

Strong Start #9

For the third year, each of the county's seven AAUW branches supports the Santa Clara County Office of Education's childcare and preschool initiative **Strong Start**.

AAUW's public policy advocates support for a strong system of high-quality public education and adequate and equitable funding for all students, **including preschool**.

At the September meeting, Dalenna Ruela Hughes from FIRST 5 Santa Clara County presented on QUALITY MATTERS and the Early Learning Master Plan (ELMP) Program Quality Goals. She provided an overview of Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for preschools. The advocacy issue is to determine and finalize the quality measures.

Dr. Matthew Tinsley presented progress toward the ELMP goals:

- Expansion of local funding for ECE Services
- County-wide Measure A which is hoped to pass and which will expand funding for early childhood programs
- Whole Child Initiative pilots in Alum Rock SD and Franklin-McKinley SD
- Provide parents with school readiness enrollment information through distribution of 25,000 copies of *Potter the Otter Gets Ready for Kindergarten* book plus 3 x 10,000 pieces of collateral.
- initiating ECE data dashboards for early childhood services use
- Engaging cities county-wide as partners in ECE facilities development, including initial conversations with City of San Jose and County school districts on including ECE facilities in any new developments.

In October, the meeting presented the developing process to report progress on ELMP goals to coalition members – including SCC IBC AAUW branches. See www.strongstartsantaclara.org.