



## **Child Care Planning Committee Meeting Minutes**

November 5, 2025

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, Vice Chair of the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), began the meeting at 12:04 PM by welcoming members and the public. Vice Chair Mendoza shared the Planning Committee's vision and mission, emphasizing the importance of its work in uniting stakeholders, and encouraged members to keep these principles in mind throughout the year. She provided an explanation for Chair Fierro's absence and then invited attendees to introduce themselves, stating their affiliated organization and role within the Planning Committee.

### **2. Comments from the Chair**

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza shared opening remarks highlighting the mission to support children, families, and the community. She honored the late Member Dianne Philibosian with a moment of silence and expressed warm sentiments in her memory. Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza then announced the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025–26 appointments to the Joint Committee on Legislation, noting that these appointees will help shape policies affecting early childhood care and education. The appointees are: Lester Garcia, Sarah Soriano, Rachel Bocarsly, and Patrick MacFarlane.

### **3. Presentation of the Annual Summary and Self Evaluation Findings Report**

La Tanga Hardy and Saul Hurtado, Governance Ad Hoc Co-chairs, presented on the Annual Summary and Self Evaluation Findings Report. They shared the purpose of the Governance Ad hoc and presented the Local Planning Council (LPC) Annual Report and Summary of Self Evaluation Findings FY 2024-25 (Report). The Report identifies compliance or non-compliance with required LPC mandates per Welfare and Institution Code (WIC). Hardy addressed the process for the Report, in which the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE) drafted the Report, the Governance Ad Hoc reviewed and revised the Report on October 27, 2025. Hardy and Hurtado noted all findings in the Report were compliant with WIC and addressed next steps, which include: 1) Vote for approval by Planning Committee Members, 2) Planning Committee Chair signs the report, 3) Report is submitted to California Department of Social Services (CDSS) by November 15, 2025. Further details can be found on the PowerPoint.

### **4. Consent Calendar**

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza presented the Consent Calendar, which included the Planning Committee meeting minutes from September 3, 2025, and the Local Planning Council Annual Report and Summary of Self-Evaluation Findings FY 2024-25. Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza requested a motion to approve the Consent Calendar for the Planning Committee meeting minutes to September 3, 2025. Member Sarah Soriano moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Member Nellie Rios-Parra seconded the motion. Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for discussion. No comments were discussed. The motion to approve the Consent Calendar, including the September 2025 minutes, and the Local Planning Council



Annual Report and Summary of Self-Evaluation Findings FY 2024- 25 passed with one abstention: Member Carolyne Crolotte.

### **5. Universal PreKindergarten (UPK) Update**

Debra Colman, OAECE Director; Erica Torres-Ness, OAECE UPK Coordinator, and Simone Taylor, OAECE UPK Coordinator, presented on the Universal PreKindergarten (UPK) Goals and Activities for FY 2025-26. The presentation included the specific workplan for each of the four UPK Goals, which include:

- Family Access: To increase parent’s knowledge about their early education choices.
- Local Education Agency (LEA) Partnership: To strengthen partnerships between school districts and Early Child Care Education (ECE) mixed delivery systems.
- Special Needs and Inclusion: To promote the inclusion of children at risk for disabilities or with special needs in early care and education environments that are the least restrictive.
- UPK Workforce: To support planning for the early care and education workforce serving preschool children, ensuring alignment with the UPK system

More information can be found on the Powerpoint.

Vice Chair Mendoza opened the floor for Member discussion. The following highlights some of the comments provided:

- Appreciation was expressed for the Navigating UPK in Los Angeles Guidebook, with acknowledgment of its value and excitement about its release. Commended the team’s work and emphasized the importance of a more integrated approach for community members, especially given the lack of awareness about available options. Praised efforts related to Family Child Care (FCC) providers and Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN) providers in supporting UPK access.
- A question was raised regarding whether there is a plan to better prepare parents to enroll in UPK. It was explained that families with 3- and 4-year-olds should be directed to UPK Liaisons with their contact information being listed in the Navigating UPK in Los Angeles Guidebook on page 6.
- It was noted that the Child Care Alliance, uses UPK funding to support 1–2 liaisons per community through Resource & Referral agencies. The work is targeted and helps families explore multiple options, including Transitional Kindergarten (TK), Head Start, California State Preschool Program (CSPP), and others.
- Requested access to the PowerPoint in advance to allow time for review and preparation, enabling more robust questions and meaningful feedback during discussions.
- Questions were raised about special education data from LEAs and partners, and how student data will be protected under federal requirements. It was clarified that the project does not involve individualized student data; the focus is on conducting a landscape analysis to identify service providers, existing services, and gaps in support for children with special needs. A

report will be developed and shared with the community to highlight findings. In the next FY, the information will be used to create a plan to improve resource allocation for children with special needs.

- Advocacy efforts from Every Child California were noted, including removing barriers such as requiring an Individualized Education Plan or medical diagnosis to access services, ensuring equitable access for all families.
- It was highlighted that access to information varies regionally; Northern California has CSSP FCCHEN resources, while Los Angeles County lacks similar infrastructure. Discussion emphasized exploring existing contracts, connecting with providers, and coordinating with the Department of Education to ensure guidance comes directly from the source. The project is in early stages of implementation.

Vice Chair Mendoza invited public discussion; one comment was discussed.

- It was noted that the family child care network operates under four different contract types, any of which can serve 3- and 4-year-olds. Although there are six CSPP contracts for FCCHENs, there are approximately 900 child care providers and agencies statewide. It was clarified that the absence of CSPP contracts in Los Angeles County does not prevent providers from serving preschool-aged children. A webinar is planned to showcase available options to providers.

#### **6. Presentation on the State of the Early Care and Education Workforce: California Regions**

Dr. Ashley C. Williams, Founder and Principal Consultant of justECE, presented on the 2025 State of the ECE Workforce in Los Angeles County on behalf of Elena Montoya from the Center for Child Care Employment (CSCCE) at UC Berkeley. CSCCE conducts research and analysis on the preparation, working conditions, and compensation of the early care and education workforce. The study was first conducted in 2006, with a baseline survey in 2020 and follow-up surveys in 2023 and 2024. A new baseline survey was conducted in 2025, with additional topical follow-ups planned for 2026, 2027, and 2028. The 2025 baseline survey was statewide and regionally representative, including six study populations: FCC providers (owner/operators only), center staff (directors, site leaders, lead teachers, assistant teachers), and TK staff (teachers, paraprofessionals). The survey was administered online in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic, included participant incentives, and was fielded in Spring 2025. Key takeaways from Dr. Williams' presentation include:

- Early educators are educated and experienced.
- Wages in Los Angeles County has made progress in increasing wages since 2020, but pay is still relatively low.
- Concerning rates of enrollment of ECE workforce in public assistance persist.
- Addressing both economic and emotional well-being of educators continues to be a priority.
- Turnover/staffing remains a challenge.
- Most early educators see themselves still working in ECE in 3 years.



Vice Chair Mendoza opened the floor for member discussion. The following highlights some of the comments provided:

- Questioned whether center teacher data is being broken down by age or reported as whole? It was answered that it was reported as a whole; age-specific breakdown can be requested.
- Discussed if there is a connection between pay and mental health of teachers? It was answered that it is correlated, though direct causation not measured; related to minimum wage increases and economic stress.
- Inquiries on how minimum wage affects mental health, and the aging workforce. It was answered that minimum wage increases are part of the conversation; aging workforce is a significant concern with staffing gaps.
- Requested information on how many TK teachers by LEA. Answered by saying that data is not available; will refer to appropriate staff for follow-up.
- Posed question regarding turnover, after how many years does it occur and what is the percentage? It was answered that the data requires clarification; will refer to correct staff.
- Questions on how wage increase relates to cultural diversity of FCC providers in Los Angeles County? It was answered that data shows increases factoring in minimum wage, Child Care Providers United (CCPU), and rate adjustments.
- Questions regarding how can wages be increased, gaps filled, and what solutions exist to retain staff? Comments emphasized the need for actionable solutions, including credential pathways, wage increases, and strategies to prevent workforce attrition.
- Shared observations from FCC provider experience including long-term negotiations through CCPU and joint labor-management committees have improved wages and benefits; raising rates depends on state legislative appropriations; challenges include competition with tourism, Olympics, and fast-food wages.
- Inquired about the Center's use of data, it was answered that the Center continues to curate intentional, values-based budget data to inform decisions without compromising workforce well-being; livable wage highlighted as an important reference point, though slightly dated.

Vice Chair Mendoza invited public discussion; no comments were discussed.

## **7. Developing the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan**

Before transitioning to a facilitated discussion with the strategic planning consultants, Vice Chair Mendoza encouraged councilmembers to consider how the data presented by Dr. Williams reflects their lived experiences. Vice Chair Mendoza highlighted four key themes from her initial review of the data:

- Compensation – From the comparative analysis of wages from the 2020 workforce study, there is an increase in wages overall.
- Qualifications – Data reveals that there is a highly educated and experienced workforce. With over 50% of family childcare providers and center teaching staff having at least their Associate's



degree. Over 50% of family child care providers and center teaching staff also have at least 16 years of experience.

- Retention - The annual turnover rate across child care centers and positions are similar, ranging from 19-21%. The highest annual turnover rates are being seen in Title 22 centers with lead teacher turning-over at an annual rate of 23% while assistant teacher turnover is 20% annually.
- Well-Being – Despite the increased compensation trends, since the 2020 survey, child care providers and center teaching staff are overwhelmingly reporting high levels of perceived stress. Additionally, both family child care providers and center teaching staff are reporting higher rates of depressive symptoms than State-wide reporting. In California, 40% of center teaching staff reported significant depressive symptoms, but this rate was 43% in Los Angeles County.

Raahi Reddy, Principal in Charge; Jose Alvarez, Project Manager; and Beda Castillo, Project Research Associate, consultants at Estolano Advisors (EA), a public policy firm, are leading the development of the 2026 ECE Strategic Plan in partnership with OAECE staff. Reddy discussed EA's role in shaping the vision and outcomes for the Strategic Plan, emphasizing the use of the latest research and the current ECE landscape to identify key priorities. Two goals were highlighted: (1) identify areas of focus from the workforce data to inform the Strategic Plan's goals and outcomes, and (2) explore potential actions or recommendations to address broader themes. Questions posed to the audience included:

- What in the ECE workforce data resonated with you?
- How can we best support workforce in this current time?
- Based on data, what strategies need to be uplifted around compensation?
- What kind of strategies do we need to elevate around the well-being of the ECE workforce?

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for Member discussion. The following highlights some of the comments provided:

- Inquired about high rates of stress and depressive symptoms among ECE staff and how these affect both educators and children; supporting workforce and family well-being was highlighted as a priority. Noted that well-being is influenced by administrative and licensing demands, overwork, and low pay.
- Questioned the disconnect between educators' experience/education and compensation, emphasizing the importance of creating respect for the profession and increasing pay to support retention. It was noted that compensation should focus on wages, not only benefits, to ensure a livable income.
- Raised concerns about the aging workforce, noting that many educators are leaving the field or moving to TK, which highlights staffing gaps. Strategies to attract and retain educators were suggested, including support for professional advancement through degrees, credentials, and apprenticeships.

- Observed that center-based staff face higher rates of stress and depression, while private-pay teachers often earn the least due to limited funding. It was emphasized to address pay inequities across program types.
- Inquired about geographic disparities in workforce availability across Los Angeles County, noting that certain areas struggle to find teachers despite program funding. It was suggested mapping workforce concentration to inform targeted support.
- Highlighted existing workforce supports, including stipends, coaching, mentoring, and higher education opportunities, and emphasized the need to strengthen communication and outreach to ensure more educators are aware of and can access these supports.
- Noted the importance of equity in program access, emphasizing that funding and resources should be balanced across centers, FCCs, and other provider types to ensure parent choice and provider participation.
- Emphasized advocacy for sustainable funding, given budget deficits and past cuts to county support for child care programs. It was noted that a mixed delivery system and reliable funding streams are necessary to maintain workforce stability.
- Noted that teachers themselves can champion improvements, and that strategies to reduce administrative burdens and maintain passion in the profession are key to retention.
- Suggested learning from agencies that successfully pay livable wages to inform strategies to retain staff, reduce attrition, and ensure no provider is left behind.

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza invited public discussion; two comments were discussed.

- It was noted that the system is complex, encompassing multiple components of the public child care system. Emphasized that any increases in reimbursement for subsidized providers should avoid negatively impacting private providers, as private programs cannot match public funding rates.
- It was suggested to be realistic about current and potential funding sources, acknowledging ongoing cuts. Encouraged exploring alternative funding agencies, raising awareness about the value of family child care providers and preschools, and engaging business partners, chambers of commerce, and parents to demonstrate how child care supports workforce participation. It was emphasized that there are multiple pathways to achieve desired outcomes.

#### **8. General Public Comment and Announcements**

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for announcements and public comment.

- Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) Seminar repeat session scheduled in March.
- Ready to Teach seminar on Workforce Development, focusing on infant and toddler care, scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Screening of *Make a Circle* film on Monday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, at the local public library in Santa Monica; able to find even on city website, there is an Eventbrite registration.



- United American Indian Involvement is hosting an event on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 10:00AM – 8:00PM at Griffith Park; accepting nonperishable food donations due to SNAP program shutdown.
- Addressed the hunger crisis in Los Angeles County stating that there is approximately \$350 million in SNAP benefits distributed monthly. Additional donations were made, but gaps remain. Strategies are being developed through the LA County Poverty Alleviation Initiative. Stakeholders encouraged to share ideas and strategies to support ECE emergency response.

### **9. Call to Adjourn**

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza moved to adjourn the Planning Committee meeting. Member Samitha Givens seconded the motion. Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for discussion and asked if there were any objections. The motion to adjourn the meeting was passed with no objections. The Planning Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

### **Attendance**

#### **Public Agency**

1. Alicia Rivas
2. Bobbie Guerrero
3. Gus Bribiesca
4. Kelly Fountain
5. Jessica Kim
6. Nellie Ríos-Parra
7. Jacqueline Rodriguez, alternate for Rachel Bocarsly
8. Tracey Washington
9. Ufuoma Akwaja
10. Rebecca Lynch, alternate for Vanessa San Martin

#### **Child Care Provider/Early Educator**

1. Alcema Sanchez
2. Andrea Fernandez Mendoza
3. Brittie Crawford
4. Danielle Craig
5. Erendira Doherty
6. Justine Lawrence
7. LaShon Tillie-Jones
8. Leidy Milla Bernasconi
9. Saula Hurtado

10. Sylvia Hernandez

#### **Parent/Caregiver**

1. Christina Moore
2. Elsa Leal
3. Kelly Reynolds, alternate for Humberto Estratalan
4. Jen Baca Beltran
5. Mona Franco
6. Sasha Duarte
7. Natalie Anguiano, alternate for Sasha Duarte

#### **Discretionary**

1. Anna M. Lopez
2. Eva Rivera
3. Ivy Chang
4. Jill Lee
5. La Tanga Hardy
6. Sarah Soriano

#### **Community Organization**

1. Aurora Lopez
2. Betty Collins
3. Edilma Serna
4. Fiona Stewart
5. Gina Rodriguez

6. Stephanie Orozco, alternate for Gina Rodriguez
7. Joelle L. Landazabal
8. Bianca Castellanos, alternate for Joelle L. Landazabal
9. Carolyne Crolotte, alternate for Mirel Herrera
10. Samitha Givens

#### Public Attendance

1. Raahi Reddy
2. Adrianna Oliveros
3. Gloria Santoyo
4. Ashley Williams
5. Jose Alvarez
6. Renee Aguilar
7. Norma Amezcua

8. Amanda Hsu
9. Chris Sears
10. Hazel Naal
11. Lisa Wilkins
12. Zenaida Meza
13. Amy Battle

#### OAECE Staff Attendance

1. Alejandra Berrio, *Staff Analyst*
2. Betsy Jacoby, *Staff Analyst*
3. Debra Colman, *Director*
4. Diana Alavarado, *Junior Staff Analyst*
5. Erica Torres-Ness, *Management Analyst*
6. Ida Legesse, *Staff Analyst*
7. Meliza Hernandez, *Staff Analyst*
8. Sheronda Helton, *Staff Analyst*
9. Simone Taylor, *Management Analyst*