



# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017--2022



## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Twin Rivers Community,

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the dedicated staff and community partners who served on the **Twin Rivers Unified School District Early Childhood Education (ECE) Collaborative Task Force**. Given the urgency of the issue, the task force was able to bring together a number of experts and stakeholders from every facet of the Twin Rivers community, with the ultimate goal of improving the lives of our young children, prenatal through age eight, and families.

The proposed **Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022** is the result of the diverse perspectives of members of the task force. I hope you share the excitement I feel upon reading this document, which is a testament to their shared commitment for a comprehensive and sustainable early childhood education system. Through open and candid discussions, the ECE Collaborative Task Force came up with 23 recommendations around the following five priority areas:

- High Quality Teaching and Learning
- Integrated Services and Inclusion
- High Quality Locations and Facilities
- Family Advocacy and Community Engagement
- Increasing and Improving Workforce Capacity

Over the course of the next five years, we will diligently work on implementing the Recommendations outlined within the ECE Strategic Plan. We intend to keep the community and stakeholders updated on our progress toward meeting our identified goals. We aim to build and maintain the strongest possible early learning program that will serve to support our children as they transition through their educational journey towards success.

Respectfully,

**Steve Martinez, Ed.D.**  
*Superintendent*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We recognize that collaborative engagement strengthens the vision and work of any plan. We are deeply grateful to the community members, staff, and administrators who served on the Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD) Early Childhood Education (ECE) Collaborative Task Force (CTF) and are particularly appreciative of their time, perspective, and commitment to the collective work that resulted in this plan. The Twin Rivers **Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022** was made possible with support from the following:

### DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

- Steven Martinez, Ed.D, Superintendent
- Sara Noguchi, Ed.D, Associate Superintendent, Innovation, Research, & Design\*
- Anne Zeman, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent, School Leadership Elementary\*
- Gina Carreón, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources/Labor Relations
- Russ Sulken, Executive Director, Information and Educational Technologies
- Kimbely Barnett, Executive Director, General Services
- Kathleen Walker, Executive Director, Special Education, Educational Services\*
- Zenobia Gerald, Director, Communications Services
- Tabitha Thompson, Ed.D, Principal, Morey Avenue ECDC\*
- Bradley Allen, Principal, Noralto Elementary
- Amanda Forde, Principal, Dry Creek Elementary
- Yolanda Falkenburg, Coordinator, Family & Community Involvement
- Elizabeth Cunnion, Coordinator, Early Childhood Education\*
- Alberto Becerra, Coordinator, English Language Learners
- Bonita Mallory, Coordinator, Student Services
- Ernestine McGuire, Coordinator of Curriculum & Instruction, Educational Services
- Shaen Hosie, Program Coordinator, Special Education (Vineland Center)\*
- Kathleen McCarthy, Mental Health Therapist, Special Education

[\*Steering Committee Members]

### BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER

- Ramona Landeros, Trustee Area 3, Twin Rivers Unified School District

### TEACHERS

- Jeanne Regello, Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), Early Childhood Education
- Jill Booker, Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), Special Educational Services
- Lorelei Yates, Teacher, Madison Elementary
- Julie Bradford, TK Teacher, F.C. Joyce Elementary
- Houa Lee, TK Teacher, F.C. Joyce Elementary
- Allison Richter, Early Childhood Special Ed, Vineland ECSE

### PARAEDUCATORS / COMMUNITY LIAISON

- Meghann Lerno, ECE Paraeducator, Woodridge
- Tashamarie Brewer, Family & Community Liaison, Morey Avenue ECDC
- Nancy Frisk, ECE Paraeducator, Special Education

### LABOR PARTNERS

- Kimberly Gunter, Site Representative, Twin Rivers United Educators
- Marty Heeb, President, California School Employees Association

### PARENT

- Ezel Humphrey-Grant, Head Start Policy Committee Chair

### COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- Natalie Woods Andrews, Director of Early Learning, Sacramento County Office of Education
- Patricia Colon, Education Action Team Coordinator, Sacramento Promise Zone
- Debra Cummings, Reducing African American Child Death (RAACD) member, Sacramento County
- Paris Dye, Community Incubator Lead, Liberty Towers
- Anthony Garcia, Director of Community Services, Child Action, Inc.
- Kendra Harris, Public Affairs Officer, Child Action, Inc.
- Kathy Henry, Roberts Family Development Center
- Monin Mendoza, School Readiness Program Planner, First Five Sacramento
- Vaqar Qureshi, Community Liaison, Neighborhoods Choice
- Katy Robb, Director, Mutual Assistance Network
- Tina Roberts, Co-founder & Chief Operations Officer, Roberts Family Development Center
- Diane Spence, Child Development Director, Highlands Community Charter
- Angela Thao, Education Coordinator, Sacramento Promise Zone
- Tyrone Williams, Sacramento Housing Redevelopment Agency

### FACILITATORS

- Senta Greene, Full Circle Consulting Systems, Inc.
- Robbin Randolph, Full Circle Consulting Systems, Inc.

A special thanks is also extended to Full Circle Consulting Systems, Inc., the Steering Committee and Twin Rivers Early Childhood Education for their tireless efforts and commitment to raising the visibility and importance of early care and education.

To each of these contributors we are extremely grateful.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the **Twin Rivers Early Childhood Education (ECE) Strategic Plan 2017-2022**, is to inform the community about the power and importance of early childhood education and the role that it plays in children's growth, development, school readiness, overall academic success, and readiness for college, career and civic-mindedness. It is a blueprint for investing in early childhood education priorities for the next five years to ensure that early childhood education is seamlessly integrated into the educational continuum of Twin Rivers.

**Twin Rivers strongly believes that high quality early learning is a catalyst for high student achievement and lifelong learning.** The district's highest priority is to provide a safe, nurturing and challenging learning environment for all students, beginning with the youngest learners, in its thriving, family-focused Early Childhood Education (ECE) program. Additional background on the importance of ECE can be found in *Appendix B: Footnotes/ Endnotes*.

With a commitment to gathering input from the diverse voices of the Twin Rivers community, a collaborative team was developed that included a representative of the Board of Trustees, district staff and administrators, parents, teachers, paraeducators and community based organizations. Full Circle Consulting Systems, Inc. was brought on board to facilitate the process of developing a strategic plan to build awareness and visibility of early childhood education for Twin Rivers and to document and write the Collaborative Task Force's recommendations for the Plan.

The Collaborative Task Force (CTF) identified the following five Priority Areas for the Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022, and developed 23 recommendations to address the Focus Topics within each priority area.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### TWIN RIVERS ECE STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY AREAS

The Plan narrative describes each of the five **Priority Areas and their Guiding Principles, Focus Topics, and Recommendations**. A complete matrix for each Priority Area which includes the **Strategies, Milestones, and Possible Resources and Partnerships** can be found in the *Proposed Implementation Guide* (Appendix A).

With the current understanding and focus on the necessity for school readiness and the value of early childhood education, Twin Rivers understands the need for enhanced efforts to ensure that all children have the educational experience, competencies, academic support and guidance to achieve school success. Through this plan, the district will actively seek and connect support and services for all children in a way that is integrated, seamless and individualized.

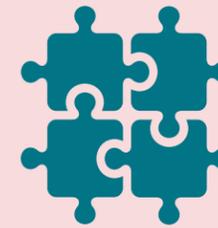
Twin Rivers is motivated by a desire to make a powerful difference in the lives of children and is designing educational experiences with each child's future in mind. An effective plan requires commitment to the vision, collaboration, action, and sustained effort. Everyone plays a vital role and must remain attentive so that this plan transforms practices, increases positive child results and establishes a high-quality workforce. The Twin Rivers **Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022** promotes a shared understanding of and commitment to turning a vision for high quality early learning for all children, prenatal through age eight, into a reality.

#### I. HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

This priority area is based on elements outlined in two federal and state documents designed to assess and raise the quality of early childhood education settings: the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) and the California Department of Education's Early Learning and Development System. To address this priority area, the Plan outlined six recommendations in the following focus topics: **Curricula and Assessment Alignment; Early Prevention and Intervention for Academic and Behavioral Support; and Family Academic Engagement and Partnership**.



#### II. INTEGRATED SERVICES AND INCLUSION



Integrated Services is an approach that involves collaboration between all of the services and departments within Twin Rivers to address the educational, behavioral and social-emotional needs of the child. It also involves enlisting the support of community partners (medical, dental, social and mental health services, etc.) to provide a range of coordinated services. Inclusion refers to including children with disabilities in programs, together with their peers without disabilities. Four recommendations are identified to address the following focus topics of this priority area: **District Leadership; Professional Learning and Development; Curricula and Collaboration; and Community Outreach and Partnership**.

#### III. HIGH QUALITY LOCATIONS AND FACILITIES

A safe, clean and visually appealing environment reflects a level of compassion, care, interest, and investment in our youngest learners. Aside from curriculum and instructional practices, one factor that significantly influences learning is having safe and age-appropriate indoor and outdoor learning environments. To provide services to the children within the Twin Rivers boundaries, additional quality early learning settings will be needed. Three recommendations are provided to address the following focus topics in this important area: **Preschool/Early Learning Expansion; Safety for New and Existing Sites; and Funding**.

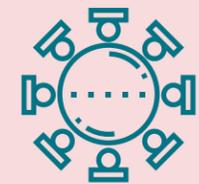


#### IV. FAMILY ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Families are truly children's first teachers. Children learn about their world and experience emotional security through their encounters with their families. Family advocacy begins with a deep understanding and desire to support families where they are and contribute to their vision for their children's future. An engaged community has a collective responsibility for the education and well-being of all of its children. At the heart of this priority is a concerted effort to support all voices being heard and feeling a part of the Twin Rivers community. Five recommendations are presented to address the focus topics in this area: **Partnership Development; Family Engagement; Communication; and District Climate**.



#### V. INCREASING AND IMPROVING WORKFORCE CAPACITY



Having programs and curricula that reflect the socio-cultural perspectives of the community requires a strong and diverse pool of educators, administrators and school leaders to address the strengths and complex needs of children and families. This approach to education, as indicated by research, also requires specialized training, mentorship, and professional development to ensure that learning and educational experiences for young children, prenatal through age eight, are meaningful, supportive, and results driven. There are five recommendations presented to address the following focus topics: **Talent Recruitment; Talent Retention; and Compensation**.

## TWIN RIVERS DISTRICT PROFILE

Twin Rivers Unified School District (Twin Rivers) is one of the educational cornerstones of the Sacramento community. The district was formed in 2007 with the passage of a ballot measure which combined four school districts in northern Sacramento County: Del Paso Heights Elementary, North Sacramento Elementary, Rio Linda Union Elementary and Grant Joint Union High School District. The new district assumed operational responsibility for approximately 31,000 students (including charters) on July 1, 2008. Twin Rivers is the 27th largest school district in California, currently serving 31,979 students (including charters) who speak 46 languages. It has approximately 3,000 employees and 50 school sites. The district's mission is: "To inspire each student to extraordinary achievement every day."

Twin Rivers is enriched by, and is deeply committed to, the diversity of its students who represent a wide range of ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, and aspirations. The student population includes:

- 45% Latino
- 21% Caucasian
- 15% African American
- 9% Asian

One in every four students is an English Language Learner and 82 percent of the district's students qualify for free and reduced-price lunches.

Since its inception, Twin Rivers has been educating and preparing students to live and lead productive lives. In fact, the district's graduation rate, 84.4 percent, which is up 9.1 percent from the 2012-2013 school year and now exceeds Sacramento County and state averages, reveals progress towards this goal.

Twin Rivers understands that a strong early childhood education program will empower its core beliefs which are listed below:

1. *All students will graduate college, career, and civic-minded ready.*
2. *All students will have a safe, clean and secure environment that is free of bullying and that creates opportunities for learning.*
3. *Student engagement is critical to student success.*
4. *Partnerships with all stakeholders are vital to student success.*
5. *TRUSD will be fiscally sound and maximize resources for student success.*
6. *TRUSD will honor diversity and create equity across the district.*
7. *TRUSD will identify, recruit, retain, and develop the best employees.*

## PURPOSE OF THE ECE STRATEGIC PLAN

The purpose of the **Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022** Strategic Plan is to inform the community about the power and importance of early childhood education and the role that it plays in children's growth, development, school readiness, overall academic success, and readiness for college, career and civic-mindedness. It is a blueprint for investing in early childhood education priorities for the next five years to ensure that ECE is seamlessly integrated into the educational continuum of Twin Rivers.

Early childhood is a unique stage in a child's development. It is a time in which the human brain experiences rapid development. During this period, a child builds cognitive skills which are the foundation for academic subjects such as reading, math, and science, as well as social-emotional growth, character development, gross motor skills, impulse control, and problem solving<sup>1</sup>.

Twin Rivers understands this critical time period and has developed an innovative Plan that expands the time frame for early childhood education to before and beyond preschool and prekindergarten, to include practices and resources for all children, prenatal through age eight, and their families.

It was the specific intention of the participants who created this Plan that it not be "just another plan" that sits on a shelf somewhere. Instead, this Plan provides a practical, understandable roadmap for improving the lives of the young children and families who are part of the Twin Rivers community.

The Plan is envisioned as a document that all members of the community can relate to, embrace and be a part of its realization. The vision, priorities, guiding principles, recommendations, and strategies in the Plan serve as a guide for program planning, decision-making, and resource allocation.

With this plan, the strength and vitality of the community become stronger and children's futures grow brighter. We understand that a good foundation in the early years makes a difference through adulthood and gives the next generation a better start<sup>2</sup>. Twin Rivers' current and future investments will be inspired by this commitment to elevate all children's educational success.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

**Twin Rivers strongly believes that a high quality early childhood education program is a catalyst for high student achievement and lifelong learning.** The district's highest priority is to provide a safe, nurturing and challenging learning environment for all students, beginning with the youngest learners, in its thriving, family-focused Early Childhood Education (ECE) program.

The ECE program currently provides an enriched, high-quality educational environment for children from birth to age five. ECE facilities are housed at 21 of the district's school sites. There are currently eight ECE inclusive classes which provide opportunities for children with disabilities to be fully included in general education classrooms. Federal, state and First 5 Sacramento funds provide comprehensive support services to children and families in the following programs: California State Preschool, Early Head Start and Head Start.

While high quality early learning is essential to ensuring success in school and beyond, only 43% of three and four year olds attend preschool in Sacramento County. It is estimated that there are more than 10,000 children, between the ages of birth-36 months, within the Twin Rivers district boundaries who are not receiving early education services<sup>3</sup>. In addition, the need for special education preschool services continues to increase.



## THE STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

Collaboration in education has been well-documented in the literature and continues to play an increasingly important role for Twin Rivers<sup>4</sup>. This Plan reflects the leadership of the Board of Trustees and Superintendent Dr. Steve Martinez as they work toward building a collaborative blueprint for excellence in early childhood education and school readiness. It offers a set of recommendations to elevate the awareness and practice of early childhood education and to weave it into the total fabric of the district.

With a commitment to gathering input from the diverse voices of the Twin Rivers community, a collaborative team was developed that included a representative of the Board of Trustees, district staff and administrators, parents, teachers, paraeducators and community agencies. Full Circle Consulting Systems, Inc. was brought on board to facilitate the process of developing a strategic plan to build awareness and visibility of early childhood education for Twin Rivers and to document and write the Collaborative Task Force's recommendations for the Plan.

Through consultation with Full Circle Consulting Systems, Inc. (Full Circle), the district embraced a framework for strategic planning for the time period of December 2016-September 2017. Full Circle facilitated six full-day meetings to gather input from the Collaborative Task Force (CTF) for development of the Plan. Between CTF meetings, the Consultants held phone conferences with the CTF Steering Committee, to review development of the Plan and agendas for upcoming meetings.

The Collaborative Task Force (CTF), representing voices from various backgrounds, and with a range of life experiences and areas of expertise, participated in various activities and many lively conversations about the current realities of the educational and developmental needs of young children, prenatal through age eight. The facilitation process began by having the CTF catalogue and acknowledge the progress TRUSD had made, to date, in the area of early learning. Early Childhood Education (ECE) staff presented an overview of the status of ECE in the district. In subsequent meetings, the group identified five priority areas for the Plan, and then working in priority area groups, developed focus topics, guiding principles, recommendations, strategies, milestones, and possible resources and partnerships for each of the five priority areas.

At each meeting, the Collaborative Task Force explored an area of importance for leadership and/or educating young children. Topics included:

- Starting with “Why”
- The Power of Vulnerability
- The Importance of Inclusion
- Trauma Informed Practices in Schools
- California's Early Learning and Development System
- The Power and Importance of Understanding and Valuing Cultural Diversity

One of the central tasks of the members of the Collaborative Task Force was to explore their motivation for participating in the development of the ECE Strategic Plan. The group stated a desire to have “... ***ALL children, prenatal through age eight, and their families, have the tools to be successful in life through safe, nurturing, and inclusive early learning programs, services and support.***”

## ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The **Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022**, was developed by the Collaborative Task Force (CTF) and is organized as follows: Priority Areas, Guiding Principles, Focus Topics, Recommendations, Strategies, Milestones, and Possible Resources and Partnerships.

### PRIORITY AREAS

The CTF identified the following five priority areas for Twin Rivers to focus on during 2017-2022:

- I. High Quality Teaching and Learning
- II. Integrated Services and Inclusion
- III. High Quality Locations and Facilities
- IV. Family Advocacy and Community Engagement
- V. Increasing and Improving Workforce Capacity

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The CTF then identified a set of principles to underlay the focus topics and recommendations for each priority area. The guiding principles are based on the latest research on effective practices in the field of early childhood education. These principles are intended to guide the way decisions are made and how actions will be carried out concerning children, prenatal through age eight.



### FOCUS TOPICS

Within each priority area, the CTF identified the topic areas it felt were most important to focus on during the implementation of the 2017-2022 ECE Strategic Plan.

### RECOMMENDATIONS • STRATEGIES • MILESTONES • POSSIBLE RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Recommendations were developed for each Focus Topic. Every recommendation includes strategies for addressing the recommendation, along with milestone dates by which the strategy will be accomplished. In addition, possible resources and partnerships are identified to assist the district in addressing the recommendations.

**While the Plan narrative focuses on describing the Priority Areas, Focus Topics, Guiding Principles, and Recommendations, a complete matrix for each Priority Area which includes the Strategies, Milestones, and Possible Resources and Partnerships can be found in the *Proposed Implementation Guide* (Appendix A).**

# THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TWIN RIVERS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2022

The 23 recommendations of the **Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022** are listed below under the five Priority Areas identified by the Collaborative Task Force. An Introduction explains each Priority Area, followed by the Guiding Principles, Focus Topics and the Recommendations for the respective priority area. A complete matrix for each Priority Area which includes the Strategies, Milestones, and Possible Resources and Partnerships can be found in the Proposed Implementation Guide (Appendix A).

## I. HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

The elements of high quality teaching and learning are outlined in two seminal early childhood education documents: the **Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)**<sup>5</sup> and California Department of Education’s (CDE) **Early Learning and Development System**<sup>6</sup>. The QRIS, a federal initiative, is a system designed to assess and raise the quality of early childhood education settings and includes the following components:

- Child Development and School Readiness
- Teachers and Teaching
- Programs and Environments



**The Early Learning and Development System**, which was developed by the California Department of Education (CDE), offers a comprehensive approach to assessing, improving, and communicating the level of quality in early care and education programs.

This system works toward strengthening and maximizing children’s growth and development through:

- **Learning foundations** that explain what children, with adequate support, typically learn and develop
- **Curriculum (a teaching and learning program) frameworks** to support children’s learning as they grow and develop
- **Observational assessments** that provide a structure and tool for recording individual child development and documenting his or her progress
- **Program guidelines and resources** to provide high quality care and education to children, prenatal through age eight
- **Professional development** to improve educators’ disposition, learning, skills and instructional practices<sup>7</sup>

High Quality Teaching and Learning embraces an authentic approach to recognizing every child’s individual strengths, needs, preferences, and learning styles to maximize the educational experience. A systemic approach to assessing, improving, and communicating the level of quality, as outlined in these systems, has been shown to produce gains in children’s academic ability and performance, and to reduce later grade retention (being “held back”) and/ or placement in special education.

It should be noted that the incorporation of play is an essential component of child development and school readiness. The use of play in the early education environment facilitates and strengthens the early learning process and allows children to express themselves in a developmentally appropriate way<sup>8</sup>.

Another important component of High Quality Teaching and Learning is social-emotional learning which teaches children how to identify feelings, manage emotions, get along with others, and problem-solve. The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as critical to providing High Quality Teaching and Learning:

- **Curricula (teaching and learning programs) and Assessment Alignment**—ensuring that learning experiences are appropriate for a child’s stage of development, age, individual interests, strengths, needs, preferences and learning styles; that the various learning programs and evaluation standards used in the educational setting are compatible; and that there is ongoing communication as children transition from one learning environment to the next
- **Early Prevention and Intervention for Academic and Behavioral Support**—ensuring that, as early as possible, children have access to the knowledge, skills, services and supports needed for their optimal learning and social-emotional development
- **Family Academic Engagement and Partnership**—ensuring that families understand their role as the child’s first teachers, have access to resources and support and experience partnership with their child’s teachers

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Alignment of early learning systems is critical for child growth and development.
- Partnering with families is essential to a child's academic success.
- Cross collaboration and articulation promote seamless transitions for a child's healthy learning and development from one learning environment to the next.
- Early intervention involves giving children the knowledge, skills, and tools to succeed early on in school.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

### Curricula and Assessment Alignment

1. Ensure that early learning curricula (teaching and learning programs) and assessments are developmentally appropriate
2. Ensure that early learning curricula, the Preschool Learning Foundations and Frameworks, standards and assessments are aligned
3. Ensure communication and collaboration among staff as a child transitions from one early learning experience to the next

### Early Prevention and Intervention for Academic and Behavioral Support

4. Provide the early foundations for children to be successful in the learning environment
5. Ensure the earliest possible interventions for academic and behavioral support

### Family Academic Engagement and Partnership

6. Partner with families to support their child's academic success

Over the last few years, Twin Rivers has made progress in expanding early learning opportunities for all young children by increasing access for children with disabilities to learn and play with their peers, without disabilities, in general education classrooms. Currently, Twin Rivers offers eight inclusive ECE classrooms. The district's fundamental belief in inclusion is backed by an educational philosophy that all children have the right to belong and inclusion should begin early in a child's educational life<sup>11</sup>.

### Inclusion involves facilitating:

- Access to a range of activities and environments for every child by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning<sup>12</sup>.
- Participation in a range of instructional approaches to promote active engagement in play and learning activities and a sense of belonging for every child<sup>13</sup>.
- Support such as professional development, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among families and professionals to assure high-quality education<sup>14</sup>.

### The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as critical to providing Integrated Services and Inclusion:

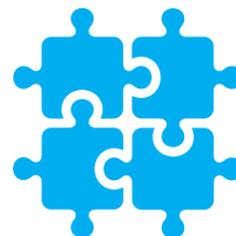
- **District Leadership**—ensuring that there is clear accountability for embedding integrated services and inclusion into the overall educational processes of the district
- **Professional Learning and Development**—providing the necessary training and support for staff, family and community to implement effective integrated services and inclusion
- **Curricula and Collaboration**—ensuring that learning materials, lessons and schedules are relevant, flexible and collaborative
- **Community Outreach and Partnership**—reaching out to involve and educate community partners about integrated services and inclusion

## II. INTEGRATED SERVICES AND INCLUSION

Integrated Services is an approach that involves collaboration between all of the services and departments within Twin Rivers to address the educational, behavioral and social-emotional needs of the child. It also involves enlisting the support of community partners (medical, dental, social and mental health services, etc.) to provide a range of coordinated services. Although social-emotional learning is provided in the classroom, sometimes, because of childhood trauma, additional resources may be needed to address learning and behavioral concerns. In these cases, integrated services will provide a coordinated response for support and intervention. Integrated Services involves a vision that all staff members are trained to work with every child regardless of need.

Inclusion refers to including children with

disabilities in programs, together with their peers without disabilities<sup>9</sup>. Many of the traditional educational programs across the United States have a one-size-fits-all approach to educational support and services, where all children are expected to progress at the same time in the same way. The United States Department of Education has challenged this approach to education and in 2017 reaffirmed their position on inclusion stating that: "...all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs where they are provided with individualized and appropriate supports to enable them to meet high expectations"<sup>10</sup>.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTEGRATED SERVICES AND INCLUSION

### District Leadership

1. Ensure integrated services and inclusion are an integral part of the district's educational process for ALL children and their families

### Professional Learning and Development

2. Provide opportunities for staff, families, and community members to understand the approaches and practices of inclusive education

### Curricula and Collaboration

3. Ensure that curricula (teaching and learning programs) are accessible for ALL early learners and their families

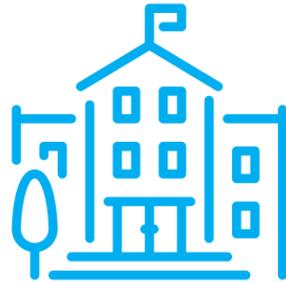
### Community Outreach and Partnership

4. Utilize community resources and partnerships to enhance integrated services and inclusion

## III. HIGH QUALITY LOCATIONS AND FACILITIES

A safe, clean and visually appealing environment reflects a level of compassion, care, interest, and investment in our youngest learners. Aside from curriculum and instructional practices, one factor that significantly influences learning is having safe and age-appropriate indoor and outdoor learning environments<sup>15</sup>. Relationships are formed and nurtured in quality environments. Environments are an essential element of high quality care and education and are a source of community pride for children and their families and for the educators who teach in them. This priority area introduces important strategies for expanding access to high quality locations and facilities.

Twin Rivers is currently at capacity serving approximately 1,000 students, birth to kindergarten, in 37 classrooms at 21 school sites. With the estimate that there are more than 10,000 children, between the ages of birth-36 months, within the Twin Rivers boundaries who are not receiving early education services<sup>16</sup>, additional quality early learning settings will be essential to providing services for these children.



The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as essential to providing High Quality Locations and Facilities:

- **Preschool/Early Learning Expansion**—expanding early education settings
- **Safety for New and Existing Sites**—ensuring that early education sites are optimal for early education learning experiences
- **Funding**—exploring innovative sources of funding for early education locations and facilities

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR HIGH QUALITY LOCATIONS AND FACILITIES

- Early learning opportunities should be available in every neighborhood served by TRUSD.
- All early learning environments should be safe, clean and visually appealing.
- Every early learning environment should provide equitable experiences to learn, play and work.
- Funding should not be a limiting factor.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGH QUALITY LOCATIONS AND FACILITIES

### Preschool/ Early Learning Expansion

1. Increase preschool locations and facilities

### Safety for New and Existing Sites

2. Ensure all early learning classrooms are safe and compliant with district, state, and federal standards

### Funding

3. Secure additional funding sources

## IV. FAMILY ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A child's first learning experience begins in the home<sup>17</sup>. Families are truly children's first teachers<sup>18</sup>. Children learn about their world and experience emotional security through their encounters with their families. Families come to school with a host of strengths, needs, concerns, priorities, and perceptions about their child's educational process. Recognizing that these feelings and experiences affect how families enter into and sustain partnerships with the school is profoundly important. Research reveals that the combination of quality programs and professionals working in partnership with families will contribute greatly to children's personal and academic growth and development<sup>19</sup>. Family advocacy begins with a deep understanding and desire to support families where they are and contribute to their vision for their children's future. The process is based on the identification of each

family's strengths, needs, concerns, and priorities. This provides direction for support and creates a pathway for setting meaningful goals and objectives to assist families in accessing social and educational services that both empower and encourage child-family success.

An engaged community has a collective responsibility for the education and well-being of all of its children. At the heart of this priority is a concerted effort to support all voices being heard and feeling part of the Twin Rivers community.



The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as vital for Family Advocacy and Community Engagement:

- **Partnership Development**—developing community partnerships and providing information on available resources to families
- **Family Engagement**—involving families in the school
- **Communication**—developing effective approaches for interacting with the community
- **District Climate**—developing a welcoming environment in the district

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Families are children's first teachers.
- Our work builds on the assets of the families; we start where the families are.
- The community experiences a sense of ownership for the education of ALL children.
- We recognize and honor the unique characteristics and experiences of each neighborhood, yet we encourage a climate where all neighborhoods feel they are a part of and belong to the Twin Rivers community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Partnership Development

1. Build bridges with community partners to develop a network of support for families with children, prenatal through age eight
2. Expand Family Resource Centers--places within the community where families, school staff and community partners can interact to help students and their families succeed academically, socially, and emotionally

### Family Engagement

3. Further develop family engagement at each school

### Communication

4. Implement a variety of communication strategies aligned to the unique culture of the neighborhood/schools

### District Climate

5. Further develop a positive community-wide culture

Research shows that the most important component of good early care and education is the quality and consistency of the educator. Low wages and public underfunding for early childhood education have created a teacher retention crisis and made it difficult to maintain the necessary quality and consistency. Many school districts are making efforts to increase the wages paid to early educators.

The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as central to Increasing and Improving Workforce Capacity:

- **Talent Recruitment**—attracting a diverse and skilled workforce
- **Talent Retention**—providing the professional support to retain the workforce
- **Compensation**—exploring ways to increase early education compensation

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INCREASING AND IMPROVING WORKFORCE CAPACITY

- The early learning workforce will reflect and draw from the diversity of the Twin Rivers community.
- Early learning staff will experience being valued members of the Twin Rivers workforce.
- Staff will be compensated in a manner reflective of their education, experience and responsibilities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASING AND IMPROVING WORKFORCE CAPACITY

### Talent Recruitment

1. Develop a systematic and robust process for recruitment of a DIVERSE early learning staff
2. Develop an Education, Outreach and Awareness Campaign for careers in early childhood education (ECE)

### Talent Retention

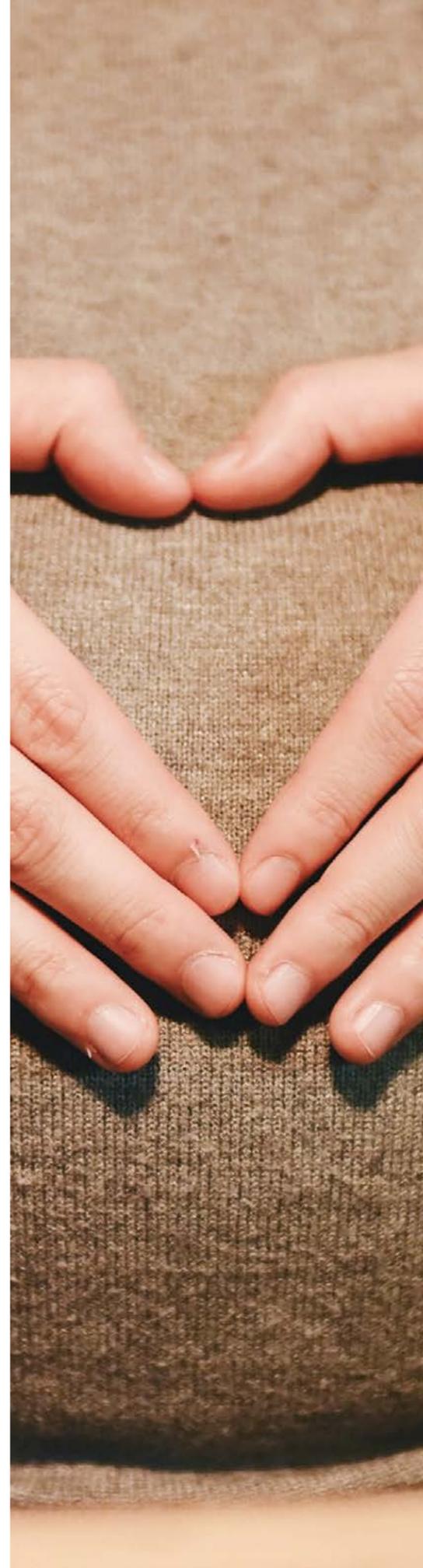
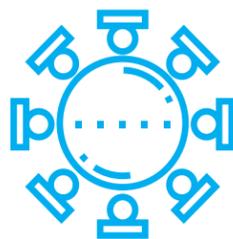
3. Promote talent retention through career growth opportunities
4. Promote talent retention through career development, mentorship, training, and support programs

### Compensation

5. Work toward providing equitable salaries for early childhood educators relative to salaries in the region

## V. INCREASING AND IMPROVING WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Twin Rivers acknowledges the need to continually work to have programs and curricula reflect the socio-cultural perspectives of the community. It is difficult to imagine being able to achieve that without a strong and diverse pool of educators, administrators and school leaders to address the strengths and complex needs of children and families. This approach to education, as indicated by research, also requires specialized training, mentorship, and professional development<sup>20</sup> to make sure that learning and educational experiences for young children, prenatal through age eight, are meaningful, supportive, and results driven.



## COMMITMENT TO THE VISION

This plan proposes specific recommendations and strategies to effect meaningful outcomes for child development, school readiness, a competent and stable workforce, inclusive education and positive collaborative practices for family and community engagement. While adopting this plan makes a powerful statement about expectations of quality and results for obtaining children's educational success, this alone does not guarantee impact nor create change. An effective plan requires commitment to the vision, collaboration, action, and sustained effort. Everyone plays a vital role and must remain attentive so that this plan transforms practices and increases positive child results and establishes a high-quality workforce. This plan promotes a shared understanding of and commitment to turning a vision of high quality early learning for all children, prenatal through age eight, into a reality.

Twin Rivers is committed to ensuring the implementation of the **Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan 2017-2022**. During the 2017-2018 school year, key personnel will be identified to provide the leadership necessary to ensure successful implementation of the Plan. Implementation efforts will include a clear focus on monitoring and reporting progress to both the Superintendent and the Board of Trustees. To ensure continuous quality improvement, during the 2021-2022 school year, Twin Rivers leadership and the Board of Trustees will reflect on the progress made toward the goals in this ECE Strategic Plan, and begin the work necessary to plan for future goals.

### APPENDIX A: Proposed Implementation Plan

### APPENDIX B: Footnotes/ Endnotes

# APPENDIX A: PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Listed below are the complete matrices for each of the Priority Areas. Footnote citations can be found in Appendix B.

## I. HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

The elements of high quality teaching and learning are outlined in two seminal early childhood education documents: the **Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)**<sup>5</sup> and **California Department of Education’s (CDE) Early Learning and Development System**<sup>6</sup>. The QRIS, a federal initiative, is a system designed to assess and raise the quality of early childhood education settings and includes the following components:

- Child Development and School Readiness
- Teachers and Teaching
- Programs and Environments

The **Early Learning and Development System**, which was developed by the California Department of Education (CDE), offers a comprehensive approach to assessing, improving, and communicating the level of quality in early care and education programs.

This system works toward strengthening and maximizing children’s growth and development through:

- **Learning foundations** that explain what children, with adequate support, typically learn and develop
- **Curriculum frameworks** to support children’s learning as they grow and develop
- **Observational assessments** that provide a structure and tool for recording individual child development and documenting his or her progress
- **Program guidelines and resources** to provide high quality care and education to children, prenatal through age eight
- **Professional development** to improve educators’ disposition, learning, skills and instructional practices<sup>7</sup>

High Quality Teaching and Learning embraces an authentic approach to recognizing every child’s individual strengths, needs, preferences, and learning styles to maximize the educational experience. A systemic approach to assessing, improving, and communicating the level of quality, as outlined in these systems, has been shown to produce gains in children’s academic ability and performance, and to reduce later grade retention (being “held back”) and/ or placement in special education.

It should be noted that the incorporation of play is an essential component of child development and school readiness. The use of play in the early education environment facilitates and strengthens the early learning process and allows children to express themselves in a developmentally appropriate way<sup>8</sup>.

Another important component of High Quality Teaching and Learning is social-emotional learning which

teaches children how to identify feelings, manage emotions, get along with others, and problem-solve.

The Collaborative Task Force identified the following **Focus Topics** as critical to providing High Quality Teaching and Learning:

- **Curricula and Assessment Alignment**—ensuring that learning experiences are appropriate for a child’s stage of development, age, individual interests, strengths, needs, preferences and learning styles; that the various learning programs and evaluation standards used in the educational setting are compatible; and that there is ongoing communication as children transition from one learning environment to the next
- **Early Prevention and Intervention for Academic and Behavioral Support**—ensuring that, as early as possible, children have access to the knowledge, skills, services and support needed for their optimal learning and social-emotional development
- **Family Academic Engagement and Partnership**—ensuring that families understand their role as the child’s first teachers, have access to resources and support and experience partnership with their child’s teachers

### Guiding Principles for High Quality Teaching and Learning

- Alignment of early learning systems is critical for child growth and development.
- Partnering with families is essential to a child’s academic success.
- Cross collaboration and articulation promote seamless transitions for a child’s healthy learning and development from one learning environment to the next.
- Early intervention involves giving children the knowledge, skills, and tools to succeed early on in school.

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
Curricula and Assessment Alignment	1. Ensure that early learning curricula and assessments are developmentally appropriate	1a. Establish a cross grade level curriculum committee to explore various curricula and assessments	1a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool Learning Foundations</li> <li>• Second Step curriculum</li> <li>• The Alignment Guide</li> <li>• Preschool Frameworks</li> <li>• Common Core State Standards</li> <li>• Transitional Kindergarten Implementation Guide</li> <li>• Next Generation Science and Social Studies Frameworks</li> <li>• First Five California</li> <li>• Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)</li> <li>• SETA</li> <li>• Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE)</li> <li>• Creative Curriculum</li> <li>• Guided Language Acquisition by Design (GLAD) Strategies</li> <li>• Sebrato Early Academic Language (SEAL) project</li> </ul>
	2. Ensure that early learning curricula, the Preschool Learning Foundations and Frameworks, standards and assessments are aligned	2a. Mandatory professional development to ensure all teachers understand the Alignment guide – Whole group Pre-K, TK and K with grade specific focus work	2a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
	3. Ensure communication and collaboration among staff as a child transitions from one early learning experience to the next	3a. Develop a plan for engaging implementation coaches to focus on bridging PreK, TK, and K	3a. Years 2-3 2018-2020	

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
Early Prevention and Intervention for Academic and Behavioral Support	4. Provide the early foundations for children to be successful in the learning environment	4a. Increase access to 0-3 Play Pals playgroups	4a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRUSD Behavior Specialist,</li> <li>• School Counselors</li> <li>• Behavior intervention specialist</li> <li>• High Quality Para Educators in all classrooms PK – 2nd grade</li> <li>• Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA)</li> <li>• Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)</li> </ul>
		4b. Raise the awareness of early learning foundations by connecting with local groups	4b. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		4c. Provide mobile early learning classroom to bring access of learning opportunities to the community	4c. Years 4-5 2020-2022	
		4d. Identify age appropriate social emotional learning curriculum Pk-8 to support students in the following areas: behavioral, social and emotional.	4d. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
	5. Ensure the earliest possible interventions for academic and behavioral support	5a. Every family completes Ages and Stages and Ages and Stages-Social Emotional questionnaire at entrance to Pre-Kindergarten, Transitional Kindergarten, and Kindergarten	5a. Years 2-3 2018-2020	
		5b. Develop and implement intervention strategies flowchart	5b. Years 2-3 2018-2020	
	6. Partner with families to support their child's academic success	6a. Train staff to implement academic home visits	6a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		6b. Facilitate “Academic Nights” to strategically teach families how to work with their child in academic subjects, including Reading, Math and Science	6b. Years 2-3 2018-2020	

## II. INTEGRATED SERVICES AND INCLUSION

Integrated Services is an approach that involves collaboration between all of the services and departments within Twin Rivers to address the educational, behavioral and social-emotional needs of the child. It also involves enlisting the support of community partners (medical, dental, social and mental health services, etc.) to provide a range of coordinated services. Although social-emotional learning is provided in the classroom, sometimes, because of childhood trauma, additional resources may be needed to address learning and behavioral concerns. In these cases, integrated services will provide a coordinated response for support and intervention. Integrated Services involves a vision that all staff members are trained to work with every child regardless of need.

Inclusion refers to including children with disabilities in programs, together with their peers without disabilities<sup>9</sup>. Many of the traditional educational programs across the United States have a one-size-fits-all approach to educational support and services, where all children are expected to progress at the same time in the same way. The United States Department of Education has challenged this approach to education and in 2017 reaffirmed their position on inclusion stating that: “...all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs where they are provided with individualized and appropriate supports to enable them to meet high expectations”<sup>10</sup>.

Over the last few years, Twin Rivers has made progress in expanding early learning opportunities for all young children by increasing access for children with disabilities to learn and play with their peers, without disabilities, in general education classrooms. Currently, Twin Rivers offers eight inclusive ECE classrooms. The district’s fundamental belief in inclusion is backed by an educational philosophy that all children have the right to belong and inclusion should begin early in a child’s educational life<sup>11</sup>.

### Inclusion involves facilitating:

- Access to a range of activities and environments for every child by removing physical barriers and offering multiple ways to promote learning<sup>12</sup>
- Participation in a range of instructional approaches to promote active engagement in play and learning activities and a sense of belonging for every child<sup>13</sup>
- Support such as professional development, incentives for inclusion, and opportunities for communication and collaboration among families and professionals to assure high-quality education<sup>14</sup>

### The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as critical to providing Integrated Services and Inclusion:

- **District Leadership**—ensuring that there is clear accountability for embedding integrated services and inclusion into the overall educational processes of the district
- **Professional Learning and Development**—providing the necessary training and support for staff, family and community to implement effective integrated services and inclusion
- **Curricula and Collaboration**—ensuring that learning materials, lessons and schedules are relevant, flexible and collaborative
- **Community Outreach and Partnership**—reaching out to involve and educate community partners about integrated services and inclusion

**Guiding Principles for Integrated Services and Inclusion**

- Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies and practices that support the right of every young child, regardless of ability, and his or her family to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of the early childhood program.
- Professional development is necessary to ensure that practitioners acquire the knowledge, skills, and ongoing support for effective inclusion practices.
- Supporting the use of people-first language, which puts the person before the difference, allows for focus on the whole child and their positive qualities.
- Building trusting relationships between families and school staff is essential to meet the needs of the students.

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
<b>District Leadership</b>	<b>1. Ensure integrated services and inclusion are an integral part of the district's educational process for ALL children and their families</b>	1a. Establish district leadership for oversight, guidance and supervision of integrated services and inclusion	1a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion Works!</li> <li>• Preschool Program Guidelines</li> <li>• California Department of Education (CDE)</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Learning and Development</b>	<b>2. Provide opportunities for staff, families, and community members to understand the approaches and practices of inclusive education</b>	2a. Provide training opportunities in different delivery systems and in a variety of subjects to staff and practitioners	2a. Years 2-3 2018-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion Works!</li> <li>• Preschool Program Guidelines</li> <li>• TRUSD Professional Development Department</li> <li>• UC Davis, Medical Investigation of Neurodevelopmental Disorders (MIND) Institute</li> <li>• Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) Trainings</li> </ul>
		2b. Provide practical application trainings on accommodations related to specific disabilities, mental health, medical needs and/or specific needs	2b. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		2c. Provide mental health/behavior training (for trauma informed practices) and behavioral support	2c. Years 1-2 2017-2019	

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
<b>Curricula and Collaboration</b>	<b>3. Ensure that curricula are accessible for ALL early learners and their families</b>	3a. Implement a collaborative structure for general education and special education to analyze the curricula and adapt instructional materials to the individual needs of each learner	3a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative Curriculum (Pre-Kindergarten)</li> <li>• Big Day Curriculum (Transitional Kindergarten)</li> <li>• STAR Curriculum (SPED)</li> <li>• Preschool Learning Foundations</li> <li>• Desired Results Access Project</li> <li>• Guided Language Acquisition by Design (GLAD)</li> <li>• Universal Design for Learning (UDL)</li> </ul>
		3b. Establish transition procedures when moving from one environment to another to ensure communication and support	3b. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		3c. Establish co-teaching as a curricula delivery model for supporting inclusion in the classroom	3c. Years 3-4 2019-2021	
		3d. Create a uniform program design, with a standardized week, for all special education preschool programs, based on IEP team decisions	3d. Years 2-3 2018-2020	
<b>Community Outreach and Partnership</b>	<b>4. Utilize community resources and partnerships to enhance integrated services and inclusion</b>	4a. Develop a community outreach plan/flow chart	4a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRUSD Resource List</li> </ul>
		4b. Collaborate with other service agencies to meet student needs and to gain resources	4b. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		4c. Provide information regarding the curricula and special education to community programs and families	4c. Years 2-3 2018-2020	

### III. HIGH QUALITY LOCATIONS AND FACILITIES

A safe, clean and visually appealing environment reflects a level of compassion, care, interest, and investment in our youngest learners. Aside from curriculum and instructional practices, one factor that significantly influences learning is having safe and age-appropriate indoor and outdoor learning environments<sup>15</sup>. Relationships are formed and nurtured in quality environments. Environments are an essential element of high quality care and education and are a source of community pride for children and their families and for the educators who teach in them. This priority area introduces important strategies for expanding access to high quality locations and facilities.

Twin Rivers is currently at capacity serving approximately 1,000 students, birth to kindergarten, in 37 classrooms at 21 school sites. With the estimate that there are more than 10,000 children, between the ages of birth-36 months, within the Twin Rivers boundaries who are not receiving early education services<sup>16</sup>, additional quality early learning settings will be essential to providing services for these children.

The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as essential to providing High Quality Locations and Facilities:

- **Preschool/ Early Learning Expansion**—expanding early education settings
- **Safety for New and Existing Sites**—ensuring that early education sites are optimal for early education learning experiences
- **Funding**—exploring innovative sources of funding for early education locations and facilities

#### Guiding Principles for High Quality Locations and Facilities

- Early learning opportunities should be available in every neighborhood served by TRUSD.
- All early learning environments should be safe, clean and visually appealing.
- Every early learning environment should provide equitable experiences to learn, play and work.
- Funding should not be a limiting factor.

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
Preschool/ Early Learning Expansion	1. Increase preschool locations and facilities	1a. Search the available inventory of possible sites/ classrooms	1a. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRUSD Schools</li> <li>• Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA) Head Start</li> <li>• Local agencies, churches, businesses, and apartments</li> <li>• Division of State Architect (DSA)</li> <li>• Architectural Design</li> </ul>
		1b. Conduct needs assessment for eligible students and determine demand	1b. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
		1c. Identify potential sites	1c. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
		1d. Develop the implementation plan for new sites (licensing process, design, Division of State Architect, and other regulation compliance) allowing sufficient time for implementation	1d. Years 1-2 2017-2019	

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
		1e. Collaborate with local agencies/churches/businesses/apartments	1e. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
		1f. Develop creative schedules to utilize existing facilities (Twilight hours, etc.)	1f. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
Safety for New and Existing Sites	2. Ensure all early learning classrooms are safe and compliant with district, state, and federal standards	2a. Increase knowledge of all stakeholders about preschool regulations and compliance rules	2a. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRUSD Facilities Department: maintenance; industrial engineers</li> <li>• School principals</li> <li>• Community Care Licensing</li> <li>• Key Stakeholders (TBD)</li> <li>• SETA/Head Start</li> <li>• TRUSD Emergency Operations Manual</li> </ul>
		2b. Develop safety plans to ensure safety drill compliance, including sufficient supply and materials required for safety plan	2b. Year 1-2 2017-2019	
		2c. Implement ongoing pedestrian safety workshops for students and parents	2c. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
Funding	3. Secure additional funding sources	3a. Develop a process that incorporates ECE expansions, and modernization programs into District Budget Planning	3a. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task Force Members (TBD)</li> <li>• TRUSD Business Services</li> <li>• Philanthropic Organizations</li> <li>• Social Media Charity Sites</li> <li>• Community Partners (TBD)</li> <li>• Monitor pending state/federal legislation</li> <li>• Elk Grove USD, Sacramento City USD and San Juan</li> </ul>
		3b. Secure additional opportunities for funding facilities and facility improvements	3b. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
		3c. Collaborate with community agencies and partners	3c. Years 2-3 2018-2020	
		3d. Investigate social media charity sites/ philanthropic opportunities	3d. Years 3-4 2019-2021	
		3e. Actively write and partner with community agencies to obtain additional funding	3e. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
		3f. Explore and incorporate creative funding models used by other School Districts	3f. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	

## IV. FAMILY ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A child's first learning experience begins in the home<sup>17</sup>. Families are truly children's first teachers<sup>18</sup>. Children learn about their world and experience emotional security through their encounters with their families. Families come to school with a host of strengths, needs, concerns, priorities, and perceptions about their child's educational process. Recognizing that these feelings and experiences affect how families enter into and sustain partnerships with the school is profoundly important. Research reveals that the combination of quality programs and professionals working in partnership with families will contribute greatly to children's personal and academic growth and development<sup>19</sup>. Family advocacy begins with a deep understanding and desire to support families where they are and contribute to their vision for their children's future. The process is based on the identification of each family's strengths, needs, concerns, and priorities. This provides direction for support and creates a pathway for setting meaningful goals and objectives to assist families in accessing social and educational services that both empower and encourage child-family success.

An engaged community has a collective responsibility for the education and well-being of all of its children. At the heart of this priority is a concerted effort to support all voices being heard and feeling part of the Twin Rivers community.

The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as vital for Family Advocacy and Community Engagement:

- **Partnership Development**—developing community partnerships and providing information on available resources to families
- **Family Engagement**—involving families in the school
- **Communication**—developing effective approaches for interacting with the community
- **District Climate**—developing a welcoming environment in the district

### Guiding Principles for High Quality Locations and Facilities

- Families are children's first teachers.
- Our work builds on the assets of the families; we start where the families are.
- The community experiences a sense of ownership for the education of ALL children.
- We recognize and honor the unique characteristics and experiences of each neighborhood, yet we encourage a climate where all neighborhoods feel they are a part of and belong to the Twin Rivers community.

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
Partnership Development	<b>1. Build bridges with community partners to develop a network of support for families with children prenatal through age eight</b>	1a. Identify a variety of community partners-their role, and services	1a. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current TRUSD resource guide</li> <li>• 2-1-1</li> <li>• Family Resource Centers</li> <li>• Black Child Legacy Campaign (BCLC)</li> <li>• Promise Zone</li> <li>• Mutual Assistance Network</li> </ul>
		1b. Develop central hub for resources: Resource guide	1b. Years 2-3 2018-2020	

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
Partnership Development	<b>2. Expand family resource centers--</b> places within the community where families, school staff and community partners can interact to help students and their families succeed academically, socially, and emotionally	2a. Identify resources	2a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA)</li> </ul>
		2b. Conduct survey of available space	2b. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		2c. Identify interested school communities	2c. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		2d. Identify volunteers and provide training to connect families to needed services in the family resource centers	2d. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
Family Engagement	<b>3. Further develop family engagement at each school</b>	3a. Establish intentional transition supports between early learning and elementary sites	3a. Years 2-3 2018-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and teachers at the schools</li> <li>• Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Team</li> </ul>
		3b. To continue and expand Parent Teacher Home Visits	3b. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	
Communication	<b>4. Implement a variety of communication strategies aligned to the unique culture of the neighborhood/ schools</b>	4a. Identify neighborhood leaders in each geographic area	4a. Years 2-3 2018-2020, ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sierra Health</li> <li>• Black Child Legacy Campaign (BCLC)</li> <li>• TRUSD communications department</li> <li>• Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Team</li> <li>• First Five Sacramento</li> <li>• Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE)</li> </ul>
		4b. Provide training in: 1) Becoming a bridge between home and school, 2) Sharing district information, and 3) Gathering input from families	4b. Years 2-3 2018-2020, ongoing	
		4c. Create roadmap and FAQ for families to support them in navigating the school system	4c. Years 1-2 2017-2019	
		4d. Further develop communication through social media platforms	4d. Years 1-2 2017-2019, ongoing	

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources
District Climate	5. Further develop a positive community-wide culture	5a. Create a Twin Rivers welcoming schools environment, inviting parents, key neighborhood leaders, and the school community to review and advise on the welcoming atmosphere of Twin Rivers' learning environments	5a. Years 2-3 2018-2020	
		5b. Each school will set a school climate goal in their school plan and district goals	5b. Years 2-3 2018-2020, ongoing	
		5c. Add Early Childhood Education to district's goals and Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)	5c. Years 2-3 2018-2020	

## V. INCREASING AND IMPROVING WORKFORCE CAPACITY

Twin Rivers acknowledges the need to continually work to have programs and curricula reflect the socio-cultural perspectives of the community. It is difficult to imagine being able to achieve that without a strong and diverse pool of educators, administrators and school leaders to address the strengths and complex needs of children and families. This approach to education, as indicated by research, also requires specialized training, mentorship, and professional development<sup>20</sup> to make sure that learning and educational experiences for young children-- prenatal through age eight--are meaningful, supportive, and results driven.

Research shows that the most important component of good early care and education is the quality and consistency of the educator. Low wages and public underfunding for early childhood education have created a teacher retention crisis and has made it difficult to maintain the necessary quality and consistency. Many school districts are making efforts to increase the wages paid to early educators.

The Collaborative Task Force identified the following Focus Topics as central to Increasing and Improving Workforce Capacity:

- **Talent Recruitment**—attracting a diverse and skilled workforce
- **Talent Retention**—providing the professional support to retain the workforce
- **Compensation**—exploring ways to increase early education compensation

### Guiding Principles for Increasing and Improving Workforce Capacity

- The early learning workforce will reflect and draw from the diversity of the Twin Rivers community.
- Early learning staff will experience being valued members of the Twin Rivers workforce.
- Staff will be compensated in a manner reflective of their education, experience and responsibilities.

Focus Topics	Recommendations	Strategies	Milestones	Possible Partnerships & Resources	
Talent Recruitment	1. Develop a systematic and robust process for recruitment of a DIVERSE early learning staff	1a. To compare/ align TRUSD qualifications with state credentialing and/ or qualification requirements	1a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Los Rios Community College District</li> <li>• California State University, Sacramento (CSUS)</li> <li>• University of California, Davis</li> <li>• Community Based Organizations (CBOs)</li> <li>• Highlands Community Charter &amp; Technical Schools</li> <li>• Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE)</li> </ul>	
		1b. Participate in and/or facilitate Work/Job Fairs	1b. Years 2-3 2018-2020		
		1c. Enhance communication with the outside community	1c. Years 1-2 2017-2019		
	2. Develop an Education, Outreach & Awareness Campaign for Careers in early childhood education (ECE)	2a. Conduct an ECE Community/ District asset scan of potential workforce	2a. Years 1-2 2017-2019		
		2b. To develop and increase the diversity of future early learning candidates to be hired by TRUSD	2b. Years 2-3 2018-2020		
Talent Retention	3. Promote talent retention through career growth opportunities	3a. Develop a clear career growth ladder	3a. Years 1-2 2017-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twin Rivers Human Resources &amp; Professional Development Departments</li> <li>• Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE)</li> <li>• Twin Rivers Early Childhood Education (ECE) Dept.</li> <li>• Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA)</li> <li>• California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC)</li> </ul>	
		4. Promote talent retention through career development, mentorship, training, and support programs	4a. Create a plan to provide support strategies for teachers		4a. Years 1-2 2017-2019
	4b. Continue to plan & implement high quality, initial and continuing, professional development for classified staff		4b. Years 1-2 2017-2019 ongoing		
Compensation	5. Work toward providing equitable salaries for early childhood educators relative to salaries in the region	5a. Conduct a comparative analysis of early childhood educator salaries with the district identified comparable districts.	5a. Years 1-2 2017-2019		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twin Rivers Human Resources</li> <li>• Surrounding comparable districts</li> <li>• California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)</li> </ul>
		5b. Conduct an analysis of early childhood educator educational and credentialing requirements with district identified comparable districts	5b. Years 1-2 2017-2019		

## APPENDIX B: FOOTNOTES/ ENDNOTES

1. NationalSwell. 2014. Ask the Experts: How Can We Fix Early Childhood Education? <http://nationswell.com/ask-experts-can-fix-early-childhood-education> NationSwell (accessed July 7, 2017).
2. United Nations Children's Fund. 2013. Why Early Childhood Development? [https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index\\_40748.html](https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/index_40748.html) (accessed July 10, 2017).
3. Local Child Care and Development Planning Council. (2014) UPDATE-Promoting Excellence in Child Care and Education, Five Year Plan.
4. Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (Eds.) (2009). Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8. 3rd ed. Washington, DC: NAEYC. For more information on collaboration in the context of developmentally appropriate practice, see: <https://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/position%20statement%20Web.pdf>
5. Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). QRIS statewide systems, for rating quality in early care and education, are implemented in over half of the States and others are developing such systems. The United States Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services have supported States in further developing such systems under Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge and the Child Care Development Fund. For more information see: <https://qrisguide.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?do=qrisabout> For more information on California's Race to The Top Early Learning Challenge and approach to QRIS see, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/rt/californiaqris.asp>; [http://www.ccfca.gov/programs/programs\\_ca-qris.html](http://www.ccfca.gov/programs/programs_ca-qris.html)
6. California Department of Education's (CDE) Early Learning and Development System, see, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/psfrmwkp303.pdf> and for corresponding publications see: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/cddpublications.asp>
7. Committee on the Science of Children Birth to Age 8: Deepening and Broadening the Foundation for Success; Board on Children, Youth, and Families; Institute of Medicine; National Research Council; Allen LR, Kelly BB, editors. Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2015 Jul 23. 4, Child Development and Early Learning. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310550/>
8. Copple, C., & S. Bredekamp, eds. 2009. Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8. 3rd ed. Washington, DC: NAEYC.
9. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 2009. Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For more information on DEC/NAEYC joint position statement on a definition of early childhood inclusion, see: [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)
10. See OSEP Dear Colleague Letter (January 7, 2017) available at: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/preschool-lre-dcl-1-10-17.pdf>
11. California Department of Education. The Face of Preschool Inclusion. Winter-Spring 2010. The Special EDge newsletter. The Special EDge newsletter—a publication of the California Department of Education, Special Education Division—informs and supports California's parents, policymakers, educators, and other service providers on special education topics, focusing on research-based practices, legislation, technical support, and current resources.
12. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 2009. Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For more information on DEC/NAEYC joint position statement on a definition of early childhood inclusion, see: [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)
13. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 2009. Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For more information on DEC/NAEYC joint position statement on a definition of early childhood inclusion, see: [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)
14. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 2009. Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). For more information on DEC/NAEYC joint position statement on a definition of early childhood inclusion, see: [http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC\\_NAEYC\\_EC\\_updatedKS.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf)
15. Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). QRIS statewide systems, for rating quality in early care and education, are implemented in over half of the States and others are developing such systems. The United States Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services have supported States in further developing such systems under Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge and the Child Care Development Fund. For more information see: <https://qrisguide.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?do=qrisabout> For more information on California's Race to The Top Early Learning Challenge and approach to QRIS see, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/rt/californiaqris.asp>; [http://www.ccfca.gov/programs/programs\\_ca-qris.html](http://www.ccfca.gov/programs/programs_ca-qris.html)
16. Local Child Care and Development Planning Council. (2014) UPDATE-Promoting Excellence in Child Care and Education, Five Year Plan.
17. Urban Child Institute. (UCI). 2015. Learning Begins at Home. <http://www.urbanchildinstitute.org/articles/features/language-learning-begins-at-home> (accessed on August 7, 2017)

18. Singer, J., Goldenberg, J., & Vele-Tabador, E. (Eds.) (2006). A Review of the Early Care and Education Literature: Evidence Base for Touchpoints. Brazelton Touchpoints Center Executive Summary. Brazelton Touchpoints Center. Print.
  19. Public Broadcast Station for Parents (PBS Parents). No date. <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/going-to-school/supporting-your-learner/role-of-parents/> (accessed on August 8, 2017). National Association for the Education of Young Children. (NAEYC). 2009. Family Engagement, Diverse Families, and Early Childhood Education Programs: An Integrated Review of the Literature. <https://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/ecprofessional/EDFLiterature%20Review.pdf>. (accessed on August 8, 2017).
  20. Committee on the Science of Children Birth to Age 8: Deepening and Broadening the Foundation for Success; Board on Children, Youth, and Families; Institute of Medicine; National Research Council; Allen LR, Kelly BB, editors. Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2015 Jul 23. 4, Child Development and Early Learning. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK310550/>
- California Early Childhood Educator Competencies. 2011 <http://www.ececompsat.org/docs/ececompetencies2011.pdf> (accessed on August 6, 2017), The California Early Childhood Educator Competencies describe the knowledge, skills and dispositions that early childhood educators need in order to provide high quality care and education to young children and their families. The ECE Competencies are aligned with the California Preschool Learning Foundations and the California Infant/Toddler Learning & Development Foundations to guide professional development and related quality improvement activities. For more information see: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/ececomps.asp>