



# Early Childhood Policy Council Parent and Workforce Advisory Committees

## Meeting Agenda, Attendance, and Summary

Thursday, November 16, 2023  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

### Agenda

#### 1. Introduction

- Welcome
- Review of agenda

#### 2. Review Draft Early Childhood Policy Council Budget Letter

- Share draft letter
- Solicit input from committee members
- Public comment

#### 3. Solicit Input on 2025–27 Child Care and Development Fund State Plan

- Provide overview
- Solicit input from committee members
- Public comment

#### 4. Review Advisory Committees' Policy Issues

- Review policy issues
- Public comment

#### 5. Adjourn

## Attendance:

**ECPC Council Members:** Kim Johnson, Lupe Jaime-Mileham, Robin Layton, Tonia McMillian, Miren Algorri, Mary Ignatius

**Parent Advisory Committee Members:** Mary Ignatius, Yenni Rivera, Naima Facih, Patricia Lozano, Patrick McFarlane, Deborah Corley Marzett, Cherie Schroeder

**Workforce Advisory Committee:** Tonia McMillian, Miren Algorri, Virginia Eigen, Patricia Alexander, AnnLouise Bonnitto, Zoila Toma

## Summary Report

### **Welcome and Review of Agenda — Tonia McMillian, Chair of the Workforce Advisory Committee and Mary Ignatius, Chair of the Parent Advisory Committee**

**Tonia McMillian** and **Mary Ignatius** opened the meeting. McMillian thanked members of both advisory committees, the Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC) and the public for their attendance. She then shared the three agenda topics for the day's meeting:

- Preparing a budget letter to the Governor and Legislature on behalf of the ECPC and advisory committees
- Soliciting feedback on the Child Care and Development Fund State Plan
- Reviewing the policy ideas generated at the previous joint committee meeting

**Ignatius** acknowledged November as Native American Heritage Month and recognized indigenous peoples' resilience, persistence, and commitment in holding onto their languages and cultural traditions. She dedicated the meeting to Josephina Ramirez Notsinneh, a long-time advocate from Children Now, who recently passed away, leaving behind two young children. Ignatius called upon the committee to take up Ramirez Notsinneh's unfinished business and "carry on and ensure that children and families and early educators get what they need and deserve."

### **Presentation: Review Draft ECPC Budget Letter — Mary Ignatius and Robin Layton, ECPC member**

Ignatius and Layton's full remarks are captured on pages 4–6 of the [November 16, 2023 ECPC WAC/PAC meeting transcript \(November 16 transcript\)](#).

Last year, Ignatius and fellow ECPC member **Robin Layton** worked on a budget letter with the help of the advisory committees, and they are doing the same work for the 2024–25 budget. Many of the 2023–24 budget letter's recommendations were included in the final budget, which made historic investments in early childhood education (ECE) despite record deficits at the start of 2023. The current draft letter is an opportunity for the ECPC to appreciate and acknowledge the nearly \$3 billion the Governor and

Legislature are investing in ECE over the next couple of years. At the same time, the ECPC needs to continue holding the Governor and Legislature accountable to keep the promises they have made and prioritize families and providers.

The Governor's budget proposal is set to be released January 10, 2024. At that time, it will be possible to compare the proposal and the parent and provider priorities identified at the previous joint committee meeting. Ignatius noted that while much of the Governor's budget proposal is relatively fixed, it is important for the ECPC budget letter to focus on the identified priorities.

**Layton** reiterated the reason for a thank you letter. After a few years of operating in reaction mode, the ECPC now has a solid plan and schedule for communicating with the Governor and others going forward. The ECPC schedule for 2024 is not set yet, but the goal is to send the budget letter in January. After review by the advisory committees, the letter will be shared for approval at the December 21 ECPC meeting.

**Ignatius** read the full text of the draft budget letter.

Read the [Draft ECPC Budget Letter December 2023](#) on the ECPC website.

#### Committee Questions and Public Discussion — Tonia McMillian

Comments and questions from attendees both in person and via Zoom were invited. (The full text of this discussion period is captured on pages 6–14 of the [November 16 transcript](#))

**Layton** shared that she and Ignatius consciously took time to determine the appropriate tone and approach for this year's budget letter. She reflected that the advisory committees are always in a fight mode and often face disappointment, but this year felt different. Because the 2023–24 budget was very successful in supporting ECE, Layton and Ignatius chose to express appreciation in the letter. She recommended that the ECPC monitor the Governor's new budget proposal for follow-through on commitments, including the work of the Rate and Quality Advisory Panel (RQAP): "I think, in January, we are also looking for a commitment to undo the pause of those 20,000 slots and that there's a reflection or recognition that commitment remains and will be part of the next budget. But we can't hold [the Governor] accountable on that until we see what he's put in [the 2024–25 budget]."

**McMillian** thanked Layton and Ignatius for their insight on how they drafted the letter, noting, "I was a little concerned that there was no mention of different organizations, the roles that they played, but I get it."

**Deborah Corley Marzett**, family child care provider, thanked Layton and Ignatius for explaining their thinking and expressed her appreciation for the tone of the letter: "I thought it actually was well done, especially understanding and knowing that if we don't

hear what we want to hear in January that you're ready to change up [the rhetorical style].”

**Layton** thanked Corley Marzett and affirmed the importance of the ECPC being ready for the next letter. She stated that she has requested that a future ECPC meeting include an agenda item on priorities: “We all have our priorities and asks; it hasn't been formalized through this committee and the full ECPC.”

**Patricia Lozano** thanked Ignatius and Layton for drafting the letter and agreed on the importance of expressing gratitude. She asked, “When are you planning to send the letter? Can we have access to the letter?”

**Layton** said that the budget letter input process will be repeated at the December 21 ECPC meeting, with next steps to be determined if there are suggested revisions: “...it can't get changed too much without coming back to [the advisory committees] and then going back to the ECPC. So hopefully it'll be a clean approval and then it can get sent. Otherwise, we'll have to wait until—well, hopefully the first meeting will be in January, but again, we don't have the schedule.”

**Virginia Eigen** shared her opinion of the draft letter's tone: “I can appreciate the stance of gratitude on this letter. I also appreciate that there was a reminder at the top that these committees were created to help create policy and to advocate for ECE, families, and the workforce.”

**Zoila Toma** expressed support for a draft letter focusing on accomplishments and asked who was chosen to be a part of the initial drafting process: “I think anything that has happened, major or small, it's very important and it does create impact, but I don't know who exactly and how many members were involved in creating this letter. I think it's also important to involve more members to get a little bit more feedback to add or delete or other stuff that we also might have in mind because we—as parents, you might have some ideas. As providers, another.”

A participant commented that under Bagley-Keene public meeting rules, only two members of the ECPC, in this case Layton and Ignatius, can work together on a topic without breaching the public meeting laws.

**Ignatius** described the circumstances surrounding the initial drafting of the budget letter: “[Layton] and I got together one time last month because of the rules and limitations of what we're allowed to do, came up with this draft, and we're presenting it to you all for the first time....” She encouraged attendees and committee members to provide their input during this meeting: “There has not been a lot of process or conversation or meeting.... This is really the time to share that and then we can adapt those notes.”

**Patrick MacFarlane** suggested giving credit to leaders within the state administration in the budget letter: “It would be valuable in the letter to call out by name some of the

leaders within the administration who have been so instrumental over the last couple of years in working with the field and being responsive. And I think the Governor and his team, I think, would appreciate that kind of acknowledgement.”

**Layton** acknowledged McFarlane’s idea and asked for clarification about which personnel he thinks should be named. She noted that recognizing specific individuals creates the risk of leaving people out.

**MacFarlane** acknowledged this challenge and suggested listing departments.

**Ignatius** acknowledged suggestions to include policy recommendations in the draft budget letter. She noted that specific policy recommendations will be made in the next letter, to be sent after the release of the Governor’s proposal.

**Layton** and **Ignatius** returned to the topic of expressing appreciation to departments in the budget letter. Layton noted that while the departments carry out budget priorities, they do not pass the budget; therefore, it is most appropriate to thank the administration and Legislature in the budget letter.

**Ignatius** posed a question to the committee members gauging their comfort level with the draft letter. She also raised the possibility of adding a reference to racial equity and the impact of the state’s ECE investments on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) communities.

**AnnLouise Bonnitto** concurred with Ignatius’ comment about including reference to BIPOC and specifically elevated the need to recognize tribal early child care and the tribal educator workforce: “[The] tribal piece is huge just because the tribes are not racially based with the sovereignty piece. So, when it’s not named specifically in some of these things, unfortunately, it gets shipped to the side. ...I would love to see at least something mentioned in there, because what happens with the rates that go out—sometimes they don’t take into consideration tribes and what they have to go through and the inequities that they go through, as far as the child care rates for teachers and supply for even qualified teachers.”

**Ignatius** solicited Bonnitto’s help in drafting language regarding tribal early educators and true cost of care to insert into the budget letter.

**Layton** noted that the [ECPC 2021–22 Budget Letter](#) from May 2021 included BIPOC as a priority area. She read the paragraph to the group and asked if they would like similar language added to the current draft.

**Bonnitto** responded affirmatively and noted, “when it comes to legislation and the law, if it’s silent and not said, it didn’t happen. And we just definitely want to make sure that these particular groups are not siloed off to the side by accident.”

**Ignatius** echoed Bonnitto's sentiment: "We can be really strong that all policies investments must take into consideration and be inclusive of all of these communities."

Public Comment (Zoom live and chat speakers included)

(Partial record of public comment is captured in page 9 of the [November 16 transcript.](#))

**Kristel England** asked about the intent of the phrase "recognize the cost" in the draft letter and what action the ECPC is expecting to be taken.

**Denyne Colburn** stated appreciation for the tone of the letter and wondered whether discussion of supporting the workforce could address "updating existing regulations that are challenging to the workforce such as the 80/20 rule."

A participant shared her perception of the mechanisms of change in the state system and advocated for children, families, and providers: "...I don't want to be in fight mode; however, I do demand results and our leaders to stand for/with and assist those most vulnerable, affected, and hindered due to lack of accountability and systemic, on-purpose barriers."

**Kendra Holly** asked about the budget letter, "Is the goal to get the Governor to agree to payment based on the spot the child takes instead of days attended?"

**Jennifer Greppi** suggested changing the phrase 'family engagement' to 'family partnership' in order to "better represent the two-way relationship between parents and providers. It's a back and forth and relationship that deserves to be recognized."

**Layton** clarified the intent of the phrase 'recognizing the cost' in the draft budget letter and the expectation that the budget "reflect the recommendations that come out of the [RQAP]." She pointed out that the RQAP evolved from a stakeholder's input group to a respected panel of experts/advisors. She noted that the RQAP and the Rate and Quality Work Group members represent the field, including center-based and family child care (FCC) providers, and parents. She also noted that she and Ignatius have "taken into consideration the last three years of committee members comments as well as the many members of the public that attend these meetings."

**Presentation: 2025–27 Child Care and Development Fund State Plan — Lupe Jaime-Mileham, Deputy Director, Child Care and Development Division, California Department of Social Services)**

**McMillian** welcomed **Dr. Lupe Jaime-Mileham** to facilitate an input session on the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan.

Jaime-Mileham's full remarks are captured on pages 14–16 of the [November 16 transcript.](#)

The CCDF is a federal block grant administered by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for states, territories, and tribal governments. The CCDF provides support for children and their families and subsidizes child care that fits the needs of families and prepares children to succeed in school and beyond. Recipients of CCDF funding are required to submit a plan to the federal government.

The CCDF State Plan, or ACF 118 report, consists of eight separate sections:

- Leadership and coordination with relevant systems
- Family engagement and consumer education
- Financial assistance to families
- Equal access to childcare
- Standards and monitoring to ensure health and safety
- Retention and recruitment of an effective workforce
- Continuous quality improvement
- Grantee program integrity and accountability

For each area, the lead agency is expected to explain how they will use the funds to meet the requirements.

The State Plan is prepared every three years and is in effect for a three-year term. The CCDF 2025–27 State Plan is due July 1, 2024 and will be effective October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027.

The CDSS has begun drafting the CCDF 2025–27 State Plan in collaboration with other state agencies, the ECPC, tribal partners, and community partners. This collaborative approach ensures that expert voices are represented as the state develops the best plan for its needs.

Jaime-Mileham noted that the joint advisory committee meeting was serving as the third of eight scheduled input sessions with a variety of partners throughout the state.

After providing an overview of the State Plan, Jaime-Mileham focused on select topics in plan sections related to families and the workforce, including:

- Section 3: Financial assistance to families
- Section 4: Equal access to child care
- Section 6: Retention and recruitment of an effective workforce
- Section 7: Continuous quality improvement

She described Section 3 of the CCDF State Plan Sections as follows:

*Section 3. Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families.* Section 3 discusses the policies and procedures related to providing stable child care through financial assistance to families. Currently, the requirement for receiving child care services is that the family must meet one of the identified eligibility categories and have a need. The lead agency has the authority to identify some other eligible conditions above the federal requirements. A recent notice of proposed rulemaking released by the ACF introduced the possibility of adding the options of *presumptive eligibility*. Presumptive eligibility would allow families to receive available child care services for a predetermined period of time prior to collecting and submitting all documents of eligibility.

Jaime-Mileham presented four questions regarding Section 3 and presumptive eligibility for committee members' feedback.

- How would the use of presumptive eligibility benefit families in California?
- What are your concerns about this policy?
- Are there questions that you anticipate the policy will raise when it is implemented?
- Is the proposed three months a reasonable amount of time to allow families to collect and submit documentation?

She described an example of what presumptive eligibility would look like in action before inviting comments and questions from attendees.

#### Committee Questions and Public Discussion — Lupe Jaime-Mileham

Comments and questions from attendees both in person and via Zoom. (The full text of this discussion period is captured on pages 16–24 of the [November 16 transcript](#))

**Corley Marzett** thanked Jaime-Mileham. She voiced support for presumptive eligibility for family daycare providers. She posed follow up questions about immediate family eligibility and provider reimbursement: "...as the family becomes immediately eligible and they say, 'this is the provider that I would like to use', will the provider immediately receive the paperwork through email and or mail? And along with that...let's say the family does not get all the paperwork together in that three-month period, will the provider be reimbursed for the services that they [are] paying?"

She went on to share examples of scenarios that result in delays in provider reimbursement and payment, stating, "If we're going to implement this...We need to make sure to hold the agencies accountable for that, called out and corrected, because there's no reason why a provider should have to provide services for all those months and is told they're going to be reimbursed, and if something happens and the parent



fails to do something, the provider loses. We want to make sure that doesn't happen for any provider in this state.”

**Jaime-Mileham** restated Corley Marzett’s feedback to confirm her understanding of it: “[You are] supportive of the presumptive eligibility but want to make sure that there is additional language in regard to the immediate notification of the provider upon the family being deemed eligible for the presumptive eligibility. And [you] want to make sure that [CDSS notes] with further policies regulation that the provider is paid for that full period of time regardless of whether that family comes through with paperwork or not...” and “[CDSS needs] to continue to monitor and support because it’s something that is currently not happening in regard to the payment and so we need to strengthen that a bit more.”

**Corley Marzett** verified Jaime-Mileham’s understanding and underscored the need for timeliness in releasing a family’s paperwork to the provider: “...the paperwork needs to go out immediately to the provider, as a parent can change their provider immediately and a notice has to go out the same day because that’s regulation. The same day that a parent will tell a case manager, ‘I want to switch providers’, that letter is supposed to go out immediately....”

**Ignatius** expressed agreement with Corley Marzett’s comments. She shared that Parent Voices submitted comments on the proposed rule and presumptive eligibility: “We believe anything that any policy that removes and makes it much more simpler for families to apply for services, we are in support of... if a family had already applied for another service that was income-based, that they had to prove and show documentation within the last 12 months, they should also be made eligible based on that documentation that’s already been submitted.”

Ignatius shared her perceptions of how the current paperwork process affects families’ attempts to access services: “The fact that families are constantly having to submit and resubmit documentation and then that documentation gets lost or somebody didn’t receive it...that’s how families keep falling through the cracks. And they just throw up their hands and walk away from the system instead of that system receiving them and wrapping their arms around them to make it simpler and easy for them to experience.” She proposed the idea of “automatic eligibility if you’ve already provided documentation in the last 12 months. And then they would be held to the law in the CCDF that says if you are over 85 percent of SMI [state median income] you have to report.”

**Jaime-Mileham** thanked Ignatius. She verified her understanding of Ignatius’ advocacy for applying categorical eligibility rules to presumptive eligibility, meaning that “the family would not need to resubmit their paperwork again since they have already established the categorical eligibility in the last 12 months.”

**Jaime-Mileham** asked participants to continue giving feedback on any sections covered today. She continued describing relevant portions of Section 3 in the CCDF State Plan:

*Section 3.2.4. Waiving of the Family Fees:* Family fees are also referenced as a contribution or copayment. The federal regulations allow the state to waive family fees for families with incomes at or below the federal poverty level for their family size, families receiving or needing protective services, or families who meet other criteria established by the lead agency, CDSS.

Currently CDSS waives family fees for families who meet any of six criteria:

- Below 75th percentile of the SMI
  - This includes families with an income at or below the federal poverty level.
- Receiving Child Protective Service or identified as at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation
  - They may be exempt from paying a family fee for 12 months when a referral indicates that the family fee is waived.
- Receiving Cal Works cash aid
- Receiving child care and development services for children with special needs
- Enrolled in a federally based migrant program (CMAC)
- Eligible for child care based on experiencing homelessness
  - This criterion applies in pilot counties where homeless child care eligibility has been approved and put in place to supersede the state law.

Jaime-Mileham sought member feedback on two questions regarding Section 3.2.4 and waiving family fees:

1. Given the new family fee schedule that sets fees at no more than 1 percent of family income, is there still a need for additional family fee exemption?
2. If so, what populations would you suggest?

**Ignatius** asked Jaime-Mileham for clarification on the nature of the SMI question: “...(family) fees are eliminated for all below 75 percent of SMI, but there are particular groups that have already been identified who even if they started to make income between 75 and 85 [percent of SMI] would not have to pay fees. And so, you're asking who else in that or what other populations might want to be included in those?” She also asked if survivors of domestic violence are named in the family fee waiver eligibility criteria: “Having watched a family go through [domestic violence] right now, real fears about income and what's allowable and what's not is really a determining factor of if they're going to flee. And so, if there was a way to include them, that would be great.”

**Jaime-Mileham** confirmed Ignatius' understanding of the SMI question. She also verified that survivors of domestic violence are not identified in the criteria.

**Eigen** asked whether family fee waivers account for regional cost of living “...because California is so diverse and the cost of living in different sections is extremely diverse as well.”

**Jaime-Mileham** acknowledged feedback that high-cost of living counties should be taken into account when considering fees and waivers.

She then described Sections 6 and 7 in the CCDF State Plan as follows:

*Sections 6 and 7. Training and Professional Development for Our Workforce:* Currently, the CCDF is utilized to target the mixed delivery system—which is the Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN), FCC, and center-based workforce. And it [provides] a system of support that supports the training and professional development of the mixed delivery system [workforce]. Training and development includes the Workforce Pathways Grant, Quality Counts California (QCC), Language Project, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, and many other supports.

She posed one question to committee members regarding training and professional development: “Does this group have any feedback on the offering of topics, access to the array of offerings, additional supports missing, the vehicles of how these are being offered, et cetera?”

**Eigen** commented on her experience searching for grants to support her recent return to school as she prepared to move from preschool to transitional kindergarten (TK): “I actually didn't find anything besides student loans. So, making it easier for people to access and find that information is imperative to get people into the field.”

**Corley Marzett** expressed interest in adding a state-level training on parent contracts to support new providers going into the field. She suggested this training would supplement orientations provided by California Child Care Providers United and others: “If the state took an extra step to supporting those providers, and after they have their orientation... saying ‘the state would like to help you [understand] the importance of a solid contract. Of course, we can't tell you what to put in the contract, but yet it's important how to create a great solid and secure contract between the provider and the parents.’”

She also advocated for the state taking time to teach providers to maneuver through the CDSS website: “If you do not know where to find the information, how can you be expected to know the information?”

**Lozano** noted that the FFN provider work group has expressed a desire for trainings: “We hear that [FFNs] are really interested in accessing trainings but sometimes it's hard to know where to go.” She expressed support for continuing to work on making trainings “more accessible...especially [for] those who are interested in getting licensed right. It feels like overwhelming sometimes on where to go, how to access that information.”

**Jaime-Mileham** acknowledged feedback on accessibility and targeted approaches to ensure FFNs know where to access information.

**Toma** commented on a provider training fund: “I know that training fund, it's doing great when it comes to paying, helping with tuition reimbursement, business training...and all the things that were mentioned. But also, as long as we continue to [receive] those funds—hopefully we can work in our contract for the future years—I think we can expand this.” Further, she advocated for everyone to proactively sign up for emails “so they can stay up to date on what's happening,” both in terms of news and available support resources.

**Jaime-Mileham** thanked Toma and acknowledged “the importance of the training fund and of course the talk about making sure that it's ongoing.”

**MacFarlane** commented that the top issues he sees for the workforce are access to child care and housing supports, along with trainings and resources so providers can inform families of housing supports.

**Jaime-Mileham** asked for confirmation that MacFarlane is advocating for CDSS to take a “more of a whole child, whole family approach and that beyond child care needs, families need to also be aware of resources like housing.”

**MacFarlane** concurred with Jaime-Mileham and advocated for helping families be aware of the family fees along with timely access to resources on housing: “to ensure that early educators are not burdened by family fees and that also if they have housing issues, that they have access to resources immediately so that they're not faced with housing insecurity as much as possible.”

**Jaime-Mileham** thanked MacFarlane for his feedback. She then reviewed a list of future in-person and online feedback opportunities to continue the conversation. The day's meeting was the third of four planned regional feedback sessions, the others having been held in Fresno and Redding. The final regional session is to be held 10:00 a.m. to noon, November 20, 2023 at the Riverside County Office of Education. For those unable to attend a regional meeting, there will be an in-person session at CDSS headquarters in Sacramento on November 29, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. There will also be a Zoom session from 10 a.m. to noon on December 7, 2023.

After the first draft of the CCDF State Plan is released in early February 2024, there will be a 30-day public comment period to allow an opportunity to review the draft and offer more written comments. As required by federal law, CDSS will also hold a public hearing during the 30-day comment period. More information about these public comment periods and the public hearing will be shared through the CDSS listserv in January 2024.

The information gathered in the input sessions will inform the final draft of the CCDF State Plan, which will be submitted on July 1, 2024. Written feedback, questions, and RSVPs to remaining sessions can be submitted via email ([statepln@dss.ca.gov](mailto:statepln@dss.ca.gov)).

Jaime-Mileham thanked everyone for their time.

#### Public Comment (Zoom live and chat speakers included)

**Jennifer Greppi** asked, “How does this interact with 12-month eligibility? Does this supersede the 12-month rule?”

**Dr. Linda Moreno** commented, “We should still have the ability to have a two-weeks’ notice that’s why we’re licensed!!!”

A participant shared, “I’ve had parents be rejected from low-income programs just because of the person that fills up the paper, for example, field workers they have a boss that is not familiar with papers like that, they make mistakes, and the programs have said that the paperwork does not make sense and rejected them.”

**Yenni Rivera** shared her experience in the application process with families from specific populations: “Bringing to light that many of our parents in Los Angeles County (and I’m sure in all our counties) get rejected or their application is delayed because, due to escaping [domestic violence], they’re not able to immediately provide documentation, and due to safety, it can take them a bit of time to obtain the documentation required. Others are due to homelessness and/or living in their vehicles or shelters or doubled up that they do not immediately have documentation available, and also takes them time to obtain documentation.”

**Nora Martinez** asked, “What happens if they lose the program, and they are single parents? They tell them to get back in waiting list and can’t afford child care, so she has to ask grandma, mom, sisters to watch them, and is too hard for them.”

**Rivera** shared her perspective on trauma-informed services: “For families that have a traumatic event occurring as they are seeking a subsidy/assistance, there should be a longer grace time as we are supposed to provide trauma-informed care. On top of surviving or navigating either domestic violence or Department of Mental Health or homeless systems, they’re trying to also navigate our early education system all at once. Just like [CDSS] puts an immediate stop on their clock for [Greater Avenues for Independence], our early education system should have an aligned system in place so families can receive child care immediately as part of a plan to get back on their feet.”

**Edwin Cardenas** stated, “Training tied to actual degrees and higher education centers should be key.”

**Lorena Burrola** expressed her perception that “Many of our agencies offer services to FFN and FCC, however, we have little to no funding for marketing or website

development, making it difficult to get the information or resources out to the community.”

**Patricia Sullivan** shared her opinion about subsidies and FCC providers: “It’s also important to mask the amount of subsidy given to FCC providers. Subsidized families don’t need to see the amount of the subsidy. Many FCCs are being taken advantage of when families see the subsidy amounts and ask for extra services, extend their days, because they feel the providers are getting a lot of money, and some are even asking for kickbacks. In [San Francisco], we have asked our subsidy letters to eliminate this information.”

**Tony Tyson** asked, “Has there been any consideration of setting specific benchmarks or goals for early educator wages as part of advocacy and the development of new reimbursement rates (i.e., Living Wage by location, PK/TK-12 Wage Parity for early educators with like education, etc.)?”

**Joanna Rocha** commented, “Some [child care] providers have a lot of room for children, but they are not getting full due to having a Type A or Type B [citation]. Programs don’t want to hire them. Is there anything we can do about that?”

**Chanel Hamilton** commented, “It would be amazing to create a branch of employees that work with CDSS with families that need case management style support when they are navigating their way to stabilization, whether that’s housing, education, or employment.”

### **Review Advisory Committees’ Policy Issues and Committee Discussion —Tonia McMillian and Mary Ignatius**

(The full text of this discussion period is captured on pages 32–34 of the [November 16 transcript](#))

**McMillian** thanked Jaime-Mileham. McMillian explained that the conversation would return to a discussion from the August joint committee meeting. Committee members were asked to identify the policy issues they felt were most important for supporting parents and providers. The goal of identifying issues was to build a common understanding of priorities and then raise these issues when responding to the Governor’s budget and deciding on topics of focus for the coming year’s meetings.

The chairs presented a list of priority policy issues compiled from feedback and posed two questions for the committee members:

- Is there an issue near and dear to your heart that you don’t see on the list?
- Is there an issue on this list that you would like to add more description to or clarify?

**Ignatius** read the draft list of priority policy ideas.

[Read the list of ECPC Advisory Committees Priority Policy Ideas to Lift Up on Behalf of Parents and Providers \(slide 16\) on the ECPC website.](#)

**McMillian** stated that she wanted to add a policy about supporting access to child care subsidies for currently incarcerated and recently released mothers. She proposed the inclusion of language such as “expand access to child care subsidies targeting specific populations such as currently incarcerated and recently released mothers.” She opened the floor for discussion.

**Ignatius** noted that 50 parents recently gathered to discuss issues including adjusting the SMI to area median income: “I’m not sure if it was related to income eligibility but adjusting income eligibility to be based on area median income rather than [SMI] because of the significant cost of living.”

She advocated for the Legislature and Governor to keep the promise in the budget to expand slots to reach 200,000 by 2025.

**Corley Marzett** proposed including ‘paid’ in the two-week notice “because it was pointed out to me that when a parent gives a two-week notice in policy, it does not say or mention that it’s a paid two-week notice.” Making this change would clarify that the provider should be paid and the responsibility goes to the parents.

**McMillian** mentioned that the CDSS Community Care and Licensing Division currently has a licensing advocate for providers for centers with licensing. She proposed adding a policy to create spaces within Resource and Referral agencies (R&Rs) for parent and provider advocates. Long-time providers and parents who understand and have participated in changing the process can play a role to help new providers and new parents navigate their way.

**Toma** advocated for clarifying policies that support creating safe and accessible outdoor space for children in home- and center-based settings. She shared her observations around compliance and expenses: “Unfortunately, when [Community Care and Licensing Division representatives] comes [to conduct regulation site visits], sometimes we think that we have the appropriate play areas and sometimes they ask us to dismantle everything, and we have already spent money into all that. So, I think it’ll be great if we have some sort of support on that area so we can know exactly, and we are not wasting resources, money, and things that have to be dismantled...”

She also expressed her opinion about required administrative reporting of appropriate supports for children with special needs: “I have to be sending a letter to my subsidy program, every time I’m submitting the attendance sheets, that assistive support is ongoing with the special needs. That’s everyday support. So telling them, every month, the same thing, it’s a bit questionable.”

**Miren Algorri** commented about parental choice and policy: “...when we talk about parents’ choice, it should be respected. But when it comes to parents’ choice, they’re

very limited when their children need some type of support because the children must be enrolled in the district to receive such support. So, we need to work on policy that ensures that children, regardless of the type of early care and education setting they're attending, get the resources that they need in order for them to thrive." She also expressed solidarity with Patricia Lozano's comment on supporting multilingual students, parents, and providers.

**MacFarlane** raised up two policy areas: "I would like to see access for more families, perhaps for families that are above the current income eligibility, but I think more families being served is an important goal. The second [area] is around the findings from the reparations task force and doing something... to incorporate reparative justice for Black Californians as it relates to child care."

**Cherie Schroeder** advocated for a voucher to follow a child in foster care instead of being tied to a provider because a change in foster care placement often results in losing child care: "...it's just another disruption upon another disruption. And perhaps even we're lucky that we have child care available...at least in our county, but not all up and down the state...just putting dependent children in as another one of those vulnerable populations."

**Bonitto** suggested a policy focus including tribal providers, noting that tribal children are dually eligible for both the state and tribal funding programs. She offered two priority policy ideas:

- Ensuring tribal child care providers have information about and access to the same workforce pathways opportunities and trainings offered to state contracted providers
- Advancing stronger policy language that "directs" R&Rs to include tribal child care providers in referrals systems
  - Currently there is only a state management bulletin that "encourages" the inclusion of tribal providers, and "...we found at the local levels it really leaves it up to the local agencies. And sometimes they do, sometimes they don't."

**McMillian** noted the new paid family leave program effective January 1.

**Lozano** suggested adding "supports for Multilingual Learners, their families, and providers."

**Algorri** suggested a policy setting 18 months as the upper age limit for children to qualify as infants for FCC settings, "just like centers." She noted, "Children are children, doesn't matter the setting. This is hindering families and it's hindering [FCC] providers because we have a lot of parents out there who are struggling to find infant care for infants who are three, four months old and we have the slots in our [FCC] homes. However, we have four 23-month-olds that are taking those infant spots and that has to



do with equity. How is it that infants are 18 months and below at a center, but they're 24 months and below for [FCC]? ... I think it's important because a parent should not have to commute 100 miles a day in order to have child care services for their infant children.”

#### Public Comment (Zoom and chat speakers included)

**Rivera** advocated for vouchers to follow the child and family to better support families who move frequently: “We have a huge challenge in LA County and [California] due to families constantly moving because they're doubled up/couch surfing, from shelter to shelter, being evicted, surviving homelessness, etc. It's a REAL issue due to the cost of living, but the barrier could be less challenging if the voucher followed the family/child.”

She expressed her opinion on the impact of paperwork on families, highlighting migrant families: “Keep in mind that aside from the wait time, families are trying to obtain waivers for each document needed or save for the fees. Then comes the burden of transportation to obtain the documents needed. On top of that is having a reliable address for documents to arrive. These are true challenges our families are facing.... We have an influx of migrant families who may qualify for subsidies but have never filled out complicated forms. This is a clear example of the lack of equity.”

She identified domestic violence and homelessness as priority policy issues and advocated for eligibility grace periods as part of trauma-informed care and services: “...it's different traumas and different needs, and we need to keep that attention because it does affect getting all documentation. Three months grace doesn't really align [with lived experiences of the populations]. She shared the reality of the need, which she has seen as the family coordinator for Los Angeles County: “I can tell you there's thousands, at least we've calculated about 15 [to] 20 thousand that are in our services. Whether, for us it's HUD definition of income. For the education system, who I work with hand-in-hand, it's different, the McKinney-Vento [Homeless Assistance Act's definition].”

Rivera believes that there are more eligible families in Los Angeles County who are not coming forward: “...because of embarrassment, because of many trauma, they don't necessarily come to our doors, but they are living off vehicles, shelters, doubled up, constantly moving.” She advocated for a longer grace period to obtain documentation or allowing vouchers to follow the family or child: “Even our case managers have a hard time finding families. Can you imagine families themselves having to figure out, ‘Wait, what document am I missing?’, ‘What shelter did I leave that on?’ Sometimes they have to leave without even being able to take all of their items. ... We have to be respectful, especially if we're saying that we have to be a trauma-informed care system federally.”

**Ignatius** validated Rivera's input and the importance of feedback from the committee members: “...these subcommittees are centered around the needs of families and centered around the needs of the workforce. Because we are all breathing these

systems every day, we're the closest to the problems and the closest to the solutions. So that is why we lift up everybody's expertise to move these policies forward.”

**Maria Zaldua** commented, “Add access to mental health evaluations in number 8 [in the list].”

**Kendra Holly** suggested, “Change the policy from payment based on the child's attendance to payment based on the spot the child is taking in our licensed facility.”

**Crystal Jones** advocated for subsidy agencies to agree to honor providers’ rate contract as a part of their parent contracts: “...it is crucial to include that language in the contract.”

**Chanel Hamilton** suggested FCCs be granted access to a special license that would allow programs with two providers to accept up to six infants.

**Celine Krimston** expressed her opinion about assessments: “I would like to see a policy set that [school districts] must collaborate with providers in their boundaries. The responsibility is currently on providers, and (A) not all providers/agencies have the resources to support families in the process, and (B) many districts are not responsive.”

**Dezerie Martinez** suggested providing additional support to private, unsubsidized FCC and center-based providers: “They typically do not have access to the education/training, incentives, and other resources that subsidized or QCC-participating providers receive.”

**Maria Zaldua** suggested, “Free access to higher education for ECE teachers/childcare providers.”

**Chanel Hamilton**, a former FCC provider, expressed solidarity with Rivera’s suggestion to extend the three-month grace period for documentation, factoring in document processing time and family movement: “It already takes eight weeks in order to get a birth certificate and then another two weeks in order to get a social security card. So that's already pressing up against that three-month grace period. So, I definitely think that should be extended because she mentioned families that are constantly moving or even families that are waiting for out of state documentation. If they're not from LA County or from California, it might take much longer to get that documentation.”

She commented on the idea of a policy changing infant ratios: “...even changing the age to 18 months, you can only offer a space for four infants at a time if you're only offering infant childcare. So, then maybe adding some language similar to school-age children where you can increase to have the six children if there's two providers at any time.” She also advocated for funding opportunities for providers who want help with startup costs because it's extremely difficult for new providers to navigate how to open up a program and where to get financial assistance. “The R&Rs do a really good job of

providing workshops and opportunities to collaborate, but the need for the financial assistance is really prevalent.”

**Regina Cannon** expressed interest in formal externship programs between community colleges and providers who need trained professionals to meet demand: “...it’s hard for us as great daycare providers to find people that have passion like we do for our daycares. And we could bridge the gap where if the community college, if the state, would pay the people that are near ending their degree in child development to come into our homes and see if they want to be a daycare provider, but also be an assistant to us like maybe 200 hours every six months.”

**Joanna Rocha**, a provider in Monterey County, described seeing home-based providers operate under capacity while migrant families face difficulties fulfilling application requirements and experience high rejection rates: “A lot of my families are migrant workers that don’t know how to fill out papers, don’t know how to write in Spanish.... So, if they make a mistake that doesn’t consist with... what [the program is] asking, the program turns them off. ...Not everybody has the school that you do to understand computers, understand papers. A lot of them are just normal people that come from Mexico and don’t know how to fill out paper. So, they just fill whatever they know...there’s nothing I can do. All I can say is that I’m sorry.... There’s no explanation I can give them. So, is there something that we can do about that with these?”

Further, Ms. Rocha advocated for policy change around Type A violations, given that homes function as both business and personal space: “We do use our home. [When] there’s a Type A violation that they won’t hire you. So, we’re losing a lot of providers in my county because of that. It’s so hard not to get a violation because we have our children, we have our families. When the children leave before 6:00, our house goes back to normal. Then if the licensing comes in and you have a soap out there, that’s the Type A (citation), and then you don’t have any children, but still, you’re in the hours of operation. So, it’s so hard with licensing and the requirements and the hours of operation. So sometimes a lot of providers want to close sooner. They want to close around 4:30 and that it’s a bad thing for parents because a lot of migrant people get off at almost six o’clock, so now they’re struggling to work and meet work requirements.”

**McMillian** thanked the public for their written and verbal input, acknowledging the importance of their participation and thanked fellow ECPC members, and Parent and Workforce Advisory Committee members for their continued dedication to this work and for their time.

The meeting was adjourned.