



POLICY ROUNDTABLE FOR CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022

Submit to: LA County Commissions Services
Date: 12.16.22

Instructions: Each LA County Commission is required to provide an update to the Board of Supervisors about its activities through an Annual Report. The Annual Report for Citizen’s Advisory Commissions is to be completed either each Fiscal Year or each Calendar Year as determined by the Commission. The following template includes suggested sections but is meant to be used as a guide and does not preclude a Commission from including additional information.

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PART I: COVER SHEET

Question: Include the name of the Commission and the timeframe covered by the Annual Report.

1.1) Commission Name

Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development Commission (Policy Roundtable)
Timeframe: FY 2021-2022

Question: Include the Commission's physical and website addresses, telephone, and fax numbers

1.2) Address

600 South Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 800 Los Angeles, California 90005

1.3) Website

<https://childcare.lacounty.gov/prccd/>

1.4) Fax

N/A

1.5) Telephone

(323) 346-7069

1.6) Policy Roundtable Commissioners

Question: Include members’ names and their titles, and the names of the Executive Officer.

**Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development Commission
Program Year September 2021 – June 2022**

COMMISSIONERS

Karla Pleitéz Howell, J.D., Chair
First Supervisorial District
Alejandra Albarran Moses, Ph.D., Vice-Chair
Fourth Supervisorial District

LA County Board of Supervisor Appointees

First Supervisorial District	Second Supervisorial District	Third Supervisorial District	Fourth Supervisorial District	Fifth Supervisorial District
Jessica Perea	Justin Blakely Sharoni Little	Terry Ogawa Amber Rivas	Ricardo Mota	Ellen Cervantes Joanie Aguayo

LA County Department Appointees

Chief Executive Office

Vacant
Alternate: Vacant

Department of Parks and Recreation

Faith Parducho
Alternate: Catharine Dingman

Department of Children and Family Services

Jennifer Hottenroth
Alternate: Lisa-Marie Kay

Department of Public Health

Robert Gilchick Alternate:
Debra Colman

Department of Mental Health

Kalene Gilbert
Alternate: Carolyn Kaneko

Department of Public Social Services

Nurhan Pirim
Alternate: Nora Garcia-Rosales

Department of Probation

Jeannette Aguirre Carrillo
Alternate: Carol Williams

Child Care Planning Committee

Ariana Oliva

Other Agency Appointees

Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles

Jackie Majors
Alternate: Paul Pulver

Los Angeles County Office of Education

Keesha Woods
Alternate: Debi Anderson

Child360

Vacant
Alternate: Vacant

Los Angeles Unified School District

Dean Tagawa
Alternate: Colleen Pagter

Commission for Children and Families

Steve Zimmer
Alternate: Jacquelyn McCroskey

Southern California Chapter – California Association for the Education of Young Children

Fran Chasen
Alternate: Liliana Alvarez Hernandez

First 5 LA

Ofelia Medina
Alternate: Marcy Manker

PART II: MISSION STATEMENT

Question: State the mission of the Commission and any motto or vision/values, if applicable; and how mission, vision and values align with and support the County's Mission and Strategic Priorities.

II.1) Mission

The Los Angeles County Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development Commission (Policy Roundtable) builds and strengthens early care and education (ECE) by providing recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on policy, systems, and infrastructure improvement.

II.2) Vision

Children are healthy, thriving and have equitable opportunities to achieve optimal development and succeed in life.

II.3) Alignment with and support of the County's Mission and Strategic Priorities

The Policy Roundtable Commission addresses issues that are in alignment with the LA County Mission.

- LA County Mission
Establish superior services through inter-Departmental and cross-sector collaboration that measurably improves the quality of life for the people and communities of Los Angeles County.
- The Policy Roundtable Commission includes eight LA County Departments and requires the composition of the Commission to include a cross-section of skills, expertise, and experience that can help facilitate inter-Department and cross-sector collaboration to improve the quality of life for the people and communities of LA County.

The Policy Roundtable Commission addresses issues that are in alignment with the following LA County Strategic Priorities:

- Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative (ARDI): The mission of the OAECE aligns with County ARDI goals, especially Strategic Goal No. 3: Increase Stable Full-Time Employment Among Individual Adults with Incomes at or Above 250% FPL. Child care is identified as a contributing outcome in the ARDI Strategic Plan.
- Poverty Alleviation Initiative (PAI): ECE is elevated as a critical issue in the Board's Poverty Alleviation Initiative. This Board priority has a focus on supporting ECE systems and workforce.

The Policy Roundtable Commission addresses issues that are in alignment with the following LA County State Legislative Agenda 2022 items:

- Child Welfare & Early Childhood Development
- Child Welfare Initiatives
- Economic and Workforce Development

II.4) Roles and Responsibilities

Question: List any roles and responsibilities of the Commission. This information can be extracted from the Commission ordinance, bylaws, or fact sheet.

Policy Roundtable Commission Ordinance SECTION 5. Section 3.75.100 Duties and Responsibilities

- Develop policy recommendations related to child care and development that are based on solid research economic forecasts, projected demographic shifts and trends, and federal and state policies, taking into account all forms of child care and development services.
- Advise and assist County Departments in developing and implementing strategies to connect clients and/or employees to high quality child care and development services.
- In conjunction with the Chief Executive Office, develop recommendations for consideration by the Board on County, state and federal legislative and budget issues related to child care and development. The Policy Roundtable shall work with community stakeholders so as to understand the impact of those issues on the supply, quality and demand for child care and development services.
- Working in collaboration with County departments and community stakeholders, identify strategies to secure and leverage, coordinate, monitor and maximize funding for and access to high quality child care and development services.
- Develop, distribute in electronic format, and post on a County website, an annual report summarizing key issues, Policy Roundtable recommendations, and Board actions.

Unified Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2020-2025

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2020, the Policy Roundtable co-created with the Child Care Planning Committee (CCPC) and the Office of Advancement for Early Care and Education (OAECE) the Unified Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2020-2025 (Unified Strategic Plan). The Policy Roundtable, OAECE, and CCPC adopted the Unified Strategic Plan to ensure the three groups focus on the same child care and development priority areas. Each group agreed to work only within the boundaries of the Unified Strategic Plan.

The Unified Strategic Plan highlights priority areas, goals, and strategies for the Policy Roundtable to accomplish. This Unified Strategic Plan indicates important role delineations between the Policy Roundtable, the CCPC, and OAECE. The following highlights the strategies the Policy Roundtable is charged with focusing on:

- **Priority 1 - Access to Early Care and Education**
Goal: Increase access to early care and education services for children birth to five years of age and out of school care for children up to age twelve.
Strategy 1.1: Reduce barriers and maximize resources to expand early care and education services to centers and family child care homes, prioritizing infants and toddlers, high-need families, and under resourced communities.
Strategy 1.2: Advocate for funding to build or upgrade early care and education centers and family child care homes.
- **Priority 2 - Early Care and Education Quality**
Goal: Strengthen the quality of early care and education services, especially for children and families most in need.
Strategy 2.2: Advocate for increased quality improvement investments for all providers including centers, family child care, and family, friends, and neighbor care.
Strategy 2.4: Promote integration across early childhood services and develop strategies that connect early childhood education with other child/family support systems.

- **Priority 3 - Early Care and Education Workforce Supports**
Goal: Improve the compensation and qualifications of the early care and education workforce
Strategy 3.1: Advocate for increased compensation for the early care and education workforce.
- **Priority 4 - Family and Community Engagement in Early Care and Education Issues**
Goal: Increase engagement of parents, caregivers, and communities on ECE issues
Strategy 4.2: Empower and mobilize families as advocates for early care and education resources.

PART III: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Question: Provide historical information about the Commission such as when it was formed and the purpose for its formation.

III.1) Historical Information

- Formation of The Policy Roundtable Commission
The Policy Roundtable Commission, established in 2000, is a Board of Supervisors appointed body composed of 25 community leaders in early childhood, education, business, economics, and research and representatives of County Departments including Child and Family Services, Mental Health, Probation, Public Health, Public Social Services, and Parks and Recreation.
- Purpose of The Policy Roundtable Commission
The Policy Roundtable Commission is charged with developing policy recommendations for elevation to the Board of Supervisors, advising County departments on early care and education programs, and identifying strategies to secure, coordinate, and maximize funding for high quality services.
- Staffing The Policy Roundtable Commission
The Roundtable is staffed by the OAECE, an office within the LA County Department of Public Health (DPH).

III.2 and III.3) Prior Year Accomplishments (2016-2019) and Significant Outcomes (2015-2019)

III.2) *Question: Include issues of focus in past years, not including most recent past year to be discussed in Prior Year's Accomplishments.*

III.3) *Question: Include significant outcomes of work by the Commission.*

Policy Roundtable Commission Issue Areas, Accomplishments, and Outcomes FYs 2015-2019

Issue	Accomplishments	Outcomes
Access to Early Care and Education		
FYs 2015-2019: Vulnerable families and communities did not have access to uninterrupted ECE care	FYs 15-19: Policy Roundtable supported efforts to ensure that vulnerable children and their families have access to consistent, uninterrupted subsidized ECE services.	FYs 15-19: Advised Supervisor Kuehl's office in the development of legislation that established the Emergency Child Care Bridge Fund for Children in Foster Care (Bridge Fund); and weighed in on the components of the legislation (AB 1164 (Thurmond)) to include emergency vouchers, navigators to help families transition to permanent sources of subsidized services and training in trauma-informed practices for early educators accepting vouchers via the Bridge Fund. The legislation was integrated into the Budget Act of 2017 with funding for a pilot. Monitored implementation of the Bridge Fund in LA County through regular updates from DCFS, Child Care Resource Center, and Child Care Alliance of LA (CCALA).
FYs 2015-2019:	FYs 15-19: Support the streamlining of California Department of	FYs 15-19: Policy Roundtable's Pursuit of Position was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in support

<p>Access to ECE services is not widespread in California</p>	<p>Education (CDE) administrative processes to expand access for low-income families, ensure continuity of care, and promote flexible use of ECE funding to meet the needs of families.</p>	<p>of AB 60 (Santiago and Gonzalez) to provide 12 months of continuous eligibility for children of families eligible and enrolled in subsidized ECE programs contracted by CDE. The proposal was included in the Budget Act of 2017.</p>
<p>FYs 2015-2019: Need for ECE facility development in communities with shortage of services</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Support efforts to expand the supply of appropriate ECE services through facility development in communities with a significant shortage of these services.</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Provided feedback on the Assessment of LA County Property for Future Early Care and Learning Sites to the Chief Executive Office's Asset Management Branch, Master Planning Unit per a motion by the Board of Supervisors.</p> <p>FY 16-17: Policy Roundtable informed various child care and development legislation and its implementation. Provided Pursuits of Position to the CDE to ensure that the voice of child care providers, parents, and stakeholders are considered.</p> <p>FY 16-17: Policy Roundtable's partnership with the Packard Foundation was instrumental in bringing technical assistance to exempt providers (family/home-based) who are often excluded from vital trainings provided to child care facilities. This effort recognized the importance of home-based providers and the need to ensure their continued viability, quality, and growth.</p>
<p>Early Care and Education Quality</p>		
<p>FYs 2015-2019: No set standards for quality ECE regarding disabilities and special needs</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Support efforts to enhance the quality of ECE that set high standards for all services and program types and address the needs of all children, including those with disabilities and other special needs, and their families.</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Policy Roundtable representatives served on the work group convened by the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to explore the development of a model early childhood mental health consultation project for piloting in ECE programs. DMH provides periodic updates to the Roundtable to solicit input from the membership on the project's implementation.</p>
<p>Early Care and Education Workforce Supports</p>		
<p>FYs 2015-2019: Child Care subsidized reimbursement rates are too low, and this creates low wages making it difficult to recruit people to the field</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Support efforts to adequately fund high quality ECE services for all children from low- and moderate-income families.</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Elevated public policy recommendations to increase the adjustment factor to the reimbursement rate for infants and toddlers served by CDE-contracted programs.</p>

<p>FYs 2015-2019: A standardized quality rating and improvement system did not exist</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Support efforts to develop and implement a statewide quality rating and improvement system and a system to adjust reimbursement rates based on demonstrated quality.</p> <p>FY 16-17: Partnered with Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) and LA County Office of Education (LACOE) on the development of a single application for the QRIS Block Grant application and was subsequently awarded a grant.</p> <p>FY 16-17: Provided a position letter to the state Early Education and Support Division regarding how to ensure that vulnerable families have access to subsidized child care, especially system-involved teen parents.</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Monitored local efforts to implement the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), also known as Quality Start Los Angeles (QSLA), in Los Angeles County.</p> <p>FY 16-17: Policy Roundtable was instrumental in informing the OAECE’s response to a motion by Supervisor Antonovich related to the development of a County-wide child care rating system. The Policy Roundtable ensured that the response to the motion included an understanding of the current state of the quality rating and improvement system in Los Angeles County-wide and evidence-based models to inform a viable future strategy. The Policy Roundtable was a critical partner in the effort to ensure that there would be one comprehensive County-wide rating system for child care providers. In addition to establishing a common and standardized rating system, this effort positioned LA County for consideration for a CDE grant.</p>
<p>FYs 2015-2019: ECE field could not sustain a professional workforce and needed to ensure safety of children</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Support efforts to develop and sustain a well-educated and highly skilled professional workforce prepared to serve the culturally and linguistically diverse child and family populations of LA County.</p> <p>FYs 15-19: Support efforts to ensure the health and safety of all children cared for in licensed ECE facilities as afforded by timely, regular, and frequent on-site monitoring by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Community Care Licensing Division.</p> <p>FYs 15-19: Support proposals designed to prevent, detect, investigate, and when appropriate, prosecute fraud in subsidized child care and development programs.</p>	<p>FYs 15-19: Supported the OAECE’s implementation of the Investing in Early Educators Stipend Program (AB 212) and its expansion through legislation and budget language, to early educators working in centers and family child care homes where most children are receiving services subsidized by the CDE as well as early educators working in CDE-contracted centers. Early educators earning college units in child development are eligible for a stipend; an additional stipend is awarded to early educators earning a degree.</p> <p>FYs 15-19: Policy Roundtable has a long-term commitment advocating for annual licensing inspections of child care and development programs - centers and family child care homes. It does so by monitoring potential legislation and budget language for opportunities to elevate recommended pursuits of position in support of annual inspections to the Board of Supervisors.</p>
<p>Policy Roundtable Commission Infrastructure</p>		
<p>FYs 2015-2019: OAECE did not have a Director during and had fits and starts in seeking a</p>	<p>FY 19-20: Debra Colman was hired as Director of the OAECE and provided support to the Policy Roundtable with knowledge and expertise pertaining to the ECE field.</p>	<p>FYs 19-22: The Policy Roundtable accomplished many initiatives with the support and direction of OAECE Director Colman.</p>

permanent Director for the Office		
FYs 2016-2018: Policy Roundtable needed to update and improve its Commission infrastructure	<p>FY 16-17: Received Board approval to include in the Commission’s name “Development” to emphasize the holistic issues surrounding ECE and early child development. Informed by evidence-based research on brain development and disparate issues surrounding the continuum of children’s lives, 0-8, this strategic and vital shift encompassed the importance of leveraging the subject matter and organizational expertise of the Policy Roundtable.</p> <p>FY 17-18: Roundtable Commission started its Strategic Plan planning process to align its work with other 0-5 organizations in the County.</p>	<p>FY 16-17: The addition of “Development” broadens the span of issues, policies, and practices that can be raised and discussed when making recommendations to Board of Supervisors.</p> <p>FY 17-18: The Policy Roundtable established 2 Workgroups: <u>CalWORKs Stage 1 Workgroup</u> focused on identifying key obstacles to access subsidized child care, to determine the access issue with the highest priority, and to frame policy recommendations that would increase access.</p> <p><u>LA County’s Prevention Plan Prevention Workgroup</u> focused on improving access ECE programs. The workgroup discussed strategies around family engagement, implementation of what was the new statewide Bridge Fund Program and mapping of resources for ECE.</p>
Prior to FYs 2015-2019: Policy Roundtable had not developed a Strategic Plan in coordination with CCPC and OAECE.	FY 18-19: Policy Roundtable attended a convention to work on a joint strategic plan.	FY 18-19: Policy Roundtable launched a joint strategic planning process in partnership with the CCPC that has served as a roadmap to the OAECE under DPH and as staff to the two bodies; the Strategic Plan was adopted by the CCPC and Policy Roundtable in January 2020.

III.4) Changes to the Commission

Question: Indicate whether the Commission expanded, changed, or remained consistent with their duties/goals/missions

Consistent (No Changes)

During FY 21-22 there were no changes to the Policy Roundtable’s bylaws and Ordinance. The Policy Roundtable plans to make changes to the Ordinance and/or the bylaws during FY 22-23. The updates will reflect the changes within the Commission and will highlight Commission efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies. The Policy Roundtable also did not make any changes to its Unified Strategic Plan.

Expanded

In FY 20-21 the Policy Roundtable adopted the Equity Statement below. In FY 21-22 the Policy Roundtable began implementing the Equity Statement during meetings and policy decisions. More information about how the Equity Statement was implemented is provided in this Report’s section Part IV: DEI.

Policy Roundtable Commission Equity Statement

“The Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development (PRCCD) firmly believes that all young children in LA County have an undeniable right to develop and thrive without explicit and implicit biases. Existing systemic educational and societal barriers have led historically marginalized communities to lack access to education, healthcare, and other services necessary for their growth and development.

Acknowledging and eliminating the various layers of inequities is essential and central to ensuring that children, families, and child care providers will be recognized as valued members of society. PRCCD will also work diligently to make a collective impact in advancing equity for child care providers by influencing and championing training, development opportunities and a diverse workforce.

To accomplish this, we must normalize a holistic, intentional investment in children, families, and child care providers. As influencers, we strive to create conscious, collaborative communities of leaders, policy makers, educators, and parents. The PRCCD is dedicated to challenging one another to engage in a full spectrum of diverse perspectives amongst subject-matter experts and the community at-large. PRCCD is committed to being the catalyst of advocacy for equitable public policies and supporting and sustaining effective quality early care and education through recommendation to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.”

PART IV: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Question: Indicate how your Commission has included diversity, equity, and inclusion in your work, projects, and activities to represent all constituents of the County of Los Angeles.

IV.1) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives

As noted earlier, the Policy Roundtable Commission drafted and adopted an Equity Statement in FY 20-21 (formally adopted in June 2021) and began implementing the Equity Statement in FY 21-22 in various ways. The Commission has not established a specific DEI Initiative to implement. It is intended for its commitment to DEI to permeate all aspects of its work. The Policy Priorities determined by the Policy Roundtable will be through an equity lens by using the Equity Statement.

IV.2) Methods to Express Ideas Openly

Question: Indicate how your Commission provides an environment that allows members, public and stakeholders to share and express openly their ideas, opinions, and beliefs.

The Policy Roundtable continued and sought out additional ways to elevate diversity, equity, and inclusion in its practices and policy recommendations.

- All new Commissioners were provided a New Commissioner Orientation and the Equity Statement was included in this Orientation
- The Policy Roundtable established additional virtual meeting engagement methods to help expand participants' comfort in participating in discussions, for example:
 - Encouraging people to attend early to chat with one another
 - At the beginning of each meeting people were encouraged to share something non-work related
 - Entering comments in the chat, and using technology such as Jamboard for people to add their ideas individually, anonymously, or with their name
 - Inviting people to share their ideas pre and post meeting to OAECE staff via email or phone
- The Policy Roundtable prioritized equity in the issues it focused on for years and the Equity Statement explicitly and formally recognized that this is a value and priority for the Commission
- The Policy Roundtable will continue to look for ways to strengthen its DEI practices and accountability to using a DEI lens in its recommendations

IV.3) Bylaws/Mission Updates

Question: Indicate whether your Commission's bylaws/mission statements include the promotion of zero tolerance in relation to racial and ethnic discrimination and/or gender-based differences.

The Policy Roundtable's bylaws/mission statements do not include specific language to promote zero tolerance in relation to racial and ethnic discrimination and/or gender-based differences. The Policy Roundtable will update its bylaws/Ordinance to include its commitment to the Equity Statement.

IV.4) Encouraging Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Question: Indicate how your Commission handled diverse matters appropriately and demonstrated a commitment to encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion to its constituents.

The Policy Roundtable highlights DEI efforts through the inclusion of its newly adopted Equity Statement. The Commission elevated DEI issues in its ten informational meetings with LA County Board of Supervisors' Children's Deputies and in policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors submitted via Pursuits of Positions to the Legislative Affairs Office. Equity was a foundational issue to address the need for higher pay rates and wages, continuity of ECE services for families, and increased resources to support ECE workforce development. The policy positions adopted by the Policy Roundtable in FY 2021-2022 embody its Equity Statement. These policy positions can be found in section VI.1 Accomplishments FY 2021-2022.

PART V: ANNUAL WORK PLAN

Question: Provide goals or objectives for the upcoming year; and indicate how goals and objectives support the County's mission, vision, and strategic priorities.

V.1) Goals for FY 2022 - 2023 and County Support

The Policy Roundtable's FY 22-23 goals fall into the following areas:

1. Develop at least one pursuit of position on a policy issue to submit to LA County Legislative Affairs
2. Update the Policy Roundtable's bylaws, Ordinance, and other statements as appropriate
3. Achieve changes in the Unified Strategic Plan Priority Area 2: Promote integration across early childhood services and develop strategies that connect early childhood education with other child/family support systems.

Develop Pursuit of Position and Board of Supervisors Engagement

Policy Roundtable Commissioners will continue its practice to identify policy priorities and develop at least one Pursuit of Position to share with the Board of Supervisors' Children's Deputies through structured informational meetings. The Policy Roundtable will also continue to invite and engage the Deputies to the Policy Roundtable Commission meetings.

Update Policy Roundtable Commissions Bylaws, Ordinance, and Other Statements

The Policy Roundtable will update its bylaws, Ordinance, and other statements as appropriate. For example, LAUP (also known as Child360) is an organization that has a designated Commission seat, however, in FY 21-22 LAUP dissolved as an organization. This and other changes require the Policy Roundtable to update its bylaws and Ordinance. The Policy Roundtable will also review if any of its governance documents, such as its bylaws and mission statement, need to incorporate specific language to promote zero tolerance in relation to racial and ethnic discrimination and/or gender-based differences.

Unified Strategic Plan

The Policy Roundtable will stay abreast of policies, research, status of ECE field and services' experiences to inform its approach to making progress in Priority Area 2 (Quality) strategy and activity listed below:

- [Strategy 2.4](#): Promote integration across early childhood services and develop strategies that connect early childhood education with other child/family support systems
- [Activity 2.4.2](#): Convene a community of practice among LA County Departments' early childhood initiatives and programs to support quality, share tools and resources, and improve coordination

One of the approaches the Policy Roundtable will implement is to provide time in Policy Roundtable meetings for each LA County Department that holds a seat on the Commission to present information about that Department's early childhood development and ECE programs. The Commission will facilitate discussions between the Commissioners who represent eight LA County Departments, cross-sectors, and other *early childhood focused Commissions* to identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination. The Policy Roundtable will encourage and identify by May 2023 if new collaborative efforts have resulted from these discussions. The Policy Roundtable will also ensure their decisions are based on input from the CCPC and Joint Committee on Legislation.

V.2 and V.3) **Workplan FY 2022 - 2023 and Goal Timeline**

V.2) Question: Include a work plan to accomplish the goals.

V.3) Question: Include a timeline for completion of each goal.

Policy Roundtable Commission Workplan FY 2022-2023			
Month	Goal 1: Pursuit of Position	Goal 2: Update Bylaws, Ordinance, Statements	Goal 3: Promote Integration Across Early Childhood Services and develop strategies that connect early childhood education with other child/family support systems
September 2022			
October 2022	Family First Presentation		DPSS Presentation
November 2022			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECE Facilities Development Toolkit ECE COVID 19 Response Team Presentation
December 2022	Thriving Families Report		DCFS Presentation
January 2023	Review Governor’s Budget	OAECE staff begins to identify areas of potential change	LA County Department Presentation
February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Possible Policy Priorities Policy Priority Areas are informed by CCPC and Joint Committee on Legislation 	OAECE staff identifies areas of potential change to present to Roundtable Commission	LA County Department Presentation
March 2023	Approve Pursuit(s) of Position Prep for Board of Supervisors’ Deputies		LA County Department Presentation
April 2023	Promote Pursuit(s) of Position with Board of Supervisors’ Deputies	Provide process for updating bylaws, Ordinance review process	LA County Department Presentation
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify if any other Pursuit(s) of Position are needed Follow up with Board of Supervisors’ Deputies 	Discuss updates to bylaws, Ordinance, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA County Department Presentation Develop recommendations for LA County Early Childhood Service Coordination Strategy
June 2023		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve to bylaws, Ordinance, etc. changes Submit requested changes to Commission Services 	Present Recommendations to Policy Roundtable and prioritize focus for next year

PART VI: PRIOR YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Question: For Commissions that are long-standing (2 years or older), include your accomplishments from last year and a completion date or expected completion date

VI.1) Accomplishments FY 2021 - 2022

The Policy Roundtable's significant FY 2021-2022 accomplishments are captured in the following four categories:

1. Developed Policy Positions
2. Responded to Board of Supervisors' Motions
3. Informed Board of Supervisors and/or State Policymakers about Proposed Policies and ECE Needs
4. Strengthened Policy Roundtable Infrastructure

1) DEVELOPED POLICY POSITIONS

The Policy Roundtable developed four Pursuit of Positions, three of which were approved by the Legislative Affairs Office:

PURSUIT OF POSITION #1: INCREASE REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR STATE SUBSIDIZED EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Support a state budget proposal that would increase reimbursement rates by 20 percent above the current 75th percentile of the 2018 Regional Market Rate (RMR) Survey, essential to stabilizing California's early care and education system and compensating the workforce comparable to their education and experience.
- **Background:** The Budget Act of 2021 transitioned agencies holding direct service contracts with the state for center-based early care and education services from reimbursement based on the Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR) to RMR ceiling used to reimburse providers (centers, family childcare homes, and family/friend/neighbor) accepting subsidy vouchers from income-eligible families. The budget agreement also updated rate ceilings from the 75th percentile of the 2016 RMR survey to the 75th percentile 2018 RMR survey. Yet, reimbursement rates for centers and family child care homes were outdated before the ceilings went into effect on January 1, 2022 and continue to fall behind the rate of inflation. Low reimbursement rates have complicated efforts to fund and deliver high-quality early care and education programs that promote children's optimal development while addressing the health, safety and overall well-being of the children served. Insufficient funding limits program ability to increase compensation and offer benefits such as health insurance and retirement, adequately resource programs, and incentivize quality improvement efforts, ultimately limiting access and forcing many child care providers out of business. Furthermore, basing reimbursement on market rates fails to consider the actual cost of care, not to mention the increased costs associated with ensuring children and their families who need it most have access to programs notable for high quality inclusive of developmental screenings of children, early childhood mental health consultation, and ongoing professional development opportunities.
- **Result with LA County Legislative Affairs:** Position taken by Legislative Affairs
- **Outcome at State Level:** The following was approved and incorporated in the California FY 22-23 Budget:

- \$413 million to annualize a full year of previously agreed upon rate increases while the state continues to work with partners and stakeholders toward a single reimbursement rate structure

PURSUIT OF POSITION #2: CONTINUE ONGOING COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDS THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2023

- Ongoing COVID-19 relief funding for an additional 18 months to provide the necessary supports for agencies to rebuild their ECE programs to achieve full enrollment and offer families additional time to financially recover from the impacts the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Background:** ECE programs provided a critical service to the children and families throughout the COVID-19 pandemic by remaining open and/or re-opening to support working families, many of whom are low-income relying on subsidized services. COVID-19 relief benefits have been critical to programs operating with reduced capacity to maintain social distancing and enhanced cleaning practices to ensure the health and safety of the enrolled children and their early educators. Families, especially in communities of color, have been hit hardest by the pandemic and have faced challenges about what bills to pay including rent, utilities, food, and child care. COVID-19 relief benefits have ensured that early care and education programs have remained open and re-opened to serve essential workers throughout the pandemic and allowed low-income working families to continue accessing the services without the worry of fee payments. The relief benefits are due to sunset on June 30, 2022.
- **Result with Legislative Affairs:** Position taken by Legislative Affairs
- **Outcome at State Level:** The following was approved and incorporated in the California State FY 22-23 Budget
 - \$157 million (\$136 million one-time federal funds, \$10.8 million Prop. 98, \$10.5 million General Fund) to temporarily waive family fees for state-subsidized preschool and child care services through June 30, 2023
 - \$114 million (\$6 million General Fund, \$108 million federal funds) to pay providers based on enrollment at the maximum authorized hours of care (also known as “hold harmless”) through June 30, 2023.

PURSUIT OF POSITION #3: REINSTATE AND INCREASE FUNDING FOR EARLY LEARNING AND CARE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

- Reinstated \$195 million to the Early Learning and Care Workforce Development Grants Program and an additional \$55 million to focus on the professional development needs of family, friend, and neighbor (license-exempt) providers and build the capacity of early educators to serve dual language learners.
- **Background:** The 2019-20 Budget Act established the Early Learning and Care Workforce Development Grants Program with an appropriation of \$195 million to be disbursed over a four-year period by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The full amount was swept in early 2020 during state budget negotiations due to concern for economic instability with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Investing in the workforce is necessary to meet the demands of early care and education programs for qualified staff. Re-investing the \$195 million in professional development will go a long way to supporting a diverse and qualified early care and education workforce that facilitates the optimal development of children in partnership with families.
- **Result with Legislative Affairs:** Position taken by Legislative Affairs
- **Outcome at State Level:** Did not move forward in final state budget

PURSUIT OF POSITION #4: RESTORE FULL FUNDING FOR LOCAL CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COUNCILS

- Restore full funding for the local child care and development planning councils (LPCs) in order for LPCs to fully meet their contract mandates as part of the ECE infrastructure designed to support the system of ECE.
- **Background:** LPCs were established in 1997 to convene community stakeholders in each county to identify and address local child care needs and priorities. Furthermore, LPCs are required to fulfill several mandates as provided in Welfare and Institutions Code in addition to assuming other duties as assigned by the state. For example, LPCs have been charged with emergency planning and implementation, in response to wildfires and the COVID-19 pandemic, and most recently with contributing to the planning for universal transitional kindergarten as liaison between school districts and the early care and education community. The state budget for the LPCs was slashed in half in 2010. LA County experienced a reduction in its contract with the state from nearly \$380,000 to short of \$190,000. Aside from modest cost-of-living adjustments since the recession ended, full funding has not been restored. Many counties across the state are operating on the margins of their budget. As such, many LPCs operate without even a part-time coordinator. As the largest County in the state, full funding for Los Angeles County’s LPC would allow for greater engagement of diverse community stakeholders and deepening the efforts to identify and respond to the early care and education needs of the communities of families and the programs that serve them throughout the County.
- **Result with Legislative Affairs:** Position not taken by Legislative Affairs
- **Outcome at State Level:** LPC funding was restored in the California Budget FY 22-23 to its full funding level provided in 2011.

2) RESPONDED TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS’ MOTIONS

MOTION #1: PATHWAYS TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY FOR WOMEN, COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, AND THE CARE ECONOMY

Purpose of Motion: Establish an Economic Mobility Initiative (Initiative) that targets outreach to women and people of color. The Initiative shall include the creation of a Community Impact Entrepreneurship Academy to stabilize and grow women-owned businesses and businesses of color.

Motion’s Directive: The Board of Supervisors instructing the Director of the OAECE, in consultation with the Roundtable Commission, CCPC, the Directors of Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services (WDACS), the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI), the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and other relevant departments to:

1. Develop a plan and framework for implementing a comprehensive ECE workforce development strategy equipped to support new and current workers in the field through educational and job training opportunities
2. Report back on policy recommendation for unmet needs of ECE workforce in LA County with information related to compensation needs for the ECE workforce who serve different ages of children in a variety of settings and proposed financial models to increase the wages for licensed ECE centers and family child care homes based on best practices from other jurisdictions

Response to the Motion: OAECE, in coordination with the Policy Roundtable, CCPC, the Directors of WDACS, DPSS, DCBA, LACDA, WGI, and the CEO, developed the following plan and framework for a comprehensive ECE workforce development Strategy.

Directive #1: Plan and Framework for Implementing a Comprehensive Early Care and Education Workforce Development Strategy

System Stabilization: An approach to stabilize licensed early care and education providers that are open during COVID-19 recovery and re-engage early care and education providers who have closed during the pandemic.

- **Recommendation #1:** Provide operations grants to center-based early care and education and family child care providers to stabilize the system and prevent further closures.

Improved Qualifications and Career Pathways: A plan to support early care and education professionals to improve their qualifications and advance along the California Early Learning Career Lattice; Strategies may include but not be limited to support/or Family, Friends, and Neighbors (FFN) to become licensed family child care homes, career and college advisement, apprenticeships, and financial incentives to increase completion of training, college coursework, degrees, and Child Development Permits.

- **Recommendation #2a:** Increase early educators' participation in professional development through financial incentives and college and career advisement.
- **Recommendation #2b:** Align and expand supports to strengthen family child care businesses, expand family child care services, and support FFN providers to formally enter the workforce.
- **Recommendation #2c:** Pilot competency-based pathways that allows the workforce to demonstrate skills to earn credit toward degrees.
- **Recommendation #2d:** Invest in innovative "earn and learn" strategies, such as apprenticeship programs, to recruit, and train an effective workforce.

System Coordination: Maximize partnerships with outside organizations and colleges such as Quality Start LA, the LACOE, First 5 LA, R&Rs, Alternative Payment Program agencies, Child360, and PEACH, and the California ECE Workforce Registry to leverage systems alignment, training, and educational opportunities.

- **Recommendation #3:** Establish and convene an ECE workforce collaborative to coordinate, align, and maximize resources.

Facility Development: Consult with relevant ECE stakeholders to provide recommendations to reduce fees, streamline the permitting process and review child care as a permitted use in certain zones to catalyze the opening of new child care providers in Los Angeles County.

- **Recommendation #4:** Facility Development: Consult with relevant ECE stakeholders to provide recommendations to reduce fees, streamline the permitting process and review child care as a permitted use in certain zones to catalyze the opening of new child care providers in Los Angeles County.

Philanthropic Partnerships: Identify funding to capitalize early care and education providers who were forced to close between March 2020 to present to spur re-opening.

- **Recommendation #5:** Work with LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment to align public and private resources.

Funding Approach: Identify any staffing needs and costs that would be required to implement the comprehensive workforce development strategy along with identification of any potential funding sources.

- **Recommendation #6:** Secure funding to support the following components of the Comprehensive ECE Workforce Development Framework

Directive #2: Policy Recommendations for Unmet Needs for the Early Care and Education Workforce

- **Recommendation #1:** Provide financial relief to individuals in the ECE workforce through, for example, stipends, bonuses, tax credits, education loan forgiveness, home buying assistance, and local increases to child care vouchers.
- **Recommendation #2:** Re-envision the state ECE reimbursement system to cover the true cost of quality care.
- **Recommendation #3:** Develop and endorse LA County ECE salary scale/compensation standards that outline the qualifications and minimum salary/benefits for different levels of the workforce using the living wage/self-sufficiency standards as the floor and parity with Transition Kindergarten - 3rd grade educator salaries for lead teachers with bachelor's degree and Child Development Permit, regardless of setting.
- **Recommendation #4:** Explore the feasibility of a local ongoing revenue source to subsidize compensation for early care and education providers.

Implementation Status: The implementation status of each recommendation is included in the attached report "Plan and Framework for Implementing a Comprehensive ECE Workforce Development Strategy and Policy Recommendations for Unmet Needs for the ECE Workforce" provided to the Board of Supervisors.

MOTION #2: BUILDING LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Purpose of Motion: Draw down funding from the CDSS Facilities Infrastructure Grant Program to increase LA County's ECE facilities. LA County child care providers applying for the CDSS Facilities Development grant opportunities need immediate assistance from the OAECE and LA County's Department of Regional Planning (Regional Planning) and a long-term solution to streamline the child care facilities process is also necessary.

Motion's Directive:

1. Direct the OAECE, in collaboration with Regional Planning and the Policy Roundtable, to provide in writing within 90 days a plan to assess the feasibility of strategies to streamline the ECE facility development process. The plan should explore strategies to identify barriers and potential solutions to remove those barriers in ECE facilities land use entitlement and permitting processes. The plan should also identify any staffing needs and costs that would be required to implement strategies to streamline the ECE land use and facilities requests process.
2. Direct the OAECE, in collaboration with Regional Planning and the Policy Roundtable to engage additional partners such as First 5 LA, CCALA, and the Partnership for Early Childhood Investment to develop a comprehensive support system for ECE providers applying for the state Infrastructure Grant Program.

Response to the Motion:

The OAECE in collaboration with Regional Planning and the Policy Roundtable developed a plan to assess the feasibility of strategies to streamline the ECE facility development process and a comprehensive support system for ECE providers applying for the Facilities Infrastructure Grant Program.

Directive #1: Develop Plan to Assess the Feasibility of Strategies to Streamline the ECE Facility Development Process

OAECE, Regional Planning, the Policy Roundtable, Public Works Department Building and Safety Division (Building and Safety), Fire Department (Fire), CDSS, Public Counsel, and First 5 LA developed the following plan to assess the feasibility of strategies to streamline the ECE facility development process in LA County.

Access to Information

- **Strategy Recommendation #1:** Maximize ECE coordination between Regional Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire through the proactive interdepartmental coordination of all ECE facility development applications.
 - **Status of Strategy:** Completed
- **Strategy Recommendation #2:** Create a website with informational resources for ECE providers, including user-friendly summaries of state and local code requirements, permitting processes, and potential fees associated with the project.
 - **Status of Strategy:** Completed

Reduce Processing Time

- **Strategy Recommendation #3:** Amend LA county zoning code to streamline the review of ECE centers.
 - **Status of Strategy:** Regional Planning is exploring the process to amend the County's zoning code as appropriate to allow child care centers a use “by right” or with a ministerial SPR in all applicable zones.

Reduce Financial Barriers

- **Strategy Recommendation #4:** Conduct an ECE facility development fee study.
 - **Status of Strategy:** Completed

Directive #2: Develop Support System for ECE Providers Applying for the State Infrastructure Grant Program

OAECE and Regional Planning established the LA County ECE Facilities Development Workgroup (Workgroup) that includes the OAECE, Regional Planning, Building and Safety, Fire, CDSS, Public Counsel, and First 5 LA to support LA County ECE providers apply for the CDSS Infrastructure Grant Program. The following are examples of supports the Workgroup along with Resource and Referral (R&R) agencies provided to LA County ECE providers.

- **LA County Facilities Development Process Webinar and Toolkit:** With the support of First 5 LA, the Workgroup provided a webinar and toolkit outlining LA County's land use and facilities development review and approval process. Staff from the OAECE, Regional Planning, Building and Safety, Fire, and CDSS presented information about their respective department's role, oversight, and process related to ECE facilities development. The webinar was provided in English and Spanish and more than 200 people attended. The recording of the webinar is available on the OAECE's website for the public to access. The “Child Care for All: How to Develop and Renovate ECE Facilities in LA County” toolkit is available in English, Spanish, Korean, and Chinese and can be accessed on the OAECE's website.

- CDSS Infrastructure Application Clinic Webinars: With the support of First 5 LA, the OAECE, and Public Counsel provided webinars that reviewed a step-by-step process for completing the Infrastructure Grant application. Webinars were provided in English and Spanish, and in partnership with R&Rs, more than 600 people participated. The webinars are also available on the OAECE's website for the public to access.
- CDSS Infrastructure Application Reviews: Public Counsel provided individual review and feedback to ECE providers about their draft CDSS Infrastructure Applications. More than 50 application reviews were provided.
- Responded to Questions About CDSS Infrastructure Application: OAECE, Public Counsel, Regional Planning, and Building and Safety answered more than 100 questions submitted to the Workgroup about the CDSS Infrastructure Application.
- LA County Staff Prioritized ECE Facilities Requests: Regional Planning and Building and Safety coordinated and prioritized all questions, plan reviews, and permit applications related to ECE facilities.
- ECE Facilities Development Project Webpage: The OAECE established an ECE Facilities Development Project webpage that includes CDSS Infrastructure Application information and resources about the LA County facilities development process and contacts. This page of the website can be accessed at childcare.lacounty.gov/special-projects.
- OAECE and Regional Planning Collaboration: The two departments are co-leading the Workgroup and co-presented an overview of the effort to the Policy Roundtable on January 12, 2022. On March 16, 2022, the team also presented to the Regional Planning Commission the challenges ECE providers face to improve or acquire new facilities, as well as an overview of the CDSS ECE infrastructure facilities development funding. Finally, the OAECE gained input from the Policy Roundtable Commission on the solutions to remove barriers for acquiring and improving ECE facilities.

The attached report, “Plan to Assess Feasibility of Potential Solutions to Remove Barriers in ECE Land Use Entitlements and Permitting Processes and Engage Additional Partners to Support ECE Providers Applying for state Infrastructure Grant Program,” provided to the Board of Supervisors, provides more details about the plan and support system developed.

3) INFORMED BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND/OR STATE POLICYMAKERS ABOUT PROPOSED POLICIES AND ECE NEEDS

The following are examples of how the Policy Roundtable informed the Board of Supervisors and policymakers about proposed policies and ECE needs:

- Elevated ECE Coalition budget asks and SB 246 (Leyva) pertaining to reimbursement rate reform and rate increases to Third Supervisorial District
- Elevated public policy recommendation to increase the adjustment factor to the reimbursement rate for infants and toddlers served by CDE-contracted programs and to provide 12 months of continuous eligibility for children receiving early care and education services subsidized by the CDE
- Implemented strategy to inform Board of Supervisors about ECE issues through 10 informational meetings with LA County Children’s Deputies

4) STRENGTHENED POLICY ROUNDTABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

The Policy Roundtable strengthened its focus on DEI efforts through the application of its Equity Statement, explicitly elevating these issues in informational meetings with LA County Board of Supervisors' Children's Deputies, and in policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors submitted via Pursuits of Positions to the Legislative Affairs Office. Equity was a foundational issue to address the need for higher pay rates and wages, continuity of ECE services for families, and increased resources to support ECE workforce development. The policy positions adopted by the Policy Roundtable in FY 21-22 embody the Policy Roundtable's Equity Statement.

PART VII: ONGOING/LONG-TERM PROJECTS

VII.1) Ongoing/Long-Term Projects

Question: Provide any ongoing or long-term projects that the Commission is continuing to work on

The Unified Strategic Plan Priority Areas that the Policy Roundtable is currently focusing on are anticipated to need long-term multi-year action to improve policy and systems in these areas.



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October 19, 2021

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director *Barbara Ferrer*

SUBJECT: **PLAN AND FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTING A COMPREHENSIVE EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNMET NEEDS FOR THE EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE (ITEM 34, BOARD AGENDA OF JUNE 22, 2021)**

This is in response to the June 22, 2021 motion by the Board of Supervisors instructing the Director of the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE) in the Department of Public Health (Public Health), in consultation with the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development Commission (Roundtable Commission), the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), the Directors of Workforce Development, Aging, and Community Services (WDACS), the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA), the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI), the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and other relevant departments to:

1. Develop a plan and framework for implementing a comprehensive early care and education workforce development strategy equipped to support new and current workers in the field through educational and job training opportunities.
2. Report back on policy recommendations for unmet needs of the early care and education workforce in Los Angeles County with information related to compensation needs for the early care and education workforce who serve different ages of children in a variety of settings and proposed financial models to increase the wages for licensed early care and education centers and family child care homes based on best practices from other jurisdictions.

1. Plan and Framework for Implementing a Comprehensive Early Care and Education Workforce Development Strategy

OAECE, in coordination with the Roundtable Commission, the Planning Committee, the Directors of WDACS, DPSS, DCBA, LACDA, WGI, and the CEO, developed the following plan and framework for a comprehensive early care and education (ECE) workforce development Strategy. The process was rooted in the County of Los Angeles Unified Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education – 2020-2025 (Strategic

Plan), which was created by the OAECE, in partnership with the Roundtable Commission and the Planning Committee. The Strategic Plan focuses on four priority areas: 1) access to early care and education, 2) early care and education quality, 3) early care and education workforce supports, and 4) family and community engagement in early care and education issues. Grounded in the Strategic Plan's priority on early care and education workforce supports, OAECE conducted individual interviews with local experts from Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (R&Rs), the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), institutions of higher education, WDACs, Child360, First 5 LA, and SEIU to understand the current issues facing the ECE workforce, the existing infrastructure and strategies in place, and system gaps affecting the ECE workforce. In addition to the interviews, OAECE conducted an extensive review of current research and recommendations from national, state, and local reports to inform recommendations. The following recommendations build out a comprehensive workforce development system and are organized by the six specific directives from the Board motion.

- a) ***System Stabilization: An approach to stabilize licensed early care and education providers that are open during COVID-19 recovery and re-engage early care and education providers who have closed during the pandemic.***

Throughout the pandemic, ECE programs have remained open and serving families. Unfortunately, during COVID-19, ECE programs experienced a dramatic decrease in revenue combined with increased costs. Over the course of the pandemic, ECE providers have had to operate under public health restrictions that limited the number of children that could be enrolled. This, coupled with families' concerns about potential exposure to the virus as well as their own loss of income from the pandemic, has resulted in a dramatic loss of income for ECE providers. While income has been reduced by half, on average, expenses have also increased because of public health requirements (e.g., cleaning/sanitation, personal protective equipment). For many providers, particularly family child care home businesses, this has meant cutting their own salaries, taking on personal credit card debt, and temporarily or permanently closing their doors. As of September 1, 2021, 25 percent of the LA County ECE system remain closed and many that are open are in a financially fragile position.

Recommendation (a1): Provide operations grants to center-based early care and education and family child care providers to stabilize the system and prevent further closures.

Implementation Status:

- In Fall 2020, LA County DCBA, LACDA, and OAECE, in partnership with the LA County ECE COVID-19 Response Team¹ provided \$10 million of CARES Act funding through operations grants to 113 ECE centers and 349 family child care providers to help ECE programs re-open or have the ability to remain open.
- On July 27, 2021, LA County appropriated an additional \$10 million to LACDA through the American Rescue Plan Act to launch in Fall 2021 a second round of stabilization grants to support ECE programs to remain open and help re-open more programs. OAECE and the LAC ECE COVID-19 Response Team have been talking with ECE providers throughout the pandemic and would like to support those who have closed to reopen, as well as to help ECE providers that are economically fragile to remain open. With this in mind, OAECE

¹ ECE COVID-19 Response Team consists of OAECE, First 5 LA, LACOE, the Child Care Alliance of LA, the Child Care Resource Center, Pomona Unified School District Resource and Referral Agency, LAUSD, Child360, and the City of LA.

recommends increasing the child care operations grants by an additional \$10 million. With this increase in American Rescue Plan Act funding, LA County would provide resources to approximately 900 ECE providers.

- To ensure that family child care providers are operationally stable, OAECE also recommends partnering with LACDA, DCBA, and community partners like the Non-Profit Finance Fund to provide business technical assistance through a community of practice, coaching, trainings, and tools. This strategy is based upon key findings from the 2020 Los Angeles Early Care and Education Provider Financial Analysis. Due to the economic impact of the pandemic, there is even more urgency to provide business best practices to family child care homes. With an American Rescue Plan Act investment of \$5,000,000, the project would serve up to 500 family child care providers over a two-year period.

- b) **Improved Qualifications and Career Pathways: *A plan to support early care and education professionals to improve their qualifications and advance along the California Early Learning Career Lattice. Strategies may include but not be limited to support for Family, Friends, and Neighbors (FFN) to become licensed family child care homes, career and college advisement, apprenticeships, and financial incentives to increase completion of training, college coursework, degrees, and Child Development Permits.***

Prior to COVID-19, Los Angeles County's ECE system was facing a diminishing supply of licensed child care as well as a teacher shortage. The supply of licensed child care has been declining for over ten years in Los Angeles County, with home-based family child care providers leaving the field at an alarming rate. In fact, the supply of licensed family child care is at its lowest point in over 20 years. Recruitment and retention of qualified educators is a persistent challenge for the ECE field and a direct result of stagnant low compensation and challenging working conditions now exacerbated by the added stress and health risks associated with COVID-19. For these reasons the quantity of the ECE workforce has reached a crisis point.

Research has demonstrated that having a teacher with specialized knowledge and skills is associated with better child outcomes, particularly for those children most at risk for school failure. However according to the ECE Workforce Index, in California just under half (49 percent) of early childhood teachers in centers have a bachelor's degree and that figure is even lower for family child care home providers. While many current ECE workers lack formal preparation and education, they may have extensive experience and can demonstrate the competencies that ensure children in their care receive a high-quality experience. Understanding the various education and training requirements for different settings, how prior education units may or may not transfer, knowing which courses are needed and where to find them has often been cited as barriers and discourages individuals from pursuing or completing their degrees. College and career advisement programs have proven to be successful to help students and current providers navigate the educational requirements for working in ECE settings; however, these programs are scarce and can only serve a limited number of students. The majority of ECE providers earn a low wage making it more difficult to have the resources needed to participate in trainings and pursue a formal education to deepen their knowledge and competencies to better serve young children. This has often been cited as a significant barrier by providers.

Competency-based education pathways allow candidates to shorten the time it takes to get a degree while still ensuring they have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be effective educators. Apprenticeships are another avenue to increase the qualifications of the workforce by allowing individuals currently in the field or new to the field to pursue a degree while working. There are also

a number of barriers to accessing and navigating the preparation and professional development system for early childhood in Los Angeles County. Significant investment in professional development pathways and supports that acknowledge competency, degree, and practice-based qualifications, as well as additional investment in compensation for the ECE workforce are needed to ensure there is a sufficient and ongoing supply of qualified educators.

Recommendation (b1): Increase early educators' participation in professional development through financial incentives and college and career advisement.

Implementation Status:

- Through the \$2.4 million California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Workforce Pathways grant, DPH-OAECE provides financial incentives to early educators to improve their qualifications. In FY 20-21, OAECE provided stipends to 1,219 early educators who completed 21 hours of professional development, college coursework, a degree, or their first child development permit.
- OAECE will continue to provide financial incentives to the ECE workforce this year in addition to launching a new college and career advisement program. Although advisement is being piloted, additional funding of \$3,000,000 over four years is needed to reach all early educators in need of this support service.

Recommendation (b2): Align and expand supports to strengthen family child care businesses, expand family child care services, and support FFN providers to formally enter the workforce.

Implementation Status:

- In FY 20-21, OAECE launched a financial incentive program for FFN providers who completed core ECE training or obtained a family child care home license. This strategy partners with the State funded Child Care Initiative Project (CCIP) to maximize resources for family child care providers. In FY 21-22, the program will expand to reach additional providers and pilot an advisement program for participants that will be funded by the CDSS Workforce Pathways grant.
- In July 2021, LA County dedicated an additional \$10 million of American Rescue Plan Act funding to this effort. WDCAS, LACDA, DBCA, and OAECE will partner with State funded programs like the CCIP and SEIU to align resources to expand the scope and scale of support for family child care providers.
- In September 2021, First 5 LA approved a Home-Based Child Care Strategy which will access the assets and challenges faced by ECE providers, as well as the needs of families. The landscape anyway will inform future investments in home-based ECE programs.

Recommendation (b3): Pilot competency-based pathways that allows the workforce to demonstrate skills to earn credit toward degrees.

Implementation Status:

- To diversify the ECE workforce, there is a need to develop college on-ramps to expedite the degree process based on competency-based testing. To address the increasing shortage of qualified ECE providers, LA County can partner with Partnerships in Education, Articulation, and Collaboration through Higher Education (PEACH), Unite-LA, and the Learning Policy Institute to design, pilot, and evaluate a competency-based education model for the ECE workforce. A total of \$2,000,000 over 4 years is needed for this effort.

Recommendation (b4): Invest in innovative “earn and learn” strategies, such as apprenticeship programs, to recruit, and train an effective workforce.

Implementation Status:

- Apprenticeships serve as an entry model for the ECE workforce that provides training, while earning wages. LA County WDACS is supporting the Child Care Resource Center (CCRR) and the Early Care and Education Pathways to Success (ECEPTS) apprenticeship pilot this fiscal year. WIOA funding in the amount of \$154,000 has been set aside for three cohorts, totaling 24 participants. WDACS, in partnership with OAECE, is seeking to leverage ARP funds and create a high road training partnership (H RTP) as part of its \$9 million multi-industry H RTP programming.
- c) ***System Coordination: Maximize partnerships with outside organizations and colleges such as Quality Start LA, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, First 5 LA, R&Rs, Alternative Payment Program agencies, Child360, and PEACH, and the California ECE Workforce Registry to leverage systems alignment, training and educational opportunities.***

Los Angeles County is home to a rich network of ECE programs administered by many different agencies and home-based child care businesses funded by numerous federal and state funding streams. Similar to this patchwork of programs, there are multiple efforts to support different aspects of the ECE workforce. However, there are few long-term and stable funding sources that target ECE workforce development programs. The strategies implemented are often disconnected and limited in scope and scale and the short-term funding for workforce development initiatives has resulted in the implementation of many strong programs ending when the funding ends. The lack of alignment and resources to coordinate services across a plethora of organizations that support the ECE workforce was emphasized in both the interviews and the literature review. Coordination and collaboration across the multiple systems that support the ECE workforce is essential to ensure the sustainability of a comprehensive workforce system.

Recommendation (c1): Establish and convene an ECE workforce collaborative to coordinate, align, and maximize resources.

Implementation Status:

- In FY 20-21, OAECE launched the Workforce Pathways LA Joint Committee on Workforce Systems Improvement which assessed the LA County ECE professional development landscape. In June 2021, the committee released “Learning from Today, Preparing for Tomorrow: An Early Care and Education Professional Development Analysis for Los Angeles County” and convened a forum to discuss next steps in building a better system. Based on the work forged by this effort led by the OAECE, the Quality Start LA Workforce Development Committee, and the Planning Committee Workforce Workgroup, this strategy needs \$1,000,000 over four years to expand, convene, and coordinate a countywide ECE workforce collaborative.
- The California ECE Workforce Registry (Registry) is an essential tool for tracking ECE workforce data such as demographics, qualifications, and compensation information and communicating with early educators and policy makers to inform decision-making. The Registry was instrumental in conducting recent ECE professional development system assessments in real-time. An investment of \$2,000,000 over four years is needed to refine and sustain the long-term data collection and management of the Registry.

- d) **Facility Development:** *Consult with relevant ECE stakeholders to provide recommendations to reduce fees, streamline the permitting process and review child care as a permitted use in certain zones to catalyze the opening of new child care providers in Los Angeles County.*

The FY 21-22 California budget includes \$250 million for Child Care Infrastructure Grants. These grants will provide support for the acquisition, construction, development, and renovation of child care facilities in primarily child care deserts. ECE providers serving LA County who receive these infrastructure grants will need technical assistance and support to navigate the various local licensing, zoning, permitting, and other regulatory processes that pose barriers to the development of new child care facilities and the expansion of existing facilities. In 2018, to address the unmet need for ECE services in the County, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion in consultation with the Roundtable, OAECE, Internal Services (ISD), and Public Works (DPW) to explore whether unused County-owned property and County-owned buildings could be used to build new or house existing ECE facilities in accordance with state and local regulations. Although the process failed to identify county-owned properties, it did uncover and highlight the numerous hurdles that early care and education providers face when seeking to open or expand facilities and ultimately affirmed that there is not a system of support related to facilities for providers to utilize in Los Angeles County. Based on the report back to the Board of Supervisors on June 14, 2019, several policies and programs were identified to address these barriers including: (1) creating a “one-stop” website with informational resources for providers, including user-friendly summaries of state and local code requirements and permitting processes; and (2) Offering technical assistance and free one-on-one guidance to help providers navigate the development process from beginning to end.

Recommendation (d1): Expand ECE facilities by supporting ECE providers in navigating licensing, zoning, permitting, and other regulatory processes that pose barriers.

Implementation Status:

- In September 2021, the Low-Income Investment Fund (LIFF), in partnership with OAECE, First 5 LA, and the Planning Committee, launched a roundtable series to cultivate ECE facilities champions in LA County.
 - In addition, OAECE has dedicated \$100,000 to support the design of an on-line facilities development toolkit with informational resources for ECE providers. OAECE is currently having planning conversations with Public Counsel and the Department of Regional Planning to prepare for the launch of this project.
 - As a final piece of the implementation plan, OAECE recommends that a dedicated position be created in the Department of Regional Planning to support ECE facility navigation. In order to take the first steps in developing a facilities support system for ECE services, action is needed to create an LA County staff position to provide support and technical assistance to ECE providers opening new facilities or expanding existing facilities. Approximately, \$800,000 over four years would be needed to support facility navigation staff.
- e) **Philanthropic Partnerships:** *Identify funding to capitalize early care and education providers who were forced to close between March 2020 to present to spur re-opening.*
- Partnering with philanthropy enables the public sector to leverage the knowledge, resources, and flexibility of philanthropic organizations that share the same goals. LA County is fortunate in that the Country’s largest private foundations, family foundations, First 5 LA, and other key government agencies who are focused on improving outcomes for young children come together under the leadership of the LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment (LA Partnership). The mission of

the LA Partnership is to invest in and promote innovations that advance the lifelong health and well-being of LA County children, ages 0-5.

Recommendation (e1): Work with LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment to align public and private resources.

Implementation Status:

- Although public and private funders have invested resources in ECE workforce development, there have been limited conversations on how to align resources. The LA Partnership has invited OAECE as well as representatives from the Offices of Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell and Supervisor Sheila Kuehl to present the recommendations in this motion and possible roles for the philanthropic community.
- f) **Funding Approach:** *Identify any staffing needs and costs that would be required to implement the comprehensive workforce development strategy along with identification of any potential funding sources.*

LA County has a deep history in supporting ECE workforce development. As one of the four priority areas in the Strategic Plan, several ECE workforce initiatives have secured funding and are either in the planning phase or underway. As shared earlier in this report, action is taking place in core ECE workforce development areas including operations grants to stabilize the ECE industry, financial incentives to improve the qualifications of the ECE workforce, programs to support family child care providers, and initiatives to increase and/or improve ECE facilities. Although there are numerous ECE workforce strategies being implemented throughout LA County, the planning effort for this report affirmed several gaps that still need to be addressed. OAECE recommends the following investments to address some of these prominent ECE workforce development system gaps.

Recommendation (f1): Secure funding to support the following components of the Comprehensive ECE Workforce Development Framework

Implementation Status:

- **System Stabilization: Expand Operations Grants for ECE providers**
 - Amount Needed: \$10,000,000 over 1 year.
 - Potential Funders: American Rescue Plan Act
- **System Stabilization: Support Family Child Care Homes with Business Technical Assistance**
 - Amount Needed: \$5,000,000 over 2 years
 - Potential Funders: American Rescue Plan Act, Partnership for Early Childhood Investment
- **Improved Qualifications and Career Pathways: Expand College and Career Advisement for Early Educators**
 - Amount Needed: \$3,000,000 over 4 years
 - Potential Funders: LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment
- **Improved Qualifications and Career Pathways: Develop and Pilot Competency-based College Credit Pathway for Early Educators**
 - Amount Needed: \$2,000,000 over 4 years
 - Potential Funders: American Rescue Plan Funding, LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment
- **System Coordination: Strengthen ECE Workforce Development Systems Coordination**

- Amount Needed: \$1,000,000 over 4 years
- Potential Funders: American Rescue Plan Funding, First 5 LA, LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment
- **System Coordination:** Fortify Workforce Data Infrastructure through the ECE Workforce Registry
 - Amount Needed: \$2,000,000 over 4 years
 - Potential Funders: LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment
- **Facility Development:** Establish LA County ECE Facilities Development Navigation:
 - Amount Needed: \$800,000 over 4 years
 - Potential Funders: American Rescue Plan Funding, LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment

2. Policy Recommendations for Unmet Needs for the Early Care and Education Workforce

The reasons for the decline in the number of ECE workers are complex and interconnected, but at the heart of the issue is low compensation and lack of benefits. While the average annual salary of a kindergarten teacher in LA County is \$66,000 including benefits, the ECE sector earns, on average, just above the minimum wage. In fact, 50 percent of ECE worker households are “low income” and a high proportion of these households are on some form of public assistance. While the wages for the industry overall are low, disparities within the field also exist depending on funding source, ages of children served, organization, and type of care provided. There is also significant racial disparity in wages. According to the [2020 Early Childhood Workforce Index report](#), Black women and educators who work with infants and toddlers are paid thousands of dollars less than their peers. Investments in wages and the professional development of the ECE workforce would not only reduce the need for providers to rely on public assistance but would make the field more attractive to new and higher skilled workers. According to a UNITE-LA report, “every \$1 invested in higher wages (both for existing and potential ECE workers) would yield a 1.9 multiplier effect across the economy in terms of output and a corresponding 1.3 multiplier effect for additional labor income in LA County.”

Recommendation (2a): Provide financial relief to individuals in the ECE workforce through, for example, stipends, bonuses, tax credits, education loan forgiveness, home buying assistance, and local increases to child care vouchers.

Implementation Status:

- Based on an April 2021 agreement between the State of California and California Child Care Providers United, providers who served children receiving subsidies from the following programs in March 2021 are eligible for a \$600 per-child stipend:
 - CalWORKS Stages One, Two and Three
 - Alternative Payment Programs including Migrant Alternative Payment Programs
 - General Child Care and Development Programs
 - Migrant Child Care and Development Programs
 - Family Child Care Home Education Network
 - Child Care and Development Services for Children with Special Needs
 - Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children (Bridge Program)
- Although one-time stipends are an excellent resource, they are a short-term benefit. A sustainable strategy is needed to lift a significant portion of the ECE workforce out of poverty. Currently, State subsidized early educators who accept child care vouchers through the Alternative Payment program are only reimbursed for child care services at the 75th

percentile of the 2018 market rate. In both San Francisco and Riverside County, local government has increased the compensation of early educators by blending local and state funding.

- In this time of COVID-19 recovery, LA County has the opportunity to increase the compensation of early educators by braiding local and State funding. Based on the success of the LA County CARES Act Child Care Vouchers, OAECE recommends augmenting LA County child care vouchers through the Alternative Payment program with local funding to 100 percent of the 2018 market rate.

Recommendation (2b): Re-envision the State ECE reimbursement system to cover the true cost of quality care.

Implementation Status:

- Historically, ECE providers who care for low-income children through State subsidies are reimbursed by two different rates, the Standard Reimbursement Rate and the Regional Market Rate. In FY 20-21, the Board of Supervisors took a position of support on State legislation SB 246 that proposed restructuring the reimbursement system for ECE providers. As a result of statewide advocacy, the spirit of SB 246 was incorporated into the FY 21-22 California budget by:
 - Raising the Regional Market Rate from the 75th percentile of the 2016 Regional Market Rate survey to the 75th percentile of the 2018 survey effective January 1, 2022.
 - Transitioning direct service contractors from a reimbursement based on the lower Standard Reimbursement Rate to the higher Regional Market Rate ceiling.
 - Establishing the reimbursement rate for license exempt providers (Family, Friends, and Neighbors) to receive a State subsidy equivalent to 70 percent of the licensed family child care home rate ceiling.
- Although this is the beginning of a transformation of the reimbursement system for ECE providers, there is a great deal of policy work that needs to continue. This moment in time presents a unique opportunity for LA County to sponsor or support legislation to increase the State ECE reimbursement rate to a level that covers the true cost of care for young children and would raise much of the ECE workforce out of poverty.

Recommendation (2c): Develop and endorse LA County ECE salary scale/compensation standards that outline the qualifications and minimum salary/benefits for different levels of the workforce using the living wage/self-sufficiency standards as the floor and parity with Transition Kindergarten – 3rd grade educator salaries for lead teachers with bachelor's degree and Child Development Permit, regardless of setting.

Implementation Status:

- The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment has identified the development and use of wage scales as a necessary strategy for improving compensation. A wage scale is intended to be used to inform cost-estimate modeling for expanding access to high-quality ECE and to provide a guide for fair and just compensation. Salary scales have been built in Minnesota, Illinois, North Carolina, Oregon, and Washington.
- In LA County, this work began in 2005 when the CEO and OAECE first published the Model Compensation Scale for Child Care Workers Study. In 2020, LA County released a Comprehensive Fiscal Analysis of the Los Angeles County Early Care and Education System, which provides a new wage analysis.
- LA County is well positioned to lead the promotion of a wage scale for the ECE workforce. OAECE recommends that the salary scale in the Comprehensive Fiscal Analysis of the Los

Angeles County Early Care and Education System be used as an advocacy tool that the Board of Supervisors could endorse and elevate in a campaign for increased ECE provider compensation.

Recommendation (2d): Explore the feasibility of a local ongoing revenue source to subsidize compensation for early care and education providers.

Implementation Status:

- In 1987, a children's agenda was passed by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors which set the stage for several ballot initiatives for children, including an initiative to support child care wages. In 2020, Alameda County implemented a tax to support ECE and San Joaquin County has implemented a cannabis tax to support children and youth.
- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a spotlight at the State and Federal levels on the critical importance of early care and education. OAECE recommends that LA County build on this momentum by identifying a local revenue source to increase compensation that meets a defined wage scale for the ECE workforce.

OAECE will continue to update you on significant developments related to this plan. If you have questions or need additional information, please let me know.

BF:da:dc

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Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Public Social Services
Consumer and Business Affairs
Los Angeles Child Care Planning Committee
Los Angeles County Development Authority
Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development Commission
Women and Girls Initiative
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May 6, 2022

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director *Barbara Ferrer*

SUBJECT: PLAN TO ASSESS FEASIBILITY OF POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS TO REMOVE BARRIERS IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) LAND USE ENTITLEMENTS AND PERMITTING PROCESSES AND ENGAGE ADDITIONAL PARTNERS TO SUPPORT ECE PROVIDERS APPLYING FOR STATE INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM

This report is in response to the February 8, 2022 motion by the LA County Board of Supervisors directing the Department of Public Health’s Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE) in collaboration with the Department of Regional Planning (Regional Planning) and the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development Commission (Policy Roundtable Commission) to:

1. Provide a plan to assess the feasibility of strategies to streamline the early care and education (ECE) facility development process. The plan should explore strategies to identify barriers and potential solutions to remove those barriers in ECE facilities land use entitlement and permitting processes. The plan should also identify any staffing needs and costs that would be required to implement strategies to streamline the ECE land use and facilities requests process.
2. Engage additional partners such as First 5 LA, the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, and the Partnership for Early Childhood Investment to develop a comprehensive support system for ECE providers applying for the State Infrastructure Grant Program.



Section 1. Plan to Assess the Feasibility of Strategies to Streamline the ECE Facility Development Process

Early care and education is a critical part of Los Angeles County's education and economic infrastructure, yet in 2019, child care facilities only had the capacity to serve 5% of children under 2 years old.¹ In 2017-2021, the ECE field lost more than 7% of child care homes and more than 16% of licensed infant/toddler spaces.² This shortage of child care services is due to a combination of factors including a high demand for subsidized ECE services, a shortage of child care facilities, and minimal State and local funding. Additionally, due to the expansion of universal transitional kindergarten for all four year-olds, there is an immediate need to convert ECE facility space designed for preschool age children to be developmentally appropriate facilities for infants and toddlers.

To examine possible solutions, OAECE, in collaboration with Regional Planning, the Policy Roundtable Commission, Public Works Department Building and Safety Division (Building and Safety), Fire Department (Fire), California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Public Counsel, and First 5 LA developed the following plan to assess the feasibility of strategies to streamline the ECE facility development process in LA County. Grounded in the County of Los Angeles Unified Strategic Plan for Early Care and Education 2020-2025 (Strategic Plan), OAECE and Regional Planning established the LA County ECE Facilities Development Workgroup (Workgroup) that includes the OAECE, Regional Planning, Building and Safety, Fire, CDSS, Public Counsel, and First 5 LA to collectively identify the:

- Current issues ECE providers face when developing a new facility and/or renovating facilities
- Infrastructure in place to support ECE providers in navigating LA County's facility development and approval process
- Barriers ECE providers experience in seeking land entitlement approvals
- Possible solutions and approaches to determine if solutions are feasible

The OAECE also researched local, state, and national ECE facility development approval protocols, conducted individual interviews, and reviewed research with local and state-wide ECE facilities experts to identify effective practices to inform recommendations. Also, the information gathered during this process incorporates data and recommendations from the report "Assessing LA County Property for Future Early Care and Learning Sites" submitted to the Board in 2019. The following plan outlines strategies and feasibility of streamlining the ECE facilities development process, as well as an overview of the comprehensive system that has been developed to support ECE providers applying for State Infrastructure Grant funding.

Access to Information

The land use and facility development approval process can be challenging for most ECE providers because there are multiple systems they need to navigate, with each system possibly

¹ California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Child Care Data Tool, accessed, 4.20.22.
<https://rrnetwork.org/research/child-care-data-tool#!0>

² California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Child Care Data Tool, accessed, 4.20.22.
<https://rrnetwork.org/research/child-care-data-tool#!0>

requiring different information from the ECE provider. For example, ECE providers seeking to develop new facilities or improve current facilities will likely need various types of approvals from the following County/State departments: 1) Regional Planning, 2) Building and Safety, 3) Fire, and 4) CDSS Child Care Licensing Division. Building and Safety operates District Offices that provide Building and Safety services in localized locations throughout LA County. The seven District Offices that serve the unincorporated communities and include Regional Planning staff, which helps strengthen coordination between the two Departments, includes Antelope Valley, Calabasas, East Los Angeles, La Puente, San Gabriel Valley, Santa Clarita Valley, and Southwest. At a County level, Regional Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire have designated ECE Facility Coordinators to support ECE providers in their respective department's land use and/or facility development requirements and these staff are also members of the Workgroup. The Department of Public Works also provides Building and Safety services, such as reviewing and approving ECE facility development plans and permit requests to 14 contract cities. In addition, Building and Safety partners with municipal planning staff to provide services in Artesia, Carson, Cerritos, Industry, Irwindale, La Canada Flintridge, La Mirada, Lakewood, Lawndale, Lomita, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estate, Santa Fe Springs, and Westlake Village.

- **Recommendation 1: Maximize ECE coordination between Regional Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire through the proactive interdepartmental coordination of all ECE facility development applications**

To help ECE providers navigate the complex facilities development requirements, it is recommended that ECE providers start with Regional Planning staff at each District Office listed above to obtain basic information including application requirements and who to contact in the other departments. "One Stop" meetings with the designated Regional Planning, Building and Safety, and Fire ECE Coordinators would also be offered to ECE providers so they can obtain more detailed, site-specific information before they submit an application. ECE providers can travel to any District Office to participate in these meetings, but because there is one designated ECE Coordinator in each department, the ECE Coordinators may participate virtually. After ECE providers submit an application online or at a District Office, the application would be routed to the designated Regional Planning ECE Coordinator, who will work directly with the designated Building and Safety and Fire ECE Coordinators to obtain the required approvals from all departments. By implementing this process, ECE providers will have a single point of contact that will make sure applications for facilities throughout the unincorporated communities are processed consistently and expeditiously. A single application form addressing all departments' requirements will be explored to further expedite the process.

- *Feasibility of Recommendation:*

Due to the existing relationship across County departments, the Workgroup has determined that this recommendation is highly feasible to implement. The current level of staffing is able to sufficiently manage the ECE facilities plan reviews and permit requests, but if the demand for ECE facility permits significantly increases, then additional staff from the departments may be needed. The current staff are able to partner to maximize ECE coordination among all departments and no additional costs are associated with this recommendation.

- **Recommendation 2: Create a website with informational resources for ECE providers, including user-friendly summaries of State and local code requirements, permitting processes, and potential fees associated with the project.**

The proposed on-line resource would be housed on OAECE's website at childcare.lacounty.gov. It would include a user-friendly directory of staff designated in LA County departments that can help with processing ECE facilities development plan reviews and requests for permits. This staff directory will be available to the public and County staff to help ECE providers know who to contact in each department and improve timely communication between departments. In addition, the OAECE recently partnered with Public Council to produce an ECE Facility Development Toolkit and corresponding training. Once completed, the toolkit would also be housed on the OAECE website as a part of a collection of ECE facilities development resources.

- *Feasibility of Recommendation:*

By building upon OAECE's current website, the Workgroup has determined that this recommendation is highly feasible to implement. The OAECE has staff resources to update the website's information on a regular basis and it has the funding to support the costs associated with building the webpage. The total budget for the project is estimated to be \$5,000. The most significant challenge is the time needed to create content and design the new elements of the website.

Reduce Processing Time

The time to process land use and facility development plans, as well as permitting approvals, could range from a couple of months to over a year. For example, the process to authorize a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) that requires a public hearing could take more than 12 months. In March 2022, Regional Planning and the OAECE presented to the Regional Planning Commission about the critical need for ECE services in LA County and the ECE facilities development challenges providers experience in obtaining zoning and permit approvals. The Regional Planning Commission expressed interest in identifying ways to improve these processes for ECE providers.

Currently, the County zoning code has the following relevant land use definitions:

- **Small FCC Home** - A home that regularly provides non-medical care, protection, and supervision for eight or fewer children in the provider's own home for periods of less than 24 hours per day, as defined and licensed under the regulations of the State of California.
- **Large FCC Home** - A home that regularly provides non-medical care, protection, and supervision for nine to 14 children in the provider's own home, for periods of less than 24 hours per day as defined and licensed under the regulations of the State of California.
- **Child Day Care Center** - As defined by Section 1596.76 of the California Health and Safety Code, a licensed child day care facility other than a FCC home, that provides non-medical care and supervision for children on less than a 24-hour basis. This term includes

"infant center," "preschool," "extended day care facility" and "school-age child care center."

The County zoning code allows ECE facilities: by right (P); with a ministerial Site Plan Review (SPR) that only requires staff review and approval and does not require a public hearing; or a CUP in certain zones, as follows:

AGRICULTURAL /RURAL ZONES	A-1	A-2	C-RU	MXD- RU
Child care centers	CUP	CUP	SPR	SPR
Child care centers, accessory to K-12 school	CUP	SPR		
Schools K-12	CUP	CUP	SPR	SPR
FCC homes, large and small, in an approved residential use	P	P	P	P

RESIDENTIAL ZONES	R-A	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-5
Child care centers >50	CUP	CUP	CUP	SPR	SPR	SPR
Child care centers <=50	CUP	CUP	CUP	MCUP	SPR	SPR
Schools K-12	CUP	CUP	CUP	CUP	SPR	-
FCC homes, large and small, in an approved residential use	P	P	P	P	P	P

COMMERCIAL/MIXED USE ZONES	C-H	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-M	C-R	C-MJ	MXD
Child care centers	SPR	SPR						
Schools K-12	SPR	SPR	SPR	SPR	SPR	CUP	-	SPR
FCC homes, large and small, in an approved residential use	P	P						

Other jurisdictions such as Santa Monica³, San Francisco⁴, Redwood City⁵, Oakland, and Hayward have streamlined their review processes of ECE facilities land use requests by

³ Santa Monica Zoning Ordinance, accessed 4.21.22, <https://publicdocs.smgov.net/WebLink/0/edoc/2343115/o-2486.pdf>

⁴ San Francisco Planning, Memo To The Planning Commission, accessed 4.11.22, <https://commissions.sfplanning.org/cpcpackets/2020-014033OTH.pdf>; San Francisco Planning, Save Our Small Businesses Initiative (Prop H/SBRA), accessed 4.11.22, <https://sfplanning.org/save-our-small-businesses-initiative>,

⁵ Redwood City, Zoning Code Amendments and Updates, accessed, 4.11.22, <https://www.redwoodcity.org/departments/community-development-department/planning-housing/planning-services/zoning-code-amendments>

Redwood City, Article 39 – Child Care Facilities, accessed 4.11.22,

https://library.municode.com/ca/redwood_city/codes/zoning_code?nodeId=ART39CHCAFA_39.5FAEXHCACE

establishing additional by right or ministerial site plan review processes for ECE facilities.⁶ In 2019, Governor Newsom signed SB 234, the “Keeping Kids Close To Home Act”⁷ that extends large family child care homes serving up to 14 children the same exemptions under local neighborhood zoning and permitting laws that small family child care homes received. Specifically, SB 234 clarified that a city or county cannot require a large family child care home to obtain a zoning permit or business license to provide services.⁸ Although this legislation streamlined the steps for family child care facility development, ECE centers are still required to go through a lengthy process.

- **Recommendation 3: Amend LA County zoning code to streamline the review of ECE centers**

To reduce the barriers to ECE facility development, OAECE recommends amending the County’s zoning code as appropriate to allow child care centers a use by right or with a ministerial SPR in all applicable zones. The ordinance would expedite the process by making some projects ministerial, eliminating long procedures such as individualized public hearings and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which analyzes the potential environmental impacts of proposed projects. A shift of this nature will allow ECE providers to move through the facility development process in a timely way.

- *Feasibility of Recommendation:*

Since there is precedent by other jurisdictions to make some projects eligible for a use by right or ministerial reviews, the Workgroup has determined that this recommendation is somewhat feasible to implement. Overall, there is collective interest by County departments, ECE providers, and the public to eliminate ECE facilities development barriers such as long approval processes for some projects. The most significant barriers to the recommendation are the costs and the time it would take to implement. The budget associated with preparing the ordinance is estimated to be between \$300,000 to \$500,000. This amount would be to prepare the analyses and documents in compliance with the CEQA. An additional \$50,000-\$100,000 would be needed for community engagement. Finally, the process to gain approval for a use by right or a ministerial review can be lengthy, taking an average of 12 months.

Reduce Financial Barriers

Child care facility development fees also create barriers for ECE providers in obtaining land use/entitlement, facility development plan reviews and permit approvals. ECE services are primarily provided by not-for-profit centers and small businesses called family child care (FCC) home providers. In 2021, over 68% of licensed facilities in LA County were family child care

⁶ Child Care Planning Council Alameda County, Land Use for Child Care Facilities: Current Practice and Strategies for Streamlining the Development of Child Care Spaces for Alameda County’s Children, accessed 4.10.22, https://www.acgov.org/ece/documents/Final_Land_Use_Report.pdf

⁷ Nancy Skinner, Gov. Newsom Signs SB 234, The “Keeping Kids Close To Home Act”, accessed 4.10.22, <https://sd09.senate.ca.gov/news/20190906-gov-newsom-signs-sb-234-“keeping-kids-close-home-act”>

⁸ Child Care Law Center, SB 234 Frequently Asked Questions, accessed, 4.10.22, <https://www.childcarelaw.org/sb234-resources/sb-234-faqs-for-family-child-care-providers/>

homes.⁹ On average, the ECE sector earns just above minimum wage. In addition, ECE providers are predominantly women of color and 50% of ECE worker households are “low income” with a high proportion of these households on some form of public assistance.¹⁰ As a result, it is difficult for ECE providers to raise the funding needed to acquire a facility and/or make facility improvements. LA County facility development filing fees can range from hundreds to thousands of dollars for child care facilities. Far too often providers abandon their project to improve their ECE facilities because the land use and Building and Safety fees are too high to continue the project. For example, an ECE provider who has a project that costs \$50,000 will be charged approximately \$2,000 for the building, energy, and disabled access plan check fee and permit fee. A project that costs \$100,000 will be charged approximately \$3,000 for the same types of fees. Some fees are based on the cost of the project and the fee is a percentage of the project’s total budget. Building and Safety has additional fees that include plan check fees and permit fees for areas such as mechanical, plumbing, electrical, sewer, and grading. In addition, the ECE provider will likely have to pay Regional Planning and Fire fees. For example, a CUP process facilitated by Regional Planning may cost an ECE provider \$10,215. One provider paid nearly \$90,000 in combined fees and was not able to complete the project due to the lack of funds. If a by right ordinance for land use was adopted, the processing time for facility development requests would be shortened and there would also be less fees associated with the project.

- **Recommendation 4: Conduct an ECE facility development fee study**
OAECE recommends the implementation of a facility development fee study to understand the types of fees associated with applications, the amounts of the various fees, and what the fees pay for in the County system. The study also needs to identify the estimated amount of ECE facility projects that each department reviews per year, over time. In addition, the study would explore different funding sources to offset the fees that have been historically passed onto the ECE providers.
 - *Feasibility of Recommendation:* Based on the success of other municipalities implementing fee studies for ECE facilities, the Workgroup has determined that this recommendation is highly feasible. The City of Santa Monica’s Child Care Linkage Fee Study provides a roadmap for this recommendation. The County departments’ designated ECE facilities development staff have both the knowledge and the data readily available to conduct the fee study so there are no additional costs associated with the project. The largest challenge is that staff will need time to conduct the fee study, including gathering the data and conducting the analysis.

⁹ California Department of Social Services, Child Care Centers, accessed 2.27.22, <https://www.cclld.dss.ca.gov/carefacilitysearch/DownloadData>

¹⁰ While the wages for the industry overall are low, disparities within the field also exist depending on funding source, ages of children served, organization, and type of care provided. There is also significant racial disparity in wages. According to the [2020 Early Childhood Workforce Index report](#), Black women and educators who work with infants and toddlers are paid thousands of dollars less than their peers

Section 2. Comprehensive Support System for ECE Providers Applying for the State Infrastructure Grant Program

In Fiscal Year 21-22, the State of California allocated a historic investment of \$250 million in one-time Federal and General Funds for funding infrastructure for child care facilities, focusing on areas of highest unmet need “child care deserts.” The CDSS released its Requests for Application (RFA) in February 2022 for minor facilities repairs. Successful applicants will receive CDSS grants for the acquisition, construction, development, and renovation of ECE facilities. To support LA County ECE providers, the Workgroup in partnership with Resource and Referral (R&R) agencies, provided application assistance to LA County ECE providers. Examples of the supports provided include:

- **LA County Facilities Development Process Webinar** – With the support of First 5 LA, the Workgroup provided a webinar outlining LA County’s land use and facilities development review and approval process. Staff from the OAECE, Regional Planning, Building and Safety, Fire, and CDSS presented information about their respective department’s role, oversight, and process related to ECE facilities development. The webinar was provided in English and Spanish and more than 200 people attended. The recording of the webinar is available on the OAECE’s website for the public to access.
- **CDSS Infrastructure Application Clinic Webinars** – With the support of First 5 LA, the OAECE, and Public Counsel provided webinars that reviewed a step-by-step process for completing the Infrastructure Grant application. Webinars were provided in English and Spanish, and in partnership with R&Rs, more than 600 people participated. The webinars are also available on the OAECE’s website for the public to access.
- **CDSS Infrastructure Application Reviews** – Public Counsel provided individual review and feedback to ECE providers about their draft CDSS Infrastructure Applications. More than 50 application reviews were provided.
- **Responded to Questions About CDSS Infrastructure Application** – OAECE, Public Counsel, Regional Planning, and Building and Safety answered more than 100 questions submitted to the Workgroup about the CDSS Infrastructure Application.
- **LA County Staff Prioritized ECE Facilities Requests** – Regional Planning and Building and Safety coordinated and prioritized all questions, plan reviews, and permit applications related to ECE facilities.
- **ECE Facilities Development Project Webpage** – The OAECE established an ECE Facilities Development Project webpage that includes CDSS Infrastructure Application information and resources about the LA County facilities development process and contacts. This page of the website can be accessed at childcare.lacounty.gov/special-projects.
- **OAECE and Regional Planning Collaboration** – The two departments are co-leading the Workgroup and co-presented an overview of the effort to the Policy Roundtable Commission on January 12, 2022. On March 16, 2022, the team also presented to the Regional Planning Commission about the challenges ECE providers face to improve or acquire new facilities, as well as an overview of the CDSS ECE infrastructure facilities development funding. Finally, the OAECE gained input from the Policy Roundtable

Commission on the solutions to remove barriers for acquiring and improving ECE facilities.

It is anticipated that CDSS will release a second RFA for major facilities construction by June 2022 and the Workgroup will provide supports consistent with those provided for the minor facilities repairs RFA.

To create a long-term vision for ECE facilities, OAECE is also working with the LA Partnership for Early Childhood Investment (LA Partnership), a public-private collaboration of the County's largest private foundations, family foundations, Unite-LA, Frist 5 LA, and key government agencies that come together to invest in and promote innovations that advance the lifelong health and well-being of LA County children, age birth - 5. The LA Partnership is exploring the possibility of conducting a landscape analysis of the ECE field to help inform what is needed to build on-going and stronger support for the ECE system. This analysis would identify the number of ECE facilities needed in lower-resourced communities. The LA Partnership is also exploring possible long-term alternative funding sources to increase and stabilize ECE services, including funding to reduce and/or remove the ECE facility development financial barriers.