

Stronger Teaching and Caregiving
For all young children by

2025



FOCUS

SAN JOSE

About These Briefs

New America has been following work in three communities that, with the support of the Starting Smart and Strong Initiative from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, are working to provide stronger teaching and caregiving by 2025. For the past four years, New America has been observing Oakland, Fresno, and a school district in San Jose as they improve teaching, engage parents, build the evidence base, and create a culture that supports early learning. Our reporting, analysis, and documentaries can be found at newamerica.org/californiaece, along with a June 2018 policy report, *Lessons from Three California Communities on Strengthening Early Education*.

Starting Smart and Strong in San Jose

In Silicon Valley, working-class and immigrant families have not been able to take advantage of the opportunities brought by the region's technology boom. Too many children are living in deep poverty without access to early education. Thanks to robust community organizing and leadership from San Jose's Franklin-McKinley School District, foundations, the business community and many partners, the area is building a strong system of support for young children. They are succeeding by strengthening early education programs for all children under five, engaging families and improving how teachers are trained.

WHO ARE SAN JOSE'S YOUNG CHILDREN?



47% The share of children in Franklin-McKinley's highest-poverty neighborhoods who are not ready for kindergarten.*

29% Children in Franklin-McKinley who are not ready for kindergarten.*



**Not ready for kindergarten is defined here as being developmentally vulnerable on at least one domain of the Early Development Instrument, a population measure of young children's health, development, and school readiness.*



13% Children [ages 0-5] in San Jose living in poverty

76% Children in FMSD who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch



45% Share of Children in FMSD who are dual language learners



* Other languages include: Filipino/Tagalog, Khmer, Punjabi, and Cantonese

SUPPORTING ADULTS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN

New investments to improve kindergarten readiness across the city:

\$3.3 million from David & Lucile Packard Foundation since 2015

\$13 million in public-private money for a new Educare building, which uses a "teaching hospital model" for educators



Director of early learning in Franklin-McKinley School District



An early learning strategic plan



Training for all adults who work with young children, including an Early Learning Academy for principals



Training helps Franklin-McKinley School District early childhood educators [first grade, kindergarten, preschool, infant-toddler teachers and informal caregivers] teach social-emotional skills:



Job-embedded professional development



Ongoing professional learning communities and coaching



Strategic use of data to inform practice



“Voice and choice” approach to ensure that training has buy-in from teachers



Teacher-leader program

Results:



Teachers are more likely to teach social skills, emotional competencies, and problem-solving in their classrooms



Teachers received an average of 45 hours of one-on-one or teaching-team coaching support



Professional development programs have been expanded and improved



RECENT STATEWIDE REFORMS FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

- ▶ \$5 million to train early educators to work with dual language learners
- ▶ \$5 million to increase the number of bilingual TK–12 teachers
- ▶ Annual grants to school districts to expand dual language immersion
- ▶ Stipends for training in early childhood for new transitional kindergarten teachers

“The data helped me identify the areas that I wanted to focus on as a professional. How do we set goals for ourselves to become the best educators we can be?”

– Erika Mathur, early childhood specialist, McKinley Elementary School



Looking Ahead

With the opening of an Educare Center in 2015, leaders in San Jose are on their way toward a 2025 goal of stronger teaching and more supportive caregiving for all children. The Franklin-McKinley School District, in partnership with Educare and the Franklin-McKinley Children's Initiative, is doing important work to engage families and train educators in methods to improve their practice. With leadership from teachers, the district is also working to collect data to better understand the needs of the children. Juan Cruz, the district's superintendent, called recent survey results "eye-opening." These data are helping district officials identify new pockets of need and make stronger decisions about where to direct resources.

"You can't have a \$13 million building on every corner. But what you can have are the components of quality early childhood education, and you can work with the educators to build toward that."

– Jolene Smith, chief executive officer, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County