



California Child Care Coordinators Association

Guiding Principles Second Year of the 2026-2027 Legislative Session

Early Learning and Care (ELC) Programs contribute to children's overall healthy growth and development, strengthens families, and supports working families. The importance of Local Child Care and Development Planning Councils (LPCs) across the state has been magnified in recent crises, and as the Governor and State Legislature act on significant investments in early learning and care programs. LPCs are poised to continue a central role in supporting the whole child/whole family approach – coordinating across their counties and mixed delivery systems to leverage information and resources to support the field's capacity to provide early learning and care services to its local communities. LPCs offer a public forum to hear issues that matter most to the field and galvanize a coordinated and collaborative response by engaging early educators, parents, community-based and public agencies, institutions of higher education, philanthropy, and resource and referral agencies with policy makers and other local partners to strategize response and action plans.

The early learning and care system remains fragile as public funding has not kept pace with the true cost of operating and sustaining high-quality programs. Advocacy efforts to reform the currently complicated dual reimbursement rate system have not been realized. The early learning and care system remains fragile due to chronic underinvestment and low compensation of the workforce. In addition, the expiration of the Hold Harmless provisions increases financial uncertainty for contractors and further threatens program stability.

Early Learning and Care remains at a critical juncture as California confronts a shifting fiscal climate marked by declining revenues and growing uncertainty. As the Governor and state legislature implement the vision captured through the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care, LPCs continue to provide a proven record of service that is responsive to the unique strengths, resources, and needs of the local community. LPCs actively support access and quality within the early learning and care diverse delivery system, including state funded, federally funded and private centers, school-based settings, family child care providers, before/after school programs, and Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFNs) settings. LPCs maintain links between state government and agencies, local families, ELC providers, and community stakeholders. LPCs provide innovative and responsive support for workforce education and development, including Quality Counts California (QCC) Workforce Development Pathways Grant programs, Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Mixed Delivery Planning Grant. With the creation of UPK and additional early learning and care investments, LPCs are poised to support the advance of new and emerging programs addressing whole child/whole family outcomes for children ages birth to three, children within the P-3 continuum, and children utilizing before/after school care through age 12.

As an association, CCCC is committed to the best outcomes for and overall well-being of children from birth through age 12 and their families by ensuring that all families have access to high-quality early learning and care, UPK and school age programs that include:

- Developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Inclusive environments conducive to learning and development
- Family engagement and partnership
- Meaningful connections to comprehensive services
- Cultural and linguistic appropriateness and embracing diversity
- Early identification and intervention processes
- Continuous quality improvement
- Access to a strong statewide infrastructure and local coordination of services
- Emergency responses to public health crises and other emergencies

For the 2026-2027 year, the California Child Care Coordinators Association (CCCCA) Public Policy focus will reside around key areas of concern that include **reliable LPC Data supply, ELC Workforce, Universal Pre-Kindergarten, and ensuring-all available ELC funding is fully utilized to maximize services for California families**, which are directly impacting the Early Learning and Care field in numerous ways. The key areas of concern will be updated annually to ensure that CCCCCA is addressing the current issues that are impacting children, families, and the ELC workforce in California.

To create and support a quality early learning and care system, the CCCCCA advocates for the following issues that include but are not limited to:

Streamlined and efficient administrative systems within the California Department of Education/Early Education Division (CDE/EED) and California Department of Social Services/Child Care and Development Division (CDSS/CCDD). CCCCCA supports proposals that –

- Provide increased resources for local early learning and care services and infrastructure, including additional funding for Local Child Care and Development Planning Councils (LPCs) to meet the LPC legislative mandates as outlined in California Welfare and Institutions Code, Chapter 31, Article 1, Sections 10480 and Article 2, Section 10485-10487 and the increased need for the coordination of new strategies and additional funding streams at the local level;
- Preserve local flexibility and decision-making within counties regarding determining where LPC staffing and administration are located;
- Make further investments that support the ongoing efforts of LPCs in the collection, analysis and sharing of data that informs state and local legislators, key stakeholders and early learning and care partners throughout the state of California;
- Revise the current methodology used to determine priority zip codes for each county and allow LPCs the flexibility to rank local priorities based on the most current and accurate data available;
- Adequately fund and integrate the LPCs as key partners in the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care through their specified membership, which addresses the whole child within the context of the family and the community, including links to the TK-12 system, and increased capacity to leverage local resources for programs serving children birth through age 12;
- Create a well-financed and coordinated system of regulatory compliance and contracting

processes, including the use of electronic signatures and data collection;

- Build a streamlined single subsidy reimbursement system reflecting the actual current cost of providing high-quality care inclusive of compensating the ELC workforce comparable to education and experience;
- Advocate for state and federal budget and policy determinations that result in protected, sustained, and increased funding sources for early learning and care services;
- Coordinate across state and county agencies to support an array of comprehensive services comprised of health (physical, dental, vision), early childhood mental health consultation, prevention and early intervention, TK-12 and higher education, community and economic development, family support, food/nutrition, social services and recreation activities;
- Ensure streamlined data collection systems that provide opportunities to understand the needs of children and their families and the impact of the services they access; and
- Integrate the LPCs as key partners in the reimagining of Quality Counts California (QCC) and UPK planning at the local level.

A robust licensing system to ensure that children are cared for in safe and healthy environments. CCCCA supports proposals that –

- Strengthen a sufficiently funded, appropriately staffed, and supportive Community Care Licensing system that supports prospective and operating early learning and care programs;
- Make available technical assistance and resources to existing and potential licensed programs and providers that support quality;
- Ensure annual inspections of licensed centers and family child care homes; and
- Prioritize intra-departmental coordination between licensing and the administration of early learning and care programs by the CDE/ELCD and the CDSS/CDD.

A highly qualified ELC workforce responsible for the care and education of our diverse populations of children that engages parents/primary caregivers as partners in their children's optimal growth and development. CCCCA supports proposals that –

- Recruit, retain, and support a diverse, trained, educated, and equitably compensated early learning and care professional workforce that includes state funded, federally funded and private centers, school-based settings, family child care providers, before/after school programs, and FFNs;
- Expand and stabilize the teacher pipeline to support the early learning and care field;
- Advocate for compensation levels comparable to education attainment and experience;
- Create access to high-quality, coordinated educational and professional development systems from entry-level through degree attainment;
- Advocate for professional development and higher education opportunities that aligns with and builds upon the early learning and care competencies inclusive but not limited to: dual language development; culture, diversity and equity; special needs and inclusion; leadership in ~~ECE~~ ELC; and administration and supervision;
- Provide ongoing professional development opportunities to include coaching and mentoring; and

- Engage LPCs as the lead agencies for coordinating funding and partnerships to develop and implement strategies that support and enhance the professional development and education of the ELC workforce.

Investments and strategies that increase the availability, accessibility, and affordability of high-quality ELC services for all children. CCCCA supports proposals that –

- Promote a diverse delivery system inclusive of public and private sectors;
- Provide adequate funding to serve all children from income eligible families in need of subsidized ELC services;
- Ensure family eligibility that promotes continuity of care and assistance for children and families;
- Update annually family entry and exit income eligibility caps for subsidized early learning and care programs to the most current California State Median Income (SMI);
- Create opportunities for LPCs, CDE, and CDSS contractors to provide feedback regarding family need and eligibility requirements;
- Increase investments for infant and toddler care and other high need populations;
- Assure access for unique populations of children and their families, including but not limited to dual language learners, children at risk and/or with special developmental and health care needs, children experiencing homelessness, children under the supervision of the child welfare system, and children of teen parents;
- Reform the reimbursement rate system and raise rates to levels that meet the true cost of operating quality programs (centers and family child care homes) by region;
- Result in an expansion of Infant and Toddler care;
- Promote the elimination of family fees to help alleviate the financial burden experienced by families in subsidized ELC programs; and
- Provides state-funded contractors with targeted technical assistance on fiscal budgeting to promote effective use of all allocated funds and avoid reversion to the state.

Development of high-quality learning environments and facilities that fully address the demand for ELC services. CCCCA supports proposals that –

- Promote broad representation of centers, family child care homes, and FFNs participation in Quality Counts California (QCC) quality improvement efforts that encompass a diversity of modalities (i.e. coaching/mentoring, trainings/workshops, and more);
- Provide technical assistance, professional development, training and coaching that remove barriers and support quality improvement in school-based settings, centers, family child care homes, and FFNs settings;
- Advocate for increased state and local funding to grow and sustain equitable quality improvement implementation;
- Promotes inclusive environments for all children within a mixed delivery system (e.g. centers, public/private, community-based, school districts, family child care homes, FFNs, etc.);
- Ensure ELC programs receive the necessary supports—to improve the quality of their services;
- Provide state and local resources to equitably improve and expand public and private capital

resources and technical expertise to develop, finance, and maintain new and existing high-quality facilities;

- Award funding for the acquisition, construction, or renovation of facilities in communities with unmet needs for ELC service;
- Promote new policies and policy amendments that support the development of ELC facilities, including the integration of ELC in land use, housing, transportation corridors, and economic, workforce and community development.

**Emergency response system focused on preparedness, responsiveness and recovery.
The CCCCA supports proposals that –**

- Augment funding to the LPCs to support ~~local partners~~ and serve as conveners of local partners for disaster preparedness, and response and recovery including the coordination of leveraging and distributing resources during disasters, such as public health crises, wildfires, and earthquakes, among others;
- Ensure needed resources – concrete and financial – are readily available to meet the needs of families and the centers, family child care homes, and FFNs that serve them; and
- Involve the LPCs to inform and develop state disaster and infrastructure development and communications such as guidance and the availability of resources.