



**Early Childhood Policy Council
Agenda and Transcripts**

Virtual Meeting

Tuesday, August 13, 2024
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Physical Meeting

1000 G Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
WestEd, 5th floor, Capitol Room

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome
- Voices from the field
- Public comment

2. Disrupting Poverty and Neglect Through Concrete Supports

- Presentations
- Council discussion
- Public comment

3. Building a Comprehensive Early Learning and Care Mixed Delivery System that Integrates Universal Prekindergarten

- Review and discussion of draft policy recommendations
- Public comment

4. Rate and Quality Advisory Panel Update

- Status Update
- Council questions
- Public comment

5. Child Care Transition Quarterly Report

- Update from the California Department of Social Services

- Council questions
- Public comment

6. Adjourn

Attendance:

ECPC Council Members:

Carola Oliva-Olson, Cheryl Polk, Donna Sneeringer, Janet Zamudio, Kim Johnson, Kim Patillo Brownson, Laura (Kay) Ruhstaller, Lisette Frausto, Lupe Jaime-Mileham, Mary Ignatius, Mayra Alvarez, Natali Gaxiola, Paula Merrigan, Robin Layton, Sarah Neville-Morgan, Scott Moore, Sonia Jaramillo, Tonia McMillian

Parent Advisory Committee Members:

Cheryl Schroeder, Deborah Corley-Marzett, Naima Facih, Patricia Lozano, Yenni Rivera

Workforce Advisory Committee:

AnnLouise Bonnitto, Debra Ward, Zoila Toma

Guest:

Cheryl Treadwell, Lucy Ford, Stephen Propheter, Yasmin Grewal-Kok

Public Comment:

Alexandra Hilario, Ghada Ponce, Marcella Graves, Paloma Corona, Sarina Lynn, Susan Savage, Sylvia Hernandez, Yvonne Cottage

Hosts:

Diana Yactayo, Gina Morimoto, Giovanna Wormsbecker (SP), Jateri Willis, Junting Tan (CN), Karin Bloomer, Ramee Serwanga, Veronique Baumbach, Ya-Nan Chou (CN), Yelka Vargas (SP)

Meeting Transcripts:

Welcome and Introductions

Karin Bloomer:

Good morning. We're just letting members of the public take a moment to join us. Well, good morning everyone. Before we begin our Early Childhood Policy Council Meeting today, I'd like to review a few Zoom features with you. We'll enable these features after providing this instruction.

In a few moments, we will be offering the closed captioning feature in Zoom. To access this feature, you will need to locate the live transcript button at the bottom of your Zoom screen, and then click 'Show Subtitle'. This will allow you to view closed captions in

English throughout the meeting. In a moment, we will also offer language interpretation services. I'll now turn things over to our interpreters to describe how you can listen to this meeting in English, Spanish, or Mandarin.

Spanish Interpreter:

[foreign language].

Mandarin Interpreter:

[foreign language]. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you. We will now open up the language channel, so please do pick your preferred language at this time. That includes individuals who will be participating in English. If you'd like to build it here, the translated public comment, for example, from another language, please do select the English Channel at this time.

Three more items of note. We'll be opening up the chat feature to invite written public comment at the end of each agenda item today. And during the final comment period, we'll also invite verbal public comment. We'll be asking those who give verbal testimony to limit their time to one minute in order to invite as many voices as possible to share. The slides we share today in the meeting will be posted on the ECPC web page within the next week.

And finally, just as a reminder, because of updates to the Bagley-Keene public meeting law, council members who are attending virtually today do need to keep their cameras on, unless it's technologically impossible to do so. All right. And with that, I will turn it over to the chair.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you so much, Karin. Good morning, and welcome to the third Early Childhood Policy Council Meeting of the year. I am Kim Johnson, privileged to serve as the director of the California Department of Social Services and the chair of this council. I want to thank all of the council members and advisory members for joining this morning, and recognizing as we were briefly chatting here, that it's, for many, a return to school time. So just appreciate all that you're doing to welcome new students into your programs and to your classrooms, and welcoming families in this transition time. Good luck to all the parents too who are changing their schedules and routines and waking up those young children. So sending good wishes all around in that space.

For roll call this morning, we will ask the support team to take note of the council members who are in attendance. Thank you for doing so. And as we often do, we have a very full agenda this morning. We will share the agenda and allotted time for all. We're going to begin as we always do with voices from the field, then we're going to focus in on what the council members had requested as a focus conversation, and that's about disrupting poverty and neglect through concrete support. So we're grateful to have some guest speakers to share that, and of course talk a little bit more about the efforts underway in some of the work that we're doing.

We're then going to circle back to a conversation we had in May, related to building a comprehensive early learning and care mixed delivery system that integrates universal pre-kindergarten. Council Members Donna Sneeringer and Council Member Dean Tagawa will share the draft policy recommendation. I think actually Dean's not able to be with us this morning, but it was part of that. And we'll share those recommendation that they gathered from council members, advisory committee members and from public comment to that with the council.

And we are going to conclude with updates from the work of the rate and quality advisory panel and a transition of child care and development programs to the Department of Social Services. So we are going to get through the agenda. We want to hear your voice, but we also want to make sure we are able to cover all the topics throughout this conversation as well. So we'll just make sure we have some timekeepers keeping us on schedule.

So without further delay, let us start with where we do every meeting and with voices from the field. And I want to welcome Lucy Ford from the Child Care Resource Center. Good morning, Lucy. Thank you for joining us and I will turn it over to you.

Voices from the field

Lucy Ford:

Hi. Good morning everyone. My name is Lucy Ford. I am with the Child Care Resource Center. We're a non-profit organization in Southern California. I'm so happy to be here and to share a little bit about what CCRC is doing and has been doing and looking into the future and what that looks like. I will be sharing my screen. Let me go ahead and do that now. It's just a slideshow, so there's no actual sound or music coming from there. So just a thumbs up if any one of you can see my screen. Okay, great. So I'll go ahead and get that started.

So like I said, with the Child Care Resource Center, I am boots on the ground doing everything that relates to being part of the community outreaches, getting to know what is out there, what the families really need to do. And I've been with the agency for 11 years. So we've done and been through quite a bit together. I'm sure many of you, COVID was a big thing that happened, and we all had to react real quick and see what it is that families were in need of and what kind of help, what resources were out there. So we've always had a donation program where parents could call us and say, "Hey, I need diapers or do you know somewhere I can get food? Or I am in need of X, Y, Z, how can you help?"

So we've always been that resource center for people, but we're doing what we can. If we have items, we were giving items, we were talking to people, but doing the best we can. And I would say one of the better things that came out of COVID, if you will, is that so many people were willing to give and there was an excess of things that were just around. So CCRC really tried to take as much advantage of that as possible. We started doing monthly distributions. At first it was a weekly distribution. We were talking to parents, we were talking to providers, we were talking to the kiddos and saying, "Hey. You're not going to school anymore. School's at home, how does that feel? How do you feel? What's going on?" And we really tried to talk to these parents and say, "Hey. We

know things are changing. We know there's a lot going on, so how can we be this resource for you? How can we make this as best for your child, for your family, for the community as possible?"

So we heard a lot of stories and some of them are hard to hear to be honest. We had parents that came to us and said, "Hey. This week I need to decide if I am buying diapers for my little one or if I am buying lunches for the week. " And we were like, "No, you need both. Neither one of these are optional. " We had one mom that came to us and said that she was washing disposable diapers, which is just unheard of. You can't do that. So we really wanted to see what the parents were needing and being there for them.

We had parents that weren't able to leave their house because they didn't have a car seat or the car seat wasn't the size, the kind that it should be. We had parents that told us that their kids weren't motivated to go to school. That they weren't reading because they didn't have books and the parents weren't fluent in English, so they couldn't read to the kids what they were hearing in school and there was a disconnect there. Or they weren't excited to go to school because they didn't have sharp crayons or a new notebook. So real tough things in addition to just, "I don't have a warm coat this winter. " We really took this time to talk to the community and talk to those parents and see what it is that is needed and how we can really bridge that gap and be there.

So these distributions that started years ago have continued and we are happy to say that we still continue to provide not just monthly distributions for parents for these items like diapers, like fruits and vegetables, like non-perishable foods. But also, other things that maybe you don't think of that are in need, like household items, trash cans and trash bags. Because sometimes you just don't know what you need until you're in that situation. So we've expanded what it is that we are able to distribute, how often we distribute. We still have our donation program where if a parent calls us and says, "Hey. I really need food for this week. What can you do for me?" We have great partners. We have great donors that we're able to reach out to and say, "Hey, this is what's been going on. Is there something that you can do to help?" And we really work with them so that we are able to help as many parents.

And we've really come to understand the difference between a long-term need and a short-term need. Because one of our biggest programs that CCRC offers is our subsidized child care program to the fact that if a parent is going to school or is working, we are able to help them pay for their child care so that they're able to do those things with one less worry, which is a great long-term need. We love seeing parents graduate and say, "Hey. I was able to do this with your help. " But we also love the short-term need of, "Hey. I need diapers right now. " So we're able to provide that for them.

And we've had so many success stories, which we love sharing and hearing, but I know that someone called us within the past six months, a year or so and said, "Hey. I just was calling to see when your next distribution was. " So we were talking to her and saying, "Yeah. We're hoping to have it by the end of the month. It really depends on when the items arrive. I can put you on the list so that we can reach out to you when we're ready to start registering those families. "

And she was like, "No, no, no. Excuse me. I don't need your items. And I actually want to call to volunteer because a year ago or two years ago, I came to a distribution, and I

left crying because I needed diapers, and I didn't know where to turn. And not only did I get diapers, but I got a bag of fruits and vegetables with it, and I think my kids got a Frisbee or something, some little toy that we just happened to have that week. And it just changed... That week for me was so different and I really want to pay it forward and I really want to give it back. " So those success stories are what we love to hear and kind gives us a bit of a push to see what else can we do, how else can we move our mission forward and just better the community overall.

So we're always looking to see what else is next. What's the next step? What else can we do? So we're moving into more food, more non-perishable items that CCRC has never been a huge part of, but we received a big grant from our assembly member recently. So we're hoping to launch what we are calling a fill the Fridge campaign where parents will have the opportunity to come and shop for not just food, but all those resources. So it's like a one stop, how can we help you with everything you need? So CCRC is always looking to do more and be more involved and be out there more. But we love it and we're happy to be here.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you so much, Lucy. Really appreciate you sharing the great work that you are doing and also really appreciate the visuals. The pictures were wonderful to see both all that you're able to provide based on the needs of the community and families asks as well. And really appreciate you lifting up the story of those that are able to get resource and then come back as a resource. So very much appreciate you sharing that with us this morning.

Any questions from council members? You received a lot of hearts. I don't know if you could see them, but there were a lot of hearts popping up on the screen as you were sharing in the video. So again, thank you for what you do and really appreciate you spending some time with us this morning. Thanks so much.

Karin Bloomer:

Do have a late hand. Came from Lissete.

Kim Johnson:

Okay. Lissete please.

Lissete Frausto:

Hi. Good morning everyone. I don't have a question, but I do want to say that everything that you guys are doing is so great. And I'm emotional because I'm a parent myself. I'm the only provider for my home at this moment. I have three children, 10, 8, and 1. But knowing that there's these resources out there for families that are usually underserved and also the language barriers and all the different things out there for us, it's great to know that there's these resources there that are there for families. And it's just great to know all the work that you guys are doing. And for myself, usually also trying to get myself out there to either donate things that my kids don't use anymore, like clothes because I know that that can help other families as well. So it is just great what you guys are doing and yeah, it got me really emotional.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you for sharing, Lissete. Thank you so much.

Karin Bloomer:

Donna Sneeringer had raised her hand and here in the room.

Donna Sneeringer:

Well, I want to thank my colleague Lucy for showing some of the pictures of the work that we're doing and really wanted to lift up that as family resource centers, we have multiple sites where we do this. The tangible support that we are able to give families to bridge difficult times is very, very needed. And I'm always amazed as I've been at the events handing out fruits and vegetables, the very basic needs that families have that really we have a mission to reach out and fill those needs. And because of our work to do fundraising and donations in the community, we have been able to really impact and prevent some terrible things.

I am always reminded; we have home visiting programs. A mother who had a medically fragile child, all she wanted was a rocking chair so she could rock her baby. And we were able to get a rocking chair donated. We had a mother whose children were going to be removed by Child Protective Services because she didn't have appropriate beds and we got her beds. And I really call on all my colleagues who are in similar types of organizations to remind you all this is work we should be doing, and need to be working toward to really fill those concrete needs to help families get through difficult times.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Donna. And Zoila.

Zoila Toma:

Thank you for daycare infants for the presentation. I love the whole idea of, I know so many family child care educators have stepped in to support for those immediate help the summer of our families have, but just hearing that you guys have a long-term plan for the families to improve their life, that it's awesome. I would like to know if you guys can share the information, want to share with the families. Maybe there's a center close by that we can send the families when they're in dire need. Another thing is also because I also started my organization that I want to do similar things, but it's fairly new and working together, I think I can learn a lot and bring resources toward my area to support the families in my area. So please share that information. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you. Deborah.

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Thank you so much. Thank you, Lucy, for the information. Very valuable. I do have a question. I'm sitting here in Kern County and I'm thinking to myself, "Wow. This is going on. I have families that are also in need. Is this something that goes on throughout the

entire state? And if it is, there's people and families and children falling in between these cracks because I myself as a provider have families that would love to receive this type of help but have no idea that it's out there. " So how do we make sure that everyone in the state is receiving these services? And Donna, you had hit that on the nail. What those that have the resources to doing what you do is what you all supposed to be doing. So thank you for that Donna. So I'd like to know, Lucy, is this something that's going on throughout the state? Are there other organizations in the counties that should be doing it and that's not doing it as well? Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

There are family resource centers throughout California, and we're going to have Cheryl Treadwell speak in just a moment. And I'll encourage her to say a little bit more about connection to family resource centers and where there might be not only a similar offering of services that you just heard Lucy describe, but also food banks. We can also make sure we have that information. We'll put some information in the chat. So again, that that's known, to your point, that not a secret that people need to know how to access these resources in their community. So appreciate you lifting that up. AnnLouise, you were going to be our last comment here before we transition to our next item.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

Thank you. So I love the work that you're doing. My question for you is for funding purposes, because we all have physical department, is this done under quality improvement funding that you're getting, or is it the general funding that you're getting, when you go and do, for example, the beds and some of the other things that are technically outside of that child care subsidy payment?

Donna Sneeringer:

Lucy, I'll answer it for you. It is a mix. We do fundraising. We have corporate partnerships. I think you saw some pictures with giant checks from Macy's. We have board member donations, and we are able to really maximize our community support as much as possible. And we do seek grants to do that as we did with Assembly member Schiavo to start to do food distribution. The Fill the Fridge campaign we're doing is a food raising campaign. So there's a lot that goes into pulling it together and that's how we're able to do it.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

And my second part, do you work closely with the tribes? I know that in the past I've worked with the agency in the different counties and regions, but are you still continuing that work so that they're aware of these things?

Donna Sneeringer:

Yes.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

Okay, perfect. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you. And a great way to kick us off into our next agenda item. Again, thank you, Lucy, for joining us and for starting us off today. So we are going to move into our next item, disrupting poverty and neglect through concrete supports. Again, a tremendous amount of work has been done in thinking through how we've talked in this council, for example, as Donna referenced home visiting. How are we connecting families experiencing poverty to resources that they need as a mode to support them? There's some additional work happening through the Child Welfare Council with a mandated reporting to community supporting task force. And Cheryl may touch on that as well in some of her comments. But again, where it is absence of resource, whether it's that diaper, whether it's the food, whether it's those other supports, how are we being intentional on connecting families to concrete support?

So we are thrilled to have two guest speakers with us today. Yasmin Grewal-Kok is a policy fellow at the University of Chicago Chapin Hall. And she will share what the research shows about the impact of concrete supports for families in need. And we'll also again be hearing from Cheryl Treadwell from the Department of Social Services chief. She's the chief of the Safety Prevention Early Intervention branch. So Cheryl's going to share California's broader prevention strategies and the work that we're doing to develop community pathways, and also she will touch on that mandated reporting shift that I referenced as well. So we're going to hear from both presenters then please your questions and are we going to do public comment before we do that? I'm sorry.

Karin Bloomer:

No, that's fine. We did just announce in the chat that public comment is open in the chat feature. So thank you.

Disrupting Poverty and Neglect Through Concrete Supports

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Karin. So first up, Yasmin, we welcome you to the Early Childhood Policy Council and you are welcome to share your slides and presentation this morning.

Yasmin Grewal-Kok:

Wonderful. I hope you all can hear me and see my slides.

Kim Johnson:

Yes.

Yasmin Grewal-Kok:

All right. Good morning everyone. Thank you so much for the opportunity to present to you all today on economic and concrete supports as a core component of child and

family well-being systems. I'll be talking about the intersection of family economic insecurity and child welfare involvement and what the research tells us about the relationship between economic and concrete supports and risk for child maltreatment and child welfare involvement.

So what exactly do we mean by economic and concrete supports? We provide some examples here, but we do consider economic and concrete supports broadly to include supports that go directly to families, including cash, public benefits, tax credits, employment, income, child care, legal support, and healthcare. In general, the research shows us that reduced access to economic and concrete supports is associated with increased risk of child maltreatment and child welfare involvement. While increased access to economic and concrete supports is associated with decreased risk of child maltreatment and child welfare involvement. This ever-growing body of evidence is consistent across time and types of studies. And the evidence is also consistent across mechanisms, meaning that economic and concrete supports are associated with reduced risk for child welfare involvement regardless of the type of support provided to families.

And importantly, the economic and concrete supports evidence is actionable. It can inform evidence-based policymaking, and the types of supports we choose to provide to children and their families to keep them together and prevent unnecessary separation. It's important to recognize that US child welfare policy and structure has been a reflection of our choices. From the onset of Child and Family Services in the US, policymakers repeatedly separated programs designed to address poverty from programs designed to protect children.

As a result, we think that the economic hardship that families face, a fragmented and siloed human service system, deficit-based and piecemeal policies and mandated reporting laws, plus disparate access to and lack of sufficient economic and concrete supports have resulted in overloaded and destabilized families unmet service and support needs, high rates of reported neglect, in particular, deployment of the authority to investigate and remove children from their homes and child welfare involvement. We propose an alternative policy and fiscal framework that includes macroeconomic policies to address economic hardship, cross-sector shared responsibility and accountability across human services to prevent child maltreatment and the activation and deployment of child protective services and foster care and a move towards mandated supporting, which I know California is currently undertaking.

We know there's a strong relationship between family economic insecurity and child welfare involvement. This is true nationally and in California. As estimated by the Legislative Analyst Office in California, 53 percent of child welfare-involved families earn less than \$1,000 a month. The LAO also highlighted that across California, foster care placements by county increase as the poverty rate increases. In this graphic, you can see that as the percentage of children in poverty increases, the rate of foster care placement also increases.

Data shows us that consistently around 60 percent of substantiated child protective services responses nationally involve neglect only. I highlight this number because we often suspect that cases involving neglect are secondary to poverty. But the research I'm going to share with you today shows us that the provision of economic and concrete

family supports is associated with decreased risk for both neglect and physical abuse. So we need to look beyond just the neglect numbers. Two important bills were recently passed in California that narrow the definition of neglect and aim to prevent children from entering the child welfare system for reasons of economic hardship alone. AB 2085 clarifies that mandated reporters should not make referrals based solely on parents' economic disadvantage. And SB 1085 prohibits children from being removed solely due to homelessness or poverty.

Research increasingly indicates that families who experience material hardship may be at particularly high risk for child welfare involvement. Material hardship generally means unable to meet your family's basic needs, usually food, housing, utilities, medical care. The study on this slide looked at what happens when families who are low income experience material hardships. It found that when these families experience at least one material hardship, they are three times more likely to be subject to a neglect investigation and four times more likely to experience a physical abuse investigation.

And when these families experienced multiple types of hardship after not having experienced any hardship, the impact is even greater, and they are seven times more likely to experience a physical abuse investigation. This rapid survey out of the Stanford Center on early childhood found that half of California parents with young children reported having difficulty paying for basic needs.

75 percent of parents surveyed reported experiences of emotional distress. And 75 percent of parents reported their children are experiencing emotional distress. This is what Stanford calls the hardship chain reaction. So, material hardship is directly associated with an increase in parents' emotional distress, which in turn is associated with an increase in child emotional distress.

It's critical to think of economic and concrete supports as a race equity strategy to address the persistent racial and ethnic disparities across the child welfare continuum in California and nationally. As I just shared, poverty and economic hardship puts families at increased risk of child welfare involvement due to past and ongoing systemic inequities, racism and discrimination.

Families of color are more likely to experience economic hardship, and this likely contributes to their disproportionate child welfare involvement. Therefore, economic and concrete supports to stabilize families and prevent child welfare involvement may be an important mechanism to reduce racial disparities.

Let's now turn to what the evidence tells us about the relationship between economic and concrete supports and child welfare involvement. Based on the research we've compiled at Chapin Hall; this slide provides an overview of the types of economic and concrete supports that when decreased are associated with increased risk for child welfare involvement.

This includes reduced TANF benefits, lack of child care and stable housing, reduced employment and income and increased gas prices. Meaning, families then have less disposable income. I'm only going to focus on a few of these studies today, but you can find details about each of these studies in a comprehensive deck that's available on Chapin Hall's website, and I'll share the link later on.

There's a growing body of evidence on the relationship between access to TANF and child welfare involvement. For example, this study found that states that implemented total benefit loss as the most severe sanction for not meeting TANF work requirements saw significant increases in substantiated neglect reports and foster care entries.

When one looks at this impact, it's important to keep in mind the first statutory goal of TANF, which is to provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes or with relatives. According to the most recently available public data, states are holding up to \$6.5 billion in federal TANF funds in reserve, which they are allowed to do. But California is one of the few states with an unobligated TANF balance, so it has zero unobligated TANF funds.

There's a body of research on the relationship between access to child care and child welfare involvement, and I'll share a few of those studies today. The study in the top bullet found that for every child care concern reported by families receiving TANF, which I forgot to mention, is CalWORKs in California. The risk of supervisory neglect increases by 20 percent.

Another study found that mothers entering substance abuse treatment who have difficulty securing child care are 82 percent more likely to self-report child neglect compared to mothers entering treatment who don't have difficulty securing child care. It's particularly interesting to note that difficulty finding child care was a stronger predictor of maternal neglect than almost any other factor measured in this study, including mental health and severity of drug use.

Now, let's talk about what the evidence suggests happens when families have increased access to economic and concrete supports. Based on the research we've compiled at Chapin Hall; this is a summary of the types of economic and concrete supports that are associated with decreased risk for child welfare involvement. We've organized them into four categories, macroeconomic supports, concrete supports, public benefits and child welfare interventions augmented with economic and concrete supports.

I'll share just a few key findings with you all today. This recent working paper analysis found that on average an additional \$1,000 unconditional cash payment to families in the early months of a child's life is estimated to reduce the likelihood of a CPS referral for neglect by 10 percent by the time that child reaches age 3, a referral for physical abuse by 30 percent, a substantiated CPS referral by 15 percent, and child mortality by 30 percent by the time that child reaches age 5.

There's a growing body of evidence showing that tax credits are associated with decreased risk for child welfare involvement. This recent working paper analysis, which was based on California data, found that an additional \$1,000 in child-related tax benefits to low-income families during a child's first year is associated with reductions in the number of CPS referrals, investigations and substantiations by 3 to 4 percent, and days spent in foster care by 8 percent by the time the child reaches age 3.

Based on the evidence I just shared, one state policy option to consider is to reduce child welfare involvement is to enact child tax credits. We saw the significant impact of the expanded child tax credit during the pandemic and reducing child poverty. California does have a refundable child tax credit, but there are opportunities to make it more

generous like Minnesota's, which is predicted to reduce child poverty in the state by 33 percent.

Let's now turn to Child Care Assistance. In this study, each additional month that mothers who are low-income receive a child care subsidy is associated with a 16 percent decrease in the odds of a neglect report and a 14 percent decrease in the odds of a physical abuse report in the following 12 months. The study found that less restrictive child care subsidy policies, including copayment exemptions for families experiencing poverty are associated with lower rates of substantiated maltreatment reports.

This study based on data from Los Angeles County found that neighborhoods with a higher percentage of 3 and 4-year-olds attending preschool are associated with lower rates of child maltreatment investigations and substantiations. This seminal study found that more generous public benefits are associated with fewer children placed into foster care. Specifically, it estimated that a 10 percent increase in state public benefit levels. At that time, it was AFDC plus the value of food stamps for a family of four is predicted to reduce foster care placements by 8 percent.

As this map shows, California is one of the few states where the maximum TANF benefit is above 40 percent of the federal poverty line. Although California's TANF benefit amount is currently the second highest in the nation, it is still at only around 50 percent of the federal poverty line. This longitudinal study found that children from low-income families who participated in SNAP or WIC had a lower risk of experiencing substantiated maltreatment reports compared to children from low-income families who didn't participate in either program.

We see that across the country, many families who are eligible for WIC do not participate despite its proven benefits. In addition, more than 50 percent of WIC-eligible SNAP and Medicaid recipients do not participate in WIC. According to this graphic, although California is doing better than most states, only 66.5 percent of those eligible for WIC receive it indicating opportunities to increase outreach and connection efforts.

Recent research indicates that economic and concrete supports can have a population level impact on child maltreatment and child welfare involvement. So, let's think about Public Health Approach to Prevention. When implemented with high quality and broad reach, a short-term home visiting program has the potential to reduce population rates of child maltreatment.

This study focused on Family Connects, which is a community-wide nurse home visiting program for families with newborns. It is short-term and focuses on assessing family material needs, and then connecting families to needed community resources. So, everyone in the community is eligible to receive this home visiting program.

Studies of all families with births in selected hospitals in Durham, North Carolina over a six-month period found that families who were randomly assigned to receive Family Connects experienced more positive maternal mental health, a 44 percent lower rate of CPS investigations through the time their child reached age 2, and 39 percent fewer CPS investigations through the time their child reached age 5.

This comprehensive analysis looked at state spending across a broad array of public benefit programs. It found that each additional \$1,000 that states spent annually on

public benefit programs per person living in poverty is associated with a reduction in child maltreatment reports, substantiations, foster care placements, and child fatalities due to maltreatment.

These findings suggest that state investments in public benefit programs are a population-level strategy to prevent child maltreatment and child welfare involvement. This graph shows each state's total annualized spending on public benefit programs per person living in poverty from 2010 to 2017. I know it's a bit small, but you can see from the arrow that California is spending more than average, but there's definitely still room to increase spending on supports for families.

Recent LAO reports have cited the study I just shared on the relationship between increased state spending on public benefit programs and decreased risk for child welfare involvement. Based on this research, the LAO concluded that overall spending on poverty alleviation and prevention could be a component of reducing child maltreatment and recommends the following policy considerations.

What support could the Legislature consider to target disproportionately impacted communities prior to child welfare involvement and how can the Legislature help ensure poverty alleviation programs and child welfare supports are complementary. Evidence-based policymaking goes hand-in-hand with funding decisions. Total annual public expenditures on California's child welfare system are over \$3 billion with more than 50 percent of federal child welfare funding going to foster care, and only 11 percent on preventative services.

What would it take to flip that percentage? I know we're going to hear after my presentation about opportunities with Family First and Community Pathways. And so, I feel like California's will be making significant progress in flipping that percentage.

So, the research I shared with you today is actionable. Evidence-based policymaking will require collaboration across families and communities, child welfare and human service agency partners. But most importantly, this work must be centered on the experiences and leadership of families and communities.

Human service agencies must be reoriented towards preventing child welfare involvement and change policies by understanding the impact that their policy choices have on child welfare involvement. And child welfare must coordinate with system partners to improve upstream supports before families become involved in child welfare.

So, building a child and family well-being system will require a multi-system approach to better resource and support families. I'll end my presentation with this visual pathway to preventing child welfare involvement that Chapin Hall created based on the body of evidence on economic and concrete supports I realize this is very small, but you can find a version of this on our website.

And in this vision, a comprehensive continuum of supports are provided to families upstream of any system involvement, resulting in a significantly narrowed use of the child protection and foster care system. So, it can respond only when necessary. You can find all of Chapin Hall's resources here. I'll also put the link in the chat.

Thank you so much. I know I spoke very quickly. I shared a tremendous amount of information and data, but I believe we'll have time for questions after the next presentation.

Kim Johnson:

Wonderful. Thank you so much, Yasmin. So, yes, please jot down your questions. We will go to those questions right after Cheryl presents. But thank you, that was a tremendous amount of information in a short amount of time, and I appreciate the content that you put together for us this morning. So, Cheryl Treadwell, I will turn it over to you for your presentation. Welcome.

Cheryl Treadwell:

Thank you. Good morning, everyone. I am happy to be in this space today. And a certainly, appropriate topic. Thank you, Yasmin, for that foundation to segue to this segment. So, I'm going to present a little bit of the Cliff Knoll version of two major opportunities that we have occurring in our state right now. Shifting the Paradigm from Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting by Building Community Pathways. How will that help views with our hope... So, next slide, please. So, I'm going to talk why this is important. I think we've already...

Gina Morimoto:

I'm sorry, we're hearing the Mandarin breakthrough. If you could please check your interpretation channels.

Cheryl Treadwell:

So, can I still continue or we're good?

Gina Morimoto:

Yes, thank you.

Cheryl Treadwell:

All right. So, I talk about why this is important and then the two efforts that we mentioned here at the reporting and the community pathways. Next slide, please. So, some of the stories that have been shared as a result of this effort, and I always like to start with a story, and we've heard some of that today, but this is one of the members who was part of the task force where she shared that her daughter was born medically fragile, and they had no support in the family. She didn't know where to go. She didn't know how to ask for help, and she didn't know what she needed.

So, she had domestic violence in the home. There was a lot of stress. And so, when the police were called, they called CPS. She had no idea at that time that her child would be removed because she was a victim of domestic violence. She didn't know how could we take a child away. And she believes that from her experience, her child was placed in foster care.

It would have been different if she had had the support or been able to understand the laws around failure to protect. And what we've learned is that that has traumatized her and her family even though her daughter spent less than a year in foster care. That is the things and those are the stories that why this shift matters for us. Next slide, please.

Why it matters is that what we've learned that when folks call the hotline, general neglect tends to be the number one allegation that's required, and you saw what Yasmin had shared that 45 percent of those allegations are usually around general neglect. And in this state, it is a catch-all. But we have also made some changes there that she spoke to in legislation. But the main thing to keep in mind around this, that it's not just gendered by the law, but also that there is racism and implicit bias that also genders those reports, and also in absence of having the right supports and resources to address what needs to be addressed around those calls. Next slides, please.

And as she said, the data confirms this. I won't repeat what the data says here. I think we're missing the narrative. Can you click again and see? Basically, just as I said, we must address racism that's embedded in the child and family service public systems based on the data, and there's significant disparities when it comes to Black families, Native American families when they are separated from their families with respect to this approach. Next slide, please.

So, we have opportunities here and the Department of Social Services is trying to leverage this momentum. In 2018, the federal government passed a law that's called the Families First Prevention Services Act. It opened a door for family, strengthening the opportunities to move further upstream. California submitted its five-year plan that was approved in '22, and 53 counties and two tribes had opted to avail of this service to provide community comprehensive prevention services. As you heard, our Child Welfare Council convened in '23, what we call the Mandated Reporting Community Task Force. That task force developed 14 recommendations and five strategic priorities that was voted on and was submitted to Child Welfare Council, which will be voted on permanently in September, their September meeting.

The department also has a Citizen Review Advisory Panel who also has recommended that we reform the mandated reporting system, and to the effort that as Ms. Bonnitto spoke about earlier in TANF, we are working on our, what we call our CalWORKs leakages, which is a program where child welfare and our CalWORKs programs are working to move further upstream restructuring, so that those programs can be seen as a prevention strategy, making sure that people have had access to those services and supports. Next slide, please.

As I said, there were five strategic parties. I won't go through all of them. I'll just highlight a few here. We want to eliminate that over-surveillance, the over-reporting of Black Americans and Native American children. We want to be able to get into and analyze the category of neglect. We started all that with the legislative changes. We want to unpack that, dig deeper into understanding that we may understand what's behind the calls.

We want to ensure that mandated reporters are trained and that we standardize that training. I know that that's been a huge request at the department's level to really look at the training that's been provided out there. And then, really standardize that in such a way that we are ameliorating changing some of the way that mandated reporters see families. And then, we want to look at making sure that the laws, policies and education do not continue to incentivize people to call the hotline if they don't need to when it's totally unnecessary. Next slide, please.

So, I know this is tiny, I apologize, I'm not going through all of that. You can find the report to the mandated reporting community supporting on the Child Welfare Council website, but just highlighting a few things, to establish. They want to establish an advisory committee to oversight these recommendations mentioned earlier before in Yasmin's presentation. The statistics around what the legislative analyst officer's report, just looking at determining if we can narrow the categories in our current state law around child abuse and neglect reporting.

Looking at amending the law when we can, some of those amendments have been in process. There's a current law I know that's on the books looking at that in terms of neglect of AB1799. It hasn't been signed yet, but it's something that has been... There's an example of how even our legislative community is making this a priority. We have some tools that we're modifying. So, there's a slew of things that we are doing here in reference of moving in that direction of paradigm shift. And I oversee the Office of Child Abuse Prevention, there we are working on, as I said, revising the curriculum for mandated reporters. Next slide, please.

And these are just additional recommendations, just encouraging us to continue to oversight this, making sure that we are aligning in this with what we call efforts that are being developed in another committee that's part of the council called the Prevention and Early Intervention Committee. And then, of course, there's going to be a lot of messaging that needs to happen.

We need to change the narrative and the mindset around prevention by moving further upstream in all of our systems, focusing once again on Black American families and Native American families. I mean, that's a paradigm that we've been talking about for many, many, many years. And I think this is the one time in my 25 years state career that I've seen an opportunity for us to really move the needle and make some of those changes. Then, next slide, please.

I went through the mandated reporting piece really quickly, but the marriage of that with what we're doing in Community Pathways. And I want to say, there's this generic use of the term Community Pathways, and then there is the Community Pathways that is being developed under the State's Family First Prevention Services program.

FFPSA pretty much a nasty acronym for Family First Prevention Services Act is the federal law. It really opened the door for us in California to begin to build capacity to move further upstream, and we were able to secure fund state funding in an amount of a \$198 million that went to counties to begin to build that capacity, and to expand that prevention conversation in terms of more public-private partnerships, leveraging other spending sources from state and county federal funds that could be braided together to really build this continuum of prevention services. So, when we talk about building the Community Pathway, that is one important tool in the system of transformation, it's not the only tool, but one of many. Next slide, please.

So, what's the Community Pathway Prevention? Basically, what we're saying is when families come to your attention, if you're a community organization, they voluntarily come to seek help. They usually come to the churches. They come to the schools. They come to the family resource centers. Child Care Centers are becoming more, when I think about CCRC, which is sort of a new partner to us who share that they are able to be that one-stop shop and provide those concrete services, but also other support

services, treatment services and family support services that we have not thought about when you think about childhood child care programs. And, of course, other neighborhood-based organizations.

So, no wrong door in the Community Pathway is the concept of where we're trying to go with this work. And if we do this work, we're strengthening. If you strengthen families, you're strengthening communities, right? So, the whole idea is to be able to meet the needs of these families. And I believe that's all part of some of your vision for the work that you're doing in your master plan. Is there a role for early childhood programs as referral to services or as providers? Those are things. These are opportunities that we are looking at to partner and bridge those conversations with new partners when it comes to this work. Next slide, please.

So, basically, you've heard the concept of social determinants of health. If we can build a network of services around these domains, economic stability, people ought to be able to get what they need, they have living wages, be able to go to school, be able to have good healthcare. They are able to do and have these things in their communities, and we are strengthening families in the way that we desire to do. Next slide, please.

And there's the benefits that we talked about families. As I said, our idea is to serve families further upstream outside of the child welfare system to avoid involvement with child welfare, to allow families to voluntarily receive these services and not feel that there is like Big Brother overlooking them with conditions to receive these services. You ought to be able to go and get what you need and have your needs met.

This federal opportunity allows us to take money that is usually used for foster care and move it further upstream. If you think about the billions of dollars that we spend on resource parents and foster parents and foster care, and that is not at all a downgrade or a put down for resource parents in the foster care system because we appreciate them as well. But if you think about moving that same money on the front end, the system, the system, the dollars we're talking about, when you hear people talk about \$40, we take that money and move some of that up into the front of the system. Imagine what we can do by disrupting the pathway or pipeline to foster care and just strengthening families by redirecting those dollars.

So, it's an exciting time. But to do that, we can't do it alone. We need shared partners. We need understanding around shared responsibility, and we certainly need collaboration with child and family servicing agencies in the community. Next slide, please.

So, to operationalize that, what we're doing under our state Family First Prevention Services, our Community Pathway can be delivered several ways. You can get it by contract with a county who is counties that have opted into the Family First program or contracting for the services for the Community Pathway. The things that we're offering has to be an evidence-based service. And then, there are other agencies too that they can contract with that non-child welfare public agencies, as we want to call them, can also contract with the counties. So, that is what we're in the midst of supporting counties now. Next slide, please.

So, here's some examples across opportunities that we have identified from the plans that have been submitted to us. We have 53 plans that were submitted, but only 33

counties have decided to do what we call the Community Pathway. And our two tribes, Yurok and Karuk tribes are doing the Community Pathway. So, some are integrating home visitation into their early childhood education programs. We have counties that are directly linking the Community Pathway referrals to the Child Care Referral Services in their counties as an initial contact. Some counties are working on developing those plans of safe care working with their local hospitals. Some counties are expanding the identify EBPs, so they'll be able to pull down more the federal dollars and expand those services that they're already doing in the community.

When you think about parent and teachers as one of the EBPs or parent child interactive therapy as one of the EBPs that is being implemented, Healthy Families of America as one of the areas that is being implemented. So just expansion of those are happening under this area. Some are using it to develop and expand more 211-311 information referral lines. People will still go to the hotline, but they need to know where to go and not have CPS if they can defer these families to these services. So some counties are building that referral pathway network. And then we have some areas that are looking at building the network of family resource centers instead of focusing on one resource center, FRCs are now joined together, creating hubs of supports. And then those projects are being prioritized in the communities through other initiatives as well by the residents in those neighborhoods. Next slide please.

So moving forward, the big vote happens in September on the mandate reporting recommendations. We're continuing to work with our counties to build that capacity to set up the infrastructure so that as we move toward implementation, our implementation date is now set for October 2026. There's still lots to do to get there. You're probably saying, well, why 2026? There are some federal requirements and automation pieces that we're trying to put in place and it's going to take us there. Take us some time to do that, but some of the counties have already started offering prevention services with the state funding that we have shared with them. Next slide, please.

Here's a link, and I think I'll have to refresh this link. Oh, here we go. Here's the links to if you want to find out if your county has submitted one of the plans, there's links to plans here and there's other links to some of the other supports and services that we've offered to counties. And there's an email box there if you want to email us for other information. So I went through a lot. This is the tip of the iceberg. Hopefully this is helpful and very open to questions. So thank you for inviting me and I hope that you were able to get something to take away from this today.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you very much, Cheryl. Appreciate you joining and for your presentation and lifting up some of the efforts happening across California. I know that you referenced right at the end there, Cheryl, some of the counties who are creating community pathways, and their communities are doing more to create these networks of family resource centers. But just to the question Deborah had earlier, if there's any other resource links or suggestions, maybe it's just a matter of typing in your county and family resource centers and then you'll get... 211 is also available in some counties. But if there's anything else you want to share in terms of helping this network who's joined

here today, getting families connected to those resources, please do feel free to add that in the chat if you can think of something.

Cheryl Treadwell:

Yeah, so I will make sure that the list that we have of FRCs that we fund, we fund several FRCs in the Office of Child Abuse Prevention. I'll make sure that that gets to this group. We don't have a live link, but we do have a list and there are a couple links that I think that I can retrieve that sort of shows all the FRCs listed in California. Some of those were developed as a result of COVID, but those are some of the same FRCs that exist in the state. So I'll make sure that information gets to this group.

Council Discussion

Kim Johnson:

Wonderful. Thank you Cheryl. I'm going to turn it over to council members first. Council members, questions that you have, comments that you have related to what you just heard. And then we're going to also add a few prompting questions for the council to consider in just a moment too. But first, let's start with questions. Here in the room, Donna.

Donna Sneeringer:

Thank you Cheryl for your presentation and we are so appreciative of our partnership with you at CCRC. And I just wanted to lift up for the council that I think that breaking across some of these silos seems like it should be easy, and it seems like a no-brainer, but we're very used to living in our own world. One of the things that we've been able to do is really start to look holistically at services for families and not just in each individual contract silo. And I'm curious what kind of opportunities there might be to look at our resource and referral contract as a leveraged partnership opportunity with family resource centers and if there's any thought at the state about how to better give those opportunities or green lights for that kind of facilitation.

Kim Johnson:

It's a good question. Cheryl, I don't know if you have anything off the top, but clearly in some of this community pathway work, so I don't know how many technical assistance opportunities you've already had, Cheryl, but I know that there have been quite a bit in trying to help county human service departments in particular understand what the opportunities are to connect with different community-based organizations, inclusive of local child care resource and referral agencies. I know we've had some focused conversation on that front, but anything else you'd add.

Cheryl Treadwell:

And I think that's emerging work and I appreciate that, Donna. I think through our advisory committee where we're starting to develop the community pathway and figure out how we structure some of that capacity, so that insight will be very helpful for your input and discussion.

Donna Sneeringer:

I'll follow up.

Cheryl Treadwell:

Yeah.

Kim Johnson:

Great, Tonia.

Tonia McMillian:

Thank you Yasmin and Cheryl. Oh my God. So I spent three years in foster care. So your presentation is very near and dear to my soul right now and you really touch my spirit. And so this past weekend, Black ECE had our symposium and out of that there was a comment made. How about moving from mandated reporter to mandated supporter? And we found that we had quite a few family child care providers in the room who were also foster care parents. And so when I hear about building community pathways, I would love to hear more about that, but I also want to get more information about the work that you're doing with the formerly incarcerated parents who are now going through reunification and that work. And you mentioned the advisory committee. What will that advisory committee look like? Because I know for a fact too that family child care providers, like I said, many are also foster care parents. And if you're going to have a advisory committee, I feel like that voice needs to be heard as well.

Cheryl Treadwell:

So our advisory committee does include foster parents, former foster youth and we have folks with lived experience on that advisory committee, on the community pathway advisory committee. So we will have ongoing in the future opportunities for folks to join on specific topics as we move forward on an ad hoc basis. But those voices, child care providers, lived experience, folks that have experienced the system are all on our current advisory community pathway committee. So that point is well taken. We wanted to make sure that we had that there because we can't build this without those voices in perspective. In terms of the incarcerated parents piece, that is something that is not currently identified as a specific area for reunification pieces. For me, that's an area that sort of bridges in the other part of system once folks are in foster care. So that's like in my sister shop, but I will lift that up and I'm not aware of any current programs around that, but that certainly is a needed area.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Cheryl. Tonia, I will say that we have had recent policy change in California's TANF program, CalWORKs, where historically if a family was working to reunify, the supportive services were turned off while the child was not placed with the family. And we have recently changed that policy to have the resources continue, thereby increasing the opportunity for family reunification. We're going through the implementation of that right now, so I do want to lift that up as some work that we're doing.

Tonia McMillian:

Thank you, Kim. Because black children are so over-represented in the foster care system, they stay longer, the chances of reunification are slimmer. And so this presentation today, really, like I said, it touched my spirit today and thank you guys so much for your work, but I really want to find out more. And I know that when you look at family child care providers who are working with limited resources already and then they're still sacrificing and giving and giving and giving even in the foster care system, there's got to be help and resources available.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Tonia. Appreciate you. Mary.

Mary Ignatius:

Well, this was two just really extraordinary presentations. I think it reinforces and validates what we see within our membership of parent voices who are often part of all of those quantitative data that you presented. And I feel like there's so much that we could discuss here. I'm just so glad you're just both unapologetically talking about the racism, sexism, and classism that's embedded in all of these systems. And there are so many services out there, but when it trickles down to the families on the ground, it's like when they try to access these services, they get re-traumatized by the experiences they're facing when they're trying to get the services. Just as the system criminalizes them, the people in them also do. And so I just feel like I'm so glad to hear the language shifting. Language is so important. So mandated reporting, the community supporting or mandated support, trauma informed, healing informed, I think we still have to work on home visiting because that's another fear based condition that families, when they hear home visiting, they think, oh, fear, it's CPS, they're going to take my kids.

And one thing I think comes up a lot as we try to make changes to these systems that are more family-centered and informed by families is that the data that is collected by these different systems that interact with families are not allowed to communicate with each other. I don't know why that is, but the fact that families have to go to five or six or seven or eight different agencies to get services and provide the documentation and the paperwork, they keep telling us over and over again that they just give up because they get overwhelmed, mostly just overwhelmed with having to constantly report and constantly prove that they are worthy of these services.

So I hope that we can figure out some way that all of these systems, just even between child care and CalWORKs, if they could just have access to the same information, we would have so many less families falling through the cracks and getting the child care that they're entitled to from day one and then they won't show up in the system Cheryl is experiencing. And then there was one other thing I was going to say and I don't remember, but I just think... Oh, the child welfare, you said 11 percent was going to preventative services. Is there any yearly goalposts of increasing that 11 to 15 to 20 to increase the preventative services? Because that's where a lot of funding for these supports could come from. I'll stop.

Kim Johnson:

Cheryl, maybe just say a little bit about future opportunities to draw down federal dollars on the prevention side and that would certainly increase the overall amount of funding that's available.

Cheryl Treadwell:

Yeah, that's the hope is that that number would increase based on county's ability to draw down more, as I mentioned, federal dollars where I talked about the dollars that normally we use for foster care is now being used for services. So those \$40 counties will have an opportunity hopefully to expand more of the prevention opportunities that you're mentioning. And I certainly hear you on the administrative kind of paperwork nightmares sometimes that we create in that, it's also emerged. It's not enough just to access it, but to be able to access it really easy. So I think that's an important point for us to keep in mind as we build this system. So appreciate that comment.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you.

Cheryl Treadwell:

But one more thing. So we will be monitoring the continuous quality improvement so that we can see that we are making those improvements. So that is part of our structure too as well.

Kim Johnson:

Great, thank you. And just drawing everyone's attention to the chat where those questions that I referenced are there, the council members are naturally asking them and identifying some of those places. So just put those there for reference. Deborah, I'll turn it over to you.

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Thank you, Director Johnson. I just want to say thank you miss Cheryl and Yasmin for your slides and your presentation. I want to say to Tonia, I am a family provider as you know, and I also had to take in a daycare child. The mother had given CPS verbal authorization for me to step in and take over custody for her 2-year-old child. And from that point on, I went through the courts through guardianship. I didn't get a dual license, but I did take that on and providers are doing that to help them support the families. But what was disappointing for me at the end when he turned 18 years old, because he didn't go to foster care, he was not eligible in any programs and that was really disheartening.

And I'm not sure the bill AB 24 or something someone was mentioning for foster care children, there's children in guardianship that need support after 18. And those children were forgotten, and we struggled and struggled and looked and looked and there's no support for him thereafter. So thank you for everything but this really hit home. There needs to be some support for children that also have guardianship and not foster care and for housing and for job support. There's zero out there for them. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you for lifting that up, Deborah, and for sharing your experience. Appreciate that. Natali.

Natali Gaxiola:

Hi. I just wanted to say I really, really appreciated the approach that this... I feel like there's always been that intent to help families and things have been done with good intention, but the approach has always been sometimes what creates the barriers. So I really appreciate the support factor being there more than the punitive factor that most families have experienced in the past in regards to the mandated reporting and the process. And as a practitioner myself who is a preschool teacher, knowing how difficult it is to take steps without having the opportunity to provide supports in other ways before we get to the point where we are, it is a mandated reporting issue. So thinking ahead in regards to early childhood programs and connections with different programs like this.

I think the biggest challenge, and again as a practitioner who has consistent contact with parents, is the supportive roles that are lacking in some of the programs. Because as a teacher, I have limited time and limited abilities and a lot of children to service. And a lot of those other roles that are happening are for example, the director, site supervisors, they're looking at licensing and all these other things. So I think we need to start giving some thought into how to place certain people in these roles or connection with programs and families. That one person that can step into the program, support kids there and also support parents in what they need specifically in their situation. So I think it's a lack of manpower, not lack of the intention. So that was my little feedback on that. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you for that recommendation. Appreciate you lifting that up. Cheryl.

Cheryl Shroeder:

Yes. Thank you so much. I think most of you know, I'm a California resource parent and this has been my life's work and I just think Yasmin, every time I hear someone from Chapin Hill, my whole premise for years and years has been we need to eradicate child poverty and how are we... We just need to get the right people to start listening. We haven't really looked at the federal poverty rates for a long, long time. I know given just politics as it is that this isn't something that people aren't heartily looking at.

Nevertheless, we have millions and millions of children and family that don't even rise to the level of federal poverty that really could use the benefits and supports and services. They haven't raised that rate. Yasmin, I know you could speak to this a million times better than I can. I just want you to go out and it just needs to be...

We all know this. I think we're speaking to the choir here and it's the others that aren't listening and hearing and not wanting to spend money when they don't recognize that spending money and providing child care and providing services and providing supports will elevate our economic standards and more people will be paying taxes, less money will be going to child welfare. And I keep thinking about this simple thing and maybe it's

my brain that isn't big enough. Why can't we educate people at the hospitals? We don't let you leave and take a baby without a car seat training. Why can't we have a little bit of parent education training? We're doing better about breastfeeding training, yet we don't provide anybody with some basic information. And I do know that the in-home visitation programs, which are quite expensive, it's really hard to get those best practices into our communities because of the cost. Yet we know they work.

I have a couple of young teens with babies right now that it just seems like it should be automatic, automatic, automatic when those young teens that are in foster care that really love their babies and want to keep them, but really have never been given because they never have received the right sort of parenting, so they don't really know how to parent. And we just had a teenager that, my AmeriCorps service member, we're trying to do so much better, spent hours. She had all this stuff; she just didn't know how to use this stuff and how to organize and kind of put herself together on our mission of really keeping children with their parents. We all know they're going to do better if we can do that.

So anyways, if somebody smarter, wiser, and bigger than I am could really think about the hospital, how do we shift that to where we start to do a better job and maybe looking at those federal poverty lines. And Yasmin, just keep sharing on and sharing out the word to the world how important this is to raise this all up to improve the lives of children. Thank you everyone.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Cheryl.

Yasmin Grewal-Kok:

If I could just respond to Cheryl. I mean, you raised so many points that I'd love to respond to, but I'll keep my comments brief. I will note that Family Connects, the universal home visiting program that I shared about with those really kind of incredible outcomes, is not an expensive home visiting service. New Jersey is implementing it universally. So there are models to look at to support those parents with newborns. But you raise a really interesting point about child poverty and the importance of reducing it. I do want to emphasize foster care is an incredibly expensive intervention and the long-term cost savings from helping families early are huge. And we all know from the incredible federal government's response during COVID exactly what is possible in terms of providing supports to families. And we also know that child poverty and allowing it to be at this high rate is a choice. It's an intentional choice that we've made as a country. So encourage you all to continue advocating to reduce the child poverty rate because it will have an impact on the child welfare system.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you Yasmin. I was just going to also just lift up as you referenced that child tax credit in particular and how much impact that had across the country when that was implemented. So to that point, and thank you Cheryl for what you do and for sharing your recommendations as well. Sonia.

Sonia Jaramillo:

Hello everyone. Thank you for the information in the presentation. As a former K12 educator, I'm wondering about the trainings, professional development opportunities that will be implemented. With this paradigm shift, I believe that professional development has to be intentional and very well planned. And maybe you already have that plan, but I missed it. So one of the things that I'm wondering is because along the way we are always told that we are mandated reporters and that we don't investigate, but we just submit the report and someone else has to do that. So I'm wondering about that training where we are able to differentiate and ensure that we are protecting the child, but at the same time protecting our licenses, permits, et cetera.

Cheryl Treadwell:

Absolutely. That is one of the main recommendations. Matter of fact, our department, my branch has already started working on revising that training and keeping in mind that we know that educators tend to be the main ones that report. So that is probably the first target priority area to sort of build that curriculum revision. And so definitely we'll be reaching out to people from the education field to inform that process to make sure that we get it right.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you very much. Thank you for a robust discussion. Just also noting in the chat that there's a desire to make sure these resources that are being lifted up and shared throughout the council meetings are broadly available. So just noting that and would just also note that we are putting some of those resources in the chat and many are available on cdss.ca.gov, but we will lift those up in a way that make it accessible and really appreciate the recommendations from the council members on what more can be done to realize keeping families together and getting these concrete supports out to families to disrupt poverty. I really want to appreciate everyone's engagement in that discussion and thank Cheryl and Yasmin for joining us this morning. Thank you so much. We're going to open up for public comment.

Karin Bloomer:

Yes, thank you. We will now open the chat for public comment for the next five minutes as we move on to agenda item three, building a comprehensive early learning and care mixed delivery system that integrates universal pre-kindergarten. I believe we're turning it to council member, Donna Sneeringer.

Building a Comprehensive Early Learning and Care Mixed Delivery System that Integrates Universal Prekindergarten

Donna Sneeringer:

Good morning everyone. I took mad notes in the whole last session, so I'm having to reset my brain a little bit. So I'm speaking on behalf of myself and my fellow council member, Dean Tagawa, who's not able to be here today. He and I took on the task a few months ago to start to look at what policy recommendations would be needed as

California embarks on a very ambitious change in our system toward universal access to pre-kindergarten programs and the need to strengthen and support our child care system because we know families need the whole continuum, they need all the parts of the system, and that we really need to start to look more holistically at long-term systems change that can be inclusive of everything that is needed. So today we are bringing to you the council's work to develop these policy recommendations that support comprehensive early learning and care mixed delivery system integrating UPK. I'm going to do a quick recap of the process of how this came to be.

At the May 20th ECPC meeting, Dean Tagawa and I solicited input from attending council members, advisory committee members and members of the public for suggested recommendations. Dean and I worked to compile these recommendations into a draft document with a whole lot of help from Karin Bloomer helping us put the pieces together. At the June 27th joint meeting of the Parent Advisory and Workforce Advisory Committee, the committee chairs shared the draft recommendations and invited input from committee members and the public. Following that meeting, Karin emailed the draft recommendations back to us and to committee members and they also submitted additional suggestions from those conversations. We then incorporated those suggestions and assessed in a document that you all received last week, assessed which of those recommendations were already aligned with the recommendations from the UPK work group that recently completed their work and the master plan for early learning and care. So the document you received has a nice chart and check boxes of where there is alignment between those.

All of this was sent to council members last week for review. We did ask for additional edits by last Friday and the document was posted on the ECPC webpage for the public to consider. So as you can see, we've tried to have a very thorough and inclusive process with lots of input from anyone who was interested. And what we're hoping to do today is review the additional edits and seek the council's endorsement to include these recommendations in the council's year-end report to the administration and the legislature so that these items can be considered in the next legislative session and going forward as we look at best practices and what is needed to really have a comprehensive and stable system.

So we would prefer not to wordsmith. I know it's tempting, and I know some of you are word smithers. I've known some of you a long time, but we're going to really ask that you put your requested edits in the chat if you had not already submitted them. And we're going to ask you to raise your hand if you have a proposed edit so Karin can capture it in real-time. Then we'll review one at a time and ask for your endorsement. Are there any questions folks have before we look at the edits and the documents? Not seeing any. Okay. Before we share the edits that were submitted, does anyone have additional edits to propose and if so, would you raise your hand?

Karin Bloomer:

A hand from AnnLouise Bonnitto.

Donna Sneeringer:

Okay, AnnLouise.

Karin Bloomer:

AnnLouise, we can't hear you. Are you muted? AnnLouise? We see your hand is raised but you're muted on Zoom. There we go.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

I'm going in and out. I'm going to type the question. Okay, so sorry.

Donna Sneeringer:

Okay, thank you. All right. Okay, so Karin, with no further ado.

Karin Bloomer:

So I think Donna, as you mentioned, we were going to zero in on the additional edits that were submitted since council members and the public have since seen this version. So as I understand it, we're going to look at the recommendations here that have strike throughs and underlines. Those represent the additional submissions since these were sent out and posted. And so we're going to review those before the request for endorsement. So I think that the first draft recommendation for which there was an additional edit submitted is recommendation one. Under collaboration letter b. You can see there was a request to add what's underlined here. So we have, "Remove administrative barriers, increased flexibility and facilitate ways for school districts and early childhood education providers, including family, friend and neighbor providers, licensed family, child care providers and private child care centers to work together, to create good choices for families." So I think the question is, does anyone have a question about this additional edit or a concern about this additional edit? If not, if I hear none, we'll move on to the next proposed edit.

Okay. Hearing nothing, we'll move on to the next proposed edit since you've all seen it. This is in regard to recommendation two in regard to pay, two b. The suggested edit is to change from set a goal to create parity and pay to implement parity and pay and benefits for ECE providers and transitional kindergarten teachers. Any questions or concerns about this proposed edit? Okay, I'm going to move on to the next area where there was something submitted. We're now under recommendation five for information letter b. You'll see the recommendation that was already submitted and then I'll just read the last sentence where there's this proposed edit. Explore policy changes to allow children in Head Start to return to their CalWORKs child care eligibility without additional assessment certifications for continuity of care when they start school. What's underlined is the additional edit and I'll just pause to see if there's questions or concerns.

Mary Ignatius:

I have a question. It's Mary. I don't know if just this section is specific only to Head Start, but I wonder if you could put California State Preschool Program. I guess maybe, what does it mean... Head Start to return to their CalWORKs child care eligibility. Does that mean their CalWORKs Child Care eligibility is paused while they're in Head Start? That they don't lose it while they're in Head Start? Because I don't want them to lose it.

Donna Sneeringer:

Yeah. I think the goal is they don't lose it. If they enroll in Head Start, they would still be eligible when they come back. And when they age out of Head Start. And I think you raise a good point that it's Head Start and other preschool programs. So we know that the need for child care extends beyond school hours, preschool hours, and we want to make sure those eligibilities are retained. That's the goal.

Mary Ignatius:

I think I had put in a recommendation about how to make sure CalWORKs eligibility is maintained across. So whether it's a general child care program where a parent enrolls directly at the center, even at birth or an infant or a toddler. So regardless of if it's preschool age, it's just something about families knowing about their CalWORKs voucher when they enroll outside of [inaudible].

Donna Sneeringer:

They should remain eligible throughout, as long as they're maintaining the other criteria.

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah, remain eligible and be told that they can use their CalWORKs voucher even at the same time as when they're using these other programs.

Donna Sneeringer:

Concurrent. Yeah.

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah.

Karin Bloomer:

Excuse me. I can use some help here, but is it remain eligible? I know there's more to this.

Mary Ignatius:

Informed and notified of their eligibility.

Donna Sneeringer:

Maintain eligibility and are notified of those rights or something like that.

Mary Ignatius:

Across. It's Head Start, it's California State Preschool, it's General Child Care.

Kim Johnson:

Do you want to take out the Head Start collaborative office here?

Donna Sneeringer:

I think it's just taking out Head Start down at the bottom to allow children in other early learning programs to return to their CalWORKs Child care and then not call out Head Start specifically. Does that work, Mary?

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah.

Donna Sneeringer:

Okay. All right.

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah, I don't quite understand the return to,

Donna Sneeringer:

I think sometimes families don't need care outside of the hours that are offered. Many Head Start and CSPP programs have extended their hours. So maybe it's maintain their CalWORKs at child care eligibility instead of return.

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah.

Donna Sneeringer:

Does that work better?

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah.

Donna Sneeringer:

Yeah.

Mary Ignatius:

And maybe they don't need the extra hours, but do they know if they wanted to take a class at night or do Uber on Saturdays, they could? They have access.

Donna Sneeringer:

Yeah, that's the notifying them of their rights in both programs to ensure.

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah.

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Donna, on the beginning of that sentence, would it also be then partnership with Department of Education?

Donna Sneeringer:

Yeah, that too. So we need to add CDE up there.

Mary Ignatius:

Air travel. Appreciate that. Thank you.

Donna Sneeringer:

Great. Yeah. Good.

Karin Bloomer:

Okay, moving on to recommendation six. Under funding letter a., you'll see a revised suggested revised language to say allocate funding based on the rate and quality advisory panel report to meet the needs of children from prenatal birth until a child's 13th birthday older for a child with special needs to ensure a whole child, whole family approach to the continuum of services across the age spectrum. I want to pause here for questions or concerns about this proposed edit. Robin, I see your hand. Please go ahead.

Robin Layton:

Hi. Yeah, so this was my proposal because appropriate, sufficient didn't work for me. So allocate funding I'm good with. I'm open to suggestions on the rest because the more I read it last night, the more I was thinking, why do we have until the child's 13th birthday when we're talking about early childhood education? So I was just curious about this whole paragraph, but I would like to keep the allocate funding and to be more firm about what we're trying to do here. And I was just curious about the 13th birthday, and I don't know if we need prenatal slash birth. I think we've been trying to get P3 to be prenatal to third grade. So what are we? Are we prenatal to TK or are we all the way up to 13th?

Karin Bloomer:

Is there a council member who?

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah. That was me. I mean, I don't know what we are. I just know families need care until then and that's what our subsidized child care system is. So I think just being consistent. And I think that the child care, the probable family child care FFN, and I'm sure there's center-based programs that are serving children older than five. And so I think the rate, and I haven't been part of the rate discussion, but I'm presuming those rates cover the ages of those children.

Donna Sneeringer:

The child care rates go through the 13th birthday as well. So that would be consistent.

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah.

Robin Layton:

That's great. Then do we need to change it anywhere else in the document so it's not just referring to ECE? Because early childhood education is not up to 13, is my understanding.

Karin Bloomer:

Well, this is Karin speaking. I mean I'm not in a position I think to answer that Robin, I'll look to your colleagues who are experts in that, but this is the funding recommendation. So in that sense it's covered here

Donna Sneeringer:

And I think correctly or not, Robin, Early learning and ECE have been used broadly to define that whole space. I hear what you're saying, but it gets used in a more broad sense in the child care system.

Robin Layton:

Okay. And then do we need to say prenatal slash birth or just prenatal until a child's 13th birthday?

Karin Bloomer:

So any concerns from counselor committee members, if we strike the word birth, so it's from prenatal until a child's 13th birthday. That's fine.

Donna Sneeringer:

Think that's fine.

Sarah Neville-Morgan:

Fits early Headstart for a model. So I think in capturing the prenatal it's pretty important.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

Yep.

Donna Sneeringer:

Thank you.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

Do they say slash birth, or do they say include like prenatal, comma, birth? How is it worded in Head Start?

Sarah Neville-Morgan:

I think it's prenatal. So the early Head Start work and their research is prenatal. I also want to flag if knowing that CCDF funding for child care services goes up to age 13, expanded learning program. So I don't know how we're including those in here, but they're pretty critical to a lot of families and also have issues with their rates. We're not tackling those with the rate work now, but definitely have a lot of staff who reflect their community and the students they're supporting are now a really big part of helping families access before and after school programs that also have enrichment as part of them.

Karin Bloomer:

I'll just mention there's a draft recommendation regarding expanded learning opportunities programs under three c., which we can turn to.

Donna Sneeringer:

I would think, Sarah, that we, I would read six to be inclusive of all of those programs. Knowing the challenge that expanded learning has a different reimbursement structure obviously, but I think we would want to make sure we're allocating to fix that in this. I mean, you know me, I think the whole thing's a continuum and families need all the parts.

Karin Bloomer:

I see Robin has a hand on this, Robin.

Robin Layton:

This might fall under wordsmithing or philosophical, but the more I stare at this paragraph, the more I want to change it where it says to meet the needs. I think we should say, to meet the needs from prenatal until a child's 13th birthday. I think we should take out of children.

Donna Sneeringer:

You're right, that might be resembling wordsmithing,

Robin Layton:

But I have a reason for it.

Donna Sneeringer:

I get it.

Robin Layton:

I just don't want to bring it up. So meet the needs from-

Donna Sneeringer:

Prenatal and children.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

... Just take of children. Keep from. Thank you

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Donna. Just a clarification when we mean based on the rate and quality advisory panel report, curious about which report? Is it the very first one or final adoptive?

Robin Layton:

I put in there the final one and I even at one point I thought should I put recommendations? I want to call it what it is. So whatever report that's going to get us to the funding is what I want in there.

Donna Sneeringer:

We'll link it.

Robin Layton:

Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

And this is it's second generation name, by the way, as well, the panel's name. So yes, we'll link it. Oh, yes. Okay, wonderful. Let me just scan to see, I think... So that completes recommendations for which there were additional edits after this draft was shared with the council and posted on the ECPC webpage. So Donna, I don't know if you want to just do a quick check if there are any other counsel requests for edits prior to Donna checking on your interest in endorsing this?

Donna Sneeringer:

Last call for edits. And not hearing or seeing any, we need to move forward with the council endorsing these recommendations. And we are using the same process that we have used to adopt budget letters. So it is a matter of a process of saying, "Aye." If you agree, you can abstain or you can oppose. So I think at this point we would be looking for those who support the recommendations. Please say, "Aye." Aye.

Tonia McMillian:

Aye.

Mary Ignatius:

Aye.

AnnLouise Bonnitto:

Aye.

Robin Layton:

Aye.

Natali Gaxiola:

Aye.

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Aye.

Lisete Frausto:

Aye.

Kim Johnson:

I will abstain, since they're to the department in several places.

Donna Sneeringer:

Okay. Staff from DSS, abstaining, anyone else?

Sarah Neville-Morgan:

CDE.

Donna Sneeringer:

CDE abstaining. Okay.

Sarah Neville-Morgan:

Even though we're very appreciative that you highlighted both the UPK mixed library quality and access report that so many people spent so many hours on and the master plan. So appreciate that alignment in here.

Donna Sneeringer:

All right. Any opposition to moving these forward as part of our final report to the administration and the legislature?

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

No.

Donna Sneeringer:

All right.

Mayra Alvarez:

No. Do we have to go member by member?

Donna Sneeringer:

I don't think so. We haven't with the budget. It's just a matter of if you are opposing or abstaining speaking up, but I think we generally got eyes from most people, so...

Mayra Alvarez:

Sounds good.

Karin Bloomer:

You needed to weigh in one way or the other. So we have all eyes, with the exception of three abstentions, Kim Johnson, Lupe Jaime-Mileham and Sarah Neville-Morgan.

Donna Sneeringer:

And probably Stephen Propheter too.

Karin Bloomer:

He's not officially a council member, but you're an honorary in many ways.

Donna Sneeringer:

Okay. Well, thank you. Thank you to everyone. I have really appreciated the conversation that we've had here. I know that this is a difficult change for many people and we all are trying our best to find the best path forward. This is not something that gets fixed in a year or a budget cycle. This is going to be an ongoing conversation in California and I'm really hopeful that these recommendations can turn into fruitful policy conversations as we try to build the kind of system our kids and families deserve. And just really thank you all for all your input and all your time and thank you to Karin for all her work.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you very much, Donna. Thank you, Karin. Thank you, council members. This has been a topic of conversation and many council meetings, so really appreciate the work that's been done here and now on to more operationalizing, which I know everyone is looking forward to, so really appreciate that work.

Karin Bloomer:

Kim, I see Deborah Corley-Marzett has a hand.

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Thank you Karin, for the acknowledgement. Thank you, Donna for your report. I appreciate that. There's just two things I just want to say about this. One, Donna, you mentioned something that's very important to me and you mentioned notifying parents of their rights. And that's true and that's heavy. But there's some things that parents are not notified of that are part of their rights. And there's a lot of people in this meeting that's going to hear this to providers for the first time. There's something called... Someone also mentioned about sleep. Sleep time. Parents have the right to know that they receive sleep time if they work any time from 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM. A lot of parents

don't know their rights. Parents, we talked about parents going to school. There's a lot of parents and providers are not aware that parents have the right to have study time, two hours per unit.

That information is important. You said it, Donna. Parents' rights. They have the right to know this information. It is not being shared properly to providers or to the parents. This is important that it is shared. When you said parents' rights, boy that hit a chord with me, they have the right to know this. So please, we need to do better. The state needs to do better. The agencies need to do better. The networks need to do better to make sure that all parents' rights, all information is received by all parents as well as providers. Then secondly, I just want to add something, if I can. It's my two cents on mixed delivery. As we all were told in our last meeting through CDE, that the pathways for providers to be a part of the mixed delivery because we know again, it's not all providers. We have to keep that up front because that's a reality.

All providers are not a part of it. But as we learned just recently that providers can become a part of it if they have a teacher's permit or certificates. It was a whole year, time wasted. This is a perfect place where all providers, providers who cover work with children from zero to five who are worried right now and losing their children, how they're going to sustain, how they're going to keep their businesses because all the children are going to pre-K, UPK, et cetera. So how do we bring them in through this pathway? Wasted time.

So I just want to bring that up again. When we say all providers, let's just be frank. Let's not say all because all is not all. I think we need to get rid of that word and tell the truth on who it all really includes and doesn't include. And again, I'll say that Pathways, perfect, great work with CCPU. And the training fund to get the providers trained to get them in school and get them taken care of. But this is a failure to me. It really is when all providers are not included. And a year later we're told, "Oh yeah, by the way, you can take this pathway." That's not what it's about. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Deborah. I appreciate your comments. And on the first more to happen through both parent handbooks and additional outreach we can do on ensuring that families know what resources are available and how they can access that and providers to your point. So thank you for lifting that up.

Karin Bloomer:

We're going to open up public comment now in the chat for this most recent agenda item for the next five minutes again as we move on to the next agenda item.

Rate and Quality Advisory Panel Update

Kim Johnson:

Yes. So I will welcome Dr. Lupe Jaime-Mileham to share with us our rate and quality advisory panel update.

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Perfect. So good morning everyone, and again, happy to be with everyone this morning. I will be providing an update for this segment and let's go ahead and go to the next slide. I am very excited to introduce probably not a new face to the field, but sharing that Jackie Barocio joined last month as the Branch Chief for the Division Central Operation Branch, which includes the Data Research and Planning Office, as well as the Child Development Fiscal Services Section and the Child Care Administrative Bureau. Jackie comes to us most recently from the Legislative Analyst Office where she focused on child care programs as well as adults and aging services. And she's very familiar with the department's programs and state processes. So Jackie will be taking on a leading role in regards to our rate reform efforts, moving towards a single rate. And so very excited to introduce her.

Let's go to the next slide. I'm also quite excited to share that we have now announced Karen Chang is also joining as a new Branch Chief to our Program Quality and Improvement Branch. As you remember, Erica Altino who served many years of state service has retired and so that created the vacancy. So Karen has an extensive background in advancing racial and economic equity through her 25 plus years of experience with a focus on marginalized community of color through her administration of child welfare, child care and public benefit programs. As the Assistant Deputy Director of the Child Care and Licensing, which you might know her from her previous role, Ms. Chang has led a program of over 4,500 licensed child care facilities and workforce, which is over 550 staff across 21 regional and statewide offices. So again, very excited about the two additions to the CCDD family.

So let's go ahead and go to the next slide. As far as beginning with the update of rate reform process, which we continue to achieve quite a few milestones, all significant documentation related to rate reform, including more details on the highlighted items can be found on our website, which we will add to the chat. And then let's go to the next slide. So on July 1st, the department submitted its tri-manual '25 through '27 Child Care and Development CCDF State Plan to the Federal Administration for Children and Families ACF. The plan is posted on the CCDF State Plan pages on the CDSS website, which we will put that in the chat so you can have access to it. An earlier draft that the plan was posted for public comment on February of 2024 and the final plan was submitted in July, which was received to reflect comments that CDSS received during this period of time.

And we also received an update to the plan, which is the new plan Preplan provided by ACF. So we transferred that information into the new Preplan. Section four of the plan contains an update on the alternative methodology process and timeline. It includes a plan to set new rates using the alternative methodology by July 1st, 2025. And one thing I want to make sure to note to avoid confusion because the alternative methodology process is still underway and some information, such as new rates themselves, are not yet reflected. So the rates that you see included in section four of the state plans are our current rates, along with in a separate section a description of the cost of care plus add-on rates, in case you notice that section there. The department will submit an update them to the ACF CCDF plan by July 1st, 2025, which will then include then what was landed on in regards to the new payment rates informed by the alternative methodology.

Section four of the plan will also include an analysis of the extent to which payments to providers have kept up pace in inflation. This analysis, which has been previously shared publicly, is found statewide average inflation rate over the calendar years of 2022 and 2023, and it was an 11 percent. And that combined with the rates of cost of Care Plus met and exceeded the inflation rates for the same period of time. So let's go to the next slide.

So you probably have seen this timeline in previous presentations before and it does speak to key milestones associated with the alternative methodology. The exciting news is that now we're approaching the fifth ring at the far right, which is the rate setting and implementation base. As it relates to rate setting, we are waiting for ACF approval of the state plan that was submitted July 1st. That's within 90 days of ACF approval. The state and CCPU will reopen negotiations to restructure the current subsidy reimbursement rate for family, child care, home providers, as well as family, friend and neighbor. While we do not have an exact date of the start of negotiations, we anticipate that to start somewhere between December and January. Now, rate setting will occur for non-CCP-

Spanish Interpreter:

[foreign language overlap].

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Representative program types, including-

Spanish Interpreter:

[foreign language overlap].

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

The budget process concurrently and informed by rate negotiations by family child care home providers or CCPU negotiations. ACF requires that the new subsidy reimbursement rate informed by the alternative methodology is set by July of 2025. And so, between now and then, the governor and the legislator will need to consider all the resources available to support operationalizing all these changes.

As it relates to implementation, within 60 days of ACF approval of the state plan. So sometime this fall, the department will submit an outline of all activities needed to implement the new state rate structure to the legislator. This will be a public document that will be able to share more at the time about the details and timeline associated to implementation.

Rates will take effect when any other activity reasonably necessary to implement have occurred, such as regulatory policy guidance, training of contractors, automations, for example, et cetera. Trailer bill language included as part of the fiscal year '24-'25 budget agreement elaborates on the timeline of the state's transition to a single rate structure.

It provides that rates based on the alternative methodology will be established no later than July 1st of 2025, as referenced. And CDSS will provide a timeline for transitioning to the new rate if the new rates do not take place in effect July 1st, 2025. The trailer bill

language also states that the rates will not be reduced from the current rate subsidy providers are receiving, inclusive of the cost of care plus payments.

The trailer bill language requires CDSS to submit a quarterly report to the legislator and Child Care Provider United, focusing on rate reform implementation. And so you can see at the bottom of the infographic, opportunities for public engagement and rate reform process are going to be ongoing, which is something that we want to continue to hear from everyone. So let's go to the next slide.

So through this fiscal year, stakeholders will be able to engage in the rate reform conversation through the following channels. And one is the department will convene quarterly meetings of the rate and quality advisory panel. I say back by popular demand for fiscal year '24-'25. The next meeting will take place on September 24th. Over the past few months, the department also partnered with the Department of Education and convening focus groups comprised of center-based programs, one at title XXII private centers that participated in state and voucher programs and one contracted Title V centers and state preschool programs.

The focus groups met three times each from May to July to provide input on how elements of the rate structure, defined by the state and CCPU through the joint Labor Management Committee, should be tailored to meet the requirements of center-based programs where they differ from home-based care. The first set of focus groups just recently concluded, and we will be reporting out the feedback on next month's rate and quality advisory panel. So the department also anticipates that focus groups will continue with center-based and other focus groups may be reconvened at another time throughout the year to continue to dive into specific.

So the ECE will also continue to hold quarterly public meetings at which rate reform is always an agenda item. And then finally a public-facing mailbox that we will put in the chat will remain available for anyone in the public to continue to submit their information and comments as well as feedback, considerations as we want to hear from you all regarding this big historic moment. So let's go to the next slide. So this is the end of this presentation.

Again, just an infomercial to say please continue to engage with us and as a reminder that all rate reform related and information can be found on our rate reform and quality website and the link on the slide, and also in the chat. You can also join our listserv to continue to receive the latest information. So that concludes this presentation.

Kim Johnson:

Questions from members?

Sorry, trying to switch devices and see the chat. It's not going to work for me. Robin.

Robin Layton:

Thank you, Lupe, for that summary. Just want to also remind everybody to really pay attention to the part about the funding increases may not go into effect on July 1, 2025. So it's really important to continue all the great advocacy that we've all been doing to make sure that if we don't have a new funding allocation on July 1, 2025 that we have what we have now, which is the Hold Harmless, I think it's called Cost of Care Plus so

that we don't go down. So it's really important to keep up all the great work that everybody's doing.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you. Robin. Deborah?

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Yes. Thank you again. I just want to say again and Dr. Lupe, thank you. Definitely. I just want to say as far as the rate reforms concerned, is that we need to meet, we need to meet more often. How can we submit something to the state, as Dr. Lupe said, we're going to submit it with old values, then we'll go back later with the trailer.

But if we're going to submit anything later on a trailer, we need to meet and put some values to these indicators. We're not meeting. If the state is serious about rate reform and I want providers and folks to hear me, if the state is serious about rate reform, then will the work group will be meeting more often, getting this work done for the providers in this state? We've been waiting for this for a long time and we're here. Now, I feel like everything is slowing down.

We don't need this. We need the wheels running and going. So I think we need to meet more often and get this taken care of for the providers. And that's pretty much what I have to say. I disagree with submitting it, Dr. Lupe. As important as the true cost of care is, and I did say you are going to put some numbers on there, but they're not the true numbers.

The true numbers come when we put the true value to those indicators. Those are the true numbers. So until we get there, we got a long way to go still. So please, let's get meeting in the work group and get this taken care of. I'm ready. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you. Deborah. Zoila?

Zoila Toma:

My apologies. Trying to play with technology here. Thank you Dr. Lupe for the information. It's great information. I know it's so much information, I'm trying to go through quickly as possible, trying to grasp that information. There is a section where it says that the agencies that are going to be doing the referral and all this when it comes to, I think it's four one in that section, but how can we ensure that the agencies are going to that?

We've been having so many issues with the referral agencies at this point. They are taking care of their centers first and providers are always left behind. So how are we going to ensure that we are again, as family educators, included? I see also there's a section about another survey. So this means that we are going to be again working all over again to collecting data that apparently hasn't been collected and hasn't been taken seriously.

We did it one before this one that it was completely scratched out of, then we did it again with P5, and now we're going again through the same circle. All this is just

delaying, I feel like its tactics sometimes for just delaying the rate structure to keeping us over here unpaid, and all this is a bit frustrating.

Deborah has touched so many important subjects and things that we need to consider, and we need to work and we need to sit down and we need to crunch those numbers because realistically, I don't see those, whatever is happening, reflecting the true cost, it's not working for me. It's not working for us, not working for the families. We need to make this happen as soon as possible. Thank you.

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

And so just a clarification, we will not have another survey, as you're right, the field has been surveyed out. What we're doing right now is we are diving into focus groups to clarify a few things that perhaps the survey did not capture. So for this alternate methodology, we will no longer have surveys. We have, like you've mentioned, we already went forward with the key elements. Right now, we're just looking at the variables of those elements as the next stage of this. And so very important for us to continue to engage on that. So thank you for your information.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you. Mary? Mary?

Mary Ignatius:

Sorry, I had too many windows. What was my question? One of the things we learned about, or in our learnings around family fees were just the interactions with the payments provided to child care providers. And I was just sitting here thinking about co-payments and the amount that the program charges and what the state pays. And I'm just wondering, are you foreseeing, in all of these changes, that co-payments would get eliminated or greatly reduced or what does that look like? What does the parent impact look like as these rates change?

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Mary, let me clarify, because I know that ACF uses the word "co-payment" versus "family fee."

Mary Ignatius:

I mean California co-payment, the difference in subsidy.

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Yeah, so the difference in regards to what a provider charges versus what the state can pay is what you're referencing on. So those are types of information that we want to continue to receive information from the field to continue to dive into that. I know that parent voices continues to provide us some more information on that and we look forward to receiving more on that.

Kim Johnson:

And then obviously if there are changes to the rates, the co-payment has potential to change. So that's kind of in the to-be-determined grouping there. Yeah. Yeah. Robin?

Robin Layton:

I just want to follow up on what Deborah was bringing up. Maybe add to it that I was part of the Title 5 focus group and one thing that we were very adamant about and requested is that the draft report that included the numbers and the recommendations be brought to the focus groups prior to the rates panel, so that when we are in the rates panel, we can say "yes, we all reviewed it in all the different focus groups," in order to save a lot of time at the rates committee.

And also, then when it comes to the ECPC, we can say, "the rates panel approved this," because we were also very concerned that we weren't seeing numbers. They're taking a lot of notes and they're compiling it all. And so we did also request that we see it in advance of the rates panel and we were assured that that would happen in all the different focus groups. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you. Not seeing any... oh, Tonia.

Tonia McMillian:

Yeah. Thank you. Robin, are you saying that you guys weren't shown those numbers first?

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Tonia, the purpose of the-

Robin Layton:

No, there was a lot of TBD. No, we were not shown numbers. That's all going to come later, I guess, in the report. Is that correct, Lupe?

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Yeah. So the purpose of the focus groups was to dive deeper into the different elements to receive information from the field in regards to those elements. So we did not put something forward to the focus group. We asked, for instance, "tell us about transportation" and then had conversations in regards to what to consider in regards to that element.

Robin Layton:

And a lot of our conversation was, "well, go back to that survey. What did the surveys say?" We did request not to have the choices on the type where we would get the funding recommendation. Now, I can't remember what it's called. I think it's the living wage. We only recommended that there be one source. So that's why it's really important for the focus groups to see the, I guess you would call it the draft final report, before it goes to the rates panel.

Tonia McMillian:

Thank you, Robin, because at the end of the day, that TBD and all this time, there should just be... we should be further along. How many years is this? What year is this?

Robin Layton:

Totally agree, Tonia. There was a lot of frustration. I'm not sure if you were on the family child care focus group, but yeah, there was a lot of frustration on why aren't we going back to the survey that had all the answers, where are the numbers, where are the numbers? And so we're frustrated as well.

Tonia McMillian:

This part of the master's plan and yeah, I'm calling it that intentionally, the master's plan, does not surprise me that it's taking this long. So, damn, I'm done.

Kim Johnson:

Okay. Thank you very much for impressing upon the continued need for urgency in implementation. Want you to know that we hear you in what you're putting forward. So appreciate the council members lifting up the time and the need for implementation sooner. So appreciate hearing that.

Karin Bloomer:

So we've just finished that agenda item and thus we'll open up the chat for public comment in regard to that item as we move on to the final agenda item before general public comment, the child care transition quarterly report.

Child Care Transition Quarterly Report

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Yes. So good morning everyone. And I also have this topic, which is as required in statute, to provide an update in regard to the transitional quarterly report that we submit to the legislator. Let's go to the next slide. So today I will sharing my updates will include the '24-'25 budget for the child care and development programs, highlights from CDSS first submission as lead agency for the child care and development fund, CCDF, of the CCDF State plan, and then our latest progress towards launching Brilliant Beginnings.

And I will conclude the presentation with an update in regards to the child care and adult care programs. So let's go to the next slide. So the governor and legislator has reached - oh, if I can go one slide back. The governor and the legislator reached an agreement for fiscal year '24-'25 state budget. The budget agreement will support the state fiscal stability while preserving programs that California depend on.

The agreement closes a budget shortfall of 45 billion and the final budget includes \$6.1 billion. Of that is \$3.8 billion general fund dollars for child care and development programs. Let's go to the next slide. The multi-year plan was initiated as part of the 2021 Budget Act to expand access to subsidy child care and development slots. And the current budget allocates \$1.64 billion to continue to fund the 118,556 slots. And I

say that with an asterisk to mean that it depends on the age of the child and et cetera, right?

With that precise number, that will be added in the last few years, it authorizes an additional 228.6 million, representing approximately 1,100 new general child care CCTR slots beginning October 1st of 2024. In addition, the budget includes changes to our statute that will give the department the authority to streamline requests for application process. And then an example would be to provide an alternative application for existing contractors to receive funds allocated for efficiency in the field.

The budget also maintains funding for the emergency Bridge program and for fostered children through an approved re-appropriation of the fiscal year '23-'24 funds. And I also want to note that the budget continues to support the local diaper and wipe distribution efforts, which is \$9 million in funding for that. Let's go to the next slide.

Okay, so on July 1st, the department submitted the tri-annual 2025 to 2027 CCDF State Plan, as I mentioned in the previous presentation to the Federal Administration for children and families, ACF. States and territories receiving CCDF funds must prepare and submit to ACF a plan detailing how these funds will be allocated and expeditized. And this was the first time that CDSS prepared and submitted the CCDF State Plan as the CCDF lead agency. It was previously prepared and submitted by our partners, California Department of Education. The plan is posted on the CCDF State plan page and on the website, which we'll include in the chat.

And the plan covers a wide variety of topics: the selection on parental choice, equal access, payment rates, payment practices, which all fall under Section 4, includes information relevant to the rate reform that I've referenced in previous presentation. Let's go to the next slide.

So this is the nutrition update, which is the Child Care Adult Care food program, CACFP, that also transitioned from Department of Education to the Department of Social Services. And together with the Child Care development programs of July 1st, 2021. Since the transition, the department has taken on a multiphase approach to integrating the nutrition program and aligning program administration with the California Health and Human Services agency's guiding principles.

So the CACFP team continues to collaborate with community care licensing to expand access to programs. The department is using the community care licensing data to identify newly licensed daycare homes and centers that are not yet operating or leveraging the CACFP and is reaching out to them about supporting them and being connected with the inclusion program.

The CDSS added 16 new online courses available in English and Spanish to the CACFP policy guidance to promote technical assistance and support professional growth opportunities. Some of these new trainings include best practice for improving workforce culture, addressing health equity and diversifying meals and nutrition programs.

So the department is collaborating with the CACFP Roundtable and the US Agriculture and Natural Resource Nutrition Program Institute to develop an interactive map visualization of CACFP participation throughout California. The map will integrate additional data elements from various sources and include food insecurity rates, USDA

low income or low access data, as well as the new child nutrition programs areas eligible for data to facilitate data-informed decision making and really have more targeted efforts based on that interactive mapping.

So let's go to the next slide and then also with our Brilliant Beginnings update. So on July 1st of 2021, CDSS launched the Brilliant Beginning Initiative to support the improvement of child care data landscape and includes CalSPARK and the MyChildCarePlan.org, and now Childcare Connect.

During this past quarter, the CalSPARK project made progress in two areas: it conducted internal engagement to fully document business and technical processes, and it also conducted primarily market research and vendor communities. It also continues its ongoing collaboration with the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, which is the network on hosting and maintaining the MyChildCarePlan.org, which was launched in October of 2022.

And during this quarter, work was finished pertaining to an update to the website that will add all licensed child care providers in California. CDSS made progress following the state IT approval process for the Childcare Connect, which will eventually replace the MyChildCarePlan.org after June of 2025. Childcare Connect will meet all federal consumer education requirements, which MyChildCarePlan.org may not meet, and then state mandates connected with assembly bill 2960, statute of 2018 and finalize a draft report informed by parents listening sessions hosted by the Child Care Resource and Referral.

So thank you for that information. Let me go to the next one. And so finally, this ends my short presentation. Thank you so much for your continuing engagement and please visit again our Child Care transition webpage. To learn more about transitions, we will place the link on the website and link to join our Listserv in the chat.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you so much, Dr. Jaime-Mileham. Questions, comments?

Karin Bloomer:

Sonia has her hand raised. Hard for us to see behind the recording symbol. Sorry, Sonia.

Sonia Jaramillo:

Thank you. Good information. So as I'm trying to meet community need and expand services, I'm new to the extended day. So one of the things we're finding out in regards to the meal, the provision of meals for our kids, I'm wondering if there's a plan to add another meal to that because when you have the little ones for three hours, they need a third meal, not a snack. So granted, we're able to pay with other grants, but I'm trying to stay away to maintain the integrity of each grant and be able to see if we can find ways to pay with the grants that are okay for that.

So I know we get the option of three, but what we're finding out is the need for a third meal like breakfast, lunch, and dinner before they go home and then keeping at least

one snack, if possible two, because they need to eat, they're hungry every two hours. Is there a plan for modifying, updating that reimbursement that you have for that?

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Yeah, so yeah, so the CACFP is governed under the federal right, where they have very specifics. However, in regards to number of meals and et cetera. However, I'm going to take this suggestion back to Deputy Alexis Fernandez and her team to share what is being shared out about the possibility of just the feedback of adding an additional meal for all the reasons that you shared.

Sonia Jaramillo:

Appreciate it. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you. Deborah?

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Sonia, thank you for that. I'm glad you mentioned that. That was also a concern. One of my concerns. And to be honest about it really goes beyond adding additional meal. It needs to be more, just more period. Because as the state is aware, that for some kids at school, that's their best meal, the most nutritious meal they can get is at school and then they may go to daycare and then daycare is going to give them, if they're there, depending on what time they're there, a snack and or dinner.

But we also know that kids like to eat beyond dinner. And that's also important and we don't want providers to feel like, "well, I can only give you this much," but they should be able to freely give whatever they want to give and feel to give to a child because no child should be hungry.

And if the state is serious about no child should be hungry, then it should automatically be increased to more meals and snacks, period. Thank you for that. I want to say something here that's really important to me, as all things are, when I think about DSS and transition, we always see child care transition quarterly reports.

There's something that's missing here. A focus group I asked about that started when you guys transitioned over, we never had this at CDE, but I think, and I know, that DSS needs to do more focus groups directly with the providers one-on-ones. I've asked for this before for providers. Hear what's going out in the field directly from the providers.

There's issues, there's things providers don't want to say or are not able to say because they are still afraid of retaliation. An agency may tell you, "well, we don't retaliate." They do. They do retaliate. Providers are afraid to speak up and say something, because those agencies hold their businesses in their hands. "How can I say something? They're going to take my children, Deborah."

This happens on a regular basis. I want the state to hear it from me. I want the public to hear it. This is a concern for providers out there. DSS, I'm asking you, please develop a work group, a focus work group, whatever you want to call it, something where you are one-on-one in a safe place with providers, so they can truly tell you what's going on.

Payments late, issue here, issue there. There's a lot of things going on. No pun intended, a lot of fires out there, that other providers are helping put out for providers that should be able... It shouldn't even be happening, let's just put it frankly. Providers are going through a lot and dealing with a lot. And again, I've mentioned before, the last thing a provider should have to do is battle with their agency or their network. This is happening on a regular basis, and it has got to stop.

So, I'm asking again, DSS, develop something to where providers have a safe place to come with you one-on-one, in a quarterly meeting or something, so you can hear directly from the providers what's going on. And they're not retaliating, don't let them tell you they're not, because a provider who's been retaliated against will tell you different. These agencies, they hold everything. They don't, a provider would say, "They're not going to give me a kid, Deborah if I speak up," or, "Since I spoke up Deborah, they don't refer any children to me anymore. They don't want to work with me anymore." Man, how do you make your ends meet if someone's pulling everything apart? This is a concern. So, we need a focus group, a work group at DSS that speaks directly with providers, hear from them quarterly what's going on. They need a safe place to vocalize what's really happening in the field. Those are the voices in the field. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Deborah. Request noted. And we'll note that we do offer several opportunities also on the community care licensing side, but I hear you're specifically talking about related to subsidies. So, request noted for us going forward, appreciate that. Zoila.

Zoila Toma:

When it come to the food program, I think it needs a lot of restructure. For example, getting paid by attendance, I think it will be ideal more than, I'm sorry, paying for enrollment instead of attendance. Right now, for example, I already prepare my meals for the day and cook and all that, but when it comes, there probably two children that are missing. So, I lost those two meals. I'm not going to get reimbursed for those meals, but I already invested. When I prepare for my meals, I do it on the weekend. I don't know how many children are going to show up. And the schools are the same, they have the meals for everybody, some kids show up, some kids don't. And there are foods that I can save because they're sealed, like the snacks, but the actual meals are freshly cooked. Those food, I cannot serve them the next day.

So, that's basically a waste, unfortunately. So, I think it needs a lot of restructure and please bring all that information. Times are changing, kids don't eat little, kids are growing and development. I have to serve, kids eat at school at about 11:00, but when they come with me at 2:00, 3:00, I have to feed them actually lunch. And then later on, two hours later, they asking me for their snack. So, even though they're not here for meal time, that meal, I lost it again because I cannot claim it, it's off my meal hours, but I am not going to leave that child hungry. So, I think it needs to be restructured. Thank you.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you for those recommendations. Lissete?

Lissete Frausto:

Hi, So, I just had a quick question, Director Johnson and Dr. Jaime. I have learnt from a parent, my daughter just started out at a family child care home daycare. And let me just say that, thank you to all the providers that are here in this call today. I had a past experience with a previous provider that created PTSD and I was unsure of what was going to happen in this new space but let me tell you that I was not wrong when I knew that not all the child care provider homes are the same, that there are many amazing providers out there. And I got so lucky to be a part of one of the providers now and just seeing also everything that she does day to day and just knowing what the reimbursement rate is for just my child, I'm like, "Wow." And for her, sometimes my daughter, she's 17 months old, there's times where she'll want to eat and there's times when she doesn't want to eat, and she works with her.

She's like, "She's a baby, I can't force her to nap or eat. She's going to eat when she wants." So, they work around her, and I appreciate that. But one of my questions was going to be of, if parents work from home, do they qualify for the subsidized child care? Because one of the parents that she had was let go just because she works from home. And we were having this conversation just yesterday and I was like, "You know what? Let me bring it up during the ECPC meetings," because I'm like, "That's not fair. It's still work. You are working from home." For myself, I'm working from home at the moment, and I am so thankful and so blessed to have found her. And now, to find out that the program just said, "You can't have child care because you work from home," one, our children should also have a space where they're learning, where they're interacting, where they're developing social skills, social-emotional skills, and just because you work from home, you shouldn't have those benefits of having child care.

I always also say that child care should be available to all families no matter their income or their living situation, because we all need child care. All parents need child care and especially working from home, it's already a lot for us mentally, physically, we're just here working from home and yeah, we're working from home. We could be with them, but they're not building their social skills. They're not being exposed to all these other things. So, I just wanted to ask that question, because when she told me that, that the mom was very heartbroken that the program disqualified her from having child care just because she works from home, my heart just, it's just unfair. So, I just wanted to have a clarification around that.

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

Thank you for that comment. I don't know, to be honest with you in regards to that particular regulation. I was hoping to do a quick look, but I don't think I'm fast enough yet. So, let me follow up with you in regards to families working from home and the allowability of that. And then, we'll make sure to circle back.

Lissete Frausto:

Thank you. I appreciate it.

Mary Ignatius:

Lissete, tell her to appeal just in the meantime, because there's a period of time that you can-

Lissete Frausto:

Yeah.

Mary Ignatius:

... appeal and if she goes past it-

Lissete Frausto:

Yeah.

Mary Ignatius:

... it could mean can't get back in.

Lissete Frausto:

Yeah. Yeah. That's what I was thinking. Thank you, Mary.

Kim Johnson:

Deborah.

Deborah Corley-Marzett:

Yes. If the parent works from home then they're entitled to subsidized child care still. This is a perfect example of what I'm saying, a part of what the agencies do, they know this, and if they don't know it, they should know it. Parents' rights, they have the right to know that, that if they work from home that yes, they're still entitled to child care. If they work overnight, yes, they're entitled to sleep time. If they go to school, yes, they're entitled to study time. That's the problem. Perfect example right there. You got a parent worried about child care, because her agency told her, "You're not eligible." And, if she missed the deadline to appeal, that's not her fault because she trusted her agency to tell her the truth and they failed her. That's one example. And know that that's happening throughout the state. This is a part of the failures of the agency that go on, and this has got to end. Thank you for bringing that up.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you, Deborah.

Karin Bloomer:

Okay, we'll open the chat now for public comment and we'll also turn to general public comment, which means we will open up the ability for members of the public to speak verbally as well. Let me just quickly refer to some of the things I should share in regard to that. So, if you'd like to make verbal public comment, members of the public, if you

could please use the raised hand feature. It should be at the bottom of your Zoom screen or depending on your Zoom version, you may have to click on the participants and then you'll see the raised hand feature under the participant panel. We will take people one at a time to speak verbally. Please do keep your comments to one minute or less, so we can allow for as many members of the public to speak as possible. If there's anyone here physically in this room who would like to join public comment, of course, please let us know as well.

And again, we'll keep the chat open for the duration of this meeting before we adjourn at noon. So, with that, I am going to look at the attendees for raised hands, and we'll start with Marcella Graves, we're going to unmute you. Please go ahead and unmute on your end.

Marcella Graves:

Yes. Hi. Good afternoon everyone. Can everyone hear me?

Karin Bloomer:

Yes.

Marcella Graves:

Okay, great. Yeah, I want to piggyback on that because you do, as providers, we get penalized and mistreated when we stand up and stand up for what is right. If you have a question about something about your paperwork or this and that, or they think you're a troublemaker, then you get penalized for different reasons, different situations. And then also, I had a client that they switched her back to the welfare, since she qualified for welfare, and she only had a month left or whatever, three weeks, and they transferred her back to welfare. Then, welfare said she didn't qualify. Well, within that time it was 30 days, I kept the kids because she was going to school or whatnot, and they had to re-go back and put her back to stage two.

But in that whole time, there was a gap. They didn't cover her at all, and the worker had retired or whatnot. And so the parent, I didn't charge her, but I suffered as the provider because I wanted the young lady, she'd been going to Fresno State about two years, to complete, and I helped her complete. I kept her children, she had two twin infants and I kept them and everything, but who suffered? Me, the provider, because I had 30 days with no income. And that shouldn't have be, they shouldn't even switched her over there, but they did. It didn't make sense that she only had 30 days left for welfare, why transfer over there? And I just want us providers to be treated fairly and with respect and dignity when we're dealing with subsidy programs. And it's true about, they don't refer you when you stand up for what's right. Thank you so much for your time.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you, Marcella. We're going to turn to Sarina Lynn next. Sarina, you can unmute on your end.

Sarina Lynn:

Hi, thank you so much for having me. Sarina Lynn, I have a four year old son and a seven year old daughter. And I just wanted to thank Yasmin and Cheryl again for their presentations and I'm so hopeful that the data showing that early support and intervention and most importantly, access to child care starting at birth is a necessary economic and concrete support. I'm hopeful that some of these data points can be used in the discussions about state rate reimbursement reform, but also for private providers that are really, really struggling right now. They do not have the benefit of Hold Harmless from the state, and they are closing from the unintended consequences of transitional kindergarten. So, I'm hopefully that the referring to programs that are serving our youngest and most vulnerable children as an economic and concrete support may help fix that.

And then, the entire mixed delivery system, serving children zero to four really, as we said on this call, women of color that need to be paid competitive wages and reimbursed at the true cost of care and these women continue to carry the early child care system on their backs. And we really can't increase access to care, we cannot increase access to quality child care without getting these women professional wages, competitive wages, and the funding is the first part. So, I love all the examples, the real-time examples. There were some from, I think Sonia and Zoila and Tonia, I just want to thank you for showing those examples of what providers do every single day and what they do for our children and families. So, thank you so much.

But funding first, pay our people. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you, Sarina. Now, we're going to turn to Ghada Ponce, please go ahead and unmute on your end.

Ghada Ponce:

Yes, hi. I wanted to go back to everything Ms. Deborah Marzett was saying, thank you so much for all of that. I think it's the way maybe it's presented on the end of the admin. For example, when I do registrations, I know how to, well, we should know what questions we should be asking in terms of sleep hours and things of that nature, because I ensure that my parents know everything that's needed from beginning to end. So, maybe there should be a training for admin, from the CDE department, as to how to do the enrollment process to ensure that the parents are getting every aspect that is needed from this program. So again, maybe just a training for the admin is what I am suggesting, because I do know that with other schools, I do have friends who are in the same field and their presentation is very different than what I do.

And I know that they are kind of withholding, which makes me sad because I work in San Bernardino County and these parents do not have access to all of the information that is out there. So, if we could get a training, thank you, Deborah, if we could get a training together for all admin, I will be more than happy to join that group and get it all together, along with Deborah. I'm sure she would love that, so we could team up.

So, thank you so much and thank you for everything that you all do. I know this is time consuming and child care is very difficult, but we are all very, very blessed to be in this field to better our future. So, thank you for that.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you, Ghada. We'll turn next to Paloma Corona, please go ahead and unmute on your end.

Paloma, if you could unmute on your end, please go ahead.

Paloma Corona:

Hi.

Karin Bloomer:

Hello.

Paloma Corona:

Oh, I'm sorry. I was having some technical issues right here. My name is Paloma Corona and I'm a family child care provider from the L.A. area. I've been doing this for about 15, almost 16 years. And I'm also a member of CCPU. And I believe that including family child care providers into a mixed delivery system is essential for establishing an inclusive and comprehensive early childhood education framework. Families should have the flexibility to choose care options that best meet their needs and obviously child care providers offer a range of settings that accommodate their schedules. We have more flexible schedules, some of us are open 24/7, and we can work with the family's schedule. So, I really ask you all to think about this and include family child care providers in this mixed delivery system. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you, Paloma. All right, we'll turn to Sylvia Hernandez. Sylvia, please go ahead and unmute on your end.

Sylvia Hernandez:

Hi, good morning everyone. My name is Sylvia Hernandez, I'm a child care provider. I've been working with children since '98. I have my own child care for 17 years, and I just believe right now for the last comment that I heard, the agencies need to update their system, update their staff. Because, we might have good programs, but when it comes to the parents trying to get all this help that they need and they qualify for it, the information is given wrong where I literally have to drive myself to the agency, go sit with the parent and explain to their caseworker, why does she qualify. Because, I've been in the field for so many years, I can advocate for my parents. This is what us providers do, we go out of our way to make sure that these parents get what they deserve, what they need, and actually accommodate.

I don't understand sometimes where they'll tell me, oh, parent is going to get 60, 80 hours, if you divide that, our pay is \$3 and something an hour. So, I tell them, you know what? This is where this system has to change. It has to be where a parent can work from home. A parent can go to school, they have that right. But as providers, we have the right as well to divide these hours with another provider, because we're getting burned out as well. But even though I am 24/7, I am Monday through Friday, 24 hours,

it's very tiring to still come out of my way, go to the agency and tell them, "Look, this is wrong, this is how it's not supposed to be." This training, I believe that it should be coming from the agency. Invest that money with the employees that you guys have, because then you hear now, "Oh, I have this, your caseworker is this one," then you have another one.

So, it's not just with the agencies, and I'm not going to name all of them, but you know who you are, and this needs to stop because once we get that fixed, everything's going to fall in where it's supposed to. So, this is where we need to sit and say, what are the agencies are doing, what are they doing to help these parents? Because the help is not there. I have parents who I even have to appeal with them, because they're not getting approved, and they have that need for the care. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you, Sylvia. We're going to turn next to Susan Savage. Please go ahead and unmute.

Susan Savage:

Good morning. Thank you. I really appreciate the points of ensuring rates are equitable across the system to create pay equity between both private and school-based programs. Research by UC Berkeley shows that private child care providers are often black and brown and serve these communities and school-based staff are typically white. Paying all of our folks without requiring more of them, from an already highly qualified, highly experienced workforce is really key to ensuring equity across California. Also, I've seen that some superintendents are extremely passionate to involve the community in the mixed delivery system, while others are less so. So, how do we ensure this lack of equity is remedied? Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you Susan. Yvonne Cottage, please go ahead and unmute on your end.

Yvonne Cottage:

Oh, thank you. I was wondering how I was going to unmute. Hi, everybody. Thank you so much for allowing us this public comment. My name is Yvonne Cottage, I am a family child care provider in Lancaster. I am also a proud member of Child Care Providers United and I've been providing high quality wraparound care in my home based 24/7 facility for over 16 years. And I've also served as a hub to all of my clients, acting as a liaison between the families in my care and the necessary resources in our community. And like Sylvia said, we know the programs better than the workers themselves at CCRC, Crystal, at all of these different agencies and still, we are not compensated for our time, our quality, our services and our experience. And it's essential that we are included in these decisions and that our voice is not just heard, but something's done about it to ensure that these families have that child care early learning that it's accessible, affordable for every family in our state.

Because parents need that access to second and third shift facilities that family child care provides. And studies and surveys have proven time and time again that the

parents' number one choice is home-based early education and care. And it's really time for the state to take concrete action now and finalize that actual cost of care document without further delay. Because otherwise we're all failing the state, we're all failing the children and the families in our community if we don't act now. Thank you.

Karin Bloomer:

Thank you, Yvonne. Seeing no other hands, I'll turn it back to Chair Johnson.

Kim Johnson:

Okay, thank you. Oh-

Karin Bloomer:

Oh, please. I'm sorry, there's someone here physically in the room. Please go ahead.

Alexandra Hilario:

No, I was just wondering, thank you so much for all the work that you are doing, I think it's really important to do the living wage, making sure that we have the true cost of care. The panel, Dr. Lupe, you're part of that panel, do you know what method you're using to calculate the true cost of care?

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

So, as a part of the panel, we've been doing a series of meetings in regards to both the early surveys, which was commented in regards to this group. We took in those surveys and worked with CCPU partners in regards to identifying then the elements of each of those. And all that is public on our website. Our next phase is to continue to do the focus groups as well as going back to the negotiation table after ACF approves the state plan, to then dive into those calculations I've mentioned.

Alexandra Hilario:

Are they considering the MIT living wage calculator at all?

Lupe Jaime-Mileham:

So at this point, MIT is one of the options that is as part of that.

Alexandra Hilario:

Okay. And then, I also want to know, we need more resources, we would like to, in my agency, we want to increase our family resources. And maybe I'll connect with the [inaudible] the meeting, because one of the things that, we used to be able to provide diapers for our families and that went away a few months ago. So, we want to increase the services that we provide to our families and in Alameda County, so hopefully there's a way to do that.

Donna Sneeringer:

Yeah.

Kim Johnson:

And your name for the record?

Alexandra Hilario:

I'm sorry, Alexandra Hilario. I'm the executive director for St. Vincent's Day Home, we're a child care development center in Oakland.

Kim Johnson:

Wonderful. Thank you. Thank you so much. So, we have one more council member comment. Mary?

Mary Ignatius:

Yeah, I just wanted to make sure Lissete saw in the chat that Dr. Mileham put the code in the chat around working from home. I do think there could be a lot of interpretation case workers part if the parent then qualifies. I don't know what it means, based on the type of work being done and its requirements. I think post pandemic, you have many people who are working from home, doing jobs that they were doing pre pandemic, but now just doing from home. So, I just wonder if there's a way to get, could a parent just, I don't know, show a pay stub or there is employment verification. What would a parent need to provide in order to show that they are in fact working from home and need the care?

Kim Johnson:

Yeah, noted Mary and happy to follow up on that. I see three members, so I'm going to give each of you a minute here in final comments here. So, Zoila, then Sonia, then Tonia.

Zoila Toma:

Thank you for the presentation. Always a pleasure to be here. One thing that I would like to see in one of our meetings is how family child care, licensed and et cetera are going to be part of the mixed delivery. I need to see a map. I need to understand exactly how, because I see our name thrown in there, it is somewhere there, but we have no clear vision. We are anxious and all the information come to us last minute. So, I would like to see what is expected from us, what are the plans, the ideas, how can we work together so we can be included? I just don't want to see our name there; I want to be part of it. Please help us, guide us, work with us. Thank you everyone.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you Zoila. Sonia.

Sonia Jaramillo:

Quickly, I just want to know if there's a way to help us expedite the licensing of facilities. I noted as a comment on the section, but right now I'm a desperate point. It's been

months and I need my facilities license. Parents are calling us every day. So, if there's a way that I can have, can someone please contact me? I am desperate.

Kim Johnson:

Noted. Sonia, we'll get licensing in touch with you. And Tonia.

Tonia McMillian:

Yeah. I just wanted to add on what Mary stated about the regulation. I did pull that regulation up and we know those regulations, the majority of them were written during a time period that's not so good. But the last amendment to that regulation was in 2021. And so yeah, it needs to be revisited.

Kim Johnson:

Yep. Thank you Tonia. Thank you public for engaging with us. We are so grateful for all of you who participated today and for your voices brought to the council. Thank you council members and advisory committee members for your time and continued commitment and advice to both the departments and legislature and the governor and the superintendent. We appreciate you bringing your voice and recommendations to us and hear you on some specific asks to come.

For the public, the workforce and parent advisory committees of the council will be meeting on October 17th from 10:00AM to 12:00PM, all are welcome and encouraged to participate. And the fourth and final quarterly meeting of this council, full meeting will be held on November 19th from 9:00 to noon for the 2024 year. More work to be done. Thank you for work to date and really, really also want to thank the presenters who joined us this morning and engaged in this conversation. Thank you all and have a wonderful afternoon. Thank you. Great to see you all.

Mayra Alvarez:

Fabulous meeting. Thank you everyone.

Kim Johnson:

Thank you.

Adjourn

ENDS [02:58:31]