FIONA MA, CPA
TREASURER
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

August 31, 2026

Chancellor Julio Frenk
University of California, Los Angeles
Murphy Hall
Los Angeles, California 90095

Re: Preserving UCLA's Early Care and Education Centers

Dear Chancellor Frenk:

Congratulations to you and the entire UCLA community on the university's continued national recognition. UCLA's standing among the nation's leading public universities reflects decades of visionary leadership, public investment, academic excellence, groundbreaking research, and the dedication of its faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

UCLA's transformation from a regional campus into a world-renowned research institution did not happen by chance. Following California's 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education, the university expanded its graduate programs, medical education, research capacity, and faculty. UCLA also recognized that attracting and retaining exceptional students and employees required more than classrooms and laboratories. It required investments in the services that enable people - and their families - to thrive. Accessible childcare has been an important part of that vision for approximately 60 years.

I am therefore deeply concerned by reports that UCLA is considering closing two of its existing early-childhood education centers. These centers are not simply employee amenities. They are essential infrastructure that allows student parents to continue their education and enables faculty, medical professionals, researchers, and other university employees to perform work that is critical to UCLA and the wider community.

California's affordability crisis is making it increasingly difficult for students and working families to live, study, and build their futures here. For many households, two incomes are necessary to cover housing and other basic expenses. When affordable childcare is unavailable, one parent may be forced to leave school or the workforce. That burden still falls disproportionately on women, limiting their educational opportunities, career advancement, lifetime earnings, and retirement security.

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I recently visited UCLA's Early Care and Education center at 3233 South Sepulveda Boulevard and met with its dedicated teachers. They shared the program's history, beginning with UCLA student parents who advocated for affordable childcare so they could concentrate on their studies. I also toured the thoughtfully designed facility that UCLA built approximately 30 years ago - an investment that reflected the university's long-term commitment to children, families, and educational opportunity.

I respectfully urge UCLA to pause any plans to close these centers and undertake a transparent review that includes student parents, employees, educators, organized labor, alumni, and other members of the UCLA community. I also encourage the university to explore sustainable alternatives, including:

- Engaging alumni whose families benefited from UCLA's childcare programs;
- Establishing a dedicated childcare fund and seeking employer-matching contributions;
- Pursuing philanthropic, foundation, state, and federal support;
- Examining partnerships with UCLA Health and other university divisions that depend upon a stable workforce;
- Reviewing underused real estate and other institutional assets for opportunities to support or expand childcare services; and
- Developing a long-term plan that recognizes early-childhood education as part of UCLA's academic, workforce, and equity infrastructure.

Any financial review should also account for the less visible costs of closure: students delaying or abandoning their degrees, employees reducing their hours or leaving UCLA, greater difficulty recruiting top professionals, and the loss of experienced early-childhood educators. What may appear to be a short-term savings could create much greater academic, operational, and human costs over time.

For six decades, UCLA's childcare program has helped generations of parents pursue an education, serve patients, teach students, and contribute to the university's excellence. Preserving this program would honor that legacy while demonstrating the kind of continued leadership and vision needed to keep UCLA at the forefront of public higher education.

I respectfully ask that you meet with the affected parents and educators, maintain operations while alternatives are fully evaluated, and work with the UCLA community to develop a sustainable path forward. UCLA has long understood that investing in families is an investment in educational excellence. I hope the university will continue to lead by example.

Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership of this important public institution. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter and assist in identifying potential resources and partnerships.

In Peace & Friendship,

FIONA MA, CPA
California State Treasurer

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