



# Senator Melissa Hurtado

## REPRESENTING SENATE DISTRICT 14

### Senate Bill 959

### Safe Early Education Centers for Children

*As Amended March 12, 2020*

#### SUMMARY

SB 959 would ensure that instructions on how to respond to federal immigration enforcement activities on or around early learning and care programs are provided to parents and programs..

This bill also emphasizes that discrimination based on immigration status is prohibited within California's early learning centers and care system.

#### BACKGROUND

Existing law prohibits school officials and employees and others, except as required by state or federal law from collecting information or documents regarding citizenship or immigration status of pupils or their family members.

Ensuring that early education learning and care programs have the information and resources to make sure that children have a stable upbringing is a critical service component. The foundation of a child's well-being is in the primary years centers is critical to make sure that children have a stable upbringing. The foundation of children well-being is in its primary years because it lays the groundwork for lifelong health and success. Protecting children from any adverse childhood

experiences (ACEs) is critical in their developmental stages.

#### THE PROBLEM

Preventing childhood trauma is critical to the success of the State of California. Experts agree that when there secure attachment is taken away, young children experience significant anxiety and stress that is hindering their ability to focus on learning. It makes their daily lives unstable, creating obstacles to getting their basic need met, and increasing their vulnerability to long term, poorer health outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

California must take lead to protect and defend the wellbeing of young children. If the issue is unaddressed, the anxiety that young children would face during the early stages will affect them in adulthood.

#### SOLUTION

SB 959 will ensure that children enrolled in a childcare and developmental program are protected from the collection of information or documents regarding citizenship and immigration status.

It also ensures that administrators report any requests for information or access to a school site by an officer or employee of a law enforcement agency for purposes of enforcing

---

<sup>1</sup> W. Cervantes, et al., "Our Children's Fear Immigration Policy's Effects on Young Children," CLASP, March 2018, available at

[https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018/03/2018\\_ourchildrensfears.pdf](https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018/03/2018_ourchildrensfears.pdf). Viewed February 3, 2019



# Senator Melissa Hurtado

REPRESENTING SENATE DISTRICT 14

the immigration law in a manner that ensures that confidentiality and privacy of children.

SB 959 will also require that the California Department of Education (CDE) to provide all children development programs with information about a child's right to be safely enrolled in a child development program regardless of immigration status. The information will include know your rights and model policies created by the Attorney General.

Additionally, CDE will be required to support child development programs that CDE directly contracts by providing information to parents and guardians in their primary language.

This bill will also require that child development programs that are directly contract with CDE provide their subcontractors with information about the model policies and protocols for responding and interacting with immigration enforcement officials.

Finally, SB 959 requires the Attorney General's office to expand the model policy for the development programs by April 1, 2021.

## SUPPORT

The Children Partnership (co-sponsor)  
Early Edge California (co-sponsor)  
Los Angeles County Office of Education

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Marisol Ibarra

Office of Senator Melissa Hurtado  
[Marisol.Ibarra@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Marisol.Ibarra@sen.ca.gov)  
(916) 651-4014

### Jessica Moran

The Children Partnership  
[jmoran@childrenpartnership.org](mailto:jmoran@childrenpartnership.org)  
(562) 659-2848

### Patti Herrera

Early Edge California  
[Pattih@sscal.com](mailto:Pattih@sscal.com)