



## Statement on the Governor's Early Education Block Grant Proposal from Early Childhood and K-12 Organizations

The organizations listed here are pleased to submit this statement on the Governor's proposed early education block grant. We represent statewide, regional and local entities in the early childhood and K-12 education arena: early childhood program providers, school districts and county offices of education, labor and management associations and policy organizations. Our goal in providing this statement is to share our common views on key issues raised by the early education proposal.

We appreciate the Administration's interest in reducing complexities and improving alignment in California's early education and K-12 education systems and increasing access and opportunities for success for disadvantaged children.

We appreciate the goal of building local capacity to promote access to high quality pre-kindergarten programs for children the year before they enter kindergarten that address California's diverse population with priority for children from low income families, dual language learners and children with exceptional needs.

The proposed block grant is a significant policy change that warrants discussion outside the fiscal process to ensure appropriate deliberations take place to understand the current structure and develop a stronger pre-kindergarten system. Like the process used to develop the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) or the reconfiguration of Adult Education, the early education proposal requires more than a few months to be fully fleshed out.

While we request that this proposal be removed from the budget process, we recognize the value in the opportunity to have an important policy conversation with the objective of improving services for children through an efficient and coherent early education system. To that end we have developed the following guiding principles to inform the discussion:

**Don't undo TK.** Parents, local education agencies and communities value transitional kindergarten (TK) as an integral part of the public education system. Removing TK's current structure would eliminate an important kindergarten readiness entitlement that families rely on, as they do the availability of kindergarten, first grade or any other grade level. We support TK's continued availability, its stable funding stream and ADA funding structure.

**Additional investments needed.** Increasing access to high quality pre-kindergarten programs will entail additional investments per child as well as increases in the number of children served. Additional investments are also needed to address barriers to school district pre-kindergarten expansion. A high quality early learning system requires resources to support increased capacity, educator effectiveness, facilities, curriculum and materials, and workforce development. According to recent estimates, approximately 35,000 low-income 4-year olds lack access to state preschool, transitional kindergarten or Head Start.

**Room to grow.** The children of California deserve the chance to prepare for success in school and the state has a special responsibility to ensure opportunity for disadvantaged children. The system should, at a minimum, be designed to grow adequately and serve the number of children in need.

**Reliable funding.** The early education system needs a stable and meaningful level of funding to support high quality programs for all children, through the partnerships of local education agencies and community-based providers.

**Simplify administrative complexity to serve local needs.** Improved efficiencies in the delivery of high quality prekindergarten programs should help align services in the mixed-delivery system and streamline programmatic requirements for local education agencies as part of a stronger pre-kindergarten system.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments and for the Administration's ongoing outreach to stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Advancement Project  
Butte County Office of Education  
California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO)  
California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)  
California Federation of Teachers  
California School Boards Association (CSBA)  
California School Employees Association, AFL-CIO (CSEA)  
California School Funding Coalition  
California State PTA  
Children Now  
Coalition for Adequate Funding for Special Education  
Compton Unified School District  
Early Edge California  
First 5 California  
Kidango  
Sacramento City Unified School District  
San Diego County Office of Education  
San Francisco Unified School District  
Santa Clara County Office of Education  
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)  
Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Administrators of California  
Small School Districts' Association