

## **DRAFT**

Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission and Pilot Program Meeting Minutes 11/30/2017

10:00am-12:00 pm

Prince George's Community College, 301 Largo Rd., Largo, MD 20774

(The Gwynn Room in Accokeek Hall)

### **I. Opening**

#### A. Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford

1. Welcome and I would like to thank Prince George's Community college for hosting us on this our last meeting of the year.
2. Walking through campus to get here today I saw a lot of construction because it means growth and opportunity.

#### B. Secretary Lourdes R. Padilla (Department of Human Services)

1. I want to thank our host here as well as commission member Gloria Brown Burnett who made this meeting possible as she reached out to our community partners here at the community college to get us the room as well as the constituents we will be hearing from today.
2. Following today's presentations we will be discussing the draft report therefore I will be very brief but it is those partnerships that make this type of work possible.

### **II. PowerPoint Presentation 1**

#### C. Jade Gingerich -MDOD (MD Promise Program)

1. I am glad to have the opportunity to present on the MD promise program today as it is a program that really aligns with the Two Gen approach.
2. MD Promise is a national research grant that was awarded to 6 states and MD was one.
3. It is funded at the federal level through the Department of Ed. SSA HHS and DOL.
4. The 6 states granted the funding are lead by Utah.
5. Research has shown that children on SSI grow up to be adults on SSI and many families who rely on SSI are utilizing their child's SSI benefit to sustain the family.
6. Children on SSI statistically have low education attainment and low postsecondary education causing a cycle that that child ends up with the same outcomes as the parent.
7. The Myth is you cannot work while on SSI so part of our goal is dispelling that myth.
8. A guiding principle of the program is that long term poverty can only be solved by work.
9. Research shows that paid work during a child's educational period is a pathway to success and breaking that cycle.
10. Section 301 SSA allows for SSI to continue after high school while looking for work as long as the individual is engaged in work activities.
11. One of the Panelists we hoped to have here today could not come in because they had work and we consider that to be a success.
12. Our staff has been trained in trauma informed care and to be assertive and get out into the communities because we have to stop expecting them to come to us.

#### Delegate Valentino-Smith

13. What are the disabilities most common among the program participants?

#### Jade Gingerich

14. That is a great question and it is intellectual disabilities which mean that they are not obvious.
15. That also leads me to point out that Adult SSI is different than SSI for a child. For a child to qualify for SSI it is based around the disability and the family's economic status. For an adult it is the inability to work.
16. Therefore someone who received SSI as a child due to their disability does not necessarily qualify when they reach adulthood if it is determined they could potentially work.

### **III. Panel Presentation 1 (Facilitated by Jade Gingerich)**

#### A. Panelist 1

1. Discussed that he never had a job before he became involved with the promise program. Now he has had 4-5 jobs.
2. Stated that the jobs that promise had placed him in ranged from building patio and recreational furniture in a warehouse setting, daycare, retail, and a summer camp athletics coach.
3. Explained that he would have never had the job experience to know that he hates retail work but loved working with kids. Something he says he did not know because he did not get along with younger siblings.
4. Explained that he always thought work was something terrible because he heard everyone come home at the end of the day and complain but for him he found everything enjoyable except retail. But that that knowledge in itself is helpful because he knows what to look for in a job.

#### B. Panelist 2

1. Explained that she has a 19 year old with autism and when she was approached by this new program she originally pushed back. Because she did not want these workers in her home. But they were persistent and ultimately she is glad she finally agreed.
2. Once the MD promise staff was involved they got an IEP for her daughter at school and that is something she had been fighting for but sometimes she just gets tired of fighting with the school so she was glad to have the extra support.
3. Explained that just because she has autism it does not mean she is incapable or does not want to work. In fact that her daughter wants to work. Her daughter states she wants to be a Doctor so the staff found them opportunities to volunteer at hospitals last year and she loved it.
4. They then tried to get her a job at a library but she hated it. But that does not mean it is not helpful.
5. She explained that promise takes her daughter to her 3hr work requirement and that takes pressure off her who is also working so juggling two peoples work schedules became a real burden.
6. She expressed to the panel that she believes that there is a real need to bridge that gap for a child with disabilities when the busses stop and school is over the services stop with them but the disabled person does not leave to enter the workforce in the traditional manner.
7. She expressed also that it is wonderful the services that Prince Georges County Social Services have lined up for her and her daughter but that she fears what every parent of a disabled child fears. What happens when the parent is gone and they don't have that person to apply for them? Who can you trust to do that for them? Currently she fears that there is no real answer.

#### C. Panelist 3

8. Explained that she was first approached by promise by them asking if she wanted a job and that she was apprehensive.
9. Explained that she was placed in a job where she did secretarial work and that she was mortified because she was a disorganized student.
10. Discussed that the staff at MD promise sat with her and worked directly with her to organize herself which helped her in school and in the job.

#### D. Discussion with the panel. (Facilitated by Jade Gingerich)

##### Delegate Valentino-Smith

1. Are the program counselors finding it easy to access the employment opportunities in the current economic climate and what are the concerns in a changing economy are employers paying directly, how are the jobs identified?

##### Jade Gingerich

2. The program does both paid and unpaid employment opportunities and a ton of relationship building by our staff.
3. Our hope is always that an unpaid employment placement turns into a paid one however our current structure allows us to cover the pay for the employer. Our first priority for placement will always be a standard paid employment if it can be found. Second will be a job works or youth works program which accounts for about 1/3 and third is the option where we cover the cost for the employer.
4. For us even if at 16,17,and 18 years of age if they fail at a job then it was worth it because they can learn from what didn't work before reaching those critical stages where they are aging out into the adult SSI where that economic support may be gone.

##### Delegate Valentino-Smith

5. For the panel how do you or the program participant get to work?
6. All panelists responded that they rely on a family member for transportation.

Jade Gingerich

7. We use multiple resources and try to find placements as close as possible and within the accessibility of the participant depending on what their resources are but that we do recognize transportation is a huge gap and when options are exhausted the program relies on Taxi vouchers.

#### **IV. PowerPoint Presentation 2**

##### **A. Cecelia Knox –Program Director Next Step program**

1. I want to start by saying that this presentation will have a slant toward women because it is a fact that 56% of households with children in poverty are headed by women.
2. In this region we face unique challenges because a person in Prince Georges County cannot support themselves on minimum wage.
3. Additionally in this region the job openings don't match the workforce
4. There are further barriers too such as the complexity of the workforce and isms, racism, sexism, etc. present in Prince Georges County that is where the connections within the minority community are so necessary. Connecting the resources and leveraging them are a priority here.
5. The previous presenter talked about their persistence in program participation, I would consider ours to be aggressive advising.
6. We sit a participant down and get into great detail on who is in your family that is important to you because we find that the answer to who is family is often complex and can often be a barrier in itself.
7. Barrier removal is the first and most important part to assisting a participant.
8. If the barrier is financial we remove it, if it is behavioral we work on it and we are intrusive.
9. If the participant says they want to be a nurse and they are switching their major because they are scared to take microbiology we ask what is the barrier and how can we support you in taking that class.

#### **V. Panel Presentation 2 (Facilitated by Cecelia Knox)**

##### **A. Panelist 1**

1. Explained that she had dropped out of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and had her CNA certificate but the license had lapsed and in 2001 she was expecting a child so she walked into her local social services office which is where she got involved with the Next Step program.
2. It was at that time she was asked what do you want to do and she said she wanted to be a nurse and was confronted by something she had never heard before. "then do it" She told them she couldn't because she did not have a High School Diploma. They said "ok then get that"
3. I realized I came to community college to get my CNA because I never thought I could do more.
4. Since then I got my GED and have graduated from Bowie state and returned to become a social worker myself.

##### **B. Panelist 2**

1. Described that she viewed herself as a success because she did well in school was a federal employee that was unable to keep her job because of a high risk pregnancy. She explained that she was two weeks shy of completing her probationary period when the doctor said she could try and stay on the job for two weeks and risk the life of the child or quit.
2. Described that she viewed herself as a failure when she walked through the doors of social services.
3. Described losing her family and friends because they told her she was going to be on welfare forever and living in section 8 housing the rest of her life.
4. Explained that Next step helped her obtain her masters and recently buy a home.

##### **B. Panelist 3**

1. Due to time constraints cut short but explained that he was involved in the program through his mother and that he was able to attend a summer camp that taught him about business development and leadership.
2. That camp helped him start up a company selling T shirts online.
3. Explained he hopes to continue his artistic pursuits in animation.

#### **VI. Comments and Questions (Facilitated by Cecelia Knox)**

1. Lieutenant Governor - We are continuing to really hit on are requirements are federally mandated so it is important to identify which ones can we change as a state.
2. Stuart Campbell – The block grant is actually the only federal program specifically for combating poverty which is what gives it the flexibility in funding. The other programs are not for combating poverty in the fed's eyes.
3. Brandon Butler – We keep getting back to that we need to build bridges between the programs and not silos.
4. Secretary Padilla –The transportation portion we spoke about is really something I continued to hear in my local tours and that there are faith based organizations in the community that would like to give rides to work partnering is difficult when dealing with faith organizations because everyone is in the agency is conscious and careful around separation of church and state.

**VII. Interim Report Draft Review** (Facilitated by Nicholette Smith-Bligen)

1. Delegate Valentino-Smith – The transportation issue is something we have really been speaking about a lot in the Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness and has allot of suggestions on transportation are in that report that could be folded into this one.
2. Lt. Governor– I don't think we are attempting to get into that with this report. The intent of this interim report is to identify the potential pilots that we need to do and what should come out of the pilots. We know that there is a lot of money being spent on these issues but that the barriers are in the way. For example we have certainly identified a barrier exists in the funding streams for a lot of these programs.
3. Delegate Valentino-Smith – Another

**VIII. Conclusion** - Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford

1. Thanked all the members in attendance for traveling to the meeting reminded members that that there is only one more meeting before the interim report is due and that while a date has not been set the next meeting will be held in Prince Georges County.
2. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from 10/3/2017. No changes made draft accepted.
3. Meeting concluded.