



Education Coordinating Council

February 27, 2019

9:00 a.m.

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

Present:

Mónica Garcia, Chair
Judge Akemi Arakaki, representing Judge Victor Greenberg
Jesus Corral, representing Terri McDonald
Jose Gonzalez, representing Arturo Valdez
Leslie Heimov
Judge Michael Nash, Office of Child Protection
Anabel Rodriguez, representing Jonathan Sherin
Fabricio Segovia
Dr. Charles Sophy, representing Bobby Cagle
Rachelle Touzard, representing Debra Duardo
Alex Wilensky, representing Bruce Saltzer

**Speakers and
Guests:**

Kalene Gilbert, Department of Mental Health
Denise Grande, Los Angeles County Arts Commission
Dr. Yasangi Jayasinha, Department of Public Health
Carolyn Kaneko, Department of Mental Health
Megan Kirkpatrick, Los Angeles County Arts Commission
Beth Morrow, OCP Consultant
Sai Pratap, LANES

Monica Banken, Fifth Supervisorial District
Mark Baucum, Fourth Supervisorial District
Danette McBride, Second Supervisorial District
Elise Weinberg, First Supervisorial District

Chair Mónica Garcia brought the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., welcomed everyone, and thanked the Department of Mental Health for sponsoring today's meeting costs. She explained that ECC co-chair Judge Michael Levanas is no longer with the Juvenile Court and Judge Victor Greenberg has taken his place as presiding judge and ECC co-chair. Though Judge Greenberg could not attend today, Garcia said he will speak at the next meeting about his goals for working with the ECC. Judge Akemi Arakaki, supervising judge of the Juvenile Court, attended today in his place and was welcomed by Office of Child Protection Executive Director Judge Michael Nash.

Additionally, Chair Garcia introduced two new members—Anabel Rodriguez, representing Department of Mental Health director Dr. Jonathan Sherin, and Dr. Charles Sophy, representing Department of Children and Family Services director Bobby Cagle—and then asked ECC members, meeting speakers, and audience members to introduce themselves.

Accomplishments

As ECC members know, the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires school agencies to collaborate with their child welfare partners to ensure school stability and success for foster youth. In 2017, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) together agreed to a pilot program to ensure that youth received transportation to their schools of origin—if that was in their best interests—when they were originally detained by DCFS or subsequently changed placements.

To date, the transportation pilot has given over 700 youth more than 33,000 rides, and DCFS has made an additional \$1.5 million available to extend the pilot through June 2019. A long-term ESSA transportation plan is under negotiation that will serve as a template for all school districts within Los Angeles County.

LANES/Child Welfare Public Health Nurse Initiative

From its inception, the ECC has wanted robust and accurate Health and Education Passports (HEPs), containing a variety of crucial information, for all foster children. Great strides have been made on the education data-sharing side, and the LANES/Child Welfare Public Health Nurse Initiative offers a chance to make vast improvements to the accuracy and completeness of health information contained in HEPs.

The Los Angeles Network for Enhanced Services (LANES) is a community-based Health Information Exchange (HIE) for hospitals, clinics, independent physicians' associations, and health plans that administer care to Los Angeles County residents. LANES securely and cost-effectively exchanges electronic health records among public and private health-care providers, making information available when and where it is needed for patient care and coordination. LANES program director Sai Pratap reviewed the organization's background, vision, and mission, its purpose, the types of information shared through its system, and a list of participants that have already gone 'live' with LANES or are preparing to do so.

The LANES partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's Child Welfare Public Health Nurse (CWPHN) program unit is designed to ensure that child-welfare teams have access to timely, accurate, and complete health information, thus improving outcomes for children and youth in foster care.

Right now in the CWPHN unit, its director Dr. Yasangi Jayasinha explained, tracking down patient records piecemeal via phone requests, follow-up calls, and faxed hard copies currently takes up an estimated 75 percent of PHNs' time, leaving little opportunity for actual nursing duties. Inevitably, these inefficiencies lead to gaps in knowledge that can threaten a child's health—new caregivers not being told about a peanut allergy, for instance, or duplicated immunizations.

“For kids in the child-welfare system who no longer have parents involved,” Jayasinha went on, “our PHNs assume the role of care coordinator. As an example, for adolescents taking psychotropic medications, we confirm and keep current the court authorizations for those meds and monitor how the young people are doing. If someone reports a problem with side effects, say, or has stopped taking the meds, our PHNs step in to pinpoint when the youth last saw the prescribing physician and what drugs were ordered, then bring the youth back to the provider and

facilitate their interaction. Every single patient will be positively affected by our ability to access health-care information in a timely fashion.”

Using LANES, PHNs can comprehensively prepare for provider visits by reviewing a patient’s complete records and highlighting any new issues. (The system also sends automated notices when a child sees any linked medical provider or goes to an emergency room.) Afterward, PHNs electronically update DCFS’s case-management system, CWS/CMS, with information about the visit that is then available to the child’s social worker. At the same time, CWS/CMS populates the youth’s individual Health and Education Passport with the new information.

Once the formal agreement with LANES is signed, consultant Beth Morrow said, project teams from different county partners and subject-specific working groups will consult with the PHNs to determine an ideal workflow, and DPH will revise its written policies and procedures to reflect the system’s addition. Implementation will be piloted with a small team to iron out any kinks, and a comprehensive training will be developed to ensure that PHNs know the system’s rules and how to use it. Once PHNs are credentialed, they will be issued their log-in information, possibly as early as this summer.

In answer to concerns about confidentiality, Morrow emphasized that LANES shares the same information that PHNs are getting now by phone and fax, just in the more efficient electronic format. “This doesn’t change the law,” she said. “It doesn’t change who’s allowed to see what and why.” HIPAA standards remain in force. Absent any involvement with the child-welfare system, parents make medical decisions for their minor children, including signing consent forms. Once a child is detained by DCFS, court orders allow social workers or others to authorize medical treatment. When PHNs log in to LANES, they must attest to having the legal authority to do so; all professional expectations that now govern PHN activities also apply with LANES. (In addition, Pratap said, LANES is an opt-out model; if a patient or parent/guardian opts out of sharing patient information, those records aren’t in the system.)

Under California law, system and non-system youth alike may keep services surrounding sexual and reproductive health completely confidential between themselves and a provider, choosing not to have that information shared with parents, social workers, or the court. Conversations about these ‘sensitive subjects’ with teens have been the responsibility of providers since these laws were enacted, and trainings specific to providers for foster youth were recommended.

Dr. Charles Sophy, DCFS Medical Director, expressed appreciation to the Office of Child Protection for spearheading the LANES effort. “This will make a huge change for us,” he said. “Timely, accurate information can change the course of treatment for our kids and prevent duplicative services. It will streamline many efforts.”

School-Based Healing-Informed Arts Education

The Los Angeles County Arts Commission began embedding the arts into juvenile-justice reform efforts in 2014, serving six probation camps by 2015 and now offering arts programming in camps, juvenile halls, county parks, continuation schools, and juvenile day reporting centers.

Starting a year ago, the ECC and the Arts Commission have been partnering with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to use the arts as a strategy for fostering ‘communities of wellness’ within public schools. The model builds the capacity of school personnel and their community partners to provide healing-informed, integrated arts instruction representing multiple arts

disciplines including dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and creative writing. The project will establish school cultures grounded in the practices of healing-informed care by providing arts-based student instruction, professional development, and community-building activities. This work constitutes a systems-change effort in which healing-informed school campuses serve as models within their school districts.

This spring, partners expect to identify three to five high schools with high populations of foster, probation, and possibly homeless youth, and begin planning and initial training with school staff as well as building bridges to involve local community artists. “Implementation should start in the fall,” said Denise Grande, director of arts education for the Commission, “with artists on-site twice a week and monthly trainings for teachers and other staff. Our goal by this time next year is to expand into those high schools’ feeder middle schools, so we’re looking for partners at the school-district level.”

Both ECC members and many in the audience spoke up with suggestions of schools and school districts to contact, and Grande asked that they—and school districts not in attendance today, as well—reach out to Commission staff:

Denise Grande dgrande@arts.lacounty.gov
Megan Kirkpatrick mkirkpatrick@arts.lacounty.gov

Chair Garcia recommended that the project spell out exactly what is needed from prospective partners (enrollment percentages of at-risk or system youth, for instance, and/or feeder-school structures), and continue to recognize how important adult learning is for system learning.

The project will also hire an external evaluator who will inform the process and advise as to the appropriate data to collect and analyze.

Member Updates

- The Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) is working with DMH and the University of California Los Angeles to bring in-depth trauma-informed training to staff of all 81 school districts located within Los Angeles County, Rachelle Touzard reported. “LACOE leadership is committed to seeing this through,” she said, “and is assessing current resources, gaps, and readiness for all districts to become trauma informed.”
- LACOE has partnered with DCFS and Probation to participate in the *California Foster Youth FAFSA® Challenge* (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to increase system youths’ access to financial aid for college. “We had hoped that foster students would match the statewide average of 60 percent completed applications in the general population,” Touzard noted, “but we’re now at 40 percent and the deadline is this Saturday, March 2. There are still plenty of cracks in this process, along with structural barriers.”
- LACOE’s third annual *Piecing It Together* symposium for students in foster care or experiencing homelessness—and those who support them—will take place on Thursday, May 23, 2019, at Almansor Court in Alhambra. For more information, contact Grace Gonzalez at Gonzalez_Grace@lacoedu.
- Jose Gonzalez reported that LACOE’s Community Schools Initiative—whose end goal is to create sustainable and predictable systems to access supports as student needs arise—is

commencing with 10 pilot districts. “We want to facilitate providing services to kids during the school day and enrichment activities after school, plus parent engagement,” Gonzalez said. “We hope everything will be in place by July 1.”

- Jesus Corral updated the information he shared in October 2018 on Probation’s Residential Center College Program, through which 140 youth in probation camps and juvenile halls enroll in college courses every semester. The program recently celebrated its first A.A. degree, awarded *cum laude* through Mission College, with the student’s having complete all units while in custody. Corral additionally mentioned Probation’s partnership with UPS, which teaches students about logistics and hires them for living-wage jobs. Also announced was the parent/youth summit being held at East Los Angeles College this coming Saturday, where youth taking courses from there tour the campus with their families.
- Chair Garcia explained the so-called ‘impaction proposal’ in effect at California State University Los Angeles. “We’ve increased high-school graduation so much that Cal State L.A. has had to turn away thousand of students who meet the entrance requirements because of lack of space,” she said. “They can be provisionally accepted for the future, provided they complete two years in a program at a community college—what I call the ‘not yet’ program. And yes, they’re supposed to get their second choice of Cal State schools, but many young people in Los Angeles prefer not to leave the area for a variety of reasons.” Leslie Heimov acknowledged the barriers this situation may erect for some students, but reminded attendees that non-minor dependent benefits can follow youth out of Los Angeles County.

Public Comment

- Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas is hosting a reconvening of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection (BRC) on the five-year anniversary of its report, *The Road to Safety for Our Children*, on Wednesday, March 13, from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m., at the Exposition Park Constituent Service and Training Center, 900 Exposition Boulevard, Los Angeles 90007. Danette McBride explained that the event will reconvene BRC members and staff for a retrospective look at their report, its recommendations—one of which was the creation of the Office of Child Protection—and whether those recommendations have led to the envisioned improvements over the last five years.
- OCP Assistant Executive Director Carrie Miller noted the retirement of Probation’s Dave Mitchell next month, praising him as a passionate and committed advocate for probation youth during his many years as a member of and working with the ECC. Chair Garcia echoed Miller’s congratulations, saying that Mitchell has contributed to “a different reality for kids.”

Next Meeting

The Education Coordinating Council’s next meeting is scheduled for:

Wednesday, April 24, 2019
9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Room 743, Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Adjournment

There being no further public comment, Chair Garcia adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.