



**EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES
2015**

**REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, February 11,**

The Early Childhood Council convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, February 11, 2015, at City Hall, Boards and Commissions Room, in Austin, Texas.

Board Members in Attendance: Kyle Holder (Chair), Jacquie Porter (Vice-Chair), Dustin Breithaupt, Larry Elsner, Aletha Huston, Laura Koenig, Anurita Mitra, Rhonda Paver, Cindy Rodriguez, Brook Son and Avis Wallace. Staff in Attendance: Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) staff - Ron Hubbard and Cynthia Gamez

Chair Holder called the Board Meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

1. INTRODUCTIONS: Members of the audience introduced themselves to the Council members.
2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None
3. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: None
4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The January 14, 2014, regular meeting Minutes were approved on Council Member Huston's motion. Council Member Breithaupt seconded on a 7-0-1 vote with Council Member Elsner abstaining.
5. PRESENTATIONS: None

6. WORK GROUP REPORTS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- Executive Work Group –
 - Chair Holder led discussion regarding the United Way Breakfast Briefing on Early Childhood for City Council Members. Alison Bentley from United Way reported that 3-4 City of Austin Council Members had RSVP'd. Council Member Son volunteered to be the liaison with United Way for ECC Co-Host responsibilities. A motion was made by Member Huston to approve moving the March ECC meeting to United Way and to start the meeting at 9:30am. Vice-Chair Porter seconded on an 11-0 vote.
- Policy and Finance Work Group –
 - Council Member Huston gave an update on the Welcome Letter to new City of Austin Council Members.
 - The Work Group is waiting to align their Work Plan with the new School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP). The group will add that the ECC will be responsible for coordinating the Ready Communities section of the SRAP.
 - Council Member Elsner reported that the group would like more clarification regarding vaccination requirements and medical guidance from A/TC HHSD.

Would like for A/TC HHSD to make recommendation so that child care providers are in line with public health. The group would like to request for Dr. Phillip Huang to present on adult vaccinations and to give guidance on medical issues that may result if staff/children are not vaccinated. The Provider Work Group will send HHSD staff questions for Dr. Huang. Presentation will be on March 11th.

- Provider's Work Group –
 - Council Member Koenig updated members on the current work underway that is looking at ways to reduce fees or property taxes for centers that meet very high quality standards and serve low-income children. Discussion around “low-income” focus which could be too political. Child Care centers would need to be classified as an educational agency versus “custodial care” to get a tax exemption. A suggestion to look at the actual amount of property relief (dollars) in terms of the number of centers that would qualify was made. Will request help from QC3 Work Group for definition of quality and United Way for data.
 - Next Provider meeting is on 2/26/15 after the Workforce Solutions Director's Network meeting.
 - The Provider Group Work Plan will remain the same but they will take a more active role during Week of the Young Child (WOYC). The group would also like for City of Austin City Council to recognize WOYC through a resolution.

7. STAFF BRIEFING AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS –

- Cindy Gamez reported that the ECC members need to update their application if they would like to be considered for re-appointment. Clarified that the ECC will continue to meet as regularly scheduled and that ECC current appointments will expire on June 30th, 2015. Chair Holder encouraged members to identify ECC community members who live within district to apply.

8. SUCCESS BY 6 UPDATE –

- a. Alison Bentley reported that SB6 is updating data and requesting information from agencies.
- b. Member Koenig added that there is an on-going collaboration effort between City of Austin, E3 Alliance, ISD's to adopt new quality standards for Out of School Time (OST). Looking at TXPOST standards. Next steps: group is going before Joint Sub-Committee to present. Suggested that Workforce Solutions be a part of the conversation since they invest a lot of dollars in after-school care.

9. RELATED GROUPS – None

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS –

- a. Third Sector Pay for Success Presentation
- b. Healthy Texas Babies Presentation

ADJOURNMENT - Chair Holder adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m. without objection.



February 11, 2015

Chairperson

Kyle Holder

Vice-Chairperson

Jacquie Porter

Members

Albert Black
Dustin Breithaupt
Larry Elsner
Aletha Huston
Debra Keith-Thompson
Laura Koenig
Anurita Mitra
Rhonda Paver
Cindy Rojas Rodriguez
Brook Son
Avis Wallace

**Early Childhood
Council**

City of Austin HHSD

To: Mayor Adler and Members of the Austin City Council
Re: The City of Austin Early Childhood Council

This letter is to introduce you to the Early Childhood Council, one of the many boards and commissions of the City of Austin to which you will appoint a member. It has 13 members with expertise in early childhood, including early childhood education providers, directors of programs for children and families, and academic experts. Travis County and AISD each appoint one member; the 11 others are appointed by the City Council and the Mayor. The ECC is an active and knowledgeable group that fulfills its charge.

The Early Childhood Council, established in 1985 as the Child Care Council, is charged with making recommendations to the City Council that support:

- Optimal development of young children and their families
- Continued development of a system of high-quality early care and education
- Cooperative arrangements to support quality early care and education
- Volunteerism and philanthropic efforts to support the well-being of families and children

Activities and Accomplishments in 2013 and 2014 include:

- Played a major role in implementing and updating the United Way's School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP), which now serves as a guideline for both city and county social service contracts in the area of early childhood
 - Several members serve on the Leadership Team for the SRAP
 - The ECC is responsible for monitoring several strategies
- Planned and carried out a Parent Engagement Project jointly with the City Public Engagement Office, using an online survey and focus groups to learn about parents' needs and concerns
- Made recommendations to City Council, and, upon request, to the Department of Health and Human Services about support for social services for young children
- Recommended and supported the City Council resolution to increase enrollment of children from low-income families and English language learners in full-day pre-kindergarten in AISD

- Worked with staff in the public library system to increase services in low-income neighborhoods and to children from non-English-speaking families (e.g., Spanish story times and summer programs).
- Responded to requests from city officials regarding issues affecting children (e.g., the Healthy Babies Initiative, outdoor smoking ban)
- Supported initiatives to improve quality in early care and education settings, including encouraging scholarships for early childhood teachers, hosting Directors for Change, consulting with Workforce Solutions regarding quality improvement efforts, responding to the Texas Workforce Commission proposals for quality initiatives
- Made recommendations designed to assure that community planning efforts addressed the needs of young children and families (e. g., Imagine Austin)
- Addressed issues raised by early childhood education providers, including rules limiting use of public swimming pools by child care centers, fire and health regulations, and zoning issues
- Maintained active communication with United Way, Workforce Solutions, AISD, the public library system, the Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing, the Austin Association for the Education of Young Children, and the city/county/AISD Joint Committee
- With other community members, made visits to City Council members and Travis County Commission members to discuss the School Readiness Action Plan, Austin/Travis County investments in early childhood education compared to our peer cities, and other issues affecting young children and families.

Sincerely,



Kyle Holder, Chair

Cc: Austin City Council
Carlos Rivera, HHSD Director