



Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

Minutes: September 5, 2007

12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Location: Department of Public Works
Alhambra Room
900 S. Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

Members in Attendance: (37) Sue Peter for Alice Murphy, Alicen Vera, Bobbie Edwards, Angelica Solis, Dianne Philibosian, Anita Tetrault, Atalaya Sergi, Beverley Morgan-Sandoz, Randi Wolfe for Carolina Alvarez, Avery Goldstein for Chantal Lamourelle Sims, Roseanne Ghiazza for Corinne Sanchez, Grace Castro, Jenny Trickey, Joy Cyprian, Amy Bigelow for Patrice Wong, Noreen Clarke, Nellie Rios Parra, Craig Lancaster, Lorraine Schrag, Ancelma Sanchez, Jan Isenberg, Rocio Bach, Rosa Arevalo, Tracy Colunga Hollingsworth, Maria Rochart, Mary Helen Vasquez, Leyla Abou-Taleb for Holly Daasnes, Robert Wiltse, Julie Taren, Karen Kaye, Kathleen Pompey, Norayma Cabot, Silvia Parra, Pamela Kwok, Lucy Fitzpatrick for Pamela Schmidt, Celeste Salinas for Pat Mendoza, Patti Oblath.

Guests and Alternates: Peggy Sisson, JoAnn Shalhoub-Mejia, Ree Harris, Lisa Wilkin, Lorraine Gutierrez, Lloyd Kajikawa, Lou Orr, Ben Gales, Bunthy Prum, Florence Nelson, Jane Lee Choe, Elaine Waldman, Emilio Sosa, B. J. Brooks.

Staff: Laura Escobedo

I. Welcome and Introductions

Craig Lancaster, Chair of the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), opened the meeting at 12:10 p.m. He introduced himself as the new Chair and then asked those present to introduce themselves. The new members were asked to identify themselves as new.

The minutes from June 5, 2007 had been sent electronically to all members and alternates. However, because there were no hard copies of the June minutes available, the Chair postponed the approval of the minutes until the October meeting.

II. Presentations from new members

Atalaya Sergi was introduced. She is the new Los Angeles Coordinator for the Jumpstart, which was begun in 1993. Its mission is to ensure that children ages three to five years old are ready for school by building literacy and language skills. Jumpstart objectives include school success, family involvement, and the development of future teachers. Jumpstart partners with local colleges and universities whose students volunteer at child development sites to work directly with preschool age children. Currently the program includes 17 preschool sites and three universities in Los Angeles. Focus for program selection is on areas with low income families. Jumpstart has an aggressive growth plan for Los Angeles that involves working with up to 500 college students and 60 different preschool sites.

Angelica Solis was introduced. She is with the Alliance for Better Communities (ABC), a seven year old organization. Ms. Solis is the early childhood policy specialist. Issues affecting the Latino community in Los Angeles are the focus for the efforts of the ABC, which conducts local advocacy. In 2003, ABC partnered with United Way to produce the Latino Report Card, which highlights issues related to health, public safety, etc. ABC is charged with implementing the recommendations from that report. ABC looks at education from the perspective of pre-K through college. Currently, Ms. Solis is working on preschool standards (foundations), quality assessments, and after school care. ABC usually works through collaborative groups formed around specific issues. The effort related to the preschool foundations is an example of this approach.

III. Approval of the County's Legislative Agenda for Child Care and Development for 2008-2009

Michele Sartell, staff to the Joint Committee on Legislation, presented the current agenda. She explained that this is used to determine the parameters for County support or opposition for any piece of legislation related to child care and development. The language is overly broad and inclusive to allow us the flexibility to address legislation without getting the Boards approval each time. This also guides the work of County lobbyists. She called for questions or revisions and additions to the agenda.

There being no changes to propose, the Chair called for a motion to approve the legislative agenda as it stands. A motion was made by Dianne Philibosian to approve the document; the motion was seconded by Nellie Rios-Parra. The Chair called for the vote. The motion was passed with no opposition or abstentions.

IV. Work Group Participation

Craig Lancaster explained that those present were to break out into their chosen work groups. Prior to doing so, the Membership and Policies Work Group made an announcement. In the interest of supporting new leadership within the Planning Committee, the Membership and Policies Work Group was recommending that at least one of the long-term co-chairs of each work group step aside so that someone else from the work group be able to become a co-chair. JoAnn Shalhoub-Mejia stated that this topic should be dealt with at the first meeting of each work group so that by early October all new co-chairs could be identified. She asked that each group be mindful of this recommendation as they confirmed their membership during the break-outs.

It was suggested that each current Co-chair give a very brief description of his/her work group's activities. The work groups are: Joint Committee on Legislation, Inclusion, Membership and Policies, Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment, School-age Quality, Qualifications and Compensation, and Improving Access to Quality Child Care. Once this was done, the Chair read out the names of those who had signed up for each work group and asked them to meet in various parts of the room with the current co-chairs. They were to review the roster, confirm membership, delete those who were not interested, and correct any contact information. The Chair reconvened the meeting after about 20 minutes.

V. Presentation: Update on the Implementation of the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP).

Helen Chavez, the new STEP Coordinator, was introduced. She provided personal background on herself, then provided an overview on STEP and the status of its pilot implementation. She explained that the STEP rating scales measure regulatory compliance, teacher/child relationships, learning environment, identification and inclusion of children with special needs, staff qualifications and working conditions, and family/community engagement.

Providers who participate from any of the nine pilot communities will be offered mini-grants for quality improvements, free training on a variety of topics related to elements in STEP, and free on-site quality assessments. Ms. Chavez explained that to begin the process, interested programs submit an application to participate in STEP. Staff then conducts a licensing review. Those who meet the regulatory compliance standards would be invited to submit a mini-grant request. Those who need more assistance prior to using such a mini-grant will be assisted in preparing a portfolio and reapply for a mini-grant. After participation in various activities to improve specific elements within the family child care home or center, the participants would receive an on-site program review. Following the review and on-site evaluation, ratings will be assigned and posted on the Office of Child Care Web site.

A certain number of providers and centers have been determined for each of the nine pilot communities. The total participation target is 213 centers and 400 family child care homes. Outreach to identify participants will continue through October 2007. Applications must be submitted by December 1, 2007.

Training related to STEP begins with an institute on working with English Language Learners (September-December 2007) and the Environment Rating Scales (September 2007 through May 2008). Training related to Strengthening Families, use of early screening tools, Desired Results, and Program for Infant and Toddler Caregivers (PITC) will begin soon.

Helen can be reached at hchavez@ceo.lacounty.gov or at (213) 893-0505. All STEP materials can be accessed at www.childcare.lacounty.gov.

VI. Planning Committee Update for 2007-2008

Laura Escobedo described the various projects that the Planning Committee had initiated and which would be completed or ongoing in the coming year. Among them are the Child Care Needs Assessment that had just been approved by the Superintendent of Public Schools and the Board of Supervisors. The data from the needs assessment has been available on the web site since March 2007; but the analysis and report was just approved. It will be sent to CDE and put on the Web site.

The Child Development Economic Impact Report and the Career Pathways Study that the Planning Committee approved last year for funding will be completed by the end of this year (December) and a public roll-out of the information will be scheduled for January 2008. The Planning Committee will have a presentation on this in the Fall of 2007.

The 10-year Strategic Plan has been reviewed and revised. Recommendations for changes will be presented to the Planning Committee for approval soon.

The next component of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) is Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI). The Planning Committee convened a group of stakeholders from both early childhood and mental health to begin to develop a vision for how early mental health services could best work with child development environments and services. This vision will be introduced through the PEI planning process in the hopes that it becomes a part of Los Angeles County's approved plan for funding and implementation. The Planning Committee will have a presentation on this as well.

A collaborative in the Bay Area is advocating First 5 California to continue to fund the CARES (Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards) project statewide and to expand on its role in workforce issues. Specifically, they want the Commission to establish a five-year Blue Ribbon Committee on Early Childhood Education Professional Development, which would look at competencies, and alignment with two-year and four-year curriculum, and development of appropriate BA and MA level programs, among other items. The group is asking that other organizations support their request so that the new strategic plan for First 5 California will have a child development workforce component. This may be taken up at the next meeting.

VII. Announcements or Comments

There were no announcements.

VIII. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.