

**FINAL REPORT: April 5, 2006**

**TO: EVCP PAUL GRAY**

**FR: DAVID B. BOGY and JUDITH KLINMAN**

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**RE: STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE BERKELEY CAMPUS EARLY  
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM (ECEP) AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

In a memorandum dated December 5, 2005 you requested our assistance in assessing the current state of affairs in the Berkeley Early Childhood Education Program (ECEP). This was in response to several letters the upper campus administration has received from teachers and parents of ECEP expressing their dissatisfaction with recently proposed changes as well as general dissatisfaction with the management of the program. We have met with and interviewed several people and visited all of the centers in an effort to learn the state of affairs in ECEP.

ECEP has 8 child care centers (with a 9<sup>th</sup> under construction), 2 for faculty/staff children and 6 for students' children. (We understand the new center will serve a mixture of faculty/staff/student children.) The 2 centers for faculty/staff children are the Harold E. Jones Child Study Center (HEJ CSC), associated historically with the Institute of Human Development (IHD), a campus ORU, and the Clark Kerr Infant Center and Preschool (CKI/P). The HEJ CSC is the primary center that participates in the use of children for observational research in the field of child development. The IHD is now and has

historically been closely associated with the Psychology Department, involving in the past such well known child development researchers as Phillip and Carolyn Cowan and Susan Ervin-Tripp.

The HEJ and CKI/P centers are full fee centers, i.e., the parents pay market rates for child care, although some student registration fees evidently subsidize part of the cost in some way. The six student child care centers are essentially free for the student parents, and they are funded by student registration fees, as well as certain state and federal programs for which the student centers qualify but the faculty and staff centers do not. The two operations were merged in the early 1990's under then Vice Chancellor Dan Boggan at the request of IHD, evidently to help solve budget problems with the HEJ CSC, which the IHD could not or no longer wished to cover.

This merger created within ECEP two somewhat different categories of centers with perceived differences in status, the HEJ and the CKI/P faculty/staff operation, where some of the teachers take pride in their research and professional child development roles, view themselves as part of IHD, and want to have a research role similar to that of university faculty and the student child care centers that operate essentially as regular day care centers, without much, if any, research component. This has led to perceived differences in status among some of the teachers, the parents, and the overall standings of the different centers.

The last two directors of ECEP were promoted from within the student child care centers, and they have had difficulty in managing the program, especially at the HEJ CSC. Some of the teachers do not view the current director as having the proper appreciation for their research agenda, as well as other complaints, and they appear to resist proposed changes in the management structure that could possibly have a negative impact on that agenda. One method employed by the teachers in this resistance is to regularly express their dissatisfaction with management to the parents who react by writing letters to senior management on campus. It is understandable that the parents align with the teachers in their disputes with management because the teachers provide the daily care of their children, and the teachers have obvious leverage with the parents through their children.

That is not to say that teachers do not have some legitimate concerns that adversely affect their morale. As with most preschool and school teachers, their salaries are much too low for the responsibilities they bear and the work that they do, and they generally feel disrespected and unappreciated by management. They suffer from the desire to be recognized as professionals, but they must also bargain with the administration through a large union that includes employees with issues unrelated to those of the teachers, except salary and benefits. The teachers want their voices to be heard on issues that pertain to the organization of ECEP, the program, and the hiring of its leadership. At a time when financial issues at the University are being regularly reported in the news (financial excesses primarily benefiting senior managers of UC), the ECEP teachers are working without a contract, having received no or paltry raises in recent years. It is

understandable that the management-union relationship appears to be particularly adversarial.

One of the rallying points of the teachers has been the effort by the administration to gain more control over “prep time”, a practice of teachers having two hours a day “off the floor” ostensibly to prepare for their classes, but evidently regularly used by some teachers to conduct unrelated activities, often off campus. An attempt by the ECEP administration to gain control over this practice, and the strong reaction against the change by the teachers, was one of the primary issues that initially prompted the External Review (ER) of ECEP that was initiated by Vice Chancellor Genaro Padilla in 2003.

The ER recommended many structural changes to correct what it saw as very low teacher morale, unusually generous and uncontrolled prep time, a serious substitute teacher retention problem (also related to prep time), poor communication between management, teachers and parents, budgetary problems, and some physical plant problems.

It appears from the materials provided to us that the ECEP administration, with the assistance of the two outside consultants, Susan Colson and Jeremy Warren, have made many good faith efforts to get input from all stake holders in the crafting of the new organizational structure. In some cases it appears that these efforts were essentially boycotted by most teachers, another indication of how uncooperative the factions have become. The view is held by some teachers and parents that while there was an open consultation process to discuss the problems, the administration worked out the new

structure without broad input. The shop steward, who represents the teachers in union negotiations with management, expresses major dissatisfaction with the recent process of restructuring. Resistance and criticisms of the process and of management were mounted by a teacher/parent group, and several long, multi-signature letters expressing the dissatisfaction with the proposed changes were forwarded to upper levels of the campus administration, including Chancellor Birgeneau. However, some teachers and new program managers indicated that there was considerable pressure from other teachers to sign the letters to the administration protesting various proposed changes. It appears from our interviews and visits that maybe half a dozen or so (out of about 40) teachers are quite vocal in their displeasures with the recently implemented restructuring that was a result of an External Review, but most teachers would welcome a reduction of the level of conflict. The current Director has announced her retirement and the Associate Director has resigned. A search has begun for their replacements, but with somewhat altered job descriptions. The search process has also been criticized by teachers and parents.

Several teachers and parents have called for a cessation of the reorganization until the new director is in place. They also question whether the ECEP should be located administratively under the Associate Vice Chancellor – Residential & Student Service Programs Harry LeGrande, or even in the office of Vice Chancellor – Student Affairs Genaro Padilla. This is probably more related to conflicts with these administrators than the structure, however. They also wish to have a major voice in the selection of the new director.

## OBSERVATIONS

1. The teacher dissatisfaction, while real and needs to be addressed through the actions recommended below, may not be as prevalent as it would appear from the signed letters. There is clearly much pressure on many of the teachers and parents to participate in the letter writing activities. Some of the teachers expressed to us that the reorganization was overdue and should continue.
2. The parents who join with the teachers and generate letters to the administration would most likely be happy with any organization that would end the turmoil. They basically want their children to have a safe, stimulating and harmonious learning environment in the day care and preschool centers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

While it will be difficult to satisfy all of the factions and turn the ECEP into a harmonious, smoothly functioning group of child care centers in the short run, the following recommendations are intended to address many of the expressed concerns and may be considered for longer term improvement and stability.

1. Stop the reorganization process until the new director is on board, but do not scrap the plan or roll back the already implemented changes. This is seen as a reasonable compromise that may address some of the teacher/parent concern but with less disruption than a return to the previous structure would entail.
2. Consider increasing the salary range for the new director. The proposed salary does not appear to be in line with the director's level of responsibility. Give the

- new director more autonomy in managing ECEP. Include members of all constituencies in the search committee for the director. Make the committee membership public. This addresses the teacher/parent's expressed complaint regarding secrecy of the director search process.
3. Move the new director's office to the HEJ facility to insure better communication between management and teachers. This center will then become the ECEP headquarters. This recommendation addresses the lack of communication between the director and teachers because of the remoteness of the director's office.
  4. Increase the financial attractiveness of the substitute teacher job so that these teachers will view the position as desirable and will remain in the pool longer and work with more enthusiasm. This recommendation addresses the long-standing problem of retaining substitute teachers. Currently their pay is too low and they get no benefits. It would be highly desirable to have a cadre of permanent employees, who would work part-time and be available to circulate as substitute teachers amongst the different centers as needed.
  5. Remove the separation and distinction between the faculty/staff and the student child care centers. Give equal priority to all children for attending all centers. This should also be done only after the new director is hired. This recommendation addresses the problem of the different teacher status, and it also provides more diversity in the groups of students. In addition to being beneficial to the children in the child care program, it would also ensure that any research being pursued would pertain to a large cross-section of children's backgrounds.

6. Postpone addressing the prep time issue until after the new director is on board and a new union contract has been successfully negotiated. This may then become a work rule issue. Some parents believe it is extremely important to retain the prep time in order to maintain the quality of the programs. Could the retention of the prep time be linked to increased parental participation in the programs—perhaps several hours a week per child in a center? Rather than be mandatory, participation could be linked to reduced fees (a more cooperative model, closer to what had been in place in earlier years). In the case of staff with young children in the centers, the issue of possible release time or flex time would have to be discussed. Parental participation is probably a very healthy goal for any pre-school and infant care program.
7. Clarify the research responsibility of the centers and of the teachers. Although their job descriptions state what percent of the teacher job is related to professional development and research there seems to be a lack of understanding of this in some centers. This will help focus the efforts of ECEP on child care and education.
8. Require that university professors with research projects using the children at HEJ as human subjects provide financial support to the center from their research grants. This will insure that only peer reviewed child development research is being conducted and it will assist in solving the financial problems of ECEP.



9. Provide more campus funds to subsidize the cost of child care for faculty and staff. Just the amount of one recent faculty retention package would go a long way in addressing the budgetary shortfall of ECEP. An amount of \$100k per year would help substantially. Faculty members with young children are usually our most junior faculty who are already dealing with serious financial problems and job stresses in raising a family in the Bay Area. Especially female faculty members with young children, just the ones the University says it wants to attract and retain, have a very difficult time of holding everything together as they struggle here with the demands of job and family. A more harmonious child care facility would help them immeasurably.
10. Keep the ECEP under Residential & Student Service Programs for now. While this may not necessarily be the optimal location, the fact that roughly 75 % of the program relates to students' children makes the RSSP a logical home. While some of the letters were highly critical of AVC LeGrande, there was no convincing evidence that he has mismanaged the program. A new strong director of ECEP who has much more autonomy may help greatly in this regard. If, after a new director has been hired, serious administrative problems are found to persist, an alternate administrative home should be explored.

#### FINAL COMMENT

The University's support of students and young faculty is intimately linked to its family policies. One of the highest priority issues for young families is how to juggle child care with professional responsibilities. This is also a key element in the recruitment and

retention of women faculty – a recognized and stated priority and need of the campus, especially in the sciences and professional schools. A University that is as progressive and visible as UCB needs to insure that child care be placed among its highest priorities. This would contribute to changing the perception of the University to a supportive and welcoming community in which to pursue teaching and scholarship while raising a family.