

# ASSEMBLY MEMBER KEVIN MCCARTY

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## AB 123 (McCarty) Pre-K for All

**Lead Co-Sponsors:** Early Edge CA and Kidango

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**As Amended:** April 22, 2019

### SUMMARY

AB 123 expands access to full-day preschool for three crucial populations: all four-year-olds who are eligible based on income, all four-year-olds living in low-income neighborhoods, and all three-year-olds living in poverty. This bill also raises preschool quality and increases teacher compensation and qualifications to help close the school readiness gap.

### ISSUE

Research shows that quality learning experiences during children's critical early years of brain development are pivotal to their success in school, overall well-being, and prospects in life.

High-quality preschool improves a child's school readiness and social-emotional development and builds a foundation for future success. The benefits of high-quality preschool are especially powerful for disadvantaged children who often enter kindergarten months behind their peers and struggle to catch up. Achievement gaps appear to emerge early in children's development, before they enter kindergarten, and are partly the result of fewer high-quality early childhood educational opportunities for children from low-income families.

California has made progress in expanding access to preschool through a suite of programs including State Preschool (CSPP), Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and Head Start. However, 30% of low-income 4-year-olds and 66% of low-income 3-year-olds still lack access to a licensed preschool.

### SOLUTION

AB 123 provides high-quality preschool to the children who need it most in order to set children on a path to success in school and in life. AB 123:

**Expands access to full-day, full-year preschool** for all 4-year-olds who live in a neighborhood where more than

70% of students are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals. AB 123 also ensures that all 3-year-olds in poverty receive two years of high-quality preschool. By expanding access, AB 123 addresses the challenges that working parents face in obtaining quality, affordable child care for their preschool-aged children.

**Increases salaries and qualifications of preschool teachers** to support children's learning, including adequate financial support for obtaining additional higher education and training. The bill requires lead teachers to earn a Bachelor's degree with an emphasis or major in child development or early childhood studies by July 1, 2028. Existing lead teachers who have a Child Development Teacher Permit from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing will be grandfathered in and will not be subject to additional educational requirements. In order to support the existing workforce pursuing a higher education, AB 123 will provide scholarships for teachers. AB 123 increases CSPP reimbursement rates to raise the pay of lead teachers who have attained a Bachelor's degree to a professional wage.

### COMPANION BILLS

AB 124 (McCarty) Preschool Facilities Bond Act of 2020

AB 125 (McCarty) Early childhood education: reimbursement rates

### SUPPORT

Kidango (lead co-sponsor)

Early Edge California (lead co-sponsor)

Advancement Project (co-sponsor)

California Federation of Teachers (co-sponsor)

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids (co-sponsor)

LA Chamber of Commerce (co-sponsor)

Black American Political Association of California

Congregation Beth Am

Oakland Unified School District

National Association of Social Workers, CA Chapter

San Francisco Child Care Planning and Advisory Council

### SUPPORT (continued)

California State PTA

North Bay Leadership Council

MarinKids

American Academy of Pediatrics

Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

Tandem Partners in Early Learning

First 5 Monterey County

Lynwood Elementary  
Sacramento County Office of Education  
Riverside County Board of Education  
Children's Paradise, Inc.  
Mission: Readiness  
Council for a Strong America