



## Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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### **ANNUAL RETREAT MINUTES**

**August 9, 2006**  
**9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**  
**La Casita de Arroyo**  
**177 South Arroyo Boulevard, Pasadena**

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#### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

Mr. Matt Rezvani, Chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), opened the meeting at 10:10 a.m. Mr. Rezvani welcomed members and guests. Mr. Rezvani introduced Ms. Nancy Carter with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)/Urban Los Angeles Chapter, as a new member of the Roundtable appointed by Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke. He then invited members and guests to introduce themselves.

Mr. Rezvani thanked Ms. Peggy Sisson for securing the host facility and Ms. Jan Isenberg for being the first to return her completed survey. Each was presented with a small token of appreciation.

##### **a. Review of Minutes from June 14, 2006**

Mr. Rezvani entertained a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on June 14, 2006. Ms. Arlene Rhines offered a motion and Ms. Sisson seconded the motion to accept the minutes as written. The minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **2. License Exempt Care in the Context of Los Angeles County: A Review of the Data**

Reflecting on the theme of the retreat, *Is advocating for quality child care, in all its forms, a choice or obligation?*, Mr. Rezvani acknowledged the courage and passion of the advocates at the table, and praised their willingness to confront some of the more challenging issues facing the early care and education field. To launch the discussion on license-exempt care, Mr. Rezvani turned over the meeting to Mr. Duane Dennis and Ms. Sheri Lewis. (See PowerPoint, *Who is Using License-Exempt Care in Los Angeles County?*)

Questions, comments and issues raised during presentation:

- Slide 8: One of the national studies using ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) or FDCERS (Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale) included a sample of providers in Los Angeles County. The national study conducted in 2000 referred to in the slide, included a sample of providers in Northern California.

- Slide 18: Currently, work participation rates for TANF are at 20%; effective October 1, 2006, participation rates are to reach 50%. To date, there is no information on how these higher participating rates will affect the child care system. Ms. Lewis stated that DPSS is developing a system to learn more about CalWORKs recipients not participating in work and their child care needs. She added that information is pending from the federal level as to what will be considered valid activities for workforce participation. California expects that some activities currently allowable under state law will not be allowed under Federal law.
- In answer to the question regarding DPSS's role in ensuring that children are ready for school, Ms. Lewis answered that their focus is on moving families into the workforce and child safety. DPSS has no relationship with child care providers, licensed or license exempt. The child care provider reflects the parent's choice of caregiver. Parents with children under the age of one are exempt from work participation.
- Mr. Duane Dennis noted that the relationship of license-exempt providers to the parent and to the agency paying for the care has presented a variety of challenges, particularly when the care is provided in the child's home. In Los Angeles, the Alternative Payment Programs (APPs) worked out an indemnification agreement with DPSS, which limits the APPs liability if something happens to a child while being cared for by a license-exempt provider in the child's home. Parents choosing license-exempt care provided in the child's home, remain in Stage 1 even after their CalWORKs cash aid has been terminated and they are otherwise eligible for care under Stage 2.

Generally, when a parent's training or work schedule is stabilized, the family is transferred to CalWORKs Stage 2. However, CalWORKs Child Care Stage 2 is administered by the California Department of Education and there is no indemnification agreement to cover families in Stages 2. As a result, families choosing license-exempt care provided in the child's home, remain in Stage 1.

### **3. What role should license exempt care play in the subsidized child care arena?**

Mr. Rezvani introduced Dr. Eva Shivers as the next presenter to help Roundtable members think about the policy implications of license-exempt care. Dr. Shivers is a member of the University of Pittsburgh faculty and earned her Ph.D. in the fall of 2003 from the University of California, Los Angeles in Psychological Studies in Education where she studied with Dr. Carollee Howes. She also holds a Bachelor degree in English literature from Arizona State University and a law degree from Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. Dr. Shivers has conducted research and published on the topic of license-exempt care and addresses the importance of culture in her work.

Dr. Shivers elaborated on her work that has led her to think about license-exempt child care policies. While a doctorate student at UCLA, Dr. Shivers worked with Ms. Sheila Wills of Crystal Stairs in reaching out to license-exempt providers. Their efforts started small, eventually reaching 170 license-exempt providers by the time Dr. Shivers left the project. In her work with Crystal Stairs, Dr. Shivers found that license-exempt providers are hungry for information and it inspired her to pursue policies to address this specific population. She relayed that discussions

around license-exempt providers are growing and shared her enthusiasm in learning that Los Angeles County is raising questions with respect to this population as well. Her presentation goal was to share her knowledge of what is occurring across country as well as the results of her research. (See PowerPoint, *What role should license-exempt care play in the subsidized child care arena?*)

*Facilitated discussion based on Slide 13 (page 5, first slide): What are our assumptions about license-exempt care?*

- Poor quality
- All about money
- Not interested in training
- Too many children cared for in the home
- Concern about prevalence of fraud
- Not interested in becoming licensed

Based on this quick exercise, sorting the truth from the myths is essential.

#### **4. How can the Roundtable support that role?**

Mr. Dennis opened the discussion, relaying that the work group has varying opinions on how to address license-exempt care and has brainstormed several items for consideration. The Roundtable has answered the big question: license-exempt care is part of early care and education system. He also mentioned that the question of how to best use limited dollars is an issue, noting that some states have reduced, or even eliminated reimbursements to license-exempt providers.

*Next steps brainstorm:*

- Conduct research to learn more about license-exempt care.
  - Include basic data collection
- Agree that training has a positive effect on license-exempt providers. How does it affect their work with children? What about childhood outcomes? How evaluate is important (i.e. longitudinal studies on children).
- Increase training resources to license-exempt care to ensure better outcomes for children.
- Learn more about those who do not participate in training – licensed as well as license-exempt providers. What works? Building relationships and trust are key to reaching those not currently engaged.
- Are there incentives for those who participate in trainings? What are the incentives? Licensing does not require ongoing participation in trainings and there are no requirements for license-exempt providers to participate in any training, as they are not required to meet even minimum health and safety requirements. At the most, license-exempt providers self-certify and meet Trustline requirements.

- Other states offer incentives to participate in trainings, such as one-time funding playground equipment. Many need basic equipment. Dr. Shivers suggested talking for people currently attracting providers to trainings. They have ideas for doing more recruitment.
- Alternatively, Dr. Shivers advocated learning more about the effectiveness/impact of training on childhood outcomes. Conversely, she professed that it is hard to get funding for evaluation.
  - Resource and referral agencies (R&Rs) stated that folks often attend trainings for information and connectedness for incentives. In northern counties, providers have expressed interest in health and safety items, such as fire extinguishers. Providers, on the other hand, stay for raffle items, such as educational toys. Brain development workshops are greatly appreciated; providers like making the connection to what it means for the child. Providers, regardless their educational level, experience changes as they learn.
  - From a provider perspective, the joy of working with children is its own reward. Some providers are closed to ongoing educational opportunities; others may initially be reluctant, but once they participate, they are excited about learning. Reluctance to trainings can be associated with the idea of attending after long days of work. Child care needs and transportation barriers may inhibit attendance.
- A recommendation was made that the County require attendance at trainings by license-exempt providers as a condition for funding. It was also noted that similar conditions should be applied to licensed providers.
- Consider the income of license-exempt providers. In many cases, their income is comparable to the families they are serving. How can the economic stability of the provider be addressed?
- Parent choice is important. To what extent do parents receive information that helps them make choices? R&Rs provide information; Stage 1 families have access to the DPSS child care web site that has information on locating and selecting care. At the time of orientation to CalWORKs, however, parents are managing a lot of information and are held to strict timeframes. Do parents in Stage 1 have enough time to access child care information, look at programs, and make thoughtful child care choices? Do we do enough to educate parents on how to find and select care? Parental choice is here to stay. National studies show that choice is limited. Again, we need to think about the quality of care reaching children.
- Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) ties funding to five days of training for their contracted sites. Through Starting Points, LAUP is doing outreach to assist providers in meeting the LAUP quality standards.
- Increasing our body of knowledge is key. Partnerships with universities and R&Rs may inform research. A statewide evaluation conducted in Illinois may serve as a good starting model.

- Mandates are necessary, but an effort must be made to not exclude parental choice and choices around culture.
- Examine data collected through First 5 LA's early funding initiatives, some of which resulted in work with license-exempt providers (ex. Pomona). Evaluations may have been more anecdotal and focused on providers rather than childhood outcomes. LACOE/Family Child Care Training Institute contracted with an outside evaluator who conducted interviews over telephone in English, Spanish and Chinese. Ms. Isenberg will share results.
- A suggestion for framing the work ahead: 1) address and counter the myths; 2) address some of problems (i.e. define legislative strategies); 3) build upon parents as partners with providers; and 4) measure child outcomes.

## **5. Lunch**

## **6. Election of Officers**

Ms. Connie Russell reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee, including Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura, Ms. Joan McGowan, and Ms. Isenberg. The Nominating Committee recommended that Mr. Rezvani and Mr. Robert Wiltse remain as chair and co-chair respectively.

Mr. Dennis moved to nominate Mr. Rezvani as Chair and Mr. Wiltse as co-chair; seconded by Ms. Nishimura. The motion passed as moved.

Ms. Isenberg encouraged folks to begin thinking about officers for next year as this is the last allowable term of service for the current Chair and Co-Chair. Mr. Rezvani thanked the Roundtable for their support.

## **7. Update on the Quality Rating System**

Mr. Rezvani reported that the Roundtable has received an extension to September 29, 2006, to continue work on the implementation plan before it is reported to the Board of Supervisors. The Roundtable is seeking programmatic and funding partners. Connections for Children and the City of Santa Monica have expressed interest in using the Quality Rating Instrument to pilot a small-tiered reimbursement program. Other partners are in development. The meeting with County Counsel resulted was positive. Their advice was if the Roundtable is going to take on this type of project, to do it well! To minimize liability, they have offered to develop disclaimer language.

Ms. Nishimura reported that Ms. Monica Mathur, the Occupational Therapist doctoral student interning with the Office of Child Care, has refined the identification and inclusion of children with special needs component. Ms. Arlene Rhine announced the new title, *Steps to Excellence*, and spoke to the ongoing work with LAUP to assure alignment. Ms. Rhine directed members to the sample "applicant binders" on the tables that would be complemented with a box for organizing their supporting documents. Ms. Rhine added that various state offices are showing

an interest in the quality rating system, which has resulted in a recent meeting with Ms. Julianne Huerta, Republican Caucus Finance Consultant.

In response to Mr. Dennis' request for the status of the Child Care Planning Committee's work to attach costs to the quality rating system, Ms. Laura Escobedo provided an update. The Committee's Quality and Compensation Work Group has taken on the task of creating budgets for levels three through five. The Work Group has been tackling staffing costs and is beginning work on those items directly related to the inclusion of children with special needs. The timeframe for completing the models is six months. Mr. Dennis would like the Roundtable to answer cost questions that may arise for providers that would like to participate and achieve higher levels of quality.

Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey requested clarification on the funding needs. Ms. Malaske-Samu reported that funding is needed to pay for the actual costs of conducting the observations using the Environment Rating Scales and Adult Involvement Scales (ERS and AIS) and provide incentives to participating programs. Efforts are underway to identify community partners to provide incentives, such as higher reimbursements or bonuses, however allowing for flexibility across communities to make it work. Ms. Malaske-Samu added that the desire is to include pilot communities representing a spectrum of incomes. With respect to alignment with LAUP, work is ongoing. Ms. Carolina Alvarez reported that LAUP currently does not have a component on families and communities. LAUP is exploring piloting this component with some of their current providers. Ms. Imelda Foley expressed gratitude that there is alignment, including accepting documents used by other entities and incorporating the LAUP classroom scale into overall program scale.

#### **8. Can the early care and education field preserve diversity while raising the educational standards?**

Mr. Rezvani introduced Dr. Marlene Zepeda to lead the discussion on the early care and education workforce. Dr. Zepeda is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Child and Family Studies at California State University Los Angeles. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Child Development from California State University Los Angeles and her Master of Arts and Ph.D. degrees in Developmental Studies from the University of California Los Angeles. She also has experience as a preschool and elementary school teacher and community college instructor. Dr. Zepeda has a special interest in issues affecting young Latino children and their families. She participated in the development of the California's Pre-kindergarten and Development Guidelines sponsored by the Child Development Division of California's State Department of Education and is the first author of the forthcoming book entitled, "Bridging Cultures in Early Care and Education".

Dr. Zepeda referred to the workforce study recently released by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, Institute of Industrial Relations at the University of California at Berkeley and the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network. (Copies of the highlights for Los Angeles County were included in members' materials.) This study revealed that the current workforce serving children from birth to five years of age is significantly more diverse than the K-12 system. She mentioned Latino and Asian teachers are relatively over-represented compared to the diversity of children in the classroom, while the proportion of

African American teachers is comparable to proportion of children. Teachers with Associate of Arts degree are more diverse and linguistically competent than people with Bachelor degrees; this diversity in the staff is lost as move into the higher positions, with directors tending to be white women. Dr. Zepeda also referred to findings that the current workforce is aging and nearing retirement. Diversity of the workforce is at risk as early childhood educators are encouraged to obtain BAs. The question is how can we maintain diversity as we encourage the early childhood workforce to earn BAs?

Dr. Zepeda offered five considerations for discussion:

1. One of the great strengths of the early care and education workforce is its diversity.
2. Planning of a high quality, publicly funded preschool program must include an explicit commitment to preserving diversity. How can that be achieved?
3. Must move away from the idea that individuals of color cannot achieve BA degrees.
4. In thinking about this issue, we need to keep in mind the consequences of not raising standards.
5. A related issue is the cultural competence of all teachers.

Discussion:

- A challenge is attracting a diverse workforce when the compensation is not comparable to other careers requiring BAs. More resources are needed.
- What are we learning from Head Start? Has there been a change in diversity with the increased education expectations of teachers?
- What is the feasibility of someone entering the education system and achieving a degree with minimal dual language skills? Dr. Zepeda replied that it takes approximately two years before an English learner can begin taking basic general education classes. Frequently, students are screened out because colleges are not willing to invest the money needed to help the students succeed with such programs as mentoring and tutoring. Santa Ana has a program that does support English learners. Dr. Howes conducted a study that reflects on this as an issue of social justice and requiring a commitment from community.
- Stipend participants report that the financial incentives are helping them with education goals and staying in field.
- Providers with degrees from foreign countries need help securing analyses of their transcripts to determine if their degrees are comparable. Santa Clara County has a model program to analyze transcripts. Multiple populations are entering the education system from various entry points.
- Articulation between two-and four-year institutions is lacking.

- Is there a way to identify those most likely to succeed and ensure they have the resources needed to succeed, while simultaneously identifying resources to assist those not likely to achieve a degree, but help keep in the field?
- What about shifting the Stipend Program away from Child Development permits to supporting teachers' efforts to acquiring an AA and BA? A number of stipend participants have graduated with AAs and BAs. Stipends are helping pay for the cost of tuition plus for people attending public institutions. Participants need better advisement to help them move forward.
- CSULA has three tracks for child development, but all tracks require taking large numbers of elementary classes (i.e. art for elementary school). Given the large numbers of students interested in child development, the colleges and universities do not value it as a degree program and thus invest the fewest resources. Some universities provide credit for experiences (e.g. waive fieldwork experience).
- Diversity needs to occur from the entry level all the way up through the director. Most representative of diversity of children (ethnically and linguistically) are assistant teachers. Recommendation is to target this group to provide supports to move up the educational ladder.
- Mean time for a student to earn a BA at a CSU is seven years; up to 10 years for some students. The majority of students are working while attending school.
- Everything is enrollment driven. Enrollments have dropped as tuition and other costs have increased.
- Sixty-five percent of the student body at CSULA receives financial aide. Some students are loan adverse. Loan deferment programs for some careers help draw students. Policy recommendation is to inform students about financial assistance and current resources, including forgivable loan programs.
- There is an assumption that women of color are not able to earn BAs. In reality, more women of color are earning BAs.
- Emphasis should be on the outcomes we want for children. A six state study conducted by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute found a low correlation between child outcomes and BA degrees, except in math and interactions with children. Otherwise, the findings were inconsistent. The study excluded Spanish speakers.
- Everyone needs to learn to become culturally competent to work across ethnicities. Cognitive outcomes are important, as are the preservation of language and culture. An effort is underway to develop a greater understanding of language acquisition and parent engagement among early childhood educators.
- UC Davis is implementing a "learning through relationships approach," which recognizes the importance of the relationship between the caregiver and the child in determining child

outcomes. Dr. Howes' study supports the BA, supplemented by education in childhood development.

- There is research on how persons of color learn. It is not clear, how higher education is using this research to educate students of color.
- Discussions are occurring in higher education about tailoring education to the individual; however, there are no models. Professors enter teaching with their own ideas based on their experiences, role models and expectations of the university (i.e. focus on research). What does it mean in a classroom to be more student-focused? Professors teach how children learn in lecture format; not modeling the theory for the students. Some professors use active, cooperative learning methods. Students with community college experience have some hands on experience, compared to four-year colleges, in which students do not begin their degree focus until junior year. On the other hand, a large portion of CSULA's students transfer from community colleges.
- What are consequences if we do not raise standards? We will never reach our compensation goals if we do not raise the education levels of workforce (i.e. comparable to elementary teachers).
- The danger of not raising standards is that the affluent can afford high quality programs, while working poor cannot afford quality. Poor children will continue to be left behind.
- In reference to the quality rating system and identifying children with special needs and community and family sections, it is a lot to expect that someone with 12 units can manage the expectations of high quality program. The seminar on the quality rating system focused on the Adult Involvement Scale used video clips illustrating how conscientious, good teachers in high quality programs are with their language, body posture, etc. There is potential for wonderful work. There exist disparate levels of expectations – high levels for children and high levels for teachers to screen, assess, etc. without the skills.
- Teachers with expertise in working with children with special needs are needed to ensure that the program as a whole is inclusive. In addition, expertise is required to be aware of and identify community resources to complement the early care and education experience.

Dr. Zepeda concluded that opportunities exist for maintaining a diverse workforce. She mentioned that standards legislation is also looking at workforce issues. Currently there are no preschool standards in California; however, the California Department of Education is working on preschool standards. The workforce will need to understand and implement the standards.

In addition, efforts should examine ways to ensure that higher education is addressing the workforce, including those individuals hired to teach in two-and four-year institutions. The Ph.D. pipeline is lacking, although UC Davis has one with an emphasis on early childhood. She added that the mobilization in higher education was lost with the defeat of Prop 82. Questions also exist on whether the discussion should be on children zero to five or zero to eight.

**9. How can the Roundtable support a diverse and well-educated early care and education workforce?**

Ms. Isenberg requested that discussion on this issue be deferred to the September meeting of the Roundtable. Ms. Malaske-Samu will add this item to the September meeting agenda. Ms. Malaske-Samu referred members to the workforce documents included in their packets as follows: California Early Care and Education Workforce Study: Licensed Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Providers – Los Angeles County Highlights, August 2006; and Workforce Study for Los Angeles County Results in Relation to Policy Implications prepared by the Child Care Planning Committee.

Ms. Carter, in reviewing the Steps to Excellence matrix, noted that while the section on identification and inclusion of children with special needs includes referrals to Regional Centers and school districts, no mention is made about children with serious emotional disturbances. Ms. Malaske-Samu answered that Regional Centers and school districts have legal mandates. Ms. Carter was asked to provide language related to AB 3632 mandates to incorporate into the document.

**10. Closing Remarks**

Mr. Rezvani thanked members and guests for their participation in the retreat. The retreat adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Ms. Carolina Alvarez  
Ms. Nancy Carter  
Mr. Duane Dennis  
Ms. Anne Franzen  
Ms. Jan Isenberg  
Ms. Sheri Lewis  
Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey  
Ms. Joan McGowan  
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura  
Mr. Matt Rezvani  
Ms. Arlene Rhine  
Ms. Connie Russell  
Ms. Lari Sheehan  
Ms. Peggy Sisson  
Mr. Robert Wiltse

**Guests:**

Ms. Jan Brown, UCLA Center for Improving  
Child Care Quality  
Ms. Imelda Foley, LAUSD  
Ms. Lark, LAFLA  
Ms. Lily Park, Pathways  
Dr. Florence Nelson, Zero to Three  
Dr. Eva Shivers, University of Pittsburgh  
Ms. Sheila Wills, Crystal Stairs  
Dr. Marlene Zepeda, CSULA

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