



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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MEETING MINUTES

April 9, 2008

10:00 a.m. – noon

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration

500 West Temple Avenue, Conference Room 743

Los Angeles, California 90012

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Duane Dennis, Chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), opened the meeting at 10:05 a.m. Members and guests were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves.

a. Comments from the Chair

Mr. Duane Dennis directed members to the draft Steps to Excellence Project (STEP) Progress Report for January through March 2008 which is to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors. He noted that STEP had experienced limited success in recruiting child care and development programs located in Florence/Firestone and Wilmington. Mr. Dennis mentioned a willingness by the First Supervisor District office to work with the Office of Child Care on recruiting providers from Florence/Firestone for participation. Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu pointed out those collaborative efforts with the Board offices are already underway and are noted in the report. Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey suggested that working with the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project leads could be beneficial, particularly in Wilmington. The report also lists support and training activities underway and the leveraging of community resources and partnerships. Members offered comments to strengthen the report. Mr. Dennis stated that the report with suggested corrections will be delivered to the Board of Supervisor offices by Friday, April 10, 2008.

Mr. Dennis inquired if the Office of Child Care would fully utilize funds from the one-time training contract. Ms. Malaske-Samu reported that the funds are supporting the current training and training supports. The contract documents, with a July 1, 2007 start date, were received from the California Department of Education (CDE) in October 2007. The Board of Supervisors accepted the contract in November just before the end of year holidays. As a result, the 12-month contract ended up being implemented in six months. A time-only extension had been requested from CDE and both CDE Finance and Contracts had agreed to grant the request. However, that decision was overturned by a Child Development Division administrator. Roundtable members offered suggestions to add pressure to CDE to allow a time-only extension, including a letter from the Chief Executive Office to Camille Maben, Director of CDE's Child Development Division (CDD) as well as eliciting the help of the legislative lobbyist. Ms. Malaske-Samu will review the status of the training dollars and whether the funds will be fully expended by June 30th.

b. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- March 12, 2008

Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Robert Wiltse seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

c. Recommendation to Not Provide Project Support Letters

Mr. Dennis reminded members of the discussion at last month's meeting to develop a policy regarding handling requests for letters of support from government and non-government entities. The item was carried over to the current meeting for a motion against providing support letters.

Ms. Connie Russell made a motion that the Roundtable not entertain positions on behalf of governmental and nongovernmental agencies seeking letters of support for funding; Dr. McCroskey seconded the motion. During discussion, Dr. McCroskey offered that neither the Children's Planning Council or First 5 LA provide letters of support due to potential conflicts of interest. First 5 LA as a grantor would find it difficult to send a letter of support on behalf of an organization to another grantor. The Children's Planning Council convenes people to develop consensus and shared understanding, not advocating on behalf of one organization over a perceived other. In summary, the practice would dilute the potential role as non-prejudiced and advocating for all children and families. The motion passed with one abstention.

2. STATE BUDGET UPDATE

Mr. Robert Wiltse directed members to their meeting packets for copies of two letters: Pursuit of County Position on a Budget Item dated April 1, 2008; and Child Care and Development Services – Oppose Budget Item No. 6110-196-0001 dated April 3, 2008. As noted in the letters, the Board of Supervisors has taken a position to restore State Budget reductions, including proposed funding reductions to child care and development services. Subsequently, a letter opposing the proposed cuts has been sent to the Chairs of the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees and, on Tuesday, April 8, 2008, Martha Flammer testified at the Assembly Subcommittee 2 on Education and Finance opposing the cuts to child care and development programs.

In addition to budget items, Mr. Wiltse announced that SB 867 (Cedillo), which would have authorized family child care providers to organize, was vetoed by the Governor on March 20, 2008. Next, Mr. Wiltse referred to two bills listed in the legislative matrix, SB 1629 (Steinberg) and AB 2759 (Jones), for closer inspection by the Roundtable. SB 1629 would establish the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Commission to develop a framework for improving program quality and identify resources. AB 2759 is framed as a state preschool reform measure that would, in part, authorize the transfer of funds between center child care and development and state preschool programs; revise enrollment priority for state preschool; delete the director qualification waiver provisions; and revise reimbursement rates for state preschool program providers and create requirements for assessing and collecting fees for families with children in full-day preschool. Mr. Dennis asked the Joint Committee on Legislation to return to the Roundtable with recommended positions on two bills, AB 2467 and AB 1629.

Mr. Wiltse also reported on other policy issues being addressed at the State level. Among the items, the revised Regional Market Rates (RMRs) that were due for release in July have been pushed back to probably an October release date. The proposed RMRs are being carefully scrutinized by the Department of Finance. In addition, there is discussion on the shortfall of Stage 2 Child Care funds for this fiscal year. Ms. Sheri Lewis reported that the State is currently collecting data on the anticipated shortfall from the counties. There is not enough money in the reserve to cover the shortfall. Mr. Dennis pointed out that in the past, Stage 1 and Stage 2 Child Care has been guaranteed. This year, the Alternative Payment Program (AP) agencies are receiving the message to stop enrolling families in Stage 2. Some agencies also may be faced with dis-enrolling families in Stage 2. Ms. Lewis added that the Department of Social Services (DPSS) received an inquiry from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the California Welfare Directors' Association (CWDA) to provide impact numbers and counties have been encouraged to revise their Stage 1 child care reserves to address the impact of keeping families in Stage 1 or for dis-enrolling families from Stage 2 putting them back into Stage 1.

Ms. Malaske-Samu asked if families in Los Angeles County are being dis-enrolled from child care. It was reported that an AP agency has sent out dis-enrollment letters and has dis-enrolled families from Stage 2. Those families were however, enrolled into Stage 1 and were able to maintain their child care. While Stage 2 has experienced a short fall, Stage 1 child care has been able to fill the gap. Ms. Lewis was asked to keep the Roundtable apprised of the CalWORKs child care programs.

Dr. McCroskey requested additional information on AB 2525 (Galgiani), which would require as part of the assessment and evaluation process for incoming inmates two questions regarding preschool attendance, 1) "Did you attend preschool?", and 2) "If yes, for how long?" Dr. McCroskey has concerns based on the face of the bill. The Joint Committee on Legislation will take a closer look at the bill and explore whether an analysis has been written that could shed some light on the intent and goal.

Ms. Evelyn Aleman of First 5 LA queried members whether they were aware of legislative threats against First 5 LA. First 5 LA staff have been meeting with legislators and closely monitoring legislation and the budget and, as a result, are becoming keenly aware of attempts to tap into or divert First 5 LA funds to broader issues or to deal with budget deficits. She referenced the SBx1 5 (Cox), which would have allocated the funds to health services and health care initiatives (this bill failed passage in committee) and SB 825 (Padilla), which would require First 5 CA to support a proposed Shaken Baby Syndrome Education Program. Ms. Victoria Evers, Intergovernmental Relations of the Chief Executive Office remembered hearing a proposal to allocate Prop 10 funds towards poison control activities due to reductions and efforts focused on targeting prevention efforts on behalf of children birth to five. The First 5 Commissions at both the state and county levels are working on addressing legislation independently as well as collaboratively.

3. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT/PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PLANNING

a. Update on Planning Sessions Attended

Mr. Dennis asked members to report on meetings that they might have attended. Mr. Wiltse relayed that he attended, as did Ms. Terry Ogawa of the Education Coordinating Council and Dr. McCroskey, the launch of the Prevention Initiative held on Tuesday, April 8, 2008. He noted that discussions are occurring at the SPA level on strategies for ensuring that the mental health needs of children are served under the MHSA/PEI. Dr. McCroskey reported that the Prevention Initiative is the result of five years of work and now is funded for one year, during which a plan of sustainability will be pursued. She suggested a full presentation on the Prevention Initiative, which is looking at how to build social networks in specific communities. There is strong interest for including early care and education in those community networks and already there is active participation in certain SPAs. Opportunities exist for relationship building between the early care and education field and the child welfare system. As examples, the key leads for SPA 4 are the Children's Bureau and the Children's Institute, for SPA 5 it is Westside Children's Center and SPA 6 include SHIELDS for Families and Crystal Stairs. In addition to the overall presentation on the Prevention Initiative, Ms. Malaske-Samu suggested follow-up panel discussions by the leads of each SPA.

Mr. Dennis asked if there are discussions in relationship to the proposed mental health cuts and protecting the MHSA/PEI funds. Dr. McCroskey answered that the discussions are around the allocation of funds rather than the protection of funds. Ms. Malaske-Samu will follow-up with inviting a panel and Mr. Wiltse and Dr. McCroskey will follow-up with Mr. Harvey Kawasaki's office at DCFS to arrange for a representative of the Prevention Initiative to attend the Roundtable meeting scheduled for May 14, 2008.

Ms. Malaske-Samu referred to the meeting packets for the summary of notes from the Children's Planning Council and First 5 LA meetings focused on developing strategies for meeting the mental health needs of children and youth that were held in Downey, Pacoima, and Eagle Rock. Ms. Ogawa added

that the Education Coordinating Council and the Office of Child Care are working on pulling together group of folks to discuss evidenced-based practices.

4. COUNTY POLICY ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Mr. Dennis recommended tabling discussion to the next meeting and allocating 40 - 45 minutes to give this item the time it deserves as it will lay the foundation for the summer retreat. Ms. Malaske-Samu reported that there is a 60-day report back to the Board of Supervisors as of March 11, 2008. She will prepare a request for extension to the Board to allow for more dialogue and the preparation of a full policy recommendation. An ad hoc committee to include Dr. McCroskey, Ms. Ogawa, Mr. Robert Ennis of First 5 LA, and Ms. Celia Ayala of LAUP, will fine tune a draft for the full membership to consider.

Ms. Ogawa mentioned that this item has been tentatively included on the agenda of the Education Coordinating Council (ECC) scheduled to meet on Thursday, April 24, 2008 at Magnolia Place. She would like to at least initiate the discussion with the ECC starting with the report that initiated the motion by Supervisor Knabe.

5. COLLEAGUE AGENCY REPORTS

a. Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee)

Ms. Holly Reynolds announced two upcoming events that will be hosted by the Planning Committee:

- Forum on Funding for Child Care and Development scheduled for Wednesday, April 23, 2008 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Department of Public Works located at 900 South Fremont in Alhambra. The focus of the forum will be to address the amount of unearned funds returned to the CDE/CDD and what can be done to maximize the use of the dollars.
- Public Hearing on New Priority Areas for CDE Funding for Child Care and Development scheduled for Wednesday, April 23, 2008 from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the Department of Public Works located at 900 South Fremont in Alhambra. The purpose is to provide public comment on the new list of zip code priorities for future funding for State Preschool and General Child Care and Development.

Flyers for both events were included in members' meeting packets. Ms. Malaske-Samu alerted members that they will be required to show their identification to enter the Department of Public Works. She added that these are good opportunities for representatives of CDE/CDD-contracted programs to have a say in how State funding is allocated.

b. Children's Planning Council (CPC)

Mr. Dennis serves on the CPC and is part of both the executive committee and ad hoc governance committee, which is looking at proposed restructuring. A special meeting chaired by Supervisor Knabe is scheduled for April 17, 2008 to discuss the recommendations for restructure and obtain community feedback. Highlights of the restructuring include: reducing the number of council seats from 50 to 30; increasing the data arm; and looking more seriously at community organizing and eliminating the mandate from the SPA Councils. Mr. Dennis relayed that the restructuring will change the face and form of CPC, which represents all children and family issues, inclusive of child care. Recommendations will be posted at the CPC Web site at www.childrensplanningcouncil.org and the meeting is open to the public. No vote is expected on that day, as the proposal is provoking lots of discussion. Regardless of the restructuring the Roundtable will continue to have a seat.

c. First 5 LA

Ms. Connie Russell attended her first meeting last month; the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 10th from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

d. Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP)

Dr. Ayala provided the report on behalf of Ms. Carolina Alvarez. She began by announcing the birth of Ms. Alvarez's beautiful baby boy.

Dr. Ayala summarized the ongoing work by First 5 LA and LAUP to agree to a sustainability plan for LAUP. Beginning with a quick history, the original contract for \$580 million funded 2004 – 09. More recently, LAUP requested a no cost extension to 2013, allowing for the acquisition of dollars from public and private entities. First 5 LA returned with a counter proposal that included a no cost extension to 2016, but with major implications in service. LAUP now has a proposal for an extension to 2014, again without additional funding, but using their current funds differently. The proposal is on the First 5 LA Commission meeting agenda scheduled for April 10th. Dr. Ayala expressed LAUP's concern with their stakeholders continuing to provide high quality for the approximately 11,000 children participating in LAUP and being able to do so with a mix of funds. Dr. Ayala anticipates that First 5 LA will take action in May or June as that is also when they need to approve their budget for 2008-09. The issue for First 5 LA will be how quickly funds other than First 5 LA can be raised.

Dr. Ayala announced that the Board of Supervisors presented a scroll to LAUP recognizing April 13 through April 19, 2008 as the Week of the Young Child on behalf of the 1.8 million children in Los Angeles County. LAUP is sponsoring 150 activities during the week, including literacy fairs, center-based events, and, for the first time ever, presenting Preschool Teachers of the Year awards. Dr. Ayala distributed invitations to the event to recognize the teachers scheduled for Tuesday, April 15, 2008 from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 North Grand Avenue, 5th Floor in Los Angeles. Three LAUP and three non-LAUP teachers representing a variety of centers will be recognized.

Dr. Ayala will share LAUP's fundraising goals at future meetings.

e. New Directions Task Force

Ms. Kathy House began with a report on activities relating to the Office of Child Care under the county's new structure. She relayed that the CEO is looking at all county entities that have to do with children, including the Office of Child Care. Recently, there was a meeting of the leadership to discuss its purpose, what it could be, and the potential to increase interface with other county departments, then whether it makes sense to locate the Office of Child Care as part of department rather than CEO, with Community and Senior Services considered as an option. By moving the Office of Child Care into a department, it may gain a louder voice on behalf of the child care and development system.

Ms. House added that similar discussions are occurring in relationship to the New Directions Task Force in terms of its current charge and what it could accomplish.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Materials regarding additional upcoming events during the month of April were included in members' meeting packets.

7. CALL TO ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 p.m.

Commissioners Present:

Mr. Duane Dennis
Mr. Whit Hayslip
Ms. Kathy House
Ms. Jan Isenberg
Ms. Sheri Lewis
Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey
Ms. Arlene Rhine
Ms. Connie Russell
Ms. Esther Torrez
Ms. Mika Yamamoto

Guests:

Ms. Evelyn Aleman, First 5 LA
Dr. Celia C. Ayala, Los Angeles Universal Preschool
Ms. Beth Chiaro, Child Care Resource Center
Mr. Robert Ennis, First 5 LA
Ms. Leila Espinosa, UCLA/Early Developmental Screening and Intervention
Ms. Victoria Evers, Intergovernmental Relations/CEO
Ms. Kristen Laws, First 5 LA
Ms. Elsa Leal, Los Angeles Universal Preschool
Ms. Terry Ogawa, Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council
Ms. Holly Reynolds, Child Care Planning Committee

Staff:

Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu
Ms. Michele Sartell