



# MARIN COUNTY CHILD CARE COMMISSION

## MEETING MINUTES

A Regular Meeting of the Marin County Child Care Commission was held on Wednesday, November 14th, 2018 from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M. at the Dance Palace, Point Reyes.

### 1. Call to order\*\*

Roll Call

Commissioners present at roll call: Barton, Tomsky, Lau, Lombardi, Aldana, Grewe, Myers, Calica.

Commissioners absent at meeting: Sanchez, Andrade-Wolf, Negussie, Fierro, Han, Trahan.

Staff present: Ericka Erickson

Facilitator:

Guests:

- Lorenzo Cordova, Aide to County Supervisor District 4 Dennis Rodoni
- Bob Raines, Shoreline Unified School District Superintendent
- Lourdes Romo, Executive Director, Papermill Creek Children's Corner and former Child Care Commissioner
- Laurie Monserrat
- Meredith Parnell, Executive Director, MarinKids
- R. Victoria Maier, Bolinas-Stinson Preschool
- Susan Tacherra, Bolinas Children's Center
- Rommer Carrera, Parent Services Project
- Olivia Beltran, Latinas in Power and Interpreter
- Daphne Cummings, Shoreline Acres/Bodega Bay Preschool
- Peggy Dodge, College of Marin
- Madeline Nieto Hope, West Marin Coalition/TBYC/TAY
- Laura Byes, Community Action Marin
- Grayson Kent

### 2. Approval of/Revisions to Agenda \*\*

M/s/c Grewe/Barton, the matter passed 8-0 to approve and adopt the agenda as presented.

### 3. Public (non-members) Comment on Non-Agendized Items

No comments

### 4. Consent Calendar\*\*

M/s/c Lau/Myers; the matter passed 8-0 to approve the adoption of items on the Consent Calendar.

### 5. Commission Operations

Annual Election - The matter passed 5-0 to approve the Slate of Officers for 2018 and the Nominating Committee members presented by the Executive Committee

**6. Marin County Needs Assessment)**

M/s/c Lombardi/Lau; the matter passed 8-0 to approve the needs assessment report with the edits suggested at this meeting, giving authority to the Executive Committee to make any minor edits needed, and also send it out for review by the full Commission before it is submitted to the California Department of Education.

**7. The Importance of Child Care and Early Education**

Guest speaker Bob Raines, Shoreline Unified School District Superintend, highlighted the need to advance the partnership between pre-k and k-12 education. There are silos in our field, and the funding is in silos. The funding has restrictions, including the revenue from the property taxes. One of the successful initiatives that the District has been involved in the Pre-K 3 Early School Success.

Guest speaker Lorenzo Cordova, Aide to County Supervisor Dennis Rodoni, highlighted their commitment to work on addressing some of the issues raised so far at the meeting. Some of these issues include the need to discuss how we fund early childhood education (ECE), who can tap into ECE, how we make the ECE careers attractive, and advance collaboration among the various “silos” in our community, including among the eighteen school districts. Overall, it is crucial to continue to raise awareness in our community about the importance of ECE and to promote an agreement to prioritize early childhood education and to bring about solutions for the challenges stakeholders are facing in the field through, for example, local initiatives such as Measure A (2017). Mr. Cordova also presented a certificate of appreciation to Lourdes Romo for her years of service in the community.

**8. Public Hearing: The State of Child Care and Early Education in Marin**

Participants were invited to share their comments on the state of child care and early education following the same format of previous community meetings hosted in Marin City (2016), Canal neighborhood of San Rafael (2017), and Novato (2018) by answering the following questions:

- What is working in this field?
- What are the current challenges?
- How would you improve early care and education in Marin? What are some potential solutions for the problems?

Below is a summary of the critical issues shared by attendees:

Challenges

- ✓ The inaccuracy of the Census numbers related to the number of children in neighborhoods such as Dillon Beach. If we are determining “who gets what” based on numbers that are not good, then we need to restructure the way we consider and use the data from the Census and other mainstream sources, including in decisions regarding funding. It is almost impossible to get accurate data in West Marin, to go to the ranches that are isolated and know exactly who

is living there. As an example, we used to have a Child Protective Service worker here, but the numbers didn't make that a priority.

- ✓ Population and demographics:
  - The exorbitant housing costs drive families with children to other areas
  - There are not enough children to fill the slots
  - "There is a serious lack of children, but this doesn't mean that the existing children deserve less. They still have to have a quality education."
  - "The tax base for Bolinas and Stinson is huge, tremendous. It doesn't really help the finances of the district, but most of those people [homeowners] don't live here – these are their second homes. "95% of children in our school are subsidized". The tax base gives a skewed image of our West Marin. It seems that we don't have poor people here, but we do, or people that are barely making ends meet. Middle class now can't afford child care. Low-income families are well-taken care off by subsidized programs like Community Action Marin, for which we are very thankful for, but the middle class, even though we charge so little (\$8 /hour). Teachers make a little bit of money and rent is exorbitant. Running a program with fewer children is tough. Stinson Beach preschool program had to close two years ago because there were not enough children to support two preschools and the new TK for 4-years-old. Therefore, if you take out the 4-years-old, who are going to TK, you have the 3-years-old, which is good. However, programmatically, 3 and 4 years-old children work better together than 2 and 3 years old, which is what we have now because there is **zero** program for 2-year-old children in our area. There are **zero** infant and toddler programs. We have not had an infant and toddler program for the last 15 years. Therefore, parents can't wait to put their child in the 2-year-old program. Then, we have 2-year-old who enter the program with diapers that are starting to crawl together with 3 and 3.7-year-old children, whom we need to work on expanding their literacy. So, it is a very tough program to manage." – Child Care Center Director
- ✓ The Strong Start initiative started with the framework of supporting child care, early education, and after-school programs, but later the Measure was focused on early childhood only. It is essential to keep the intention of supporting and expanding the broad spectrum of these services for children of all ages until the end of high school.
- ✓ Meredith Parnell, Executive Director at MarinKids shared updates about their work, including related to Measure A. The Board is working on reframing the initiative, including analyzing other similar ballot measures in the Bay Area (e.g., the ones who had a focus on enhancing early educators' compensation), and mapping resources at the local level (e.g. County Budget and related allocations on investments in children). It is needed to energize the base differently.

- ✓ Families in central Marin are reporting that the leadership at some centers are promoting the use of only English in the classrooms. It seems that the current cultural and political climate at the national level is being reflected in local communities, with kids being discouraged to speak their native language.
- ✓ The degree of trauma that the kids and families in our communities are facing because of the change in the culture since the 2016 Presidential Election is hugely impacting the work we do. "Families are saying goodbye to their child in the morning and not sure if they will see them again... trying to have an evening parent meeting... parents are not coming! Once they are home behind those doors, they lock it, and no one is going out again. Hopefully, this is a temporary climate, and we don't need to design our master plan to address this trauma in our communities."
- ✓ The economic pressures on parents that are not equipped to be resilient affect the children.
- ✓ In West Marin, there is not a breath of need; there is a depth of need.
- ✓ Limited culturally-appropriate mental health services
- ✓ There is a lack of out-of-school-time services for school-age children, especially in Tomales and Bolinas. "We had to do bake sales to provide services for children in West Marin – and this is hard to do." There is no equitable infrastructure among the different areas in West Marin.
- ✓ Many families don't qualify for subsidized care but can't afford to pay child care services and after school. There is also a gap of time between the end of school day (3 pm) and the starting time of some programs that offered here (4 or 5 pm). Some teachers decided to get together and start an afterschool program to fill that gap. Many parents don't work in this area, so they work "over the hill" and can't get back in time to pick up their children. So, we are offering this program, but we are not paid extra for that. It's just a need that we need to address.
- ✓ "It's a real struggle to piece all these programs together to address the needs. We have to address it and find solutions moment-by-moment, year by year. Sometimes, I can get funding for scholarships, but we have to have enough children to fill the scholarships, or I can't even apply. I almost feel like the system of funding scholarships is a poor system because their formula is based on the students, not teachers. The teachers are investing in their professional development, and we need to compensate them appropriately. I can apply for funds for scholarships, but if I don't have more children, I don't get the scholarships. If we fund the teachers, I will secure a teacher through the years, independently of the number of kids. Here we have "baby years" and other years when no babies are born. So, there are years when we have 15 kids in our program because they were all born in the same year and we can work well with all of them until they go to kindergarten. There are years when we have very few children, but we have to keep the quality consistent through the years so families will want to stay with us two to three years because it is a great program." "We worry about quality all the time, but then a big piece of quality is having someone who is in the classroom who can stay in the classroom consistently and so how we can partner

that up with a quality conversation, like, paying teachers, or allocating funds to the teacher directly." – Child Care Center Director

- ✓ It is difficult to identify substitute teachers that can come "over the hill," there is nobody in West Marin who is qualified. There are many adults in the community that would like to get in the field, but they would have to go "over the hill" to take classes.
- ✓ There are many unique obstacles for teachers to obtain the ECE units or to advance their education (e.g., going "over the hill" to attend evening classes, lack of child care for mothers in the evening for them to attend these classes)
- ✓ Transitional Kindergarten is impacting the pre-schools
- ✓ There is an excellent advancement in professional development education opportunities, but, because of the stipends that are offered for attendance at these workshops, rather than continuing accredited college education, many of the people in the workforce are attending professional development workshops and not classes at the college. There is a concern is that those individuals teachers will not have the minimum units required in the future to stay in the field.

### Advancements (What is working?)

- ✓ There is a great deal of support for Spanish-speaking children because our workforce is diverse and many educators speak Spanish. There was significant progress in this area in our field in the last years. When the students come into the classroom, and they have someone who speaks their language, it makes a difference in their identity and resilience.
- ✓ Trauma-informed care has been included in training for educators (including in K-12).
- ✓ Home visitation program for families with children 0 to 3 years-old, essential for early intervention.
- ✓ Quality initiatives and professional development opportunities.
- ✓ Community comes together and work hard to address the struggles.

### Solutions

- ✓ Advance trauma-informed care and resilience education with teachers and parents.
- ✓ Look at the numbers regarding our communities deeply, thoughtfully, and alternatively because the current snapshot that we have and the 2020 Census is not going to capture what we need - and West Marin is always especially negatively affected.
- ✓ Promote a complete count for the Census 2020 – mobilize our communities.
- ✓ Identify local funds to complement teachers' wage. Change the funding formula from "student-based" to "teacher-based."
- ✓ Offer housing for teachers to live where they work.
- ✓ Expand home-visitation programs.

- ✓ Offer ECE classes in the West Marin (e.g., through a partnership with College of Marin) and/or online together with support services to make it easier to navigate the system and attend the classes (e.g., offer child care).

**8. Member Announcements**

No announcement was shared.

**9. Adjourn**

M/s/c Lombardi/Lau; the matter passed 7-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 P.M.

These minutes were reviewed and approved by the Marin County Child Care Commission at their next regular meeting on Tuesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019.