

# MAKING IT WORK: STATE AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES FOR IMPROVING CALIFORNIA'S EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM



**#ECEMatters**

# ECE in California: An urgent concern

- **33%** of eligible children served
- **4 out of 10 NIEER** preschool quality benchmarks
- **1.8%** of California budget spent on ECE
- **\$1 billion cut** in the recession, and not yet recovered



# LPI's ECE research



## The Road to High-Quality Early Learning

*Lessons From the States*

Marjorie Wechsler, David Kirp, Titilayo Tinubu Ali, Madelyn Gardner, Anna Maier, Hanna Melnick, and Patrick M. Shields



JUNE 2016



## Understanding California's Early Care and Education System

Hanna Melnick, Titilayo Tinubu Ali, Madelyn Gardner, Anna Maier, and Marjorie Wechsler



MAY 2017



## Building an Early Learning System That Works

*Next Steps for California*

By Hanna Melnick, Beth Meloy, Madelyn Gardner, Marjorie Wechsler, and Anna Maier



JANUARY 2018



# Building an Early Learning System That Works: Next Steps for California

Hanna Melnick and Beth Meloy

January 23, 2017

**#ECEMatters**

 LEARNING POLICY INSTITUTE

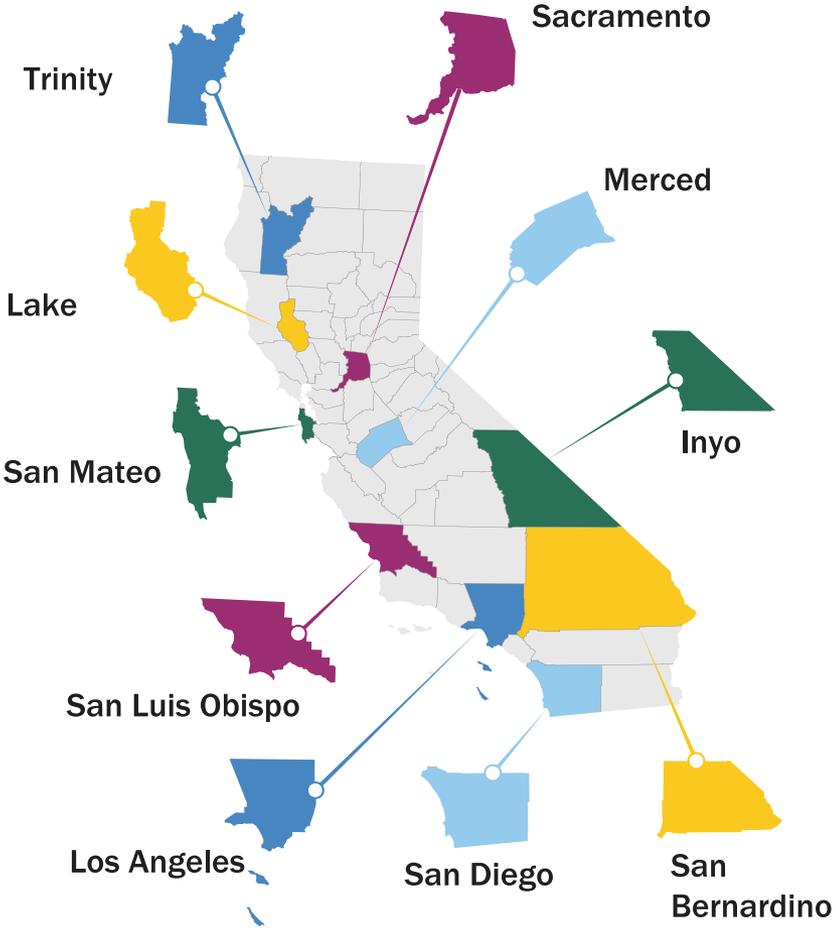
“I was making minimum wage just to get by and I had no other support. ...I didn't make enough money for rent and child care, so I couldn't keep working.

I signed up for school and applied for CalWORKs. In addition to paying taxes...I was able to raise four amazing kids who also value education.

-- Jennifer LaBounty

in Smith, S. (2012). CalWORKs and child care: A hand up, not a hand out. Oakland, CA: The Women's Foundation of California.

# About the research

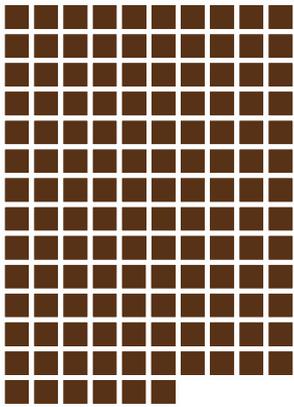




# ECE Programs and Their Administration

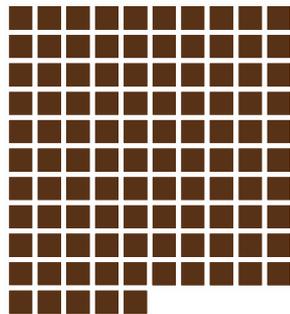
# California funds multiple ECE programs

## State Preschool



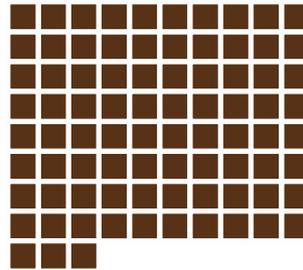
**136,107**  
ENROLLMENT

## Head Start / Early Head Start



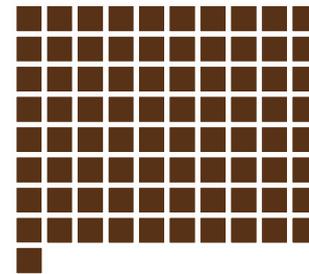
**105,210**  
ENROLLMENT

## Alternative Payment Programs



**83,311**  
ENROLLMENT

## Transitional Kindergarten



**81,832**  
ENROLLMENT

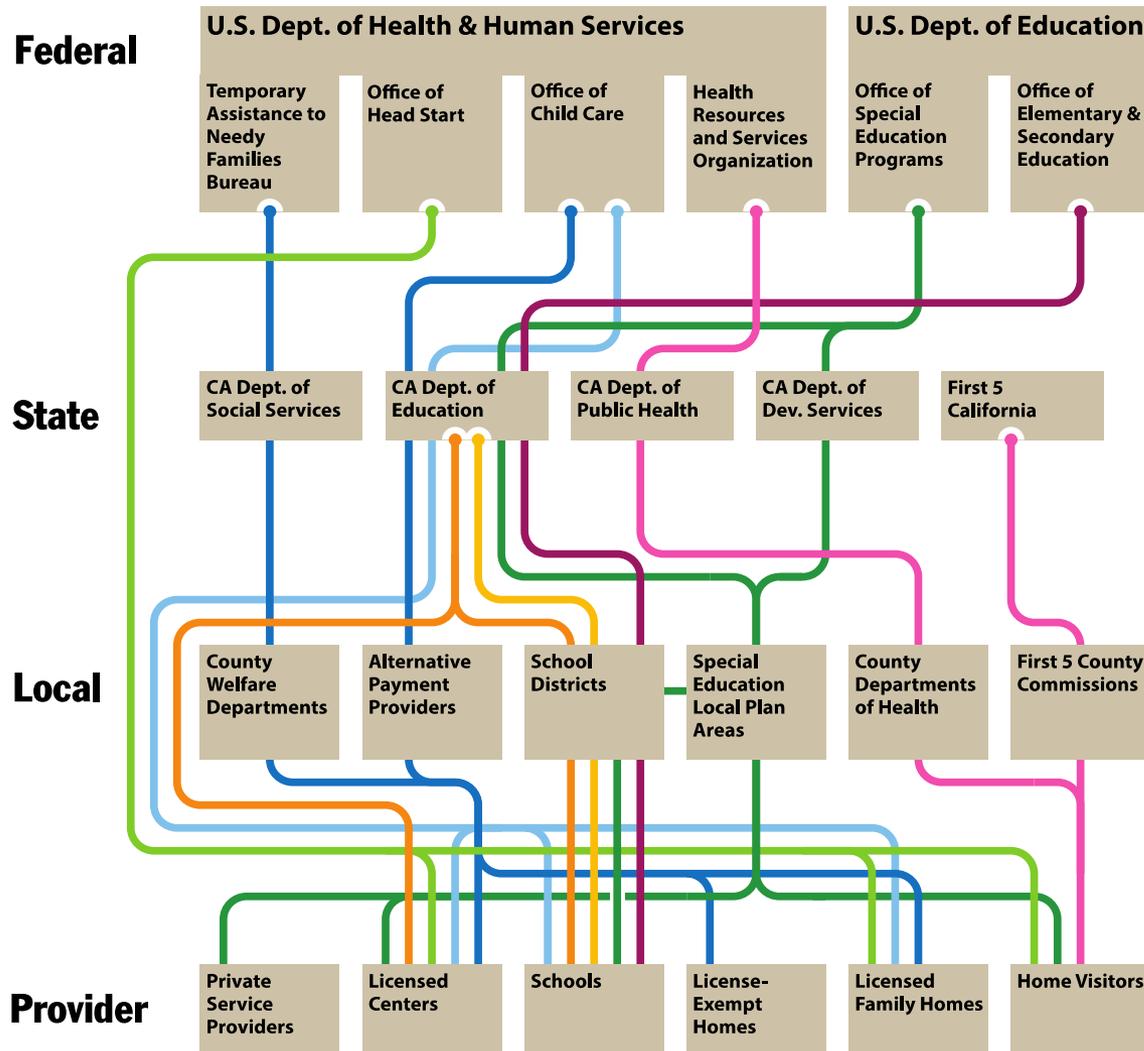
## General Child Care & Development



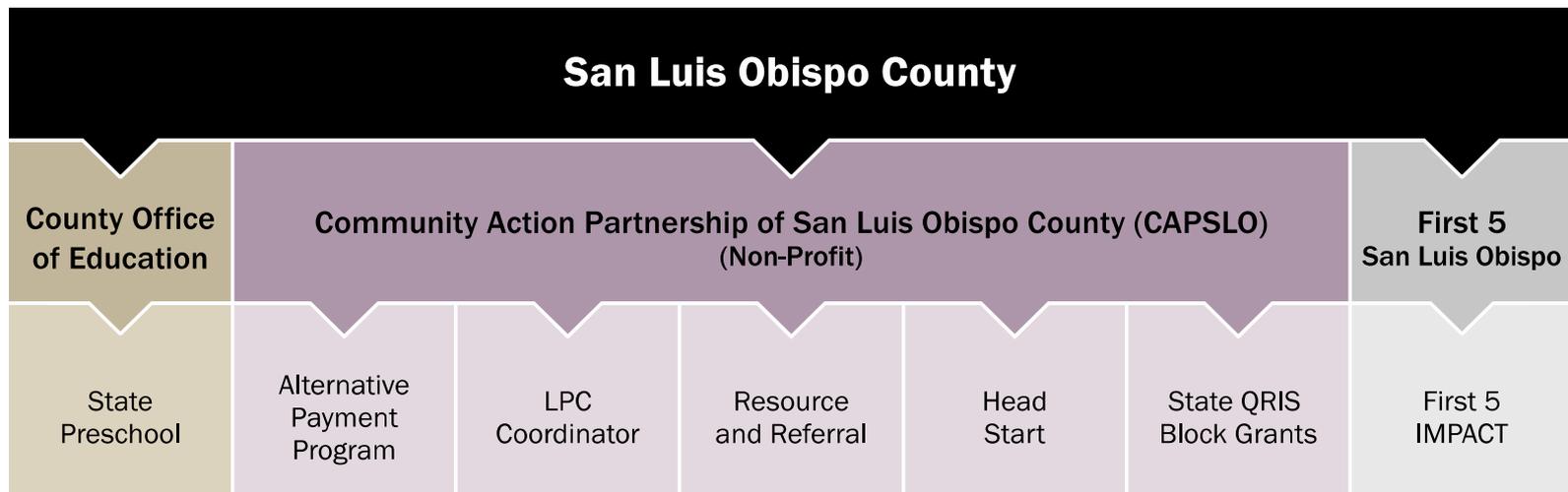
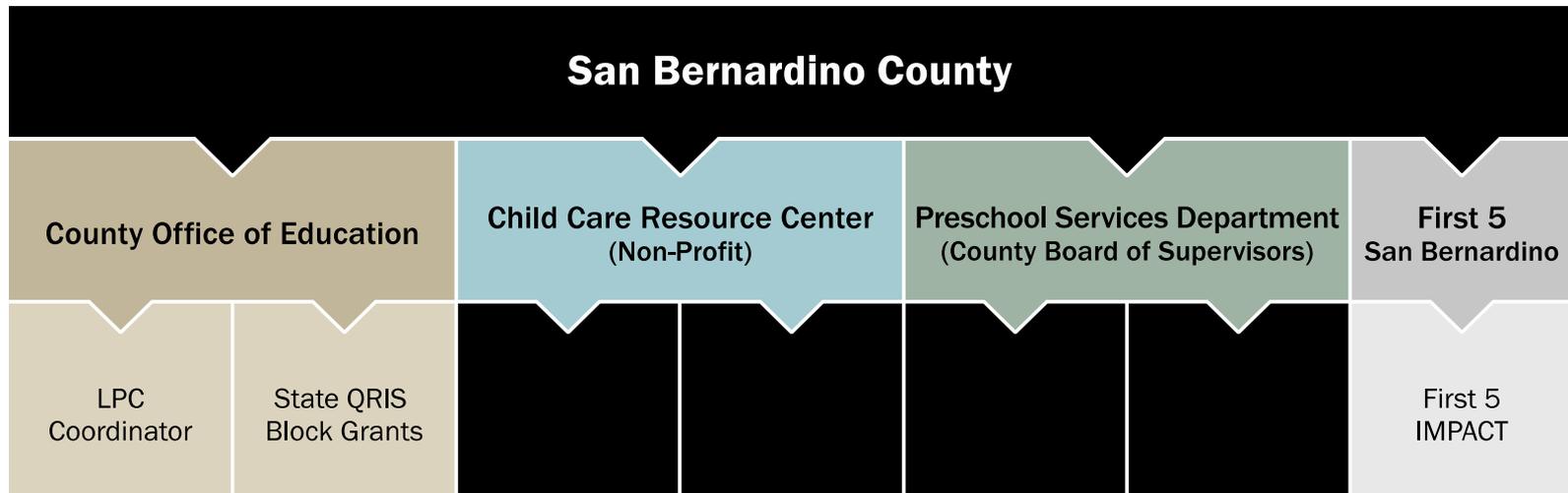
**23,656**  
ENROLLMENT

Note: Data for children birth to age 5 in a single month in 2015-16.

# Many agencies administer ECE programs



# Each county administers ECE differently



“ “ Is it complicated? Are  
parents confused?  
Unequivocal yes.

-David Fleishman,  
Executive Director, 4Cs of San Mateo County

# Recommendation: Build a coherent system of ECE administration

- 1) Identify a **state-level governing body** to coordinate all ECE programs.
- 2) Streamline regional administration with a **single county coordinating body**.

# Recommendation: Build a coherent system of ECE administration

3) Develop a **one-stop shop** for parents and providers.



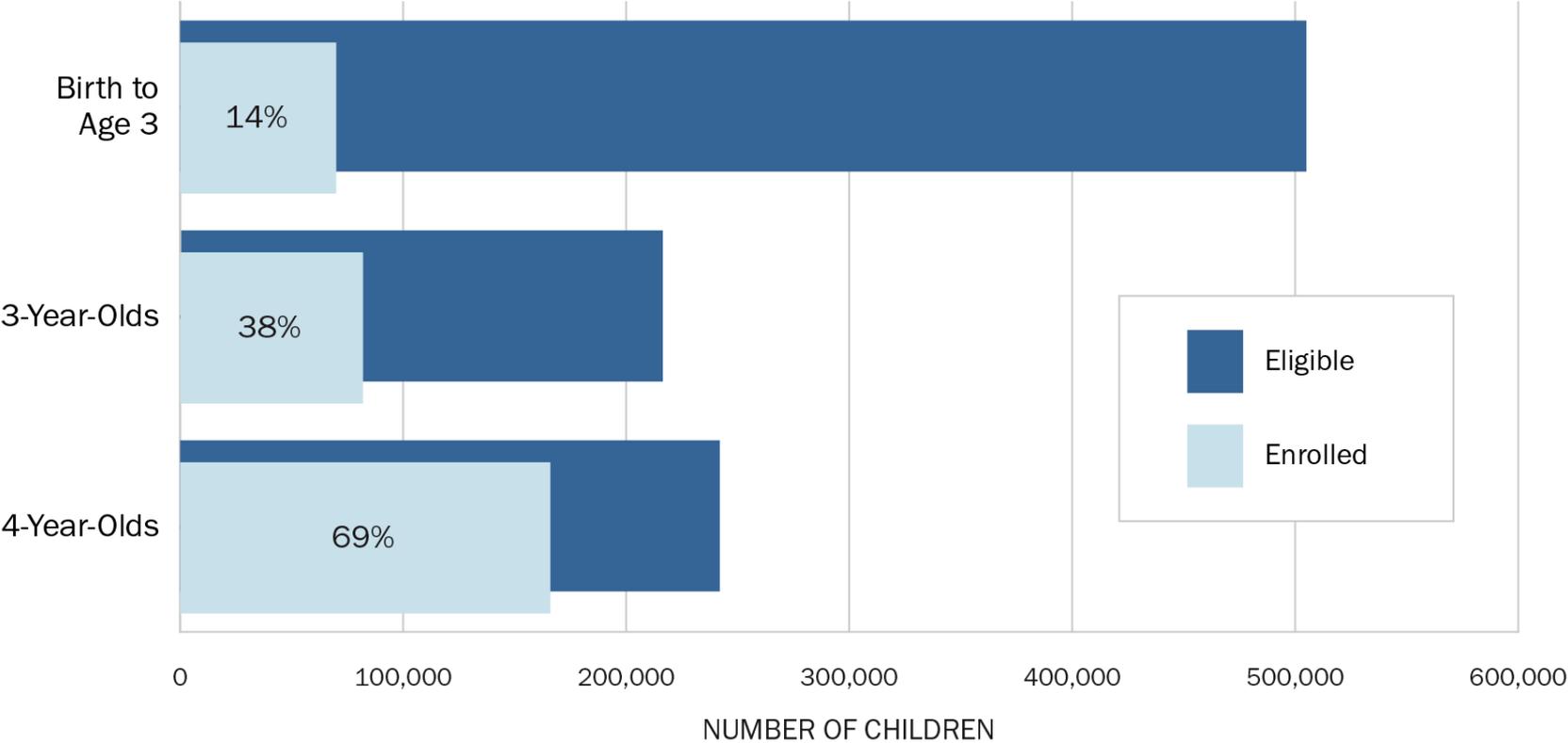
**North Carolina's Smart Start  
provides a model for a one-stop  
shop**



# Access

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# California's ECE Programs Serve Few Eligible Children





You get a 50¢ increase—which is going to be approximately \$1,040 a year—but you're not going to qualify for child care, which is then going to cost you \$15,000 a year.

Kim McDougal, Executive Director of YMCA  
Childcare Resource Services in San Diego County

# Families can't find the care they need



- Complex enrollment



- Lack of full-day, alternative hour care



- Limited rural options

# Licensed care is scarce in every county

Low reimbursement rates

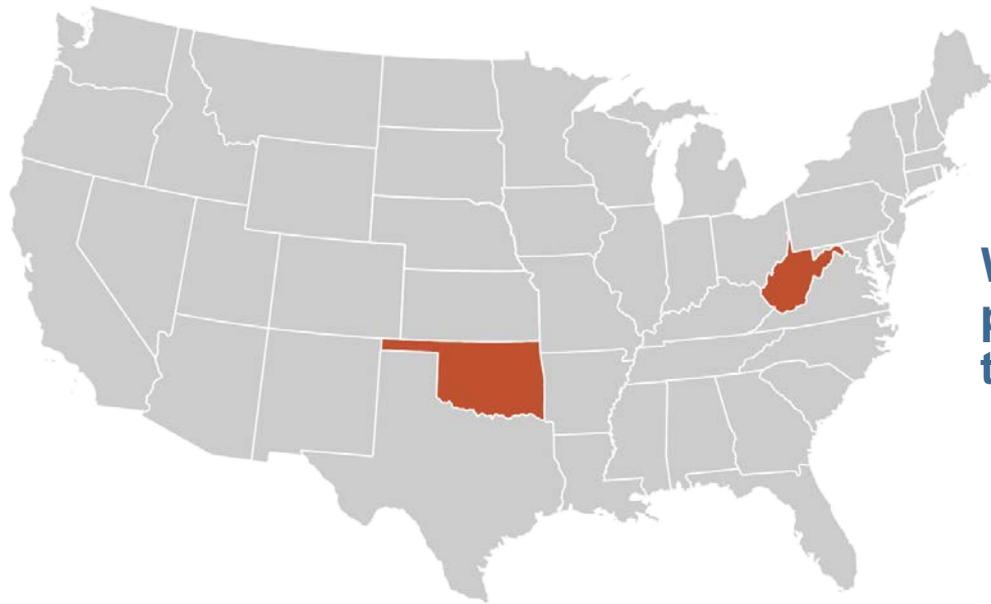
Unaffordable facilities

Inflexible contracts

Shortage  
of  
Licensed  
Care

# Recommendation: Make ECE affordable for all children birth to age 5

- 1) Establish **universal preschool for 4-year-olds.**



**West Virginia and Oklahoma  
provide universal access  
through mixed-delivery systems**

Recommendation:  
**Make ECE affordable for all children birth to age 5**

- 2) Make preschool affordable for all **3-year-olds using a sliding fee scale** that eliminates the “income cliff.”
- 3) Ensure access to subsidized child care on a **sliding fee scale for all infants and toddlers.**



# ECE Workforce

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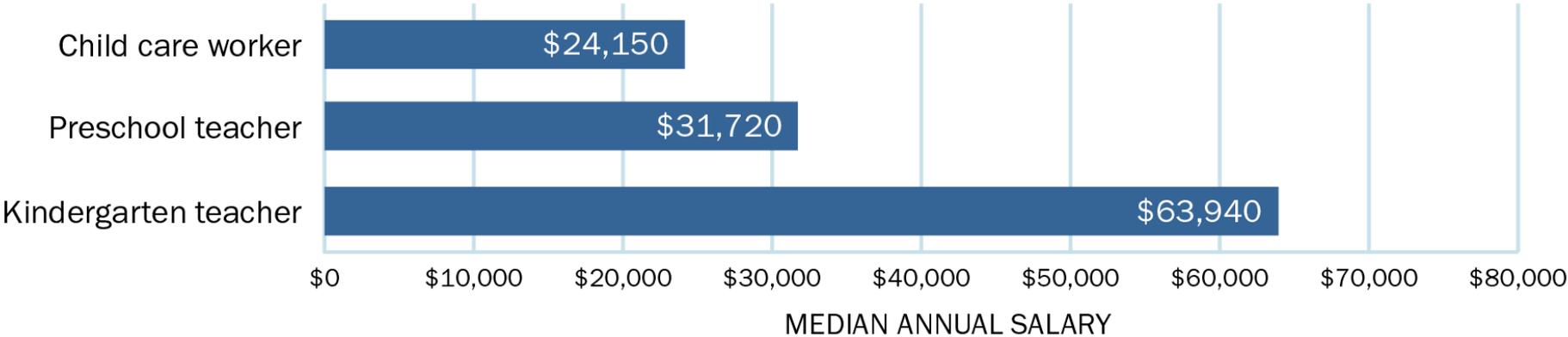
# Educator Credential Requirements Vary by Program

*Minimum requirements for preschool teachers*

## Minimum Teacher Requirements

		Degree Requirement	ECE Coursework
Alternative Payment Program	License-Exempt Providers	 No requirement	 No requirement
	Family Child Care Homes	 No requirement	 No requirement
	Centers	 No requirement	 12 units
Transitional Kindergarten		 Bachelor's degree & teaching credential	 24 units
California State Preschool Program		 No degree requirement, must have 40 units of college coursework	 24 units
Head Start		 Associate or bachelor's degree*	 Degree must be in ECE or related field

# California's Early Educators Earn Very Low Wages



**Educators sometimes return to school only to find that “a lot of coursework they had taken before is not counted towards a degree at all.”**

**—Cindy Faulkner, Operations Manager  
at First 5 San Bernardino**

# Recommendation: Build a well-qualified workforce

- 1) **Increase expectations and support** for educators' higher education and training, starting with preschool.

- 2) **Increase reimbursement rates** to enhance



**New Jersey raised educator requirements and offered scholarships**



# Program Quality

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# California's ECE Programs Have Different Quality Standards

*Minimum program standards for 4-year-olds*

		Minimum Teacher Requirements	Staff-to-Child Ratios	Curriculum Standards
Alternate Payment Program	License-Exempt Providers	 No requirement	 No requirement	 No requirement
	Family Child Care Homes	 No requirement	 1:8 <sup>a</sup>	 No requirement
	Centers	 12 ECE units	 1:12	 No requirement
Transitional Kindergarten		 Teaching credential and 24 ECE units	 No requirement <sup>b</sup>	 Developmentally appropriate curriculum
California State Preschool Program		 24 ECE units plus 16 general education units	 1:8	 Developmentally appropriate curriculum
Head Start		 A.A. or B.A. <sup>c</sup>	 1:10	 Developmentally appropriate curriculum

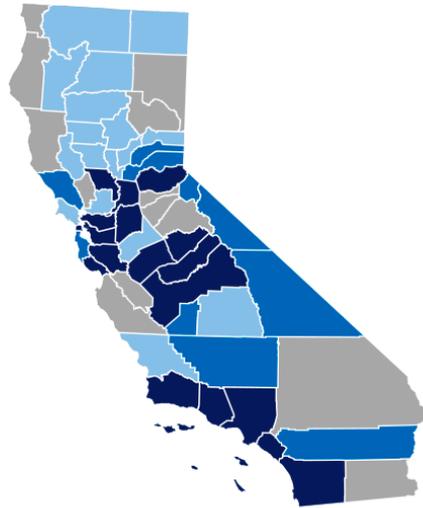
# Only 14% of providers participate in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRISs)

Federal Race to the Top-  
Early Learning Challenge



2012-2016

State Preschool  
QRIS Block Grant



2014-2016

State Infant and Toddler  
QRIS Block Grant



2015-2017

First 5 IMPACT



2015-2020



**Coaching is very expensive, [so it's]  
hard for counties to expand.”**

**—Edirle Menezes,  
Early Childhood Education Program Officer,  
First 5 Contra Costa**

Recommendation:  
**Improve the quality of all ECE programs**

- 1) **Raise quality requirements** for programs with the lowest standards.
- 2) Ensure all state-supported programs **participate in quality improvement activities**.

# Recommendation: Improve the quality of all ECE programs

- 3) Ensure access to **coaching and other job-embedded supports** for all ECE providers



**Every Michigan preschool classroom has a coach**



# Learning Policy Institute Resources



## Building an Early Learning System That Works

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**#ECEMatters**

# Improving Program Administration

## Panel Discussion

# Improving Program Administration

## **Karla Pleitéz Howell (moderator)**

*Director of Educational Equity, Advancement Project*

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## **Raechelle Bowlay-Sutton**

*Coordinator, San Luis Obispo County Child Care Planning Council*

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## **Sean Casey**

*Executive Director, First 5 Contra Costa*

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## **Sarah Neville-Morgan**

*Director of the Early Education and Support Division,  
California Department of Education*

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## **Natalie Woods Andrews**

*Director of Early Learning, Sacramento County Office of Education;  
Director, California Preschool Instructional Network*

# Ensuring High-Quality Preschool in an Expanded ECE System

Panel Discussion

# Ensuring High-Quality Preschool in an Expanded ECE System

## **Marjorie Wechsler (moderator)**

*Principal Research Manager, Learning Policy Institute*

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## **Wendy Dickens**

*Executive Director, First 5 Shasta*

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## **Erin Gabel**

*Deputy Director for External and Governmental Affairs, First 5 California*

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## **September Jarrett**

*Executive Director, San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education*

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## **Dean Tagawa**

*Executive Director for the Early Childhood Education Division,  
Los Angeles Unified School District*

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## **Samantha Tran**

*Senior Managing Director of Education Policy, Children Now*