

# Community Voices L.A.

Community Voices is a Los Angeles County-based parent and caregiver advocacy project. We are dedicated to speaking out for children and working families on the issues of child development, community empowerment and economic independence for working poor families. Why do we do this? Because Children Can't Vote!

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2010



## COMMUNITY VOICES LA?

Community Voices L.A. is a Los Angeles County-based parent and caregiver advocacy project.

Community Voices L.A. empowers parents, child care workers, and community members to stand up and speak out on child care-related issues. Child care keeps working families from becoming

... **Why? Because Children Can't**



## EVENTS

## State Schools Chief O'Connell Joins Educators to Urge End to Budget Impasse



## Thousands of Families and Workers are Impacted by Lack of Funding for Child Care

September 30, 2010 (Los Angeles, CA) — State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell, child care providers, charter school operators, after-school programs, and public school educators today urged the state Legislature and the Governor to immediately pass a state budget that is now a record 92 days late. The budget impasse has resulted in the reduction or loss of early education and child care services for more than 28,000 children and their families, the reduction of hours or layoff of 1,141 child care workers, and the closure or reduction in services at 234 preschool centers or sites.

"Many vital programs and hard-working individuals are being affected by the standoff between the Legislature and the Governor," said O'Connell. "But none touches the most vulnerable — our children — or creates more havoc with thousands of working parents and their employers than the closure of child care centers. They don't deserve the anxiety, lost wages, lost educational opportunities, and upheaval caused by the failure to enact a budget. State leaders must do better because Californians need a responsible budget passed now, not later, that protects education."

About 230,000 children are currently being served in 4,000 centers across the state. Also, about 120,000 children are currently receiving state-subsidized services from private providers, such as family child care homes.

"People up and down the state of California should be outraged by this historic budget impasse," said Gisselle Acevedo, President and CEO of Para Los Niños that operates early childhood education centers, a charter elementary school, after-school programs, and supportive family services in greater Los Angeles. "Leaders in Sacramento should be ashamed of themselves for playing political football with vulnerable children and families. Real people are facing really tragic circumstances. We implore the Governor and the Legislature to do the right thing, right now, by passing a responsible budget immediately!"

O'Connell released preliminary results of a survey conducted last week by the California Department of Education (CDE) on agencies that deliver subsidized part- or full-day child care. Of those agencies that responded:


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• 9,917 children are not being served by their full- or part-time preschool programs because of the budget impasse;

• 1,141 adults serving these children at full-day agencies have been laid off or had their hours reduced;

• 18,366 children are in jeopardy of losing their care because their provider is not being reimbursed because of the budget impasse;

• 90 staff serving children whose services are in jeopardy have been laid off or suffered reduced hours of employment at those agencies or providers;

The preliminary survey also revealed that some child care providers have closed and may not reopen even after the budget has been signed:

• 24 full-day preschool programs involving 81 sites closed or did not open on or before July 1;

• 29 full-day preschool programs involving 74 sites are currently operating with reduced hours; and


• 18 part-day preschool programs involving 79 sites also closed or did not open after July 1.

The CDE has no legislative authority to pay preschool programs until the 2010–11 state budget is enacted. Although agencies with CDE contracts are encouraged to have a reserve fund, agencies have difficulty managing the fiscal burden of operating a program over an extended period of time with no income from the state to cover costs. Some preschool centers that have shut down or are about to shut down have exhausted their cash reserves and have borrowed against future state funding.

For information on child care and development programs in California, please visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/op/cdprograms.asp>.

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The California Department of Education (CDE) is a state agency led by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell. The core purpose of CDE is to lead and support the continuous improvement of student achievement, with a specific focus on closing achievement gaps. For more information, please visit <http://www.cde.ca.gov> or by mobile device at <http://m.cde.ca.gov/>. You may also follow Superintendent O'Connell (@SSPIJack) on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/sspijack>.

Posted by Community Voices at 3:00 PM 

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