



Charting a Path to Universal Preschool for Three and Four Year Olds in Los Angeles by 2024

For Action April 14, 2021

(Res-021-20/21)

Whereas, For decades a plethora of research has unquestionably indicated that the early childhood years are the most critical time for learning and cognitive development and that enrollment in high quality preschool programs has long-term academic, socioemotional, and lifelong economic benefits, particularly for our most vulnerable students (Cannon, Kilburn, Karoly, Mattox, Muchow & Buenaventura, 2017);

Whereas, Early childhood education has historically played a critical role in combating educational inequality and promoting social justice. (Long, Souto-Manning, & Vasquez, 2016). Establishing a strong foundation in the quality and quantity of early childhood education spaces rooted in social justice values essentially recognizes and respects the human rights of children in regards to their identity, agency and integrity;

Whereas, Research shows that students who participate in high-quality Early Childhood Education programs are less likely to be placed in Special Education programs (8.1 percentage points), be retained (8.3 percentage points), more likely to graduate from high school (11.4 percentage points) than their peers who did not participate in such programs (McCoy, 2017) and that providing families who otherwise would not have received access to high-quality Early Childhood Education programs is an effective means for breaking the cycle of poverty (Hoagland, Fumia & Reynolds, 2019);

Whereas, As of the 2019-20 school year the Los Angeles Unified School District's Early Childhood Education Division served over 20,000 students from infants to 5 year olds in high-quality programs such as CalSafe, Expanded Transitional Kindergarten, Early Education Centers, California State Preschool Programs and Preschool Collaborative Classrooms, providing children with exceptional foundational skills and enabling the District's highest-needs families to advance their education or pursue job opportunities;

Whereas, Data show that students enrolled in the District's Early Childhood Education programs are more likely to have better attendance in Kindergarten, demonstrate earlier Kindergarten readiness and more advanced literacy development on the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), if eligible for special education services, more likely to transition to the general education settings, as well as promote English Learner reclassification while preserving students' emerging bilingualism;

Whereas, The Governing Board of Education unanimously approved the creation of a Birth to Eight Roadmap for Success (Res 020-17/18) which resulted in the creation of a plan for the District's youngest learners to achieve developmentally appropriate social-emotional skills and academic success, ultimately eliminating achievement gaps before third grade;

Whereas, The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated the fundamental inequities rooted in the communities the district serves and long-term recovery necessitates investments in effective high-yielding strategies, such as universal high-quality early childhood education programs, which have been proven to be effective and beneficial for not only to students, families, teachers, schools and local economies; and

Whereas, Governor Newsom's Early Learning and Care Master Plan (December 2020) serves as a framework to realize the vision that by 2030 all children in California are able to thrive physically, emotionally, and educationally in their early years through access to high-quality early learning and care resources, with opportunities for the workforce that advance equitable outcomes for children, and greater efficiencies through structures for continuous improvement; Now, therefore be it



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Resolved, The Governing Board of Education for the Los Angeles Unified School District recognizes that Early Childhood Education programs are an essential investment in closing both the opportunity and readiness gap, particularly in historically underserved communities and affirms its intent to ensure every child, ages 3-5, in Los Angeles has a seat in a high-quality Early Childhood Education program, prioritizing our highest needs communities and in collaboration with non-profit and community providers, by the 2024-25 school year.

Resolved further, The Superintendent is directed to develop a comprehensive plan, in collaboration with early education providers, advocates, and community stakeholders, presented to the Board in 180 days, guided by the following pillars:

- High-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive, and developmentally appropriate teaching and learning that is free of implicit-bias and reflects vertical alignment from preschool to the primary grades;
- Equitable implementation that prioritizes dual language learners, Black students, children with disabilities, families experiencing homelessness, children involved in the child welfare system, and historically underserved communities;
- Robust career pathways and targeted professional development that is responsive to the needs of children and educators, fosters innovation, implements critical pedagogy and bridges the PreK-3 continuum;
- Meaningful partnerships with community and home providers as well as support services that address the needs of the whole child;
- Authentic, asset-based family engagement that nurtures family wellbeing, supports children’s learning, strengthens family-teacher partnerships, and empowers families with ongoing learning and development opportunities; and
- Innovative approaches to funding, program development, implementation and delivery

Resolved further, That the Superintendent’s plan shall prioritize the following strategies, to the extent feasible, in order to achieve the goal of universal preschool by the 2024-25 school year:

- High quality teaching and learning:
 - Providing Early Transitional Kindergarten (ETK) on every elementary school campus
 - Becoming a Head Start and Early Head Start program grantee via the Federal Office of Head Start, within the Administration of Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services
 - Investing developmentally appropriate teaching practices, curriculum and professional development, including anti-bias and inclusive approaches, as well as developmentally appropriate teacher-child ratios across various programs



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- Equitable implementation:
 - Use an equity-based approach to re-open closed Early Education Centers and Infant Centers, prioritizing serving parenting LAUSD students
 - Expansion of the Dual Language Early Education pilot, prioritizing communities with high populations of Dual Language Learners, Black students and low-income families, to build vertically articulated P-12 Dual Language pathways and promote biliteracy putting students on the path to attainment of the State Seal of Biliteracy
 - Expansion of pre-school collaborative classrooms (PCC) to further the District's inclusion initiatives, including reducing the over-identification of Black students, and other over-identified student groups, for Special Education services
 - Expansion of Preschool for All Learners (PALS) classrooms, with a focus on those Communities of Schools that have historically high concentrations of students with moderate to severe disabilities
 - Explore opportunities to support district employees who are parents with young children through engaging staff on best approaches to ensure they have access to early learning and care for their children
- Robust professional development and career pathways:
 - Investing in professional development for early education teachers, including developing micro-credentialing opportunities for existing teachers, supporting practitioners who seek to obtain a credential, and the creation of the pathways for aspiring early education aides who wish to become credentialed teachers
 - Vertically articulated professional development opportunities that are incorporated into Elementary professional development cycles
- Meaningful partnerships:
 - Collaborating with non-profit licensed community and home-based Early Childhood Providers in a mixed-delivery system to ensure universal access
 - Partnering with LA County early childhood leaders on building support systems for children, families and early childhood educators (e.g. identifying access gaps, whole child/family support services, etc)
- Authentic, asset-based family engagement:
 - Leading meaningful school-family partnerships that promote authentic, asset-based, culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement



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- Encouraging and supporting meaningful family engagement practices (regular communication between staff and families, opportunities for parents to visit and volunteer in the classroom, hiring staff who speak parents' home language and providing communications and resources in parents' home language, etc)
- Support schools to engage families proactively and consistently in a two-way conversation about needs, goals, and support for their students (e.g. additional time/staff support for educator/family conversations)
- Incorporating early childhood family engagement opportunities and workshops into the Parent and Community Services Branch
- Creation of a robust marketing and outreach plan to ensure families are aware of the District's expanded program offerings in collaboration with the larger Los Angeles early childhood community
- Innovative approaches, including but not limited to:
 - Leveraging underutilized/under-enrolled spaces on district sites for program expansion and growing enrollment and utilizing facilities bond dollars, to the extent feasible
 - Integrating support services to meet the needs of the whole child and promote family well-being
 - Integrating the District's eSIS system into the Whole Child Data Platform
 - Explore opportunities for moderate income families, such as sliding scale approach

Resolved further, the Superintendent shall prioritize expanding both Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and Early Transitional Kindergarten (ETK) programs, utilizing both Federal and State COVID-19 relief funds, to ensure program offerings are equitably distributed across district sites without ETK or TK starting in the 2021-22 school year, as well as re-opening previously closed Early Education Centers to be fully operational no later than the 2024-25 school year;

Resolved further, the developed plan shall also identify potential funding streams (local, state, federal, grant and philanthropic) and legislative advocacy efforts necessary to fully execute the plan; and may it finally be

Resolved, the Office of Government Relations shall continue to advocate for additional resources at the local, state and federal level to sustainably expand the District's current program offerings including pursuing funding in support of universal preschool as part of the upcoming Federal appropriations process and the District taking an official "support" position on AB-22, AB-92, SB-50, SB-70, SB-246, and AB-92.