



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION

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December 19, 2018

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
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Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Judge Michael Nash (Ret.)  
Executive Director

## Education Coordinating Council 2018 Annual Report

### Background

The Education Coordinating Council (ECC) is a public-private partnership that was created in 2004 by the Board of Supervisors to raise the educational achievement of system-involved youth in Los Angeles County. ECC members include department directors from Children and Family Services, Probation, and Mental Health, superintendents from Los Angeles County school districts, and the presiding judge from the Juvenile Court, as well as advocates, representatives from community-based organizations, and a former foster and former probation youth. The ECC currently functions under the umbrella of the Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection (OCP).

The purpose of the ECC is to coordinate efforts across organizations and jurisdictions, encouraging varied networks to cooperate to expand best practices and help fill gaps to prevent system-involved children from being left behind educationally. It does this by mobilizing supports across stakeholder groups, brokering solutions and collaborations among child-serving entities, and spearheading strategies that bolster increased educational achievement for the County's foster and probation youth.

### ECC Strategic Plan (2016–2021) Implementation

The 2016–2021 ECC Strategic Plan outlines priority areas, outcomes, and action items around which the ECC engages to accomplish its mission. The chart below shows the five priority areas and their related outcomes.

<b>ECC Strategic Plan Priority Areas and Outcomes</b>	
<i>Priority Area</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
<b>1. Enrollment in Early Childhood Education</b>	The ECC aims for at least 90% of system-involved children under the age of six to participate in high-quality early care and education programs.
<b>2. Achievement for School-Age Youth</b>	Departments, courts, schools, caregivers, and other providers work in concert to supply system-involved youth with the supports they need to be working at grade level (at a minimum) and on target to graduate from high school.
<b>3. Job/College Readiness for Transition-Age Youth</b>	Improve readiness for and access to college and/or jobs for transition-age youth.
<b>4. Electronic Information-Sharing</b>	Expand the sharing of education information related to system-involved youth across departments, providers, and youth.
<b>5. Research and Evaluation</b>	Assess the progress of the educational achievement levels of system-involved youth in Los Angeles County.

### ***Priority Area I: Enrollment in Early Childhood Education (ECE)***

#### Expanding Access to ECE

Since its creation in 2004, the ECC has championed the importance of access to high-quality early care and education services for system-involved youth and their children. In early 2017, the ECC, in partnership with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), created a workgroup to address this issue. Since the June 2017 release of the OCP's prevention plan, *Paving the Road to Safety for Our Children*, the ECE workgroup has been subsumed into the overall prevention work and transferred to the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development (staffed by the County's Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education), which now leads it.

Working with the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development, First 5 LA, the Los Angeles Child Care Alliance, DCFS, the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Commission for Children and Families, the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Child Care Planning Committee, the Alliance for Children's Rights, the Advancement Project, the Southern California Association for the Education of Young Children, prevention and aftercare (P&A) networks, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and others, the OCP has:

- Identified an innovative model in San Francisco (which shows promise for replication) for blending funding, coordinating services, and improving quality of care across the continuum of ECE services

- Been awarded a grant of \$75,000 from the County of Los Angeles Quality and Productivity Commission (matched with \$75,000 from OCP) to conduct a first-ever comprehensive fiscal analysis of the early care and education system in Los Angeles County
- Hired the consultant team Jeanna Capito and Associates through a competitive solicitation process to complete this analysis by June 2019

## ***Priority Area II: Achievement for School-Age Youth***

### Improving School Stability

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed by President Barack Obama in 2015, requires local child welfare agencies and school districts to jointly establish long-term transportation plans to enable prompt transportation to foster youths' schools of origin—to detention or placement change—to facilitate educational stability for foster youth.

On February 7, 2017, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors directed the ECC and LACOE, in consultation with DCFS, school districts, and advocates, to create an implementation plan and timeline for compliance with ESSA's school-stability provisions. Once an ESSA Transportation Workgroup was formed, its members recommended an interim transportation pilot with services available to all LA County school districts. This pilot, they believed, could provide opportunities both to ensure the transportation of foster youth to their schools of origin in the short term, and also to collect data to project future costs and identify lessons learned that would inform long-term transportation plan.

Following the execution of a Board-directed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing funding and logistics, the ESSA workgroup developed the initial pilot, which uses various transportation methods—caregiver reimbursements, bus passes or transportation vouchers for public transportation, utilizing/modifying existing school bus routes, and a private transportation vendor, HopSkipDrive.

This year, the ECC continued to facilitate (and extended) the implementation of the ESSA pilot, tracked outcomes, and developed a draft long-term transportation plan. Efforts included:

- Securing additional staff capacity for pilot implementation

DCFS receives hundreds of notifications a week that youth are being removed from their families or changing placements. The ECC, in collaboration with the Center for Strategic Partnerships, secured \$150,000 of philanthropic funding from the Hilton Foundation and \$60,000 from the Reissa Foundation to expand staff capacity for the pilot. This philanthropic bridge funding allowed the hiring of five additional temporary Education Consultants to help process notifications and coordinate transportation, two of whom were eventually hired full-time by DCFS. DCFS further expanded the transportation team by hiring eight more Education Consultants to handle this work over the long term.

- Conducting outreach and gathering feedback

At the HackFosterCareLA +1 event on May 24, 2018, the ECC and HopSkipDrive presented on leveraging technology and public-private partnerships to better facilitate school-of-origin transportation and school stability. Multiple partners additionally expressed interest in leveraging a private vendor to transport foster youth for other purposes, such as parent/sibling visitation and medical appointments. The ECC, LACOE, DCFS, LAUSD, Juvenile Court, and Children's Law Center (CLC) also presented at the June 7 Annual Dr. Hershel Swinger Memorial Partnership Conference to inform stakeholders about and receive feedback on this work.

- Facilitating an extension of the pilot

In June 2018, the ECC brokered an extension of the ESSA school-stability pilot MOU for an additional year based on feedback from the ESSA Transportation Workgroup that additional time was needed to finalize and adopt long-term transportation plans. For year two of the pilot, LACOE committed \$250,000 and DCFS committed \$800,000 to cover rides through June 30, 2019.

- Facilitating the transfer of the private-vendor transportation contract

In October 2018, the ECC facilitated the transfer of the administration of the private-vendor transportation contract with HopSkipDrive from LACOE to the County's Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services (WDACS) Department. WDACS has extensive experience administering transportation contracts for vulnerable populations throughout the County, and foster youth are one of its priority populations.

- Tracking outcomes<sup>1</sup>

To date, over 500 foster youth have been transported to their schools of origin multiple times, resulting in over 19,000 rides provided. Approximately 65% of the foster youth transported by the private transportation vendor are LAUSD students, with the remaining 35% of riders spread out over 29 other school districts.

- Becoming a model for another jurisdiction

In search of a model for school-of-origin transportation for its own foster youth, Riverside County contacted Los Angeles County to obtain information, materials, and examples of the extensive policies and procedures developed here, and is using them to implement its own transportation program.

- Committing to next steps

- Because LAUSD enrolls 45% of Los Angeles County's foster youth, the ECC and LACOE are first facilitating negotiations on final terms for a long-term transportation agreement between DCFS and LAUSD.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Priority V: Outcomes" on page 9 for additional details about the pilot evaluation.

- The ECC and LACOE are also beginning outreach to other Los Angeles County school districts serving large numbers of foster youth about signing on to long-term ESSA transportation plans.

### Increasing Access to Arts Education

The ECC, working with the Los Angeles County Arts Commission (LACAC), DMH, and the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network (AIYN), developed a healing-informed arts education<sup>2</sup> pilot for middle and high schools with high numbers of foster and probation youth. The program will help youth build protective factors through the arts, and will develop local art-focused networks of mental health clinicians, artists, teachers, and other stakeholders within schools and their surrounding communities. The pilot is based on a successful model that currently exists in probation halls and juvenile detention camps that was created by AIYN, LACAC, and the Probation Department.

- The partners have secured \$434,347 in Mental Health Services Act–Prevention and Early Intervention funding to run this pilot for a year. In year two, the aim is to leverage another \$682,000 to run an expanded version.
  - The first-year pilot is expected to serve 635 youth in three to five schools, potentially within the Antelope Valley Union High School District, the Long Beach Unified School District, LAUSD, and/or the Pomona Unified School District.
  - This pilot is projected to begin in January 2019. Partners hope it will expand throughout the County within the next few years.
  - The pilot will complement other County efforts to increase healing-informed arts education, such as DMH’s Technology Enhanced Arts Learning (TEAL), which provides online socio-emotional learning modules for students in kindergarten through the sixth grade.
- The partners are finalizing the MOU for this project.

## ***Priority Area III: Transition-Age Youth (TAY)***

### Strengthening College Readiness

The ECC worked with the National Center for Youth Law’s (NYCL) initiative, FosterEd, philanthropy, and other partners to develop and implement a career/college pathway for transition-age youth (TAY). At a pilot demonstration site, partners are working with the Palmdale School District, Lancaster School District, and Antelope Valley Union High School District to place five education liaisons in middle and high schools with high concentrations of system-involved youth to implement educational teaming practices and address college preparation. Liaisons also maintain strong collaborative ties with regional DCFS and Probation offices. Efforts to date include:

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<sup>2</sup> The term *healing-informed care* represents an evolution in framing and is grounded in the practices of trauma-informed care.

- Secured \$250,000 in philanthropic funds to implement the pilot
- Education liaisons co-located in the Antelope Valley Union High School and Lancaster School districts provided teaming and intensive supports to 20 foster youth attending those schools, as well as serving as their education champions.
  - Some challenges arose in connecting with foster youths' education rights holders (ERHs) to obtain consent for youth to participate in the program; the ECC helped develop a plan for engaging ERHs through children's attorneys and the Juvenile Court.
- An MOU was drafted to give DCFS social workers access to FosterEd's teaming software, EdTeamConnect, that makes it easier to track educational progress for students enrolled in the pilot program.
- Partnered with John Burton Advocates for Youth to improve engagement with social workers and youth in early college planning

#### Supporting Post-Secondary Education for Foster and Probation Youth

- On October 2, 2018, the Board of Supervisors passed a motion instructing the ECC to facilitate enhanced support for foster-youth post-secondary educational attainment by DCFS, Probation, LACOE, and other stakeholders through:
  - Participating in California's Foster Youth FAFSA Challenge (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
  - Implementing California Senate Bill 12 (SB 12) provisions
  - Engaging with foster youth advocates
  - Additional recommendations provided before October 1, 2019, for opportunities to improve financial-aid application rates among foster youth, taking into account current available data and outcomes for future academic years
- On October 24, 2018, the ECC focused its quarterly meeting on discussing actions that LACOE, DCFS, and Probation had taken to increase FAFSA submission rates last year, and their plans for further improvements this academic year.
  - LACOE committed to lead the County's efforts to track foster-youth financial-aid application rates as part of the statewide Foster Youth FAFSA Challenge, a campaign initiated by John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY). During the 2017–2018 school year, a mechanism developed by LACOE, JBAY, and the California Student Aid Commission to track the financial aid application rates for foster youth found that just 37% of the County's foster-youth high school seniors met the FAFSA completion deadline, compared to the County's overall completion rate of 50%. This year, LACOE and JBAY will partner more closely with DCFS and Probation to increase the number of foster youth completing the FAFSA.
  - DCFS hosted special FAFSA staff trainings and webinars plus workshops for foster youth, personally communicated with 800 LAUSD students, and posted

information and workshop schedules on the department's intranet to increase social-worker awareness. In the upcoming year, DCFS will increase collaboration with its FAFSA partners, spread the word more widely about financial aid available to foster youth, increase the number of youth it works with, better support them in obtaining the needed application documents, find more ways to offer incentives for FAFSA completion, and contact foster-parent associations, foster family agencies, short-term residential treatment programs, and other contracted service providers to help youth with applications. The department also plans to challenge staff at each DCFS office to compete for the greatest prorated number of completed FAFSA submissions.

- Probation provided college-readiness services to 79 youth in the form of books, supplies, educational materials, and testing available to them once they completed their FAFSA submissions. Probation's Youth Development Services convenes an annual college summit each February, early enough in the financial-aid cycle to ensure that community colleges can assist youth with their FAFSAs before the March deadline. Probation encourages group homes to allow all eligible high school graduates and potential graduates to attend both the college summit and the Success Is Our Future events, thereby recognizing graduating probation youth and encouraging others to persevere with their education. Probation will continue to expand its current supports for submitting financial-aid applications, including increasing collaboration with LACOE and JBAY. Probation has set a target of serving 100 youth in upcoming year of the FAFSA challenge.
- Based on October's discussion, the ECC agreed to develop next steps and track progress toward reaching its Board-directed goals as well as implementing the relevant sections of SB 12. The ECC will continue to facilitate, where needed, to develop recommendations for improving financial-aid application rates among foster youth.

#### ***Priority IV: Electronic Information-Sharing***

##### Increased Information-Sharing: Health

- The ECC developed a proposal for an electronic connection between DPH and the Los Angeles Network for Enhanced Services (LANES), the system designed to enable local information exchange across health providers. The LANES/Child Welfare Care Coordination Initiative is designed to improve outcomes for youth in foster care by ensuring that child-welfare teams have access to timely, accurate, and complete health information to inform a child's care. LANES contains health provider notes, labs, continuity-of-care documents, medication lists, problem lists, allergy information, and health-plan enrollment information from participating providers, hospitals, clinics, and departments.
  - About 200 public health nurses work in DPH's Child Welfare Public Health Nursing (CWPHN) unit, as do about 25 supervising public health nurses, nurse managers, and a nursing director. Pursuant to this initiative, CWPHNs will view timely health information about child-welfare clients as needed to coordinate care

and ensure effective treatment. Depending on their role, nurses will review LANES records to support DCFS investigations, to inform Medical Hub visits, and/or as part of the ongoing management of a client's health care. As appropriate, the public health nurses will incorporate essential health information and documents from the LANES system into the Health and Education Passport (HEP) mandated for each foster youth.

- The initiative has been approved by the LANES Board. A Data Participation Agreement is being finalized, and steps toward implementation have been initiated.

#### Increased Information-Sharing: Education

- The ECC has also made significant progress toward greater access to accurate and consistent education data for foster youth.
  - Helped facilitate an MOU between LACOE and DCFS for accessing and sharing data in LACOE's electronic education data system, the Education Passport System (EPS). This agreement creates a single point for school districts and other users to access and share education data on foster youth.
  - Worked with the Juvenile Court and LACOE on solidifying an agreement to provide judicial officers with electronic access to EPS. The partners are now working on leveraging the Court's case-management software portal in this effort and identifying the information in EPS that would be most useful to judicial officers. The ECC will facilitate bringing other important partners, such as CLC, to this work's implementation in early 2019.
  - Partnered with LACOE and DCFS to create a detailed strategic plan (Attachment A) with short- and long-term strategies, timelines, and milestones around the development and implementation of EPS modules to improve access to clean and consistent education data, and to outline a plan for social workers to transition from the Student Information Tracking System (SITS) to EPS by early 2019. The ECC, LACOE, and DCFS presented the proposed plan as well as progress to date to the Board of Supervisors' Children's Deputies on October 31, 2018.

### ***Priority V: Outcomes***

#### Measuring Results

- As part of our school-stability work, the ECC and the ESSA pilot parties have designed an evaluation of the transportation pilot, conducted through the Children's Data Network, to help parties analyze and effectively incorporate lessons learned into long-term transportation plans between DCFS and school districts. As pilot results emerge, the ESSA Transportation Workgroup and pilot parties continue to update and streamline procedures. Being tracked are:
  - Average distance
  - Costs
  - Number of youth served



- Number of rides
  - Mode of transportation
  - Lessons learned
  - Other relevant metrics identified by the ESSA pilot parties
- While the pilot parties are focusing on a process evaluation at this time, especially with the transfer of the private-vendor contract to WDACS, the goal is to leverage this work in future to track more outcomes around school stability and educational attainment for foster youth, such as attendance and grades. Once the pilot ends in June 2019, a report to the Board will be submitted in July 2019.

Many thanks to ECC members, philanthropy, advocates, and all our stakeholders for their significant contributions to this work.

If you have questions about this report, please contact me at (213) 893-1152 or via email at [mnash@ocp.lacounty.gov](mailto:mnash@ocp.lacounty.gov), or your staff may contact Stefanie Gluckman at (213) 893-2507 or via email at [sgluckman@ocp.lacounty.gov](mailto:sgluckman@ocp.lacounty.gov).

MN:CDM  
SKG:BS:eih

Attachment (1)

- c: Chief Executive Office  
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Children and Family Services  
Commission for Children and Families  
Health Services  
Mental Health  
Office of Education  
Probation  
Public Health  
Public Social Services  
Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services  
Education Coordinating Council

## Attachment A. Education Passport System (EPS) Workplan

Milestones	Timeline	Lead	Status /Notes
<b>Phase I: Before transfer from SITS to EPS</b>			
<b>I. Convene bi-monthly advisory and technical group</b> to discuss EPS system-wide issues and get feedback/recommendations on needed improvements usability issues, other necessary modifications or improvements	<b>Ongoing</b>	LACOE	Complete and ongoing
<b>II. Develop and implement the 1399 school transfer module</b> , module should allow CSWs to inform both old and new schools of replacement/detention with single action on EPS	<b>10/31/2018</b>	LACOE, DCFS	In progress
<b>III. Present to the Children’s Board Deputies at cluster on work plan</b>	<b>10/31/2018</b>	OCP, LACOE, DCFS	
<b>IV. Develop and implement the Single Screen Student Information Summary for the mobile app and mobile web version (versus standard desktop web version).</b> This should allow for social workers to see basic relevant academic and attendance information (enrollment, grades, attendance, test scores, demographics, etc.) on a single screen.	<b>11/30/2018</b>	LACOE, DCFS	
a. Pilot screen with the Torrance and 1 <sup>st</sup> District Pilot CSWs	Nov. & Dec. 2018	DCFS	
<b>V. Analyze and secure capacity</b> necessary to develop and implement modules, training, and to support transition from SITS to EPS	<b>11/30/2018</b>	LACOE	
a. LACOE EPS team analyzes additional staffing needs to implement the modules listed above and to prepare for the transition from SITS to EPS	11/16/2018	LACOE	
b. Include DCFS technical support staff into LACOE/DCFS EPS tech meeting	10/2018	DCFS	Complete and ongoing
c. Identify DCFS/BIS staff to assist with requirements to change over to EPS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These requirements will include: IT Requirements, Office 365 Requirements, Security Requirements; DCFS COA Management of User changeover and ongoing user identification and system privileges</li> </ul>	11/2018	DCFS	

Milestones	Timeline	Lead	Status /Notes
<b>VI. Develop a detailed transition plan</b> for CSWs to move from SITS to EPS	<b>Draft-</b> November 30 2018 <b>Final-</b> December 15 2018	LACOE, DCFS	
<b>VII. Begin work and discussions around post-transition modules,</b> such as:	<b>12/30/2018</b>	LACOE, DCFS	
a. Develop and implement EPS trainings of DCFS Education Staff and Training staff who will deliver trainings to regional offices	09/2018	LACOE, DCFS	In progress, ongoing
b. Amending MOU with LAUSD to prepare for post-SITS to EPS transition modules such as the universal local data match	12/30/2018	LACOE	
c. Convening the Court, LACOE, and DCFS around determining who legally needs access to education records at the Court and to begin determining logistics of who needs access and when	12/15/2018	OCP	
d. Identify participants and begin convening a workgroup of EPS stakeholders to discuss next steps for a universal local data match between DCFS and districts	12/15/2018	LACOE	
<b>Phase II: DCFS Transition from SITS to EPS and Post-Transition</b>			
<b>I. Transition from SITS to EPS for DCFS CSWs</b>	<b>01/2019</b>	LACOE, DCFS	
<b>II. Continue Implementing EPS Trainings to DCFS offices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trainings will be onsite at each DCFS regional offices; following the trainings each office shall have the ability to use EPS as their primary education retrieval tool</li> </ul>	01/2019	DCFS	Ongoing
a. As new modules and other training needs arise, convene stakeholders to develop and implement trainings to DCFS social workers as needed	Ongoing	DCFS, LACOE	
<b>III. Continue convening Advisory and Tech group</b> to get regular feedback/recommendations on needed improvements usability issues, other necessary modifications or improvements	<b>01/2019</b>	LACOE	Ongoing; update workplan as necessary to update and track items

Milestones	Timeline	Lead	Status /Notes
<b>IV. EPS Access at the Courts:</b> determine logistics and legality of when and who should have access at the court	<b>04/2019</b>	LACOE, DCFS	
a. Continue convening the Court, LACOE, and DCFS to develop procedures, content, and next steps	01/2019	OCP	Ongoing; identify and include other stakeholders as necessary
<b>V.</b> Develop and draft procedures to conduct a regular <b>universal local data match</b> with participating districts, moving away from from districts simply using CDE or CalPADS match; substantial number of children are both incorrectly identified or missing from CalPADS match. Local match will provide a much more accurate identification of foster youth under LCFF	<b>06/2019</b>	DCFS, LACOE	
a. Begin convening stakeholders and discussing strategies for implementing a universal local data match	01/2019	LACOE, DCFS	
b. Amend MOUs if necessary for any additional fields with participating districts to allow for local data match	01/- 12/2019	LACOE	Focus on districts participating in the workgroup/with biggest foster youth populations first
c. Vet draft procedures for data match with EPS workgroup	04/2019	LACOE, DCFS	
d. Integrate feedback from workgroup on procedures and begin implementation of universal data match	06/2019	LACOE, DCFS	
<b>VI.</b> Implement the <b>school transportation module</b> (software is ready for testing), module should help facilitate school of origin transportation procedures between school districts and DCFS as well as allow for electronic referral for stop-gap and long-term transportation rides when needed	<b>08/2019</b>	LACOE, DCFS	Should include private vendor in conversations so can interface with their system
a. Develop and implement trainings for CSWs, school district staff/liaisons, and Education Consultants as well as any other staff who are involved in this process	07/2019	LACOE, DCFS	And ongoing

Milestones	Timeline	Lead	Status /Notes
<b>VII. Unrestricted Document Viewing Capability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently, CSWs still require specific district permission for viewing non Education related information (Health, Mental Health, etc.), want to streamline so that social workers are pre-authorized to view any document they would already be allowed to see</li> </ul>	<b>09/2019</b>	DCFS, LACOE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Convene and begin conversations with DCFS, County Counsel, LACOE, and school districts as necessary to determine what CSWs should have access to without needing specific district permissions</li> </ul>	02/2019	LACOE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Develop and implement procedures to provide CSWs with unrestricted viewing capability to documents they are allowed to see based on discussions</li> </ul>	09/2019	LACOE, DCFS	