



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**DATE:** Wednesday, February 23, 2022  
**TIME:** 6:00 PM – Board Business Promptly

Register in advance for this meeting/webinar:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_angCzVI9Qcu9SP1J1jzq\\_g](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_angCzVI9Qcu9SP1J1jzq_g)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting/webinar.

ACTION ITEM	ORDER	GENERAL SESSION AGENDA	
	1	<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>	Gloria Leiva
	2	<b>PUBLIC INPUT/ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	Gloria Leiva
<b>ACTION</b>	3	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January 26, 2022</li> </ul>	Gloria Leiva
	4	<b>BOARD EDUCATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020 Administrative Report – Koch-Young Family Resource Center (New Initiative: No/low POS Caseloads)</li> </ul>	Rose Chacana Melinda Sullivan
	5	<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governor's Budget FY 2022-23</li> <li>Satisfaction Survey Update</li> </ul>	Melinda Sullivan
	6	<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board Committee Charges</li> <li>Conflict of Interest Review</li> </ul>	Gloria Leiva Melinda Sullivan
	7	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Financial Statements</li> </ul>	Larry DeBoer Kaye Quintero
<b>CLOSED SESSION</b>	<b>8 ACTION</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE SESSION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of Minutes</li> <li>Litigation</li> </ul>	Gloria Leiva Melinda Sullivan
	9	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	Gloria Leiva

# APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES FOUNDATION**

**Board of Directors**

**January 26, 2022**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT**

Gloria Leiva, Chair  
Elizabeth Beltran  
Anthony Brouwer  
Larry DeBoer  
Dr. Anila Guruji  
Mark Higgins  
Kim Isaac  
Dr. Alex Li  
Louis Mitchell  
Jae Rhee  
Yudy Mazariegos  
Dina Richman  
Brigitte Sroujeh

**NOT PRESENT**

Danielle Dejean  
Ana Villasenor

**ADVISOR TO THE BOARD - PRESENT**

Al Marsella

**STAFF**

Carmine Manicone  
Kaye Quintero  
Melinda Sullivan

**GUESTS**

Tina Daley  
Karen De Vore  
Lia Cervantes Lerma - SCDD  
Diana Sandoval – DDS  
Martha Silva  
Taleen Khatchadourian

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Leiva called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

Ms. Lia Cervantes Lerma, SCDD, announced that the State Council on Developmental Disabilities will be conducting Statewide Virtual Trainings in English and Spanish for the calendar year 2022. Flyers were distributed to the Board.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Mr. DeBoer moved to approve the minutes of November 17, 2021, Ms. Beltran seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.**

## **BOARD EDUCATION**

As part of Board Education and Training, Ms. Sullivan gave a focused training on the requirements of the DDS/Regional Center contract. Board members were given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the content.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **COVID Update**

Ms. Sullivan advised the Board that with the uptick in COVID due to the Omicron variant, the Center has approximately 30 staff who have tested positive or living with someone who has tested positive. As a precaution, the Center has instructed all staff to work from home for the month of January and will reevaluate the situation then. Key leadership and operations staff will still come into the office as needed.

### **Caseload Ratio Plan – DDS Acknowledgment**

Ms. Sullivan advised the Board that they could find a copy of the letter from DDS dated November 29, 2021 acknowledging the Center's plan submitted on September 10, 2021.

### **Alternative Staffing Model – DDS Approval**

Ms. Sullivan advised the Board that they could find a copy of the letter from DDS dated January 14, 2021 approving the Center's plan submitted on November 4, 2021.



## Office Expansion - Space Planning Efforts

Ms. Sullivan advised the Board that the Center has begun space planning efforts for office expansion space at the Center. As part of lease negotiations 5 years ago, the Center will receive additional space in May 2022 on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and will move the reception/lobby and the operations unit to that space. In addition, the Center will be redesigning existing space for the addition of new service coordination teams.

## **ARCA REPORT**

### ARCA Highlights

Mr. DeBoer advised the Board that he and Ms. Sullivan attended the ARCA meeting on January 20-21 via Zoom and that the highlights from the meeting were in the packet for review. Discussion followed.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

### Independent Audit Report 2020-21

Ms. Quintero advised the Board that they could find the Corporate Audit for Fiscal Year 2002-21 in their packet for review. Ms. Quintero reviewed highlights of the audit and reported that the Center received an unmodified report, which is the best rating possible for an audit.

Mr. DeBoer advised the Board that the Administrative Affairs Committee is recommending that the Board accept the audit.

**Dr. Li moved to accept the Corporate Audit for Fiscal Year 2020-21 as drafted, Ms. Mazariegos seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.**

### 2020 Tax Return

Ms. Quintero advised the Board that they could find the Corporate Tax Return for year 2020 in their packet and reviewed highlights.

Mr. DeBoer reported that the Committee reviewed the document and is recommending that the Board accept the document.

**Ms. Richman moved to accept the Corporate Tax Return for 2020 as presented, Mr. Higgins seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.**

## Review of Financial Statements

Mr. DeBoer reviewed the financial statements through November 30, 2021.

### *Fiscal Year to date 2021-2022 (C-1)*

In Operations (main contract) we have spent \$10,466,727 (38% of budget). In Purchase of services (main contract) we have spent \$104,337,014 before we add late bills. Including projected late bills, we will have spent \$108,756,024 (36.8% of budget).

### *Fiscal Year 2020-2021 (B-3)*

This month we recorded \$39,458 in OPS and \$580,385 in POS. To date, we have spent 96% of our OPS and 98% of our POS allocations.

### *Fiscal Year 2019 - 2020 (A-8)*

This month we reclassified \$82,618 in OPS resulting in a credit balance and recorded \$55,983 in POS. To date, we have spent 96% of our OPS and 98% of our POS allocations.

## **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE**

### Service Standard - Social Recreation, Camp & Non-Medical Therapies

Mr. Manicone advised the Board that they could find in their packet a copy of the draft service standard for Social Recreation, Camp, & Non-Medical Therapies. Mr. Manicone reported that the Center has done outreach at a community meeting, to the Client Advisory Committee, and to peer support groups. The Programs and Services Committee reviewed the service standard and is recommending that the Board approve the document as presented. Discussion followed.

**Ms. Beltran moved to approve the Social Recreation, Camp, & Non-Medical Therapies Service Standard as presented, Mr. DeBoer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.**

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Mr. Marsella advised the Board that the Nominating Committee met to begin discussing board recruitment for FY 2022-23. A slate of officers and directors will be presented at the May 2022 meeting for information only and election at the annual meeting of the corporation in June 2022.

### **ADJOURNMENT FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Ms. Beltran moved to suspend the General Session meeting at 7:35 PM for Executive Session to conduct business on Approval of Minutes, Personnel, Litigation, and 2021-22 Executive Director's Performance Goals Update, Ms. Sroujeh seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.**

### **RECONVENE FOR GENERAL SESSION**

The Board discussed in Executive Session the Approval of Minutes, Personnel, Litigation, and 2021-22 Executive Director's Performance Goals Update.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.

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Mark Higgins, Secretary

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### ACTION LOG

January 26, 2022

	DESCRIPTION	ACTION	STATUS
	Approval of Minutes – November 17, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved</li></ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent Audit Report 2020-21</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved</li></ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2020 Tax Return</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved</li></ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Service Standard - Social Recreation, Camp &amp; Non-Medical Therapies</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved</li></ul>	

# BOARD EDUCATION

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **Koch Young Resource Center**

### **2021**

The following report represents a summary of the significant activities and accomplishments of the Koch Young Resource Center (KYRC) over the course of the 2021 calendar year. The information in this report is organized around the major goals and objectives set forth for the unit.

#### **KOCH YOUNG RESOURCE CENTER SERVICES WORKPLAN:**

##### **I. Peer Support**

The Peer Support Partner (PSP) program provides families with one to one support by seasoned and trained peers at their request. These parents are volunteers who dedicate their time to give back to other families in need. KYRC along with Lanterman staff identify and recruit potential candidates, and KYRC provides the training.

Peer Partner training was conducted for English/Spanish/Korean/Armenian/Tagalog speaking parent leaders. The two-hour training focuses on developing mentoring skills, how to provide support and guidance, and emphasizes the practice of teaching parents to access important tools such as the Lanterman website and the Guide to Lanterman. This year **21** new partners (2020-8) were selected to join the pool of **27** available Peer Support Partners (PSP). The Family Support Specialists conduct monthly meetings for PSP's in Spanish, English and Korean to provide ongoing support, guidance and resources. In 2021, a total of **49** PSP requests were successfully matched. Parent volunteers play a significant role in providing family support to families in need during very stressful time. It is critical for families to know they are not alone and have another parent they can reach out to.

One of the most important responsibilities of our PSP's is to conduct Welcome Calls to new Regional Center families. Peer support partner volunteers contact new families and welcome them to the Regional Center. Families are provided information about the Resource Center and upcoming events and programs. In 2021, a total of **740** new families (2020 630) received Welcome Calls.

In addition to Welcome Calls, New Family Orientations (NFO) were offered to welcome new families and connect them with resources and support as soon as they enter the regional center. A total of **6** New Family Orientations were conducted via Zoom in English and Spanish with approximately **17** participants. Due to the low attendance, NFO was put on hold for Q3 and Q4. Alternative options will be explored for 2022.

##### **II. Working in Groups**

KYRC provided technical assistance to **13** support groups (10 parents, 1 client, and 2 sibling groups). Throughout the year, support groups were provided via Zoom. Average attendance increased for all support groups as clients/family members grew more

accustomed to participating virtually. Four support groups had the most significant increase in average attendance:

Support Group	Average attendance 2021	Average attendance 2020
De Mi Familia A Su Familia	60	44
Grupo De Apoyo Lanterman	42	32
Japanese Parent Support Group	69	55
Padres Unidos	57	40

California Sibling Support Group resumed monthly meetings via Zoom. New So Cal Father's group got off to a strong 1<sup>st</sup> year with steady, average attendance of 24 participants per month. Efforts were started to develop a new support group for 2022 for Filipino parents.

In addition to support groups, the resource center oversees the Peer 2 Peer Social Group program provided by Easter Seals. The program is a social recreational group for adult clients that meet throughout the month and designed to inform, promote and facilitate peers to come together and explore social opportunities based on common interests. Due to the pandemic, the program met via Zoom. Easter Seals provided iPads for individuals who needed technology to participate. The group increased meetings from twice per month to twice per week. Activities include: workouts on Saturdays, plus online meetups to discuss spending habits, information on COVID, voting- to name a few. Easter Seals also provided optimal social opportunities online such as Pictionary, karaoke and "Name That Tune" as well as virtual tours of local sites throughout the city. In June, the group resumed in-person gatherings in the communities once per month while adhering to CDC guidelines to maintain health and safety for all. The group met at the LA Zoo, visited the Arboretum, had lunch at the Universal City Walk and spent the day at the beach together. They appreciated seeing each other again. Average attendance for online and in-person sessions was 16-21 individuals. Total number of active members is 43.

### **III. Resource Information Development**

The Resource and Information Specialist continued to coordinate the Center's web site. Unique visitors to the web site totaled **66,140** with **102,850** page views.

The Network of Care feature on the website is an on-line electronic resource directory, which highlights integrated and regional center resources as well as specialized modules in the areas of health, legislation and advocacy. The NOC received **642,981** visits (individual visitors) with an average of **1,759** hits (successful request to a webserver) per day for **4,410,751** page views for 2021.

Resource packets are available for families online on the Lanterman website and received **751** page views. The top 6 e-packets: General Information, Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, Parenting, Transition to Adulthood, Cerebral Palsy, Early Start. The resource packets include the Guide to Lanterman, Family Service Guide and disability specific information with community and age related resources. All packets continue to be updated and maintained. The Family Service Guide (FSG) was updated and posted on website in 4 languages: English, Spanish, Korean and Armenian.

#### **IV. Information and Referral Service**

Since March 2021, the Help Desk provided assistance remotely. The Help Desk offers the hotline and reference desk services for all inquiries linking people to community resources related to developmental disabilities. This year, a total of **1627** requests for information and referral assistance were received.

The Help Desk continued to coordinate the food and PPE distribution efforts for families. The Help Desk became the hub for delivery and pick up arrangements between LRC and community partners such as 211/Door Dash, Villa Esperanza, Vital Care, Easter Seals and the LA Food Bank. Approximately, over 4,250 families received food boxes/food cards/PPE.

In August, the KYRC initiated a soft re-opening to the public, by appointment only 2 days per week. The library resumed circulation of library items. Library usage was slow but steady. A total of 108 items were circulated, of which 46 were toys.

In response to individual technology needs, the library facilitated the technology loan program. Lanterman Regional Center partnered with Human- I.T. to provide low-cost computers including internet services to 40 clients/families.

#### **V. Community Awareness**

Due to the pandemic, in-person community awareness activities remained on hold throughout the year. Instead, print/digital media ads were secured in local newspaper and parent magazines. In the Fall, the LA Downtown News/Pasadena News (LA Times affiliates) ran (2) ¼ page ads English/Spanish in the October- Education & Enrichment issue and the December- Holiday issue as well as weekly digital ads. LA Parent magazine ran a ½ page ad in English and Spanish in the March/April- Special Education issue; September/October- Back to School issue, and November/December- Holiday issue.

KYRC continued to provide virtual orientation sessions for pediatric residents at local hospitals such as CHLA and Kaiser. KYRC staff served as liaison to the CHLA Alta Med pediatric clinic.



KYRC received a total of **265** (2020-235) new referrals for regional center services, all referrals were submitted to Lanterman intake department as well as other regional centers in the area of residence.

KYRC continued to work closely with DCFS, DMH, public school districts, Head Starts and other community partners to ensure the referral process is successful. KYRC staff provided virtual presentations for agencies throughout the area which include an orientation about the regional center, family supports and services and the importance of early identification and intervention.

## **VI. Education and Training**

Four Service Coordination and Advocacy Trainings (SCAT) series were conducted via Zoom for families and community members this year. The goal of this 4-week series is to increase the participant's knowledge of the special needs system. The trainings were conducted in English, Spanish, and Korean. A total of **132** families successfully completed the 4 training sessions.

In May, weekly (1-2 hrs.) technology classes started for Spanish speaking parents. Classes were limited to an average of 10-12 participants to allow for interaction and individual support. Topics included: create & send emails; how to decipher encrypted emails; explore advanced strategies how to communicate via email; how to send and receive attachments (i.e. IPP amendments) subscribing to email blasts; how to use LRC website including Network of Care and Learning Center. Since May, the technology classes had a total of 277 attendees.

KYRC provided a total of **113** standalone parent trainings/workshops. All trainings were conducted online via Zoom. Interpretation services were provided as requested. Participation increased dramatically. The following is a sample of the topics held throughout the year:

	Number of Sessions per Language		
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>SPANISH</b>	<b>ENGLISH</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL</b>
IPP/Person Centered Planning	1	2	Korean (1) / Armenian (1)
IEP Strategies during COVID	6	7	Korean (4)/ Armenian (1)
CalAble	1	1	Korean (1)
Conservatorship, Special Needs Trust & Estate Planning	5	5	Archived on LRC website
DPSS programs: IHSS; SSI	6	4	Chinese (1)
Transition to Adulthood and Employment (Conference)	2	2	Chinese (1)/ Korean (1)
Strategies to Cope with your Child's behaviors during COVID	4	2	Korean (3)

Preventative Strategies to Avoid COVID-19	2	1	Archived on LRC website
Coping with Difficult Times: Depression, Anxiety, Self-Care	4	1	Chinese (1)
KYRC supports & services	1	1	Korean (1)
Coffee With Lanterman	2	1	Korean (2)
New topics: Epilepsy/Down Syndrome/CP	3	3	
Generic Resources: OCRA, Access services, CCS	3	3	
Respite Services	1	1	Korean (1)
Overcoming Communication Barriers	1	1	
Community Policing (LAPD & Glendale PD)	2	2	Korean (1)

## **VII. Assistive Technology**

The Regional Center contracts with the Assistive Technology Exchange Center (ATEC) from Goodwill of Orange County to provide comprehensive one-to-one Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) assessments, trials/trainings and quarterly workshops. Throughout the year, the program provided services remotely:

- 32 new referrals
- 41 individual evaluations
- 123 clients received AT/AAC trial/training
- 65 AT devices loaned (*Does not include special initiative*)

## **VIII. Strong Beginnings**

KYRC's ***Strong Beginnings*** program continued to provide services for Lanterman clients between 0-5 yrs. old. Every year, we strive to reach out to Lanterman families with children under five. Our goal is to empower parents with the skills they need to better engage their children with special needs.

The ***Strong Beginnings*** program provides support through a variety of modalities for parents and children to learn and experience success in a supportive environment. The children must be at risk or presenting with delays. The program provides education, information and groups for parents and their child. Parents and children learn basic skills and strategies to enhance their child's development. This year the program was provided via Zoom. A total of 11 playgroups with 365 (child/parent) participants were conducted. These groups were provided for children according to age. Groups begin with sessions for infants. Subsequent groups require increased abilities to participate in more structured group activities according to the child's developmental age. The program options includes: *Infant Massage, Baby Signs and Play, Toddler Talk, Dance with Me, Potty Time* and the regular playgroup. A new group was developed this year for parents with children experiencing feeding issues. The 4-week series was facilitated by a licensed Occupational Therapist.

In addition to playgroups, a total of **14** parent educational workshops were provided with **672** parents in attendance. Parent educational workshops consist of a 2-hour workshop related to child development and parenting issues. This year the presentations focused on social-emotional development. Topics included: “*Social-Emotional Developmental Milestones*”, “*How to Support Social Emotional Development of Infants and toddlers*”, and “*Understanding Social Emotional Support when dealing with Challenging Behaviors*”. A few new topics were introduced this year: *Fun with Music*, *Feeding Challenges* and *Strategies to Promote Speech and Language*. Developmental kits were provided for children who completed all playgroup sessions as well as trainings and other activities.

Lastly, 3 story time event were conducted via Zoom with approximately **30** children in attendance. Every child received a copy of the book as well as development materials. Children and their parents followed along with an art activity and reading. Parents were provided strategies to encourage them to read to their children at home.

The ***Strong Beginnings*** program is made possible by the generous contribution from the Fred and June MacMurray Foundation.

#### **X. Services Access & Equity programs**

The Center continued to partner with Esperanza Community Housing Corporation and Korean Youth Community Center (KYCC) to provide the Promotora/Community Health Worker (CHW) programs. The goal of these programs is to increase access and utilization of services that are offered by the regional center as well as generic resources in the community. The Promotoras/CHW work closely with families, one-on-one, to improve utilization of services for hard-to-reach clients, increase their knowledge and understanding of services, as well as strengthen their relationship between Lanterman and the community it serves.

The Korean CHW program continued to provide services for the Korean community serving up to 26 families per year. The promotora program continued to serve up to 104 Spanish speaking families per year. These families are selected by the SC’s and their regional managers as having no open authorization for purchased services, as well as considered at risk for being disconnected, inactive and/or presenting with family stressors. This year, due to the pandemic, the promotoras/CHW provided critical support during very difficult times. The program continued to provide remote and in-person services and therefore avoided any interruption of services for families participating in the program. Due to the increased stressors families experienced increased need for assistance related to health issues (COVID related), financial stressors due to loss of income, and family stressors such as domestic violence and/or DCFS involvement due to stay at home orders.

These families experience a higher level of stress navigating the services system remotely. In order to ensure quality of services, the KYRC director provided regular supervision meetings throughout the month to ensure care coordination with LRC regional managers and service coordination staff.

In 2021, Lanterman completed the Multi-Media Outreach project. The project involved a multi-media approach to sharing information with the community. The project originally included the development of 12 videos on 6 topics related to regional center purchased services. This year, all 6 videos were re-created in Korean. The six topics include: Respite, Inclusion, Employment, Living Options, Early Intervention and Behavior Intervention. All videos are available in all 3 languages on the LRC website.

In 2021, one of the initiatives from the Department of Developmental Services is related to the development of the Specialized Caseload for clients with low/ no purchase of services. The Enhanced Caseload (EC) team at Lanterman regional center was assigned to the KYRC for oversight and supervision. The EC team will consist of 4 services coordinators (2 Spanish/ 1 Korean/ 1 Armenian) and a supervisor. Each service coordinator will carry a caseload ratio of 1:40 clients both school age and adult clients. Individuals on the caseloads will be either non-white or non-English speaking. Clients/families will be assigned for a 12-18-month period during which the SC will work closely and actively to assist the family in applying for generic, community and regional center services. Families will graduate from this program, and return to a traditional caseload and new families will be assigned to these caseloads.

Recruitment efforts were undertaken in Q3 for a supervisor and 3 (2 Spanish/1 Korean) of the 4 service coordinators. Low/No POS reports were reviewed to identify possible clients. It is expected that the first wave of 30-40 clients will be assigned by January 2022.

## **XI. State of Emergency Efforts**

Throughout the year, the KYRC continued to coordinate the distribution of food to Lanterman families. The Center renewed its partnership with the LA Food Bank to provide 100 food boxes of non-perishable items on a weekly basis. Lanterman matched the donation of food boxes with a grocery gift card worth \$25 to assist families with the purchase of fruits, vegetables and other perishable food items not included in the food boxes. The partnership with 211/United Way remained to deliver food items to the client's homes in the Central LA, Wilshire-Hollywood areas. Lanterman's two service providers assisted with weekly deliveries to families residing in the foothill areas of Pasadena, Glendale and Burbank.

To date, Lanterman's food assistance program has provide weekly food gift cards/food boxes and PPE to an average of 60-75 families per week. In total, the program has provided 1,190 cards (value \$29,750) and 4,247 food boxes (value \$63,984).

Along with weekly food distribution, KYRC organized monthly PPE distribution events in the Los Angeles and Glendale area. Through July 2021, with the help of parent volunteers, a total of 2,168 clients received PPE items including surgical masks (43,360), cloth masks (10,840) and hand sanitizers (4,336).

In addition to food distribution, KYRC partnered with a variety of community businesses to provide much needed resources to Lanterman families. In July, a diaper distribution event was conducted for 110 Early Start families. Diapers, wipes, car seats, and baby bundles with clothes, toys and baby products donated by Baby2Baby were given away. In August, KYRC received donations from Baby2Baby and 24 hr. Care for the annual Back to School Backpack Giveaway event. A total of 200 families received backpacks with school supplies. In November, KYRC partnered with the Karsh Center for the annual Big Give Thanksgiving distribution. A total of 125 families received turkey baskets delivered to their home.

## **XII. Conclusion**

Overall, KYRC met all objectives and exceeded expectations. Training opportunities were increased as well as attendance to parent trainings, playgroups and support groups via Zoom. New programs and resources were developed in response to State of Emergency such as food distribution and PPE supplies. Creative partnerships were maintained with LA Food Bank, 211/United Way and service providers to provide much needed resources. Help Desk continued to support families remotely during difficult times with information and resources.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February 1, 2022

Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman  
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #3 on Health and Human Services

Assemblymember Joaquin Arambula  
Chair, Assembly Committee on Budget, Subcommittee #1 on Health and Human Services

**RE: Department of Developmental Services (4300) – Governor’s 2022-23 Proposed Budget**

Honorable Senator Talamantes Eggman and Assemblymember Arambula:

The Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) represents the network of 21 regional centers, community-based organizations that serve nearly 400,000 Californian children and adults with developmental disabilities. We thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Governor’s proposed Budget for FY 2022-23 for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).

**Progress During the Pandemic**

The last two years has been a frightening and trying time for people with developmental disabilities, many of whom are at higher risk of medical complications from COVID-19, and their families. The pandemic has disrupted daily life and previously consistent routines and support options. The strength and resilience this community has demonstrated during this time cannot be overstated.

Better than anticipated state finances ahead of finalization of the FY 2021-22 Budget, in combination with short-term federal investments in response to the pandemic, provided a much-needed infusion of resources into California’s developmental services system. These funds were wisely invested in advancing several critical initiatives to improve services to young children, expand service options and flexibilities, enhance services to diverse communities, support the expansion of the Self-Determination Program, and incentivize good individual and systemic outcomes. Implementation of these critical policies has begun and will yield benefits for many years to come.

**Supporting Specialty Populations**

One of the hallmarks of California’s developmental services system is the recognition that individual service options need to be tailored to meet the unique needs of each person served by a regional center. When there are gaps identified in the service models available to meet the needs of specific populations, targeted investments are needed to ensure members of those groups are not inadvertently left behind.

**Employees with Developmental Disabilities**

In September 2021 Governor Newsom signed SB 639 (Durazo), which will phase out subminimum wage employment in California for individuals with disabilities. This includes thousands of people served by



regional centers. Regional centers are committed to supporting those individuals in transitioning to other employment options ahead of the deadline. ARCA supports the proposed \$8.2M (TF) included in the Governor's Budget for new employment service models to support those moving from Work Activity Programs and exiting secondary education. Employment is a source of pride and identity for many. Supporting individual employment journeys during this period of transition is the right thing to do.

#### Deaf or Hard of Hearing

It is estimated approximately 14,300 individuals supported by regional centers have a developmental disability and are also either deaf or hard of hearing. Connectedness with others is a core feature of the human experience and is the foundational driver behind efforts to enhance opportunities for integration and inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities. Effective communication is a key element that makes connection to others possible. ARCA supports the proposed \$14.3M (TF) in the Governor's Budget to fund communication assessments for those served by regional centers who are deaf or hard of hearing as well as the one-time investment of \$700k (TF) to secure a consultant skilled in this area to inform this work.

#### Young Children

Needed services for most infants and toddlers under the age of three who have identified delays or risk factors for developmental disabilities are provided through California's Early Start system and implemented by the regional centers. On the child's third birthday, responsibility for many therapies and interventions shifts to the school system. This transition has always been challenging for young children and their families, but has grown even more so during the pandemic. There are approximately 3,000 children over the age of three who have not yet been successfully moved to needed special education services. ARCA supports the proposed \$13.2M (TF) included in the Governor's Budget to support Early Start-to-school transitions through regional center special education specialist positions and to develop more inclusive preschool options.

#### Investing in Service Stability

A significant driver of service outcomes is the stability of the relationship between the individual being supported and the service they receive. The longer an individual person can be supported by the same Direct Support Professional (DSP), the greater the benefit achieved. Additional investments included in the Governor's Budget will help support these improved outcomes with further benefit possible with targeted additional investments.

#### Direct Support Professional Training

One of the outcomes of the FY 2021-22 Budget was implementation of the recommendation to better compensate DSPs who complete additional training and certification. This has the dual effect of providing people with developmental disabilities with more highly trained staff, as well as creating a clear career path for DSPs, which encourages longevity. ARCA supports the inclusion of \$11.9M (TF) in increased costs for DSP training wage augmentations in the Governor's FY 2022-23 Budget due to the anticipation that by the end of that fiscal year, approximately 10,000 DSPs will complete at least the first level of certification. This investment in a stable, quality workforce will yield long-term benefits and improved outcomes.

#### Rate Model Implementation

In early 2019 a rate study released by DDS quantified the need for additional investment in service provider rates to promote their long-term sustainability and encourage sufficient service capacity. The



FY 2021-22 Budget included an agreement on a four-year phased-in implementation of the recommended changes, with the first investment anticipated for April 2022. ARCA supports the \$427.1M (TF) funding for full-year implementation of the April 2022 service provider rate increases included in the Governor's Proposed Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget.

ARCA additionally supports the request of Lanterman Coalition. The Coalition is composed of many of the leading statewide developmental services organizations in California. We join them in seeking to accelerate the rate model implementation, including modification of the date of the second phase of anticipated rate increases from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2022. This investment will both enhance the stability of the DSP workforce and support staff recruitment necessary to achieve a return to greater in-person service delivery options as some pandemic-era flexibilities fade.

#### **Advancing Service Coordination as a Direct Service**

Every person with a developmental disability served by a regional center has an assigned service coordinator. This professional supports the individual and their family as they navigate various service systems, engage in person-centered planning, and secure needed resources to strive to achieve their unique goals. The effectiveness of this critical direct service is significantly impacted by the number of people each service coordinator is working to support. Due in large part to chronic underfunding of positions needed to support growing populations, caseload ratios have grown to unsustainable levels in recent years, resulting in service coordinators spending much of their available time on compliance activities. ARCA is heartened to see the recognition of the value of high-quality service coordination reflected in the Governor's Budget for FY 2022-23, but also recognizes this year as an opportunity to correct long-term funding formulas that erode critical investments in this area.

#### **Regional Center Performance Incentive Program**

The Governor's Budget includes a proposal for \$87.5M (TF) to support the Regional Center Performance Incentive Program, with a priority for the funds to reduce caseload ratios within the regional centers. ARCA supports this proposal, which reflects a deal made between the Legislature and the Administration during FY 2021-22 Budget negotiations. This promises to be transformative and provide those served by regional centers with the service coordination support they have been assured and need to thrive.

#### **Reduced Caseload Ratio for Young Children**

ARCA also supports the inclusion of \$51.1M (TF) included in the Governor's Budget for FY 2022-23 to provide the youngest children supported by regional centers with reduced caseload ratios. For families new to disabilities services, this targeted investment will provide more frequent scheduled and on-demand contact. This support wrap will provide them the support they need to learn about a variety of services available to them, enhance their service navigation skills, and cement the relationship with their regional center early in their child's life.

#### **Stabilizing Funding for Regional Center Operations**

Anticipated and proposed investments in regional center operations in FY 2022-23 will correct funding gaps that have widened significantly over time. As a result, this year presents a unique opportunity to also correct the structural problems in the annual budgeting formula (known as the "Core Staffing Formula") that underfunds growth and erodes sustainability, in large part because its underlying fiscal assumptions have not been updated in decades.

In FY 2022-23, the cost of updating the formula would be approximately \$21.6M GF (\$32.2MTF), equal to approximately 2.6% of the total anticipated regional center operations budget. Like implementation

of the rate models for service provider rates, this update would promote stability for those served by regional centers and encourage longevity of staff in critical service coordination positions, which would enhance trust and promote better outcomes.

#### **Other Investments**

ARCA supports and appreciates additional investments proposed in the Governor's Budget for FY 2022-23 that will better support people with developmental disabilities and their families. Two notable additional investments in the DDS portion of the Budget include recognition of the salary needs of regional center Emergency Coordinators, reflective of their independent decision-making authority, and the inclusion of needed supervision positions to support Enhanced Service Coordination. In other areas of the Budget, ARCA appreciates and supports investment in addressing the pandemic's strains on our health care system, as well as work to improve the state's disaster-readiness and disaster resilience, as these cross-cutting issues also impact the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

ARCA will continue to build on our long-standing collaborative relationships to partner with those served, their family members, the Legislature, the Administration, and community organizations. We are deeply committed to meeting today's needs with an eye towards the future. This is possible only by hearing and respecting the diverse perspectives of our system's stakeholders. By doing so, we will be able to keep the promise of the Lanterman Act for hundreds of thousands of Californians who rely on it.

Sincerely,

/s/

Amy Westling

Executive Director

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