

*These Principles developed by the Community Commissioners were formally approved at the October 9, 2018 hearing of the Commission. They are designed as both a statement of our vision and a guide to evaluate recommendations.*

## **Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education**

### **Approved Principles**

The intent of the Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education is to plan an early learning system that works for/meets the needs of children, families, and providers. The Commission is dedicated to developing strategic solutions to improve outcomes for young learners in California. These principles will guide our decisions as we make recommendations.

- All children birth to age five should have access to nurturing, educational, culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate high-quality early care and education opportunities with a commitment to social, behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and physical development, and continuity of care.
  
- Equity should inform all decisions, and systemic and implicit bias must be eradicated. State policy and investments should affirmatively remove obstacles and barriers for families seeking access to early care and education.
  - Barriers segregate families from opportunity due poverty, racial bias, toxic stress, homelessness, immigration status, language, geographic isolation, involvement with the child welfare system, disability, and other challenges.
  
- All families should have access to a variety of early and education settings that meet their needs and definition of high quality and are affordable.
  - Relationships are central to quality.
  - There should be no wrong door for parents entering a mixed-delivery system.
  - Early care and education should be available to support parents' ability to work, prepare for work, and/or go to school. It must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days per year.
  
- High-quality early care and education requires a competent, effective, well-compensated, and professionally supported workforce who reflect the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity and needs of the children and families they serve, across the various roles and settings where they work.
  - Those settings include public and private centers; schools; family child care homes; and family, friend and neighbor care.
  - We must respect the experience, commitment, and diversity of our current workforce while providing pathways to opportunities for career advancement and quality improvement for providers in all settings.

- Effective partnerships are key to successful outcomes. Silos must be broken down, and early childhood education and care integrated with other supports and services for children, families, and the workforce.
  - Those supports include paid family leave, early identification and intervention, quality health care, child welfare services, and home visiting.
  - The state should optimize the impact of federal and local government investments and collaborate with business, labor, and philanthropy.
  - Early care and education must be coordinated with TK-12 to serve young children and ensure smooth transitions to the TK-12 system.
  
- High-quality early care and education requires financing that is adequate and sustainable, with incentives for quality and targeted investments to ensure equity for children with the greatest needs.
  - Financing must reflect state goals and be efficient, transparent, and easy to navigate and administer.
  - Financing should cover the real cost of care to meet the needs of diverse children and families and adequately support and compensate the workforce.
  - Financing must include adequate reimbursements for system-wide costs, infrastructure, facilities, licensing and monitoring, data collection, research and evaluation, supporting and engaging families, and support for the workforce, including training and higher education.
  
- While we make incremental progress to achieve our vision over the next decade, we must maintain services, prioritize areas of need by targeting investments, continue to invest in what works, and grow our many pockets of success.
  - We must develop uniform, interactive data systems to ensure transparency regarding the current system, building understanding and sharing across systems that serve children and families.
  
- The Legislature plays a central role in setting policy, investment, and conducting oversight to meet California's goals. State governance structures must be transparent, accountable, collaborative, and committed to equity, continuous improvement, and responsive to emerging needs.
  - Decisions must be informed by ongoing evaluation, robust data, and current research.
  - Parents, the early care and education workforce, local and state partners, and other stakeholders must be key participants in all aspects of governance.