



Measure I

Sonoma County Child Care & Children's Health Ordinance

Community Advisory Council

June 25, 2026

Welcome to Newly Appointed Members of the Measure I CAC

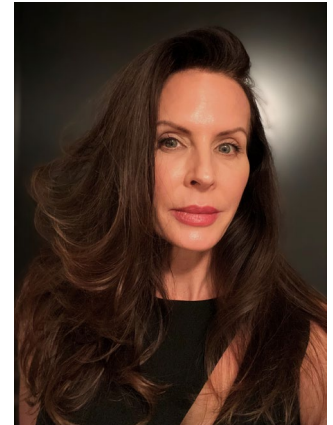


Renee Whitlock Hemsouvanh
Fulton Community School & Farm

- *Local child care provider representative: center-based ECE*

Tara Good-Young
Pediatric Dental Initiative

- *Pediatric, perinatal and/or mental health care program and/or systems representative*



Ancestral Land Acknowledgement

Today, the First 5 Sonoma County Commission and the Measure I Advisory Council is humbled to bring us together on the ancestral lands of the Southern Pomo People. We celebrate the active work of their descendants to preserve & nourish their indigenous culture and identity.

We acknowledge the Southern Pomo People as the traditional stewards and custodians of this area and honor with gratitude the land itself, all of its ancestors
- past, present and future.

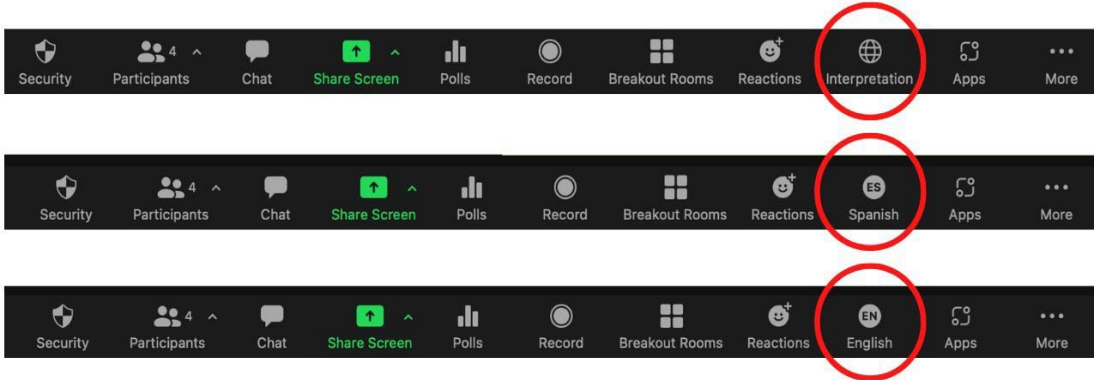
Welcome! ¡Bienvenidos!

Zoom Interpretation/Interpretación de Zoom



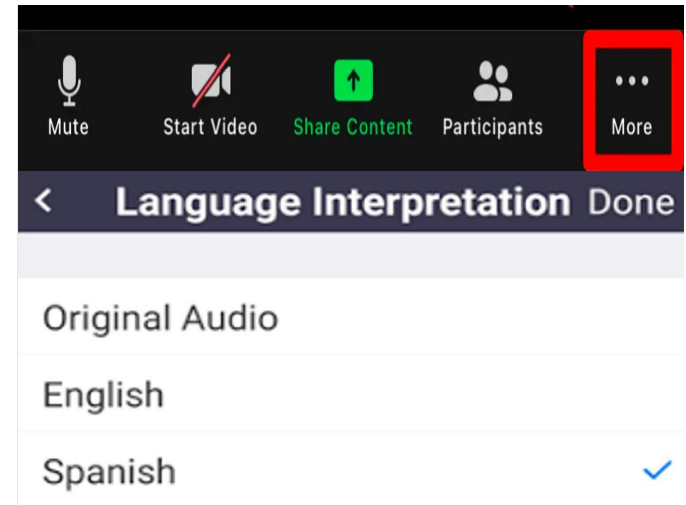
Computer / Computadora

1. Click on the "Interpretation" icon
2. Select your preferred language



1. Haga clic en el icono "Interpretación"
2. Elige su idioma preferido

Phone / Por Telefono



Agenda Review & Minutes Approval

Community Agreements



**Public comment
on non-agendized items**

**Comentarios públicos sobre
temas no incluidos en la
agenda**

Guidelines for Public Comment

Directrices para los comentarios públicos



- Public comments are brief statements intended to inform the CAC and First 5 about the topic/Action Item
- Comments from the public at public meetings do not include questions and is not intended to be a dialogue
- Appointed Council members and First 5 staff and consultants are discouraged from responding or discussing topics with the public (can potentially constitute a Brown Act violation)
- Time limits can (and typically will) be imposed per comment and/or for total time allotted
- Los comentarios públicos son declaraciones breves destinadas a informar al CAC y a First 5 sobre el tema o punto de acción.
- Los comentarios del público en reuniones públicas no incluyen preguntas y no están destinados a ser un diálogo.
- Se desalienta a los miembros designados del Consejo, al personal de First 5 y a los asesores de responder o discutir temas con el público (ya que podría constituir una violación de la Ley Brown).
- Se pueden imponer límites de tiempo por comentario y/o para el tiempo total asignado (y típicamente se impondrán).

First 5 Sonoma County Staff Report

First 5 Sonoma County FY 2026-2027 Budget: *Revenue*

State Prop 10	1,949,732
Other State funding	
CDSS OCAP	1,922,119
First 5 CAIMPACT Legacy	281,007
CDSS QCC QI Grant	160,531
QCC Hub Allocation	15,635
MHSA - DHS-Behav Health	30,977
Sonoma County Measure I	32,000,000
Peter E. Haas, Jr. Family Fund	100,000
Interest	700,000
Total Revenue	\$37,160,001

FY 2026-2027 Budget: *Expenses*



<i>Community Investments</i>	
Goal I: Healthy Children (Prop. 10+)	1,820,000
Goal II: Thriving Families (Prop. 10+)	1,700,000
Goal III: ECE (Prop. 10+)	325,000
Goal IV: Community (Prop. 10+)	1,060,000
<i>SUBTOTAL Prop 10+ Investments</i>	4,905,000
Goal I: Healthy Children (Measure I)	9,900,000
Goal II: Thriving Families (Measure I)	0
Goal III: ECE (Measure I)	15,272,000
Goal IV: Community (Measure I)	910,000
<i>SUBTOTAL Measure I Investments</i>	26,082,000
Total Community Investments	\$30,987,000

<i>Personnel</i>	
Total Personnel	\$2,671,477
<i>Services & Supplies</i>	
Total Services & Supplies	\$564,944

<i>Evaluation</i>	
Evaluation Databases	150,000
Evaluation Consulting	500,000
Total Evaluation	\$650,000
Total FY 26-27 Expenses	\$34,873,421

Measure I Procurement



Early Identification & Intervention

- *RFP Closed 6/23/26*
- *Contract recommendation to Commission 8/24/26 - Start date 9/1/26*

Mobile Clinics

- *Collaborative Grantmaking in-process, contracts approval August*

Community Early Relational Health Hubs

- *RFQ open, Qualifications due July 13, contracts start January 1, 2027*

Sonoma County Childcare Facilities Fund

- *Year 2 allocation approved \$13m*
- *Facilities needs assessment will inform next round*
- *Funding will start fall/winter 2026-27*

One-Time Retention Payments to ECE Providers

- *June & July*
- *Total of \$5m*

CAC – First 5 Commission Engagement



- Standing “CAC Update” Item on Commission Agenda
- Chair or Vice Chair provides report-out
- Aligned with First 5 Sonoma County Leadership Advisory Roundtable process

CAC Bylaws Review



- Annual review of bylaws required by bylaws
- Convene ad hoc subcommittee to review
- Legal Counsel support provided
- Develop recommendations and bring back to CA

CAC Parent Rep Support



- Dedicated contact person
- Bi-monthly check-in
- Potential to tie in to funded parent leadership activities

**Early Care and Education Family
Scholarships:
Family Engagement Findings and
Preliminary Financial Modeling**

ECE Scholarship Model Overview



Purpose: Design a sustainable, locally driven early care and education scholarship model to expand access to affordable child care for Sonoma County families.

Outcomes:

- A Family ECE Scholarship Model that complements existing subsidies
- Expanded access for families on waitlists or just above income limits
- More equitable distribution of resources

ECE Scholarship Model Overview



Timeline & Process:

Phase 1: December 2025 - June 2026

- ✓ Landscape Assessment
- ✓ Family Engagement Activities
- ✓ Family ECE Scholarship Scenario (financial modeling)

Phase 2: July 2026 - July 2027

- July - August: Develop a Draft ECE Scholarship Model based on all inputs
- September: Post & distribute the Draft ECE Scholarship Model for 30 days of public feedback (Eng/Span)
- October - November: Revise and finalize ECE Scholarship Model for implementation
- December - June 2027: Determine contracting needs, procurement, start up planning for contractor/s
- July 2027: Scholarships available to the community

ECE Scholarship Model Overview



Where We Are in This Process

Part 1 - April CAC Meeting

- a. Reviewed Sonoma County's ECE subsidy landscape: how the current system works, who it serves, and where gaps exist
- b. Presented waitlist data and unmet need and introduced key design questions for the scholarship model

Part 2 - June CAC Meeting

- a. Brief recap of key findings from the ECE subsidy landscape assessment
- b. Financial modeling findings: what it costs to serve waitlisted families and how far Measure I funding goes
- c. Family engagement findings: what families told us about cost, quality, and access
- d. CAC discussion and input on scholarship model design

How We Will Use Our Time



- I. Recap: Sonoma ECE Subsidy Landscape
- II. Preliminary Financial Modeling Findings
- III. Family Engagement Findings
- IV. Staff Recommendations
- V. CAC: Clarification Questions and Perspective Sharing
- VI. Activity: Feedback Exercise

Recap: Sonoma ECE Subsidy Landscape

ECE Scholarship Landscape Assessment



Purpose of Landscape Assessment

Prior to creating a locally designed scholarship model, it was important to:

1. Understand how other municipalities across the nation have designed and learned from ECE Scholarship Models funded in a similar manner to Measure I
2. Learn directly from Sonoma County families what their needs, experiences, and priorities are related to child care and the development of an ECE Scholarship Model
3. Understand the existing ECE subsidy system (amount of funds, type, usage etc.)
4. Quantify the gaps of the existing system (qualification criteria, waitlists, service gaps by demographic or geography)

Recap: Existing ECE Subsidy Landscape



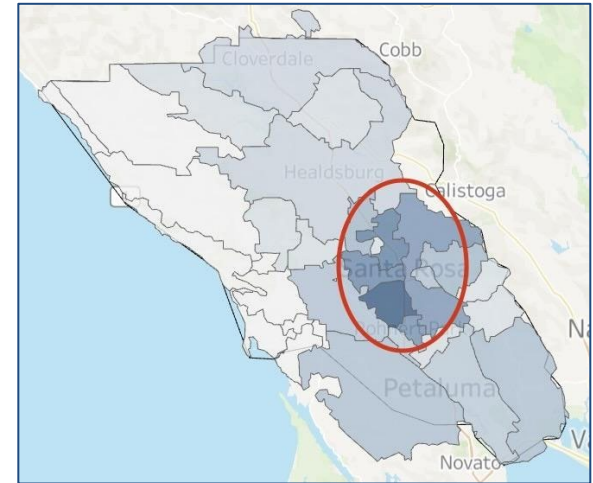
- Three primary public systems support child care subsidies in Sonoma County:
 1. California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
 2. California Department of Education (CDE)
 3. Federal Office of Head Start
- Most families must demonstrate a need for care (employment, school, or protective services involvement) *AND* meet income eligibility thresholds.
- Income ceilings: up to 85% of State Median Income (SMI) for CDSS programs, approximately \$108K per year for a family of four; up to 100% SMI for CDE programs, with some exceptions; and at or below the federal poverty line for Head Start.
- Family fees are capped at 1% of monthly income; families below 75% SMI pay no fee.

Recap: Unmet Need in Sonoma County



As of March 2026, 1,141 children ages 0-4 are on child care eligibility waitlists maintained by 4C's and Children & Families Circle (CFC).*

- 60% of waitlisted families fall within the highest-priority need bands (Rank 1-29); median monthly household income is approximately \$2,464.
- 67% of children on the waitlist are birth-2 years. Infants and toddlers are also the most supply-constrained age group.
- The highest concentrations of waiting families are in South Santa Rosa, North Santa Rosa, Northwestern Santa Rosa, and Rohnert Park.
- 73% of waitlisted families are enrolled in at least one means-tested government program; most need care in order to maintain or seek employment.



* While River to Coast does not have a waitlist, there are likely many local programs with waitlists.

Recap: Preparing the Provider Pipeline



Nationwide, in locally funded scholarship models, there are two distinct approaches to building a quality provider pipeline that supports children on scholarships and other subsidies.



Quality Screened Entry model: Meet quality requirements before entry. This assures quality, but depending on requirements, the pipeline may grow slowly (examples: San Francisco, New Orleans)



Quality Building pathway: Lower bar at entry and structured coaching and other support that helps grow the pipeline faster and builds capacity over time (example: Multnomah County, New Mexico)

Recap: Key Scholarship Design Questions



- **Eligibility:** Who qualifies? Targeted to highest need, sliding scale, or universal? Should the ECE workforce or other specific populations be prioritized?
- **Enrollment structure:** Contracted model, broker model, or hybrid?
- **Provider standards:** What quality requirements should providers meet to accept scholarship families?
- **Provider pipeline:** Quality-screened entry or a quality-building pathway with structured support?
- **Workforce investment:** Should compensation be embedded in scholarship rates, offered as a parallel program, or both?

Recap: CAC Discussion Questions



1. Who should the scholarship reach first, including which communities or age groups should be prioritized?
2. How should the scholarship model balance deeper support for fewer families against broader reach for more families?

Recap: CAC Discussion Emerging Points of Consensus



1. Interest in some level of quality expectations and quality supports.
2. Payment levels commensurate with what providers are asked to do.
3. A strong focus on the infant and toddler gap.

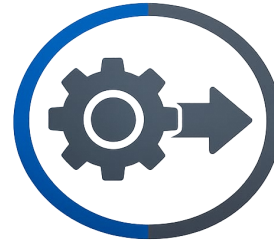
These comments were preliminary and will be considered alongside family engagement findings, financial modeling, public feedback, and future model development. See CAC notes from 4/23/26 for additional detail.

Roles: Moving from Inputs to Model Development



Inputs

- Financial Modeling
- Family Engagement Data
- Local Data and Reports
- Population-Based Data
- CDSS Record Request
- Subsidy Reimbursement Rate Data
- Waitlist Data
- National examples and lessons learned
- CAC: Recommended strategy language
- First 5 Sonoma County Strategic Plan
- CAC: Member Comments at Public Meetings
- Public Comment Period (September 1- 30)



Analysis

First 5 Sonoma County staff release the final ECE Family Scholarship Model and related procurements.

Preliminary Financial Modeling Findings

ECE Family Scholarship Scenario Modeling



Core Question:

If funding were the only barrier and adequate provider capacity existed, what would it cost to clear the current waitlist using Measure I funding in licensed ECE sites?

Cost of Care & Reimbursement Rates



	Infant/Toddler		Preschool	
Full Time Care Type	Private Care	Subsidy Reimbursement	Private Care	Subsidy Reimbursement
Center - Based Care	\$2,027	\$1,759	\$1,430	\$1,338
Family Child Care Home	\$1,530	\$1,333	\$1,422	\$1,233

Note: Subsidy rates include the Cost Plus Care supplement of \$230 per child per month.

Estimated Cost to Clear the Waitlist



Annual Cost Private Rates

~ \$20 Million/year

To serve all 1,141
children on the waitlist

Annual Cost Subsidy Rates

~ 17.8 Million/ year

To serve all 1,141
children on the waitlist

Current Annual Measure I Allocation

2.7 Million/year

Notes: Cost estimates reflect key model assumptions, including care schedule distribution (68% full-time, 32% part-time) and provider type by age group. Waitlist refers to the list provided by 4C's and Children and Families Circle from March 2026. River to Coast did not have a waitlist due to having sufficient funding to serve its geographic area.

What \$2.7 Million Can Fund Annually?



How far does the annual scholarship allocation go?

**Measure I Scholarship
Allocation**

\$2.7 Million/year

\$13.5 Million over 5 years

Estimated Reach

**~133 children served per
year at \$1,500/month**

~10% of the 1,141 children
currently on the waitlist

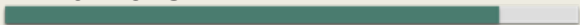
Provider Capacity Constraints



Licensed Child Care Capacity: 2024-25 LPC Early Learning and Care Needs Assessment

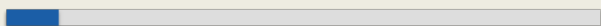
INFANT & TODDLERS (AGES 0-2)

86% Unmet Need For Licensed Child Care



PRESCHOOL (AGES 3-4)

8.8% Unmet Need For Licensed Child Care

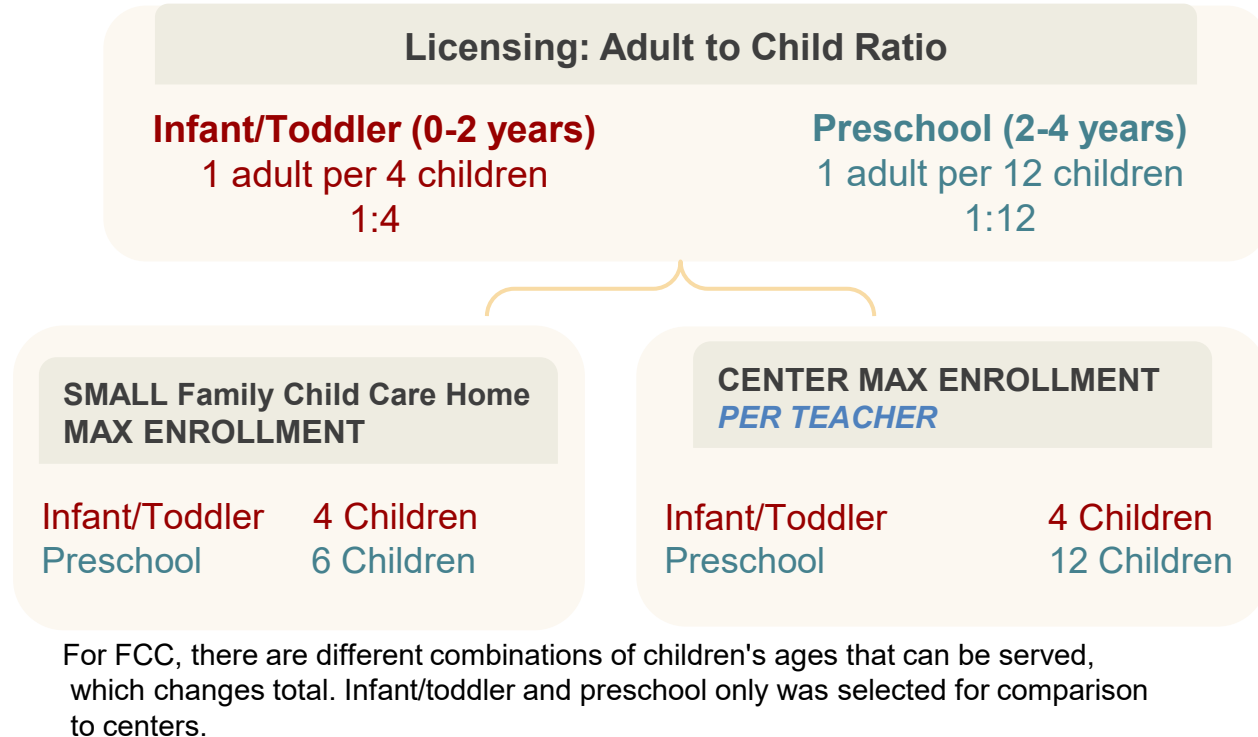


- Every region of Sonoma County has some level of unmet need for licensed child care.
- **Santa Rosa** has the most severe imbalance, where the number of children needing care exceeds available licensed capacity. This means that regardless of funding, there is not enough licensed child care.

Infant and Toddler Care Is Harder to Sustain



- California Community Care Licensing establishes adult-to-child ratios that cannot be exceeded.
- Lower child-to-adult ratios for infants and toddlers mean fewer children can be served per caregiver.
- * In order for this ratio difference to be financially neutral, the subsidy reimbursement or private pay for infants and toddlers must make up for the ratio constraints.



Subsidy Rates Disincentivize Infant & Toddler Care



SMALL FCC MAX ENROLLMENT

Infant/Toddler	4 Children
Preschool	6 Children



SMALL FCC - Income per month

Infant/Toddler	\$5,332
Preschool	\$7,403

Serving infants and toddlers costs FCC providers \$2,071 a month in lost revenue

CENTER MAX ENROLLMENT *PER TEACHER*

Infant/Toddler	4 Children
Preschool	12 Children



CENTER – Income per month, per teacher

Infant/Toddler	\$7,036
Preschool	\$16,056

Serving infants and toddlers costs centers \$9,020 a month in lost revenue (per teacher)

Preliminary Financial Modeling: Summary of Findings



Waitlist

- 67% of children on the waitlist (N=1,141) are under age 3
- Santa Rosa has the greatest concentration of families waiting for care

Preliminary Financial Modeling: Summary of Findings



Waitlist

- 67% of children on the waitlist (N=1,141) are under age 3
- Santa Rosa has the greatest concentration of families waiting for care

Cost To Clear The Waitlist

- \$20 Million per year at private market rates
- \$17.8 million per year at subsidy reimbursement rates

Current Allocation

- 2.7 Million / year available through Measure I (\$13.5 Million over 5 years)
- ~133 children served per year at \$1,500/month average scholarship
- ~10% of the waitlist reach with current funding

Preliminary Financial Modeling: Summary of Findings



Waitlist

- 67% of children on the waitlist (N=1,141) are under age 3
- Santa Rosa has the greatest concentration of families waiting for care

Cost To Clear The Waitlist

- \$20 Million per year at private market rates
- \$17.8 million per year at subsidy reimbursement rates

Current Allocation

- 2.7 Million / year available through Measure I (\$13.5 Million over 5 years)
- ~133 children served per year at \$1,500/month average scholarship
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Provider Capacity Constraints

- 86% unmet provider capacity for infants and toddlers vs. 8.8% for preschoolers
- Title 22 teacher to child ratios coupled with subsidy reimbursement rates that don't fully cover cost of care create a revenue gap that discourages providers of all types from serving this infants and toddlers.

Family Engagement Findings

Throughlines & Design Implications

Family Engagement: How We Heard From Families



IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS 59 parents

Interviewed parents across 8 sites in Sonoma County (Sebastopol, Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Sonoma Valley).

Explored current child care arrangements, barriers, and what families need most.

4CS PARENT SURVEY 199 parents

Survey families on the 4Cs Child Care Eligibility List (CEL).

Covered child care needs, work circumstances, and support needs while awaiting care.

VIRTUAL 1:1 FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS 8 parents

Interviewed parents on the 4Cs CEL with at least one infant or toddler (birth–24 months).

Explored waitlist experiences, child care type awareness, child care preferences, and scholarship needs.

Note: All engagements were conducted in English and Spanish and included compensation.

Family Engagement Throughlines



The following themes surfaced across all three family engagement activities:

Design Themes

1. Cost
2. ECE Quality elements
3. Child care preferences
4. Infant & toddler care priority

Implementation Theme

5. Outreach, education & navigation support

Throughline 1: Cost of Child Care



Child care is unaffordable for most families, including those who don't qualify for subsidies.

What the data shows

- Through the *community interviews* 33 of 46 parents who shared a perspective on affordability (72%) described child care as unaffordable.
- 54% of *subsidy waitlist survey respondents* (108 of 199) reported leaving a job, delay starting a job, or reduce work hours due to lack of subsidized care.
- 53% of *subsidy waitlist survey respondents* (106 of 199) are currently paying out of pocket while waiting for subsidized care.

"[The costs are] eating me alive." – Parent interviewed while waiting for subsidized child care

Throughline 2: Quality Elements



Families described ECE quality as:

- Safe and trusted
- Culturally linguistically responsive
- Inclusive of children with special needs
- Led by trained, qualified staff
- Developmentally rich curriculum

Examples:

- 27% of parents participating in *community interviews* prioritized bilingual or bicultural care
- 25% of parents participating in *community interviews* cited trust or safety (licensed, trustlined/background checked)
- 12% of parents participating in *community interviews* noted gaps for children with disabilities or complex health needs
- 75% of parents participating in virtual follow-up interviews value child care programs that support early academic and social skill building (6 of 8)

“Day schools may require certain certifications so that the adults are very well aware of like the stages of development and how to handle different things that may come up” – Parent interviewed while waiting for subsidized child care.

Throughline 3: Child Care Preferences



While waiting for a licensed site, families rely on informal care

What the data shows

- 75% of parents participating in *community interviews* (44 of 59) are not using formal child care; of those, 37 rely on a parent staying home and 27 rely on grandparents or another family member as primary or backup care. Many described FFN arrangements as unreliable and dependent on a family member's availability, job schedule, or other circumstances.
- 53% of *waitlist survey respondents* (105 of 199) rely on family, friends, or neighbors while waiting for subsidized care, while 64% are personally providing care themselves; only 19% have any licensed provider involved (11% FCC home, 8% center).
- Most parents participating in *virtual interviews* (7 of 8) preferred center-based programs over family child care homes, citing perceptions of greater safety and oversight.

Throughline 4: Infant and Toddler Care Priority



0-2 year olds are the highest cost, highest need, and most underserved group.

What the data shows

- 7 parents participating in *community interviews* called for more care options for infants and children under 1.
- On the waitlist of 1,141 children, most were infants and toddlers (775 infants/toddlers; 366 preschool-age).
- All 8 *virtual interview* participants have at least one infant or toddler (birth to 24 months) and discussed needing care to enable them to return to work.

Family Engagement Throughlines: Summary



In summary:

1. Child care is unaffordable for most families, including those who don't qualify for subsidies.
2. Families define quality as care that is: Safe and trusted. Culturally linguistically responsive. Inclusive of children with special needs. Led by trained, qualified staff and uses a developmentally rich curriculum.
3. Families are relying on a patchwork of child care types during their children's youngest years, shaped by what they can afford, trust, and value.
4. 0-2 year olds are the highest cost, highest need, and most underserved group.

Staff Recommendation for Discussion

Staff Recommendation: Countywide Central Eligibility Waitlist



#1: Fund the technology and maintenance of a Countywide Central Eligibility Waitlist

- There is no existing public funding source for a countywide Central Eligibility List. Those that maintain one are doing so at their own cost or cost sharing.
- The only way to ensure accurate prioritization of children for scholarships is to have one waitlist.

Please note: This cost was not allocated to this strategy in the CAC recommendations so an additional allocation would be required in order to keep scholarship funds at the same level.

Staff Recommendation: Infant and Toddlers



#2: Implement an infant/toddler-focused ECE scholarship program for this strategic plan period

- Prioritize the youngest infants (under age 1) by priority rank and provide continuity of care until that child reaches 3.
- If all children under age 1 on the universal subsidy waitlist are served (up to rank 85), then move to children under 18 months by priority rank.

Staff Recommendation: Family Child Care Homes



#3: Use a Family Child Care-specific Cohort Model to serve scholarship children for this strategic plan period

- Select FCC for the cohort through an application process, prioritizing those that already serve subsidy children 0-5, those who are bilingual, and have some additional quality elements (Quality Building) while also considering geographic unmet needs.
- FCC selected as part of the cohort model would be prioritized for other quality supports (tuition assistance, coaching, facilities, etc.) Please note, others in the county would also be served by quality supports, including centers.

Staff Recommendation: Compensation for FCC in Cohort Model



#4: Eliminate financial disincentive for FCC Cohort providers serving infants and toddlers, relative to the current preschool subsidy rate by funding the ECE scholarship at the breakeven point of \$1,850 per month (full time).

- For other children under the age of 3 in the FCC's care supported by subsidy vouchers (not scholarships), top off that subsidy rate so that the FCC also receives \$1,850 rather than the state rate of \$1,333 (for full-time).
- Should public subsidy become available for a child receiving a scholarship, continue "top offs" so that provider continues to receive scholarship rates.

CAC Activity & Discussion

Activity: Level of Agreement with Staff Recommendations



1. Fund the technology and maintenance of a Countywide Central Eligibility Waitlist.
2. Implement an infant/toddler focused ECE scholarship program for this strategic plan period.
3. Use a Family Child Care-specific Cohort Model to serve scholarship children for this strategic plan period.
4. Eliminate financial disincentive for FCC Cohort providers serving infants and toddlers, relative to the current preschool subsidy rate by funding the ECE scholarship at the breakeven point of \$1,850 per month (full-time).

Activity: Level of Agreement with Staff Recommendations



Sharing Your Preferences

1. **Review the activity worksheet.** You will find staff recommendations and space to indicate your response.
2. **Mark your worksheet.** For each recommendation, place a checkmark on the number that indicates your level of agreement with each recommendation. Only use whole numbers – not 1.5
3. **Hand in your worksheet to Christina.** Numerical results will be posted on the shared whiteboard without names, and we will debrief as a group. Christina will hand back the sheet so you have it for reference during the discussion.

Reminder – This is not a vote; it is capturing your current perspective as a CAC member. This activity and the discussion that will follow will be used as an input, among other inputs, to design the draft model. The draft model will be posted for public comment in English/Spanish from Sept 1- Sept 30th.

Activity Results: CAC Insights & Discussion



1. In looking at the activity responses, are there items that the CAC would like to prioritize for discussion as a group?
2. Do any individual CAC members want to provide comments or perspectives on any of the recommendations?
 - Who?
 - Which recommendations?



Next Community Advisory Council Meeting:
August 27, 2026
3:00-5:00 pm

LOCATION:
120 Stony Point Rd., Suite 155, Santa Rosa