

Children's Program Coordinator Position Ad Hoc Committee Report to Representative Committee 2019

INTRODUCTION

At its 2018 Annual Session¹, Pacific Yearly Meeting established and appointed an *ad hoc* committee to consider the following questions:

- Does the Children's Program Committee need a coordinator? If yes,
 - For what roles?
 - How should they be supervised and supported?
 - Should they receive payment beyond the free registration and board? If yes,
 - Are we following the law in the way we currently pay them?
 - How much should they receive?
- The Children's Program will continue with a Coordinator for at least one more year. How much, and by what method, should the Coordinator be paid for Annual Session 2019?

This report presents the *ad hoc* committee's responses to these questions.

RECOMMENDATION FOR ANNUAL SESSION 2019

Recommendation 1. In order to avoid delay or confusion in planning for the Children's Program for the 2019 Annual Session, we recommend that the Children's Program Coordinator position for 2019 be continued unchanged from the prior year. This includes continuing the position's roles and responsibilities as before, treating the position as that of an independent contractor (that is, not a Yearly Meeting employee), with compensation consisting of a fixed fee of \$1,500.00 plus free registration (including room and board) for the Annual Session not to exceed the dormitory rate for an adult attender. *This recommendation has been shared with the Children's Program Committee and the prospective Children's Program Coordinator for 2019.*

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANNUAL SESSIONS 2020 AND LATER

Recommendation 2. Beginning after the 2019 Annual Session and going forward, we recommend that the responsibilities currently assigned to the Children's Program Coordinator be reassigned as follows:

- a. **Roles:** the recommendations below assume the following roles in planning and managing the PYM Children's Program:
 - (i) **Children's Program Committee (CPC)** - Carries overall management responsibility for the children's program at PYM Annual Sessions, including the program design, staffing, pre-Session planning, program execution, and program evaluation; detailed job descriptions, and annual recruiting, selection, and training for staff are described in (iv) and (v) below. A standing committee of PYM.
 - (ii) **Ad hoc Working Group to Develop Children's Program Curriculum** - A proposed *ad hoc* team to develop a reusable, multi-year, curriculum for the lower elementary, upper

¹ Minute AS 2018-2

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elementary and middle school age groups at Annual Session. This would be a one-time task; the working group is not envisioned as a standing committee. Appointed by the Yearly Meeting; reports to the CPC.

- (iii) **Youth Programs Coordinator (YPC)** - assists and supports the CPC, with particular focus on recruiting and training the onsite coordinators, and on administrative tasks incidental to engaging volunteers, such as securing screening of CP staff. These responsibilities are, of course, in addition to those of the other, non-CP, aspects of the YPC position.
 - (iv) **Administrative Coordinator** - leads the pre-Session work of recruiting teachers; supervises the onsite coordinators at Annual Session. May be, but not required to be, a member of the CPC. Annual appointment. Volunteer (unpaid) position, with Annual Session registration fees waived; see 3(e) below. Responsible to the CPC.
 - (v) **Onsite Coordinators** (two positions) - support and assist teachers at the Annual Session, including logistics and filling in as needed; may assist in training teachers. May be, but not required to be, members of the CPC. Annual appointment. Volunteer (unpaid) position, with Annual Session registration fees waived; see 3(e) below. Supervised by the Administrative Coordinator.
- b. **Pre-Session Planning:** Planning for the Annual Session, including recruiting and selecting teachers and coordinators, should be performed by the Children's Program Committee (CPC), with support from the Yearly Meeting's Youth Programs Coordinator (YPC) and, once selected, the Onsite Coordinators. The YPC should specifically administer related paperwork and assist with communications to teachers and parents. The Administrative Coordinator should work closely with the YPC on administrative needs. We understand that the Yearly Meeting intends to recruit and hire a new YPC in the near future; as the new YPC deepens their acquaintance with the Yearly Meeting community, they will develop in their capacity to also assist the CPC in identifying appropriate candidates for these positions. The Administrative Coordinator may be an existing member of the CPC who is delegated as the lead for Annual Session and work closely with the Onsite Coordinators and the YPC to facilitate their input to the teacher recruitment process. The coordinators should support teachers, once recruited, to develop their lessons and should be responsible for ensuring necessary materials are ready for Annual Session.
- c. **At the Annual Session:** The Children's Program should be supported by two Onsite Coordinators, one for the morning portions of the Children's Program and one for the afternoon portion, with overlapping participation during the lunch hour, which should allow for effective handoff. The Administrative Coordinator along with the two Onsite Coordinators should run the set up and activities for teachers on the first day of Annual Session. The Administrative Coordinator should be at all lunch meetings to assist with the handoff. Dividing the onsite coordination responsibility between two coordinators should give each coordinator opportunity to participate in the business and general life of the Annual Session. The Administrative Coordinator should provide ongoing support and supervision to the coordinators. The YPC may also provide coaching as needed for the CP coordinators.
- d. Children's Program coordinators (Onsite and Administrative) and teachers should be compensated by waiving registration fees (including room and board, but not to exceed the dormitory rate for an adult attender) for the annual session but with no cash compensation.

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Recommendation 3. The Youth Programs Coordinator's job description should include the above-described roles with the Children's Program, and the recruiting and job candidate evaluation process for the YPC should reflect these. The Children's Program Committee should have a corresponding role in updating the YPC's job description and in the hiring process.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS INDIRECTLY RELATED TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE'S ASSIGNMENT

Recommendation 4. An *ad hoc* working group should be appointed to define a multi-year, reusable curriculum for the Children's Program, such that the elementary and middle school age groups of children would be dealing with the same subject area in a given year, and the topics would rotate from year to year. For example, if a four-year, four subject area curriculum were defined, children who participate every year would return to a given topic four years later, but now dealing with it at a level appropriate to their current age. This *ad hoc* working group should be responsible to the Children's Program Committee, but its membership should not be restricted to members of the CPC, but instead be drawn from interested parties from the Yearly Meeting at large.

We recommend this as a task for a distinct group of volunteers, rather than asking the CPC itself to undertake this task, because the qualifications and interest for such a limited-time curriculum design effort are distinct from those for planning, executing and overseeing the Children's Program itself. We also think that the existence of such a structure would be reassuring to many potential teachers (and thus ease the recruitment of teachers and CPC members), and that a spiraling curriculum structure would add coherence and long-term value in service to the development of our children's religious life.

We further recommend that a second phase to the work of this *ad hoc* working group on CP curriculum would be offering a series of face-to-face, one-day, trainings for prospective CP teachers, to take place during, though parallel to, gatherings of both Quarterly Meetings, or at another accessible time and place. This project would be one with which the YPC would be engaged - it may be that this could be where some of the "Allies to Youth" training could be shared. We hope that building a cohort of teachers familiar with the curriculum and classroom management techniques will bring greater joy to teachers and stability to the Children's Program. We also hope for, and anticipate, cross-fertilization with Quarterly Meeting Children's Programs. We suggest that the training be provided at no cost and that young adults be recruited as both facilitators and participants. The Youth Programs Fund (interest from the Bob Vogel Endowment administered by the YPCC) could be a source of funding for the costs of running these trainings. See <https://www.pacificyearlymeeting.org/youth/resources-funding/>.

Recommendation 5. We take it as a given that nurturing the religious and spiritual growth of our children is a vital and central mission of our Yearly Meeting. Accordingly, we urge that serving on the Children's Program Committee should be treated as a weighty role on a par with service on the weightiest of other Yearly Meeting Committees. We ask that the Nominating process seek to consider the Children's Program Committee as an appropriate assignment for Friends recognized for their spiritual depth and administrative skills, among the other qualities we seek to have represented on the Children's Program Committee.

Recommendation 6. We further recommend that the work of those who nurture children, teens and youth be lifted up in the Yearly Meeting in other ways. We would like to see greater encouragement of Friends to contribute to the CP, to see the YPC role formally extended to include

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children, and for the CPC to include (in its annual budget requests) funding for the CPC to meet face-to-face one a year, and for teachers and CPC to meet together for a half-day retreat shortly before Annual Session. We also ask that the Ministry & Oversight and Nominating committees continue to build up the support they provide to the Children's Program Committee.

Additional Note: Although we are not bringing a recommendation to the Yearly Meeting on this topic, we call to the Yearly Meeting's attention the idea of having a Personnel Committee as a standing committee of the Yearly Meeting, to bring together expertise in Human Resource management for the Yearly Meeting. We heard this idea raised during our consultations and believe it has sufficient merit to be considered in more detail by the Yearly Meeting, particularly if we move to having more than one paid staff member.

OUR PROCESS

This *ad hoc* committee realized quickly the need to consult across the Yearly Meeting. We formally interviewed 10 Friends including the YPC, recent and less recent members of the CPC, former coordinators and seasoned teachers in the CP in addition to informal conversations with others. This added to the knowledge already held by the four members of the *ad hoc* committee and notes we had kept of input from others, including those gathered at Annual Session 2018.

Sitting in worship with the input we had, together with our analysis of it, we were able to develop our recommendations with feedback from the YPC and the YPCC when we drafted this final report.

Respectfully submitted,

Ad hoc Committee on the Children's Program Coordinator Position:

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