



Early Care Educators OF SAN FRANCISCO

ECESF Principles

We are early care educators working with families to nurture and educate the youngest of our community. We believe ...

Early care and education is a public good, needs to be universal, publically funded, and community-driven.

- Early care and education gives back to the whole community—its success requires the support of a whole community.
- Early care and education is currently subsidized by low-income workers, too-high fees of families, and long hours required by both waged and unwaged caregivers.
- Community-based organizations—family child care, centers, and family friends and neighbors—that rose to provide the care and education of our youngest, despite the lack of funding, have expertise and deep community roots which must be recognized as the foundation of our early care and education system.

Education at its most impactful is rooted in love and relationship, and is an act of liberation—self-actualizing for all unique experiences and social identities—which nurtures the soil of a democracy and humanity. Care and education are not separable.

- Early care and education is the foundation for self-identity and all future learning.
- Every child has a right to loving care and the opportunity to learn—whether it be formal, familial, or both.
- The purpose of education is not to cater to future job markets, but to support individuals from all backgrounds and abilities to develop to their fullest potential.

Calling for just compensation and decent working and living conditions for all caregivers and educators challenges racism, sexism, and degradation at the root of low-waged reproductive work.

- Early care and education is a racialized and gendered workforce, with low- or no-pay excused by assumptions of low-skill or the naturalness of caregiving by women. Infant-toddler educators are the lowest paid, and most likely to be women of color.
- To educate well requires knowledge, skill, dedication, inspiration, and caregiving—with expertise that comes from multiple pathways including years of practice, community, as well as institutions of learning.
- ECE career paths for caregivers and educators to progress within the field must include direct caregiving of children, starting right at birth, at the highest levels of salary, responsibility, and decision-making.
- Education alone cannot break the cycle of poverty—decent compensation for essential work allows families to care for their children now, and children across all genders, races, and abilities the opportunity to prosper while caring for others.

- Recognizing, valuing, and compensating the community wealth that caregivers and educators create is transformative.

Children, teachers, and families in vital learning and care communities are all learners co-constructing their learning and care.

- Each brings their expertise: from knowledge of their family culture and child, to expertise in child development and learning environments, to their own well-being, needs, and interests.
- All need space and time to share their knowledge, ask questions, reflect, co-create, and be heard—both in their learning and care communities and in the larger community.

Early care and education and paid family leave are essential supports for families. ●

Every caregiver, whether educator, parent, or guardian has the need for, and right to, respite, comfort, self-care, joy, and full participation in community life and decision making.

- All caregivers—parents, guardians, and educators—provide their best caregiving when they have their needs met, and respite, joy, and care in their lives. ● All parents and guardians have the right to the necessary supports to develop deep relationships and care for their own children.

Healthy communities share wealth to support human development, well-being, and quality of life including accessible and well-resourced care and education from birth to college; senior and disability support care; housing with room for dependent care; nutritious food; physical and mental health and medical care; healthy and beautiful environments, including nature, parks, and recreation; clean air and water; and safe communities built on a foundation of relationship, caring, and love.