



## Policy Roundtable for Child Care

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### **MEETING MINUTES**

April 8, 2009

10:00 a.m. – noon

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 10:03 a.m. Members and guests were welcomed and invited to introduce themselves.

##### **a. Review of Minutes**

- March 11, 2009

Ms. Arlene Rhine made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Whit Hayslip seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with one abstention.

#### **2. RESPONDING TO THE CALWORKS STAGE 1 CHILD CARE UTILIZATION REPORT**

Ms. Charlotte Lee of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) distributed three handouts: a report entitled *Stage 1 Child Care Subsidies for Welfare to Work Participants in Los Angeles: An Analysis of Eligibility and Utilization Patterns*, a document containing updates on work of the sub-workgroups, and a matrix of recommended actions with status update information.

Ms. Lee reported that the study was commissioned by DPSS and conducted by the Research and Evaluation Section of the Service Integration Branch. The study examined the use of child care services by eligible CalWORKs participants to support their welfare to work activities. DPSS contracts with the Alternative Payment (AP) Programs to directly administer CalWORKs Stage 1 Child Care. Administrative data was the sole source of information for the study.

According to Ms. Lee, among the notable findings in the report are the numbers of requests for child care services that are denied, often due to participants not completing and submitting their paperwork. Additionally, non-English and non-Spanish speakers were less likely to follow through on their requests for child care, pointing to barriers relating to language and culture. On the other hand, younger parents were more likely to follow through with meeting the requirements for accessing child care. Ms. Lee added that families involved with specialized services for domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health concerns faced additional barriers to accessing child care services.

Ms. Lee stated that the report findings raised many additional questions. A key finding of the report points to the paperwork participants need to complete, which is onerous. She added that those most vulnerable are less likely to comply with the paperwork and documentation requirements for obtaining child care and development services. More vulnerable families also are frequently navigating multiple systems, each with its own set of requirements and expectations. And while the intent of CalWORKs is to move families into work and self-sufficiency, child care and development services make it possible for parents to work, while also supporting the healthy development of young children.

Ms. Lee relayed that two sub-workgroups have been formed to develop recommendations for overcoming the barriers that CalWORKs families confront in accessing child care and development services. The two sub-workgroups, Forms and Specialized Supportive Services, are comprised of individuals representing DPSS partners, legal advocates, community colleges, and the Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Agencies/AP Programs. The Forms Sub-workgroup is working on simplifying and streamlining the forms required as part of the Stage 1 Child Care packet. It was mentioned that in 2006 when DPSS negotiated the initial contract with the R&Rs/APs, fraud was the issue that drove the amount of paperwork required from providers and parents. Ms. Lee mentioned that as they move forward to improve access, they will still have the tension between fraud/program integrity and access. The goal will be to work internally to keep fraud to minimum, while not hindering access. The Forms Sub-workgroup plans to have recommendations ready by the end of April. The Specialized Supportive Services Sub-workgroup is exploring options to expedite processing child care requests and conducting cross trainings for R&Rs/APs and DPSS staff. This group will also address the needs of the non-English speaking populations. Thus far, neither group has reached consensus on the recommendations, among them deciding who should be the initial point of contact for determining the family's eligibility for child care and development services – DPSS or the R&R/APs.

Negotiations to renew the child care service contract between DPSS and the R&R/APs have begun. DPSS and the APPs both agree that changes need to occur to better serve families and their children. Mr. Dennis wrapped up the conversation by stating that the Roundtable has a policy framework that includes ensuring DPSS families have access to high quality early care and education services. Ms. Malaske-Samu summarized the challenge of working with the multiple programs that further highlights the complications of the respective systems. She suggested trying a case management approach that establishes personal connections with families to help them navigate the systems. She added that attention is required for linking eligible DCFS families with CalWORKs to ensure continuity of child care services over five years rather than only up to 18 months through DCFS child care. Lastly, she offered a representative of the Roundtable or Office of Child Care to participate in the Specialized Supportive Services Sub-workgroup to help the most vulnerable families.

### **3. UPDATE ON THE CHILD CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

#### **a. Implementation of the Child Care Policy Framework**

Ms. Malaske-Samu stated that the agreement between DCFS and the Office of Child Care for training was submitted for the Board of Supervisors Meeting Agenda on April 14, 2009. DCFS has committed a small amount of funding for trainings on developmental screenings tools, the Environment Rating Scales, and positive relationship-building to STEP participants and the cadre of child care providers receiving payments through the DCFS AP Program. The training

money needs to be spent by the end of June 2009. The Office of Child Care will work closely with the DCFS on developing training models and a cohesive structure for the trainings.

Ms. Malaske-Samu also reported that work was beginning with First 5 LA to develop a public relations campaign targeted to child welfare clients. A meeting is scheduled for May 19, 2009.

The first report on the status of implementing the policy framework is due to the Board of Supervisors in July of 2009.

#### **4. UPDATE ON STEPS TO EXCELLENCE PROJECT (STEP) CELEBRATION**

Mr. Dennis announced that he will be traveling on April 14<sup>th</sup>, so Ms. Connie Russell will serve as mistress of ceremonies. To date, 118 RSVPs have been received. Breakfast will be served beginning at 7:30 a.m. and will include chorizo and eggs, rice and beans, breakfast burritos, pan dulce, and hot chocolate, coffee, tea, and juice. Supervisor Knabe will make welcoming remarks, followed by a few words from Chief Executive Officer Bill Fujioka. Ms. Sandy Banks of the Los Angeles Times will present the keynote address. STEP participants attending the breakfast will receive gift bags and certificates. Alice Maldonado of Mockingbird Communications is contributing public relations assistance.

Mr. Whit Hayslip commented on the outcome of the STEP evaluation at a Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) site. During the rating review, staff focused on meeting the standards of the Adult Involvement Scale (AIS) that looks at the quality of interactions between teachers and children. At the debriefing, staff commented that it was their easiest day with children, attributing it to enhancing their staff/child interactions.

#### **5. JOINT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATION REPORT**

Ms. Michele Sartell referred members to their meeting packets for copies of the matrix on legislation being considered by the California State and Federal Legislatures updated as of April 7, 2009 and the memo to the Board of Supervisors dated March 27, 2009 providing the Sacramento Update.

##### **a. Federal Update**

Ms. Sartell mentioned that two bills of interest have been introduced by the House of Representatives (see pages 14 and 15 for H.R. 460 and H.R. 702). She added that the House and Senate have passed their respective budget resolutions, which include support for the President's early childhood initiatives and promise to build upon the investments included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The differences in the budget resolutions will be resolved in a joint conference committee.

With respect to release of funding under the ARRA, the Office of Head Start will soon issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the new Early Head Start creation and expansion funds. California Head Start Association in partnership with First 5 California, WestEd and Preschool California is offering training and technical assistance to organizations planning to respond to the RFP. The information and training sessions will occur in three phases. A copy of the training opportunities flyer was included in the meeting materials.

Ms. Sartell reported that a number of national organizations have pages on their Web sites dedicated to the ARRA and its implications for child care and development as follows:

- Child Care and Early Education at CLASP (Center for Law and Social Policy): [www.childcareandearlyed.clasp.org](http://www.childcareandearlyed.clasp.org)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): [www.naeyc.org/policy/arra/](http://www.naeyc.org/policy/arra/)
- National Women’s Law Center: [www.nwlc.org](http://www.nwlc.org)
- Zero to Three: [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org), click on Public Policy

#### **b. California Update**

Ms. Sartell returned members and guests to the legislative matrix for summaries of the bills introduced in the Assembly and Senate. She directed attention to SB 244 (Wright), which was presented by Mr. Richard Cohen on behalf of the bill sponsor, the Los Angeles County Education Foundation, at the March meeting. This bill would amend various sections of the Education and Welfare and Institutions Code to give priority for child care and development services to children ages birth to five who are in the foster care system, are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, are in relative care, were in the foster care system and were recently adopted, are homeless, or have a parent who is in the foster care system, on probation, on parole or in a correctional or residential treatment facility receive priority. The Joint Committee on Legislation will review this bill as well as other bills more closely at their next meeting scheduled for April 27, 2009 at 12:00 p.m. The bill was amended on March 31, 2009 and referred to the Senate Education Committee; no hearing date has been scheduled.

Members and guests may recall Mr. Adam Sonnenshein’s presentation of AB 495 (Davis), sponsored by Los Angeles Universal Preschool. This bill has been referred to the Assembly Education Committee and is scheduled for a hearing on April 15, 2009.

Ms. Sartell next referred members and guests to the Sacramento Update (see page 2) for the item to remove the sunset date on the expansion of the Stipend Program. The expansion allows family child care providers participating in Family Child Care Home Education Networks and persons working in family child care homes and centers serving a majority of children subsidized by the California Department of Education eligibility for the Stipend Program. In addition, there is a summary of a proposal for County-sponsored legislation in 2010 to address retention of unspent child care and development funds (see page 4).

In closing, Ms. Sartell referred members and guests to the bottom of page 15 of the matrix for the listing of Assembly and Senate Budget Subcommittee hearings that will address child care and development and related services. Information on accessing the hearings on the Web site has been added.

## **6. COLLEGE AGENCY REPORTS**

### **a. Child Care Planning Committee**

Ms. Holly Reynolds relayed that Ms. Moira Inkelas of UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families & Communities presented their work on the First 5 LA funded Early Developmental Screening Initiative (EDSI). Efforts are underway in pilot communities to promote the use of developmental screening tools in child care and development programs.

The Child Care Planning Committee is currently recruiting members for 2009-10. Applications are available at the Office of Child Care Web site at [www.childcare.lacounty.gov](http://www.childcare.lacounty.gov).

**b. Commission on Children and Families**

Ms. Ann Franzen reported that the Commission is preparing for its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. She will have more information for the May meeting. Ms. Malaske-Samu will be presenting the policy framework at their upcoming meeting. The Commission is interested in working with the Roundtable in connecting emancipating teen parents with child care and development services before they exit the system.

**c. Education Coordinating Council**

Ms. Michelle Barritt provided a brief report on behalf of Ms. Terry Ogawa. The Board of Supervisors at their March meeting approved formally placing the Education Coordinating Council (ECC) within the Chief Executive Office/Service Integration Branch effective July 1, 2009. Mr. Miguel Santana, Deputy CEO over the Children & Families Well-being Cluster will speak to the transition at the ECC's meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 30, 2009.

**d. First 5 Los Angeles Commission**

Mr. Dennis announced that he will attend his first Commission meeting as the Roundtable representative in May. He plans to meet regularly with early care and education advisors to ensure that he is bringing Roundtable issues to the table.

**e. Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP)**

Mr. Adam Sonnenshein reported on the first meeting of the Early Childhood Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) held in March in Sacramento. The Committee will evaluate a series of systems serving children birth to five and strategies for implementing a quality rating and improvement system, including a tiered reimbursement system. He mentioned that evaluation reflecting child outcomes is needed. Ms. Laura Escobedo was a member of a panel presenting on quality systems; Ms. Escobedo reported on rating systems being implemented in Los Angeles County.

The Advisory Committee agreed to form five to six subcommittees, where he anticipates most of the actual work occurring and therefore a good for place public participation. The subcommittees will make recommendations to the full Advisory Committee. Los Angeles County has three representatives on the Advisory Committee: Mr. Cliff Marcusson, Ms. Yolie Flores Aguilar and Dr. Celia Ayala.

The California Department of Education has a Web site dedicated to the work of the Advisory Committee as follows: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/sb1629advisorycommittee.asp>.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

## **8. CALL TO ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

### **Commissioners Present:**

Mr. Duane Dennis  
Ms. Ann Franzen  
Mr. Whit Hayslip  
Ms. Kathy House  
Ms. Charlotte Lee  
Ms. Holly Reynolds  
Mr. Matt Rezvani  
Ms. Arlene Rhine  
Ms. Connie Russell  
Ms. Esther Torrez

### **Guests:**

Ms. Cristina Alvarado, Child Care Information Services  
Ms. Michelle Barritt, Education Coordinating Council  
Ms. Diana Careaga, First 5 LA  
Mr. Darrell Hills, Drew Child Development Center  
Mr. Jawane Hilton, Center for Community and Family Services  
Mr. Michael Olenick, Child Care Resource Center  
Mr. John Russell, Center for Community and Family Services  
Mr. Adam Sonnenshein, Los Angeles Universal Preschool  
Mr. Steve Sturm, Department of Children and Family Services  
Ms. Cristina Torres, UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities  
Ms. Grace Cainoy Weltman, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles

### **Staff:**

Ms. Laura Escobedo  
Ms. Kathleen Malaske-Samu  
Ms. Michele Sartell