



**Alameda County Child Care Planning Council
Public Policy Committee
January 4, 2010
MINUTES**

“The Mission of the Public Policy Committee is to support the mission of the Planning Council by monitoring and developing early care and education legislation, policies and regulations that impact children, families and child care providers and recommending appropriate action to the Child Care Planning Council.”

Attendees:

Jennifer Freitas	4Cs
Melinda Martin	Consultant, ACOE
Helena Welch	Community member, Co-Chair
Nini Humphrey	Mills College Leadership Program
Robin Michel	Co-Chair
Linda Olivenbaum	EBAEYC

Daryl Hanson	YMCA of the East Bay
Beverly Reliford	Steering Committee Member
Maria Gomez	Family Day Care, California Corps, Dublin
Darlene Johnston	Little Mud Puddles

Planning Council Staff: Ellen Dektar, Angie Garling

I. Welcome/Introductions/Announcements

The East Bay Association for the Education of Young Children (EBAEYC) Conference will be held on February 27th at Merritt College. More information will be distributed soon. The Knowledge is Power event for parents will be held on February 13th from 10-3. Parent Voices will be joining a multi-issue “Action” this Thursday at the State Building in San Francisco. Senator Lonnie Hancock is hosting an event on Wednesday for advocacy groups where information about public messaging and polling will be shared.

II. Review and Discuss State and/or Federal Legislation or Budget (Including ELQIS and ELAC Updates from members)

There were no major updates and everyone is anticipating the release of the Governor’s budget on Friday and a tough budget year.

III. Discussion and Action to Plan March Legislator event

The Committee refined the target audience and the program. The targeted invitees will be all legislative staff, and City Council people from Dublin, Livermore and Pleasanton. The three cities can be recognized for the work they do to support child care. If we invited all the cities, we would have to include them in the program and it would be difficult to cultivate (roughly 110 city council members) to attend. The Committee considered having a panel discussion to highlight city work, which could be more inclusive of other cities, but later the Committee decided that there is not enough time in the agenda for this format.

We could consider handing out written synopses of other cities’ child care policies and projects, such as: the San Leandro ToD child care, Supervisor Miley’s Ashland teen center which will include child care, Hayward County center; Emeryville –survey and child care center; and Berkeley 2020 vision which addresses child care.



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Beverly reported that Hayward has two city council candidates who would be interested in attending the event. Sara Lammon, who has a child care background is running, as well as Linda Bennett who worked at Helen Turner (child development center). The group decided to consider convening a candidates' forum on child care in the future but to retain this event as an appreciation for people currently in office. There will be candidates for Supervisor Gail Steele's seat and possibly other city council seats. *At a minimum, we should offer to meet with them so when they are stumping they can be knowledgeable/ target Hayward.* Next year's legislative staff breakfast could possibly be held in Hayward at the City building.

The group discussed the agenda for the breakfast. One member suggested showing a slideshow with pictures about why child care is important. If the focus was on working parents it might take the focus off the subsidized child care system. Also, it is confusing for people to hear about current empty spaces and simultaneously that working parents need more child care (although we are talking about subsidies, not spaces). What would be our message be with respect to Community Care Licensing (CCL)? *Our message would be that licensing is underfunded and staffed and standards have deteriorated so it is one of worst states in country.* Maria could tell her story about problems nine years ago and how today a program like the one she mistakenly sent her child to might not be shut down. The family child care she runs has had three CCL visits in 8.5 years. One of these visits was last year. She could emphasize how many times parents like her are at work, distracted, and worried if they don't have good child care. If CCL does not visit, programs could have hazardous equipment and safety issues. Ideally CCL would provide support for providers to build a relationship with their analyst and be able to seek information from them which could help them improve, like "what if?"; It would also be good to compare the state licensing system to those for commercial kitchens and beautician licensing practices.

Beverly said that keeping fees reasonable should be an emphasis. Having so many people visiting their programs and offering their opinions makes providers feel smothered. *Daryl said that recently she submitted an application to open a new center in October and it wasn't visited by CCL until February.* During time lags such as this, providers are paying rent and they are trying to provide the public with subsidized child care.

Robin summarized one essential message—*child care is essential to economic recovery* as California spirals downward with 12% unemployment, *How do we leverage public investments into prosperity?* Parents may be anguished at work because of poor child care or prohibited from working because they do not have any. We also need high quality programs, not infants lashed into their seats and we can't put the burden of paying for the high quality programs on the backs of providers. Can we show how much licensing fees have increased? Have they tripled?

Can we show that the quality of child care decreased because of licensing reductions? As part of her Mills research paper Nini Humphrey will try to contact Betsy Rutana, Jim Hopper, Fred Gil and other former community care licensing advocates to gather information. Our case must be anecdotal, because there is no baseline. Nini should identify a period, when visits were reduced to every five years, vs. three years. State policy said if violations increased by a designated percentages they would reinstitute visits back to every three years and then they did. *Nini and Jennifer will try to track down that policy history.* Nini will frame the policy context for the breakfast. She can ask former licensing advocates how they define the declines of Community Care Licensing and what data they would share to illustrate this. She could ask providers and parents whether they can tell if CCL services have decreased, how they can tell, and how would they envision a new system.



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Angie summarized the planned CCL presentation. Maria could tell her story; we would have punchy Graphics that summarized the NACCRA report that ranks CA 47th; and shows the fee for licensing 20 years ago vs. today. It could include quotes from those interviewed.

The Committee said it would be fine to include an Early Start parent or other advocate in the state section who could talk for five minutes about the Early Start cuts and the impact on children and child care.

There was discussion about how to personalize the city awards. For instance a family child care provider who had city council support for her permit could write a letter. We could also have the awards presented by Rosemary Aleman or her Head Start staff.

IV. Set Agenda for February Adjourn

The agenda should include responding to the State budget and refining the legislative breakfast agenda.

Next Meeting: Monday, February 1, 2010 6:30-8:30pm **Every Child Counts**
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1. Ongoing	Public Policy Committee (Jennifer Greppi-Freitas— lead)	Monitor proposed State and Federal budget issues and make recommendations, when necessary, to the Steering Committee or Executive Committee for action.				
6. By April, 2010	Public Policy Committee (Darlene Johnston –lead)	Plan (date, location, agenda) and convene the 3 rd Annual Legislative Staff Appreciation Breakfast in March 2010.				