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February 27, 2024

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Road
Ukiah, CA 95482

Dear Supervisors Mulheren, Haschak, Gjerde, McGourty, and Williams:

As the Mendocino County Local Childcare Planning Council, we write to urge the Board of Supervisors to adopt language into your Legislative Platform in support of children, families, and childcare providers in our county.

Economic and Community Development has historically been a priority area for the Board. Childcare providers are a critical piece of our county's economy: in addition to the many small business owners who run a childcare center or operate out of their home, childcare providers allow the many parents in our community to work. We ask that the Board support legislative efforts at the state and federal levels that improve the quality of early education and childcare programs, support provider workforce development, and expand opportunities for family voice and choice.

Attached is our Public Policy Platform, if the Board would appreciate sample language.

Sincerely,

Miriam McNamara

Miriam McNamara, Co-Chair

Teri Sedrick

Teri Sedrick, Co-Chair

Maddie Torrey

Maddie Torrey, LPC Coordinator

Nicole H. Glentzer

Nicole H. Glentzer, County Superintendent



MENDOCINO COUNTY

LOCAL CHILDCARE & DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COUNCIL

Public Policy Platform 2024-25

The Mendocino County Local Child Care Development and Planning Council (LPC) represents the needs of our county's children (0-21), families, and providers of childcare in Mendocino County on behalf of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors (BOS) and the Mendocino County Board of Education (BOE).

In taking a stance on Public Policy issues, our Council will consider, and work to especially highlight: the unique needs of our rural setting, the voices of underrepresented demographic groups in our Mendocino County communities, and our children and families with a need for Special Education services.

Our identified areas of concern and advocacy include:

QUALITY: Improve systems to increase quality standards of early education and childcare programs. Address and solve problems within state policies and procedures to increase efficiencies in basic health and safety for children and support additional quality activities in the state. Advocate to streamline quality standards across programs.

FUNDING: Increases in funding, and rate reimbursement reform to provide resources and training for staff in childcare programs to ensure the highest quality education and childcare services for children and families. Sufficient funding for summer programming under Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP) for minimally funded programs.

ACCESS: Increase access for low-income families who need quality early education programs by adding spaces and increasing the income eligibility level (SMI level). Minimize contract restrictions to allow diverse agencies to apply for expansion funding and allow funding flexibility for agencies to serve multiple age-groups to meet the needs within their communities.



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WORKFORCE: Continue the professionalization and recognition of the childcare industry including a respected, effective, well-compensated, and professionally supported workforce. Funding programs to make continuing education available.

FAMILY VOICE AND CHOICE: Elevate the voices of the families our agencies serve. Build and support high-quality childcare programs that reflect the needs of our diverse communities, including, but not limited to: robust early learning and care programs, after school programs, infant and toddler childcare, non-traditional hours of care (evenings and weekends), summer childcare, and more. Additionally, advocate for the continued waiver of family fees, to protect true family choice of programs.

PARTNERSHIP: Continue to develop partnerships between local agencies, and to support partnerships at the state level between the California Department of Education, the Department of Social Services, Health and Human Services, First 5 and other partnering organizations to narrow gaps between state policies and the programs implementing these policies and to streamline administrative burdens.

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS: Support fully funded efforts to collect, streamline and analyze data. With fully funded data systems we could track the availability of spaces in early care and education programs and identify child care deserts or gaps in services for different age groups. With additional demographic information (age, race/ethnicity, language, special needs, foster/homeless, etc), we could ensure appropriate and responsive services for a variety of needs. Support fully funded efforts for analysis of this data at the state and local level.

Updates made and platform approved unanimously by LPC General Council on January 8, 2024 (MT)