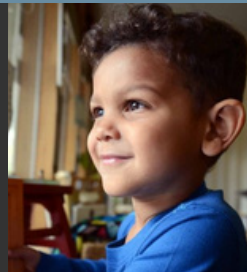




Expanding Early Education & Care Facilities

A brief for **school districts** prepared by Build Up San Mateo County, an initiative preserving, growing and improving the supply of early education and care.

San Mateo County has a **shortfall of 17,000** child care, preschool, and after-school spaces, which directly impacts children's education and their families' economic viability. By 2032, this shortage is expected to rise to 22,000. School districts are valued partners for growing and improving these opportunities; when located on school campuses, these programs complement districts' missions and goals.



How does the availability of high-quality child care, preschool, and after-school care impact school districts?

Children who participate in high-quality child care and preschool programs **enter kindergarten more prepared**, reducing the need for additional K-12 resources and supplemental services. Children who receive high-quality early education are **50% less likely to require special education** and 29% more likely to graduate high school. Accessible after-school care allows **parents to pursue employment** knowing their children are safe and engaged in enriching activities.

A recent county needs assessment found that school districts are **key partners** in addressing the shortage of child care and early learning.

Potential School District Actions and Local Examples

On-campus child care for teachers and staff supports employee retention and work-life balance. Recently, the **Sequoia Union High School District** partnered with a local, private child care provider to open infant/toddler and preschool programs for children of teachers and staff at Carlmont High School. Staff at the **Bayshore School** and the **San Mateo-Foster City School District** can enroll their children in onsite preschool and after-school programs.

Using vacant space for infant/toddler care provides access to early learning for the youngest children. The **Pacifica School District** hosts a private operator to run both infant/toddler child care and preschool at Linda Mar Elementary School. With formal care available for just 60% of the county's infants and toddlers who may need care, many of our youngest children are missing out on high-quality early learning that will prepare them for school.

Tuition-based preschool or after-school care offered in vacant classrooms is a win-win. First, the **San Mateo-Foster City School District**, and then many others, used vacant classrooms to offer tuition-based preschool for three- and four-year-olds. These programs pay for themselves and help districts align preschool through third grade.

Long-term leases and below-market rents allow nonprofit child care programs to be economically viable. The **Belmont-Redwood Shores School District** has a long history of partnering with nonprofit preschool and after-school operators on several campuses. The district provides unused campus space at below-market rent with a long-term lease.

Partnering with cities allows districts to leverage resources and coordinate to meet family needs. Brisbane, Redwood City, South San Francisco, and San Carlos have city council/school district standing committees. School districts in Brisbane, Hillsborough, Pacifica, Redwood City, and South San Francisco, partner with their local Park and Recreation Departments to offer on-campus preschool and/or after-school care.

Long-term facilities planning and bond initiatives can include child care, preschool, and after-school care. In 2014, the **Woodside Elementary School District** successfully passed Measure D, a bond that included \$1.6 million for their district-operated preschool.

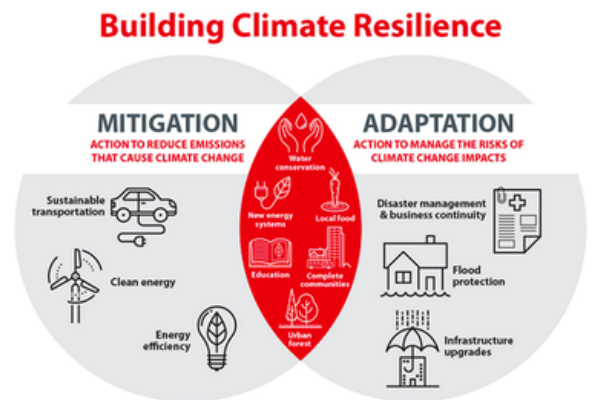
Climate Change and Child care for Districts

Climate change has already begun to disrupt children’s learning, with extreme weather events resulting in school closures, and the effect of climate change on young children’s health has yet to be seen. **Time spent learning and exploring outdoors is also essential to young children’s brain development and learning.** School districts can help protect young children against the effects of climate change by **leveraging opportunities and spaces to provide climate-resilient child care** and **partnering with child care providers** to use district funds for climate-resilient upgrades. Climate change will require school districts to upgrade facilities to be climate resilient, and they can do the same to help preschools and ensure young children are kindergarten ready.

Climate Resilient Classrooms and Schools

Aspects of climate resilient schools and classrooms include:

- energy-efficient electrical infrastructure, including solar panels with back-up battery systems,
- electric appliances, including water heaters (rather than gas),
- electric school buses,
- energy-efficient air filtration systems to keep indoor air quality within acceptable levels,
- drought-resistant landscaping and lots of shade in schoolyards,
- trees planted near and around buildings to shade them, lowering the indoor temperature and reducing costs and energy needed for air conditioning.



The EPA recommends schools to have indoor air quality (IAQ) plans to provide guidance on how indoor air quality will be monitored and managed.

Build Up is here to support school districts in learning more about operating or hosting tuition-based or subsidized child care programs.

Sources for this document include: *SMC Child Care Needs Assessment*, Brion Economics, 2022; *America’s Best Investment: Early Childhood Development*, First Five Years Fund., California SB 394, “How to Climate-Proof Schools,” *Stanford Medicine Magazine*, 2023.

Thank you Build Up’s Funders and Partners:



To learn more, visit www.buildupsmc.org or contact Christine Padilla, Director of Build Up San Mateo County at 650.517.1436 or cpadilla@sanmateo4cs.org.

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