



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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MINUTES

November 8, 2006

9:45 – 11:45 a.m.

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration

Conference Room 743

500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Matt Rezvani, Chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. by welcoming members and guests. Members and guests were invited to introduce themselves.

a. Comments from the Chair

- **STEP Materials for Centers and Family Child Care Homes**

Mr. Rezvani noted that Office of Child Care staff (e.g. Aracely Acuña) had been busy duplicating full copies of the Steps to Excellence Program (STEP) implementation plan for all members. The full plan was submitted to the Board of Supervisors on October 13, 2006. Mr. Nick Ippolito, Deputy to Supervisor Knabe, has scheduled a follow-up meeting with the Board Deputies for November 20, 2006. We are confident that Supervisor Knabe will introduce a motion to the Board of Supervisors soon after that meeting, calling for the implementation of STEP and the allocation of County funds.

- **Attendance**

A number of Roundtable members are traveling; Ms. Lari Sheehan and Mr. Duane Dennis are traveling internationally, while Ms. Jan Isenberg and Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu, staff to the Roundtable, are in nearby Irvine. Ms. Isenberg and Ms. Malaske-Samu are attending a Regional Technical Assistance Workshop on the Development of County Preschool Plans. The Roundtable can look forward to their report at the December meeting.

- **Report on the Investing in Early Educators Program**

During the past Fiscal Year, the Office of Child Care operated two stipend cycles of the Investing in Early Educators Program. The staff processed nearly 5,000 applications and awarded over 3,200 stipends, totaling \$6.9 million. Fact sheets on Cycles 6 and 7 were included in the members' packet of meeting materials. Mr. Rezvani noted that just over 200 family child care providers and 50 staff from non-California Department of Education (CDE)-contracted centers were able to participate in Cycle 7 for the first time as a result of County-sponsored AB 1285. This legislation expanded the pool of eligible participants to include Family Child Care Home Education Network members, family child care homes and child care centers serving a majority of subsidized children. And finally, staff is very pleased to

report that the audit of all State programs has been completed for the 2005-06 Fiscal Year and there were no findings!

b. Review of Minutes

- October 11, 2006

Approval of the minutes was postponed to the December meeting due to a lack of quorum.

2. LOS ANGELES COUNTY HOMELESS INITIATIVE

Mr. Rezvani introduced Ms. Kathy House, Assistant Division Chief with the Service Integration Branch of the Chief Administrative Office. Ms. House has been working intensely with Ms. Sheehan on the Los Angeles County Homeless Prevention Initiative. The Roundtable is particularly interest in how homeless families will be able to access services.

Ms. House reported that on April 4, 2006, the Board of Supervisors approved over \$100 million in County general funds to fight and prevent homelessness. Ms. House stated the intent of the initiative to fill the gaps in order to support communities in ways historically not possible without the restrictions imposed by federal funds. She iterated two funding sources: \$20 million in ongoing County general funds depending on fluctuations of County budgets from year to year; \$80 million is on a one-time only to establish a Countywide Homeless and Housing Program (works like a housing trust fund).

Efforts to develop the proposed initiative encompassed working with the large County family, including the Departments' of Public Social Services (DPSS), Children and Families Services (DCFS), Health Services (DHS), Public Health (DPH), the Sheriff's Department, the Probation Department, and the Community Development Commission. A stakeholder process was implemented across the County; leaders of faith-based communities, community-based organizations, and cities were convened. "NIMBY" ("not in my backyard") was among the big issues that required attention. The Board of Supervisors has charged that the effort to gain cities' and others cooperation and buy-in be collaborative.

Ms. House referred members to the handout, *Los Angeles County Homeless Prevention Initiative – County General Fund Project*. In addition to the \$80 million, one-time only allocation to the Homeless and Housing Program designed to essentially prevent homelessness, Ms. House reviewed the breakdown of the ongoing funds to be allocated across 10 initiatives as follows (see handout for budget detail):

- 1) Creation of five county 24-hour multi-disciplinary/interdepartmental Stabilization Centers – one per supervisory districts in communities willing to embrace the goals of the initiative; intended to help communities gain the infrastructure and support needed to treat homeless persons.
- 2) Establish a Homeless Family Access Center for Skid Row Families – help homeless families transition to permanent housing.
- 3) Create a Homeless Court Program – based on a model currently presided over by Judge Tynan to help homeless individuals clear misdemeanor records that may otherwise impede their efforts to transition to stability.
- 4) Provide Financial Support for Prototype Court – to help home offenders with serious mental disorders and drug convictions resolve their felony convictions.
- 5) Housing Locations – help transition homeless individuals and families to permanent housing and maintain it.

- 6) Housing Database – development and maintenance of a listing of housing vacancies throughout County.
- 7) DPSS General Relief Subsidy and Case Management Program.
- 8) DPSS Applications at County Jails Pilot.
- 9) DPSS Applications at County Medical Center Pilots.
- 10) Hire a Homeless and Service Enriched Housing Initiatives Coordinator.

Ms. House summarized her comments with a mention to the Board of Supervisor's commitment to resolving homelessness and helping families.

Additional comments:

- Cities will be able to access the funds through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, including those with existing homeless initiatives such as Pasadena, Santa Monica, and Long Beach. Ms. House summarized the guiding funding principles that encompass filling gaps in services, creating new approaches, not supplanting existing funds, planning for the future, and demonstrating community support.
- Child care is critical to families' participation in transition activities, such as seeking employment, housing, and other services. Child care is an element for stabilization centers as child care on site will be essential for parents to be free to focus on their service needs.
- Key folks representing County departments, cities and community-based organizations have made substantial contributions to the initiative and are continuing to provide that support in the early phases of implementation. Recruitment for the Coordinator is underway, and yes, it is a big job. Ms. House is committed to forwarding the quarterly status reports to the Roundtable through Ms. Malaske-Samu.
- Many components of the initiative are targeted to families; ensuring that no children are homeless is a stated priority of Supervisor Molina.

The entire Board letter dated April 4, 2006, on the Los Angeles County Homeless Prevention Initiative is available from the Office of Child Care. To request a copy, contact Michele Sartell at msartell@cao.lacounty.gov.

Mr. Rezvani thanked Ms. House for her presentation and offered the Roundtable's assistance on child care issues as the initiative moves forward.

3. UPDATE FROM THE EDUCATION COORDINATING COUNCIL

Mr. Rezvani introduced Terry Ogawa, the former Executive Director of the City of Los Angeles Commission for Children, Youth and their Families (the Commission). Ms. Ogawa left the Commission this past summer so she could enjoy the flexibility afforded to consultants. She is currently working with the Education Coordinating Council (ECC) on the implementation of the ECC's education blueprint for children involved in the child welfare and probation services. Mr. Rezvani reminded members that Ms. Terri Nishimura, with support from Office of Child Care staff Ms. Michele Sartell, developed the early childhood component of the blueprint.

Ms. Ogawa reported that she began working with the ECC in September 2006, and initiated her work by meeting with groups working in early childhood, including the field of child care and development and child welfare. She is particularly interested in the coordination between the child care field and county departments. At the ECC meeting in October, discussion focused on how information is currently shared across departments and areas for improvement, looking specifically at the exchange of information between the Probation Department and DCFS and the schools. Ms. Ogawa commented that there is very little communication among these groups and the child care field.

As the person responsible for the early childhood area of the ECC's blueprint, Ms. Ogawa will focus on the following strategies:

- Ensuring that children under the auspices of DCFS and children in Probation are enrolled in child care and development programs.
- Increasing the involvement of community-based organizations and County departments available to DCFS and Probation families to help them become good nurturers, provide positive learning environments, and prepare their children for school.

Ms. Ogawa mentioned that administrative, regulatory and cultural barriers and challenges that exist among and between the various County departments, organizations and systems will need to be addressed and overcome. She added that data collection is key to learn where the children and families are living in conjunction with the location of child care and development programs and other support services. She is also interested in learning about the current use of child care and development programs by the targeted families, including whether families are accessing Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) sites. Lastly, Ms. Ogawa has received interest in her efforts from some specific DCFS programs and Divisions. Angela Carter, of the Heads Up Prevention Program, at DCFS is interested in her program's fit with child care. Steve Sterns, at Government Relations has expressed a desire to strengthen the relationship between DCFS and LAUP, beginning with how many of DCFS families are currently enrolled.

Mr. Rezvani thanked Ms. Ogawa for her remarks, adding the Roundtable's willingness to work with her.

4. UPDATE ON THE LOS ANGELES CENTRALIZED ELIGIBILITY LIST (LACEL)

Mr. Rezvani introduced Ms. Laura Escobedo with the Office of Child Care. In addition to her work with the Child Care Planning Committee, Ms. Escobedo manages the LACEL. The LACEL tracks families and their children who are income eligible for subsidized child care and have applied for these services. In addition to ensuring that families are made aware of the range of subsidized care in their communities, the LACEL provides unduplicated counts of children in need of child care subsidies.

In her overview of LACEL, Ms. Escobedo provided a brief history of the LACEL's evolution, beginning with funding from the CDE in 2001 to serve as a pilot County. The LACEL was developed with the help of CDE-contractors, and using a Web-based design. In April 2003, the LACEL was up and the databases from the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies listing eligible families waiting for child care subsidies were transferred onto the LACEL. Initially, participation in the LACEL was voluntary, however as of July 2006, all CDE-contractors are required to use the LACEL rather than maintain their own waiting list.

To bring all of the CDE-contracted programs on board, the Office of Child Care is providing orientations and trainings on how to input data and navigate the LACEL. Outreach to families is an essential component of LACEL, therefore a brochure, fact sheet, and application have been developed in eight languages, including English, and are posted on the Web site at www.lacountychildcare.org. In addition, a list of over 350 community-based organizations and others has been compiled and strategies for reaching these groups will be established and implemented once the Program Coordinator for outreach has been hired.

Ms. Escobedo provided an overview of the current data available from the LACEL, including the number of children by age group on the list and families' priority ranking on the list. Family records are updated every six months, therefore trends in updates showing changes in the numbers of families enrolled and terminated can be reviewed.

Ms. Escobedo's full presentation is available in the PowerPoint presentation included in members meeting packets.

Other comments:

- LACEL is funded at \$500,000 per year.
- Can we overlay the children on the list with those using informal arrangements?
- Some child care and development programs are maintaining their own waiting lists, however they will be required to use the LACEL exclusively (rather than their own lists) in the near future. Colleges with child development programs are exempt however, as they maintain waiting lists to help their student population access their programs. One of the challenges that the LACEL has not yet resolved is how to improve access among school-based sites for school age populations at that attending school.
- The data from the LACEL will strengthen advocacy efforts for larger public investments that support working families that meet the income eligibility requirements.

Mr. Rezvani thanked Ms. Escobedo for her presentation and asked her to keep the Roundtable informed about the families in need of subsidized child care in Los Angeles County.

5. COLLEAGE AGENCY REPORTS

a. Child Care Planning Committee

Ms. Peggy Sisson, Chair of the Committee, reported that the Planning Committee received a presentation on First 5 LA's early childhood workforce initiative by Tessa Kaganoff at their October meeting.

Also in October, the Planning Committee submitted a memo to the Board of Supervisors requesting an extension on the plan for the State preschool study, which was granted. Ms. Escobedo is currently surveying State preschool providers on why they are unable to spend their entire State preschool dollars. She is also pursuing information from the CDE on the amount of State preschool funds from Los Angeles County that are returned and/or unspent over the past three years. The results from the study will provide the platform for future advocacy efforts.

The next meeting of the Planning Committee is Saturday, December 12, 2006, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Los Angeles County Office of Education located at 12830 Clark, Room 606A, Downey, CA 90242.

b. Children's Planning Council

Mr. Dennis is traveling therefore, no report is available.

c. First 5 LA

Mr. Rezvani reported that the Zero to Three Initiative will be presented to the Board in November or December. Mr. Rezvani will miss the November meeting.

d. LAUP

Ms. Carolina Alvarez announced the resignation of Ms. Graciela Italiano-Thomas from LAUP and introduced Gary Mangiofico as the new Chief Executive Officer. Ms. Italiano-Thomas has accepted a position as President and Chief Executive Officer, of Thrive by Five in Washington State.

LAUP has a new regional Parent Advisory Coalition (PAC) in Service Planning Area (SPA) 3, designed to promote leadership among parents of LAUP preschoolers. LAUP is working with all of the SPA Councils to replicate the PAC.

Mr. Mangiofico reported that 6,500 children are currently enrolled in LAUP programs, of which nearly 4,000 are in new spaces. Another 4,500 spaces are in facilities under construction or renovation. LAUP expects nearly 11,000 children enrolled once the new spaces are completed and fully enrolled. Mr. Magniofico indicated that there are communities in which there is no space available for development. LAUP is currently partnering with the Lynwood Unified School District to establish 20 new LAUP centers. Over 1,000 children in Lynwood now have 12 which are school-based and others are center-based. Ms. Escobedo asked that zip codes being addressed by LAUP for additional spaces be provided to the Planning Committee as augments to the data collected for developing priorities that go to the CDE.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

None made.

7. CLOSING COMMENTS & CALL TO ADJOURN

Mr. Rezvani called to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Commissioners Present:

Ms. Carolina Alvarez
Ms. Maria Calix
Ms. Ann E. Franzen
Ms. Sherri Lewis
Ms. Joan McGowan
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura
Mr. Matt Rezvani
Ms. Arlene Rhine
Ms. Connie Russell
Ms. Peggy Sisson
Mr. Robert Wiltse

Guests:

Ms. Jan Brown, UCLA Center for Improving
Child Care Quality (CICCQ)
Ms. Victoria Evers, LAC Intergovernmental
Relations
Ms. Kathy House, Service Integration
Branch, CAO
Mr. Gary Mangiofico, LAUP
Ms. Ofelia Medina, Alliance for a Better
Community
Ms. Terry Ogawa, Education Coordinating
Council

Staff:

Ms. Laura Escobedo
Ms. Michele Sartell