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Early Childhood Programs Frequently Asked Questions

Magnolia Elementary School Judith P. Hoyer Program

What is a “Judy Center”?

Judy Centers are named after the late Judith P. Hoyer, an early childhood advocate and Supervisor of Early Childhood Education for Prince George's County, Maryland Public Schools. Judy Centers provide a central location for early childhood education and support services for children birth through Kindergarten and their families who reside in specific Title I school (high poverty) districts across the State of Maryland. Judy Centers are unique because they promote school readiness through collaboration with community-based agencies, organizations, and businesses. This integrated approach promotes program and service delivery that is conveniently located in or near Title I schools, ensuring that young children who may begin school at a deficit are given opportunities to start their formal education on a level playing field with their peers.

Readiness for school includes:

- being socially adjusted, emotionally aware, and able to communicate with adults and other children
- having an awareness of print and letter-sound relationships and understanding a story
- understanding basic math ideas, patterns, shapes and how to put things in a certain order
- having awareness of animal and plant life, and people’s roles in the family and the community
- being comfortable with individual creativity and an appreciation for self-expression through the arts

12 Components of a Judy Center

1. Full Day/Summer Programs
2. Provision of Breakfast/Lunch
3. Service Coordination and Family Support.
4. Combination of Early Education Services
5. Family Involvement
6. Early Identification/Intervention
7. Young Children with Disabilities Involvement
8. Health Services
9. Educational Training for all Staff and Partners



10. Adult Education/Family Literacy

11. Highly Qualified Programs

12. Judy Center Partnership/Leadership

Judy Centers are monitored on a regular basis and are required to meet the above twelve Component Standards.

Who will benefit from the Judy Center approach at Magnolia Elementary School?

- **Children in the Magnolia community will benefit** because the learning environments are positive, exciting, and age-appropriate. They are exposed to the seven domains of learning—personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts and physical development and health – in high quality environments. Children with disabilities or special needs are provided with interventions that may ensure greater school success.
- **Parents of young children in the Magnolia community will benefit** because there are many opportunities to become more involved in their child's education, increase their parenting skills and their own educational level, and participate in rich family-oriented activities.
- **Harford County Public Schools and Magnolia Elementary School will benefit** because children will enter school better prepared educationally and socially. Parents will become more involved and, through early intervention, developmental delays and speech issues will be remedied before children enter the primary grades. This has social, as well as financial benefits for the school system.
- **The state will benefit** from the improved quality of life for families with young children living in Maryland.

With the opening of the new Judy Center at Magnolia Elementary School in Harford County, Judy Centers are now located in almost all Maryland jurisdictions. Baltimore City, Charles County, and Montgomery County each have two Judy Centers. The Magnolia Judy Center will host an official opening of the Judy Center at Magnolia Elementary School in spring 2014.

Magnolia Elementary School Judy Center contact information

Contact Bonnie Mitrega at Bonnie.Mitrega@hcps.org or 410-612-1553

http://www.msde.maryland.gov/MSDE/divisions/child_care/early_learning/Judy.htm



Eligibility Age

At what ages are children eligible to enroll in early childhood programs?

- According to COMAR 13A.08.01.02, the ages for school attendance are as follows:

Title I School Readiness Program	A child admitted to the School Readiness program in the Title I school enrollment area <u>must be 2-years-old on September 1</u> of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.
Special Education Early Intervention	A child <u>between the ages of 3-years old and 5 –years-old</u> , who have an educational disability, are eligible for Early Intervention services.
Prekindergarten	A child admitted to the prekindergarten program in the public school shall be <u>4-years-old or older on September 1</u> of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.
Kindergarten	A child admitted to the kindergarten program in the public school shall be <u>5-years-old or older on September 1</u> of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.
First Grade	A child admitted to the first grade in the public schools shall be <u>6-years-old or older on September 1</u> of the school year in which the child applies for entrance.

Can students seek admission to HCPS from a private, parochial, other public-school system, or a nonpublic program certified by the Maryland State Department of Education?

Any student seeking admission from a private, parochial, other public-school system, or a nonpublic program certified by the Maryland State Department of Education shall be placed in the grade level to which they are certified by the sending school, provided the child is age-eligible.

Title I School Readiness Program

What is the Title 1 School Readiness Program?

The Title I School Readiness program prepares our youngest learners ages 2-years-old – 4-years- old for the demands of school. This Title I program focuses on math and reading at the earliest stages of development as well as giving our parents skills and strategies to use with their children. Each session will provide 2 hours of learning each week with instruction delivered by a certified classroom teacher. The sessions will be held at the Title I Elementary School and will provide 2 hours of learning (9:00-11:00 or 1:00-3:00) (Havre de Grace Elementary 9:30-11:30 and 1:30-2:30) one day each week with instruction delivered by a certified classroom teacher.



This program will be free of charge to all families living in the Title I Elementary School enrollment area. Sessions will begin the third week of September and will end the second week in June. (Approximate Time Frame)

How does the Title I School Readiness application process work?

Child must live in the Title I Elementary School enrollment area.

- There must be an adult (parents, grandparents, adult siblings, etc.) accompanying the child for the full two-hour session.
- A child may not miss more than 3 total sessions for the entire school year.
- Child must be 2-years-old by September 1st
- Priority will be given to those students not already being serviced through other HCPS programs (e.g. Head Start, Child Find, Infants & Toddlers, Pre-K, Private childcare facility).

Necessary Documentation:

1. **Child's birth certificate.** If you do not have a birth certificate, one of the following is acceptable:

- Hospital certificate
- Physician's certificate
- Baptism/church certificate
- Passport/visa
- Birth registration

2. **Proof of residence, one of the following:**

The following may be acceptable for proof of residency:

- A current monthly utility bill* (turn off notices not accepted) internet, cable, landline, gas & electric (usage detail page required). The utility bill must show name, service address, usage and charge.
- If a monthly utility bill CANNOT be provided ~Parent or Guardian must provide 2 Documents from the list below



One item from Column A PLUS One item from Column B

Column A	Column B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homeowner’s Deed ➤ Most recent mortgage payment * ➤ Signed Settlement Agreement ➤ Current signed Lease Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pay stub * ➤ W-2 ➤ Car, Homeowner, or Renter’s Insurance Declaration page ➤ Government or official correspondence * ➤ Change of address card from MVA or Post Office ➤ Credit Card Statement * ➤ Cell Phone bill *

*These documents must be dated within 30 days from date of enrollment.

3. Immunization records and physical form

<http://www.hcps.org/parents/immunizationrequirements.aspx>

HCPS Elementary Schools with Title I School Readiness Programs

- Bakerfield Elementary
36 Baker Street, Aberdeen, 410-273-5518

- Deerfield Elementary
2307 Willoughby Beach Rd, Edgewood, 410-612-1540

- Edgewood Elementary
2100 Cedar Drive, Edgewood, 410-612-1540

- George D. Lisby Elementary at Hillsdale
810 Edmund Street Aberdeen, 410-273-5530

- Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary
203 East Bel Air Avenue Aberdeen, 410-273-5524

- Havre de Grace Elementary
600 Juniata Street Havre de Grace, 410-939-6616

- Magnolia Elementary
901 Trimble Road Joppa, 410-612-1552

- William Paca/Old Post Road Elementary
2706 Philadelphia Road Abingdon, 410-612-2033



Special Education Early Intervention

What does disabled mean?

Federal and State laws identify specific educational disabilities that entitle a child to special education services if it is determined that the disability is interfering with the child's learning.

These educational disabilities include:

Autism Deafness
Deaf/Blindness
Developmental Delay
Emotional Disability
Hearing Impairment
Intellectual Disability
Multiple Disabilities
Orthopedic Impairment
Other Health Impairment
Specific Learning Disability
Speech or Language Impairment
Traumatic Brain Injury
Visual Impairment

What is Child Find?

“CHILD FIND” is the name given to the all-out effort to locate children who may be in need of special education services. It is a special education service provided by the Harford County Public Schools to identify children who live in Harford County, from ages 3 through 21, who are suspected of having an educational disability and who may be eligible for special education and related services.

How do I refer a child to Child Find?

- Children between the ages of three and five years, who live in Harford County and are not enrolled in a Harford County Public School may be referred directly by the parent/guardian to the Office of Child Find by calling 410-638-4386/87.
- Students who attend a private or parochial school in Harford County may be referred for screening by school teams or the parent/guardian by calling the Office of Child Find at 410-638-4386/87 for further information.
- Children enrolled in Harford County Public Schools, in grades K-12 who are suspected of having a disability and may be in need of special education, should be referred to the local school for screening.

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What is the Child Find process?

Parent or Guardian contacts the Child Find office at 410-638-4386/87.

- An IEP meeting is convened to consider the possibility that the student has an educational disability.
- If needed, assessments are completed.
- An IEP Meeting (Individualized Education Program) is convened to determine the child's eligibility for special education and related services.
- If a child is eligible, an IEP or a Service Plan will be developed, identifying goals and services to be provided.

What services might an eligible student receive?

Possible Services include:

- Special Education Instruction
- Speech/Language Therapy
- Audiological Services
- Psychological Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Vocational Education

What is the cost involved?

Child Find screening services are available, at no charge, to all Harford County residents three through 21 years of age. Assessments, evaluations, and all special education services which are determined to be necessary by the IEP Team are provided free of charge.

What is the Infants and Toddlers Program?

The Harford County Infants and Toddlers Program is an early intervention program for children birth to 4- years-old and their families. Through family-centered services, parents and caregivers are provided guidance and coaching to help their child be successful at home and in the community and develop school readiness skills.

Children ages 3 – 4-years-old are provided services through HCITP upon meeting the requirements of the MD Extended IFSP Option.

Who is eligible for services?

- Children who demonstrate a 25% delay in one or more areas of development.



- Children who demonstrate atypical development in one or more areas of development.
- Children with a diagnosis placing them at risk for developmental delays

What services are available?

- Audiology
- Counseling
- Evaluation
- Family education and support
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Psychology
- Service coordination
- Special instruction
- Speech/language therapy

Where are services provided?

Services are typically provided in the natural environment. This could include:

- A home
- Daycare setting
- Preschool
- Community event/activity
- Library
- Other community locations

What is the process?

The process begins by making a referral. Most referrals are made directly by the child's parents by calling the Harford County Infants and Toddlers office at 410-638-3823.

With parental consent, referrals may also be made by health care providers, child care providers, social workers, family members, and other individuals familiar with the child's development.

Who provides the services?

The Harford County Infants and Toddlers Program is an interagency program provided by:

- Harford County Public Schools
- Harford County Health Department

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- Harford County Department of Social Services
- Other private agencies

What else should I know about Infants and Toddlers?

If your child is under 3-years-old and you have concerns about their development, call the Harford County Infants and Toddlers Program at 410-638-3823.

If your child is over 3- years-old and you have concerns about their development or school readiness, call Child Find at 410-638-4386.

These programs are a public service to eligible children of Harford County and are provided at no charge to families.

What is the Regional Early Intervention Classroom?

The early intervention classrooms are designed to meet the needs of those students with moderate to severe delays in cognition, social interaction, communication and behavior. These students require a structured teaching routine presented in a language rich environment. Each classroom is staffed with a special education teacher and paraeducator. The classrooms are located in regional centers throughout the county. Students attend 2, 3, or 4 days per week. Related services such as speech-language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision and hearing services are delivered at the regional early intervention center (in or out of the classroom).

HCPS Elementary Schools with Regional Early Intervention Classrooms

- Edgewood Elementary
2100 Cedar Drive, Edgewood,
410-612-1540
- Homestead/Wakefield Elementary
900 South Main Street, Bel Air,
410-638-4175
- Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary
203 East Bel Air Ave, Aberdeen,
410-273-5524
- North Bend Elementary
1445 North Bend Road, Jarrettsville,
410-692-7815

Prekindergarten

What is prekindergarten?

Prekindergarten is a state-funded program for 4-year-old children who are from families that are economically disadvantaged or homeless. The overall goal of prekindergarten is to provide learning experiences to help children develop and maintain school readiness skills necessary to



be successful in school. The Prekindergarten program provides appropriate experiences that address the literacy, mathematical, cognitive, social, emotional, and physical needs of young children. In HCPS prekindergarten is a two-and-a-half-hour program offered in a morning and afternoon session.

How does the prekindergarten application process work?

- Applicants must be 4-years-old on or before September 1. There are no early entrance procedures for prekindergarten.
- Economics is the only requirement in determining prekindergarten eligibility. [Table of Contents](#)
- Parents may pick up an application at any Harford County public elementary school beginning the first Friday in May.
- Parents must submit the completed application packet, including the necessary documentation, to an elementary school that hosts a prekindergarten program

Necessary Documentation:

1. Proof of Income: (Previous year's federal income tax form 1040, with child listed as a dependent.)

- *If you have filed for an extension, your application is not complete and will not be considered until you submit a copy of the 1040 form to the school.*
- *If you do not have an income, you will need to provide certification from the Department of Social Services that you are receiving some kind of service: welfare, WIC, food stamps, and/or medical assistance.*

2. Child's birth certificate. If you do not have a birth certificate, one of the following is acceptable:

- Hospital certificate
- Physician's certificate
- Baptism/church certificate
- Passport/visa
- Birth registration

3. Proof of residence

The following may be acceptable for proof of residency:

- A current monthly utility bill* (turn off notices not accepted) internet, cable, landline, gas & electric (usage detail page required). The utility bill must show name, service address, usage and charge.



- If a monthly utility bill CANNOT be provided ~Parent or Guardian must provide 2 Documents from the list below

One item from Column A PLUS One item from Column B

Column A	Column B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Homeowner’s Deed ➤ Most recent mortgage payment * ➤ Signed Settlement Agreement ➤ Current signed Lease Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pay stub * ➤ W-2 ➤ Car, Homeowner, or Renter’s Insurance Declaration page ➤ Government or official correspondence * ➤ Change of address card from MVA or Post Office ➤ Credit Card Statement * ➤ Cell Phone bill *

*These documents must be dated within 30 days from date of enrollment.

4. Photo I.D. of parent

HCPS Elementary Schools with Prekindergarten Programs

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Abingdon Elementary
399 Singer Road, Abingdon ,
410-638-3910 <input type="checkbox"/> Bel Air Elementary
30 East Lee Street, Bel Air,
410-638-4160 <input type="checkbox"/> Deerfield Elementary
2307 Willoughby Beach Rd, Edgewood,
410-612-1535 <input type="checkbox"/> Edgewood Elementary
Inclusion Program
2100 Cedar Drive, Edgewood,
410-612-1540 <input type="checkbox"/> Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary
203 East Bel Air Ave, Aberdeen,
410-273-5524 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Bakerfield Elementary
36 Baker Street, Aberdeen,
410-273-5518 <input type="checkbox"/> Church Creek Elementary
4299 Church Creek Rd, Belcamp,
410-273-5550 <input type="checkbox"/> Dublin Elementary
1527 Whiteford Road, Street,
410-638-3703 <input type="checkbox"/> George Lisby at Hillsdale Elementary
810 Edmund Street, Aberdeen,
410-273-5530 <input type="checkbox"/> Havre de Grace Elementary
600 Juniata St, Havre de Grace,
410-939-6616 |
|--|--|



- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homestead/Wakefield Elementary
Inclusion Program
900 South Main Street, Bel Air,
410-638-4175 | <input type="checkbox"/> Joppatowne Elementary
410 Barksdale Road, Joppa,
410-612-1546 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magnolia Elementary
901 Trimble Road, Joppa,
410-612-1553 | <input type="checkbox"/> Meadowvale Elementary
910 Grace View Dr, Havre de Grace,
410-939-6622 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Bend Elementary
1445 North Bend Road, Jarrettsville,
410-692-7815 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prospect Mill Elementary
101 Prospect Mill Road, Bel Air,
410-638-3817 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Riverside Elementary
211 Stillmeadow Drive, Joppa,
410-612-1560 | <input type="checkbox"/> Roye-Williams Elementary
201 Oakington Rd, Havre de Grace,
410-273-5536 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> William Paca/Old Post Road Elementary
2706 Philadelphia Road Abingdon,
410- 612-2033 | |

Kindergarten/First Grade

What is kindergarten?

All kindergarten programs in the public schools are full-day programs operating for 6.5 hours a day to support the academic, social, physical, and emotional development of kindergarten students.

Can parents “hold their child out” for one year if a child is age-eligible for kindergarten?

- A parent may request a one-year waiver to defer entry to kindergarten. You may obtain a form by downloading the link, contacting your local school, or contacting the *Office of Early Childhood Programs*.
- Internal employees only:
<http://share.hcps.org/searchcenter/Pages/Results.aspx?k=maturity%20waiver&s=All%20Sites>

If parents or legal guardians decide that it is in the best interest of their child who is already enrolled in kindergarten to be withdrawn, what must they do?

- If parents or legal guardians feel that it is in the best interest of their child to be withdrawn from kindergarten, they must do the following:
- File a written request to withdraw the child from the program; and



- Register the child for enrollment in kindergarten the following school year.

How do I register for kindergarten?

- Please contact your local school to learn how that specific school handles the kindergarten registration process.
- Registration begins the first Friday in May.
- The child must be 5-years-old on or before September 1 of current school year.
- <http://www.hcps.org/parents/KRegistration.aspx>

Necessary Documentation:

1. Child's birth certificate. If you do not have a birth certificate, one of the following is acceptable:

- Hospital certificate
- Physician's certificate
- Baptism/church certificate
- Passport/visa
- Birth registration

2. Proof of Residence The following may be acceptable for proof of residency:

- A current monthly utility bill* (turn off notices not accepted) internet, cable, landline, gas & electric (usage detail page required). The utility bill must show name, service address, usage and charge.
- If a monthly utility bill CANNOT be provided ~Parent or Guardian must provide 2 Documents from the list below



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*These documents must be dated within 30 days from date of enrollment.

3. Photo I.D. of parent

4. Immunization records and physical form

<http://www.hcps.org/parents/immunizationrequirements.aspx>

Do I need to register my child for kindergarten if my child is enrolled in a Harford County Public School prekindergarten program?

- You do not need to register your child for kindergarten if he/she is already enrolled as an HCPS student in the same school.

What if my child is transferring to a new school?

- If your child is transferring to a new school, request a Maryland Student Transfer Record from the current school. Call the new school to make a registration appointment.

Are there any informational events prior to the start of kindergarten? [Table of Contents](#)

- All of the elementary schools hold an *Open House* event over the summer for incoming kindergarteners. Please contact your child's school for more information.

Can Harford County Public Schools deny entrance into kindergarten or first grade?

- No. Age is the only criteria required for entrance into kindergarten and first grade.



Can a child be admitted early to kindergarten, or first grade?

- Yes. Per *COMAR 13A.08.01.02, Age for School Attendance*, all local boards of education are to adopt a regulation permitting early admission to prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade.
 - A 4-year-old child, upon request by the parent or guardian, may be admitted to kindergarten if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.
 - A 5-year-old child, upon request of the parent or guardian, may be admitted to the first grade if the local superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee determines that the child has demonstrated capabilities warranting early admission.
- While *COMAR* requires that local school systems adopt regulations for early admission, the content of the policies and procedures must be determined by the local boards of education.

What is the process for applying for early admission to kindergarten?

- Early admission to kindergarten is **open only to children whose birthdays fall between September 2 and October 15, inclusive.**
- Applications for early entrance can be obtained beginning the first Friday in May at any Harford County elementary school, on the Harford County Public School System's website (www.hcps.org), or from the *HCPS Office of Early Childhood Programs*.

During the school year, can a child who did not turn 5-years-old by September 1 be enrolled in the kindergarten program if he or she is attempting to transfer from another institution?

- If an underage child is transferring from a kindergarten program in a public school in Maryland, the Harford County Public School System will verify that the child was enrolled through early admission procedures. After verification through school records, the child may continue in a HCPS kindergarten. Close monitoring of the child's progress will occur.
- If an underage child is transferring from a public kindergarten in another state, the child may continue in kindergarten pending receipt of school records. Close monitoring of the child's progress will occur.
- If an underage child is transferring from a private or parochial school kindergarten, the child will **not** be allowed to enroll in a HCPS kindergarten.

Can a child who is enrolled in a private or parochial kindergarten program transfer to a public-school kindergarten program?

- Yes. Per *COMAR 13A.08.01.01C*, an age-eligible child who attends a non-public



kindergarten program for part of the year **may** transfer to a public kindergarten.

What is the process for applying for early admission to first grade?

- Since kindergarten is a mandatory grade, a student must first enroll in kindergarten (the appropriate grade for his/her age).
- If an underage student already fulfilled the kindergarten requirement through attendance in a public school in another state, the parent must provide records that demonstrate the child's successful year-long participation in that program to be admitted.

If a child did not meet the age for kindergarten attendance, was admitted to kindergarten in a private or parochial school, and successfully completed kindergarten, can the child transfer to the public school as a first grade student?

- Children who did not meet the age requirements and were admitted early to a private or parochial school kindergarten program will not automatically be enrolled in first grade in Harford County Public Schools. The child's parents/guardians can apply for early admission to first grade. If the child meets the performance requirements required by HCPS regulations, then the child will be granted early admission. The first step in this process is registering for kindergarten at the elementary school assigned to the family's residence and completing the application for early admission to first grade.

If the parents of a non-English speaking child apply for early admission, must accommodations be made?

- No. The Maryland State Department of Education has determined that a local school system is **not** required to make adjustments in its early admission regulation to prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade for non-English speaking students. Assessments for early admission to kindergarten and first grade will be administered in the language of instruction – English.

If the parents of a home-schooled child requests a transfer to public school, must they meet the September 1 age of entry for kindergarten?

- *COMAR 13A.08.01.02*, allows a student to be enrolled in kindergarten home schooling if he/she is 5- years-old by September 1. A student who was home schooled, must be 5- years-old by September 1 to enroll in public kindergarten or meet the early admission criteria. A student who has completed a home school kindergarten program and requests transfer to first grade must meet the age requirement of 6-years-old by September 1 or the early admission to first grade criteria.



Considerations Regarding Early Entrance to School

- ✓ Successful candidates of early entrance are often quick learners, independent and motivated, developmentally advanced, and socially mature compared to same age peers.
- ✓ Young children are emotionally vulnerable and may become stressed or anxious when adult expectations for their performance exceed their developmental capabilities. Children learn best when they are provided challenges that are appropriately matched to their ability and readiness level.
- ✓ Young children learn best through structured and self-directed play. The quality and quantity of their time spent playing impacts their ability to think creatively, make decisions, and cope with stressful situations.
- ✓ Entering school early is a decision that will have long-term effects on your child. The potential social/emotional and cognitive impact on your child as he/she progresses through elementary, middle, high school, as well as beyond is not foreseeable.
- ✓ How will your family respond when your child's new peer group reaches adolescence and is old enough to date, drive, and assume other adult prerogatives?
- ✓ Results from longitudinal studies indicate that carefully selected, advanced young learners tend to do very well academically and socially when provided early entrance.
- ✓ All children need challenges tailored to their intellectual strengths and their social and emotional development stage.

2018-19 ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

	Title I	4 th Tier	Pre-K	Full-Day Pre-K	Title I School Readiness	Co-Taught Pre-K	Learning Together	Early Learner	Early Intervention	STRIVE	CSP	Judy Center
ABES												
BFES												
BAES												
CCES												
CVES												
DAES												
DEES												
DUES												
EDES												
EMES												
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Harford County Public Schools Early Childhood Programs

Kathy Griffin, Coordinator

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