

Children's Planning Council Meeting

July 19, 2006

9:30 a.m.

Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 140
500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012

Present: Chair Zev Yaroslavsky
Victoria Adams, representing Steve Cooley
Lauraine Barber
Priscilla Charles-Carter
Rabbi Bernard Cohen
Deborah Davies
Duane Dennis
Nancy Diaz, representing Bryce Yokomizo
Amy Enomoto-Perez
Jeff Farber
Dorothy Fleisher
David W. Fleming
Teri Gillam, representing David Sanders
Cynthia Harding, representing Bruce Chernof
Jan Isenberg, representing Darline Robles
Penny Markey, representing Margaret Donnellan Todd
Colleen Mooney
Elisa Nicholas
Michi Okana
Danny Ramos
José Ramos, Jr.
Lisa Cleri Reale
Bruce Saltzer
Marvin J. Southard
Beatriz Olvera Stotzer
Norma Sturgis, representing Roy Romer
Anita Vigil, representing Robert Taylor
Sharon G. Watson
Phillip L. Williams

Staff:	Yolie Flores Aguilar	Noah Smith
	Paula Angeles	Janet Sparks
	Ernesto De Guzman	Laura Valles
	Sofia Moreno	Miesha Watson Council
	Marisol Saens	Chrysta Wilson

Chair Zev Yaroslavsky brought the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m. and asked that Council members and the audience introduce themselves.

Approval of the Minutes of May 17, 2006

David Fleming moved that the minutes of May 17, 2006, be approved as mailed. Phillip L. Williams seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Chair’s Report: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky

- The Board of Supervisors has approved \$250,000 for the Children’s Planning Council’s community-building mini-grants program, plus a provisional set-aside for an additional \$250,000, also for mini-grants. These allocations are intended to support the parent, resident, and youth networks engaged in neighborhood change efforts throughout Los Angeles County. Chair Yaroslavsky thanked the Annie E. Casey Foundation for its initial investment in the mini-grants program, which allowed a test of the idea, and expressed appreciation to the three SPA Councils that piloted the program in their regions: SPA 1, SPA 7, and SPA 8. All councils will now have available “spark money” to mobilize communities on behalf of children and families.
- David Sanders, director of the Department of Children and Family Services, is leaving this month to become the executive vice president of systems improvement for Casey Family Programs in Seattle, a great loss to the County family. “People who don’t believe you can turn an organization around, change its culture, and point it in the right direction,” Yaroslavsky said, “just have to take a look at the last three years at DCFS.” Sanders has been an outstanding director, cutting the number of children in foster care by half, with plans to halve that number yet again. He will have a national impact in his new position—created for him by Casey—and Los Angeles County hopes to continue its relationship with him. “In his absence, I want to acknowledge the incredible work he has done and the legacy he leaves,” Yaroslavsky said. “Our challenge will be to keep the momentum going.”

Presentation and Endorsement of the Children’s Planning Council 2006–2007 Budget

Yolie Flores Aguilar presented the proposed Children’s Planning Council budget for fiscal year 2006–2007, which has been reviewed by the Strengthening Community Capacity Committee and adopted by both the Executive Committee and the Foundation Board, the latter being the non-profit entity having fiduciary responsibility for all fiscal matters related to the Council.

In the current budget, revenues and expenses total slightly over \$5 million, up about \$500,000 from last year because of new efforts such as the mini-grants program and the Community Building Institute. The breakdown of revenues and expenses is:

<u>Revenue sources</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Private sector	16%	Community planning and engagement	61.7%
Public sector (including First 5 LA)	83%	Data partnership	7.8%
Other	2%	Policy	4.9%
		Communication	3.8%
		General operations	21.8%

In addition to fundraising efforts connected to the Council's fifteenth anniversary, the Foundation Board will convene next week to discuss increasing private sector funds. Flores Aguilar will e-mail information on that meeting to anyone who is interested.

David Fleming moved that the proposed 2006–2007 budget be endorsed; Phillip Williams seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Family Economic Success Draft Framework: Beatriz Olvera Stotzer for Lari Sheehan

The draft framework for family economic success was developed by a public/private/community stakeholder group with expertise in many fields, convened by the Children's Planning Council and the Chief Administrative Office. Using the self-sufficiency standard created by the National Economic Development and Law Center in Oakland, the group studied what it takes for a family to succeed economically, with opportunities to plan for the future. In Los Angeles County, a family of four needs a yearly income of between \$60,000 and \$65,000 for simply the basics—food, shelter, transportation, child care, and so on—with no savings or resources put aside for emergencies. Approximately 950,000 families in the County have incomes below this level, which is approximately 300 percent of the Federal poverty level.

How can the county and other institutions address the concept of creating assets for these families? What can families do to access services to help them grow? Although the task force will develop recommendations for the Board of Supervisors, it is well aware that any plan will require partnerships beyond county government with many other sectors, individuals, and institutions. To ensure that what is being planned for families is driven by the families themselves, an extensive community engagement effort will take place through the end of 2006, though which residents will be asked if the framework strategies are the correct ones, and if others should be contemplated.

Colleen Money reviewed the first area of the framework strategies, which focuses on integrating the assets needed to train workers for living-wage jobs, on facilitating higher education, and on assessing the impact on neighborhoods and communities of the large segment of undocumented workers in Los Angeles County who often work for substandard wages and no benefits.

Workforce/economic development

- **Foster local leadership** for effective workforce and economic development by challenging leaders to create partnerships and cooperative models that can be replicated in different communities.
- **Develop effective access to multiple pathways toward all post-secondary educational options** by creating an inventory, advertising models, and outreach and community organizing strategies that can be replicated in different communities.
- **Recognize and understand the needs of the underground economy** by researching its scope and impact on the workforce, sharing those findings, and making appropriate recommendations to policy-makers.

Jeff Farber reviewed the second area of strategy, focusing on boosting families over the basic-income threshold and preventing them from being bilked by unscrupulous cash-lending schemes.

Asset building and asset leveraging

- **Promote responsible lending.**
 - ✓ Ensure that Los Angeles County and other government entities deposit their money only in, and do business only with, banks that have fair lending practices.
 - ✓ Ensure that Los Angeles County includes in its contracting process a listing of financial institutions that exemplify responsible lending practices.
 - ✓ Ensure that Los Angeles County develops a public awareness campaign to call attention to banks and lenders that engage in responsible lending, as well as to practices that are not in consumers' best financial interests.
 - ✓ Encourage cities throughout Los Angeles County to enact moratoriums on the opening of new payday lender stores.
- **Establish a Center for Family Economic Success** (created by Los Angeles County and other organizations) to educate and coordinate community-based organizations and public institutions around financial asset-building to help increase capacity, develop and leverage resources, and develop unified policies.
- **Test the effectiveness of the Oakland Family Independence Initiative.**
 - ✓ Provide cash to families to pursue their own strategies for family economic success.
 - ✓ Provide facilitators to support families in implementing those strategies.
 - ✓ Provide a space for peer-to-peer support among and between families to enhance their ability to succeed in implementing their own strategies.

Farber continued by reviewing the third family economic success strategy.

Access to public benefits

- **Provide stable funding and a permanent home for the EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) campaign partnership** by engaging key partners to make a long-term financial commitment to the campaign and secure it a permanent home.
- **Promote the effective utilization of public benefits** by providing public benefit applications online (through the second phase of LACountyHelps) and by training community- and faith-based organizations on the applications' requirements so they may assist consumers in completing them.
- **Promote, enforce, and advocate for the effective utilization of business tax credits** by partnering with the county's Small Business Commission on policies regarding public benefit programs for which businesses are eligible.

The community engagement process around this initiative will be facilitated by the SPA/AIC Councils and their partners, and Flores Aguilar announced that Phil Ansell from the Department

of Public Social Services has offered that department's mailing list of TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) and Medi-Cal recipients for a written survey. Tentative plans are being made for a family economic success conference sometime this fall. The task force will reconvene in January 2007 and a final draft plan will be presented for approval to the Children's Planning Council in March and submitted to the Board of Supervisors in April.

Rethinking how the various city and county Workforce Investment Boards use their money—right now most goes to job centers and very little to training and job development—and encouraging partnerships between them is one area Flores Aguilar is working on. United Way's strategic plan has elements that also fit in well with the framework, and Lisa Cleri Reale said that its staff were very impressed with the task force's work. The United Way board this morning approved a community investment plan, a portion of which partners with the Children's Planning Council on the EITC campaign.

Marv Southard liked the framework's focus on public benefits, but cautioned that although some programs are relatively easy to sign up for, others are more difficult, and a poorly prepared application can delay the reception of benefits. He encouraged making the 'easier' applications available online first, distinguishing them from those for which people should seek assistance. Many stakeholders spoke to that issue during the task force meetings, Flores Aguilar said, and training will be provided to community-based organizations and other partners helping with that aspect.

David Fleming commented on the family economic success plan's being the first real nexus between the Children's Planning Council and the business community. "The best thing to be created in the private sector," he said, "is a job." Job creation, however, requires a friendly business climate, which high taxes, numerous regulations, and abundant red tape in the Los Angeles area often sour. The Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation tries to keep jobs here and attract new businesses, but many major businesses refuse to expand here because of the business climate, instead sending jobs out of state. Forty-three percent of the goods that come into the United States by water arrive through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, Fleming said, and must leave through Southern California to reach their destinations. Building the Alameda Corridor east and expanding transportation in other ways would create 1 million new logistical jobs, which pay higher than manufacturing positions and require no college education. The Metropolitan Transit Authority board, upon which both Fleming and Chair Yaroslavsky sit, is currently fighting to get that accomplished, and attendees can help by getting the word out, especially to elected officials. As Fleming put it, "Everyone benefits by job creation."

Dorothy Fleisher noted that much of the Children's Planning Council's work is with residents of local communities who may never have heard of the Alameda Corridor. How can "regular folks" become connected with large civic opportunities like this? Flores Aguilar mentioned that Colleen Mooney and the SPA 8 Council are working with Conoco/Phillips in Wilmington, a model to be replicated with other businesses. Predatory lending practices, Beatriz Olvera Stotzer added, also affect small businesses in many ways—preventing expansion and job creation, for example, if one missed credit-card payment means being charged 28 or 30 percent interest on money that owners must borrow to stock inventory.

Flores Aguilar said that David Fleming and Phillip Williams (who represents the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce) would be invited to convene a meeting soon to discuss their facilitation of engagement and partnerships in the business community. Chair Yaroslavsky thanked the task force for its report, encouraging everyone to work together on this issue.

Community Building Institute

Laura Valles explained the underlying principles of the Community Building Institute (CBI), a plan almost two years in the making. The CBI is a targeted effort by the Children's Planning Council to provide training and technical assistance to enhance the community-building skills of parents, youth, institutions, and Council staff and volunteers, mobilizing them to improve children's lives.

- The Council's focus on strengthening the capacity of communities to act on their own behalf also means building the capacity of the SPA/AIC Councils, something not possible without County government's \$1 million investment in the CBI.
- The CBI plan has been informed by parents, youth, and other residents in the community, and by SPA/AIC Council staff and departmental representatives to the councils, all of whom have communicated the training they would like available.
- The plan is ambitious by design, and the Council is thinking "broadly and boldly," Valles said, in terms of the training and support to offer. It will not duplicate the efforts of other initiatives, but will lead others into become a part of the institute.
- A concerted effort has been made to include an evaluation piece, since feedback on the CBI's effectiveness is vital.

Within the plan, community-building efforts are aimed at improving the physical, economic, and social conditions of communities by using the principles of asset-based community development and a three-pronged strategy of community engagement, community organizing, and shared decision-making. Approaches include community and civic participation, capacity-building, neighborhood governance, collaboration, asset-mapping, strengthening relationships, and addressing issues related to race, class, and other forms of diversity.

The CBI will provide training, research, and technical assistance in a three-level progressive training program with four tracks—for parents and youth, institutional partners, council staff, and a special curriculum for Latino parents of children birth to age five. Objectives are to:

- Strengthen community-building and -engagement skills to improve the five outcomes of child well-being
- Build the capacity of institutions to partner with community
- Facilitate the empowerment of residents to act on their own behalf
- Create a climate that encourages community-building as an approach for planning, advocacy, direct action, service delivery, and the implementation of community change efforts

As an example, the curriculum for parents and youth will include self- and family empowerment, navigating systems, leadership skills development, asset-mapping, community action research,

communication strategies, and meeting facilitation. (Community action research—research done by communities to promote action by communities—will collect and analyze organic data that is not necessarily captured by the Children's ScoreCard. "The communities are the experts," Valles said. "They know what needs to be collected.") Children's Planning Council staff will participate in similar training modules, including those on public speaking and basic organizational skills. The departmental representatives' curriculum will be developed with the County's Department of Human Resources and the leadership academy. Latino parents were chosen for a special curriculum, funded by Wellspring. Opportunities for curricula for other ethnic groups will be pursued through the BP partnership with the Asian Pacific Legal Center (which is training Asian/Pacific Islander parents), the Urban League (African-American parents), and MALDEF, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

Following a development stage in July, August, and September, the CBI will pilot its curricula from September through December, launching the full-fledged institute in January 2007.

The CBI is a huge commitment for the Children's Planning Council, Lisa Cleri Reale said—is the budget allocation sufficient? The current allocation is seed money, Valles answered, acknowledging that a six-person staff will be necessary, including an associate manager, a coordinator, two trainers, a data analyst, and a program assistant. The key will be building partnerships and leveraging resources that already exist. Valles recently learned, for example, of a curriculum developed by Clinica Oscar Romero in the Pico/Union district for advocacy and organizing. Sam Chan suggested connecting with the Department of Mental Health's ICARE (Infancy, Childhood and Relationship Enrichment) network of 200 providers of early education and intervention services, and with DCFS's prevention efforts. The Interagency Operations Group would also be interested in working with departmental representatives to see what training would be appropriate. Valles encouraged anyone knowing of a possible curriculum to contact her.

Children's Planning Council Strategic Plan: Samuel Q. Chan

Presentations on the Council's draft strategic plan have been made over the last two months to the SPA/AIC Councils and other stakeholders, and much valuable feedback has been obtained. Prior to the Council's September meeting, the plan and its narrative will be revised and finalized; if members reach a consensus at that time, it will be presented for approval then. Otherwise, further revisions will occur and approval will be sought in November.

Today's conversation builds on the discussions at May's meeting, consultant John Ott said, and is a chance to consider the implications of the plan, both for individuals and for institutions. Some concrete examples of the plan in action were presented for all three areas of focus.

- **Pursuing bold policies to improve children's lives.** The family economic success plan is the 'poster child' for this effort, since poverty is at the root of many challenges children and families face with jobs, housing, health care, schools, and so on. Jeff Farber characterized the plan as a collaboration across the system of SPA/AIC Councils, with policies springing up from neighborhoods and partnerships being established with institutions, improving the quality of life for all.

- **Mobilizing empowered communities for children and youth.** Colleen Mooney showed excerpts from a DVD made for a SPA 8 conference that focused on resident power and its implications for the community. The clips demonstrated neighborhood-based projects—area clean-ups and other activities—that parents and youth involved in SPA 8's 23 neighborhood action councils had chosen to do. "This is not issues-based community organizing," Mooney explained, "but relationship-based community building. This is investing time in neighborhoods, sitting down with people, asking them 'What issues do you care about enough to work on?'" Because of the neighborhood-based experience of one of the SPA 8 Council's original conveners, Lauraine Barber, the council always had a resident focus, but also had to ensure that institutional stakeholders supported its work. Fortuitously, the formation of the council coincided with DCFS's family support RFP, which provided money for capacity-building—and not for just the lead agency, but for all the institutional partners involved, which in SPA 8 now number 65. (The South Bay Center for Counseling, Mooney's agency, is the family support lead agency.) "The family support journey with the SPA 8 council forced us to rethink our commitment to the goals we share," Mooney said. "We were all service delivery types, but services are only one small part of community-building. It has been inspiring to watch the key players in the SPA Council step back as the neighborhood folks have become empowered and joined the steering committee and the council as equal partners." The expectation now exists that institutional partners will support the work of all the SPA/AIC Councils, embedding council staff in partner agencies for office space and other services, participating in conferences and community events, and investing in "the work that belongs to all of us," as Mooney phrased it.
- **Promoting responsive family-strengthening institutions.** Ott showed more video of school-related projects in SPA 8, and José Ramos spoke of a SPA 4 group in the East Hollywood area, Communities in Action, that has established ties with a local school and nonprofit agency and wanted to expand its linkages into the political arena. By building relationships with Los Angeles City Councilmember Eric Garcetti and his staff, the group was able to obtain a \$10,000 city grant to create a pocket park in an area with a dearth of green spaces. To match those funds, volunteers will provide leadership and services once the park is established. More and more, Ramos said, SPA 4 Council members are valuing the skills and knowledge of community families, and they are coming together as equals to share power.

Ott asked meeting attendees to break into small groups to discuss these questions:

- After these presentations, what do I better understand about the strategic plan?
- What implications do I think this plan will have for me and my role in the Children's Planning Council?
- What implications do I think this plan will have (or should have) for my partner institution or stakeholder group?

Following the discussion, Ott again stressed the fact that today's exchange was the "whetting of the appetite" regarding the strategic plan conversation, which will continue individually and in small groups for the rest of the summer, with most of September's meeting being devoted to it.

Participants better understood that:

- The structure of the Children's Planning Council may need to change.
- This is not a static document, but an unfolding one.
- "We're not reinventing the wheel, but putting cars on wheels that are already rolling."
- The three areas of focus are distinct in themselves, but are still related and integrated.
- The community at large must be educated on the nexus between community-building and institutions.

Some implications for individuals and their roles were that:

- "We must help clarify how we define 'impact' and whether we are truly *having* an impact."
- Staff must be more involved in identifying partners, sharing information with communities on resources for technical assistance, mobilizing the community, encouraging a culture shift within organizations so agencies view communities as equal partners, and doing GIS mapping of areas that are in poverty, for instance, or in need of specific services.
- Information dissemination is key.
- This is about more than every-other-month meeting dynamics.

Some implications for the represented institutions were that:

- Representatives must engage their constituent bodies in the same way they are being engaged by the Council. Between now and September, conversations must begin "back home."
- Representatives must share the plan and seek buy-in from their executives and boards of directors so that agencies can align their workplans to emphasize the efforts taking place here. (As an example, Lisa Cleri Reale reports to the United Way board after every Children's Planning Council meeting. That board saw the synergy between its own workplace giving efforts and the Council's advocacy with the business community, resulting in a partnership around the EITC campaign.) These cannot be just one-time reports, but must be an ongoing invitation for engagement.
- The culture within grant-making institutions must undergo a fundamental shift, so their framework begins to support responsive family-strengthening institutions and community-building work.
- Conversely, community development must tie in to philanthropy, aligning funders around initiatives and collectively pooling funds (mini-grants, for instance)—work that is already underway with Southern California Grantmakers.
- For nonprofits that are historically service providers, an opportunity exists for the Community Building Institute to embed the plan's principles into the organization through training that involves staff and consumers at the same time, changing the culture from the ground up instead of through top-down mandates.

Ott thanked everyone for their participation in the discussion. Children's Planning Council staff will be contacting members about strategic plan presentations during the balance of the summer.

Announcements

- The Council's strategic planning committee e-mailed members a memorandum regarding recommendations for a policy agenda, and Flores Aguilar distributed a slightly revised memo that will be discussed at the September meeting. This will be further discussed at the September 20th CPC meeting.
- The Council's fifteen-year anniversary celebration event will be held on October 19 (the preferred date) or October 26 (when there is a conflict with the Nexus conference). Members were asked to hold both dates for the time being, pending confirmation with Chair Yaroslavsky's office on his availability.
- Invitations were solicited for the Leading Boldly Awards, which will be conferred at the anniversary celebration on 15 individuals who have "broken the mold and gone above and beyond the call of duty to lead boldly in the face of adversity to improve the lives of kids, families, and their communities." Nomination forms were included in member packets, and members were encouraged to distribute them widely. Additional forms are available from the Council office. Nominations must be submitted by August 30 to Chrysta Wilson at the Council office, or via e-mail to cwilson@laccpc.org.

Next Meeting

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

Wednesday, September 20, 2006
9:30 a.m.

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