



MAKING IT WORK: STATE AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES FOR IMPROVING CALIFORNIA'S EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM

January 23, 2018
2:00 p.m.

Sacramento Public Library (Galleria)

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Raechelle Bowlay-Sutton

Coordinator, San Luis Obispo County Child Care Planning Council

Raechelle Bowlay-Sutton is Coordinator of the San Luis Obispo County Child Care Planning Council. She has worked for the past 4 years to build a cohesive and strategically designed Quality Rating and Improvement System for San Luis Obispo County as the local Quality Counts Administrator, and she also holds the unique role of the county's Assessment and Professional Development Lead. Bowlay-Sutton's background includes working with children with special needs, supporting nonprofit organization management, and owning a family child care home.

Sean Casey

Executive Director, First 5 Contra Costa

@First5CoCo

Sean Casey has been with First 5 Contra Costa since 2000 and became Executive Director in 2005. In that time, First 5 has become a leader in the county and the Bay Area in QRIS, Help Me Grow, and family support systems. Previously, he created the Fetal/Infant Mortality Review programs in Alameda and Contra Costa counties, and provided support and training in similar programs in numerous California counties and in several states. He also worked at UC San Francisco on developing better data for program analysis of maternal and child health programs. Casey received an M.P.H. in maternal and child health and an M.S.W. in social welfare from the University of California, Berkeley, and a B.A. from Oberlin College.

Wendy Dickens

Executive Director, First 5 Shasta

@first5shasta

Wendy Dickens has served as the Executive Director for First 5 Shasta for almost 2 years. Currently, she participates on many collaboratives to make sure that efforts toward early childhood education are being recognized as important in the community as well as providing support for families. These collaboratives include Reach Higher Shasta (including two subcommittees regarding literacy and early childhood services), Strengthening Families, Executive Committee for Foster Youth Education, and Shasta College Family Studies Committee. She also oversees Shasta as the lead agency of the seven-county QRIS consortium. Dickens is an ACE interface trainer and ambassador in relaying information about ACEs and the five protective factors within the community. She previously worked at Shasta County Health and Human Services as a Program Manager in the Children's Branch for 15 years.

Erin Gabel

Deputy Director for External and Governmental Affairs, First 5 California

@First5Ca

Erin Gabel is the Deputy Director for External and Governmental Affairs at First 5 California, where she is responsible for the State Commission's legislative and public affairs initiatives. Previously, she was the Education Consultant for California State Senate President Pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg and advised the pro tem and Senate on a wide range of education reform issues, including early learning. She also served as the Director of Government Affairs for California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson and the California Department of Education. In addition, Gabel was one of the founding staff members of the nonprofit Partnership for Children and Youth, and she now serves on its Board of Directors.

September Jarrett

Executive Director, San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education

@sf_oece

September Jarrett is Executive Director of the San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education. Previously, she served in the Office of the Mayor and as Director of Policy and Planning for the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families. In addition, she was Program Director at the Mimi and Peter Haas Fund, which works to ensure high-quality early education opportunities for San Francisco's low-income children and families, and served as founding staff of the Child Care Facilities Fund of the Low Income Investment Fund. Jarrett has an M.S. in public policy from the New School for Social Research and a B.S. in urban studies from San Francisco State University.

Patricia Lozano

Executive Director, Early Edge California

@EarlyEdgeCA

Patricia Lozano is the new Executive Director of Early Edge California. Previously, she served as a Senior Program Officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and worked on the foundation's national early learning strategy. In California, Lozano has spearheaded projects at UCLA's Center for Improving Child Care Quality, First 5 LA, and the RAND Corporation, and developed research and evaluation projects to find evidence-based best practices for teachers to work with dual language learners. She formerly was a teacher and Associate Director of a child development center. Lozano holds an M.A. in psychology from California State University, San Bernardino, and a B.A. in psychology from Universidad de Los Andes in Colombia.

**Assemblymember Kevin McCarty
(D-Sacramento)**

@KevinMcCartyCA

Kevin McCarty was elected to the California State Assembly in 2014 to represent the 7th Assembly District, which includes Sacramento, West Sacramento, and parts of unincorporated Sacramento County. He serves as Chair of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance, which oversees the largest component of California's multibillion-dollar budget. As Chair, McCarty made historic investments in public education, early childhood education, and career technical education, and increased the number of students enrolled in California's Community College, CSU, and UC systems. Other legislative priorities for Assemblymember McCarty include: expanding health care access, fighting climate change, championing criminal justice reform, curbing gun violence, tackling poverty, and advocating for the middle class. Previously, McCarty served on the Sacramento City Council from 2004 to 2014. He received an M.P.P. in public policy and administration from CSU Sacramento and a B.A. in political science from CSU Long Beach.

**Hanna Melnick
Research and Policy Associate, Learning Policy
Institute**

Hanna Melnick is a Research and Policy Associate on LPI's Early Childhood Learning and Deeper Learning teams, with a focus on California policy. She is the lead author of *Understanding California's Early Care and Education System and Encouraging Social and Emotional Learning in the Context of New Accountability*. A former elementary school teacher, she also worked for the Berkeley Unified School District and Pivot Learning Partners on issues related to California's Local Control Funding Formula, and consulted for the Alameda Early Care and Education Council on the coordination of public preschool and subsidized child care. Melnick received an M.P.P. from the Goldman School of Public Policy at University of California, Berkeley, and a B.A. from Harvard University with a concentration in social studies and a citation in Spanish.

**Beth Meloy
Senior Researcher and Policy Analyst, Learning
Policy Institute**

@BethMeloy

Beth Meloy is a Senior Researcher and Policy Analyst on LPI's Early Childhood Learning team. Meloy previously worked in the Office of Head Start, where she advised federal policymakers on early childhood research to inform their decisions (including the wholesale revision of the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework),

and as an Education Policy Advisor in the U.S. Senate. Meloy received a Ph.D. from Georgetown University in developmental psychology, an M.P.P. from the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University, and a B.A. in psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Sarah Neville-Morgan
Director of the Early Education and Support
Division, California Department of Education**

Sarah Neville-Morgan was recently appointed by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson to serve as Director of the Early Education and Support Division at the California Department of Education (CDE), a division that provides leadership and support to the state's early learning and care community, providers, and contractors. In this role, she is responsible for leadership and oversight to more than 700 early care and education contractors and management of statewide quality improvement projects. Previously, she served as Deputy Director of Program Management at First 5 California, as a Child Development Consultant in the Policy Office at the CDE, as Deputy Executive Director of the California Early Learning Council, and as an Academic Child Development Specialist at the UC Davis Center for Child and Family Studies. She also has worked in a child care resource and referral agency.

**Karla Pleitéz Howell
Director of Educational Equity, Advancement
Project**

@AP_California

Karla Pleitéz Howell is Director of Educational Equity for the Advancement Project and is responsible for managing operations. A public interest lawyer with experience in direct client services, systems change, and advocacy, she works with key stakeholders to identify education priorities to ensure equity in California's education system. Previously, she was the Supervising Attorney for Public Counsel's Early Care and Education Law Unit, where she advocated for increased child care facilities throughout Los Angeles County and as the Directing Attorney for El Rescate Legal Services, a nonprofit focused on assisting families with immigration legal issues. Pleitéz Howell began her legal career as a law clerk for the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office. She received a J.D. from UC Hastings College of the Law and a B.A. in political science from UCLA.

**Patrick M. Shields
Executive Director, Learning Policy Institute**

@shields_lpi

Patrick M. Shields is LPI's Executive Director and a member of the Early Childhood Learning team. His 25 years of experience managing large-scale social science

research projects includes his previous position as the Executive Director of SRI Education, where he served as Research Director for Teaching and California's Future, a 15-year initiative to track the quality of the teacher workforce that contributed to legislation to ensure high-quality teaching for all of California's students. In addition, he recently served on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Strengthening Science Education through a Teacher Learning Continuum. Shields received a Ph.D. and an M.A. in educational policy from Stanford University, an M.A. in educational administration from Columbia University, and a B.A. in romance languages from Amherst College.

Dean Tagawa

Executive Director for the Early Childhood Education Division, Los Angeles Unified School District

@LASchools

Dean Tagawa is Executive Director for the Early Childhood Education Division in the Los Angeles Unified School District. As early education and transitional kindergarten programs in LA Unified have grown to over 30,000 students, he has developed preschool inclusion programs and implemented a new curriculum with a focus on concept development and social-emotional learning. Previously, he has served in multiple roles at LAUSD, including as an Instructional Director for Early Education, a principal, a reading coach, and a teacher. He has served on various early education work groups, including the Early Childhood Education Workforce Consortium, County of Los Angeles Childcare Planning Commission, and the Partnerships for Education, Articulation and Coordination through Higher Education (PEACH). In addition, Tagawa served in the U.S. Army for 8 years.

Samantha Tran

Senior Managing Director of Education Policy, Children Now

@samdtran

Samantha Tran helps oversee Children Now's education policy agenda, including managing the organization's comprehensive policy, advocacy, and communications campaigns on school finance and accountability. She is also a Strategic Advisor on Children Now's foster youth, early learning, and health policy work. Previously, she was a Senior Research and Policy Consultant at the California School Boards Association (CSBA), where she tracked and provided guidance on state and federal

policy issues. She represented CSBA in meetings with the State Board of Education, Department of Education, California First 5 Commission, and other state bodies. Tran received an M.A. in education policy from Stanford University and a B.A. in communications from the University of San Francisco.

Marjorie Wechsler

Principal Research Manager, Learning Policy Institute

Marjorie Wechsler is LPI's Principal Research Manager. She co-leads LPI's Early Childhood Learning team, is a member of the Educator Quality team, and is the lead author on *The Road to High-Quality Early Learning: Lessons From the States* and *The Building Blocks of High-Quality Early Education*. She has more than 25 years of experience conducting policy research at the national, state, and local levels, including her previous tenure as Co-Director of SRI International's Center for Education Policy, where she led research studies on the preparation and induction of new teachers, teacher professional development and teacher leadership, and systems reform efforts. Wechsler received her Ph.D. in education administration and policy analysis from Stanford University, an Ed.M. in education policy from Harvard University, and a teaching credential and B.A. from Brandeis University in psychology.

Natalie Woods Andrews

Director of Early Learning, Sacramento County Office of Education; Director, California Preschool Instructional Network

Natalie Woods Andrews is Director of the Sacramento County Office of Education's Early Learning Department and Director of the California Preschool Instructional Network, which is funded by CDE's Early Education and Support Division. In this role, she guides professional learning opportunities for administrators and teachers; plans and coordinates statewide, regional, and local early learning events for administrators and teachers; facilitates collaboration among local public and private early learning programs, elementary schools, community-based agencies, and institutions of higher learning in order to expand access to high-quality early learning services in Sacramento County; and administers Sacramento County's QRIS. A credentialed administrator and teacher with 30 years of experience, Woods Andrews received an Ed.D. in educational leadership from the University of Southern California.

