



Council Meeting Minutes January 23, 2024

Members Attending

Alex Reyes (S.A.)
Andy Imparato (DRC)
Aubyn Stahmer (UCEDD)
Brian Winfield (DDS)
Cathay Liu (F.A.)
Debra Cooper (CHHS)
Eric Ybarra (S.A.)
Harold Ashe (F.A.)
Harold Fujita (F.A.)
Jessica Brown (F.A.)
Joseph Billingsley (DHCS)
Joyce McNair (F.A.)
Julie Gaona (S.A.)
Julie Neward (F.A.)
Julio Garnica (S.A.)
Kara Ponton (S.A.)
Kilolo Brodie-Crumsey (F.A.)
Larry Yin (UCEDD)
Lee Bycel (F.A.)
Mark Beckley (CDA)
Michael Ellis (F.A.)
Michael Thomas (DOR)
Nestor Nieves (S.A.)
Nicole Adler (S.A.)
Rosanna Ryan (S.A.)
Sonia Jones (S.A.)
Viviana Barnwell (F.A.)
Wesley Witherspoon (S.A.)
Yasamin Bolourian (UCEDD)

Members Absent

Nick Wavrin (CDE)

Others Attending

Aaron Carruthers
Aminah Abdul-Hakim
ARCA-Sidney Jackson
Beth Hurn
Brian Weisel
Bridget Kolakosky
Charles Nguyen
Christy Lam-Julian
Connie Arnold
David Grady
Dena Hernandez
Holly Bins
Jennifer Lucas
Jose Valle
Julie Eby-McKenzie
Ken DaRosa
Lisa Hooks
Lynn Villoria
Mary Ellen Stives
Maureen Fitzgerald
Michelle Cave
Nicole Patterson
Patricia Herrera
Peter Mendoza
Renee Bauer
Riana Hardin

Others Attending (cont.)

Robin Maitino-Erben
Ryan Duncanwood
Scarlett VonThenen
Sheraden Nicholau
Tania Morawiec
Veronica Bravo
Yaritza Sanchez

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wesley Witherspoon called the meeting to order at 10:32 A.M.

2. ESTABLISH QUORUM

A quorum was established.

3. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Members and others in attendance introduced themselves and disclosed if there were others in the room with them.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Connie Arnold, a Disability Rights Advocate, provided a public comment outlining concerns regarding independent living and access to care for individuals with disabilities. She emphasized the importance of a person-centered approach and highlighted challenges faced by recipients of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), including limited access to backup emergency services and difficulties in finding qualified care providers. Arnold’s testimony included her personal struggles with finding reliable care, particularly during emergencies, illustrating the broader issues of a strained care system that threatens the autonomy and well-being of people with disabilities.

Christy Lam-Julian, a self- and family advocate, also provided a public comment. She communicated her interest for the opportunity to learn from and engage with the Council. Additionally, Lam-Julian reported existing service gaps in the Contra Costa area and requested support from the Council to address these issues.

5. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 2023 MINUTES

Action 1

It was moved/seconded (Ryan [S.A]/ Reyes [S.A.]) and carried to approve the November 2023 meeting minutes. (See last page for a voting record of members present)

6. CHAIR REPORT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Witherspoon highlighted upcoming monthly observances and provided an update on the Search Committee’s progress for the National Association’s next Director. He noted that 7 out of more than 100 applicants were invited for interviews. Additionally, he recognized Councilmember Kilolo Brodie-Crumsey for her dedication and leadership

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on the Council and State Plan Committee. Councilmember Brodie-Crumsey expressed her gratitude towards her colleagues and shared a short presentation about her personal journey, and experience with raising a child with disabilities.

SCDD committee reports were provided in the meeting packet. Chair Witherspoon asked that members read through these reports when they are able. The committee reports can be accessed online at <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT AND STAFF REPORTS

The Executive Director provided an overview of the 2024 report on the phasing out of subminimum wage for people with disabilities. The report revealed that the transition of individuals from 14c subminimum wage programs was progressing on schedule, with about 2,000 of the 4,000 targeted individuals already transitioning to competitive integrated employment or other meaningful choices since SB 639's enactment. The full transition is expected to be done by January 2025. A significant challenge noted in the report was data availability, as departments struggled to collect and report new data elements required by SB 639. The report also addressed privacy concerns, indicating that while individual-level data could not be disclosed, group-level data will be provided in future reports. These preliminary findings will be presented to the legislature in late January.

He also shared that Assemblymember Liz Ortega formed a Select Committee on Opportunities and Barriers for People with Disabilities in the Workplace. They held a hearing in December to explore contributing factors to the low employment rate among people with disabilities and the challenges they face while employed. The Executive Director attended and provided the Committee with data showing lower employment rates among people with I/DD compared to PWD. Additionally, he highlighted the Council's role in advancing policies like SB 639 and the establishment of the Employment First Office. He also advocated for funding Disability Benefits 101 (DB101), a website that helps individuals understand the impact of income on benefits, urging for \$200,000 in state funding to ensure its continued operation and assistance in the transition to employment for people with disabilities.

The Executive Director raised concerns about a potential change by the U.S. Census Bureau in how they define and collect data on disabilities,

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shifting from the American Community Survey (ACS) methodology to the Washington Group Short Set (WGSS) of questions. This modification risks undercounting individuals with disabilities by up to 40%, which could significantly reduce resources allocated for services.

The Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee hosted a town hall to gather feedback from individuals participating in self-determination programs regarding challenges they faced with their Financial Management Services (FMS) providers. The LPPC committee held a meeting on January 16th, featuring a guest speaker from the California Dental Association. Several years ago, the Council collaborated with the Dental Association, leading to the allocation of \$50 million in one-time funding by the legislature to establish specialty dental clinics. However, the Governor proposed delaying the implementation of this initiative, as part of the effort to balance the current year's budget. The Executive Director expressed appreciation for the California Dental Association's participation in the LPPC meeting and their discussion of future steps.

8. STATEWIDE SELF-ADVOCACY NETWORK (SSAN) REPORT

SCDD SSAN representative Alex Reyes provided Councilmembers with an update from SSAN's meeting on December 12th, 2023. The next SSAN meeting will be held on February 28-29 over Zoom.

9. 2024 GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET

Debra Cooper, Council delegate and Assistant Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHSA) presented an overview of the Governor's budget, noting a \$37.9 billion projected shortfall due to stock market declines and delayed income tax collections. To mitigate this, the Governor proposed using \$13 billion from state reserves, reducing spending by \$8.5 billion, increasing revenue and internal borrowing by \$5.7 billion, utilizing \$7.2 billion for late expenditures and deferrals, and shifting \$3.4 billion in funding. The budget for the Health and Human Services programs for 2024-2025 was discussed, with a total allocation of \$253 billion. In response to the budget shortfall, CalHHSA identified guiding principles and priority initiatives that improve equity, address disparities, and maintain core safety net programs for low-income disadvantaged Californians. However, this also meant delays to some of their other initiatives.

Key initiatives that they were able to protect included the expansion of Medi-Cal to all income-eligible adults between ages 26 and 49, regardless

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of immigration status, with an allocation of \$3.4 billion in 2024 and \$3.7 billion ongoing. The California Behavioral Health Community-Based Organized Networks of Equitable Care and Treatment (BH CONNECT) Demonstration maintained \$7.6 billion in funding. The California Advancing and Innovating Medical (CalAIM) initiative received about \$2.4 billion in 2024-25 to continue transforming the healthcare delivery system. Additionally, the budget allocated \$25 million, with an increase to \$198 million upon full implementation, to provide rent or temporary housing assistance to individuals at risk of homelessness. Childcare expansion was also prioritized, with \$2.1 billion dedicated to expanding access to subsidized childcare and development program slots. Within developmental services, they maintained \$1.7 billion to meet population growth and increased utilization. They also maintained \$50 million in funding to build capacity across local trusted community partners to enhance their ability to prevent and respond to behavioral needs of California's diverse older adult population. Public health infrastructure received \$300 million in ongoing support.

Despite facing a budget shortfall, they were committed to a targeted set of reforms aimed to improve delivery of some of their key programs. The reforms focused on improving service delivery for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, establishing a local aging network for seamless home and community-based services, and improving foster care outcomes through payment reforms.

Brian Winfield, Council delegate and Chief Deputy Director for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), highlighted key components of the Governor's proposed 2024-25 budget as it pertains to DDS. He noted that the current year's budget remains unaffected, with all prior caseload projections upheld. For the 2024-25 fiscal year, the proposed budget allocated \$14.8 billion in total funds for developmental services, with \$9.6 billion from the general fund—an increase reflecting additional allocations of \$106.2 million for Regional Center operations and \$1.5 billion for the purchase of services. These enhancements are designed to address the expected growth in service demand, with caseloads projected to increase by 28,775 individuals, reaching a total of 458,228 individuals served by Regional Centers. The proposed budget specifically aims to support this expanded service provision and caseload.

He also highlighted four key aspects affecting developmental services. The first was the discontinuation of funding for participant choice

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specialist positions within Regional Center operations, a program that was originally funded for three years but will expire after June. Secondly, he mentioned the preschool inclusion grant program, which had been allocated \$10 million, but had not yet been initiated by DDS. Initially delayed by one year, the Governor's proposed budget further postponed the commencement of these inclusion grants by an additional two years, pushing the start to fiscal year 2026-27. Next, he emphasized the importance of rate reform, highlighting the multi-year phase approach for new rate models, which will result in increased rates for service providers. Although the legislature had previously fast-tracked the implementation to July 2024, the Governor's proposed budget suggested reverting to the original schedule, with full implementation by July 2025. Despite the delay in implementation, Brian assured the Council that the Quality Incentive Program would continue, along with adjustments to independent living skill services and funding for minimum wage increases. Brian also mentioned the master plan for developmental services, which, while not a direct budget item, is acknowledged in the Governor's proposal. This plan, influenced by the master plan on aging, focuses on future developmental service planning and amplifying the voices of those served by Regional Centers and their families. A stakeholder working group is being assembled for this master plan. Chair Witherspoon requested that Executive Director Carruthers and Councilmembers be invited to be members of the master plan stakeholder committee.

10. **2023 PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REPORT (PPR)**

Former State Plan Committee Chair Kilolo Brodie-Crumsey and State Plan Manager Rihana Ahmad presented highlights of the 2023 Performance Program Report (PPR). The report covered activities from October 1st to September 30th and was submitted to the Administration on Community Living in December. It was noted that in California, 207 individuals reside in state Developmental Centers, with 396,375 served by regional centers and 615,226 identified with I/DD per the federal definition. The Council's systems change activities impacted 5,940,228 individuals in 2023, with outreach efforts reaching 139,089 Californians. The Council directly engaged with 84,139 individuals through various means like training, meetings, events, and technical assistance. They conducted a total of 7,126 major activities in 2023, with 5,164 people reached through technical assistance. Additionally, they held 658 trainings, impacting 19,912 individuals. Despite holding fewer trainings than in 2022, the Council achieved a more focused outreach in 2023, especially in addressing disparities, with a 20% increase in outreach

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activities. Translations and interpretations for activities were expanded, with more than double Spanish translations and interpretation since 2022. The Council also expanded its network of collaborative partners, increasing by 120%, to include a wide range of federal, state, and local organizations. In 2023, the Council's activities were aligned with three primary goals: 19% focused on self-advocacy (Goal 1), 55% on systems change (Goal 2), and 26% on capacity-building (Goal 3).

Under self-advocacy, the Council conducted 20 Statewide and 87 Regional Self-Advocacy Chats, supported 19 self-advocacy groups, provided 67 trainings, and prepared 577 Peer Leaders. The Self-Advocates Leadership Academy (SALA) in the LA region emerged as a pivotal project, enhancing leadership skills and advocacy, with plans for statewide expansion in 2024 based on its successful pilot. Feedback from participants underlined the transformative impact of these initiatives, enhancing confidence, leadership, and advocacy skills. Another project, "The Other Option" from the Bay Area, empowered 26 young adults through a series of workshops, emphasizing future planning and community support. The Council surpassed its second-year state plan targets for self-advocacy, exceeding expectations in training and outreach metrics, which led to an increase of measures for many of the objectives.

Throughout 2023, the Council dedicated its efforts towards achieving systems change and advocacy, which included monitoring 200 systems/entities and 18 legislative bills, participating in 1,870 meetings, conducting 271 trainings for 4,785 professionals, leading 3 statewide projects, 14 regional projects, and funding 2 cycle 45 projects. The Council's commitment was also evident in its leadership of statewide and regional projects, directly contributing to significant legislative successes in areas such as civil rights, education, and public safety. Key projects included the "Alternative to Conservatorship" with LAUSD, focusing on reducing unnecessary conservatorships and promoting rights awareness, and the "Yolo County Oral Health Advisory Committee," which aimed to enhance oral health access for people with I/DD. The "CA START East Bay Advisory Committee" focused on implementing evidence-based care coordination models for individuals with I/DD. Feedback from participants highlighted the impact of the Council's work, such as improved emergency response protocols, policy changes facilitating the employment of individuals with I/DD, and successful advocacy leading to inclusive hiring practices. These achievements underscore the Council's

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important role in driving systemic change and advocacy for improving the lives of people with I/DD.

Under capacity-building and advocacy, the Council engaged in 542 collaborative meetings, offered technical assistance to 4,444 individuals, and conducted 320 training sessions, preparing 164 peer leaders. The Council led or participated in 35 capacity-building projects, funded 2 cycle 45 projects, and participated in 113 events. Notable initiatives included collaborations with the Hoopa Tribe Education and Tribal Community IEP Gatherings, enhancing outreach and training on educational equity for Native American students with disabilities and establishing key tribal partnerships. The Council achieved its 2023 targets for Goal 3, with 46% of people trained, 44% receiving technical assistance, capacity-building projects exceeding expectations at 146%, and reaching 40% of self-advocates and family advocates. These achievements reflect the Council's commitment to enhancing advocacy, technical support, and training across diverse communities.

Participant surveys post-training, events, and projects revealed high satisfaction rates across the Council's goals: 97% satisfaction for Self-Advocacy initiatives, 91% for Systems Change projects, and 98% for Capacity-Building efforts. The Council effectively met or exceeded its Year 2 objectives, with notable progress in all goal areas.

11. **NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT**

The next Council meeting will be held on March 19, 2024. Chair Witherspoon adjourned the meeting at 2:26 P.M.

Name	Action 1
Adler, Nicole	NP
Ashe, Harold	For
Barnwell, Viviana	For
Beckley, Mark	NP
Billingsley, Joseph	NP
Bolourian, Yasamin	For
Brodie-Crumsey, Kilolo	For
Brown, Jessica	For
Bycel, Lee	For
Cooper, Debra	For
Ellis, Michael	For
Fujita, Harold	For
Gaona, Julie	For
Garnica, Julio	For
Imparato, Andy	NP
Jones, Sonia	For
Liu, Cathay	For
McNair, Joyce	For
Neward, Julie	For
Nieves, Nestor	For
Ponton, Kara	For
Reyes, Alex	For
Ryan, Rosanna	For
Stahmer, Aubyn	For
Thomas, Michael	For
Winfield, Brian	Abstain
Witherspoon, Wesley	For
Ybarra, Eric	For
Yin, Larry	For