



**Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education: Draft Report
Key Recommendations on Workforce and Supporting Dual Language Learners
March 8, 2019**

Governance

- Establish an **Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC)** to advise the Legislature, Governor and Superintendent of Public Instruction. It would replace current advisory bodies. Adequate staff and budget would be provided. Responsibilities include:
 - Determine adequate resource levels for long-term investment each year and **develop and monitor resources needed to fund BRC Recommendations.**
 - Develop specific plans and monitor systems changes including changing to a children and family first culture and using a strong equity lens in all decision-making.
 - Oversee data, evaluation, and accountability plans.
 - Increase access using **Targeted Universalism** process to develop a **ten-year plan to meet universal goals first targeting the most excluded and then evaluating and adjusting policies and investments.**
- Establish a **Workforce Advisory Council (WAC)** including providers from all settings, provider organizations, center directors, state agency staff, F5, and other stakeholders with expertise in workforce. WAC will be represented on the ECPC and staff and support for participants will be provided. Responsibilities include:
 - Develop a **cost model and strategic plan** to provide recommendations to the ECPC and other entities on an ongoing basis and monitor implementation.
 - **Estimate the cost of advancing preparation, workplace supports, and compensation of the workforce.** Develop a cost model determining the extent of the cost gap between existing resources and what is required to accomplish reforms and articulate a phase-in plan to meet reforms.
 - Develop a **strategic plan for recruitment and retention** and to ensure career advancement pathways for all providers in all settings.
 - Identify ways to increase capacity of higher education systems, exploring the possibility of **community colleges offering early childhood BA degrees**, and increase partnerships with community-based **apprentice programs**. Ensure support systems such as counseling, financial aid, tutoring, and mentoring are in place.
 - **Ensure stable, adequate funding.**

- Establish an **augmented Division or Office for Early Childhood Education (OCE)** in CDE with sufficient resources and staff to implement recommendations.
 - To align administration and coordinate services OCE shall establish an **Interagency Workgroup** which will report to the Governor, Legislative oversight committees, and the ECPC.

Access

- **Universal goal:** California families at or below the State Median Income (SMI) would pay **no more than 7% of their income on early care and education** for children under the age of 6.
- **Immediate Goal:** Prioritize increased investment to **increase access for infants and toddlers to ECE** focusing first on low-income families or those facing barriers.
- **Expand access to full-day preschool and ECE for all 3 and 4-year olds**, beginning with those in low-income families or others facing barriers.

Workforce

- **Long-Term Universal Goal:** High-quality early care and education requires a competent, effective, **well-compensated, and professionally supported workforce**. It must be one that reflects the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity and needs of the children and families they serve.
- **Equity and Diversity:**
 - Examine **racial disparities in compensation and career advancement** and develop targeted solutions.
 - Establish supports and systems to optimize all providers' ability to meet the diverse needs of children and families, including working with **dual-language learners, supporting culturally responsive practice**, and providing trauma-informed care and instruction.
 - Develop **focused training and education opportunities for people of color and those who are English learners in English and their home language**.
- **Collective Bargaining:**
 - **Support collective bargaining rights** for family child care home providers (FCCs), both licensed and Family Friend and Neighbor (FFN).
- **Compensation**
 - **Increases in compensation** are required at all levels of qualification among the **incumbent workforce**.
 - Make **compensation comparable between community-based providers and those in school district programs** for all staff members.
 - Provide **equal compensation** to center-based educators working with **infants and toddlers and children ages 3-5**.

- Invest in strategies that **compensate providers as they increase their professional development**, such as student loan forgiveness, paid professional development time, and graduated wage increases above the base.
- **Title 5 programs: Ensure salary parity with TK-3 for those with comparable education and experience** with competitive benefit packages including health dental, vision, 20 days paid time off annually, and retirement contribution.
- **Title 22 programs:** For those participating in state funded programs, their **salary should have parity with TK-3 for those with comparable education and experience** with competitive compensation increasing with education, training and quality improvement, and competitive benefit packages including health, dental, vision, 20 days paid time off, and retirement contribution.
 - **Provide incentives to licensed family child care homes who wish to specialize in care of infants and toddlers** by establishing a specialized reimbursement rate for those with demonstrated experience and specialized training.
- **Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN):** For those participating in state funded programs **immediately make the compensation floor the state minimum wage** and provide benefits for those working an annual average of 20 hours per week-include 20 days paid time off and support for purchase of health, dental, and vision insurance.
 - FFN providers receiving state funds should be offered **training, a higher reimbursement rate for improving quality, coaching and mentoring** to serve children with special needs, and **pathways** to licensing or a certification.
- **Qualifications:** Standards for the ECE workforce cannot be increased until compensation levels are raised.
 - Members of the current workforce must have opportunities, incentives, and supports to acquire education and training, and, for those who wish and are able to pursue, attainment of Associate, Bachelor's, and advanced degrees.
 - The incumbent ECE workforce in publicly funded programs should bear **no cost** for professional development and the entering workforce should receive support to **limit the cost** of educational attainment.
 - As new qualifications are enacted, ensure that resources to support any education, training, and certification that may be required is available and accessible.

- **Competency-Based Permitting and Certification**
 - **Streamline and simplify** current educator and caregiver **competencies** to focus on essential adult practices that improve child outcomes.
 - **Align CA** competencies with **national** competencies
 - **Establish and adequately fund a competency-based system that spans preparation, certification, and pre- and in-service training** to improve quality and inform practice.
 - Require a certification process in which candidates demonstrate competencies, including in serving **dual language learners**, infants and toddlers, children experiencing trauma, and special needs children.
 - Competencies should be linked to **periodic recertification**.
 - Preparation should include **supervised field experience**.
 - **Create, over no more than a 2-year period, competency-based assessments** that allow **both new applicants and the incumbent workforce** to demonstrate that they possess competencies.
 - The assessments should be for all positions, including teachers, coaches, administrators, and center directors, in coordination with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing process.
 - The assessments should be piloted and refined for the year prior to scaling statewide.
 - Assessments can be done both through the higher education system and on-site programs.
 - Competencies could be measured in a variety of ways, including:
 - Certification based on **formal education**
 - **PD and mentoring** participation and evaluation
 - **Job evaluation** using essential practices
 - For the **incumbent workforce**, the state should consider an **equivalency for competencies that translates into units/course credits**.
 - This system should be aligned with the system Quality Counts California is developing for coaching competencies.

- **Professional Development (PD)** (for center-based teachers and licensed FCCs)
 - **Extend the Workforce Registry** to all counties to support the ECE workforce in tracking and accessing PD opportunities and as a source of information for evaluation and planning statewide.
 - PD must focus on strengthening educator and caregiver competencies.
 - The **incumbent ECE workforce** in publicly funded programs should bear **no cost for increasing competencies**.
 - Invest in a **range of appropriate supports** including: (1) scholarships; (2) tutoring; (3) conveniently scheduled and located classes; (4) education advisors; (5) resources for students learning **English as a second language**; and (6) the availability of courses and books in **languages in addition to English**.
 - **Increase release time and paid training days** for all members of the ECE workforce.
 - PD programs should include supports such as **payment for substitutes**.
 - Provide site leaders, administrators, teachers and caregivers with intensive, sustained, individualized, **on-site coaching** focused on interactions with children, building on California’s extensive teacher mentoring program.
 - **Invest in proven apprenticeship models** to professionalize the early learning workforce by enhancing skills and knowledge while simultaneously increasing their compensation.
 - Expand **peer mentor programs** providing coaching and other training and support for providers from the same community and cultural background.
 - **Expand DLL training and support** to accommodate the multiple languages spoken by providers and the families and children they serve.
 - **Expand infant and toddler training** and supports.
 - Offer PD programs to **FCCs** that are accessible to providers and delivered so they enhance, not hinder, their ability to provide services and sustain their businesses.
 - FCCs should receive training on child development and running a small business.
 - Provide **training in management and administration for Title 5 and Title 22 centers**.

Workforce Related Quality Improvement

- **Tie reimbursements to higher quality standards** after the state provides sufficient funding and makes them accessible to family child care homes and FFN providers.
- **Assess effectiveness of federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) quality expenditures** and fund those found to have the most effective outcomes.
- Expand and develop effective Family Child Care Home Education Networks (FCCHENs).

Reimbursement Rate Reform

- The **BRC concurs with the multi-step recommendations of the Rates Working Group**, to implement comprehensive rate reform through a multi-step process.
- **Long-term:** the reimbursement rates for Title 5 and 22 programs should include **competitive compensation that increases with quality improvement.**
- **Near-term:** the reimbursement rates for Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) should **make the compensation floor the state minimum wage**

Higher Education Systems

- Provide adequate funding for the **Community College and State University systems** to expand accessibility and range of programs offered.
- **Focus ECE degree programs on particular** areas such as (1) **DLLs**; (2) children with disabilities and special health care needs; (3) infants and toddlers; (4) trauma informed care; and (5) interactions that support children’s cognitive and linguistic development.
- **Support higher education faculty** and administrators to better meet the preparation and professional development needs, including supervised clinical experience.
- Invest in a range of appropriate **supports** that allow people from a wide spectrum of cultural, educational, and financial backgrounds to **access professional development opportunities**, including conveniently scheduled and located classes, education advisors, and resources, including **courses and books for students learning English as a second language.**
- More **effectively link degree programs with the credentialing system** to ensure both coursework and course content effectively prepare the ECE workforce.

Data Systems

- There is **tremendous need to build data infrastructure for ECE.**
- **Decrease barriers to linking administrative data across systems** and build on existing administrative data systems to provide timely data on the array of federal, state and locally funded programs serving families with young children.
 - **Align** data definitions, reporting timeframes and documentation **across the state agencies that oversee ECE programs**, including CDE, DSS and others.
 - **Align intra-agency data at CDE** between ECE programs.
- Invest in and maintain a **comprehensive workforce data system and the Workforce Registry** to identify the characteristics and needs of the workforce and to assess the reach of policy initiatives and investments.
 - Create a **workforce data plan that requires participation** in state workforce data systems by all members of the ECE workforce employed in licensed settings and in settings that receive public funding.
- **Provide public access** to important and timely information on California’s ECE system by creating an **online portal.**

ECE and K-12 Alignment

- **Staff qualifications, ratios, and developmentally appropriate practices for children birth to age 5 should be analyzed and, where necessary, changed** to ensure that children thrive and all outcomes, including social and emotional, are improved.
- **Barriers to district participation in preschool and child care programs should be mitigated**, including coordination and greater alignment of schedules, facility regulations, and other barriers, while maintaining requirements which serve the needs of children and families for full-day, full-year care.
- **Build partnerships** between **school district programs** and our **mixed delivery systems**.
- **Build partnerships** between statewide education **advocacy organizations and early care and education associations**.
- TK-12 and ECE should work with higher education to **explore including ECE units or basic knowledge of ECE in the Administrators Credential** content.

Dual Language Learners (DLLs)

- **Establish evidence based instructional approaches for young DLLs with a dual language approach**, instruction with varying proportions in the home language and English to support simultaneous development of both languages and **promote bilingualism and literacy in both languages**.
- Ensure ECE workforce competencies **address equity for our dual language learners** and include knowledge of **first and second language learning**, understanding the role of culture in language development, and familiarity with best practices for DLL education.
- It is critical that **screening, observations, and ongoing monitoring of DLLs/ELs are done in the home language** and English with culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate and valid assessments by qualified assessors who are knowledgeable about DLL/EL education and language acquisition.
- Increase language access and cultural competence, remove systemic barriers due to cultural and linguistic bias and **expand investments in professional development opportunities to support all DLL children**.
- Recognize that the state's **DLL/EL students enter the education system with linguistic, cultural, and intellectual assets** that contribute to the rich diversity of California.
- Conduct **effective outreach to families from linguistically diverse backgrounds** and **implement the law ensuring ESL classes are an approved activity**.
 - **Family engagement strategies for DLL** must be responsive to their specific strengths and needs.
- **Provide targeted funds for local initiatives** learning from the 2015 First 5 \$20 million investment in a **Dual Language Learner Pilot**.
- **First 5** should be a member of the State Early Childhood Advisory Council and a partner in systems change in areas of their focus, including home visiting, **Dual-Language Learners** and Quality Counts.

Financing

- **Long-term goal: Create an adequate and sustainable financing structure for all subcommittee recommendations** including:
 - equitable access to early care and education for all families while targeting those most separated from opportunity;
 - a **well-compensated, professionally supported diverse workforce**; and
 - necessary facilities, systems, and infrastructure.
- We do not propose to take funding away from existing programs but rather to identify additional financing options for consideration by the BRC. **The BRC does not believe in taking current funds needed by our TK-12 partners.**