



Policy Roundtable for Child Care

222 South Hill Street, Fifth Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (213) 974-4103 • Fax: (213) 217-5106 • www.lacountychildcare.org

MINUTES

October 11, 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 9:55 a.m. by welcoming members and guests. Members and guests were invited to introduce themselves.

a. Comments from the Chair

Mr. Rezvani referred members to their meeting packets for information on a number of training opportunities, and a recently released article from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, which is a part of the National Institute of Health. A new compendium of findings from the Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development has just been released. This study is following over 1,000 children throughout the country from birth through ninth grade. The most recent results suggest that:

Most child care settings in the United States provide care that is “fair”, falling between “poor” and “good”. Fewer than 10% of the arrangements were rated as providing very high quality care or very poor quality.

The quality of care is modestly linked to the cognitive development of children across the infant, toddler, and preschool years. Children who receive higher quality care show slightly more positive outcomes than those in lower quality care.

Quality of care was, however, particularly important for children whose development was slow at the age of 1½ years. Other research has shown that high quality care has had a significant impact on children from socio-economically disadvantaged households. Participants in this study did not have the same response – possibly because this study did not include mothers under 18, or extremely poor children.

Family characteristics have more influence on a child’s development than their child care experience.

b. Review of Minutes

August 9, 2006

Action: Ms. Jan Isenberg moved for adoption of the minutes; seconded by Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura. The minutes passed unanimously.

September 13, 2006

Action: Ms. Peggy Sisson moved for adoption of the minutes; seconded by Ms. Isenberg. The minutes passed unanimously.

2. PREVENTION INITIATIVE

The presentation by Ms. Lari Sheehan has been postponed to the November meeting. Ms. Sheehan will be asked to also update the members on the County's initiative to reduce homelessness and plans to address child care needs under the initiative.

3. FINAL REVIEW OF THE STEP CHILD CARE QUALITY RATING SYSTEM

a. Comments on the Plan

Mr. Rezvani congratulated Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu's tremendous efforts leading the development of the Steps to Excellence Program (STEP) quality rating system. Her work was in evidence today at the meeting with Mr. David Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer for Los Angeles County. Mr. Janssen expressed willingness to support implementation of the plan with a significant allocation of funds. To support implementation, Mr. Janssen offered \$200,000 per year for the first three years. Mr. Rezvani publicly thanked Ms. Malaske-Samu for her work.

Ms. Malaske-Samu thanked Ms. Connie Russell for taking the time to comment on the proposed Board letter and implementation plan. Ms. Malaske-Samu provided a brief overview of the quality rating system, followed by a summary of the implementation plan by Mr. Rezvani.

Ms. Malaske-Samu prefaced the remainder of her comments by mentioning that the Office of Child Care operates largely on State contracts. With annual, ongoing funding under a separate contract from California Department of Education for the Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List (LACEL), approximately \$200,000 in local planning council monies have been freed up and can now support the operation of the quality rating system. Financial support is still needed for conducting evaluations of programs, a significant component as it requires trained individuals to observe the programs, prepare the analyses, and report back.

The Office of Child Care staff is currently working with communities to develop incentives to encourage participation in the rating system by programs and commitments to improve their program quality. In addition, training and technical assistance intended to help programs improve quality are built into the implementation plan. Furthermore, a line item allows for publicizing the ratings to the child care community and families for decision-making. Foundations are being explored as potential sources of funds to support these activities, added Mr. Rezvani.

Currently, implementation of the quality rating system is billed as a pilot demonstration project. We have the benefit of learning from Los Angeles Universal Preschool's (LAUP) track record to date. Mr. Rezvani believes that a successful model in Los Angeles County may set a precedent for the State. Mr. Rezvani remarked, which he shared with Mr. Janssen, that we have no idea of what we are currently getting out of the huge investment in child care in Los Angeles County - \$1 million for public child care and \$1 billion for child care overall. Ms. Nishimura commented that the line item for incentives may be underestimated.

Ms. Malaske-Samu pointed out two changes that have been made to the matrices:

- 1) The lower option in Scale 5. Qualifications and Working Conditions was removed from Step 3 of the family child care rating scale to ensure that the expectation for high quality is comparable to center-based care. Participants in the family child care forums raised their concern that the scales be comparable so that families may have the same level of confidence about the quality of family child care as they do of centers.
- 2) The title of Scale 5 has been changed from Administration to Qualifications and Working Conditions in both matrices.
 - b. Schedule for Submission

Pending approval of the Roundtable, the implementation plan will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors tomorrow, October 12, 2006, and will include letters of support from:

Victor Gordo, Pasadena City Council Member;
The Child Abuse Prevention Center;
Department of Public Social Services;
Department of Children and Family Services; and
Education Coordinating Council

In addition, the Resource and Referral Agencies serving the pilot cities and the City of Santa Monica are willing to partner. Others stepping forward with offers of support for implementing the quality rating scale include:

Southern California Association for the Education of Young Children
Child Care Training Institute, Los Angeles County Office of Education

Action: Ms. Arlene Rhine moved to approve the implementation plan and the quality rating scales with amendments; the motion was seconded by Ms. Sisson. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Malaske-Samu relayed that the Board of Supervisors have a couple of options: look at the plan and file it, or recommend moving forward on it with a directive to seek funding or decide to fund. Once the Board of Supervisors receives the packet, it will be up to them to add it to their agenda for a formal position.

In closing, Mr. Rezvani encouraged Commission members to express support of the plan to their Supervisors. He hopes that collective efforts on behalf of the Roundtable will encourage the Board of Supervisors to take action and support with money. He also suggested that additional letters of support be generated by other organizations. Ms. Malaske-Samu asked that these efforts be coordinated with her. Ms. Malaske-Samu also committed to providing members with full packages of STEP and the implementation plan.

4. LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR 2006-07

a. Child Development-Related Legislation Adopted in 2006

Mr. Robert Wiltse distributed a copy of the proposed legislative agenda for the first year of the 2006-07 session. The document has been reviewed by the Joint Committee on Legislation and the Child Care Planning Committee, resulting in some edits and enhancements to last year's agenda items. He referred to the underlined sections as proposed additions and/or changes, with comments as follows:

Item 1 addresses the emerging expectations of the early care and education workforce and the evolution of learning standards.

Item 3 reflects the underfunded Alternative Payment system.

Item 4 edits adding full-day, full-year relates to the directive from Board of Supervisors to track usage of State Preschool programs to determine recommendations for flexibility in using funds to better meet family needs.

Item 6 deletes "weekly" with respect to work requirements given the anticipated changes in work requirements under the California Work, Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs).

Ms. Malaske-Samu asked that the legislative agenda recommendations from the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Public Social Services (DPSS), and others that address critical children's issues identify collaborative issues. Ms. Victoria Evers of the County's Intergovernmental Relations Branch (IGR) replied that she will be looking for areas of integration for relevant Departments to mutually support. Ms. Malaske-Samu offered the Roundtable's support of children and families impacted across county departments.

Action: Ms. Sisson moved approval of the recommended items with amendments and to forward the recommendations to the IGR for inclusion in the County's State Legislative Agenda; the motion was seconded by Ms. Isenberg. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Input for 2006-07 Legislative Agenda

Next, Mr. Wiltse directed members to the document, "Winners and Losers – A Report to the 2006 California State Legislature and Budget, Child Care and Development". (See handout.) He highlighted a number of bills of interest, including SB 697 (Kuehl), which would have allowed family child care providers to organize, but prohibited them from holding a strike. This bill was vetoed by the Governor. This issue is expected to resurface during the next session. Ms. Isenberg referred to SB 638 (Torlakson), which was signed by the Governor and implements the before and after school programs called for under Proposition 49. With the passage of SB 638, bridge funding is available to continue school-age programs during the

early implementation stages per this bill. Mr. Wiltse also referred to the health and safety bills signed by the Governor which are intended to bolster the safety of children and inform consumers of substantiated complaints in child care programs.

Ms. Malaske-Samu asked if there are any anticipated trends for the next legislative session. Ms. Evers mentioned that the reauthorization of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) at the federal level will affect work participation rates statewide. Two items were approved in the State budget: funding dedicated to CalWORKs for work participation; and child welfare and foster care. In addition, Supervisor Knabe's sponsored bill to address child care fraud locally did not make it out of Senate Appropriations; however the IGR has been directed by the Board of Supervisors to pursue a child care fraud eradication and prevention pilot. It was acknowledged that programs receiving State funds are subject to multiple audits throughout the year, such as the Alternative Payment Programs. Ms. Malaske-Samu suggested a future presentation and discussion on issues around fraud and efforts underway to alleviate and prevent it. Mr. Duane Dennis remarked on the work of the Child Care Alliance conjointly with Supervisor Knabe's office to craft the bill.

5. RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMITTEE ON LICENSE EXEMPT CARE

Mr. Dennis, reflecting on the Roundtable retreat held in August, heard from the members that the Roundtable considers license exempt care as a component of the early care and education system and the License Exempt Committee should continue deliberations on how to address quality and improving child outcomes in license exempt settings. Discussion ensued on the Roundtable's position on whether license exempt care as a critical component of the system and the Roundtable's role in addressing it. There was general agreement to its importance given the number of families that use it, some of which is good. Members also recognized the lack of research looking at license exempt care and child outcomes.

A number of questions and comments were raised with respect to the Roundtable continuing a focus on license exempt care, including:

Should the Roundtable endorse efforts to learn more about license exempt care and child outcomes?

Are mandates to participate in quality improvement activities as a condition for funding an option?

Is license exempt care the best place to invest dollars?

Should the Roundtable support research or a study (for example, by a University with First 5 LA funding) to collect data, conduct an analysis on the dollars spent on license exempt care in Los Angeles County, and on what kind of care is provided? What about the investment of dollars by projects supporting license exempt care?

Should the Roundtable take a leadership role around services and programs for license exempt providers?

Might the Roundtable recommend changes to license exempt care that may require (legislative) mandates? What are the unintended consequences of (legislative) mandates, i.e. availability of child care spaces?

Does the Roundtable have a responsibility to look at childrens' outcomes? Are they ready to learn? What about child abuse prevention?

Do we look at quality improvements in license exempt care?

What about the parents' perspectives? Is there enough care? Is it safe and is it preparing my child for school? Why do parents choose license exempt care?

Action: Mr. Dennis moved that the Roundtable support the continuation of the License Exempt Child Care Committee and its work to:

examine child outcomes in license exempt care;
quality improvements which support positive child outcomes in this type of care; and
raise policy issues related to the provision of high quality care by license exempt providers.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Rhine. The motion passed unanimously.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP) Conference is scheduled for November 4, 2006, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Los Angeles Marriott Downtown. For more information, call 1-866-355-7627.

The California Department of Education has finally release the dollars allocated under SB 640 that extended SNAP for an additional 18 months effective January 1, 2006. Work is underway to introduce legislation to sustain the program indefinitely.

The City of Pasadena is hosting their annual National Lights on After School at Kids Space from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on October 12, 2006.

7. CLOSING COMMENTS & CALL TO ADJOURN

Mr. Rezvani called to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Commissioners Present:

Ms. Carolina Alvarez
Ms. Maria Calix
Mr. Duane Dennis
Ms. Jan Isenberg
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura
Mr. Matt Rezvani
Ms. Arlene Rhine
Ms. Connie Russell
Ms. Peggy Sisson
Ms. Esther Torrez
Mr. Robert Wiltse
Ms. Ruth Yoon

Guests:

Ms. Susan Cooper, Los Angeles Universal
Preschool
Ms. Victoria Evers, LAC Intergovernmental
Relations
Ms. Ofelia Medina, Alliance for a Better
Community
Ms. Jo Ann Kurtz, Department of Public Social
Services
Ms. Terry Ogawa, Education Coordinating
Council

Staff:

Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu
Ms. Michele Sartell