



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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MINUTES

January 10, 2007

9:45 – 11:45 a.m.

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Conference Room 743
500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu, staff to the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), opened the meeting at 9:55 a.m. by welcoming members and guests. She relayed Mr. Matt Rezvani and Mr. Robert Wiltse's last minute regrets for missing today's meeting. Members and guests were invited to introduce themselves.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Ms. Esther Torrez, former Chair of the Roundtable, graciously agreed to chair the meeting.

a. Comments from the Chair

Ms. Malaske-Samu referred members to their material packets and the two letters from the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors. The first letter has to do with the upcoming Homeless Count and the request for volunteers. Information on this effort was also distributed last month, however volunteers are still needed.

The second letter is the Roundtable's official notification of the Board's action regarding implementation of the Steps to Excellence Program: Los Angeles County Child Care Quality Rating System (STEP). This item will be discussed later in the agenda.

A number of resource materials were included in members' packets, including a report prepared by the Legislative Analyst's Office titled "*Developing Safety and Quality Ratings for Child Care*". The timing of this report is helpful to the Roundtable's work to promote STEP. Ms. Malaske-Samu also thanked Mr. Wiltse for calling attention to the San Francisco Gate article on quality rating systems. Ms. Malaske-Samu stated the importance of tracking such articles and building media files on the topic.

Children Now has released their annual *California Report Card 2006-07 – The State of the State's Children*. The Report Card may be downloaded from the Children Now Web site at www.childrennow.org. In the area of Early Care and Education, Children Now gave California a grade of C-. The Report Card notes that 82 percent of the families seeking subsidized child care are requesting full-day services for children from birth through five years of age based on data from centralized eligibility lists throughout the State.

California earned a B+ on after-school care. The Report Card notes that beginning this year, California has committed half a billion dollars to after-school programs, nearly doubling the number of publicly-supported programs expected to be available for this age group. This increase in funding is the result of the passage of Proposition 49 back in 2002, championed by then Mr. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Children Now also released “The Promise of Preschool”. Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) is featured as one of the model programs and the participation of family child care is highlighted. Other Web sites with information of note: Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division’s December Update highlights implementation of new legislation related to child care and development services (www.cclcd.ca.gov/CommunityC_1726.htm); and the 2007 California Working Families Policy Summit will be held on Thursday, January 18, 2007, at the Sacramento Convention Center from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (www.ccrwf.org/working/).

Also included in members’ packets are two fact sheets, one on the mental health needs of young children and the other on low-income children produced by the National Center for Children in Poverty. Lastly, a number of conferences and seminars are scheduled in the coming weeks and flyers on those events are included in members’ packets. Ms. Malaske-Samu invited members to report on any of the conferences they might attend.

b. Approval of Minutes

- December 13, 2006

Ms. Jan Isenberg offered a motion and Ms. Terri Nishimura seconded the motion to accept the minutes as written. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Note: Corrections to the minutes relating to Ms. Lari Sheehan’s announcement on Homeless Count (see page 6) were brought to staff’s attention following the meeting. The corrections have been made and a copy of the corrected minutes will be included in the February meeting packets.

2. STEP IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE REPORTS

As mentioned earlier, a copy of the motion and minute order calling for the implementation of STEP was included in the meeting materials. Ms. Malaske-Samu directed members to page 3, noting that the Roundtable is required to provide monthly status reports to the Board between February and June 2007. Thereafter, reports will be quarterly through June 30, 2010. The real work on STEP will be accomplished in committees, so committee reports will form the bulk of the agendas through July 2007.

a. Funding and Partnerships

This Committee will meet on January 17, 2007, from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Service Integration Branch, 5th Floor Conference Room, located at 222 South Hill Street, Los Angeles. This Committee is charged with developing the financial and collaborative resources necessary to launch the STEP pilot in July 2007.

Members were directed to the motion adopted by the Board, which calls for a five-signature letter from the Board to be sent to the First 5 LA Commission encouraging the Commission to support the implementation of STEP. The letter has been developed, and signatures are being gathered. Prior to the Board's adoption of the December 12, 2006, motion, Mr. Nick Ippolito, Deputy to Supervisory Knabe, suggested a meeting with Ms. Nancy Au, 4th District representative to the Commission. It has taken some time to coordinate, but the meeting has been scheduled for the morning of Thursday, January 11, 2007.

Ms. Ruth Yoon, who was not able to attend today's meeting, has communicated Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) interest in partnering with the Roundtable on STEP. LAUSD operates over 100 child care and development programs.

b. Promotion and Public Awareness

This Committee's meeting will be held on January 23, 2007, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Hall of Administration, Room 758. In anticipation of the meeting, Ms. Malaske-Samu will be meeting with the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) Graphic Arts staff next week to discuss the development of a project logo and "branding" of the STEP materials. Samples will not be available by the January meeting, however the Committee will review the options, and then present its recommendations to the full Roundtable in the very near future.

In the implementation plan, we discussed hosting a January kick-off event. Given the December 12, 2006, date of the plan's adoption, the kick-off event is now targeted for the Week of the Young Child, April 22 – 28, 2007, aiming for either Wednesday or Thursday of that week. As discussed previously, Mr. Roger Neugebauer, editor of the Child Care Information Exchange and sponsor of the World Forum, is able to participate in this event. Mr. Neugebauer's presence would be particularly helpful as his work has consistently bridged the divide between public and proprietary child care services.

The Roundtable has been approached by staff to Assembly Member Ted Lieu, 53rd Assembly District, Gail Gronet, staff to the Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez, and an NBC reporter who just happens to be expecting his first child in the next two months. The Roundtable's work has been cited in the e-mail blast, Early Education in the News, and Ms. Laura Escobedo has been invited to present on STEP to the California Child Care Coordinators Association.

Ms. Nancy Carter asked to be added to this committee.

c. Training and Technical Assistance

A date for the meeting has not yet been set to allow Mr. Duane Dennis and Ms. Nishimura to identify staff to participate on this Committee. A potentially achievable first task for this Committee is to jointly sponsor training on the screening tools with colleagues such as Pediatric Therapy Network (PTN) and the Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP). Ms. Vibha Pathak, Resident of USC Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program and intern with the Office of Child Care, will also work with this Committee.

d. Policies and Procedures

No meeting has been set to date. One of the decisions will be how to respond to programs interested in participating, but located outside of the pilot communities. County Counsel is willing to serve in an advisory capacity to this Committee.

3. COMMITTEE ON LICENSE EXEMPT CARE

Mr. Dennis reported on the conference call from December 14, 2006, to debrief on the presentation by Center for Community and Family Services (CCFS) on their mandated training program for providers, including license exempt. The CCFS model was approved by the California Department of Education (CDE) about five years ago; however CDE's position has since changed regarding mandated training. The discussion on the conference call raised the potential for legal challenges if such a model were implemented as it is outside the mandates of the federal law. Ms. Malaske-Samu followed up with a conversation with County Counsel whose response spoke to the issue of parental choice, which would be hindered if the parent's provider of choice did not participate in the mandated training. One member noted the inherent conflict in that the child care system was set up from the perspective of working parents, not the best interests of the children.

Mr. Dennis stated the larger issue that license exempt care is a state issue, not a federal issue. He pointed out that some states have eliminated license exempt care (Wisconsin), whereas other states pay license exempt providers significantly lower rates than licensed providers (North Carolina). Mr. Dennis suggested that the route to change may be through legislation. However, he noted that the advocacy community comprised of welfare rights groups and legal services would likely oppose a change, whereas the education community may support such an initiative. Ms. Victoria Evers, Intergovernmental Relations of the Chief Administrative Office, mentioned that a Board policy would need to be developed depending on the direction the Roundtable before any Los Angeles County positions are issued.

Mr. Dennis reminded members that the overall objective is to improve childhood outcomes in license exempt care. The next meeting scheduled for January 31, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. at the Hall of Administration, Room 743 will focus on elements that might serve as a pilot for Los Angeles County.

4. JOINT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION

Ms. Malaske-Samu announced that the Governor is scheduled to release his budget today. Among proposals anticipated in his budget is the elimination of cash assistance to children if their parents are not meeting the new work requirements or where parents are not legal residents or are drug felons. Ms. Evers added that the Governor is proposing imposing sanctions on families that do not participate in work activities within 90 days. Ms. Evers also added that the Governor proposes to eliminate the CalWORKs cost of living adjustment (COLA) that is to take effect July 1, 2007. Ms. Evers reminded members that there has been no COLA in the last two years since it was frozen when the Governor initially wanted to eliminate it. In addition, the Governor is proposing moving from quarterly to semi-annual reporting by parents regarding changes in their households.

The Joint Committee on Legislation will meet on January 22, 2007, at 12:00 p.m. at the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) located at 12440 East Imperial Highway,

Room 539, Norwalk. The Committee will review the Governor's 2007-08 Proposed Budget on Child Development Services and child care and development bills newly introduced for the 2007 legislative session. Organizations have been invited to share their policy platforms and issues for which they will be seeking support this year.

5. ECONOMIC IMPACT PROJECT

Ms. Peggy Sisson, Chair of the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), reported the following:

The Economic Impact Report and Workforce Analysis Project has been launched with the first Technical Advisory Committee meeting on December 18, 2006. As its name implies, there are two components: the economic impact of child care and development as an industry; and the potential for developing career pathways in child care and development.

The Project Advisory Board is being formed. Invitations are going out to prospective members from Los Angeles City Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, current Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Matt Rezvani has been invited to serve on this Board. Responses are still being compiled and the first meeting of the Advisory Board is scheduled for January 30, 2007. Mr. Jack Kyser of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation has accepted an appointment to this Board.

Included in the meeting materials is the Child Care Planning Committee's Plan for Monitoring the Allocation of State Preschool Funds in Los Angeles County addressed to the Board. The Report was requested by the Board in August 2006 and distributed this morning. In addition to monitoring State Preschool funds, the Planning Committee will monitor the new Pre-kindergarten and Family Literacy Program (PKFLP) funding allocations. The Planning Committee is scheduled to report its findings on the allocation for preschool funds, the unearned funding that reverts to the State, and the amount of contract reductions in 2007-2008 to the Board in 2008.

Based on the surveys that were sent to State Preschool programs, one of the major issues facing their programs is the demand for full-day care. Ms. Escobedo mentioned that, in general, state-contracted programs try to spend within 95-98% of their contract to avoid overspending. Ms. Arlene Rhine added that if programs spend up to 97% of contract, they keep their full contract amount, then after three years their contract is reduced if they continue to not meet a certain level of spending. Ms. Sisson said that State contracts do not pay full cost, referring to the Pasadena Unified School District, which subsidizes the cost of care of their state-contracted programs.

The Planning Committee is additionally recommending a review of the earnings for full-day general child care funds in Los Angeles County.

6. COLLEAGE AGENCY REPORTS

a. Children's Planning Council

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 17, 2007, at 9:30 a.m.

b. First 5 LA

The Joint Planning Committee is scheduled to meet on January 18, 2007, from 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. in First 5 LA's Multi Purpose Room. The agenda includes an update and discussion on First 5 LA's Prenatal through Three Focus Area Investment.

c. Los Angeles Universal Preschool

Ms. Carolina Alvarez offered the following updates:

LAUP is undergoing a comprehensive audit by First 5 LA that is expected to last through February.

On January 23, 2007, LAUP is hosting an inclusive workshop led by Whit Hayslip for its providers. Three of LAUP's Inclusion Demonstration Sites – LAUSD's Westminster, Alma Preshool, and a third to be identified will participate and open their doors as models. Staff of the model sites will provide mentoring with support of LAUP to other inclusive sites. At this time, the mentors do not receive additional funds or incentives for their service, only funds for their enrolled children. LAUP is now exploring their needs and what it takes to be a demonstration site. Ms. Escobedo asked Ms. Alvarez if LAUP would share their cost data, which could contribute to the work of the Planning Committee in developing model budgets for quality programs.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

As mentioned at the December meeting, the PKFLP RFA is available; the Frequently Asked Questions are now posted (www.karenhillscott.com/downloads/publications/cde-faq.pdf). Ms. Malaske-Samu commented on the change in answer to a question she had posed regarding the lottery for full-day services. Originally it was thought to be a county by county draw, but now full-day option allocations will be based on a statewide random draw.

The Office of Child Care has a job opportunity for an outreach specialist (Program Specialist I) to work on the Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List. A second announcement will be released soon for a data person.

In February, we will be examining Roundtable appointments to various Committees.

The Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program received over 3,000 applications for Cycle 8. Of those applications, 124 were determined to be ineligible. Verification forms for documenting completed coursework will be sent to applications this month and are due back with supporting documents in early March. Some discussion ensued regarding an event to feature successful stipend recipients and maybe tying it to the launch of STEP during the Week of the Young Child.

Ms. Carter's office has moved to the Liemert Park area. Among their services are 12 week family to family education classes. Ms. Carter will send information to Ms. Malaske-Samu to forward to Roundtable members.

8. CLOSING COMMENTS & CALL TO ADJOURN

Ms. Torrez called to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Commissioners Present:

Ms. Carolina Alvarez
Ms. Nancy Carter
Mr. Duane Dennis
Ms. Jan Isenberg
Ms. Sheri Lewis
Ms. Joan McGowan
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura
Ms. Arlene Rhine
Ms. Connie Russell
Ms. Lari Sheehan
Ms. Peggy Sisson
Ms. Esther Torrez

Guests:

Ms. Victoria Evers, Intergovernmental Relations/CAO
Ms. Terry Ogawa, Education Coordinating Council

Staff:

Ms. Laura Escobedo
Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu
Ms. Michele Sartell