AB 2092 – Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS)

SUMMARY

AB 2092 establishes the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) as the lead agency with the statutory authority to manage the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS). This bill also creates an interagency taskforce to oversee data governance, ensuring that California can integrate siloed information from various state agencies serving children from birth to age five.

BACKGROUND

In 2020, California adopted the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care: Making California for All Kids. The state's roadmap was designed to address substantive issue areas within California's early learning and care system, including the need for a data and governance infrastructure that can inform policy and funding decisions with a focus on child care quality and access.

California has built the foundation to begin implementing a state ECIDS. Through Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) federal grant programs and other investments, the CDSS and California Department of Education (CDE), both of which collect considerable zero-to-five data, identified ECIDS as a priority and planned its implementation. Through this, the state has been able to produce a knowledge brief, conduct a pilot program to share learnings and best practices at the local level, build the ECIDS data infrastructure, and have developed a conceptual diagram of how ECIDS can be integrated to the Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Data System. The state has leveraged federal funding to complete some of the foundational work toward integrating early childhood data, but, without continued infrastructure support, efforts to build a comprehensive ECIDS are at risk.

PROBLEM

- **Unclear Leadership:** Although the IT infrastructure for an ECIDS exists, no entity has the legal authority to access and integrate early childhood data across all agencies serving children ages zero to five.
- **Data Silos:** Critical early childhood data often lives within only one state agency's various data systems, and, if the same datapoint is collected across agencies, it might be defined differently. Information regarding child participation in early learning and care is currently siloed or incomplete, making it

impossible to track a single child's experience across different programs.

- **Inability to Address Disparities in Early Childhood:** Without integrated data, the state cannot identify "child care deserts" or understand outcomes for children ages zero to five, particularly when disaggregated by race and income.
- **Privacy Barriers:** Without a designated managing entity, state agencies are legally unable to share sensitive data due to existing privacy laws, preventing ECIDS from becoming a true integrated data system.

EXISTING LAW

Existing early childhood data initiatives are scattered across CDE, CDSS, and the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS), often operating under different data collection and reporting protocols.

In 2019, California passed legislation that called for the creation of the C2C Data System to connect critical state-level data currently siloed across various state agencies. However, the C2C Data System is designed primarily as a longitudinal tool for long-term research and workforce outcomes, rather than a real-time ECIDS capable of supporting daily program administration. While C2C tracks milestones over a lifetime, it lacks the specific granular connectivity required to help CDE, CDSS, and CalHHS coordinate immediate services for families, such as identifying enrollment gaps or streamlining eligibility across different early learning and care programs.

SOLUTION

Grant CDSS the statutory authority to serve as the lead agency for ECIDS and mandate the following:

- **Interagency Taskforce:** CDSS will convene a taskforce of data providers to guide decision-making and governance of ECIDS.
- **Privacy and Protection:** The taskforce will enforce data privacy policies and establish or update necessary Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between agencies to facilitate legal data integration.
- **Landscape Analysis:** The taskforce must conduct a comprehensive analysis of zero-to-five data, identifying gaps, staffing needs, and infrastructure requirements.

- **Standardization:** The bill charges the taskforce with addressing differences in data definitions and collection frequency to ensure early childhood data is ready for integration.

By establishing a clear legal framework for data sharing, the legislation strengthens California's ability to expand equitable access to high-quality early learning and care programs for the state's youngest children.

SUPPORT

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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