



## Early Childhood Policy Council

May 4, 2021

Governor Gavin Newsom  
State of California  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Pro Tem Toni Atkins  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Speaker Anthony Rendon  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 219  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor, Madam Pro Temp, and Mr. Speaker:

The Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC) was established in law via Senate Bill 75 (Chapter 51, Statutes of 2019) to advise the Governor, Legislature, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction on statewide early learning and care policy, including the planning for and the implementation and evaluation of the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care and the 2019 California Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education Final Report.

To achieve this vision, the ECPC advocates for state budget investments and policies that elevate equity with consideration for demographic, geographic, and economic diversity, with a focus on family-centered, two generation approaches to support the whole child and whole family.

As the state works diligently to respond to COVID-19 challenges for parents and learning loss experienced by children, our state leaders must prioritize equitable investments in high-quality early childhood programs, including early learning and care programs, health services, and family strengthening supports to ensure families, child-serving providers, and educators have what they need to help raise healthy, thriving children as we rebuild and create stronger, more resilient communities.

The ECPC calls on the Administration and Legislature to advance federal and state budget investments, maximize federal waivers, and implement policies that reflect the following consensus and equally weighted priorities for families and early childhood professionals:

**Priority: We must ensure there is equitable access to services and supports for families to ensure a successful recovery from the pandemic, particularly marginalized populations including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) families, immigrant families, homeless families, foster children, children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents, children with disabilities, dual language learners, and low-income families, including those experiencing generational poverty.**

- Augment financial and economic supports for income-eligible families, including increase access to early education and child care assistance in all settings with family fees waived;
- Strengthen investments in health, mental health, nutrition, and wellness services to ensure families have better access to such supports, barriers are removed and systems are functioning to serve families where they are;
- Bolster intergenerational family supports so families are cared for as a unit, including dyadic care models, strengthening the capacity of parents to raise healthy children;
- Ensure robust availability of early intervention services that support the unique needs of children and families.

**Priority: We must adequately support all early childhood professionals across all child care and learning settings, including tribal providers, that care for California's young children by providing financial, economic, and housing supports for child care providers including compensation, benefits, sick leave, and retirement.**

- Ensure federal and state resources are allocated to an increase in payment rates to implement the most current market survey with rate reform setting a new base rate to ensure increased compensation for early childhood professionals.
- Strengthen availability of early childhood workforce professional development and career pathways that rewards and incentivizes training and retention of early childhood professionals who have undertaken training and professional development through increased reimbursements aligned with the reformed rate structure. Standards for the early childhood workforce cannot be increased until compensation levels are

**Early Childhood Policy Council – Budget Letter**

raised (outside of transitional kindergarten and early transitional kindergarten, a system that relies on a different compensation structure).

As your partners in helping California families with young children navigate the challenges of today, we look forward to working with you to ensure our children remain a top priority in our collective response to recovery. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Members of the Early Childhood Policy Council