



**EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, November 14, 2018**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) convened in a regular meeting on Wednesday, November 14, 2018, at Workforce Solutions Capital Area in Austin, Texas.

Board Members in Attendance: Chair Elsner, Members Huston, Sanchez, Wren, Burson-Polston, Harrison, Cortes-Castillo

Staff in attendance: Rachel Farley, Cindy Gamez, Laura Williamson

Chair Elsner called the Meeting to order at 8:50 a.m.

1. **INTRODUCTIONS-** ECC members, guests, and presenters introduced themselves.
2. **DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST-** None
3. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL-** None
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Member Huston moved to approve the October 10, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes with no changes and Member Wren seconded the motion. Minutes were approved by a vote of 7-0.
5. **PRESENTATIONS:** None
6. **NEW BUSINESS AND POSSIBLE ACTIONS:**
 - a. Chair Updates- Larry Elsner
 - i. Proposed action: ECC authorizes the chair and ECC members to send letters on behalf of the ECC to Council and the Mayor in support of any future Council resolutions introduced that move forward recommendations from the Child Care and Pre-K Resolution Work Group that were submitted to Council in April 2018.

Member Huston moved to pass motion with an amendment that letters may be sent to other relevant stakeholders in addition to City Council and the Mayor. Member Harrison seconded the motion and it was approved by a vote of 7-0.
 - b. Policy Work Group Updates- The policy work group met to do discuss the 2019 planning retreat portion of this meeting.
 - c. Finance Work Group Updates- None
 - d. Community Partnerships and Engagement Work Group Updates- None
 - e. Updates from ECC representative on the Success by 6 School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP) Leadership Team- Mary Jane Burson- None
7. **STAFF BRIEFING**
 - a. Updates on Prenatal to 3 work and Family Connects, and invites to City officials to speak with ECC in 2019- Rachel Farley, APH

Invites have been extended to City Manager Cronk, Mayor Adler, Council Members Alter and Garza, and Police Chief Manley to attend a 2019 ECC meeting to discuss their early childhood priorities. CM Garza's office confirmed that she will attend the February 13 ECC meeting. For the Texas Family Connects program, Austin Public Health is still working on the legal agreement with St. David's South Austin Medical Center. In the meantime, Family Connects nurses are doing home visits with clients referred through OBs, WIC, and the program's web site. Austin's Prenatal to Age 3 team members travelled to Washington, DC, December 5-7 to attend a cross-site convening with National League of Cities and five other cities working on prenatal to 3 initiatives.

8. **RELATED GROUPS UPDATES** (Only as needed)

Martha Burris of Workforce Solutions Capital Area said the waiting list for child care subsidies in Travis County is down to 250 families and staff are working on outreach to these families.

9. **2019 PLANNING- Facilitator- Cindy Gamez**

a. **Role of the ECC-** Chair Elsner reviewed the role of the ECC as an advisory body to the City Council regarding early childhood issues and a group that can endorse the efforts of others, as they did, for example, with the community's Success By Six School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP).

b. **Overview of COA Strategic Outcomes and Indicators included in Austin Strategic Direction 2023, and facilitation of discussion regarding where early childhood aligns- Laura Williamson.**

The Strategic Direction 2023 can be found at this link:

https://www.austintexas.gov/financeonline/afo_content.cfm?s=73&p=160

The strategic direction is organized around six strategic outcomes the City is striving for in the next three to five years: Economic Opportunity and Affordability, Mobility, Safety, Health and Environment, Culture and Lifelong Learning, and Government that Works for All. City budgets have been done on a departmental basis in the past. This year, the City budget was developed around these six strategic outcomes. The Economic Opportunity and Affordability section includes:

- As a strategy: "Create equitable access to quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) by supporting families who do not qualify for existing free programs and cannot afford quality programs on their own, increasing availability of quality ECE programs, and encouraging living wages for ECE providers."
- As metrics these two community indicators:
 - Number and percentage of children enrolled in quality Early Childhood Education programs (as evidenced by meeting Texas Rising Star criteria). [This metric falls within one of Council's top 10 indicators (those in which Council would like to see a high level of improvement over the next 2-3 years), "Skills and capability of our community workforce (including education)."]
 - Percentage of households that are considered cost-burdened based on calculation of housing and transportation costs relative to income (utilities, child care, property tax, and health care costs to be added as data becomes available)

As the ECC makes recommendations to Council, it may be useful to describe how those recommendations tie into the Austin Strategic Direction 2023.

c. **Work group recommendations to Council as result of Council Member Garza's 2017 High Quality Child Care/Pre-K3 resolution**

- i. **Status of recommendations-** Rachel Farley reviewed a table (see meeting back-up materials) detailing the status of work group recommendations given to Council in response to Resolution Number 20170928-057.
- ii. **Discussion- How ECC can support efforts around the resolution work group recommendations in 2019**

- If APH reconvenes the work group to respond to future Council efforts, ECC should be represented.
- An ECC representative can provide input to the consultant who will be exploring potential public-private partnerships and incentives that would increase access to child care.
- Child care centers on AISD campuses are within the district's Community Education Department under Gloria Williams.
- ECC can encourage continued dialogue on recommendations that have not yet been acted upon.
- One Foundation Communities site has a child care facility. The decision is usually made to put available space toward additional apartments or community centers, rather than child care centers. Members commented that the greatest need is likely for infant and toddler seats. Members see Foundation Communities as a strong organization and are interested in pursuing any opportunities to support and encourage them to have child care affiliated with additional properties.

d. **Success By 6 School Readiness Action Plan (SRAP) for Austin and Travis County, 2019-2023**

i. **Overview of groups taking the lead on particular goals and strategies-** Sue Carpenter, United Way, gave an overview of the new SRAP using a DRAFT one-pager of the framework (see back-up materials)

- If we want to change things for families with young children, we need to take a systems approach. Also focusing on sustaining and expanding programs and policies to support families.
- Child and Family Outcomes- what we can expect to happen if we make the systems changes and policy and program expansions.
- Theory of change- for child to be kindergarten ready, they need to have supported families, quality care and education, health and mental health services, and safe and stimulating communities.
- Success By 6 SRAP is community collective impact initiative, not a United Way initiative, a community initiative. SRAP was first adopted in 2010 and this 3rd iteration begins January 1.
- SRAP will refer to the COA Strategic Outcomes in collateral materials.
- Has a strategic emphasis on low income families and the work is done through an equity lens because local data shows that family income correlates strongly to opportunity and achievement gaps in school readiness.

ii. **Discussion- How ECC can align with and support the SRAP in 2019**

- ECC is a key part of the SRAP efforts.
- Note- Shifting the SRAP terminology from Ready Families, Ready Communities, etc., to language with better communication power.
- There is a SRAP data committee led by the County's planning department that determines how the SRAP goals are defined and measures progress.
- In Supported Families section of the SRAP Goals and Strategies (see back-up materials), there are areas in which SRAP work groups are likely to ask for ECC support (see blue highlights; ex- asking Council for additional funding for specific effort). There are areas COA is working on that ECC could support (see yellow highlights). Ex- pushing for equity in East and West Austin in programming for young children at Austin Public Libraries (APL); encouraging more programming for young children in the Parks and Recreation Department (PARC)
- SRAP 3.0 printing in April latest kindergarten readiness data can be included.
- United Way is finalizing baseline data (for example, on home visiting and school readiness, and the gaps) and can share that with the ECC.
- Shifting to say "very high quality" to distinguish between Texas Rising Star-rated centers and those with 4 stars and above.

e. **Discussion:**

i. **Are there any additional 2019 priorities that are part of the ECC's mission/role?**

ii. Prioritize the identified areas of focus for 2019

- Support the SRAP and CM Garza's efforts, ensure the necessary funding is allocated
- Strength of ECC- ECC can partner with Success By 6 to do fact/data sheets by district for CMs
 - Fact sheets focused on work group recs, Ex- gap in cost of high quality care per kid
 - Link child care and the child care workforce to affordability, child care is the 2nd largest item on family budgets after housing; consider all families who may struggle, including those above federal poverty levels
 - Compare our City investments in EC to other cities
 - Amount of COA money spent on children versus other issues
- Learning curve often high for new ECC members. When meeting with Council members, have a shorter script and facts to focus on.
- Anna Lisa will give regular debriefs from SRAP data committee
- Resolution Recommendations ECC wants to focus on
 - Coordinated Early Childhood Enrollment System- also included on SRAP
 - Working with COA departments- APL, APD, PARD- also included on SRAP
 - APL- Get information on story times- APL must do outreach and choose times that work for families; could ask head of APL to speak with ECC; may be an opportunity for the in-person support piece of the coordinated development system to be located at libraries.
- ECC members can check in with the office that appointed them regularly to encourage their involvement in supporting CM Garza's leadership on early childhood issues.
 - Some CMs do regular district town hall meetings with presentations, district office hours, and/or attend neighborhood association meetings. Could do SRAP presentations at district town halls/speakers bureau of ECC members to tell community about Success By 6 SRAP
 - Council visits- could set appointments right after April ECC meeting
 - Build relationships with CMs, but offices also want specific "asks"
- ECC wants a representative on any planning committee for the Dove Springs Health Center and/or wants ECC to meet with that committee

iii. What work groups would help the ECC meet the identified priorities?

1. Work group to draft list of questions for City officials invited to ECC meetings in 2019- to be completed by end of January

2. Other work groups

- Policy- consider budget/funding issues as needed, moving forward work group recommendations, SRAP priorities, and early childhood initiatives led by Council; data fact sheets
 - Lead- Anna Lisa; Members- Ami, Aletha, Raul, Sebastian
- Community Partnerships and Engagement- reach out to Quality of Life commissions, find out about district town halls or other district events, bring back information on Round Rock Ready
 - Lead- Rebecca; Members- Mary Jane, Monica

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Presentations
 - i. Community 2-gen work and strategic plan
 - ii. United Way's family engagement initiative
 - iii. Texas Family Connects
 - iv. Workforce Solutions Capital Area- How additional funding for quality and subsidies is being used
- b. City officials invited to speak with ECC
- c. Next meeting- Wednesday, January 9, Location- City Hall, 9:00 A.M.

ADJOURNMENT- Chair Elsner adjourned the meeting at Adjourned at 11:29 without objection.