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Highlights

Nebraska Follows Louisiana's Lead on Tax Credits

Nebraska's Governor Ricketts signed [The School Readiness Tax Credit Act](#) into law. LB 889 will create two categories of income tax credits for child care and early childhood program providers-as well as early childhood staff- with the amounts tied to state quality standards and experience and education, respectfully. The total credits available will be capped at \$5 million reports [The Omaha World-Herald Bureau](#) . The original legislation that Omaha Sen. Heath Mello introduced had included additional tiers for parents and businesses, based on similar tax credits in Louisiana reports [The North Platte Bulletin](#).

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Federal Updates

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The first ESSA negotiated rulemaking committee came to a consensus on assessments, but not its other directive-the supplement not supplant issue-which means the Department of Education can propose language for this as it sees fit. Follow along with the implementation at the department's ESSA [website](#).

Child Nutrition Reauthorization

Rep. Todd Rokita released [Improving Child Nutrition and Education Act of 2016 \(H.R. 5003\)](#), the House Education and Workforce Committee's [child nutrition reauthorization bill](#). While the bill expands access to summer meals and increases the reimbursement rate for school breakfasts, advocacy groups like the [Food Research and Action Center \(FRAC\)](#) oppose the bill for relaxing nutrition standards and restricting the Community Eligibility Provision.

Suspension and Expulsion

The US Department of Health and Human Services released ["State and Local Action to Prevent Expulsion and Suspension in Early Learning Settings: Spotighting Progress in Policy and Supports."](#) a resource that highlights states and local community action that builds on the joint policy statement on expulsion and suspension. Building on this momentum a group of 30

national organizations, led by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), published a [statement](#) in support of the recommendations of the joint policy statement.

Early Head Start and Head Start

The Office of Head Start (OHS) released [ACF-PI-HS-16-02](#) Supplemental Funds Available to Extend Duration of Services in Head Start and Early Head Start, outlining the purpose, eligibility, and application process for the \$294 million in supplemental funding Congress appropriated for existing programs. OHS Director Dr. Blanca Enriquez wrote about the funding in a [blog post](#) and [FAQs](#) are available.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

The White House convened researchers, educators, government and business leaders to explore ways to support STEM from the very early years. In conjunction with the convening, the US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services partnered with *Too Small to Fail* to create a set of early [STEM resources](#).

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Policy Trends & Analysis

Child Health

Researchers at the Urban Institute published "[Uninsurance among Children, 1997-2015: Long-Term Trends and Recent Patterns](#)," that analyzed data from the National Health Interview Survey to look at the falling rates of child uninsurance since the passage of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in 1997.

State ECE Policy

The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) highlighted excerpts from governors' [2016 State of the State addresses](#) related to child care and early education for a total of 23 mentions on the importance of early learning.

US Census Data

Child Trends and the NALEO Educational Fund released "[The Invisible Ones: How Latino Children are Left Out of Our Nation's Census Count](#)" that highlights the nearly 400,000 young Latino children ages 0 to 4 that were undercounted in the 2010 Census the implication that has on the 2020 Census and distribution of federal government assistance before then.

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New Research

Contracted Slots

Researchers from the Oregon Child Care Research Partnership and Oregon State University published an evaluation of the Oregon Department of Human Services' [contracted slots](#) with providers of Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten (OHSPK) program and community-based programs in Oregon Programs of Quality (OPK), Oregon's forerunner to its QRIS system.

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Upcoming Events

May-June, 2016

Achieve OnDemand™ from the Ounce of Prevention Fund is hosting a number of new, live, online webinars made just for home visiting professionals and facilitated by home visiting experts. Topics include "Being Present with Families" and "The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children." Sign up [here](#) for more information.

June 1-3, 2016

The Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is hosting the [2016 Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency \(RECS\)](#) in Washington, D.C. that will focus on will focus on programs, policies and services that support low-income and vulnerable families on the path to economic self-sufficiency and well-being.

June 22-24, 2016

The Institute for Child Success (ICS), ReadyNation, and the Sorenson Impact Center are co-hosting the [Third Annual Conference of the Early Childhood Social Impact Performance Advisors](#) in Denver, Colorado. Final registration for remaining spots due May 15th.

June 29, 2016

The Education Commission of the States is holding its [National Forum on Education Policy](#) in Washington, D.C.

July 11-13, 2016

ACF is hosting the [National Research Conference on Early Childhood](#) (formally the Head Start National Research Conference) in Washington, D.C.

July 12-14, 2016

The BUILD Initiative and the QRIS National Learning Network are hosting the [2016 QRIS National Meeting](#) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

October 13-14, 2016

ICS is hosting the fourth annual [Early Childhood Research Symposium](#) in Charlotte, North Carolina. Deadline for calls for papers is June 1, 2016.

November 15-16, 2016

The Ounce of Prevention Fund is hosting the Sixth National [Summit on Quality in Home Visiting Programs](#) in Washington D.C. The event is targeted to researchers, advocates, policymakers and practitioners. Call for workshop proposals is [now open](#). For more information, visit [here](#).

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News and Resources

Early Childhood Education

- Leaders of the World Bank Group and UNICEF released a [joint statement](#) urging global leaders to increase investments in early childhood and announced a new alliance to make early childhood investments a global priority.
- The Council of Chief of State School Officers released a new policy statement titled ["Equity Starts Early: How Chiefs Will Build High-Quality Early Education"](#) that includes five action steps to leverage the value of early childhood education within the public education system.

Paid Leave

New York and California celebrated the passage of new and expanded Paid Family Leave laws this spring. New York became the fourth state to guarantee paid family leave to bond with a new child or care for an ill family member and San Francisco passed a measure to build on the state's existing policy. San Francisco's efforts actually led Gov. Jerry Brown to amend the state's legislation.

Pay for Success (PFS)

The Institute for Child Success (ICS) announced the selection of its [second cohort of communities](#) to receive technical assistance in analyzing the feasibility of PFS programs. ICS is one of several grantees of the Social Innovation Fund's (SIF) Pay for Success program that provides technical assistance to communities and focuses on early childhood programs. The cohort includes the City of Evansville, Indiana, the City of Tempe, Arizona, the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, California and the State of Tennessee.

Workforce

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center and the Early Care and Education Consortium have jointly released "[Tackling an Early Childhood Workforce Study: Important Considerations.](#)"

Head Start

Dr. Bettye Caldwell, an educator who paved the way for Head Start passed away at 91 [The New York Times](#) reports.

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News From The States

[AZ](#) | [CA](#) | [FL](#) | [GA](#) | [KS](#) | [LA](#) | [NH](#) | [NM](#) | [WA](#) |

Arizona

- [The Sierra Vista Herald](#) profiled the Cochise County First Things First region and its revenue sources, administrative structure, and voting body.
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California

- First 5 LA announced its 2016 State Legislative Agenda that includes an "extension of subsidized child care (AB 2150 by Assembly Members Miguel Santiago and Shirley Weber), a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment tool (SCR 125 by Senator Ben Allen) and mental health intervention and prevention services for preschoolers (AB 1644 by Assembly Member Rob Bonta)." [Read more](#) from the First 5 LA press release.
- The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) published the results from its 12th annual survey on Californians and education, including the fact that 68% of those polled believed preschool participation is "very important" to child success. This support ranged by geographic area-highest in Los Angeles with 76%-and demographic group-highest among Latinos with 87%. Read more from [89.3 KPCC](#).
- State Sen. Allen introduced a [Senate Concurrent Resolution](#) that would state the Legislature's intention "to work toward adopting a statewide, developmentally appropriate kindergarten readiness assessment tool to assess the readiness of children entering transitional kindergarten and kindergarten."

Florida

- Gov. Rick Scott signed into a law a bill that brings Florida into compliance with many of the federal changes in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization Act of 2014 including health and safety, eligibility and training and professional development reports [The Gainesville Sun](#).
- Florida and Utah joined the ranks of 28 other states and the District of Columbia in opting to provide access to Medicaid and CHIP for lawfully present immigrant children. By taking advantage of the Legal Immigrant Children's Health Improvement Act (ICHIA) provision included in the 2009 reauthorization of CHIP, approximately 18,000 children (17,000 in Florida alone) will be able to access health insurance now reports CLASP's [Suzanne Wikle](#).

Georgia

- The Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students and Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning launched a new public awareness campaign for the state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for child care, Quality Rated, reports [The Atlanta-Journal Constitution](#).

Kansas

- The state's Consensus Revenue Estimating Group reduced its budget projections for this year and next by \$228.6 million and the Brownback administration is moving a number of plans to meet the budget shortfall, including delays to transportation projects and securitizing a portion of the tobacco settlement that currently goes to funding early childhood programs. Additional proposals include cuts to education funding and delays to pension payments. Read more from [The Great Bend Post](#).

Louisiana

- Law enforcement leaders in Louisiana released a new report from Fight Crime Invest in Kids called "[We're the Guys You Pay Later.](#)" which makes the connection between high quality early learning and future crime.

New Hampshire

- [The Sentinel Source](#) published an editorial in support of Senate Bill 503 that would create a commission and allow the state to enter into Pay for Success contracts for preschool programs.

New Mexico

- Gov. Susana Martinez invited the 750 families on the waiting list for the state's Child Care Assistance Program to reapply after the state raised the cap on family income reports [The Albuquerque Journal](#).

Washington

- The Legislature concluded its supplemental budget year session with an increase of \$12.7 million to support family child care providers to succeed in delivering [high quality services](#).

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The [Ounce national policy team](#) partners with and supports early childhood leaders in states as they advance a comprehensive agenda for at-risk children and families. We do this by providing individualized strategy and policy consultation and resources; facilitating peer-to-peer learning and networking across states; and supporting Educare Schools and the Educare Learning Network in the development of their policy and advocacy work.

The National Policy Digest is a bi-monthly newsletter that shares up-to-date and noteworthy developments in state and federal early childhood news, policy and funding changes, research, policy trends and analyses, upcoming events, etc. culled from diverse sources in the field. To subscribe, please visit our [website](#).



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