



Workforce Advisory Committee Meeting Summary: September 9, 2020

Attendees: Tonia McMillian, Miren Algorri, Virginia Eigen, AnnLouise Bonnitto, Amelia Soto, Zoila Toma, Debra Ward, Latonda Williams

Number of virtual participants: 254

1. Welcome and Introductions (Tonia McMillian)

- In her opening remarks, Chair Tonia McMillian presented an overview of the meeting structure, including describing the process the committee will use to select two members to serve on the full Early Childhood Policy Council. Chair McMillian also provided a brief report to the committee and members of the public on themes discussed during the first meeting that included: 1) Fully recognizing the role of the early childhood workforce, 2) Improving the structure of supports available to providers, 3) Rethinking compensation to ensure equity, 4) Improving administrative structures and program operations, and 5) Dismantling systemic racist policies that maintain the inequitable status quo.
- Chair McMillian also reminded the committee and the public of the September 30, 2020 Census deadline and encouraged everyone to spread the word to their organizations, partners and families they serve.

2. Early Childhood Policy Council Appointments

- Chair McMillian introduced the Council appointment process. California Health and Human Services (CHHS) Deputy Secretary Kris Perry facilitated the voting process to appoint two members of the committee to join the Early Childhood Policy Council. Deputy Secretary Perry reminded members that those elected to the full Council will take on Council member duties in addition to their current advisory committee duties that include attending 4 Council meetings per year.
- Deputy Secretary Perry initiated the process by first asking each committee member if he/she would like to withdraw their name from consideration. After establishing a list of candidates, Perry gave each candidate 30 seconds to explain why they would like to be considered for the council role. After hearing from each candidate, each committee member identified two people they would like to appoint to the Council.
- Committee chair Tonia McMillian and member Mirren Algorri were appointed to the full Council.

3. Master Plan for Early Learning and Care

- Master Plan for Early Learning and Care team member Aressa Coley presented an update on the plan development process and priorities identified by stakeholders that are being incorporated into the plan including addressing equity and poverty, using a whole child and whole family approach, supporting a mixed-delivery system, equitable rate reform, equitable compensation, and encouraging parents as partners.
- First5 California Senior Policy Advisory and Place County Office of Education Assistant Superintendent Catherine Goins gave an engaging talk titled "Advancing Equity in the Early Care and Education Workforce." Catherine's presentation can be found on the official Early Childhood Policy Council Website (<https://chhs-data-prod.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/2020/09/16092150/Advancing-Equity-in-the-Early-Care-and-Education-Workforce.pdf>)



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- The full Master Plan for Early Learning and Care presentation can be found on the official Early Childhood Policy Council Website (<https://chhs-data-prod.s3.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uploads/2020/09/16092155/California%E2%80%99s-Master-Plan-for-Learning-and-Care.pdf>)

A high-level, thematic summary of committee discussion and public comments received during the meeting can be found in the following pages.



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Summary of Themes and Comments from the Workforce Advisory Committee Meeting

This Summary provides themes and illustrative quotes from participants in the Workforce Advisory Meeting on September 9, 2020.

Themes include:

- **Dig deeper into personal and systemic bias**
 - Everyone has biases and they are complex
 - Systemic bias can be interrupted by individual and collective action
- **Develop an action plan to combat systemic inequities through investigation, engagement and strategic investment of resources**
 - A focus on equity requires a coherent, consensus plan of action
 - Plan of action focused on incentivizing participation in a comprehensive anti-bias education
 - QRIS can be used to develop an actionable plan and access additional resources

Dig deeper into personal and systemic bias

Everyone has biases and they are complex

Catherine's presentation began with a discussion of the complexity and ubiquity of bias. As she put it, "If you have a brain you have bias." She described how bias can be explicit (i.e. above the surface, tip of the iceberg), and also implicit (i.e. beneath the surface). She also emphasized that bias can be *favorable* as well as unfavorable. A person's biases can be very personal and also interact with bias that is embedded in a system.

Systemic bias can be interrupted by individual and collective action

Catherine also described how systemic bias can be interrupted by individual and collective action. She illustrated this through a personal story, and also provided examples of how this can be addressed in the early childhood education context explicitly. As a starting point, she argued that the system, and its history, must be understood before implicit bias can be interrupted. She also made the point that with limited resources, action to interrupt systemic bias must be strategic. Moreover, she advocated for a deeper investigation of one's own system and organization in order to be effective and strategic.

Develop an action plan through investigation, engagement and strategic investment of resources

A focus on equity requires a coherent, consensus plan of action

Catherine described how this process of interrupting systemic bias begins with a plan of action, which itself must be a product consensus and coherent with your circumstance, asking the question, "What did it mean for us to focus on equity?" To do this requires engaging the community, and really listening.



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Interrogating one's own biases and understanding the difference between diversity, inclusion, and equity. For her organization it was important to focus on outputs, as opposed to inputs, and to determine exactly what one should do when faced with bias, either explicit or implicit.

Plan of action focused on incentivizing participation in a comprehensive anti-bias education

More specifically, her plan of action focused on incentivizing participation in a process of comprehensive *anti-bias education*. This began with personal understanding of one's culture, before expanding to listening and understanding the perspectives of others. Then they used this information to look more deeply at unfairness in their system and to build empathy. Finally, they took action through activism including considering equity or inequity of specific hiring practices, questioning behaviors and attitudes such as claims of "colorblindness," and continuing to focus on inclusion by asking, "who is not at the table?"

QRIS can be used to develop an actionable plan and access additional resources

Catherine ended her presentation by describing how Placer COE used the QRIS process to develop a particular plan of action around equity, and how they went about this. To start with they engaged and partnered with the community. They employed outside support to encourage more honest feedback from stakeholders and thereby learned a lot more about what could be improved. They acted on this information including, for example, shifting how family, friend, and neighbor providers were described to better align with how they described *themselves*. They also sought to better meet providers where they were and respect their contributions without judgement. For example, this included respecting the fact that some providers did not wish to go back to school but still had valuable contributions to make.

Specific themes from responses both from committee members and the public include:

- **Important to consider the full scope of child needs**
- **Integrate anti-bias training as a requirement for providers**
- **Expand the understanding of challenges unique to specific providers**

Responses from the Committee Members and Public

Important to consider the full scope of child needs

Committee members and comments from the public suggest that Catherine's commitment to inclusion of voices and perspectives resonated. And specific additional student groups were named as important for consideration. This includes, for example, children of incarcerated parents and children with disabilities.

Integrate anti-bias training as a requirement for providers

One committee member suggested that the type of anti-bias education path or training Catherine described be included in the plan as a requirement, as opposed to being optional as it tends to be currently. A few members of the public endorsed this suggestion.

Expand the understanding of challenges unique to specific providers

Finally, a member of the public suggested that the assumptions about providers be explored in the context of challenges and barriers unique to them. For example, she noted that in some cases an inability to take part in continuing education due to language barriers can be misinterpreted as not wanting to participate. Others noted challenges unique to providers in rural areas where resources



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available for this sort of planning process are limited. Finally, one person voiced appreciation for consideration and support to private providers.