



San Diego County Preschool for All *Demonstration Project*

Guiding Principles

Preschool for All

California envisions a future where all families have access to quality early education experiences for their children. This vision is being realized locally through the San Diego County Preschool for all Demonstration Project (SDCPFA). Thanks to funding from First 5 San Diego, SDCPFA is collaborating with 26 preschool agencies at 74 sites located in 8 regions in the county. The project is being developed by the Early Education Programs and Services Unit within the Student Services and Programs Division at the San Diego County Office of Education. The project is scheduled for completion in 2011.

Guiding Principles

The SDCPFA Demonstration Project is informed by guiding principles which originated from the Preschool for All Master Plan for Implementation written in 2005:

- Provide voluntary universal access
- Utilize existing programs and resources
- Assure safe and hazard-free environments
- Allocate sufficient and stable funding
- Interface with existing subsidy programs
- Include continuous staff development with support to help teachers move toward a BA degree
- Offer parental choice
- Provide research-based curriculum choices
- Ensure full inclusion of children with disabilities and other special needs
- Provide access to health, mental health, and social services for working families
- Articulate with K-12, community colleges, and universities
- Contain outcome-based evaluation

Quality

SDCPFA is built on a four-tiered quality rating and improvement system: Pre-Entry, Entry, Advancing and PFA Quality. Reimbursement as well as stipends are increased at every tier level. Preschool sessions are expected to improve at least one tier level every three years. An external assessment is conducted annually to measure growth and to establish professional development activities for the following year. Assessment tools include the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R), Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Program Administration Scale (PAS).

Qualified Teachers

Effective teaching begins with well-prepared, fairly compensated teachers who receive ongoing professional development support. Effective teachers create lively, enriching experiences that inspire each child's lifelong love of learning. Upon entry into the SDCPFA system, teachers must have a Child Development Teacher Permit that includes 24 Early Childhood Education college units. At the highest tier level, teachers hold a Master Teacher's Permit and a Bachelor's degree that includes a core curriculum of 24 ECE units.

Age Appropriate Activities

High-quality preschool programs address the unique virtues of every child by offering culturally, linguistically and developmentally appropriate curricula organized clearly by defined goals and outcomes.

Positive Learning Environments

Quality preschool facilities promote learning through play. Facilities must incorporate safe and adequate space and furnishings and allow for a variety of activities, both indoors and outdoors, which promote opportunities for free play and structured routines.