

2019-20 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING TRAILER BILL

Child Care and Early Learning Strategic Plan (Adds Uncodified Section)

SEC. 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) Providing children in California with a healthy start is one of the best investments the state can make.

(2) Research links early childhood interventions and improved life outcomes, including higher education levels, better health, and stronger career opportunities.

(3) Access to high-quality, affordable child care and early learning programs is essential for all families.

(4) Parents are more likely to be successful in school and/or career if they know that their children are safe and productively engaged throughout the day.

(5) Children who are emotionally, developmentally, and academically supported in a care setting are more likely to start school ready to learn and continue to excel once they are school-aged.

(b) To implement a more well-aligned, comprehensive child care system in the state, no later than October 1, 2019 the Executive Director of the State Board of Education or his or her designee, in consultation with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the director of the Department of Social Services, shall enter into a contract with a non-governmental research and policy agency to develop recommendations for future investment in the state's system of subsidized child care and early learning for children from birth through age five, with specific focus on children in high-need, low-income areas. These recommendations shall be compiled in a report, to be completed no later than October 1, 2020, to the Governor, the chairpersons of the legislative policy and budget committees for education and health and human services, the Executive Director of the State Board of Education or his or her designee, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the director of the Department of Social Services, and the director of the Department of Finance.

(1) The report shall include all of the following:

(A) A blueprint for the state's system of subsidized child care and early learning for children from birth through age five that equally prioritizes parents' need for care to work and the educational needs of young children. This new system shall balance all of the following:

(i) Access and affordability for families;

(ii) A wage and working environment that values and supports child care professionals;

(iii) A setting and curriculum that invests in children's social, emotional, and academic development; and,

(iv) A seamless system of wraparound services that supports a diverse child population and mitigates any barriers to learning.

(B) A framework, including options to generate needed revenues, to implement a comprehensive, high-quality child care and pre-kindergarten education system in California. This framework shall reflect the principle of shared responsibility and outline the appropriate role for government, businesses, and parents in meeting child care and pre-kindergarten education needs.

(C) Ways to simplify the subsidized child care system, bring greater cohesion and stability to the system, and increase access to child care subsidies, including by considering all of the following:

(i) A cohesive system of provider reimbursement that reflects the variations in the cost of doing business across the state and the costs of serving a diverse population of students, including students with disabilities and dual-language learners.

(ii) A single set of minimum quality and program guidelines for all subsidized providers by setting.

(iii) A career pathway for child care professionals that provides upward mobility and produces a trained and stable workforce, but also considers potential barriers to access for families resulting from a lack of qualified child care professionals.

(iv) Improved efficiency for parents to access information about subsidized care, to apply for and use subsidies, and to access care that meets their needs, including for those requiring care for their children during non-standard hours of the day and week.

(v) Improved efficiency for providers accepting subsidies to receive payment for services.

(D) Necessary steps to provide universal pre-kindergarten education for all three- and four-year-old children in California, including by considering all of the following:

(i) Recommendations to address the overlap between the transitional kindergarten, State Preschool, and Head Start programs, and ensure that all children, regardless of income, have access to the same level of pre-kindergarten program quality.

(ii) Strategies to address facility capacity and ensure a trained workforce is available.

(iii) Recommendations to align pre-kindergarten education with the subsidized child care system and the K-12 education system, to ensure that children have access to a full day of care, as needed, and ensure seamless matriculation to K-12 education.

(E) An assessment of the current allocation of public funding for child care and pre-kindergarten education across the state, specifically by measures of local needs and access to subsidized care.

(F) Estimated costs to implement the recommendations included in the report as well as strategies for prioritizing state investments in child care and pre-kindergarten education in future years.

(2) The report developed pursuant to paragraph (1) shall build on prior child care system and pre-kindergarten education research and data, including that developed by the Department of Education, the Department of Social Services, the Governor's State Advisory Council on Early Learning and Care, and the Legislature.

(c) Of the amount provided in Schedule (11) of Item 6100-194-0001 of the Budget Act of 2019, the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) is available to the State Board of Education to allocate pursuant to the purposes set forth in this section. Of this amount, up to two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) may be used by the Executive Director of the State Board of Education to ensure an appropriate level of staff is available to oversee the contractor referenced in subdivision (b).

Child Care Infrastructure Grants (Adds Uncodified Section)

SEC. 2. (a) Of the amount provided in Schedule (11) of Item 6100-194-0001 of the Budget Act of 2019, the sum of two hundred and forty five hundred million dollars (\$245,000,000) is available for the Superintendent to administer infrastructure grants for construction of new or retrofitting of existing child care and preschool facilities pursuant to this section.

(b) The infrastructure grants shall be awarded on a competitive basis to child care and preschool providers that are not local educational agencies, including those that operate as a child care center or a family child care home. The Superintendent shall allocate a portion of the funds available for the grants each fiscal year through 2023-24, in approximately equal amounts each year. The Superintendent shall require the following from applicants for the infrastructure grants:

(1) A proposal to increase local access to subsidized early learning and preschool programs for children up to five years of age, including children with exceptional needs. The proposal shall quantify the number of additional subsidized children proposed to be served.

(2) A plan to fiscally sustain subsidized spaces or programs created through the use of these funds. Subsidies may be funded with private, local, state, or federal funds, but shall be able to demonstrate a reasonable expectations of sustainability.

(c) Priority for funding shall be given based on the following:

(1) Applicants with a demonstrated need for expanded access to subsidized child care and/or preschool.

(2) Applicants in low-income communities, as measured by the proportion of children that qualify for state or federal subsidies for child care or preschool.

(3) Applicants who plan to serve children that qualify for state or federal subsidies for child care or preschool.

(d) Infrastructure grants may be used for one-time infrastructure costs only, including, but not limited to, universal design facility renovations, the cost of design, engineering, testing, inspections, plan checking, construction management, site acquisition and development, evaluation and response action costs relating to hazardous substances at a new or existing site, demolition, construction, landscaping, or other related costs as determined by the Superintendent.

(e) Infrastructure grant recipients shall commit to providing program data to the Department of Education, as specified by the Superintendent, and participate in overall program evaluation.

Child Care Workforce Development Grants (Adds Uncodified Section)

SEC. 3. (a) Of the amount provided in Schedule (11) of Item 6100-194-0001 of the Budget Act of 2019, the sum of two hundred and forty five hundred million dollars (\$245,000,000) is available for the Superintendent to administer competitive workforce development grants to expand the number of qualified child care and early learning professionals and increase the educational credentials of existing child care and early learning professionals across the state, pursuant to this section.

(b) The Department of Education shall administer the workforce development grants through local partnerships in all 58 counties in the state. The Superintendent shall allocate a portion of the funds available for the grants each fiscal year through 2023-24, in approximately equal amounts each year. All local partners shall submit a plan to the Department that describes how they will allocate funds and increase the number and qualifications of child care and early learning professionals in their county. This plan shall also describe how local partners will engage in collaborative partnerships with local governmental agencies, businesses, non-profit organizations, or other interested partners to improve the educational attainment of child care and early learning professionals in their county.

(c) Workforce development grant award amounts shall be determined based on the following criteria:

(1) Demonstrated need for child care professionals in each county.

(2) The cost of living in each county.

(3) Number of children under the age of 13 in each county with family income of up to 85 percent of the state median income.

(d) Workforce development grants may be used for costs associated with the educational expenses of current and future child care and early learning professionals that move them along the child care and early learning professional continuum, including:

(1) Tuition, supplies, and other related educational expenses.

(2) Transportation and child care costs incurred as a result of attending classes.

(3) Substitute teacher pay for child care and early learning professionals that are currently working in a subsidized child care and early learning setting.

(4) Other educational expenses as determined by the Superintendent.

(e) Local partners receiving grants shall commit to providing program data to the Department of Education, as specified by the Superintendent, and participate in overall program evaluation.