



**DREAM
KEEPER**

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.