

AGENDA

Early Learning Legislative Advisory Committee

October 27, 2022

4 – 6:00 pm

1. Introductions + Housekeeping (30 min)
2. Why we're here: Brief history of the work to date + our charge (10 min)
3. Cities' Involvement in Early Learning (25 min)
Presentation by Josh Wallack, former deputy chancellor for Early Childhood Education and Student Enrollment in the New York City Department of Education and founder of a nationwide Early Childhood Education Implementation Working Group
4. Scope + Norms + How to do the work (45 min)
5. Next steps + Preview Next Meeting (10 min)

Early Learning Legislative Advisory Committee: Meeting Notes

October 27, 2022

Attendees: Maggie Barnes, Rachel Boettcher, Lynn Bolton, Eric Haugee, Megan Jekot, LaVon Lee, Camila Mercado Michelli, Kristenza Nelson, Khalid Omar, Kera Peterson, Tracy Roscoe, Clare Sanford, Maria Scot, Sai Thao, Brianna Trinidad Sprung, Quentin Wathum-Ocama (Co-Chair), Barb Yates

Absent: Halla Henderson, Hwa Jeong Kim, Nicolee Mensing, Stephanie Thomas, Leah Van Dassar, Zang Vang-Lee

1. Introductions and Housekeeping

Co-Chair Quentin Wathum-Ocama began the meeting and led introductions. He stated general housekeeping items such as this being a public meeting and that all documents would be shared on Google Drive.

2. Why we're here: Brief history of the work to date + our charge

Councilmember Rebecca Noecker talked briefly about the previous work done in Saint Paul on early learning. In 2017 the Saint Paul Children's Collaborative convened an advisory and a work group that met and created a Blueprint with high level recommendations. In the years that followed, a design team took these recommendations and did outreach and engagement with parents and providers to fine-tune the recommendations. And most recently, an Organizational Development Work Group, hosted through Think Small, got into much more detail, and wrestled with program design questions. At the same time, there has been coalition-building work happening to get people engaged and did some polling.

The work has culminated in this process. The Saint Paul City Council has recognized that they should take on the examination of a program: what should be retained from the previous work and what should be new.

People should note that while a campaign called SPARK (Saint Paul All Ready for Kindergarten) has been formed, that work is distinct from the work of this Committee, which is not connected to the SPARK campaign.

3. Cities' Involvement in Early Learning

The Committee listened to a presentation by Josh Wallack, former deputy chancellor for Early Childhood Education and Student Enrollment in the New York City Department of Education and founder of a nationwide Early Childhood Education Implementation Working Group. (His notes are attached separately.)

Councilmember Nelsie Yang discussed how the work the Committee will be doing is grounded in the expectations of the resolution passed by the City Council. Councilmember Mitra Jalali said that the Council is hoping the results of this committee will go back to the Council for action. The Council can: (1) propose an ordinance, (2) take different actions through the annual budget process with the mayor, (3) vote to place a question on the ballot, (4) take the recommendations and lean on their philanthropic partners, (5) request more exploration, or (6) do nothing. The Councilmembers on this committee see their role as being active listeners and to manage the relationships with their colleagues on the Council to keep them informed.

Questions for Josh Wallack followed his presentation:

- Evaluation. Many states have a QRIS system. Minnesota's is voluntary. NYC used a national instrument (CLASS – Classroom Assessment Scoring System) and had a team trained to run assessment, that visited classrooms and observed, which results in a score that is then used for coaching. Some programs look at child level outcomes such as kindergarten readiness.
- Wages. St Louis County is using ARPA dollars for wages and benefits but those funds are temporary.
- Age Range solely 3-4. This is a common approach because it is often what families are most interested in right off the bat. Some communities are focused on birth to five. NYC is working now in opening center-based and home-based environments for infant and toddler care.
- Hours of Care funded. Different communities make different choices, depending on amount of funding they have. The more hours and more weeks of care – the better. Some communities coordinate with other childcare subsidies to help fund slots in their system and use them side by side. Washington DC funds their preschool for the school day then uses childcare subsidies to pay for those hours before and after a school day (wrap around services). There is a lot of administrative complexity when doing this.
- Average Compensation. In NYC, certified teachers in a community-based organization make the same as a Kindergarten teacher in district schools. This was a fairly recent development. This is a complex issue, one the cities across the country are wrestling with.

4. Scope + Norms + How to do the work

A committee member questioned the scope, saying they had been in a similar meeting years ago and a lot of people have spent a lot of time and effort to answer some of these questions. Why is the committee going back to the beginning?

Councilmembers responded that the work to date hasn't been done in the service of government policy, and that this is the first table that has the full support of the City Council. The results of this committee will be used to generate consensus among the Council.

Another committee member appreciated the work done to date but expressed that many providers believe that a universal preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds will put providers out of commission. The committee member wants to ensure the Committee explores wages and benefits and feels the Committee should be looking at 0 – 5.

Co-chair Quentin Wathum-Ocama began to close the meeting since time was running short and said that the Committee will have a conversation about norms at the next meeting in two weeks. He shared “exit slips” with the committee that he asked them to complete, which asked if there were questions or concerns about the committee’s scope, other issues than what was on the workplan that Committee members felt should be discussed. He will review them after the meeting.

The meeting adjourned.

Early Learning Legislative Advisory Committee (ELLAC) 2022-2023 Workplan

Date	Time	Place	Topic	Learning/Meeting outcomes
10/27	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Why Early Learning Matters + City's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group introductions, establish norms/scope of work - Why early learning matters and how cities are playing a role in it
11/10	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	St. Paul's Work To Date + Setting our Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share context/history of this idea over 7 years, learn about the need in Saint Paul & hear from local efforts - Include specifics on pre-work to date about 3 & 4 year olds vs. broader age group - Agree on and finalize scope of work encompassing key topics and concerns across the group
11/17	4-6 pm	Neighb House	Learning: Potential funding sources and governance structures for early learning initiatives - Research on funding sources/concerns/questions to date & governance models, including collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn from models in other cities/places as well as what's been discussed in STP
12/1	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Learning: Family-centered program design and workforce development - Equitable early learning program designs around the country & locally for diverse families and workers, including scope of ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn from models in other cities/places as well as what's been discussed in STP
12/15	4-6 pm	Neighb House	Discussion: Program design & workforce development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore key questions together as a group on how such an initiative in STP could be designed and staffed for equity and success
1/5	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Discussion: Program design & workforce development (additional time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore key questions together as a group on how such an initiative in STP could be designed and staffed for equity and success
1/19	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Discussion: Governance models & funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explore key questions together as a group on how such an initiative in STP could be governed and funded

Early Learning Legislative Advisory Committee (ELLAC) 2022-2023 Workplan

Date	Time	Place	Topic	Learning/Meeting outcomes
2/2	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Recommendations: Program design & workforce development	- Come to final recommendations & remaining Qs
2/16	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Recommendations: Governance models	- Come to final recommendations & remaining Qs
3/2	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Recommendations: Funding	- Come to final recommendations & remaining Qs
3/16	4-6 pm	Rondo Library	Planning Meeting - Council Presentation	- Wrap up process and prepare for presentation to the City Council
3/22	3:30 PM	City Hall	Council Presentation (has to be done by 3/26 per resolution)	- Present to City Council: recommendations, topics for future

1. What do you like about what you see on the syllabus?
2. Is there anything that you think is missing?
3. Do we want to break up into subcommittees to do the work or remain as a whole group?

THEMES FROM LAST WEEK'S EXIT SLIPS

- Summarize the work to date (including some specifics like pre-work on costs of 3 & 4 yo's) and lay out a clearer understanding of what the general remaining concerns & questions are.
- Need to clarify the age range; the resolution scope is anywhere 0-5/"early learning." The committee should discuss whether and how to recommend anything further or more specific than that.
- Need to work through numerous workforce development questions: compensation/wages/benefits, training, qualifications/certification, hours, etc.
- Strong need for equity in program design: language support, undocumented families, racial equity and culturally responsive education as central pieces, not afterthoughts.
- Need to review and analyze existing proposals & programs in other places.
- Need to hear from existing community groups on their work on similar initiatives to date.
- Need to determine the nature of collaboration with SPPS, State, other relevant agencies.
- Need to clarify governance structure to ensure transparency & accountability of any future program.
- Need to consider all potential funding options and fiscal sustainability of each.

Name (optional) _____

Use the back side if needed

1. Do you have any questions or concerns about the scope of this committee now? Are there things you would like to get addressed that may not be in scope but should be registered here?

2. What other major questions or concerns do you think this committee should be covering? What do you want to make sure we address before our time/work together is done in March?

3. Any thoughts on the draft meeting topics?

Name (optional) _____

Use the back side if needed

4. Do you have any questions or concerns about the scope of this committee now? Are there things you would like to get addressed that may not be in scope but should be registered here?

5. What other major questions or concerns do you think this committee should be covering? What do you want to make sure we address before our time/work together is done in March?

6. Any thoughts on the draft meeting topics?