

Tulare County Council on Child & Youth Development Meeting Minutes
 Thursday, February 5, 2026, 3:00pm-4:30pm
 Tulare County Office of Education Early Childhood Education Program
 7000 Doe Ave. Visalia, CA 93291
 Sycamore Conference Room

Members present: Stephanie Caldera, Elisa Cortez, Cheri Doria, Terri Gardner-Martinez, Sherri Glenn, Laura Harris, Sham Mashael, Barbara Newman, Monica Pilkinton, Victoria Rodriguez, Timberly Romero, Christina Saucedo, Bernadette Solorzano, Samantha Terry (staff), Courtney Venegas. Members not present: Elvira Barron, Christine Benevedes, Lorena Castillo, Rebecca Della, Martin Nogues, Christina Osorio, Denise Pedregon, and Amy Sullivan. Guests: Jessica Andrade, Jerry Ledesma, and Joanna Lemus.

Agenda Item	Topic	Presenter	Council Member Prep
1. Call to Order	Introductions	Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Terry at 3:03pm and introductions took place.
2. Public Comments		Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	No public comments were made.
3. Consent Items	1. October Meeting Minutes 2. Needs Assessment Template 3. LPC Priorities	Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	Prior to voting on the consent items, Mrs. Terry informed the Council that the narrative portion of the full comprehensive Needs Assessment is still under review to ensure it is compliant with all the current Federal Regulations. Therefore, Mrs. Terry recommends that the Council votes on the Needs Assessment Template to have that submitted to CDSS to meet the mandate of the Needs Assessment and once the report is complete and approved it will also be submitted to CDSS for their records. In addition, Mrs. Terry informed the Council that LPC Coordinators across California no longer have access to AIR (American Institute of Research) which is the data system that has been utilized by LPC Coordinators for over a decade to complete the LPC mandates such as the Zip Code Priority Report. Since AIR data is not available, CDSS calculated the Zip Code priorities for all county's for the interim guidance until a more permanent plan/ process is established by CDSS starting in the new fiscal year. However, the data that CDSS provided excludes CSPP data and is different in a lot of areas compared to what was submitted by the Council last year, which is only 2020 data as that is all that is available on

			<p>AIR. The Council has a few options to help ensure the Zip Code Priority meets the May due date. The Council can submit the priorities that CDSS calculated, submit the priorities that we submitted last year, or change the priorities based on local knowledge. If the Council makes changes to the priorities that differ from the priorities that CDSS calculated, the Council just needs to provide an explanation. It was suggested that Mrs. Terry talk to Eric Sonnenfeld as well as the CDE and CDSS Contractors to obtain their feedback. This will help determine how the Council wants to proceed and will vote on the final decision during the April meeting.</p> <p>Ms. Newman motions to approve the consent items. Mrs. Glenn seconds the motion to approve the consent items. No objections. Abstentions from October meeting minutes: Cheri Doria, Monical Pilkinton, and Christina Saucedo. Consent items are approved.</p>
4. Council Discussion a.	VTTF (Voluntary Temporary Transfer of Funds)	Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	Mrs. Terry informed the Council that this will be a standing agenda item each meeting to provide information about this process that the Council helps to support each fiscal year. Mrs. Terry informed the Council that the past few years, millions of unspent ECE contract funds have been sent back to the state, which sends a negative message to legislators that additional funds are not needed in the ECE field. However, we know that is not true because there are still many children unserved throughout California. The VTTF is a temporary transfer of funds from one program to another during one fiscal year to help keep the funds in the ECE field rather than being sent back to the state. The goal is to keep those funds within the county but if there is no match between contracts, the state assists in transferring the funds across the state. This opportunity takes place twice a year and is something that continually needs to be discussed across the state to help minimize the amount of unspent funds that goes back to the state each year. The next opportunity for the contractors to take part in the VTTF is coming up in the Spring and Mrs. Terry will keep the Council informed of any transfer request that get submitted.
4. Council Discussion b.	Council Talking Points	Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	Mrs. Terry led a discussion with the Council members to ask them what they think that the Council does, aside from the advocacy events. The things that were discussed and will be shared with the Council members so they can

			use it when practicing the Council’s elevator speech.
Council Discussion c.	Council Elevator Speech discussion	Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	Mrs. Terry reviewed the elevator speech that was created at the previous meeting. No changes were made and the Council members now can use the Council talking points to review/ practice the elevator speech when discussing the work of the Council during networking opportunities.
Council Discussion d.	2026 Target Audience for Call to Action	Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	Mrs. Terry shared the slide that was created at the LPC Strategic Planning session in January 2025, that outlined audiences that the Council wants to reach out to in the future to present, have discussions with, educate, etc. about the importance of ECE. The Council identified a few other areas/ groups of audiences that need to be added to the list. Many shared that they know someone within an organization and can request that the Council materials be displayed for families and community members to see. This will help support the mission and vision of the Council to promote community awareness of the importance of ECE for everyone in Tulare County.
5. Subcommittee Updates		<p>Events Subcommittee: Victoria Rodriguez & Samantha Terry</p> <p>Community Resource Subcommittee: Elisa Cortez & Laura Harris</p>	<p>Events Committee: Mrs. Terry informed the Council that the Annual Legislative Event has been rescheduled to April 14, 2026, at the Visalia Convention Center from 6:00pm-8:00pm. Mr. Palermo assisted the Council to get Kaweah Health to approve CME units for eligible participants that attend the event. This is a huge accomplishment that brings up the prestige of the event and hopefully will entice more medical professionals to attend. Mrs. Terry also informed the Council that the Annual Collaborative Event is scheduled to take place on March 26, 2026, at TCOE Mooney from 8:00am-12:00pm. This event will have two speakers to help bridge the connection between home and schools and community.</p> <p>Community Resource Committee: Mrs. Cortez informed the Council that the committee has been working diligently to find the most effective way to better support children and families in Tulare County and promote ECE for all families. The committee identified the family types that are present in Tulare County by income levels and identified the places/ organizations that those family types access to determine who the Council should reach out to in order to share ECE resources and provide information to changes in the ECE field that will positively impact the children and families.</p>

6. Round Table Announcements

Group Discussion

Mrs. Terry informed the Council that this time is an opportunity for the members to highlight their organization by sharing any successes, employment opportunities, events that are taking place, etc. This helps promote community awareness, collaboration, and partnerships. Some information that was shared is outlined below:

- Mr. Ledesma informed the Council that he is serving on a committee that is planning the National Public Health Week that is taking place in April. More information will be shared as it gets closer.
- Ms. Mashael shared that CASA is hosting their first Open House on February 18, 2026, from 5:00pm-7:00pm. In addition, they are in the planning stages for their big GALA that they host in May.
- Mrs. Saucedo shared that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and our local CAPC will be hosting many activities. Information for the activities and events will be shared with the Council.
- Ms. Lemus shared that Save the Children is expanding their services to include children with special needs as well as their Read Across America.
- Ms. Caldera shared that Bright Start is in the process of partnering with Visalia Parks & Recreation to help integrate children and families with special needs at a younger age into community-based opportunities.
- Ms. Solorzano shared that VDA is hosting their Annual Staff Conference this month. In addition, she shared that their Program Director presented at the EveryChild CA Event in January and she was a success.
- Mrs. Doria shared that the Central Section Region of EveryChild CA is hosting their next meeting in-person at San Luis Obispo and even non members are welcome to attend. The meeting will host CDE, CDSS, Licensing and CTC.
- Ms. Newman shared that CVRC just conducted a large hire of new staff for three offices.
- Mrs. Cortez shared that CSET is offering the VITA program for families that are interested.

7. Council Homework		All members	Mrs. Terry informs the Council members that the homework for the next meeting is to have the members practice sharing the Council Elevator Speech.
8. Adjournment		Samantha Terry, Council Coordinator	Mrs. Terry adjourns the meeting at 4:24pm.

Next Scheduled Council Meeting: Thursday, April 9, 2026, from 3:00pm-4:30pm at TCOE Doe Ave. in the Elderwood Room.