



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA CALIFORNIA NCLR AFFILIATE NETWORK

PRESCHOOL FOR ALL (PFA): POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Research has consistently shown that high-quality preschool education programs can help to prepare children for the first day of school and can have a long-term, positive impact on the school careers and life success of children. Unfortunately, too few Latino children are served by existing preschool education programs in California. For example, although nearly half (46%) of all three- to five-year-old children in the state are Latino, only 37% of eligible Latino children are enrolled. To remedy this, NCLR has joined forces with its affiliated community-based organizations in the state, the California NCLR Affiliate Network (CNAN), to establish a task force on early childhood education as part of a broader campaign to achieve high-quality preschool for all children in California within ten years. NCLR and its affiliate network believe that for a preschool system to be successful in California it must provide high-quality services to all children, particularly Latinos, who represent a large and growing proportion of eligible children. To achieve this, NCLR and CNAN recommend the following:

Ensure that preschool programs are accessible to Latino children and their families:

- Include an effective outreach strategy, so that all parents are informed about the availability of preschool education programs in their communities.
- Prioritize the implementation of preschool education programs in communities that have both a low supply of preschool programs and schools that are designated as low performing.
- Ensure that PFA programs are full-day, or at a minimum are linked to full-day care, to meet the needs of working families, including those with nontraditional work schedules.

Support culturally- and linguistically-appropriate high-quality services:

- Ensure that the curriculum and instruction in preschool programs is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate to the needs of all children.
- Provide preschool services in a variety of settings (schools, community-based organizations, family day care homes) in order to offer families greater options and flexibility.
- Increase the number of highly-qualified preschool teachers who have the language skills and cultural backgrounds to meet the needs of the state's linguistically- and culturally-diverse children and their families.
- Provide parent involvement activities that enhance parents' capacity to support early learning and to serve as advocates for their children's development.
- Ensure that parent activities and materials are culturally sensitive and provided in their primary language.
- Establish a system to conduct research on the supply and demand of preschool programs throughout the state.
- Ensure that preschool programs are provided in facilities that are safe and conducive to children's learning.

For more information, please contact Ana Gámiz of the NCLR Sacramento Office at (916) 448-9852 or agamiz@nclr.org.