



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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MINUTES

October 10, 2007

9:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration - Conference Room 743
Los Angeles, CA 90012

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Duane Dennis, Chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. Members and guests were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves.

a. Comments from the Chair

- Presentation to Past Officers

On behalf of the Roundtable, Mr. Dennis presented the recent past Chair and Vice-chair – Mr. Matt Rezvani and Mr. Robert Wiltse - with tokens of appreciation for their three years of service. Mr. Dennis thanked them for their leadership.

- Invitation to Mr. William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer

The Roundtable will extend an invitation to Mr. Fujioka, County of Los Angeles Chief Executive Officer (CEO), to attend the Roundtable meeting in November, December, or January. Mr. Dennis stated that this will give the Roundtable and Mr. Fujioka an opportunity to meet and encourage him to keep child care as a priority on the County's agenda.

- *Child Care Provider Guide*

The updated *Child Care Provider Guide* is posted on the Web site (www.childcare.lacounty.gov). A limited number of hard copies are available. In addition, the family child care sections are available on the Web site English and Spanish. Members asked for hard copies, which will be provided at the November meeting.

- Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program – Cycle 9

Mr. Dennis reminded members that applications to participate in Cycle 9 are due to the Office of Child Care by October 30, 2007. Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu reminded members of their advocacy efforts that resulted in extending the Stipend Program to participants in Family Child Care Home Education Networks, family child care providers, and staff working in centers serving a majority of children subsidized by the California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD). The extension is due to sunset by July 2009. Ms. Malaske-Samu reported that while the numbers are not large, a significant number of family child care providers (approximately 200 per Cycle) and center staff serving a majority of subsidized children are participating. Advocacy efforts will build to maintain the extension and will include looking to other counties interested in extending their stipend programs as well.

b. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- September 12, 2007

Ms. Peggy Sisson made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Ann Franzen seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously accepted as written.

c. Election of Roundtable Representative to First 5 LA Commission

As was announced at the last meeting, Mr. Rezvani resigned from the First 5 LA Commission. Mr. Rezvani provided a brief overview of the Commission's requirements of its member and how the Roundtable can most effectively assist the Commission in meeting its goals. Having served as the Roundtable representative for the past five years, he suggested that one of the most important assets he brought to the Commission was a sense of neutrality as well as some knowledge of health care and early child development. Seeing as the Commission has agreed to fund the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP), Mr. Rezvani believes that the next representative to the Commission can bring a similar sense of focusing on the issues and not funding needs of a particular organization. Mr. Rezvani stated that he was committed to bridging efforts where possible, such as advocacy at the state and federal levels. Mr. Rezvani added that Commission members are expected to review and stay abreast of significant program and budgetary information. Serving on the Commission does require a commitment of time, including serving on committees.

Given these issues and wanting to ensure that the Roundtable continues to have representation on the Commission, Mr. Rezvani nominated Ms. Connie Russell to serve as the Roundtable representative to the First 5 LA Commission and moved to that effect. Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rezvani thanked the Roundtable for selecting and trusting him as their representative to the Commission. Mr. Dennis expressed his appreciation to Mr. Rezvani for his service on the Commission and how knowledgeably he represented the Roundtable.

2. STEPS TO EXCELLENCE PROJECT UPDATE

The meeting was turned over to Ms. Helen Chavez for a project update on STEP. Ms. Chavez comments, supported by a PowerPoint presentation, summarized the following activities currently underway: recruiting providers, promoting STEP, and infrastructure development followed by selected discussion items. With respect to recruiting providers, Ms. Chavez has conducted 12 outreach sessions with a total of 263 participants (68 percent family child care providers, 32 percent center representatives) to date. Of those attending the outreach sessions, the majority (approximately 70 percent) said their programs plan to participate in STEP, while about 15 percent stated no and just over 10 percent responded with maybe. Nine additional sessions are planned. The next strategy for recruiting providers includes the development of a media plan. Mr. Wiltse volunteered to send a mailing on STEP to his listing of providers to augment recruitment efforts.

Introducing the STEP Infrastructure, Ms. Chavez showed a slide outlining the process for participating in STEP from point of application to receiving a rating award and having it posted. For discussion, she proposed that an evaluation will be essential to STEP's success and suggested that it be aligned with other evaluation planning efforts. In addition, she provided information on efforts underway to provide staff support, including a part-time training consultant, an intermediate typist clerk, and a communications/marketing specialty group to develop parent materials. Members were asked for leads to identify potential specialty groups. Ms. Kate Sachnoff of First 5 LA suggested Hershey Cause.

Ms. Chavez next directed members to the STEP Policy Brief (October 2007), which she distributed during her presentation. The Policy Brief provides an overview of the discussion relating to participation of Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) sites and accredited programs in STEP with respect to maximizing resources and eliminating duplication of efforts. A Policy Subcommittee was convened and recommends that LAUP and accredited programs be included in the STEP pilot, which should add to the broad cross-section of participants and enhance the evaluation results, among other issues. Efforts will be made, however, to avoid duplication and maximize resources by prioritizing ratings of programs and classrooms serving younger children, for example, among others (for a full description of the issue, critical considerations and policy recommendations, see the STEP Policy Brief, October 2007).

Lastly, Ms. Chavez provided an overview of the proposed evaluation process, beginning with the identification of goals and objectives, followed by developing the evaluation questions, then developing a logic model, and ending with developing an evaluation plan. Ms. Chavez will be convening an Evaluation Subcommittee to serve as advisors to the process.

Ms. Malaske-Samu added that the contract from the CDE/CDD has arrived and work is quickly underway to schedule a menu of trainings.

3. EDUCATION COORDINATING COUNCIL/EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION UPDATE

Ms. Terry Ogawa announced that the Education Coordinating Council (ECC) will hold their next meeting on Wednesday, October 24, 2007 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at The California Endowment. The agenda includes a report and discussion on early care and education. Ms. Ogawa suggested this meeting as important for the Roundtable because many of the people who sit on the Council represent various County and allied organizations that do not discuss or think about the relevance of high quality early care and education as integral to their services targeted to families with children.

Ms. Ogawa will present a report that includes a request to the ECC to adopt a unified strategy that integrates systems of early care and education, child welfare, and probation for young children under the age of five. This overarching goal contains recommendations relating to: helping families engaged with Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) or Probation access high quality early care and education programs; easing children's transitions between and among home, child development programs, kindergarten, and even to placement through DCFS; building upon existing systems and structures; exploring opportunities in zero to three initiatives; and developing short-term policy and protocol changes to make it easier for families to use child care and development services.

Ms. Ogawa added that Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey will present baseline data at the meeting. She also reflected on the need for a common policy agenda given the extreme need for child care services across the board for families both in and out of the child welfare system. Both Ms. Ogawa and Mr. Dennis mentioned that a result of welfare reform was creating an entitlement and priority for child care services for families participating in welfare to work activities under the CalWORKs program above all others, including children under the supervision of child protective services.

4. DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES, CHILD CARE PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Wiltse distributed the following materials: DCFS Child Care Program brochures, Child Care Fact Sheet FY 2006-07, and the booklet, *Developmental Milestones Guide: Birth to Five Year*, published by DCFS. By way of introduction, DCFS manages a \$15 million contract with the CDE/CDD. Per this contract, DCFS is able to provide child care services to their client families. Of the 37,409 children under

the supervision of DCFS, 27.5 percent are under five years of age. Mr. Wiltse mentioned that the push is to keep families together rather than removing children by connecting them with support services, including child care, and conducting follow-up visits. As such, high quality early care and education is critically important to facilitating the health, social, emotional, and cognitive development of this population of children who have experienced the trauma of abuse.

Mr. Wiltse directed members to Child Care Fact Sheet FY 2006-07. He stated that child care funding is for children at risk of abuse and living with their birth parents so that the parents can meet their court ordered activities, and for children living with a relative caretaker who is working. He mentioned that their families confront a number of issues in accessing quality child care, particularly in areas of the county where there is greater demand than supply. In addition, this population of children may also be at risk of or experiencing learning disabilities or health issues compounded by being removed from their home. In essence, young children engaged with DCFS have lots happening in their lives, which manifests sometimes in out of control behavior reflective of a life that is also out of control. Mr. Wiltse offered the question of how does one obtain child care services for the children and are there enough child care providers that can meet their specialized needs. He then stated that the Children's Services Workers need to understand that investing time on a young child's education needs will be beneficial down the road.

Lastly, Mr. Wiltse mentioned some preliminary exploration of developing crisis nurseries modeled on some programs in other areas of the state and country. Two members of the Board of Supervisors are interested in initiating this effort in their districts.

Ms. Malaske-Samu, in reference to the number of very young children in the child welfare system, said that the numbers support the need for quality programs serving children from birth to two years of age. In answer to a question regarding whether Mr. Wiltse's office maintains a waiting list, he replied that it is longer in some offices due to the gap between supply and demand. He added that all relative caregivers are automatically registered on the Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List (LACEL), which provides them with a potentially greater and more permanent list of options, given that his program can only serve children for a maximum of 18 months.

Dr. McCroskey added that Mr. Wiltse's office was recently incorporated into the Community Based Support Division (Division) along with Community Resources, Education, and the New Prevention Initiative. The Division is designed to consolidate efforts that reach out to communities. Dr. McCroskey recommended scheduling a presentation by a representative of the Division to discuss the opportunities for supporting families with community based services rather than removing children from their families. Mr. Whit Hayslip returned to the issue of children with multiple challenges and expressed his concern that training folks is not enough. He suggests training be combined with building systems of ongoing support for folks working with more challenging populations and that the supports allow for reflection of their work with children and their families.

COLLEAGUE AGENCY REPORTS

a. Child Care Planning Committee

Ms. Sisson commented on Ms. Laura Escobedo's report to the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee) on the cost of quality study. A report will be scheduled for the Roundtable at a future date. Ms. Sisson believes the report raises policy issues and is a resource for discussing the true costs of operating a quality program.

Ms. Sisson also announced that the Roundtable and the Planning Committee are hosting a meeting on Wednesday, October 17, 2007 from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. at the Office of Child Care to discuss alternative administrative models for child development funds.

Ms. Malaske-Samu added that pending the official change from the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Craig Lancaster will soon begin representing the Planning Committee. Ms. Sisson has finished her term and Mr. Lancaster is the new chair.

b. Children's Planning Council

Mr. Dennis reported that the Children's Planning Council is embarking on structural changes with the departure of Ms. Yolie Flores-Aguilar as the Chief Executive Director to now serve on the Los Angeles Unified School District Board. The changes will determine the search for the new Executive Director. In the meantime, Dr. Cheryl Mendoza has assumed the position of Acting Chief Executive Office. Ms. Flores-Aguilar is now Chief Executive Officer of the Children's Planning Council Foundation, Inc.

c. Los Angeles Universal Preschool

No report.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

6. CALL TO ADJOURN

Mr. Dennis adjourned meeting at 11:54 a.m.

Commissioners Present:

Mr. Duane Dennis
Ms. Ann Franzen
Mr. Whit Hayslip
Ms. Jan Isenberg
Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura
Mr. Matt Rezvani
Ms. Arlene Rhine
Ms. Connie Russell
Ms. Peggy Sisson
Mr. Esther Torrez
Mr. Robert Wiltse
Ms. Ruth Yoon

Guests:

Ms. Jane Lee Choe, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals
Ms. Liz Diaz, Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families
Mr. Craig Lancaster, Child Care Planning Committee
Ms. Elsa Leal, Los Angeles Universal Preschool
Ms. Chloe Nichols, DPSS
Ms. Terry Ogawa, Education Coordinating Council
Ms. Kate Sachnoff, First 5 LA
Ms. Yadira Sanchez, DCFS Child Care Unit
Ms. Ellie Zucker, UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality

Staff:

Ms. Helen Chavez
Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu
Ms. Michele Sartell