Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development

Wednesday, January 8, 2014
10:00 a.m. – Noon
Conference Room 743
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple Street, Los Angeles

Proposed Meeting Agenda

Goals for Meeting:

- Conduct Roundtable business in a fair and transparent manner.
- Surface issues that are relevant to the group's mission, provide accurate information on those issues, and facilitate both dialogue and action.

10:00	I.	Welcome and Introductions		Sharoni Little Vice Chair
		A. Comments from the Chair		
		B. Review of December 11, 2013 Meeting Minutes	*Action Item*	
		C. Update from First 5 LA		Karla Pleitez Howell
10:15	II.	Child Care Policy Framework		Jacquelyn McCroskey K. Malaske-Samu
11:00	III.	Expanding and Improving California's Early Learning System		Vicki Ramos Harris School & Community Engagement Early Edge
11:30	IV.	Anticipating the State Budget: Legislative Priorities of Colleague Organizations		K. Malaske-Samu Guests
11:50	V.	Public Comments and Announcements		Members and Guests
12:00	VI.	Call to Adjourn		Sharoni Little

Mission Statement

The Los Angeles County Policy Roundtable for Child Care builds and strengthens early care and education by providing recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on policy, systems, and infrastructure improvement.

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Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development
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MEETING MINUTES ▪ DECEMBER 11, 2013

1. Call to Order and Announcements from the Chair

Ms. Dora Jacildo called the meeting to order at approximately 10:10 a.m. She introduced herself as Chair of the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development (Roundtable) and Fourth District appointee, and invited participants to introduce themselves. Following self-introductions, Ms. Jacildo announced that Mr. Adam Sonenshein, who had represented Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) on the Roundtable, had taken a new position. As a result, he had resigned from the Roundtable and sent his regards to the members. Ms. Jacildo remarked that Mr. Sonenshein and his very astute legislative analyses would be missed by the Roundtable!

LAUP has nominated Dr. Dawn Kurtz, Senior Vice President of Programs, to serve as their representative on the Roundtable. Naomi Rodriguez will serve as Dr. Kurtz's alternate. We look forward to the Board of Supervisor's endorsement of the new LAUP representative.

Ms. Jacildo welcomed Karla Pleitez Howell back from maternity leave and invited her to update the members on the First 5 LA Commission. Ms. Pleitez Howell thanked Ms. Jacildo and noted that as she had just returned to work, her contact with the Commission has been limited to a conversation with Ms. Kim Belshe, Executive Director of the Commission. In that conversation, Ms. Pleitez-Howell and Ms. Belshe agreed that feedback from the Roundtable will be valuable to the Commission.

2. Approval of the November 13, 2013 Minutes

Minutes of the November 13, 2013 meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Duane Dennis and a second by Ms. Maria Calix. Ms. Pleitez Howell abstained as she was not in attendance at that meeting.

3. Strong Start for America's Children Act

Ms. Jacildo welcomed Ms. Tessa Charnofsky, with the First 5 LA Public Policy Team and thanked her for taking the time to walk the Roundtable through the federal legislation titled "Strong Start for America's Children Act of 2013". Ms. Charnofsky's PowerPoint is attached.

Ms. Charnofsky reminded the group that President Obama has proposed a $75 billion Preschool for All initiative, to be funded by 94 cent tax per pack of cigarettes. Senator Tom Harkin introduced S. 1697 and Congressman George Miller of California introduced H.R. 3461 to implement the President's initiative. While these bills have many common elements, there are differences between them.

The bills would authorize $1.3 billion in 2014 and $27 billion over the first five years. Grants to states would be determined by the number of four-year old children in families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Services would be available to three year olds after all eligible four year olds are served.

Funds would be distributed to local entities that meet high quality standards and could include school districts, Head Start programs and early care and education programs. The standards used in the early learning programs would need to be aligned with the K-12 system and be developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate. Data from the early learning programs would need to be linked to the K-12 system.

States would have the option to “set aside” funds:

- Up to 20 percent during the first four years for the purpose of increasing program quality, and
- Up to 15 percent for programs serving infants and toddlers.

The bills include state match requirements and minimum standards to participate. It was noted that California may have difficulty meeting the following standards:

- Teachers will be required to hold Bachelor degrees. Currently California licensing regulations require 12 units in child development.
- Parity with K-12 compensation will be required for teachers. Most teachers in child development programs are paid significantly lower salaries than K-12 teachers.
- Programs will be required to provide or connect families to health and other services. With the exception of Head Start, programs in California are not required to offer these services.

There are significant political challenges confronting these bills:

- There are no Senate Republican cosponsors and only two House Republicans cosponsors
- Neither bill specifies the source for funding. Republicans are not likely to support a large new program.
- Even if funds would be authorized, the appropriation process could be challenging.
- Given the State match requirement, it is not clear if Governor Brown would be willing to participate.

Following Ms. Charnofsky’s presentation, the following issues were raised:

- Would launching this program require serious reductions of other services?
- What will be the role of family child care under these bills? Given the potential for expansion, without any funds to construct new facilities, family child care could be an important component.
- How will the proposed changes impact Head Start?

Ms. Olyvia Rodriguez, representing the Chief Executive Office’s Inter-governmental Relations and External Affairs, offered some political insights. She noted that the overall goals of both bills are admirable. However, they are the starting points and if successful, will likely look very different at the end. She encouraged Roundtable members to study both of these bills as well as the other early education bills, very carefully. There may be components that would be beneficial to children and families in Los Angeles County, while other provisions could be less helpful. The Roundtable should make its recommendations to the Board only after drilling down to the details of these bills and understanding what impact the legislation would have on local programs and families. Recommendation can be to support a full bill or parts of a bill.

The Board of Supervisors is on record as supporting the President's initiative for Preschool for All. However, the President's plan is not the same as the specific legislation. Going forward, Ms. Rodriquez agreed to share information on federal legislation related to early care and education, including S.1697 and H.R. 3461, with the Roundtable.

Ms. Jacildo thanked Ms. Charnofsky and Ms. Rodriguez for their thoughtful presentations and noted that the Roundtable looks forward to working collaboratively with them in the future.

4. Child Care Characteristics Study

Ms. Jacildo welcomed Ms. Cristina Alvardo, Executive Director of the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, and thanked her for updating the Roundtable on the Child Care Characteristics Study.

Ms. Alavardo referred members to the two handouts on the Child Care Characteristics Study. The California Departments of Social Services (CDSS) and Education (CDE) are collaborating on this effort, which is intended to generate data from the state's subsidized child care programs regarding the characteristics or providers of these services, the children and families receiving the services, and the impact of the services on participating families related to caring for their children and moving to economic self-sufficiency through employment.

It was noted that this study is building on earlier work led by CDE per legislation adopted in 2009. That study was conducted by the University of California Davis and included case studies in Shasta, Ventura, and Sacramento counties.

The current project includes a Project Team, including decision makers from CDSS and CDE. The Technical Advisory Group is led by Todd Bland, Deputy Director of the Welfare to Work Division at CDSS and Debra McMannis, Director of the Child Development Division of CDE. Members include representatives from the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, County Welfare Directors Association, California Alternative Payment Program Association, California Child Development Administrators Association, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, Northern Directors Group of California, and the Child Care Law Center.

This group is charged with:

- Informing the development of the Request for Proposal for soliciting researchers,
- Ensuring that the study's scope reflects statewide ideas and questions,
- Promoting the value of the study to ensure state and local collaboration, and
- Providing input to the Project team.

Approximately $1.5 million from the CDSS research budget will fund the study.

In the discussion that followed, members and guests suggested topics to be addressed by the study:

- Nutrition
- Actual cost of providing care verses the reimbursement rates
- Actual costs of serving children with special needs against the reimbursement rates and adjustment factors
- Actual costs to administer various program types
- What is the definition of self-sufficiency? Off of cash aid or financially secure?
- Why do families leave subsidized child care programs?
- How do substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health issues impact the use of subsidized child care services?
- Health access issues for child care workers and participating families
- Food security and quality for participating families and child care workers
- Participation rates in the Child & Adult Care Food Program
- Impact of continuity of care on children
- Access to transportation for children, families and child care workers
- Use of developmental screening in child development programs
- Education levels of child care workers, participating parents
- Access to information on child development

Ms. Alvarado thanked the Roundtable members and guests for their suggestions and agreed to share them with the Technical Advisory Group.

5. Child Care Policy Framework

Ms. Malaske-Samu shared a draft of the proposed Child Care Policy Framework 2014-2016. As stated earlier, the goal with this version of the Policy Framework is to present a concise document, with a limited number of goals that go deep and produce tangible outcomes that can be measured. Members were encouraged to provide feedback prior to the January 8, 2014 meeting.

6. Public Comments and Announcements

None offered.

7. Call to Adjourn

Ms. Jacildo thanked all members for their participation, wished everyone a happy holiday season and adjourned the meeting at noon.

Members Attending:
Maria Calix, Second District
Sam Chan, Department of Mental Health
Carol Heistand for Fran Chasen, Southern CA Association for the Education of Young Children
Duane Dennis, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
Robert Gilchick, Public Health Department
Jennifer Hottenroth, Department of Children and Family Services
Karla Pleitez Howell, Child Care Planning Committee
Dora Jacildo, Fourth District
Sharoni Little, Second District
Kathleen Malaske-Samu, Chief Executive Office
Terri Nishimura, Fourth District
Faith Parducho, Department of Parks and Recreation
Nora Garcia- Rosales for Nurham Pirim, Department of Public Social Services
Nina Sorkin, Commission for Children and Families
Esther Torrez, First District
John Whitaker, Fifth District

69 percent of members were in attendance.

Guests Attending:
Cristina Alvarado, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
Robert Beck, Department of Public Social Services
Patricia Carbajal, Chief Executive Office/IGEA
Ellen Cervantes, Child Care Resource Center
Tessa Charnofsky, First 5 LA
Terry Ogawa, Consultant
Naomi Rodriguez, LAUP
Olyvia Rodriguez, Chief Executive Office/IGEA

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many voices
CCDAA
one message

CCDAA Public Policy Information

Advocacy Priority #1- Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR) Increase

Background- The Standard Reimbursement Rate is the daily fiscal rate for center-based State Subsidized Child Development Contractors that have direct service contracts with the California Department of Education. This rate has remained stagnant since 2008,. The current SRR for full day care of Preschool Children (CSPP contracts) and full day General Child Care (CCTR contracts) maximum is $34.38 per day. Infant/Toddler earnings are based on specific factors of the SRR based on the age of the child and the number of hours in care. The part day preschool SRR (CSPP contracts) maximum is $21.22 per day.

Impacts- The stagnation of the SRR, coupled with increased requirements and standards have negatively impacted the over arching quality of the SRR Funded programs in a number of ways; including staff turnover loss of facility due to rental increases, absence of training on all of the new requirements and standards,, reduced or no teacher planning/prep time for curriculum, equipment/materials not purchased or replaced, reduced or no classroom supply budgets, loss of institutional knowledge and expertise as staff reductions are made.

Proposed Remedy- A gradual increase to the SRR beginning FY 14-15, which would be annually tied to the cost of Living inflation index for California. Each year the inflation index documents a rise in cost.

Advocacy Priority #2- Elimination of Part-Day State Preschool Program Family Fee

Background- Beginning in July 2012-13 the State Legislature and Governor imposed Parent Fees in the State Preschool Program (CSPP). Prior to the passage of this legislation, families receiving part-day State Preschool Services were exempt from family fees.

Impacts- Programs struggle to institute the requirement to impose fees on families. For many parents this is a large impact up to as much as $8.88 per day. Families are forced to make a serious financial decision as to whether they could afford to pay for Preschool for their 3 or 4 year old child. This occurred in the context of Head Start programs remaining free for parents and with the exception of the Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Programs which also provided a free program for four year olds. Some families choose to delay their child's readiness until a TK Program becomes available at their neighborhood school or Kindergarten entrance.

Several unintended consequences have also resulted, staff time and associated cost associated with the collection of fees, delinquent fee management, payment plans, and terminations from service.

Proposed Remedy- Effective July 1, 2014 eliminate the Part-day State Preschool family fee.

Revised December 6, 2013

Advocacy Priority #3- Alternative Payment Program Core Client Service Rate

Background- Alternative Payment Programs (APP) are funded with state and federal funds, and offer an array of child care arrangements for parents, such as in-home care, family child care, and center-based care. The APP helps families arrange child care services and makes payment for those services directly to the child care provider selected by the family.

Core Client Services are those delivered by APP staff that support parent eligibility and need certification and, establishment of the certified need for care for every eligible child, establishment of a reimbursement ceiling (RMR) for every child and changed as required, parental rights notice (NOA), parental appeals and hearings, monthly reimbursement to providers for care, monthly and quarter reports to the State, and audits.

APP's have experienced an escalating decline in the Core Client Services rate from 25% since the inception of the program in 1980 to 17.5% beginning in October 2010.

Impact- This substantial loss of Core Client and Admin. Services dollars has resulted in the denigration of the internal structure of the Alternative Payment Programs. And consequently in the services they are able to provide to client parents. Programs have been forced to reduce the number of staff available to serve parents and their providers thereby increasing worker case load levels to unmanageable numbers given the complexity of eligibly and need required documentation. This reduced labor for has also meant the loss of critical program and institutional knowledge. In some cases contractors have reduced service days or hours for clients. Quality assurance reviews have been severely impacted, increasing the potential for errors when both the State and Federal Government are mandating error reduction.

Proposed Remedy- To support a sustainable infrastructure to provide Core Client and Admin Services to eligible parents a rate of 20% is proposed beginning in FY 14-15. This rate would be raised to 21% in FY 15-16 and sustained over time. Adjusting the Core Client and Admin Services rate is cost neutral for the State.

Advocacy Priority #4- The CCDAA Guiding Philosophy be amended to include that providers receiving reimbursement under the voucher system must have the following minimum standards:

- Trustline fingerprinted
- CPR first aid training
- Child development training.

CHILDREN LEARNING, PARENTS EARNING 1451 River Park Drive, Suite 185, Sacramento, CA 95815 Phone: (916) 567-6797 FAX: (916) 567-6790

December 19, 2013

CAPPA Board of Directors

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The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the California Alternative Payment Program Association (CAPPA) we respectfully would like to submit recommendations for your consideration as part of the upcoming 2014-15 State Budget. These recommendations were developed via input from community based public and private agencies that currently serve to connect working poor families to early care and education programs for children from birth on.

Prior to presenting the recommendations, we would like to underscore that that long term success in the delivery of community based early care and education programs that supports both children from birth on and the needs of working parents must be based on a rate schedule that accurately values the services provided. California's current mixed delivery system of public and private agencies too must be funded at a level to guarantee that services continue to be delivered to working families while addressing the business expenses that occur as a cost of providing a service in California. Finally on this note, we believe that maintaining these programs under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Education (CDE) provides a greater certainty that children will be seamlessly supported throughout their learning years and beyond.

The following recommendations will support families working in the short term while delivering longer term academic achievements for California's most fragile children.

Recommendation #1: Reinvest funding into the existing mixed delivery, public and private community based partnerships meeting the "parental choice" needs of working families with early care and educational opportunities. Currently there exists a delivery infrastructure in place in each county to meet the needs of working families and children from birth on. Please consider putting monies back into strengthening the existing Alternative Payment Programs (APPs), Resource & Referral agencies, high quality Title 5 centers, Family Child Care Home Networks (FCCHNs), and small business early care and education providers, for all children from birth on.

The existing infrastructure of public and private early care and education agencies have a great capacity to meet the needs of working families and children but need a stable and reliable level of funding in order to efficiently maximize the subsidy dollar. Agencies are only paid as a percentage of monies put out the door for direct payments for child care. However, there is no funding for the costs that are accrued by these agencies for mandated work and the protection of public dollars, verifying family need and eligibility for care that may never result in a payment made. Further State policy decisions such as the past elimination of funding for Stage 3, the ensuing disenrollment of families, complying with over 114 separate Child Development Division Management Bulletins since 2010 are all examples of unfunded mandates. Since 2010, our caseworker family loads have increased from roughly ***1:40*** to ***1:250***.

Recommendation #2: Increase support and access for working families to child care and preschool slots. Although a modest increase was realized in the 2013-14 budget, over 110,000 fewer children and working families have access to child care and preschool slots. Since 2007-08, child care and preschool funding has been cut by nearly 40 percent[1]. Taken together the modest increase in the 2013-14 budget factored into the devastation realized since 2007-08 still has the number of funded slots nearly one-quarter below what it was in the 2007-08 budget. According to the 2013 California Child Care Portfolio[2] there are just over 1 million licensed child care spaces available for an estimated 4.2 million children 0-12 years old whose parents are in the workforce.

Recommendation #3: Increase CalWORKs and Early Education funding so working poor families needing child care can find and keep jobs. During California's recession, tough cuts were made to California's CalWORKs programs and general child care programs to our poorest of poor families. In reflection of past enacted budgets, our CalWORKs programs and Early Education programs suffered cuts of 30.48 percent. If this cut was taken contrasted to other cuts realized during the past budgets, it appears much of California's fiscal health was budgets was at the expense of working poor families and children. See chart below[3].

	FY 2008-09 Funding Level (In thousands)	FY 2012-13 Funding Level	% Change (FY 2012-13 compared to FY 2008-09)	FY 2013-14 Restoration	Net Effect Cuts and Restoration
Legislature, Judicial & Executive	$8,183,061	$3,195,595	-60.95%	46.03%	-14.92%
K-12 Education	41,899,019	45,587,360	8.80%	4.21%	13.02%
Higher Education	11,193,476	10,635,838	-4.98%	11.03%	6.05%
Health and Human Services	64,425,379	77,568,495	20.40%	39.24%	59.64%
Early Education	3,100,000	2,100,000	-32.26%	1.77%	-30.48%

At the height of the recession, counties were reporting unemployment rates in the double digit percent levels. Although the unemployment rates have fallen to 8.7 percent[4], what contractors see every day is that working poor families primarily headed up by single moms are still being ravaged by the recession. In reviewing the Employment Development Division website, the October data also notes that "nontraditional employment[5]" or that employment that tends to pay higher wages "women comprise 25 percent or less of total employment." Added to this fact are that many occupations require access to child care and early education for children for longer periods of time or for off-hour (nontraditional nine to five) care. Alluded to on this site, is that if women are not able to access the noted 200 plus nontraditional employment opportunities, then women cannot attain economic self-sufficiency nor support their families.

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[1] California Budget Project November 2013 report, *Starting Strong: Why Investing in Child Care and Development Programs Is Critical for Families and California's Economic Future* http://cbp.org/pdfs/2013/131114_Starting_Strong.pdf

[2] http://www.rrnetwork.org/rr-research-in-action/2011-california-child-care.html

[3] California Department of Finance except Early Education. Per Schedule 9(2010-11) or equivalent for subsequent budgets.

[4] October 2013 EDD numbers http://www.calmis.ca.gov/file/lfmonth/countyur-400c.pdf

[5] http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/article.asp?ARTICLEID=657

Finally, according to a recent UC Berkeley Labor Center report, "Early care and education (ECE) is an important industry in California, serving more than 850,000 California children and their families and bringing in gross receipts of at least $5.6 billion annually. The industry not only benefits the children who receive care, but also strengthens the California economy as a whole, which is especially important during this time in which California continues struggling with high unemployment and a weak economic recovery."[6]

Recommendation #4: Stabilize CalWORKs Stage 3 child care caseloads and fund accordingly. By the time that fragile families have moved through CalWORKs Stages 1 and 2 programs into Stage 3, they have transitioned off cash aid, have achieved some level of stability, have secured employment, and have achieved a modicum of self-sufficiency. By the time the families enter Stage 3, California has invested over two plus years into their success, and this is the point wherein the families are poised for self-sufficiency. ***The families in Stage 3 are the success stories of CalWORKs!***

In October 2010 funding was eliminated for Stage 3 families. Overnight, 54,000 children lost access to a child care slot, and parents were left with no safety net to put their children while they worked. Employers and businesses were harmed during this chaos. Although the Legislature was able to restore some of the funding, by the time that it was restored, families had lost jobs, preschools, child care centers and providers shuttered their local businesses, and counties absorbed higher unplanned costs.

From 2011 to this day, there still exists an uncertainty of funding and stability for Stage 3 families, although the State Budget for 2013-14 funded Stage 3 based on projected caseload numbers. We believe it important to stabilize Stage 3 funding caseload in the longer term so that the working parents that continue to follow the engagement rules of CalWORKs will continue to have access to early care and education for their children while they work.

Recommendation #5: Value local agency control and use of technology to best meet needs of working families and protect public dollars. Currently, APP agencies determine eligibility of a family based on over 67 levels of criteria. To determine a benefit level for a family, agencies are expected to select from over 200 separate calculations from which to reimburse. Agencies are forced to pay for warehousing storage of paperwork and case files. Finally, early care and education agencies must wait to receive a paper check from the State before reimbursement for services already rendered by small business providers can be made.

We recommend that investment be made in moving towards greater use of technology within our system to bring better integrity to protection of public dollars, as well as the elimination of burdensome processes and storage that do nothing to strengthen the ability to support families and children. Specifically, we would recommend:

1. Streamlining eligibility guideline to three or four categories
2. Simplifying payments as full time, part time, or hourly.
3. Allowing paperless storage of all documents.

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[6] Economic Impacts of Early Care and Education n California; MacGillvary and Lucia; August 2012

4. Requiring direct deposit of funds to contractors
5. Validating the use of electronic signatures

Thank you for your consideration of the above recommendations. CAPPA looks forward to working with your administration in the development of early care and education proposals that support the ability of community based agency partners to serve families; but also proposals that support both sides of the equation: *Children Learning, Parents Earning.*

If there is any additional information needed, please contact me at either (916)567-6797 or by email at: denyne@cappaonline.com.

Regards,

Denyne M. Micheletti

Denyne M. Micheletti, CEO
CAPPA

CC: Michael Cohen, Director; Department of Finance
Keely Bosler, Chief Deputy Director; Department of Finance
Ian Johnson, Department of Finance
Matt Saha, Department of Finance
Gail Gronert, Office of Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez
Jackie Wong, Office of Senate President pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg
Mark Martin, Assembly Budget Committee
Samantha Lui, Senate Budget Committee
Brynan Sullivan, Legislative Women's Caucus

Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles
Blueprint for Reinvesting in Child Care

CHILD CARE ALLIANCE OF LOS ANGELES

Creating Brighter Futures.

We support the California Department of Education (CDE) and believe it is critical to invest in strengthening the early care and education delivery system. We believe by maintaining programs within CDE we can improve young children's transition from early care and education to elementary school as well as ensure the integrity and consistency of programs.

We also recommend these priorities for reinvestment in child care and development programs for young children in California:

1. **Accessibility**: Increase rates to allow parents access to most child care options
    a. Increase Provider Reimbursement Rates - rates should be tiered based on quality and it is critical that moving forward, rates be increased for all types of child care providers, as they have been held flat for an extended period of time.
    b. Simplify voucher reimbursement to include fewer rate categories.
    c. Eliminate Family Fees for State Preschool Programs.
2. **Affordability**: Increase funding for more child care spaces.
    a. Expand total dollars to increase child care spaces lost due to budget cuts. Budget cuts from 2010-2012 removed over 110,000 child care spaces in California.
    b. One time dollars approved this fiscal year should become an ongoing investment.
3. **Quality**:
    a. Increase licensing visits and oversight for all licensed care programs.
    b. Increase training opportunities for license-exempt child care.
    c. Increase training opportunities for infant/toddler care.
4. **Consumer Education:**
    a. Invest in the Consumer Education Infrastructure - invest in Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) programs and in improved technology for in the CCR&R system to improve the infrastructure, parent/consumer education, training and accessibility for families.

Martin Castro, Chair
Duane Dennis, Vice-Chair
Jackie Majors, Treasurer
Patti Oblath, Secretary

Child Care Resource Center
City of Norwalk
Connections for Children
Crystal Stairs, Inc.
Drew Child Development Corporation
International Institute of Los Angeles
Mexican-American Opportunity Foundation
Options
Pathways
Pomona Unified School District

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PUBLIC POLICY GOALS

Approved June 2013

The public policy work of CAEYC is issue-driven. It is based on research about what we know promotes excellence in early childhood programs, and what will lead to a well-financed, high-quality system of early childhood education for all children.

It is the policy of the CAEYC to use the following guidelines, which were updated by a survey of members in January 2012, and reviewed by the members of the Public Policy Committee in June 2013, when adopting public policy positions:

1. Advocate for all young children to live in ecologically safe environments within inclusive nonviolent communities free from abuse and neglect.

2. Ensure the growth and maintenance of high quality, developmentally appropriate inclusive programs and services for all young children (birth through age 8) through appropriate funding, training, regulations and monitoring.

3. Ensure appropriate licensing and credentialing standards for early childhood educators and other professionals who work with young children and their families. Promote and encourage accreditation for licensed providers and assist exempt providers to move towards licensure and accreditation.

4. Improve working conditions, salaries/benefits, professional training and educational opportunities, public recognition and accountability for early childhood professionals.

5. Ensure equal opportunity through legal and human rights for all young children and their families.

6. Enhance the quality of life for infants, young children and their families through the education of parents, early childhood professionals, legislators, public administrators, business and community leaders, agencies and other organizations whose decisions affect young children directly and indirectly.

7. Promote anti-bias and inclusive practices in all services delivered to young children and their families by fostering appreciation for the diversity in California.

8. Promote quality programs that offer children and families developmentally appropriate curriculum, knowledgeable and well-trained staff and educators, and comprehensive services that support children's health, nutrition, and social well-being in an environment that respects and supports diversity.

9. Improve access to high quality services by meeting the needs of working families, children and families with special needs, English Learners and other special populations; provide increased access to all families by fully funding eligible families to receive child care and development subsidies; and support an integrated delivery system for child care and development services for children birth to school age.

10. Ensure that standards for early childhood programs reflect effective practices based on research.

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SB 837 (STEINBERG)

Kindergarten Readiness Act

Joint Authors: Senators Beall, Block, DeLeon, DeSaulnier, Hancock, Hill, Lara, Leno, Liu and Wolk
Co-author: Assemblymember Bonta

SUMMARY

Senate Bill 837, the Kindergarten Readiness Act, makes one year of voluntary, high quality transitional kindergarten available to every 4 year old in California, so that all children are ready for success in school.

BACKGROUND

A powerful body of research shows that investing in early education is highly effective in increasing high school graduation and college attendance, decreasing crime, and building a stronger economy and middle class. That is why there is overwhelming public support for increasing investments in pre-k.

Promising new reforms such as the Common Core State Standards and the Local Control Funding Formula establish greater equity and quality in California's public K-12 education system. However, neither of these reforms addresses the reality that the achievement gap is formed well before children arrive in kindergarten.

Recent Stanford research shows that by age 2, low-income children are six months behind in language development relative to their higher income peers. By age 5, low-income children are more than two years behind in language development.

In California, too many children miss out on a critical developmental window of opportunity. Only half of California low-income preschool-aged children are served in State Preschool or Head Start, and only one-quarter of all children are eligible for the current transitional kindergarten program.

Children who do not read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade are four times more likely to not graduate from high school on time. Too few California children are on track to read well by this all-important milestone; just 48% of 3rd graders test proficient or better in English-language arts. The costs of attempted remediation, in the form of repeated grade-levels, special education placements and other interventions, are high.

Longitudinal studies show that every dollar invested in high-quality early education programs generates $7 or more in returns. Savings come in the form of lower grade retention, lower crime rates, and higher lifetime earnings.

If California were to invest in high quality transitional kindergarten for all, the savings in the prison system alone are estimated to be $1.1 billion a year due to the reduction in prison population by 13,000 prisoners.

Now is the time to make a wise investment in transitional kindergarten for all.

THIS BILL

SB 837 will:

- Provide all 4 year olds with high-quality, developmentally appropriate transitional kindergarten (TK).
- Combine the best quality standards from current TK and State Preschool, creating a model that results in sustainable gains in school performance.
- Be funded through Average Daily Attendance (ADA), with additional resources provided for low-income, English learner and foster children.
- Allow for a mixed delivery system, in which school districts and charter schools may contract with private TK providers who meet quality standards.
- Allow existing federal and state preschool funds to be focused on additional early care and education programs for low-income 3- and 4-year olds, giving them an added boost when they need it most.
- Not take any funds away from existing state-contracted child development providers.
- Reduce the average cost per child of current TK by creating a two-session model.
- Phase in over five years, starting in 2015-2016, to allow ample time to expand services to all children whose parents wish to enroll them.

SUPPORT

Early Edge California (sponsor)
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Tom Torlakson (co-sponsor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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