

## CCCECE ShoutOut! As the Budget Settles in

July 18, 2012

**Sent on Behalf of Joel Gordon, CCCECE President:**

Let me start by saying thank you to all of you who made such giant efforts to turn the tide on the governor's devastating budget proposals. I thought it would be appropriate to assess how the final budget will affect us all. My thoughts on it are not meant to cover all of the details which can be found at CDPI's website or through CCDAA.

The final verdict can only be described as mixed. There's nothing to really be happy about except the knowledge that things could have been much worse and a real disaster was averted.

### THE GOOD

A great number of the governor's original proposals were, in fact, defeated. These include:

- The re-alignment that would remove almost all of the Child Development funds from the Department of Education and send them to the Department of Social Services was dropped. This move would have undercut almost 70 years of infrastructure and removed the educational component from child care, devastating the field. By defeating this proposal, many programs vital to our child development departments, including the Early Childhood Mentor Program, the Child Development Training Consortium, PITC demonstration sites and more, were preserved.
- Part of the re-alignment proposal would have been eliminating contracts for Title 5 centers, including the campus programs. Child care subsidies would have been distributed on a voucher basis only. This would have stripped our campuses of the ability to successfully serve our students. This too was removed from the final budget.
- The Governor's proposal to eliminate college enrollment as a reason to receive subsidized care was also removed from the final budget. Again, if this piece had passed campus programs would have been devastated and in most cases lost their *raison d'être*. It is notable that it was **CCCECE that first raised this issue** with our colleagues in other child development agencies and ECE advocates. Once they understood the impact of this clause, many of them included this issue as part of their advocacy efforts. Special thanks go to CAEYC that sent a letter to legislators focused on this concern and to staff from the Department of Education who consistently raised the issue during hearings. The legislators quickly understood that a clause like this in the budget would cause irreparable harm to the early childhood teacher training programs across the state and have a direct impact on overall workforce development.
- Proposals to reduce a college student's eligibility for child care to two years were rejected, and this eligibility remains at six years. While the January version of the Governor's budget had eliminated college enrollment as a cause for child care eligibility, by the time the May Revision of the budget was issued, the governor had heeded the Legislative Analyst's recommendation to

allow students to receive child care for two years. At the legislative hearings it was **CCCECE that raised the issue that our students simply don't complete their studies in two years.** Our message was heard – that students come to us unprepared to do college level work and must overcome this before they can even begin their certificate or degree requirements. We were pleased when the final budget passed that the two year limit was eliminated. Simply put this means more students achieving their educational goals.

- During this process CCCECE was able to emerge as a significant voice in children's public policy. We worked closely with our allies throughout the state to help craft a single, powerful voice. Literally hundreds of students from our campuses made their way to the hearings and each told a powerful story about how their lives would be torn asunder if they were to lose their child care, drop out of school, and go back on welfare.

#### THE BAD

As you're also probably aware, our budgets will be reduced. This appears to be about another 10% cut although we haven't seen how this will translate to our contracts. Given the current level of underfunding that has gone on for years, we will surely feel the impact ripple through our programs across the state. We know that each campus program is re-assessing its viability. The effects of these cuts won't be known for several months.

#### THE UGLY

We don't yet know how many CCC programs will close because of these actions. I've already heard that Citrus College will be closing their lab school and both Monterey Peninsula College and Cabrillo College are facing big cutbacks and re-organizations in their lab schools. Las Positas College closed its new lab school on the last day of finals, but their board of trustees gave it a reprieve until they can look at alternatives. As noted in previous ShoutOuts, four lab schools in the south Bay area either closed or are on the edge of closing. There are many colleges we haven't heard from yet, and there's no question that many boards of trustees will be evaluating the continued operation of these lab schools in the coming months. CCCECE plans to re-survey (a much briefer version) the lab schools to find the most current state of our programs in time to share at this year's CDTC/Mentor conference in October.

Add to this the uncertainty about the budget initiatives that will be on the November ballot and the questions they pose and we don't anticipate that the coming year will be any less demanding than the one we are experiencing. Most sources say that it is also likely that the Governor's re-alignment proposal will resurface.

#### THE FUTURE

All we can say for sure is that CCCECE will continue to monitor public policy, partner with our colleagues, and continue advocating for the best campus lab schools, the best early childhood teacher preparation programs, and the right of young children and their families to get off to a good start in life.