



CHILD CARE PLANNING COUNCIL OF SONOMA COUNTY

History

The first local child care planning efforts were launched in 1991 as a result of proposed Assembly Bill (AB) 2141 (Chapter 1187, Statutes of 1991), which would create Local Child Care Planning Councils in each county.

On May 14, 1991, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors directed the County Administrator “to establish a Local Child Care Planning Council based upon membership suggested in AB 2141...” That same day, staff from the County Administrator’s Office convened a group of local child care providers and advocates to develop the Local Planning Council’s membership roster. Closely following the recommendations of AB 2141, the group formulated a potential membership of no fewer than 40 local organizations. This list included the County Office of Education, Social Service and Public Health Departments, Head Start Program, Homeless Task Force, the local community college and university, local resources and referral agencies, child care providers, county and municipal governments, consumers, business, labor, schools, licensing agencies, minority organizations, and other human services agencies.

Since members of the community, child care professionals, parents and others had long felt the need for greater coordination and advocacy for child care services within the community, the Council started meeting on a monthly basis.

On June 4, 1991 the Board officially formed the Sonoma County Child Care Planning Council and charged it with developing a plan for use of Federal Child Care Block Grant funds. In August 1991, the plan was submitted and approved by the Board prior to submission to the California Department of Education.

In September 1991, AB 2141 passed the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Pete Wilson. The bill authorized local planning councils to determine local child care needs and to develop ongoing comprehensive planning for child care needs in each county. The Sonoma County Office of Education agreed to support the Council, and the County Board of Supervisors approved the Sonoma County Child Care Planning Council as a standing committee in October 1992.

In 1997, AB 1542 (Chapter 270, Statutes of 1997) heralded the advent of welfare reform in California. While creating and defining California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), the legislation also strengthened and broadened the role of the local planning councils.



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Additional mandates of AB 1542:

- Establish priorities for State-funded child care and development services;
- Conduct a Countywide needs assessment at least once every five years;
- Conduct periodic reviews of child care programs funded by the Department of Education (CDE) and Department of Social Services to see if priorities are being met;
- Collaborate with child care providers, human service agencies, County departments, parent
- Design a system to consolidate local child care eligibility lists Countywide;
- Develop a comprehensive Countywide plan for child care; and
- Coordinate part-day Head Start and State Preschool programs with full-day child care