



**SUMMARY**

AB 1969 establishes a California Coordinated Neighborhood and Community Services grant program to implement new, and strengthen existing, neighborhood and regional cradle to career (C2C) networks to reduce inequities and increase economic mobility in communities across California through integrated place-based support systems.

**BACKGROUND**

Achieving better outcomes for children and families requires a strong understanding of community and regional contexts, as well as effective coordination of services and supports aligned with the needs of each community. A cradle-to-career approach recognizes that a child’s well-being and long-term success are shaped by multiple interconnected systems—including early childhood education, K–12 schools, health care, housing stability, public benefits, and workforce pathways. Over the past decade, Promise Neighborhoods and other neighborhood, county, and regional Cradle-to-Career (C2C) networks have operated in some of California’s most disadvantaged communities.

Using a place-based, equity-focused strategy, these partnerships align public agencies, schools, community-based organizations, and philanthropic partners to coordinate services and supports across sectors. These networks also collect and share data across institutions to improve program effectiveness, identify service gaps, and ensure resources reach the families who need them most.

Today, these data-driven partnerships exist in San Diego County, Tehama County, Alameda County, San Francisco County, Fresno County, and Del Norte County. Together, they support children from prenatal care through post-secondary education and into the workforce, serving approximately 1.4 million children and youth living in areas of extreme poverty. Early data already demonstrates meaningful progress toward state priorities, with an independent evaluation and

full return-on-investment analysis forthcoming this year. To date, statewide efforts have reached 73,320 children ages 0–18 and 57,054 adults through comprehensive school- and community-based services with a modest \$12 million state budget investment in the 2022–23. Communities where these networks operate have experienced improvements in health care access, literacy and school readiness, college and career readiness, and family economic mobility, alongside reductions in child welfare system involvement and juvenile justice contact.

In total, nineteen established Cradle-to-Career networks have been piloted through one-time federal, philanthropic, and state investments. While these investments have demonstrated the effectiveness of coordinated, place-based strategies, they have not provided the sustained infrastructure needed to scale and expand this work statewide. To build on these proven outcomes, California must invest in an “It Takes a Village” strategy that supports long-term coordination, data sharing, and cross-sector partnerships to help children and families succeed from cradle to career.

**PROBLEM**

Annually, California spends over \$200 billion in federal, state, and local dollars towards cash grants, food assistance, and other crucial services to children and their families. Despite these investments, children and families continue to live in communities of poverty marked by racial inequities, achievement gaps, health disparities, and many other indicators. Having locally embedded organizations dedicated to coordination could help to ensure that these investments meet or exceed their goals. To safeguard and maximize the return on California’s investments, the state must adopt a comprehensive approach from cradle to career.

## **SOLUTION**

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AB 1969 invests in communities and regions with persistent poverty by funding networks that do the following:

1. **Link, align, and leverage cross-sector community partners** for the effective and equitable distribution of services for children and families from cradle to career;
2. **Prioritize systems change** by informing, funding, and advocating for program and policy changes to positively impact economically distressed neighborhoods and communities; and
3. **Collect, assess, report, and share data** by working with partners and communities to identify the highest needs within neighborhoods, implement evidence-based C2C solutions, and use data to continuously improve programs.

By investing in place-based support systems, this grant program ensures children, families, and communities have the resources they need to thrive.

## **SUPPORT**

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- End Child Poverty in California (Sponsor)

## **CONTACT**

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