

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Education & Workforce Development Council of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce advocates for improving alignment of the cradle-to-career educational pipeline - from early childhood to K-12, to post-secondary education, and into the workforce. The Council is committed to ensuring the development of a 21st century workforce capable of competing in a global economy with an emphasis on expanding opportunities for at-risk and underserved populations. Ensuring that California's students have a strong foundation will result in a compounding impact on their educational success and will maximize the impact of downstream investments in later stages of the cradle-to-career continuum.



Improve student outcomes and investments for K-12 students

The Chamber supports "The California Way" policies including 21st Century assessments and accountability system based on decentralization, self-accountability and transparency. The Chamber supports investments that will strengthen funding for our schools, such as the Local Control Funding Formula that provides local districts with increased spending flexibility. The Chamber supports a new vision of accountability that is inclusive of continuous professional development and supports for educators. These efforts will revive our teacher shortage and will ensure equity, transparency and flexibility that build local engagement and capacity.

Increase postsecondary access and attainment

In today's economy, a postsecondary credential is the key to both expanding individuals' employability and earnings potential and to improving socioeconomic mobility within our community. The Chamber supports efforts to expand college access and affordability, from increasing need-based financial aid, to providing more support for non-tuition costs for students with financial need. The Chamber also supports creating multiple on-ramps back to college for adults with "some college, no degree" and for workers in need of "upskilling." We champion innovations within our higher education systems that increase student completion, shorten time to graduation, and improve system efficiencies and alignment. This includes supporting performance-based funding to reward degree completion and serving under-represented and low-income students, student success initiatives, creation of an online community college, promoting regional alignment of transfer pathways, and revamping developmental education.

Close Los Angeles' skills gap

It is vital that we continue to invest in workforce development efforts that are tied to labor market and employer demand, including paid work experiences and internships for young adults. This also includes adequate implementation and investments in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Strong

Workforce efforts and improved regional coordination of workforce development systems and services to address the needs of vulnerable populations. Additionally, the Chamber is a strong supporter of reviving the California teaching profession by supporting investments to recruit new teachers and retain existing educators through tuition assistance, loan forgiveness, and other incentives like housing programs and tax credits.

Smart justice reforms

The Chamber supports policies that mitigate barriers for the reentry population and enhance access to high-quality education and workforce opportunities for justice-involved youth and adults. The Chamber also supports policies that uphold evidence-based diversion and intervention models that aim to disrupt the systemic causes of mass incarceration and dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline.

Students and mixed status families

In L.A. County, there are an estimated 520,146 children who live in mixed status families. The highly publicized restrictions toward undocumented individuals is having the unanticipated consequence of having families not send their children to child care centers, school or access financial aid programs available for college students. There are numerous reports of families not applying for public benefits and other services to which they are entitled. The L.A. business community is a strong supporter of state efforts that maintain safeguards that provide families with a higher level of protections in or near educational institutions and government buildings where public services are provided.

Lead innovative work-life harmony

The Chamber encourages employers to have a robust work life environment in the workplace. Well-designed work life policies increase job satisfaction, create loyal employees and allow employers to compete in today's workforce. The Chamber supports employer policies that encompass flexible work schedules, child care support and allow for community engagement.

Invest in high quality early child care and education

Studies show that investments in early education set the foundation for learning, ensure school readiness and narrows the persistent achievement gap for the region's most vulnerable children. All children should have high quality preschool and childcare experiences and all parents should be able to access affordable programs while feeling confident that their children are experiencing developmentally appropriate learning experiences from caring teachers and caregivers. The Chamber supports increased investments in reimbursement rates that will allow greater access to affordable high quality early education and efforts to provide financial assistance to increase ECE teacher knowledge, competencies, and qualifications with a goal of both improving the quality of the workforce and maintaining and further promoting the diversity of ECE professionals.

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