



**EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER**  
 1000 S. Fremont Ave. • P.O. Box 7916 • Alhambra, CA 91802-7916  
 (626) 299-4700 • FAX (626) 281-0730

**ELARC Board of Directors  
 Meeting Minutes  
 April 11, 2023  
 Approved as Recorded on May 9, 2023**

**Board Members Present:**

Dr. Linda Lopez, President  
 Yougeng Sun, Vice-Chair  
  
 Richard Helgeson, Treasurer  
  
 Marisol Guerrero, Consumer  
  
 Joel Moreno, VAC Representative  
  
 Terry Munoz, Parent  
  
 Dalia Mendoza, Consumer  
  
 Alex Wu, Consumer  
  
 Pat Gomez, Parent  
  
 Devora Reed, Secretary

**Staff Present:**

Gloria Wong, Executive Director  
 Edith Hernandez-Daniels,  
 Chief of Consumer Services  
 Rhoda Tong,  
 Associate Chief of Consumer Services  
 Elizabeth Harrell,  
 Community Services Manager  
 Roxy Ortiz,  
 Information & Training Supervisor  
  
 Johnny Trombley, IT Supervisor  
  
 Angie Salas, Executive Secretary

**Absent:**

**Guests:** Refer to Sign in Sheet

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**DUE TO THE CURRENT HEALTH CRISIS THE BOARD MEETING WAS HELD BY REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY**

**I. Welcome & Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 P.M. by Dr. Linda Lopez, President. The meeting arrangement consisted of a Zoom Conference/Teleconference line and material was displayed on agency website and available to all visitor participants with a link from the agency website. Dr. Lopez welcomed all to the Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center Zoom Board of Directors Meeting.

Roll call was conducted. A quorum was established in order to conduct necessary business.

**II. Community Introductions/Opening Round:**

The Board members and guests were asked to introduce themselves and were noted on the “Sign-In” sheet.

**III. Community Input:**

Comments from the community were addressed.

**IV. Approval of Board of Directors Meeting and Executive Session Minutes  
Motion Required - ATT #1 and ATT #2**

***M/S/C (Pat Gomez/Richard Helgeson) To approve the BOD Meeting Minutes and Executive Session Minutes of March 14, 2023 as recorded. Unanimous.***

**V. Board Nominating Committee (Richard Helgeson & Pat Gomez)  
Motion Required**

Dr. Linda Lopez, President reported that Board Members Richard Helgeson and Pat Gomez interviewed Victoria Theresa Chen, a prospective Board Member. Mr. Helgeson reported that Mrs. Chen is highly qualified and shared that she has previously served on ELARC’s Board of Directors and comes with vast experience. Mrs. Chen is a parent of an ELARC consumer and has been involved in legislative visits to various legislators which includes visits to Sacramento.

***M/S/C (Richard Helgeson/Terry Munoz) To approve the nomination of Victoria Theresa Chen to the Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center Board of Directors. Unanimous.***

Dr. Lopez welcomed Victoria Theresa Chen to the Board of Directors. Mrs. Chen thanked Dr. Lopez.

Gloria Wong, Executive Director, welcomed Mrs. Chen back to ELARC’s Board of Directors.

## VI. Executive Director's Report

### 1. Purchase of Service (POS) Data Meeting and Reporting ATT #3, ATT#4, ATT #5 and ATT #6

Ms. Wong provided background information on the public meeting on "Purchase of Service (POS) Data Report", which was held on March 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am.

#### ATT #3

Ms. Wong shared the "Purchase of Service (POS) Data Public Meeting" announcement. She reviewed highlights of the "Power-Point" presentation and the feedback from participants.

#### ATT #4

Purchase of Service (POS) Data Report Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022 PowerPoint presentation was shared.

#### ATT #5 and ATT #6

Ms. Wong identified the staff panel of presenters at the March 29 2023 meeting.

- Gloria Wong, Executive Director
- Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services
- Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager
- Carmen Castro Luna, Enhanced Services and Community Engagement Supervisor
- George de la Loza, Career Pathway & Local Partnerships Officer
- Adriana Roman, Cultural Specialist

Ms. Wong indicated the purpose of the meeting was to review the POS Data for Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022, which is posted on ELARC's website. Ms. Wong noted the POS data is analyzed by the following categories:

- ❖ Ethnicity
- ❖ Diagnosis

- ❖ Residence type
- ❖ Age
- ❖ Language

The community presentation focused on POS expenditures in the above categories and on ELARC's ongoing efforts to reduce disparity among the various ethnic groups. Ms. Wong shared that a unit has been created to oversee special projects designed to reduce disparity. The supervisor of this unit, Carmen Castro Luna, presented in detail on those various efforts.

Ms. Wong opened the "Power-Point" review by highlighting ELARC's unique demographics.

There are seven (7) ethnic groups serviced by ELARC:

- 1) American Indian or Alaska Native - 10 (0.1%)
- 2) Asian - 1,959 (12.8%)
- 3) Black/African American - 221 (1.4%)
- 4) Hispanic - 10,730 (70.0%)
- 5) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - 14 (0.1%)
- 6) Other Ethnicity or Race / Multi-Cultural - 1,035 (6.8%)
- 7) White - 1,350 (8.8%)

Ms. Wong noted that of the seven (7) ethnic groups, three (3) make up 91.6% of the total served by ELARC. The three (3) primary ethnic groups are:

- 1) Hispanic - 70.0%
  - 2) Asian - 12.8%
  - 3) White - 8.8%
- Total - 91.6%**

Ms. Wong noted the importance of having a workforce that can culturally and linguistically relate to the three (3) primary ethnic groups receiving services from ELARC. The following was a review of present staff and their ethnic background.

✓ Hispanic

- ❖ Consumers: 76%
- ❖ Service Coordinators: 83%
- ❖ Management: 84%

✓ Asian

- ❖ Consumers: 14%
- ❖ Service Coordinators: 16%
- ❖ Management: 5%

✓ White

- ❖ Consumers: 10%
- ❖ Service Coordinators: 1%
- ❖ Management: 8%

Ms. Wong proceeded to review the total annual POS expenditures for all ages by ethnicity. The following graph was reviewed in detail.

*Eastern Los Angeles  
Regional Center*

**Total Annual Expenditures and Authorized Services  
by Ethnicity or Race**

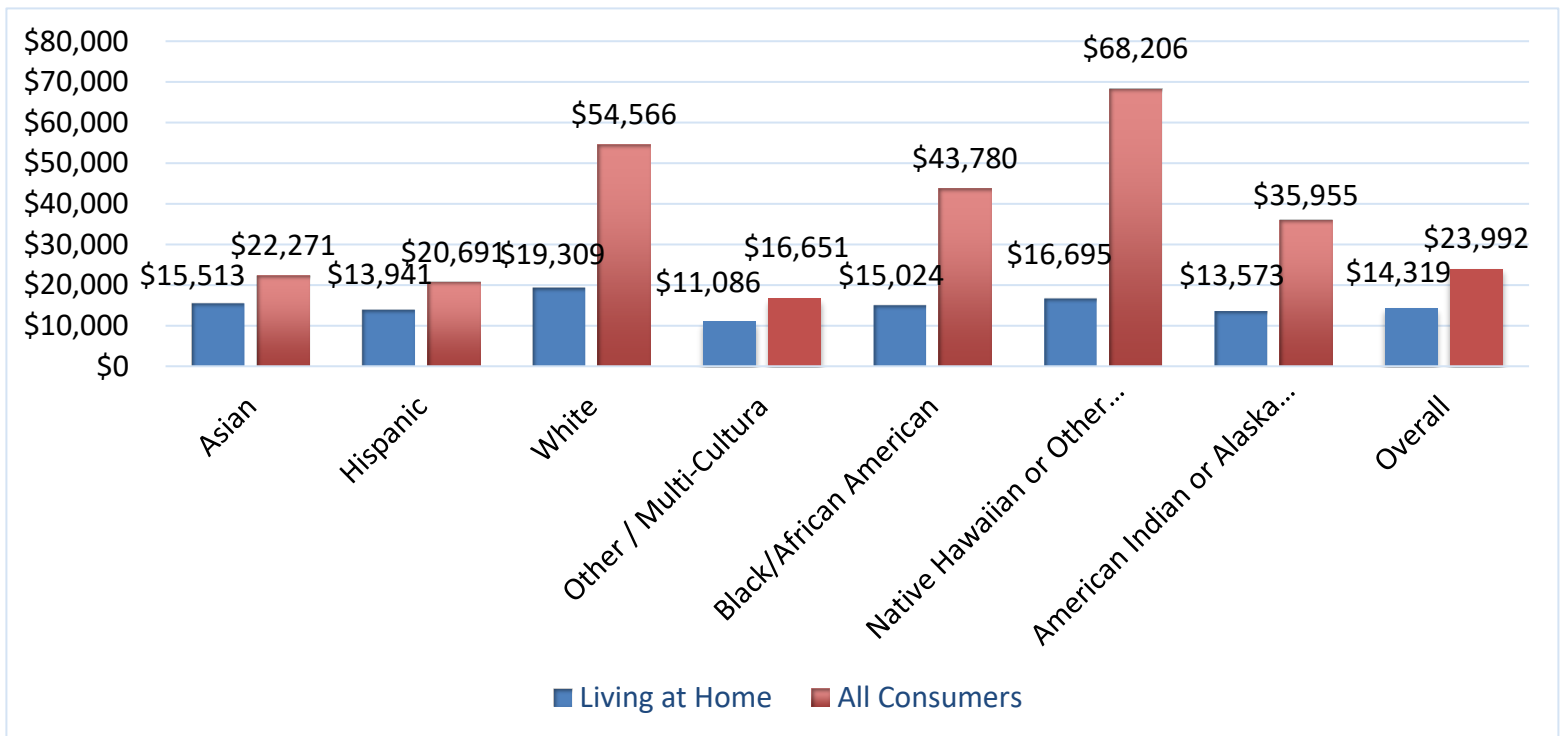
*Fiscal Year 2021-2022  
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**For All Ages**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Consumer Count</b>	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Authorized Services</b>	<b>Per Capita Expenditures</b>	<b>Per Capita Authorized Services</b>	<b>Utilized</b>
American Indian or Alaska Native	10	\$272,187	\$359,551	\$27,219	\$35,955	75.7%
Asian	1,959	\$29,575,090	\$43,628,112	\$15,097	\$22,271	67.8%
Black/African American	221	\$7,185,149	\$9,675,376	\$32,512	\$43,780	74.3%
Hispanic	10,730	\$157,888,113	\$222,011,514	\$14,715	\$20,691	71.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	14	\$834,612	\$954,887	\$59,615	\$68,206	87.4%
Other Ethnicity or Race / Multi-Cultural	1,035	\$11,808,341	\$17,233,522	\$11,409	\$16,651	68.5%
White	1,350	\$56,215,681	\$73,664,450	\$41,641	\$54,566	76.3%
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>15,319</b>	<b>\$263,779,171</b>	<b>\$367,527,414</b>	<b>\$17,219</b>	<b>\$23,992</b>	<b>71.8%</b>

The below graph serves to indicate the narrowing of the difference in POS expenditures by ethnicity when residential costs are not included. There remains a POS differential but it is significantly narrowed when residential costs are not factored in the analysis. Ms. Wong reviewed those differences specifically for the Hispanic, Asian and White ethnic communities.

**Internal Comparison: Total Annual per Capita Authorized Services for Consumers Living at Home vs. All Consumers:**



The next section of the presentation was covered by Carmen Castro Luna, Enhanced Services and Community Engagement Supervisor. Mrs. Luna focused on the numerous initiatives developed with grant funds to enhance services and reduce disparities.

One of the initiatives focuses on expanding employment options and opportunities. Mrs. Castro Luna reported that the grant is funding three (3) critical positions that will be devoted to this effort. The team consists of:

- George De la Loza, Local Partnership Agreements (LPA) Grant Officer
- Fausto Villanueva, Employment Specialist
- Stephanie Ulloa-Gonzalez, Employment Access Coordinator

The team is supervised by Diana Gudiño, Innovative & Quality Services Unit Supervisor. Mrs. Castro Luna reported Mr. De la Loza is concentrating on establishing two (2) new employment pathways:

- 1) Career pathway
- 2) Micro Enterprise pathway

Efforts will continue to expand on the current employment programs:

- Competitive Integrated Employment
- Paid Internship Opportunities
- Supported Employment Program

A second initiative being funded under the Service Access and Equity (SAE) grant is for the newly created position of “Mental-Health Specialist”, which is assigned to Ivana Ayala. The position is supervised by Roxy Ortiz, Community Development and Training Supervisor, and Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager. The objective of the project is to demystify the stigma related to mental health with an emphasis on working with the Asian and Latino communities. The mental health specialist will generate training materials, information and screening tools to help identify co-occurring mental health conditions and will be conducting consultations with families and service coordinators. The Mental Health Specialist will be focusing on the following:

- Creating and developing culturally appropriate material
- Fact sheets
- Training material



- Offering Trainings to staff and families focusing on destigmatization
- Targeting underserved population
- Understanding mental health challenges
- Connecting the community in navigating resources
- Building service linkages on mental health
- Consultations with Service Coordinators on mental health issues
- Consultations with consumers and families

Mrs. Castro Luna reported on the Self-Determination Program specialized caseload pilot program which is also being funded by the SAE grant. This will allow for the continuance of ELARC's current practice of having six (6) reduced caseloads at a 1:40 ratio. This reduced caseload project allows service coordinators to provide more time and attention to those families that are transitioning from traditional service coordination to Self-Determination. This will allow for better measurement of progress and adherence to timelines with a focus on expanding the enrollment of Hispanic and Asian families. This program is under the supervision of Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services.

A third initiative provides Regional Centers with ongoing funding to improve and promote Language Access and Cultural Competency. The initiative requires all Regional Centers to develop a plan to address the following:

- ✓ Improving the quality of translation and interpretation services and ensuring that both translated documents and the interpretation services are culturally competent and language proficient.
- ✓ Making sure ELARC's website and social media accounts are culturally competent and language proficient.
- ✓ Ensuring that Intake and Assessment Department reviewing process is culturally competent and language proficient. Taking into account the needs of the families as much as possible and making the process easier and user friendly when coming into the Regional Center system to that it's not overwhelming to the families.

Additionally, ELARC was awarded a grant to fund for three (3) "Community Access Coordinators" (CAC) whose role will be:

- A) Conduct outreach to families/consumers
  - Spanish speaking

- Cantonese/Mandarin speaking
  - Vietnamese speaking
- B) Conduct focus groups to better understand and improve relationships with the community we serve; find out what's working and what's not working in order to be able to provide better and more effective services:
- Five (5) successful focus groups have been held with the community
  - Focus groups held with service coordinators have been successful
  - Providing education and training tools
  - Collaborating with Community Based Organizations (CBO)
  - Individual and group education sessions to families

Other components of our efforts includes support and training to staff and families:

- 1) Veronica Valenzuela, Training Supervisor, to provide support and training to all service coordinators in order to ensure consistency in the delivery of services and information across all units at ELARC so that there are no discrepancies.
- 2) Noriko Ikoma, School Transition Liaison, focuses on 0-5 age group to provide support and training to the Early Start (0-3) and Lanterman service coordinators (3-5), families and community partners. Efforts are to smooth transition out of early start services into the Lanterman services and the transition to public school services.

Another element is the Coordinated Family Support Services (CFSS), a pilot program, that is available to adults who choose to live at home with their families. This program began January 2023 and will remain in place as a pilot program through December 2023. ELARC's primary point of contact for this project is Dora Ramirez, Health and Safety Initiative Specialist, supervised by Mrs. Castro Luna. Duties consist of:

- ❖ Training and outreach to service coordinators
- ❖ Conducting informational meetings to ensure they understand the program and are able to communicate the information during IPP meetings to the families and to the individuals ELARC serves
- ❖ Monique Perez, Community Services Specialist, lead contact to conduct outreach with targeted providers and Community Based Organizations (CBO's) and other organizations in the community to bring awareness about the program

- ❖ Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager, to present CFSS as an ongoing and immediate service
- ❖ Information on CFSS is available on ELARC's website

Dora Ramirez, is the Health and Safety Initiative Specialist. Her duties consist of:

- ❖ Assist service coordinators to understand the process used in residential facilities
- ❖ Provides information sessions with service coordinators
- ❖ Collaborating with Natalia Magaña, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist
- ❖ Collaborating with Enhanced Service Coordinators to target families who are receiving "No-POS" or "Low POS" and how they can benefit from this initiative

A crucial component toward equity is the restoration of social recreational services. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) released guidance in November of 2021 to Regional Centers regarding a more flexible payment option to pay for services at the beginning of the month instead of paying for services after the delivery of services.

American rescue plan provided DDS with \$12.5 million dollars to issue "social recreational grants" and ELARC received 19 program applications. Six (6) projects were approved for ELARC to develop the following recreational programs:

- Free music lessons
- Inclusive camping programs
- Swimming lessons

Enhanced service coordination pilot project was approved in 2016. DDS has now established guidelines to create a statewide "enhanced service coordination" program. All 21 Regional Centers are now able to implement this "enhanced service coordination" program as modeled after ELARC's program.

Comments from the community were addressed.

## 2. 2022 Community Report: Empowering Families for Success ATT #5 and ATT #6

Gloria Wong, Executive Director, introduced the annual Community Report. The 2022 report theme is on the enhanced service coordination project. There are three (3) articles of families/consumers who have completed the “enhanced service coordination” project and share their personal experience. The report is entitled “Empowering Families for Success”.

Carmen Castro Luna, Enhanced Service Coordination Unit Supervisor, stated that each story is unique in their approach to services. The common factor in the three (3) stories is the trust that is established by having a lower caseload ratio. This allows for an in-depth exploration that results in an enriched “individualized Program Plan” IPP and establishes a strong foundation from which to continue to navigate the Regional Center with confidence. The end result is a substantial increase in the POS expenditures and commitments.

Mrs. Castro Luna offered some insight into each of the stories.

### ❖ **Berelyn**

Article: Overcoming Obstacles

“She mentioned that she would not have obtained certain services if it were not for the guidance and support of her Enhanced Service Coordinators (ESC).”

### ❖ **Michael**

Article: Building Relationships

“Roy continues to work with Michael and his grandmother and hopes to have provided them with a strong foundation of knowledge regarding the Regional Center system so that they feel comfortable and confident navigating the system, communicating with their service coordinator, and requesting the services and supports Michael needs.”

### ❖ **Roy**

Article: Empowering With Education and Resources

“Working with Velen and TASK was extremely empowering to Roy’s parents and enabled them to successfully advocate for their son’s needs during the IEP process.”

In concluding the “POS Data” meeting review, Ms. Wong noted that panel of presenters fielded many audience questions, comments and concerns. At the March 29, 2023 Community meeting the comments and questions came primarily from Hispanic families. The meeting concluded two (2) hours after the originally scheduled end-time at “noon”.

Points raised included individual case situations and specific inquiries by parents. These were also more general negative comments on the Regional Center operation. Such comments and concerns included the following:

- 1) Generic services . . . . . frustration over Regional center request for an application to the generic services and requiring a denial letter from the agency before Regional Center will approve funding
- 2) Frequent denial of service request
- 3) The gap of POS expenditures for “Hispanics” as compared to “Whites”
- 4) Overall, families felt that if they were not required to go through the complex process of applying for generic services and awaiting a decision before Regional Center can fund for those services, there would be a favorable impact on the POS differential between the other ethnic groups. Frustration levels are intense as Regional Center denies services whether it’s due to the “generic services” protocol or based on Regional Center “Policy & Procedures”

In consideration of the extent of concerns raised, Ms. Wong offered to have a follow-up session to continue the discussion. A follow-up session, to be presented in Spanish, will be scheduled within a month. Notice will be posted on ELARC website and circulated.

The discussion moved to the next agenda item, the status of the AB637 proposals submitted to DDS. The three (3) categories of service are:

- 1) Transportation Services
- 2) Restored Services
- 3) Licensed Psychologists New Rate Model

Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager, provided updated information specifically on the “Transportation Services” AB 637 proposal. It was noted that a frequently used transportation provider has submitted a thirty (30) day notice to no longer service ELARC consumers due to the low rates which have been authorized by DDS for this provider. We continue to pursue an expedient response from DDS on our proposal to avert the loss of critical transportation services to ELARC consumers. Will continue to update as needed.

### **3. Purchase of Services (POS) Policy Approval ATT #7 and ATT #8**

Ms. Wong presented correspondence from DDS dated January 23, 2023 and March 15, 2023.

#### **ATT #7**

Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, provided information on the policy approval of Social/Recreation Activities/Camp Services/Educational Services for Children 3-17, and Non-Medical Therapies.

No comments from the community.

#### **ATT #8**

Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager, reported on ELARC grant award of \$441,000 authorized by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). The grants will focus on:

- Innovative social recreation programs
- Swimming lessons focus on integrating in children who are deaf and hard of hearing
- Chinese Parents Association (CPA) – inclusive social recreational program
- L.A. Music and Art School – tuition free music ensembles – focusing on Spanish speaking individuals
- Woodcraft Rangers – inclusive after school and camp program
- UNI – community connector training and education – social recreation services

Comments from the community were addressed.

## 5. Self-Determination (SDP) Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC)

Gloria Wong, Executive Director, reported the SDP/LVAC had a meeting on January 17, 2023.

Rhoda Tong, Associate Chief of Consumer Services, reported on the current number of consumers in the Self-Determination Program and the various stages of progress:

- 72 Individuals that are currently active in the Self-Determination Program
- 53 Successfully transitioned over to SDP
- 30 Completed Person Center Plan
- 54 Obtained Fiscal Management Service (FMS)
- 57 Completed and signed IPP's
- 52 Spending plans completed
- 54 Individual budgets certified
- 70 SD Participants completed orientation for SDP

Mrs. Tong reported that as of March 2023 there are 119 SD participants who have successfully transitioned to the SDP since the open enrollment phase began in July 2021. Mrs. Tong reported two (2) participants exited the program due to personal reasons. Mrs. Tong shared that ELARC is able to reach this milestone due to the centralization of SD cases being assigned to service coordinators with a reduced caseload of 1:40. The orientations continue to be well attended. The SD orientations are offered by ELARC and the State Council.

Ms. Wong shared the next SD LVAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm on Zoom. Information is available on ELARC's website.

No comments from the community.

## 6. Office Space Expansion & Lease Negotiations Update

Ms. Wong provided updated general information on office space expansion plans and lease negotiations. The needed additional office space has been approved by DDS in order to meet the new caseload ratio requirements and the addition of new staff. The lease is a work in progress which is nearing completion.

**7. Budget Update Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 - '23  
HANDOUT #2 and HANDOUT #3**

**Purchase of Services Expenditure Report (PEP)**

**HANDOUT #2**

Ms. Wong reported on the Purchase of Services Expenditure Report (PEP), which reflects a projected \$15,725,868 million dollar surplus.

**Budget Performance Report: Operations**

**HANDOUT #3**

Ms. Wong reviewed the Operations Budget Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2022 - '23. There is a projected \$413,062 surplus balance in the operations allocation. This reflects the additional funding to hire the "service coordinators" in order to meet caseload ratio requirements. Recruitment efforts continue to be a work in progress.

**Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 – '21 Update  
ATT #9**

**ATT #9**

Ms. Wong reported on DDS correspondence dated March 17, 2023 in regards to B-6 Final Allocation for fiscal year 2020-21.

**Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 – '24**

Ms. Wong provided background information on "Zoom" Grassroots Day event scheduled for March 29, 2023.



Roxy Ortiz, Information and Training Supervisor shared the ELARC delegation included consumers, parents, and service providers. Ms. Ortiz reported they met with nine (9) out of the eleven (11) representatives in the catchment area. Presentation points included:

- Core Staffing Formula
- Policy Advocate for AB 649
- Provider Rate Reform
- Family Fees

## **VI. Committee Reports**

### **A. Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) - (Marisol Guerrero)**

Last CAC meeting was held on March 21, 2023.

Gloria Wong, ELARC Executive Director, provided a Budget Preview for the upcoming fiscal year and the CAC candidates gave their speech for the election. However, the election could not take place because a quorum was not met.

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2023 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm and the elections will take place then.

Patrick Schattilly, Consumer Advocate, will be working on:

- 1) "Understanding Regional Center" (URC) presentation on April 20, 2023
- 2) CAC recruiting efforts
- 3) Working with Employment Team for their May CAC, presentation on employment and Micro Enterprise

### **B. Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) - (Joel Moreno)**

Joel Moreno, VAC Representative, reported on the Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) activities. Updates noted from the meeting and discussions held on March 23, 2023 included:

- November 2023 elections for the VAC Leadership
- Karen Sibrian, HCBS Specialist, presented on HCBS
- Presentation on Quality Incentive Program (QIP)

- Updates on social recreational grants
- Regional Center performance measures
- End of COVID-19 State of Emergency
- START training
- Gina Esparza, Emergency Management Officer, and Alhambra Police Officers presented on Active Shooter Training
- Next meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2023

**C. Finance/Personnel Committee (Richard Helgeson)**

There was no meeting of the Board Finance/Personnel Committee.

**VII. Miscellaneous Announcements**

Next Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 at 6:00pm.

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss the motion was made to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 8:07pm - Unanimous.

***M/S/C (Pat Gomez/Yougeng Sun). Unanimous.***

Respectfully Submitted by:



Devora Reed,  
Secretary, ELARC Board of Directors

Recorded by: Angie Salas,  
Executive Secretary