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SAN FRANCISCO

# **Dream Keeper Initiative: Board of Supervisors Hearing**

**April 21, 2022**



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# San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education

**Presenter:  
Ingrid Mezquita, Director**

**Funding Area:** Growing financial health and economic well-being, employment pathways.

**Goal:** *Recruit, increase and retain Black early care educators by implementing strategies recommended by Black Educators*

- **Focusing on School Readiness:** *research shows that when African American children have someone that looks like them in the classroom, they are more likely to have improved confidence which impacts learning outcomes.*
- **Increasing Black Early Educators Voice:** *plays a pivotal role in children's school readiness with unique needs for professional development, compensation and relevant business supports.*

**Community  
Partner:**



Je Ton Carey  
Director of Black Early Care &  
Education Achievement





Recommendations of **African American Early Care & Education Policy Council** to be released March 2022 with preliminary direction:

- 1. [Improve Industry Stability]** Foster the retention of Black/AA early educators in all early learning settings.
- 2. [Improve Compensation]** Address pay inequity across the early learning system.
- 3. [Improve Job Satisfaction & Efficacy]** Support professional development, services and tools for all early educators that affirm race, culture and identity; and amplify voices of Black educators and families on behalf of their children across early learning system.



## Program Highlights

### *How is your department measuring success?*

- Increasing best practices for Black educators and all early educators to provide relevant care for young Black children in S.F.
- Improve school readiness outcomes for Black children.

### *What primary activities have occurred?*

- Bi-monthly sessions engaging 25+ Black early educators, through informed analysis, discussion of ECE pedagogy, systems, programs and policies that support the ECE system.

### *Initial short-term outcomes or highlights (successes) to share?*

- **Participant Survey:** Bi-monthly feedback loops drive iteration of council framework, leading to 80% satisfaction with meeting content, engagement strategy and overall ability to shape recommendations. 100% of participants receive stipends to aid ongoing engagement.



## Initial Learnings

***What challenges has the department encountered with respect to DKI? How are those challenges being resolved?***

1. Early research revealed too few Black-led child care programs in our public system. Growing our educator pipeline equally important to our goals.
2. Over 60% of Black children are cared for by family, friends or neighbors and support for informal caregivers is critical to Black ECE achievement.
3. The ECE mixed-delivery system is complex, including Family Child Care Programs, Centers, SFUSD and more, all of whom have varied experiences and perspectives. Gathering unique perspective is critical.



## Collaborative Systems Change: Pipeline for Black ECE Career Development funded through OEWD grant

- Provided ECE educational enrichment opportunities to advance the skills and knowledge for Black/AA educators entering the ECE workforce
- In partnership with Department of Early Childhood, reduced barriers to higher education for Black early educators through no-cost: books, tuition, laptops, tutoring, mentoring, advising and case management for 2 cohorts x 40-educators enrolled at City College of S.F.
- Mapped career pathways and advancement for new African American/Black early educators entering the field and/or looking to provide quality care to children from low-income families via City & County ECE system with job placement.