

## **BRC April 2019 Final Report**

### **Key Recommendations around Quality Early Learning, Strengthening the Workforce, and Supporting Dual Language Learners**

#### **Governance**

- Establish an **Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC)** to advise the Legislature, Governor, and Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). Responsibilities include:
  - Determine adequate resource levels for long-term investment each year and **develop and monitor resources needed to fund BRC recommendations.**
  - Promote equity and increase access using a **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 Committee (WAC)** as a standing committee of ECPC, comprised of providers from all settings, provider organizations, parents, state agency staff, First 5, representatives from Higher Education, and other stakeholders with expertise in workforce issues. WAC will select two members to serve on the ECPC. 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.
    - Determine how to increase capacity of existing and new evidence-based **coaching, training, apprenticeship, and mentoring** programs.
    - Develop a **strategic plan for recruitment and retention** to ensure career advancement pathways for all providers in all settings.
  - **Ensure stable, adequate funding.**
  - 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.
  - **Establish data needs** and plans to collect and use more data.

- Establish an **augmented Division or Office for Early Childhood Education (OCE)** in California Department of Education (CDE) with sufficient resources and staff to implement the BRC recommendations.
- Establish an **Interagency Agency Workgroup (IAW)** to implement administrative changes and coordinate services among agencies. It will report to the Governor, Legislative oversight committees, SPI, 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 age 6.
- **Immediate goal:** Prioritize increased investment to **increase ECE access for infants and toddlers**, focusing first on low-income families and those facing barriers.
- **Expand access to full-day ECE programs including preschool for all 3 and 4-year-olds.** Expansion should begin with low-income families, ensuring full-day care with wraparound services available.

## Workforce

- **Long-term universal goal:** High-quality ECE requires a competent, effective, **well-compensated, and professionally supported workforce.**
- **Equity and Diversity:**
  - The workforce must **reflect the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity** and needs of the children and families they serve.
  - Examine **racial disparities in compensation** and **career advancement** and develop targeted solutions.
  - Ensure a **core foundation for the entire workforce to effectively work with dual language learners (DLLs)** including familiarity with best practices for DLL education, and the capability to support culturally-responsive practice.
  - Establish **supports and systems to optimize all providers' ability to meet the diverse needs of children and families.**
  - 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 license-exempt.
- **Increases in compensation** are required **at all levels of qualification** among the **incumbent workforce.**

- **Compensation – ECE providers in licensed programs that receive public funds (Title 5 & Title 22):**
  - Achieve **salary parity across all ECE settings with TK-3** for those with **comparable education and experience.**
  - Establish **competitive compensation across all settings with TK-3** for all **teaching and assistant roles.**
  - Competitive compensation should **increase with education, training, and quality improvement.**
  - **Provide competitive benefit packages**, including health, dental, vision, 20 days paid time off annually, and retirement contribution.
  - 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.
  - Make **compensation comparable** between **community-based providers** and those in **school district programs** for all staff members.
- **Compensation – Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN)**
  - Providers receiving public funds should receive **adequate compensation.**
    - The floor should be the **minimum wage**, with **incentives for quality improvement.**
    - Compensation in addition to minimum wage floor should be provided to those working an average of at least 20 hours per week, sufficient to purchase health care, retirement, and disability insurance.
- **Qualifications:** Standards for the ECE workforce cannot be increased until compensation levels are raised.
  - Establish clear **competency-based certification for all roles and across all programs.**
  - **Staff qualifications** for the ECE workforce in programs serving **children birth to age 5 should be analyzed and, where necessary, changed** to ensure that children thrive and all outcomes are improved.
  - 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.
  - As new qualifications are enacted, ensure that resources to **support** any education, training, and certification that may be required is **available and accessible.**
  - TK-12 and ECE should work with higher education to **explore including ECE units** or basic knowledge of ECE in the **Administrators Credential** content.
  - Provide **pathways to licensing** for FFN providers, or a certification program where an FFN who does not want to become licensed can still acquire training and supports with commensurate increases in compensation, including **FFN pre-apprenticeship programs.**

- **Competency-Based Permitting and Certification**
  - **Streamline and simplify** current **ECE 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.
    - Implementation should include realistic, phased-in timelines with **necessary support and compensation**, with attention to both incoming and current workforce in all settings.
    - The Workforce Advisory Committee (WAC) should work with stakeholders and the CTC to **revise the Child Development Permit** establishing a competency-based qualification and assessment system.
    - Require a certification process in which candidates demonstrate competencies, including in serving **DLLs**, infants and toddlers, children experiencing trauma, and children with disabilities.
    - Competencies should be linked to **periodic recertification** based upon the most recent research.
  - **Create**, over no more than a 2-year period, **competency-based assessments for both new applicants and the incumbent workforce**.
    - Assessments should be created 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**.
- **Professional Development (PD)—center-based teachers and licensed FCCs**
  - The **incumbent ECE workforce in publicly funded programs** should bear **no cost** for increasing competencies and professional development.
  - The **entering workforce** should receive support to **limit the cost** of educational attainment.
  - PD, including **coaching and mentoring**, must focus on **strengthening** educator and caregiver **competencies**.
  - Provide site leaders, administrators, teachers and caregivers with intensive, **sustained, individualized, on-site coaching** focused on interactions with children.

- Ensure access to formal education opportunities and professional development, including **mentoring, coaching, and apprenticeship programs.**
    - **Invest in proven apprenticeship models** and **collaborate with ECE apprenticeship experts** to grow ECE apprenticeship programs **building on successful models** to professionalize the Early Learning workforce by enhancing skills and knowledge while simultaneously increasing their compensation.
    - Invest in a **range of appropriate supports** including: (1) funding for tuition, books, fees, transportation, and child care; (2) tutoring; (3) conveniently scheduled and located classes; (4) ECE-focused counselors and mentors; (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 Early Learning workforce.
    - PD programs should include **payment for substitutes.**
  - **All ECE providers** should have access to training on **child development.**
  - Offer PD programs to **FCCs** that are accessible to providers and delivered so they enhance 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.
- **Specialized Training and Support for FFN providers**
    - FFN providers should be offered **quality training opportunities and peer learning communities** on an ongoing basis.
      - 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.
      - FFN providers should receive **coaching and mentoring** to serve **children with disabilities.**

## Reimbursement Rate Reform

- **Tie reimbursements to higher quality standards** after the state provides sufficient funding and makes them accessible to family child care homes and FFN providers.
- Follow the multi-step recommendations of the Reimbursement Rates Working Group to establish a framework in which all subsidized programs shall be reimbursed on the **same regionalized pay scale which tiers up for quality**.
  - Move towards a heavier emphasis on the **true cost of providing quality** child care, preschool, and early learning experiences.
- **Long-term goal:** Reimbursement rates for **Title 5 and 22 programs** should include **competitive compensation** that **increases with quality improvement**.
  - Reimbursement rates for **Title 22 licensed FCCs** should be sufficient to **ensure competitive salaries and benefit packages**.
- **Short-term goal:** Reimbursement rates for FFN providers should make the **compensation floor the state minimum wage**.
  - FFN providers should be receive a **higher reimbursement rate** for improving **quality**.
- **Provide incentives** for providers to care for **children with disabilities and infants and toddlers**.
  - **Provide incentives to licensed FCCs who wish to specialize in care of infants and toddlers** by establishing a specialized reimbursement rate for those with demonstrated experience and specialized training.

## Higher Education Systems

- **Increase the capacity** of the **Community College** and **State University** systems to enable them to **expand accessibility and range of programs** offered to reflect current research on child development and defined competencies.
- More effectively **link degree programs with the credentialing system** to ensure both coursework and course content effectively prepare the Early Learning workforce.
- The Workforce Advisory Committee (WAC) should collaborate with higher education faculty and administrators to **develop and/or revise programs and refine ECE courses** with changes informed by the needs and perspectives of current families, children, providers and teachers.
  - Include coursework on developing **cultural competence and supporting DLLs** to better meet the preparation and professional development needs of the ECE workforce and diverse children served.

- **ECE degree programs should develop content expertise across particular domains** such as (1) **DLLs**; (2) children with disabilities; (3) infants and toddlers; (4) trauma-informed care; and (5) adult-child interactions that support children’s cognitive and linguistic development.
- **Support higher education faculty** and administrators to better meet the preparation and professional development needs of the Early Learning workforce, including supervised **clinical experience** that emphasizes mastery of competencies.
- Invest in a range of appropriate **supports** including (1) conveniently scheduled and located classes, (2) education advisors, and (3) resources, including courses and books for students learning English as a second language.
- Particular attention should be paid to making **scholarship programs accessible to a linguistically diverse group of educators**.
  - These scholarship programs should provide **mentoring** support because of the difficulties inherent in taking college courses while working full-time.
  - Scholarship programs should provide **more than tuition support**. The cost of books, fees, transportation, and child care for parents can prevent higher education from being financially feasible for the Early Learning workforce.
- Ensure that funding to the **California’s first fully online public community college (OCC)** includes **ECE content and classes** and examine other successful state models for on-line teacher education.

### Dual Language Learners (DLLs)

- **Recognize the assets of DLLs**, increase language access and cultural competence, remove systemic barriers due to cultural and linguistic bias, and expand investments in access and PD opportunities that will **enhance the capacity of the Early Learning workforce to effectively support all DLL children**.
- **Establish evidence-based instructional approaches for 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 DLLs** 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 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 education and language acquisition.

- Conduct **effective outreach to families from linguistically diverse backgrounds.**
- **Provide targeted funds for local initiatives** learning from the 2015 First 5 \$20 million investment in a **Dual Language Learner Pilot.**

### Integrated Data Systems

- **Decrease barriers to linking administrative data across systems** and build a **statewide integrated data system** that combines data from health, social services, and educational sectors.
- Leverage the existing data infrastructure and fund the remaining elements of a **longitudinal data system to include a unique child identifier across all programs from birth to 12<sup>th</sup> grade** to track and evaluate outcomes, and include postsecondary education and workforce outcomes.
  - All children from birth to age 3 involved in publicly-supported programs should be included.
- Invest in and maintain a **comprehensive workforce data system and the ECE 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 Early Learning workforce employed in licensed settings and in settings that receive public funding.
  - **Extend the Workforce Registry** to all counties to support the Early Learning workforce in tracking and accessing PD opportunities and as a source of information for evaluation and planning statewide.
- **Provide public access** to information on California’s ECE system by creating an **online portal.**

### ECE and TK-12 Alignment

- **Ratios and developmentally appropriate practices** for programs serving **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 full day preschool and child care programs should be **mitigated.**
- **Build partnerships** between **school district programs** and **mixed delivery community-based systems.**
- It is crucial for **elementary school principals** to understand **best practices for early learning.**



## Financing

- **Long-term goal: Create an adequate and sustainable financing structure for all BRC recommendations** including:
  - **Equitable access to early care and education** for all families while targeting those most separated from opportunity;
  - Settings that meet family needs and encompass a definition **of high quality** and are affordable
  - A **well-compensated, professionally supported diverse workforce**; and
  - Support for necessary facilities, systems, and infrastructure.
- The BRC **does not support diverting funds needed by the TK-12 system** or by other family and child-serving sources.