



Early Childhood Policy Council

December 19, 2022

Governor Gavin Newsom, State of California

Speaker Anthony Rendon, California State Assembly

Pro Tem Toni Atkins, California State Senate

Assemblymember Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Budget Committee

Senator Nancy Skinner, Chair, Committee on Budget & Fiscal Review, Chair, Women's Legislative Caucus

Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Vice Chair, Women's Legislative Caucus

Dear Governor, Madam Pro Tem, Mr. Speaker, Chairs, and Vice Chair:

The Early Childhood Policy Council (ECPC) was established in law via Senate Bill 75 (Chapter 51, Statutes of 2019) to advise the Governor, Legislature, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction on statewide early learning and care policy.

We are grateful that the Administration has listened to the advocates through the adoption of a wide array of temporary COVID-19 policies that are helping both families and the early education workforce survive a traumatic pandemic — and now the “triple pandemic” of COVID, RSV, and virulent strain of the flu. These include policies that pertain to health, nutrition, and child care, as well as others. We also recognize and appreciate the Administration's establishment of the Rate and Quality Workgroup to address the state's woefully inadequate reimbursement rate structure. We know that the child care workforce is essential – before, during, and after the pandemic.

As you embark on the State Budget development process for State Fiscal Year 2023-24, we urge the Administration and Legislature to uphold the following investments that mitigate the harm of systemic injustices and racism and combat COVID-19's ongoing damage to children, families, and providers.

Protect and preserve access to quality, affordable child care.

- Make current COVID-19 policies permanent, including hold harmless and family fee waivers, both of which are set to expire June 30, 2023.
- Keep the Administration's current commitments to expanding access to child care.

Protect and expand the early care workforce.

- Adopt the recommendations of the Governor's Rate and Quality Workgroup in its report (found here: [Rate and Quality Workgroup Report](#)) and the accompanying modeling of an alternative methodology rate structure, [Understanding the True Cost of Child Care in California: Building A Cost Model to Inform Policy Change](#).

Support the social, emotional, and developmental needs of children.

- Ensure that the Governor's investments in behavioral health and supports for children with special needs are inclusive of early childhood care beginning at birth.

We are confident that the Administration and Legislature can find revenue sources to support these essential investments and not be deterred by the fiscal forecast.

Finally, we respectfully request a meeting with the Governor in early 2023 to discuss these investments.

As your partners in helping California families with young children navigate the challenges of today and supporting the early care and learning workforce provide essential services that support California's economy, we look forward to working with you to ensure our children remain a top priority. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Early Childhood Policy Council
ECPC Parent Advisory Committee
ECPC Workforce Advisory Committee