

December 10, 2024

Honorable Mayor and City Council
City of Long Beach
California

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation to receive and file the City of Long Beach Early Childhood Strategic Plan. (Citywide)

DISCUSSION

The City of Long Beach received and filed the 2018-2023 Citywide Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan (ECE Plan) on October 2, 2018. This plan has served as a guide for collaborative efforts to support the early child systems in Long Beach. The ECE Plan has reached the end of the five-year timeframe; therefore, the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) engaged in efforts to create a new, updated Early Childhood Strategic Plan that highlights the collaborative strength of the early childhood education system and lists goals and objects to address emerging needs of young children, their families, and their care providers. The updated Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan (attached) was released via memorandum to Mayor and City Council on October 7, 2024.

In June 2023, the Health Department's Early Childhood Strategic Initiatives Program (ECSI) launched the community early care and education needs assessment with the early childhood community by engaging internal City teams and community partners who have served as the ECE Plan Oversight Committee (Oversight Committee) to guide the project. These members represented California State University, Long Beach, the Long Beach Unified School District, the Long Beach ECE Committee, Long Beach City College and various divisions and programs within the Health Department. The ECSI Program worked collaboratively with The Enlighten Group to lead the data collection effort, with support from the Oversight Committee. Through 13 focus groups and interviews, and through an online multilingual survey, participants shared their insights on an array of early care and education services offered in Long Beach. Data collection included over 100 participants, including Spanish and Khmer speaking individuals, parents, children and ECE professionals.

Data was shared with the Oversight Committee to co-analyze the findings. Together, six overarching goals were created, along with 21 objectives and 108 activities to be overseen by the Oversight Committee and led by various partners across Long Beach. The goals are as follows:

Goal 1: Support strong and resilient families

- Goal 2: Increase access to early care and education services via a mixed-delivery system
- Goal 3: Support the development of a strong early-childhood-serving workforce
- Goal 4: Strengthen the quality of early childhood programs and services across the city
- Goal 5: Support safe, healthy and accessible environments for children and families
- Goal 6: Promote partnerships that align ECE services and integrate the voices of children and families

The updated Early Childhood Strategic Plan will be the guiding document for the early childhood serving community over the course of the next five years and will be used to support shared grant applications by both City staff and community partners. Additionally, this plan will be used to track early childhood efforts across the City. With this collaborative effort, the City and community partners will ensure that young children have the best start in life to foster their ability to thrive over their lifetime.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Nicholas Masero on September 23, 2024, and by Budget Analysis Officer Greg Sorensen on September 13, 2024.

TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

City Council action to receive and file the City of Long Beach Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan is requested on December 10, 2024.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. Implementation of the strategies and proposed action steps could have a significant fiscal impact and funding is needed to move forward with some of the recommendations.

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



Alison King
Director
Health and Human Services

APPROVED:



THOMAS B. MODICA
CITY MANAGER