



Education Coordinating Council

October 23, 2014

1:00 p.m.

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

Present: Yolanda Benitez, representing Arturo Delgado
Philip Browning
Renatta Cooper
Jesus Corral, representing Jerry Powers
Monica Garcia, chair
Erika Torres, representing Ramone Cortines
Bryan Mershon, representing Marvin J. Southard
Fernando Meza, representing Richard Martinez
Michael Nash
Ramon Quintana
Virginia Roberts, representing Darin Brawley
Bruce Saltzer
Fabricio Segovia

Chair Monica Garcia brought the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m., welcoming everyone and thanking the Probation Department for sponsoring the refreshment costs. Ms. Garcia asked ECC members and the audience to introduce themselves.

Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs)

Yolanda Benitez from LACOE provided the Council with an overview of the LCAP approval process. The county offices of education are responsible for approving the LCAP plans developed by each school district under their jurisdiction. To assist districts with the drafting of their LCAPs, LACOE created an electronic template where districts could enter information. 59 school districts in Los Angeles County used the LACOE templates. All 80 LCAPs in Los Angeles County have been approved and the LCAPs are available for review on LACOE's website -https://elcap.lacoe.edu/lcap/plan_status.pl.

Each LCAP plan had to explain the efforts undertaken by the school district to include stakeholders (parents, community, students) in the planning process and had to be approved by the district's school board prior to being presented to LACOE. In addition, each LCAP had to describe how the school district would improve and measure the educational outcomes of three targeted disadvantaged groups (e.g. Foster care youth, English learners, and school meal program eligible). For each of these groups, explicit goals and metrics were hopefully developed and

articulated in the LCAP. Ms. Benitez also noted that the State Department of Education continues to work on refining the LCAP template and how best to assist school districts with measuring outcomes.

Ms. Garcia thanked Ms. Benitez for her overview. Several school districts were then asked to present on their LCAPs specifically as they relate to the improvement of educational outcomes for foster care youth.

Pasadena School District

District Students	17,488
Foster Care Students	395

Erik Sahakian, Director Office of Child Welfare, Attendance and Safety, outlined the efforts underway in Pasadena to improve educational outcomes for foster care youth. Mr. Sahakian noted the district's work to increase staffing infrastructure that would allow for more intensive work with foster care youth. To increase the academic outcomes of foster care youth, the district will:

- Quickly identify youth for pull-out efforts when there are signs of academic or behavioral challenges with the hope of proactively addressing issues.
- Meet quarterly with youth to ensure they remain on course for college.
- Hire foster care liaisons who will be charged with assessing youth and providing information to teachers and school-based support staff.
- Use Individualized Learning Plans to ensure academic resources target the needs of youth
- Ensure that attendance system is used to identify challenges at the first possible sign and intervene accordingly.
- Ensure that behavioral issues are identified and remedied with the intent of keeping the youth in school and engaged.

Compton School District

District Students	23,852
Foster Care Students	445

Virginia Roberts, Senior Director Pupil Services Department, noted the efforts by Compton to determine how best to service foster care youth. The district reviewed its capacity to service these youth and made several district-wide changes:

- Board policies related to foster youth would be reviewed to ensure they aligned with programmatic goals.
- Ensure the student information system is able to interface with CALPADS so that foster care youth are quickly identified.
- Hire dedicated administrative and counseling staff to work with foster care youth. These staff would be responsible for engaging with foster care youth monthly to monitor their progress and identify any challenges.
- Remove barriers to immediate enrollment of foster care youth with the goal of those youth being enrolled within 48 hours, and limit the placement of foster care youth in continuation or alternative schools.

Los Angeles School District

District Students	653,826
Foster Care Students	8,400

Erika Torres, Director Pupil Services, provided an overview of the efforts by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to proactively engage with their foster care youth. Ms. Torres noted the importance of the collaboration between LAUSD, community members and agencies in the development of a plan to address foster care youth educational challenges. That collaboration is ongoing and will be used to ensure stakeholders can provide input as the effort gets underway. To address the 8,000+ foster care youth who attend LAUSD schools, the following actions are being implemented:

- Hiring of 55 counselors and 11 leads to provide ongoing intensive case management services. Each counselor will have approximately 100 foster care to manage in coordination with the youth's social worker.
- Intakes and annual academic assessments are being completed on each foster care youth to ensure they are proficient or above on the SBAC assessments for math and English-language arts.
- Parents/caregivers are being trained to support the learning of foster care youth at home and at school.
- Counselors will be actively involved in reducing the number of chronic absences experienced by some foster care youth and will also work to increase the attendance rates of foster care youth.

Pomona School District

District Students	26,264
Foster Care Students	495

Fernando Meza, Administrative Director Pupil & Community Services, thanked the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for their partnership with the Pomona School District. The partnership, through the Gloria Molina Project, was responsible for an 84% graduation rate for foster care youth in 2014. Mr. Meza noted that Pomona is focusing on elementary age foster youth and ensuring they remained enrolled and engaged. Along with these efforts, Mr. Meza also noted that:

- Pomona was increasing staff training around equity with the goal of reducing the disproportionate suspension/expulsion of foster students
- Pomona was increasing online learning opportunities for foster youth in hopes of closing the achievement gap.
- Pomona will be hiring additional staff to serve as liaisons between foster youth, their families and local schools.

Bruce Saltzer asked the presenters if there was some explanation for the disparity in funds dedicated to foster care youth among school districts. Mr. Meza noted that Local Control Formula Funding (LCFF) was allocated based on the student size of the district. School districts allocated LCFF funds to foster care services based on their LCAP plans and perceived needs.

Martha Matthew noted that LCFF funds are supposed to be locally flexible. The intent was to allow school districts to determine how they spent their funds. School districts, however, were also required to develop goals and metrics by which they would be held accountable for the funds. Ms. Matthew also encouraged ECC members and the public to join the Coalition for the Educational Equity for Foster Youth as it monitors the LCAP implementation of school districts throughout Los Angeles County.

Ms. Garcia noted the work being done by the school districts that explicitly addressed the educational challenges of foster care youth. She noted that the ECC would be actively looking at the LCAPs of all school districts in Los Angeles County and working with them to increase programmatic uniformity where possible. Ms. Garcia also referred members and attendees to a one-page document which summarizes the goals and metrics noted by each school district. As additional districts present their LCAPs, their information will be added to the document.

Foster-Ed Los Angeles

Jackie Wong, Director Foster-Ed California, noted the ongoing efforts of Foster Ed to partner with DCFS to strengthen the educational outcomes of foster youth, and to work with school districts to improve their ability to provide resources and educational supports specifically for

foster youth. Foster Ed has also been working with the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to improve data sharing to better identify foster youth at the school district level. CDE's California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) allows for the tracking of student academic performance. An interface between CALPADS and CDSS' Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) will allow schools an opportunity to identify all of their foster youth. This effort is critical if local efforts are to improve foster youth educational outcomes.

Ms. Wong also noted that a data summit was held October 17, 2014 to ensure local school districts and partner agencies clearly understood CALPADS and how best to integrate this new feature into LCAP planning and implementation

Marc Berkman, Director Foster-Ed Los Angeles, also noted a report by Foster-Ed that reviews the educational process in place at DCFS and LACOE. The report recommends changes in how the current DCFS educational liaisons are utilized and suggest possible reallocation of staff to better complement the LCAP work being done by local school districts. The report is currently being reviewed by DCFS and LACOE. The final report will be presented to the ECC at a later date.

Electronic Data-Sharing System

Steve Sturm from DCFS provided an update on the progress of the Electronic Data Sharing System. To date, there are in place interfaces that allow DCFS to identify and share student information with the following school districts:

- LAUSD Pomona
- Long Beach Compton

The interface with LAUSD has been temporarily halted as a result of challenges with their student record-keeping system, MiSiS. Those issues are expected to be resolved within the next month.

Mr. Sturm noted that the Pasadena and Antelope Valley School District interfaces are near completion and should be fully executed by the end of the year.

The inclusion of several smaller school districts is closer to realization as a result of software purchased by LACOE that should allow them to retrieve student data and provide to DCFS. The software purchased is used by over 30 school districts in the County and will expedite LACOE's ability to interface with those school districts and forward foster student information to DCFS.

Mr. Sturm also noted positive movement regarding the electronic identification of probation youth. Several meetings have been held with Probation to determine how best to provide information to schools about probation youth.

Ms. Garcia requested that Mr. Sturm provide additional information on this effort, specifically who within Probation had provided approval for this effort. Mr. Sturm stated he would provide.

School Attendance Task Force

Judge Nash then briefed the ECC on the progress of the School Attendance Task Force (SATF). He noted the success of the Hershel Swinger Partnership Conference held at CSULA and that several presentations were facilitated by SATF members. Judge Nash also noted the successful effort by the SATF recommending that the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) discontinue processing citations issued to juveniles and instead, forward those citations to the Probation Department for handling. A letter was written to the MTA Board recommending that change. Judge Nash noted that the MTA Board had followed the recommendation.

Judge Nash also noted that September was School Attendance Month and the “I’m In” campaign was in full swing. Over 40 school districts signed up for the effort which entailed various activities to highlight and increase school attendance. Ruth Cusick suggested that school districts represented on the ECC be encouraged to participate in the planning for next year’s School Attendance Month activities.

Judge Nash concluded his remarks by thanking the ECC for its work over the last 10 years and encouraging members to continue to work to improve the educational situation for Foster and Probation Youth.

Public Comment

Pat Levinson requested that the ECC be more vigilant in its efforts to ensure foster youth receive educational supports from school districts, especially those youth who were aging out of the foster care system.

Special Recognition

Monica Garcia recognized Judge Nash for his tireless work on behalf of youth in Los Angeles County. Ms. Garcia noted that his efforts will be long-lasting and have bettered the lives of countless youth. In recognition of his retirement, a scroll from the Board of Supervisors was presented to Judge Nash as well as a poem written by a young lady who was involved in both the Probation and Foster Care systems. ECC members were also allowed an opportunity to acknowledge Judge Nash’s retirement.

Carrie Miller thanked Judge Nash for his efforts over the years and noted his importance in the creation of the ECC.

Next Meeting

Thursday, April 23, 2015
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Location to be determined.

There being no public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.