

My name is Cheri Diaz, founding director of Hope 4 Kids Early Learning Centers.

First, thank you for listening to us during the last council meeting. I was pleasantly surprised and filled with hope that our thoughts and words landed on such open minds and hearts. I appreciate your work for Goleta and am impressed and excited that child care is on the agenda again.

1. **Remove fees** and, in fact, provide incentives, subsidies or building/financial grants to directors or business owners wanting to start a child care business. *1 A. Eliminate zoning issues for schools.*
2. **Eliminate permits**, the permitting process, the fees, anything that detours, delays or prevents a child care operator from starting a child care center.
3. **Provide housing assistance** to early childhood education teachers who meet a certain educational standard (12 ECE units, maybe an AA in Early Childhood) AND can provide evidence that they have been working at a local child care facility for a certain amount of time. Maybe there is a reconfirmation process every 6 months or so based on paycheck stubs or a letter from the employer.
4. Lastly, **promote respecting the very field of early childhood education**. We are not babysitters. We are highly educated professionals who shape the minds, the thoughts, the actions, the planning, the very executive function of the brains that will one day lead this city. So help me and help all early childhood education professionals be seen, respected and treated as the educated, trained, and hard-working professionals we are.