



Child Care Planning Committee
Wednesday, April 1, 2026 • 12:00 – 2:30 p.m.

California Endowment
 1000 N Alameda St, • Redwood Room
 Los Angeles, California, 90012

Vision Statement

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

Mission Statement

Lead, build and strengthen an affordable and high-quality early care and education system for the children and families of Los Angeles County.

Agenda

Theme FY 2025-2026: Strengthening the ECE community in times of change.

| Time | Agenda Item | Activity | Speaker |
|------------------------|---|-------------|--|
| 1. 12:00-12:20 p.m. | <u>Welcome & Introductions</u> 1A. Reading of the Vision Statement and Mission Statement 1B. Introduction of Councilmembers, Alternates, and Public 1C. Comments from the Chair | Information | Manuel Fierro, Chair of Child Care Planning Committee |
| 2. 12:20-12:30 p.m. | <u>Family Access Ad Hoc Update</u> 2A. Presentation of the FY 25-26 Local Planning Council (LPC) Local Funding Priorities Report | Information | Sylvia Hernandez Family Access Ad Hoc Co-chair Leidy Bernasconi Family Access Ad Hoc Co-chair |
| 3. 12:30-12:40 p.m. | <u>Consent Calendar</u> 3A. Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2026 3B. Approval of the FY 25-26 Local Planning Council (LPC) Local Funding Priorities Report for Submission to California Department of Social Services | Action Item | Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, Vice Chair of Child Care Planning Committee |
| 4. 12:40-12:45 p.m. | <u>Governance Ad Hoc Update</u> 4A. Presentation of Child Care Planning Committee Membership Application Update | Information | Manuel Fierro, Chair of Child Care Planning Committee Saul Hurtado, Governance Ad Hoc Co-chair LaTanga Hardy Governance Ad Hoc Co-chair |
| 5. 12:45-1:00 p.m. | <u>Presentation of Leadership Candidates</u> 5A. Presentations by FY 26-27 Candidates for Chair, 1 st Vice Chair, and 2 nd Vice Chair | Information | Manuel Fierro, Chair of Child Care Planning Committee |

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| <p>6. 1:00- 1:05 p.m.</p> | <p><u>Special Needs Ad Hoc Update</u> 6A. Presentation of the Status of the Special Needs Landscape</p> | <p>Information</p> | <p>Saul Hurtado Special Needs Ad Hoc Co-chair</p> <p>Sylvia Hernandez Special Needs Ad Hoc Co-chair</p> |
| <p>7. 1:05- 1:25 p.m.</p> | <p><u>Policy Update</u> 7A. Presentation on Joint Committee on Legislation Update and Pursuit of Position 7B. Presentation on Federal and State Public Policy Update 7C. Discussion Among Committee Members 7D. Public Comment</p> | <p>Discussion</p> | <p>Sarah Soriano, Joint Committee on Legislation Chair</p> <p>Rachel Bocarsly, City of LA</p> |
| <p>8. 1:25-2:25 p.m.</p> | <p><u>Strategic Planning</u> 8A. Presentation on Strategic Planning Ad Hoc 8B. Strategic Planning Session on Access to Early Care and Education Services 8C. Discussion Among Committee Members 8D. Public Comment</p> | <p>Discussion</p> | <p>Eli Pessar, Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Chair</p> <p>Demetria M. Murphy, Estolano Advisors</p> |
| <p>9. 2:25-2:29 p.m.</p> | <p>9A. General Public Comment and Announcements</p> | <p>Information</p> | <p>Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, Vice Chair</p> |
| <p>10. 2:29-2:30 p.m.</p> | <p>10A. Call to Adjourn</p> | | <p>Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, Vice Chair</p> |

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Supporting documentation is available on the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education website at www.childcare.lacounty.gov/lpc/

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Next Meeting
Wednesday, June 3, 2026 ▪ 12:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Los Angeles County Office of Education
10100 Pioneer Blvd. Santa Fe Springs California 90670



Child Care Planning Committee Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2026

1. Welcome and Introductions

Manuel Fierro, Chair of the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), began the meeting at 12:11 p.m. by welcoming members and the public. Chair Fierro shared the vision, mission statement and acknowledged the significance of the Planning Committee's work in bringing stakeholders together, particularly in light of recent challenges. Chair Fierro invited attendees to introduce themselves, share their affiliated organization, and state their role within the Planning Committee.

2. Governance Ad hoc Update

La Tanga Hardy, Workforce Ad hoc Co-Chair, provided an update on the Workforce Ad hoc, which oversees Planning Committee governance and reviews proposed changes to the Policies and Procedures Manual. She presented the revision to add a Second Vice Chair position, referred to as the Dianne Philibosian Memorial Chair.

Member Hardy reviewed the origin of the Second Vice Chair strategy, noting it was proposed by Diane Philibosian, and approved at the June 2025 Planning Committee meeting. She explained that the First Vice Chair's responsibilities remain unchanged, while the Second Vice Chair will preside over meetings in the absence of the Chair and First Vice Chair, participate in agenda development, and support the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE) staff on community outreach, membership recruitment, and member engagement.

Two proposed edits to the Policies and Procedures Manual were presented: the Officers section, reflecting the addition of a third officer and rationale for leadership development and succession planning; and the election section, adding duties for the Second Vice Chair position.

More information was provided in the PowerPoint presentation.

3. Consent Calendar – November 5, 2025

Vice Chair Andrea Fernandez Mendoza presented the November 5, 2025, Planning Committee minutes. Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza requested a motion to approve the November 5, 2025, Planning Committee minutes and the Revision of Bylaws to include the 2nd Vice Chair as the Dianne Philibosian Memorial Chair. Member Fiona Stewart moved to approve November 5, 2025, Planning Committee minutes, and Member Christina Moore seconded the motion. Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for discussion. The motion to approve the Consent Calendar and the Revision of Bylaws to include the 2nd Vice Chair as the Dianne Philibosian Memorial Chair passed with 0 abstentions.

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for Member discussion. There were no comments.

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for Public Comment on discussion. There were no comments.



4. Governance Ad hoc Update

Saul Hurtado, Governance Ad hoc Co-Chair, provided an update on the Governance Ad hoc. He announced the launch of the Child Care Planning Committee membership application for FY 2026–2027, with a submission deadline of April 17, 2026. The application will be shared through multiple channels, including Quality Start LA, parent networks, and online via a link and QR code for accessibility.

Member Hurtado also announced the opening for nominations for Chair, First Vice Chair, and Second Vice Chair for FY 2026–2027. He noted that the Chair position is a two-year commitment, while the Vice Chair positions are one-year terms, with the option to continue for a second year.

More information was provided in the PowerPoint presentation.

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for Member discussion. There were no comments.

Vice Chair Fernandez Mendoza opened the floor for Public Comment on discussion. There were no comments.

5. Governance Nominations

Chair Fierro opened nominations for the FY 2026-2027 Leadership Slate, including Chair, First Vice Chair, and Second Vice Chair, and reviewed the roles and responsibilities for each position.

- **Chair responsibilities:** 1) chair the Planning Committee meetings; 2) help develop the agenda for each meeting; 3) sign all documents related to contracts with the California Department of Social Services, Board letters related to Planning Committee business, and other correspondence deemed appropriate; and 4) represent the Planning Committee on the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development.
- **First Vice Chair responsibilities:** 1) preside over Planning Committee meetings in the absence of the Chair; 2) assist the Chair in agenda development and meeting preparation; 3) serve as a key advisor to the Chair on strategic planning, implementation, and organization development; and 4) provide guidance, consultation, and support to Subcommittees and Ad hoc committees, as requested by the Chair.
- **Second Vice Chair responsibilities:** shall 1) preside over Planning Committee meetings in the absence of both the Chair and the First Vice Chair; 2) participate with the Chair and First Vice Chair in agenda development and meeting preparation; and 3) work in collaboration with the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE) staff to support community outreach, member engagement, leadership development, and recruitment efforts.



Below are the nominations for the FY 2026-2027 Leadership Slate:

- Chair: Andrea Fernandez Mendoza
- First Vice Chair: Christina Moore and Rachel Bocarsly
- Second Vice Chair: Kelly Fountain and Saul Hurtado

6. Policy Update

Sarah Soriano, Joint Committee on Legislation Chair, presented an update on the Governor's Proposed Budget for FY 2026–2027. She shared that the Governor's proposed budget was released in January and includes a 2.14% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA).

Member Soriano also provided an update on federal policy developments, including the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). She noted that on January 6, 2026, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services temporarily froze access to certain federal child care and family assistance funds for several states, including California, pending review related to concerns about fraud and misuse of funds. The funding freeze could impact early care and education programs, as these funds support families with child care costs and related services. She also noted that legal challenges were filed, resulting in a temporary injunction and subsequent stay while the issue is under review.

Lastly, Member Soriano shared that the Joint Committee on Legislation (JCL) met to review policy issues elevated from the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development (PRT) meetings between June 2025 and January 2026. JCL consists of four members from the PRT and four members from the Planning Committee. The committee discussed three policy issues recommended for further pursuit:

- Implementation of Alternate Reimbursement Rate Methodology
- Strengthen measures that protect immigrant children, families, and staff
- Wildfire Rebuild Recovery

More information was provided in the PowerPoint presentation.

Chair Fierro opened the floor for Member discussion. The following highlights some of the comments provided:

- A question was raised about whether the list of relevant legislation could be updated before April 1, given that the bill introduction deadline is February 20. Members noted that priorities may evolve and suggested the JCL consider mechanisms to pivot if new bills emerge.
- Members were encouraged to participate in policy discussions by attending the JCL meetings held on the third Wednesday of each month and the PRT meetings held on the second Wednesday of each month.
- Raised concerns about the impact of immigration enforcement on early care and education programs, noting that while school districts may have certain protections, child care programs do not. It was shared that immigration policies and enforcement actions are creating stress for families and educators and may affect workforce stability.

- Discussed federal policy updates, including the deadline to submit public comments on proposed rule changes related to enrollment- versus attendance-based reimbursement. It was noted that submitting comments is important to ensure concerns are documented.
- Highlighted the need to include child care in wildfire recovery and rebuilding efforts across Los Angeles County. Challenges discussed included facility loss, licensing, zoning, permitting, and infrastructure requirements, as well as the need for funding and coordination with agencies such as the Department of Regional Planning and the Department of Economic Opportunity.
- Discussed the impact of Transitional Kindergarten (TK) expansion on child care programs and suggested exploring policy responses, including reviewing approaches taken in other states and considering potential legislative strategies.
- Workforce concerns were raised, including the need to support youth and immigrant communities in the workforce and explore wage subsidy programs, particularly for providers affected by wildfires or economic hardship.
- Emphasized the importance of aligning advocacy efforts across local, state, and federal levels while also identifying immediate actions to support providers and families. Suggestions included gathering anecdotal information and data to document impacts on child care businesses, families, and staff.
- Members were reminded to remain vigilant when individuals request access to program sites and to verify identification as part of general awareness and fraud prevention efforts.

Chair Fierro opened the floor for Public Comment on discussion. One comment was provided:

- Raised concern about the increasing presence of social media influencers entering Family Child Care homes to create content, noting that this issue has been reported in other states and may be emerging locally. Inquired about policy solutions that could be explored to address and potentially prohibit this activity statewide.

7. Early Care and Education Strategic Planning: Conversation about Transitional Kindergarten and Universal PreKindergarten

Eli Pessar, Chair of the Strategic Planning Ad hoc, provided an update on the group's work to inform the 2026–2030 Early Care and Education Strategic Plan. The Ad hoc reflected on major developments from 2020–2025, including COVID-19 impacts, fluctuating recovery funding, Universal Transition Kindergarten expansion, and workforce decline driven by low wages, burnout, and sector competition. Despite increased attention to ECE, funding has remained insufficient, and families and providers face hardships such as food insecurity, immigration fears, and natural disasters. The group emphasized that progress has not matched need. Priority areas identified include improving access through better data and enrollment systems, ensuring quality with adequate resources, strengthening workforce compensation and well-being, and elevating family and provider voices to guide policy and advocacy.

Dr. Bruce Fuller, PhD, University of California, Berkeley, presented on the impact of Transitional Kindergarten (TK) expansion on the Early Care and Education (ECE) system. He noted that enrollment patterns in Los Angeles (LA) County are shifting as TK continues to expand in public schools, primarily serving 4-year-olds. The ECE Master Plan anticipated this shift and encouraged prekindergarten (pre-K) centers to pivot toward serving younger children, supported by state incentives such as expanded California State Preschool Program (CSPP) eligibility and voucher growth. While some programs are



transitioning to serve younger children, progress is uneven due to program closures and infrastructure limitations. Dr. Fuller emphasized the need for improved data systems to better understand enrollment trends to help providers adapt to these changes. Key findings from this study include:

- TK enrollments have rebounded from COVID-19 and continues to grow.
- Post-Covid TK enrollment growth is strongest in middle and upper-middle income areas of the country.
- Many income-eligible 3-year-olds are not enrolled in CSPP
- Some pre-K centers are pivoting to 3-year-olds and younger children, but overall the field is hampered by center deaths.
- Interviews point to factors that advance or impede the pre-K center pivot to younger children.

More information was provided in the PowerPoint presentation.

Chair Fierro opened the floor for member discussion. Below are highlighted comments:

- Discussed how TK enrollment differs from other early care programs, noting that families enrolling in TK through school districts do not face the same eligibility verification, documentation requirements, or family fees required for other subsidized programs. It was suggested that these differences may influence families' decisions to choose TK over other early learning options.
- Concerns were raised about licensing and regulatory barriers affecting providers' ability to pivot serving younger children. Members noted that licensing processes for new centers or classroom changes can take several months, leaving classrooms unused and making it difficult for programs to adapt to enrollment shifts caused by TK expansion.
- Discussed infrastructure changes, workforce training, and cultural shifts within centers.
- Workforce implications of the pivot to younger children were also highlighted. Members noted that not all pre-K teachers are trained or interested in working with infants and toddlers and emphasized the need for investment in training, professional development, and compensation to support this transition.
- Discussed the importance of supporting family choice and continuity of care, noting that some families may prefer to keep children in familiar early learning environments rather than transitioning to TK, particularly when TK programs are not located on elementary school campuses. Members suggested exploring policy options that allow funding to follow the child within a mixed-delivery system.
- Used examples from other states were referenced, including models that support true parental choice and mixed-delivery systems, where funding can flow to different types of providers that meet program standards.
- Emphasized the need to strengthen communication with families about available early learning options, including CSPP eligibility for two- and three-year-olds, as many families are not aware of programs for which they may qualify.
- Suggested that community-based communication strategies may be more effective than centralized systems alone, emphasizing trusted community networks and grassroots outreach to better connect families with early learning resources.

- Raised questions about inclusive engagement in early care and education policy discussions, including ensuring that diverse communities are included in conversations about system changes such as TK expansion.

Chair Fierro invited public discussion; highlighted are comments discussed:

- Discussed the nuance of supply and demand in early care, noting that while provider capacity may exist, it is unclear whether families are aware or able to access it. Recommendations included gathering formal, equitable feedback from families to better understand needs and tailor services.
- The Strategic Planning process was highlighted as needing flexibility, with examples from Oakland Unified's two-year plan cited for its strong engagement pillar and ability to pivot based on emerging needs. Suggested a summit or tabletop exercise with ECE leaders to collaboratively prototype solutions for priority issues.
- TK expansion was noted as a solution to declining school enrollment, but concerns were raised about coordination, as multiple systems try to serve the same children. Emphasized that licensed family child care providers; family, friend, and neighbor providers; and exempt providers are often left out of discussions, and strategies should ensure representation of all provider types.
- Discussed gaps between Resource & Referral (R&R) agencies and Local Education Agencies, noting the need for systems that help families understand available care options and improve communication between providers and schools.
- Opportunities for employer-supported child care were highlighted, referencing HR 1 provisions that provide tax incentives for businesses offering child care benefits. Strategic Planning efforts could expand partnerships with employers to leverage these incentives.
- Noted challenges in accessing TK datasets for enrollment and referrals, which impacts the ability of R&R agencies and other systems to guide families effectively. Recommendations included funding to explore centralized referral systems and developing Universal PreKindergarten toolkits to improve information dissemination and family access.

8. General Public Comment and Announcements

Vice Chair Mendoza opened the floor for announcements and public comment.

- Long Beach ECE Committee is hosting an ECE Symposium on March 14; tickets are \$125 and available via the committee's listserv.
- PEN Inc. is donating 2,000 books to high school students, starting with ABC High School and the Eaton Fire area, and encouraged collaboration opportunities.
- Sharon Barker promoted professional development consulting services to support family child care providers.
- Enrollment in certain programs can provide monetary incentives through Quality Start LA for professional development participation.

9. Call to Adjourn

Chair Fierro moved to adjourn the Planning Committee meeting. Member Stacy Lee seconded the motion. Chair Fierro opened the floor for discussion and asked if there were any objections. The motion to adjourn the meeting was passed with no objections. The Planning Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

Attendance

Public Agency

1. Alicia Rivas
2. Gus Bribiesca
3. Jessica Kim
4. Kelly Fountain
5. Rachel Bocarsly
6. Cristina Angelo, Alternate for Ufuoma Akwaja
7. Vanessa San Martin

Child Care Provider/Early Educator

1. Anselma Sanchez
2. Andrea Fernandez Mendoza
3. Brittie Crawford
4. Justine Lawrence
5. Saul Hurtado
6. Sylvia Hernandez

Parent/Caregiver

1. Christina Moore
2. Stephanie Garcia, alternate for Christina Moore
3. Crystal Thompson
4. Eli Pessar
5. Elsa Leal
6. Jen Baca Beltran
7. Jessica Reynaga
8. Nicole Baitx Kennedy

Discretionary

1. Ivy Chang
2. Jessica Guerra
3. La Tanga Hardy
4. Sarah Soriano

5. Vanessa Macias
6. Cristina Gonzalez, alternate for Vanessa Macias

Community Organization

1. Betty Collins
2. Fiona Stewart
3. Devon Turner, alternate for Fiona Stewart
4. Gina Rodriguez
5. Stephanie Orozco, alternate for Gina Rodriguez
6. Joelle L. Landazabal
7. Manuel Fierro
8. Mirel Herrera
9. Stacy Lee
10. Victoria Tarango

Public Attendance

1. Carlos Dubon
2. Sharon Barker
3. Brooke Loeffler
4. Priya Batra
5. Demetria Murphy
6. Jose Ramos
7. Amanda Hsu
8. Gus Bribiesca
9. Luis Bautista
10. Maria Gonzalez
11. Lisa Wilkin
12. Vincent Chen
13. Bianca Castellanos
14. Silena Siverson
15. Mercedes Santoro

- 16. Bruce Fuller
- 17. Amy Battle
- 18. Eva Rivera
- 19. Gaby Ayala

OAECE Staff Attendance

- 30 Debra Colman, *Director*
- 31 Leanne Drogin, *Deputy Director*

- 32 Alejandra Barrio, *Staff Analyst*
- 33 Betsy Jacoby, *Staff Analyst*
- 34 Meliza Hernandez, *Staff Analyst*
- 35 Sheronda Helton, *Research Specialist*
- 36 Diana Alvarado, *Policy and Program Specialist*
- 37 Simone Taylor, *Management Analyst*



2026-2027 Child Care Planning Committee Leadership Slate Nominated Councilmembers

Chair Candidates



Andrea Fernandez Mendoza, M.A. ECEL

Vice President of Education & Program Director, California Children Academy
Vice Chair, Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

Guided by servant leadership, my goal is to support and empower the educators, families, and children who make up our early childhood community. With over 30 years of experience in education management, I view leadership as a responsibility to foster a collaborative and inclusive environment where every stakeholder feels heard. My "why" is rooted in a desire to leverage my expertise in policy development and regulatory compliance to remove barriers for our programs, ensuring they have the resources and advocacy needed to thrive. Having served as a committee member since 2012 and as the current Vice Chair, I am deeply invested in the long-term success of the Child Care Planning Committee and the stability of the California subsidized childcare system. I am eager to continue this journey of service, as Chair of the Los Angeles Child Care Planning Committee, using my voice to champion equitable, high-quality early education for all.

First Vice Chair Candidates



Rachel Bocarsly

Senior Program Manager, Child Care Policy and Equity, Community Investment for Families Department
Public Agency, Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

In my role with the City of Los Angeles, I connect the dots between local programs, resources, and legislation with the organizations, providers, and families who benefit from them. I build awareness of key issues and advocate for creative solutions. I am interested in taking on the role of First Vice Chair because I want to bring that same focus to our county-wide planning and help advance the critical work needed to improve opportunities for children, families, and providers. I love to learn, I'm eager to collaborate, and I'm not deterred by the layers of complexity that challenge progress. I've never been in a professional setting where there is more belief and energy for the power of what we can do together, and it would be my honor to help lead the coordination of that power.



Sarah Soriano

Executive Director of Early Learning, Young Horizons Child Development Centers
Discretionary, Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

I want to serve in the First Vice Chair position because I am a passionate, experienced leader with more than 30 years in the early care and education field and a deep commitment to advancing systems that support children, families, and the workforce. Having previously served as Chair of the Child Care Planning Committee from 2017 to 2019, I bring institutional knowledge, collaborative leadership, and a clear understanding of the committee's critical role in shaping countywide priorities. I strongly believe early care and education is a foundational investment in children's lifelong love of learning and their future success. Supporting families and strengthening the early education workforce are essential to building thriving communities, and this work must always be grounded in purpose and equity. Serving as First Vice Chair allows me to continue leading with the "why" at the center, ensuring policies and planning reflect the true value and impact of early care and education.

Second Vice Chair Candidates



Kelly Fountain, Ph.D

Director of Early Learning, Lancaster School District
Public Agency, Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

My name is Dr. Kelly Fountain. I am honored to be nominated by a colleague for this position. I work hard each day to provide high-quality care for children in my program, the professional development I provide in my district and county, or the advocacy I advance across the state. In my role on the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Council of Early Childhood Education Leaders, through my consultant work, or here at the Child Care Planning Committee, I strive to advocate for marginalized children to access a play-based universal experience. The honor of stepping into a leadership role here would further those efforts and support more children in our county to imagine a better tomorrow.



Saul Hurtado

Family Child Care Provider, Fuentes & Hurtado Family Child Care
Child Care Provider, Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

Hello, I'm Saul Hurtado. I'm an educator and Family Child Care Provider in the city of Sun Valley. While many of you already know me, some haven't heard of me. I have worked in the community as a child care provider for more than 21 years alongside my mother, Ana Maria Fuentes. I'm running for Second Vice Chair to change the way many people see family child care providers. I want to show that we can be part of the solution and work hand in hand to get results, especially when facing budget cuts and the attacks on our communities and children from the Trump Administration. Together, we can accomplish anything!



Christina Moore, M.A. Ed., M.B.A

Chief Program Officer, Maryvale
Consumer, Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee

I am seeking to serve as Second Vice Chair of the Child Care Planning Committee because of my deep commitment to advancing high-quality early childhood education through collaborative leadership, systems improvement, and advocacy for families and providers. With more than two decades of progressive leadership experience in state-funded and community-based early learning programs, I bring a strong understanding of policy, compliance, and program quality across diverse funding streams to the table. As Chief Program Officer at Maryvale, I have successfully led large, complex programs serving hundreds of children daily, increased enrollment and access for low-income families, diversified funding, and guided teams through accreditation and continuous quality improvement initiatives. I have over 2 decades of experience serving on nonprofit boards, as well as working closely with public and private partners, and believe that this experience positions me to effectively support the Child Care Planning Committee's mission, facilitate stakeholder engagement, and contribute strategic, equity-focused leadership as Second Vice Chair.

RECOMMENDED PURSUIT OF POSITIONS – PROPOSED LEGISLATION AND GOVERNOR’S 2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET: EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Introduction

The Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development Commission (Policy Roundtable) firmly believes that all young children in Los Angeles County have an undeniable right to develop and thrive without explicit and implicit bias. Due to structural inequity, all legislation and policies should be examined through an equity lens to build a system where all children have access to high quality, affordable early care and education (ECE). With this as a core value, the Policy Roundtable recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt the following proposed pursuit of positions to increase access to and strengthen the ECE system:

- 1) Support AB 1981 and similar measures that require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide a definitive timeline and annual updates regarding CDSS’s transition to new reimbursement rates based on the alternative methodology
- 2) Support AB 2379 and similar measures that strengthen protections for immigrant child care providers and the children they serve by notifying child care providers of their constitutional rights when confronted by immigration enforcement
- 3) Support proposed FY 2026-2027 Budget item and similar measures that strengthen child care infrastructure, specifically targeted toward communities impacted by recent fires

This document provides a brief analysis of each proposed policy position and justification. It concludes with the recommended pursuit of positions and demonstrated consistency with existing Los Angeles County legislative policies.

- 1) Support AB 1981 and similar measures that require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide a definitive timeline and annual updates regarding CDSS’s transition to new reimbursement rates based on the alternative methodology**

Summary Analysis of Proposed Legislation

Current child care subsidy reimbursement rates do not cover the full cost of operating ECE programs serving income eligible families. As a result, early educators earn inadequate wages and have few benefits thereby driving early educators away from the profession, as well as deter new people from entering the ECE workforce. In California, 65 percent of the ECE workforce are women of color.¹ According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2023 California was home to more than 37,000 child care workers and the average annual salary for this workforce was \$40,060.² By comparison, the living wage in Los Angeles County for a single adult with one child is \$101,200.³ The California ECE Workforce Study also found that in 2023, 50 percent of early educators in family child care homes, 38 percent of Assistants/Aides in early education centers, and 29 percent of teachers in early education centers participated in at least one or more public assistance programs.⁴

¹ Kim, Y., Austin, L.J.E., & Hess, H. (2024). The Multilayered Effects of Racism on Early Educators in California: An Examination of Disparities in Wages, Leadership Roles, and Education. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. March 23, 2024 <https://csce.berkeley.edu/publications/report/effects-of-racism-on-california-early-educators>

² U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics Query System. March 2, 2025 <https://data.bls.gov/oes/#/occGeo/One%20occupation%20for%20multiple%20geographical%20areas>

³ Living Wage Calculation for Los Angeles County, California. (2025). Massachusetts Institute of Technology. March 2, 2025 <https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06037>

⁴ Muruvi, W., Powell, A, Kim, Y., Coperman Petig, A., and Austin, L., The Economic Well-Being of Early Educators in California (2024). Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. March 2, 2025 <https://csce.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/CA-economic-wellbeing-2024-1.pdf>

Many families struggle to find the child care they need. In 2023, more than 85 percent (1.8 million) of California’s children eligible for subsidized child care were not accessing these services.⁵ Inadequate reimbursement rates suppress wages causing an ECE workforce shortage and limited supply of programs to meet child care needs of working families.

Welfare and Institutions Code section 10227.6 (i) states that the Governor and Legislature shall, by no later than July 1, 2025, establish reimbursement rates based on the alternative methodology and if the new reimbursement rates established do not take effect on July 1, 2025, the CDSS shall provide the Legislature with the department’s anticipated timeline for transitioning from the rates that are in effect on July 1, 2025, to the new reimbursement rates established and new reimbursement rates have not been established. A timeline to transition from the current regional market reimbursement rate methodology based on “how much parents can pay” to the new reimbursement rates based on a “cost estimation model” has not been provided to the Governor nor the Legislature. This delay is resulting in continued implementation of inadequate reimbursement rates for ECE providers compounded by the absence of a definitive timeline for transitioning to the alternative methodology. To address this, Assembly Bill (AB 1981), introduced by Assembly Majority Leader Aguiar-Curry, requires DPSS to provide the Chairperson of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee the department’s timeline for transitioning from the current reimbursement rates to the new reimbursement rates by January 31, 2027, and every subsequent year until the rates established in section 10227.6 (i) are in effect.

Justification

The State of California has committed to transition how it calculates its subsidized child care reimbursement rates from a market-based approach to a cost-based model. This is a positive step forward to closing the gap between expenses and revenue, addressing long standing inequities in the system, and stopping the cycle of early educators continually receiving low wages. It is recommended that Los Angeles County support AB 1981 and similar measures that require the state to be explicit about the implementation timeline of the new reimbursement rates. Publicly provided information about progress toward implementing the new reimbursement rate methodology will help recruit and retain valuable ECE staff to serve children.

2) Support AB 2379 and similar measures that strengthen protections for immigrant child care providers and the children they serve by notifying child care providers of their constitutional rights when confronted by immigration enforcement

Summary Analysis of Proposed Legislation

Nearly 50 percent of Los Angeles County child care providers are immigrants and one in two children in the Los Angeles Metro Area has at least one immigrant parent.^{6,7} California students have the right to attend public school in the State free from discrimination, harassment, violence, intimidation, and bullying (CA Education Code [EC] 220, 234, et seq.). The threat of immigration enforcement can impair the ability of students, regardless of their immigration status, to thrive and

⁵ Pryor, L. and Schumacher K., The Unmet Need for Child Care Remains Staggeringly High (2025). California Budget & Policy Center. March 2, 2025 <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/the-unmet-need-for-child-care-remains-staggeringly-high/>

⁶ Ali, U., Brown, J., and Herbst, C., Secure Communities as Immigration Enforcement: How Secure is the Child Care Market? (2024). Journal of Public Economics. March 2, 2025 <https://docs.iza.org/dp15821.pdf>

⁷ Profile of the Foreign-born Population in Los Angeles, California (2023), Vera Institute of Justice. March 2, 2025 <https://vera-institute.files.svdcn.com/production/downloads/publications/profile-of-foreign-born-population-los-angeles-long-beach.pdf>

receive an equitable education.⁸ Deportation threats can negatively impact children’s mental and physical health and long-term development as well as the health and well-being of early educators. Family child care homes are essential to Los Angeles County’s child care system, particularly for working and immigrant families. These ECE providers care for children in their homes which makes them uniquely vulnerable to intimidation, misinformation, and unlawful searches or arrests by law enforcement, including federal immigration authorities. Without clear, accessible education of their rights, ECE providers may unknowingly allow unlawful entry into their homes or feel pressured to comply with actions that violate constitutional protections. Fear and confusion around immigration enforcement can force ECE providers to close their doors, disrupting care for families and putting children at risk. Assembly Bill 2379, introduced by Assemblymember Solache, seeks to provide licensed and license-exempt family child care providers with information about their constitutional rights when confronted by immigration enforcement to protect themselves, the children in their care, and the families they serve. Specifically, AB 2379 will:

- Require CDSS to notify all licensed and license-exempt family child care providers of their Fourth Amendment rights
- Require development of a plain-language, multilingual training program for child care providers on their rights and responsibilities
- Require child care providers to complete this training within specified timeframes to ensure consistent statewide understanding of their rights
- Take effect immediately as an urgency statute to protect access to child care without fear of harassment or unwarranted searches

Justification

AB 2379, also known as Protecting Family Child Care Providers’ Constitutional Rights, builds on California’s law that recognizes child care sites as sensitive locations. Passage of AB 2379 and similar measures to protect immigrant child care providers and the families they serve will help child care doors remain open and safe from intimidation, misinformation, and unlawful searches or arrests by law enforcement, including federal immigration authorities.

3) Support proposed FY 2026-2027 Budget item and similar measures that strengthen child care infrastructure, specifically targeted toward communities impacted by recent fires

Summary Analysis of Proposed FY 2026-2027 Budget Item

In January 2025, the Los Angeles County wildfires severely impacted the child care sector, reducing the system's capacity in the County by 2,802 licensed ECE spaces. According to California Community Care Licensing, licensed child care providers submitted 339 incident reports documenting a wide range of impacts from the fires. Across Los Angeles County, 42 ECE licensed facilities were destroyed, including 23 centers and 19 family child care homes. In addition, nine ECE-licensed facilities were significantly damaged (6 centers, 3 family child care homes), and 30 license-exempt Family, Friends, and Neighbors (FFN) providers were impacted. According to Pasadena Community Foundation’s (PCF) Six-Month Impact Report of the Eaton Fire, “Child care providers and their client families are among those most profoundly impacted by the Eaton Fire.”⁹ PCF also reports that more than half of the licensed family child care home

⁸ Joy Ee, J. and Gandara, P., Under Siege: The Disturbing Impact of Immigration Enforcement on the Nation’s Schools (2020). Immigration Initiative at Harvard. March 2, 2025 https://immigrationinitiative.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/brief_2_english.pdf

⁹ Pasadena Community Foundation, *Resilience: Six-Month Impact Report, Eaton Relief and Recovery Fund*. July 7, 2025. https://pasadenacf.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/PCF-201.pdf?utm_source=

facilities in Altadena were damaged or destroyed, “while 60 percent of the spaces previously available for children are no longer available.”¹⁰ ECE providers are essential to the recovery of these areas and their ability to reopen allows families to return to work and the area, children regain stability, and neighborhoods rebuild. ECE programs operate on slim margins and most do not have the resources to rebuild or repair their facilities without financial support. A few organizations have provided financial support to child care providers impacted by the fires to re-establish their programs and while this funding has been helpful it does not go far enough. For example, the Low Income Investment Fund’s LA Rise program provided \$1.3 million in grant funding to help ECE providers impacted by the fires rebuild and reopen; however, applicants who applied for grants had more than \$14 million in damages.¹¹ The Governor’s Budget Summary 2026-27 includes “an increase of \$11.5 million one-time Proposition 64 funding for child care infrastructure, specifically targeted toward communities impacted by recent fires.”¹²

Justification

According to the 2022 Los Angeles County ECE Needs Assessment, Los Angeles County only has licensed capacity through centers and family child care homes to serve 4 percent of children ages birth to 23 months and 26 percent to serve children ages two to five.¹³ The Los Angeles County wildfires significantly reduced the already limited capacity to serve young children in fire impacted areas. Additionally, many child care providers impacted by the fires want to return and reopen but do not have the financial resources to rebuild or repair damaged facilities or renovate a space to move into. The proposed \$11.5 million funding included in the Governor’s Budget Summary 2026-27 will be critical to helping ECE programs rebuild, reopen, and help families regain stability.

Recommended Pursuit of Position – Support

The Policy Roundtable, with input from the Joint Committee on Legislation, recommends a position of support in the following areas to improve the ECE system:

- 1) Support AB 1981 and similar measures that require the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide a definitive timeline and annual updates regarding CDSS’s transition to new reimbursement rates based on the alternative methodology
- 2) Support AB 2379 and similar measures that strengthen protections for immigrant child care providers and the children they serve by notifying child care providers of their constitutional rights when confronted by immigration enforcement
- 3) Support proposed FY 2026-2027 Budget item and similar measures that strengthen child care infrastructure, specifically targeted toward communities impacted by recent fires

County Legislative Policy

These positions are consistent with the Los Angeles County 2025 State Legislative Platform:

¹⁰ Pasadena Community Foundation, *Resilience: Six-Month Impact Report, Eaton Relief and Recovery Fund*. July 7, 2025. https://pasadenacf.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/PCF-201.pdf?utm_source=

¹¹ Los Angeles Recovery and Investment in Service of Early Care and Education (LA Rise) Fund, Fact Sheet. February 28, 2026.

¹² Governor’s Budget Summary 2026-27. March 2, 2026. <https://ebudget.ca.gov/2026-27/pdf/BudgetSummary/FullBudgetSummary.pdf>

¹³ California County Local Child Care Planning Council Needs Assessment – Los Angeles, prepared by Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education. February 26, 2026. <https://childcare.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Child-Care-Needs-Assessment-Los-Angeles-County-FINAL-11.3.22.pdf>

Human Services

- Increase access to high-quality ECE services provided by a qualified and well compensated workforce.
- Increase and expand eligibility, including the elimination of immigration status restrictions, and decrease enrollment barriers, simplify eligibility determination and income reporting requirements, and/or increase automation and information sharing with state agencies.

Equity

- Address and combat discrimination based on age, disability, disease status, gender identity, language, immigration status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

Justice, Public Safety, and Emergency Management Systems

- Improve wildfire prevention and fire safety services, including but not limited to, measures to increase financial assistance training, and other resources for local response.

Public Services and Infrastructure

- Prioritize disaster risk mitigation, prevention, and response efforts appropriate for urban and rural communities.

Additional Sources

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- Pasadena Community Foundation, *Resilience: Six-Month Impact Report, Eaton Relief and Recovery Fund*. July 7, 2025. https://pasadenacf.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/PCF-201.pdf?utm_source=
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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



POLICY • PLANNING • PRACTICE

Voluntary, Temporary Transfer of Funds (VTTF) Process For California Department of Education (CDE) Contractors in Los Angeles County

*Developed and Approved by the Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee
October 2009; Updated October 2025*

Process Development

Per the requirements established by the California Department of Education (CDE), the Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee) formed an ad hoc work group made up of non-CDE contractors who solicited input from current CDE contractors and members of the Planning Committee related to the processing of requests for voluntary, temporary transfers of funds (VTTF). Based on the input from the contractors and on the framework established by CDE for implementing the VTTF, the ad hoc work group developed the procedure described in this document.

The Planning Committee, in approving this procedure, appointed the Los Angeles County Child Care Planning Coordinator (Coordinator) as the designated staff to coordinate activities related to the VTTF including informing CDE contractors, reviewing individual requests through CDE staff, matching and packaging the transfer requests, and submitting the requests within the allotted timeframes to CDE for approval or denial. The Coordinator is charged with maintaining the confidentiality of the requests and all information provided by the agencies participating in the VTTF process. To ensure a fair process, the Coordinator and the Planning Committee's ad hoc VTTF work group developed a method for informing CDE contractors of the VTTF process, reviewing activities, and tracking and documenting all VTTF requests, which was approved by the Planning Committee in June 2009.

VTTF Process

1. The Coordinator may hold at least one orientation before each of the deadline periods established by CDE: November 1-15 and May 1-15. All contractors will be contacted to inform them of the process and of the orientations. Contractors are able to contact the Coordinator to seek information if they cannot attend an orientation.
2. Agencies/organizations that are willing to participate may contact the Coordinator by e-mail at OAECE@ph.lacounty.gov or by telephone at (213) 639-6239 to indicate their interest. These organizations will complete a VTTF Request Form detailing their requests to release or to receive funds. The VTTF Request Form is available through the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education or the Planning Coordinator. The VTTF Request Form, as well as these approved procedures, are available on the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education website at www.childcare.lacounty.gov.
3. The VTTF Request Form asks for information from the agency meant to establish the feasibility of releasing or accepting funding in the current fiscal year. The information in the VTTF Request Form will also assist in matching requests for the transfer and/or applying priorities in the case of more requests for funds than there are funds to be transferred.

4. Contractors requesting additional funds must demonstrate the ability to over-earn their existing contract amount and/or serve more children with their existing licensed capacity. For the Fall transfer period, the program must be immediately ready to provide additional child days of enrollment; for the Spring transfer period, the program must demonstrate that they are projected to over-earn their contract amount, as indicated by the CDE Early Learning and Care Division fiscal and enrollment reports. Programs requesting funds must also demonstrate that they will incur the additional costs required to earn an augmented contract. No transferred funds can go into a reserve account.
5. In the VTTF Request Form, the agency is asked to state or demonstrate the following:
 - Contract type
 - To which service area the funds had been assigned (or will be assigned if received) and ages served/to be served and the current priorities of those service areas
 - Amount of funds to be transferred or accepted
 - Estimated number of children or child days of enrollment the received funds will support over what period of time within the current fiscal year
 - The availability of spaces or sites to provide more service
 - The reason why an agency estimates it will under-earn its contract (if transferring funds)
 - Estimated expenditures related to the accepted funds
 - Agency's projections of earnings (in the case of an agency that may be over-earning)
 - Name and contact information for the Executive Director or individual responsible for signing state contracts
6. Deadlines to submit a VTTF request form to the Coordinator are **October 25th** for the November 1-15 CDE deadline; and **April 14th** for the May 1-15 CDE deadline. These dates will be adjusted annually.
7. Once the agency has completed and submitted the VTTF Request Form, the Coordinator will contact the agency's CDE field and fiscal consultants to verify that there are no impediments to considering the request. If the CDE consultant indicates that the request should not go further, the agency will be informed.
8. Once the review is complete, the Coordinator will look for a match between funds being transferred and funds requested to serve more children or to compensate for over-earnings. Considerations for a match include:
 - Same type of contract is involved, (ex. CCTR to CCTR) as required by the CDE
 - If at all possible, areas of service have the same priorities or the agency receiving funds will be utilizing them in a Priority 1 area
 - Amount of funding to be transferred is similar to the amount requested
9. If requests have come in for which there is no match, the Coordinator may issue a general e-bulletin to all contractors describing the opportunity to release or receive and urging them to consider participation. If there are no agencies offering to release funds, **or** no agencies asking for additional funds by the stated deadline, no transfers can take place within the County. Those who requested to participate will be notified.

10. If there are more requests for funds than there are funds to be released, requests will be prioritized based on all of the above (see item 8) **and** the following considerations:
 - Consideration of the service priorities (Priority 1 will receive preference)
 - Agencies that have offered to serve the same area where the funds are being relinquished, unless there is reason to believe that there are barriers to utilizing funds in that particular area due to the number of programs or demographic shifts
 - Stated feasibility of accepting a smaller amount than was requested
 - For the November deadlines, the plan for continuity of service for additional children enrolled with transferred funds
 - For the May deadlines, whether an agency has received transferred funds in the November cycle
11. If there are more requests for funds than there are funds to be transferred, and all requesting agencies have equal priority based on Item 10 above, a recommendation to divide the transferred funds equally among those requesting additional funds may be made.
12. Once the recommended matches are determined, the Coordinator will provide a standard form letter (developed by CDE) to each agency. The letter will state the amount of the funds to be released or received, the contract type, the contractor's vendor number, and the fiscal year in which the transfer is occurring. The Executive Director or other authorized person will be required to sign and return the letter to the Coordinator.
13. The Coordinator will prepare the cover letter addressed to CDE staff and the summary of the transfers and submit this with the signed letters from the agencies to CDE within the timeframes determined by CDE: November 1-15 or May 1-15. Information about specific contractors involved in these matched transfers will be handled confidentially.
14. The decision to approve or deny a VTTF request will be made exclusively by CDE. Once the decision is made by the CDE staff, the Coordinator will be notified of the outcome.
15. If the request is approved, the participating CDE contracting agencies will receive contract amendments and fiscal adjustments based on CDE staff approvals.
16. If the request is denied, the participating CDE contracting agencies will receive a letter that explains why the request was denied.
17. CDE will report to the Coordinator the results of CDE's decisions. The Coordinator will report annually to the full Planning Committee on the progress and process of the VTTF. This report will constitute an evaluation of the process that includes the amount of time required to implement the VTTF, the amount of funds transferred, effectiveness of the VTTF in reducing under-earnings, and the estimated number of additional children served.