



AGENDA

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IMPROVING QUALITY IN CALIFORNIA'S EARLY EDUCATION SYSTEM: NEW RESEARCH AND IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

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Mon., Feb. 29, 2016 | 8:30-11:30 a.m.

CA Secretary of State Office
Building – Auditorium

1500 11th Street, Sacramento, CA

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The conference is co-sponsored by Policy
Analysis for California Education (PACE)
and Early Edge California



8:30 a.m. Registration and Refreshments

9:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks

David Plank

Executive Director, Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE)

Deborah Kong

President, Early Edge California

Meera Mani

Director, Children, Families, and Communities Program,
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

9:15 a.m. Essential Quality Elements – Recent Research Publications

Moderator: *Deborah Kong*

Marjorie Wechsler

Principal, Research Manager, Learning Policy Institute

Abbie Lieberman

Policy Analyst, Early & Elementary Education Policy, New America

Lisa Kaufman

Executive Director, Educare Silicon Valley and

Chris Sciarrino

Director of Workforce and Professional Development, Early Learning Lab

Carla Bryant

Chief of Early Education, San Francisco Unified School District

Audience Q&A

10:15 a.m. Quality Improvement in California

Moderator: *Andrea Ball*

Senior Policy Advisor, Early Edge California

Sarah Crow

Vice President of Policy and Evaluation, Opportunity Institute

Jolene Smith

Chief Executive Officer, First 5 Santa Clara County

Celia C. Ayala, Ph.D.

Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles Universal Preschool

Camille Maben

Executive Director, First 5 California

Deanna Mathies

Director of Early Learning, Fresno Unified School District

Audience Q&A

11:20 a.m. Closing Comments and Thank You

Deborah Kong and David Plank

PANELIST BIOS | ALPHA



Celia C. Ayala, Ph.D.

Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles Universal Preschool

Dr. Celia C. Ayala believes wholeheartedly that helping students achieve success heavily depends upon the collaborative effort between parents, teachers, administrators and the larger community.

With nearly 40 years of professional experience in the education field, Dr. Ayala has filled most of those shoes— parent, teacher, administrator, community leader, CEO of LAUP— and knows firsthand that educating any child involves a rich and complex myriad of challenges. Under her leadership, LAUP—a nonprofit that funds, rates and provides coaching and other trainings to early education sites—more than 115,000 children have become better prepared for kindergarten and beyond. Despite their disadvantaged backgrounds, by second grade, LAUP alumni had higher test scores in reading and math than non-LAUP students.

Dr. Ayala’s visionary influence has led to LAUP’s recognition as a state and national model—in early education coaching, training and consulting, early language development, fiscal coaching, family engagement and more.

In 2008, former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Dr. Ayala to the Early Learning Quality Improvement System Advisory Committee. That work is now experiencing fruition through the implementation of quality rating and improvement systems (QRIS) across the state, including the QRIS Block Grant.

Among Dr. Ayala’s many local, state and national appointments, she served on a committee for the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, which released this year’s seminal report: “Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth to Age Eight.”



Andrea Ball, J.D.

Senior Policy Advisor, Early Edge California

As senior policy advisor, Andrea’s primary focus is helping develop and lead a policy and advocacy agenda to strengthen the early care and education workforce in California. She comes to Early Edge California with deep knowledge of California’s public education system and state legislative and budget process. Andrea’s prior experience includes serving as Deputy Superintendent of Government Affairs for then-State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell, where she led the Department’s legislative and fiscal policy agenda aimed at closing gaps in student achievement and improving alignment of the PreK through University systems. Andrea also served as statewide director of the California Academic Partnership Program and started her education policy career with the Long Beach Unified School District. Most recently, Andrea was a legislative advocate with the California School Boards Association and had primary responsibility for the association’s legislative advocacy on the Local Control Funding Formula.



Carla Bryant

Chief of Early Education, San Francisco Unified School District

Carla Bryant has over thirty years of national experience creating culturally competent policies, programs, and procedures for comprehensive early learning, P-3, elementary, family support and after school programs. As the Chief of the Early Education Department for San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), she is responsible for administrating 12 early education schools with prekindergarten (PK) through transitional kindergarten (TK) students, supporting 74 elementary schools align curriculum and instruction PK-3rd grade, and integrating community based PreK and District practices with the assistance of City departments (i.e., First 5 SF). A report from New America's Early Education Initiative, "The Power of a Good Idea: How the San Francisco School District is Building a PreK-3rd Bridge" shines a light on her efforts.

Before coming to SFUSD, Carla was a strategic advisor for the City of Seattle where she co-created Seattle Early Education Collaborative (SEEC). SEEC is a community based early learning system that joined disparately funded programs (federal, state, local, and private) into one system that included joint assessment & accountability, professional development, and transition processes. SEEC as an integral part of the Seattle Public Schools P-3 model and was highlighted by the National League of Cities (NLC) as one of four cities with progressive plans to align the early learning and K-12 education systems. Ms. Bryant anticipates completing her PhD at the University of Washington in Special Education in the winter of 2015.



Sarah Crow

Vice President of Policy and Evaluation, Opportunity Institute

Sarah Crow is Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff at The Opportunity Institute. In this role, Sarah works closely with the President on strategic planning and vision of the organization, as well as leads policy research focused on early learning programs and family work supports. Prior to joining OI, she was the Associate Director of the Children and Families program at Next Generation, where she led research and advocacy on California policy related to early childhood education and health, as well as work-family issues. Sarah previously worked as a senior analyst at the San Francisco Human Services Agency and advised on issues including subsidized employment, childcare, food assistance, and access to Medi-Cal, California's Medicaid program. She has worked as a researcher, evaluator and consultant to state and federal public agencies, as well as foundations and non-profits, on a range of issues including children's health insurance programs, welfare policy, and health access. She sits on the Board of Directors of Help A Mother Out, a local non-profit that delivers diapers to low-income Bay Area families. Sarah holds a B.A. in comparative literature from Oberlin College and a Master of Public Policy from the University of Michigan.



Lisa Kaufman

Executive Director, Educare California at Silicon Valley

Lisa Kaufman currently serves as the Executive Director for Educare California at Silicon Valley (Educare). Prior to joining Educare, Lisa led the Early Learning Services Department for the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE). The department includes Head Start, State Preschool, the Inclusion Collaborative, the California Preschool Instructional Network and the Local Child Care Planning Council (LPC) programs, as well as provides leadership on various high visibility early learning initiatives, including ECSV, the Santa Clara County Early Learning Master Plan and statewide and local strategic planning and implementation efforts for transitional kindergarten. Prior to joining SCCOE, Lisa served as the Chief of Early Childhood Education for San Francisco Unified School District, where she led the district's initial PK-3 strategic planning efforts and the city's largest early learning program. She previously led Early Advantage, a collaborative effort of the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Los Angeles County Education Foundation that served over 30,000 children, families and early childhood and elementary educators annually. Lisa received her Ph.D. and A.M. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and her B.A. from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).



Deborah Kong

President, Early Edge California

As Early Edge California's president, Deborah leads the organization's day-to-day work and collaborates closely with senior staff on strategy. She has worked for more than seven years as a key member of Early Edge California's leadership team as it has successfully advanced an early learning agenda. The mother of a 4 year old, she has a real-time appreciation for the current sense of urgency and opportunity for dramatically expanded and improved early childhood education. After 15 years as a journalist, including a position as a national writer for the Associated Press, and as a reporter for the San Jose Mercury News and Philadelphia Inquirer, Deborah pursued a Masters of Public Policy degree at UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy so that she could take a more active role in effecting change. She also received her bachelor's degree in English with a specialization in Asian American Studies from UCLA. The granddaughter of a Chinese immigrant who came to America in the 1920s without any knowledge of its language and culture, and who ended up graduating from UC Berkeley, Deborah carries a special value for the critical role education can play in helping families achieve the American Dream.



Abbie Lieberman

Policy Analyst, Early & Elementary Education Policy, New America

Abbie Lieberman is a policy analyst with New America's Early & Elementary Education Policy team where she provides research and analysis on policies that impact children from birth through third grade. Prior to joining New America, she interned on the legislative affairs team at Education Trust and at the U.S. Department of Education

working on the 2013 Race to the Top District competition. Ms. Lieberman graduated from Georgetown University's McCourt School with a master's degree in public policy, where her research focused on education reform and students with disabilities. She holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and political science from University of California, Davis.



Camille Maben
Executive Director, First 5 California

In December 2012, Camille began serving in her current role as Executive Director of First 5 California. In that role, she is responsible for staffing the California Children and Families Commission, in addition to directing the work of the agency and its staff. Through her leadership, First 5 California is implementing several evidence-based and results-driven Signature Programs targeted to children, parents, and teachers that focus on quality.

Prior to her appointment at First 5 California, Camille served as the Division Director of the Child Development Division at the California Department of Education (CDE). Part of her responsibilities in that role included providing leadership and oversight to over 700 early care and education contractors with a \$1.7 billion dollar budget. She most recently served as Co-chair of the State Advisory Council on Early Learning and Care, and also helped win and implement the \$75 million federal Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant.

In earlier work, she was appointed by the Governor to serve as Chief of Staff for the Office of the Secretary of Education (OSE). She worked closely with the Secretary on the coordination and development of the Governor's education policy agenda.

Prior to OSE, Camille served as Division Director of CDE's School and District Accountability Division, which included the No Child Left Behind Office, oversight of the Categorical Program Monitoring process, the Title I Policy and Partnerships Unit, and the English Learner Accountability Unit. She served as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction's (SSPI) representative to the California Interscholastic Federation. Camille also served as Senior Advisor to former SSPI Delaine Eastin and has worked as a consultant to the Assembly Education Committee. Camille currently serves as a school board member for the Rocklin Unified School District. She has served on the Rocklin Board for over 25 years.



Meera Mani, Director
Children, Families, and Communities Program,
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Meera Mani is director of the Children, Families, and Communities (CFC) Program. She joined the Foundation in February 2009 as program officer, and in 2010 assumed responsibility for leading the preschool, after-school and summer enrichment subprogram in CFC. Prior to joining the Foundation, Meera served as research director for Preschool California, where she monitored and advised national and state research and evaluation efforts, provided expertise and strategic support to ensure effective policy development, field operations,

communications and messaging. Additionally, Mani served as the president of The Clayton Foundation, led and managed the day-to-day operations of Educare Colorado, now known as Qualistar Early Learning, and served on various task forces, committees and collaborative projects including the Mayor's Early Childhood Education Commission. Meera has a master's degree in child development from M.S. University in India and a doctor of education in Educational Leadership and Administration from Boston University.



Deanna Mathies

Director of Early Learning, Fresno Unified School District

Deanna Mathies has worked in education for 30 years. She taught Special Education for eight years and spent 13 years teaching first through third grades. Deanna was also a literacy coach for teachers teaching four through six grades. She worked as a Teacher on Special Assignment creating and delivering professional learning for preschool through high school teachers. For the last five years Deanna has overseen Early Learning for Fresno Unified School District. While serving as the Manager of Early Learning Deanna implemented a continuum of learning in Fresno Unified's Early Learning programs she has helped create and lead an expanded coaching team and Professional Learning Communities in early childhood settings. Deanna has been part of expanding services to all children under five in Fresno. Currently she is Director of the Fresno County First 5 Birth Through Third Grade grant for Fresno Unified School District and the David and Lucile Packard Starting Smart and Strong Initiative. She also serves as a board member for the Fresno County Economic Opportunity Commission. Deanna has a Master's in Education Administration and Supervision, a Cross- Cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certificate, a Special Education Credential, and a Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential with an emphasis in Early Childhood.



David Plank

Executive Director, Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE)

Before joining PACE in January 2007, David N. Plank was a Professor at Michigan State University, where he founded and directed the Education Policy Center. He was previously on the faculties at the University of Pittsburgh and at the University of Texas at Dallas, where he taught courses and conducted research in the areas of educational finance and policy. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1983. Plank is the author or editor of six books, including the AERA Handbook on Educational Policy Research. He has published widely in a number of different fields, including economics of education, history of education, and educational policy. His current interests include the role of the State in education, and the relationship between academic research and public policy. In addition to his work in the United States, Plank has extensive international experience. He has served as a consultant to international organizations including the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United States Agency for International Development, the Ford Foundation, and also to governments in Africa and Latin America.



Chris Sciarrino

Director of Workforce and Professional Development, Early Learning Lab

Chris Sciarrino serves as the Director of Workforce and Professional Development for the Early Learning Lab (ELL) in Oakland, California. The ELL is dedicated to innovation and experimentation of best practices in early childhood, a mission to which Chris has been long been passionate. Sciarrino brings over 30 years of early childhood field experience including program development and implementation of innovative practices, curriculum design, administration, and university teaching expertise. She served as a Regional Field Specialist for the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning at the University of Washington supporting federal Head Start staff with best practice interpretation in the Head Start system. As the Senior Director for Research and Professional Studies at the Clayton Early Childhood Resource Institute in Denver, she participated on the team of the Early Head Start research project and led the project's continuous improvement model which was highlighted as a national example. She has extensive experience developing and presenting trainings for early childhood professionals, including several curriculum approaches; HighScope, Montessori, and Creative Curriculum. Past foci include developing a Professional Development Institute in Denver, CO, directing the Early Reading First program, developing and piloting a birth to three curricula-based social communication assessment, developing and implementing a curriculum embedded language and literacy assessment for preschoolers and managing the Institute's Early Education Career Center, a higher education collaborative. Sciarrino received her undergraduate and Master's Degrees in Child Development and Family Studies from Kent State University. Sciarrino served on the Buell Early Childhood Leadership Design Team. She brings a never-ending passion for the unique developmental needs of all young children as well as helping teachers translate theory and research into day-to-day interactions that work.



Jolene Smith

Chief Executive Officer, First 5 Santa Clara County

Since the passage of Proposition 10 in 1998, Jolene has been instrumental in establishing FIRST 5 as an organization that supports the healthy development of children prenatal through age five and enriches the lives of their families and communities throughout Santa Clara County. As the leader of the Early Childhood Development Collaborative in 1999, Jolene was responsible for developing the original county Strategic Plan that led to the creation of FIRST 5. In 2000, she served as the Director of Program Development, and worked her way up to Deputy Director, and eventually became the Executive Director in January 2005. During her tenure as Chief Executive Officer, FIRST 5 has been recognized for its leadership on ensuring that the healthy development of our youngest children is viewed as a high priority in the county. Through her efforts, she has worked to engage and unite the community through strategic partnerships and collaborations to tackle challenging issues such as children's health insurance, early literacy, high-quality early education, screening and assessment for developmental delays, model court programs, and a cross-disciplinary, cross-sector community of learning. Under her leadership, FIRST 5 has worked closely with policymakers and elected officials at the federal, state, and local levels to create the necessary change in our laws and in our politics to improve the lives of the people in the community.

Jolene's 30 years of public service are based around her strong commitment and dedication to help people in need. As a high school youth counselor, a national trainer, and a Program Manager with the Santa Clara County Health and Hospital System and the Social Services Agency, Jolene has used her expertise in strategic planning, program development, and training and consultation, to ensure that children, youth, and their families receive vital social services.



Marjorie Wechsler

Principal Research Manager, Learning Policy Institute

Marjorie Wechsler is Principal Research Manager at the Learning Policy Institute where she leads the team working on early childhood learning. She currently is directing a study examining the design, implementation, and funding of state preschool programs in four states. Previously Dr. Wechsler was co-director of SRI International's Center for Education Policy where she led research on preschool through third grade education, teacher development, school- and district-level reform, and systems approaches to educational improvement.