2025 Impact Report: A New Chapter

EARLY EDGE CALIFORNIA

A Message from Our Executive Director

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN ONE OF REMARKABLE RESILIENCE AND FORWARD MOMENTUM FOR EARLY EDGE CALIFORNIA AS WE EMBARK ON A NEW CHAPTER.

Our efforts have been fueled by the strength and perseverance of California families and the Early Learning and Care workforce amid ongoing local, state, and nationwide challenges. As fires swept through Los Angeles and immigration pressures continued to reshape our communities, our team responded to ensure those impacted had the supports they needed.

We celebrated major victories for children across the state including Universal Transitional Kindergarten reaching full expansion with the start of the 2025-26 school year and Governor Newsom signing both of our sponsored bills SB 271 and AB 753 into law.

Another major highlight was our Early Learning Tour, where we brought California legislators and leaders to Denver to learn from Colorado's coordinated efforts across the Birth-to-Five continuum.

Looking ahead, our organization is entering an exciting new chapter. We have developed a new 5-year strategic plan that outlines an ambitious path focused on deepening impact, expanding equity, and elevating the voices of those closest to the work. We also refreshed our brand and website to offer clearer, more accessible ways to engage and take action.

We look forward to continuing our work in support of our mission in 2026!

With appreciation,

Patricio Vado

Watch our new Birth to Three video
which shows how *caring for families carries us all.*

Our Impact in 2025: By the Numbers

EDUCATIONAL SITE VISITS

11 site visits to Early Learning and Care settings led by Early Edge, for our team, partners, and legislators to learn more about exemplar programs and best practices in supporting young children.

MEDIA COVERAGE

19 total media clips in 2025 across English and Spanish media, including 8 television interviews.

Across Our Priorities

Birth to Three Care

30 partners, including local government, advocacy organizations, unions, and R&R agencies, have been engaged in our B-3 Workgroup to date.

Transitional Kindergarten/Universal Preschool Implementation

200K estimated number of 4-year-old children enrolled in TK for the 2025-26 school year.

Workforce Compensation, Supports & Pathways

3 bills sponsored and supported by Early Edge to support the Early Learning and Care workforce were signed into law.

Dual Language Learners

26 state and federal legislative offices that Early Edge met with about our priorities for Dual Language Learners.

Early Edge is proud to have advanced our 2025 policy agenda to improve the quality, accessibility, and equity of Early Learning and Care programs across California. Our top 10 round-up shares about the specific priority actions we have moved forward this year through our advocacy and in collaboration with partner organizations.

A New Chapter

BRIGHT FUTURES BEGIN HERE

New Strategic Plan

This year, Early Edge completed a refresh of our strategic plan. Building on the foundation we set in 2021, our new five-year plan reflects everything we've learned over the past three years and outlines a more focused and inclusive path forward. It deepens our commitment to California's most underserved communities, especially Black and Brown children and families, and formally integrates our Birth to Three work as a core priority. The plan articulates bold goals to better support babies, young children, their families, and Early Learning and Care teachers and providers.

> "This year strengthened our strategic clarity and organizational foundation. Looking ahead to 2026, we are focused on translating vision into action, driving Early Learning and Care systems change that supports kids, families, teachers, and caregivers statewide."
>
> *— Stephanie Wayland, Chief Operating Officer, Early Edge California*

New Brand & Website

To align with our evolving strategy, we also introduced a new look and digital home! This refresh is more than a visual update. It's a reflection of how our organization has grown, the communities we serve, and the movement we're building together for Early Learning and Care.

Here's what you'll find:

- A modern, welcoming brand to reflect our vision for supporting young learners.
- An updated site design for easy navigation.
- Stories and data that elevate the case for investing in Early Learning and Care.
- Resources for families, child care providers, Early Learning educators, and policymakers.
- Clear ways to take action, connect with us, and stay engaged.

Legislative & Budget Wins

Legislative Wins

Signed sponsored bills into law:

- AB 753 Assemblymember Robert Garcia) helps expand access to high-quality child care for families statewide by building pathways for early educators.
- SB 271 (Senator Eloise Gómez Reyes) ensures that parenting students at California's colleges and universities have the information, support, and child care resources they need to complete their degrees.

Signed supported bills into law: AB 49 (Muratsuchi), AB 495 (Celeste Rodriguez), AB 1123 (Muratsuchi), AB 1454 (Rivas, Muratsuchi, Rubio), and SB 778 (Limón).

Budget Wins

Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK):

- $2.1 billion for the final year of UTK implementation.
- $1.2 billion ongoing to maintain 10:1 child-to-staff ratios in TK classrooms.

AB 2268 implementation:

- $10 million to support the selection and adoption of a developmentally appropriate Multilingual Learner screener in TK.
- Funding to protect LCFF grants for TK following recent assessment changes.

100%

our sponsored bills signed into law & budget asks included in the state budget.

70%

of our 2025 supported bills signed into law.

$3.3B

secured in the 2025-26 state budget for UTK.

"Governor Newsom and California leaders know that prioritizing Early Learning and Care is the best commitment we can make for our children, for families, and for our state's future."

— Patricia Lozano, Executive Director, Early Edge California

Birth to Three Child Care

Birth to Three Campaign

Early Edge ramped up its statewide campaign to elevate the importance of infant and toddler care and spotlight family and caregiver voices by launching a new campaign page and promotional video, as well as spotlighting a caregiver testimonial about her experiences providing infant and toddler care. We also focused on increasing media coverage around Birth to Three Care, including an EdSource commentary we co-authored with Kidango calling for California leaders to prioritize child care for infants and toddlers, and interviews in The Guardian (est. audience reach: 143M), Fox 40 News (est. audience reach: 20K), Univision Al Punto California (est. audience reach: 200K), and Univision 34.

New Partnerships

Early Edge continued to build partnerships in the field to support Birth to Three Care:

- Early Edge hosted quarterly meetings of our Infant & Toddler (B-3) Workgroup to dig into the LA Blueprint recommendations and discuss how to move the recommendations forward. This year, Early Edge expanded the Workgroup to include Bay Area-based organizations to gain additional perspectives on how local policies can help inform our statewide efforts. Early Edge has been invited to present at the upcoming LA County Policy Roundtable meeting in January to give background information on the B-3 Workgroup and reflections on the most recent meeting. In the spring, Early Edge will present a set of recommendations for next steps for the LA County Blueprint for Infants and Toddlers.
- Ongoing collaboration with A Golden State for Kids campaign included our participation in its launch event, the Zero To Three Jamboree, where our team shared key Early Learning and Care resources with children and families and uplifted the critical need for access to child care for young children.

Student Parents

In addition to our co-sponsored bill SB 271 (Gómez Reyes) being signed into law to support student parents' access to key resources including child care, Early Edge continued to uplift the experiences and needs of this parent population throughout the year. We launched a blog series featuring bright spots for student parent support on California campuses. We also hosted a webinar focused on supporting student parents of infants and toddlers in California's higher education system, which featured perspectives from student parents attending Pasadena City College, Cal Poly Pomona, and UCLA, and special remarks from Asm. Marc Berman.

> **"In order for colleges to be more inclusive and supportive, it is crucial for them to adopt a two-generation approach…By supporting me, my daughter's future is also being transformed."**
>
> *— Miriam, Student Parent, UCLA*

To celebrate **National Student Parent Month** in September, Early Edge centered the experiences of student parents through a new video series, which can be viewed in our student parent playlist.

Transitional Kindergarten / Universal Preschool Implementation

Celebrating a Major Milestone for TK in California

2025 was a historic year for Transitional Kindergarten (TK) in California, with TK reaching full expansion at the start of the 2025-26 school year, giving all 4-year-olds the option for a high-quality preschool experience and creating the largest universal preschool program in the nation! Visit TKCalifornia to learn more.

Back-To-School: TK Edition

At the start of the new school year and in celebration of TK reaching full implementation, Early Edge did a back-to-school campaign focused on TK awareness-building among parents. This included a targeted media campaign focused on uplifting the positive impact TK is having on California children and families, with coverage in NBC Los Angeles, Univision 34 Los Angeles, CalMatters, and EdSource, as well as a social media campaign comprised of organic and paid content resulting in over 34.6K views.

"[My daughter] loved it! From a young age, they're encouraged to motivate themselves, to learn, to keep going so they won't be afraid of the first day of school when they are older."

— Alicia Ventura, Parent, Los Angeles Unified School District

TKCalifornia

UPK Legislative Briefing with LPI and ACSA

On March 19th, Early Edge co-hosted a legislative briefing alongside the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) and the Association for California School Administrators (ACSA) to review the progress made for UPK and look at what lies ahead. The event offered an opportunity to share research, celebrate achievements, and identify remaining challenges and additional supports needed around UPK implementation. Special guest speakers included Asm. Al Muratsuchi and Asm. Corey Jackson.

Workforce Compensation, Supports & Pathways

AB 753 Signed Into Law

Early Edge's co-sponsored bill AB 753 by Assemblymember Robert Garcia was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom in October. Effective immediately, this landmark legislation will help California expand access to high-quality child care for families across the state by building pathways for early educators.

"By signing AB 753, the state is creating pathways that help aspiring educators gain both experience and education in early childhood settings, so they can support our youngest learners to thrive."

— Patricia Lozano, Executive Director, Early Edge California

Early Edge Celebrates Ratification of Contract by CCPU

Early Edge celebrated the ratification of the 2025-28 contract between home-based provider union Child Care Providers United (CCPU) and the State of California, as reflected in Senate Bill 151. The negotiated agreement included stabilization payments, continued reimbursement on enrollment, advanced reimbursement, and the retention of the healthcare, retirement, and training benefits.

Advocating with Partners in the State Capitol

- **Thriving Families California**: Early Edge joined Thriving Families California for their "Lifting Up Families" Advocacy Day, meeting with 3 legislators alongside parents, providers, and community partners, to advocate for raising child care rates, strengthening critical safety net programs, and uplifting the diverse needs of families.
- **Parent Voices:** Early Edge joined Parent Voices California for their 29th Annual "Stand for Children Day" to urge state representatives to take action for young children and their families by providing health and child care supports.
- **Child Care Providers United (CCPU):** Early Edge joined CCPU's Day of Action calling for rate reform for all family child care providers and preserving the historical investments made for their healthcare and retirement benefits.
- **ECE Coalition:** As a member of the ECE Coalition, Early Edge participated in the coalition's advocacy days alongside partners, meeting with 8 legislators to advocate for the development of an alternative methodology for provider reimbursement rate reform, prospective pay based on enrollment instead of attendance, and maintaining the Administration's promise and plan to fund an additional 200,000 child care slots by 2026-27.

Dual Language Learners

Dual Language Learner (DLL) Field Building

This year, the DLL Master Plan Advocates continued to advance its two-year action plan for DLLs, based on recommendations from the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care. Some highlights this year included:

- Launching a 4-part blog series to elevate DLLs in California's UTK expansion, highlight efforts to support bilingual TK educators and programs, and share how districts are creating welcoming, inclusive schools for all children.
- An educational site visit to two Los Angeles Unified School District TK, dual immersion Armenian programs: Pinewood Avenue Early Education Center and Mountain View Elementary School.

Black English Language Initiative

Early Edge has continued the partnership established last year with Black Californians United for Early Care and Education, Catalyst California, and Californians Together to host listening sessions to uplift community voices aimed at informing advocacy efforts that ensure California has policies to affirm Black children learning multiple languages, including Black Languages, Black English, and African American Vernacular English (AAVE) from early childhood through 3rd grade, including supporting biracial and multiracial children within the African diaspora.

"We know that Black English Language speakers thrive when learning environments recognize, affirm, and celebrate the full richness of their language and culture. This is why we are excited about this work and partnership to ensure that this happens consistently across Early Learning settings in California."

— Carolyne Crolotte, Director of Policy, Early Edge California

CDSS AB 393 Webinar

California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) hosted a webinar, *Identification of Dual Language Learners in Child Care and Development Programs*, to provide policy and technical guidance for contractors fulfilling the requirements of our signed sponsored legislation AB 393. Early Edge was pleased to support with content development for the webinar, which brought together over 300 participants!

Partnerships

- **Two Languages, Twice the Opportunities:** Early Edge continued its partnership with the DLL Initiative's Two Languages, Twice the Opportunities campaign, supporting its presence at LA Times' Festival of Books and through two media opportunities: a segment on Telemundo 52's Acceso Total program and a co-authored article for LA Times' Reading by 9 guide with First 5 LA.
- **Consortium for Multilingual Learner Success:** Early Edge continues to serve as an advisory member of the Consortium and joined the Consortium's Voices of Hope event in April to honor the schools and leaders making an impact on Multilingual Learners across LA County.

Early Edge in the Field

2025 Early Learning Tour

In October, Early Edge hosted a delegation of elected officials, including Assemblymembers Al Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez, and Robert Garcia, and the Mayor of the City of Sacramento Kevin McCarty, as well as leaders from California for its 2025 Early Learning Tour in Denver to learn about Colorado's coordinated efforts in building an Early Learning and Care system that focuses on the Birth-to-Five continuum. The 4-day tour offered an agenda designed to deepen learning through site visits, listening sessions, and meaningful discussions that reflected a shared commitment to supporting young children, their families, and the Early Learning and Care workforce.

> **"Our time in Denver was so inspiring. Thank you to our colleagues in Colorado for sharing about the innovative strategies they've engaged to build robust supports for young children through a statewide continuum of care."**
>
> *— Patricia Lozano, Executive Director, Early Edge California*

Conference Presentations

The Early Edge team had the opportunity to present at conferences throughout the year to uplift our priority areas and share knowledge with the field.

- **CHESS Conference:** *Supporting Student Parents and their Young Children in California's Institutions of Higher Education*
- **CABE 2025:** *Identifying and Supporting Multilingual Learners in Transitional Kindergarten*; *Strategies and Tools for Preparing Educators to Identify and Support Dual Language Learners*; and *Supporting Multilingual Learners in Transitional Kindergarten Expansion and Implementation*
- **California Student Parent Summit 2025:** *Connections That Count: Supporting Student Parents with Young Children at California Community Colleges*
- **The California Child Care Resource & Referral Network and Thriving Families CA Foundation Hybrid Joint Annual Conference 2025:** *Protecting Children in Immigrant Families ACCESS to ECE; A Partnership to Amplify Black Language as a Rule-Governed, Legitimate Language*
- **BUILD 2025 Conference:** *¡Sí Se Puede! Aspiration in Uncertain Times*; *Policy to Practice: A Cross-Sector Approach to Supporting Dual Language Learners in California's Early Learning and Child Care System*; and *From Vision to Implementation: Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems for Supporting Children from Cradle to Career*

Special Initiatives

Supporting Immigrant Families: ALL IN for Safe Schools Campaign

Early Edge is a core partner in ALL IN for Safe Schools, a California-based campaign, led by The Children's Partnership and Californians Together, that brings together early childhood and K–12 education non-profit leaders to support educators and providers in creating welcoming, inclusive, and affirming learning environments—especially for children in immigrant families and LGBTQ+ students. Through this work, Early Edge has prioritized supporting immigrant families by helping schools and Early Learning and Care providers prepare for and respond to ICE enforcement activities and by promoting policies that protect and support immigrant students and families.

Gubernatorial Engagement

Early Edge is actively involved in key efforts to engage California's gubernatorial candidates ahead of the 2026 election. We are a partner of the Alliance for Candidate Engagement in Education, a coordinated effort led by EdTrust-West, which will host a series of engagement events in 2026 to ensure education and California's students are priorities for California's next Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction. We are also a member of Choose Children, a coalition of child advocates, community-based organizations, First 5 Commissions, and foundations which has launched a statewide campaign to engage the candidates around the critical need for ongoing early childhood investment in California.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

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