



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 739
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<http://latchildrencommission.org>**

Monday, March 2, 2015

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING (15-1090)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Call to Order. (15-0836)

Present: Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, Commissioner Sunny Kang, Commissioner John Kim, Commissioner Liz Seipel, Commissioner Wendy B. Smith, Commissioner Adelina Sorkin LCSW/ACSW, Vice Chair Carol O. Biondi and Vice Chair Sydney Kamlager

Excused: Commissioner Genevra Berger, Commissioner Adrienne Konigar-Macklin, Commissioner Jacquelyn McCroskey and Commissioner Steven M. Olivas Esq.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Introductions of March 2, 2015 meeting attendees. (15-0837)

Self-introductions were made.

2. Approval of the March 2, 2015 Meeting Agenda. (15-0838)

On motion of Commissioner Kang, seconded by Commissioner Sorkin (Commissioners Berger, Curry, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, Olivas, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved this item.

3. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of February 2, 2015. (15-0839)

On motion of Commissioner Kang, seconded by Commissioner Smith (Commissioners Berger, Curry, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, Olivas, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved this item.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

4. Vice Chair's report for March 2, 2015. (15-0840)

Vice Chair Biondi reported on the following:

- **The Statement of Economic Interests annual filing deadline is Wednesday, April 1, 2015.**
- **The Transition Team for the Office of Child Protection Special meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 9, 2015 at 9:30 a.m.**
- **The Public Safety Cluster meeting will be held March 4, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Conference Room 830.**
- **The Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC) meeting will be held April 22, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. at the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court, 201 Centre Plaza Drive #2700, Monterey Park, CA 91754.**
- **The Office of Child Protection is seeking stakeholder input to develop a County-wide Mission Statement on child safety. The Commission has been invited to participate in this endeavor. Two forums taking place Friday, March 6, 2015 in Lancaster and Monday, March 9, 2015 in Los Angeles.**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, and Olivas being absent), the Commission accepted the Vice Chair's report.

5. Department of Children and Family Services Director's Report for March 2, 2015 by Philip Browning, Director. (15-0841)

Director Browning reported on the following:

- **The Los Angeles Times recently published an article regarding the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children/Youth Welcome Center located in the LAC + USC campus. This center focuses on a child friendly environment for children in need of immediate placement. This article referenced DCFS' challenges in locating placement within the 24-hour period for youth that come into this center.**

- **Los Angeles County will opt to join and participate in the Approved Relative Caregiver Funding Option Program (ARC) in March 2015 with an implementation date of June 2015. DCFS and the State have confirmed the number of cases considered for the July 1, 2014 ARC deadline to be 3,400 individuals.**
- **DCFS is working to update its Strategic Plan and budget.**
- **To date, DCFS has hired 800 new social workers and the attrition rate is at eight percent (8%).**

Commissioner Curry commented on the Welcome Center and noted that based on past experiences, many youth coming into the child welfare system have mental health issues and personnel are not adequately trained to deal with the mental health needs of this population. Vice Chair Biondi also noted that law enforcement uses the Welcome Center as a shelter. Commissioner Sorkin added that the main issues that should be addressed are prevention, early intervention and the overuse of psychotropic medication. She also noted that the Department of Mental Health (DMH) does not have a program in place to assist these youth and that the DMH has not spent the 51 percent of the Mental Health Services Act funding on children. After discussion, the Commission declared its intent to convene an Ad-hoc committee comprised of Commissioners Curry and Smith and DCFS staff to address the challenges that DCFS is facing pertaining to the Welcome Center.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Director Browning responded:

DCFS currently monitors the group homes compliance for the medical and contract components.

- **The psychotropic medications are monitored by the Court, psychiatrists and pharmacists.**
- **The discrepancy that exists between the State and DCFS on number of psychotropic medication usage by Los Angeles County youth in foster care is being discussed for a resolution. The State bases its number of psychotropic medication use on the number of paid prescriptions by Medi-Cal. A request to the State by DCFS is underway to receive a printout of the psychotropic medications; however, the State Department of Health Services requires a Memorandum of Understanding to be signed between the DCFS and the State before this information can be released. DCFS is also working with the State to automate the sharing of information related to psychotropic medication prescriptions.**

- **The Family Preservation Request for Proposal (RFP) is currently under review by the Chief Executive Office, DCFS and the Department of Public Health.**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, and Olivas being absent), the Commission accepted Director Browning's report, and declared its intent to convene an Ad-hoc committee comprised of Commissioners Curry and Smith, and DCFS staff.

III. PRESENTATIONS

- 6. Presentation on 211 LA's Developmental Screening and Care Coordination of Children's Court Clients.**

Maribel Marin, Executive Director, 211 LA County

Patricia Herrera, M.S., Program Director, 211 LA County (15-0999)

Ms. Herrera presented the following:

- **211 LA County (211) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that serves the County of Los Angeles and handles 500,000 calls each year. The families that call 211 are primarily low-income families that struggle with meeting basic day-to-day living needs.**
- **211 maintains a database that contains nearly 50,000 different services and programs which are free and available on the 211 website, as well as many of the County's departmental websites.**
- **211 staff attends to callers' issues, conduct assessments, and works with families to identify the most pressing living needs. Among the 2,000 calls received each day, 211 notes that the majority of callers are reaching out for assistance with basic living needs, such as utility assistance, shelter, and/or food expenses.**
- **211 serves as the gateway for the Family Solutions Center Program, which links callers to 12 different shelters that partner with 211. Through this partnership, 211 is able to assist with problems that extend beyond the basic living needs, such as employment.**
- **211 has created a partnership network of over 60 agencies throughout Los Angeles County, including all seven of the Regional Centers in Los Angeles County in a single Memoranda of Understanding (MOU). Through this MOU, 211 is able to achieve greater efficiency for its**

pre-screened families. For example, 211 guarantees its partners that they will receive children who are eligible for their programs and parents who are prepared to go through their process.

- A small study conducted in the San Gabriel Regional Center, revealed that families involved with 211 received services within 15 days as opposed to the average of 45 days without 211 intervention. The success rate observed with the cohort that received 211's services was attributed to the parents knowledge and understanding of the Regional Center's processes.
- 211 has an on-site location at the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court staffed with Information/Referral Specialists who assist families with court orders that were difficult to comprehend, or referrals to court-mandated programs to fulfill the Judge's orders. This program was well supported by former Judge Michael Nash as it increased family reunification.
- 211's early involvement has assisted with identifying Latino and African American low-income children at risk for the Autism Spectrum Disorder at ages 2 and 3, which is typically identified in children of this population at ages 5 through 7.
- 211 is looking to further develop its partnership with additional medical hubs. As 211 identifies more at-risk children, the need to connect them to pediatric support also increases.
- At its peak, 211 screened nearly 3,000 children. In September of 2014, First 5 LA ended funding for the services provided by 211. Currently, the program is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and as a result, only services 50 children. The State Department of Developmental Services has expressed interest in providing support with the goal of replicating this program in other counties; and 211 anticipates this funding will be available in March 2015. However, because the State program focuses on providing at-risk screening in five other Counties, it is anticipated that this funding will not accommodate a considerable amount of children in Los Angeles County.
- 211 has been working with DCFS to obtain bridge funding through the Foster Care Pilot Study; however, determining whether the Children's Court or the Telephone Screening Program should be funded has caused a delay in the funding to move forward.

- **211 is the only program that screens all children without an age restriction, and extends its screening and care coordination services to all other children in each family as well. According to 211's calculation, the cost of each coordinated case --from screening to confirmation of services received—amounts to \$350 per child.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Ms. Marin and Ms. Herrera responded as follows:

- **All seven Regional Centers accommodate all children from birth to age five, as long as the child is eligible under the Early Intervention (Part C of IDEA) or Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Act.**
- **The cost to fund the 3,000 children benchmark is \$500,000. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is currently in the planning phases of their Innovation Grant Funding and this past year, 211 was included in the Master Agreement with DMH and are eligible to receive funding.**
- **211 has identified the Department of Public Health's (DPH) Targeted Case Management Program as a potential funding source; however, when 211 submitted an application to DPH two years ago, they were informed that DPH was not accepting applications from any outside County agencies.**
- **211 receives great support from the new Presiding Judge of the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court. To expand 211 services at the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court, additional office space was identified for 211 employees.**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, and Olivas being absent), the 211 LA's Developmental Screening and Care Coordination of Children's Court Clients' Report was received and filed.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
[SEE SUPPORTING VIDEO](#)
[SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

7. Presentation on recent research conducted by GRACE and The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, regarding Child Poverty in California:

Conway Collis, President & Chief Executive Officer, GRACE
Sandra Sanchez, Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, GRACE

Courtney Powers, Vice President & General Counsel, GRACE (15-0997)

Mr. Collis reported the following:

- **GRACE is an acronym for Gather • Respect • Advocate • Change • Engage, and is sponsored by the Daughters of Charity, and has a basic mission to address systemic problems of poverty.**
- **California is the child poverty capital of the United States and has a disproportionate impact on Latino and African American children. One third of Latino and African American children live below the poverty line. As time progresses, human and economic factors are projected to contribute to the growing issue of childhood poverty. The amount of taxes being generated will be reduced as a result of the Baby Boomer population moving toward retirement. Therefore, growing youth population will require additional services as they move into adulthood.**
- **GRACE co-convened a large conference with the California Endowment that focused on foster care as an attributing factor of poverty. Through a series of workgroups attended by leading providers, advocates, and elected officials, GRACE assembled a continuum of programs identified to have the greatest impact to address childhood poverty. GRACE also collaborated with the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality and embarked on an eight-month study that identified the most cost-effective and impactful programs and services. This study received much public support through its academic backing.**
- **GRACE sponsored Statewide polling of focus groups and determined that Californians see the issue of child poverty as the single greatest concern, followed closely by K-12 education and crime.**
- **GRACE's goal is to build upon the programs and services that already exist. Grace wants to help facilitate enrollment rates for services as California has a low rate of enrollment in existing services. For example, only 50 percent of Californian families eligible for CalFresh are enrolled.**

To address early intervention for children below the federal poverty line in California, GRACE focuses on prenatal care, home visitation programs, and early childhood education. Studies show that home visiting programs result in reduced child abuse, increased home safety, reduced emergency medical care, and improved developmental outcomes for children. Currently, early childhood education opportunities only cover one third of the children below the federal poverty line. The overall cost to make slots available for all children in California below the federal poverty line is \$2.1 billion.

- **The County of Los Angeles has the highest percent of poverty in the State, with 26 percent of the population living in poverty. Efforts to address poverty will have a large impact statewide; one intervention effort is preparing children for college. Statistics show that 50 percent of high school dropouts live in poverty, 25 percent of high school graduates live in poverty, but less than 6 percent of college graduates live in poverty.**

To provide immediate assistance to low-income families by supplementing their income, GRACE proposes the following:

- **California should join the 26 other states that have a state funded Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The credit GRACE proposes would equal 10 percent of federal credit, which would yield an additional \$240 per filer eligible to receive this credit. This proposal would impact 3.2 million filers and has a cost of \$785 million.**
- **Increase the CalWorks Grants by 10 percent resulting in an additional \$600 million to benefit more than a million additional children.**
- **Provide job training and career pathways in line with the Linked Learning Pilot Program (AB 790, Furutani. Career technical education: Linked Learning Pilot Program), legislation, which connects community colleges with careers.**

To accomplish recommendations in GRACE's proposal, the funding requires \$7.5 billion per year or 6 percent of the current State Budget.

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, and Olivas being absent), Grace's report was received and filed.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

IV. DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

- 8. Discussion on the Children's Defense Fund's "Ending Child Poverty Report" dated January 28, 2015. (15-1030)**

Ms. Michelle Newell, Senior Policy Associate, Children's Defense Fund California, reported on the following:

- **Currently there are 14.7 million children living in poverty in the United**

States and among the 35 industrialized countries, the United States ranks second highest in childhood poverty rates.

- **Based on the 2011 statistics from the California Poverty Measure, Los Angeles County has a child poverty rate of 30 percent when factoring in the cost of living and the impact of government assistance programs. 730,000 children in Los Angeles County live below the federal poverty line and 26 percent of children in the County are food insecure. For example, in order to afford a two-bedroom apartment at fair market value, a parent-earning minimum wage must work a total of 115 hours per week.**
- **Impoverished children are often times a feeder class into the juvenile justice system and the criminal justice system, which results in intergenerational cycles of poverty. Childhood poverty cost the nation an estimated \$1 billion per year in lost productivity and earnings, and increased health and crime costs.**

The Children's Defense Fund of California recommends the following proposals as solutions to address childhood poverty in Los Angeles County:

- **Raising minimum wage**
- **Establishing Earned Income Tax Credit at the County level**
- **Expanding affordable child care**
- **Establishing affordable public transportation for all students**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, and Olivas, being absent), the Children's Defense Fund's "Ending Child Poverty Report" was received and filed.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

9. Recommendation to nominate a Commission Representative and an Alternate to the Education Coordinating Council. (15-1007)

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Konigar-Macklin, McCroskey, and Olivas being absent), this item was continued to March 16, 2015.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

10. Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (15-0842)

There were none.

Announcements

11. Announcements for the meeting of March 2, 2015. (15-0843)

There were none.

Public Comment

12. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (15-0844)

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

Adjournment

13. Adjournment for the meeting of February 2, 2015. (15-0845)

The meeting adjourned at 12:03 p.m.