

May 13, 2011

Susan Gillman, Chair
Academic Senate

RE: Child Care Task Force Report

Dear Chair Gillman,

CPB has been asked to comment on the February, 2011 report of the UCSC Child Care Task Force.

CPB is impressed with the quality of the report. The Task Force has carefully considered the needs of faculty and staff for affordable child care. The Task Force has weighed various options, ranging from new construction on campus to long-term leasing of an existing structure off campus.

CPB concurs with the Task Force's argument that offering quality, affordable child care for faculty and staff is critically important. Availability of child care helps in hiring. That is important especially in the next several years as older UCSC faculty retire and the campus seeks to hire young faculty who may have small children or are likely to be starting families. Availability of child care helps faculty with small children balance family with academic productivity. Offering quality, affordable child care for staff is important because staff salaries are low and staff also need help balancing work and family obligations.

One might argue that now is not the right time to commit to spending money on building or acquiring new property and to spending money on a new service. The timing might not be optimal, but, as the report points out, every other UC campus offers child care (p. 20) while, in contrast, UCSC has been studying the problem, through good times and bad, for over 20 years (p. 17). CPB believes that now is the time for the administration to commit the campus to implementing one of the scenarios described in the report.

We concur with the Task Force's recommendations that:

-- The campus proceed to implement the "minimal cost 'quick-wins'" described on page 13;

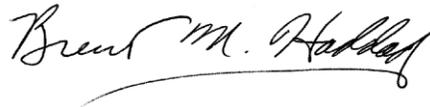
-- The campus undertake a survey of current campus (faculty and staff) need for child care. It seems possible to use health care insurance enrollment data to estimate the total number of young children in current faculty's and staff's families. Another way to estimate demand would be by including questions about need for child care in the Campus Climate survey to be conducted in Fall of 2011, as the Task Force's report suggests.

-- Should the data show a substantial existing need that is not being met by existing child care options (at, or close to, the 88 to 144 headcount capacity described in the report), CPB concurs with the recommendation that the administration appoint an "Executive Sponsor ... [who has the authority] to move to the next level of planning;"

In this case, the report offers three options for a more permanent campus child care program: build a facility on campus; lease and remodel/renovate a building off campus; buy and remodel/renovate a building off campus (in all three scenarios, the University would contract with an outside provider to actually run the child care facility). All three scenarios require an initial investment and a commitment for ongoing funding for maintenance. Compared to other capital projects, the amount that would have to be spent on a one time basis seems modest. Still, money is always an issue. Considering the three scenarios, the first -- building something new on campus, then contracting out the actual delivery of services -- seems best, but is most expensive. Renting/leasing off campus is least expensive, but in the long run it doesn't leave the campus with a tangible asset. CPB recommends the third option -- buy off campus, refurbish/remodel, contract outside for actual delivery of service. This option is less expensive than scenario 1. It is more expensive than scenario 3, but leaves the university owning a tangible asset.

Overall, then, CPB strongly endorses the report of the Child Care Task Force. Our only disagreement/concern is the task force's recommendation that an off campus site should be within 2 miles of campus. That seems to us too large a distance. Siting should consider issues such as employees' drive time, unnecessary waste of gas, and increased congestion on the city's streets. The committee suggests that the facility be located as close to UCSC as possible, but in no case should it be located across the San Lorenzo River from the campus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent M. Haddad". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Brent Haddad, Chair
Committee on Planning and Budget