The Alameda County Early Care & Education Planning Council: An Overview

Council Purpose: The Alameda County Early Care and Education (ECE) Planning Council supports the County’s role as a leader in state and national early care and education policy, research and practice. It is a resource for decision makers, and develops and identifies best practices, monitors legislation and advises policymakers on early care and education issues. It also plans for early care and education programs based on the local needs of families.

Council Members and Staff: The County Board of Supervisors and the County Superintendent of Schools jointly appoint 25 individuals to the Council reflecting the diversity of Alameda County. It has a mandated composition of 20% consumers, 20% providers, 20% public agency representatives, and 20% community representatives. Twenty percent serve at the discretion of the Board & Superintendent. The County Planning Council is staffed by Denise Turner, through the County’s Early Care and Education Program. Acting ECE Program Administrator Ellen Dektar leads the program and team members include Angela Cabrera, Anna Miera and Michele Rutherford.

The Early Care and Education Landscape in Alameda County: The County has 2,000 licensed programs, including market rate and subsidized childcare, preschool and afterschool programs serving up to 52,720 Alameda County children. However, this number is estimated to serve only 33% of children who may need services. Federal and state subsidies currently amount to over $159 million dollars in Alameda County (08/2018).

What We Do:
- Analyze local, state and federal policy and legislation for providers and policymakers;
- Conduct annual and five-year needs assessments to identify areas of unmet ECE need;
- Administer stipends to over 700 staff per year who work in subsidized ECE and complete 21 hours of professional development in topics we know improve quality outcomes for children and families;
- Increase access to quality ECE through performance measures, below.

Mission: The Alameda County Child Care Planning Council advises and makes recommendations to policy makers to ensure that all children and families have access to quality childcare that educates children and enriches their lives.

Results Based Accountability:

INCREASED ACCESS TO QUALITY ECE PERFORMANCE MEASURES

HISTORY: In 1991, the United States Congress established a federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which allocated funds to states to assist low-income families in obtaining childcare. California specified that local communities should have a voice in the appropriation and allocation of CCDBG funds. In the same year, AB 2141 passed which established a Local Child Care and Development Planning Council in each County to identify priorities for CCDBG funds based on the needs of families. In 1997, welfare reform legislation was enacted, revising the membership and responsibilities of local planning councils and establishing the County Superintendent of Schools and the County Board of Supervisors as the governing and appointing bodies of the Council. There are currently 58 individual planning councils representing each county in California. As Council members are appointed by public agencies, the councils are required to conduct business in accordance with The Brown Act. Although language governing Councils is found in state welfare reform legislation, we serve as a forum to address the child care needs of all families in the community and all child care programs - including both subsidized and non-subsidized child care.