

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF PUBLICLY FINANCED CHILDCARE**

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**RESOLUTION No. 2330-2**

**WHEREAS**, the Council for a Strong America issued a report in early 2023 which details that the lack of infant-toddler child care now costs the United States \$122 billion in lost earnings, productivity, and revenue every year; and

**WHEREAS**, this translates to a \$15 billion threat to California and a \$3 billion threat to Santa Clara County; and

**WHEREAS**, a family living in Silicon Valley needs to pay an average of \$26,450 per year for infant care and \$21,900 for a preschooler's child care; and

**WHEREAS**, the two most significant monthly expenses faced by families are housing costs and childcare. The lack of affordable childcare options leads to underemployment, greater housing instability, and the near impossibility of seeking and securing a job. Childcare is one of the most immediately impactful anti-poverty measures at our disposal; and

**WHEREAS**, publicly funded childcare is an essential piece of this vision and has the capacity to be accessible by all residing in Santa Clara County; and

**WHEREAS**, investing in affordable child care provides vital infrastructure to working parents and supports early childhood development, creates a stronger economy, increases business productivity and consumer spending, decreases poverty, and leads to safer communities; and

**WHEREAS**, access to free and quality childcare should not be conditional on families' income or proof of income; and

**WHEREAS**, families should be empowered to choose the childcare program that meets their children's needs; and

**WHEREAS**, the cost of childcare in Santa Clara County has risen to unaffordable levels for families, forcing many to leave the workforce or the county entirely. Forty percent of the women in STEM careers in Silicon Valley left or changed jobs after having their first child. This has resulted in a workforce crisis in Santa Clara County, with many businesses unable to staff up and stay open; and

**WHEREAS**, much of the childcare workforce lives in poverty with 65% of childcare providers receiving such low wages that they are eligible for several social safety net programs such as CalFRESH or MediCal; and

**WHEREAS**, childcare teachers and providers must be compensated as their peers in public education; and

**WHEREAS**, the most effective thing we can do today to solve our greatest economic and societal challenges is investing in childcare now. Investing in high-quality childcare programs will yield significant benefits for our community that far outweigh the costs. It not only provides help for working families and children, but builds a stronger economy, decreases poverty, and leads to stronger, safer communities; and

**WHEREAS**, investments in the childcare sector should prioritize supporting our most underserved children and their families, including but not limited to families of color, families of children with special needs, low-income families, and undocumented families; and

**WHEREAS**, Santa Clara County currently has over 133,000 children under the age of six; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately 40,000 children in the county are enrolled in licensed child care centers, and nearly 15,000 are enrolled in Family Child Care Homes (FCCH). In total, this accounts for approximately half of the 0-5 aged population in Santa Clara County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Santa Clara County Board of Education (SCCBOE) has long supported the expansion of early care and education and was instrumental in the initial founding of the Santa Clara County Office of Education's (SCCOE) Strong Start coalition, a coalition of community leaders, early care and education (ECE) providers, school leaders, nonprofit organizations, elected officials, members of the business community, and other key partners who are committed to expanding access to high quality early learning opportunities for all children ages 0 to 8 in Santa Clara County; and

**WHEREAS**, Strong Start looks for local, state, and national solutions to help increase access to high-quality early education and conducts advocacy efforts at the state level to encourage increased investments in early learning; and

**WHEREAS**, SCCOE launched the Steps to Success campaign with the vision of increasing enrollment and regular attendance in early learning programs in Santa Clara County. Across the county, schools and early learning partners are committed to empowering children and their families through safe, equitable, inclusive, high-quality early childhood programming; and

**WHEREAS**, Steps to Success and its partners are working towards ensuring that every child has access to early programs that will propel them towards success in life; and

**WHEREAS**, the SCCBOE has named early learning and childcare as one of their priorities and commits to advocating for Santa Clara County's youngest youth; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the SCCBOE and the County Superintendent of Schools support all efforts to provide universal access to child care to all children and families in the state; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that SCCBOE and the County Superintendent of Schools will promote and advocate for universal childcare and joins with Build the Future Santa Clara County in advocating for comprehensive and collaborative solutions in solving our childcare crisis.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on December 13, 2023, by the following vote:

AYES: President Chon, Vice President Sreekrishnan, and Trustees Di Salvo, Lari, Mah, and Rocha

NOES: none

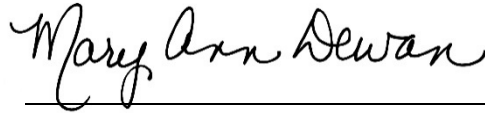
ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: Maimona Afzal Berta



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Victoria Chon, President  
Santa Clara County Board of Education



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Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.  
County Superintendent of Schools