

Early Childhood Education/Childcare

At the May 26, 2021 MXCAB meeting, First 5 Contra Costa, Cocokids, and staff from the Community Services Bureau of the Employment and Human Services Department requested allocations towards early childhood supports, providers and systems. The shortage of childcare slots, including those for children ages 0-5 who are eligible for subsidized childcare, and the lack of early care and education providers has only worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the November 16, Board of Supervisors meeting the proposal was included in the County Administrators' staff report, as a program Board members had requested follow-up information on, but was not feasible due to insufficient funding after addressing other MXCAB and Board of Supervisors' priorities. The proposal was included in the Childcare Slots proposal of Attachment D, and for informational purposes should future allocation opportunities arise.

This proposal goes hand in hand with the Development of Additional Childcare Providers proposal, since access and availability of quality childcare is contingent on the availability of a stable early childhood workforce. However, this is being presented independently due to the limited unallocated Measure X funding available at this time.

This proposal requests Measure X allocations to fund up to 500 childcare slots through a voucher program, primarily for infants and toddlers, for families who are over-income and do not currently qualify for a childcare subsidy. Partnerships between CocoKids (the resource and referral agency for the County) and the Employment and Human Services, Community Services and Workforce Services bureau have existing mechanisms in place to support this effort without a need for additional facilities to administer this program.

The annual estimated cost of planning, implementing, and administering the voucher program for non-subsidized families is approximately \$4.5 million.

Approval of this proposal as ongoing Measure X funding would guarantee families obtaining quality child care they cannot afford otherwise, and lay the foundation for the establishment of universal access to early care and education.

Attached is a letter of support from the Early Learning Leadership Group (ELLG) that provides additional information regarding the need for early childhood education and childcare in Contra Costa County.

Recommendation

An on-going allocation of \$4 million is recommended to support quality, affordable childcare in Contra Costa County.



February 14, 2022

Supervisor Mitchoff, Chair
 Supervisor Burgis
 Supervisor Andersen
 Supervisor Gioia
 Supervisor Glover

Dear Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors,

We were very pleased to see the Measure X Community Advisory Board include funding for subsidized child care in their recommendations for Measure X on-going funding. As you well know, child care is essential for families to be able to work and for children to grow and thrive. We do understand that the entire amount available is limited and tough decisions will have to be made.

That said, child care, especially for infants and toddlers is of critical importance and we hope you will give strong consideration to the Early Learning Leadership Group’s request: funding for infant and toddler spaces and retention stipends to ensure that we have a workforce to take care of our children!

Although there are child care funds coming from the state, these funds will focus on 4-year-olds, leaving an even bigger necessity for infant and toddler care and for support for providers to stay in the field. The members of the ELLG provide a wide range of services including child care consultation, coaching, developmental screening, professional development, literacy supports and family strengthening resources for families and will continue to leverage existing funds to support the field; however, given the urgency of this crisis, and the reality of First 5 Contra Costa’s declining Prop 10 funding, we need additional county-wide support to give our youngest children the care they need, allow families to work, and to retain providers in the field.

Given the limited amount of funding currently available and the competing priorities you must consider, we offer a scaffolded approach to consider with Measure X funds:

Infant and Toddler Spaces	Retention supports to providers	Total *Does not include administrative costs
\$3,120,000 (200 spaces)	\$2,240,000 (support to 400 family child care providers and lead teachers)	\$5,360,000
\$1,560,000 (100 spaces)	\$1,120,000 (support to 200 family child care providers and lead teachers)	\$2,260,000

\$780,000 (50 spaces)	\$560,000 (support to 100 family child care providers and lead teachers)	\$1,340,000
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We appreciate the Measure X CAB’s lead in supporting child care in their recommendations, and in so doing, also validating the expectations of voters when they considered Measure X on the ballot. Contra Costa County depends on child care today and the future. We encourage you to partner with us and allocate funding to demonstrate the county’s commitment to quality child care as an essential investment for economic recovery. Caring and supporting our youngest children is simply the right thing to do.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ruth Fernández, Ed.D.

Executive Director
First 5 Contra Costa

Lynn Mackey

Contra Costa County Superintendent of Schools
Contra Costa County Office of Education

John Jones

Executive Director
CocoKids, Inc.

Ali Uscilka

Program Director
Healthy and Active Before 5

Brenda Brown

Executive Director
Concord Child Care Center/LPC Member

Crystal McClendon-Gourdine, Ph.D.

LPC Chair
Local Planning & Advisory Council for Early Care & Education

Dr. Aaron Alarcon-Bowen

CSB Director
Community Services Bureau (CSB)
Employment and Human Services Department

Cc: Monica Nino, County Administrator; Lisa Driscoll, County Finance Director, County Administrator’s Office

