



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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MEETING MINUTES

September 12, 2007

9:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration

500 West Temple Avenue, Conference Room 525

Los Angeles, California 90012

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Duane Dennis, Chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), opened the meeting at 9:55 a.m. Members and guests were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves.

Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu, staff to the Roundtable, directed members to their meeting packets for the summary of the annual evaluation. This year the evaluation was completed at the annual retreat following lunch. A total of 15 evaluations out of a possible 20 were received. Two items were noted by multiple members: the need to start the Roundtable meetings on time, and to maintain participation throughout the year to reach a quorum. During this meeting, members requested that the meeting begin at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Malaske-Samu will explore the room availability to end at 12:00 p.m. rather than 11:45 a.m.

Ms. Connie Russell was asked to comment on the conference and expo recently held by Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP). Ms. Russell was impressed by the offerings of the conference and the level of participation. On behalf of the Roundtable, she accepted a Certificate of Recognition from California State Senate Majority Leader Gloria Romero, 24th Senate District, and a framed watercolor by a four-year old of Para Los Niños with the quote "When I grow up I want to be a teacher" from LAUP in recognition of contributions to early care and education. The Certificate and artwork will be displayed at the Office of Child Care.

a. Comments from the Chair

- Presentation to Past Officers

Postponed to October meeting.

b. New Member

- Ms. Mika Yamamoto

On July 17, 2007, the Board of Supervisors appointed Ms. Mika Yamamoto as the representative to the Roundtable from the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Ms. Yamamoto is replacing Mr. John Wicker. Mr. Dennis welcomed Ms. Yamamoto as the new Department representative.

In addition, the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee) has elected a new chair, Mr. Craig Lancaster from the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Early Childhood Education Division. As the Board of Supervisors has not yet acted on the change, the Roundtable benefited from both Mr. Lancaster and outgoing chair Ms. Peggy Sisson's participation.

c. Approval of Retreat Minutes

- July 11, 2007

Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura was listed incorrectly under 'Commissioners Present'. Ms. Sisson made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected and Ms. Arlene Rhine seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted as written with one abstention.

d. Communication from the Bay Area Professional Development Collaborative

Ms. Malaske-Samu relayed that the Roundtable has received an invitation by colleagues in the Bay Area to sign-on to their proposal to support professional development in early care and education (see memo dated May 17, 2007 entitled *Recommendations for Improving California's Early Care and Education Professional Development System*). First 5 California has funded the Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards (CARES) for the Early Learning Workforce program, the stipend program for persons working in non-California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) contracted child care and development programs, for a number of years. Ms. Malaske-Samu stated that while our local First 5 Commission has not participated in CARES, the principles presented in the memo document are relevant to our work on the CDE/CDD funded stipend program, Investing in Early Educators, and our ability to extend eligibility to early educators serving a majority of subsidized children in non-CDE/CDD contracted programs. Ms. Malaske-Samu added that this extension is due to expire in 2009.

Ms. Malaske-Samu focused the Roundtable members' attention to the third recommendation, 'Establish an ECE Regulation Alignment Workgroup'. She noted, as did other members, that there is inconsistency in workforce requirements across the state and between regulatory agencies. Others agreed with her remark and provided their own examples of where alignment is needed, such as in processing fingerprinting and allowing the transfer of results when a teacher changes jobs from one program to another across county lines.

Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey and Ms. Kate Sachnoff, guest, talked about First 5 LA's investment in workforce development from a broader perspective. Ms. Sachnoff added that First 5 LA is also exploring issues of fragmentation among the regulatory systems.

Ms. Sisson made the motion for the Roundtable to support the Bay Area Professional Development Collaborative Recommendations; Ms. Rhine seconded the motion. The motion passed with three abstentions.

e. Election of a New First 5 LA Representative

Postponed to October meeting.

2. STEPS TO EXCELLENCE PROJECT (STEP) UPDATE

a. Introduction of STEP Coordinator

Ms. Malaske-Samu introduced Ms. Helen Chavez as the STEP Project Coordinator. Ms. Chavez earned her Master of Social Work degree at the University of Southern California, and most recently worked for LAUP. Ms. Malaske-Samu acknowledged that Ms. Chavez has hit the ground running and welcomed Ms. Chavez to the Roundtable.

b. Outreach and Training Activities

Ms. Chavez directed members to their meeting packets for a copy of her brief PowerPoint presentation on the status of STEP in relation to two of the implementation goals: 1) Promoting STEP; and 2) Infrastructure Development. In addition, Ms. Chavez laid out two discussion items as follows:

1) STEP Appeals Process

Ms. Chavez and Ms. Malaske-Samu summarized their meeting with Ms. Michele Jackson, County Counsel, with a proposal for the STEP Appeals Process. At the outset of the meeting and on behalf of County Counsel, Ms. Jackson advised against offering an appeals process, but agreed to review the written plan for the appeals process that she was presented.

Discussion:

- There are other options to ensuring transparency and providing information rather than a formal appeal. Offer programs an opportunity to learn how their score was decided, knowing that their score will not be changed.
- STEP is voluntary and learning will occur. Part of process is helping people understand the tools that will be used to rate the program.
- The State is interested in how a quality rating system will work in Los Angeles County. Participants need a forum to express their concerns.
- Introduce a step before a formal appeal. In the LAUP process, someone has been sent to re-evaluate a program.

The STEP Appeals Process Work Group comprised of Ms. Carolina Alvarez, Ms. Jan Isenberg and Ms. Ellie Zucker of the UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality will be convened to explore this issue further.

2) Participation of LAUP Applicants in STEP

Ms. Chavez raised two critical considerations, maximizing resources and eliminating duplication of efforts. Ms. Malaske-Samu added that given our resources, it does not seem to make sense to rate a family child care home that has already received a LAUP rating. However, a center with additional classrooms serving children other than the four-year old LAUP classroom may benefit from a program rating. Ms. Chavez also pointed out that the LAUP sites receive funding for their LAUP services. Dr. McCroskey mentioned her plea for LAUP and STEP to use the same instruments for assessment and accountability, which was echoed by other members.

Ms. Chavez will convene an ad hoc group of Dr. McCroskey, Ms. Rhine and Mr. Whit Hayslip to further discuss this issue and provide a recommendation at the next Roundtable meeting.

Ms. Terry Ogawa, guest, offered a couple of general suggestions for consideration in implementation. First, she referred to the mini-grant process that is being implemented by Connections for Children with funding from the City of Santa Monica. Two applications have been created, one for family child care homes and a second for centers. This funding process may serve as a model for the STEP mini-grant process. Second, Ms. Ogawa suggested adding the County seal to the STEP poster and other materials to lend credibility for folks not familiar with the Roundtable and/or Planning Committee.

3. STATE LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET ISSUES

a. Legislative and Budget Update

Mr. Dennis introduced Ms. Victoria Evers of the County of Los Angeles Intergovernmental Relations Office to discuss the 2007-08 Budget that was finally adopted by the legislature and signed by the Governor.

Ms. Evers announced that as of 1:00 a.m. today the legislative session was adjourned. Referring to a policy brief developed by the California Budget Project, *Governor Signs 2007-08 Budget*, Ms. Evers re-stated the budget stalemate that ended once the Governor agreed to make cuts totaling approximately \$700 million using his line item veto. Child care and development budget items were left mostly untouched, except for the \$5 million allocation to provide wraparound services for children participating in State Preschool programs. The Governor's blue pencil resulted in a loss of funds to homeless services, which will impact the County, however the County will be able to backfill these funds and will advocate for a restoration of the funds in this next budget year.

Ms. Evers added that there is a \$5 billion structural deficit anticipated for next year. Subsequently, health and human service programs are expected to feel the squeeze on their budget items. The challenge ahead is to maintain current program levels while advocating for increased funding to programs.

Returning to legislation, Ms. Evers referred to AB 1400 (Hayashi), which was gutted and amended to address funding for the Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP). The bill claimed the intent originally included in SB 680 (Ridley-Scott). Unfortunately, the bill did not pass out of the Senate in time, but is now a two year bill. In addition, Ms. Evers mentioned AB 1164 (De Léon) that would provide benefits to family child care providers and allow them to organize. The bill is on its way to the Governor, although he is expected to veto it. Lastly, the Governor has called a special session to deal with health care reform.

b. Legislative Platform

Ms. Michele Sartell, staff with the Office of Child Care, reviewed the proposed recommendations on child care and development for inclusion in the County's legislative platform for 2007-08. She mentioned the challenges relating to anticipating possible legislative action and adopting as broad and inclusive language as possible so that action in the coming year will be included with the platform while limiting the number of items to 10. Working from the 2006-07 State Legislative Agenda, the following change (underlined) was made to Item 1:

1.3 Child Care and Development

1. Support efforts to develop and implement a master plan for quality early care and education that sets high standards for all such services, and addresses the needs of all children, from birth through age 12, including those with special needs up to age 18 and children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such efforts should also encompass goals for the development and sustainability of a professional workforce and early learning standards that build upon established foundations for early childhood education research and practice, and establish alignment among regulatory systems that are consistent with quality standards, teacher qualifications, and licensing.

Ms. Nishimura made a motion to approve the Child Care and Development items as edited to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors as recommendations for inclusion in the State Legislative Agenda for 2007-08; the motion was seconded by Ms. Russell. The motion passed unanimously.

4. STRENGTHENING FAMILIES THROUGH EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Ms. Malaske-Samu referred members to their meeting packets for the letter to the Board of Supervisors submitted on August 8, 2007, and entitled *Response to May 15, 2007 Motion Related to Child Care Services*. This memo addresses two issues: 1) how to increase the supply of child care providers who are trained and capable of serving children and families who are part of the child welfare system; and 2) how to increase the enrollment of children in the child welfare system in preschool services. Mr. Dennis suggested that these issues become a priority for the Roundtable in the coming year.

As way of introduction, “Strengthening Families through Early Care and Education” represents an approach to integrating child development services into the child welfare system for the purpose of preventing child abuse and neglect. This approach is generating significant interest across the nation and truly informed the Family and Community Connections component of the STEP rating instrument. Mr. Dennis turned to Dr. McCroskey to kick-off the conversation.

Dr. McCroskey began by reflecting on her experience introducing social work students by having them read the research on the Perry Preschool Project. Her challenge was to have them see that the work of the Perry Preschool was more than childhood education and was in fact incorporating social work practices of supporting families. The research on Perry Preschool and other comprehensive child care and development programs demonstrate two interconnected interventions: 1) directly working with children in the classroom; and 2) helping families (i.e. parents) learn as their children learn and in a manner that supports their child’s growth and development. Dr. McCroskey admitted that her own experiences as well as the experiences of others in learning how to advocate for their own children in early education and as they transition to elementary school and beyond has helped inform her thinking on this topic. Ultimately, she offers the Strengthening Families approach as a component of STEP that has the potential to impact the quality of services provided to children and families participating in early care and education.

Dr. McCroskey recognized some of the challenges in this approach in that it requires programs to sign on to more than just working in the classroom with the child. At the same time, she offered that the approach is targeted to strategies and protective factors that contribute to the child’s education and helps the family support their child’s development and learning. Dr. McCroskey directed members’ attention to the program strategies and protective factors that lead to prevention of child abuse and neglect outlined on page 2 of *Strengthening Families*

through Early Care and Education. She stressed the importance of acting as facilitators to help families link to resources or know how to find resources. She also mentioned the Web-based system, www.healthycities.org, one of the largest urban Web-based resources available today.

As Dr. McCroskey summarized her comments, she proposed that the Roundtable offer a challenge to early care and education field on what can be done for families.

Mr. Dennis thanked Dr. McCroskey for her comments and confirmed the importance of ensuring that children and their families involved in the child welfare system have a quality early care and education experience. Many members of the Roundtable reflected on how the system has changed over the past 25 years from when parents were more engaged and early childhood programs were sources of support and learning to where it is today given the demands for academic learning standards that are designed to prepare children for the rigors of elementary school. In addition, as the early childhood system has advocated for recognition as professionals, there has been a move away from “being a friend” to the family. The Strengthening Families approach requires a deeper, more committed relationship between the early educators and the families. It also is a way to be responsive to the developmental needs of parents, which changes as the child grows.

Mr. Dennis returned to the proposal that the strengthening families approach be a policy platform issue and agenda item for Roundtable in the coming months. As such, he envisions the development of action steps. It was further suggested that the Roundtable look at how other departments work together and become the voice in the County to say “this is how we strengthen families – through high quality child development”.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Jane Lee Choe of Wyeth Pharmaceuticals encouraged letters to the Governor supporting SB 533 (Yee), which adds pneumococcus to the list of immunizations required for entry into child care programs. Ms. Choe stated that very young children are at greater risk for the disease. In addition, Ms. Choe offered support in conducting outreach to early childhood programs to inform them of the new requirement upon passage of the legislation.

6. CALL TO ADJOURN

Mr. Dennis adjourned meeting at 11:45 p.m.

Commissioners Present:

Mr. Duane Dennis
Ms. Ann Franzen
Mr. Whit Hayslip
Ms. Sheri Lewis
Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura
Ms. Arlene Rhine
Ms. Connie Russell
Ms. Peggy Sisson
Mr. Robert Wiltse
Ms. Mika Yamamoto
Ms. Ruth Yoon

Guests:

Ms. Jane Lee Choe, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals
Ms. Victoria Evers, Intergovernmental Relations Office, CEO
Mr. Craig Lancaster, Child Care Planning Committee
Ms. Kristen Laws, First 5 LA
Ms. Esperanza Murillo, NAMI
Ms. Terry Ogawa, Education Coordinating Council
Ms. Kate Sachnoff, First 5 LA
Ms. Billie Weiser, UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality
Ms. Ellie Zucker, UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality

Staff:

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

