

>> Margo Hunkins: Welcome to the Categorical Program Monitoring Presentation on Child Development.

My name is Margo Hunkins and I am a Child Development Consultant in the Field Services Unit of the Child Development Division.

>> Lynn Ward: And my name is Lynn Ward.

I'm an Analyst in the Alternative Payment Monitoring Unit of the Child Development Division.

>> Margo Hunkins: We will begin an introduction and short history of California Child Development Programs.

We are including this background information because we hope to convey the ways in which program requirements allow us to focus on the outcomes we want to achieve for children and families.

We hope you feel free to ask questions at the presentation's conclusion.

>> Lynn Ward: Let's begin with history.

During World War II, the Federal Lanham Act created a nationwide system of children centers to care for the children of women who were working as part of the war effort.

At the close of the war, the Lanham Act expired.

California was the only state to continue those services with state funds.

Access to California centers was reserved for low-income families.

As a result of this history, California's Child Development Programs remain among the few educational programs that are means-tested.

This means that, to be eligible, families must establish that they are low-income, recipients of cash aid, homeless, or that their children are recipients of child protective services.

For programs that offer full-day services, families must also establish that they have a need for care, that is, that they are engaged in an activity that prevents them from supervising their children.

These activities correspond to the eligibility categories and include activities, such as working, searching for work, attending a vocational training program, participating in welfare to work activity, searching for permanent housing, or complying with the Child Protective Services Plan for their child.

Families may also have a need for services if the parents have a medical or psychiatric condition that prevents them from supervising their children for part of the day--in other words, if the parents or parent are incapacitated.

In the early 1980s, the Legislature enacted a second service delivery type, Alternative Payment Programs commonly known as AP Programs to augment California centers and provide additional flexibility to parents.

AP programs issued vouchers allowing families to choose from providers doing business in the private market.

The reason stated for enacting AP programs, cost savings, never materialized however the flexibility offered to parents and the ease with which services could be expanded, meant that Alternative Payment programs became the primary service delivery model for welfare to work child care.

Therefore, with the enactment of welfare reform in the late 1990s, California received an enormous augmentation of federal funds and used those funds to expand alternative payment programs.

With those additional funds came an increase in federal control.

>> Margo Hunkins: Based on this history, California has two service delivery models for child care: One, Alternative Payment, in which parents are issued vouchers for the amount of care they need which may be used to obtain services in the private market; and two, Center-Based, the traditional service delivery model operated since World War II. In both programs, families have to provide documentation of their eligibility, and for full day services, their need for care.

Local agencies must evaluate and verify that documentation.

In full day center-based programs, a schedule for enrollment is established that corresponds to the need of eligible families.

For alternative payment, a voucher is issued that reflects the family's need.

We will go over these requirements in detail in dimension two, governance, and administration.

Because child development programs are means-tested, parents also have due process rights.

We will go over these requirements in dimension six, opportunity, and equal educational access.

Because most children participating in center-based programs are birthed through five years of age, centers deliver California systems of early education services.

This means that center-based programs are required to implement the desired result system to ensure effective delivery of those services.

The desired result system is an interactive process involving local agency and child development division staff for evaluating and improving the educational outcomes and classroom quality of early education programs.

The desired result system for center-based programs contains the following essential components: One, parents surveys.

This survey is given annually to each parent and the results are aggregated by classroom, site, and program to evaluate and plan how programs can better meet the needs of parents and children.

Two, desired results developmental profiles revised or DRDPR.

The DRDPR is an observational tool that assists the children in reviewing the progress of each child in the areas of cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development.

The results of each DRDPR should be aggregated at the classroom site and program level to evaluate how teachers and administrators might improve outcomes for their students.

And three: environment rating scales.

Environment rating scales are nationally norm instruments that evaluate classroom quality for relevant age groups.

An environmental rating scale must be completed for each classroom and aggregated at the site program levels to evaluate how classroom quality might be improved.

And four: qualified teachers and staff. Teachers and administrators in center-based programs must meet educational standards and teacher-child ratios that exceed requirements for private businesses.

The results of the parent surveys, DRDPRS, and environmental rating scales must also be used to design staff development opportunities.

These components of the desired result system for centers will be discussed in more detail as we begin talking about the instrument.

The child development CPM review instrument includes the following dimensions: dimension one, involvement; dimension two, governance and administration; dimension four, standards assessments and accountability; dimension five, staffing and professional development; dimension six, opportunity and educational access; and dimension seven, teaching and learning.

Finally, as part of the desired results system, all programs are required to review themselves for administrative accuracy.

This is most accurately accomplished through an independent review of a sample of family files to evaluate whether all families have met the program, has adequately verified the eligibility, and need requirements of the program.

Now, let us follow these general program requirements through the child development instrument for categorical program monitoring.

Dimension one is parent involvement.

Center programs are required to have two parent-teacher conferences each year to discuss the child's progress with the parent.

Evidence that the district has compiled this requirement might be scheduled or agendas for parent conferences, written information that was shared with the parents, such as summaries or examples of the DRDPR or suggestions for learning activities for the parents and child.

Center programs are also required to have a parent advisory committee.

Examples of evidence of the existence of this committee can be meeting agendas for meetings or sign-in/sign-out sheets for the meetings.

Districts are also required to distribute and collect desired results parent surveys.

This survey should be analyzed to improve services to parents and children.

The results of aggregating and analyzing the survey should be submitted to the child development division each year as part of the agency's program, self-evaluation.

Center programs are also required to inform the parents of the program's goals and structure, provide parents with a program orientation, and describe available parent involvement activities.

Generally, programs find that the easiest way to fulfill these requirements is through creating a parent handbook that is presented to and discussed with parents at the time of the child's enrolment.

For pre-kindergarten and family-literacy programs, the program shall provide parent education to support the parent's literacy activities with their child, provide interactive literacy activities between parent and child, and provide staff training regarding working with families.

Evidence of these requirements might be samples of parent-child literacy activities or samples of lesson plans that include such activities and sign-in/sign-out sheets for staff training.

>> Lynn Ward: We would like to introduce the subject of dimension two, Governance and Administration, by stating that the Department has recently finalized new regulations regarding establishing eligibility and need in child development programs.

Those regulations make significant changes to current standards for eligibility and need. We have provided a number of training sessions during the spring and summer of 2008 regarding the new regulations and will continue to do so.

To further understanding of the new regulations, the department has developed a regulation handbook for Fiscal Year of 2009-2010, which we will be referencing throughout our discussion on dimension two.

The regulation handbook is being prepared and will be posted on the web within the current fiscal year.

Local agencies do not have to complete implementation of these regulations until June of 2009.

However, they do have to demonstrate that they understand the new standards and are in the process of training staff and implementing the regulations.

In practical terms, after October 1st, 2008, agency should use the new regulations to determine the eligibility of new families and families whose eligibility is being updated. If local agencies have questions, child development staff will provide assistance during the review.

To repeat, local agencies are not required to be in complete compliance with these regulations in the current year.

They must, however, demonstrate that they are making a good-faith effort to implement them.

In this presentation we intent to provide an overview of program requirements.

For additional information regarding the new regulations, please refer to the Child Development Division's regulations handbook.

Children, birth through age twelve are eligible for child development services when their family meets one of the conditions of eligibility.

The child's date of birth can be documented through a birth certificate, school record, immunization record, or other official documents.

The age limitation is waived when a child has an Individualized Education Program, or IEP, and a written statement from a licensed or credentialed professional that the child is incapable of self-care.

In all situations, the family must present evidence of, and the agency must verify their eligibility status.

To be eligible families, must meet one of the following conditions: one, the family is currently receiving cash aid.

This can be verified through documentation from a Local County Welfare Department.

Two, the family is homeless.

This can be verified by a referral from a homeless shelter or social services agency or by the parent's written declaration that they lack a fixed nighttime shelter intended for human beings.

This declaration should contain a description of the family's living situation.

Three, the child is a recipient of child protective services and the child care must be included in the social worker's plan for protective services.

Children who are at risk of abuse or neglect are also eligible if there is a written statement from a licensed professional stating that the child is at risk.

Eligibility, based on being at risk, is limited to three months of service.

Four, the family is also eligible if it meets certain income limitations.

To determine whether a family is eligible, the local agency should first document family size.

The child development division publishes a list of income limits based on family size.

In general, family size is determined by the number of parents and children residing together in a household, except when children are living with parents who are not their biological or adopted parents.

In this case, the parents and any income of those parents are excluded from determination of family size for eligibility purposes, and the family is composed only of related children.

Deciding who the parent is can sometimes be difficult.

For additional details on this subject, please refer to the regulations handbook or speak to your assigned consultant.

Second, obtain documentation of income.

In general, when a parent is employed, the documentation of income will consist of check stubs or other written documentation from the employer.

Parents are also required to sign a release, authorizing the employer to release employment information to the local agency for verification purposes.

When the parent is self-employed, documentation of income may be more complicated.

For description of requirements for self-employed parents, please see the regulations handbook.

Third, verify and determine the family's gross monthly income.

In general, the family's gross income is verified by contacting the employer if the parent is employed.

If self-employed, the local agency can generally verify income by contacting clients or reviewing bank statements.

Again, verification of self-employment income can be complicated and other options are discussed in the regulations handbook.

The family's monthly income is determined by using an income calculation worksheet.

The Child Development Division makes an income calculation worksheet available on our website with directions for determining monthly income when annual income varies because of seasonal work, commissions, or other one-time income.

Two child development programs operating on a part-day and part-year schedule are the state pre-school and pre-kindergarten and family literacy program.

Access to these programs is based on the family's income eligibility and the age of the child.

For state pre-school, children need to be three or four years of age on or before December 2nd of that enrolment year.

For pre-kindergarten family literacy programs, children need to be four years of age on or before December 2nd of the year of enrolment.

All of the programs operate full day and full year, and access is based on both eligibility and a verifiable need for services.

>> Margo Hunkins: Now, that Lynn has gone over eligibility conditions, I'd like to discuss the need conditions.

As you stated, Lynn, families enrolled in all programs other than state pre-school and pre-kindergarten family literacy must meet a need requirement in addition to the income eligibility requirement.

If the need for child care is due to the parent being employed, verification of the days and hours of employment is generally obtained from the employer.

If the parent is self-employed, verification of the days and hours of work is more complicated. Descriptions of how to verify various types of self-employment is provided in Section 18086 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

And specific examples are provided in the regulations handbook.

Documentation of seeking employment is generally provided through the parent's written declaration.

Child development services provided while the parent is seeking employment are limited to 60 working days, except when the state superintendent of public instruction has suspended this limitation, or when the parent was concurrently working or attending vocational education while seeking employment.

To obtain services based on participating in vocational training programs, the parent must identify their vocational goal provide a print-out of the class schedule from the institution in which they are enrolled, and provide an anticipated completion date of their training program.

The parent must make adequate progress toward their vocational goal to continue to receive services, and the local agency must verify that progress.

Services based on vocational training are limited to six years for each family or until the parent has obtained 24 semester units subsequent to a bachelor's degree with certain exceptions.

For both employment and vocational training, the parents need for services, can also include transportation time.

For employment, the need can include sleep time for those parents working between 10 PM and 6 AM. For vocational training, a parent requests study time.

Agency may provide child care for this purpose.

Limitations and direction for determining these add-ons are contained in regulations and in regulation handbook.

Another need condition is incapacity.

Incapacity means that a parent or parents are incapable due to medical or psychiatric condition of caring for and supervising their children for some part of the day.

Services based on incapacity are limited to fifty hours per week.

Verification from a licensed professional is necessary to establish parental incapacity.

Documentation of seeking permanent housing is based on the parent's written declaration, and any additional information, the local agency may obtain from a homeless shelter.

Services based on seeking housing are limited to 60 days per fiscal year per parent.

In conclusion, the schedule of attendance created for the child must correspond to the parent's days and hours of need.

>> Lynn Ward: And for alternative payment program, there is an additional requirement.

In addition to a schedule of attendance, the parents' need for services has to be translated into a maximum benefit amount.

A reimbursement ceiling that is available to the parent to purchase child care. Section 18074.2 of Title 5 states it explicitly.

The only considerations in selecting the ceiling for the parent is the age of the child, the type of facility preferred by the parents, and the parents' certified need for care.

Other considerations cannot affect the decision regarding selection of the reimbursement ceiling.

One of the most common errors we find in alternative payment programs is that the evidence regarding the parents' need for care, the actual approved days and hours of care, and the selection of the reimbursement ceiling become disconnected from one another.

These three things really are different applications of the same set of facts and should always be internally consistent.

Finally, all the information regarding eligibility and need must be captured in a family data file either electronically or on paper, or in some combination of the two.

The Federal Government requires that all states report on the number of families who received approved services each month.

Accurate reporting of parents who received approved services each month is necessary to comply with the federal requirement.

This year, consultants will check the cases reported on the Federal 801a Report for accuracy.

Agencies that inaccurately report cases will be required to correct this deficiency.

>> Margo Hunkins: Unlike K12 education, reimbursement, attendance, and child development programs includes excused absences.

Excused absences include those days when a child is absent due to their illness or the illness of their parents, days when the child or their family is quarantined, and days that are attributed to a family emergency.

Local agencies are authorized to develop their own written policies regarding what constitutes a family emergency, and to inform their parents of those policies.

Absences are also excused based on court-ordered visitation or days that are in the best interests of the child to spend with the parent.

Excused absences based on the best interest of the child are limited to 10 days per fiscal year per child.

All other absences are unexcused.

For center programs, unexcused absences can be claimed for reimbursement up to a total of 5% of the total days of the enrolment at a center.

>> Lynn Ward: For alternative payment programs, local agencies are able to set their own standards regarding whether or not unexcused absences can be reimbursed, and if so, the number of eligible for reimbursement, either consecutively or cumulatively.

>> Margo Hunkins: For center programs, attendance is recorded by the parents signing their child in and out of care each day, and noting the time that the child enters and departs from care.

Absences, including the reason, are noted and initialed by the center staff.

In addition, center staff must record an initial of the time that a school-aged child departs for school and reenters the center after school.

>> Lynn Ward: The same is true for alternative payment programs.

The attendance record is retained in the facility where the child attends care.

The parent must sign the child in and out of care and denote the time of arrival and departure each day. Providers must note absences and reasons, and must record an initial of the time a child leaves for school and returns from school.

Again, in alternative payment programs, one of the most common errors is that the attendance records of the child become disconnected from the approved days and hours of care as determined by the parents need.

In these cases, the attendance records are not evaluated for internal consistency with other documentation in the file.

Because the amount of agency reimbursement for the parents' cost of care is related to the attendance records, this lack of quality control often produces errors.

>> Margo Hunkins: Many parents who use subsidized child development services are assessed a parent fee.

The amount of the fee is determined by the family's income and size and is published on a fee schedule issued by the department.

The appropriate fee should be multiplied by the number of days during the month the child is enrolled in care to determine a monthly amount.

The parents' fee should be collected in advance each month.

>> Lynn Ward: Alternative payment programs have the option of collecting the fee themselves or having the private provider collect the fee.

If the provider collects the fee, the provider must transmit to the local agency a receipt or other evidence of the fee collected.

This receipt is usually submitted with the attendance record at the end of the month.

>> Margo Hunkins: Regulations also specify specific actions that local agencies must take when parents become delinquent in paying parent fees.

All agencies should become familiar with the requirements of section 18108 through 18117 of Title 5.

>> Lynn Ward: Alternative payment programs are required to provide written information to parents and the private provider selected by the parents regarding policies and program rules; for example, parents must be informed of their obligation to sign their child in and out of care and to report changes in their situation that could affect their subsidy within five days of the change occurring.

Providers must be informed of the schedule of reimbursement, payments, and any standards that govern the program's business relationship with the provider.

In addition, local agencies must collect information about fees and other charges from all providers.

For licensed providers, the information must be collected on forms generated by the provider for use in their private business.

>> Margo Hunkins: So, we have arrived at the conclusion of the presentation on governance and administration.

Because these programs are means-tested, this dimension contains extensive information. All local agencies operating Child Development Programs are required to create and maintain family data files.

These files contained all the information regarding a family's eligibility and need for services.

During a CPM visit, the reviewer selects a sample of these files from the data reported on the District's Federal 801a report, and reviews the contents of the sample to ensure that the information in the file is accurate and complete.

In addition, reviewers will examine examples of written information the local agency shares with parents and providers to ensure that the information accurately reflects program rules.

>> Lynn Ward: And for alternative payment programs, we would also look at the provider file that corresponds to each family file in the sample.

We would ensure that the information required by statute is contained in each provider file; for example, rate sheets, and a copy of the license.

We also analyze the reimbursement ceiling selected by the agency to ensure that providers will reimburse consistently with regulations.

This concludes our discussion on need.

Margo is now going to talk a little bit about the Desired Results Developmental Profile Revised.

>> Margo Hunkins: The Desired Results Developmental Profile Revised or DRDPR is an observational tool that must be completed for each child twice per year.

This is a good change from previous years which required more frequent DRDPR for infants and toddlers. The DRDPR is the cornerstone of the desired results system.

Like standardized tools for school-aged children, the DRDPR provides the teacher with an overall picture of the child's progress, and allows teachers and administrators to adapt the curriculum and create lesson plans that will more effectively support the learning needs of each child in the classroom.

Unlike standardized tests, the DRDPR is a tool that observes the child's development, as well as cognitive progress.

Specifically, the child's physical and socio-emotional development is also observed allowing the teacher to construct activities that will encourage and support the child's development in these areas as well.

The department has recently completed developing the first set of pre-school learning foundations.

Like standards in K12 education, the foundations contain learning benchmarks for pre-school aged children.

Once the DRDPR is aligned with the new learning foundations, teachers and administrators will be able to observe each child's developmental progress toward foundations in the areas of socio-emotional development, language and literacy, mathematics, and English language for development for English learners.

Consultants from the child development division will examine a sample of completed DRDPRs to evaluate whether the DRDPR was used in the manner described above. Individual observations will not be evaluated to determine whether they are accurate, rather, consultants will assess whether DRDPRs are being used as required as part of a systematic approach to improve learning and development for low-income children. This is also an opportunity for local staff to engage in an idea exchange with state staff regarding innovative use of the DRDPR, or simply making the system work better. Finally, the department provides forms to the West Ed website on which local agencies can aggregate DRDPR results by classroom, site, and program, or age group. This aggregated result can be used to evaluate curriculum and create staff development opportunities and to decide which program goals should be emphasized next year. The program decisions are made after considering the DRDPRs aggregated results are reported each year to the department as part of the agency's annual program self-evaluation.

Consultants will arrive at the review with a copy of the agency's program self-evaluation to support the agency's implementation of the steps proposed to improve student learning.

>> Lynn Ward: Consultants will also verify that each site needing a license has a current facility license issued by Community Care Licensing. Consultants also verify that the license is appropriate in terms of children's ages and the capacity to facility operations.

>> Margo Hunkins: One of the purposes of the annual program self-evaluation is to assist local agencies in identifying staff development needs.

Local agencies may also use other means to identify the training needs of their staff. Agencies are required to maintain a staff development program that includes components, such as job descriptions, orientation plan for new employees, and written employee performance evaluations.

Each classroom must have a qualified teacher, and that teacher must have at least a currently valid associate teachers permit issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

For agencies with more than one site, each site must have a site supervisor possessing a currently valid site supervisor permit.

All center-based programs must have a director possessing a currently valid program director permit.

In lieu of currently valid teacher permit, site supervisor permit, or program director permit, a temporary county certificate, pursuant to Education Code Section 44332, is acceptable.

In addition, agencies may apply for, and the child development division may grant, under certain circumstances, a waiver for meeting the time requirement for a valid site supervisor or program director's permit.

Waivers are only available when there is evidence that the agency attempted and failed to recruit a qualified individual, and when the person for whom the waiver is requested will complete the academic courses necessary for the permit and apply within 18 months.

>> Lynn Ward: Local agencies must submit a personal roster to the department as part of the Annual Program Self-Evaluation and Desired Result System.

That roster, by classroom, must reflect certificate number of the staff and support that agencies are complying with staffing qualifications and ratios for teacher-child and adult-child.

Eligible families must be enrolled in the program based on the priorities established in statute.

All children receiving child protective services receive first priority for enrolment.

After children receiving CPS services, all other eligible children are enrolled in order of the family's monthly income, lowest income first.

The child development division is authorized to waive the requirement that families be enrolled in income order, if a local agency finds that this requirement interferes with their serving a specialized population; for example, children with disabilities.

The division cannot waive the requirement that children receiving CPS services have the first priority for admission.

Because child development programs are not open to all children, families whose children are enrolled in the program must be given due process when the local agency takes an action to change their eligibility status or their level of service.

This could involve actions such as increasing or decreasing the parent's fee, increasing or decreasing the hours of enrolment, or terminating enrolment.

Families must be notified in advance of the proposed change and given an opportunity to appeal, first locally and subsequently to the division.

Consultants will review agency practices regarding issuing notices of action and appeals during the review.

All center-based programs funded by the department must refrain from religious instruction and worship.

>> Margo Hunkins: The last component of the Desired Results System for centers is Environmental Rating Scales. Environmental rating scales are nationally norm observational instruments that measure classroom quality.

As part of the desired results system, local agencies are required to complete an environmental rating scale of the appropriate type for each classroom.

The department, again through West Ed, provides forms to aggregate the scores by site and by type, such as infant toddler or pre-school.

The scores reflected on the environmental rating scales should assist agencies in evaluating classrooms and sites and proposing changes that could improve students' learning.

These evaluations are summarized and forwarded to the department as part of the annual program self-evaluation, in combination with the results of the parent surveys and the DRDPRs.

Consultants will bring to the review the environmental rating scale summaries included in the agency's most recent program self-evaluation.

Consultants will also complete selected subscales from the appropriate environmental rating scale in a sample of classrooms during their visit to confirm the agency's evaluation of quality and proposals for improvement.

Discussions of the consultant's classroom observations are also an opportunity for an idea exchange between local and state staff.

Consultants will confirm that children's nutritional needs are met during hours of enrolment.

>> Lynn Ward: The Desired Results System and the Pre-School Learning Foundation are the building blocks of quality early education programs in California.

There is overwhelming evidence that quality early education programs can make enormous contributions to education success of students.

The fact that our child development programs are directed to low-income children and families means that they are one of the best available avenues for closing the achievement gap.

The desired results system encourages interaction between state and local staff in the process of continuous improvement.

Dedicated and qualified staff, at the state and local levels, will work together in contributing to the success of our students and schools.

>> Margo Hunkins: This concludes the Categorical Program Monitoring Presentation on Child Development.

Please feel free to ask questions at the conclusion of this segment.

Thank you.