



Annual Internal Review EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL (ECC)

This report covers the time period of 1/1/2012 to 12/31/2012

The Board/Commission mission statement from City Code §2-1-123 is:

The Early Childhood Council shall:

- (1) make recommendations to the city council for the creation, development, and implementation of programs that promote optimal development for young children;
- (2) develop, for recommendation to city council, programs and activities that contribute to the continued development of a system of high-quality early care and education and after-school programs for Austin's children;
- (3) explore and develop, for recommendation to city council, cooperative arrangements with area governments in the metropolitan region to support a system of quality early care and education;
- (4) encourage volunteerism and philanthropic efforts in order to generate broad-based community involvement and support for quality early care and education and promote the well being of families of young children; and
- (5) develop, for recommendation to city council, strategies encouraging individuals and agencies to continually improve the quality of their services for young children; and
- (6) support innovative approaches to quality early care and education and leadership development in fields relating to the optimal development of young children.

- 1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

In the listing below, please find the Early Childhood Council's recommendations.

Recommendations were made to the City Council regarding:

- Texas Workforce Commission changes to child care parent fee structure.
- Texas Workforce Commission changes to child care reimbursement rates.
- Child care and children's services being addressed in the Colony Park development planning.
- ECC support of and recommendation to City Council to support Austin/Travis County School Readiness Action Plan.
 - Included visits to individual City Council members in support of School Readiness Action Plan by ECC members.
- Maintaining at least the current funding level for Community Development Block Grant child care contracts.
- Including the goals of the School Readiness Action Plan in the Imagine Austin Plan.
- Uses for the additional early childhood funding included in the FY 2013 budget.
- Including early childhood issues in the City's Legislative Agenda.
- Support of a smoking ban on restaurant and bar patios.
- Changes to the Parks and Recreation Department requirements for child care centers to use public pools.

The ECC worked to connect with related community groups both by inviting presentations to the ECC and by ECC Members visiting the other groups. Please refer to the following list of Presentations and / or Community Contacts:

- School Readiness Action Plan by Success By 6 (United Way)
 - Including active membership on the School Readiness Action Plan Leadership Team
- Meeting with Neighborhood Housing and Community Development about Colony Park
- Neighborhood Housing and Community Development – FY 2013 Action Plan Process
- Communication with Chair of Commission for Women about cooperation on work for child care for low-income, single parent families
- Contact with Workforce Solutions about coordination regarding child care issues
- Update by state Child Care Licensing regarding recent changes
- Taking Charge of Change (leadership development for child care directors) presentations by multiple participants
- Several ECC members attended the HHSD joint FY 2013 budget presentation for Boards and Commissions.
- Imagine Austin Plan Update
- Several ECC members attended a Parent Leadership Institute meeting to hear parents' concerns regarding early childhood issues
- AISD Back to School Summary Report about the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year for PreK
- Texas Early Learning Council Update (a state level council appointed by the Governor)
- Austin Association for the Education of Young Children – multiple updates about activities
- HHSD about second-hand smoke on restaurant and bar patios.

2. Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.

All six of the charges to the ECC are addressed in its activities and the activities the ECC supported and through both recommendations and work. The highlight of the year is the ongoing work on the Austin/Travis County School Readiness Action Plan that included community-wide participation from stakeholders including governments, non-profits, early childhood professionals and parents with the ECC as a major contributor.

The full Austin/Travis County School Readiness Action Plan is available online at:
http://www.unitedwayaustin.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/UWATX_SchoolReadinessActionPlan_full_May2012.pdf

3. List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year.

Please see the attached Early Childhood Council 2013 Work Plan.



EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL 2013 WORK PLAN

Charge: The Early Childhood Council shall:

- (1) make recommendations to the city council for the creation, development, and implementation of programs that promote optimal development for young children;
- (2) develop, for recommendation to city council, programs and activities that contribute to the continued development of a system of high- quality early care and education and after-school programs for Austin's children;
- (3) explore and develop, for recommendation to city council, cooperative arrangements with area governments in the metropolitan region to support a system of quality early care and education;
- (4) encourage volunteerism and philanthropic efforts in order to generate broad-based community involvement and support for quality early care and education and promote the well being of families of young children; and
- (5) develop, for recommendation to city council, strategies encouraging individuals and agencies to continually improve the quality of their services for young children; and
- (6) support innovative approaches to quality early care and education and leadership development in fields relating to the optimal development of young children.

Assignments and Goals

Executive

- With United Way, organize and conduct visits to city council, county commissioners, city and county HHS agency officials. Advocate for
 - restoring social service contract funding
 - using criteria that include prevention for next funding competition
 - expand scholarships for child care employees
 - increase funding for Jeanette Watson salary supplements
- Communicate regularly with City Council, County Commissioners Court, and agency officials with written memos (short) as well as visits.
- Create calendar of city and county budget cycles and key dates for ECC.
- Continue procedures for regular communication with other city boards and commissions that were begun in 2012.

- Regular reports and follow-up between ECC and related groups.

Policy and Finance

- Review community plans and make recommendations regarding needs of children and families, including: School Readiness, CHIP, Imagine Austin, and Workforce Development plans.
- Develop strategies to engage parents, and train some parents to attend visits with public officials. Work through Success By 6 parent leadership groups.
- Continue procedures for regular communication with other city boards and commissions that were begun in 2012.
- Have regular communication with Workforce Solutions Board and staff, and provide public comments regarding CCDF funds and the annual child care plan to the Texas Workforce Commission.

Providers

- Continue to build relationships with local providers.
- Partnerships between providers and Licensing representatives.
- Address hot topics and emerging issues, and have discussions with relevant officials to improve public services for children, particularly in underserved areas.

All

- Continue to actively participate in and support the ongoing cycle of the early childhood community planning process including membership on the School Readiness Action Plan Leadership Team.
- Follow-up on School Readiness Action Plan, specifically where the ECC is listed as the responsible entity.