



## **2025-26 EARLY CHILDHOOD POLICY OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE CITY OF OAKLAND**

### **Support Head Start in Oakland**

Every year, over 450 low-income children and families are provided with high-quality early care and education programming through the City of Oakland Head Start. Approximately \$2 million from the City's general fund leverages over \$20 million in state and federal support annually. Over 150 City of Oakland staff, multiple nonprofit staff, and family child care providers operate the program. This is a critical program for families with young children in Oakland that must be protected.



**ASK: There should be a clear plan to retain the current over 450 City of Oakland Head Start slots. The City's Head Start leadership should be strengthened, and accountability structures defined and put in place.**

### **Support Implementation of Early Childhood Local Funding Initiatives**

New local funding streams, the Oakland Children's Initiative and Measure C, which is countywide, were hard-fought wins for families and providers. These new initiatives do not mean that early childhood programming is "taken care of." There is a \$1 billion need for child care in our county, and Measure C provides \$150 million. Only 10% of Oakland parents eligible for infant and toddler care subsidies receive them due to lack of funding. Child care providers are one of the lowest-paid sectors in the economy; many make only minimum wage and are on public assistance. Future state and federal funding cuts related to healthcare, mental health, and other services will only exacerbate this issue.



**ASK: Preserve city programs serving young children, such as the Oakland Fund for Children and Youth, and reinstate those supported by the Sugar-Sweetened Beverage tax.**

### **Safe and Family-Friendly Communities**

Families deserve to be safe and protected in their communities. The City needs to invest in joyous, safe, communal spaces for young children and their families, including our parks and libraries.



**ASK: Elevate and fund family-friendly activities at parks, recreation facilities, libraries, and other community assets that serve young children and their families.**

### **Lift Up Needs of Families in Housing and Homeless Solutions**

While the majority of the unhoused in our county are single adults, there are approximately 700 unhoused families. This is likely an undercount, as families fear reporting their housing status. The impact of housing instability on children is profound and long-term. However, families are often overlooked in housing policy, such as in the county's new Measure W funding.



**ASK: Concretely support families in city affordable housing funding, tenant protections and legal supports, and other housing resources. Programs supporting navigation to services and housing, specifically the Alameda County CARE Program, need to be prioritized and funded.**