



## **Early Edge Summary: California Department of Social Services Child Care and Development Plan**

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is committed to working with stakeholders to build an integrated child care and development system with equity, justice, and a whole child, whole family approach at the center. Recommendations for system improvements set forth in the California Master Plan for Early Learning and Care (MPELC) and the California Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education Final Report (BRC Report), the prior work of the California Department of Education (CDE), and additional planning efforts will also help to guide these objectives.

### Workforce and Logistics

- Dr. Lupe Jaime-Mileham was appointed as Deputy Director of Child Care and Development Division in January 2021.
- Transferring Employees
  - 185.7 FTE are transferring. Estimated cost is \$31.7M.
  - In a survey, CDE respondents expressed feelings of neutrality (60%) or positivity (15%) about the transition, while 25% expressed unhappiness. A primary issue flagged by CDE staff who expressed unhappiness is concern that child care programs will lose their link to education as a result of the transition.
- CDE and CDSS Labor Relations are requesting joint delegated authority from the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) to begin scheduling and conducting impact negotiations with union organizations, consistent with the established meet and confer process.

### Administrative Transition

- Documents:
  - CDE has identified and provided to CDSS the public-facing child care and development documents currently on the CDE website that must be part of the transfer. The timeline of activities and priorities is under development.
  - The main CDSS website containing the resulting information will be live by July 1, 2021, and additional updates will be completed in phases.
- Audits:
  - The CDSS Office of Audit Services (OAS) and the CDE Audits and Investigations Division (A&I) have a similar nature of operations. As a result of this similarity and of detailed planning, CDSS and CDE anticipate a seamless transition of audit responsibilities related to the federal child development programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
  - Several experienced A&I staff will be transferring to OAS, which will further ease the transition.

- Contracts:
  - Beginning July 1, 2021, CDSS will assume CDE agreements for programs transferring to CDSS and will be responsible for payment distributions associated with contracts as appropriated in the new fiscal year Budget Act.
  - Regarding accrual payments associated with the prior fiscal year (2020-2021), CDE will continue to make those payments per the prior year appropriation.
  - CDSS, CDE, and the Department of Finance (DOF) are actively engaging to seek a process in an attempt to maintain these flexibilities for programs with General Child Care and State Preschool contracts without disruption.
  - CDSS is developing the business process for new agreements and exploring the option of multi-year provider agreements, which will require approval from the Office of Legal Services at the Department of General Services (DGS).

### Data and Technology Systems

- Most data systems that support transitioning programs cannot be easily shifted to CDSS. Each system must be carefully prioritized, analyzed, and understood before CDSS can determine the best course of action.
- CDSS will engage with CDE and any affiliated partners to determine the best course of action for each system. Based on the outcome of these discussions, it will be determined whether it is best to shift systems, design new systems, modify systems existing within CDSS or develop interagency agreements.

### Policy and Regulations

- CDE has already started the process to identify regulations that apply to CSPP, one of the programs remaining at CDE, and provided notice regarding changes to these regulations to the public on December 18, 2020. This regulation package will be adopted by April 1, 2022.
- CDSS will reconvene the Tri-Agency (CDSS, CDE, and First 5 California) collaboration meetings and others to identify duplication and regulatory conflict, and assist with coordination of efforts.
- CDE and CDSS will work to address the areas of misalignment between General Child Care (CCTR) and CSPP that are due to state or federal statutory requirements that cannot be aligned through state regulations (e.g., priorities, eligibility, etc.). For example:
  - CSPP allows for enrollment of over-income families, while the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) rules preclude this for CCTR.
  - Family fees are not required for part-day CSPP, while CCDBG rules preclude this for CCTR.
  - The CCTR base reimbursement rate is lower than the CSPP base reimbursement rate.
  - Expulsion prevention requirements apply only to CSPP, but should be applied to all Title 5 and Title 22 licensed programs.
  - There should be an allowance for dual enrollment of children attending CSPP in CCTR, CalWORKs Child Care, or other subsidized programs, to cover the days and hours a family may need services.

- Issues that CDE will work with the Administration and Legislature as well as CSPP contractors and stakeholders to address during and after this transitional period include:
  - Age definitions that do not allow for parental choice in enrolling TK-eligible children in CSPP.
  - Statute that requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to encourage CSPP contractors to offer full-day services through a combination of part-day slots and wraparound services.
  - Many Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) offer “full-day” services of up to six (6) hours a day for the school year, which may not meet families’ needs. Clear and consistent definitions of part-day and full-day services are needed to allow for flexibility and to serve the needs of families.
  - The need to better define Family Child Care Home Education Networks (FCCHEN) and how they operate under CSPP. CDE will work in partnership with CDSS and others stakeholders on these goals.
  - Allowance for up to 24-month enrollment for eligible three-year-old children at initial certification in CSPP.
  - Allowance for children in TK to also be served by CSPP for additional hours as necessary to meet the needs of families.

#### Programmatic Transition

- Quality Counts California (QCC):
  - CDSS has recently taken on a greater leadership role with QCC and is working in close partnership with CDE, First 5 California, and diverse stakeholders to design and implement a shared definition and vision of quality.
- Continuous Planning and Engagement:
  - CDSS is partnering with the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network and Parent Voices California to gather authentic feedback from its parent members about opportunities to improve the child care and development system in California.
  - CDSS is also partnering with Community Care Licensing to conduct a series of provider focus groups, modeling the sessions after the parent focus groups to promote equitable access and diverse participation.
  - CDSS is consulting with tribal organizations about the transfer to gauge impact on tribal communities and solicit feedback.
- Development of Child Care and Development Plan (CCDF):
  - CDSS will take over as the lead CCDF agency as of July 1, 2021, and will follow the annual process of the CCDF plan development and public comment so that future CCDF plans reflect stakeholder input.
  - For the plan under development now, which is due to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on June 30, 2021, CDE and CDSS are working together in close collaboration.

#### Program Integration and Enhancements

- Integration of Child Care and Development Program and Expected Outcomes:

- CDSS is considering the following methods to improve program integration:
  - consolidation of funding streams and programs
  - streamlining of eligibility processes and standards
  - reviewing and unifying rate and fee structures
- CDSS intends to conduct a full analysis, in partnership with both the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and CCLC, of the three-stage CalWORKs child care system to determine whether the original intent of the system is being met through the existing structure.
- CDSS will consider the consolidation of other contracted or voucher-based programs to provide a more comprehensive mixed-delivery system for families.
- CDSS will consider pursuing policies related to categorical and presumptive eligibility for programs to allow families easier access and more immediate services.
- CDSS and CDE will partner to align standards for Title 22, Title 5, and other publicly-funded child care and development programs to provide integrated standards.
- Strengthening Workforce Competencies:
  - The Statewide Verification Hub (SVH) will improve California families' access to services by streamlining the eligibility verification process for California Health and Human Services (CHHS) programs, while preserving individuals' privacy and security. This centralization of child care and development data will enable CDSS to develop and coordinate the connection of various consumer education and content management portals.
  - CDSS intends to launch a suite of tools so that parents, caregivers, agencies, researchers, and the State have access to the same information on quality child care.

#### Child and Adult Care Food Program

- CDE developed and provided to CDSS a document that details information about the six current CACFP service contracts, including bid details, contract periods, amounts, and purpose. CDSS will work with CDE to ensure that there is no disruption of payments to providers for meals served.
- With the goal of reducing administrative duplication, CDSS will identify potential overlaps in compliance review between CACFP and other nutrition services in order to minimize the impacts of reviews for contractors and lower review costs.

#### Alignment with the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care (MPELC)

- Programs:
  - CDSS is committed to furthering this equitable treatment of all children as most recently demonstrated by the establishment of the Office of Equity (OOE) in 2019, and the new Research, Automation, and Data Division (RADD) under the leadership of the new Chief Data Strategist position established in early 2020.
- Workforce:

- CDSS will prioritize workforce strategies from the MPELC and specifically focus on these priorities identified by stakeholders:
  - Incentivize and support a professional learning system through flexible and responsive strategies built with and for the diverse workforce;
  - Expand access to responsive, engaging, culturally inclusive content in multiple languages that is designed to support professionals' daily needs across the mixed-delivery system, including home-based settings;
  - Expand pathways for professionals in all settings for equitable career advancement;
  - Establish and sustain supports for workforce development; and
  - Revise and streamline workforce standards and associated monitoring processes.
- Governance and Administration:
  - CDSS will implement a Statewide Verification Hub (SVH).
  - CDSS will explore opportunities to improve accessibility by:
    - Supporting virtual or telephone platforms for accessing and maintaining child care and development services such as applications, hearings, and submitting time sheets.
    - Allowing for online or telephone communication for both parents and providers supporting continuity of care for children while ensuring timely reimbursement for child care providers.
    - Creating laws, regulations, and sub-regulatory guidance to implement the above recommendations.
    - Identifying strategies to responsively meet the needs of particularly high-risk groups.
- Modify Provider Payment Policies to More Efficiently Pay Providers:
  - CDSS will review CAPP funding terms and conditions with the intent to improve the timeliness of child care provider payments.

#### Budget/Fiscal Outlook in Response to COVID-19

- Overview of 2020 Budget and [AB 82](#)