



START WITH EQUITY:

ADVANCING EQUITY IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEMS

WITH THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

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CHILDREN'S EQUITY
PROJECT

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START WITH EQUITY:

ADVANCING EQUITY IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SYSTEMS

WITH THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

Congress recently passed and President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP), the most recent and sweeping federal recovery package to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The law includes a number of targeted investments in children and families, including \$39 billion to stabilize and support the nation's struggling child care system, the largest infusion of resources to the child care system in history. This includes nearly \$15 billion for Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Supplemental Funds, nearly \$24 billion for child care stabilization grants, and over \$3.5 billion in Mandatory and Matching funding for CCDF, a permanent annual appropriation increase. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services increased the tribal set aside for ARP discretionary funds to 3%. The ARP also includes \$1 billion for the Head Start program and over \$122 billion for the Pre-K-12 system.

States and tribes are now in a position to make decisions about how they will invest the funds by 2024. While immediate investments must be made to reopen and stabilize struggling child care programs that have been hit hard by the pandemic, policymakers should also strategically invest those funds in building a foundation for higher-quality, equitable systems that enable all children to thrive, including and especially those who have been historically and continuously marginalized.

In 2020, the Children's Equity Project released two reports, [*Start with Equity: From the Early Years to the Early Grades*](#), in partnership with the Bipartisan Policy Center, and [*14 Priorities to Dismantle Systemic Racism in Early Care and Education*](#), in partnership with the Equity Research Action Coalition at UNC Frank Porter Graham, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Head Start Association, Council for Professional Recognition, National Black Child Development Institute, National Indian

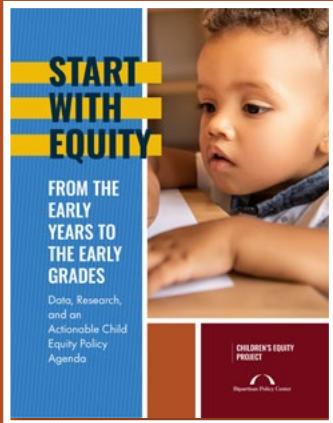
Child Care Association, The Education Trust, and The BUILD Initiative. Together, these reports present a wide ranging, actionable equity policy agenda, organized around 14 key priorities, for early care and education systems.

This policy agenda attends to critical levers to ensure **equitable access, positive experiences, and outcomes that are not associated with demographic characteristics** in learning systems for our youngest children and their families. The ARP provides a unique opportunity to make tangible headway on this agenda.

This brief reviews concrete ways to invest in ensuring **equitable access, experiences, and outcomes** through the 14 priorities articulated in the CEP's previous reports, and can be a tool to support states and tribes in building a pathway towards stronger, higher-quality, more equitable systems.

In all policy and funding decisions, it is essential to consider the special trust-relationship tribes have with the federal government and to honor government-to-government consultation. Too often, tribal consultation is seen as a barrier, instead of a strength, and leaves tribes out of opportunities for support that states benefit from.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



START WITH EQUITY:
From the Early Years to
the Early Grades

[Download now](#)



Start With Equity:
14 PRIORITIES TO
DISMANTLE SYSTEMIC
RACISM IN EARLY
CARE AND EDUCATION

[Download now](#)



Start With Equity: Advancing Equity in Early Care and Education Systems with the American Rescue Plan Act
The Children's Equity Project

GUIDING FRAMEWORK

Science tells us that the first few years of life are a sensitive period for children’s language, cognition, emotional, social, behavior, identity, and pre-academic skill development. High-quality early care and education experiences can provide the types of rich learning experiences that foster healthy development. Unfortunately, our existing systems are falling short in two key ways: ensuring equitable **access** to resources and services and ensuring positive **experiences** for children within the system. These shortfalls result in opportunity gaps that are associated with a host of disparities in **outcomes** by race, language, disability, income, and other factors.

ACCESS

To ensure **equitable access**, policymakers should **disseminate funding equitably** in order to:

- Ensure that children and families, especially those who have been historically marginalized, can access inclusive, high quality, affordable early care and education.
- Ensure that home-based providers (including family child care providers, family friends, and neighbor care providers, and other home-based providers), particularly those who serve historically marginalized communities, have equitable access to resources.

EXPERIENCES

To ensure **positive experiences**, policymakers should:

- Ensure that the workforce is well compensated, supported, prepared, and competent.
- Ensure that quality and improvement systems embed equity at every level and are accessible to all providers, especially those who serve children from historically marginalized communities.
- Ensure that dual language learners have access to bilingual instruction.
- Ensure that authentic partnerships with families and family leadership are made the status quo.
- Ensure that children experience anti-bias, anti-racist, affirming and culturally grounded experiences in their learning settings.

OUTCOMES

To ensure **positive outcomes independent of demographic characteristics**, policymakers should:

- Ensure that all data are disaggregated by key social identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, income, language, and disability).
- Ensure that equity is embedded in data-driven continuous quality improvement efforts.
- Ensure that policy decisions, including professional development and resource allocation, are driven by these data.
- Ensure that monitoring and accountability systems meaningfully integrate equity indicators.

In March 2020, Congress passed the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which included a \$3.5 billion investment in child care. An additional \$10 billion was included for child care in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act passed in December 2020. In March of 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services posted states’ [initial](#) summaries describing how they plan to invest those funds. Our review of those summaries reveals that states plan to use funds for virus mitigation efforts; to expand access to child care (e.g., provide child care subsidy assistance to essential workers, waive copayments for families, suspend child care waitlists, expand income eligibility requirements); to provide summer programming for school-aged children; to support the workforce (e.g., increase compensation, hire substitutes, provide professional development and mental health supports); for direct costs (e.g., operating costs, rent, classroom materials and supplies); and to invest in data infrastructure.

In the following section, we detail specific investments states can make to advance racial equity in early care and learning systems using funding from the ARP.





PRIORITY 1:

DISSEMINATE PUBLIC FUNDS EQUITABLY

Equitable access, experiences, and outcomes are reliant on equitable funding. The ARP provides a historic opportunity to level the playing field in funding and make our system fairer. The Office of Child Care’s [guidance](#) on ARP stabilization grants include a recommendation to provide bonuses or supplemental funding to providers meeting unique needs, including underserved communities, providing clarity on this important lever to move toward equity. ARP funding allocated under the Stabilization Fund (i.e., *Section 2202*) and Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG; i.e., *Section 2201*) enable funding consistent with this priority.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Prioritize stabilization funding to providers operating in communities of color and under-resourced communities, and who serve children from other historically marginalized communities, including children with disabilities, dual language learners, immigrant children, children experiencing homelessness, and children in the child welfare system. States and tribes can do this by creating resource allocation formulas that supplement base funding levels.
- Ensure that specific funding allocated for outreach and administration include a targeted effort to ensure historically marginalized communities know how to access funding and are supported in doing so, including those who have operated outside of the subsidy system. States may consider contracting with third parties (e.g., AEYC affiliates and local CCR&Rs) to offer technical assistance and support to providers as they navigate application and reporting requirements for funding.
- Fund increased access to comprehensive services, aligned with those provided in Head Start, to children in child care and public Pre-K via formal partnerships with Head Start programs or by building or leveraging community partnerships. This includes equitably expanding access to infant and early childhood mental health consultation, prioritizing historically marginalized communities and programs that serve other marginalized groups, like children in the child welfare system, children experiencing homelessness, and children with disabilities.
- Prioritize infrastructure renovation projects, in line with the ARP Act and the Office of Child Care’s [guidance](#), on historically marginalized communities, focusing first on eliminating environmental toxins.



PRIORITY 2:

MOVE TOWARD HOLISTIC, STRENGTHS-BASED, AND AUTHENTIC INTEGRATION

Early childhood programs and K-12 schools are segregated across many measures, including race, socioeconomic status, and language; lack diversity in leadership; and often poorly prioritize culturally responsive pedagogy and instruction in children’s home language/s.¹ ARP funding allocated under CCDBG (i.e., *Sections 2201(a), 658G(b)(4), and 658E(c)(2)(T) of the CCDBG Act of 2014*); and under the ARP Stabilization Fund (i.e., *Section 2202*) enable investments to advance equity in this priority area.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Invest in the data infrastructure necessary to map holistic, strengths-based, authentic integration, including real-time child enrollment information and demographics by classroom and program, information on workforce and leadership demographics, and use of culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy in children’s home language.
- Expand access to high quality learning for infants and toddlers by supplementing existing Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grants with ARP child care funding. Prioritize partnerships with lower resourced programs, family child care programs, and programs serving historically marginalized communities.



PRIORITY 3:

EMBED EQUITY INTO MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

Racial bias exists in accountability and monitoring systems. Systems across all levels — federal, state, and local — lack attention to or altogether omit indicators related to equitable experiences and outcomes for children and families. Building more equitable early care and learning systems requires monitoring systems to explicitly include measures of access to resources and positive experiences, and accountability systems to consider progress on closing disparities in outcomes, where they exist. ARP funding allocated via CCDBG (i.e., Sections 2201(b) and 658G(b)(3) of the CCDBG Act of 2014), enable investments to advance equity in this priority area.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

Invest in an equity review of monitoring and accountability indicators, fund updates to those systems based on that review, and provide support to providers and programs to meet new or revised indicators that explicitly advance equity.

EXAMPLE EQUITY INDICATORS FOR INCLUSION IN STANDARDS, MONITORING, AND RATING SYSTEMS

- Required training on anti-racism and anti-bias approaches for all staff.
- Ongoing coaching and professional development on anti-racism and anti-bias approaches.
- Culturally responsive, demographically appropriate, and equity grounded curriculum and pedagogy.
- Curriculum, assessment, pedagogy, and family engagement linguistically available to families.
- Curriculum and pedagogy is delivered in a dual language model if more than 1/3 of children share the same home language other than English.
- Assessments culturally responsive, strengths-based, and are given in children’s home language.
- Prohibition on harsh disciplinary and exclusionary practices.
- Ongoing disaggregated data collection and analysis to identify and rapidly address disparity.
- Programmatic policy on family engagement includes eliciting input from families on programmatic operations, stresses parent-teacher partnerships to support children’s learning, and promotes family leadership.
- No segregated or self-contained classrooms by funding stream that result in racial/ethnic, disability, or socioeconomic segregation.



PRIORITY 4:

ADDRESS WORKFORCE EQUITY

Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and other early educators of color face several inequities in the early care and education system, including differences in compensation, position, and working conditions.² Building a more equitable system begins with addressing workforce equity across these domains. The Office of Child Care’s [guidance](#) on stabilization grants includes recommendations to invest in workforce compensation, via increased wages, bonuses, hazard pay, access to insurance, and paid time off, among others. ARP funding provided under the Stabilization Fund and CCDBG (i.e., Section 2202(e)(1)(A) and 658G(b)(1) of CCDBG Act of 2014) enables investments to advance equity in this priority area.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Fund a pay, benefits, and job position analysis to identify and address inequities.
- Increase the value of child care subsidies and incentivize programs to use funds to increase compensation.
- Provide support and subsidies that increase providers’ ability to equitably access benefits, including health insurance, retirement benefits, and paid leave.
- Adopt or expand T.E.A.C.H and WAGE\$ initiatives, and prioritize enrollment of bilingual providers, providers of color, and providers serving historically marginalized communities. Efforts to support greater access to higher education should complement, not substitute for, fair compensation.
- Launch Tribal T.E.A.C.H to support Indigenous providers in attaining higher educational opportunities, including and especially in Tribal Colleges.



PRIORITY 5:

EMBED EQUITY IN WORKFORCE PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Early care and education workforce preparation and development systems should meaningfully embed equity at every level, and for every role. This priority builds on the previous priority to ensure fair and equitable compensation to providers and early educators. ARP funding under the Stabilization Fund (i.e., *Section 2202(e)(1)(A)*) and under CCDBG (i.e., *Sections 2201(a), c, and 658E(c)(2)(T)* of *CCDBG Act of 2014*) enable investments to advance equity in this priority area.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Invest in high-quality professional development for early educators, aides and assistant teachers, administrators, and other systems leaders to support children’s holistic recovery from the pandemic. This should include efforts to foster and maintain the strengths and assets children have built over the past year, address trauma, and maintain strong family partnerships, while also providing the supports children need given the challenges they face, including economic, health, social-emotional, behavioral, and academic, if applicable.
- Invest in a statewide training and technical assistance effort on racial equity, supporting dual language learners, the inclusion of children with disabilities, and meaningful collaboration with tribal communities for all early educators and assistant educators, administrators, and systems leaders.
- Invest in a statewide training effort across the coaching infrastructure, including quality coaches, Pyramid Model coaches, mental health consultants, inclusion coaches, instructional coaches, and any other coaches operating in the state, focused on racial equity, dual language learning, and inclusion issues as they pertain to their specialty.
- Invest in diversifying the lead teacher, early care and education administrator and leader, and coaching and consultant workforces by supporting bilingual professionals and professionals of color in attaining the appropriate credentials needed to fill these roles.
- Expand the coaching corps focused on anti-bias, anti-racist approaches to supporting learning and development, in order to provide time-limited training and supports during the critical return to in-person programming.
- Fund a landscape analysis of all workforce preparation and development programs in the state on content specific to racial equity, dual language learners, children with disabilities, and Tribal consultation, coordination, and/or collaboration. Use the analysis to fund the development of a plan to better integrate equity content across all levels of preparation and development.
- Invest in the technical infrastructure needed to implement tele-coaching and consultation models to expand access to rural communities, lower resource or less connected communities, and hard-to-reach areas.
- Equitably expand access to early childhood mental health consultation and other social emotional focused workforce development systems, prioritizing historically marginalized communities of color, immigrant communities, and programs that serve children with disabilities, children in the child welfare system, and children experiencing homelessness. This may include investing in new mental health consultation training systems and funding organization infrastructure required to shore up existing or start up new systems.



PRIORITY 6:

EXPLICITLY INCLUDE EQUITY IN THE DEFINITION OF QUALITY AND ACROSS RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS

Indicators that explicitly capture equity have been almost completely excluded from the definition of quality and in Quality Improvement Systems (QIS), including Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS). In addition, many quality rating and/or improvement systems and accompanying resources have been inaccessible to many providers. Funding allocated to CCDBG via the ARP (i.e., Sections 2201(a) and 658G(b)(3) of CCDBG Act of 2014) enable investments to advance equity in this priority area.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- In partnership with families and providers, especially families and providers of color, fund an audit of QRIS to assess whether equity indicators are included throughout (see report pull-out box) and whether providers of color, bilingual providers, and providers who serve historically marginalized communities have equitable access to enter the system and its accompanying resources.
- Fund a reclassification of programs based on the updated definition and tiers and invest in coaching and consultation to support programs in meeting indicators.
- Invest in bringing the lowest resourced or least connected providers into quality improvement systems. This includes partnering with tribal communities, through Tribal Consultation, to ensure support to develop and implement improvement plans.



PRIORITY 7:

ENSURE HIGH-QUALITY CURRICULUM, PEDAGOGY, AND GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION ARE ACCESSIBLE AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE

High quality and culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum are critical to ensuring positive learning experiences and outcomes. Pedagogical approaches and curricula shown to support child development aligned with “[Ideal Learning Principles](#)” have been less accessible to children from historically marginalized communities.³ ARP funding in the Stabilization Fund (i.e., Section 2202(e)(1)(e)) and in CCDBG (i.e., Sections 2201(a), 658G(b)(2), and 658E(c)(2)(T) of CCDBG Act of 2014) enable investments to advance equity in this priority area. Inequities also exist in gifted and talented education (GATE), where research finds that White children are twice as likely as Black children to be in GATE, even when they share the same math and reading scores. Scholars have noted the various inequities in GATE, from how gifted is defined and measured, to bias in referral, to access and availability of GATE programs in schools primarily serving Black and Latinx children and children from low-income communities. Equitable systems require equitable access to these programs and services.

FEDERAL AGENCIES SHOULD:

- Fund research to evaluate the effectiveness of policies to close disparities in access to and enrollment in GATE, including more accurate, anti-bias, culturally grounded methods to assess giftedness.

**STATES
& TRIBES
SHOULD:**

- Fund an inventory of high-quality pedagogical approaches, in line with Ideal Learning Principles, being implemented in child care, Head Start, and public Pre-K settings.
- Fund pedagogical and curricular exemplars to serve as learning hubs throughout the state and tribal communities, including Head Start exemplars; support in-person and remote learning opportunities from these hubs; and invest in targeted technical assistance, particularly for programs that serve historically marginalized communities, to replicate best practices.
- Invest in curriculum and pedagogical training resources for providers who need them, prioritizing those who serve historically marginalized communities, family child care providers, and family, friend, and neighbor providers.
- Invest in new curricula, learning materials, and training resources in children’s home language/s.
- Invest in the development and evaluation of new curricula and learning approaches, aligned with Ideal Learning, made by and for Black, Indigenous, Latinx and other people of color.
- Invest in expanding GATE programs in historically marginalized and lower resource communities. Invest in embedding enriched learning opportunities in every classroom, starting with historically marginalized and lower resource communities.
- Invest in ongoing professional development opportunities to minimize the impact of bias in teachers’ and other staff’s GATE identification and referral decisions.



PRIORITY 8:

ENSURE GLOBAL CLASSROOM QUALITY MEASUREMENT EXPLICITLY ASSESSES EQUITABLE EXPERIENCES

The most widely used global classroom quality measures do not address equitable experiences for young children.⁴ For example, implicit bias and its effects on family partnerships, adult-child interactions, and discipline decisions are never addressed. Language of instruction and access to bilingual learning for dual language learners is rarely addressed.⁵ It is critical that programs deemed high-quality by classroom quality measures are equitable and provide positive experiences and outcomes for all children, including those from historically marginalized communities. ARP funding in CCDBG (i.e., *Sections 2201(a)* and *658G* of *CCDBG Act of 2014*) enable investments to advance equity in the priority.

**STATES
& TRIBES
SHOULD:**

- Pool funding across states to invest in modifying existing instruments or developing new instruments that reliably and validly assess equity in learning settings, via global classroom quality measurement.
- Purchase and weave into practice classroom quality measurement tools that explicitly assess equitable experiences for young children. Ensure these instruments are used in monitoring and quality improvement efforts.



PRIORITY 9:

ELIMINATE HARSH DISCIPLINE

Harsh discipline, including expulsion, suspension, corporal punishment, seclusion, and inappropriate restraint, are associated with a negative social-emotional and academic long-term outcomes.⁶ The most commonly cited concern for prohibiting these harsh forms of discipline is that teachers and providers do not have the support to use positive approaches. The significant infusion of resources via the ARP can help address this concern. ARP funding for CCDBG (i.e., Sections 2201(a), 658G(b)(1) and 658E(c)(2)(G) of CCDBG Act of 2014), as well as the ARP Stabilization Fund (i.e., Section 2202(e)(1)(F)) enable investments to advance equity in the priority. In addition to child care funds, Community Mental Health Services and Block Grant and Pediatric Mental Health Care Access funding can also support increased access to mental health supports for providers, children and families, via infant and early childhood mental health consultation and other models that could prevent harsh discipline and its disproportionate use.⁷

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Prohibit harsh discipline across programs that receive public funding and invest in the training, coaching, and consultation needed to support implementation of the policy. This should include equitably expanding access to infant and early childhood mental health consultation and similar models in order to support providers in promoting social emotional development and understanding the role of bias on the perceptions of behavior and discipline decisions.
- Fund an expansion of state child care data collection to include discipline data, including suspension, expulsion, corporal punishment, seclusion, and restraint that is disaggregated on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability— and allows for interoperable use of data to understand trends that may emerge among certain subpopulations of children (e.g., Black boys with disabilities).
- Invest in technical assistance to providers on how to track, report, and use such data.
- Invest in the technological infrastructure needed to connect discipline data systems to state professional development, coaching, and technical assistance networks to address concerns and deploy supports in a timely manner.



PRIORITY 10:

PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND PROMOTE THEIR OPTIMAL DEVELOPMENT

Protecting the rights of children with disabilities and promoting their optimal development is critical to ensuring an equitable early learning system. This must include addressing equity in early intervention and special education access, accurate identification, and full inclusion in all programming. Today, data indicate that nationally, Black children and American Indian/Alaska Native children are underrepresented in early intervention and preschool special education services.⁸ Some research also indicates that children of color are more likely to be over-identified for subjective disabilities or those based on judgment or contextual factors, as opposed to those that rely on relatively more objective criteria.⁹ Additionally, school-aged children of color with disabilities spend less time in general education settings and are disciplined at higher rates than their white peers.¹⁰

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- In partnership with trusted community organizations, launch a public engagement and outreach campaign to ensure children of color have equitable access to early intervention and inclusive preschool special education services.
- Expand data collection on Parts C and B Section 619 of IDEA on pre-eligibility stages of services, including who is getting referred for and receiving evaluations, by race, ethnicity, language, gender, and socioeconomic status.

**STATES
& TRIBES
SHOULD:**

- Provide ADA and inclusion training for child care providers, including family child care providers, with an emphasis on the legal responsibility to enroll children with disabilities and research-based inclusion support strategies that can facilitate meaningful and successful participation.
- Within the guidelines of ARP funds and consistent with [guidance](#) published by the federal Office of Child Care, invest in physical infrastructure modifications to ensure physical access to early childhood programs, including child care, Head Start, and Pre-K, for children and adults with disabilities.
- Connect existing preschool special education and early intervention data systems with broader early childhood data systems. Ensure that the data system includes inventory of all available high-quality early care and education slots in the community in order to expand the pool of high-quality inclusive settings available to children with disabilities.
- Hire a data analyst to examine racial, language, or other disparities in special education, including in access to developmental and behavioral screenings and evaluations; access to services- especially early intervention and preschool special education services; dosage of services; inclusion; over-or under-identification across disability categories; and discipline of children with disabilities. Use data to inform the development of a plan to address inequities.
- Fund an all-hands-on-deck inclusion training and technical assistance effort by identifying self-contained, segregated systems and transitioning them to inclusive models. Investments may include shared professional development with early educators, early interventionists, and special educators; inclusion coaches and implementation of co-teaching or itinerant teaching models; and restructuring physical locations, budgets, and staffing structures.
- In partnership with families, fund an effort to support greater awareness of and linkages to gifted and talented programs upon the transition to elementary school in historically marginalized communities, including communities of color, immigrant communities, and low-income communities.



PRIORITY 11:

IMPLEMENT A DATA-DRIVEN CONTINUOUS EQUITY QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

Continuous, data-driven decision-making can lead to improved program quality and child outcomes.¹¹ Unfortunately, these processes often lack attention to equity as a process and a goal. ARP funding via CCDBG (i.e., *Sections 2201(a) and 658G(b)(1)(A) of CCDBG Act of 2014*) and the Stabilization Fund (i.e., *Section 2202(e)(1)(E)*) enable investments to advance equity in this priority.

**STATES
& TRIBES
SHOULD:**

- Invest in a statewide data system that includes equity indicators, such as those described in the report [14 Priorities to Dismantle Systemic Racism in Early Care and Education Settings](#), across child care, Pre-K, and Head Start. Ensure all data are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, gender, and disability.
- Set up a system to ensure greater public transparency and progress tracking in addressing equity by publishing progress on closing disparities across all indicators at least quarterly at the state, tribal, and local levels. Connect this system to the state's training and technical assistance infrastructure to ensure timely support to address concerns.
- Invest in servers to build data systems and in physical locations to house servers, particularly in historically marginalized communities, including tribal communities. Ensure access and ownership of data by communities.
- Invest in data systems for family child care or family friend and neighbor networks or hubs that would enable continuous, equitable quality improvement and shared services.



PRIORITY 12:

EXPAND FAMILY LEADERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Families are children’s primary, most important, and longest lasting teachers. Equitable systems require authentic family partnerships and meaningful opportunities to make decisions and inform programmatic operations, and state and local policy.¹² ARP funding via CCDBG (i.e., *Sections 2201(a), 2201(b), 658G(b)(1)(E), 658G(b)(3)(E), 658G(b)(4)(E), and 658E(c)(2)(T)(iii)(V)* of CCDBG Act of 2014) enable investments to advance equity in the priority.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Invest in adopting and implementing the Head Start Family and Community Engagement Framework in child care and public Pre-K systems, including investing in professional preparation and ongoing development on effectively partnering with racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse families.
- Fund a family engagement coordinator in child care and Pre-K settings tasked with facilitating partnerships with families, soliciting input and learning from families, and connecting them to needed community resources.
- Fund the development of parent committees, including providing stipends for participation, and grant committees decision-making authority in states, tribes, districts, schools, and child care programs.
- Fund family stipends to ensure that families are represented in state and local planning around the use of ARP funds. States should provide multiple opportunities for engagement, including virtual and with translation services. Ensure in-person solicitation of information — including hearings — are held during days and times when families can participate.



PRIORITY 13:

PRIORITIZE FAMILY CHILD CARE AND OTHER HOME-BASED CARE

Family child care and other home-based providers are often overlooked and under-resourced, but remain a critical part of the early care and education system, particularly for the youngest learners and in many communities of color.¹³ It is necessary that these providers have equitable access to resources. ARP funding via the Stabilization Fund and CCDBG (i.e., *Sections 2201(a) and 2201(b), and 658(G)(b)(4) and 658E(c)(2)(T)(iii)(III)* of CCDBG Act of 2014) enable investments to advance equity in the priority.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Adopt and fund implementation of the policy recommendations outlined in the [Family Child Care Policy Framework](#), which were developed by the Bipartisan Policy Center in partnership with several national, state, and local organizations.
- Fund the upfront costs of establishing staffed family child care networks and shared services hubs, prioritizing historically marginalized communities, including physical infrastructure, data systems, policy development, and governing plans. Fund shared training and coaching through these hubs.
- Invest in establishing a path to licensing for home-based providers who are not licensed and want to be.
- Ensure family child care providers, especially those who serve children from historically marginalized communities, are included and prioritized in attaining stabilization funds and other recovery funds.



PRIORITY 14:

EQUITABLY EXPAND ACCESS TO DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION APPROACHES FOR DLLS

Dual language learners (DLLs) make up about one-third or one fourth of all young children under age 8.¹⁴ Despite this, most instruction and assessments in the early care and education system are exclusively in English. Research indicates that valuing children's home language, including different English dialects such as African American English Vernacular (AAEV), and providing dual language instruction produces academic, social, and economic advantages, compared to English-centric approaches.¹⁵ ARP funding via CCDBG (i.e., Sections 2201(a), 658E(c)(2)(G) and 658E(c)(2)(G)(ii)(V)(bb) of CCDBG Act of 2014) enable investments to advance equity in this priority.

STATES & TRIBES SHOULD:

- Invest in transitioning from English exclusive instruction to a dual-language model, prioritizing communities with large numbers of DLLs. This may include using the [Planned Language Approach](#) as a guide, and purchasing curricula, books, toys, assessment instruments, training, coaching, and investing in parent information resources, and revising policy handbooks.
- Invest in developing and expanding Native Language preservation programs in tribal communities.
- Prioritize existing bilingual paraprofessionals or teacher aides in attaining the credentials needed to become lead teachers, coaches, and administrators, including funding comprehensive scholarships, mentorship, and financial supports to overcome structural barriers.
- Invest in the development and implementation of a universal home language survey across the ECE system to attain an accurate count of DLLs in the state.
- Invest in expanding existing data systems to include information on the availability of and enrollment in dual language instruction models, by race, ethnicity, language, disability, and socioeconomic status.
- Invest in curricula, books, assessment tools, and other learning materials in children's home languages.
- Invest in bilingual summer learning opportunities, prioritizing dual language learners.
- Invest in a public information campaign lifting up the benefits of bilingualism for a diverse set of stakeholders, including families, providers, and systems leaders, among others.

ENDNOTES

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