



**EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL  
MINUTES**

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
Tuesday, April 20, 2010**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) convened for a special called meeting on Tuesday, April 20, 2010, at Austin City Hall, Room #1029, 301 West Second Street, in Austin, Texas.

Board Members in attendance are listed on the attached attendance roll sheet. Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) staff in attendance was Ron Hubbard.

Invited to participate in the discussions as advisors were:

- Brook Son and Anna Lisa Fahrenthold, Travis County HHS
- Leah Meunier, Success By 6
- Cris Perez, Cindy Gamez and Sherry Trebus, Workforce Solutions

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Aletha Huston called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:** The following citizens addressed the Council:

- Leah Roberts, individual – about saving FamilyConnections
- Lynn Payne, former FamilyConnections employee – about child care resource and referral services
- Jackie Taylor, for the Austin Association for the Education of Young Children – about FamilyConnections services
- Melissa Huber, home child care provider – about services at FamilyConnections
- Doris Jones, Gethsemane Lutheran and AAIEYC – about services at FamilyConnections
- Emily Grigsby, FamilyConnections patron - about services at FamilyConnections
- Juanita Spears, advocate for FamilyConnections - signed but did not speak.

**2. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCH** – Council Member Rodriguez reported that the committee recommends approval of the downtown survey document. The committee's motion to approve the downtown survey instrument was approved on a 10-0 vote with Council Members Wallace and Cloud arriving after the vote.

**3. CONSIDERATION OF CHILD CARE QUALITY AND PARENTING SERVICES**

- a. **STAFF BRIEFING:** Ron Hubbard, Early Childhood Coordinator, presented an overview of current child care quality and parenting services that are funded by the City of Austin including what services were provided through FamilyConnections.

- b. RECOMMENDATIONS: The Council and advisors discussed the issues and concerns about the potential loss of the services provided by FamilyConnections and what steps may be taken to address the issues.

A recommendation to City Council to find ways of shifting money immediately to existing contractors on an interim basis to maintain continuity of services was approved on Council Member Holder's motion with Council Member Carpenter's second on a 12-0 vote.

A recommendation to City Council that in budget planning for next fiscal year (Fiscal Year 2010-2011), the Early Childhood Council strongly recommends that the funding for child and family services be maintained at least at the current levels was approved on Council Member Carpenter's motion with Council Member Wallace's second on a 12-0 vote.

Chair Huston agreed to put the two recommendations in a letter from the ECC and send to the Mayor and City Council Members.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Huston adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m. without objection.

# Early Childhood Council

Attendance - 12 Month

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

	LAST	FIRST	MAY 09	JUNE 09	JULY 09	AUG 09	SEPT 09	OCT 09	NOV 09	DEC 09	JAN 10	FEB 10	MAR 10	APR 10	4/20/10 Special	
1	Black	Albert	X	1	1	X	X	X	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
2	Briley	Sandy	1	1	1	1	X	1	1	1	X	1	1	1	1	
3	Carpenter	Sue	1	X	1	1	1	X	X- Harlem	1	1	X- Work	1	1	1	
4	Cloud	Ariel	1	1	1	X	1	E	1	1	E	1	1	1	1	
5	Elsner	Larry	New Appointment				1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
6	Holder	Kyle	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
7	Huston	Aletha	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
8	Keith-Thompson	Debra	New Appointment 11/5/09						1	E	1	1	1	1	1	X
9	Paver	Rhonda	E	1	1	X	1	1	E	1	1	1	X	1	1	1
10	Rodriguez	Cindy	X	1	1	1	1	E	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
11	Rosofsky	Natasha	New Appointment				1	1	1	X- Israel	1	1	1	1	1	1
12	Sanford	Margie	1	1	1	1	1	X	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
13	Wallace	Avis	1	E	E	1	1	E	1	1	1	E	1	1	1	1
	Total Members Present		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	6	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12
								No Quorum								

Present = 1, Absent excused = E,  
Absent unexcused = X



**Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department  
Early Childhood Council**



April 22, 2010

Mayor Leffingwell and City Council Members:

**Chairperson**

Aletha Huston

**Vice-Chairperson**

Kyle Holder

**Members**

Albert Black  
Sandy Briley  
Sue Carpenter  
Ariel Cloud  
Larry Elsner  
Rhonda Paver  
Cindy Rojas Rodriguez  
Natasha Rosofsky  
Margie Sanford  
Debra Keith-Thompson  
Avis Wallace

Early Childhood  
Council  
City of Austin HHSD  
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The Early Childhood Council held a special meeting on Tuesday, April 20, to develop and approve recommendations to City Council regarding future child care quality services and parenting services and future use of general revenue funding as a result of the loss of the social services provided by Family Connections. We have serious concerns about the loss of important services to parents and children in our community that has resulted from the closing of Family Connections.

The services that the City has been funding include child care quality improvements, parenting education and support, salary supplements for child care teachers who improve their educational credentials, and bridging child care vouchers to assist families in crisis. Family Connections has also provided a resource center for parents and child care providers and many forms of parent outreach. All of these services are critically important to the welfare of our most vulnerable young citizens.

As part of our charge to make recommendations to the City about ways of improving quality services for young children and their families, we passed the following.

The Early Childhood Council recommends that the City Council:

1. Find ways of shifting money immediately to existing contractors on an interim basis to maintain continuity of services.
2. In budget planning for next fiscal year (Fiscal Year 2010-2011), the Early Childhood Council strongly recommends that the funding for child and family services be maintained at least at the current levels.

We also reached a consensus that the Early Childhood Council intends to generate long-term recommendations about the most effective ways to allocate funding to support healthy families and children. We will develop these recommendations at our regular meeting on May 11 and will forward them for your consideration.

We appreciate the commitment of the City of Austin to the children and families in our community.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aletha C. Huston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Aletha C. Huston  
Chair

xc: Bert Lumbreras, Assistant City Manager  
David Lurie, HHSD Director  
Vince Cobalis, HHSD Human Services Assistant Director