

**NIH Child Care Board Meeting Minutes  
December 3, 2020  
WebEx**

**Members, Liaisons, and Guests in Attendance:** Dr. Theresa Cruz, Dr. Kristin Dupre, Ms. Ila Flannigan, Mr. Dan Fogarty, Ms. Olivia Kent, Mr. Dan Lonnerdal, Dr. Seema Nayak, Ms. Nicole Ray, Dr. Suzanne Ryan, Dr. Gilman Toombes, Dr. Blake Warner, Ms. Kate Winseck, Ms. Heather Rogers, Ms. Laura Bardini, Ms. Julie Margel, Ms. Tracy Carrico, Ms. Christina Segura, Ms. Debbie Washington, Dr. Melissa Conti Mazza, Dr. Carl Hashimoto, Dr. Mary Kearney, Mr. Ivan Locke, Ms. Mallory McCormick, Dr. Pragya Prakash, Ms. Anna Verschoore, Dr. Judith Walters, Ms. Susan Cook, Mr. Russell Mason, Ms. Linda Owen. Guests: Ms. Tammie Edwards, Ms. Colleen McGowan, Mr. Timothy Tosten

- I. **Welcome and Introduction of Board Members, Liaisons and Guests:** Chair Kristin Dupre called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, and introduced guests: Ms. Colleen McGowan, Director, Office of Research Services; and Mr. Timothy Tosten, Associate Director for Program and Employee Services, ORS.
- II. **Ms. Colleen McGowan**, Director, Office of Research Services – Ms. McGowan acknowledged the difficult circumstances under which NIH employees and contractors have been working throughout the pandemic and applauded the work of the childcare center directors and their staff to remain open, provide care for children of NIH employees and trainees/fellows while adhering to stringent state and county health and safety mandates.

Ms. McGowan reported that the ORS is engaged in a strategic planning initiative; last strategic plan was done in 2010. She will send the stakeholder survey to the Child Care Board chairs for their input. Her goal is to look at all ORS functions and ensure that its business models are creative, flexible, and responsive to the needs of NIH employees and contractors.

Ms. McGowan made the exciting announcement that the NIH Back Up Care Program opens to eligible Trainees/Fellows, effective January 4, 2021. She acknowledged the tireless efforts of the Child Care Board to expand the program to trainees/fellows and to continue to promote the program through a robust communication plan, including OITE, intramural AOs, a global communication, and various listservs.
- III. **Mr. Timothy Tosten**, Associate Director for Program and Employee Services – Mr. Tosten announced the recently announced retirement of Ms. Susan Cook, Division of Amenities and Transportation Services Director, at the end of December. He thanked Ms. Cook for her 30+ years of service to the NIH and DATS. He introduced Ms. Tammie Edwards, current Chief, Medical Arts Branch, ORS, who will be the Acting DATS Director, effective January 1, 2021.

Ms. Cook thanked the Child Care Board members for the opportunity to work closely with them over the past decade. She found the interactions fulfilling and challenging and encouraged the Board to continue their efforts to be a persuasive voice for employees and contractors and their needs for child and family programs at the NIH. Board members thanked Ms. Cook, wished her well, and also expressed their hopes that the hiring for the Child and Family Programs manager position will be expedited.
- IV. **Updates:**
  - A. **Approval of October 22, 2020 Minutes** – A motion to approve the October 2020 meeting minutes was made by Dr. Suzanne Ryan, seconded by Mr. Dan Fogarty, and approved by all.
  - B. **2019-2020 Annual Report Response from Dr. Lawrence Tabak** – Dr. Theresa Cruz read the response from Dr. Lawrence Tabak, Principal Deputy Director of the NIH to the Board’s Annual Report.
  - C. **Childcare Centers** – All three childcare centers are open and operating under state-mandated restricted capacities. Ms. Linda Owen reported on weekly attendance numbers, positive COVID cases in the centers, adherence to health and safety protocols, and waitlist activity. Board members expressed their appreciation for the work of the childcare directors and their staff and encouraged center staff to take advantage of asymptomatic testing offered to them at the Clinical Center.

- V. **2020-2021 Work Plan** – Chair Kristin Dupre presented the revised work plan. A motion to approve the 2020-2021 Child Care Board Work Plan was made by Dr. Theresa Cruz, seconded by Dr. Suzanne Ryan, and approved by all.
- VI. **2020-2021 Committee Assignments** – Vice Chair Olivia Kent presented the revised Committee Assignments list for the 2020-2021 Board year.
- VII. **NIH Childcare Waitlist Committee Report** – Dr. Theresa Cruz reported on the five-year trend of children on the NIH Childcare Waitlist; as of September 30, 2020, there are 772 children waiting (down from 798 as the start of 2020). The number of children with an immediate need is currently at 121, >30% overall decline during the pandemic. The age group of 37 – 49+ months has only 21 children (out of a total of 196 children in the age group) with immediate need. There is a concern that there are not enough preschoolers on the NIH Waitlist, centers need to be preparing for when the pandemic capacity restrictions are lifted, and what can help, e.g., advertising to the NIH community, particularly to trainees/fellows starting in the summer months.
- A. **Discussion of adding NIH contractors to the Waitlist** - The committee chairs facilitated a discussion about the idea of allowing NIH contractors to register their preschoolers (not children ages birth-35 months) for the NIH Waitlist, creating a separate list similar to the Other Feds list already in place. The Waitlist Manager would maintain the tiered list, and it was noted that this task would be included in the Statement of Work for the re-compete of the contract. Board members voiced their support of NIH contractors, who they see as an integral part of the greater NIH workforce and community. It was reiterated that federal employees and trainees/fellows waitlist would have priority and the “contractor list” could not be accessed by the centers unless ORS approved.
- B. **Recommendation to ORS** - The committee chairs asked what the Child Care Board needs to do to promote the idea of adding a contractor list to the NIH Childcare Waitlist. Ms. Susan Cook recommended that the Board prepare an information paper that could be presented to ORS and then to the NIH Office of General Counsel for verification that the creation of a separate contractor list presents no concerns regarding displacing federal employees.
- VIII. **Announcements and Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m. The next Board meeting will be held on January 28, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.