



Education Coordinating Council Strategic Plan

Overall ECC Focus: To raise the educational achievement of children and youth under the supervision of the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation to equal that of other youth.

Strategy 1: Ensure that the Dependency Education Pilot Project is successfully completed and introduced countywide.

Objective: Complete implementation of the pilot project now underway in the Montebello Unified School District and the Pomona Unified School District. Glean lessons learned through its evaluation process and develop strategies for rolling out the model in all DCFS regional offices.

Implementation steps:

- a. Continue partnership with the First Supervisorial District, Chief Executive Office, DCFS, Montebello Unified School District, Pomona Unified School District, and Casey Family Programs, serving as co-lead on the project, through September 2009, the end of the pilot period.
- b. Use evaluation findings to determine the most effective model components for implementation countywide.
- c. Identify sources of funding to support expansion of project to other Los Angeles County school districts.
- d. Work with DCFS on how best to incorporate the model components into departmental practices.
- e. Train social workers on model components and how to routinely include educational planning into overall case planning.

Strategy 2: Work closely with the Probation Department to ensure that the Comprehensive Educational Reform for the Juvenile Halls and Camps is successfully institutionalized.

Objective: Assist the Probation Department in implementing the 35 recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Educational Reform Report adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 14, 2008.

Implementation steps:

- a. Continue to participate on the Comprehensive Educational Reform Committee (CERC) to provide guidance and feedback on the reform effort progress.
- b. Assist the Probation Department develop a plan for more successful transitions of probation youth from probation halls/camps into their local communities and mainstream district schools.
- c. Work with members of the CERC to design a charter school and/or a school to be operated by a neighboring school district that would be located at one of the probation camps and secure the necessary waivers/approval to allow for its creation.
- d. Help develop a plan for using multidisciplinary teams to conduct comprehensive educational case plans for every probation youth residing in the halls/camps.
- e. Train probation officers on effective educational case planning methods and educational advocacy.

Strategy 3: Partner with the Los Angeles County Office of Child Care to significantly increase the number of DCFS children under the age of six—and the children of DCFS and probation families—who are enrolled in high-quality early care and education programs.

Objective: Work with the Office of Child Care, DCFS, and the Probation Department to develop a set of procedures for enrolling DCFS children under the age of six, and the children of DCFS and probation youth, into high-quality early care and education programs.

Implementation steps:

- a. Secure commitments from DCFS and Probation Department leadership to significantly increase the participation of their children, and the children of their youth, in high-quality early care and education programs.
- b. Establish baseline data on the need for and the ability of DCFS and probation clients to access child care and developmental services.
- c. Based on the data findings, work with the Office of Child Care, DCFS, and the Probation Department to develop an effective referral mechanism to such programs and a process for tracking enrollment.

- d. Train DCFS and probation workers on the mechanism and process.
- e. Help develop a curriculum for training licensed child care staff in family child care homes and child care and development centers to meet the unique needs of children who have experienced abuse or neglect and their families.

Strategy 4: Collaborate with youth development programs, County departments, school districts and cities to significantly increase the number of DCFS and probation youth participating in after-school and summer extracurricular and enrichment programs.

Objective: Work with DCFS and the Probation Department to develop a set of procedures for enrolling DCFS and probation youth in after-school and summer extracurricular and enrichment programs.

Implementation steps:

- a. Secure commitments from DCFS and Probation Department leadership to significantly increase the participation of their youth in after-school and summer programs.
- b. Create a resource guide of existing youth development programs which have the capacity and training to work with system youth and hold resource fairs, as necessary, to connect youth, caregivers and workers to available resources.
- c. Work with DCFS and the Probation Department to develop a recruitment and referral mechanism to such programs and a process for tracking enrollment.
- d. Train DCFS and probation workers on the mechanism and process.

Strategy 5: Resolve remaining barriers to allow for the sharing of educational information between County departments and school districts throughout Los Angeles County.

Objective: Create an electronic data transferring process for sharing educational records with Los Angeles County case managers.

Implementation steps:

- a. Develop a vehicle for sharing educational records that is compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- b. Work with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to determine the ways in which this information can be shared without violating its Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS).

- c. Work with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and DCFS to ensure that the appropriate education fields are incorporated into the next generation of CWS/CMS (California's SACWIS system).
- d. Work with the Probation Department to ensure that the appropriate education fields are incorporated into PCMS.
- e. Partner with a software company to develop software that allows for the electronic transfer of educational data.
- f. Work with DCFS, Probation, County Counsel, and Los Angeles County school districts to establish a protocol for sharing electronic education data.