



County of Los Angeles  
Child Care Planning Committee and Policy Roundtable for Child Care



**PUBLIC POLICY PLATFORM – FY 2008-09**

**Introduction**

The Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee) and Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable) promote policies designed to increase the availability of and access to affordable, high quality early care and education programs for all children and their families of Los Angeles County. This public policy platform presents current and emerging policy issues in early care and education that are consistent with the County of Los Angeles State Legislative Agenda for the First Year of the Fiscal Year 2008-09. The platform identifies each of the legislative agenda items in **bold** followed by examples of efforts that may be addressed by proposed legislation and/or the proposed state budget.

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**Platform Issues**

- 1. Support efforts to enhance the quality of early care and education 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.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Addressing the early care and education needs of children from birth through age 12, including infants and toddlers, preschool and school age children, and children with disabilities and other special needs up to age 22, and their families.
- Enhancing the quality of child care and development centers, family child care homes, and license-exempt care providers.
- Promoting a strengthening families approach to meet the needs of children at risk for abuse, neglect or sexual exploitation or under the supervision of the child welfare system and children of families under the supervision of Probation.
- Integrating early intervention systems that recognize and respond early to learning difficulties in young child who may be at risk for learning disabilities.

- 2. Support efforts to develop and implement a statewide quality rating and improvement system and a system to adjust reimbursement rates based on demonstrated quality.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Providing parents with clear, concise information on the quality of child care and development settings.
- Encompassing early learning standards that are research-based, culturally responsive to children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, aligned with existing regulatory systems and local quality initiatives, recognize and respond to the individual needs of children in group settings, and attends to families' needs for comprehensive services.

**3. Support efforts to develop and sustain a well educated and highly skilled professional workforce prepared to serve the cultural and linguistically diverse child and family populations of Los Angeles County.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Focusing on essential skills that include teachers with: bilingual language skills able to provide curriculum and care that leads to English Language Proficiency while maintaining home language, proficiency in recognition and response to children with disabilities and other special needs, skills to work with parents and guardians, and expertise on the spectrum of child development from birth through early adolescence. Workforce practice must be based on established early care and education foundations and research.
- Expanding early childhood educators' access to higher education through stipend programs, grant funds and loan forgiveness programs, higher compensation when they attain post-secondary degrees, and benefits (i.e. health insurance and retirement plans).
- Supporting efforts to enhance the quality of the license-exempt care workforce and facilitating connections between license-exempt care and the larger system of early care and education.

**4. Support efforts to sustain the expansion of our local stipend program to address the retention of qualified persons working in licensed programs that serve a majority of children who receive child care subsidies as well as child care employees working in State subsidized child development centers.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Offering stipends to child care providers working in programs that participate in Family Child Care Home Education Networks.
- Allowing persons working in licensed family child care homes and centers in which the majority of children are subsidized by the State to participate in the stipend program.

**5. Support efforts to ensure the health and safety of all children cared for in licensed early care and education facilities as afforded by timely, regular, and frequent on-site monitoring by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD).**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Restoring inspections, at a minimum, to pre-2004 levels of child care and development centers annually and family child care homes triennially.
- Advocating for, at a minimum, annual unannounced inspections of all licensed facilities.

- Providing that CCLD is sufficiently funded, staffed and held accountable to meet the standards and provide technical assistance and resources to current and future licensees.

**6. Support efforts to adequately fund high quality early care and education services for all children from low and moderate income families.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Increasing access to subsidized child care and development services for all children, including infants and toddlers and children with disabilities and other special needs as well as preschool and school age children.
- Increasing levels of reimbursement in the Standard Reimbursement Rate (SRR) and the Regional Market Rate (RMR).
- Developing a system to adjust reimbursement rates based on demonstrated quality.
- Increasing funds for expansion of full-day, full-year services for all ages.
- Offering tax incentives to businesses to provide or pay for employee's child care.
- Ensuring that the income ceiling for eligibility for State subsidized care reflects the current State Median Income (SMI), adjusted by region if appropriate.
- Opposing proposals that would reduce subsidized child care rates based on geographic location.

**7. Support efforts to streamline administrative processes to expand access for low-income families, ensure continuity of care, and promote flexible use of child care and development funding to meet the needs of families.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Allowing administrative efficiencies such as multi-year contracting, grant-based funding, and locally determined waivers on program rules and regulations to allow flexibility of services based on community and family needs.
- Ensuring agencies have the capacity to connect with and serve the most vulnerable and the most difficult-to-serve families.
- Maintaining affordable family fees that do not exceed eight percent of gross family income.
- Funding Centralized Eligibility Lists (CELs) to refine efforts to document actual need and eligibility.

**8. Support efforts to expand the supply of appropriate early care and education services by including these services in city and county general plans.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Integrating child care and development in specific plans for land use, housing, transportation, economic, workforce, and community development.
- Facilitating the cost effective construction or renovation of child care and development facilities in communities with unmet needs for these services.

**9. Support proposals designed to prevent, detect, investigate and, when appropriate, prosecute fraud in subsidized child care programs.**

**10. Support efforts to ensure that vulnerable children and their families have access to consistent, uninterrupted subsidized early care and education services.**

Such efforts should include, but not be limited to:

- Making sure that California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) families have access to high quality, consistent child care and development services that provide the children with school readiness skills, ensuring that participating families are afforded the time and information needed to evaluate their child care options and make sound choices, and that allow parents to pursue or maintain employment.
- Promoting, facilitating and supporting consistent and continuous participation of children under the supervision of the child welfare system and Probation and their families in high quality child care and development programs that promote healthy child development and support effective parenting.
- Ensuring that all subsidized children – infants and toddlers, preschool age, and school age children – and their families have access to consistent and continuous child care and development services that partner with parents to promote children’s healthy growth and development and prepare them for school and life, and meet the needs of families.