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Contact: Mayor's Office of Communications, 415-554-6131

***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**MAYOR LONDON BREED APPOINTS INGRID MEZQUITA TO
SERVE AS DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF EARLY CARE
AND EDUCATION**

Mezquita to oversee San Francisco's system of supporting and preparing children 0-5 years old

San Francisco, CA – Mayor London N. Breed today appointed Ingrid Mezquita to serve as Director of the Office of Early Care and Education (OECE). In this role, Mezquita will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of OECE's work, including organizing funding, coordinating resources, and administering programs to improve access to high quality care and education for children 0-5 years of age.

"I am proud to appoint Ingrid Mezquita to serve as the Director of the Office of Early Care and Education," said Mayor Breed. "Throughout her career, Ingrid has fought to ensure that all children have access to educational opportunities and high quality care to prepare them for the rest of their lives. I am confident that in her new role, she will continue to strengthen San Francisco's system of care for our youngest residents while improving access and equity throughout the City."

OECE is responsible for organizing local, state, and federal funding while administering and supporting programs to improve access to high quality care and education for children up to five years old. Additionally, the office is tasked with addressing the needs of early care and education work and building the capacity of the early care and education system. As one of the Departments within the San Francisco Human Services Agency (HSA), OECE connects families and children to HSA's larger network of supportive services dedicated to helping San Franciscans achieve their full potential through all stages of life.

OECE administers the Early Learning Scholarship, which provides financial assistance to pay for quality early care and education for eligible San Francisco families. Additionally the office administers the Preschool for All Tuition Credit program, which offers universal access to preschool for all 4-year-old children living in San Francisco through reduced cost preschool or tuition rebates.

"I have witnessed firsthand much of San Francisco's evolution when it comes to caring for its youngest residents — from my days of growing up here under the consent decree and bussed from the Mission to Chinatown, to helping our City be one of the first in the nation in launching its universal preschool system, Preschool for All," said Mezquita. "Despite the abundance of resources we have for our children, we are still challenged in closing disparities and realizing a vision in which all our children and their families have every opportunity to thrive and succeed."



It is out of my commitment to this vision, I answered the call to serve as the new Director for the Office of Early Care and Education. Every day, I get more excited about the upcoming possibilities and alignment of our City's services for our babies and their families."

"I am excited for Ingrid to lead the Office of Early Care and Education into its next chapter," said Board of Supervisors President Norman Yee. "She brings passion and decades of experience in the field. With her vision, I know San Francisco will continue trailblazing nationally with unprecedented investments and innovative strategies to support our youngest residents and their families."

Mezquita currently serves as Executive Director of First 5 San Francisco, which works closely with OECE to advance local, regional, and state-level discussions regarding the needs of young children. As part of her role as the Director of the Office of Early Care and Education, Mezquita will be tasked with coordinating all services provided by both First 5 San Francisco and the Office of Early Care and Education.

"I am thrilled that children and families in the birth to five age range will have a coordinated system of early education and care, advancing them towards competent kindergarten readiness," said Dr. Suzanne Giraudo, Chair, First 5, Children and Families Commission and Psychologist, Clinical Director, California Pacific Medical Center.

Mezquita grew up in the Mission District and attended San Francisco public schools. She raised her two daughters in San Francisco and is the proud grandmother of two granddaughters who are also being raised in the City.

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