

March 4, 2019

Assembly Member Eloise Reyes  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0047

**RE: AB 6 (Reyes) Office of Early Childhood Education  
AAP-CA Position: Support**

Dear Assembly Member Reyes:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing the over 5,000 board-certified pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 6 to establish a California Office of Early Childhood Education to ensure a holistic implementation of early childhood education programs and universal preschool.

According to a new analysis by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers Graduate School of Education: "...children in high-quality preschool are more likely to receive health and dental care and less likely to suffer depressive symptoms, high blood pressure, and hypertension later in life. High-quality programs can also increase children's cognitive and social-emotional skills, which helps reduce risk-taking behaviors and unemployment throughout life. Preschool programs can also help children develop healthy eating habits and provide opportunities for children to participate in regular, vigorous exercise through play...high-quality preschool programs can also have an effect on children's health by addressing parent health issues and enhancing parenting skills that reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect." (Michelle Russe, January 4, 2019, *Rutgers Today*)

The American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Early Education states: "High-quality early education and child care for young children improves abstract physical and cognitive outcomes for the children and can result in enhanced school readiness. Preschool education can be viewed as an investment (especially for at-risk children), and studies show a positive return on that investment. Barriers to high-quality early childhood education include inadequate funding and staff education, as well as variable regulation and enforcement. Steps that have been taken to improve the quality of early education and child care including creating multidisciplinary, evidence-based child care practice standards; establishing state quality rating and improvement systems; improving federal and state regulations; providing child care health consultation; as well as initiating other innovative partnerships..." (Elaine A. Donoghue <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/140/2/e20171488>)

All children deserve the opportunity to develop school readiness via exposure to early education, but low-income families often face barriers to enrolling their young children into such programs, including financial restraints, lack of knowledge of resources, and language barriers. AB 6 would establish a dedicated Office of Early Childhood Education to ensure that underserved families have better access to early childhood education programs by allowing agencies to work together to address these barriers and to initiate innovative partnerships.



Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of the children, youth, and families of California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kris E. Calvin".

Kris Calvin  
Chief Executive Officer  
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

cc: AAP-CA Leadership; AAPCA Advocate Lydia Bourne; AAPCA Senior Policy Analysts Neha Sharma, MD, Ava Sun, MD, Devon Ward, MD, Suraj Batish, MD