Our Vision
The vision of the Task Force is to ensure that all families who live, work, or attend school in Santa Monica have access to affordable, high quality childcare and early education, and that those who provide these services are appropriately educated and compensated.

Welcome and Introductions: Meghan Moroney convened the meeting at 1:08 pm.

Attendees:
Judy Abdo
McKenna Belgarde
Laura Benavente
Shari Davis
Betsy Hiteshew
Gary Huff
Louise Jaffe
Robby Jones
Iao Katagiri
Heidy Lara
Joanne Leavitt
Sonia Madix
Laura Manson
Pauline McPeake
Meghan Moroney
Lara Sando
David Sonnenschein
Ben Swett
Julie Taren
Laila Taslimi
Cecilia Tovar
Michele Wittig

City Staff:
Ivy Chang
Carla Fantozzi
Natasha Kingscote

Approval of November 14 and December 19, 2018 Meeting Minutes – The minutes of the November 14 and December 19, 2018 meetings were approved as amended by general consent.

Presentation by Carla Fantozzi, City of Santa Monica
- Carla Fantozzi provided an update on the Arts & Literacy Festival, taking place on April 27.
- The theme is “Outer Space” and there will be a mobile planetarium set up in the Thelma Terry Center.
- There will be interactive activities sponsored by service agencies.
- Preliminary planning meeting looked at adding additional agencies to the program.
- The Task Force discussed adding a table for the Lab School.

Presentation / Update by Susan Samarge-Powell, SMMUSD
- Susan Samarge-Powell presented on the decline in Head Start program and the district’s strategy for continuing to serve those with the most need.
- There is concern that within the next 5 years, LACOE will discontinue to partner with SMMUSD, citing feasibility of the SMMUSD Head Start program; LACOE will no longer reduce slots in SMMUSD.
- Previously, a recommendation was made to the school board to consider starting their own program with district and state funding, instead of reapplying for Head Start via LACOE.
• The recommendation is now to separate from LACOE, forgoing $1.6M in grant funding, and instead utilize $800K from the general fund by means of Measure GSGH to convert to a district-run program.
• Without limitations set by Head Start, particularly around Head Start and non-Head Start classrooms integrating, the District will gain added flexibility in how they address family needs.
• Potential enrollees residing outside of Santa Monica/Malibu will be connected to LACOE and other Head Start programs.

• The Task Force expressed concern over ensuring SMMUSD permit families would be allowed to enroll.
• The Task Force also emphasized the need for continued funding, year after year.

Betsy Hiteshew made a motion and Louise Jaffe seconded to strongly support the vision for an Early Learning Pathway as outlined in the Child Development Services presentation, and ask the Board of Education to vote “yes” on this proposal, with the stipulation of ongoing funding. The motion passed with 18 in favor and 0 opposed.

Reports:
• There were no reports.

Announcements
• The Governor’s budget included $1.8B allocated to a variety of Early Childhood programs; a further report will be presented to the Task Force in February.

Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm by Meghan Moroney.