



## Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

Minutes: March 4, 2009

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

Location: Lakeshore learning,  
2695 East Dominguez Street  
Carson, CA 90895

**Members in Attendance:** (27) Rocio Bach, Ancelma Sanchez, Peggy Sisson, Diane Philibosian, Bobbie Edwards, Gay Macdonald, Rebecca Patton for Atalaya Sergi, Pamela Kwok, Joy Cyprian, Kathleen Pompey, Holly Reynolds, Diana Hechinger for Nellie Rios Parra, Lorraine Gutierrez for Corrine Sanchez, Lucy Fitzpatrick, Sylvia Parra, Rosa Arevalo, Darlene Cabrera, Holly Daasnes, Jan isenberg, Michael Ladjevic, Pat Mendoza, Patti Oblath, Nurhan Pirim, Sarah Soriano, Jenny Trickey, Roselma Samala for Randi Wolfe, and Patrice Wong

**Guests and Alternates:** Elaine Waldman, Hector Dela Cruz, Lou Orr, Fiona Stewart, Lisa Wilkin, Celeste Salinas, Mayra Manriquez, Jazmin Chavarria, Katie Fallin, Krishanda Hampton, Guadalupe Chavez, Diana Carega, Ana Gallegos, and Heidi Cifuentes

**Staff:** Laura Escobedo

### I. Welcome and Introductions

Bobbie Edwards, Vice Chair, opened the meeting at 12:17 p.m. She welcomed the group, thanked Lakeshore for hosting the meeting and then read the opening statement. She noted that there was no quorum and so the approval of the minutes would be brought up later to allow for more members to arrive.

### II. Office of Child Care Update

Laura Escobedo noted a one-page report on the efforts of the Education Coordinating Council and the Office of Child Care to facilitate better connections with child care and development services for vulnerable populations of children. This is in line with the Child Care Policy Framework approved by the Board of Supervisors. Laura Escobedo also provided an update on the federal stimulus package (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act), which would mean an additional \$220,000,000 in child care and development funding for California. This could translate to about \$45-60 million for Los Angeles County services which would mean as many as 9000 more children served and 1,000 jobs. California Department of Education (CDE) is planning for the allocation of these funds. Currently under discussion are: back filling the \$55 million cut in the 2009-10 budget to child development contractors; increasing the Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR); and increasing services through current contractors. Although federal funds can be allocated over two years and be spent within three years, CDE is concerned that these are considered one-time funds and therefore permanent changes to services would mean an ongoing cost to the state.

### III. Approval of Minutes from the January 7, and February 5, 2009 meetings

**Bobbie Edwards called for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 7, 2009 meeting. Peggy Sisson moved to approve; Pat Mendoza seconded. Corrections were noted and the motion was amended to approve the minutes with the corrections. The vote was called; motion was approved, no abstentions. Sarah Soriano moved to approve the minutes from February 2009; second by Anselma Sanchez. The vote was taken. Motion was approved with one abstention.**

At this point, the Chair, Holly Reynolds, took over chairing the meeting.

### IV. Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) Evaluation Results

Katie Fallin with the Research and Evaluation unit at First 5 LA explained that when the commission approved funding for LAUP, it also earmarked funds to conduct evaluation studies. First 5 LA contracted with Mathematica Policy Research to conduct the Universal Preschool Child Outcomes

Study (UPCOS). They began by reviewing existing measurement and evaluation tools to determine which, if any were suitable to use with Los Angeles ethnic and language populations. Their determination of the flaws with some tools is a valuable result of the study in and of itself. Essentially the study was to determine if development between Fall and Spring enrollment could be measured for LAUP children, what was most impacting their development, and what would the implications be for program improvement and future research.

A representative sample of 1,555 children from 97 center-based LAUP-funded sites was selected in 2007. Data included: child assessments; parent interviews and ratings; teacher interviews and ratings; classroom observations using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and CLASS. Demographic data indicated that nearly 75% of the children were poor or very poor and that 75% of program participants were Latino. Forty percent spoke Spanish only or primarily; 55 spoke another language (not English) only or primarily. The study also looked at how many hours per week children participated in LAUP and further reviewed this information by the primary language spoken. By far, the majority of children with less than 15 hours per week were from homes where Spanish was the primary or only language spoken.

Children's school readiness outcomes were:

- 1) Language and literacy skills, on average, were above national norms; although expressive language skills were lower and pre-writing skills were lower for Spanish speaking children
- 2) Positive social skills were above national norms and negative behaviors were below norms
- 3) Early math skills improved between Fall and Spring (no norms for these scores)
- 4) Children did well with executive function skills (self-regulation, attention, impulse control)
- 5) Twenty percent of children had body mass indexes (BMI) in the obese range

Other findings:

- 1) Children in families with more than three risk factors had lower Spring scores
- 2) Spanish speaking children had lower scores than English speaking children even when controlling for measurement tools used
- 3) The performance of low scoring children (Spring) were lower than the Fall scores of high performing children
- 4) Scores of some of the lowest scoring children indicated there may be unidentified special needs

Classroom quality and program characteristics:

- 61% of teachers had Bachelor of Arts (BA) degrees and an average of 12 years of experience
- 67% of classrooms used a specific curriculum; 33% did not
- 32% of children were in programs where there were no developmental screenings done
- Average class sizes were 18 children with an average staff to child ratio of 1:6 (but the range was wide).
- Overall quality met or exceeded levels from other studies
- Scores for "instructional support" (CLASS) were low as they have been in other studies
- Teacher education levels and ECERS scores were associated with CLASS scores (higher=higher); however Star ratings were not associated with CLASS scores.

Questions and Implications for further study:

- Spanish-speaking children had lower scores generally and attended fewer hours. How can this be understood and addressed?
- More support for teachers working with dual language learners is needed
- Greater attention may be needed for use of developmental screenings
- Teachers need more support in developing practices related to effective instructional support (language modeling, concept development, etc.)

- Are the STAR ratings weighted effectively since the CLASS scores and Star ratings did not match up?
- Is more standardization in use of curriculum needed?

First 5 LA will continue to evaluate various aspects of LAUP that will hopefully shed more light on the issues raised. A future emphasis will be on dual language learners.

#### V. Presentation: What If There Was Enough Funding....?

Laura Escobedo explained that the Access Work Group was reviewing various ways to increase public investment in early care and education. One of the questions that arise is how much would it cost to serve all the eligible children? Instead of using the entire universe of children from low income families, we began with the children identified through registration on the Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List (LACEL) whose parents were working, attending school or training, seeking work or incapacitated. The numbers were pulled at the end of December 2008. Other calculations involved looking at the cost of care by type of care chosen (family child care home, center, CDE-contracted center, etc.) by age of child. The SRR and the Regional Market Rates (RMRs) were used to calculate both full time and part time costs for school-age children. Also calculated was the additional cost of Alternative Payment administration as applied to the children using license-exempt care, family child care, and non-CDE contracted center-based care. Lastly, the Work Group calculated what parent fees might be given current rates, using the range of incomes displayed on LACEL for the families pulled in December 2008.

In addition, the Work Group calculated what the costs might be at higher rates of reimbursement derived from the development of the quality budgets related to the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP) levels using Level 5 rates specifically. Totals display estimated costs at current rates of reimbursement minus estimated parent fees and at quality levels of reimbursement. The results were:

	<b>Current Funding Rates</b>	<b>Quality Level Rates</b>
Total for all ages, all types of care, and full and part time schedules	\$350,453,339	\$380,021,345
Parent fees	\$17,485,425	\$17,485,425
Net cost	\$332,967,914	\$362,535,920

The new stimulus funding through Washington D.C. will only address about one-seventh of the current need in Los Angeles County. If we work to increase funding, we should not be afraid to insist on higher levels of funding to meet quality standards since it is only a small percentage increase overall.

#### VI. Overview of the Importance of Food Safety and Certification of Food Handlers

Hector De La Cruz of the Los Angeles County Environmental Health Consultative Services unit spoke to the meeting about food safety certification. Food borne illness (FBI) often is under-reported, but affects millions and causes hospitalization for 325,000 annually and death for 5,200 people. Children are a high risk group for FBI although there are not yet any mandates to have people working in child care centers certified as food handlers. Los Angeles County wants to eliminate the casual attitude people have about personal hygiene and build an understanding about the importance of food safety through information and training.

There is a certification process offered through the retail food service industry. It involves about eight hours of training and then a test that, when passed, qualifies a person to be certified. The test addresses basic tenets of food safety, particularly around handling foods that must be kept hot or cold in order to prevent bacteria. A list of training providers is available through Environmental Health.

The following are the recommendations for safely handling food at child care and development facilities:

- Maintain at least one certified food handler at each facility
- Assure adequate food safety knowledge among staff
- Develop standard operating procedures for food preparation, receiving, and storage
- Adhere to California Code requirements

Several attendees asked that more materials be available to guide centers in developing standard operating procedures. The Office of Child Care will work with Environmental Health to identify or develop something appropriate.

#### VII. Announcement of Membership Recruitment for 2009-10

Ancelma Sanchez, Co-Chair of the Membership and Policies Work Group, reminded current members that they must re-apply each year to continue as members. The deadline for applications is May 4, 2009. Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair are also being collected during this period of time. Participants were encouraged to share the applications with others so that there would be a broad and diverse group of applicants from which to fill membership categories.

#### VIII. Announcements and Public Comment Adjournment

Elaine Waldman from Public Health distributed a lead prevention calendar for 2009.

LAUP is again coordinating the preschool teacher of the year awards. Nominations are due by March 20, 2009. Nomination forms are available at the meeting or online.

Community Care Licensing has just issued its information update on the web at [www.myccl.dss.ca.gov](http://www.myccl.dss.ca.gov). It contains an article on infection control provided by the Los Angeles County Public Health Dept.

The annual Southern California Association for the Education of Young Children (SCAEYC) Conference is scheduled for May 16, 2009. An announcement will be sent to members.

#### IX. Adjournment

**The Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.**