Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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MEETING MINUTES

November 14, 2007
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 p.m..
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Avenue, Conference Room 739
Los Angeles, California 90012

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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

- Mr. Dennis welcomed to the Roundtable new members, Ms. Kathy House representing the County of Los Angeles Chief Executive Office, and Mr. Craig Lancaster, current chair of the Child Care Planning Committee.

- Mr. Dennis announced that Mr. William Fujioka, the County of Los Angeles Chief Executive Officer, has accepted the Roundtable's invitation to attend the Roundtable meeting scheduled for February 13, 2008.

- Mr. Dennis next reflected on a meeting between representatives of San Francisco and San Mateo counties and representatives of the Child Care Planning Committee, the Roundtable, the Education Coordinating Council, and the Fourth Supervisory District held on October 17, 2007. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how these two Northern California counties have implemented legislation allowing for additional local control of California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) child care funding. San Mateo and San Francisco are high cost counties in which families who were income eligible for subsidized child care services were "incoming out" at 75 percent of the State Median Income (SMI) well before they could afford the full cost of care.

  The discussion was very informative, helping those that attended understand in which areas these counties were afforded additional flexibility. In both situations, families are able to retain subsidized child care until they reach 84 percent of the SMI, but neither county was allowed to move funds across program types. Following this session, staff had an opportunity to meet with Mr. Nicholas Ippolito, Deputy to Supervisor Don Knabe of the Fourth District, and Ms. Victoria Evers of the Chief Executive Office Intergovernmental Relations to discuss options for Los Angeles County. The strategy proposed at that meeting was for Supervisor Knabe to convene a forum in late February/early March of 2008 to hear from child care and development operators to learn more about what they need to most effectively serve families.

Ms. Malaske-Samu commented that returning unspent funds allocated to part-day preschool programs is a major concern for Los Angeles County, as is the inability to use these funds for full day services to meet the needs of families. Mr. Whit Hayslip added that the discussion needs to also emphasize the benefit to children's early growth and development as a result of participating in a full-day program. Other comments included the need to collaborate to maximize child care funding, and returning money may be perceived as not needed.

- On October 24, 2008 the Education Coordinating Council (ECC) met and discussed proposals related to early education opportunities for children in the child welfare system. The discussion was largely positive with an interest in assuring access to high quality services for these children. The ECC accepted the recommendations in total. The report containing the recommendations will be posted on the ECC Web site at www.educationcoordinatingcouncil.org once approved by the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Terry Ogawa mentioned that since the recommendations were accepted, a decision was made to ask the Roundtable to participate and provide guidance for convening a meeting as the effort to implement the recommendations proceeds. Ms. Ogawa also stated that the ECC is committed to working with others to develop policies and advocate for reducing barriers to ensure funds are not returned to the State. Mr. Dennis reminded Roundtable members that returned child care monies go to the State's general fund, not the CDE.

- Ms. Malaske-Samu reviewed the materials included in members' packets as follows:
  - Brochure and application for the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) Training Cohort 2 beginning in February 2008. Applications are due by January 25, 2008. Ms. Michele Sartell added that substitute funding is available to programs needing to arrange for coverage in the classroom for the staff member to attend.
  - Two RAND report summaries: *Early Care and Education in the Golden State: Publicly Funded Programs Serving California's Preschool-Age Children* and *Who is Ahead and Who Is Behind? Gaps in School Readiness and Student Achievement in the Early Grades for California's Children*. The full reports are available at www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2007/RAND_TR538.pdf and www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2007/RAND_TR537.pdf respectively.
  - *California Preschool Learning Foundations: Overview to California's Revised Preschool Learning Foundations*. Links to the Revised Preschool Learning Foundations are available for comment until November 30, 2007 at www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/psfoundations.asp.
  - Wall St Journal article entitled *Growing Up: As States Tackle Poverty, Preschool Gets High Marks.*
  - A list of New Web resources.

b. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- October 10, 2007

Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura made a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Robert Wiltse seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted as written with two abstentions.

2. STEPS TO EXCELLENCE PROJECT (STEP) UPDATE

Ms. Helen Chavez, STEP Project Coordinator, provided an update on STEP implementation in the following three areas: mini-grants, training calendar, and outreach and applications.

a. Mini-grants

Four mini-grant workshops have been scheduled through mid-November in different communities throughout Los Angeles County. Of the four, one was set-up as a "conference call option".

b. Training Calendar

On November 13, 2008, the Board of Supervisors adopted a contract with the CDE to provide one-time only training funds. Ms. Malaske-Samu reported that the term of this contract is July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008, however the release of all CDE contracts was delayed until the State budget was finalized. The contract documents were not received until the second week of October. A request has been made to CDE for a time only time extension through September 30, 2007. Without the extension, we will be forced to schedule 12-months of training into just six months. In the meantime, we are finalizing plans for the following trainings sessions: Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect (PCAN); PEDS (Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status) and ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire), and Program for Infant Toddler Care in Practice. Trainings on the Environment Rating Scales (Early Childhood, Family Child Care, and Infant/Toddler) and Dual Language Learners are already underway.

c. Outreach and Applications

Ms. Chavez diagrammed the outreach strategy, which has utilized the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, the Family Child Care Associations, flyers, and 21 outreach sessions held in the nine STEP pilot communities from September though October of 2007 to disseminate information on STEP. Of the 385 attendees, 78 percent have represented family child care homes while 22 percent are from centers. Per the evaluations completed at the sessions, 163 stated that they plan to participate in STEP; 26 stated they would not participate due to the following reasons: not located in a pilot community, licensed for less than a year, already participating in a quality rating system, or not ready. To date, most of the applications received are from family child care providers located in Long Beach.

d. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Annual Conference – November 2007

Ms. Malaske-Samu, Ms. Chavez, Ms. Jan Brown, formerly of UCLA's Center for Improving Child Care Quality, and Ms. Julie Taren of the City of Santa Monica presented a workshop on the quality rating system at the NAEYC Annual Conference held in Chicago during the week of November 5, 2007. Ms. Malaske-Samu took a straw poll of the workshop participants and learned that a number of them are participating in quality rating system and their experience overall has been positive. Mr. Hayslip congratulated the panel on a well-presented and received workshop.

Ms. Malaske-Samu asked Mr. Hayslip and Ms. Chavez to reflect on the workshop they attended entitled "Sharpening the lens on developmentally appropriate practice: Revision of the NAEYC position statement". The panelists were Ms. Carol Copple, NAEYC; Ms. Sue Bredekamp, Council for Professional Recognition; and Barbara Bowman, Chicago Public Schools (formerly with the Erikson Institute in Chicago). In summary, Mr. Hayslip reported that NAEYC is revising its position statement and guide for developmentally appropriate practice for zero to eight year olds due to extreme concern with the achievement gap between poor and middle income children, most notably with respect to the impact of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The discussion in part, focused on the need for intentionality within developmentally appropriate practices and a curriculum that prepares children, particularly poor children, for school. This shift in position is creating controversy in the early care and education field as it is perceived of as moving away from developmentally appropriate practice toward a more academic approach and creating a dual track system, one for poor children and the other for middle and higher income children.

Based on conversations with one of the panelists following the session, Mr. Hayslip learned that developmentally appropriate practice is not being discarded, rather an integration of intentionality which is not implicit in the current practice model. He added that the kindergarten curriculum is not expected to change, rather early childhood programs are expected to do more for children to prepare them for the rigors of kindergarten.

Mr. Hayslip then commented on the relevancy to the earlier discussion around the need for full-day programs. He argued that a full-day with children looks a lot different than a 2½ hour per day content-rich program; a full day allows the integration of the curriculum content into the mix of child-directed and teacher directed activities and children's play.

Ms. Malaske-Samu remarked on the challenges of expecting early educators to be intentional in their practices when they do not have the level of education required. Mr. Hayslip agreed, adding that he would like to engage in more conversations on the quality of teacher/adult-child interactions, which calls for the question: Are we looking at the quality of training and compensation to get them to do that? Ms. Chavez added that the other piece missing from the conversation was parent involvement.

3. FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Ms. Sartell directed members to the document *Winners and Losers: A Report on the California State Legislature and Budget – Child Care and Development* included with their materials. The document summarizes the California State Budget items for child care and development for 2007-08. In addition, it lists the bills relating to child care and development that were either passed or vetoed during this legislative session. Ms. Sartell commented that like this year's session, not much change in terms of gains is anticipated given the current state of the budget and looming deficit.

Ms. Malaske-Samu referred members to two documents in their materials: *Suggested Changes to Federal Legislation Policies Addressing Issues of Major County Interest* and *Federal Legislative Policies Addressing Issues of Major County Interest.* The first document contained suggested changes to the previous year's policy recommendations for children and family services. Most of the recommended changes address the interface between the child welfare and child care and development systems. Among the recommended changes is supporting funding at the federal level that would allow the child welfare system to invest some of its dollars into child care for their children.

Ms. Malaske-Samu reported that the recommendations are due to Intergovernmental Relations by November 16, 2007. Members were invited to provide suggestions to the Federal Legislative Agenda, resulting in the following recommended revisions:

7. <u>Children and Family Services</u>

m) Revise to read: "Support proposals which provide funding for state and local governments ***for full-day, full-year child care programs, with an emphasis on funding for programs serving infants and toddlers,*** and before and after school programs ***for school age children***.

n) Revise to read: "Support proposals which provide funding for state and local government to increase access, availability and ***affordability*** of child care for working and low-income families ***and children with special needs***, promote systems to monitor the quality of child care, and support the development and creation of child care facilities, including by allowing a portion of the Child Care and Development Block Grant funds to be used to build child care facilities in areas with a shortage of licensed child care."

p) Revise to read: "Support legislation to provide funding to local school districts to implement locally determined programs to help educate public school students with limited English proficiency and ***support legislation to provide funding to child care and development programs to implement locally determined programs which support language, literacy and learning for children birth to five years of age with limited English proficiency.***"

Add item: "***Support proposals which would increase funding for the professional development, training and education of the child care and development workforce and provide comparable compensation to their skills and education.***

9. Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

b) Revise to read: "Support proposals and funding which would promote income security, housing, health care, ***child care and development services for pregnant and parenting teens,*** and education and vocational opportunities for youth emancipating from foster care, and which would lower the age provision of the Independent Living Program to 14 years."

4. WHAT DOES IT COST TO MEET STEP STANDARDS?

Mr. Dennis welcomed Ms. Laura Escobedo, staff to the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), to the Roundtable meeting to present the Committee's report on their analysis of costs to programs on steps three through five of the STEP scoring matrix.

Ms. Escobedo referred members to their materials for a copy of her provided a PowerPoint presentation and matrices of cost per child based on STEP budget components. In her presentation, Ms. Escobedo outlined the assumptions for creating the cost analysis and reviewed the alignment of the standards with Title 5 and accreditation for steps three, four and five. Her remaining slides presented the budget implications for preschool only, infant/toddler only (from a combined program), preschool only (from a combined program), and comparisons with the current Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR) and Regional Market Rate (RMR). The largest discrepancy in cost and most expensive care under STEP is for infant/toddler care.

Comments:

- There are potentially significantly higher costs for moving from a Step 1 or 2 to Step 3, which raises the question of why a provider would want to participate in STEP. On the other hand, if the provider is rated at Step 1 or 2, but costs are equivalent to those for a Step 5 program, why not improve the quality?
- Cost of infant/toddler estimated at $72 per day is too low. Ms. Escobedo replied that the $72 per day is an average.

Ms. Escobedo concluded her comments by suggesting that the analysis can be used as a tool for promoting STEP and advocating for raising reimbursement rates. The current rates are insufficient to pay for quality. She added that while it does cost more to operate a quality program, it is not significantly higher except for infants.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

6. CALL TO ADJOURN

Mr. Dennis adjourned the meeting at 11:40 p.m.

Commissioners Present:
Ms. Maria Calix
Mr. Duane Dennis
Mr. Whit Hayslip
Ms. Kathy House
Mr. Craig Lancaster
Ms. Sheri Lewis
Ms. Terri Chew Nishimura
Ms. Arlene Rhine
Mr. Robert Wiltse
Ms. Mika Yamamoto
Ms. Ruth Yoon

Guests:
Ms. Leila Espinosa, UCLA/EDSI
Ms. Kristen Laws, First 5 LA
Ms. Terry Ogawa, Education Coordinating Council
Ms. Kate Sachnoff, First 5 LA
Ms. Peggy Sisson, City of Pasadena
Ms. Ellie Zucker, UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality

Staff:
Ms. Helen Chavez
Ms. Laura Escobedo
Ms. Kathy Malaske-Samu
Ms. Michele Sartell