



August 14, 2008

To: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Sharon G. Watson  
Lead Consultant, Education Coordinating Council

**PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN “*EXPECTING MORE; A BLUEPRINT FOR RAISING THE EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF FOSTER AND PROBATION YOUTH*”**

At its meeting on February 14, 2006, your Board approved “*Expecting More: A Blueprint for Raising the Educational Achievement of Foster and Probation Youth*,” developed by the Education Coordinating Council (ECC), and instructed the ECC to report its progress in implementing the recommendations in that document to your Board every six months. The first Progress Report was delivered to your Board on August 14, 2006, the second on February 14, 2007, the third on August 14, 2007 and the fourth on February 14, 2008; this is now the fifth report.

During the past six months the ECC and its members have made tremendous strides in implementing the recommendations in *Expecting More*, and we thank the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation and the Interagency Operations Group for the significant financial support that made a lot of this progress possible. Much is being accomplished in the quest to raise the academic performance of children and youth under the supervision of DCFS and Probation, especially in those areas requiring inter-departmental and/or inter-sector collaboration.

For example, the ECC has been a key member of the Comprehensive Education Reform Committee (CERC), chaired by Chief Probation Officer Taylor, which has just completed a plan for strengthening educational services to probation youth in the juvenile halls and camps. In partnership with the CPC, ECC helped bring the views of a host of other public and private organizations to the attention of the CERC. This plan will be considered by your Board on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Four workgroups have been established to begin addressing several of the plan’s major recommendations—Assessment and Curriculum Re-structuring, Electronic Data Exchange, MOU/Report Card Development and Dependent Charter School. Each of these

workgroups are, in turn, helping to implement the ECC's Blueprint, especially with respect to Recommendations 3, 5, 7, 8, and 11.

In addition, ECC was a strong supporter of the Small Schools Resolution adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education on June 24, 2008.

Some of the key achievements with respect to individual Blueprint recommendations are:

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**Recommendation #1: Higher numbers of children in the care of DCFS, and the children of foster and probation youth, should be enrolled in high-quality early intervention, care, and education programs that are culturally and linguistically responsive.**

⊗ To accomplish this recommendation, the ECC, at its April meeting, strongly urged the integration of the child welfare and early care and education systems and adopted a plan for an initiative—*Making the Connections in Los Angeles County Between Child Welfare and Early Care and Education*—to make this happen. Major factors driving the need for this initiative include:

- There is **no single point of entry for the early care and education “system”**; it is a mix of public funds, informal babysitting, entrepreneurial businesses, and full-day, part-day and voucher program services, each with different eligibility requirements, regulations and services. This has led to an extremely long **waiting list of 48,000 children** on the County's centralized eligibility list for subsidized child development services.
- Over **20,000 children under the age of six had open cases with the Department of Children and Family Services in 2006**. Of these, 41% were infants a year old or younger, with the majority living in SPA 6 (19.1%), followed by SPAs 2, 3, 7 and 8.
- **An estimated \$1.4 billion in child care subsidies and services for qualifying families is received** by the County from the California Department of Education each year; **almost \$162 million of these funds has been returned** to the State over the past three years.

Given the importance of connecting child welfare and early education leaders and the ECC's ability to bring key stakeholders together, the Council agreed to be the catalyst for implementing the *Making the Connections* Initiative. Several activities are now underway to address the above challenges.

- ECC is partnering with county departments and DCFS Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) lead agencies to determine how to maximize available child care subsidies for young DCFS children in the highest need communities.
- DCFS and the Office of Child Care are looking at linking the child abuse and neglect prevention training, offered by the Child Abuse Prevention Center through the County's Steps to Excellence Quality Rating Program (STEP), with the child care

programs associated with the DCFS general child care programs and PIDP lead agencies.

- In response to a motion by Supervisor Don Knabe this spring calling for a child care policy that cuts across county departments, providers, and other entities, as well as for the exploration of legislative solutions for retaining unspent child care funds, the Policy Roundtable for Child Care held a retreat in June. A process has now begun to develop a unified policy and operational strategies to ensure that child development services are properly integrated into County and community services that promote the well-being of children and families.
  - Earlier this month, Juvenile Court Referee Sheri Sobel convened a first-time meeting of children's advocates, attorneys, DCFS representatives, school districts and early care and education professionals to discuss how their various systems can work more effectively together to meet the needs of infants and toddlers (prenatal to 3 years) under the jurisdiction of the Dependency Court. This group identified several opportunities to coordinate resources and trainings that recognize the important role the courts play in children's development, especially in those children under the age of 5.
- ⊗ In its first full year of implementation, **182 child development centers and licensed family child care homes have submitted applications to enroll in STEP**, 91% of the initial recruitment goal of 200 programs. Another 132 have applied for supplemental STEP Quality Improvement grants. In addition, \$500,850 has been awarded to STEP child care providers and 400 child development professionals have participated in STEP trainings.

**Recommendation #2: Community organizations and county departments should offer increased support and resources to parents, relative caregivers, and foster parents to help them be good nurturers and provide the positive learning environments that will ensure that their children are ready for school.**

- ⊗ The Early Developmental Screening and Intervention (EDSI) strategic partnership completed its first Learning Collaborative in June, which involved 8 medical providers and 11 early care and education sites. EDSI also recently hosted a policy meeting to discuss ways to track outcomes across the population of young children with developmental needs. Participants identified potential ways to reconcile mandates around the various assessment tools used in health care, education and other fields to encourage consistency and efficiency across systems of care. WIC parent education classes were piloted in the 2008 year and are scheduled to be delivered more broadly across the county beginning this fall. EDSI is also working in Pacoima and in the Westside to establish an ideal system of early identification and intervention that encourages the early care and education community, along with medical providers and other community agencies involved with early identification, to work together for families.
- ⊗ All 8 PIDP agencies have embraced the core prevention values of the *Making the Connections* Initiative: community-capacity building; integration and alignment of efforts; and interdepartmental collaboration. Their efforts for this year range from

building community action/social networks that will focus on the place-based needs of families in specific communities to implementing resource centers that will link and provide support services and resources to community-referred families. Common to all of these efforts is the focus on supporting families, parents/caregivers and children to thrive in positive learning environments.

- ⊗ Los Angeles County Office of Education's Head Start Program, DCFS and the PIDP lead agencies are working to ensure that DCFS children and families accessing services through the lead agencies are connected to Head Start programs throughout the County. Head Start offers a comprehensive range of integrated services to children and their families, including medical and oral health care, nutrition, parent involvement, mental health services, services for children with special needs, early childhood development, literacy programs for children and parents, and family support. As LACOE operates the largest Head Start program in the nation, serving almost 24,000 three to five year olds, infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, it is a critical resource for young foster children in Los Angeles and their families. These agencies are now identifying what opportunities exist for more effective outreach and enrollment procedures.
- ⊗ The Department of Mental Health, in collaboration with the Center for Nonviolent Education and Parenting and PACE Head Start, successfully designed and implemented the *It Takes A Community* (ITC) curriculum to support parents and caregivers in promoting the social-emotional development and emotional intelligence of their young children. Over 50 parents and caregivers participated in this initial program which will soon be expanded to other early care and education settings. ITC serves as a major strategy to strengthen families and help prevent child abuse and will be used as one of the guiding frameworks for staff/program development, service integration and community-building models to be implemented at sites such as Magnolia Place.
- ⊗ Probation's Promoting Healthy Families program, which is being implemented through a Family Resource Center at each juvenile hall, promotes family reunification through a broad range of services for parents of detained youth that address the multiple needs of these youth and their families. This program focuses on empowering each family to successfully handle difficulties that may arise with their youth, on developing a support network for each family, and on empowering youth to cope with family, peer, school, and neighborhood problems.

## **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

**Recommendation #3: Higher numbers of DCFS and Probation youth should be enrolled in skill-building and enrichment programs that include non-system students and provide opportunities for positive and enduring connections to nurturing adults.**

- ⊗ The ECC convened a first-ever, highly successful Resource Fair on June 25 at the California Endowment. Over 750 DCFS and Probation youth, caregivers and those who work with these youth participated in the event, which showcased countywide resources for system youth, ages 0 to 24, in the areas of early childhood education, after-school and

summer programming, literacy, arts and culture, mental health, kinship support, mentoring, housing, legal services, job placement and career development, school transitions and college readiness. Over a dozen partners—including county and city departments and commissions, school districts, Casey Family Programs, Children’s Law Center, the Association of Community Human Service Agencies and several community-based and youth organizations—did the planning for this Fair. News articles about the Fair appeared in the *Daily News* and *La Opinion* and interviews with various participants were aired on KFWB and Channel 54. Major donors included Jose Huizar, The Looker Foundation, Supervisor Antonovich, Supervisor Molina, and the Association of Community Human Service Agencies.

- ⊗ The Probation Department’s school-based Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) supervision program is collaborating with school officials and a host of community and faith-based organizations to provide tutoring and academic resources to probation youth and their family members at park sites during the summer break and also after-school.
- ⊗ In conjunction with the Public Library’s Library Card Initiative for probation youth, school-based DPOs have begun bringing probation youth to public libraries to obtain library cards. This has resulted in youth signing up for a host of library programs, including after-school tutoring, computer lab workshops, and GED and homework assistance. The Library’s online **Live Homework Help** service **has now received 32,000 hits from probation youth**. In addition, library staff has provided literacy training for over 100 families of probation youth and 120 probation officers.
- ⊗ LACOE has committed to providing \$500,000 for tutoring services for foster youth residing in group homes and foster family agencies during the 2008-09 school year.
- ⊗ The First Supervisorial District has contributed \$400,000 to Nogales High School for after-school enrichment programs.

**Recommendation #4: Youth should be systematically engaged and meaningfully involved in designing, implementing, and evaluating the programs, activities, and events in which they will participate.**

- ⊗ United Friends of the Children is conducting an internship program for foster youth this summer, placing them in a variety of non-profit organizations that match their interests.

As one of the participating organizations, the ECC is hosting Gail Yen, a former foster youth who was reunited with her family almost two years ago. Gail is an excellent student and will be entering her senior year of high school in September. She plans to attend a 4-year college and major in political science, so the ECC has arranged for her to also work, two afternoons a week, in Assemblymember Anthony Portantino’s office and two days a week with the countywide Transition-Age Youth Coordinator in the Chief Executive Office. Gail has already been extremely helpful in shaping the ECC’s work and theirs.

- ⊗ Higher Education and Transitional/Emancipation Resources and Services were two of the topics highlighted at The California Youth Connection’s annual Policy Conference on August 11, 2008. Foster youth throughout the state expressed their concerns and, on the final day of the Conference, presented recommendations for local and statewide policy and practice changes to an invited audience of policy-makers and stakeholders. Attendees then engaged in small group discussions about these youth recommendations.
- ⊗ Probation’s Teen Council program provides the opportunity for juvenile hall youth to campaign to become a group/unit representative, a position which encourages them to actively participate in the day to day activities of their living unit. The Teen Council helps youth see that their input is valued and that their program-related suggestions are taken seriously.
- ⊗ The Probation Department’s Placement Services Bureau has developed a Youth and Family Engagement Initiative which will be implemented this fiscal year. Youth will be creating and evaluating the programs and services which serve them and will provide consultation to the Department and group homes about the policies and services that affect their lives.

**Recommendation #5: Families, caregivers, and agency staff should pay greater attention to preparing DCFS and Probation children and youth for transitions to preschool, elementary school, middle school, high school, adult education, vocational school, college, and employment, and for transfers between schools.**

- ⊗ The Juvenile Court is working with Probation to revise protocols for youth being sent to probation camps, including eliminating the shorter camp stays that cause educational havoc for many youth. The target date for longer stays will coincide with implementation of the department’s camp re-design project. In addition, these protocols will address requirements relating to the transfer of school records and shore up arrangements for youth being released from camp to attend community school.

The Court is also working with DCFS to develop a protocol to improve communication about the overall needs of youth, including education, when they—often suddenly—transition from one placement to another between court hearings. Guidelines will be put in place to ensure that schools are consulted in the transition process in order to minimize the impact of these moves on the youth’s academic achievement and earning of course credits.

- ⊗ The ECC is continuing to oversee the issuance of \$100,000 in college scholarship funds to probation youth honored at last year’s Success is Our Future event, as well as the group receiving scholarships at this year’s event. These funds, provided by a private donor, will help meet the financial needs of these scholarship recipients throughout their undergraduate years.
- ⊗ **Los Angeles Unified School District is now administering 8 different child development programs, providing services to almost 24,000 children from birth to 5 years,**

**including 49% of all four year olds in the county.** These early education programs, designed to respect the needs, languages and cultures of all students, families, staff, and communities, are providing high quality child development experiences to ensure that preschool children are ready for kindergarten.

LAUSD collaborated with the ECC and DCFS to create a map showing the locations of these child development programs by SPA. Lists and descriptions of these programs, along with information about DCFS regional offices and PIDP lead agencies, were generated for the SPAs that overlap with LAUSD—SPAs 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. These products should help educate child welfare system staff about the LAUSD child care services that may best serve the department’s families and children.

- ⊗ DCFS received 165 applications for the City of Los Angeles’ Summer Job program this year. Unfortunately, many more applications could have been submitted if system youth were able to more easily obtain identification records. To help this happen, the ECC partnered with the Chief Executive Office and the County Registrar-Recorder’s Office to set up a way for system youth to apply for birth certificates--on the spot and at no cost to them--at the ECC’s Resource Fair in June. The First Supervisorial District generously agreed to fund the application fees and, as a result, 60 system youth received birth certificates.
- ⊗ Partnered with California Assemblymember Anthony Portantino, All Saints Church Foster Care Project, Five Acres, Rosemary Children’s Services, Hillside, and the California Youth Connection to host a Town Hall meeting, on May 10, on “Breaking Barriers to Higher Education” for foster youth. Several current and former foster youth discussed the problems that they are encountering to attending college, and several ideas for legislative remedies emerged that the Assemblymember agreed to pursue.

**Recommendation #6: The ECC should participate in and work to align local efforts to create safer schools (including passages to and from), particularly within and among the seven school districts represented on the ECC.**

- ⊗ The Department of Mental Health will participate as one of the collaborative partners with the Los Angeles and Alhambra school districts, who were among the select few Southern California Local Education Agencies to be awarded federally-funded Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative grants.
- ⊗ The Probation Department has been in the forefront in working with schools, law enforcement agencies and neighborhood stakeholders to develop and establish School Safety Collaboratives/Safe Passages programs for youth traveling to and from schools in high-crime areas. A recent State Attorney General’s report credited the efforts of Probation, school officials and law enforcement agencies with increasing the safety of students on their way to and from school. Students at participating schools reported that they have noticed the presence of more adults in and around their schools and feel safer.

## **DATA AND INFORMATION-SHARING**

**Recommendation #7: The enhanced sharing of information among school districts, county departments, the juvenile courts, and counsel for children who appear in those courts should be assured by concurrently working to:**

**Resolve differing views about what federal law and California law allow, especially regarding federal confidentiality regulations, so that placing agencies (such as DCFS and Probation) and counsel for the child can access school records without a court order or authorization from a parent/guardian/holder of education rights, thereby enabling them to carry out their responsibility to meet the educational needs of children in their care**

**Establish a clear and consistent understanding of federal and state confidentiality laws among school districts, DCFS, Probation, and children’s counsel so that information necessary for school success is routinely shared in a timely and effective manner**

**Pursue amendments to the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), if needed, to clarify that child welfare agencies and legal representatives are able to independently access, share, and receive educational information with and from all school districts**

**Advocate for school districts in Los Angeles County to include child welfare personnel among those designated as eligible to receive ‘directory information’ on enrolled students. (School districts currently include juvenile justice personnel, but those provisions have not been interpreted in Los Angeles County as including DCFS employees.)**

**Draft a court order that would permit county departments and the youth’s attorneys, while a youth is under the Juvenile Court’s jurisdiction, to access pupil records, grades, transcripts, special education assessments, individual education plans, and current attendance records**

**With foster and probation youth, develop guidelines for information-sharing that do not violate their need for privacy and confidentiality**

- ⊗ The Los Angeles Unified School District unanimously approved a motion on May 27 that adds the Departments of Children and Family Services, Probation, and Mental Health to its directory of bodies that can obtain some identifying information on students from the district—name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous public or private school attended by the pupil. (Schools publish this directory at the beginning of each year, and parents have the right to ‘opt out’ of sharing this information with any entity on the district’s eligibility list.) Department staff will now have the ability to quickly determine whether a youth attends a school in LAUSD, in addition to the above information. This is the first time that LAUSD has agreed to share any identifying information on system youth as a group, and it is an important first step in creating a data-sharing partnership between the school district and county departments.

- ⊗ Brokered an agreement between school districts and the Los Angeles County Office of Education as to whom to contact to receive timely education information on probation youth leaving the halls/camps. Education records are required to be transferred within two business days.
- ⊗ The First Supervisorial District has formed a partnership that includes the Chief Executive Office, DCFS, ECC and the Montebello and Pomona school districts, to design two pilot projects that will improve the academic achievement of foster youth in the DCFS Belvedere and Pomona regional offices. The three components of these pilots are:
  - Creation of a mechanism for electronically sharing education records and student information between DCFS offices and school districts. Formal agreements that allow for the sharing of this information between the Montebello and Pomona school districts and their partner DCFS offices are currently being forged with the assistance of the First Supervisorial District.
  - Development of a comprehensive assessment tool for foster youth that will help guide the development of specialized education plans based on individual student needs and strengths. A team comprised of school personnel, social workers, DCFS education consultants, caregivers, and the youth themselves will oversee the implementation of these plans.
  - Education of caregivers and caseworkers on how to activate available services and supports within their youth's school district and community

Student evaluations using the newly designed assessment form began on August 11. If the projects succeed during this pilot year, the goal is to roll the model out countywide.

**Recommendation #8: The ECC should work with the Chief Administrative Office, county departments, school districts, and placement provider agencies to ensure the development of an electronically based information system that includes the individual educational records of DCFS and probation youth.**

- ⊗ In conjunction with the pilot projects described under Recommendation #7, the ECC is collaborating with the Montebello and Pomona Unified School Districts to create and begin testing a pilot educational database system within the 2008-09 school year.

### **SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT**

**Recommendation #9: Educational liaisons and school-based staff should be provided with the information they are requesting about who these youth are, the names of those responsible for their education (holders of educational rights, caregivers, caseworkers, attorneys, etc.), how best to contact them, and what services and supports are available for these youth.**

- ⊗ Completed data matches between DCFS, Probation and the Long Beach, Los Angeles, Montebello and Pomona Unified School Districts to determine the names of shared youth, which schools they attend, and how they are faring academically compared with other district students.
- ⊗ Developed a contact information sheet for school personnel to use for education-related questions regarding foster and probation youth. This information sheet was distributed at the ECC/LACOE School Superintendents meeting on June 18<sup>th</sup>.
- ⊗ The Juvenile Court is now requiring that the holder of education rights be listed on every minute order issued by the court. The court's information technology section is designing a screen that will be added to the computerized case management system so that court clerks are prompted to fill in that name at every court hearing, reminding the judge if it is not already in the file. In the meantime, clerks will be required to input the information manually. As schools receive copies of all minute orders, this practice will assure that school personnel know whom to contact about a student's educational issues as soon as the youth is enrolled.

The Presiding Judge also met with DCFS to request that the holder of education rights routinely appear on court reports, which already list other relevant people and their addresses. He plans to ask the same of the Probation Department, so that it's required by everybody and, over time, "we can get it right."

- ⊗ LAUSD partnered with the DCFS Metro North office to determine which youth they both serve and how best to connect them to needed services. A reception was held at the DCFS Office for their LAUSD parents, caregivers and youth to encourage the building of relationships among the various parties and to introduce this new way of working together.

**Recommendation #10: School-based staff should be trained regarding the educational and emotional needs of foster and probation youth and ways to meet those needs.**

- ⊗ LACOE and LAUSD arranged "A Day at Dependency Court" on April 22 for 36 education liaisons, teachers and other staff from 13 school districts to learn about what foster youth go through in court and how the court is addressing their needs. After an introductory briefing by Nash, visitors observed two courtroom sessions. Later, an eight-member panel—including CASAs, the court pediatrician, children's attorneys, and representatives from the Department of Children and Family Services—answered questions. This experience was so successful that organizers are considering making it an annual event and possibly visiting the Antelope Valley court as well. Another "Day" has been proposed for education liaisons to visit the juvenile halls and probation camps—including their on-site schools—to get an idea of daily life for the young people there.

- ⊗ LAUSD has agreed to incorporate a segment on the importance of child abuse reporting in a training being conducted by its Foster Youth Services (FYS) section for school personnel in the fall of 2008 on how schools can best address the needs and challenges of foster and probation youth. There will be 800 personnel attending this seminar, including staff from every school in the district.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **Recommendation #11: County departments, school districts, and the judiciary should cross-train key stakeholder groups on their collective and individual responsibilities for ensuring that foster and probation youth receive a solid education.**

- ⊗ The Probation Department and LACOE have developed an MOU that outlines their respective individual and joint responsibilities for the education of probation youth housed in juvenile halls and camps. Included in this document will be a “report card” on the educational outcomes achieved that will be regularly shared with the Board of Supervisors.
- ⊗ DCFS and Long Beach Unified School District staff have begun meeting monthly to discuss issues facing foster youth students in that district, and clarifying each other’s roles and responsibilities regarding youth academic achievement.
- ⊗ The Fourth Supervisorial District, Department of Mental Health, Probation Department and the Children’s Planning Council are co-sponsoring a major “transformational learning opportunity” in October 2008 for over 200 participants, including department staff and selected providers. The focus of the day will be on understanding how trauma, violence, substance abuse, and other major risk factors impact children and youth in Los Angeles communities. This event will provide a framework for ongoing training and subsequent forums to accelerate system transformation, culture change, and prevention-focused efforts underway in these and other county departments, with the assistance of key community partners.
- ⊗ In the spring, the DCFS Pomona regional office and the Pomona USD conducted a joint training session for the staff of both offices. In preliminary conversations with key leadership from the DCFS office and the district’s Child Development Unit, it became clear that opportunities to understand each other’s systems and the regulations that each entity was bound by were extremely limited. (For instance, in a conversation about eligibility requirements for early education programs, DCFS staff learned that immigration status is not requested for programs operated by school districts, a fact that could help resolve a major access issue for some DCFS children.) As a result, a joint training session was held on July 10 at Pomona USD for over 100 children’s services workers and school-based child development staff on their programs, eligibility requirements, and important regulations.

**Recommendation #12: DCFS/Probation caseworkers, caregivers, and the courts should each be accountable for the educational success of foster and probation youth through a three-pronged approach:**

**DCFS and Probation caseworkers shall ensure, using multidisciplinary team decision-making and case conferences, that academic expectations are established for these youth and that educational plans are developed which outline the activities youth should participate in to meet those expectations. These team meetings should include, at a minimum, youth, parents, caregivers, and school representatives.**

**Caregivers and others identified in the plan shall implement these educational plans by facilitating the child's involvement in the agreed-upon programs and activities.**

**Courts shall monitor the creation of these plans and the progress made in achieving them, and hold the involved parties accountable for their implementation.**

- ⊗ As referred to under Recommendation #7, the ECC is partnering with the First Supervisorial District, Chief Executive Office, DCFS, and the Montebello and Pomona school districts to pilot procedures for assessing DCFS youth educationally in the Belvedere and Pomona offices, and creating an education case plan to meet their individual academic needs. With the assistance of a former foster youth (ECC's summer intern), drafted an Educational Assessment Form that will be tested with 40 Montebello Unified School District foster youth. Once the form is finalized, assessments will begin with Pomona USD foster youth. These two one-year demonstration projects will field test the proposed assessment process, a multidisciplinary team/education case planning process, a data-sharing process, and the use of community resources and services to meet individual academic goals. If these pilots prove successful, the goal will be to expand this approach countywide.

### **Educational Achievement Outcomes:**

- ⊗ Because data matches have been conducted annually between DCFS (since 2005), Probation (since 2006), and the Los Angeles USD, that school district now has longitudinal data on the educational achievement of system youth. As a result, it is now possible to track the educational achievement of LAUSD system since the creation of ECC at the end of 2004. In looking at the data from 2005 for DCFS youth and 2006 for Probation youth, compared with the data from December 2007, there are a couple of noteworthy differences:
  - **The number of suspensions** for DCFS youth **has dropped** from 16.8% to 13.1%. Even more significantly, the percentage of probation youth has dropped from 77.8% to 48.9%, indicating that LAUSD and Probation are much more effectively meeting the emotional needs of these youth.
  - **DCFS youth have, on average, increased their likelihood of scoring at the proficient/advanced level on the English/Language Arts California Standardized Test** by 9.4% and on the Math portion by 7.5%. This demonstrates

how well the partnership efforts between DCFS and LAUSD are working to address the educational needs of foster youth. Probation youth, with one less year of data, have essentially remained the same, showing a percentage difference of less than 1 point.

As can be seen by all of the above, ECC members, partners and community organizations are actively engaged in making *Expecting More* a reality and the Council looks forward to reporting further progress in its next report in February 2009. If you should have any questions or require any additional information, your staff may contact the ECC at: (213) 974-5967.

cc: Chief Executive Officer  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Director, Children and Family Services  
Chief Probation Officer  
Director, Mental Health  
Superintendent, Office of Education  
Education Coordinating Council