



DRAFT



**FAMILIES AND EDUCATION LEVY  
LEVY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, June 10, 2014**

**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tim Burgess, Elise Chayet, Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis, Cristina Gonzalez, Charles Knutson, Kevin Washington, Greg Wong

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kathryn Aisenberg (OFE), Leilani Dela Cruz (HSD), Carmela Dellino (OFE Consultant), Sonja Griffin (OFE), Erica Johnson (OFE), Regina Jones (Mayor's Office), Patricia Lee (Council Central Staff), Sarah Lober (Youth Commission), Holly Miller (OFE), John Pehrson (LOC member emeritus), Adam Petkun (OFE), Sara Rigel (Public Health), Sid Sidorowicz (OFE), Rachel Schulkin (OFE), Cashel Toner (SPS), Sarah Wilhelm (Public Health)

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM by Councilmember Tim Burgess. Introductions were made. T. Burgess requested approval of minutes from the May 13 meeting. Sonja Griffin requested a change on page 1, last paragraph. Once the Request for Investment process was completed, the north end site did not get final approval. The minutes were approved with S. Griffin's amendment.

Holly Miller reviewed the meeting agenda. The day's goal was to provide a briefing on preschool legislation, in part because the LOC may expand to provide oversight of a preschool program should it become law. H. Miller walked through the contents of the meeting handouts, which included one additional page concerning the sliding scale for tuition reimbursement. Contents also included a BERK report provided to the City, the outreach summary describing outreach results, and the Action Plan that was submitted to City Council by the Mayor. Cristina Gonzalez asked what recommendations were desired from the LOC at this point. H. Miller explained the LOC will weigh in during implementation planning.

Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis asked whether there must be a single levy or whether there can be separate levies for preschool and the Families and Education Levy. T. Burgess explained there can be multiple levies. The ordinance passed unanimously out of committee and the full city council will consider it on June 16 or 23. H. Miller said that developing a deep understanding of the local context was very instrumental to developing the plan.

On slide 2, Kevin Washington asked what organized care refers to. H. Miller explained it could be care in a home, with a friend or family member, and it could be for only a few hours a week or full time. There is no consensus for what defines "care." On slide 3, H. Miller explained the definitions of publicly funded programs and private preK centers. She noted family child care homes are not included in pilot programs discussed in the presentation. Slide 4 included a history of the preschool work, beginning with the City Council resolution providing funding and authorization for a Request for Proposal to develop an action plan. BERK led a consulting team to develop the action plan while OFE conducted community outreach. OFE packaged the action plan recommendations into the Mayor's Action Plan, and City Council may take action in the next two weeks. If the plan is adopted, OFE will begin working on an implementation plan.

H. Miller read slide 5, explaining community outreach was crucial to informing the action plan. Staff worked with more than 100 child care providers/experts and there were four community outreach meetings in four areas of Seattle. Rachel Schulkin met with 80 organizations to discuss program development and to hear their concerns. There was a social media presence as well as a parent/guardian survey that oversampled parents of English Language Learner students.

On slide 6, H. Miller explained the proposal was less ambitious than BERK's recommendation due to concerns about initial cost and quality in an accelerated implementation. Slide 8 showed some level of subsidy for all families in order to encourage everyone to participate to achieve high quality. C. Gonzalez asked how preschool slots would be allocated to individuals, and H. Miller explained it would be discussed later in the meeting. Returning to slide 8, H. Miller explained the training required of all teachers that want to participate in the program, as well as the availability of tuition support to help teachers achieve the requirements. K. Washington asked if it was a best practice to promote stackable credentials. H. Miller replied that it was a recommendation in the BERK report.

On slide 9, H. Miller described the mixed delivery approach, working with all Seattle Public Schools and community-based providers to deliver high-quality programs. Slide 10 illustrated the requirement for all providers participating in the program to be a part of Washington's Early Achievers program. S. Griffin added the plan will be adjusted as needed to maintain alignment with state and federal guidelines.

S. Griffin explained slide 11, emphasizing SPS' important role as a partner. She noted City Council is deliberating how to ensure contracting priorities ensure service reaches students who need it the most. H. Miller discussed the importance of maintaining mixed income representation in the classrooms. T. Burgess added research suggests children of color and low-income children achieve better outcomes in mixed-income classrooms and that a widely available program will help build community support. L. Gaskill-Gaddis said that Seattle is segregated by geography and that careful consideration should go into site locations. Regina Jones explained that lower-income neighborhoods border high-income neighborhoods, enhancing the feasibility of mixed-income classrooms. K. Washington said parents should be engaged in helping with the work.

S. Griffin read the implementation schedule on slide 12. She explained the conservative ramp-up was informed in part by a visit to Boston where the delegation learned an accelerated phase-in could compromise quality. T. Burgess added that, whereas Boston only reached 2,400 children in its 9<sup>th</sup> year, Seattle will plan to reach 2,000 children in four years. Charles Knutson asked how the timing of a preschool levy would synchronize with the Families and Education Levy. T. Burgess explained the two levies would expire at the same time, at which point they could merge or remain separate.

S. Griffin explained the age requirements for child eligibility on slide 13, as well as other enrollment priorities on slide 14. Initially, the goal might be to prioritize all eligible 4-year-olds over 3-year-olds, beginning with those whose family income is at or below 300% of FPL. H. Miller added there is substantial debate over whether a second year of preschool makes a difference, and research points to greatest impact for those below 300% of FPL. T. Burgess noted the contracting priorities for where initial sites are located will naturally encourage access to the program for low-income families.

Erica Johnson explained slide 17, demonstrating a proposed sliding tuition scale. It was designed to ensure affordability for all families, including middle-income families. Slide 18 shows adjustments to the amended sliding scale schedule. Smaller steps between subsidies are available at different income levels. T. Burgess explained the estimated monthly cost is \$10,700. Even higher-income families would receive a small subsidy to signal that this is a program for the entire city. This nuanced schedule also softens the impact on families relative to bigger steps tied to FPL. E. Johnson explained the rationale for a sliding scale. T. Burgess

added that many cities and states make preschool free for everybody. In cities and states with a sliding scale, they make it available to everybody, as is proposed here.

E. Johnson described slide 20, depicting the teacher-student ratio and other class size characteristics. The ratio will change when students from special populations make up six or more students in class.

K. Washington asked whether special education community have weighed in. E. Johnson explained the current plans do reflect input calling for more staff support for these students. H. Miller added SPS will be involved in developing protocols in the future.

E. Johnson described a typical preschool day outlined on slide 22. Before- and after-school care will be available if paid for by the family, and subsidies will be available.

E. Johnson played a video showing what happens in developmentally appropriate play-based preschool utilizing High Scope curriculum. R. Schulkin noted the quality interactions between teachers and children in the video.

R. Schulkin listed teacher education requirements on slide 23. On slide 24 she noted teachers currently in the program will have four years to meet requirements, and support will be available to achieve them. The amendment on slide 25 moved language from the Action Plan into an Ordinance to codify it.

S. Griffin noted community feedback related to selecting curricula, as described on slide 26. Seattle will not mandate a specific out-of-the-box curriculum. Instead, the principles on slide 26 will guide a process to adopt approved curricula that providers will be able to use should they join the voluntary preschool program. H. Miller noted logistical challenges to implementing multiple curricula with fidelity. L. Gaskill-Gaddis asked why a waiver won't be allowed at the outset. S. Griffin explained data show we haven't found a preschool that has currently mastered preparedness for all students. H. Miller added waivers will be evaluated on child outcomes in the future. E. Johnson explained coaching curriculum implementation is an important factor in ensuring preschool quality. L. Gaskill-Gaddis said there is only one curriculum being used in Boston's program. K. Washington stated he thought there would be scores of successful programs based on High Scope's long history. S. Griffin said the BERK Consulting report did recommend High Scope.

S. Griffin walked through language support contents on slide 27, adding it is best to offer home language support in assessments, if possible. Teachers also need training to support language acquisition for children. Slide 28 notes alignment with Department of Early Learning's Early Achievers program. Teachers need to learn from active professional development opportunities. K. Washington asked whether there is enough local capacity for professional development and whether we need to develop an internal academy. H. Miller noted the Early Learning Academy is training teachers in the High Scope approach.

R. Schulkin described slide 29, which shows the zero expulsion policy and associated supports. The amendment on slide 30 adds a zero suspension policy. Slide 31 adds that research has shown parents benefit from seeing and practicing good techniques for learning at home. A grant fund will support efforts that appear to be working well.

R. Schulkin explained slide 32 highlights the importance of kindergarten transition.

On slide 33, S. Griffin said we know we'll need to offer some support to help facilities meet quality standards. Supports will also be available to help teachers achieve BA requirements. It also assures access outlined by Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) principles. Slide 34 indicates the RSJI is a key priority for Mayor Murray. Additional funding will be made available to use the RSJI toolkit to understand barriers to participation in the program. The amendment on slide 35 directs OFE to work with other city departments

to develop an RSJI toolkit that fits with preschool program. Enrollment priority setting is an example of something that could be evaluated with RSJI toolkit criteria.

H. Miller explained slide 36 on timeline and cost. Slide 37 depicted interest in two aspects of evaluation: a process evaluation that examines implementation fidelity and offers course corrections, and an impact evaluation that examines long-term impacts on children.

H. Miller shared the organizational structure on slide 38. The expanded oversight committee will add four members with not more than one having a conflict of interest, including current LOC members. The next steps were listed on slide 39.

C. Gonzalez asked what is being done to ensure teachers will represent the communities in which they will be teaching. H. Miller said that the demographic composition of current teachers in similar programs (ECEAP, Step Ahead, Head Start) is racially and ethnically diverse. Significant assistance will be given to help current teachers meet credentialing standards. Additionally, contracting priorities, geographical focus, and support for existing programs should help with diversity. C. Gonzalez asked whether there will be metrics measuring teacher diversity. R. Schulkin said the Department of Early Learning collects data on workforce demographics and we will use that data to conduct an analysis. As our workforce is developed, we will also collect data. R. Jones noted outreach to local colleges will also help yield a model that delivers education in communities being served. K. Washington said that if we can provide rigor to data collection we can provide some pathways for other communities to follow suit. S. Sidorowicz explained OFE is working with the state's Education Research and Data Center to match preschool data with K-12 data. We are working on our first prototype provider dashboard now. We'll be able to match last year's Step Ahead data with kindergarten students to provide feedback to providers.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:35 PM.