

Debra is the Director of the Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education (OAECE) at the LA County Department of Public Health. OAECE leads program, policy and systems improvement efforts to support early care and education across LA County. With over 20 years of experience leading innovative initiatives for children and families, Debra has specialized in building the capacity of organizations and schools to deliver quality school readiness, literacy and parent engagement services. Over her career, she has managed family literacy programs like Motheread/Fatheread - Los Angeles, administered the early learning investments of United Way of Greater Los Angeles and led Families In Schools' Early Education and Family Literacy Department. In addition, Debra has taught graduate students in partnership with the UCLA School of Education and is a Field Instructor with the UCLA and USC Schools of Social Work. Most recently, Debra was a Senior Program Officer with First 5 LA leading innovative policy and system's change strategies to increase access to high-quality early care and education for children. Born and raised in Los Angeles, she holds a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from Cal State L.A. and a master's degree in Social Welfare from UCLA.