



**The Santa Cruz County
Child Care Planning Council**
El Consejo de Planeación de Cuidado
Infantil del Condado de Santa Cruz
www.childcareplanning.org

Subsidized Programs Consortium Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 5, 2006, 9:00-10:30
COE, Ocean/Pacific Room

Representatives Present: Wilma Gold (UCSC), Elaine Henning (Voucher Project), Erika Ismerio (YWCA), Kathy Lathrop (PVUSD), for Elizabeth Lopez (HRA), Ellen Ortiz (Consultant), Diane Oyler (CDRC), Tricia Pastor (Live Oak), Yolanda Santoya (Campus Kids Connection), and Cynthia Wells (Head Start).

I. Introductions

Ellen Ortiz called the meeting to order at 9:10. All members present introduced themselves.

II. Discuss COPE closure and assignment of contracts to interim contractor.

Erika Ismerio reported that the YWCA received the contract from COPE. They have reopened the site at the Fairgrounds- now called the YWCA Fairgrounds. Louise Blanchard and Starlight sites will be reopened in about two weeks. As of yesterday, 38 of the 40 children at the Fairgrounds site have returned.

Elaine Henning described the Voucher Project's role in ensuring placement and child care funding of displaced families.

Tricia Pastor reported that as of March 15th the State informed Live Oak School District that it could begin operating under a direct contract with CDD for the slots originally subcontracted from COPE. LOSD has still not been reimbursed for January, February and half of March (for a total of about \$90,000). The matter is currently in legal discussions. The State has no role in ensuring payment by COPE to LOSD.

Diane Oyler reported that CDRC staff did a great job of supporting parents at COPE on Friday afternoon (March 17th), Saturday morning and the following Monday morning starting at 6:00am to make child care referrals. CDRC worked closely with Voucher Project to ensure that funding would follow them. Diane talked about the challenge faced by some of the Family Child Care Providers who took on the displaced children and who are now losing them again to the original site.

Kathy Lathrop reported on behalf of the COPE staff the immense gratitude for the work of the Voucher Project and CDRC in supporting staff and families.

III. Reiterate goals of Consortium. Discuss role of Consortium in light of recent events, relationship with CDD and lessons learned.

Tabled until future meeting: Review matrix of 05-06 contracts and discuss current opportunities for sub or re-contracting of unused slots to keep them in the county.

Consortium's Statement of Purpose:

We agree to help preserve current state slots and believe that licensed slots allocated to our county ethically belong to the entire child care community. We believe that the state funded slots and the maintenance of them is the responsibility of our entire child care community. We invite all state funded programs to join and become an active member and to cooperate to secure new state funded slots for our county.

Members shared the following lessons learned:

- Having internal information due to our close-knit network in Santa Cruz was crucial in being able to respond quickly.
 - Naïve on part of Consortium to think that an organization in such great fiscal distress could go through an organized process that we were seeking.
 - We don't have agreements about decision making in this Consortium.
 - Although the Consortium can act as an advisory group, each member will continue to be in a competitive bidding process for new slots.
 - We need to keep our radar on to detect any possible future problem situations like this.
 - Should we have communicated directly with the Board of Directors of COPE?
 - Put on future agendas time for directors to share issues/concerns and advise one another.
 - Although a transition plan was developed by COPE staff and consultant, the Board made a decision based on financial realities that trumped the transition plan.
 - Need to re-publicize mission statement/objective of Consortium
 - Kathy suggested three roles for the Consortium:
 1. Networking, supporting, collaborating, sharing expertise, centralized information.
 2. Collective care about services in our county.
 3. Unified collective for pressure to the State to clarify processes for contracting guidelines.
- Kelly Sherlock is available to answer questions.
 - What's happening with the other 100 slots contracted to COPE? Hiranya to call S. Hawley.

IV. Further discussion of CEL planning and implementation.

Ellen shared the Voucher Project's intention to give a demonstration of a potential web-based data base for the Centralized Eligibility List at our next Consortium meeting. Ellen distributed a Draft Letter of Intent and asked members to review and respond by the next Consortium meeting. There will also be two additional CEL meetings held in May. Training sessions will be in mid-June and Discussion sessions in late June for CEL participants only. An email detailing these meetings will follow.

V. Update on plan for use of unspent AB212 funds.

Next meeting date: May 3rd, 9-10:30

Next meeting: demonstration of web-based database for Centralized Eligibility List.
