



Early Childhood Studies (ECS)
Education (EDUC)
Early Childhood Studies Non-credit (ECSN)
Education Non-credit (EDUN)
Spring Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2026
9:30am-12:30pm

Attendees: Thomas Lamica, Thesa Roepke, Maria Suarez, Yvon Frazier, Elena Thackeray, Jennifer MacDonald, Diana Borjas, Michelle Graham, Michelle Robertson, Vanni Rattanatrav, Asael Picasso, Griselda Reyes, Christian Patterson, Laura Ishikawa

Members not in attendance: Monica Thorpe, Veronica Sanchez, Patty Clarkson, Mari Rojas-Cortez, Susan Walsh

Notetaker: Sandra Orozco

Agenda No. 1 Welcome and Housekeeping (TR) Meeting began at 9:03am.

Agenda No. 2 Introductions and ice breaker (ALL)

- 1. Child Development Training Consortium Report (YF)** The annual report and status of the student stipend grant was presented by Yvon Frazier. Key updates were shared with members. The program is a grant designed to retain students and help them progress in their permit level. The grant currently funds up to 300 units at a maximum of \$46 per unit, though more units can be approved at a lower rate. A notable shift this year is that many applicants are already in the workforce, unlike previous years. Funds were used only for ECS (Child

Development) units, with no general education units approved due to high demand. Students must pass courses with a C or better to receive funding. Retention appears strong, with fewer dropouts than the usual 25%, and many classes are still full by week 12. While students can use the money freely, they are encouraged to reinvest it in education-related expenses (e.g., books, laptops, registration). The program is continuing, and a new 2026–2027 grant cycle is underway for approval. The grant is highly utilized, supporting student retention and progress, with strong demand exceeding initial funding limits.

Student stipend application data by semester:

Fall 2025 and Spring 2026, there were:

39 applicants (217 units) in fall

27 applicants (167 units) in spring

384 total units requested, exceeding the funded 300-unit cap Based on current numbers, students would receive \$29 per unit, deposited into their financial aid accounts.

Agenda No. 3 ECS Lab School Updates (MR) The Lab School is currently recruiting for 2 teacher positions. One currently opens and another is expected to be due to the retirement of a long-term faculty member. Replacement lead teacher positions will be filled with CSEA Teacher II.

The Lab School has a strong focus on developing a workforce pipeline, especially by training students (e.g., ECS majors) who can grow into teaching roles and eventually transition into higher-paying jobs in the community.

Partnerships (e.g., with First 5 and Nature-related initiatives) help shape a vision for natural, flexible learning environments, specifically for the Lompoc site. The emphasis is on meaningful interactions rather than physical structures, with plans to build facilities in phases as funding becomes available.

Agenda No. 4 Agency Updates-Roundtable Discussion on Workforce Needs (ALL)

- a) Christian Patterson suggested a relevant need is communicating the workforce changes that will be implemented regarding the Child Development Permit Matrix. With the current Child Development Permit undergoing restructuring, those who obtain or upgrade their current permit will be held to the current structure. It may be in educators' best interest to apply or upgrade immediately, so that they are "grandfathered in" while we wait to see what the new structure will entail.

- b) Maggie Suarez suggested more integration of the CLASS tool into courses where appropriate.
- c) Griselda Reyes expressed the need for recruiting bilingual aides to work in the community and asked for courses at the college be taught in Spanish.
- d) Michelle Graham shared that there is a growing need in our community for highly qualified teachers who have college units working specifically with infants and toddlers.
- e) Other suggestions were solicited from members via email but were not received in time for the finalization of minutes.

Agenda No. 5 Program News (TR) Thesa Roepke provided updates on the academic programs on the areas below:

- a. **Skills USA (TR)** The ECS Program had two students that competed both regionally and at the state level in SkillsUSA within the Early Childhood area. The skills area was based on literary reading with props to a group of preschool children. Both students medaled in the regional competition. One student earned silver and the other earned gold with a perfect score. Both students advanced to the state level competition where they medaled again (silver and gold). One student will continue to the Nationals in Atlanta, GA in June.
- b. **CTE Bulldog Bootcamp (TR/YF)** Bulldog Bootcamp is a free, 2-week, non-credit program providing two courses. It provides students with course content on career preparation, basic skills, workforce knowledge, and interview training. Additionally, the course content involves a hands-on competition where students identify a problem, design a solution, and present the solution to college constituents while competing against other groups. The program will be led by Monica Thorpe with support from other staff and in collaboration with the Preschool 1 classroom at the Santa Maria Lab School location.
- c. **DAS ECS Apprenticeship (TR)** ECS Program leadership along with the grants team applied for a \$450,000 DAS Apprenticeship Implementation Grant. The funding would mainly be used to cover the gap between standard pay and the required prevailing wage to support highly engaging Early Care and Education Teacher Apprenticeship Program. The college has identified the ECS Lab Schools as the employer during the first 4 years with plans to expand later to local employers. As part of the DAS Implementation Grant, the ECS Faculty have created an innovative APRN course to support apprentices during their on-the-job (OJT) portion of the apprenticeship. The course is titled, APRN 400: Early Care and

Education Teacher and will be a part of the RSI requirements in addition to the four identified courses (12 RSI units).

- d. **New Courses (TR)** The ECS Program has worked over the past year to write new curriculum to address community and workforce needs. The following classes have been approved by the college curriculum committee and will be available in fall 2027.
 - i. Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) 300
 - ii. Registered Behavior Technician Non-credit (RBTN) 7300
- e. **New Programs (TR)** The ECS Program has worked over the past year to develop new programs to address continued program, workforce, and industry needs for competent and qualified employees. The Behavior Studies Certificate of Achievement is the first step in the CTE pathway to becoming a BCBA and it will provide students with educational preparation related to basic competencies, so they are prepared and eligible to take the Registered Behavior Technician Certification exam.
 - i. Certificate of Achievement in Early Childhood Studies: Applied Behavior Studies consists of 16 units of coursework: CDEV C1000, ECS 112, ECS 114, ECS 122, RBT 300, and 2 units of ECS 149
 - ii. Family Childcare Preparation Certificate of Completion-Non-credit consists of two existing non-credit courses ECSN 7300 and ECSN 7301. This certificate is stackable and leads to two additional existing non-credit certificates in ECSN.
 - iii. The ECS Program hired an educational expert to research Speech Language Pathology Programs (SLPA) at other CA community colleges as well as our local community needs over the past year. The research findings indicated that an SLPA degree and certificate program was needed in our local community. The ECS Program will champion the development of several SLPA courses along with the creation of both an associate degree and certificate of achievement. The research also indicated that four existing ECS courses were consistently incorporated into similar degrees and certificate pathways. The college will also check in with our region to see if there are opportunities for collaborations with other colleges to serve these program students.
- f. **Course/Program Revisions (TR)** The ECS Program Faculty worked over the past year to complete the 6-year curricular review process for all ECS emphasis-based courses in our local degrees/certificates as well as the ECSN courses and certificates. We also worked on the Elementary Education Transfer C-ID updates and made revisions in consultation with counseling faculty.

- i. ECS emphasis course revisions effective fall 2027. Courses reviewed were: ECS 111, ECS 112, ECS 113, ECS 115, ECS 120, ECS 150, and ECS 151.
 - ii. ECSN courses were revised and updated to align the content with current content ECSN 7300, ECSN 7301, ECSN 7302, ECSN 7303, and ECSN 7304. A summary of changes included systems nomenclature, content updates based on program feedback, and type of certificate to include SP grading.
 - iii. ECSN Program name change was made to the program formally known as the Family Childcare Preparation Certificate to the Family, Friend, and Neighbor Childcare Certificate. The Family Childcare Preparation name was moved to the new certificate mentioned previously.
 - iv. The previously created Early Childhood Studies Site Supervisor certificate has been put on hold because the current ECS General Certificate meets the requirements of the Site Supervisor permit there is no longer a need for a separate Site Supervisor Program. The Associate Teacher, Teacher, and Master Teacher certificates have been active and being offered since fall 2026. There will be future revisions to all three certificates to align with the new Child Development Permit changes once codified into statute.
 - v. Updated and revised existing Associate in Arts for Transfer (Elementary Education) to meet new state C-ID requirements.
- g. **OER/ZTC (TR)** ECS Program Faculty provided revisions of our core courses to be zero textbook (ZTC) cost with the goal of becoming one of the first textbook cost degrees at the college. Currently, 7 of our 8 core transfer degree courses have already been designated or will be designated by fall 2026.
 - i. Core courses converted to ZTC include ECS 104, ECS 116, ECS 105 with one course pending for transition in spring 2027 as ZTC (ECS 118/ECS 119).
- h. **Common Course Numbering (CCN) (TR)** The members were provided with memorandum from the Chancellor's Office regarding the legislation and rollout phases of CCN across the state. The ECS program processed the Phase IIB required course and will offer the CCN version of ECS 100 now known as CDEV C1000 in fall 2026. Phase III is on hold due to ongoing discussions around articulation with four-year institutions. Thesa shared pedagogical concerns regarding the CCN COR templates for ECS 105 and ECS 106. Both courses integrate three developmental periods into the COR verses a single period currently approved. If approved based on the CCN templates, both courses will require instruction and competency assessment of students for infant/toddler, preschool, and school age children. Thesa encouraged advocacy to keep instruction and best practices limited to preschool/TK aged children for both courses.

- i. **TOP Code to CIP Code Changes (TR)** The members were provided with information from the Chancellor's Office that outlines changes being made on a federal level to TOP and CIP codes specifically in Career and Technical Education Programs. Both ECS and EDUC are affected. Over the course of the next year, program faculty will be reviewing courses and programs to ensure alignment with the correct TOP/CIP codes that provide CTE funding.
- j. **Program Recommendation Status Update (TR)**
 - i. Speech Language Pathology Assistant-Still in the planning stages. Faculty will work on course development on new courses over the next academic year and filing the program with the region.
 - ii. Infant Toddler Specialization Program faculty will need to file the program with the region. No new course development is needed. Certificate development will occur over the next academic year.
 - iii. Special Education Assistant Program faculty will need to file the program with the region. No new course development is needed. Certificate development will occur over the next academic year.

Agenda No. 6 Graduation Data (TR) The members were provided with program graduation/completion numbers by program.

- 6. **Program Statistics (TR)** The members were provided with program data including demographic, success/retention, impacts, enrollment/headcount, and other relevant data. Key considerations moving into next year:
 - I. **Impact of general education (GE) requirements and AB 705:** The speaker questions how limits on remedial English and math support affect student success, especially since students in Child Development courses are also required to take English and math early on. This may be competing with program-specific learning.
 - II. **Shift in credentials and certificates:** There is a decline in career/technical education certificates as more students move toward transfer degrees. However, transfer degrees don't fully prepare students for specialized fields like infant/toddler care or special education.
 - III. **Program structure changes and support:** The department is responding by introducing program specific First-Year Experience cohorts, more tutoring and support services, strategically scheduled child development courses by modality, reviewing auto-awarding of degrees/certificates to better track completion (stackable certificates)
 - IV. **Enrollment and outcomes:** Enrollment is increasing overall, but degrees and certificates are flat or slightly declining. Most students are Hispanic and primarily under the age of 25, with some older returning students. Gender imbalance persists (majority are female, though some male participation is noted in specific courses).
 - V. **Retention concerns** include overall retention is **about 64%** but varies significantly by group. Hispanic students show higher persistence than average. White and "other" groups show lower persistence.

- Documented challenges include financial hardship, transportation issues, work obligations, and caregiving responsibilities.
- VI. **Course-level** differences data showed some courses (like education/field experience classes) have higher success rates. Others show more drop-offs, raising questions about instructional design or student support.
 - VII. **Program development priorities** showed expand dual enrollment (high school CCAP programs). Developing new stackable certificates (infant/toddler, special education, SLPA pathway). Improving evening practicum options for working students. Securing funding for projects, labs, websites, and lost grants, Strengthening ESL/English confidence support within CTE pathways
 - VIII. **Overall conclusions: Enrollment** is rising, but completions and funding are not keeping pace. The program is working through adjusting to better scheduling, support services, and new certificate pathways, while addressing structural barriers tied to policy, student needs, and workforce realities.

Agenda No. 7 Program Accomplishments and Needs (TR)

a. Program accomplishments

- i. Successful creation of two new programs
- ii. Submission of the DAS Implementation Grant
- iii. Career Academy Collaboration with local industry
- iv. Increase in total student enrollments
- v. Launching of the EDUN program
- vi. Research completion for new SLPA program
- vii. Use of prep room for instruction
- viii. Emphasis course revisions
- ix. Launching of the three level stackable ECS Certificates
- x. Revision of ECSN Certificates and additional of new program
- xi. Completion of CCN Phase IIB-CDEV C1000
- xii. Transition of two more core ECS classes to OER/ZTC
- xiii. Finalization of observation room upgrades
- xiv. Completion of currency/relevancy review of 7 ECS courses

b. Program Needs: A recommendation was made to gain support from members to move forward addressing the following program needs for ECS /EDUC/ECSN/EDUN.

- i. Continue 6-year course revisions (ECS 300 level courses, ECS 114, ECS 117, ECS 123)
- ii. Continue ECSN 6-year course revisions (ECSN 7310, ECSN 7311, ECSN 7312, ECSN 7313, and ECSN 7314.
- iii. Seek financial assistance to complete LVC ECS Lab School Outdoor Classroom Project
- iv. Work toward NAEYC Academic Program Accreditation

- v. Hire administrative support for ECS/EDUC programs
- vi. Offer AST in ECE as a free ZTC degree
- vii. Budget augmentation to support ECS/EDUC program operations and Instructional needs
- viii. Advocate that Common Course Numbering Round #3 Templates do not articulate with COR
- ix. Increase CCAP/Enrichment to all area high schools.
- x. Assess and create a plan for equitable student access at both the LVC and SM ECS Lab Schools.
- xi. Seek alternative funding sources for the Twilight program.
- xii. Non-Credit Pathways: Create ELDV Pathway for EDUN certificate and provide a stable budget to support basic program operations and supplies.
- xiii. Update both ECS Lab School and ECS Program Websites
- xiv. Secure ECS Instructional Assistants (3) to provide academic support services to students in the lab school or extend faculty load/stipend to support students and instructional practices.
- xv. Implement the DAS approved Apprenticeship program for Early Care and Education Teacher path.
- xvi. Study student success rates from the course sequence (ECS 100-105-106-118).
- xvii. Develop sustainable transfer pathways for local students.
- xviii. Extend the current department administrative assistant from 10 to 11 months to adequately support year-round academic programs.
- xix. Develop learning communities to support success and completion rates specifically in English and math.

The meeting concluded at 12:40pm. Members were encouraged to attend the Pathways to Success event immediately following the advisory meeting.

Next meeting Fall 2026