



# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Jestin D. Johnson  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Scott Means  
Interim Director, Human  
Services

**SUBJECT:** Early Childhood California  
Apprenticeship Initiative  
Joint Partnership Grant FY23-24

**DATE:** October 16, 2023

City Administrator Approval

Date: Oct 29, 2023

## RECOMMENDATION

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution: (1) Authorizing The City Administrator To Negotiate And Execute A One-year Memorandum Of Understanding With Peralta Community College District (“PCCD”), Merritt College To Expand Apprenticeship Opportunities In Early Childhood Development For City Of Oakland Head Start, And (2) Accepting And Appropriating Up To \$116,356 In Reimbursable Amounts From PCCD Merritt College For The Apprenticeship Program**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Merritt College Early Educator Apprentice program addresses the early childhood education (ECE) workforce deficit by creating a new apprenticeship program for the ECE sector to recruit, train, and support Head Start families, parents, and community members to become qualified ECE teachers.

Starting with the 2023-2024 program year, the Oakland Head Start Program intends to partner with Peralta Community College District Merritt College, the Early Childhood Education Pathways to Success (ECEPTS) program, and the YMCA of the East Bay to create and launch an Early Childhood Development Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship workforce development program.

This program will create an ECE career pathway for academic growth, development, and eventual employment in the Early Childhood Development field. The Merritt College Early Educator Apprenticeship Program provides the following for pre-apprentices and apprentices: on-the-job training, coaching/mentoring, free college coursework (12 units in ECE), professional learning communities, and potential employment.

The apprenticeship program will provide equity outcomes through the following implementation approaches which include:

- Cohort Learning Community with peer support and encouragement and a focus on personal growth;

Life Enrichment Committee  
November 14, 2023

- Enhanced Supports to ensure success – childcare, transportation, resume/interview assistance, stipends, and embedded tutors;
- Diversity and Inclusion – participants, staff, and instructors;
- Tailored Approach – classes are brought to the community locations, job placement close to home (if possible), intentional mentor pairing, and success coordinator for navigation of services and college work;
- Two Generation Approach – the approach provides a whole family emphasis and benefits for participating parents and children;

## **BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

The Merritt College Early Educator Apprentice program (MCEAP) was created to ensure equitable educational and economic opportunities for the early childhood education (ECE) workforce in Northern Alameda County. Post-pandemic economic recovery, along with the stability of the economy, is always dependent on the ECE workforce, which includes preschools, family childcare, and infant and toddler care. The impact of not having enough ECE workers has been felt across multiple sectors. The City of Oakland Head Start and YMCA of the East Bay, with Merritt College, have created a model that addresses the unique support systems needed by this workforce, which is heavily composed of working women, immigrants, and people of color.

The program helps provide a pathway to employment, an Associate Teacher certificate, and the Child Development Permit, which meets the level of Associate Teacher with the City of Oakland. The structure of the apprenticeship program increases students' success toward degree attainment because it provides on-going mentoring and learning support, as well as a clear pathway to earning a viable career.

This apprenticeship program is in the early stages of developing a strategy to expand to additional apprenticeships, which would allow participants in this program to qualify for other workforce development programs that would allow them to complete an Associated Degree and obtain their master teacher child development permit which is the equivalent of a City of Oakland Head Start Instructor position. This program helps close equity gaps through academic, social, and financial support.

The work plan is innovative because 1) it is intentional, 2) it includes academic and social support, 3) learning occurs at education campuses and worksites, and 4) it includes multiple pathways for entry and advancement.

## **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

The policy recommendation in this report advances the Citywide priority of **Housing, Economic, and Cultural security**.

The State of California, as is most of the nation, is currently experiencing a teacher shortage. With the current expansion of free early education in California, it is estimated by California State University that the state will need 11,000 more pre-kindergarten teachers by 2025.

The City of Oakland's Head Start program currently is unable to recruit and hire enough teachers to fill its vacant positions. Currently, Head Start has 37 vacancies in the following classroom-based positions: 1 FTE Early Childhood Center Director, 12 FTE Early Head Start Instructors, 5 FTE Head Start Instructors, 9 FTE Head Start/EHS Assistant Instructors, and 10 FTE Head Start/ Early Head Start Associate Instructors.

The department works closely with Human Resources on continuous recruitment for these positions. On a monthly basis, Human Resources gives qualified candidate applications to the department for interviewing. However, in the past 6 months, Head Start has only been able to hire 8 additional teaching staff.

The Merritt College Early Educator Apprentice program (MCEAP) will build a critical pool of qualified ECE candidates that the Head Start program can hire from. As an innovative approach to the early learning workforce, MCEAP, in partnership with the City of Oakland Head Start, would provide on-the-job training, coaching/support, community-based college coursework and degrees, professional learning communities and gainful employment with benefits and built in growth opportunities. Participants would have access to a true and meaningful career pathway that will allow them to work with young children and their families.

This program would allow the city to develop the following:

- A formalized Early Childhood Education (ECE) Workforce Development Pipeline (Apprenticeship Program) which provides a **career pathway** and road map for Oakland EHS/HS parents and community members interested in the field;
- A **Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)** that focuses on the following sector: Child Development/ECE;
- Build **teacher quality & ECE outcomes** through professional development opportunities and AA/BA advanced degree programs;
- Stabilize and **retain the current ECE workforce, including existing positions of Head Start/Early Head Start Assistant, the Head Start/Early Head Start Associate position, the Head Start/Early Head Start Instructor position, and the Center Director position.**

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The grant award for the Merritt College Early Educator Apprentice Program includes a budget in the amount of \$116,356 and will cover the basic operational costs of the program. Oakland Children's Initiative also provides funding to support the workforce development programming for Oakland Head Start. Funding in the amount of up to \$116,356 for the Head Start program described in this report will be accepted and appropriated into the project, and fund numbers to be determined.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

The submission of this report was shared with the Head Start Parent Policy Council and the Head Start Advisory Board, which are public Meetings.

### **COORDINATION**

The Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau were consulted in preparation of this report and resolution.

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** The funding supports the objectives of recruitment, instruction, support services, on-the-job training, intermediary apprenticeship sponsorship, and administrative costs for 18 apprentices selected to be a part of the Merritt College Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship program for associate (assistant) teacher apprentices.

**Environmental:** There are currently no direct environmental benefits or impacts from the Head Start and Early Head Start program to the City of Oakland.

**Race & Equity:** The Oakland Head Start program serves a city that has a history of disparities. The comprehensive early care and education delivered to support low-income children and families – especially those historically marginalized and chronically underserved – in achieving their full potential directly addresses historic disinvestment and structural racism experienced by many Oakland families in the Program. Although Oakland has experienced increasing rates of economic growth and prosperity most recently, communities of BIPOC, low-income, and more disadvantaged residents are not benefiting from this growth and are instead facing higher levels of unemployment and lower access to adequate and stable housing health care, food security, and other needed services.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> City of Oakland Head Start FY 21-22 Community Assessment (January 2022)

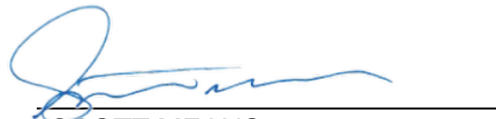
**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:

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For questions regarding this report, please contact Diveena Cooppan, Human Services Division Manager, Early Childhood and Family Services, at (510) 238-3165.

Respectfully submitted,



SCOTT MEANS

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