



Action Items for the 3/21/14 Planning Council Meeting

Action Item #1: Support AB 1454 (Calderon)

Recommended by the Public Policy Committee

Background: California Community Care Licensing (CCL) staff visit a range of licensed facilities, including child care programs, to oversee compliance with health and safety requirements. It is reported that in 2003 facilities used to receive annual visits, and now due to budget cutbacks visits may be as infrequent as once every five years or more. This bill requires annual unannounced visits for a range of state licensed facilities, including child care. It also recommends use of a particular “Key Indicator Inspection” protocol. The Child Care Resource and Referral Network is a leading bill proponent. The Public Policy Committee voted to recommend that the Council support this bill at the March 3 meeting with the perspective that annual licensing visits are a fundamental building block of child care quality and regulations provide important minimum health and safety standards.

Pros: Children’s health and safety will increase as a result of checking provider compliance with Health and Safety regulations.

Cons: The bill does not have a funding source identified, so it could result in an increased financial burden to programs via fees and then fines could be applied to programs not meeting Licensing standards.

Next Steps: With Council approval staff will prepare a document for the Board of Supervisors for their approval. If they approve their state lobbyist can promote our position and it will become part of the County’s legislative platform. There may be related Licensing improvement bills reviewed in the Legislature and ECEPC staff will continue to monitor those as well.

Action Item #2: Support Letter to Senator Steinberg Regarding Specific SB 837 Priorities and Concerns

Recommended by the Public Policy Committee

Background: SB 837 was introduced by the Senate Leader Daryl Steinberg and represents unprecedented high profile leadership and support for early care and education at the state level. Senator Steinberg has also gone to Washington DC to promote this bill. The Kindergarten Readiness Act proposes adding one additional year of school for all four year olds. This proposed program is called Transitional Kindergarten. It proposes a five year phase in starting in 2015-2016, and an additional annual investment of roughly \$280 million. It is funded and designed as a part day, part year program with a one to 10 teacher/child ratio. Please see fact sheet for additional details. The Public Policy Committee voted in March to send the bill’s author and sponsor a letter recognizing the importance of a significant investment in ECE, while also highlighting some of the chief concerns we would like to see the bill address.

Pros (re: SB 837): We need to capitalize on this unprecedented interest from legislative leadership, and some could argue, the media and the public and work for increased revenue for ECE. The bill also intends to raise the level of compensation for ECE teachers by integrating them into the K-12 system.



The advantages for weighing in this way are to communicate our concerns while also recognizing the opportunity to expand services for four year olds. We have the option of voting to take a formal position on the bill at a later date.

Cons (re: SB 837): Some of the concerns we have heard from Council members are:

- It may complicate services for families that need full day child care;
- the teacher training model of requiring teaching credentials is unrealistic for many of the ECE field's teachers who have received important child development training and also offer culturally and linguistically appropriate supports for children;
- Offering services through local school districts may make instruction more academic and less developmentally appropriate;
- The teacher/child ratios are higher than the current state Pre-K program;
- Schools may not want to contract the programs out to community providers;
- Lack of clarity on the real cost and the effects of the program on the Prop. 98 funding situation.

The disadvantages for weighing in this way are not being counted as formally supporting the bill as ECE advocates. We have the option of voting to take a formal position on the bill at a later date.

Next Steps: With Council approval of the letter in concept staff will submit a final draft of the letter to either the Public policy Committee or State Contractors for their approval. Then we will send out the letter to the bill's author and also prepare a document for the Board of Supervisors for their approval. If they approve their state lobbyist can promote our position and it will become part of the County's legislative platform.