



# **Introduction to the Strong Start Initiative**

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# The Benefits of High Quality ECE

**More likely to**

Show improved reading  
Show improved math  
Stay in school longer  
Graduate from high school  
Graduate from college

**More likely to**

Have a job  
Own a home



**Less likely to**

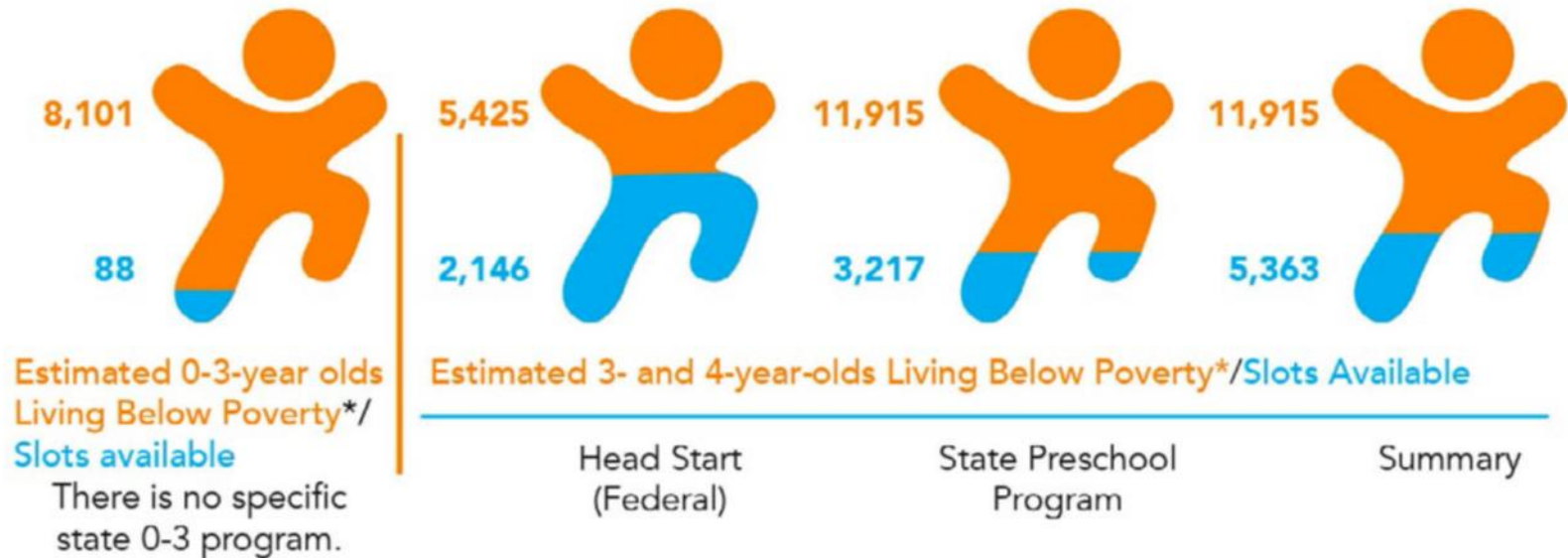
Be placed in special education  
Repeat grades  
Drop out of school  
Become teen parents

**Less likely to**

Have had multiple arrests  
Received welfare assistance  
Be diagnosed with hypertension  
Smoke or abuse drugs

# Not Serving the Most At-Risk

## Santa Clara County State and Federal Early Learning Programs 2013-14



\* Income eligibility limit for family of four: Head Start \$23,050; State Preschool \$49,896

# How to Solve the Problem



# The Strong Start Initiative



**A coalition of community leaders, school districts, non-profit organizations, elected officials, members of the business community and other key stakeholders who are committed to expanding access to high-quality early learning opportunities for all children aged 0-8 in Santa Clara County**

# Structuring the Initiative

## STRONG START GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



# Initial Desired Outcomes

STAKEHOLDER	OUTCOMES
<b>General Public</b>	Understanding the benefits of high quality ECE Support for local public funding of ECE
<b>School Districts</b>	Expansion of their ECE programs Improving quality in their ECE programs
<b>Elected Representatives</b>	Understanding the benefits of high quality ECE Understanding their agency's role in providing ECE Support for local public funding of ECE

# Current and Planned Activities

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
<b>Public Education</b>	Public information campaign; PSAs; Voter guide; Strong Start web site
<b>Public Polling</b>	Existing and planned polling (public, Chamber of Commerce)
<b>Influencer Education</b>	Superintendent & CBO presentations; Chamber of Commerce; Rotary luncheon; League of Women Voters; Raising of Silicon Valley forum
<b>Policy Analysis / Research</b>	"Gap" analysis; Cost of quality estimate; TK fact sheet; Analysis of best practice models
<b>Demonstration Programs</b>	Educare SV
<b>Policymaker Education</b>	School board presentations; SCCSBA early education forum; Local elected meetings; Early Education Block Grant legislator forum
<b>Advocacy</b>	Legislative advocacy; Early Education block grant proposal feedback; collaboration with Early Edge, Children Now and SVCF bi-county network; DOF public comment
<b>Public Forums</b>	LWV Candidate forums
<b>Coalition Building</b>	SVCF joint advocacy initiative; SVCN collaboration; GRACE initiative; SJ Learns; coalition member recruitment
<b>Lobbying</b>	CAEYC early learning advocacy day; COE lobby day; Strong Start lobby day



# Specific Ask

- 1. Everyone** - Join the Strong Start coalition, attend meetings, allow us to use your logo, advocate with us – be the “unusual suspects”, put ECE on your agendas
- 2. School Districts** - Grow your TK program, consider extended TK, expand ECE through LCAP/LCFF or with Title I and Title II ESSA funds, enhance after-school and summer programs for low income and young children, reach out to non-profits
- 3. Cities** - focus your library and parks & recreation programs on improving early literacy; reach out to school districts and COE for help in improving / coordinating



# **Governor's Budget Proposal**

- 1. No additional funds beyond increases approved in last year's budget**
- 2. The preschool block grant proposal:**

**“Specifically, the Budget proposes a \$1.6 billion early education block grant for local educational agencies that combines Proposition 98 funding from the State Preschool Program, transitional kindergarten, and the Preschool Quality Rating and Improvement System Grant.”**

**California State Preschool - \$845M dollars, 138,400 4 year olds, 300 non-LEAs  
Transitional Kindergarten - \$726M dollars, 83,000 4 year olds, all E/USDs in CA**

**Total restructure of CA's preschool system in 5 months led by Governor / DOF**

# Feedback to the Proposal

1. The early childhood system is too complicated and needs to be simplified
2. Greater connection to the k-12 system is very good idea

**BUT**

3. This big a change should be part of the policy process and not squeezed into the budget timeline
4. We have a mixed model of delivery and should keep it
5. What about quality?
6. The system desperately needs more money and the budget proposes no additional funding