

Regular Meeting
Early Child Development and Early Learning Task Force
Wednesday, July 6, 2022
5:00 P.M.

Task Force Members Present: Chair Vera Vignes, Efren Aguilar, Geoff Albert, Toni Boucher, Lila Guirguis, Lindsay Lewis, Dr. Dianne Philibosian, Dr. Marie Poulsen, Tony Santilena, Susan Wood, Carla Hegwood (Ex-Officio, arrived late), Blanca Siebels, Ree Harris-Hudson, Lisa Clements (arrived late)

Task Force Members Absent: Melani Smith-Hill

Staff Present: Michelle Garrett, Charlene Chen (Recording Secretary), Pat Bowie (Consultant), Dion O'Connell, Vannia de la Cuba

1. Call To Order/Roll Call

Chair Vignes called the meeting to order at 5:06 P.M.

2. Approval of Minutes – June 15, 2022

In Favor: Chair Vera Vignes, Efren Aguilar, Geoff Albert, Toni Boucher, Lila Guirguis, Lindsay Lewis, Dr. Dianne Philibosian, Dr. Marie Poulsen, Tony Santilena, Susan Wood, Blanca Siebels

Opposed: None

Abstain: None

3. Public Comment

No public comment.

4. Discussion of Current Proposed Policy Changes – Vera Vignes, Task Force Chair

Chair Vignes provided a summary of the consensus reached at the previous meeting around key policy areas of health and emotional well-being, quality early childhood settings and neighborhood support. Chair Vignes proposed adding economic instability to the list of overarching themes (racism, social justice, culturally specific programs for English learners/all learners, and the impact of violence on children and families). Dr. Dianne Philibosian proposed adding health disparities to the list of overarching themes while Lindsay Lewis suggested adding access to mental health services.

The task force then discussed the revision to the core elements during which time Chair Vignes asked the group: are the proposed revisions simple and clear; do they reflect the

systems approach of the policy; and do they agree on the revised Policy elements. The group expressed consensus concerning the revisions, but would require wordsmithing to capture the intent and accountability needed to strengthen the policy.

Efren Aguilar recommended a training requirement for Staff on how to interpret and use data to inform program development. Chair Vignes reminded the group that their current focus is to review and make recommendations to the policy. Efren's suggestion might be part of the subsequent implementation and can be part of the broader task force recommendations to the City Council.

Additional elements discussed included a reference to "inclusion," especially as it could broadly apply to families with disabled children, economic, and health disparities. Carla Hegwood suggested adding or acknowledging pathways for families that travel between partners to the 'Strengthening Families' building block. Chair Vignes closed the discussion with full consensus from the group around renaming the Building Blocks to "Core Elements" of the Master Plan.

No Public Comment.

5. Review of Policy Vision Statement & Master Plan for the Young Child – Vera Vignes, Task Force Chair

Chair Vignes opened the discussion by reading the policy vision statement and asking the group if it captured the full scope and intention of the policy. Dr. Philibosian stated that the vision is as relevant today as it was when the policy was adopted in 2015. Lila Guirguis expressed that the vision statement was not bold enough. Lisa Clements remarked that COVID left many children play-deprived and that play is critical to a child's growth. Both Lisa and Toni suggested that the vision statement could be modified so that it has a stronger application and connection to children/families. Lindsay Lewis offered that the "early success" phrase of the vision statement does not reflect the nurturing aspect that the community strives for nor does it lend itself to a pathway for a love of learning. Other words recommended for incorporation included "community," "thriving," "kindness," "resilience," "developmentally appropriate," and "belonging." Geoff offered that "creates" is a process-driven word as opposed to a vision or aspiration. Efren suggested that the Task Force develop a glossary to define the words and elements of the revised policy.

Efren Aguilar offered that the vision statement could incorporate "every child has a right" in the statement and referenced the Convention on the Rights of the Child, an international treaty sponsored by the United Nations. Dr. Philibosian added that this can also be folded into the vision statement, "every child has a right to thrive" and elaborate on what children's rights are in the Master Plan portion of the policy.

Chair Vignes re-introduced the Master Plan for the policy and solicited feedback from the group. Dianne Philibosian offered that the Master Plan should read like an architectural rendering and give a sense of the architecture, without the detail you'd find in a draftsman's set of plans. Lisa Clements recommended adding a second sentence stating, "The Master Plan is built on the core values of (overarching factors) to illustrate the 'Master Plan is what and is why.'" Dr. Philibosian added that the additional statement of

core values could also include the additional words/phrases that the task force had wanted to incorporate in the vision. Lindsay Lewis suggested changing "service" to "supports" to show inclusiveness while Lila Guirguis proposed removal of the funding element from the Master Plan and instead incorporated as part of the action steps. Dr. Philibosian suggested adding the funding element as a recommendation to the city to "actively seek external funding". Chair Vignes stressed the importance of keeping the funding piece as a show of the city's commitment and support to the community and work towards achieving buy-in from leadership, stakeholders, and community members. Efren Aguilar offered that the city may attract private philanthropic dollars if the elements of the 'Rights of the Child' are incorporated into the policy. Chair Vignes closed the discussion and will return with a revised vision statement for the group to review.

No public comment.

6. Update on the Interim Report to City Council – Vera Vignes, Task Force Chair


Chair Vignes stated that the update to City Council will highlight the progress of the task force regarding the Building Blocks and over-arching themes, the agreements reached by the task force thus far, and the work plan moving forward.

No public comment.

7. Adjournment

Chair Vignes adjourned the meeting at 6:41 PM

X 
Michelle Garrett
Assistant to the City Manager

X 
Danica Borja
Recording Secretary