



CALIFORNIA
CRADLE TO CAREER
COALITION

CA PROMISE
NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK



StriveTogether[®]
Every child. Cradle to career.



October 8, 2024

The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: 2025-26 January 10 Budget Request: \$17.5 million one-time to support proven place-based anti-poverty initiatives:

- Prevent a funding cliff at the 4 state-supported Promise Neighborhoods, and
- Drive equity goals by supporting 4 regional partnerships in chronically underserved communities.

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the [California Cradle to Career Coalition](#) that joins 650 organizations serving 1.4 million youths statewide, GRACE/End Child Poverty California, and StriveTogether, we [thank you for taking historic action in your 2022 May Revise providing \\$12 million to 4 Promise Neighborhoods - place-based partnerships proven to move children from poverty to economic mobility](#) by coordinating housing, public benefits, child welfare, community schools, and other vital supports. We further [thank you and First Partner Siebel Newsom for taking the time in December to visit our Mission Promise Neighborhood partnership](#).

California's investment expires in July, however, threatening a funding cliff at the 4 Promise Neighborhoods, with severe consequences for the children and families served, and undermining the achievements gained. Meanwhile, regional partnerships working in some of the most underserved areas such as the Salinas and Central Valleys have shovel-ready projects with acute need for modest state investment.

We therefore request to include \$17.5 million one-time in your January Budget to:

- prevent a funding cliff that would harm nearly 75,000 children experiencing poverty,
- address equity gaps by expanding to 4 regional partnerships, and
- sustain the vital oversight and evaluation infrastructure at the Department of Social Services who has so effectively implemented this data-driven program.

The initial investment is already showing incredible results. While the official evaluation will be published next year, including the total return on investment, early data highlight the breadth of impact, including to advance several of the state's goals:

- Statewide: 73,320 children 0-18, and 57,054 adults reached with comprehensive services at schools, preschools and in the community
- Mission Promise Neighborhood
 - 23 families moved into permanent, affordable housing
 - 236 families enrolled in public benefits
- Hayward Promise Neighborhood
 - 184% increase in families accessing food and nutrition resources
 - 19% decreased in food insecurity
- Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood
 - 15% decrease in chronic absenteeism
 - 4.4% increase in high school graduation
- Corning Promise Neighborhood
 - \$3.5 million procured to develop high-wage, high-growth areas in rural high schools through the Career Technical Education Pathway ReDesign
 - 1,960 mental health therapeutic sessions with K-12 students

\$17.5M One-Time Investment Urgently Needed For Highest Poverty Communities, Maintain California's Leadership

[California unfortunately still leads the country in having the highest child and family poverty rate](#) when using the Supplemental Poverty Measure that accounts for our high cost of living, with significant disparities for low-income communities of color.

As well, while the 2022 initial investment established California's leadership, other states have made robust commitments, including:

- [Tennessee: \\$180 million total through the Tennessee Opportunity Pilot Initiative](#)
- [Maryland: \\$20.2 million annually in conjunction with the ENOUGH Act](#)
- [Washington state: \\$16 million annually through Challenge Grants](#)
- [Minnesota: \\$1.5 million annually to education partnerships](#), in addition to [\\$5.2 million in base funding](#)

By aligning California with these other states and the federal Promise Neighborhood program, this investment will support the national [strategic plan by StriveTogether to move 4 million children out of poverty to economic mobility by 2030](#).

Funded at \$17.5 million one-time, the investment will provide \$3 million each over a three-year period for 4 Promise Neighborhoods (\$12 million) and \$750,000 each for 4 regional organizations currently operating across California (\$3 million), with the remaining funding to support administration, oversight, and evaluation by the Department of Social Services (\$2.5 million):

Promise Neighborhoods: \$1M per year over 3 years for 4 PNs (\$12 million)

- \$1 million annually is the minimum amount provided through the US Department of Education’s Promise Neighborhood program.
- 4 PN grants would again prevent the funding cliff that will otherwise occur in July.
 - The vision is for the existing 4 federally established Promise Neighborhoods to be supported as well as the eight unfunded PNs across California in the most recent DoEd solicitation

Regional Partnerships: \$250,000 per year over 3 years for 4 Regions (\$3 million)

- \$250,000 annually represents just 25% of regional hub operational costs, with the rest sourced from local, federal, and private funds.
- 4 grants would enable the Department to ensure minimum coverage to improve equitable access statewide.
 - The vision is for at least 10 regional grants to address inequitable coverage statewide

DSS Administration, Including Oversight and Evaluation (\$2.5 million)

DSS is responsible for all aspects of the program, including the evaluation of program efforts in communities. We again thank Secretary Kim Johnson and her team at DSS whose implementation of the initial \$12 million has been a model of efficient and effective program deployment and community partnership.

This investment will build upon and leverage the \$12 million one-time from your 2022-23 May Revision which established a limited grant program at the Department of Social Services. That funding is already supporting the development of metrics and an outcomes framework that can guide and ensure the maximum return from state resources.

\$17.5M one-time Ensures Equitable Use of \$400M in Existing State Investments

Our coalition can fulfill the **effective and equitable use of \$132,742,237 in existing state investments - \$400M over 3 years** - coordinating and providing services to children and families. State investments are not only a crucial component to our mission, but for the state to meet its own goals of a more equitable and just future. Without action, state investments from cradle to career may not achieve their intended goals, or reach communities at all, including state priorities for:

- reducing family homelessness,
- preventing child welfare system impact,
- maximizing federal public benefits,
- pathways for teachers of color,
- kindergarten readiness,
- community schools,
- student mental health, and
- post-secondary college linkages and workforce development.

Place-Based Partnerships Have Proven ROI of \$6 to \$12 For Every \$1 Invested

Moreover, state funding of these networks is a cost-effective way to ensure that children receive coordinated and effective services, and will yield tremendous return on investment:

- [Every \\$1 invested into a Promise Neighborhood generates a \\$6.12 return.](#)
- Regional hubs like Fresno C2C have demonstrated as high as a \$12 return, such as ensuring coordination among health services that prevented costly hospitalizations.

The state is just one important component of these successful public-private partnerships:

- Coalition members have leveraged more than \$111 million in local, federal, and philanthropic investments
- State investment would enable new matching opportunities.

What is the Place-Based Partnership Model?

To increase impact and greater return of public investments, the state needs a whole child, whole family, and whole community approach to address these issues – namely, a place-based strategy. To effectively address poverty, children and families need coordinated health, community, and educational support at every stage of life – from cradle to career.

Cradle to career partnerships understand this and have worked in neighborhoods, counties, and regions to provide holistic support for children and families in economically disadvantaged communities. **These networks join the necessary community partners (educational institutions, businesses, government agencies, and community-based organizations) to create common agendas, align and allocate cross-sector resources, and collect and share data to provide a coordinated continuum of services at each stage of a child’s development through college or career.**

Neighborhood-based members implement place-based comprehensive services, ranging from newborn home visits, parenting classes, childcare, early learning programs, tutoring, after-school and enrichment programs, college readiness programs, housing support, tax preparation services, food pantries, and vaccine outreach and education. Cradle to career

regional networks work to scale successful approaches across cities and counties to improve outcomes on a larger scale through convening cross-sector groups to create blueprints to achieve regional equity goals, funding nonprofit organizations, and coordinating school districts, health departments, and organizations across counties and regions to ensure greater access to health, educational, and socioeconomic support.

What State Investment Delivers for Community Through Place-Based Partnerships

A critical feature of the place-based model is that it is a community-specific approach that is not one-size fits all. The hallmark of these organizations, however, is that they are vital hubs, with the unique capacity to ensure the effective and equitable use of resources to make collective impact, including to:

- Convene multi-sector partnerships
- De-silo funding streams
- Ensure coordination & prevent duplication of services
- Collect data and conduct evaluation

The following illustrates what state investments will deliver at the local level, and examples of impact of the current programs:

Partnership	State Support Needed	Example of Prior Impact
Mission Promise Neighborhood	Expand MPN to 5 schools (4 Elementary and 1 High School) in District 11 of San Francisco. Hire Family Success Coaches (5) to provide school service connections. (1) Parent Outreach and Engagement Specialist. Hire Early Learning and K-12 Managers (3) to coordinate improving kindergarten readiness, reading and math scores. Provide school site-based services: tutoring, social- emotional programs, mental health and health services, parent education, and recreation.	African American graduation rates increased from 46% to 93% Rate at which students change schools mid-year fell from 13.9% to 7.9%. Social-emotional development scores for 3-year-olds jumped from 24% to 82%.
	Develop and drive 4 cross-sector	

<p>Fresno Cradle to Career</p>	<p>collaborations across Fresno County: training Black Doulas, expanding home visitation to increase impact, provide professional development and education navigation for child care providers, and continue data integration of Preconception to Age 5 strategies.</p> <p>Staff support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program Director (50% FTE) to lead county data integration system and ensure local data collection and integrate with state data portals (education, social services, behavioral health, housing). ● P-5 Coordinator to align strategies and policy groundwork for 4 collaborations <p>Software Licenses (50) necessary for data collection, management, and evaluation of the 4 cross-sector initiatives and to integrate with local, state, and federal data portals.</p>	<p>All 4 Youth Program increased mental health services uptake by 34% from 2018 to 2021.</p> <p>2021 Fresno County African-American preterm birth rate was 14.7 per 100, but 8.25 for those who participated in Fresno’s home visitation program</p>
<p>Marin Promise Partnership</p>	<p>Staff support (\$200K) to support 2 Directors of Collaborative Action respectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Close racial equity gaps in Kindergarten Readiness and 3rd Grade Reading in Marin County. ● Create a comprehensive, high quality system to improve equitable recruiting, hiring, and retaining of educators of color. <p>For each initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and coordinate strategies, collect data, and track & communicate progress towards reaching goals ● Coordinate strategic action, advocate for scaling promising practices, coordinate strategies 	<p>Doubled number of preschool students in high quality programs in West Marin by Integrating preschool with K-* system.</p> <p>160 youth of color served in the first affordable summer enrichment program in rural West Marin in 25 years.</p> <p>Increased the percentage of 9th graders “on track” to meet A-G requirements in Tam Highschool from 28% in 2017 to 58% in 2018 (and holding for three</p>

	<p>and policy groundwork for cross-sector collaborations</p> <p>\$50K: Licenses for a closed loop referral system and database linking schools and non-profit partners to better serve low income families & students of color.</p>	<p>years).</p> <p>70% of Promise students in Marin County (low income/students of color) completed FAFSA forms, vs. 51% of all CA 12th graders.</p>
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Education Test Scores Underscores Need to Invest in Place-Based Solutions

While we commend the state for [outperforming many of our peers](#) in limiting learning loss during the pandemic, it is unfortunately still the case that California students are not meeting grade-level achievement, ¹ with [significant gaps for low-income American Indian, Black, and Latinx children](#).

[A key impact of the holistic cradle to career framework is providing targeted and consistent supports in the most high-need communities, a holistic framework from kindergarten readiness, wraparound services for K-12 students, and ensuring effective linkages to successful higher education and career trajectories.](#) The \$17.5M one-time investment in our collective capacity to support children will yield long-term savings, including from our [demonstrated results](#) to improve students’ academic proficiency² and successful entry to career pathways and prosperity.³

\$17.5M Investment Drives ROI by Drawing Down Federal Resources

A wealth of research has shown that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing income, educational, health, nutritional, and housing inequities, which disproportionately impact low-income children of color and their families. Located in front-line communities, our members are among the first to see those consequences and best positioned to respond. These functions are vital - and cost effective - by maximizing federal resources to stop children and families from falling through the cracks, while preventing even worse economic harm. For example, Mission Promise Neighborhood distributed nearly \$1 million in relief for families who did not qualify for federal aid. Cradle to Career Fresno secured \$10 million in CARES Act funding for childcare vouchers, PPE for child care providers, free testing, and public health outreach by mobilizing its partners to quickly survey local needs.

They are trusted messengers to counter fears about immigration status to help families who lose income or employment and become newly eligible for CalFresh or WIC to enroll in

¹ New York Times 10/25/22. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/25/us/california-math-reading-naep-test-scores.html>.
² See for example Fresno County Cradle to Career outcomes: <https://fresnoc2c.org/our-data>.
³ See for example Stanislaus C2C StanCareers: <https://stanc2c.org/stancareers>.

federally-funded entitlement programs. [CalFresh alone generates as much as \\$1.80 for every \\$1 in food aid as the benefits are spent and circulate in our powerful food economy.](#)

Cradle to Career Grant Program Critical to Meeting State Racial Equity Goals

We applaud you [committing your Administration to take meaningful actions across the board toward equity and reverse long-standing disparities.](#) [Our coalition members](#) are intentionally in the communities with the highest poverty and who have faced the greatest disenfranchisement across the state - from urban [Castle Park in Chula Vista](#) to the tribal nations and towns of [far Northern California](#). We make change by using place-based strategies to focus resources in the locations who most need them.

[Our model has been nationally recognized as a platform to drive racial equity,](#) by operating in the communities that have faced the most severe disinvestment and have the convening power to bring together the stakeholders, services, and supports needed to ensure the next generation of children and their families succeed from cradle to career.

Now is the Time to Invest in Place-Based Anti-Poverty Partnerships For a Brighter, More Just California

[We celebrate the historic \\$12 million investment in your 2022 May Revision to support 4 Promise Neighborhoods,](#) but that funding is set to expire, threatening harm to California children and families now on the pathway from poverty to prosperity. This is the moment to expand the work of these proven networks that are dedicated to building a future where all Californian children have the resources and opportunities to thrive. This is a low-cost, high-impact way to maximize existing resources, reduce racial disparities, and ensure that children receive coordinated and effective services proven to change life outcomes.

We urge you and your Administration to prioritize this \$17.5M one-time request in your 2025-2026 budget proposal to increase California's capacity to alleviate intergenerational poverty and provide for long-term economic justice, inclusion, and prosperity for all children and their families.

Sincerely,



Shimica Gaskins
GRACE/End Child Poverty California

California Cradle to Career Coalition (Membership listed below)
California Promise Neighborhood Network
End Child Poverty in California
StriveTogether
Ashley Swearingin, Central Valley Community Foundation
Bridge the Gap College Prep
Canal Alliance
Central Valley Higher Education Consortium
City of Hayward
College of Marin
Community Child Care Council (4Cs) of Alameda County
Easterseals Central California
Eden Youth and Family Center
El Monte Promise Foundation
Every Neighborhood Partnership
First 5 Fresno County
Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission
Fresno Unified School District
Romero Jalomo, Hartnell College
Sabrina Aranda, Hayward Unified School District
Marin Community College District
Mission Graduates
Mujeres en Acción
North Marin Community Services
Pajaro Valley Prevention & Student Assistance, Inc.
Parent Services Project
Parlier Unified School District
The Children's Movement of Fresno
United Way Fresno Madera Counties

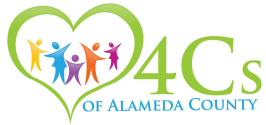
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Members of the California Cradle to Career Coalition

Bright Futures Monterey County	California Forward
Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood	Cradle to Career Fresno County
Cradle to Career Sonoma County	GRACE/End Child Poverty in CA
Hayward Promise Neighborhood	Marin Promise Partnership
Mission Promise Neighborhood	North State Together
Oakland Promise	San Diego Promise Neighborhood
Stanislaus Cradle to Career Partnership	StriveTogether
United Way of San Diego County	



United Way Fresno and Madera Counties