



Los Angeles County  
Children's Planning Council  
*Improving Children's Lives*

## **Children's Planning Council Meeting**

**May 16, 2007**

**9:30 a.m.**

Room 140, Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California

Present:

- Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
- Victoria Adams, representing Steve Cooley
- Bettye Anderson
- Charles Avila
- David L. Brewer
- Philip Browning
- Priscilla Charles-Carter
- Bruce Chernof
- Rabbi Bernard Cohen
- Deborah Davies
- Teresa A. DeCrescenzo
- Duane Dennis
- Jeff Farber
- Jonathan Fielding
- Dorothy Fleisher
- Chris Floyd
- Steven Golightly
- Jan Isenberg, representing Darline Robles
- David Janssen
- Rafael Lopez
- Jacquelyn McCroskey
- Elisa Nicholas
- Trish Ploehn
- José Ramos, Jr.
- Marsha Ramos
- Lisa Cleri Reale
- Bruce Saltzer
- Marvin J. Southard
- Margaret Donnellan Todd
- Sharon G. Watson
- Phillip L. Williams

Chair Yvonne Brathwaite Burke brought the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. and asked that Council members and the audience introduce themselves. She congratulated the Council's Chief Executive Officer, Yolie Flores Aguilar, on her recent election to the Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Flores Aguilar will take office in July.

### **Approval of the Minutes of March 21, 2007**

**Phillip L. Williams moved that the minutes of March 21, 2007, be approved as mailed. Chris Floyd seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

### **Chair's Report: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke**

- Chair Burke welcomed David L. Brewer, superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District, to his first Children's Planning Council meeting. At this mornin's breakfast with Brewer and county department heads, Burke shared with him the themes that emerged during the Council's 2005 community forum process, in which residents, parents, and youth shared concerns about child well-being that can be addressed only through coordination across county, city, and school district lines. Brewer understands this need for integration, Burke said, and has expressed his desire to partner with the Children's Planning Council and its stakeholders. She asked him to lead off the planned discussion on **partnerships**.

Following his retirement from the Navy, Brewer determined to follow in the footsteps of his parents, David and Ruth Brewer, by helping disadvantaged children—and he found them here in Los Angeles. While considering the superintendent's position, he learned that 76.6 percent of LAUSD students are enrolled in subsidized lunch programs or live below the Federal poverty level. A 2003 study showed that 526,000 district students had witnessed or experienced violence; 65 percent of sixth-graders were victims of violence, and 27 percent suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. In addition, approximately 20,000 children countywide are in the foster care system. "Politics is a contact sport in Los Angeles," Brewer said, "and we have too much politics about kids and not enough focus. There are wounded kids here, and we need to take them from where they are to where they should be."

His early commitment to foster children has partially stemmed from observing a family friend, a foster mother to two girls born with fetal alcohol syndrome. "What she has to do is phenomenal," he said. When the foster-child population in some schools is as high as 30 percent, and students are living with psychiatric disorders, dire poverty, and other horrific circumstances, "I get angry," Brewer said, when people point fingers at teachers, accusing them of 'not teaching' those children.

Realizing that the district has been "out of alignment with the issues and the people doing the work," as Brewer put it, he is creating an office of parent and community engagement to empower parents and foster effective community partnerships. Research, measurement, and analysis are key, as are identifying areas needing systemic improvement. "We want to partner in bold things," he stated, such as boarding schools for foster children, which would cost about \$32,000 per child per year. "If we have to go to Sacramento hat in hand, we'll do that," he said, "and ask the legislature if they want to educate or incarcerate." Putting political issues aside and getting the community focused on children is the answer, and Brewer looks forward to working with the Children's Planning Council to accomplish that.

Continuing the theme of partnership, **Department of Mental Health** director Dr. Marv Southard said that his department and its contracted community agencies have long been allied with LAUSD, and he expressed hope for advancing those linkages in several ways.

- Models need to be effective for “the kids we have, rather than theoretical kids,” Southard said, addressing their specific linguistic and cultural needs to provide services that do not stigmatize them and that make their lives better, not worse.
- Even though educating children is every school district's charge, improving children's circumstances by strengthening their families can often be the primary way to make that happen. On-site, school-based services are valuable, but the plagues of mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence within families must also be addressed. (“It's an airline analogy,” Brewer commented. “If a plane cabin loses pressure, adults need to put their own masks on first. Only then they can help their children.”)
- DMH has a presence in only 40 percent of LAUSD schools, and bringing innovative mental health services to scale will be an important next step. Funding, workforce, and other issues must be resolved, and mental health and substance abuse services must be embedded in any new structure.

One means for advancing this agenda is the Mental Health Services Act, passed in 2004. Twenty percent of MHSA monies are to be used for prevention and early intervention, and—once guidelines are received from the state—a planning process on how to use those funds will begin this summer. Schools will be a major partner in both planning and implementation, and Southard invited LAUSD to participate in the governance group for the planning phase.

Dr. Jonathan Fielding, director of the **Department of Public Health**, said that factors affecting the first five years of a child's life—family dynamics, nutrition, dental health, and so on—are critical to their readiness to learn in school. His department is committed to promoting a healthy school environment, both physically and emotionally, by inspecting cafeterias, promoting hygiene, ensuring safe physical activities, improving menu options, and so on. It is also concerned with other public health issues:

- Overweight and obesity is the biggest epidemic in Los Angeles County; if things don't improve, one out of three children born today will wind up with adult-onset diabetes and its attendant health problems. “It also affects children's positive self-image,” Fielding added. “We have to reverse this.”
- In the prevention of substance abuse, not enough information on effective strategies exists. “Early intervention—assessment centers, referrals, treatment services—works for families,” Fielding said, “With treatment for young people, the results aren't as good as we would like. We don't know exactly what works.” Educational attainment is the best preventive measure for substance abuse, though, since children who are learning and feeling good about themselves tend not to self-medicate.
- Because violence is the number-one killer of youth in many areas of the county, violence prevention and averting unintentional injuries are also on the department's agenda.
- Emergency preparedness education is targeted to both students and families, and the department also looks at how schools themselves, usually a focal point in neighborhoods, could be a community resource used for food stamp distribution, health insurance enrollment, parent empowerment, and other community programs.

Prior to heading the **Department of Children and Family Services'** community-based support division, Harvey Kawasaki served as regional administrator in that department's Torrance office. At his first meeting as DCFS representative to the SPA 8 Council, he talked for 20 minutes about departmental initiatives such as point of engagement, team decision-making, and concurrent planning—the first time that SPA Council members had heard that depth of information from DCFS, he was told. Sharing both positive input and concerns creates opportunities for partnerships and collaboration, Kawasaki said. More than half of SPA 8's team decision-making conferences—which bring families and experts together to settle questions about removing and reunifying children—now have community agencies in attendance. He stressed the importance of departmental representatives in the SPA/AIC Council system taking a leadership role, using their authority to participate, share information, and reach out.

Deborah Davies, a convener of the **SPA 2 Council**, praised Brewer's emphasis on partnerships between schools, families, and communities. "We live in one of the richest cities in the world," she said, "yet students are still coming to school hungry, scared, and angry." Creating communities around schools could help change that, and she made two suggestions for LAUSD and other districts.

- Support parent centers, which are critical to providing families the space—often sadly lacking at school facilities—where organizations can help them receive services.
- Embrace the idea of schools staying open to become community resource centers. "Don't expect teachers and principals to vacate the classrooms," Davies said, "but use that space. Families trust schools, and that relationship can make a huge difference in a community."

Though lip service is often paid to communities and organizations partnering with schools, schools tend not to be at the table. "But we want them," Davies stressed. "They can be tremendous resources in the support of children and families."

In the discussion following these presentations, Brewer mentioned looking at models that would bring the YMCA or Boys and Girls Clubs onto campuses, and reported conversations with students who want schools open from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. He also expressed concerns about the scant resources parents are provided when children are born and during their pre-school years. "At Sister Jenny's Puente center," he said, referring to the Puente Learning Center run by Sister Jenny Lechtenberg, "she gives parents a six-pack of books every week to take home to the kids. That's the kind of 'first five' that I'm looking for."

Terry DeCrescenzo mentioned research data that has identified four major reasons for school violence: race, body image and size, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Two-thirds of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender children experience violence at school, and incidents involving gender-variant children are even more common—as much as 30 percent higher than for the rest of the teen population. "Who's training the schools to get ready for these kids?" she asked. AB 458, the 2004 California Foster Care Non-Discrimination Act, specifically mentions gender identity in its training mandate for group home administrators, foster parents, and department licensing personnel, and DeCrescenzo implored school districts to include curricula on gender-variant youngsters in their training as well.

Brewer introduced the four middle and high school students who were 'shadowing' him today, and they expressed appreciation for the help and time of the Children's Planning Council meeting attendees. One young woman particularly mentioned the hate crimes noted by DeCrescenzo. "Sometimes students think the people in charge aren't aware of what goes on or how they can make a difference," the student said, "but change takes time. Thank you. I'll let my friends know that you're trying. It means a lot."

Elementary schools generally lack counselors and psychologists that could be helpful, Lisa Cleri Reale said. At the school her child attends, the PTA pays for a psychologist to see children one day a week, and that's had a direct impact on reducing playground problems. "It all boils down to funding," Brewer acknowledged. "We're trying to get it, and we may have an opportunity with SB 1133 [the Quality Education Investment Act]." At the high school level, college counselors are also needed.

Priscilla Charles-Carter commended Brewer's emphasis on working with foster children, but expressed concerns that school staff tend not to be sensitive to these children's particular issues, and don't receive enough education about what it means to be a foster child, the dynamics of that life, or alternative methods to increase those students' academic success. She would love to see LAUSD implement an in-service on these issues, and also encourage schools to make time on their staff development agendas for experts to speak. "Someone has to want to understand what these children's challenges are," she said.

LAUSD is about to launch a training program on the educational and emotional needs of foster and probation youth, Sharon Watson announced, designed for principals, counselors, and office staff. In addition, the Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council (ECC)—which Chair Burke cited as another good example of partnership and leveraging resources—is working with Brewer on the boarding school concept for foster children. Over the past few years, the number of children in foster care has dropped from 60,000 to 20,000, but Watson reminded attendees of the county's additional 20,000 probation youth, who have similar educational issues. "There's a lot of support for Superintendent Brewer's idea," Watson said, "and we're looking forward to working on that model, which has been thoroughly vetted."

Beatriz Olvera Stotzer commented on the collaborative nature of the Children's Planning Council and its wide reach to measure outcomes and document them within systems. An overarching theme within the county's five desired outcome areas (good health, safety and survival, economic well-being, social and emotional well-being, and achievement and work-force readiness) has been getting children from birth to age 18 ready for school and able to succeed once they get there. **Olvera Stotzer moved that the Children's Planning Council convene a school readiness/school success summit—involving LAUSD, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, Los Angeles county government, the city of Los Angeles, the League of California Cities, and others—to develop policies that can have an impact on individual communities. Jacquelyn McCroskey seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.** Olvera Stotzer will head an ad hoc group to plan the summit, which will build on the school readiness summit held two years ago.

Burbank mayor Marsha Ramos suggested examining her city council's allocation of funds to provide mental health services in schools, which principals see as providing very positive benefits. The Long Beach Unified School District has also done much in that regard, Elisa Nicholas said, and the county's larger cities should be engaged in the summit as well. According to Jeff Farber, smaller districts such as ABC Unified and Whittier City have long found funding for on-campus partnerships with community-based organizations. "The push in smaller districts comes from parents going to school board meetings," Farber said, "and meeting with superintendents. The SPA/AIC Councils have many active groups of parents who do that." DMH provides mental health services in every school in the Pasadena Unified School District, Southard said, and that robust partnership has resulted from district leadership. "With this leadership commitment from LAUSD," he said, "we may make progress."

- The Children's Planning Council juvenile justice study (released last year and available at <http://www.childrensplanningcouncil.org>) was recently presented to the Board of Supervisors, which requested follow-up recommendations for substantial, 'hard-hitting' changes to the system. Because this additional report is due by June 5, an intensive community process will not be possible, but Jacquelyn McCroskey and others will be consulting various sources as the document is drafted. Chair Burke applauded the excellence of the original report, saying that Supervisor Gloria Molina in particular wanted a further action agenda and timelines for change. "These are difficult issues," Burke said. "If we knew how to solve them, we would have by now. We've given the Children's Planning Council the challenge of doing this job, but we understand its complexity and the problems involved in implementation."

McCroskey asked anyone wishing to be involved in developing the document to contact her or Flores Aguilar. The draft will be e-mailed to all Children's Planning Council members for feedback—within a 48-hour window, because of time pressures—prior to submission to the Board. A deadline extension is possible, Burke said, depending on the project's progress over the next three weeks.

### **Chief Executive Officer's Report: Yolie Flores Aguilar**

- As promised at the March meeting, Flores Aguilar presented a final draft of the Children's Planning Council's strategic plan for 2007–2009. Once members approve its content, it will be produced in a community-friendly way. Flores Aguilar outlined sections that differ from previously approved drafts:
  - The vision, mission, and values section (page 4), which synthesizes in concrete language concepts developed over the 15-year life of the Council
  - Critical success factors and barriers to success, assigned to each goal
  - The idea that Children's Planning Council members will model the change they seek within their own organizations (page 6, 'Critical Success Factors,' fourth bullet), to ensure the spread of responsive family-strengthening institutions
  - Reframing the 'Tracking Our Progress' section (page 14) in less academic language

Cheryl Wold, co-chair of the Council's Data Partnership, explained the strategic plan evaluation piece, which will monitor the achievement of desired results. The evaluation will:

- ✓ Periodically assess programs and capture relevant organizational learning
- ✓ Ask good questions and gather reliable data so that decisions and adjustments can be made based on that feedback
- ✓ Be a practical monitoring tool, focused on objectives and specific actions
- ✓ Capture learning arising from new strategies, identify new models within communities, and share those results
- ✓ Use both quantitative and qualitative measures to ensure that relationship- and capacity-building, for example, are proceeding appropriately

Responses being heard through the SPA/AIC Councils, Flores Aguilar said, indicate that people in the community are astonished that a quasi-governmental entity is talking about social change, community organizing, and building power in neighborhoods. "They understand that government can't solve all their problems," Flores Aguilar said, "but they want to work together. We're on the right track, and our direction is being validated."

Data indicates that the greatest risk factors for child well-being are concentrated in South Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, and the San Fernando Valley, and Rafael Lopez would like to add a statement in the strategic plan encouraging new collaborations between the county and the city of Los Angeles, as well as other cities. He will provide leadership with Los Angeles's Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families to make that collaboration happen.

**Rabbi Bernard Cohen moved that the content of the Council's strategic plan final draft be accepted as amended. Lisa Cleri Reale seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.** Flores Aguilar said that implementation reports would be made to the Council every six months or so, and that member work was just beginning.

- The first phase of the county's Family Economic Success (FES) plan was completed last June, and the public/private/community task force, co-chaired by Beatriz Olvera Stotzer and Phil Ansell, went on hiatus during a community engagement process that was completed in March. Facilitated by representatives from Claremont Graduate University, focus groups sought to discover if families' conceptions of economic success matched the task force's suggested strategies. Claremont's report was presented to the Strengthening Community Capacity Committee (SCCC) last week, and the FES Task Force will reconvene on May 25 to use those findings to strengthen and modify its framework. According to Olvera Stotzer, the process took longer than anticipated, but has yielded a much-enriched product.

In conversations with United Way, the city of Los Angeles, and various philanthropic organizations, issues related to poverty—which Flores Aguilar characterized as "the elephant in the room"—continue to surface. Many entities are planning and investing in this area, and finding alignment for a coordinated effort will be essential.

- Flores Aguilar distributed an information sheet on the community-building mini-grant program, funded by the county in the amount of \$250,000, that will launch July 1 through the SPA/AIC Councils. Grants of between \$500 and \$1,000 will help residents put into action

their advocacy agendas, and Flores Aguilar will meet with supervisorial district deputies this month to discuss the process.

- The county is also helping to fund the Council's Community Building Institute, which may retain a Boston-based organization, the Interaction Institute for Social Change, to roll out its training and technical assistance components. Stakeholders will meet with that firm's representatives in June and decide whether or not to execute a contract.
- Flores Aguilar reviewed the contents of member packets, including an analysis of the governor's May revision to the state budget, which would cut CalWORKs funding to families, and a *Pasadena Weekly* article about the Safe Surrender program, naming the Children's Planning Council as having spearheaded its collaborative implementation in Los Angeles County.

### **Executive Committee Report: Chris Floyd**

- Following January's "firestorm of questions," as Chris Floyd put it, regarding the Children's Planning Council's partnership policies, the Executive Committee and the Strengthening Community Capacity Committee have discussed the issue in two all-morning sessions facilitated by consultant John Ott. Although some questions remain open, members agreed that partnerships are at the core of the Council's work, and came to several preliminary conclusions.
  - When the resource is *local* (a term still to be defined), an individual SPA/AIC Council may pursue that resource, regularly informing the Strengthening Community Capacity Committee of its progress so that other councils may benefit from its experience, and so that any potential opportunities for leveraging may be explored.
  - Any partnership requiring a SPA/AIC Council to sign a contract or enter into a legal agreement will necessitate conversations with Children's Planning Council central-office staff and other bodies as appropriate.
  - Because they are best positioned to weigh the multiple considerations associated with such requests, individual SPA/AIC Councils can and should make decisions about how to respond to members who are applying for grants or other resources and seek letters of support. SPA/AIC Councils should inform each other through the Strengthening Community Capacity Committee when they have made these decisions.
  - As a general principle, any decisions about resources that will affect all SPA/AIC Councils should not pit individual councils against each other, but instead support the development of the system of councils as a whole, at the same time recognizing that different councils are at different developmental stages.

A work group—representatives from the Strengthening Community Capacity and Executive Committee, as well as central-office and SPA/AIC Council staff—has been formed to develop a specific process for partnering with Children's Bureau, the request that began this discussion. Using a real-world opportunity rather than a theoretical one will help the group develop the appropriate steps and criteria for formal partnerships involving the Council as a

whole. (Before work begins, Flores Aguilar will ascertain whether the Children's Bureau opportunity still exists.) The group will report to the Council in July.

- Lisa Cleri Reale announced that the Executive Committee is planning a one-day retreat to work through certain governance questions posed as part of the strategic plan. Staff will send advance notice of the date to all Children's Planning Council and Strengthening Community Capacity Committee members, and ask them to submit thoughts and recommendations.

### **Nominating Committee Report: Rabbi Bernard Cohen and Lisa Cleri Reale**

Rabbi Cohen began by thanking members of the Nominating Committee for their stellar job:

- Bettye Anderson
- Rabbi Bernard Cohen
- Miriam Long
- José Ramos, Jr.
- Lisa Cleri Reale
- Bruce Saltzer
- Anita Vigil
- Yolie Flores Aguilar (*ex officio*)

The group met at length and spent nine hours interviewing candidates and making difficult decisions. In addition to identifying a slate, it is also recommending the creation of a two-seat 'member emeritus' category for members who deserve to be retained indefinitely because of their years of accomplishment and devotion. This category will replace the single slot for a member who has made significant contributions to the Council's work.

Lisa Cleri Reale reviewed background information on the committee's choices and introduced those individuals in attendance. **Cleri Reale then moved to accept the Nominating Committee's slate and recommend that the Board of Supervisors appoint (or reappoint) these individuals to serve on the Children's Planning Council:**

- **Parent representatives:** Felicia Lynn Ford  
Mary Helen Vasquez
- **Youth representatives:** Jon Perry Amos  
Daniel Wu
- **African-American community representative:** Clarence Shaw
- **Latino community representative:** Beatriz Olvera Stotzer
- **Business community representative:** David W. Fleming
- **University researcher:** Paul Chung
- **Foster parent/caregiver:** Priscilla Charles-Carter
- **Members emeritus:** Jacquelyn McCroskey  
Sharon G. Watson

Cleri Reale further moved to eliminate the slot designated for a "member who has made significant contributions to the work of the Children's Planning Council," replacing it with a two-slot 'member emeritus' category. Bettye Anderson seconded the two-part motion, and it was unanimously approved.

### **Update on Los Angeles County Reorganization: David Janssen**

An ordinance adopted by the Board of Supervisors two months ago put into the place the beginning of a switch to a strong executive governance model for Los Angeles County.

- It gives a chief executive officer responsibility for the administration of the county.
- It outlines a process for the CEO to hire, fire, and discipline department heads, with the approval of the Board of Supervisors.
- Its non-intrusion policy addresses the changed role of the Board offices with regard to the county's legislative and executive functions.

This coming Tuesday, the Board will hear David Janssen's presentation on implementing the new ordinance structure; if it approves the direction he is proposing, revisions will then be needed to the county charter.

Recent discussions about this change, which has been considered from time to time in the past, began in earnest as the Board prepared for Janssen's retirement by searching (ultimately unsuccessfully) for his replacement as chief administrative officer. "Contrary to popular belief, I'm not responsible for this," Janssen said, "but I certainly didn't hesitate to answer questions about what I thought would work. Although Supervisor Antonovich doesn't support the change, the rest of the Board feels that it's time to separate administration and policy-making."

Janssen began his presentation with a graphic of the county's current organization chart—dozens of agencies and advisory bodies that all, with the exception of a handful of elected officials, report directly to the Board, which must act in its executive capacity only in public, with a majority vote. "When everyone's in charge, no one's in charge," as Janssen put it. Elected officials are chosen for their stands on issues, not for their management experience, while executives are hired for their bureaucratic expertise and their record of success within a political environment. "It's an unnatural relationship," Janssen said, made more complex by California's Brown Act open-meeting law and Los Angeles County's size. Were it a corporation, Janssen said, it would be the 87th largest in the country. "We've done a very good job over the last twelve years in making things work better," he maintained. "Now we'd like to bring an 85 percent [effective] organization up to 95 or 98 percent." Nevertheless, any new design will take years to implement fully and dramatic changes shouldn't be expected right away.

To plan the new structure, four task forces of department heads and Board deputies developed ways to do business more collaboratively. Preserving timely responses to constituent requests was important to Board deputies, particularly in unincorporated areas of the county where the Board of Supervisors essentially functions as a city council. The goals of the new plan are:

- Accountability
- Integrated and customer-focused service planning
- Improved communication
- Increased interdepartmental collaboration
- Continuous process and organizational improvement



all provide services to families, Janssen said, and much discussion occurred about their cluster placement. The CAO's Service Integration Branch, which concentrates on children and families, will provide support to two clusters, children and families' well-being, and health and mental health services.

Janssen reviewed proposed roles and responsibilities for the CEO's office, Board deputies, and department heads, and the roles of the cluster teams in terms of key county processes, noting that everyone has concerns about where they fit in to the new structure. The process for responding to constituent requests was laid out in detail, as were processes for policy planning, development, and review, for budget development and management, and for operations management.

A number of changes will better organize the process of deliberation for the Board of Supervisors. As of July 1, all Board letters for agenda items will appear on CEO letterhead except for those emanating from the sheriff, the district attorney, the fire department, the assessor, or the auditor-controller. In addition, a consent agenda will allow for one approval action on all consent items, and several Board meetings each year would be set aside to discuss policy issues, possibly in locations other than the Hall of Administration.

In the discussion following Janssen's presentation, Bruce Saltzer expressed concerns about responsiveness and accountability, and about a possible bottleneck with all Board letters going through one office. He called for further discussion on the new structure, encouraging Janssen to solicit input from individuals other than deputies and department heads. Chair Burke acknowledged responsiveness as an immediate concern under the county's current organization; even something as simple as getting a new piece of hospital equipment or hiring a new staff person can take an enormously long time. "Changing that has to be the primary goal of this reorganization," she said. "If that doesn't happen, we shouldn't do it." Saltzer agreed, but pointed out differences between formal and informal processes—the theory and reality, as he phrased it—for getting things done. "The system is working now," he said, "even if not perfectly." Janssen accepted that as a legitimate concern, but also remarked, "With fifty people involved in every decision, the blame is beyond comprehension in this county." Especially in unincorporated areas, Jeff Farber sees the community as having dual advocates in Board offices and cluster leaders, yielding potentially better access. "Probably not July first," he said, "but soon."

In answer to questions from Elisa Nicholas about the deputy CEOs, Janssen explained that these individuals would come from inside the organization. "The next six months are going to be challenging," he admitted. "If department heads come from outside Los Angeles County, they probably won't have a problem with this structure. If they're from here, they won't like it."

Marv Southard summed up the separation of powers that is key to the new governance: "Under the current structure," he said, "a whole bunch of people can say 'no,' but only the Board of Supervisors together can say 'yes.' Here it's simplified so we get to 'yes' early, with help to work out any obstacles." Library chief Margaret Donnellan Todd sees the new design as facilitating good policy discussions, which will no longer have to wait until a Board letter appears on the agenda, but can begin in the cluster with the deputy CEO. "We'll get more communication, more discussion, and faster movement," she said.

Bryce Yokomizo—former director of the Department of Public Social Services and now helping with the transition in Janssen's office—is part of the first management group in operation. He cited a situation last year in which \$17 million of net county cost had to be spent in general relief funds because delays in home assessments (required by the Adoptions and Safe Families Act) rendered numerous DCFS cases ineligible for foster-care draw-downs from the state and Federal governments. DCFS director Trish Ploehn made completing the assessments a priority, but needed assistance. "Department heads all have major problems of our own," Yokomizo said. "When someone else has a problem, we're very sympathetic, but we can't help." Since then, however, DPSS has loaned DCFS clerical and other assistance, and the assessments are being completed. "Getting departments to work together is greatly enhanced by a closer sense of communication with a general manager," Yokomizo said. "Because that's such a concern, our responsiveness to constituents should get better."

"Integrating services is the whole issue," Janssen concluded. "It's what I've been working on for ten years. As a practical matter, when department heads are hired and fired by one person instead of five, their attention span is going to increase, and they'll do a much better job in the organization." Phil Williams characterized the morning's discussion as a fascinating self-assessment, and commended Janssen and the Board of Supervisors for their efforts. Janssen's transition report to the Board includes further explanation, and Flores Aguilar will e-mail that to Children's Planning Council members.

#### **Goal 5, Los Angeles County Strategic Plan: Bryce Yokomizo, Chief Administrative Office**

An update on Goal 5 strategies was included in member packets, as were highlights of related accomplishments over the last year. Strategies reflect the five outcome areas of child well-being—the Children's Planning Council's family economic success work appears under economic well-being—and also address the alignment between departments and stakeholders.

Last week, the New Directions Task Force—top management of the major child- and family-serving county agencies—voted to focus its energies on the HST initiative, which stands for Healthy Communities, Strong Families, and Thriving Children. Yokomizo's office will be looking for funding assistance for HST, which crosses all the Goal 5 areas, and will take that recommendation before the Board of Supervisors. A more detailed presentation on HST will be made at the Council's July meeting.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Children's Planning Council is scheduled for:

**Wednesday, July 18, 2007**  
**9:30 a.m.**  
Room 140, Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles

There being no public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.