

Children and Families in Early Education Committee - 2023-2024 School Year Recommendations

The Children and Families in Early Education Committee is charged with addressing how we can collectively and effectively serve the needs of our youngest learners in Los Angeles as well as the ways we are providing opportunities for engagement with their parents and families. During the 2023-2024 year, the committee heard from community partners, parents, school leaders, educators, local and state advocates, labor partners, and childcare providers and addressed topics including an overview of our different program offerings (Universal Transitional Kindergarten, Early Education and Infant Centers, dual language and special education programs), the current state of the mixed delivery child care system inclusive of partner early childhood providers, how we measure program quality, and current supports for District employees with young children.

Following discussions in meetings dated 9/7/23, 10/19/23, 1/18/24, 4/4/24, and 5/21/24 the committee recommends pursuing action around the following items:

Recommendations:

- **Explore partnership opportunities with home and center providers to meet the diverse needs of our families enrolled in Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK).** Consider partnerships that can open up opportunities for full day care or an extended year, while creating career pathway opportunities for students and community members.
- **Prioritize serving more two and three year olds at our Early Education Centers (EECs).** Given the expansion of UTK, pursue legislative advocacy and new district initiatives to make our programs serving two and three year olds more accessible, including:
 - Raising the income thresholds for eligibility to fill available slots.
 - Establishing a sliding scale system with differentiated costs based on income and identifying where we can add programs to offer a competitive lower cost as compared with private options.
- **Tailor marketing strategies to meet families where they are.** In addition to radio, billboard, and television ads that are part of the existing marketing approach, the district should further its canvassing efforts and conduct face-to-face outreach in spaces frequented by families in their particular neighborhoods, such as parks, libraries, local businesses, WIC offices, colleges, healthcare providers offices, or other neighborhood hubs. Marketing should also be conducted in the languages that our families speak.
- **Increase infant aide positions from three to six hours.** Increase hours to provide stability to our youngest learners and address barriers to recruiting and retaining the necessary staff to maintain the quality of our programs for babies and toddlers.

- **Partner with external providers in support of the mixed-delivery early education system.** Continue legislative advocacy to support:
 - The development of State's approved alternative payment method that better reflects the true cost of care for childcare providers.
 - The continued investment in early education investments in developmentally appropriate facilities, increased reimbursement rates, and the expansion of new child care slots.
- **Strengthen the transition from early childhood to kindergarten.** Provide additional support to all staff as they create a developmentally appropriate transition for students from early childhood programs to Kindergarten, including through professional development and increasing opportunities for collaboration between early childhood and kindergarten educators.
- **Leverage early education enrollment data for program expansion.** Work with the data and accountability team to use geographic and other relevant student and community based variables to identify priority areas for program expansion, across all our early childcare program types (e.g. infant centers, dual language programs, and others).
- **Expand early dual language programs.** Work with relevant District divisions to expand the number of early Dual Language programs and work with Human Resources, institutions of higher learning and other stakeholders to strengthen pipelines for and retention of bilingual staff and educators.