



Education Coordinating Council

May 27, 2010

9:30 a.m.

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 140
500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California

Present: Reaver Bingham, representing Donald Blevins
Carol Clem
Renatta Cooper
Maryam Fatemi, representing Trish Ploehn
Mónica García
René Gonzalez, representing Ramón C. Cortines
Leslie Heimov
José Huizar
Helen Kleinberg
Machelle Massey
Judge Michael Nash
Bruce Saltzer
Fabricio Segovia
Diana Velasquez, representing Darline P. Robles

Chair José Huizar brought the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m., welcoming everyone. He announced that, after five years chairing the Education Coordinating Council and seeing it develop some real solutions to the educational barriers affecting foster and probation youth, he is stepping away from being an active member. As a councilman for the City of Los Angeles and a member of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, he admitted to being embroiled in some extraordinarily difficult issues and needing to focus his time and energy in those areas. “It has truly been a pleasure and an honor to work with all of you,” he told attendees, “and to serve as the ECC chair.” He expressed particular appreciation to ECC staff—Carrie Miller, Sharon Watson, Terry Ogawa, and others—for their efforts. “They’ve done an incredible job,” he said. “We wouldn’t have accomplished nearly as much as we have without the work of staff.”

In light of his resignation, Huizar nominated Mónica García, president of the Los Angeles Unified School District’s board of education, to serve as the new chair of the ECC. He likewise nominated Judge Michael Nash to continue as first vice chair and former foster youth Fabricio Segovia as second vice chair. (Berisha Black, the previous second vice chair who was also a former foster youth and a wonderful advocate for foster and probation children, moved out of state in April.) All candidates expressed themselves willing to serve.

There being no nominations from the floor and no objection to the proposed slate, it was agreed by acclamation that these officers be elected for a one-year term:

- **Mónica García, chair**
- **Judge Michael Nash, first vice chair**
- **Fabricio Segovia, second vice chair**

In her new role as chair, García praised Huizar's leadership of the ECC, and asked Judge Nash to present Huizar with a scroll from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recognizing his (and the Council's) accomplishments.

Whereas José Huizar, the first Chair of the Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council, has elected to leave his post after five stellar years of leadership; and

Whereas, under José's leadership, the Education Coordinating Council took enormous strides in implementing its plan of action—Expecting More: A Blueprint for Raising the Educational Achievement of Foster and Probation Youth; and

Whereas, José's stewardship of the Council led to its resolving a decade-long barrier to sharing foster and probation youth educational information that is already greatly benefiting these youth, their caregivers, attorneys, and schools; and

Whereas, José's vision for the Council created a series of first-ever data matches with over a dozen school districts that lets us know how foster and probation youth are faring academically in comparison with other students; a tool that facilitates school enrollment within 72 hours; a greater awareness of and commitment to the needs of system youth that doubled the number of foster children enrolled in high-quality preschool programs and tripled the number of foster and probation youth in after-school enrichment programs; and

Whereas, for more than five years, the Council and the Board of Supervisors have relied on José's expertise and guidance, his presence will be sorely missed:

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles does hereby sincerely thank José Huizar for his dedicated service to the Education Coordinating Council.

*Adopted by order of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles,
State of California*

“We want to do even better over the next five years,” García concluded, “and that's a tough challenge. But the ECC shows that when adults get together, they can make a difference for kids.”

García introduced new member Fabricio Segovia, a former Los Angeles County foster youth who was involved in an ECC early effort with the residential academy work group; Segovia also presented his perspective on the importance of after-school and summer enrichment programs at a previous ECC meeting. García also welcomed back consultants Sharon Watson and Terry Ogawa, who have returned to the ECC team part-time under the organization's California Community Foundation grant.

Trish Ploehn is in Philadelphia at the Urban Child Welfare Leaders meeting, Donald Blevins—the county’s new Chief Probation Officer—is meeting with the Chief Executive Officer, and Marv Southard was called away to another meeting at the last minute.

García asked that audience members and the ECC introduce themselves.

Big Picture: A Successful Alternative to Traditional School Curriculums

Kari Thierer, the national director of school and network support for Big Picture Learning, presented background on the approach, which is making significant progress nationwide with at-risk youth. The initiative began in 1995 on a small scale, ramping up significantly after receiving funding from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. It now functions in 80 schools in the United States and 50 overseas, primarily in the Netherlands and Australia. Big Picture’s largest growth area is with foster and probation youth, who particularly need tools for creating a positive identity and who often have difficulty doing that among 5,000 other students. “We never really intended to concentrate on this population,” Thierer said, “but these are the kids that need us the most. We take kids where they’re at, one student at a time.”

In some Big Picture schools, every teacher is a generalist, and the 15 students that start with one teacher in ninth grade continue with him or her through the twelfth grade, with the instructor teaching all content areas (or providing access to that instruction). That approach is not as prevalent in California, where schools usually utilize an advisory model that includes a dedicated period with students to explore their lives, their interests, and their family situations, and to connect them with supportive resources. Internships are also part of the program, with two student days a week being spent shadowing a job in the community. Classroom activities then tie those experiences into academic content, relating student passions to the real world. “As kids follow their dreams and see where that leads, they learn they can be other things, too,” Thierer said. “The approach is very kid-centered. We start with the kid and move out, rather than starting with the teacher and moving down. With foster kids and youth in the juvenile justice system, the approach is also flexible enough to fill the huge academic gaps they often have because their school lives have not been linear.”

Most Big Picture schools have fewer than 150 students, although a few around the country have as many as 400 to 500. Transforming existing larger schools presents different challenges, and one approach is to transition the homeroom concept into the Big Picture advisory model, training traditional teachers.

The New Village charter school in Los Angeles uses Big Picture’s advisory model, and Big Picture consultant Carrie Ferguson has seen the culture of the school transform over the past six months. “Many of our girls have been out of school for a while,” she said, “and they tend not to have adult role models or relationships. When they start working with a career study project, they investigate their passions. What do they want to do with their lives? What will it take to get there? The relationships they form are very important, and help drive those interests. When you sit down and talk with a kid, you discover a lot about them you can’t tell from a test score or a grade.” Ferguson stressed that Big Picture is not simply a model that is imposed on schools. “It’s about getting the people there into the same room, sharing ideas and tweaking them to fit the school and the population,” she said. “That’s more powerful than any sort of program.”

Certain components are inherent to Big Picture's approach, however—developing individual learning plans (rather than relying on a standard format), public exhibitions of learning, and high levels of expectations for all students in literacy, numeracy, and college attendance. “For most foster youth and other at-risk students,” Thierer said, “their circumstances generate a kind of ‘*You can’t do it because . . .*’ attitude. Ours is ‘*You have to do it because . . .*’”

Although Big Picture's curriculum is individualized, it is still standards-based and in California aligns with the A-G track expected for admittance to the University of California system. “When a Big Picture student applies to a UC school,” Thierer said, “there's a matrix of different codes for the coursework. We work with UC to get kids accepted and also to keep them there, which is an ongoing issue.”

Diana Velasquez co-chairs the design committee that is bringing the Big Picture model to the Probation Department's Camp Scott/Scudder school, developing a type of ‘hybrid’ that will function well there. Committee members include Probation staff, teachers, union leaders, and other stakeholders, and Velasquez finds the investment of everyone in that group very exciting. “They're all saying the same thing,” she said. “Teaching matters. Relationships matter. ‘Respect for self and respect for others.’ That's something being lived out by everyone in the school, students and adults alike. We're learning how to do that, how to develop relationships, how to individualize curriculum.” Although the model will not fully implement until September, benefits such as decreased fighting and increased student engagement are already being seen.

“We usually try to implement the model with existing staff,” Thierer said in response to questions about adding teachers, “because they know the environment. We find out about their students, what's working for them, and we devise a way to bring in the framework. In Tulsa [alternative schools], for instance, there are two main teachers, but a whole slew of people supporting the kids around the clock. Even when kids are re-arrested, we stay in contact with the teachers in lock-up. The learning plan doesn't change.” On a larger campus using the homeroom model, Big Picture brings in community resources and enlists mentors, internship supervisors, and caseworkers, with an advisor serving as liaison to an entire team supporting the student. “We also try to influence the system,” Thierer said, “so that instead of seeing maybe 160 students a day, teachers can see fewer kids through block scheduling, a different tracking system, or changing the physical structure of the school.” At Camp Scott/Scudder, the collaboration with the Probation Department and the Department of Mental Health is critical to the complete reform that is planned. “It takes everybody at the site to play their part,” Velasquez emphasized. And when girls leave camp, Probation is trying to connect them with other schools using the Big Picture model, and to involve transition counselors. “That's a critical piece we're working on,” she said. “If we do this for them when they're with us, then don't follow up, it won't mean much.”

Frida Kahlo High School is an alternative school in the Los Angeles Unified School District—once termed a continuation school—that adopted the Big Picture model five or six years ago. The approach looks somewhat different there, Thierer said, partly because of the tremendous influence of gang life in the area, but last year 96 percent of Frida Kahlo tenth-graders passed the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) on the first try. “People are accepting responsibility for results there,” Mónica García said. “There's personalized instruction, connections with the community, relationships with multiple adults, and partnerships with service pro-

viders. Some would say that's just good teaching, but that's exactly what matters. We have high expectations of the kids, and of the adults involved, too, to do better with existing resources. The Big Picture framework changes the conversation to one of teamwork and performance rather than compliance—and it energizes everyone.”

García thanked the Big Picture representatives for their presentations, and encouraged anyone with questions to contact them through their website, <http://www.bigpicture.org>.

Current Truancy Reduction Efforts and Where We Go From Here

Last fall, the ECC agreed to look at ways of reducing school truancy, and Judge Nash offered to convene a task force to generate ideas that would build on efforts currently going on throughout Los Angeles County. “Truancy and attendance are the low-hanging fruit for us in terms of achievement and delinquency,” Mónica García said. “LAUSD could reclaim \$300 million a year if we had a hundred percent attendance. This is a real-deal issue for us.”

Nash admitted that the task force has been “slow getting off the dime,” as he put it, what with recent budgetary struggles to keep the courts open, and he hopes to begin meetings in August. As a first step, the ECC has completed some research on approaches being implemented locally as well as across the nation. Soon, all 81 school districts in Los Angeles County will be polled with regard to their efforts, as will the court system and all agencies working with kids and families in the county. The ECC will serve as a clearinghouse for that information, and Nash expressed his hope that strategies can be developed around successful initiatives so that the courts can contribute more positively to this issue. “Stay tuned,” he said.

Preliminary research indicates that approaches can generally be grouped into three categories.

- Those that rely on law enforcement interventions, including:
 - ① The Los Angeles County District Attorney’s A.C.T. (Abolish Chronic Truancy) program
 - ① The City of Los Angeles City Attorney’s Truancy Prevention Program
 - ① Programs that connect truant youth with probation officers
 - ① The Los Angeles Police Department’s truancy sweeps around school perimeters
 - ① Proposed legislation to charge the parents of truants with a misdemeanor offense
- School-based approaches, such as:
 - ① Using school counselors to work with truant youth
 - ① The Long Beach model (see below)
 - ① The proposed pilot at Washington Prep High School
- Changing schools into places that students are eager to attend, as Big Picture has done at Frida Kahlo High School and a couple of other Los Angeles area schools

Myrna Brutti described the Long Beach model, in which a community-based center provides a full array of wraparound services for an entire geographic area. Truant students are returned to school and interviewed to find out what they need to attend regularly, and they and their families

are then provided those services—transportation, food, parenting classes, mental health services, whatever is necessary—through the center.

In 2008, the Los Angeles Unified School District received a \$9 million Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant from the Federal government and developed a wellness center for the 12,000 students in the Washington Prep complex—the high school and its feeder schools (two middle and eleven elementary)—plus five private schools in the area and the surrounding community. It is a high-poverty, low-performance region that also has large numbers of foster and probation youth. Students, faculty, parents, and community residents may all walk in and receive services from the center, which currently sees between 30 and 40 students a day, along with teachers and family members.

Historically, Brutti said, schools in this area have had very high numbers of suspensions and trancies. Responding with citations alone was not productive, and district officials sought a successful model to diminish those issues and their associated crimes. In addition to the wellness center, a truancy/alternative suspension center—based on the Long Beach model—will open at Washington Prep in September, and law enforcement officials are happy that students will have a place to come where they can be helped. “People are beginning to realize,” Brutti said, “that the work we do at school is not the only place where students need support. They still go home to a particular environment, and they need to have services and supports to deal with that.” Team decision-making meetings—part of the process the Department of Children and Family Services uses when a case of child abuse or neglect is substantiated—are held at the wellness center, and teachers, counselors, and community service providers all share support for individual students.

The fact that the wellness center was established through a Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant means that it is designed to leverage partnerships with existing agencies—Probation, DCFS, the Department of Mental Health and its subcontractors, St. John’s for the health component, and so on—for outstationed staff and other resources. (A community fair spread the word to community-based organizations, and many approached the district after hearing of the center through word of mouth.) “This is part of the changing culture about how agencies do business,” LAUSD’s René Gonzalez said. “Our goal is sustainability—that this will continue after the grant money goes away. Long-term, our vision is to do this at twelve other sites, using joint-use funds to build facilities and find partners to create a hub of services for communities.” As wellness centers come online, the service-based approach to truancy will be part of each, so that students will be kept on campus instead of being sent home when truant.

Further information on the Washington Prep center will be distributed through the ECC office.

Progress in Increasing the Enrollment of Children in Early Care and Education Programs

Maryam Fatemi from the Department of Children and Family Services reported on efforts underway since October 2009 to enroll DCFS children age five and under in high-quality early care and education programs. Many partners have worked with the department to increase enrollment, including the Los Angeles County Office of Education, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), the Policy Roundtable for Child Care, and the Association of Community Human Service Agencies. (ACHSA is facilitating conversations with foster family agency providers, for instance, to enroll the 2,000 young children placed in FFAs.) Three formal enrollment projects have been developed and tested over the past year: the Long Beach Head Start collabo-

rative, the Pomona and El Monte collaborative with LACOE Head Start, and the Central and East Los Angeles collaborative with LACOE Head Start.

The focus of the initiative has been on educating staff and caregivers about the importance of early care and education, engaging service providers in the community, and searching for best practices across the nation. In Chicago, as an example, 90 percent of dependent children age five and under are enrolled in these programs, and representatives from that jurisdiction are sharing the policies and procedures that made that possible. Fatemi expressed appreciation to her “very committed” staff, including Michael Gray and Jennifer Hottenroth.

After thanking Fatemi for her leadership, Steve Sturm from DCFS’s education and mentoring section explained that enrollment rates three years ago were about 30 percent across the county, and the three collaboratives mentioned above have raised that figure to between 50 and 60 percent in those areas. “Our education efforts are paying off,” Sturm said, “but we’d still love to get to that ninety percent.” New policies, procedures, and mechanics across DCFS have given social workers more impetus to enroll children, and obtaining consent from caregivers is getting easier. Sturm echoed Fatemi’s thanks to Bruce Saltzer and ACHSA, and noted that a pilot in Santa Fe Springs has targeted another 560 youngsters.

LACOE serves 24,000 Head Start children in Los Angeles County, said Keesha Woods, assistant director of LACOE’s Head Start State Preschool, and an additional 25,000 children are being served by 21 other Head Start grantees in the county. (Los Angeles County receives 25 percent of California’s Federal Head Start funding.) “To maximize Federal funding,” Woods said, “we want to make sure that categorically eligible children receive services first, and that other children are referred to other programs.” Categorically eligible children include foster youth, homeless youth, and children on public assistance such as CalWORKs, Social Security, or TANF—Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. Children of higher-income families can be referred to other subsidies.

“Foster kids and homeless kids under DCFS take priority,” Woods continued. “If a foster child needs enrollment, they shouldn’t have to go on a waiting list behind anyone. They should get the first vacancy. At LACOE, we have agreement from the other twenty-one grantees in the county to work with us and with DCFS to allow all referrals to come through LACOE, so that we can ensure that caregivers make the connection. We walk them through the process, and we follow up. Ninety percent is great, but we want a *hundred* percent of foster children to be in the program.”

One issue hampering collaboration is the incompatibility of electronic databases, preventing DCFS staff from smoothly connecting with other agencies. Woods said participants hope to have something developed in that regard within the next two years. “We’re trying to find ways to address the challenges we’ve found,” she said, “making sure that the most vulnerable children are served first, and they can then make a seamless transition into the primary education system.”

In late 2008, said Kathy Malaske-Samu from the county’s Office of Child Care, the Policy Roundtable for Child Care asked the ECC for support with its child care policy framework, which the Board of Supervisors adopted in January 2009. DCFS’s success in enrolling children in early care and education programs is being leveraged by the Policy Roundtable and spread to other departments—three hundred juvenile probation officers, for example, have been trained in

child development, siblings' needs, and connecting families to services for children age five and younger. Collaborations are also continuing to increase communication among school districts, county departments, First 5 LA grantee agencies, and others. "The seeds have been planted," Malaske-Samu said, "and we just hope the state budget process doesn't undermine the 'tender seedling' stage that we're in now." She thanked ECC members for their support in nurturing these collaborations.

In response to a question from Helen Kleinberg about keeping children in the same early care program when they reunify with their families, Woods explained that if families are still being monitored by DCFS following reunification, nothing changes in the child's eligibility. Even when a case is closed, children in the Head Start system automatically qualify for a second year of enrollment without being certified. Because Head Start service area boundaries are dictated by Federal regulations, however, grantees must get approval to move a child from one service area to another. "We're working with the Head Start office in San Francisco to speed up the approval turnaround time for foster and homeless kids," Woods said. Locating a vacant slot is another issue, and the 21 grantees must work together to identify the first appropriate vacancy. Post-reunification, children may stay in the program in which they were originally enrolled if the family wishes, but transportation can be a challenge. Kleinberg sees the continuity of care as another argument for placing children in their communities of origin whenever possible.

The increased participation of youngsters in early care and education programs was a primary recommendation of the ECC's original Blueprint for action, and director Carrie Miller sees DCFS's goal of reaching 90 percent enrollment as something to be heartily applauded. A motion had originally been envisioned for this meeting to structure the implementation of this goal, but the various projects are working so well that a decision to revisit the issue in the future was made.

Director's Report

Carrie Miller highlighted information in her written director's report, which is attached to and made part of these minutes.

- Thanks to a committee led by Referee Sherri Sobel, the language to be added to each dependency court minute order with regard to school districts' sharing foster children's education records with DCFS, the court, and attorneys has been crafted and set up in the court's computer system. This was a major accomplishment, as language had both to comply with Federal confidentiality regulations and be acceptable to school districts whose interpretation of Federal law may have differed from the ECC's and the juvenile court's. Judge Nash hopes the effort will serve as a model for other jurisdictions, and is working with the delinquency court to institutionalize similar procedures for sharing the education records of probation youth.

Nash added that one of the first priorities of the incoming Chief Probation Officer, Donald Blevins, has been the hiring of an education director for the Probation Department, a process that is ongoing. "That's a sign of a great commitment on the part of Probation to advance the educational interests of their kids," Nash said.

René Gonzalez suggested bringing together information technology departments from various agencies to look at how to exchange education data electronically. One purpose of the

minute-order language was to facilitate that, and Miller said the process was underway. She expressed tremendous thanks to Nash for his leadership throughout this effort.

Helen Kleinberg asked whether or not records of children's involvement in early care and education programs are available for sharing—identifying special needs, perhaps, or simply capturing the history of a child's participation—since that information is very helpful in the transition to kindergarten. If such records exist, Miller explained, the minute-order language covers them, but they are, unfortunately, not consistently kept. State-funded child development centers are required to maintain records, Kathy Malaske-Samu said, and state law requires the information be forwarded to the child's kindergarten. First 5 LA is working with the Los Angeles Unified School District to develop a unique child identifying number, Jacquelyn McCroskey said, for use in K–12 and in early care programs inside or outside of those the district offers. (Extending this identifier to be used by Regional Centers and other programs would need to be negotiated.) “Even if that's uneven to begin with,” McCroskey said, “at least kindergartens would have some idea of the child's experience.”

- With regard to adding language to caregiver agreements to enroll children in school and ensure their regular attendance, Leslie Heimov recommended focusing on immediate enrollment only as a second step. “We see a lot of kids automatically dis-enrolled from their school of origin without the holder of their education rights agreeing to that,” she said. “We need to start with an affirmative decision about the student's staying in or leaving their school of origin.” Helen Kleinberg expressed her concern about the selection of the most appropriate school for youngsters if they cannot stay in their school of origin, since “most appropriate” is not always “most convenient.”
- For more information on the July 1 panel on overcoming college obstacles for foster youth—beyond the flyer included in member packets—interested parties should contact Julianna Coco, assistant director of New Visions Foundation's center for educational opportunities, at jcoco@newvisionsfnd.org or (310) 829-9877.
- Kristi López reported on Assemblymember Anthony Portantino's May 22 town hall, one in a series of meetings designed to be a safe space for foster youth to air their questions and comments about the system. The approximately 65 youth who attended expressed concerns about post-secondary education that primarily involved housing, financial aid, and getting accepted, as well as dealing with probation matters. López expressed appreciation to the Alliance for Children's Rights, the Foster Youth Services section of LACOE, and the ECC for helping to provide resources for those youth.
- Miller called attention to further materials in member packets—LACOE's latest update to the Board of Supervisors on its plan to address the Juvenile Court School program operating deficit, and an update on pending state and Federal legislation of interest.
- In response to Bruce Saltzer's question about another edition of the very successful Education Resource Fair put on by the ECC in 2008, Miller agreed that the event had been very valuable. It was also very labor-intensive, and could be replicated only with the help of staff time from other partners. Saltzer promised ACHSA's help and suggested that another resource fair be planned in conjunction with DCFS and the ECC along with ACHSA.

Updates

- Victor Gonzalez from LAUSD's Beyond the Bell enrichment program reported that he is working to connect youngsters in foster care to summer activities similar to those available during spring break, which involved equal parts of social/emotional and academic skill-building. Beyond the Bell is hiring 39 summer counselors to be stationed at district high schools, each responsible for between 200 and 300 K–12 students. For high-schoolers, they will concentrate on credit recovery, enrolling students in summer school, and following up on attendance. For K–8 students—for whom no summer school is available—they will focus on summer enrichment programs at 150 sites in the district, including a week-long camp in the Angeles Forest for students in fourth through eighth grades that offers academic and social components, plus traditional outdoor activities. For more information, attendees were asked to visit <http://btb.lausd.net>.
- Mónica García announced that only 32 schools in LAUSD remain on a year-round calendar this year.

Public Comment

Pat Levinson from LACOE's Foster Youth Services said that 75 educators attended April's 'day at dependency court,' and that about 200 youth participated in a career day held in collaboration with the court, visiting exhibitors and learning about jobs.

Next Meeting

The next ECC meeting is scheduled for:

Thursday, October 7, 2010

9:30 a.m.

The California Endowment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.



Director's Report

May 27, 2010

Education Records Sharing Solution

Language is now being added to dependency court minute orders that allows for the sharing of education records with DCFS, the Juvenile Court, and attorneys. This is a FERPA-compliant mechanism for record sharing, as it creates individual court orders for every dependency case. This language has been inserted into dependency court bench officers' computer systems so that it can be easily copied and pasted into minute orders. The dependency court bench officers have been trained on how to use this new procedure.

School Stability Recommendations

The school stability recommendations that were adopted by the ECC in February were presented to the DCFS Executive Team this month. DCFS adopted all of the recommendations, and is now moving forward to implement them.

Improving School Attendance

Currently, the expectation that a youth be immediately enrolled in school and regularly attend school is not included in the agreements that relative caregivers, foster parents, FFAs, and group homes sign when a youth is placed with them. The ECC will work with the California Department of Social Services and DCFS to add language to explicitly communicate this expectation in the next set of contract renewals, including timelines that are consistent with AB 490. Additionally, the ECC will work with the court on ways to ensure compliance.

Addressing the Unmet Needs of Children and Youth in the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems Conference

Casey Family Programs sponsored ECC Director Carrie Miller's attendance at this conference, held on May 7, 2010, which was hosted by Georgetown University's Center for Juvenile Justice Reform in Washington D.C. At this conference, there were several important developments, including:

- Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas offered to partner with the ECC on the truancy pilot it is helping to create at LAUSD's Washington Preparatory High School.
- Several attendees were eager to learn more about the minute order language the ECC developed and are interested in sharing it nationally.
- The Center for Juvenile Justice Reform is leading an effort to draft language regarding the educational needs of foster and probation youth for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization.

- The new Commissioner for the Administration for Children and Families is interested in partnering with the ECC on developing a SACWIS-compliant way to share information electronically.

Promise Neighborhoods Grant

On May 13, 2010, the ECC co-hosted a convening of several public entities, including the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Unified School District, and First 5 LA, along with a number of nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, to discuss strategies for partnering on Promise Neighborhood grants. Several follow-up meetings have been scheduled to further explore cross-sector and cross-organizational partnerships, in order to strengthen potential submissions so that Los Angeles might be awarded at least one of these grants. The RFP has been released and the application is due by June 25, 2010.

Youth Development Services Redesign

The ECC is collaborating with the CEO, DCFS, the Probation Department, and several key stakeholders to redesign the Youth Development Services Division that serves transition-aged system youth. The purpose of this redesign is to ensure that services are being provided to these youth around five goal areas: permanency, education, employment, social and emotional well-being, and self-sufficiency. A draft redesign plan is being finalized so that implementation of the recommendations can begin in June.

Partnership with the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health

The Foundation's *kidsdata.org* project has just released information on child health and well-being for every county, city, and school district in California. But, as we all know, countywide data is not sufficient for Los Angeles because of our size and complexity. So, on June 25, the ECC and Lucile Packard Foundation will co-host a meeting of data and program experts to discuss what *kidsdata.org* can do in Los Angeles County that will be helpful to our current efforts, by working at the sub-county level, filling in gaps in aggregate data, or zeroing in on a particular target population.

Overcoming College Obstacles for Foster Youth Panel Event

The New Visions Foundation is hosting this event on July 1, 2010, which will feature experts in the field including the Children's Law Center, the Commission for Children and Families, United Friends of the Children, the University of Southern California, the Dwight Stuart Foundation, and New Roads School. The discussion will be facilitated by ECC Director Carrie Miller, and the foster youth panel will include ECC intern Gail Yen.

Breaking Barriers to Higher Education Town Hall

Assemblymember Anthony Portantino hosted his third annual town hall meeting on May 22 to address the educational barriers facing foster and probation youth. The event was held at Pasadena Community College's Community Education Center in partnership with the ECC, All Saints Church, Five Acres, Casey Family Programs, DCFS Youth Development Services, and Pasadena Community College's Foster/Kinship Care Education Program.

RAISE-UP: Re-engaging Americans in Serious Education by Uniting Programs Act

This Act was created to address the high incidence of high school dropouts by offering disconnected youth a comprehensive dropout recovery system. Grants would be awarded to local partnerships, who would then sub-grant funds to provide services that focus on education, job training, and wraparound support services. If signed into law, this bill would authorize \$1 billion for fiscal year 2010, with the potential for additional funding for fiscal years 2011–2014. ECC Chair José Huizar introduced a resolution to the Los Angeles City Council to support this Act, and member Mónica García introduced one to the Los Angeles Unified Board of Education.

LACOE/CEO Board Memo Addressing the Juvenile Court Schools Structural Deficit

On October 13, 2009, the Board of Supervisors approved a motion directing the CEO and the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) to develop a plan that addresses LACOE's Juvenile Court Schools (JCS) program structural deficit, outlines both fiscal and legislative strategies to address it, and discusses the fiscal impacts of implementing recommendations recently made by the Auditor-Controller. The second quarterly report was submitted to the Board of Supervisors on April 20, 2010. It outlines five factors contributing to the JCS structural deficit and actions LACOE has taken to try and reduce it. The next report will be submitted in July 2010.