



# San Francisco Department of Early Childhood Strategic Plan Advisory Committee

## Meeting Notes

October 14, 2021 | 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (via Zoom)

[Video Recording Linked Here](#)

### Summary of Meeting

The initial meeting of the SF Dept. of Early Childhood Strategic Plan Advisory Committee was held on October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, via Zoom. Jamillah Jordan of the consulting team MIG acted as moderator for the meeting. The following is a summary of the items discussed.

### Meeting Attendees

SPAC Member	Attendance for SPAC Meeting #1 – Oct. 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2021
Sara Briseño	Present
Krystle Danridge	Absent
Rosaura Diaz	Present
Aline E Armstrong	Present
Gina Fromer	Present
Maria Luz Torre	Absent
Lily Marquez	Present
Myrna Melgar	Absent
Lynn Merz	Present
Brittany Moore	Absent
Latoya Pitcher	Present
Brenda Quintero	Present
Yingying Si	Present
Patricia M Sullivan	Present
Cathy Tsao	Present
Amy Whittle	Present

## I. Welcome and Introduction

Jamillah Jordan welcomed SPAC members and public attendees in the audience. She started with a brief overview of Zoom platform tools for participants to engage. This included an announcement for the live interpretation from English to Chinese (Mandarin) which was available during the meeting through the Zoom Chinese audio channel. Jamillah proceeded to give an overview of the agenda and meeting participation agreements.

Theresa Zighera, Executive Director of First 5 San Francisco, gave brief opening remarks, welcoming and appreciating everyone for their time and commitment to this process which will help shape the Early Childhood care system in San Francisco. Ingrid Mezquita, Director of the San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education, also welcomed participants and shared her excitement of having SPAC members engage in this role, where they will support the innovative thinking behind this Strategic Plan, that will center parents' voice. She mentioned this will be a multi-stakeholder process and the feedback from all engaged partners will come back to the SPAC to synthesize and refine.

## II. Building Relationships

SPAC members were given the opportunity to introduce themselves by sharing their name and affiliation. They were asked to respond to one of the two following questions. Visual notes were captured on a digital whiteboard using the Mural application.

### *Introduction Questions*

- What inspired you to join the SPAC?
- What do you hope to bring to this process?

### *Key themes shared throughout the introductions included:*

- Desire to hear from parents and families
- This is an inspiring moment for change
- Sense of responsibility to serve families and children
- Learn more about this process, and excitement to be a part of it
- Centering healing, equity, and values-based work

## III. Strategic Plan Overview: Understanding the Context

Ingrid gave an overview of the two agencies merging to create the Department of Early Childhood, the First 5 San Francisco (F5SF) and the Office of Early Care and Education (OECE).

The role of First 5 San Francisco is to administer the funds from the tobacco tax for the County of San Francisco. The core pillars of F5SF are to look at families from an asset-based approach and to conduct work from a research-based approach. OECE provides local funds for families to access high quality to early childcare and education. At the nexus of their partnership is to ensure children have access to high quality experiences that support children in their development and the workforce making this possible. In 2018 Mayor Breed requested that OECE

and F5SF align to improve the city's early childhood system, and therefore the two organizations are now joining into the new Department of Early Childhood (DEC).

Jamillah continue with a description of why the agencies are developing a Strategic Plan and what the "givens" are for this merging process. These main reason for the creation of the DEC include legislative mandates such as Prop 10 and Prop C, a need for clarity on contracting procedures and eligibility of funding, and a desire to focus on racial equity and evidence-based practices. Lessons learned from previous work will be taken into consideration in the development of the Strategic Plan. The key assumptions and components we are using throughout this process include the goal of wanting DEC to simplify the San Francisco ECE system; recognizing that DEC's primary role will be to serve as a grant making entity; focusing support for the highest needs children and families; and valuing the voices of parents and their engagement in the decision-making process. The initial components of the Strategic Plan include a vision and mission statement as well as cross-cutting values to guide this work.

#### IV. Strategic Plan Roadmap

Myrna Ortiz from the consulting group MIG shared how this process will be different from other strategic planning processes. This process will be co-designed with multiple stakeholders, center parent voice, focus on racial equity, and include strategies for power-sharing. A Strategic Planning process roadmap was shared along with an overview of the upcoming timeline, a list of stakeholders who will be engaged in the process, and the composition of the SPAC member seats.

#### V. Reflection Exercise

SPAC members then engaged in an exercise to share what excites and concerns them about this process, responding to the questions below. Included are the key takeaways for each discussion question.

*What is most exciting to you about the planning process?*

- Positive energy and motivation from this group
- Resources going to the communities most in need
- Equity as a lens and focus of the new department
- Co-creating a new vision, centered on shared values to guide this work
- This has been many years in the making, excitement that it is now happening

*What concerns you the most about this process?*

- Making sure we include the voices of folks who might be non-English speakers, newcomers, or those not already integrated in programs or the ECE system
- Want to have the right qualitative and quantitative data to make decisions
- No having enough resources to accomplish what we envision
- We need to have authentic transparency and be responsive to the voices involved
- Want clarity on what "kindergarten readiness" looks like and how we will define this

*What's your highest priority for this process?*

- To help set direction for this work and the department
- Ensure that the strategies and priorities are doable, and have a solid plan of action
- That these strategies can help the parents in the community
- Collaboration to make change and processes that will support children and parents
- Rigor, accountability, and transparency
- Being centered around children, improving the lives of children and their families

*What would make you feel like your voice helped determine the direction of the Strategic Plan and the City's investments? What would make you feel authentically heard?*

- Honoring, respecting, and valuing all voices included in the process – we are all keepers of knowledge
- Hoping parent stories and experiences can shape the policy making
- Collaboration is like making soup, everyone puts something in, and in the end the best soup will serve the needs of children and families. I will feel my voice is being heard when the flavor of the finished product is something I can recognize and be proud of.
- Centering the voices of parents, providers, teachers, and department staff who might not have been included in the past

## VI. Working Together: SPAC Operating Principles

Carolyn Verheyen from the consulting group MIG gave an overview of the SPAC operating agreements and procedures the group will use to build consensus throughout the process. The group will use Gradients of Agreements approach when decisions need to be made. We will work towards resolution when issues do arise.

The SPAC members used the chat to vocalize their agreement and to approve these operating principles.

## VII. Public Comments

There was one public comment stating support for this commitment. They asked how we will know if the Strategic Plan is being operationalized and being reflected in the programs and grants that are funded through DEC? How is the request for proposals related directly to the language in the Strategic Plan?

## VIII. Closing and Next Steps

Jamillah closed the meeting with a brief summary of what was discussed in the meeting. The next SPAC meeting will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, November 9th, 2021 from 6pm-8pm on Zoom.

All meeting materials will be shared with SPAC members, along with the invitations for the upcoming meetings.

# Introduction of Members

**What do you hope to bring to this process?  
What inspired you to join the SPAC?**

Very interested in hearing the voices of parents

this is an inspiring moment - look at the things that are working and what's not working, CHANGE

interested in vision and leadership and values based work

feel a sense of responsibility to serve children and families

learn a bit more and be a part of the process

learn more about the systems of care; add the layer of big picture policy

bring a lot of stories from families, and bring a mental health perspective

center healing in our conversations

share the knowledge I have in managing programs and bring family perspective

making sure we are doing things in an equitable way and a fair process

doing work to push for the humanization of black and brown people in the community

# Reflection Exercise - Discussion Questions

## 1. What is most exciting to you about this planning process?

see these invigorating moments to focus on racial equity	we are co-creating a new vision for the children and families of SF. We don't have to do what has been done!	focus on grants to those most in need	strategic planning allows us to center a values-based vision	get out of scarcity and reactive mindset and center values	accountability can be built in
new entity will serve the C&F so much better	staff of both have worked hard to come to this moment	new department, years in the making with fits and starts	opportunity to look at yesterday stuff, today stuff, and shape tomorrow	envision, look at growth, take a longer view	

## 2. What concerns you the most about this process?

we need to do a good job of being inclusive of everyone	make sure we end up with a strong plan	not hold back	need quantitative and qualitative data	hear from those who are off the radar (eg, non Eng speaking, newcomers, unengaged)	not enough resources to do what we want to do
as we do a deeper dive and the community says something different, will we shift and not just do what we want to do	we need authentic transparency	sometimes it's human nature to revert to how we've always done things—it's actually a discipline to hold ourselves to a new vision and values.	how a strategic plan actually translates to specific policies/programs/practices that uphold the vision and values	acknowledge the complexity and nuance of our priorities and our reality.	consider the ECE climate
hope my comments are valued	values are crucial	don't forget about people who aren't heard	tend to what usually gets left out	avoid sterile version of data	integrate all voices, engage in new ways

### 3. What's your highest priority for this process?

A grid of 9 yellow boxes containing responses to the question 'What's your highest priority for this process?'. The boxes are arranged in two rows: the first row has 5 boxes and the second row has 4 boxes.

- whatever we come up with is something we can do
- have a plan of action to implement
- To help set direction of DEC.
- help the parents in this community
- helping to make change
- infants and toddlers
- rigor, accountability and transparency
- stay centered around children
- collaboration with parents

### 4. What would make you feel like your voice helped determine the direction of the Strategic Plan and the City's investments?

A grid of 8 light blue boxes containing responses to the question 'What would make you feel like your voice helped determine the direction of the Strategic Plan and the City's investments?'. The boxes are arranged in two rows: the first row has 4 boxes and the second row has 4 boxes.

- honoring and respecting my recommendations
- include my recommendations but I recognize it's a team effort with lots of voices
- feel honored and valued
- Making sure comments and suggestions are valued, accepted and validated
- share my perspectives so I can help shape
- as a grantee, to be held accountable
- make certain that I use my voice as an ally to voices that have not been heard in past strategic planning processes
- . I want to use my voice and will know it has been heard if the community - department staff, parents', providers', teachers' voices - are front and center in the plan.

# 5. What would make you feel authentically heard?

