

Public Policy Platform 2020-2025

SYSTEMS, FINANCING AND ADMINISTRATION

To achieve the most cost-effective, equitable, and accessible system of child care and early learning, we support policy proposals such as:

- Increased investments for the following:
 - Infant and toddler care and other high need populations;
 - Quality improvement implementation that is accessible to all programs;
 - Subsidized child care and early learning services to serve all children from low-income families regardless of immigration status;
 - Adequate compensation for the workforce to achieve salary parity with the TK-12 system; and
 - Public and private capital resources, at the federal, state and local levels, that are equitably distributed to increase the number of facilities.
- A streamlined, single subsidy reimbursement system that reflects the actual, current cost of high-quality care that adequately compensates the workforce to achieve salary parity with the TK-12 system;
- Streamlined and efficient administration and coordinated regulatory, contracting and reimbursement processes particularly between the CA Department of Education and CA Department of Social Services;
- A system that supports a smooth transition for children and families from infant/toddler programs into the PreK/TK-12 system, with collaboration to align PreK and TK/K-3rd grade standards, curriculum, credentialing, and assessment; and
- Cradle to career data systems that link data across the education and health and human services systems in order to understand children's education trajectories and what investments are making the most difference in closing equity related achievement gaps.

HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

To achieve high-quality program implementation in both publicly and privately funded child care and early learning programs, we support policy proposals such as:

- Inclusion of a broad representation of centers, family child care homes, and alternate settings in Quality Counts San Mateo's and other quality improvement efforts that encompass a diversity of modalities (i.e. coaching, mentoring, trainings, etc.);
- Inclusive environments for all children within a mixed delivery system;
- The use of valid and reliable assessments, including direct assessment of early literacy and math skills, to guide instruction;
- Rigorous program evaluation to determine which quality improvement strategies result in improved outcomes for our most vulnerable children; and
- Supports for programs that serve school age children, including TK, to improve the quality of their services.

AVAILABILITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY

To achieve equitable and universal availability, accessibility, and affordability, within a diverse, mixed-delivery, system, we support policy proposals such as:

- Easy enrollment and verification processes for families accessing subsidized child care and early learning with adequate funding for the agencies/entities that support families so that timely and responsive services can be provided in the family's home language;
- Greater assistance for families to help them learn about child care and early learning options, particularly for families with children with special needs, in the family's home language;
- Family eligibility criteria and duration that promote continuity of care for children and families;

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- A higher income eligibility threshold for subsidized child care and early learning services due to the high cost of living in San Mateo County;
- A community-informed approach to Universal PreKindergarten planning and implementation that leverages the strengths of the current mixed-delivery system of PreK providers; and
- Thoughtful income supports or other strategies, such as family-friendly workplace policies, to improve the short- and long-term stability of families and healthy outcomes for children.

WORKFORCE

To achieve an increase in the number of qualified child care and early learning professionals who are paid commensurate with their education and expertise, in parity to the TK-12 system, we support policy proposals such as:

- Adequate compensation for the workforce to achieve salary parity with the TK-12 system;
- Improved access to high-quality, coordinated educational, professional development, and credentialing systems that address financial, cultural, linguistic, and literacy needs on a continuum from entry-level through degree attainment;
- Policies that create greater alignment and inclusion between systems of professional development and higher education;
- Professional development opportunities that help the workforce develop expertise to support vulnerable and unique populations of children and families.

FACILITIES

To ensure that children are cared for and educated in high-quality, inclusive environments within a diverse delivery system, we support policy proposals such as:

- Policy changes and strategies that reduce the complexity and remove barriers to developing new spaces;
- Technical expertise available to develop, finance, and maintain new and existing high quality child care and early learning facilities;
- City and county planning and land use policies that promote the inclusion and expansion of child care and early learning facilities, including the integration of these facilities in land use, housing, transportation, and economic, workforce and community development; and
- Policies that encourage businesses to support the expansion of child care facilities in their communities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

To achieve child care and early learning programs with the highest standards for health and safety, we support policy proposals such as:

- Capacity-building within the child care and early learning system/workforce to meet all of children's health and safety needs including mental, physical, and developmental; responding to medical or situational crises; and ensuring safe routes to schools;
- A more robust emergency response system for child care and early learning providers to ensure timely access to information and resources in the event of climate and other disasters or emergencies; and
- Streamlined, clear and consistent regulations across license types.

For more information about the San Mateo County Child Care Partnership Council, please visit www.smcoe.org/about/child-care-partnership-council/.