



Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) and Parent Advisory Group (PAG) Joint Meeting

Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2020 – 8:30am – 3:00pm
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Welcome & Introductions

DCYF Community Engagement Manager, Erin Kerrigan welcomed attendees and initiated introductions.

State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates

Members reviewed and discussed the State Agency/Partner and Regional Coalition Updates

- [State Agency/Partner Updates](#)
- [Regional Coalition Updates](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are there fewer updates from the coalitions? Are they meeting less or just helping families deal with the COVID-19 challenges? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many of the counties in our coalitions are trying to get the CARES dollars out, helping families, etc. We are also strategic planning around Help Me Grow, what our priorities have been, and where we are going.
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DCYF Strategic Plan

DCYF’s Director of the Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability (OIAA), Vickie Ybarra provided updates and requested feedback on the draft strategic plan.

- [DCYF Strategic Plan Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it is worthwhile to integrate the plans. It is clear you are working to do that with a racial and social justice lens. • Is the department considering adding a priority to support the child care industry retain/increase capacity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We will not be adding any additional priorities, but retaining/increasing capacity and supporting the child care industry, I could see falling into the high quality birth to five arena. • What does family support look like in light of covid - increased investment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is my view that we need to be working hard on prevention, so we do not see an increase in abuse for years to come. • How are school age children reflected? COVID challenges related to education and childcare have created a critical need to consider the birth to 13 continuum. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Right now they are not reflected, but there is certainly room to build that in. • We need a single point entry system for children and families – one application process and the department brings the services to them to meet their needs. • Major investments are needed to eliminate racial disparities; current subsidy rates will not cover the cost of this work for providers. • We need to support special education more. Opportunities to minimize disproportionality: standards don’t work for all kids, virtual settings do work for some, how do we meet the needs in a more personalized way? • Changes need to be made to dismantle the whole system and rebuild it to be culturally relevant for all children.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I wonder if one implication of this for our plan is that a system wide plan needs to be birth to eight, not eight to five. We need to change how the system receives our kids. We need to attend and invest more strongly in transitions for children ○ Our children are doing well when they leave and meet the requirements. By third grade they are abysmally behind as there are not any "high expectations" for them as "brown children". ○ If children are successful, and we move them to a system that requires them to assimilate, they do not have the energy to expel to learn what is being taught. Instead, children are focusing on how to behave more like the dominant culture and that robs them of their energy to learn and grow in their own way. ○ It's hard to expect a system that is built on systemic racism to pivot and provide a safe space for Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color (BIPOC) children. ○ Only using one teaching style does not work well and leaves behind both those kids who are more advanced and those that are already behind, only getting the middle few. ● There are general concerns about the inequities increasing during this time. We need to continue this momentum to build a system that meets the needs of families furthest from opportunity first, especially regarding the effects of COVID-19. This is not a short-term conversation; these effects will last long after we are "done" with the pandemic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, lasting changes based on things we have learned during the time of COVID. ● When we talk prenatal to age eight, we are responsible for children until they are thirteen, so to stop our plan at age eight does not make any sense to me. ● We also have to reimagine what DCYF could look like if it no longer has to provide services for families furthest from opportunity.
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Certificate of Parental Improvement (CPI) Workgroup

DCYF's Director of Eligibility and Provider Supports, Nicole Rose provided an update on the workgroup and work that needs to be completed for January 1, 2021 implementation.

- [CPI Workgroup Presentation](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secretary's List workgroup was very inclusive and collaborative. ● Who cross checks the definitions between states? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We always refer to our Assistant Attorney Generals (AAGs). They would look at the equivalencies and do legal research to cross-reference background checks. ● Once the process is in place, how will DCYF let the public know? Is the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) also setting up a similar process for parents? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This iteration of the bill is slimmed down just to DCYF and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). I'm not sure what OSPI will be putting into place. ○ We are in the process of developing rules. It is open to change and improvement and that process will be known to the public which is part of the stakeholder feedback we are hoping to receive. ● I appreciate the attention and emphasis to the assessment criterion ● Is there an age eligibility? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is no age eligibility, it is just anyone who has a founded finding – this includes adults and youth who are parents. ● Can the department use the disqualifying list to send an email to folks who have passed the five-year mark to give them the opportunity to apply? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I think that is an opportunity to tell them about the CPI since either DCYF or DSHS would be the ones disqualifying them. ○ I think there was an understanding that founded findings are an automatic screen out, but they are not and they haven't been. We need to work on dispelling that myth.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We do not have a registry for founded findings. I believe DSHS does, but that information is not public facing. It would not be easy to send out a mass mailing to individuals who would potentially be affected by this. ● Is there any effort on your part as an agency to rectify the courts and background checks? That is concerning to me. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are many improvements happening and continuing to happen. This will show where we need to start tracking to see where the deficiencies are. ○ I'm glad that you are working with the state patrol, because aliases can cause problems for innocent individuals. Identity theft is a real issue, and there can be barriers to clearing your name via fingerprints or through the courts. ● Can families self-refer or does someone else have to tell them they are worthy of applying for this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Families can self-refer or they may have been referred by an outside entity, but we would need to work directly with the individual since much of the information is confidential. As gatekeepers we need to think about whether we are giving families the opportunity to come to the table and say 'this is what I need'. We need to consider how we are helping individuals be successful. How do we reach out to those who often times can't find us? ○ The department can put our information out, but it is helpful to think about who the trusted messengers are among provider and parent communities. If you have any thoughts on that please send them to us.
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Preschool Development Grant

Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Birth through Five Administrator, Tracie Kenney requested feedback on the new Draft Statewide Early Learning plan.

- [Preschool Development Grant Presentation](#)
- [Draft Coordination Plan Handout](#)

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is pandemic recovery specific to workforce or the entire system? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The design team did place pandemic recovery in workforce, but maybe that isn't the right place for it. Great point, we may need to reconsider that. ● Given that the infrastructure in some systems have proven to be inequitable, how are we moving forward and reimagining whether the system itself needs to be rebuilt. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One of the things we know we have to do is stay flexible. We will be working with the Indian Policy on Early Learning (IPEL) committee and the PDG steering committee to listen to what is being said. We want to hear from all of you what else we need to add and lift up. ○ I would support putting the pandemic info in all of the areas, because this is not going away anytime soon. I feel like we do need to acknowledge it as an "add on", but acknowledged. ● Any idea of implementation cost? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We are not there yet, these are the initial draft set of strategies and this is a five-year plan. ● Do we know how we are going to pay for this during this economic crisis? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is a five-year outlook. We know economic recovery is going to be a long road. Perhaps we do need to reprioritize and re-examine how and what we are funding. ● As I look across the state, I see child care deserts and think we need to look at that. We need to take a real pragmatic look at where we are because we do not want to lose our child care centers and I am worried about the challenges they are facing at this time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The intent of doing this is to bring us together so we have a vision and place to start even in the toughest of times.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If early learning is an essential service for children's development and to strengthen at risk families, then can we include that wording? For instance, other workers that are deemed essential can still work in home with families which creates equity for families that can't access internet or learn virtually. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ That is an excellent point. We absolutely want to see that, so bring that point to outreach groups when we hold them. • Would be helpful if you can help tie how the Early Learning Plan will work in tandem with the strategic plan so they don't get confused.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You said you had about 150 folks involved in putting this strategy together, is it possible to have a list of those individuals and what their background is so we know where it is coming from? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Absolutely, we are happy to share a list of our design team.

2021 Work Plan

Members provided input on topics for the 2021 Work Plan.

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members submitted topic recommendations and participated in a group conversation to highlight which topics should be included in the 2021 Work Plan.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Engagement team collected the feedback and will compile the topics into a draft 2021 Work Plan for members to review.

Policy Development and Review

DCYF's Deputy Director of Government Affairs, Allison Krutsinger provided updates on the agency's COVID-19 response and legislative session activities.

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are other funding sources being leveraged to waive co-pays and cap, or just CARES Act dollars? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Right now, the co-pays are being covered by the CARES dollars. Those will likely be coming from the general fund or federal subsidy dollars that come as part of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) block grants after January 1. • Will a summary of the proposed DCYF legislation be shared with ELAC? The summary would be great as well as solicitation for feedback. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We can get you a summary. • Did DCYF maintain the Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) subsidy rates to providers in 2021 in the reductions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The legislature did vote for an increase that we have been paying since July 1. We are not proposing a reduction. • Is house or senate leading this year for budget? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I think it is the senate. • What other ideas do you have to be able to help sustain the child care and early learning industry? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We are partnering with the Department of Commerce and the Child Care Task Force to use a Cost of Quality model to base rates. The next phase of that is the implementation plan that is inclusive of rates sufficient to cover workforce compensation. • What kind of data do you have about how COVID is affecting the child care arena? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We are hovering around 17-20% providers that are currently closed. • Do we have geographic data about closures? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have asked for that information to be disaggregated by zip code. I don't have that with me, but I will see if I can get it to you. • What is the timeline of when new grants will go out to providers and the amounts?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Our plan is to have more information on the grants for the October 20 provider webinar. Not all decisions have been made yet.● How many families are accessing subsidies?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The working connections caseload has been declining since pre-COVID.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Community Engagement team will follow up on the requested information and share it with members in the follow-up email.

Closing Remarks/Adjournment

Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The next meeting will take place virtually on Tuesday, December 1.
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