

ALAMEDA COUNTY
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL PLAN



November, 2006



FOREWORD

We are thrilled to share with you the Early Care and Education for All Plan for Alameda County. These are challenging and exciting times for early care and education (ECE), with policy makers, media and the general public becoming more aware of the importance of the early years of a child's life. Alameda County undertook this comprehensive planning effort to address the needs of all children birth to five years and their families. This Plan will help guide our collective efforts for high-quality ECE in Alameda County.

This very successful process was made possible with the support and collaboration of community members from the ECE workforce, other professionals and interested individuals who joined together to help plan for a better future for our children and their families. Members of our community came together to provide important input and ask complex questions that kept us moving forward, getting to the heart of the issues. The excitement that filled the room when we all met fueled stimulating discussions. Many times, the walls of the meeting room were lined with giant sheets of paper, covered with words conveying the groups' ideas. We thank all of you for your patience, wisdom and generosity.

The Plan you are about to read is the culmination of this exhilarating, collaborative process, and we are very proud of both the vision this plan represents and the realistic and cohesive actions we are all committed to undertaking. We invite you to roll up your sleeves with us and share in this work that will develop lasting and positive outcomes for our children and their families, the ECE workforce, and the wider community.

Thank you for your interest in and commitment to Early Care and Education in Alameda County.

Sincerely,



California State Assembly



Alameda County
Office of Education



Handwritten signature of Wilma Chan in black ink.

Wilma Chan

District 16 Assemblywoman

Handwritten signature of Sheila Jordan in black ink.

Sheila Jordan

County Superintendent of Schools

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Mark Friedman

First 5 Alameda County

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Rosemary Obeid

Child Care Planning Council

ALAMEDA COUNTY

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION FOR ALL PLAN



// As adults, we must ask more of our children than they know how to ask of themselves. What can we do to foster their open-hearted hopefulness, engage their need to collaborate, be an incentive to utilize their natural competency and compassion...show them ways they can connect, reach out, weave themselves into the web of relationships that is called community. //

— Dawna Markova



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Alameda County launched a comprehensive planning effort in January 2006 to address early care and education (ECE) for all children from birth to five years of age. The process has built on the work of many experts, including community and business stakeholders, early childhood practitioners and K-12 professionals. Led by County Superintendent of Schools Sheila Jordan, Assemblywoman Wilma Chan, the Child Care Planning Council, and First 5 Alameda County, this process was designed to benefit our collective efforts to ensure every child in Alameda County has access to high-quality ECE.

The overall purpose of this comprehensive planning effort was to develop a vision and goals for quality ECE for all children in Alameda County, from birth to five years of age; develop a countywide consensus on the vision and goals for quality ECE; and develop a proposed implementation timeline and activities to work toward those goals.

This Early Care and Education for All Plan is the result of this effort. It is based on previous tasks of this project: a needs assessment; a community visioning effort; and a work plan. Over 60 people in the ECE community in Alameda County, as well as parents and representatives from school districts, colleges and universities, mental health and public health, served as members of Content Committees to help guide the project. In addition, hundreds of interested individuals attended meetings and input sessions across the county.

This Executive Summary reviews the Early Care and Education for All Plan, including the Vision Statement and the Overarching Initiatives that stem from the full plan. The Plan itself has six chapters, developed through the series of community meetings, with each chapter intended to build on the previous chapters. Chapter 1 includes background information on the project goals, the planning process and committee membership. Chapter 2 provides the community's vision and values for ECE. Chapter 3 presents a summary of the key findings from the needs assessment that was conducted as an early step in this planning process. Chapter 4 outlines the goals and actions designed through the planning process to make Alameda County's vision and values for ECE a reality, in consideration of the key findings from the needs assessment. Chapter 5 provides the Work Plan by which the goals and actions in Chapter 4 will be enacted, including lead and partner agencies, timelines and estimated funding needs. The final chapter provides a summary of the overarching initiatives that will take priority as this plan is implemented.



VISION STATEMENT

The following vision statement for quality ECE in Alameda County was created from a community-wide workshop on vision and goals on May 10, 2006, with input from the ECE Steering Committee.

“Young children and families are a priority in Alameda County. Community leadership and resources support a quality, inclusive Early Care and Education system that ensures universal access for families of all incomes, cultures and backgrounds. The individual needs of families and children, including preparation for life-long learning, are served by a diverse, inter-disciplinary early childhood workforce that is equitably compensated, adequately prepared and continuously engaged in professional development.”

OVERARCHING INITIATIVES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Our vision statement recognizes that “Young children and families are a priority in Alameda County.” The Early Care and Education for All Plan process includes numerous goals and actions to ensure that children and families remain at the forefront of our County’s thinking. Each goal and action is presented in this Plan, along with supporting contextual and background information, lead and partner agencies, and estimated funding needs and timelines. The following five initiatives summarize and organize the results of the plan in a succinct, easily understandable format for elected officials, the ECE community and the general public.

1. SECURE NEW FUNDING AND IMPROVE THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF FUND DISTRIBUTION

Advocate for increased ECE funding and help school districts and other eligible providers acquire and take full advantage of new and existing funding for preschool or other ECE programs, as a means of ensuring that all young children and their families have access to high-quality ECE programs. Advocate, as needed, for changes in State regulations to minimize barriers and increase equitable distribution of funding.



2. DEVELOP PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

Develop a consensus about core principles of quality for ECE in Alameda County and use that consensus to advocate for quality in every ECE program. It will only be possible to ensure that we consistently promote quality in every ECE program if the ECE community can agree on what quality means. This consensus will be developed by a workgroup who will meet over a one- to two-year period to better define the components that make for quality ECE for all children and families. Issues to be addressed include child-adult relationships, developmentally-appropriate approaches to cognitive skill development for children, workforce training and compensation, facilities, cultural sensitivity, parent and family involvement, and ways to work with children with special needs.

3. IMPROVE THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Create professional development programs, learning communities and training systems to meet the documented needs of all ECE staff in our County. Establish ECE Bachelor's and Master's degrees in every appropriate college in Alameda County. Advocate and seek funding for fellowships, scholarships and forgivable loans to the ECE workforce.

4. INCREASE CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND SENSITIVITY

Provide on-going training for the ECE workforce on issues of diversity, cultural competency and working with bilingual children. Sponsor workshops to disseminate ways that ECE providers can integrate cultural competency and sensitivity into child curriculum, parent involvement and program design.

5. EMPHASIZE A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Continue, expand and implement programs that promote cross-disciplinary efforts to allow ECE, medical and special needs professionals (teachers, providers, mental health consultants, early interventionists, pediatricians and social workers) to share knowledge and awareness of each other's work and resources. Encourage a cross-disciplinary approach throughout all early childhood fields.





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We give an enthusiastic thank you to the many dedicated people who shared their time to come together to create a successful Early Care and Education for All Plan. Your dedication and hard work through the duration of the project is reflected throughout this report. Your willingness to share ideas and concerns is deeply appreciated. We look forward to continued collaboration in creating a better society through nurturing children and supporting their families, providers and teachers.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Alameda County launched a comprehensive planning effort in January, 2006 to address early care and education (ECE) for children from birth to five years of age. The process built on the work of many experts, including community and business stakeholders, early childhood practitioners and K-12 professionals. Led by the County Superintendent of Schools Sheila Jordan, Assemblywoman Wilma Chan, the Child Care Planning Council, and First 5 Alameda County, this process will benefit our collective efforts to ensure that every child in Alameda County has access to high-quality ECE.

This Early Care and Education for All Plan is the result of this effort. It is based on previous tasks of this project: a needs assessment; a community visioning effort; and a work plan. Over 60 people from Alameda County's ECE community, as well as business and school district representatives and parents, served as members of Content Committees to help guide the project. Additionally, hundreds of interested individuals attended meetings and input sessions across the county.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The overall goals of this comprehensive planning effort were:

- Develop a vision and goals for quality ECE for all children in Alameda County, from birth to five years of age;
- Develop a countywide consensus on the vision and goals for quality ECE; and
- Develop a proposed implementation timeline and activities to work toward those goals.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

A Steering Committee, three Content Committees, and public participants guided development of the Early Care and Education for All Plan.

1. STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee met periodically over the course of the project, reviewing and providing input on the process and content of the products and meetings. The Steering Committee was composed of:

- Mark Friedman (CEO, First 5 Alameda County)
- Assemblywoman Wilma Chan (District 16 Representative to the California State Assembly)
- Superintendent Sheila Jordan (Alameda County Superintendent of Schools)
- Rosemary Obeid (Chair, Alameda County, Child Care Planning Council)

2. CONTENT COMMITTEES

Each of the three Content Committees had a specific focus: Needs, Facilities and Funding; Program and Standards; and Professional Development/Higher Education.

Content Committee members were, for the most part, selected by the organizations or agencies to which they belong. Participating organizations and agencies were selected by the Steering Committee to represent a broad array of early childhood education constituencies and other organizations that serve children and families throughout Alameda County. Members have exhibited a strong commitment to high-quality ECE for all young children and their families, and to the constituencies or groups they represent. A complete list of content committee members and the organizations they represent appears on page vii.

Content Committee members were asked to:

- Attend all meetings as requested, which was roughly six times throughout the year;
- Read materials provided before the meetings, including reports and recommendations of the planning team;
- Provide thoughtful and constructive feedback to staff and consultants;
- Act as a liaison or ambassador to the community/constituency they represent, which may include briefings, presentations, or assistance with coordination of outreach and input.





a. Needs, Facilities and Funding

The first Content Committee to meet was the Needs, Facilities and Funding (NFF) Committee. The goal of this committee was to guide and review data requirements for the needs assessment report, suggest and review data sources, determine additional data to be collected, and review draft reports from staff. As the needs assessment approached completion, the NFF committee joined the other two committees in developing the vision, values, goals and actions that comprise this plan. Committee members discussed the need for infant and toddler care, affordability and access issues, quality and locations of facilities, and funding and delivery systems challenges.

b. Programs and Standards

A second Content Committee, the Programs and Standards (P&S) Committee, helped develop the vision statement, the list of shared values and goals, and appropriate actions related to infant, toddler and preschool quality care. P&S committee members focused on issues such as program diversity, access to special needs resources, language and cultural access, and family and community education and relations.

c. Professional Development/Higher Education

The third content committee was also engaged in creating the vision, values, goals and actions, focused specifically on Professional Development and Higher Education (PD/HE) issues, including various approaches for the ECE workforce to further their education and professional skills. Committee members reviewed current research on the State and local ECE workforce and recommended goals and actions to increase attention to the needs of the workforce, including pay and benefits, training opportunities, technical assistance and workforce diversity.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To ensure that the Early Care and Education for All Plan reflected the entire community's views, all meetings and project activities were open to the public. Many members of the public, including parents, policymakers, and ECE teachers, providers, administrators, and students joined the process by attending meetings and giving thoughtful feedback on the vision, values, goals and actions.

PROJECT PROCESS

The Steering Committee, the three Content Committees, and the public participants assisted the planning process by guiding development of the vision, goals and actions for ECE in Alameda County. The following section describes the process to reach this Early Care and Education for All Plan that the community developed and supports.

1. INTRODUCTORY MEETING

This first meeting, held January 27, 2006, brought together all Content Committees members, and the Steering Committee introduced them to the project.

2. NEEDS, FACILITIES AND FUNDING MEETINGS #1 AND #2

At the first meeting with the NFF Content Committee, January 27, 2006, we discussed the data needed to complete a comprehensive needs assessment. At the second meeting, April 21, we discussed preliminary findings of the Needs Assessment Report.

3. NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Needs Assessment Report, a key component of the planning process, was completed in May, 2006. The report looks at a variety of elements related to supply and demand for child care for our children from birth to kindergarten and their families. Additionally, the needs assessment includes information on school-age children, defined as five- to 12-year-olds.

Specifically, the needs assessment includes current demographic trends; supply, demand and resulting gaps of child care; the needs of children from special populations; a summary of the cost and available subsidies for ECE; and information about the ECE workforce. The report also highlights 12 issues of particular interest to policymakers and ECE professionals. The final Needs Assessment Report is available at: <http://www.acgov.org/childcare/documents.shtml>.





4. VISION & GOALS WORKSHOP

On May 10, the Steering Committee, Content Committee members and other interested community members met to create a vision statement and set goals for the Early Care and Education for All Plan project. Workshop participants met in three groups, based on Content Committees, and developed preliminary values, goals and draft vision statements.

5. CONTENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

One round of Content Committee meetings was held June 9 and another on July 20. At the first of these meetings, members of each committee met to continue work on the draft goals developed at the Vision & Goals Workshop and to begin creating actions needed to meet the goals.

At the second round of Content Committee meetings, committee members prioritized the goals, reviewed all actions, and completed information needed for the Action Plan, such as lead and partner agencies, timing for the start or completion of the action, needs and potential sources of funds, as well as community and political interest and feasibility.

6. ACTION PLAN WORKSHOP

At this workshop, held September 8, committee and community members finalized the goals and actions resulting from the previous meetings. This included review of the Work Plan and a summary of the Top Five Initiatives to Meet the Needs of Children and Families, as described in subsequent chapters of this document.



2 VISION AND VALUES

VISION

The following vision statement for quality early care and education (ECE) in Alameda County was created out of a community-wide workshop on vision and goals, with input from the ECE Steering Committee comprised of Mark Friedman (First 5 Alameda County), Assemblywoman Wilma Chan, Superintendent Sheila Jordan, and Rosemary Obeid (Child Care Planning Council).

“Young children and families are a priority in Alameda County. Community leadership and resources support a quality, inclusive Early Care and Education system that ensures universal access for families of all incomes, cultures and backgrounds. The individual needs of families and children, including preparation for life-long learning, are served by a diverse, inter-disciplinary early childhood workforce that is equitably compensated, adequately prepared and continuously engaged in professional development.”

VALUES

Values are principles or core beliefs. Participants at the ECE Vision & Goals workshop discussed their vision, values, goals and policies for high-quality ECE. Values that community members share with regard to young children in Alameda County include the following:

- ECE programs in Alameda County should be diverse.
- ECE providers should understand and be sensitive to diversity in language, culture and economic background and all types of families.
- All ECE programs should be purposeful and meaningful, research-based, acknowledge that play is learning, have appropriate size and ratios, and enough materials, including those that are print-rich, stimulating and appropriate to children’s development.
- Quality is dependent on a well-educated, appropriately-compensated ECE workforce.

- The ECE workforce is a learning community that requires on-going reflection and professional development, mentoring and continued opportunities for academic advancement at all levels.
- Professional development at all education and experience levels should be on-going and available for teachers and providers.
- Professional development should be offered in a range of locations, including on college campuses, in communities, as well as onsite at child care centers and family child care homes.
- ECE instructors, trainers and workforce should include both males and females who reflect the diversity of children in Alameda County, and show cultural humility, awareness and respect.
- Teachers and providers should have a foundation in the social and emotional concepts that support a child's learning, and also that support parents in supporting their children.
- A full package of benefits, including paid vacation, sick leave, retirement, health and dental care are imperative for the ECE workforce.
- Providers should be compensated according to their education and responsibilities.
- Partnerships between parents and ECE providers and teachers are valuable.
- All families should be able to afford high-quality ECE; subsidies should be available to all eligible low-income families.
- A child-oriented and attractive high-quality facility includes quality outdoor space; balanced indoor and outdoor activities; and sufficient space for exploration, dynamic child movement and a developmentally-appropriate, purposeful curriculum.
- Coordination among family child care homes, private, non-profit, faith-based, public and other types of ECE programs is vital to the well-being of families and the economic and business community.

3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter outlines the characteristics of children and families in Alameda County, the current and projected supply and demand for child care, and the types of supports the County has in place for families and the early care and education (ECE) workforce. This information comes from the ECE Needs Assessment Report, available at <http://www.acgov.org/child-care/documents.shtml>. The Report provides important background for a long-range community effort, including this project, to develop and support high-quality environments for all children. This is especially important as the quality of ECE has been linked to children's academic and social outcomes in the short- and long-term. Likewise, quality depends on a host of other important features of ECE, such as teacher and provider skills, knowledge, wages and turnover.

Although defining quality is beyond the scope of this document, one of the major planned actions is to develop a community-wide consensus about quality. This chapter addresses, other aspects of care that are important to parents when choosing child care, including geographic location and hours of operation.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Approximately 257,000 children 12 years old and younger live in Alameda County, accounting for 16 percent of the County's population. By 2010, the County population of children 12 years and younger will grow to 267,000. Asian and Latino children account for a larger share of the child population than the County population overall and are projected to grow to an even larger proportion in four years, accounting for 61 percent of their age cohort by 2010.



DEMAND, SUPPLY AND GAP SUMMARY

1. CHILD CARE DEMAND

Based on a combination of local demographic information and national child care use patterns, this project estimates that families currently demand approximately 77,600 child care slots for children 12 years and younger. Preschool children (ages two through four) account for the largest segment of demand at approximately 35,600 children; followed by school-age (ages five through 12) at 33,100 children; and infants and toddlers (birth to 24 months) at 8,900 children. By 2010, child care demand is expected to increase to 80,500 slots with infant and toddler and preschool demand growing at a faster pace than school-age demand.

2. CHILD CARE SUPPLY

Alameda County has approximately 61,900 full- and part-time slots in child care, early education, and before- and after-school facilities. These facilities can accommodate approximately 5,800 infants and toddlers, 36,000 preschoolers and 19,900 school-age children. Approximately 44,600, or 72 percent of the slots, are for full-time care.

3. CHILD CARE GAPS

Overall, Alameda County has an estimated gap of approximately 15,700 child care slots with the vast majority of the child care gap in before- and after-school care. This accounts for approximately 13,200 of the total deficit. Still, infant and toddler care represents a significant gap as well, with the supply able to serve only 65 percent of total infant and toddler demand. This results in a countywide gap of approximately 3,100 slots for infants and toddlers. The ECE Needs Assessment Report identifies a small surplus of slots for preschoolers (600 slots) in 2006, but by 2010, if supply does not increase, the County will have a shortfall in all age categories. By 2010, Alameda County will have a child care deficit of approximately 1,600 slots for preschoolers, 3,600 slots for infants and toddlers, and 13,500 slots for school-age children.

It is important for families to have choices with regard to their children's care arrangements. Families have different needs and preferences for child care, depending on their work and family situation, and their values and goals for their children. In order to ensure choice, a slight surplus of care for each age group, in each community, is desirable. If all slots are filled to capacity, parents have few options. Whereas this report does identify a surplus in some types of care in some communities, insufficient information is available to know if those slots meet the needs or preferences of families in that community. Further, there is a shortage of care in many communities. Increasing the availability of care in order to meet parents' varying needs and preferences is essential.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Within Alameda County, children from special populations have a variety of services and supports available to them; however, these services are often inadequate, confusing or difficult for families to access. Over 14,000 (birth through sixth grade) children, or about 6 percent of the child population, participate in special education in Alameda County. This rate is roughly equal to that of the State, but somewhat lower than the nation as a whole. Approximately 3,400 children under age 13 receive services for a special long-term medical need. Mental health services are provided to over 4,000 children (birth through 12 years). English Learners (EL) make up 27 percent of the elementary school population. Seven school districts in the County have a Migrant Education Program, and in total, have identified approximately 2,400 children from migrant families in the County. In 2005, there were 856 substantiated reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation of children in Alameda County; in March 2006, 564 children were in foster care. Over 62,000 children (birth through 12 years), or 24 percent of the population, receive some form of public assistance, not including a child care subsidy.

SUBSIDIES AND COST

About 25,000 children under 13 years of age currently receive free or subsidized care in Alameda County. This is approximately 10 percent of children in the County: 5 percent of infants and toddlers, 16 percent of preschoolers, and 8 percent of school-age children. A significant number of children are eligible for child care financial assistance but are not receiving it.

Unsubsidized, market-rate care is very expensive for families in Alameda County. For instance, a two-parent household making California's median income of about \$68,000 would spend one quarter of their income to place one infant and one preschooler in child care. Despite these high costs, neither parent fees nor subsidies cover the "true cost" of care.



WORKFORCE

Reflecting California's current regulatory requirements, the college and university programs in the County and the nearby areas that provide training in early childhood are mostly at the Associate's Degree (AA) level. Opportunities for upper-division- and graduate-level work in early childhood education are currently limited. However, First 5 Alameda County is working with seven of the colleges and universities in the County to increase early childhood offerings and access. Furthermore, the Child Development Corps is encouraging and rewarding early child care providers and teachers for continuing their professional training and remaining in the child care field.

Children and families in Alameda County are highly diverse with regard to race, culture and home-language. The ECE workforce is also diverse, but less so than the children they serve. For example, according to a recent survey by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment and the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network,¹ 32 percent of children ages birth to five in Alameda County are Latino and 24 percent are Asian or Pacific Islander. Teachers and providers are roughly 16 percent Latina and between 8 percent (FCCH) and 18 percent (center-based teachers) Asian or Pacific Islander. Ensuring that the ECE workforce reflects the diversity of the community is critical for all children and families to feel welcome, valued and understood.



¹ <http://www.childcarelinks.org/press/Workforce%20Study/AlamedaWFStudy06.htm>

4 GOALS AND ACTIONS

This chapter outlines the goals for Early Care and Education for All Plan in Alameda County, as well as the actions that will lead to attaining those goals and each action's priority. Goals are long-term, overarching objectives designed in keeping with the County's values for early care and education (ECE). Actions are specific steps we plan to take to reach our goals. Additionally, this chapter provides some background and context information to explain the importance of each goal and how these actions will lead to attaining these goals.

Each action is listed as either Priority 1 or Priority 2. All the actions are important for providing high-quality ECE for all in Alameda County. However, limited time and scarce resources prevent the ECE community from tackling all of them simultaneously. For that reason, a sub-set was selected as Priority 1 actions, to be started immediately with the highest level of attention. These actions are already underway or can be started very soon, and/or have substantial public and community support or funding available. Priority 2 actions are also key for meeting the goals outlined in this Plan, but these actions will take longer to start or may need additional public support and funding.

Please refer to page 45 for a list of Priority 1 actions, which also includes information about suggested lead and partner agencies, timing, funding and feasibility. A summary of Priority 2 actions begins on page 48.

GOAL 1

Expand and maintain subsidies and other financial supports to fully fund high-quality programs and address all families' ECE needs.

The need for increased subsidies and other financial supports was a key finding from the ECE Needs Assessment Report.¹ According to the Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) and the County's Head Start agencies, a large number of children who are eligible for and seek subsidies are not receiving them. Further, even middle-income families have difficulty purchasing market-rate care because of the high costs. Providers struggle to offer high-quality care at the current subsidy rate and some funds go unused because the regulations around their use are so narrow. Put together, these factors clearly indicate that the ECE system is underfunded, leaving many families without the means to place their children in the type of high-quality setting they would choose. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to address this pressing need.

ACTION 1.1

PRIORITY 1

As additional funds for preschool or other child care become available, work with school districts and other eligible providers to obtain the maximum and to ensure that programs are implemented effectively to address identified needs in the County.

The California State Legislature and Governor recently approved \$50 million in additional, on-going funds for preschool services throughout California. Further, \$50 million in one-time funds have been approved for improving ECE facilities. No specific information is available yet about application procedures for these funds, but Alameda County needs to be prepared to act quickly when such information becomes available and when other local, State and federal funding initiatives are approved. It is the County's intention, through this action, to be certain that Alameda County receives as much funding as possible and that the funds be used to expand and implement high-quality programs in keeping with identified service needs and priorities.

¹<http://www.acgov.org/childcare/documents.shtml>





ACTION 1.2

PRIORITY 1

Advocate for increased funds to provide more children with high-quality ECE and more equitably compensate for the workforce.

As noted earlier, the State is providing some new funds to serve additional preschoolers and improve facilities. However, the amount approved is small in comparison to the amount needed for every young child to have access to a high-quality program and for the entire workforce to be compensated at a level commensurate with her or his responsibilities and education. Through this action, Alameda County will work with other organizations that are advocating at the local, State, and federal levels in both the public and private sectors to increase the amount of money available for ECE.

ACTION 1.3

PRIORITY 1

Advocate for changes in State regulations to minimize barriers and increase equitable distribution of funding.

Despite a large documented need for ECE subsidies in Alameda County (see the recent ECE Needs Assessment Report),² a portion of currently available funding is going unused. This is, in part, due to strict income guidelines and regulations that prohibit subsidies from being moved between categories. For example, many working families in Alameda County earn over the income limit for subsidies, but cannot afford high-quality ECE for their children. Likewise, when there are too few children eligible for one subsidy category (e.g. Stage 2 CalWORKS), that money can not be used for another category where the need is greater (e.g. working families not on CalWORKS). Additionally, the subsidy amounts (e.g. standard reimbursement rate) are too low, making it difficult or impossible for programs to accept the subsidies because they cannot provide high-quality services at the reimbursement rate. This action will involve working to make statewide regulations better reflect the needs of families throughout the State, as well as in Alameda County, so all children can receive the services their families choose. If changes to State regulations are not feasible, Alameda County may seek appropriate waivers to allow all funding to remain in the County to serve children whose families are in need of assistance (following the San Francisco and San Mateo precedent).

ACTION 1.4

PRIORITY 1

Develop a program to increase provider and center director knowledge about financial management, managing existing contracts, and available funding.

Although financial management is a large part of providers' and directors' responsibilities, they often have limited training and knowledge in this area. Being able to effectively manage money would ensure more stable financial resources, thereby increasing the quality and quantity of services provided to children and families. Through this action, Alameda County would develop program(s) to work with interested providers or directors to improve their financial management skills.

Additionally, the complexity of the various State and federal funding and subsidy mechanisms, each with its own eligibility, reporting, accountability and use requirements, is an added burden for the subsidized programs and partially explains why some funds are returned to the State. In some cases, the administrative branch of large subsidized programs is very removed from the direct service branch and neither is sufficiently informed on how to effectively work together to maximize subsidies and comply with State reporting systems. Through the Early Care and Education for All Plan process, it is has become clear that subsidized providers often need assistance in learning how to efficiently comply with this complexity. Through this action, training and support will be provided to subsidized programs to increase the efficiency with which they manage their existing contracts and ensure that they are receiving and using all available funds.

Last, some ECE programs may be unaware of some funding streams or lack the needed knowledge and skills to access them. This action is also intended to help all providers become aware of and, if eligible, apply for and maintain all available funding, as a means of increasing the numbers of children who are served, improving program quality, and reducing the amount of funds that go unused.



ACTION 1.5

PRIORITY 2

Develop strategies to engage the business community in ECE issues as a way to support their employees.

Having access to dependable, affordable, high-quality ECE is a priority to for all working families with young children. When businesses involve themselves in ECE issues, they support their employees, thereby possibly increasing productivity, loyalty and retention, reducing absenteeism, and improving new employee recruitment. In fact, a recent study by the Families and Work Institute indicated that improved recruitment, retention, productivity and commitment were the primary reasons that employers engage in work-life programs, such as child care assistance.³ Therefore, engaging Alameda County's business community in ECE issues is a win-win proposition in that it addresses needs of families, businesses and the ECE community.

ACTION 1.6

PRIORITY 2

Advocate for better pay and benefits for the ECE workforce in publicly-funded and other settings.

A recent study by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment and the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network⁴ indicated that, on average, the highest paid ECE teacher with a Bachelor's degree in an Alameda County child care center earns \$22,500 less per year than the average Alameda County K-12 teacher. Further, K-12 teachers typically work fewer hours and have better benefits than ECE teachers. The California Child Development Corps has an advocacy campaign underway to address this salary inequity statewide, and this action is intended to support that campaign. Provision for commensurate pay and benefits should be incorporated into any new funding or program development.

³ <http://familiesandwork.org/eproducts/2005nse.pdf>

⁴ www.childcarelinks.org/press/Workforce%20Study/AlamedaWFStudy06.htm

ACTION 1.7

PRIORITY 2

Provide advocacy training to interested ECE workforce members and parents.

The ECE workforce and parents are ideally suited to advocate for better funding for, and understanding of, the ECE system. They are passionate about this issue, are knowledgeable about the shortcomings of the current system, and numerous enough to make a difference. Directors, teachers, providers and parents serve as the face of ECE, having the most contact with the public when it comes to representing the field and explaining the importance of high quality. However, many parents and workforce members need advocacy training to make their message effective. Through this action, interested individuals will have access to that training.

ACTION 1.8

PRIORITY 2

Advocate for better tax benefits for families of young children.

Tax benefits are one means by which more families can afford high-quality ECE, especially the thousands of families who do not meet income eligibility guidelines for subsidies but cannot afford market-rate ECE. There are currently two means by which families of young children receive tax benefits: the dependent care assistance program (DCAP) and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). DCAP allows families to pay for part of their child care expenses using pre-tax dollars. The EITC reduces the tax burden and sometimes provides a refund to low-income families. Both of these mechanisms should be expanded to make ECE more affordable for families. Through this action, Alameda County will advocate for such expansion.





GOAL 2

Ensure that all ECE facilities are well-designed, well-maintained, and provide a high quality, accessible and safe environment for all children and staff.

High quality facilities that are well suited for the needs of the children and adults who use them is a major issue for early childhood programs. Many facilities were originally designed for other purposes (e.g. public school classrooms designed for older children) and need to be re-modeled for ECE purposes. Even when facilities were originally designed for young children, appropriate maintenance is often prohibitively expensive for ECE programs, and many facilities fall into disrepair creating safety hazards and difficult working conditions. Attending to the special facilities needs of children and staff with mobility and/or sensory limitations is imperative for a truly inclusive program. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to overcome barriers to providing and maintaining high-quality ECE facilities throughout the County.

ACTION 2.1

PRIORITY 1

Lobby for and implement strategies to increase capital funding to improve and upgrade current ECE facilities and to create new facilities, including tracking major development opportunities.

Limited funds and high costs is one of the primary barriers to ensuring that all facilities are well-designed, well-maintained, accessible and safe. By advocating for increased funds for capital improvements and for building additional facilities in high-priority areas, this action will address this major barrier.

ACTION 2.2

PRIORITY 1

Expand provider and community education and capacity building on facilities maintenance, resources, best practices in universal design, and strategies for supportive land use and economic development.

Providers and the community-at-large need more information about what constitutes high-quality facilities, what is involved in maintaining them and strategies for accessing facilities resources. Through this action, community knowledge about ECE facilities will be expanded to increase the number of high-quality, well maintained, accessible facilities in the community.

GOAL 3

Make the ECE system streamlined, coordinated and understandable.

The ECE system is often referred to as a “non-system” or a “patchwork of systems,” because it contains so many different components, each with its own regulations, goals, funding and eligibility requirements. Although this breadth creates options for families and providers, it is difficult to navigate. For instance, low-income families may be eligible for several different types of free or subsidized ECE services (Head Start, Title V, State Preschool) but have to learn about and apply for each program at separate locations, through separate agencies. Likewise, some providers can serve children using a variety of funding streams, but each source of funds has different requirements, some of which conflict with one another. Coordinating funding streams within a program to comply with each one’s regulations is a complicated, time-consuming task for providers.

The Centralized Eligibility List (CEL), managed by BANANAS Child Care Resource and Referral for Alameda County, is working to streamline the system for families who are eligible for subsidies. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to work with BANANAS and other groups around the State make the ECE system better coordinated and easier for families and providers to access, without diminishing parental choice in program options.

ACTION 3.1

PRIORITY 2

Create a computerized system that allows providers to enter information electronically to learn about resources for which they are eligible.

A computerized system that gives all providers easy access to the reliable information about funds and other resources for which they are available, as well as information on how to access the funding, will streamline this complicated system and aid providers in serving more children in high-quality programs.





ACTION 3.2

Support efforts of the California Department of Education (CDE) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) to coordinate their policies.

PRIORITY 2

DSS oversees Community Care Licensing (CCL) and CDE oversees both special education (Part C services) and the Child Development Division (CDD). Aligning the policies of these three child-serving agencies would make the ECE system less cumbersome for families and providers.

GOAL 4

Coordinate the ECE system with other services for children and families.

Many organizations, programs, agencies and specialists serve young children and their families in Alameda County. For example, in addition to ECE, services for children with disabilities are provided by the Regional Center of the East Bay, the school districts, California Children Services, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services and Social Security, to name a few. Although each child-serving program has its own priorities, delivery systems, and clientele, they all share the common goal of aiding children and their families as they grow and develop. Currently, families must learn about and access many different types of services separately, often demanding excessive time and paperwork. Furthermore, ECE professionals are not always aware of the breadth of services available or approaches taken by different disciplines. Working together in a coordinated system will simplify access to services and supports for families, prevent duplication, maximize use of resources and optimize services because each organization will be aware of the other's efforts. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to create a coordinated system of services for young children.



ACTION 4.1

PRIORITY 1

Offer additional cross-disciplinary education for teachers and providers.

By increasing ECE professionals' knowledge of other child-serving disciplines, children can obtain the maximum benefit from the services. For instance, when ECE teachers and providers are familiar with the strategies and programs for special education or child-mental health, they can support and reinforce the efforts of those professionals and make appropriate referrals for children in their programs.

ACTION 4.2

PRIORITY 1

Convene a workgroup to plan and make recommendations for improved coordination of ECE and other child-serving systems, including public schools, in Alameda County.

In order to go beyond knowledge sharing and actually improve coordination of systems, a workgroup will be needed. That group will consist of representatives of a large array of organizations and seek to identify barriers to coordination among systems and methods for overcoming those barriers.

ACTION 4.3

PRIORITY 2

Develop a comprehensive system for families to learn about the wide variety of resources for which they are eligible.

Children and families are eligible for a wide range of services and supports, depending on their family circumstances (e.g. income, special education needs, mental health needs). Currently, learning about and accessing each service or support is a cumbersome task, primarily left to the parents. This action is designed to streamline that system and provide information to families in a single, comprehensive system.

Alameda County Social Services, Alameda Health Care Services Agency, and the Alameda Alliance for Health are already collaborating to create a computerized eligibility system called One-e-App to facilitate enrollment in Healthy Families, Medi-Cal, the County Indigent Program (County Medically Indigent Services Program), the Welfare Case Data System (WCDS), and the CalWIN system (CalWORKs Information Network). In the future, other services for young children, and their families, such as ECE services, could be incorporated into the One-e-App system, or system modeled after One-e-App could be created specifically for families of young children.

ACTION 4.4

PRIORITY 2

Coordinate advocacy among ECE and other fields such as health, mental health, housing, public education, foster care, CalWORKS and Child Protective Services.

The various child-serving organizations have similar and overlapping goals for children and similar needs in terms of funding and receiving recognition of the importance of their work. Coordinating advocacy efforts will prevent these organizations from competing with one another for scarce resources and allow them speak in a single, united voice for young children.

GOAL 5

Increase the availability of high-quality infant and toddler care.

The gap between the supply and the demand for infant and toddler care in the Alameda County was a key finding from the Early Care and Education for All Needs Assessment Report.⁵

That report estimated that the current supply is only able to meet 65 percent of the demand, resulting in a countywide gap of approximately 3,100 slots for infants and toddlers. Further, it is notoriously difficult to maintain high quality in infant and toddler care settings because such young children require a great deal of individualized attention, specialized space and equipment, and special caregiver training. All of these requirements make infant and toddler care especially costly, leading to low supply and inconsistent quality. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to increase the supply and quality of infant and toddler care in the County.

ACTION 5.1

PRIORITY 1

Advocate increasing and prioritizing public and private funding for infant and toddler care.

The dearth of local infant and toddler slots is clearly tied to lack of funding. As funding for infant and toddler care becomes available through advocacy and as policies are written that encourage the use of existing funds for infant and toddler care, programs will increase their services for the youngest children.

ACTION 5.2

PRIORITY 1

Advocate for additional paid family leave statewide, including leave for CalWORKS families.

This action is intended to address the demand side of the gap between supply and demand for infant and toddler care. Some parents who are currently employed would choose to stay at home and not use child care for their infants and toddlers if they had paid leave available. Increased paid family leave, including for CalWORKS families, would provide families with more options as they decide what is best for their child and family.



⁵ <http://www.acgov.org/childcare/documents.shtml>



GOAL 6

Promote high quality in every ECE program.

Research has consistently demonstrated a link between program quality and a wide variety of positive child outcomes including academic readiness skills and social-emotional development.⁶

High quality early childhood programs are especially important for children who are at-risk for later school difficulties because of family, societal or economic factors. Further, high quality programs are safe and healthy environments for children and provide the type of stable, consistent education and care that allows parents to work without worrying about their children. Alameda County has many high-quality ECE programs, but needs to be vigilant and consistent in developing ways to assist every program reach and maintain high quality. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County intends to support and encourage every ECE setting to maintain a high level of quality.

ACTION 6.1

PRIORITY 1

Convene a workgroup to develop a consensus about core principles of quality for ECE in Alameda County.

Agreeing on what quality means is a first, key step in consistently promoting quality in every ECE program. Through this action, a workgroup will be convened to develop a consensus on the core principles that comprise quality in ECE.

This workgroup, composed of ECE workforce members and leaders from all parts of the ECE and partner communities (such as family support, early childhood mental health and professional development), will meet over a one- to two-year period. It will work to better define the components that make for quality ECE, using the Vision and Values in this Plan as a starting point. Issues to be addressed, as outlined in the Vision and Values, include child-adult relationships, developmentally appropriate approaches to cognitive skill development for children, workforce training and compensation, facilities, cultural sensitivity, parent and family involvement, and ways to work with children with special needs.

The principles that the workgroup explores will be broad enough to reflect the multitude of program types and service delivery options that exist in the County. The workgroup will develop a framework that highlights universal elements needed in all program types to

ensure high quality services for children, families and staff. Discussions regarding these core principles will bring seemingly disparate programs into dialogue with each other and allow the ECE community to articulate a “bottom-line” that defines elements necessary for quality care and education in any setting.

While the workgroup will base its work on this Early Care and Education for All Plan’s Vision and Values, it will review and consider a variety of inputs. Inputs include academic research; existing ECE classroom quality measures like the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) and child outcome measurement tools such as the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP); accreditation systems by entities such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); and State and federal rating and evaluation systems. Although the workgroup will use these sources as inputs, the ultimate results will reflect the diversity and unique characteristics of Alameda County.

The core principles that come out of this effort are not intended to become standards with which individual ECE programs must comply. Instead, ECE programs could use them as guidance to shape and improve their programs on a voluntary basis, and parents could use them as reference in choosing an appropriate ECE program for their children. They could also be adapted for public education on the value of quality ECE. However, there is no intention that this effort would result in additional regulations that ECE programs would need to fulfill, unless they are adopted by regulatory agencies such as Community Care Licensing or the California Department of Education.

ACTION 6.2

Convene events in which ECE learning communities and on-the-floor staff collaborate and learn from each other.

PRIORITY 1

There are teachers and providers throughout the County who provide high-quality ECE programming; however, all teachers and providers struggle with some aspect of quality. By providing the workforce with opportunities to learn from one another and problem-solve together, the ECE community can capitalize on existing knowledge and skills, provide a cost-effective way to improve quality and supports for teachers and providers and create new leadership within the ECE community.



ACTION 6.3

PRIORITY 1

Advocate for Early Childhood standards at the State level that are based on quality adult-child relationships and interactions.

State standards can help all programs attain high quality by specifying what is expected. However, there is a national trend toward focusing early childhood standards on academic instruction and outcomes, sometimes to the exclusion of learning through adult-child relationships and by de-emphasizing social-emotional development. The intent of this action is both to support California in efforts to specify standards and also ensure that those standards encompass the whole child, not just academic skills.

ACTION 6.4

PRIORITY 1

Convene a workgroup to improve the delivery of technical assistance.

Currently there are several different types of technical assistance available to providers from a variety of organizations. This action is designed to create a more seamless system of technical assistance so that teachers and providers know when to call on technical assistance professionals, who to call when help is needed, and to ensure that the various agencies are working together to provide consistent supports to teachers and providers.

ACTION 6.5

PRIORITY 2

Research, summarize and distribute information about exemplary infant and toddler care models from other states and countries.

Although it is difficult to maintain high quality in infant and toddler classrooms, there are excellent models throughout the nation and world. Through this action, Alameda County programs will have the opportunity to learn about models that work, in a succinct and accessible way.

GOAL 7

Communicate and provide support to families in a culturally and linguistically-sensitive manner.

Diversity is one of Alameda County's great strengths. Alameda County is highly diverse with regard to race, culture and home-language, and is becoming increasingly diverse all the time. According to the recent Early Care and Education for All Needs Assessment Report,⁷ Alameda County's children (12 years and younger) are approximately 29 percent White, 27 percent Latino, 20 percent Asian or Pacific Islander and 16 percent African American. In the upcoming decade, the number and percent of Asian, Pacific Islander and Latino children is projected to increase, while the number and percent of White and African American children is expected to decrease. Additionally, 37 percent of children have a home-language other than English. With this strength of diversity comes an imperative that ECE services and supports be culturally and linguistically sensitive so that all families are comfortable in the ECE settings and all families can take maximum advantage of the services. Through the action in this goal, Alameda County seeks to ensure that its diversity is valued and the ECE community reaches out to all families.

ACTION 7.1

PRIORITY 1

Offer courses and on-going training to disseminate ways that ECE providers and teachers can integrate diversity, cultural competency and sensitivity, and bilingual education into child curriculum, parent involvement and program design.

Cultural and linguistic competency and sensitivity is important in all aspects of ECE programming. Through this action, teachers and providers will learn how to weave these key elements throughout their programs, making programs comfortable and inviting for all families.



⁷ <http://www.acgov.org/childcare/documents.shtml>



GOAL 8

Provide high-quality services for children with special needs and their families.

Over 2,000 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in Alameda County have an identified disability and participate in special education, according to the recent Early Care and Education for All Needs Assessment Report.⁸ Many more children will participate in special education once they reach school-age and many children with special needs will never be identified or receive special education services due to limitation in outreach and diagnostics, as well as family preferences. Further, typical development shows great variation and all children benefit from programs that are designed to address variations in development and work with a wide-range of children. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to ensure that all programs are prepared to provide high-quality services to ALL children.

ACTION 8.1

PRIORITY 1

Increase the availability of specialty teams (mental health, child development, social services, special needs, and providers of services for English language learners) for all ECE programs.

Teachers and providers need support as they identify and work with children with special needs and their families. Having specialty teams available for all programs will allow more children to be served in inclusive settings, improve the special needs identification process, increase the quality of the inclusive settings, and diminish stress for teachers and providers who often want to address children's special needs but feel they lack the needed skills and supports. Specialty teams designed to provide such support could include professionals with specialized knowledge and training in areas such as mental health, child development, social services, services for children with disabilities, and care and education of English language learners.

ACTION 8.2

PRIORITY 2

Expand and maintain information and distribution of resources on special needs and variations in typical development for parents, providers and the community.

Often families, teachers, providers and others in the community need additional information about special needs and variations in typical development. They are uncertain when and how to respond if they suspect a child's development is atypical, and they are uncertain how to support children who need special attention. Additional information for the entire community about special education and child development resources is needed to support all children and their families.

ACTION 8.3

PRIORITY 2

Provide incentives for the ECE workforce to increase and incorporate its knowledge of child mental health, variations in typical child development, and special needs into the regular curriculum.

According to a recent study by the FPG Child Development Institute, even teachers who have obtained an Associate's or Bachelor's degree in early childhood education often lack coursework addressing children with special needs or how to work with variations in typical development as part of the regular curriculum.⁹ Providing incentives for workforce members to engage in such coursework will improve the knowledge-base and ultimately improve services for all children.

Actions 4.1 and 6.1 also support Goal 8.

⁹ <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~images/pdfs/snapshots/snap31.pdf>



GOAL 9

Encourage and support a variety of ECE program types in Alameda County.

Within Alameda County, ECE is provided in a variety of settings including public and private centers and large and small family child care homes. Further, ECE is under the auspice of many types of organizations, including schools, faith-based organizations, parent cooperatives and for-profit entities. Programs have many different philosophies, curricula, and goals for children, such as programs based in play, geared toward academic or school readiness skills and those based on a particular early childhood philosophy like Montessori, Waldorf and Reggio Emilia. Alameda County values this diversity, and through the action in this goal, seeks to support a wide variety of programs to meet family's specific goals, interests and needs for their children.

ACTION 9.1

Expand parent information and materials about ECE programs.

PRIORITY 2

Information is critical for families to take full advantage of the wide variety of programs offered in Alameda County for young children. Providing such information to families is one of the key roles that the Resource & Referral Agencies (R&R) play in the community. This action is meant to support and encourage expansion of that role so all families can make informed ECE choices.



GOAL 10

Integrate family support and parent education and involvement in ECE programs.

Parents are the child's primary care and education providers. Parents make key decisions for children and know what is in the best interest of their children and families. However, parents need support in this key role and need to be integrated into ECE programs so that they know their experiences and opinions are valued. When parents, teachers and providers work together in the ECE community, everyone benefits. Through the action in this goal, Alameda County seeks to ensure that parents' critical role in their children's lives and in ECE programs is valued.

ACTION 10.1

Expand information and provide ECE staff with training on working with parents, parent involvement and parent networking.

PRIORITY 2

ECE teachers, providers and administrators are generally well prepared and comfortable working with young children, but sometimes lack that same level of preparation and comfort for working with parents and other adults. Additional information and training on this critical aspect of high-quality ECE programming is needed to ensure the workforce is successful in this critical role.



GOAL 11

Educate the public, parents and community about what makes a high-quality ECE program and why it is so important.

Some community-members think of ECE as “just baby-sitting.” They incorrectly think that providing care and education for young children is a straightforward task, requiring few specific skills, little education, and little planning. Because they lack information on what constitutes high quality, how difficult it is to provide high quality, and the great benefits that high quality affords children and families, they do not value ECE and do not understand why funding and support for programs is so critical. Further, it is difficult for parents to select high-quality programs because they are not always certain what it looks like. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County aims to increase community-wide understanding of the importance of high-quality ECE programs, thereby aiding in other campaigns to improve funding, wages, quality, respect for teachers and parent’s ability to select high-quality programs for their children.

ACTION 11.1

PRIORITY 1

Develop a public education campaign to garner support for expansion of ECE services and additional workforce training and compensation.

The campaign will focus on the value, importance and qualities of professional competence in ECE, and the need for adequate compensation in the field. The campaign will include the development of outreach materials for use by providers and advocates in presentations to the non-ECE community.

ACTION 11.2

PRIORITY 2

Educate school districts and superintendents on the value of high-quality early childhood programs for all children.

K-12 educators are increasingly concerned with the early academic and social skills that children bring to kindergarten. Research indicates that gaps in academic achievement between different racial and income groups are evident even before children start formal schooling at kindergarten.¹⁰ This action is intended to help school districts and superintendents understand the role high-quality ECE can play in improving early academic and social skills and decreasing the achievement gap.

Action 1.7 also supports Goal 11.

¹⁰ <http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm?id=617>

GOAL 12

Ensure that every member of the ECE workforce is highly skilled.

High-quality programs require a highly skilled workforce. Being an excellent ECE teacher or provider requires knowledge of child development and variations in typical development, knowledge of and ability to apply best-practice and appropriate pedagogy in ECE classrooms, and ability to work effectively with parents, other professionals and the community, along with many other high-level skills. Ensuring that every member of ECE workforce is highly-skilled will require access to higher-education, as well as non-collegiate, community-based, on-going training and supports. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to promote a highly skilled workforce throughout the County.

ACTION 12.1

Establish ECE Bachelor's and Master's degrees in every appropriate college and university in Alameda County.

PRIORITY 1

A recent study by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment indicates that California in general, and Alameda County in particular, has relatively few opportunities to attain a Bachelor's or Master's degree in ECE.¹¹ This action is intended to encourage all of Alameda County's appropriate colleges and universities to offer such a degree to ensure that all ECE workforce members who choose to do so, can continue their education.

ACTION 12.2

Seek funding for fellowships, scholarships and forgivable loans to the ECE workforce to support on-going ECE professional development.

PRIORITY 1

The cost of higher-education is often a major barrier for teachers, providers and administrators who want to further their education. Wages are typically low in ECE even for teachers with a Bachelor's degree or higher, so taking on large loans to support higher-education is often not feasible. This action is intended to reduce this barrier, allowing more workforce members access to higher-education.

¹¹ http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/cscce/pdf/revamp_report.pdf



ACTION 12.3

PRIORITY 1

Expand and improve culturally- and linguistically-sensitive professional development opportunities outside the college and university system.

Workforce skills are enhanced through a variety of mechanisms, both within and outside the formal higher-education system. This action is intended to increase the avenues open to teachers, providers and administrators to increase their skills. Alameda County strongly supports increased formal education for all teachers, providers and administrators and will encourage these professional development opportunities to provide college-level credit whenever feasible.

ACTION 12.4

PRIORITY 2

Establish credit transfer agreements between community colleges and four-year colleges and universities.

Credit transfer agreements, also called articulation agreements, ensure that credits obtained at community colleges will be recognized by the four-year colleges and universities, allowing students to move easily from the Associate-level programs to Bachelor programs without having to repeat coursework or lengthen their education. Through this action, community colleges and four-year institutions will come together to define what is required at each level, how coursework and credits will transfer, and inform students of these agreements so they can be certain they are making steady progress on their professional development path.

ACTION 12.5

PRIORITY 2

Increase accessibility to higher education by providing supports such as paid professional days, substitutes and child care services.

Many individuals enrolled in ECE Associate's and Bachelor's programs are already working in ECE programs and are parents themselves. The need to continue their employment and to meet the needs of the children in their care, as well as their own children, are all barriers to increased education. This action is meant to diminish those barriers by addressing these "real-world" needs.

ACTION 12.6

PRIORITY 2

Hold ECE classes in multiple settings, at a variety of times, and through expanded on-line courses.

As noted above, many ECE students are already employed, often as members of the ECE workforce. Holding classes only on college or university campuses and only during the work-day prevents some from participating. This action is meant to broaden the times, places, and media by which students can take part in ECE classes, so that more current workforce members enroll.

ACTION 12.7

PRIORITY 2

Advocate for the establishment of a California ECE Teacher Credential.

At one time California teachers could earn a credential covering preschool through grade 3, but that credential was phased out in the 1970s. Today, early childhood professionals can earn a Bachelor's or Master's degree in ECE at some colleges and universities, but California does not currently have an overall teacher credential for early childhood education. The lack of such a credential prevents teachers from gaining formal recognition for training in their field and makes it difficult to establish core-competencies, knowledge, coursework requirements or appropriate compensation for individuals wishing to advance in the field.





ACTION 12.8

PRIORITY 2

Encourage the ECE workforce to join and participate in professional organizations and communities.

By participating in professional organizations and communities such as the local chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the American Montessori Society or the local and State Family Child Care Associations, the ECE workforce has the opportunity to learn from colleagues, stay abreast of the latest information about child development and early childhood education, and create professional contacts. Such activities promote increased skills and program quality.

Actions 6.1, 6.2 and 11.1 also support Goal 12.

GOAL 13

Increase on-going cultural competency and sensitivity as a key component of teacher and provider qualifications and education.

As noted in Goal 7, cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity is one of Alameda County's strengths. With this strength comes a need to ensure that the entire workforce understands, promotes and employs cultural-sensitivity and competency in working with children and their families. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to acknowledge the strength of this diversity by ensuring that the entire workforce is culturally competent and sensitive.

ACTION 13.1

PRIORITY 2

Provide incentives and support for teachers and providers who are or are becoming multi-lingual.

The ability to communicate with children and families in more than one language increases communication and shows families that their home language and culture are valued in the ECE community. This action is intended to promote learning additional languages as a form of cultural competency.

ACTION 13.2

PRIORITY 2

Advocate for and design an ECE degree or certification for specialization in culture and language acquisition.

One way to encourage teachers and providers to learn about various cultures and language is to recognize their efforts with a formal degree or certification. Such a program would include an approved course-of-study and create workforce members who have an exceptionally high level of knowledge and skill in this very important area.

Action 7.1 also supports Goal 13.

GOAL 14

Develop and maintain all levels of the ECE workforce to reflect the diversity of the children in care.

Relationships between adults and children in ECE are often intense and personal. Having such relationships with individuals who are diverse with regard to culture, race, language, gender, and special needs provides children with a rich, early experience. Further, when children see and work with adults who look like them and are part of their cultural group, they gain a sense of importance and belonging. Currently, the ECE workforce in Alameda County is less diverse than children served by ECE. For example, according to a recent survey by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment and the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network,¹² 32 percent of children ages birth to 5 years in Alameda County are Latino and 24 percent are Asian or Pacific Islander. Teachers and providers are roughly 16 percent Latina and between 8 percent (FCCH) and 18 percent (center-based teachers) Asian or Pacific Islander. Through the action in the goal, Alameda County seeks to recruit and retain a workforce that is diverse in many ways to enrich the ECE community and improve children's and family's experiences with ECE.

¹² www.childcarelinks.org/press/Workforce%20Study/AlamedaWFStudy06.htm



ACTION 14.1

PRIORITY 2

Develop outreach to and recruitment from under-represented cultural, ethnic, linguistic, gender and special needs groups to encourage them to enter and advance within the ECE profession.

People outside the field may not know about the opportunities and rewards associated with a career in ECE. Promoting the ECE profession to diverse groups will increase diversity in the field and encourage diverse communities to value ECE. Some possible outreach ideas include attending career fairs and working with specific local cultural organizations to promote ECE as a profession.

GOAL 15

Compensate the ECE workforce at a level commensurate with its training and responsibilities.

The ECE workforce plays a pivotal role in the care and education of young children. The career involves a high level of responsibility and the workforce is increasingly called upon to obtain specialized education in ECE. However, salaries remain low and out-of-sync with responsibilities and education required. For instance, according to a recent study by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment and the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network¹³ the average annual salary for centers' highest-paid teachers with a Bachelor's degree or higher is \$37,544. As noted in Action 1.6, this is about \$22,500 less per year than the average Alameda County K-12 teacher. Further, K-12 teachers typically work fewer hours and have better benefits than ECE teachers. Average wage for centers' highest-paid assistant teacher is \$11.48 per hour. Increasing salaries will go a long way toward diminishing turnover (24 percent annually), increasing commitment to the field and encouraging on-going professionalization, training, and education. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County seeks to ensure that all workforce members are compensated equitably, in-line with their responsibilities and education.

ACTION 15.1

PRIORITY 2

Conduct workshops to educate administrators, teachers and providers about employee benefits.

Many ECE teachers and providers lack the types of health, retirement, vacation, and sick-leave benefits that other professionals enjoy. Even when benefits like health insurance are available, the amount the teachers are asked to contribute is often prohibitively high. Having such benefits would increase financial security for ECE teachers and providers and may increase job satisfaction and decrease turnover. This action is intended to help administrators, teachers and providers to better understand how they might be able to offer and access employee benefits.

ACTION 15.2

PRIORITY 2

Create a purchasing pool for ECE programs to attain a full package of benefits.

One reason that many centers and FCCHs do not offer benefits is that they are too small to purchase benefits that are reasonably priced. Creating a purchasing pool whereby several centers and FCCHs purchase benefits together should increase their purchasing power and decrease costs.

ACTION 15.3

PRIORITY 2

Continue to provide stipends for teachers and providers progressing on their professional path.

The Child Development Corps was established in 1999 by First 5 Alameda County as a means for encouraging and rewarding ECE providers and teachers for continuing their professional training and remaining in the field. The program requires participants to create an education plan under the guidance of a professional growth advisor and a college counselor, and provides stipends for meeting requirements and taking classes. This action is intended to support this program as an effective means of increasing teacher and provider education and compensation.

Actions 1.2, 1.6, and 1.7 also support Goal 15.





GOAL 16

Enhance the support system for existing teachers and providers.

Providing high-quality programs for children is a challenging task that requires a multitude of skills and resources. Appropriate supports in the form of specialists, consultants, mentors, and resource materials are essential to ensure high quality in every program. Through the actions in this goal, Alameda County intends to improve the supports available to teachers and providers as they seek to offer the best possible experience for children and families.

ACTION 16.1

PRIORITY 2

Organize and distribute current information about technical assistance providers so that the ECE workforce knows how to obtain needed support and resources.

Alameda County already has a rich network of support individuals and technical assistance services available to ECE teachers and providers. Creating a system to better inform teachers and providers who to contact under what circumstances would help to coordinate the current support and make it more accessible.

Action 6.4 also supports Goal 16.



5 WORK PLAN

This chapter presents the actions described in the previous chapter, and illustrates how the actions will lead to attaining the goals previously described. The first part of the table in this chapter lists Priority 1 action items and presents a suggested lead organization, partner organizations, estimated timing, funding and feasibility of each action. The second part of the table lists Priority 2 actions, along with a suggested lead and suggested partner(s).

The suggested leads and partners were selected by the Early Care and Education for All Plan workgroups that have convened multiple times over the past year to create this Plan. The suggested leads are being asked to make this action a priority for their organization and take responsibility for leading this action. There are no new funds currently earmarked for these actions, and the lead organizations are not being asked to provide new funds from their current budgets. In many cases, the lead organization is already working on this or similar actions and has already garnered the needed funds. In cases where this is a new action for the organization, the lead is being asked to work on securing the needed funds as part of the action. The suggested leads are also to coordinate the efforts of the suggested partners around completing this action. Suggested partners are asked to work with the leads to provide support, expertise, and leverage, and to aid in the establishment of needed funding.

Priority 1 actions have been organized by type of activity in the following four categories:

WORKGROUPS

These actions bring people together to discuss important issues related to provision of high-quality services in all ECE programs. The workgroups will include a broad array of ECE community members, as well as others who are interested in improving services for young children and their families. One of the most essential actions of this Plan is to develop core principles related to high-quality ECE programs. Other actions include forming a workgroup to improve provision of technical assistance, and one to improve coordination of the ECE system and other child-serving systems.

WORKSHOPS/COURSES/TRAININGS

These actions provide educational and networking activities for the ECE workforce to increase their knowledge base and skills in critical areas such as cultural and linguistic diversity, and financial management. As the workforce becomes more knowledgeable and skilled, the system's ability to provide high-quality services to all young children will increase.

ADVOCACY/PUBLIC POLICY/COMMUNITY EDUCATION

These actions take place in the public realm. They each lead to a larger goal that is somewhat beyond the purview of the Alameda County ECE community. For example, although the Alameda County ECE community cannot make changes to regulations, it can advocate for needed changes. Likewise, while the ECE community cannot change public perception of the importance of high-quality ECE programs, they can create community education campaigns to further public awareness of this important issue.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

These actions address the systems that form the framework for children and families access to services and the quality of the services they receive, such as the higher-education and facilities funding systems. By evaluating and improving these overarching systems, services for ECE families can be improved.





PRIORITY 1 ACTIONS

Action	Suggested Lead	Suggested Partner(s)	Start Time	Finish Time	Funding Needed	Funding in Use/ Available	Interest/ Feasibility
WORKGROUPS							
4.2 Convene a workgroup to plan and make recommendations for improved coordination of ECE and other child-serving systems, including public schools, in Alameda County.	LPC	First 5 Alameda	6/2007	6/2008	\$30,000	New funding needed	Low
6.1 Convene a workgroup to develop a consensus about core principles of quality for ECE in Alameda County.	LPC	First 5 Alameda ACOE	2/2007	6/2008	\$50,000-\$100,000	New funding needed	High
6.4 Convene a workgroup to improve the delivery of technical assistance.	First 5 Alameda	R&Rs First 5 Alameda contractors	2/2007	12/2007	\$35,000-\$50,000	New funding needed	Medium
WORKSHOPS/COURSES/TRAININGS							
6.2 Convene events in which ECE learning communities and on-the-floor staff collaborate and learn from each other.	First 5 Alameda contractors	First 5 Alameda R&Rs IHEs	1/2007	6/2009	n/a	Available 1/2007	Medium/ High
7.1 Offer courses and on-going training to disseminate ways that ECE providers and teachers can integrate diversity, cultural competency and sensitivity, and bilingual education into child curriculum, parent involvement and program design.	IHEs	First 5 Alameda R&Rs	Underway as part of First 5 Alameda contracts	On-going	n/a	On-going	Medium/ High
12.3 Expand and improve culturally and linguistically sensitive professional development opportunities outside the college and university system.	First 5 Alameda	R&Rs Local training groups	Underway as part of First 5 Alameda contracts	On-going	n/a	Available 1/2007	Medium/ High

PRIORITY 1 ACTIONS (continued)

Action	Suggested Lead	Suggested Partner(s)	Start Time	Finish Time	Funding Needed	Funding in Use/ Available	Interest/ Feasibility
ADVOCACY/PUBLIC POLICY/COMMUNITY EDUCATION							
1.1 As additional funds for preschool or other child care become available, work with school districts and other eligible providers to obtain the maximum and to ensure that programs are implemented effectively to address identified needs in the County.	LPC	ACOE First 5 Alameda R&Rs	On-going	On-going	\$35,000	New Funding Needed	High
1.2 Advocate for increased funds to provide more children with high-quality ECE and more equitably compensate for the workforce.	LPC	First 5 Alameda R&Rs	1/2007	12/2007	\$35,000	New funding needed	High
1.3 Advocate for changes in State regulations to minimize barriers and increase equitable distribution of funding.	LPC	ACOE CC Law Center	12/2006	12/2007	\$30,000- \$40,000	New funding needed	Medium
1.4 Develop a program to increase provider and center director knowledge about financial management, managing existing contracts, and available funding.	First 5 Alameda	State contrac- tors group	1/2007	On-going	\$30,000 per yr (incl. TA to programs)	New funding needed	Medium
5.1 Advocate increasing and prioritizing public and private funding for infant and toddler care.	LPC	ACOE First 5 Alameda R&Rs	12/2006	On-going	n/a	No	High
5.2 Advocate for additional paid family leave statewide, including leave for CalWORKS families.	CC Law Center	Parent Voices	12/2006	On-going	n/a	No	Medium
6.3 Advocate for Early Childhood standards at the State level that are based on quality adult-child relationships and interactions.	LPC	R&Rs First 5 Alameda ACOE	12/2006	On-going	n/a	No	High
11.1 Develop a public education campaign to garner support for expansion of ECE services and additional workforce training and compensation.	LPC	CA First 5 R&Rs Early Childhood Funders	7/2007	8/2007	Range: \$35,000- \$200,000	New Funding Needed	Medium



PRIORITY 1 ACTIONS

(continued)

Action	Suggested Lead	Suggested Partner(s)	Start Time	Finish Time	Funding Needed	Funding in Use/ Available	Interest/ Feasibility
SYSTEMS CHANGE							
2.1 Lobby for and implement strategies to increase capital funding to improve and upgrade current ECE facilities and to create new facilities, including tracking major development opportunities.	LINCC	ACOE LIIF	1/2007	12/2008	\$50,000 planning; several million for grants	Some new funding needed	High
2.2 Expand provider and community education and capacity building on facilities maintenance, resources, best practices in universal design, and strategies for supportive land use and economic development.	LINCC	ACOE R&Rs	1/2007	12/2008	\$50,000 planning; several	Some new funding needed	High
4.1 Offer additional cross-disciplinary education for teachers and providers.	First 5 Alameda	ACOE Safe Passages EPSDT R&Rs IHEs School Districts	Under-way	On-going	\$300,000 and up	New funding needed	High
8.1 Increase the availability of specialty teams (mental health, child development, social services, special needs, and providers of services for English language learners) for all ECE programs.	First 5 Alameda	ACOE Safe Passages EPSDT R&Rs IHEs School Districts	Under-way	On-going	\$300,000 and up	New funding needed	High
12.1 Establish ECE Bachelor's and Master's degrees in every appropriate college and university in Alameda County.	IHEs	First 5 Alameda ACOE	Under-way	On-going	\$500,000 start up	\$250,000 (7/2006)	High
12.2 Seek funding for fellowships, scholarships and forgivable loans to the ECE workforce to support on-going ECE professional development.	First 5 Alameda	CA First 5 ACOE	Under-way	On-going	Several million	\$142,000 (7/2006)	High



PRIORITY 2 ACTIONS

Action	Suggested Lead	Suggested Partner(s)
1.5 Develop strategies to engage the business community in ECE issues as a way to support their employees.	LINCC	ACOE Early Childhood Funders Group Bay Area Council
1.6 Advocate for better pay and benefits for the ECE workforce in publicly-funded and other settings.	California Child Development Corps	EBAEYC
1.7 Provide advocacy training to interested ECE workforce members and parents.	Parent Voices	LPC EBAEYC California Child Development Corps
1.8 Advocate for better tax benefits for families of young children.	LPC	CC Law Center NWLC
3.1 Create a computerized system that allows providers to enter information electronically to learn about resources for which they are eligible.	R&Rs	AP IHEs First 5 Alameda
3.2 Support efforts of the California Department of Education (CDE) and the Department of Social Services (DSS) to coordinate their policies.	CC Law Center	Legislators
4.3 Develop a comprehensive system for families to learn about the wide variety of resources for which they are eligible.	County Health Agencies	R&Rs First 5 Alameda County Social Services
4.4 Coordinate advocacy among ECE and other fields such as health, mental health, housing, public education, foster care, CalWORKS and Child Protective Services.	LPC	R&Rs
6.5 Research, summarize and distribute information about exemplary infant and toddler care models from other states and countries.	LPC	Deborah Stark
8.2 Expand and maintain information and distribution of resources on special needs and variations in typical development for parents, providers and the community.	Family Resource Network	R&Rs First 5 Alameda LPC County Health Agencies CC Law Center
8.3 Provide incentives for the ECE workforce to increase and incorporate its knowledge of child mental health, variations in typical child development, and special needs into the regular curriculum	IHEs	Family Resource First 5 Alameda R&Rs Regional Center
9.1 Expand parent information and materials about ECE programs.	R&Rs	Adult Education
10.1 Expand information and provide ECE staff with training on working with parents, parent involvement and parent networking	R&Rs	IHEs Parent Voices First 5 Alameda Adult Education

PRIORITY 2 ACTIONS

(continued)

Action	Suggested Lead	Suggested Partner(s)
11.2 Educate school districts and superintendents on the value of high-quality early childhood programs for all children.	ACOE	LPC
12.4 Establish credit transfer agreements between community colleges and four-year colleges and universities.	IHEs	First 5 Alameda
12.5 Increase accessibility to higher education by providing supports such as paid professional days, substitutes and child care services.	First 5 Alameda	Adult Education
12.6 Hold ECE classes in multiple settings, at a variety of times, and through expanded on-line courses.	IHEs	First 5 Alameda R&Rs Adult Education
12.7 Advocate for the establishment of a California ECE Teacher Credential.	CSCCE	LPC ACOE First 5 Alameda IHEs
12.8 Encourage the ECE workforce to join and participate in professional organizations and communities.	EBAEYC	First 5 Alameda
13.1 Provide incentives and support for teachers and providers who are or are becoming multi-lingual.	First 5 Alameda	California Child Development Corps
13.2 Advocate for and design an ECE degree or certification for specialization in culture and language acquisition.	IHEs	
14.1 Develop outreach to and recruitment from under-represented cultural, ethnic, linguistic, gender and special needs groups to encourage them to enter and advance within the ECE profession.	First 5 Alameda	R&Rs Adult Education IHEs First 5 California Family Child Care Associations
15.1 Conduct workshops to educate administrators, teachers and providers about employee benefits.	Working for Quality Child Care	R&Rs Labor Project for Working Families
15.2 Create a purchasing pool for ECE programs to attain a full package of benefits.	Working for Quality Child Care	LIIF PACE Family Child Care Group
15.3 Continue to provide stipends for teachers and providers progressing on their professional path.	First 5 Alameda	LPC IHEs R&Rs
16.1 Organize and distribute current information about technical assistance providers so that the ECE workforce knows how to obtain needed support and resources.	R&Rs	First 5 Alameda Family Resource Network



6 OVERARCHING INITIATIVES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Our vision statement recognizes that “Young children and families are a priority in Alameda County.” The Early Care and Education for All Plan includes numerous goals and actions to ensure that children and families remain at the forefront of our County’s thinking. The following five initiatives, which are groups of similar first priority actions, have been identified as top priorities for implementing the Early Care and Education for All Plan.

Through the process of developing this plan, we have discussed “elements,” “goals,” “objectives,” “policies,” and “actions,” which have each been useful for the task at hand. However, we also wanted to present an overall structure that organizes the results of the plan in a succinct, easily understandable format for elected officials, the early care and education (ECE) community and the general public. The following five overarching initiatives, along with their Priority 1 actions and lead and partner agencies, are meant to provide that structure.

1. SECURE NEW FUNDING AND IMPROVE THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF FUND DISTRIBUTION

Advocate for increased ECE funding and help school districts and other eligible providers acquire and take full advantage of new and existing funding for preschool or other ECE programs, as a means of ensuring that all young children and their families have access to high-quality ECE programs. Advocate, as needed, for changes in State regulations to minimize barriers and increase equitable distribution of funding.

Goal	Action	Who
Goal 1	Actions 1 through 4	LPC, First 5 Alameda, ACOE, R&Rs, CC Law Center, State contractors group
Goal 2	Actions 1 and 2	LINCC, ACOE, LIIF, R&Rs
Goal 5	Actions 1 and 2	LPC, CC Law Center, ACOE, First 5 Alameda, R&Rs, Parent Voices
Goal 11	Action 1	LPC, CA First 5, R&Rs, Early Childhood Funders

2. DEVELOP PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

Develop a consensus about core principles of quality for ECE in Alameda County and use that consensus to advocate for quality in every ECE program. It will only be possible to ensure that we consistently promote quality in every ECE program if the ECE community can agree on what quality means. This consensus will be developed by a workgroup who will meet over a one- to two-year period to better define the components that make for quality ECE for all children and families. Issues to be addressed include child-adult relationships, developmentally appropriate approaches to cognitive skill development for children, workforce training and compensation, facilities, cultural sensitivity, parent and family involvement, and ways to work with children with special needs.

Goal	Action	Who
Goal 6	Actions 1 and 3	LPC, First 5 Alameda, ACOE, R&Rs

3. IMPROVE THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

Create professional development programs, learning communities and training systems to meet the documented needs of all ECE staff in our County. Establish ECE Bachelor's and Master's degrees in every appropriate college in Alameda County. Advocate and seek funding for fellowships, scholarships and forgivable loans to the ECE workforce.

Goal	Action	Who
Goal 6	Action 2	First 5 Alameda contractors, First 5 Alameda, R&Rs, IHEs
Goal 7	Action 1	IHEs, First 5 Alameda, R&Rs
Goal 12	Actions 1 through 3	IHEs, First 5 Alameda, ACOE, CA First 5, R&Rs, Local training groups



4. INCREASE CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND SENSITIVITY

Provide on-going training for the ECE workforce on issues of diversity, cultural competency and working with bilingual children. Sponsor workshops to disseminate ways that ECE providers can integrate cultural competency and sensitivity into child curriculum, parent involvement and program design.

Goal	Action	Who
Goal 7	Action 1	IHEs, First 5 Alameda, R&Rs

5. EMPHASIZE A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH IN ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Continue, expand and implement programs that promote cross-disciplinary efforts to allow ECE, medical and special needs professionals (teachers, providers, mental health consultants, early interventionists, pediatricians and social workers) to share knowledge and awareness of each other's work and resources. Encourage a cross-disciplinary approach throughout all early childhood fields.

Goal	Action	Who
Goal 4	Actions 1 and 2	First 5 Alameda, LPC, ACOE, Safe Passages, EPSDT, R&Rs, IHEs, School Districts
Goal 6	Action 4	First 5 Alameda, R&Rs, First 5 Alameda contractors
Goal 8	Action 1	First 5 Alameda, ACOE, Safe Passages, EPSDT, R&Rs, IHEs, School Districts

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

These acronyms are used in the Early Care and Education for All Plan. Many other acronyms are used in the ECE community. For a more complete list of acronyms and the agencies they stand for, please refer to:

<http://www.acgov.org/childcare/pdf/glossary.pdf>

◆ ACOE	Alameda County Office of Education
◆ AP	Alternative Payment
◆ CC Law Center	Child Care Law Center (CCLC)
◆ CCL	Community Care Licensing (under DSS)
◆ CCS	California Children Services
◆ CDD	Child Development Division (of CDE)
◆ CDE	California Department of Education
◆ CEL	Centralized Eligibility List
◆ CPS	Child Protective Services
◆ CSCCE	Center for the Study of Child Care Employment
◆ DCAP	Dependent Care Assistance Program
◆ DRDP	Desired Results Developmental Profile
◆ DSS	Department of Social Services
◆ EBAEYC	East Bay Association for the Education of Young Children
◆ ECE	Early Care and Education
◆ ECERS	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
◆ EITC	Earned Income Tax Credit
◆ ELL	English Language Learners
◆ EPSDT	Early Periodic Screening and Diagnosis & Treatment
◆ FCC	Family Child Care
◆ FCCH	Family Child Care Home
◆ IHE(s)	Institution(s) of Higher Education (community college through university)
◆ LIIF	Low Income Investment Fund
◆ LINCC	Local Investment in Child Care
◆ LPC	Local (County) Child Care Planning Council
◆ NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
◆ NWLC	National Women's Law Center
◆ PACE	Professional Association for Childhood Education
◆ R&R	Child Care Resource & Referral agency





Alameda County
Early Care and Education for All Plan
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