EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER
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ELARC Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2026
Approved as Recorded on October 13, 2026

Board Members Present:
Pat Gomez, President
Terry Muñoz, Vice-President
Theresa Chen, Treasurer
Joshua Tjahjadi, Secretary
Joel Moreno, Vendor Representative
Alex Wu
Dalia Mendoza
Dr. Terrence Baruch
Fely Navera
Irene Martinez

Staff Present:
Gloria Wong, Executive Director
Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Client Services
Judy Perez, Associate Chief of Client Services
Rhoda Tong, Associate Chief of Client Services
Jessica Barba, Resource Development & Special Projects 1, Supervisor
David Castañeda, Community Services Specialist, RD Focus
Brendali Maldonado, Communications Officer
Johnny Trombley, IT Supervisor
Angie Salas, Executive Secretary

Absent:
Marisol Guerrero

Guests: Refer to Sign-In Sheet

I. Welcome & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 P.M. by Mrs. Pat Gomez, ELARC's Board 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.

Mrs. Gomez 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.

Ms. Wong introduced and welcomed Adriana Alonso, newly appointed Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Liaison. Ms. Alonso was introduced as the new DDS liaison following Xochitl Gonzalez promotion. Ms. Alonso greeted the group and shared that she was pleased to join and work with everyone.

Brendali Maldonado, Communications Officer, provided information on how to access interpreter services to community guests/visitors.

II. Community Introductions/Opening Round:

The Board members and guests were asked to introduce themselves, the latter are noted in the "Sign-In" sheet.

III. Community Input:

- Chala Jitpatima, community member, greeted everyone and shared that the approval of the Self-Determination Program (SDP) waiver for an additional five years was welcomed news. Ms. Jitapatima noted that they are still learning the SDP process and want to ensure they understand the requirements correctly and asked for clarification regarding Financial Management Services (FMS). She understood that FMS costs were previously paid by the Regional Center but had recently heard that the consumer may now be responsible for the cost. Ms. Jitpatima requested clarification as to whether this information is correct.

    - David Castañeda, Community Services Specialist, RD Focus, clarified that when the Self-Determination Program (SDP) was initially implemented, the cost of Financial Management Services (FMS) under the Bill Payer, Co-Employer, and Sole Employer models was deducted from the participant's individual budget. A subsequent directive from the Department changed this requirement. FMS costs are now funded separately by the Regional Center and are not deducted from the participant's individual budget. This change addressed concerns from families that FMS expenses, particularly when using multiple service providers, could significantly reduce the funds available in the participant's budget.

- Yvette Baptiste, Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (FRC) and The Partnership of Family Empowerment Center, Executive Director, provided updates on several activities and resources being offered in collaboration with the Regional Center:

    - **<u>Autism 101 Training:</u>**

        - The annual Autism 101 training was held in August and presented by Liz Rogers, Autism Specialist and Certified Person-Centered Thinking Mentor Trainer at East L.A. Regional Center. The training was well attended.

- **Easy Access Binder:**

    - A free record-keeping notebook available to individuals and families of all ages, including adults. The binder is designed to help families organize important paperwork and records. An upcoming session will provide guidance on how to use the binder, with sessions offered in both Spanish and English.

        - Thursday, September 10, 2026
            - 9am to 10am in Spanish
            - 11am to 12pm in English

- **SDP Community Event:**

    - An upcoming Self-Determination Program (SDP) community event was announced. Scheduled for October of 2026. Additional information, including the event date, will be shared with attendees.

- **Black Community Outreach:**

    - Collaborative effort with HEAL/Healed Women in the San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center area to engage the Black community and learn more about their experiences with the Regional Center system. Following an event in Pasadena, another event is planned in Irwindale. East L.A. Regional Center families who are interested are also being invited to participate. The goal is to identify challenges and successes, strengthen communication and engagement, and explore ways to improve services and supports for Black individuals and their families.

Ms. Baptiste indicated that additional event details and resources would be shared in the meeting chat.

- Joshua Tjahjadi, Board Member, referenced the recent five-year approval by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and asked whether the continued federal approval would help address the Regional Center's current financial deficit and provide greater budget stability for the current and upcoming fiscal years. Mr. Tjahjadi also asked whether there are any limitations or additional requirements associated with the approval that could affect its financial benefit.

    - Ms. Wong provided clarification on CMS Approval and Federal Funding. It was clarified that the five-year CMS approval is positive news because it allows California to bill eligible Self-Determination Program (SDP) services through the federal program. However, it is difficult to determine whether this funding will directly address or eliminate Regional Center budget deficits, as the financial impact depends in part on the number of individuals participating in the Self-

Determination Program. The approval supports the State's ongoing efforts to maximize federal funding for eligible programs and services in order to minimize the State funding to the Regional Center system. Overall, the continued CMS approval is favorable for the SDP and the community at large.

- ❖ Ms. Wong recognized Karina Andrade, EL ARCA, for her seventeen (17) years of dedicated service and leadership with the EL ARCA Program**,** as well as her longstanding participation in Regional Center board meetings and community activities. Karina was acknowledged for her consistent partnership with the Regional Center, service providers, individuals served, and their families. Her leadership and commitment to supporting the community throughout her tenure has been greatly appreciated. It was shared that Karina will be relocating to Northern California to care for her father. The Board and Regional Center expressed their sincere gratitude for her many years of service, leadership, and dedication and wished her well as she begins this next chapter.

    - Karina Andrade thanked Ms. Wong for the recognition and expressed her appreciation for the relationships she has developed with ELARC staff, the Regional Center community, and ELARCA over the years. Karina shared that she has returned to the Antelope Valley to care for her father and has taken on the role of caregiver. She noted that her experience within the Regional Center system has helped her develop strong advocacy skills, which she is now using to navigate Medicare and Medi-Cal services on behalf of her father. Karina emphasized that the developmental disabilities community and Regional Center system will always hold a special place in her heart. She described her departure not as a farewell, but as a break to prioritize her family. She expressed hope that she may eventually return to providing services in the future and thanked Ms. Wong for her kind words and recognition.

- ❖ Pat Gomez, Board President, extended best wishes to Karina and expressed appreciation for her many years of dedicated service. Mrs. Gomez thanked Karina for her contributions.

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

M/S/C (Theresa Chen/Joshua Tjahjadi) To approve the general session BOD Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2026. Unanimous.

No comments from the community.

V. Executive Director's Report - Gloria Wong

1) Rate Reform: An Update
ATT #2

ATT #2

Gloria Wong, Executive Director, introduced topics of discussion and presentations on Rate Reform and Quality Incentive Program (QIP). Ms. Wong noted the presentations are intended to update the Board and the community on important current initiatives. The first part of the presentation focused on the ongoing Rate Reform effort, a long-term initiative that began in 2019 when the Department engaged consultants to evaluate and modernize service provider reimbursement rates. Leadership noted that rates had not been updated for many years, making it increasingly difficult to sustain a high-quality provider network. Ms. Wong provided an overview of the extensive work completed over the past several years and the various phases of the reform process. She reported the initiative is now in its final stages. Ms. Wong introduced Jessica Barba, Resource Development & Special Projects, Supervisor, who led the presentation.
Ms. Wong highlighted recent developments related to the Quality Incentive Program (QIP), an important component of the rate reform process. She shared that providers receive 90% of their approved rate, with the remaining 10% funded only if they have met the quality incentive requirements. Concerns were shared that some providers had not met all QIP requirements, which affected their eligibility to receive the full rate adjustment. Ms. Wong provided updates regarding provider compliance with QIP measures, including the percentage and number of providers that successfully met program requirements. The discussion also addressed additional obligations, such as completing provider directory to ensure service availability and provider information to the community. Ms. Wong stated failure to complete these requirements contributed to delays and impacted rate adjustments for some providers. Ms. Wong directed attendees to review the accompanying PowerPoint presentation "Rate Reform: An Update for The ELARC Board of Directors" (ATT #2), along with supplemental materials and fact sheets explaining the Quality Incentive Program (QIP) and associated rate adjustments. Staff noted that these resources had been shared with the provider community to support compliance efforts and help providers meet all required standards.

Following the introduction, the presentation was formally turned over to Jessica Barba, Resource Development & Special Projects, Supervisor, for a detailed review of the materials and current status of the Rate Reform and Quality Incentive Program (QIP) initiatives.

Jessica Barba, Resource Development & Special Projects, Supervisor, provided an overview of the Rate Reform initiative and its development, noting that the presentation was intended to serve as a refresher on the history of rate reform, explain the current status of Quality Incentive Program (QIP) compliance and to discuss how provider rates have been impacted.

Mrs. Barba explained that the Rate Reform effort originated in 2019 when the California Legislature commissioned a comprehensive study examining how services for individuals with developmental disabilities were delivered and compensated throughout the state's 21 regional

centers. The study ultimately led to the development of rate reform measures designed to improve access to services, promote consistency across regions, and establish a more transparent and equitable compensation structure for service providers. Mrs. Barba reported the implementation of rate reform followed a multi-year timeline beginning in April 2022 and was carried out in phases. Each phase included incremental rate increases based on formulas developed by DDS in collaboration with a third-party consultant. The final phase of rate implementation became effective on January 1, 2025, concluding a process that spanned approximately three years.

Mrs. Barba highlighted the Quality Incentive Program (QIP) as a key component of rate reform. Under this structure, providers receive a base rate equal to 90% of the established rate model, with the remaining 10% available through quality incentive payments. For the period from January 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, eligibility for the quality incentive portion was based primarily on data collection requirements, including registration and validation within the DDS Provider Directory. The Provider Directory, which is administered by DDS, was discussed as an important element of the QIP process. Mrs. Barba noted that additional information regarding the directory and related compliance requirements would be covered later in the presentation.

Mrs. Barba reviewed the "Hold Harmless" provisions that were included as part of rate reform. Certain providers whose existing reimbursement rates exceeded the newly established rate model were protected under law and allowed to maintain their higher rates through February 28, 2026. She clarified that a previously distributed PowerPoint contained an incorrect date and confirmed that the corrected version had been posted on ELARC;s website. Following the expiration of the “Hold Harmless” period, affected providers' rates were adjusted to align with the rates established for similar services within the same region. As a result, some providers experienced rate reductions. In addition, Mrs. Barba discussed service code alignment efforts undertaken as part of rate reform implementation. These changes were intended to standardize service descriptions, billing codes and payment practices across the system. Staff worked closely with providers to ensure compliance with updated service descriptions, DDS directives, staffing requirements, service and subcode modifications, rate adjustments, and billing unit changes. Mrs. Barba stated these activities were necessary to ensure consistency and alignment with the new rate structure and service standards established under the reform initiative.

Mrs. Barba emphasized that the primary goal of both DDS and ELARC throughout the Rate Reform implementation process has been to ensure continuity and quality of services for individuals served. She noted that the intent of rate reform was to simplify administrative and billing processes for providers while minimizing any impact on individuals and families receiving services. She shared as part of the transition, ELARC reviewed and updated Individual Program Plans (IPPs), Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs), service authorizations, billing codes, and subcodes as needed to align with the new requirements. Mrs. Barba referenced a DDS directive issued on September 19, 2024, which stated that individuals receiving services should not experience changes in how services are delivered, where services are provided, or with whom they receive services as a result of rate reform. Despite these intentions, she acknowledged that some challenges occurred during implementation. In certain instances, providers determined that the new reimbursement structure was not financially sustainable and chose to discontinue services. Other providers adjusted the manner or location in which services were delivered. Mrs. Barba noted that occasional misunderstandings regarding rate reform requirements arose between

providers and the individuals and families they served. In response, ELARC's Community Services and Client Services teams worked closely with providers to clarify information, address concerns, and resolve any miscommunications.

Mrs. Barba provided additional information regarding the DDS Provider Directory. She explained that the Provider Directory serves as a statewide database containing information about service providers and is managed by DDS. Although not yet publicly accessible, the directory is being developed in phases and continues to evolve. Beginning January 1, 2026, the Provider Directory also became the portal for statewide vendorization, requiring all new vendorization applications to be processed through the system. Mrs. Barba noted that participation in the Provider Directory was required even for providers who were not directly affected by rate reform. While rate reform applied only to specific service codes, all eligible providers were expected to complete directory requirements. Certain groups, including families seeking reimbursement and providers of Self-Determination Program (SDP) services other than Financial Management Services (FMS), were excluded from rate reform requirements. Mrs. Barba highlighted ELARC's extensive efforts to support providers throughout the implementation process.

Resources made available included:

- Fact sheets
- Provider checklists
- Frequently asked questions (FAQs)
- Website postings
- Social media announcements
- Email updates
- Newsletters
- Community training opportunities

Mrs. Barba reported ELARC also conducted periodic provider check-in sessions via “Zoom” and used Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) meetings as an additional forum for communication and technical assistance. Staff further conducted direct outreach to providers identified by DDS as potentially noncompliant with Quality Incentive Program (QIP) requirements. Mrs. Barba shared these efforts included one-on-one coaching and individualized support designed to help providers complete required activities and avoid reductions in reimbursement rates. She emphasized that ELARC staff served as liaisons between providers and DDS, responding to questions, addressing concerns, and providing ongoing guidance throughout the implementation process.
Concluding this portion of the presentation, Mrs. Barba transitioned to a discussion of the Quality Incentive Program (QIP), focusing on current compliance requirements and the impact of QIP participation on provider rates beginning in July 2026. Mrs. Barba provided an update on QIP and its impact on provider reimbursement rates. She explained that DDS issued a directive on October 9, 2025, outlining the requirements providers needed to meet in order to qualify for the Quality Incentive Payment component of their rates. Eligibility was based on providers with QIP eligible purchase of service authorizations and activities during Fiscal Year 2024–2025, with compliance determining eligibility for the incentive payment during Fiscal Year 2026–2027.
Mrs. Barba noted that DDS collected and reviewed provider data to determine compliance with QIP requirements. Providers who met all required criteria were eligible to receive up to the full

10% Quality Incentive Payment component of their rate. DDS compiled and published a list identifying providers that had met the requirements and were considered compliant. Mrs. Barba explained that providers who did not appear on the DDS compliance list or who experienced rate reductions effective July 1, 2026, were likely affected by noncompliance with QIP requirements and/or eligibility criteria. DDS continues to update the compliance list monthly and makes the information available on its website. Mrs. Barba encouraged providers seeking assistance to contact their assigned Community Services Liaison, whose contact information is available on the ELARC website, or to reach out directly to Community Services supervisors, including herself and Doris Weiss. While ELARC staff remain available to support providers and serve as a liaison with DDS, she noted that technical questions regarding specific QIP compliance determinations may be best addressed directly by DDS.

The presentation also emphasized ELARC's ongoing efforts to advocate on behalf of providers, facilitate communication with DDS, and provide support whenever possible. Mrs. Barba reminded audience that QIP requirements are expected to evolve over time and that providers may be required to meet additional criteria in future years to continue earning the incentive portion of their rates. She stressed that QIP compliance will remain an ongoing component of the rate reform process.

Comments from the community:

- Audience participant commented that DDS had made improvements to the QIP structure by recognizing partial compliance. Individual noted appreciation for the implementation of a tiered approach that allows providers who meet most, but not all, requirements to receive a portion of the incentive payment rather than losing the entire 10% quality incentive component. The individual expressed support for this change, acknowledging the increasing number of requirements providers must satisfy each year. They also raised concerns regarding another aspect of rate reform involving the transition from daily to hourly reimbursement structures for day programs. Questions were asked about whether service providers delivering fewer than six hours of service per day might experience rate reductions and whether this change would significantly affect ELARC vendors.

    - Mrs. Barba explained that ELARC has been actively working with providers doing a deep dive to review program designs, obtain necessary acknowledgments, and conduct detailed analyses of service delivery models. She stated that staff are examining each provider's approved program design and intended service structure to determine how rate reform changes may apply. Ongoing communication and individualized review efforts are being conducted to support providers during the transition and ensure alignment between services delivered and established program requirements.

    - Ms. Wong provided additional context regarding the term "program design" to help the audience better understand the rate reform implementation process. She explained that when an organization seeks to become a service provider, one of the initial requirements is the submission of a program design, which outlines how services will be delivered and operated. Ms. Wong noted that

many service providers have been serving the community for decades, with some programs in operation for 25 to 30 years. As a result, many of the original program designs that were approved years ago no longer reflect current requirements and service expectations. She explained that the "deep dive" Ms. Barba referenced involves reviewing and updating these longstanding program designs to ensure they align with current standards, regulations, and rate reform requirements. Ms. Wong acknowledged that this review process represents a significant undertaking and highlighted the leadership role Community Services staff have assumed in working collaboratively with providers through these updates.

- Yvette Baptiste, Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (FRC) and The Partnership of Family Empowerment Center, Executive Director, expressed appreciation to Mrs. Barba for her presentation and ongoing efforts to support providers during the implementation of rate reform.

Ms. Wong thanked Mrs. Barba for her presentation and for providing an overview of the complex and evolving initiative. She acknowledged that rate reform can be a highly technical topic, but emphasized the importance of periodically updating the committee on developments because of the direct impact the changes have on service providers supporting children, adults, and families served by the regional center. Ms. Wong stressed the importance of understanding the consequences of not meeting the various requirements associated with rate reform and the QIP. She reiterated ELARC's commitment to assisting providers in navigating these requirements and maintaining the availability and stability of essential services within the community.

2) Self-Determination Program (SDP) Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC) - ATT #3, #4, #5 and #6

Ms. Wong provided an update on the Self-Determination Program and the activities of the Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC), which meets quarterly, typically one week after each Board meeting. She explained that the LVAC functions as an independent advisory committee. As an essential and growing option for families it is important to keep the Board of Directors updated on the LVAC activities that serve to ensure the success of the SDP option to the traditional case management alternative.

Ms. Wong reviewed the materials included in the Board packet and explained the distinction between “attachments” and “handouts” for the audience. Ms. Wong stated attachments are materials included with the agenda and posted at least ten days before the meeting, while handouts is information that becomes available subsequent to the release of the Board packet. Ms. Wong noted that the Board received both attachment and handout materials related to recent LVAC meetings, including agendas, meeting minutes, and information regarding special grant funds allocated to the advisory committee. The committee is responsible for determining

how those funds are used to support various projects that advance the SDP. Updated information was provided in HANDOUTS #1, #2, and #5.

Ms. Wong Introduced David Castaneda, Community Services Specialist, RD Focus, staff member and agency resource on Self-Determination. Ms. Wong highlighted his longstanding involvement with the program, dating back to the early pilot phase when the regional center was one (1) of only five (5) participating regional centers statewide. She noted that Mr. Castaneda has held various responsibilities within the agency and currently oversees and supports the Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC). Ms. Wong invited Mr. Castaneda to present the Self-Determination materials included under agenda items A, B, and C. She also noted that Consumer Services staff would provide current program statistics, including the number of participants enrolled in Self-Determination.

Mr. Castaneda provided an overview of his role as liaison to the Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC) and highlighted the committee's ongoing focus on improving the transition process for individuals and families entering the Self-Determination Program (SDP). He noted that a primary goal has been to make the transition process more efficient and accessible for families. Mr. Castaneda reported that, at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2025–2026, the LVAC was not expecting to receive additional grant funding. However, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) subsequently allocated approximately $90,000 in LVAC funding, which enabled the committee to pursue projects aimed at strengthening Self-Determination Program (SDP) implementation. Following a motion approved on June 16, the LVAC evaluated potential uses for the funding and approved two key projects focused on supporting successful transitions into SDP. The first project involves data collection and analysis through Kinetic Flow. Mr. Castaneda explained that the project will provide not only program data, such as the number of participants currently enrolled in SDP and those who may be experiencing delays in the transition process, but also meaningful context regarding the barriers families encounter. The goal is to better understand why some participants become stalled during the transition process and to identify solutions based on data rather than speculation. He noted that the project is in its early stages, with staff currently collaborating with Kinetic Flow to develop and implement the data collection process.

Ms. Wong informed the audience the information being discussed could be found in HANDOUT #3, Status of SDP Implementation Projects, specifically under the section addressing data analysis.

Mr. Castaneda then discussed the second project, which focuses on mentoring and supporting families and independent facilitators. Through LVAC discussions, committee members identified the need to strengthen support for independent facilitators (IF), recognizing their critical role in ensuring successful transitions into the Self-Determination Program. After reviewing proposals from three organizations, the LVAC selected the Autism Society of Los Angeles to implement the project. He shared the initiative will provide mentoring and coaching to families interested in Self-Determination, individuals transitioning into the program, and Independent Facilitators (IF). The project will also support those who have completed the certification process to become independent facilitators but have not yet moved into active practice. The Autism Society of Los Angeles will partner with experienced IF's to offer guidance, mentorship, and additional support to these individuals.

Mr. Castaneda summarized the two (2) funded initiatives as focusing on (1) data collection and analysis to better understand transition barriers, and (2) enhanced mentoring and support for families and independent facilitators to improve outcomes within the SDP.

Ms. Wong clarified that the purpose of the presentation was not to review every project in detail but to provide the community with a reference to HANDOUT #3, which outlines the most recent Self-Determination Program (SDP) implementation projects and funding allocations. She noted that approximately $92,357 in available funding had been allocated, with nearly $58,000 designated for approved projects. The Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (LVAC) is responsible for reviewing proposals, voting on projects, and determining how funding is distributed. Ms. Wong explained that the information presented reflects the committee's latest funding decisions and was provided to ensure the Board remains informed about LVAC activities and project implementation efforts.

Ms. Wong encouraged Board members and community members interested in SDP to review ATT #6, which contains the LVAC meeting schedule for the remainder of 2026. She announced that the next LVAC meeting would be held on September 15, 2026 and would be offered in a hybrid format, allowing participants to attend either remotely or in person. She encouraged interested individuals to participate in the meetings to learn more about SDP and the guidance provided by the committee.

Ms. Wong also shared that the LVAC recently appointed a new Chair, Carola Maranon, parent and experienced committee member. She explained that LVAC membership is composed equally of representatives nominated by Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center (ELARC) and representatives appointed through the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Ms. Wong thanked Mr. Castaneda for his presentation and transitioned the agenda to a review of SDP participants at ELARC. She announced that Rhoda Tong, Associate Chief of Client Services and Brendali Maldonado, Communications Officer, would provide an overview of current SDP enrollment and case statistics.

Mrs. Maldonado reported that ELARC currently has four-hundred and thirty-three (433) individuals enrolled in the Self-Determination Program (SDP), representing an increase of approximately one hundred (100) participants since the last Board update. She explained that staff identified duplicate entries within the agency's data system related to budget determinations and revisions, requiring additional review to ensure the accuracy of enrollment statistics before presenting a full report. Ms. Maldonado noted that approximately one-hundred and fifty (150) individuals have completed SDP orientation but have not yet reached the budget certification stage. She explained that these participants are often actively engaged in transition activities, including developing person-centered plans and working with independent facilitators before moving forward with budget development. She shared that staff are collaborating with David Castañeda and Kinetic Flow to better understand the transition process between orientation and program enrollment milestones. A more comprehensive analysis, including demographic and participation data, will be presented at the upcoming LVAC meeting once data verification is complete that is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2026. Ms. Maldonado concluded by reaffirming that four-hundred and thirty-three (433) participants are currently enrolled in ELARC's Self-Determination Program.

Ms. Wong asked staff to provide guidance for individuals interested in learning more about the Self-Determination Program (SDP), noting that orientation responsibilities have transitioned from the regional center to the State Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Mrs. Maldonado reviewed the Self-Determination section of ELARC's website and explained that it contains information about the program, including an introductory video, frequently asked questions, and links to additional resources. She noted that, effective April 2026, ELARC no longer conducts SDP orientations. Instead, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities now provides a standardized statewide orientation to ensure that families throughout California receive consistent information.

Ms. Maldonado explained that participants must complete both Part A and Part B of the statewide orientation to fulfill SDP orientation requirements. Orientations are offered virtually, in multiple languages, and can be accessed through links available on ELARC's Self-Determination webpage or through the State Council's website. Families receive certificates of completion for each part and are asked to submit them to their service coordinator so the completion can be documented and next steps in the SDP process can begin. Mrs. Maldonado also highlighted additional resources available through the webpage, including DDS FAQs, a dedicated email address for Self-Determination questions, and an opportunity to schedule one-on-one consultation appointments with her. Ms. Maldonado currently offers weekly community consultation sessions to assist families with navigating the Self-Determination process and connecting them with additional supports as needed.

Ms. Wong added that grant funding has also been provided to ELARC's Family Resource Center to support outreach and educational activities related to the SDP.

Comments from the community:

- Yvette Baptiste, Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (FRC) and The Partnership of Family Empowerment Center, Executive Director, commended Mrs. Maldonado for her support of individuals and families interested in the SDP. She noted that Mrs. Maldonado's name is frequently mentioned during Self-Determination meetings and that participants consistently express appreciation for the guidance she provides during her one-on-one consultation sessions. Mrs. Baptiste remarked that families find the meetings highly valuable and often request additional time, highlighting the positive impact of Mrs. Maldonado's assistance and thanked Mrs. Maldonado for her dedication and support.

    - Ms. Wong thanked Mrs. Baptiste for her comments and recognized both Mrs. Maldonado and Mr. Castaneda for their expertise and longstanding commitment to the SDP. She noted that previous state funding had supported dedicated Self-Determination positions and specialized caseloads; however, that funding is no longer available. As a result, staff now manage mixed caseloads while continuing to provide support to Self-Determination participants. Ms. Wong expressed appreciation for the expertise and dedication that Ms. Maldonado and Mr. Castaneda bring to the program and acknowledged the positive feedback received from the community.

- ❖ Chala Jitapatima, audience, thanked Mrs. Maldonado for her assistance and support with SDP training. She asked whether participants are required to utilize an Independent Facilitator if their service needs are not complex?

    - Ms. Wong and Mrs. Maldonado clarified that the use of an Independent Facilitator is entirely voluntary and is based on the participant's preference. They noted that Independent Facilitator services are paid through the participant's Self-Determination budget, and families may choose whether or not to use this support as they navigate the program.

3) National Core Indicators (NCI) Public Meeting: October 13, 2026 at 6:00pm - ATT #7 and #8

Mrs. Wong informed the Board and community that ELARC's annual National Core Indicators (NCI) Community Meeting will be held on October 13, 2026. Ms. Wong noted that the meeting is a required community event and that notice was provided through the flyer included in ATT #7. Ms. Wong explained that NCI serves as a statewide satisfaction survey and outcomes questionnaire conducted independently through the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. She referenced ATT #8, which provides background information on NCI and outlines the four surveys included in the reporting process: the Adult In-Person Survey, Child Family Survey, Adult Family Survey, and Family Guardian Survey.

Ms. Wong advised that the October 13, 2026 meeting will be dedicated entirely to reviewing survey results from multiple reporting periods. While not every survey question will be presented, staff will highlight key positive findings as well as areas needing improvement to help guide quality improvement efforts. Ms. Wong encouraged the community participation and noted that the October 13, 2026 Board meeting will focus exclusively on the NCI presentation and discussion.

No comments from the community.

4. Budget Update

Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-'27

Purchase of Services (POS) Expenditure Projection (PEP) Report

HANDOUT #6

Ms. Wong provided brief background information on the PEP report and reported the PEP report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 which indicates a deficit of ($27,095,761).

Budget Performance Report

HANDOUT #4

Ms. Wong reported that ELARC received its latest funding allocation on September 1, 2026 representing the majority of the agency's Fiscal Year 2026–2027 funding. She noted that the allocation details included in HANDOUT #4 were incorporated into the budget performance report presented in HANDOUT #5.

Based on expenditures through July 2026, ELARC is currently projecting a negligible operations surplus of approximately $425,164, or 0.74% of the total operations budget. Ms. Wong noted that while this reflects a slight improvement from the previous year, the operations budget balance indicates a nominal fiscal stability to meet the ongoing work demands and expectations. She explained that DDS and the Association of Regional Center Agencies have revised the allocation methodology, resulting in a different distribution of available funding among regional centers. Ms. Wong also highlighted ongoing financial challenges, including upcoming health insurance renewals. Based on a recent notification by Health Net, the agency's sole health provider option, will no longer provide services to large and small group businesses, the services will end on February 28, 2027. ELARC is presently working on a renewal of our plan by January 1, 2027. ELARC's brokers are actively marketing with all health carriers to find the best solution to replace the Health Net plan options.

Ms. Wong concluded that, although ELARC is projecting a small surplus at this early stage, budget conditions remain meager for both operations and purchase of services.

No comments from the community.

VI. Consumer Services Report
Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Client Services

Due to time constraints, Gloria Wong requested that Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels report be deferred until a future meeting.

VII. Committee Reports

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

CAC report will be deferred until the next meeting, as Ms. Guerrero was unable to attend the Board Meeting.

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

Joel Moreno, Vendor Advisory Representative, reported that the Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) did not meet in August. During that time, committee leadership met to begin planning activities for the upcoming year.

Mr. Moreno shared that the committee continues to feature vendor spotlights and service code spotlights, providing service providers and ELARC staff opportunities to present information and resources to committee members. The most recent presentation focused on day program services and available day program options. He concluded by announcing that the next VAC meeting is scheduled for September 24, 2026.

No comments from the community.

C. Finance/Personnel Committee (Terry Munoz/Fely Navera)

Mrs. Munoz reported that the Finance and Personnel Committee did not meet in August. As a result, there were no committee updates or recommendations to present.

Mrs. Navera confirmed that she also had no additional items to report.

No comments from the community.

VIII. Miscellaneous Announcements

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, October 13, 2026 at 6:00pm

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss the motion was made to adjourn and move into Executive Session. Board of Directors community meeting was adjourned at 7:19pm.

M/S/C (Dalia Mendoza/Fely Navera). Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Joshua F Tjahjadi

Joshua Tjhajadi,
Secretary,
ELARC Board of Directors

Recorded by: Angie Salas,
Executive Secretary