

BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES
Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
333 South Beaudry Avenue, Board Room
1:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Committee Members

Mr. Nick Melvoin, Chairperson
Ms. Mónica García, Board President
Ms. Kelley Gonez
Dr. Ref Rodriguez
Mr. Scott M. Schmerelson
Dr. Richard Vladovic

District Staff Members

Ms. Vivian Ekchian, Superintendent
Dr. Frances Gipson, Chief Academic Officer

NOTES

The meeting convened at 9:07 a.m.

Dr. Richard Vladovic arrived at 9:24 a.m.

Ms. Mónica García arrived at 9:36 a.m.

WELCOME

Board Member Nick Melvoin said the goal for today is to hear from experts and share insight on the needs of LAUSD's youngest learners, and how current opportunities can be expanded.

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Dean Tagawa, Executive Director, Early Childhood Education, said the Los Angeles Unified School District's Early Education programs help to create a pathway for children diagnosed with Autism. The students enrolled in early education programs are from low-income families, in the foster youth system, English Learners, or have traumatic backgrounds and do not qualify for early education programs unless there is a substantive need within that family.

PORTRAIT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Ms. Cheryl Wold, Measure of America briefly discussed the history of the Portrait of Los Angeles County project. She explained the Human Development Index (HDI) used in creating the Portrait, The HDI offers a widely applied standard for measuring wellbeing, and is used in multiple countries. She described the three dimensions that make up the index, and explained how they are measured. She said the HDI score for Los Angeles County is 5.43 which is slightly higher than the US overall at 5.17, and its driven by higher life expectancy rates in the county, but it is constrained by low educational attainment rates.

Ms. Wold explained the wide variation across cities and unincorporated areas in the report, from a high of 9.43 in San Marino to a low of 2.44 in the Florence-Graham area. This gap between the highest and lowest scores in Los Angeles County is wider than the gap across all US Congressional Districts. The

Human Development Index (HDI) scores also vary widely among the major racial and ethnic groups of the county. There is also an earnings gap by gender.

Another way to examine the Human Development Index (HDI) scores is to look at the 5 LA Counties framework, which links communities not by geography but by their scores. She gave an overview of the 5 LA Counties; Glittering LA, Elite Enclave LA, Main Street LA, Struggling LA and Precarious LA. She said 51% of residents live in communities that are in Struggling LA. She stated the importance that Los Angeles County is highly impacted by long standing residential segregation by race and ethnicity. She explained the life expectancy by geography and the access to knowledge in Los Angeles County.

Ms. Wold spoke briefly about Median Personal Earnings for cities, unincorporated areas, community plan areas, and communities in the Struggling and Precarious areas of the county, which make up 54% of the population and have median personal earnings below \$26,000 a year.

The goal is to increase the overall Human Development Index (HDI) in LA County by one full point over the next 8 years. This is the equivalent of increasing life expectancy by 6 months, increasing enrollment and adult educational attainment by 10% and increasing median personal earnings by \$8,000.

Ms. Wold said, focusing on the early childhood, First 5 LA is working closely with new and existing groups including the Office of Child Protection and the Los Angeles County Prevention Plan to advance collaborative strategies. The focus on Early Childcare and Education (ECE) systems help to close gaps in educational achievement, promote child health and development, promote child safety and prevent entry into child welfare. The prevention plan has a multipart strategy to help engage community members and parents by promoting child development, education and community resources including building resources in the community.

Mr. Melvoin asked for a countywide breakdown of specific Los Angeles Unified recommendations distinct from the County.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Ms. Kim Pattillo Brownson, Vice President for Policy and Strategy, First 5 LA, gave a brief overview of the early childhood education. She said early learning is important because 90% of human brain development occurs before age 5. She shared statistics on early achievement gaps and how they can be prevented. She said the vast majority of funding for early learning in California comes from the state government. During the recession, \$1 billion was cut from the early learning budget, which eliminated 110,000 young children from having opportunities for early education. The budget cut froze and lowered the income limits to 70% of the state median income. She discussed the effects of the affordability crisis on poor and working class families, and the lack of access to licensed care for income-eligible preschoolers. She highlighted other District funding opportunities.

In response to a question, Ms. Brownson said Expanded Transitional Kindergarten (ETK) legislation was approved two years ago and guidance on the Department of Education website regarding California State Preschools and compliance with the American With Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Board Members and Ms. Brownson briefly discussed other ways to gain more funding for Early Childhood Education, the positive effect of gubernatorial candidates sharing data and the budget proposals from Governor Jerry Brown.

In response to a question, Ms. Amy Alina Chambers, Preschool Specialist, Preschool for All Learners (PALS), said PALS is a special education program for students with moderate to severe disabilities. She

said students are enrolled through an intake and assessment team unless they are enrolled at a District site and are qualified as eligible for special education services. Ms. Vivian Ekchian explained the transition into special education programs begins when medical providers observe developmental indicators that do not meet growth expectations.

In response to a question, Ms. Brownson said the state pre school program has a different set of licensing requirements that are governed by state law but are still District schools, District classrooms and LAUSD teachers, but have different safety requirements.

In response to a question, Ms. Brownson said legislators may or may not understand the issue. Getting people to prioritize early education and not think of it as being an amenity is work that is being fueled by brain science literature.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION: STRENGTHENING K-12 EDUCATION FOR LAUSD STUDENTS

Ms. Karla Pleitez Howell, Director of Educational Equity Program, Advancement Project, said it is important to think about the context students sit in when discussing educational opportunities. In California, 20% of children live in poverty, near 7 million children need access to medical services, and 86% of black children and 84% of Latino students cannot read at 4th grade level. Throughout California, 35% of students do not have access to Early Care and Education.

Ms. Howell said the conversation today is about how to grow preventative measures early on in Early Care and Education and ensure we increase the opportunities and change the dynamics. There are 2 main goals - Invest in Early Care and Education, and vision for high quality. In order to achieve these goals there are three main topics of discussion 1) Youngest children within LAUSD boundaries; 2) Invest in Early Care and Education; 3) District plan to elevate Early Care and Education.

Ms. Howell shared a visual image of the childcare slots the District lost during the recession. She discussed the rising cost of early education and the affordability crisis. She said the District would inherit children from families that could not afford and lacked access to Early Care and Education. Additionally, she said approximately 169,000 babies and toddlers in LA County live within LAUSD boundaries and 55% of these families will qualify for Early Education programs.

The District should pay attention to the issue surrounding Early Care and Education (ECE) for reasons of declining enrollment, return on investment, opportunity and achievement gap, and preparing our children for the jobs of tomorrow.

Ms. Howell discussed the ECE state budget and legislation opportunities and highlighted the \$1 Billion funding request and the legislation, AB605, AB1754, AB2292 and AB2626. She said LAUSD could advocate for additional resources to support the youngest learners, and leverage the Board resolution "Creating a Birth to Eight Roadmap" (Res-020-17/18) by working with the community to explore a mixed delivery model and study the data collection. She expressed the need for more Dual Language Learner programs in LAUSD. There is also a need for a commitment to long-term vision for high quality early care and education programs for 4 year olds.

EARLY EDUCATION IN ACTION

Mr. Dean Tagawa, Executive Director, Early Childhood Education, started the conversation by discussing what is currently happening at LAUSD regarding Early Childhood Education, what can be done in the future and discussed the expected outcomes. He shared a short video about building a solid

foundation for early learners. Following the video, he gave an overview of the Early Childhood Education Programs in LAUSD schools. He said there are 620 programs at 448 schools.

Mr. Tagawa discussed studying the transition to elementary school, providing safe places for children to learn, and curriculum alignment for the 21st century. He also reviewed social emotional learning. He shared where LAUSD ranked on the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for June 30, 2015 vs. February 28, 2018.

Mr. Tagawa discussed the success of the Dual Language programs within LAUSD. He reviewed the In-Action activities that take place in the classrooms. Dual Language Learners and participation in high quality early childhood programs benefit and close the achievement gap, have a reduction in costly interventions later in life, and children from low-income families will enter Kindergarten prepared. He shared two more videos summarizing the Early Education approaches, programs offered, and voices from research on Early Childhood Education.

DISCUSSION

Dr. Vladovic said access is important and LAUSD should have partners that can provide services to students that are unavailable through the District.

Dr. Vladovic asked what is the criteria for determining administrative assignments to multiple sites and is there data on the effectiveness of the model used?

Ms. Kelly Gonez said the largest challenge for early education is the funding stream and the mixed levels of responsibilities for early education in a way that does not exist in the K-12 environment. She said she is interested in exploring innovative funding streams and funding models.

Mr. Tagawa said the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) ratings require different elements within every program, one is the annual physical. In LAUSD students are not returning for their annual physical because it is an added cost to the family budget. That hinders us in our QRIS ratings making the District only eligible for 2 points in that category. The District is working with the QRIS architect groups to have the annual physical removed during their next round of ratings.

Mr. Tagawa explained that the transition from early education programs to Kindergarten has multiple reasons behind the decline in enrollment. He said one issue is the enrollment timeline. It should be changed to mimic the Unified enrollment for Early Education Centers. The difference between the Expanded Transitional Kindergarten (ETK) programs and the high transition rate versus early education center programs is the personalization of learning that happens when a parent is at an elementary school. With early education centers they do a lot of their own programs so the question is how to create that same personalization for ETK as well.

Dr. Rodriguez said the resolution, "Creating a Birth to Eight Roadmap for Success in Los Angeles" (Res-020-17/18) is very important. *He asked about the Nature Explore Program in terms of what it would cost to put one in every Early Childhood Education Center.* He said the District has to be aggressive about the Dual Language Learner expansion on Early Childhood Education (ECE). He stated the need to expand the structured play time in ECE and said it should be adopted in elementary, middle and high schools.

Mr. Tagawa said Expanded Transitional Kindergarten (ETK) and Transitional Kindergarten (TK) are options for kids under age 5. TK does not have income eligibility requirements and ETK is available if there is a site in your resident area. Income eligibility is based on a family size and income threshold set

by the state. Mr. Schmerelson said it should be a sliding scale for families to allow partial payment by families just above the limits. Mr. Tagawa said student that will turn 5 while in ETK are eligible.

Ms. Mónica García said every child should have access to a seat in a classroom, starting with students who qualify based on income. She said the system struggles to connect with homeless families, foster youth, or children whose families are involved in the justice system. She welcomed a cross-jurisdictional approach and said the Education Coordinating Council is a great place to look for advocacy.

Mr. Melvoin said he is interested in filling the empty classrooms across the District in a rapid, cost effective manner. He is also interested in the sliding scale fee-based program to help subsidize the cost for families that don't meet the income requirements.

Ms. Ekchian said that the journey to graduation begins in preschool. The redirection of resources and emphasis on raising enrollment as an opportunity is important. She said a lot of working parents choose to take their kids to other elementary schools because of after school care. She also said the District will have 100% graduation if resources are redirected into early education.

Dr. Vladovic said years ago, through grant funding, Superintendent Rubin Zacarias started the program Family Involvement in Children's Education. The program taught parents how to reinforce the programs offered in schools.

Ms. Ekchian said as a reminder that students in concurrent enrollment programs with colleges and universities have the opportunity to go directly into the workforce.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following speakers addressed the Board on the issue indicated:

Ms. Stacy Lee, Children Now	Early Care and Education
Mr. JunHee Doh, Advancement Project	Early Care and Education
Ms. Elsa Jacobson, Child 360	Early Care and Education
Mr. Keith Hardine, Campus Aide, Santee High School	School Safety Proposal
Mr. David Tokofsky, AALA	Early Care and Education
Ms. Becca Patton, First 5 LA	Early Care and Education

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

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Materials related to an item on this Agenda distributed to the Board of Education are available at: <http://laschoolboard.org/03-20-18SpclCOW>.