

State of Early Learning and Care in Marin County

Marin County Child Care Commission
Strategic Plan 2020-2025



Overview

The Marin County Child Care Commission strives to lead and support countywide plans and advocacy efforts that ensure access to high quality early care and education services. For the last twenty-four years, the Commission has been serving as an advisory committee to the Department of Health and Human Services, the Board of Supervisors, and the Superintendent of Schools. Acting as the county's state-mandated Local Child Care Planning Council, the Commission is charged with outlining a Master Plan for child care in Marin County every five years.

During the completion of this 2020 Master Plan the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was deeply felt by this community. The Marin Child Care Commission is acutely aware of how this crisis, as well as other threats such as wildfires, have a direct impact on the wellbeing of children and families. These disasters have changed the landscape of Early Childcare and Education, and there is much work to be done to ensure the continued delivery of critical services in the months ahead. Though not directly addressed in this report, the Commission plans to take action through increased collaboration with local agencies to develop ongoing guidance for coordinated disaster responses.

Early learning and care is a holistic approach to the development of a child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs that builds a foundation of lifelong learning and wellbeing. In the San Francisco Bay Area and Marin County in particular, the high cost of living, scarcity of housing, and long commute times result in significant demand for free or low-cost, high-quality child care and early learning resources.

The Marin Child Care Commission developed the 2020-2025 Master Plan to present an updated picture of the state of child care in Marin County. The Master Plan highlights both strengths and challenges, and sets a clear course for improving the access, quality, and coordination of the child care system. The findings and goals in this plan are the result of years of listening sessions and community meetings throughout the County. Each Master Plan builds upon previous work and highlights continuing and newly identified early learning and child care needs.



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Commission Purpose and Framework

The Marin County Child Care Commission uses a collaborative approach to highlight and elevate child care and early learning needs and services in Marin County. The Commission gathers and shares data with early learning and child care providers, schools, community organizations, and families. The Commission convenes partners and families in facilitated discussions focused on issues impacting early learning and child care. The Commission supports and advocates for early learning and child care providers and programming. In 2019, the Commission promoted policies that provide future funding early learning and child care. The following is a list of state policies the Commission currently supports (Marin County Child Care Commission, 2019);

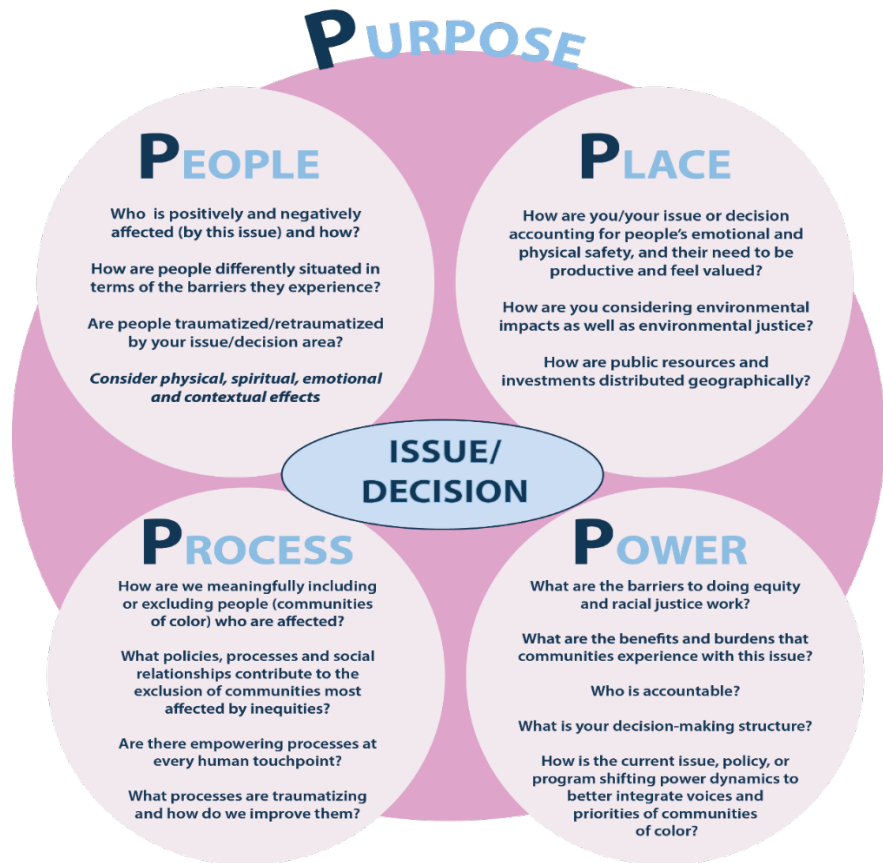
- CA SB 499 (McGuire): School Meals
- CAAB 6 (Reyes): ECE Branch
- CAAB 123, 124, and 125 (McCarty) – Pre-K for a legislative package
- CA SB 26 (Caballero) – Personal Income Taxes: Working Families Child Care Tax Credit
- CA SB 135 (Jackson) – Paid Family Leave
- CA SB 234 (Skinner) – Family Day Care Homes

The Commission believes that equity, when successful, does not take resources from one person to give to another; equity brings together a diversity of ideas and resources. As an official body of Marin County, the Marin County Child Care Commission has adopted and embraced the County's equity framework.

Just and fair inclusion in the County where all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Equity efforts seek to rectify historic patterns of exclusion.

To ensure equity, the Commission has adopted the Five Ps Equity and Empowerment framework. The framework is a transformative quality improvement tool used by the Commission for decision-making and resource allocation. The Five Ps framework evaluates each issue/decision using questions around Purpose, People, Place, Process, and Power that leads to more racially equitable policies and programs. See Figure 2 on the right.

Figure 1. Five P's Framework



Source: Multnomah County Office of Diversity and Equity

Summary of Findings

The Master Plan Committee identified key indicators that reflect the health of the system within three main identified areas: **Access to Child Care, Quality of Child Care, and Coordination of the Child Care System.** In updating the Master Plan, the Committee reviewed the indicators and progress made toward the original goals and objectives and reflected on the findings from the 2019 Needs Assessment. Based on that analysis and with considerable community input, the Committee identified the following as the most prominent challenges for Marin's child care system:

- ***Inadequate licensed supply for infant/toddler age care and school age care:*** Though there is a surplus of full-time preschool age child care for working families of all incomes, slots are not available to almost half (46%) of infants and toddlers with working parents. Childcare slots were also not available to about two thirds (63%) of school-aged children with working parents.
- ***Inability to cover the cost of care:*** The high costs of doing business and living in Marin County make child care unaffordable for providers and parents alike. The housing wage in Marin is \$10,000 per month double the \$5,000 cutoff for child care subsidies. This puts many Marin families in the difficult position of choosing child care services over basic necessities such as housing and food. The cost of child care in Marin ranges from 28% to 43% higher than the statewide cost.

- ***Insufficient staff salaries and support:*** Even with parent fees as high as they are, these fees do not provide enough revenue for teachers to earn a living wage. Providers struggle to balance escalating facility costs and teacher salaries with parent affordability. Cost and other factors lead to a significant portion of staff not having adequate training and support to meet the diverse needs of the children they serve.
- ***Need for Dual Language Learner Staff Supports:*** The majority of child care staff are working with children that speak more than one language e.g. Dual Language Learners (DLL). Sixty-three percent of staff surveyed said they did not receive adequate training to support DLL students. Staff (43%) reported that there are insufficient outside resources to assist with language barriers.

The Commission recognizes that some of the issues identified in this Master Plan should be addressed through the implementation of a statewide, publicly-funded early childhood education system. It is the Commission's intent that the strategies identified here will provide program improvements and support for children and families in Marin County as the state continues to develop and implement statewide reforms. The Commission will support state-wide reforms and with local partners facilitate processes to ensure new reforms are integrated with existing Marin County services.

Strategic Framework: Issue Areas and Goals

To respond to the child care needs identified in the needs assessment process, the 2020 Strategic Framework outlines recommendations for Marin County's child care community. They are grouped into three areas and corresponding goals.

1. Access to Early Learning Opportunities and Child Care

Goal

All families in Marin have access (defined by availability and affordability) to quality early learning opportunities and child care that meets their individual needs and preference.

2. Quality of Early Learning and Child Care

Goal

All child care arrangements (licensed and license exempt) provide children with high quality early learning experiences that support the development of the whole child.

3. Early Learning and Child Care Workforce

Goal

All early learning and child care programs are staffed by a high-quality workforce (including licensed and license exempt providers).

1. Access to Early Learning Opportunities and Child Care



Goal: All families in Marin have access (defined by availability and affordability) to quality early learning opportunities and child care that meets their individual needs and preference.

- Affordability: Maintain or reduce the percentage of family income needed to pay for early learning opportunities and child care costs.
- Availability: Increase the supply of early learning opportunities and child care options that meet the needs and preferences of parents.

Objectives

- Increase the amount of public investment in early learning opportunities and child care options.
- Increase the number of early learning opportunities and licensed child care options for infants.
- Increase the number of early learning opportunities and licensed child care options for children with disabilities and other special needs.

Strategies

- Advocate for countywide long-term sustainable revenue sources and/or ballot initiatives that supports all children in Marin
- Advocate for a complete Census count of children in all areas of the county.
- Advocate for public and private partnerships to increase affordability and availability.
- Advocate for the expansion of eligibility categories for subsidized child care.
- Advocate for employer-sponsored care as a means to increase the

2. Quality of Early Learning and Child Care



Goal: All child care arrangements (licensed and license exempt) provide children with high quality early learning experiences that support the development of the whole child

Objective

- Advocate for new initiatives that reflect best practices to increase the quality of child care.
- Strengthen partnerships that provide coordination for and access to health and mental health services.
- Raise awareness and enhance participation in existing professional development programs that support child care providers, sites, and workers (e.g. Marin Quality Counts program).
- Advocate for and support the development of cultural and linguistic competencies.

Strategies

- Raise awareness of the Childhood Mental Health Project and support its connection to early learning opportunities and child care sites.
- Support the integration and training of Community Health Outreach Workers (e.g. Promotoras and Community Health Ambassadors) with referrals to early learning opportunities and child care options.
- Advocate for the develop of a local and sustainable funding source.
- Advocate for programs to provide regular culturally-appropriate education to parents on the whole child approach and how to identify early learning opportunities and child care options that use this approach.
- Advocate for the development of and deepening of parent leadership and family engagement initiatives at early learning opportunities, playgroups and child care options.

3. Early Learning and Child Care Workforce



Goal: All early learning and child care programs are staffed by a high-quality workforce (including licensed and licensed exempt providers).

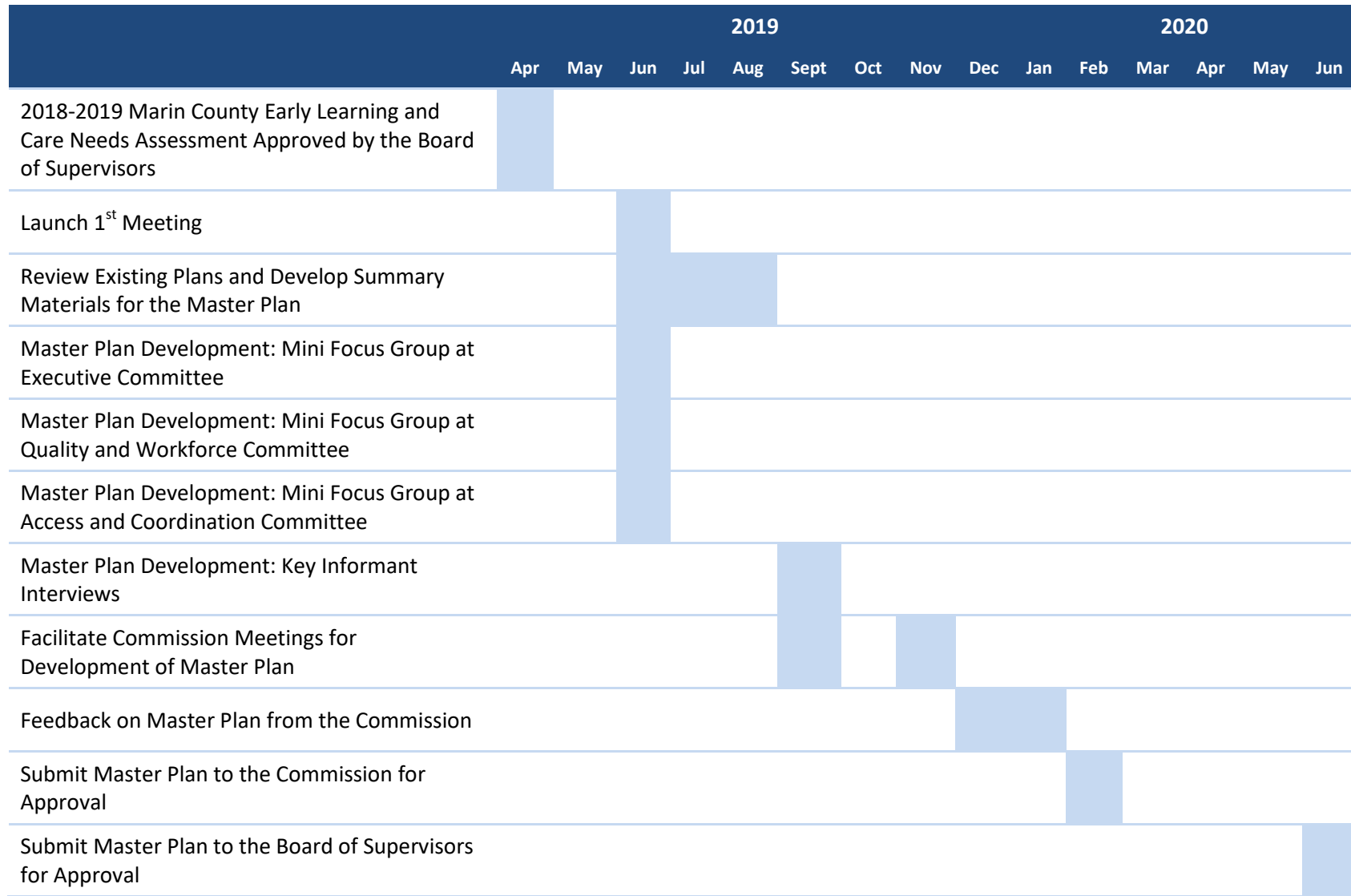
Objectives

- Advocate for increased compensation levels for the child care workforce to be commensurate with similar professions, reflective of our local economy, and linked to training and development.
- Support the development of standards for improved working environments for all Marin County early learning and care professionals.

Strategies

- Advocate for access to higher education, achievement degrees, and early childhood certifications (at least 12 ECE units), including sustainable coordination services to support potential teachers to complete their training.
- Advocate for a livable wage for all early learning and care professionals.
- Raise awareness of existing services that address food instability, financial stability, affordable housing, commutes, and benefits for all early learning and care professionals.

Timeline for the Development of the Master Plan



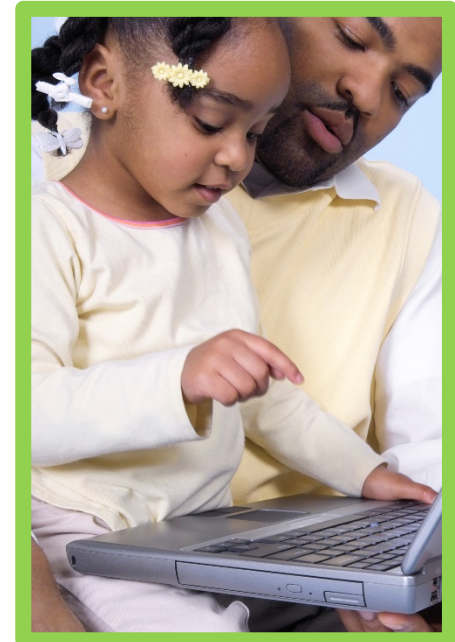
Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the Child Care Commissioners – past and present – whose passion and commitment for children has supported the development of this Master Plan. The Commission would like to thank the Executive Committee for their leadership during the planning process.

- Dr. Jason Lau, Chair
- Heidi Tomskey, Vice Chair
- Kelsey Lombardi, Secretary

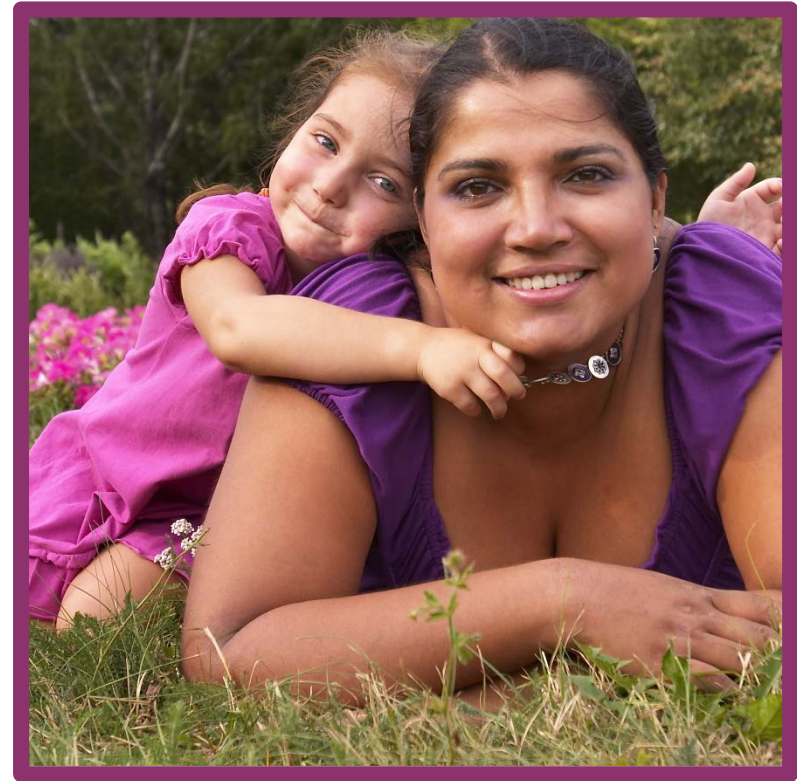
The Commission would also like to thank the following agencies for their support and contributions.

- Play Marin
- Sausalito Marin City School District
- First 5 Marin
- Marin Child Care Council
- Marin Community Foundation
- Marin County Health and Human Services
- Marin County Office of Education and the 18 individual School Districts in Marin County
- Marin County SELPA (Special Education Local Plan Area)
- Marin Family Child Care Associates
- Marin Promise
- Montessori Schools Group/Network
- NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Marin Chapter



Appendix

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History of the Strategic Framework

In 1995, the Marin County Child Care Commission identified the following components of an ideal child care system for children, families and child care service providers (see Figure 2 below). These components helped to establish the foundation for an expanded vision of the Marin Child Care Commission. This expanded vision guided the data collection, analysis, and planning efforts necessary to develop the 2008-13 Master Plan's goals, objectives, and recommendations for enhancing Marin County's child care system. The 2020 Strategic Framework is built on this past work of the Commission.

Figure 2. Components of a Successful Child Care System.

In Marin County child care for

Families:

- Is accessible
- Is affordable (fees based on ability to pay)
- Accommodates children from birth through age 14 with full continuous care
- Serves children and families in special circumstances
- Provides readily accessible parent support services such as parent education, information and referral to community resources
- Allows for choice among a range of options

In Marin County child care for

Children:

- Encourage self-exploration
- Nurture self-acceptance
- Provide environments that are healthy and safe
- Identify needs for early preventive or remedial intervention
- Encourage development of the whole child
- Are developmentally appropriate
- Are culturally sensitive and appropriate
- Prepare the child to cope with and succeed in school
- Accommodate the schedule and balance the routine of the school-age child

In Marin County child care for

Service Providers:

- Covers the full and actual cost of providing high quality child care, including adequate staff compensation, as well as appropriate physical facilities and supplies
- Promotes collaboration and cooperation among child care providers and providers of other types of ancillary community social services
- Provides resources; opportunities for professional support, development, and recognition; and training for new providers
- Offers technical support in areas such as general management and personnel issues

Source: Marin County Child Care Master Plan, 1995-2000.

Findings from the Needs Assessment

The Commission completed the Marin County Early Learning Care Needs Assessment (2018-2019) prior to undergoing this strategic planning process. The following section includes findings from the Needs Assessment and additional data that became available after the Needs Assessment was completed.

Demographics

Race/Ethnicity

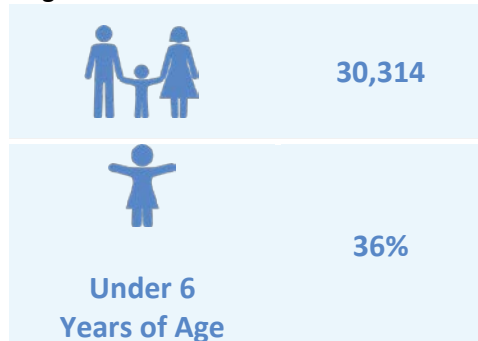
The majority of children in Marin County are Non-Hispanic White (59%). The second largest majority of children are Hispanic Latino at 25%. The remaining ethnic groups 10% of the population: Asian/Pacific Islander (7%), Black/African American (2%), and children that are two or more ethnic groups (7%) (Kids Data, 2019).

Language

Among families that speak languages other than English, the majority speak Spanish at 72%, comprising 21% of all children. Additional languages spoken in the county are Indo-European and Asian/Pacific Island languages (U.S. Census, 2017c).

Among Kindergarteners that are English Learners, the majority of students are native Spanish speakers at 82%. Additional native languages spoken by students are Portuguese, French, Mandarin (Putonghua), and Gujarati (California Department of Education, 2018).

Figure 1. Total Families in Marin and Children Under 6



Among the roughly 67,107 families residing in Marin County, there are approximately 30,314 children under 18 years of age (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017b). Of this number, there are 18% under the age of two, 17% between three and four years, and 36% total under six years of age (American Institutes for Research, 2018).

Socioeconomic Data

Despite the strong labor market, many low-income families struggle to meet the monthly family budget. As Table 1 demonstrates, the self-sufficiency standard for Marin County almost doubles with the need of child care services. In comparison with the rest of the state, the county has a much higher monthly income benchmark for families to meet basic needs.

Figure 2. Marin Resident Living Below the Federal Poverty Level

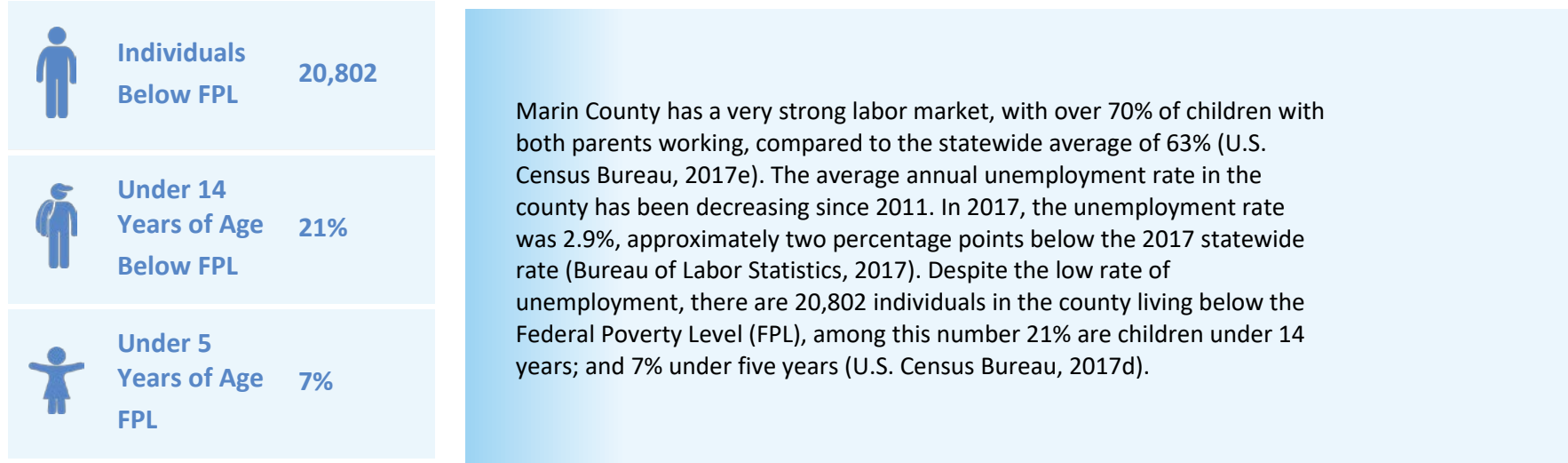


Table 1. Selected Income Ceilings for Subsidized Child Care and Monthly Median Family Income Relative to Various Measures for Monthly Income for “Basic Needs” in Marin County and California, 2017 and 2018

Monthly Income for “Basic Needs”	Marin County	California
California Budget Project Monthly Family Budget (2017)		
Without Child Care	\$7,271	\$5,029
With Child Care	\$9,212	\$6,329
California Self-Sufficiency Standards (2018)		
Without Child Care	\$8,830	--
With Child Care	\$12,462	--

Source: 2018d California Department of Education; 2018 National Low-Income Housing Coalition; 2017 California Budget & Policy Center; 2018 Insight Center for Community Economic Development

Housing

Geographically, 51% of children in the county reside in the Central region, including San Rafael and Santa Venetia (see Table 2 below). One quarter of children are located in the Northern region (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016).

Table 2. Locations of Children Ages 14 and Under, by Zip Codes, 2012-2016

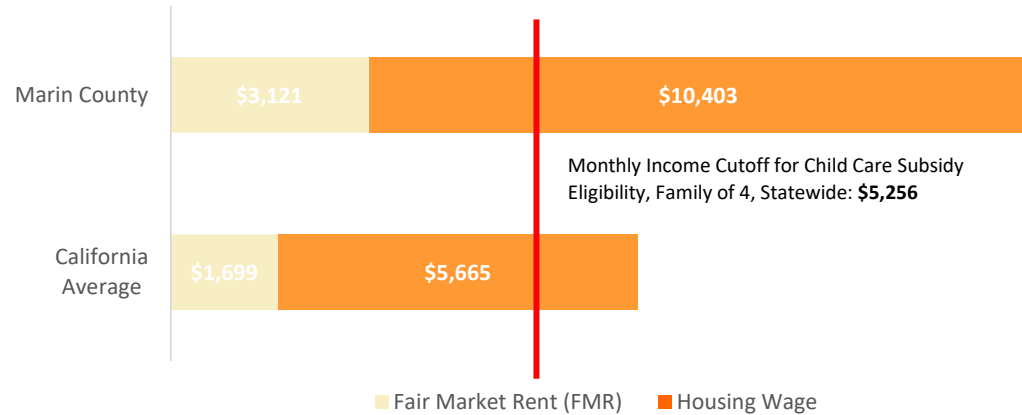
Geographic Area	Community/City	Zip Code	Under 3 Years	3-5 Years	Total Number of Children
Central	McNears Beach, San Rafael, Santa Venetia	94901	1,699	1,530	8,087
North	Novato	94947	728	776	4,192
South	Manzanita, Mill Valley, Strawberry, Tamalpais-Homestead Valley	94941	792	1,076	5,758
West	Bivalve, Inverness, Millerton, Olema, Point Reyes Station, Tocaloma	94956	25	29	163

Source: 2016 United States Census Bureau

According to Figure 3 below, Marin County has a much higher housing wage (ten thousand dollars) and Fair Market Rent (FMR) level (three thousand dollars) compared to the California averages of five thousand and one thousand dollars respectively. The monthly income needed for low-income families to qualify for child care subsidies is approximately five thousand dollars.

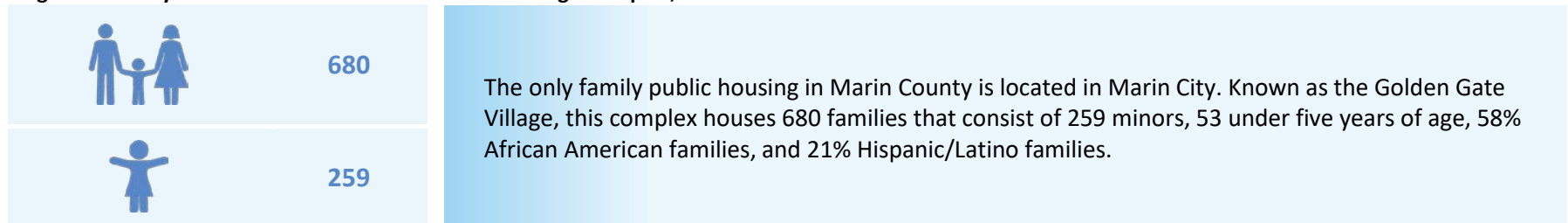
The housing wage is the hourly wage a Full-Time Equivalent worker needs to earn to afford a modest rental unit without spending more than 30% of his or her income on rent and utilities (National Low-Income Housing Coalition, 2017). As the housing wage in the county surpasses the cutoff for child care subsidies, many families are confronted with the choice of decreasing their work hours or looking to alternatives for child care services. This puts a lot of families in Marin in a difficult position, as many are faced with choosing between food and child care services. This issue is part of the phenomenon known as the Cliff Effect, which will be discussed in the next section on access to child care services.

Figure 3. Fair Market Rents (FMR) and Zillow Rent Index for 2 Bedroom Units and Homes in Marin County and California, 2018



Source: 2018 National Low-Income Housing Coalition

Figure 4. Family and children count of Golden Gate Village Complex, 2018



Source: 2018 Demographics Summary. Marin Housing Authority of Marin

Out of the 680 families in this complex, 19% receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). In addition, only half of the families in this complex have earned income (Marin Housing Authority of Marin, 2018).

Overall, in Marin County the number of children in subsidized housing increased within the last five years, from 727 in 2015 to 1,106 in 2017 (Marin Housing Authority, 2018).

Table 3. Number of Children in Families in Public Housing, 2016-2018

Year	# of Children in Families in Public Housing	# of Children in Families in Section 8 Housing	Total # of Children in Families in Subsidized Housing
2015	204	523	727
2016	230	720	950
2017	255	851	1,106

Source: 2018 Marin Housing Authority

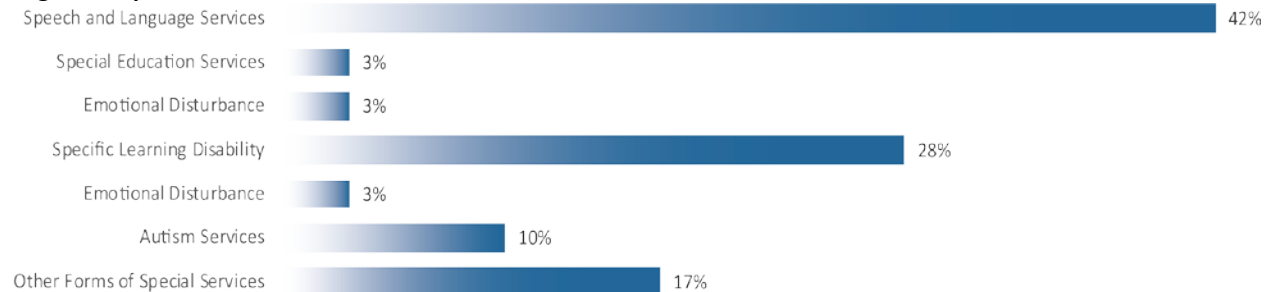
Disabilities and Special Needs

In 2017, it was reported there were 2,474 children aged 3-12 years with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and 33 children aged 0-2 years with an Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) (Marin County SELPA, 2018).



children under 12 who
have a IEP or an IFSP

2,507

Figure 5. Special education services offered to children, 2018

Source: 2018 Special Education Division, California Department of Education

Among children under 12 years of age receiving special education services, 42% receive speech and language services, 3% receive emotional disturbance, 28% receive specific learning disability, 10% receive Autism services, and 17% receive other forms of special services (Special Education, California Department of Education, 2018).

Employment

Among working families in the county, over 10,000 children under six years of age have both parents in the workforce, which is much less than the number of children between six and seventeen years of age at approximately 26,405 (United States Census Bureau, 2017).

Table 4. Marin County Children with Working Parents, 2017

Age	# of Children in Marin County	# of Children with all parents in workforce	Share with all parents working
Under 6 years	14,202	10,527	74%
6-17 years	36,672	26,405	72%
Total	50,874	36,932	73%

Source: 2017 United States Census Bureau

Child Care Access

As the cost of living continues to rise, many families are faced with the difficult decision of having to choose between an early childhood education for their children or other basic needs. Along with the rising cost of rent, the supply of child care services in centers has not met the growing demand countywide. Overall the total number of child care slots decreased from 10,714 in 2014 to 9,957 in 2017.

Affordability

The cost of child care in the county is higher than the statewide average for both child care centers and family child care homes. In 2016, the countywide average cost for a center-based preschool of \$15,550 was 39% higher than the statewide average of \$11,202. For center-based infant care, the cost of care at \$21,105 is 28% higher than the state average of \$16,452 (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2017).

Between 2012 and 2016 the cost of center-based care for preschoolers and infants increased by 59% and 54% respectively. In 2016, the cost of home-based care for preschoolers and infants in the county were \$14,299 and \$14,480 (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2013).

Figure 6. Cost of center-based care in Marin County and California, 2017

Source: 2017 California Child Care Resource and Referral Network

The Cliff Effect

In order to be eligible for subsidies, many families have to meet a strict set of guidelines. For low-income families, there is a phenomenon known as the “Cliff Effect” that occurs when a family tries to become eligible for child care subsidies. As Community Action Marin and Marin Horizon Schools document, when a family pays a copay for child care services, the copay increases as their income level progresses. When a family reaches a certain income level, this subsidy disappears, leaving the family to pay the full price of the child care service. For example, a small increase in a parent’s pay could result in a \$1,000 or more loss of child care subsidies. As a result, parents may turn down a pay raise or reduce their hours to comply with the strict eligibility guidelines (Community Action Marin et al, 2018).

Child Care Supply

A majority of families within the county seek out child care services due to parental employment. Despite the high demand for these services, there is a decreasing supply of child care services.

Between 2014 and 2017, there was a decline in the supply of licensed child care slots for child care centers (Table 5). Child care centers that provided services for preschoolers saw the largest decrease (Table 5). There was a slight increase in the number of available spaces in family child care homes between 2014 and 2017 (Table 5). Despite this increase, this supply has not been enough to fulfill the demand countywide. It was reported that child care centers were having a difficult time staffing available classrooms due to the shortage of teachers in the county. This resulted in restricting the capacity of contractors to serve those families in need of child care (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2017).

Table 5. Number of licensed child care slots, 2014 and 2017

	Overall Slots		Child Care Centers		Family Child Care Homes	
	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017
Infant/Toddler Slots	n/a	n/a	319	282	n/a	n/a
Preschool Slots	n/a	n/a	6,137	5,317	n/a	n/a
School-Age Slots	n/a	n/a	2,386	2,392	n/a	n/a
Total Slots	10,714	9,957	8,842	7,991	319	282
Total Number of Sites	322	325	319	282	n/a	n/a

Source: 2017 Child Care Resource and Referral Network

In an effort to increase the supply of child care services, the After-School Education and Safety (ASES) grants provided funding to a small group of schools in Marin County. The ASES program serves up to 908 elementary and middle school students per day for 180 normal school days (Table 8). During the summer break, these programs received funding to continue to provide child care services to children throughout the county (Table 10). This resulted in 18,953 students being served annually (California Department of Education, 2018).

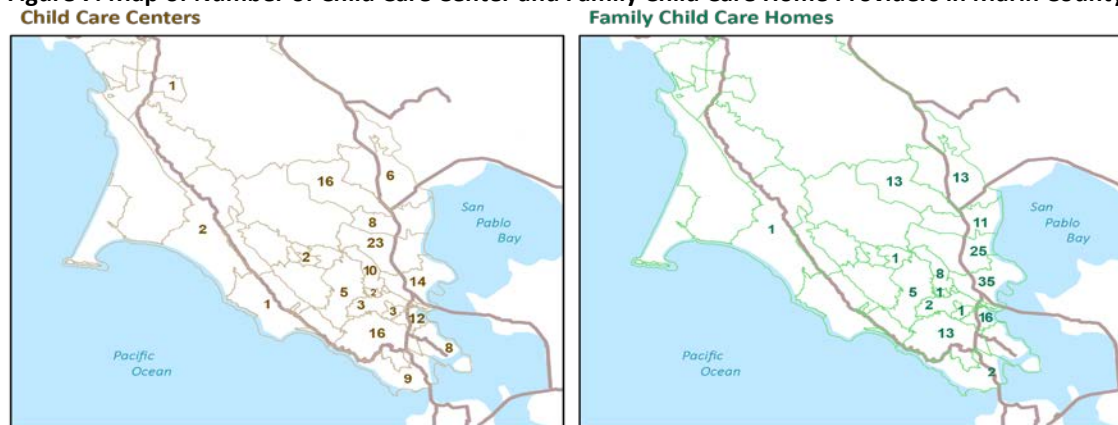
Table 8. Top ASES Grant Awarded Schools by Amount, FY 2017 - 2018

School	School Year Grant Award Amount	Summer Grant Award Amount
James B. Davidson Middle	\$215,271.42	\$53,644.50
Bahia Vista Elementary	\$204,531.60	\$53,273.22
San Pedro Elementary	\$169,260.00	\$31,931.17
Venetia Valley K8	\$128,399.54	--
Laurel Dell Elementary	\$122,850.00	\$16,380.00
Short Elementary	\$122,850.00	--

Source: 2018 California Department of Education

Aligning with the most populated areas in the county, San Rafael, Novato, and Mill Valley house the majority of licensed child care centers and family child care homes as of 2018. As seen in Figure 6 below, San Rafael houses the majority at a total of 37 licensed child care centers and 60 family child care homes (Marin Child Care Council, 2018). Despite the ample supply of child care services, the demand continues to surpass available capacity.

Figure 7. Map of Number of Child Care Center and Family Child Care Home Providers in Marin County with Known Zip Codes, 2018



Source: 2018 Marin Child Care Council

Child Care Demand

Among the 25,000 working parents in the county, 20% of these families are at or below 70% of the state median income (SMI) (American Institutes for Research, 2016). Among children between three and four years of age that have at least one working parent, Need A Number Here live at or below the SMI. (American Institutes for Research, 2016). Among these and other families in the county, over half are in need of licensed child care services. Although some families rely on relatives to provide this service, the demand for licensed child care services continues to remain high.

Out of the listed types of care needed by working parents and working families who are eligible to state subsidies, full-time care for preschoolers was the only one to exceed the level of demand (Table 9). Despite this, there is still a high demand for part-time preschool services as well as full-time care for infants/toddlers, and school age children (American Institutes for Research et al, 2016).

Table 9. Number of unmet needs for child care (demand – slots), 2016-2018

Type of Care Needed	Infant/Toddler (0-2 years)	Preschool (3&4 years)	School-Age (5-12 years)
Full-time care for working parents	877	-2,963	4,812
Full-time care for working families eligible for state subsidy	454	-229	703
Part-time preschool for enrichment/school readiness (all incomes)	--	2,133	--
Part-time preschool for enrichment/school readiness and eligible state subsidy	--	105	--

Source: 2016 American Institutes for Research, 2017 California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2018 Marin Child Care Council

As of 2016, the majority of parental requests for child care were for children under two years of age, followed by children between two and five years. Although the reasons why parents request child care services may vary, the most common range from a parent seeking employment to the parent attending school or training (California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2017).

Table 10. Parental requests for child care, 2012 and 2016 by age

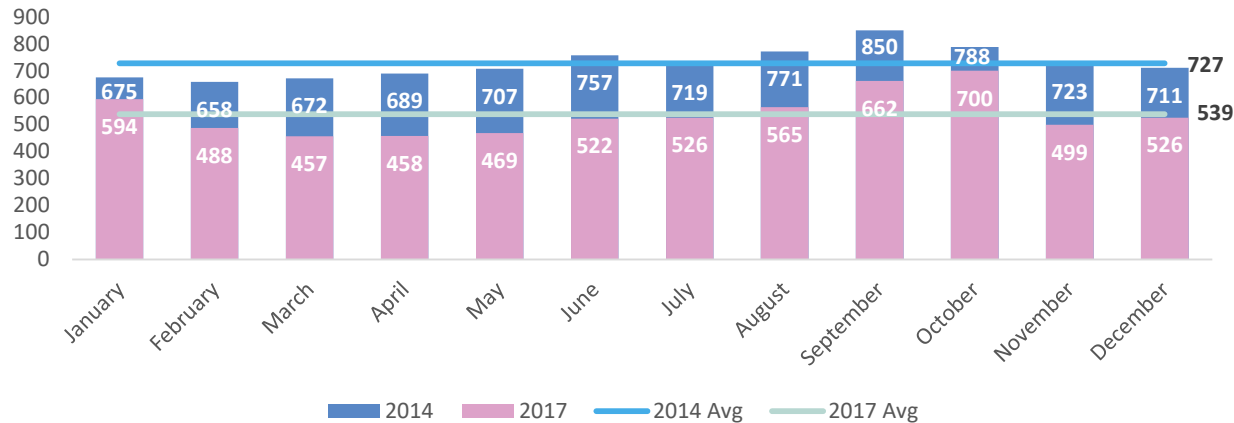
Age	% 2012 Requests	% 2016 Requests
Under 2 years	43%	48%
2 – 5 years	46%	26%
6 years and older	12%	12%

Source: 2017 California Child Care Resource and Referral Network; 2013 California Child Care Resource and Referral Network

Once a request for child care has been made, families eligible for subsidized care are placed on the Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) due to the low level of supply. Although this list is currently not funded or mandated by the state, the Marin Child Care Council (MC3) continues to provide this platform for families in need. Additionally, some child care providers also use their own waiting list to provide child care services for families eligible for subsidies. Between 2014 and 2017, the monthly average number of children on the CEL wait list decreased from 727

to 539. It is suspected that the shortage of child care slots in the Marin has resulted in less families trying to enroll their children in early learning and child care programs.

Figure 8. Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) wait list data, 2014 and 2017

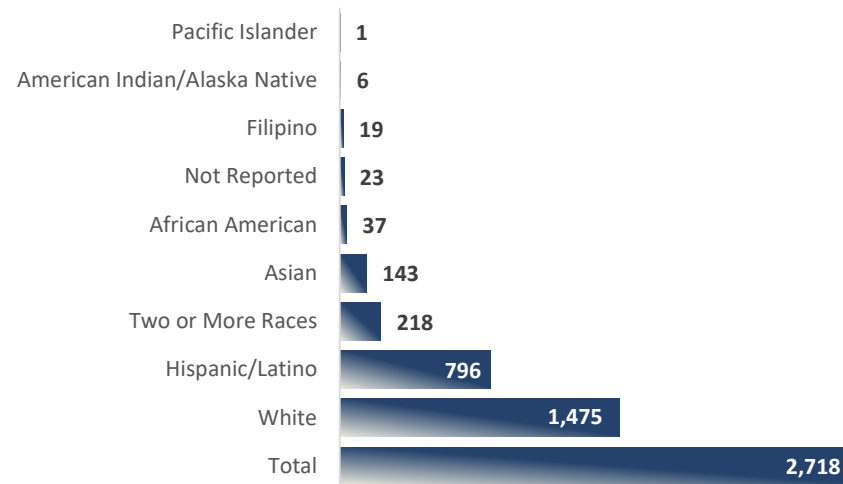


Source: 2018 Marin County Child Care Council

Enrollment

In communities across the county that have high percentages of Black/African American and Latinx populations, like Marin City, there was an increase in child care enrollment. Between 2017 and 2018, a workgroup of stakeholders in Marin City reported the total number of children enrolled increased from 75 to 93 (Community Action Marin, Marin Horizon School, 2018).

As of 2018, within the Marin County Unified School District, the majority of students in Kindergarten through grade 12 are Non-Hispanic White at 56%. The second largest student population is Hispanic/Latinos at 30%. These two ethnic groups are followed by Asian Americans and Multiracial/ethnic at 5% each and African American/Black at 2% (California Department of Education, 2018a).

Figure 9. Kindergarten Enrollment in Marin County by race/ethnicity, 2018-2019

Source: 2019 California Department of Education

Quality and Workforce

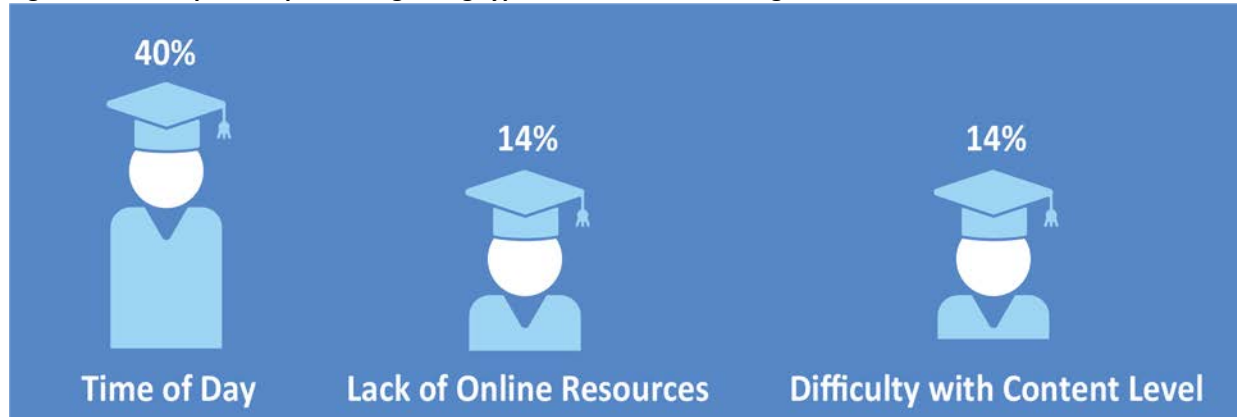
Despite the limited information on early childhood education in the county, we have developed new insights to help understand the low staff retention rate and the supply of child care services in the county. As Marin County becomes more diverse, it is critical that the early childhood education workforce (ECE) is prepared to serve the residents and their children.

Workforce Development

To better understand the decreasing supply of child care centers, the Marin County Child Care Council commissioned a study of Title V centers in 2017. Title V Child Care and Development Programs are funded and regulated by the California Department of Education. Approximately half of the providers reported that they were between the ages of 50 and 60, and approximately 29% were between 40 and 50 years of age (Marin County Child Care Council, 2017).

In terms of education level, around 46% of providers reported they do not have a high school diploma or GED. Figure 10 below illustrates the responses from these providers regarding the barriers they face in attaining more education (Marin County Child Care Council, 2017).

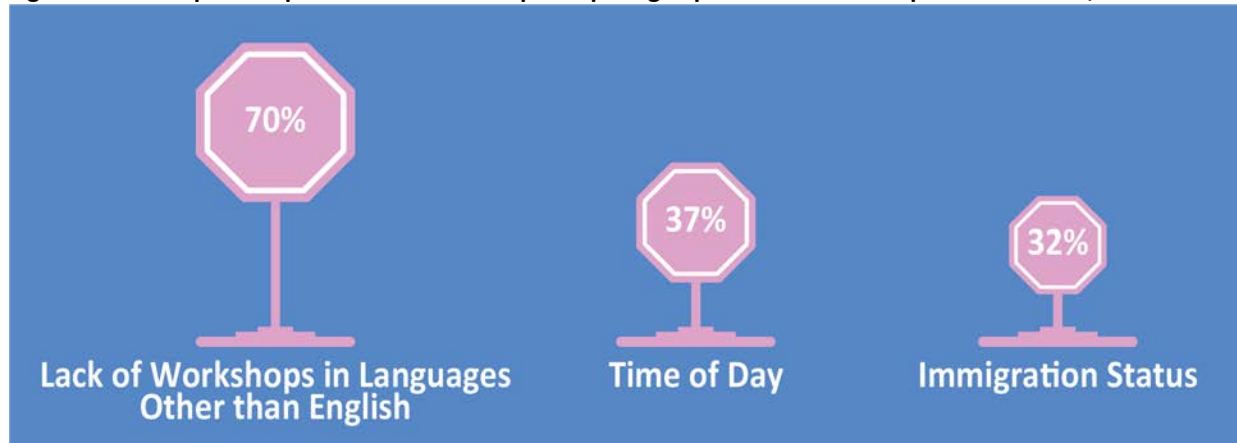
Figure 10. Participant responses regarding type of barriers in attaining education, 2015



Source: 2017 Marin County Child Care Council

The majority of ECE staff reported they do not participate in professional development activities. When asked why they do not participate, the majority cited a language barrier.

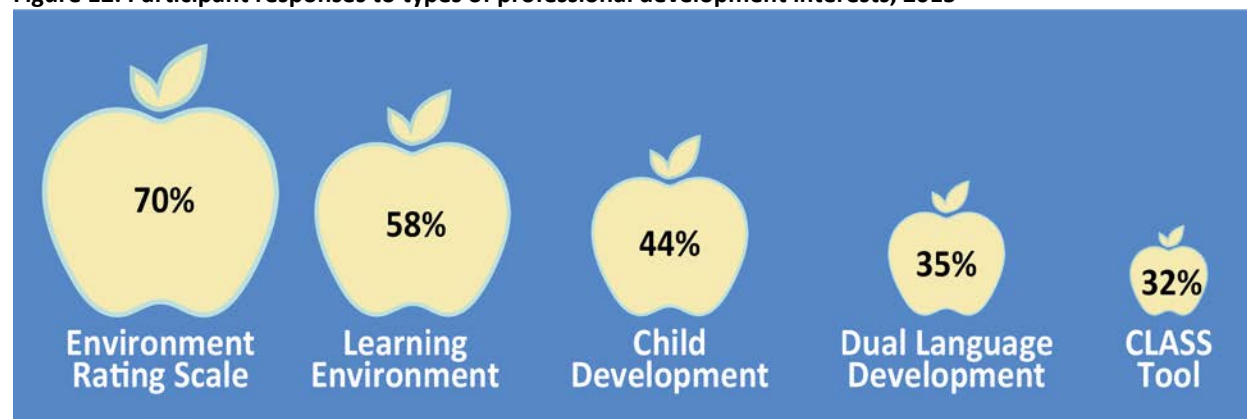
Figure 11. Participant responses to barriers to participating in professional development activities, 2015



Source: 2017 Marin County Child Care Council.

As seen below in Figure 12, the majority of respondents said they would be interested in participating in professional development activity on an environmental rating scale. This was followed by understanding different learning environments, child development, and dual-language development.

Figure 12. Participant responses to types of professional development interests, 2015



Source: 2017 Marin County Child Care Council

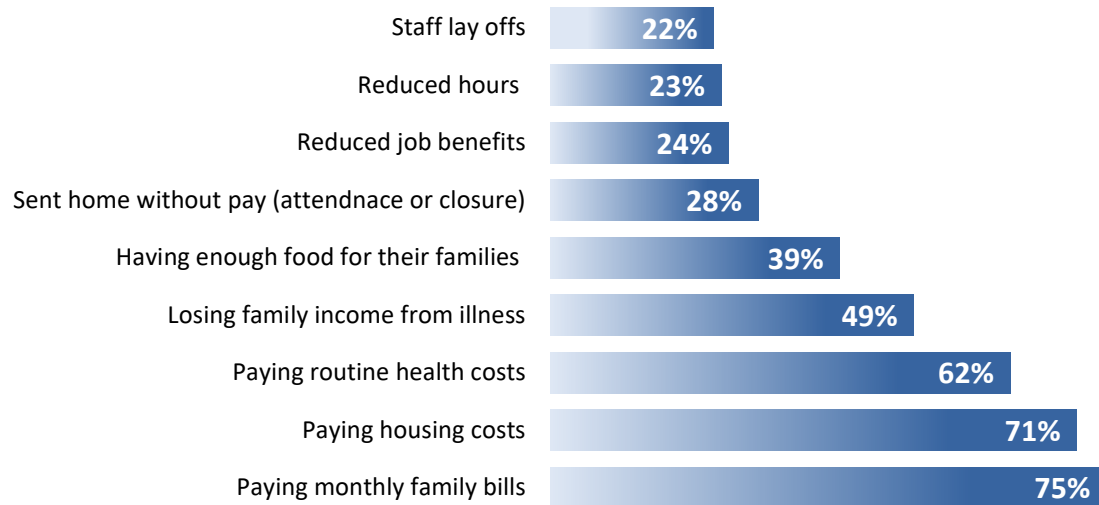
According to Marin Quality Counts, the effort to increase professional development has been successful. As of 2018, 692 ECE staff received thousands of hours in professional development services as well as 947 hours of onsite coaching classrooms (Marin Quality Counts, 2018).

Earlier this year, the Supportive Environmental Quality Underlying Adult Learning (SEQUAL) tool was used to assess the status of the early child care education (ECE) workforce. When child care staff were asked about what are things they worry about when it comes to meeting their monthly needs, their most common response was having enough money to pay the bills (Figure 12). This aligns with the demographic data regarding the high cost of housing in the county.

The majority of child care staff are working with children that speak more than one language e.g. Dual Language Learners (DLL). Sixty-three % of staff surveyed said they did not receive enough adequate training to support DLL students. When looking to outside resources to assist staff overcoming a language barrier, 47% of staff reported that this assistance was insufficient (Figure 13).

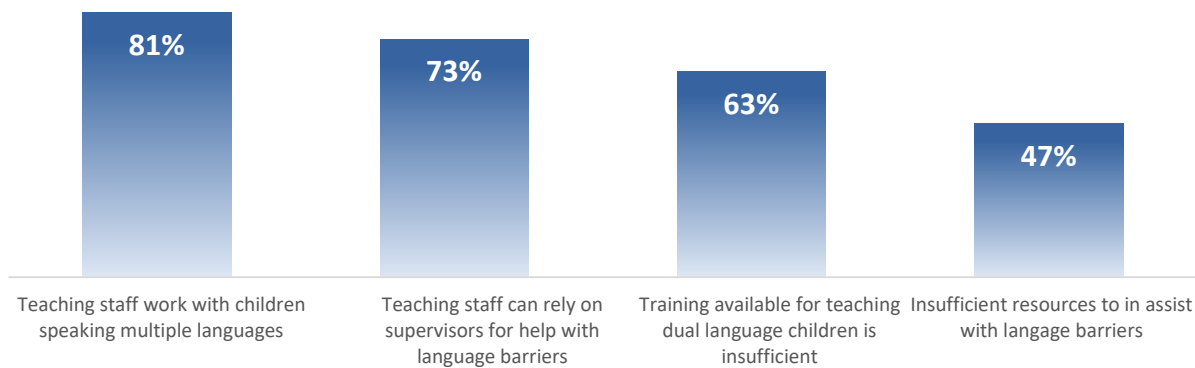
As mentioned previously, access to professional development activities for child care staff has been limited and constrained by barriers to accessing these activities. Approximately, 44% of staff surveyed said they cannot depend on receiving compensation for attending a professional development session/activity (Figure 13). Over half of staff surveyed reported not being able to adjust their work schedule in an effort to attend professional development activities (SEQUAL, 2019).

Figure 13. Teaching Staff Concerns on Meeting Monthly Expenses, 2019

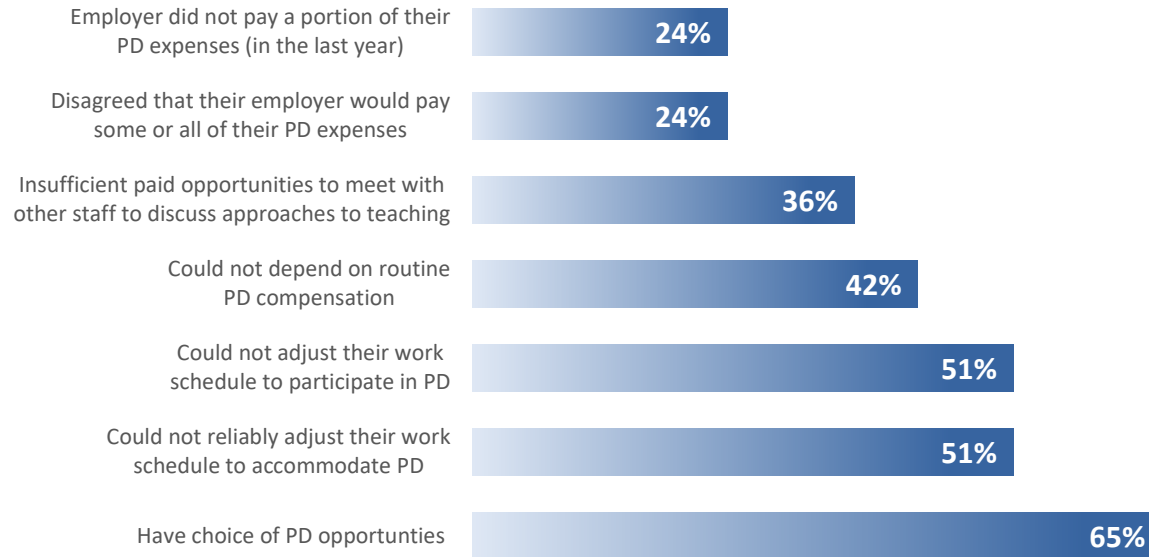


Source: 2019 SEQUAL

Figure 14. Support for Working with Dual Language Learners (DLL) and their Families, 2019



Source: 2019 SEQUAL

Figure 15. Professional Development (PD) Access, 2019**Source: 2019 SEQUAL**

In addition to professional development services, when asked about support for training, the majority of staff mentioned they have been trained on assessments and observation methods (Table 12). However, only half reported training for supporting family needs was made available to them. Another obstacle mentioned by child care staff was the lack of time to complete their “professional responsibilities (SEQUAL, 2019). One of the surveyors mentioned this challenge as follows:

“The challenge is always being able to prepare for assessments, classroom curriculum, and collaborating with my co-teacher. Any and all of this process has to take place during unpaid hours that we schedule on our own (if we feel it is needed) or is mentioned in passing moments, when we are working with children.” Teacher, Title 22

This issue that has impacted not only the supply of services by licensed child care centers, but also the staff retention rate.

Table 11. Sufficient and Appropriate Training Responses, 2019

SEQUAL Survey Responses	% Agree
Staff have been trained on how to use assessments and observation to talk with families about their children.	64%
Staff have received guidance on how to use the information from assessments and observations in their teaching.	56%
Training for supporting family needs was available to them.	44%
Sufficient training about teaching children with challenging behaviors was available to staff.	47%

Source: 2019 SEQUAL

Staff Retention

One of the reasons accounting for the low supply of child care centers in the county is the difficulty in retaining staff. In 2014, almost 75% of child care centers had at least one staff member quit. Of those staff, 58% were teachers and 36% were assistant teachers (Marin County Child Care Council and California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2015). The publicly-funded centers have the highest percentage of teachers quitting at 65% (Marin County Child Care Council and California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2015). In conjunction with the high cost of living within the county and throughout the entire region, many providers face obstacles covering the cost of living with their current wages. For the lowest-paid teacher, the mean hourly wage is around \$18 and the highest is around \$25 (Marin County Child Care Council and California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, 2015).

Earlier this year, 73% of child care staff surveyed reported concerns regarding the rapid hiring of new staff during high turnover periods (Table 12). Alarming, over half of respondents said there are not enough staff members to give every child individual attention.

Table 12. Sufficient Staffing and Retention, 2019

SEQUAL Survey Responses	Percent
Felt the practice of hiring new staff quickly in the event of turnover was unreliable	73%
Reported there were not enough staff available to give children individual attention	51%
There are no trained substitutes/floaters available to help	29%
Agreed that frequent changes in staff make it difficult to try new ways teach	28%

Source: 2019 SEQUAL

Through an equity lens, the majority of directors for licensed child care centers in Marin County reflect the current ethnic majority of the County (85% White) (SEQUAL, 2019). However, as the county and nation become more diverse, particularly children five years and younger, a change in leadership may be necessary. In areas that have high populations of Hispanic/Latino and Black/African Americans, it is highly important to ensure that the leaders in this field are reflective of the communities they serve. Currently only, 15% of center directors are Hispanic/Latino and only 8% of center directors are Black/African American in Marin County (SEQUAL, 2019).

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