

Assemblymember Mia Bonta Champions Grant Program to Expand Coordinated Neighborhood & Community Services Networks

AB 2517 is a partnership with GRACE, End Child Poverty in CA, California Promise Neighborhood Network, CA Cradle to Career Coalition, and StriveTogether

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AB 2517 will expand California's capacity to challenge poverty, address disparities, and provide support for children and their families from cradle to career."

Assemblymember Mia Bonta

-- Assemblymember Mia Bonta (D-Oakland) introduced Assembly Bill 2517, termed the [It Takes A Village Act](#), to implement new and strengthen existing neighborhood and regional coordinated services across California. Currently, these services are provided by Promise Neighborhoods and regional Cradle to Career Networks who work with families, educational institutions, government agencies, and community-based organizations and within communities, counties, and regions to prepare all children for success by building a coordinated continuum of family, community, education, and health services that support

them from before birth to college and career.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated child poverty and racial and economic disparities," said Assemblymember Bonta. "By ensuring coordinated investments in services and supports, [this bill] will expand California's capacity to challenge poverty, address disparities, and provide support for children and their families from cradle to career."

Assembly Majority Leader Eloise Gómez Reyes (D-San Bernardino) said, "I am proud to be Principal Coauthor to Assemblymember Bonta's It Takes a Village Act, a bill that will strengthen our communities by creating partnerships and increasing communication across California's regional networks. By establishing this grant program, Assemblymember Bonta is empowering community-based networks with the funding they need to join forces in the fight against poverty."

[AB 2517](#) establishes the California Coordinated Neighborhood and Community Services Grant

Program, which would award funding to organizations who (1) align and leverage cross-sector community partners for equitable distribution of services for children and families from cradle to career; (2) prioritize systems change by funding and advocating for program and policy changes across cities, counties, and regions; and (3) collect, assess, and share data by working with partners and communities to identify the needs within neighborhoods, implement evidence-based solutions, and use data to continuously improve programs. Overall, organizations would work to improve educational and socioeconomic outcomes, as well as reduce racial disparities by ensuring that public investments in services and supports are coordinated to promote efficiency and effectiveness.

“As we seek a more equitable California, it is more important than ever that we focus on the needs of children, youth, and families,” said Cynthia Nelson Holmsky, director of Bright Futures of Monterey County. “Every day these partnerships partner to both challenge and support existing systems, to do better, and do better again, and again, until their results produce equitable outcomes for all children, from cradle to career. This approach works and is essential to our recovery.”

“Promise Neighborhoods were designed to provide a coordinated response to systemic inequities,” said Richard Raya, chief strategy officer at Mission Economic Development Agency. “We have seen firsthand how effective these comprehensive cradle-to-career initiatives are in addressing emergency needs, reducing poverty, and ultimately transforming communities. This is why we support the California Coordinated Neighborhood and Community Services Grant Program.”

“To effectively provide the needed services and supports to children and families, we need to have coordination and resource alignment across sectors,” said Fresno County Superintendent of Schools Jim A. Yovino. “I support the 'It Takes A Village' California Coordinated Neighborhood and Community Services Grant Program because building local capacity to coordinate our public resources creates efficiencies and more equitable community outcomes.”

“If we are to recover and be better than before, we must provide services to support children, families, and communities in a way that uses collective impact,” said Renee Herzfeld, executive director of Community Child Care Council (4Cs) of Alameda County and early learning network director of Hayward Promise Neighborhoods. “The work of Promise Neighborhoods across the country, with federal funding, has been effective. The It Takes a Village Act, AB 2517, is California’s opportunity to invest in its own to lift what works, ensuring families are supported, children enter kindergarten ready, education K-12 works better, and generates success in college and career choices. It is good for our residents, our communities, and our state.”

“The Promise Neighborhoods have served as a catalyst in expanding the capacity of community members to identify resources to improve the state of their families and their communities,” said Janevete Cole, Alameda County Board of Education Area 5 trustee. “We are witnessing a transformation of communities through collective impact. Community members have been

empowered to take on leadership positions in the local school board and nonprofits that serve to enhance the lives of fellow community members who have immense needs. Through the advocacy and support of community members and the encouragement from Promise Neighborhood leadership, I myself, having been employed with Hayward Promise Neighborhoods as a community engagement and governmental relations representative, have now become an elected official to the Alameda County Board of Education."

Ann Mathieson, CEO of Marin Promise Partnership said, "The Marin Promise Partnership, a member of the StriveTogether cradle-to-career network, fully supports this bill as an important step forward in building sustainable community infrastructure for cross-sector partners to align around a common vision, share data to hold each other accountable, take collective action, and advocate for equitable, systemic change."

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Read more about the partner organizations involved with AB 2517 by visiting their websites.

For more information on the California Promise Neighborhood Network, visit <http://capromisenetwork.org>

For more information on the California Cradle to Career Coalition, visit <https://www.facebook.com/Cradle2CareerCA>

For more information on StriveTogether, visit <https://www.strivetogether.org>

For more information on GRACE/End Child Poverty in CA, visit <https://www.endchildpovertyca.org>.

Shimica Gaskins

GRACE

+1 626-356-4200

info@grace-inc.org

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