

Workforce Development Concept Paper

November 10, 2005

Background

Since First 5 LA's inception, the Board has funded several initiatives that specifically address the early care education field including, Child Care I & II, Compensation and Retention, Universal Preschool and various Community Development Projects. Additionally, the Board has demonstrated its commitment to the field of early care and education as an integral part of the Early Learning Goal in the *Next 5 Strategic Plan* for FY 2004-2009.

In further considering First 5 LA's role in addressing the early care and education workforce, the Board recently considered participation in First 5 California's Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Standards Initiative (CARES) at its June 2005 Board meeting. While the Board is interested in the focus of the CARES initiative model on improving the professional development for all types of child care workers, the initiative design does not permit a systemic approach to addressing workforce development nor does it offer enough flexibility to tailor workforce development strategies to meet local county needs. As such, the First 5 LA Board voted not to participate in the CARES initiative and instead directed staff to create a conceptual framework for an initiative that addresses the needs of the early care and education workforce in Los Angeles County. As part of this request, the Board asked staff to consider the continuum of care, extending from entry into the early care and education career lattice through advancement; considering too that we need to build a foundation to bridge the gap between the current status of the workforce and Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) quality standards.

To create a framework for developing the early care and education workforce, staff gathered information from several sources: a variety of experts in the field through a Roundtable discussion, key informant interviews, and reviews of relevant research. Staff also conducted a very cursory environmental scan to identify leveraging opportunities through existing resources and potential partners. Based on the above, staff developed the proposed framework identifying how First 5 LA could potentially make the most significant impact on improving the quality of early care and education and furthering the professionalism of the field.

The Issue

Nationwide, over 50% of the parents of children under the age of five are working and require some form of non-parental care for their children during the day. However, not all early care and education options are high quality and we know from the research literature that in order for children to reap the benefits of early care and education services, those services need to be of sufficient quality. One key component of quality is the teacher's qualifications. Given that First 5 LA has committed \$600 million to create Los Angeles Universal Preschool for all 4-year olds and First 5 LA is also committed to improving school readiness for all children under age 5, we have a vested interest in ensuring that there is an adequate supply of qualified early care and education professionals in Los Angeles County. There are a number of challenges facing the early care and education workforce that need to be addressed in Los Angeles County.

Level of Education and Training

There is growing concern that workers across all the different types of early care and education programs, from home-based to center-based providers, need training and education to better perform their jobs. The recent emphasis in the dialogue on improving child outcomes is geared toward the level of training and education of the individuals providing care to our young children. In fact, there is a growing discussion about whether early care and education providers need bachelor's degrees (BA), just like teachers in public schools (Education Reform, Nov. 18 2004).

The Los Angeles Universal Preschool Master Plan, for example, outlines the following broad goal for workforce qualifications: “Upgrade and align professional education and certification requirements for all early education instructional staff across roles, including a target of the BA degree plus a credential in Early Education, as the minimum requirement for the position of teacher in an early education system” (p. 38 of the Universal Preschool Master Plan). In studying the options for universal preschool in Los Angeles County, the Workforce and Professional Development Task Team ultimately recommended that the goal should be to expect 50% of teachers to have attained the BA degree at the end of seven years.

The focus on Universal Preschool and the potential development of statewide workforce qualification standards has fueled many recent discussions around the multiple issues facing the early care and education workforce. While this conversation and direction is more recent, the same issues have faced the early education workforce for many years.

While much of the research indicates that the highest quality of child care is delivered by individuals with a BA degree, many people working in the field have not completed a college degree. The table below shows the education levels of early care and education workers in Los Angeles by their professional titles. Only 32% of teachers have attained an AA or higher, while only 6% of Assistant Teachers have done so. Not surprisingly, more Directors (68%) have an AA or higher. The numbers achieving a BA are even lower for both the Teachers and Assistant Teachers.

Table 1: Highest Level of Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Child Development

	Teachers	Assistant Teachers	Directors
0 Units	1%	19%	3%
1-6 Units	4%	26%	1%
12 Units	29%	30%	12%
24 Units	34%	19%	16%
Associate Degree	19%	4%	10%
Bachelor’s Degree	12%	2%	38%
Master’s and above	1%	0%	20%

Source: Profile of the LA County Child Care Center Workforce, 2002, p. 11

The current trend is for programs to move toward adopting or establishing more stringent educational standards for the early care and education workforce. For example, LAUP has established the star-quality rating system (illustrated below) which requires early care and education staff to have specified levels of training and education in order to participate as a Universal Preschool provider. Additionally, First 5 California’s Preschool for All (PFA) Initiative establishes similar requirements as does the proposed *Preschool for All* legislation which would establish these standards statewide.

Required Educational Credentials by Star Quality Level

	Lead Teacher	Assistant Teacher
Star Level 3	Holds or qualifies for Child Development Teacher Permit—24 semester units of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and 12 units of General Education (GE)	Holds or qualifies for Child Development Assistant Permit—6 semester units in ECE or completed Regional Occupation Program (ROP) in Child Development Occupations
Star Level 4	AA degree in Child Development (with 24 units of ECE); or holds or	Holds or qualifies for Child Development Associate Teacher Permit—12 units in

	qualifies for Child Development Master Teacher Permit—24 units of ECE, plus 6 units in specialized area of ECE, plus 2 units in adult supervision, plus 16 units of General Education (or BA degree and 12 units in ECE)	ECE or CDA (Child Development Associate) credential
Star Level 5	BA degree in Child Development (or related field), with at least 24 units of ECE, or holds a teaching credential and has taken at least 24 units of ECE	Holds or qualifies for Child Development Teacher Permit—24 semester units of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and 12 units of General Education (GE)

Source: Workforce and Professional Development Task Team Knowledge Transfer, p. 11, undated.

Additionally, with all of these initiatives, a Bachelors Degree is a requirement to qualify for the highest level of reimbursement and a long-term programmatic goal. While raising standards may lead to many positive outcomes, it also creates some challenges. Many providers face barriers to acquiring more training and education. For example, some providers may find the cost of training and education to be prohibitive, or they may not have access to institutions that offer the classes they need or the time or ability to access available classes. Further, some providers lack the incentive—if they do not see any financial benefit to pursuing more education, they may not consider such an investment a good use of their time and energy. For these reasons, teachers and providers will need significant support in pursuing more education and training to meet higher standards, or a number of current practitioners could be left out.

Supply of Child Care Providers

Not only is there concern about the quality of the current workforce, there is also concern that not enough new people are entering the field to meet the demand. As the table below shows, additional workers will be needed at multiple levels within the sector. According to the 2000 Child Care Needs Assessment for Los Angeles County, there is an estimated shortfall of over 300,000 spaces.

Table 2: Universal Preschool Workforce Calculation: Basic Needs

	Today	10 Years From Now	Additional Workforce Needed
BA Teachers	561	2603	2042
AA Teachers	749	1562	813
Title 5 Teachers (40 units ECE)	1310	781	(529)
Title 22 Teachers (12 units ECE)	1123	260	(863)
Assts/Para-Educators	3743	5206	1463
Total Teachers and Assts/Para-Educators	7486	10412	2926

Source: Child Care Needs Assessment for Los Angeles County

Demographic Issues

Compounding the issue of needing more workers is the desire to have a workforce that matches the cultural and linguistic diversity of the children being served. As shown in the table below, currently, there is a disconnect between the ethnic profile of providers and the demographics of the child population. The Table below illustrates the differences.

Table 3: Ethnic Profile of Preschool Teachers and Assistants and Children under 12 Years-Old in Los Angeles County

	Percent of Teachers	Percent of Assistants	Percent of Children, 0-12 in LAC
Caucasian	31	21	19
Latino	39	49	59
African American	16	20	10
Asian/Pacific Islander	10	6	9
Other	4	4	4

Source: A Profile of the Child Care Center Workforce in Los Angeles County, 2002, p. 8.

In addition to the need for a more culturally and linguistically diverse workforce, the current early care and education workforce is aging. Twenty-one percent of teachers are over 50 years old; 55 percent are between 30 and 50 years old and only 24 percent are younger than thirty. That said, the profile of the teaching assistants is more skewed toward younger people: 49 percent are younger than 30, 40 percent are between 30 and 40 years old and only 11 percent are older than 50. Given that the over 75% of teachers are over the age of 30, there is a need to encourage more of the assistant teachers to continue their professional development to become full teachers and/or to encourage more young people to get on a career track that will lead them to a teaching position.

In summary, there are multiple challenges facing the early child care workforce including: 1) the levels of education and training of child care workers at different points in the care continuum; 2) an adequate supply of child care providers; 3) a supply of providers that matches the ethnic profile of the children being served. These layered issues require a comprehensive approach that will achieve the following goals:

- Increase the training and education levels of the current workforce,
- Increase the supply of early education professionals who are younger and more culturally and linguistically diverse than the current population of providers,
- Increase compensation and retention for early care and education providers so that they are motivated to stay in the field and more young people are encouraged to enter the field,
- Increase educational opportunities and reduce barriers by working with institutions of higher education to change their policies and practices,
- Improve the public perception of early care and education professionals so that they receive the respect they deserve and to encourage more people to choose early care and education as a career path.

Initiative Framework: Goals and Strategies

The proposed program design and initiative framework described herein is rooted in the findings of several decades of research, extensive input from experts with hands on experience in the field and lessons from CARES and other Early Care and Education Workforce Initiatives. The framework includes a direct services component to promote professionalizing the field and increase the supply of new entrants into the field, a policy and advocacy piece to affect the systemic issues that impact the long-term capacity of the workforce, and a public education piece to improve the visibility of the early care and education workforce.

The proposed initiative framework is multifaceted in order to address the needs of the continuum of the ECE workforce and the complexity of the barriers faced by this group. The framework includes the following 5 components:

- (1) Career Development Pilot Program (Direct Service)
- (2) High School Recruitment Pilot Program (Direct Service)
- (3) Higher Education Consortium (Policy & Advocacy)
- (4) Compensation & Retention Policy Steering Committee (Policy & Advocacy)
- (5) Public Education Campaign

Staff propose a phased-in implementation approach to execute the initiative framework. The details of the implementation plan will be fleshed out based on more in-depth analysis of the proposed model and an assessment of current workforce development systems and will be presented as part of the final document and initiative approval process in October 2005.

Tier 1—Programmatic Services

Career Development Pilot Program

GOAL: Increase the training and education levels of the current workforce

Professional providers who make up the ECE workforce are not a uniform group. We know that individuals working with young children possess a myriad of skills, training and educational experience and work in a variety of settings. We also know that these subgroups face different barriers to progressing within the field. As stated in the Universal Preschool Master Plan, the child development community “is struggling with tensions between *intuition vs. education, schooling vs. training, degrees vs. work experience, caring vs. teaching, and home-based vs. center-based programs*. While many focus on the oppositional nature of the debate, it is possible to position each end of the discussion as a point on a continuum”—at the one end, the formal care giver who is just entering into the career lattice, at the other end a preschool teacher with an advanced degree, and numerous transition points along the way.

To date, many of the programs and/or services available to support the workforce are targeted only at one specific segment of this continuum, due to the sheer magnitude of the workforce and their disparate needs. Based on input from our field experts and a review of best practices, staff recommend the establishment of a **Career Development Pilot Program**. The provision of mentorship and guidance counseling is a strategy that offers the potential to address professional development barriers that cut across the field. First 5 LA would provide a differentiated level of assistance, appropriate to meet provider needs, based on mentees’ position along the continuum. By pairing experienced, trained providers and/or guidance counselors with individuals who want to further develop their skill sets and learn more about professional development supports, mentees at all levels could improve the quality of the services they provide. Additionally, the program offers the opportunity to promote retention in the field through the provision of stipends to provider mentors and counselors.

The proposed Career Development Pilot Program is a three-component program directed at improving the skill levels of the current workforce through the use of mentors and counselors.

As indicated above, the current workforce spans a spectrum in terms of the informal caregiver / teacher continuum and is represented by individuals with diverse experience, training and education. Accordingly, what we expect from individuals working at different points along this

continuum varies as do their needs for enhancing their skills and developing themselves professionally. For this reason, we designed this program to meet individuals along the continuum and tailored services by categorizing the workforce into three strands.

- **Strand 1:** At one end of the continuum are informal providers who are typically self-employed and *may* lack formal education and training. Due to individual circumstances, some may be interested in pursuing a formal education track while others may have different professional development interests but are still interested in enhancing their training and ability to better serve the children in their care.

Trained provider mentors working in this strand would provide mentorship and supervision to ECE workers to assist them with enhancing their skills in working with young children (0-5). Through this strand First 5 LA has the opportunity to leverage resources and collaborate with and expand on activities currently available to the those who work in the field such as, California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) License Exempt Training programs (Child Care Initiative Project, or CCIP), through Resource and Referral agencies (R&Rs), and KCET child development programming. Additionally, First 5 LA could potentially expand these resources through the provision of health and safety trainings, organized playgroups in the park with a child development expert, facilitated discussion sessions, supports and links to English Language Learner courses and Adult and Child Food programs, to name a few.

- **Strand 2:** Along the continuum are individuals who have some formal education and training, but may not be on a formal Degree or Certificate track. Participants in this track have taken some college level courses (community or four-year) but may be ambivalent about the extent to which they intend to formalize their professional career plans and pursue a degree. Mentors, or *Career Advocates*, within this strand would provide a hybrid of mentorship and career advisement. This support would enable ECE providers to develop a better understanding of the ECE career ladder and opportunities in the field as well as provide them with a more clear direction for their career development.

Trained provider mentors for this strand would work with ECE workers to assist them with assessing their current skill sets and working with them to define their professional goals and development of a plan to achieve them. Through this strand First 5 LA has the opportunity to leverage resources and collaborate with the Early Educators Program (AB212). Mentors in this strand could potentially work with AB212 program participants to support their educational acquisition and formalize their career development plans. In addition to assisting with career development plans, mentors could assist providers in identifying and mitigating barriers to ECE professional development within college and community institutions.

Strand 3: At the other end of the continuum are ECE professionals who are currently on a Degree or Certificate Track and pursuing either their Associate Arts (AA) or Bachelors Degrees (BA). These providers often lack career and academic advising. Providers in this strand would be paired with trained “super” counselors who would give providers assistance with accessing information and resources to help them successfully complete their required courses of study. Super counselors would be required to provide a mix of career, academic, and financial counseling on site at either a community or four-year college, and to advocate on behalf of ECE professionals.

High School Recruitment Pilot Program

GOAL: Increase the supply of early education professionals who are younger and more diverse than the current population of providers

According to the statistics provided by the *Workforce and Professional Development Task Team* we will need “over 10,000 teacher and teachers assistants” over the next ten years in Los Angeles County to support the achievement our Universal Preschool goals through LAUP. Additionally, we know that the ECE workforce is aging with the 40 being the average age of providers and that the field lacks a succession plan. These statistics imply that without diligent recruitment efforts, we will not be able to serve the children and their families who will require out of home care in the future.

To begin creating a pipeline of new ECE professionals, First 5 LA is proposing several strategies to reach high school students. The High School Recruitment Pilot program will introduce students to ECE careers and recruit them into the field. In addition to assisting high school students with determining their career plans, this program would help high school students understand the opportunities available in the field, provide them with resources to achieve their goals and create tangible experience to support their interest.

Similar to the Career Development Pilot Program described above, mentor/counselors would be placed at high schools, to inform students about the benefits of working in the ECE sector and assist them with understanding the education and training they would need for successful employment. Mentor/counselors would connect students with higher education institutions to enroll in ECE courses. Additionally, through this program, high schools would offer ECE vocational classes as part of their elective curriculum. This could be done either through the expansion of existing Educational Academies such as the teaching career academies within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and other interested districts, the creation of additional such academies, or even through the development of programs at schools with child development centers on site. Through this program, students would also obtain internships at “high quality” early care and education programs, such as those within the LAUP system operating at the 3 star and up level. Providing high school students with an opportunity to do internships at preschool centers would serve the dual purpose of: 1) giving them exposure to preschool professionals; and 2) providing them with training and experience to build their skills and abilities to pursue their careers.

It is important to note that successful implementation of the strategies outlined in *Tier 1* of this framework will require the development of partnerships with several external entities, including, but not limited to, Resource and Referral Agencies, Family Child Care Associations, Community and Four-Year Colleges, School Districts and select high school campuses, The Office of Child Care and LAUP. Implementation details and recommendations will be further fleshed out in the next iteration of the framework for Board approval.

Tier 2—Policy and Advocacy

Higher Education Consortium

GOAL: Increase educational opportunities and reduce barriers by working with institutions of higher education to change their policies and practices

Buy-in and participation from local colleges and universities will be paramount to achieving our long-term goal of ensuring that young children are ready for school based on what we know from the growing body of literature that indicates the importance of teacher qualifications and

the need to support the workforce in optimizing the career opportunities available to them in the ECE field.

The Universal Preschool *Workforce and Professional Development Task Team* spent an extensive amount of time considering this issue and the best way to affect the necessary systemic changes. The Task Team recommended convening a Higher Education and Training Consortium. Staff proposes that First 5 LA work in partnership with LAUP to convene this consortium and build on the activities already underway through the Office of Child Care.

The consortium would be tasked with addressing a range of institutional-level policy issues and developing strategies and or programs that would create change within the higher education system that increase capacity and reduce barriers to meet the professional development needs of the current workforce. To achieve this, the scope of topics would include developing: financial aid/loan forgiveness opportunities; articulation agreements between 2 and 4 year institutions; programs and supports for Spanish Speakers and English Language Learners (ESL); ECE courses that are both geographically and time accessible to providers; and relevant updates to courses to ensure that class content are relevant to the success of LAUP.

Compensation and Retention Policy Steering Committee

GOAL: Increase compensation and retention for early care and education providers so that they are motivated to stay in the field and more young people are encouraged to enter the field

A major factor for the early care and education workforce is compensation, benefits, and by extension, retention. The levels of compensation in child care, as in other professions, can greatly impact people’s desire to work in the profession, both in terms of recruiting new people and retaining current workers. The following tables illustrate the sizeable differences between what child care teachers earn and what their peers who work at the kindergarten and elementary school levels earn. Child care workers earn much less than K-12 teachers, who themselves make relatively low salaries.

Comparison of Child Care Teacher and Public School Teacher Salaries in Los Angeles County

	Lowest Annual Salary	Highest Annual Salary
Child Care Teacher	\$16,450	\$25,078
		Average Salary
Kindergarten Teacher		\$44,110
Elementary School Teacher		\$47,450

Source: A Profile of the Child Care Workforce in Los Angeles County, 2002, p. 15.

Many child care workers do not receive paid benefits as part of their compensation packages. The Center for the Child Care Workforce, in its survey of child care staff salaries, benefits and working conditions, found that for full-time staff “depending on the job title in question, 28 to 46 percent of programs did not offer health insurance of any kind to their staff” (p. 16). Part-time employees fare even worse than their full-time peers, “only 16 percent of programs offer part-

time teachers health benefits on par with full-time teachers.” Other part-time staff are even less likely to receive benefits similar to their full-time equivalents.

Determining compensation and benefits is beyond the scope of First 5 LA, but influencing the conversation about compensation fits well with First 5 LA’s mission. Thus staff recommend that First 5 LA establish a steering committee to address wage parity with K-12/salary schedules, and benefits (i.e., benefit pools). Likely partners in such an effort include LAUP, the California Department of Education, the Office of Child Care, and representatives from the insurance industry.

Public Education Campaign

GOAL: Improve the public perception of early care and education professionals so that they receive the respect they deserve and to encourage more people to choose early care and education as a career path

A Public Education Campaign will support the work of the four funding areas already described and on a global level can improve the image of ECE as a profession. The public education campaign will be targeted at high school students, ECE providers and the general public. The overall objective of the campaign would be to raise the consciousness of the significance of working with young children in all settings and promote professionalizing the field.

Through this campaign we can effectively promote the field of ECE to these populations through the following activities: 1) ensure the inclusion of information at vocational fairs and other appropriate venues to provide high school students with career information to introduce and promote an understanding of the field; 2) work with KCET to create and launch a series of *A Place of our Own* episodes that focus on providing ECE workers with information about developing career plans, identifying resources relevant to enhancing their skill sets, and understanding the training and educational requirements to move along the ECE continuum; 3) develop a statewide advertisement campaign to help educate the general public on the importance of the ECE field.

Workforce Development Conceptual Framework

Services						
Funding Area	Target Population	Geographic Focus	Strategies	Potential Partners	First 5 LA Role	Proposed Cost
Career Development Pilot Program (3 Strands)	<u>Strand 1</u> Providers Not Interested in Formal Education Track	Targeted	Experienced and Trained <i>Provider-Mentors</i> Work to Support and Guide Providers to Build their Skills (connect with ESL Classes, Licensing, Safety Training)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUP • R&Rs • KCET • Family Child Care Associations 	Issue RFP/RFQ or Develop Strategic Partnership Manage Pilot Program	<i>Analysis currently underway (includes potential partners/funders and best practices)</i>
	<u>Strand 2</u> Potential Degree and/or Certificate Track Providers	<i>(Will be connected to placed-based funding approach to be presented at September 27, 2005 Special Planning Meeting)</i>	Experienced and Trained <i>Provider-Mentors</i> Work to Create a Professional Development Plan and Connect with Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAUP • R&Rs • KCET • AB 212—Office of Child Care 		
	<u>Strand 3</u> Current Degree and/or Certificate Track Providers		Career Advocates Provide Integrated Academic, Financial, Career Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Colleges & Four-Year Colleges 		

Workforce Development Conceptual Framework

Services						
Funding Area	Target Population	Geographic Focus	Strategies	Potential Partners	First 5 LA Role	Proposed Cost
High School Recruitment Pilot Program	High School Students	<p>Targeted</p> <p><i>Will be connected to placed-based funding approach to be presented at September 27, 2005 Special Planning Meeting.</i></p>	<p>Access to ECE Courses Through Community Colleges</p> <p>High School Guidance Counselors Provide ECE Career and Academic Counseling</p> <p>Paid Internship at High Quality Program (3+ Star)</p> <p>Connect with <i>Provider-Mentor</i> at Internship Site</p>	<p>Targeted School Districts and Select High Schools</p> <p>Community Colleges</p> <p>LAUP High Quality Programs</p>	<p>Issue RFP/RFQ or Develop Strategic Partnership</p> <p>Manage Pilot Program</p>	<p><i>Analysis currently underway (includes potential partners/funders and best practices)</i></p>

Workforce Development Conceptual Framework

Policy & Advocacy						
Funding Area	Target Population	Geographic Focus	Strategies	Potential Partners	First 5 LA Role	Proposed Cost
Higher Education Consortium	Community Colleges	LA County	<i>Policy Issues to be Addressed:</i> Financial Aid/ Loan Forgiveness Opportunities Articulation Agreements Between 2 & 4 Year Institutions Create Satellite Classes in the Community Programs for Spanish Speakers and English Language Learners	LAUP Community Colleges Local 4-year Colleges and Universities Financial Institutions	Convene Consortium	<i>Analysis currently underway (includes potential partners/funders and best practices)</i>
Compensation & Retention Policy Steering Committee	Policy Makers	LA County	<i>Policy Issues to be Addressed:</i> Wage parity with K-12/ Salary Schedules Benefits (e.g., benefit pools)	LAUP California Department of Education Office of Child Care Private Industry (e.g. health plan providers)	Convene Steering Committee	<i>Analysis currently underway (includes potential partners/funders and best practices)</i>

Workforce Development Conceptual Framework

Policy & Advocacy						
Funding Area	Target Population	Geographic Focus	Strategies	Potential Partners	First 5 LA Role	Proposed Cost
Public Education Campaign	High School Students	LA County	Establish Early Childhood Education as a Professional Career Option at Local Career Fairs	Professional Organizations (NAEYC) Other non-profit groups (i.e., LA Business Council) LAUP	Facilitate Connections between Career Fairs and the ECE Field	<i>Analysis currently underway (includes potential partners/funders and best practices)</i>
	ECE Providers	California	“A Place of Our Own” Episode(s) on How to Develop a Professional Career in ECE (i.e., educational requirements and resources, job opportunities)	KCET	Partner with KCET to Develop Program	
	General Public	California	Ad Campaign On the Importance of ECE Professionals/ Preschool Teachers	First 5 California Ad Council	Advocate	

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