

**Education Advisory Committee
September 21, 2015
City Hall**

Attendees

<u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Tricia Homer, <i>Dist 1</i>	<u>X</u>	_____
Charlene Mahoney, <i>Dist 2</i>	<u>X</u>	_____
Cory Sanders, <i>Dist 1</i>	_____	<u>X</u>
Maia Sheppard, <i>Dist 2</i>	_____	<u>X</u>
Melissa Day, <i>Dist 3</i>	_____	<u>X</u>
Carolyn Bernache, <i>Dist 4</i>	<u>X</u>	_____
Doris Ellis, <i>Dist 4</i>	<u>X</u>	_____
Peggy Wilson, <i>UMD</i>	<u>X</u>	_____

Also Present:

Peggy Higgins, Staff Liaison; Patricia Henderson, College Park Youth & Family Services Administrative Assistant; Laura Salers, Contract Secretary

Call to Order

Ms. Bernache called the meeting to order at 7:36 pm. Patricia Henderson was introduced to share a summary of the 2015 camp scholarship program.

Summer Camp Program

Ms. Henderson shared the struggles and triumphs of the scholarship process and camping season. Some highlighted points were:

- Most camps require electronic registration and some families don't have computers or a valid email addresses. Email is the primary source of communication for deadlines, forms and announcements.
- Presenting forms in Spanish would be helpful. 10 out of the 56 applicants needed assistance with every step of the application and registration process.
- Parents weren't expecting follow up emails and missed important communications from the camp. This caused late fees to be incurred as well as campers arriving unprepared for their session.
- There was confusion regarding the application process. Families thought that applying for the scholarship also registered their child for the camp. They are separate processes.

- Camp requirements are not always successfully communicated. For example, the EAC and families did not know that the children needed to bring their own pads and shoes to soccer camp. It's a challenge to collect information about UMCP camp opportunities because each sponsoring department advertises on their own. There is not a central location with all the details of each camp, application process and requirements. The Committee will consider recruiting a UMCP student volunteer to gather the information about the UMCP camps next year.
- A possible solution to the communication issues would be to host a mandatory orientation session for all scholarship recipients. Parents would learn about the complete process, get details and requirements of the camp their child is attending, bring required forms with them, be assisted on-site with registration and setting up a free email address. Spanish interpreters would be available to assist the parents.
- Most UMCP camps use a third-party provider for registration and payment. The EAC loses the personal connection between the City and the camp administration. We are unable to troubleshoot for the families and camp administration during the registration process. This also provides a challenge for the registering parent, and paying EAC.
- 56 children applied and all received scholarships from the EAC. One camper declined the scholarship prior to the payment deadline. Three students were no-shows after payment. (2 awardees had to attend summer school, and 1 awardee experienced a medical emergency)
- Many of the families and children expressed their appreciation and positive experiences. They were truly grateful for the opportunity that the EAC provided with the scholarships.

The EAC discussed about how to eliminate these issues next year. The EAC will consider hosting an orientation for scholarship recipients, which would be held in mid-April. The objectives of the orientation would be to help set each family up with an email address if needed, provide a road map of the scholarship process with UMCP, inform them of the forms and supplies required for their specific camp and help them register for the camp on a laptop set up in the room.

Regarding payment issues, Ms. Homer volunteered to contact camp directors and discuss ways to solve the issue of paying at the time of registration with a credit card. She will look into the possibility of a comp-code to pay with online, and then the City could be invoiced by the camp.

Ms. Ellis suggested inviting several parents and children to share their positive experiences with the City Council.

Ms. Bernache thanked Ms. Henderson for her hard work processing applications, maintaining the records and walking so many families successfully through the process. Ms. Henderson excused herself from the meeting at 8:30pm.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Bernache asked the EAC to review the minutes from the August 17, 2015 meeting. Ms. Homer made a motion to approve the minutes with several corrections. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ellis and unanimously approved.

Continued Discussion of Grants to “improve schools academically”

The City Council is asking the EAC for its recommendations of how to award \$80,000 in school grants. Ms. Higgins distributed historical data illustrating how much each school in our area received in grants from 2008 – 2015. The EAC reviewed the reports. The following proposal was discussed:

- 1) Award a current staff member, in each of the 10 schools, a \$1,000 stipend to report school achievements and activities to a City employee who is responsible for communications and public relations. This proposed expenditure would be dependent on the City hiring or assigning a person to handle communications. The stipend would also encourage the recipient to share the announcements on social media or the school’s website. This will help to improve the reputation of the schools and the public perceptions. (\$10,000)
- 2) Award each of the 10 schools \$5,000 to use with their Data Wise School Improvement process or for staff development. (\$50,000)
- 3) Award \$5,000 to the 4 schools with the highest number of College Park children enrolled, to enhance academics through equipment and/or technology. Currently, these schools are Hollywood ES, Paint Branch ES, Greenbelt Middle and Parkdale HS. (\$20,000)

Ms. Mahoney suggested the Committee contact the Area Director from each school to survey their needs. Ms. Ellis reminded the Committee that all of the Area Directors were invited to attend this meeting and no responses were received. The EAC will use the information it has and make reasonable recommendations for use of the grant funds.

Due to the limited time available to formulate the written recommendations for the City Council work session on Oct. 6, the EAC will need to turn them in by September 30. After a brief discussion, it was decided to have each EAC member in attendance contact two school principals by September 30th and get their feedback on the proposed plan for the grant funds. Ms. Higgins will create a template for the members to record the principal’s feedback when making their phone calls. Committee members will email the principals feedback to the rest of the Committee to review, by September 30. The schools are assigned as follows:

Ms. Wilson: Greenbelt MS, Buck Lodge MS

Ms. Homer: Hollywood ES, Paint Branch ES

Ms. Ellis: Berwyn Heights ES, University Park ES

Ms. Mahoney: Hyattsville MS, Parkdale HS

Ms. Bernache: High Point HS, Cherokee Lane ES

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:28 pm.