

SPRING 2024

# Gazette

EDUCARE

OF WASHINGTON DC



## Excellence in Everything: A note from the President & CEO

As we navigate through the challenges and uncertainties of the world around us, let us remember the impact that we have on each other. Our work is not only important, but it is essential in shaping the future of our community.

### Prenatal

Last month, our Perinatal Engagement Coordinator and Director of Comprehensive Services participated on one of the Reception Panels in the Region 3 T/TA Network and the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health and Safety about "Head Start Programs Are a Maternal Health Intervention Virtual Series." We showcased our prenatal program, Moms2Be, and shared stories and challenges. Please see link to our presentation: [5Panel PPT for Maternal Presentation - Copy2 - Copy \(1\).pptx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

### Strive for 85

Chronic absenteeism can have a negative impact on a child's success. When children miss school regularly, especially in the early years, they miss out on adult support and guidance that can help them master foundational skills essential for success in later grades.

Let's build the habit of good attendance. What We Can Do:

- Talk about it – sing about it – make it an adventure!
- Set a regular bedtime and morning routines.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Share ideas with other parents for getting to school on time.

### Advocacy & Parent Ambassador Program

Spring is advocacy's high season, and we have been more active than ever before this year! In March, seven parents, Advocacy Manager Adam Barragan-Smith, Parent Advocacy Coordinator Njeri Jenkins-Sutton, and President & CEO testified in the DC Council's Performance Oversight hearings to provide feedback on how various DC agencies serve children, families, and teachers. We will also testify in the Budget Oversight hearings in April to ensure that early childhood programs like the Pay Equity Fund and childcare subsidy are fully-funded.



## Important Dates

**Tuesday, April 2 Autism Awareness Day (Wear Blue)**  
**Friday, April 5 Professional Development Day, No School**  
**Wednesday, April 10 Parent Cafe, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm - IDEA**  
**Saturday, April 6 - Friday, April 12 Week of the Young Child**  
**Monday, April 15 - Friday, April 19 Spring Break, No School**

### Follow us on social media

for helpful reminders and updates

 educaredc  EducareWashingtonDC  DCEducare

Educare DC Contact Information:

**Educare DC - Parkside: 202-727-5604**

**Educare DC - IDEA: 202-738-5034**

**Remind App: Remember to utilize the Remind App, if you are not already connected. Contact your FES to help create an account or if your phone number has changed.**

### Comprehensive Services

We launched the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) Week with a bang by reading nutrition books to children or playing Sesame Street videos on "how to eat healthy", wearing fruit costumes, incorporating a touch box activity using real fruits to identify and describe the feeling, showing a cooking demo, sharing resources about healthy nutrition with parents and we let children do an activity worksheet. Lastly, we distributed CACFP Certificates of Awesomeness to teachers and staff. Please find the link below for a short video that captured some of the activities mentioned earlier.

Learn more here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J7-rjgg5\\_lbQPBDIYB4qtVvY5IPdYDLv/view?usp=drivesdk](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J7-rjgg5_lbQPBDIYB4qtVvY5IPdYDLv/view?usp=drivesdk)

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J7-rjgg5\\_lbQPBDIYB4qtVvY5IPdYDLv/view?usp=drivesdk](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J7-rjgg5_lbQPBDIYB4qtVvY5IPdYDLv/view?usp=drivesdk)

Celebrate **CACFP** Week  
March 10-16, 2024

Help serve over **4.5 million children and adults** healthy meals & snacks daily!

Learn more at [CACFPWeek.org](http://CACFPWeek.org)



## Child Care Partners

The CCP team began the new grant year with some exciting events to promote early literacy during "Read Across America" Week! Our new grant year began on March 1 for our Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Grant and "Read Across America" week began March 4th. We are now servicing four child care partner sites with 110 children and families. During the week of March 4th our CCP sites had a visit from Blue Sky Puppet Theatre. The puppeteer performed "Rufus," a puppet show about a dog who looked different than other dogs but went to dog school to prove himself. During the puppet show, children engaged in sing-alongs, learned and displayed appropriate social-emotional skills, as well as met many puppets and the puppeteer. We are looking forward to another five years of the EHS-CCP grant and the continued advancement/enrichment within our program!



## Education at IDEA & Parkside

Volunteering is a vital component of Educare DC's program. We would love to have more parent volunteers this month! During March, we celebrated "Read Across America." Parents visited their children's classrooms for read-alouds. We also had parents volunteer to plan and execute Sneaker Balls, which were a success. We would love to see more parents in our classrooms! Volunteering in the classroom requires a background and health check. Parents can also volunteer by participating in program governance. If you are interested in volunteering in your child's classroom, please contact your child's teaching team or your Family Engagement Specialist so we can support you with the next steps.

We are excited for many of our staff to attend the Early Educator Experience DC (EarlyEdX) on Friday, April 5. This event will allow them to connect with other early childhood educators and professionals in DC for learning, networking, advocacy, and celebration. Early EdX is powered by the Bainum Family Foundation and hosted by four practitioner-led organizations — District of Columbia Association for the Education of Young Children, District of Columbia Head Start Association, DC Family Child Care Association, and the Multicultural Spanish Speaking Providers Association.

On March 25th, the Parkside site hosted six early educators and city administrators from Binan, Philippines, and two Teaching Strategies staff from their international department. As a Teaching Strategies ambassador program, we are afforded the opportunity to work alongside a curriculum specialist as well as share our expertise with the Department of Education's team from Binan on curriculum implementation.



**A School for Your Community - Educare of Washington, DC is an early childhood school built to serve children and families of Washington, DC. We engage and empower parents in their children's learning and provide high-quality education through small class sizes and cutting-edge teaching methods. We are also committed to evaluation and continuous program improvement through our partnerships with the Educare Learning Network, Office of Head Start, and the University of Maryland.**

## Family Engagement

Educare DC hosted its first Kinder School Fair on Friday, February 23, 2024. The purpose of the fair was: to help families understand the difference between Public, Charter, Montessori and Private Schools, assist with narrowing down school choices, and to apply for the lottery on the My School DC website. We hoped families would be able to speak with elementary school representatives about services offered and schedule tours to get an up close and personal glance at the academic and/or extra-curricular programming. These are the schools that participated: Global Citizens, DC Prep, Burrville, Plummer, Rocketship, Bishop Walker, Brown Education Campus, Two Rivers, C.W. Harris, and Excel Academy. My School DC also participated by assisting families with applying for the lottery.

Family Engagement and Educare DC families from IDEA & Parkside hosted Sneaker Balls on March 1, 2024 & March 5, 2024. Our theme: Sneakers & Snowflakes. This was an opportunity for families and staff to socialize, enjoy music, dancing, and fun activities while showcasing their favorite sneakers.



## Recruitment and Enrollment

Re-enrollment for School Year 2024-2025 begins April 1st. This year, we will be using DocuSign to complete registration packets. If a family would like a paper registration packet, they can reach out to their Family Engagement Specialist or a member of the Enrollment Team. Our Pre-K program is not a part of the DC lottery, so families do not need to apply externally. If you have questions about enrollment, please contact a member of our enrollment team on-site or by email [enroll@educaredc.org](mailto:enroll@educaredc.org).

Enroll here: <https://www.educaredc.org/enroll/>

## Professional Development Institute (PDI)

The Professional Development Institute is preparing to welcome its 3rd cohort on April 30th! The ongoing adjustments and improvements aim to ensure continuous quality. However, the Institute remains dedicated to training and supporting entry-level teachers in early childhood education. It provides an ideal opportunity for those interested in pursuing a career in this field. The Institute offers one month of training to teachers, focusing on practical instruction for center- and school-based programs to enhance program practices and deliver better outcomes for children and families. Upon completing the program, teachers can join the Educare DC staff as Traveling Teacher Aides.