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Highlights

Illinois Enacts Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Legislation

Governor Rauner [signed HB2663](#) into law which limits preventable preschool expulsions and provides protections for children in early learning programs funded by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and child care programs licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services. It also ensures children remain in the most beneficial early care and education setting. Read more from [WTTW Chicago Tonight](#).

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Federal Updates

Home Visiting Reauthorization

Members of the US House of Representatives Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce Committees introduced [The Home Visiting Works Act of 2017](#). The bill would reauthorize the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program for five years with a gradual increase in program funding up to \$800 million annually. Read [statements](#) from Reps. Danny Davis, Diana DeGette, Lloyd Doggett and Kathy Castor for more information. The 48-member Home Visiting Coalition supported the introduction of the legislation in a [press statement](#).

Student Parents and Child Care

Members in the House and Senate reintroduced the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) Reauthorization Act that would increase funding to \$67 million permanently each year for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School program from its current funding of \$15 million. The [program](#) is currently at risk of elimination under the House Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. Read a [press statement](#) from the bill sponsors for more information.

FY2018 Federal Budget

Members of the US House of Representative continue to move forward on the FY2018 appropriations process last month. The House Budget and House Appropriations Committees coordinated on funding numbers as House leadership is considering moving the 12 appropriations bills as an omnibus package. The Appropriations Committee's subcommittees reviewed and approved a number of the funding bills including the [Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Funding bill](#). [First Five Years Fund](#) noted the subcommittee's commitment to early childhood education through proposed allocation increases to Head Start (\$29.1M) and Child Care and Development Block Grant (\$4M), as well as level funding for Preschool Development Grants. [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities \(CBPP\)](#) and [Center for Law and Social Policy \(CLASP\)](#) also analyzed the impact of the appropriations bills on children and families.

Federal Education Regulations

The Department of Education [pushed back the deadline](#) by a month to September 20 for submitting comments on "regulations that may be appropriate for repeal, replacement or modification" that was posted in the Federal Register back in June in accordance with Executive Order 13777.

Reforming American Immigration for Strong Economy Act (RAISE)

Senators David Perdue and Tom Cotton released the [RAISE Act](#), with the goal of reducing legal immigration by 50% in the next five years. The proposal would create an entirely new visa system based off of points, cut permanent residents cards by 500,000 a year, eliminate the diversity visa program and would make new holders of green cards ineligible for welfare assistance.

- The Office of the Press Secretary for the White House [released a statement](#) on President Trump's support of the act.
 - Over 180 anti-poverty, health and civil rights organizations released a statement [condemning RAISE](#).
 - More on the [proposed outcomes](#) of the RAISE act from the Center for Law and Social Policy.
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Policy Trends & Analysis

State Early Childhood Data Systems

Ounce of Prevention Fund published "[An Unofficial Guide to the Why and How of State Early Childhood Data Systems](#)," as part of its Ounce Policy Conversations series. The unofficial guide is meant to help early childhood policy leaders ensure that their state builds and leverages a unified early childhood data system.

American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics released a [policy statement](#) calling on legislators and officials to promote early childhood education. The report highlights the economic potential of investing in early childhood education, barriers to high-quality early instruction, steps that have been taken to improve child care and schooling, and the pediatrician's role to advocate for early childhood education funding. Read more from [Education Week](#).

Infants and Toddlers

- ZERO TO THREE (ZTT) released a new brief "[Advancing State Policies for Infants and Toddlers: Lessons Learned from Three States](#)" that describes the experiences of three states (Indiana, Oregon and Vermont) working to develop and take action toward cross-sector infant-toddler policy priorities and offers recommendations for other states looking to engage in similar processes.
- Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and ZTT released "[Health Insurance: A Critical Support for Infants, Toddlers, and their Families](#)" outlining the positive benefits of access to quality, affordable health insurance.

Third Grade Reading

The Institute for Child Success and the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation, in collaboration with BEST NC, produced [What Works for Third Grade Reading](#), working papers that address 12 of the North Carolina Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative's.

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New Research

Class Size

A large meta-analysis published in [Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis](#) spanning from six decades worth of research suggests that child-teacher ratios of 7.5 to 1 or lower can be beneficial for cognitive and achievement outcomes in early childhood education programs. Read more in [Education Week](#).

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)

Researchers with the Rand Corporation published "Quality Rating and Improvement Systems for Early Care and Education Programs: Making the Second Generation Better," that assesses what is known about QRIS systems and how states might strategically allocate funding given the loss of RTT-ELC support. [New America's Abbie Lieberman](#) summarizes the report () and argues for further research to determine best use of Quality Rating and Improvement Systems to measure program quality and support programs through their improvement.

Parental Predictors of Childhood Executive Functioning

Researchers at the University of Cambridge [released an article](#) in Child Development detailing longitudinal research supporting specific parental predictors of childhood executive functioning.

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News From The States

[CO](#) | [FL](#) | [IL](#) | [IN](#) | [ME](#) | [MI](#) | [NM](#) | [NY](#) | [OK](#) |

Colorado

- [The Atlantic's Ann Schimke](#) discusses a Denver in-house training initiative with the objective of reducing the national shortage of qualified teachers.

Florida

- [The Hill's Naomi Jagoda](#) chronicles Marco Rubio's hosting of roundtables in support of his child tax credit proposal.
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Illinois

- Esther Kwon and Rachel Droze pen for [Fox Illinois](#) on the lack of a state budget precluding millions of dollars going to Illinois schools.
 - Monique Garcia of [The Chicago Tribune](#) details the Illinois Senate's override of a veto by Governor Bruce Rauner to strike down a measure that would redefine distribution of tax dollars to Illinois schools.
 - Juan Perez Jr. and Hal Dardick of [The Chicago Tribune](#) report on Chicago Public School's newly proposed [2017-2018 Fiscal Year budget](#).
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Indiana

- Dan McGowan of [Inside Indiana Business](#) details a \$150,000 grant from the PNC foundation dedicated to support early childhood education in Indiana.
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Maine

- Louise Dean writes an Op-Ed in [Bangor Daily News](#) regarding student hunger and the implementation of a free breakfast program in her school district that saw a 350% increase in participation over a three-month period.
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Michigan

- Mary Beth Almond chronicles the beginning of Michigan's statewide Meet Up and Eat Up program, intended to allow students to continue receiving healthy meals in the summer, in [C&G Newspapers](#).
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New Mexico

- [The Albuquerque Journal's Wrenn Popp](#) briefs on Santa Fe County's detailed plan to provide human navigators for indigent or under-insured people with persistent and expensive health care problems.
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New York

- Pamela Morris, The Vice Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs at NYU, [discusses strengthening school readiness](#) in NYC'S Pre-K in *Education Week*.
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Oklahoma

- Tulsa's public school pre-k program still has 15% of its spots available, according to Samuel Hardiman for [Tulsa World](#).

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News and Resources

Early Childhood Programs

Yasmina Vinci, the executive director of the National Head Start Association, published a piece in [Huffington Post](#) highlighting the findings of the recent GAO report on early childhood programs.

Immigration

The Center for American Progress [debates the effects](#) of President Trump's immigration policies on American children.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

In [TribTalk](#), Celia Cole, the CEO of Feeding Texas, discusses SNAP's original intentions as a food program and recent debates in Washington that may imply economic accountability.

Data Systems

The QRIS National Learning Network and the Build Initiative [released a taping of a webinar](#) exploring an innovative approach to help states develop integrated early childhood data tools for program and policy decision-making.

Home Visiting

Chistine Todd Whitman and Brad Henry [write for The Hill](#) on the bipartisan case for reauthorizing MIECHV.

Cultural Responsiveness in Education

Dana Nerenberg pens for [Homerroom](#), the official blog of the US Department of Education, regarding the need to engage teachers in race, equity and disproportionality in discipline data.

Building Academic Skills and Fostering Motivation

Stanford Professor Deborah Stipek pens an op-ed in the [Hechinger Report](#) on academic versus play-based preschools.

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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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