

Education Coordinating Council April 25, 2018

9:30 a.m.

Room 739, Hahn Hall of Administration 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Present: Mónica Garcia, Chair

Helen Berberian, representing Bobby Cagle

Maria Brenes Sylvie de Toledo Leslie Heimov

Judge Michael Levanas

Kalene Gilbert, representing Jonathan Sherin Sheila Mitchell, representing Terri McDonald

Fabricio Segovia

Erika Torres, representing Vivian Ekchian Rachelle Touzard, representing Debra Duardo

Staff, Speakers, and Guests:

Judge Michael Nash Stefanie Gluckman Barbara Spyrou Mandi Enders Erica Ontiveros

Katie Fallon Kenyon, early care and education consultant

Denise Grande, Director of Arts Education, Los Angeles County Arts

Commission

Jacquelyn McCroskey, professor, USC School of Social Work

Carrie Miller, Assistant Executive Director, Office of Child Protection Terry Ogawa, Chair, Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development

Cheryl Wold, Portrait of Los Angeles County consultant

Danette McBride, Second Supervisorial District Mark Baucum, Fourth Supervisorial District George Lee, Los Angeles Superior Court

Chair Mónica Garcia brought the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m., welcomed everyone, and thanked the Probation Department for sponsoring today's meeting costs. She then asked ECC members, meeting speakers, and audience members to introduce themselves.

Accomplishments

• Judge Michael Levanas, Presiding Judge of the Los Angeles County Juvenile Court, announced that the court has accepted the challenge presented at the ECC's last meeting to open up the judicial electronic case-management system to display all education data on foster youth offered by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and others. "Our tech people are working with everyone," he said, "and we foresee no roadblocks. We may ask for assistance, however, in educating judicial officers on how to mine the tremendous amount of data available for the information most likely to be used in court. We'll rely on the ECC for training guidance."

If education data is visible to bench officers, attorneys for all parties will need access as well, and the court's technology unit is making those arrangements.

 Also following discussions at the ECC's January meeting, LACOE and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to share education data residing in DCFS's Student Information Tracking System (SITS) and LACOE's Education Passport System (EPS).

Prevention Through Early Care and Education

Early care and education services have been shown to significantly decrease instances of child maltreatment, Stefanie Gluckman began, as well as to enhance parents' protective factors. Over the last 15 years, the Los Angeles County Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education, along with the Child Care Planning Committee and the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development, have been aligning County services with the early childhood education and child development programs that are supported by federal, state, local, and philanthropic resources. Their goal is not to create a new system, but to strategically connect effective programs into a countywide network dedicated to strengthening families, enhancing child development, and preventing child maltreatment.

The ECC last discussed early care and education (ECE) a year and a half ago, "and we've come a long way since then," Gluckman said. She encouraged attendees to follow today's presentations by sharing thoughts about moving forward.

• Paving the Road to Safety for Our Children—A Prevention Plan for Los Angeles County

The development of the Office of Child Protection's prevention plan, explained Carrie Miller, Assistant Executive Director of the OCP, was a time-intensive, collaborative, and exciting process involving a workgroup of 30 members—representatives from First 5 LA, County departments, advocates, community groups, and service providers—along with vetting by many other stakeholders. The plan lays out seven strategies for keeping children out of the child welfare system:

- 'Networking the networks' by building on the numerous prevention and aftercare (P&A) agencies supporting children and families throughout the county and connecting them with other networks to strengthen the safety net
- Expanding these agencies' capacity to serve more families through increased Prevention and Early Intervention investments (Mental Health Services Act dollars) that will triple the P&A networks' budgets starting July 1

- Ensuring that every mother giving birth in Los Angeles County has access to home visitation services
- Convening the Early Care and Education Workgroup, to be described later in the presentation
- Measuring prevention efforts in a meaningful way through the Data Workgroup
- Following up on the *Portrait of Los Angeles County* report, to be described next
- Obtaining specific commitments toward prevention from 11 County departments and tracking their progress

• Portrait of Los Angeles County

Consultant Cheryl Wold presented details from the *Portrait of Los Angeles County*, a report developed by Measure of America and supported by 16 local organizations, including 14 private funders, Southern California Grantmakers, and the County of Los Angeles. It is available online at http://www.measureofamerica.org/los-angeles-county/.

Using data from the American Community Survey initiative of the U.S. Census, plus life expectancy estimates calculated from Department of Public Health data, the *Portrait* measures community well-being via the Human Development Index (HDI), which includes three dimensions:

- A long, healthy life measured by life expectancy at birth
- Access to knowledge, measured by educational degree attainment (among people age 25 or older) or school enrollment (among people ages 3 through age 24)
- A decent standard of living, measured by median individual earnings (for people age 16 years and older) based on wages from a job, excluding other sources of income

From these indicators, an overall HDI score from 1 to 10 provides a standardized measure for ranking, comparing, and visualizing well-being by race/ethnicity, by gender, and for 106 places within the county.

The HDI score for Los Angeles County overall (5.4) is just slightly higher than that for the U.S. as a whole (5.2). However, HDI scores vary widely across communities, ranging from a high of 9.4 in San Marino to a low of 2.44 in Florence-Graham. The report also shows wide gaps in HDI scores among major racial ethnic groups, with Asians and Whites faring best (at about 7.4 and just under 7) and Native Americans, blacks, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI), and Latino groups faring worse, with scores from 4.6 down to 4.3, respectively.

One in five Los Angeles County residents live in communities with relatively high HDI scores—meaning long life expectancy, high educational indices, and median incomes well above that of the county overall. Another 30 percent live in communities with HDI scores between 5 and 7—generally doing okay. In these 'main street LA' communities—where about 48 percent of residents have at least a college degree, including those with graduate and professional degrees—two-thirds of three- and four-year-olds are enrolled in preschool,

life expectancy is above the county average, and median individual earnings are just under \$36,000 annually.

However, 51 percent of the county's population lives in communities the report calls 'struggling,' where the HDI is quite low (between 3 and 5), median incomes dip below \$26,000, shrinking proportions of the populace have high school diplomas or college degrees, and a smaller share of children are enrolled in preschool. Thirteen communities with median incomes less than \$20,000 include about six communities—3 percent of the overall county population—that are considered 'precarious,' where the HDI is under 3.

All communities have differences in assets and buffers for adversity. What distinguishes these most vulnerable communities are low educational indices and low earnings, more so than low life expectancy.

The *Portrait* sets out three overall goals and identifies 10 strategies—heavily emphasizing early life experiences—to change the trajectory of these communities, including strengthening protective factors; expanding high-quality child care, ECE, and home visiting; addressing wide gaps in mortality by race/ethnicity; and achieving greater equity in individual earnings. The County is currently identifying where it can work in synergy and perhaps add momentum or resources to strategic efforts to support residents in vulnerable communities.

In the area of **health**, the report calls for increasing life expectancy by an average of six months across the county. Life expectancy rates are heavily influenced on the negative side by premature mortality and disability, and on the positive side by immigration patterns. A key factor is the nearly 12-year gap in life expectancy across the major racial/ethnic groups; with Black residents living an average of five years less than Whites, nine years less than Latinos, and 12 years less than Asians. Native Americans and NHOPI, although smaller in number, also have lower life expectancy rates.

Using the *Portrait* report to focus more attention on the early life-course drivers of these differences, such as infant mortality and trauma, and on strengthening social environments at home and in the community, could close these very real gaps.

In the area of **access to knowledge**, a second goal is to increase educational enrollment and attainment by 10 percent, focusing on areas whose HDI scores are below 5. This translates to enrolling about 10 percent of people ages 3 to 24 into school. In addition, it means 150,000 additional people finishing high school and 125,000 attaining college degrees. (Roughly 153,000 young adults countywide are not in school and not working, for example. Preventing even half those young adults from exiting the educational system would bring the county 75,000 people closer to this second goal.)

Greater access to high-quality ECE, including expanded subsidies for infant/toddler care and targeted preschool enrollment, might not directly affect this goal, but would help close achievement gaps and promote child safety, especially in struggling communities where children live.

In the area of **earnings**, a third goal is to increase median earnings by \$8,000, but with a laser focus on 'struggling' and 'precarious' communities. A report by Chris Benner and Manuel Pastor of the University of Southern California presented strong evidence about the regional

economic benefits of greater income equality, including this important point: Regions with higher income inequality, higher concentrations of poverty, and segregation have slower growth and are less resilient in downturns. Career education and job training opportunities for young people of color are vital for the county's economic growth, and can be a path to higher earnings and self-reliance for those working in the service and other low-wage sectors.

The *Portrait* found a sizable gender gap in earnings across all racial/ethnic groups, though greater among Whites (the highest earners). Other than outright discrimination, reasons for gender gaps include part-time work, responsibilities for caregiving/unpaid labor, the 'motherhood penalty,' and employment in different sectors. Greater pay equity and high-quality ECE could make a direct and real impact.

The *Portrait* advisory group, Wold concluded, hopes for a three-year update to the report, as published data go only through 2015. Along with First 5 LA and the Advancement Project, Wold presented the report to the school board of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and received its commitment to open 16 new ECE centers. "We'd love that to be a template for other districts," Wold said, "and we're happy to tailor the data for them." Only 4 percent of LAUSD students live in the high-HDI 'glittering LA' West area, Chair Garcia noted, urging continued attention to the issue of equity in terms of need.

Maria Brenes remarked that the U.S. Census in 2020 will provide critical information for updating the *Portrait*. "There was a big undercount in Los Angeles County in 2010," she said, "and there are concerns about an even greater undercount this time, given the possible addition of the citizenship question and the current administration's hostility toward immigrants." She urged the ECC to keep the census on its radar, emphasizing that inequity in resources often lines up with hard-to-count communities.

• Early Care and Education Workgroup

Terry Ogawa is chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development, which was created by the Board of Supervisors in March 2001 to provide leadership in addressing the longstanding issue of access to affordable high-quality child care. Its 24 commissioners are appointed by the Board and bring expertise in business, economics, child development, education, and more to the table. County departments are also very active in the Roundtable's work, as is LAUSD, and Ogawa is very pleased to partner with the Office of Child Protection in leading the prevention plan's ECE workgroup.

"We recently learned," Ogawa added, "that all three ECE-related offices—the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development, the Child Care Planning Committee, and the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education—will soon move from the Chief Executive Office to the Department of Public Health. This gives us an opportunity to look at child development and early education within a community well-being framework, and we are eager for additional conversations."

The goals of the ECE workgroup are:

- Improved access to child- and family-centered supports and services
- Quality and program continuity
- Smooth connections for children/families to supports that prevent child maltreatment

• Ensuring that educational achievement gaps, socioeconomic mobility, and well-being are thoughtfully addressed

At the county level, what's needed to achieve these goals falls under the broad rubrics of funding, access and affordability, workforce development, family engagement, coordination, and accountability.

Most of the funds flowing to Los Angeles County for ECE come from the California Department of Social Services and the California Department of Education, along with a chunk from the federal government for Head Start and Early Head Start. "From 2008 through 2011, we experienced dramatic cutbacks in funding," Jacquelyn McCroskey said, "and we haven't gotten that back. In addition, no strong overall effort exists in Los Angeles County to understand where our funding comes from or is going to. Although we can get a snapshot of that at any given point, we don't have a good way of tracking it over time to see if we're getting better at managing our dollars or not."

In its research of other jurisdictions, the workgroup found that the City and County of San Francisco began a similar initiative with an independent comprehensive financial analysis of the monies being spent on ECE, how they flow, how their use and distribution might be improved, and how to build quality into the overall plan.

"We know that San Francisco is very different from Los Angeles County," said consultant Katie Fallin Kenyon, First 5 LA's supporting consultant around ECE. "They are one city, one county, one school district, for instance. But we believe that the starting point to redesigning the ECE system here is the same—understanding the financing of the current system."

The ECE workgroup has identified priorities for a comprehensive independent financial analysis, which include:

- Securing funding to support the analysis
- Compiling existing financial analyses, data, and reports
- Hiring early-childhood finance experts to conduct the independent analysis
- Analyzing existing data and reports, gathering further data, and interviewing center-based and family child care providers about revenue and expenses
- Including sections in the report on research, revenue and expense models, child financing profiles, and recommendations

San Francisco has made investments in ECE through local measures for decades, including \$50 million in the early 1990s and a later \$20 million for universal preschool (both of which programs were recently extended for another 25 years). In 2012, the city/county created within its Human Services Agency an Office of Early Care and Education, whose director reports directly to the mayor. It also streamlined multiple local funding programs into one funding agreement, the Early Learning Scholarship, thereby reducing administrative reporting. Service quality is built in to the Scholarship system, with providers required to qualify at least as a Tier 3 in a five-tier quality rating and improvement system. Various high-need categories of children are given enrollment priority, including those in the child welfare system, the homeless, African-Americans, and dual-language learners.

Early Learning Scholarship funds augment other funding streams for which the child and family are eligible, ensuring that providers are paid a wage that enables them to live and to maintain the needed quality of care. The figure on page 8 shows the breakdown of funds for various levels of child/family eligibility.

When asked about critical factors in the success of their ECE model, representatives from San Francisco listed an active and engaged provider community, the mayor's vision for and creation of the Office of Early Care and Education, and, importantly, the initial comprehensive fiscal analysis, whose recommendations included:

- Restructuring the ECE finance system to strategically use local funding
- Simplifying and streamlining reporting and quality assurance (one report for all funders)
- Collecting comprehensive data on the ECE system
- Strengthening that system in terms of intake, technical assistance and training, and other ways to support care providers

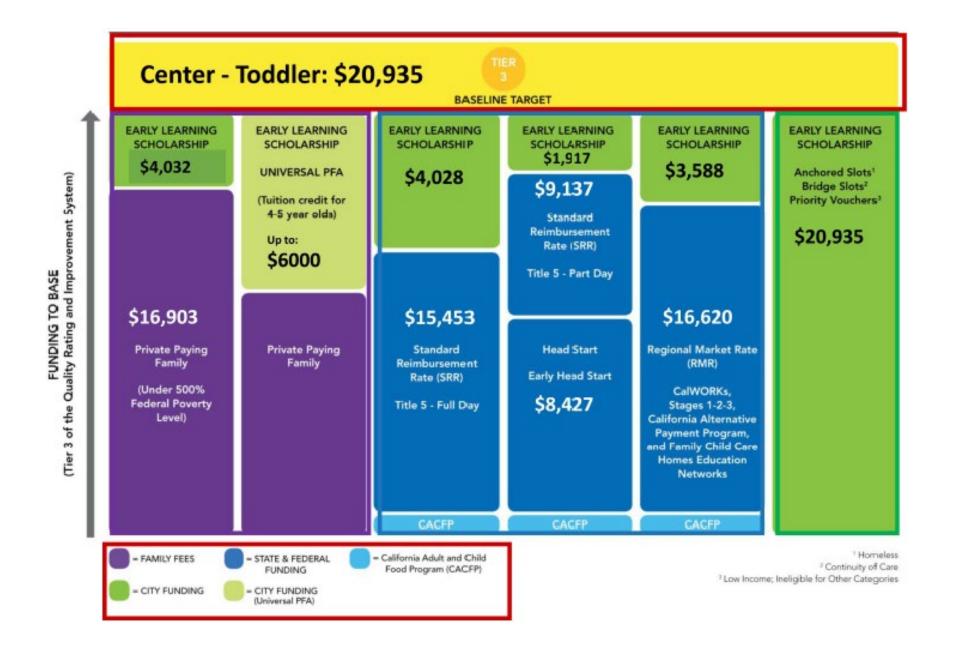
"San Francisco analyzed the number of kids in the city/county who were eligible for each funding stream," Jacquelyn McCroskey added, "and we would need to do the same. Even given that not every parent would want to enroll their children, we'd need to figure out if we're capable of meeting the need, and how the supply of slots is distributed in relation to where the need is. Embedding quality in the actual funding, too, would be a huge step forward for us."

Emergency Child Care Bridge Program

In the decade between 2002 and 2012, DCFS lost approximately half of its home-based out-of-home care capacity (foster or resource families), decreasing from a high of over 8,400 beds to a low of 3,800. Reasons for that drop vary, said Helen Berberian, but one of the top three barriers to placing very young children in home-based care continues to be the limited access most working resource families have to subsidized child care—especially after 2008 saw state-funded child care programs cut by one-third, ground that has never been regained.

"In 2014," Berberian went on, "Supervisor Sheila Kuehl convened a meeting to address what was being termed a 'foster care crisis.' Three legislative attempts later, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children was signed into law in 2017." The Board of Supervisors subsequently approved DCFS' recommendations to contract with the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles to administer the bridge program, which consists of three elements:

- Specially recruited emergency child care providers
- Emergency child care provider training to care for traumatized children
- Systems navigation services for making permanent child care arrangements



Subcontracts are being drawn up with agencies throughout the county, and 15 systems navigators are being recruited to support the countywide launch of the bridge program planned for the end of May.

"This bridge program is separate from the subsidized child care program DCFS already administers," Berberian said, "which requires several weeks for eligibility determination and service linkages—delays that are detrimental to the timely placements of young children in the homes of working resource parents. 'I'd love to take the child,' we often hear, 'but I have to go to work tomorrow."

To enhance safety, permanency, well-being, and placement stability, the bridge program enables the provision of time-limited emergency child care vouchers for working resource families who request child care as a condition of placement (or to preserve an existing placement), and for parenting teens enrolled in school or a vocational training program.

It also ensures emergency child care with both licensed and license-exempt providers for the following out-of-home caregivers of children from birth to age five and their siblings:

- Resource parents waiting for formalized state-mandated Resource Family Approvals who already have a child placement
- Existing relative/non-related extended family-member caregivers, foster parents, and FFA-certified foster parents (working through a foster family agency) who have or are considering a child placement
- Parenting teens and non-minor dependents under DCFS supervision

On a case-by-case basis, consideration is also given to children up to age 12, children with exceptional needs, and severely disabled children, youth, and non-minor dependents up to age 21.

Bridge program vouchers are approved for up to six months, with another six-month option to extend, as long as the DCFS case remains open and the children remain placed outside their birth homes. During this period, a specialized navigator works with the family to identify permanent subsidized or unsubsidized child care options.

Rather than being managed through child-care eligibility workers co-located through DCFS offices, the bridge program is collaboratively administered between DCFS, the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, and the subcontracted resource and referral agencies in each area of the county. Bridge program information-sharing sessions are planned for each DCFS regional office over the coming weeks to familiarize line staff with the details of the referral process.

AB 1694, signed by Governor Jerry Brown earlier this month, repealed earlier legislation to stipulate that foster care payments count now as income to the foster caregiver for the purpose of determining eligibility for early care and education services, and for determining applicable family fees, if any, associated with those services. "We believe that DCFS caregivers will quality for bridge program funding," Berberian concluded, "based on having an open DCFS case and caregiver availability. We'll continue to research the impact this legislation will have on caregivers who transition out of the bridge program to another permanent child care program that bases eligibility upon caregiver income."

Discussion

Judge Michael Nash supports the concept of universal early care and education, but admits that its broad implementation might take some time. However, approximately 30,000 children and youth are in the care of the dependency court, a substantial number of whom are in family maintenance, family preservation, or permanent placement programs within DCFS, and are age-eligible for ECE. "I suspect that efforts to link those families with ECE programs have not been maximized," he said. "While an overall ECE plan is being developed, does anything prevent a simultaneous focus on this at-risk population to increase the number of kids enrolled in ECE?"

Working on parallel tracks is often helpful, McCroskey assured him, mentioning the several systems issues that were uncovered when planning the bridge program. "In SPAs 1 and 2," she said, "twenty-four percent of children in subsidized child care were known to DCFS during a similar timeframe, although the two systems did not talk to one another. Linking those two populations certainly enhances the possibility of getting high-quality ECE to those children."

Leslie Heimov urged the inclusion of parenting probation youth into the ECE bridge program, as they are not part of family maintenance or family preservation programs and have far fewer resources with regard to ECE for their children. "Sometimes they make informal arrangements for their kids while they're working or going to school," she said. "If those fall through, they can lose child care forever because they have no open DCFS case." Sheila Mitchell likewise suggested looking at the trajectory of youngsters who are expelled from preschool, often for behavioral issues, to see if they end up in the probation system.

Chair Garcia would like to see the ECC take leadership on this topic. "Who's for leaving thing the way they are?" she asked. "No one. If the funding stays the same, the results stay the same. For different results, we need to invest and collaborate differently. We all should talk about the issue publicly, help every Supervisor and every public information officer understand the need for a continuum of care for kids, put what we see as the future out in front of the public, and gain support for our vision."

In the attempts at legislation prior to the bridge program, Berberian noted, opponents asserted that the bills were pitting child-welfare children against the children of the poor; according to an Advancement Project report, Fallin Kenyon added, 51 percent of infants and toddlers who are eligible for subsidized ECE cannot access it. "It's very hard to target populations because there simply aren't enough slots for everyone," she said. "If we use the money we get more effectively, that can change."

San Francisco's approach takes a broad view of 'adequacy' (having resources for all who need them), but also defines special populations, McCroskey said. Illinois has prioritized Head Start, as has New York City. "There's a lot to learn from other jurisdictions," she commented, "and no one here has really looked at all the funds that flow in and their varying restrictions. In Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), for instance, when families move from temporary assistance into ongoing child care, requirements differ for stages one, two, and three. And the Alternative Payments Program works differently still."

Youngsters in the child-welfare system are already at the highest risk, Nash said, and have always gotten the short end of the stick. He believes they should be prioritized in eligibility.

Ogawa agreed, saying that was already the case as much as possible within the ECE world. "The problem comes when we try to fit them into existing funding streams," she said, "especially when we're considering eligibility requirements for caregivers."

Trauma-Informed Arts Education

Over the past seven or eight years, Kalene Gilbert began, Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) dollars flowing from the Mental Health Services Act have allowed the Department of Mental Health to invest in early-intervention direct service and direct care. Recently, the department has begun to align PEI efforts with the Office of Child Protection's prevention plan, committing to fund home visitation and the prevention and aftercare networks. It is also interested in school-based initiatives, and Gilbert introduced Denise Grande, Director of Arts Education with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, to speak about those.

- The Arts Commission has worked with school districts, the nonprofit arts community, and county departments to offer arts instruction in all juvenile detention facilities. "Access to arts education is a child development issue and a social and emotional well-being issue," Grande said, "and can also relate to job readiness, since the median annual wage in the creative economy is higher than in any other sector. At present, access across the county to arts learning is not equitable, and we have data being collected that will show that, especially if layered across the *Portrait of Los Angeles County* report."
- The Commission has also worked with LACOE on Technology Enhanced Arts Learning, or TEAL, which offers no-cost professional development in arts integration throughout the K-6 curriculum so that visual and performing arts are embedded in the classroom. It is also starting work with the Department of Mental Health to embed social and emotional learning in all aspects of the TEAL online modules.
- Trauma-informed arts instruction is also being introduced to schools with high populations of foster and probation youth. A two-year pilot has been launched in three different communities (in three school districts) to start at the high school level and eventually reach down to feeder middle schools. "Our intention is not that art 'drop in' from the outside," Grande explained. "Our intention is to build a coalition of arts organizations in those communities so that arts instruction can be sustained by individual neighborhoods."

Foster Youth Bill of Rights and Services

Erica Ontiveros, this year's UCLA Luskin Fellow working with the Office of Child Protection, reviewed the March 2018 report on the Los Angeles County Foster Youth Bill of Rights and Services, included as a meeting handout.

On July 18, 2017, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion that recognized the need to ensure that youth in foster care are provided every reasonable resource to facilitate their development as 'healthy, educated, and self-sufficient' young adults. This recognition led to Los Angeles County's creating its own Foster Youth Bill of Rights and Services to provide information about services, programs, and legislative mandates to youth and their families.

To that end, the Commission for Children and Families convened a workgroup consisting of multiple county offices, community stakeholders, and former foster youth, Ontiveros herself included. The workgroup developed a communication plan targeting foster youth, resource parents, social workers, and probation officers, as well as innovative ways to communicate the

plan to youth, caregivers, and others via media and print. "The vision of the Foster Youth Bill of Rights and Services," said Ontiveros, "was to create a youth-friendly document that those entrusted with caring for the county's foster youth will be familiar with and adhere to as they strive to engage, educate, and empower youth regarding their rights." A living matrix of laws regarding current foster youth rights is available online at http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/121690.pdf (past the body of the report, in Attachment C).

The March report also incorporates a review of California's Foster Youth Bill of Rights and AB 1067 that includes the youth and foster parent perspective, a review and presentation of the California Welfare and Institutions Code and all other relevant federal, state, and local statutes and policies in plain language.

"Although more than forty current and former foster youth participated in the workgroup and helped facilitate some discussions," Ontiveros said, "a great need still exists for the youth voice and perspective to be involved at all levels of County work regarding system-involved youth. We are the ones directly affected by County policies and we will be the ones using this Foster Youth Bill of Rights and Services to advocate for ourselves and to educate those who work with us. As a former youth in care, I am thankful that my peers from the National Foster Youth Institute and I were able to attend workgroup meetings and lend our experience. I urge all of you to continue including the youth perspective in the implementation phase of the Foster Youth Bill of Rights and Services, which the communications subcommittee will reconvene to disseminate. I am excited to see in what ways Los Angeles County will be a model for the nation for ensuring that foster youth rights are heard, seen, and implemented."

Ontiveros concluded by expressing appreciation to the Commission's Tamara Hunter and Wendy Smith for their work on the project.

Public Comment

Ben Cone from Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services announced a pilot collaboration with the Pasadena Unified School District through which his agency, Hillsides, Five Acres, and other residential organizations located within that school district have formed a triage group for information-sharing to support school permanency and to make sure that children returning to school from care get the support they need.

Next Meeting

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

Wednesday, July 25, 2018 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Room 739, 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 11:25 a.m.