



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bay Area Council Poll Finds Strong Backing for Investing in Early Childhood Development

Results Comes as Early Childhood Education Emerges as Top Political Issue

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – With early childhood education emerging as hot political topic in the current state budget debate, and one that could figure significantly in the 2016 Presidential race, the 2014 Bay Area Council Poll shows residents here strongly favor investing in programs that promote early childhood development.

The poll found 69 percent of Bay Area residents support increasing state and local funding for both early childhood education and prekindergarten programs. Early childhood education is among the top policy priorities for the Bay Area Council, because of the immense body of scientific research showing that there may be no larger return for a child's future success than investing in growing their brain development from age 0-5.

Bay Area residents apparently follow the research, with 72 percent saying that investing in early childhood education is essential to sustaining economic growth and preparing future generations to compete in the global economy.

“Every dollar we spend now to promote early brain development equals \$7 in reduced government spending down the road,” said Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council. “Investing in children during the ages of 0-5 can produce lifelong benefits for families, communities and the economy. Early childhood investment means kids are much better prepared to succeed in K-12 and go on to college, and less likely to end up in prison or suffering from other costly social problems.”

The Bay Area Council currently is partnering with Too Small to Fail – an initiative of The Clinton Foundation and San Francisco-based Center for the Next Generation -- on an innovative messaging campaign directed to parents in lower-income communities that Sec. Hillary Clinton said she would like to see become a model for other programs nationally. The Bay Area Council, with funding from Kaiser Permanente, and Center for the Next Generation developed the campaign with globally renowned San Francisco ad firm Goodby Silverstein.

Residents also seem to understand the consequences of failing to invest in our youngest learners, with 69 percent agreeing that improving early childhood development can save

billions in spending on remedial education, welfare and prisons. All three of those categories combined make up the bulk of California's general fund spending, and prisons in particular have experienced stratospheric growth in both inmates and spending over the past 30 years.

"The research is clear, the political will is growing and what we need to do now is get more business leaders to understand how important early brain development can be to their bottom line," Wunderman said. "This poll certainly shows that the broader public understands and we need to amplify this message to get more CEOs and business on board."

The 2014 Bay Area Council Poll, which was conducted by Oakland-based public opinion research firm EMC Research, surveyed more than 1,000 residents in an online poll about a range of issues related to economic growth, housing and transportation, early childhood education, energy and communications, and healthcare. The results are being released over five days beginning May 27.

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About the Bay Area Council

The Bay Area Council is a business-sponsored, public-policy advocacy organization for the nine-county Bay Area. The Council proactively advocates for a strong economy, a vital business environment, and a better quality of life for everyone who lives here. Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council is widely respected by elected officials, policy makers and other civic leaders as the voice of Bay Area business. Today, approximately 275 of the largest employers in the region support the Bay Area Council and offer their CEO or top executive as a member. Our members employ more than 4.43 million workers and have revenues of \$1.94 trillion, worldwide.