

## Alameda County Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program Pilot

**Early Care and Education (ECE) is critical for children and families and provides meaningful supports to employers, communities, and local economies.**

For each dollar spent on ECE, studies estimate a return on investment to the community ranging from \$7 to \$17, with long-term benefits including greater educational and professional attainment for children who attend preschool.<sup>1</sup> According to a 2019 study by the UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education:<sup>2</sup>

 **Insufficient access to ECE costs businesses \$1,150 per working parent each year**

 **Reliable access to ECE reduces employee absences by 20% to 30% and reduces turnover by 37% to 60%, with women disproportionately impacted by lack of access to ECE**

 **Each dollar invested in ECE generates as much as \$1.88 in increased economic activity in California's current landscape**

### The Landscape of Alameda County's ECE Workforce

The ECE workforce in Alameda County faces a variety of challenges:

- **Aging Educators:** 24.2% of teaching staff and 50% of child center directors are over the age of 50. As an aging workforce retires, the child care field faces a shortage of prepared and qualified teachers.
- **Lack of Diversity:** At higher professional levels of teaching, there is less diversity among staff. Assistant teachers are more likely to be people of color (78%) than teachers (64%), resulting in assistant teachers more closely reflecting the race/ethnic composition of children served. Career pipelines that allow for credentialing are important public policy investments to create a more diverse ECE workforce at all levels and a pathway to higher earnings for early career teachers.
- **Workforce Attrition:** The workforce is shrinking. In 2016, one in five teachers and one in four assistant teachers left their jobs

### A Three-Fold Return on Investment: Alameda County Early Childhood CalWORKs Apprenticeship Program

The Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program provides a three-fold return on investment: (1) a successful workforce strategy for CalWORKs participants, (2) a recruitment, training, and credentialing approach for

<sup>1</sup> Meloy, B., Gardner, M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). *Untangling the evidence on preschool effectiveness: Insights for policymakers*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

<sup>2</sup> Jacobs, K., Powell, A., & Thomason, S. (2019). *Investing in Early Care and Education: The Economic Benefits for California*. Berkeley, CA: UC Berkeley Labor Center.

the child care field, and (3) increased knowledge of child development for the participating parent. The program, administered by YMCA of the East Bay through a funded partnership of Alameda County Social Services Agency, First 5 Alameda County, and Tipping Point, is a replicable model.

***The ECE apprenticeship model educates and trains CalWORKs parents for a career in ECE and beyond.*** It has already celebrated some early successes that suggest its promise as a two-generation strategy to bolster children, families, and communities.

## Apprenticeship Program Design

The program is aligned to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing targets, as well as Title 5 and Head Start requirements. At the end of the program, apprentices earn a California Child Development Associate Teacher Permit. Apprentices have the opportunity to continue in a second and third tier of the apprenticeship, in which they attain an AA and BA degree, respectively, as well as Child Development permits at higher levels.

### Apprentices are provided with:

- On the job training and mentorship
- No-cost college courses and tutoring
- Stipends and wages tied to professional milestones
- Soft and hard skills training
- A cohort learning environment
- Transportation and child care
- Resume and interview support



*My journey to being a toddler teacher... I'm a single parent of two children. The YMCA Apprenticeship offered me the assistance I need to complete my dreams and goals... My children are my motivation and happiness – what keeps me going. This fall, I will have the opportunity to work in my own classroom as a result of this program. I'm beyond excited to meet the children and families."*

-Parent Participant

## Apprenticeship Program Outcomes

### Participant Retention

- 10 of the 18 CalWORKs apprentices in the 2020 cohort **passed all of their classes** with a C or better.
- The program was able to **pivot rapidly amidst the pandemic**, with only two apprentices leaving.

### Participant Completion

- **The 16 apprentices who completed the program in 2020 were successfully assigned to field placements** while pursuing the education to obtain their Associate Teacher Permit.

### Job Placement

- **11 of the 16 apprentices were hired full-time by the YMCA at \$16.82 per hour, with planned increases to over \$18 per hour once they receive their permits (69% job placement rate).**

### Budget

- Total cost of the 2020 Cohort effort is approximately \$330,000, roughly \$18,500 per CalWORKs apprentice.

### Return on Investment

- Depending on family size and length of time on aid, CalWORKs families would otherwise pose an ongoing cost of \$230,000 per year (nearly \$13,000 per participant) to the social safety net.
- For apprentices that complete the program and obtain employment, **policymakers can expect to see a return on investment to the social safety net after 17 months.**