POLICY ROUNTABLE FOR CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT
JANUARY 13, 2021 ♦ 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.
Microsoft Teams
To join by telephone: +1 323-776-6996 United States, Los Angeles (Toll); Conference ID: 853169004#

AGENDA

Welcome and Introductions
10:00 1. Roll Call of Membership Action Item Debra Colman, OAECE

10:10 2. Comments from the Chair Information Jackie Majors, Chair

10:25 3. Approval of Minutes – December 9, 2020 Action Item Jackie Majors Erica Weiss, OAECE
- Roll Call Vote

Public Policy Update
10:35 4. First Year of 2021-22 Legislative Session Information Dean Tagawa, LAUSD
- State Legislation Introduced to Date of Likely Interest
- Board of Supervisor Advocacy Priorities - Federal and State
- Federal Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 – Head Start and Child Care and Development Block Grant/COVID-19 Relief

COVID-19 – Early Care and Education Update
10:50 5. Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Vaccines Information Jackie Majors Debra Colman

Our Strategic Plan in Motion
11:10 6. Policy Strategy for FY 2020-21 Discussion Debra Colman Karla Pleitéz Howell, Vice Chair
- Review of Advocacy Priorities
- Revisiting Opportunities and Threats
- Exploration of Tactics

Wrap Up
11:45 7. Announcements and Public Comment Information

11:55 8. Meeting in Review and Call to Adjourn Information Karla Pleitéz Howell, Vice Chair

Next Virtual Meeting:
Wednesday, February 10, 2021 ♦ 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Vision
Children are healthy, thriving and have equitable opportunities to achieve optimal development and succeed in life.

Mission
Lead, build, and strengthen an affordable and high-quality early care and education system for the children and families in Los Angeles County.
Welcome and Introductions

1. Roll Call of Membership

Debra Colman, Director of the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education opened the meeting of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development (Roundtable) at 10:04 a.m. by reading the grounding statement pertaining to the conducting of the virtual meeting. She then called roll of the membership.

2. Comments by the Chair

Chair Jackie Majors welcomed members, alternates and guests. She noted the meeting as the last of the calendar year, one that has demonstrated the resiliency of the early care and education field. She offered that it is time to think about the future of the Roundtable’s work as it enters 2021. Jackie expressed gratitude to the Office for the Education of Early Care and Education as the cornerstone for early care and education during the COVID-19 pandemic and its efforts for shepherding the work of the Roundtable.

Jackie continued by stating that early care and education is on the map and noted that without it, other systems will not work. Early care and education has ensured that children are cared for safely, which has required the collaboration of multiple partners – traditional and non-traditional. Jackie suggested that the Roundtable needs to think about its role as a leader with three leverage points for influence in the coming year: 1) setting goals, which already is in process with the Unified Strategic Plan and the identified goals; 2) orchestrating the delivery of the work; and 3) mobilizing by using the collective talents of the membership to go beyond talking and planning.

Continuing to set the stage for the meeting, Jackie shared her enthusiasm for the election of Senator Holly Mitchell as the new Supervisor, representing the second district, because she makes a difference. Jackie added her support for Supervisor Mitchell as she is: 1) THE champion for children and families and understands the early care and education work; 2) undaunted by forces working against her; and 3) a mobilizer. Jackie announced that Emily Williams is remaining as part of Supervisor’s transition team with the second district and will focus on early care and education in the coming months. Emily relayed that she will be attending future Roundtable meetings to introduce new staff, and noted that Porsha Cropper will be leaving to continue working with now Los Angeles City Council Member Mark Ridley-Thomas.

3. Roundtable Welcome and Farewell

Jackie announced that Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey submitted her resignation from the Roundtable as representative of the Commission on Children and Families (Commission) and added that the Commission recently appointed Jacquelyn to serve as their representative to the First 5 LA Board. Jackie commented on Jacquelyn’s role to many as a mentor in addition to long-standing and influential member of the Roundtable. Jacquelyn has continuously challenged Roundtable members to use data to inform decisions and consider the integration of services and County systems as integral to meeting the needs of children and families. Other members relayed their
gratitude to Jacquelyn for her leadership and passion on behalf of the children and families of Los Angeles County. Many added their experiences of benefiting from Jacquelyn’s mentorship and as a colleague, willing to share her wealth of knowledge both about early care and education and navigating Los Angeles County’s bureaucracy. Jacquelyn thanked everyone for their comments and added that she has been reflecting on when the Roundtable was established with guidance from the Los Angeles County Children’s Planning Council in response to Supervisor Gloria Molina’s concern that the County was not doing enough to address the early care and education needs of families. The Roundtable, according to Jacquelyn, has elevated its pivotal in the early care and education community during 2020 and suggested that 2021 will be even more important. She concluded by welcoming Steve Zimmer as the Commission representative to replace her, noting that his role with the City of Los Angeles in the Mayor’s Office will serve as added value. And, Jacquelyn has volunteered to serve as Steve’s alternate!

Jackie next welcomed Ariana Oliva as Julie Taren’s alternate to the Roundtable on behalf of the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee) and Lisa-Marie-Kay as Jennifer Hottenroth’s alternate on behalf of the Department of Children and Family Services.

4. Approval of the Minutes

Jackie Majors, Chair, presented the minutes from October 14, 2020 and asked for a motion to approve. Karen Chang made the motion to approve the minutes; Dawn Kurtz seconded the motion. The motion on the minutes passed with Nora Garcia-Rosales abstaining.

Guest Speaker

5. CARES Act Child Care Voucher Presentation (County Investment)

Cristina Alvarado, Executive Director of the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles (CCALA), directed meeting participants to her slide deck. She acknowledged her organization’s partnership with the Department of Public Health and the City of Los Angeles to provide child care vouchers for essential workers and low-income working parents during COVID-19 with CARES Act funding awarded by the federal government to local counties and municipalities for a number of uses. The Department of Public Health decided to allocate $15 million and the City of Los Angeles $10 million of their respective CARES funds to early care and education, building upon funding received locally from the California Department of Education. As of November 30, 2020, vouchers have been distributed to 5,480 eligible families to serve 8,384 children. Cristina noted the larger numbers of families with school age children needing services due to school closures.

Meeting participants commented on the remarkable achievement of the partnership in a very short amount of time. Cristina added that Senator Mitchell and Assembly Member Ting recently set aside an additional $110 million for early care and education, some of which will augment contract funds to the APP Agencies. More information is expected by mid-December. In the meantime, Cristina urged meeting participants to contact their members of congress to support another allocation of federal stimulus funding to support much needed early care and education services.
Public Policy Update

6. Release of Additional CARES Act Funds to Early Care and Education Programs (State Investment)

Michele Sartell, staff with the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education, provided a brief overview of her slide deck presentation and then reported on the recent interim guidance released by the California Department of Education (CDE) pertaining to an additional $110 million for distribution to support early care and education. Michele relayed that the allocation of funding is an outcome of a letter issued by the Joint Legislative Budget Committee released on October 21st to address the additional costs incurred by early care and education programs across the state. The letter was followed by Executive Order N-129-20 for the release of funds signed by Governor Newsom on October 28th. The funds are intended to mitigate some of the challenges faced by CDE-contracted early care and education agencies serving families eligible for state subsidized services by augmenting their contracts. Of the allocation, $30 million is to cover the cost of waived family fees for enrolled children receiving distance virtual learning. The remaining $80 million will augment contracted agencies experiencing over-earnings due to serving school age children requiring full-time care and extending the timeline for providing temporary emergency child care services. The distribution of funds began in late November and will continue through the end of the calendar year with contract amendments completed by late February 2021.

Michele mentioned that the legislature was convened on December 7th for the first year of the 2021-22 legislative session at which time 164 bills were introduced. Eight bills to date have been identified as of likely interest to the field of early care and education. She directed members to their meeting packets for the matrix of legislation, commenting that February 19th is the last date for the introduction of bills. In other news, Michele announced that the Master Plan for Early Care and Education was released by the Governor on December 1st, the California Women's Legislative Caucus elected Assemblymember Cristina Garcia as Chair and Senator Nancy Skinner as Vice Chair, and President Elect Joe Biden introduced his $335 billion child care plan as part of a larger $775 billion caregiving proposal. Michele referred to their packets for ancillary materials pertaining to these items.

Our Strategic Plan in Motion

7. Policy Strategy for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21

Debra began by presenting a status update of COVID-19 cases in Los Angeles County, noting the alarming rate of positive cases by late November 2020 compared to early September, almost doubling over this period of time. Debra also commented on the significant increases in hospitalization and death rates due to COVID-19.

Debra relayed that early care and education from the start of the pandemic was called out as an essential service and therefore never asked to close, allowing essential workers and others to work. Debra commented on the increased costs experienced by programs due to serving smaller group sizes with enhanced disinfecting requirements. Approximately 50 percent of the current system is open, yet several programs that closed over the course of pandemic have not been able to re-open and/or are facing financial hardships. She added that the need to serve school age children with school district closures created a further strain on early care and education system.
Debra reviewed the work of the Roundtable since September to explore core issues impacting the field of early care and education to identify a key area requiring its attention. Addressing reimbursement rates was elevated as the most critical issue. Debra acknowledged the already fragile system before COVID-19 and the relevance to ensure that it does not collapse during COVID-19. Next, Debra reviewed the four strategic priority areas – access, quality, workforce, and families and community – and noted areas of alignment between access and workforce to the bolstering the stabilization of early care and education during COVID-19.

Karla Pleitéz Howell, Vice Chair of the Roundtable, discussed balancing flexibility with focus and reflected on the three goals articulated by Jackie at the beginning of the meeting – setting goals, orchestrating and mobilizing – and putting children and and families at the center of the work going forward. She added that Jacquelyn reminded meeting participants of the Roundtable’s purpose to make policy recommendatons to the Board of Supervisors and serve as a resource to County departments. Karla also spoke to the values for guiding the strategies: 1) equity; 2) collaboration and partnership with stakeholders; 3) trauma informed; 4) policies and systems change; and 5) data. Referencing the final slide, Karla talked about the need for an analysis given how work has changed in this era of COVID-19, suggesting a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to bring focus as the Roundtable considers its work as advocates.

Karla next engaged meeting participants in identify threats and opportunities as starting points. Following are comments that were offered by meeting participants:

**Threats**
- As an example, the co-opting of equity issues when young children furthest from opportunities to access the benefits of early care and education due to virtual learning.
- Number of programs closed; how many have permanently closed? Pay attention to data and areas of investment needed.
- Workforce – how advocate for those working with children – how support providers and their career options?
- Child care deserts are impacted by the loss of programs when resources are already in short supply.
- How do we attract people to the field and keep them there when they are so poorly paid. Impacts on women of color are significant. Also notable, people are leaving due to COVID exposure.
- Worried about providers – women are heroines, but historically marginalized and not valued. Now with COVID, they are the ones who have stepped up, but still experience being under-valued even when deemed essential. 1) When look at funding (COVID), need to figure out how to support individual needs of providers – rates important, yet providers need to pay their utilities or make other modifications to operate under COVID guidance; and 2) work to increase qualifications is a barrier when community colleges struggling to keep students engaged.

**Opportunities**
- As an example, Supervisor Holly Mitchell has a key interest in early care and education, adding to the overall interest of the Board of Supervisors, comprised of all women, in early care and education.
- With center closures, need to pay attention to available facility space, particularly in the communities where the closures are occurring.
- If early educators are essential, their pay should reflect that they are essential. There is an opportunity to change the reimbursement rate system with a reasonable reimbursement rate
and pay scale that begins with a living wage. What role can the Roundtable play in the statewide conversation already underway?

- Use existing relationships – Los Angeles County Office of Education, First 5 LA, CCALA, Los Angeles Unified School District, City of Los Angeles, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education/Department of Public Health – that mobilized resources quickly. Build upon as advocates to ensure community needs are met.
- Leverage media to talk about child care workers as essential; bring messages to the attention of the public. Without child care, many other essential workers would not be able to work. This is an action that all members of the Roundtable can adopt – take to social media and other forums.
- Partnership with the City by including their voice at the table and leveraging their resources.

Wrap-up

8. Meeting in Review

Karla reviewed the key points of the discussion as follows:
1) Good-bye to Jacquelyn and welcome to new friends including connection with the City of Los Angeles.
2) Overview of the allocation of CARES Act funds to support families’ access to early care and education services. A remarkable learning opportunity on the power of relationships that expedited the distribution of funds.
3) The public policy report identified opportunities that exist for future advocacy strategies.
4) Overview of COVID-19 and strategic thinking to stay in action, be flexible as enter 2021.

Karla closed by sharing her thoughts on equity as an essential lens for the work. Jackie added that she serves on a task force that is deeply thinking and talking about equity. She referred to a blog posted on July 22, 2015, “Seeing and Naming Racism in Nonprofit and Public Organizations” that has challenged her thinking. The blog is available at http://www.mayenoconsulting.com/wordpress/seeing-and-naming-racism-in-nonprofit-and-public-organizations/.

9. Announcements and Public Comment

Jackie asked for public comments and announcements.

- Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), Los Angeles County’s local child care and development planning council also staffed by the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education, meets the first Wednesday of every month from September through June and is a strategic partner with the Roundtable. This year’s theme is “Reimagining an Equitable Early Care and Education System for Providers and Families”, which serves as the guide for conversations through lens of social justice and racial equity in context of COVID-19. As such, the Planning Committee meeting has featured several presentations reflective of the theme, the latest a presentation by Early Edge California and Advancement Project California on their report addressing the immediate COVID-19 related needs of Dual Language Learners and their families. Other guest presentations have included First 5 LA on their new indicators for young children report, “Pathway to Progress: Indicators of Young Child Well-being in Los Angeles County” and a call for help with early thinking on developing systems indicators as the ones outline in the report focus on population data. Earlier in the year, a staff member of the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network presented on advancing racial justice in early care and education.
during COVID-19 and beyond, noting that the field is predominantly comprised of women of color who poorly paid. While the implementation work on our Unified Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education has been put on hold, the Planning Committee is reinforcing our value to “embrace a deliberate focus on equity”, which has become particularly critical this year.

- Steve Zimmer relayed that it is his honor to follow Jacquelyn into serving as a member of the Roundtable. He announced another City partnership opportunity entitled “Rapid Response Support Services for Affected Early Childhood Education Workers”. Information regarding upcoming orientations will be forwarded to the Roundtable via e-mail by the end of the week.

10. Call to Adjourn
The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

Members Attending:
Jeannette Aguirre Carrillo, Probation Department
Ellen Cervantes, Supervisorial District 5
Karen Chang, Supervisorial District 4
Fran Chasen, Southern CA Chapter – CA Association for the Education of Young Children
Richard Cohen, Supervisorial District 3
Jennifer Hottenroth, Department of Children and Family Services
Dawn Kurtz, Child360
Jackie Majors, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles County
Jacquelyn McCroskey, Commission on Children and Families
Ofelia Medina, First 5 LA
Terry Ogawa, Supervisorial District 3
Nurhan Pirim, Department of Public Social Services
Karl Pleitáez Howell, Supervisorial District 1
Dean Tagawa, Los Angeles Unified School District
Julie Taren, Child Care Planning Committee
Boris Villacorta, Supervisorial District 1

Alternate Members Attending:
Debi Anderson, Los Angeles County Office of Education
Debra Colman, Department of Public Health
Nora Garcia Rosales, Department of Public Social Services
Elsa Jacobsen, Child360
Ariana Oliva, Child Care Planning Committee
Paul Pulver, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles

Guests Attending:
Deborah Allen, Department of Public Health
Cristina Alvarado, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
Carol Galán
Mary Hewitt, Los Angeles County Alliance for Boys & Girls Clubs
Maral Karacussian, Supervisorial District 4
Ashley Portillo-Baly, Child360
Nancy Lee Sayer, UCLA Center for Improving Child Care Quality
JoAnn Shalhoub-Mejia, California Federation of Family Child Care Association, Inc.
Emily Williams, Supervisorial District 2
Steve Zimmer, City of Los Angeles Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti

Staff:
Michele Sartell
Erica Weiss