

Statewide Stakeholder Engagement Report

This report summarizes the robust stakeholder engagement work undertaken to inform the development of the [California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan \(CCELP\)](#). These activities were developed and implemented by the [Glen Price Group](#) acting in coordination with the CCELP planning team, and with guidance from California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) and the State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care.

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The CCELP Statewide Stakeholder Engagement Report is posted online at www.glenpricegroup.com/ccelp/mainreport and may be downloaded in its entirety or by section. Currently, the above link is “live” but not public. A tab “Stakeholder Engagement Results” will be created on the navigation menu of the website to make the report link accessible to the public on January 28, 2013. Please find in the following pages of this document Section A, the overview for the entire report.

CCELP

California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan

Section A:

Statewide Engagement Overview

Introduction

This document summarizes the robust stakeholder engagement work undertaken to inform the development of the California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan (CCELP).¹ These activities were developed and implemented by the Glen Price Group² acting in coordination with the CCELP planning team, and with guidance from California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD) and the State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Childhood Education and Care.

2,444 early learning and care (EL&C) stakeholders across California were engaged in an interactive process designed to offer multiple opportunities for input on the development of the CCELP to as many people as possible.³ Participants included parents of children ages 0-5, early childhood educators, ECE faculty, administrators of EL&C organizations and programs, county and state level policy makers, advocates, and other community partners. Their input was solicited and captured during the summer and fall of 2012 using three main vehicles (also see “Input Sources for Development of the CCELP” process graphic on page A-5):

Summary: Stakeholder Engagement Opportunity Participation	
Activity/Item	Number of Participants
Interviews	35
Surveys	997
▪ Online statewide stakeholder survey	768
▪ Parent survey	229
Meetings	1,412
▪ Regional workshops (4)	261
▪ Local (43) and virtual (8) stakeholder input meetings	1,151
Total:	2,444

1. **Interviews.** The planning team interviewed 35 key informants representing over 30 organizations to get a big picture view of the “state of EL&C” in California (see section B).
2. **Surveys.** Themes emerging from the in-depth interviews helped shape a comprehensive online survey for all stakeholders focusing on vision, values, challenges/strengths, specific policy recommendations,⁴ and areas of strategic priority for the CCELP. A separate shorter survey was created for parents of children 0-5 that inquired into their experiences in the EL&C system—finding appropriate care, what was important to them, what were difficulties, and their ideas for improvement. The parent survey was made available in English and Spanish and distributed online and in paper form. 997 individuals responded to the surveys: 768 for the larger CCELP survey and 229 for the parent survey (see section C).
3. **Meetings.** The planning team hosted open **regional stakeholder workshops** in Fresno, Los Angeles, Oakland, and Sacramento (see section D), and **created a toolkit for stakeholders to**

¹ To learn more about the CCELP visit: www.glenpricegroup.com/ccelp

²The Glen Price Group was contracted by San Mateo County Office of Education (the CCELP planning team lead) to develop and conduct the stakeholder engagement process for the CCELP planning process. www.glenpricegroup.com

³ This number is the total count of participants for all stakeholder activities; some stakeholders engaged in multiple activities.

⁴ The policy recommendations come from the American Institutes for Research (AIR) Meta-Analysis report: “Synthesis of Recent Research - Conditions of Children Birth to Age Five and Status of Early Childhood Services in California.” August 2012. The Meta-Analysis outlines key findings and policy recommendations from 81 research articles on the early learning and care system in California since 2000. <http://glenpricegroup.com/ccelp/resource-documents/>

organize local and virtual input meetings to reach and engage more individuals in the CCELP planning process (see sections E and F). 1,412 stakeholders participated in the CCELP planning process through the four regional workshops (261) and the 43 locally and 8 virtually (1,151) organized meetings.

Stakeholder Voices: Emerging Areas of Agreement

The CCELP stakeholder engagement process provided diverse individuals the opportunity to voice their hopes and wishes for, experiences in, observations of, and suggestions for creating a better EL&C system in California. Emerging from the collective voices of these 2,444 California EL&C stakeholders were clear areas of agreement on values to guide the CCELP, a vision for a truly comprehensive early learning and care plan for California, identification of strengths and challenges in the current EL&C system, and strategic priorities to focus on for the next five to ten years.

Values. Stakeholders overwhelmingly voiced agreement on two major and related values: 1) the importance of **access** to secure, high quality education and care for all children 0-5 regardless of family income; and 2) program **quality** through consistent standards across programs and greater investment in healthy facilities and a professionally and financially well-supported ECE workforce. Many stakeholders stressed the importance of a **responsive** early learning and care system that addresses the needs of diverse young children and their families—one that is timely, developmentally appropriate, family-centered, culturally sensitive, and safe. Additionally, numerous stakeholders expressed the desire for tight alignment with the K-12 system.

Vision. Echoing the emerging values, stakeholders envision a sustainable and well-funded, coherent, easy-to-navigate, comprehensive, and high quality statewide early learning and care system that fully integrates with K-12 education and is accessible to all children 0-5. This interdisciplinary system values and promotes the academic, developmental, and life success of young children; the self-sufficiency of families; high-quality facilities and healthy learning environments; and the recruitment, professionalization, and retention of the ECE workforce. It supports a thriving whole child, whole family, and ECE community. A robust, “super” pipeline of information, data, and communication fosters ongoing evaluation and improvement of the quality of programs and better family and community engagement, and is coordinated with the K-12 system. Parents, policy makers, and the public understand and champion the importance of quality early care and education.

Challenges. Stakeholders agreed that funding (and the seemingly low priority of early learning and care in the state) was the biggest challenge for the early learning and care system, and that many other challenges were affected by, if not stemmed from, inadequate financial resources. Other challenges that were cited included lack of access to quality programs particularly for infants and toddlers; inconsistency in quality of programs; inadequate compensation and professional development opportunities for the ECE workforce which translates into high turnover of good teachers; old, deteriorating, and/or inadequate facilities; burdensome reporting requirements; duplicative and/or inefficient processes for data collection and assessments; and need for better data collection and tracking. Further, California’s sheer size and diversity adds to the challenge of developing a truly comprehensive and coordinated early learning and care system that can meet the needs of so many different families and children 0-5. Stakeholders also noted that a lack of leadership and political will around early learning and care were significant challenges. Parents who participated in the CCELP stakeholder engagement process shared that the eligibility guidelines for income and child’s age, affordability and availability of appropriate programs that accommodate the child’s needs and their working schedules, long wait lists for preferred programs, and discerning good quality programs were

their greatest challenges. More than 69% of surveyed parents experienced some difficulty in finding the EL&C program they needed (see page C-146).

Strengths. While there was less overall agreement on the core strengths of California’s early learning and care system than on its challenges, frequently cited strengths were the state’s diverse service delivery system that helps to fill in the gaps and provide more support to children and their families, and the passionate and dedicated ECE workforce. From the CCELP survey, California’s Statewide Early Learning Standards were also identified as a major strength (see page C-13). Two other key strengths cited were the fact that California houses the majority of its early learning programs within the Department of Education and that a robust community college system supports ECE workforce development.

Strategic Priorities. Understanding that there is much work to do to realize the vision of a truly comprehensive early learning and care system, and that all elements of the system⁵ would be addressed by the CCELP, California’s EL&C stakeholders prioritized: 1) Access to Quality Early Learning and Care; 2) Workforce Development; and 3) Family and Community Engagement as the top three areas for strategic focus in the development of the CCELP (see page H-12). The first two align with the emerging values for California’s EL&C system: access to high quality care and investment in a well-supported ECE workforce. From the parent perspective, Early Childhood Mental Health Services, Facilities, and Kindergarten Transition emerged as the top three important areas for their children’s early learning and care (see page C-155). Table 1 summarizes the top three element priorities identified by stakeholders and within each, the top three prioritized element recommendations.

Table 1. Top 3 Element and Recommendation Priorities from CCELP Stakeholders

Element	Policy Recommendations within Each Element ⁶ (see section H)
1. <i>Access to Quality Early Learning</i>	A.17. Recognize that quality, particularly the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers, costs more. <i>Must be funded.</i>
	A.1. Include early learning and care in a comprehensive Preschool to Grade 12 education and reform package with an equitable and adequate financing system. <i>Should include birth to Grade 12.</i>
	A.18. Restructure the child care reimbursement system for publicly funded infant-toddler programs so that providers are reimbursed for the true cost of providing quality care. <i>Should include birth to 5.</i>
2. <i>Workforce Development</i>	M.2. Set higher compensation levels for Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers if ECE teacher education standards are to be set higher to improve recruitment and retention. <i>Publicly fund the higher compensation.</i>
	M.11. Develop a well-defined ECE career pathway and associated credentials that are aligned with the Early Childhood Educator Competencies, the postsecondary education and training programs, and the potential or actual QRIS. <i>Align with K-12 system.</i>

⁵ An element is a policy area or infrastructure component of the EL&C system that will be addressed in the CCELP in addition to other Federal requirements. The list of 13 elements was identified by the Meta-Analysis and can be found on page C-4.

⁶ The listed recommendations use the original language from the Meta-Analysis with the most common key comments or suggested rewrites included in *italics*.

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Table 1. Top 3 Element and Recommendation Priorities from CCELP Stakeholders

Element	Policy Recommendations within Each Element ⁶ (see section H)
	M.13. Ensure broad availability of college courses and professional development opportunities for infant-toddler caregivers, and provide the additional supports for college readiness that are needed by infant-toddler caregivers to help them satisfy course requirements.
3. <i>Family and Community Engagement</i>	I.4. Provide training for teachers on building partnerships with families. <i>And time.</i>
	I.5. Support family engagement in developmental and early learning services for infants and toddlers for the earliest points of their entry into the programs. <i>Include all 0-5, not just infants and toddlers.</i>
	I.9. Use the following California Early Childhood Educator Competencies as a springboard for a more specific measurable menu of best practices for engaging families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Culture, Diversity, and Equity · Dual-Language Development · Family and Community Engagement

Summary of Emerging Voices and Next Steps

California’s 2,444 EL&C stakeholders voiced strong agreement around the importance of access, quality, and responsiveness as guiding values in the CCELP. These values align closely to the stakeholders prioritizing Access to Quality Early Learning, Workforce Development, and Family and Community Engagement as strategic areas of focus in the CCELP. Stakeholders shared their thoughts on the state’s EL&C most pressing challenges and primary strengths as well as their vision for an exceptional system of early learning and care for all children 0-5, their families, and educators.

The CCELP planning team will draw upon this input, detailed in the subsequent pages of this document, to help inform a draft framework for the California Comprehensive Early Learning Plan. As a strategic plan that will set forth practical recommendations for moving towards a truly comprehensive and integrated early learning and care system, the final CCELP plan will be informed by broad input from stakeholders, the Meta-Analysis, State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Learning and Care, federal government requirements of CCELP, current political and fiscal realities in California, and analysis from CCELP planning partners. The CCELP planning team will return to stakeholders for further input on the general trajectory of the draft plan before it is finalized.

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