



## Early Childhood Policy Council Meeting Summary: November 16, 2020

**Attendees:** Nadine Burke Harris, Antoinette Jacobs, Ann Louise Bonnitto, Carola Olivia Olson, Cheryl Polk, Dean Tagawa, Donna Sneeringer, Janet Zamudio, Laura (Kay) Ruhstaller, Khydeeja Alam Javid, Kimberley Johnson, Kim Pattillo Brownson, Maria "Lupe" Jaime, Mayra E. Alvarez, Miren Algorri, Natali Gaxiola, Paula Merrigan, Robin Layton, Sarah Neville-Morgan, Scott Moore, Sheryl Shushan, Sonia Jaramillo, Stephanie Myers, Tonia McMillian, Amelia Soto, Cheryl "Cherie" Schroeder, Deborah Corley, Debra Ward, Latonda Williams, Lissete Frausto, Mary Ignatius, Naima Facih, Patricia Lozano, Patrick MacFarlane, Virginia Eigen, Zoila Carolina Toma

### 1. Welcome and Introductions (Chair Burke Harris)

- In her opening remarks, Chair Nadine Burke Harris welcomed Workforce Advisory Committee appointees, Tonia McMillian and Miren Algorri, to the Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC). The Parent Advisory Committee has a few remaining seats that need to be filled by its appointing body. As such, the Parent Advisory Committee is postponing selecting two members from the committee to be appointed to the full Council until the seats are filled.
- Chair Burke Harris expressed her gratitude to the Council's commitment to ensuring that our youngest Californians—and those who care for them—have the support they need to thrive. She reminded the Council and the public of the potential and power of the ECPC as a collaborative space to strengthen the state's early childhood system.

### 2. Early Childhood Policy Council Annual Report

- Deputy Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency, Kris Perry, presented an overview of the purpose and scope of the ECPC's annual report. In her introductory remarks, Deputy Secretary Perry expressed her gratitude to the Council for their dedication to developing recommendations in the midst of a global pandemic, recognizing the havoc it has wrought on people's lives, on public health, on the state's budget and programs, on families with young children, and on the early childhood workforce. Recommendations from the Council will be captured in an annual report and submitted to the Governor's Office, Legislature, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- Master Plan for Early Learning and Care team member, Aressa Coley, presented an overview of the report development process, reported out recommendations from the Council over the last year, and facilitated a discussion with Council members to capture additional recommendations that should be included in the annual report.



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### **3. Insight from the Field**

Council and committee members, Robin Layton, Sheryl Shushan, Deborah Corley, and Zoila Toma, shared reflections and insights from diverse child care provider perspectives in the field. In her introductory remarks, Robin Layton described the importance of partnerships with providers to address the inequities in the child care and workforce systems. Panelists Layton, Shushan, Corley, and Toma engaged the Council and committee members in a discussion reflecting on the year, the impact COVID-19 has on families and providers, and considerations for the future.

### **4. Child Care Program Transition Quarterly Report**

California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Director, Kim Johnson, presented an update on the transition of child care programs from the California Department of Education (CDE). Director Johnson shared that the transfer of child care services from CDE to CDSS will begin in July 2021. The CDSS transition team has been working to provide information and opportunities for questions about the transition through a series of quarterly stakeholder calls, listening session, quarterly progress reports, and a [transition webpage on the CDSS website](#). Members of the public can submit comments and questions through the site or via email at [CCCTransition@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CCCTransition@dss.ca.gov). The CDSS team will share a draft of the transition plan in January 2021. Listening sessions and progress reports will continue in the new year until the transition is complete.

### **5. 2021 Quarterly Meeting Calendar**

- Deputy Secretary, Kris Perry, previewed ECPC meeting dates for the upcoming year. Meetings are tentatively scheduled between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on the following dates:
  - Wednesday, February 3, 2021
  - Wednesday, June 9, 2021
  - Wednesday, August 25, 2021
  - Tuesday, November 16, 2021
- Parent Advisory Committee Chair, Mary Ignatius, encouraged the Council to consider scheduling one meeting between a 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. or 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. timeframe to make it easier for parents to attend full Council meetings. The ECPC planning team will incorporate this consideration into future scheduling.

A high-level, thematic summary of Council discussion and public comments received during the meeting can be found in the following pages.



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### **Summary of Comments and Questions by ECPC Council Members and the Public**

The following highlights themes from the November 16, 2020 Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC) meeting based on recurring comments from ECPC members and the public.

The ECPC is an advisory body to the Governor, Legislature, and Superintendent of Public Instruction on statewide early learning, care, and child development. It will provide recommendations on all aspects of the state's early childhood system, including support for the demographic, geographic, and economic diversity of the state's children and families and ways the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care and the Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education's final report can be updated and improved.

### **Annual Report Recommendations**

#### **Equity**

- Multiple ECPC members suggested that the recommendations better address inequities in provider accountability, particularly with respect to transparency of information.
- Several ECPC members voiced support for additional flexibility or even suspension of family fees given the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Some highlighted the impact of failing to fully include or be intentional in supporting particular populations of students in efforts to improve equity. Specifically, dual language learners or special education students were mentioned, along with sensitivity to cultural and linguistic norms.

#### **Whole Child/Coordinated System**

- Several ECPC members highlighted the need for a coordinated system that meets families where they are and limits their burden through single, accessible points of entry.
- Several members also expressed a need for the system to be sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences and to be compassionate to the experience of providers and families, especially during a crisis.

#### **Family Engagement**

- Building on themes related to the coordinated system, members expressed support for family engagement that is responsive to the unique context of families by being culturally responsive, addressing language barriers, and setting realistic expectations for their level of expertise.
- Also raised was the importance of dispelling any implication of shame in seeking needed services, particularly because notions of who is or is not deserving often reflect and perpetuate racism, classism, sexism, and xenophobia.



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### **Workforce**

- Several members highlighted the need to, in a variety of ways, reinforce and support existing professional pathways, and ensure early childhood educators are viewed with respect. Pay equity was commonly discussed as a concrete way to strengthen professional pathways.
- Some members suggested more attention to how the workforce is engaged and supported to reach some of these goals.

### **Access to Information/Access to Services**

- Multiple members voiced support for any changes in those eligible for/accessing services be paired with comparable increases in the capacity for the system to serve these additional families.
- Some members noted the importance of improving coordination to streamline enrollment and access to related services, especially access to health care providers.

### **Insights from the Field Panel Discussion**

- Panelists included Deborah Corley, owner of a CA family daycare; Sheryl Shushan, Director of Global Family Services at Patagonia; and Zoila Toma, a child care provider in Signal Hill. Robin Layton, President and CEO of Educational Enrichment Systems, moderated.
- Panelists shared their experiences in the early days of the pandemic, including how—amidst economic pressures—they balanced the desire to keep services available to families with concerns about safety.
- Panelists also discussed the impact of various existing policies and how they fall short in the context of the lived experiences of many.

## **Child Care Program Transition Quarterly Report**

### **Question and Answer Session**

A Q&A session was also held and included the following questions:

**Question:** During this transition, how will you support providers making sure that they're aware of this transition?

**Answer:** The focus is on engagement and spreading the word to as many groupings of people as possible. DSS would like to hear from stakeholders on how best to do this. Another aspect of this is communication and the integration of various divisions, with the new division including close work with the family engagement, empowerment division and with people supporting housing and nutrition.

**Question:** Could the hold harmless be expanded for family child care?

**Answer:** DSS is working now through the listening sessions to hear what the field needs, including with respect to this topic. Enacting changes of this kind would, however, happen through the legislature and the budget process.