The Ounce of Prevention Fund gives children in poverty the best chance for success in school and in life by advocating for and providing the highest quality care and education from birth to age five. The Ounce provides consultation, peer learning opportunities, and resources to early childhood advocates and Educare Learning Network, state agency, and other state and local leaders in 23 states and Washington D.C. to improve, implement and expand the policies, investments, programs and services that create high-functioning, high-quality, state early care and education systems. The National Policy Team focuses on the intersection of policy, research, and practice, delivering policy content and advocacy expertise to state and local stakeholders, and supports the Educare Learning Network to shape and enact policies and systems needed to deliver evidence based early childhood practices that narrow the opportunity gap.

The State Policy Update provides a snapshot of early childhood care and education budget and policy changes in states during the 2018 legislative sessions as of October 2018, many of which resulted in greater access to higher quality early learning programs and more effective early childhood systems.

You can find previous editions of the State Policy Update at http://bit.ly/2J06a2F.

This report was produced with generous support from the Buffett Early Childhood Fund
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OVERVIEW

In 2018, numerous states across the country made major policy changes and investments to improve the lives of young children and families.

• The 2018-19 California State Budget included a first-ever statewide investment in voluntary, evidence-based home visiting. The newly-created CalWORKS Home Visiting Initiative will be funded from Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 through FY2022 by a $158.5 million set aside of California Work Opportunity & Responsibility for Kids (CalWORKs) funding, the state's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. After FY2022, funding will be subject to annual appropriation.

• Colorado continued its Child Care Contribution Tax Credit for five years, expanded the state's refundable Child Care Expenses Tax Credit, and increased access to the Colorado Preschool Program and full-day kindergarten by investing $4.2 million in 1,000 more seats.

• Georgia and Washington passed expulsion bills. In Georgia, HB 740 requires schools to screen students in preschool through third grade for underlying factors using a multi-tiered system of supports before giving more than five days of out-of-school suspension. Washington created a new child care licensing rule that requires providers to establish formal expulsion policies and to share them with parents, creating a more transparent and communicative process to address children with challenging behavior.

• Kansas advocates improved the statute defining pre-K eligibility and ensured that pre-K is included in the school funding formula mandated by the state supreme court.

• Louisiana's State Board of Education passed new rules to reduce the teacher-to-child ratio by one child in all early childhood settings serving children from birth to age four. These changes will be fully implemented statewide over the course of three years. In addition, a two-year study commission was established in statute to develop a long-term strategic plan for early care and education and provide for possible pilot programs.

• Maine increased child care subsidy rates to the 75th percentile of the market rate and passed legislation in support of more thorough background checks for child care providers.

• Michigan approved a new investment of $5 million dollars for early intervention services serving infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities.

• Wisconsin increased Wisconsin Shares child care program payments by $8 million in FY19.
OVERVIEW

Although early childhood funding was increased to expand access to public preschool in states such as California, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, and New York, some state policy proposals faced significant challenges.

- In Colorado, full funding for full-day kindergarten was not approved.
- In Kansas, legislation to amend work requirements and to lift the 2-year lifetime limit for child care assistance for the children of parents enrolled in college failed to receive funding.
- Michigan legislators did not allocate new Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds to change the family income eligibility threshold from 130% FPL to 150% FPL for families requesting child care assistance.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act was reauthorized in 2014 for the first time in nearly 20 years. The fiscal year 2018 omnibus spending bill included the largest-ever single-year increase in federal funding for CCDBG, increasing discretionary funding by $2.4 billion. States have taken advantage of these opportunities to increase funding and improve their child care policies. Some examples include:

- New Hampshire modified work requirements for child care subsidies to include approved substance use disorder treatment or mental health treatment programs, increasing access to child care for parents struggling with addiction.
- In New Jersey, approximately $15 million was appropriated for the first child care subsidy rate increase in 10 years. While all centers receiving subsidy reimbursements benefited from a 1-4 percent increase, those participating in New Jersey's quality rating and improvement system, Grow NJ Kids, particularly those serving infants, saw the highest subsidy increases, including a 24 percent increase for infants in a “five star” program.
- In New York, more than $100 million in new funding for child care assistance was made possible through $7 million in new state funds and $97 million in new federal CCDBG funds. Up to $80 million will be allocated to fund infant toddler services and supports.

While these successes are impressive, they only scratch the surface of the accomplishments state advocates and their many partners have achieved over the past year. In addition to administrative rule and legislative changes and budget increases that expand high-quality early learning, states approved policies such as infant and early childhood mental health consultation and paid family leave that support the whole child and family. We are excited to share highlights from each state that illustrate the persistent work of early childhood advocates, providers, and lawmakers that continue to move the field forward in creating environments in which young children and families can thrive.
### KEY

#### State Budget Updates
- ⌛ Pending or Proposed Increased/Restoration
- ⚠ Funds Held Level
- ⏰ Pending or Proposed Budget Cut
- ⌬ Budget Cut
- ✗ Budget Proposal Did Not Pass
- $ New Investment

#### Recent Policy Changes
- 🔧 Policy Change
- ⌚ Pending Policy Change
ARIZONA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Expand legislative and public knowledge about the importance of the early years, state-funded programs, as well as, the larger early childhood system that supports these programs.

• Broaden policymaker engagement through early childhood system partnership.

• Support state agency partners in pursuing funding that supports child welfare and early learning.

• Continue to support the newly founded Arizona Early Childhood Alliance as an umbrella group representing the interests of early childhood community before policymakers.

• Review Arizona's Quality Improvement and Rating System (Quality First) to align policies and leverage resources across state agency partners and Head Start centers to bring to scale.

• Strengthen Arizona's comprehensive early intervention system through aligning policy, levering resources and addressing challenges to children not receiving timely and appropriate screening, evaluation, referral and services/treatment.

• Secure legislative authorization to provide flexibility to Arizona's Children's Health Insurance Program (Kids Care) to keep new enrollment open in federal fiscal year 2020 and beyond.

• Secure legislative authorization for the Arizona Department of Economic Security to spend $56 million in additional federal funding provided through Child Care Development Block Grants to expand child care quality and access.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Broaden policymaker engagement among system partners through the Arizona Early Childhood Alliance.
State Budget Updates


HB 2127 – Children's Health Insurance Program: Allows the state more flexibility to fund CHIP (“Kids Care”) in the event that federal government contributions fall below 100% of the funding. Current law requires the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) to freeze enrollment if federal funding dips. HB2127 would have allowed AHCCCS to continue enrolling new applicants with reduced rates. Nearly passed, and is expected to be reintroduced in 2019 as federal funding is expected to drop in federal fiscal year 2020.

SB 1445 – Dental Care for Pregnant Women: Provides dental care of up to $1,000 per year to adult pregnant women covered through Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, improving oral health of expectant mothers and their babies.

Authorization for the Arizona Department of Economic Security to spend $56 million in federal funds under the Childcare Development Block Grants.

Recent Policy Changes

Childcare Assistance: HB2449 – Each federal fiscal year, the Arizona Department for Economic Security is required to pay at least 33% of quality set-aside monies for tiered reimbursement of childcare providers that meet the quality standard.

Foster Care Tuition Waiver: HB2482 gives more foster care youth opportunities for a college education by making a pilot project permanent to waive tuition and fees at Arizona's universities and colleges.

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www.theOunce.org/nationalpolicy
CALIFORNIA
Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Improve access to quality infant and toddler care in California by expanding available program spaces, increasing state funding rates for infant and toddler care, creating a grant program to fund implementation and startup costs of new child care facilities, and expanding a fund to recruit a new generation of family child care providers (See: AB 2292 – Aguiar-Curry)

• Enhance the statewide consumer education database for parents to access child care information and referral tools online (See: AB 2960 – Thurmond)

• Restore professional development days to state-contracted programs (See: AB 2626 – Mullin)

• Ensure children receive the timely developmental screenings so critical to their optimal growth and development (See: AB 11 – McCarty)

• Develop and implement a birth-to-entering-first-grade license option for day care centers (See: AB 605 – Mullin)

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Develop a single, regionalized reimbursement rate system for childcare, preschool, and early learning services that compensates all teachers and providers for the full cost of providing care, recognizes the costs of meeting varying quality standards and regulations, and strengthens the ability of the state’s mixed delivery system to provide quality early learning options.

• Expand California’s child care salary/retention incentive program, and lay the groundwork for supporting implementation of revised child development permit requirements if the Commission on Teacher Credentialing adopts proposed changes in 2019.

• Enhance the statewide consumer education database and website to include required material, such as additional public information to assist consumers with child care searches and accessing additional public benefits. One-time Budget Act funds for the website were obtained in this year’s budget to bring California into federal compliance. Ongoing funds are still needed.
State Budget Updates

Early Care and Education:

- An increase of 13,407 new Alternative Payment slots, of which 11,307 are available until June 30, 2022.
- An increase of $40.2 million for increased Standard Reimbursement Rate increments for infants, toddlers, and special needs children, growing to $80.3 million in future years.
- An increase of $10 million for a county pilot for inclusive care, $5 million for licensed child care teacher professional development, $5 million for the California Child Care Initiative Project, and $6 million for other one-time quality activities, including development of the mychildcare.org website.
  - Delivers on rate increases and 2,959 new full-day preschool slots agreed to in 2016 as well as $61 million for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and a full-year rate increase.
  - An increase of $26.4 million for federal compliance activities, specifically annual inspections for licensed child care providers.
  - Includes $128 million for caseload adjustments and COLA for child care programs.
  - Provides $167 million for the Inclusive Early Education Expansion Grant program.
  - Includes $13 million to make the Regional Market Rate (RMR) hold harmless provision permanent
  - Adopts trailer bill language to clarify that Preschool and Early Transition Kindergarten funding can be braided.

The Early Care and Education Coalition requested the establishment of a grant program to fund facilities costs for non-local educational agency (LEA) providers. A program for LEAs to adapt facilities to better support expansion of inclusive care was included in the budget.

The Early Care and Education Coalition requested the restoration of professional development days to state-contracted programs. While it was not enacted through the Budget Act, this provision is included in AB 2626 (Mullin).
State Budget Updates

Early Care and Education:

- The American Heart Association requested $10 million for dedicated technical assistance and grant opportunities for child care providers in low-income communities or serving low-income families to incorporate nutrition, active play, and screen time standards.

- The California Alternative Payment Program Association requested the addition of 100,000 vouchered child care slots for working families. Only 13,407 slots were funded.

- The California Alternative Payment Program Association requested an increase to provider rates to reflect the actual cost of care and California’s minimum wage. The California Alternative Payment Program Association requested $50 million to support needed technology upgrades for child care and early education programs, including the updating of phone systems and servers, renewal of software licensures, the transition to electronic applications and storage, training staff, and creating a new version of the centralized eligibility list.

- United Domestic Workers Local 3930 AFSCME requested an assessment of the costs to develop an electronic timecard process for the monthly attendance records at alternative payment programs.

- The California Food Policy Advocates requested the reinstatement of the state supplemental meal reimbursement for child care meals that was eliminated in 2012.

- The California Food Policy Advocates requested an increase to the supplemental rate for meals served on K-12 campuses and for family child care homes from $0.1717 per meal to $0.2306 per meal and a raise to the rate of reimbursement for child care homes operating under a public school authority.

- The California Food Policy Advocates requested an increase to the “Breakfast Before the Bell” program by $1 million and a continuation of funding the program for five years.

- The California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance requested $76.3 million to increase ASES rates to keep pace with increases in the minimum wage.

- The Child Care Law Center requested $11 million to increase hourly licensed-exempt child care rates to reflect 70 percent of the market rate.

- CompTIA and TechNet requested $100 million to create the After School Kids Code Grant Program for a three-year pilot for students to learn coding in existing afterschool programs.

- Silicon Valley Children’s Advocacy Network requested replacing the Child Care Facilities Revolving Loan Fund with a grant-based program.
State Budget Updates

Child Health:

CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative provides a total of $158.5 million in one-time Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds for the program’s costs through calendar year 2021. Placeholder trailer bill language was adopted to offer the service to first-time parents and caregivers, and then allowing for the extension of the service to additional families with young children. This program is subject to funding in the annual Budget Act. This is California’s first state-level investment in home visiting.

All Children Thrive Program – Mental Health Services Act Funding provides $10 million over three years, and budget bill language through the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to implement the All Children Thrive program. All Children Thrive/California (ACT/CA) is a three-year, equity-focused, community-driven initiative to develop, test, and refine the tools and support diverse communities need to prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), counter their effects, promote healing, and foster individual and community resilience, giving all California children the opportunity to thrive. CDPH will gather best practices from around the world and, together with leaders and residents from 12 low-income California cities and counties, establish and evaluate groundbreaking prevention and intervention strategies. By the end of the initiative, CDPH will demonstrate measurable outcomes in pilot communities and will have evidence-based models ready to scale throughout the state. ACT/CA builds on the ACT national initiative that supports transformative innovation and improvement to prioritize children’s health and development in more than a dozen cities around the country.

Black Infant Health Program provides $8 million ongoing, trailer bill, and budget bill language, to expand the Black Infant Health Program. While the social support, stress management, and empowerment model of the Black Infant Health Program is an evidence-based intervention that reduces black infant mortality, the rate of black infant mortality has remained twice that of any other group. Other interventions that have shown promise generally include a team-based approach to care that couples social interventions with medical interventions. The Centering Pregnancy model is a group-based intervention that follows the recommended schedule of 10 prenatal visits, with each visit 90 minutes to two hours long. According to Centering Healthcare, which developed the model, pregnant women engage in their own care by taking their own weight and blood pressure and recording their own health data, with private time with their provider for belly check. CDPH indicates the group-based intervention in the Black Infant Health Program is partially derived from the Centering Pregnancy model. The budget adopts placeholder trailer bill language to expand the Black Infant Health Program’s scope to fund local programs that combine social interventions with medical interventions and other wraparound services, including, but not limited to, evaluation, personalized case management, educational programs, and wraparound care provided by home visitors and various medical personnel. These programs may utilize existing approaches, such as Centering Pregnancy, or other evidence-based approaches that have shown promise in reducing the incidence of black infant mortality, premature labor, and low birth weight.
State Budget Updates

Child Health:

- Provider Rates and Proposition 56 Funds in Medi-Cal provides approximately $163 million for physician payments and $70 million for dental payments in 2018–19. Additionally, $55.3 million to support new growth in Medi-Cal in 2018–19. The Administration will continue to work with the Legislature and stakeholders on a 2018–19 supplemental payment structure for submission to the federal government by September 2018.

- Silicon Valley Children’s Advocacy Network requested funding for incentives for pediatricians and other health providers to screen for developmental delays.

- Silicon Valley Children’s Advocacy Network requested a higher wage replacement and longer time available for paid family leave.

Family Resiliency:

- Safety Net Reserve adopts placeholder trailer bill language to create the Safety Net Reserve, with Medi-Cal and CalWORKs subaccounts, and transfer $200 million to the CalWORKs subaccount. The Department of Finance will develop methodology for future funding of subaccounts in consultation with the Legislative Analyst’s Office and the Legislature.

- No Child in Deep Poverty provides $90 million beginning April 1, 2019 to increase CalWORKs grants and $360 million ongoing as the first of three steps to get children and families to 50 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. The second and third steps do not take effect until they are fully funded in the budget.

Other Early Childhood Final Budget Actions:

- Places $1.022 billion in Proposition 56 funding into a non-budget item to be appropriated through a future bill.

- Provides $8.9 million in 2018–19, $9.7 million in 2019–20, $10.3 million in 2020–21, and $10.8 million in 2021–22 for Pediatric Day Health Care services

- Children Mental Health Innovation Incubator Pilot creates the Children’s Innovation Incubator at the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC). MHSOAC received expenditure authority of $5 million from the Mental Health Services Fund in 2018–19 to create a Children’s Innovation Incubator to support program implementation, provide technical assistance and training, and ensure counties are fully leveraging funds to improve outcomes for children within California’s mental health system. According to MHSOAC, the incubator will assist MHSOAC and counties in improving the effectiveness of innovative approaches for children’s mental health services and provide California the opportunity to develop and test new, unproven mental health models with the potential to become tomorrow’s best practices. The $5 million investment will cover start-up and partially cover operations for three years.
State Budget Updates

Other Early Childhood Final Budget Actions:

CalWORKs Diaper Benefit provides $10 million one-time. Beginning April 1, 2018, diaper benefits will be included as a welfare to work (WTW) supportive service in accordance with AB 480 (Asm. Gonzalez Fletcher, Chapter 690, Statutes of 2017). The funding will be allocated to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to contract with “diaper banks,” or non-profit charitable organizations that collect and purchase diapers for the purpose of regularly distributing those diapers directly to low-income individuals free of charge, for the establishment of a Community Diaper Grant Program Fund. Under the new law, any WTW participant who is participating in an approved WTW plan will be eligible. The benefit will be issued monthly, for $30, to assist with diaper costs for each child who is under 36 months of age.

Revenue and Data:

Cannabis allocates $10 million for an equity program contingent on passage of legislation on social equity through the policy process.


Higher Education:

Online College proposal provides $100 million one-time and $20 million ongoing to create a new online community college to be administered by the Board of Governors. The new college would develop courses and programs that lead to short-term credentials and certifications with labor market value and are not duplicative of programs offered at existing colleges.

Recent Policy Changes

Early Care and Education:

Child Care Center License: AB 605 (Mullin) would create an Integrated Child Care Center License for child care centers serving children from birth through Kindergarten entrance.

Expansion of Child Care: The final Budget Act of 2018-19 enacted almost all of the policy provisions of AB 2292 (Aguiar-Curry), which develops crucial infrastructure for California’s child care system by: 1) increasing state funding rates for infant and toddler care; 2) creating a grant program to fund implementation and startup costs for new or expanded child care facilities; and 3) expanding a fund to recruit a new generation of licensed family child care providers. The piece that was not included in the budget, the establishment of a grant program to fund facilities costs for non-LEA providers (a program for LEAs to adapt facilities to better support expansion of inclusive care was included in the budget), will be a priority moving into the 2019-20 budget year.
Recent Policy Changes

Early Care and Education:

Income Threshold Eligibility: AB 2626 (Mullin) would apply current early learning and child care subsidized program flexibilities, afforded in thirteen counties, to families and providers throughout the state. These flexibilities include expanding age eligibility and removing restrictions for children who can be served in a California State Preschool Program (CSPP), increasing the State Median Income eligibility threshold in order to expand the number of working families who are eligible for services, increasing the eligibility timeframe in order to allow stability and continuity of services for children and families, resulting in better outcomes for children while closing the kindergarten readiness gap, increasing the utilization of available funding by allowing providers stability and continuity of services of enrollment of children and families, offering better workforce stability by providing staff development opportunities, and providing flexibility in funding adjustments to allow contractors to better utilize available funding.

Child Health:

Mental Health Consultation: AB 2698 (Rubio) would benefit children in the California State Preschool Program, infants and toddlers in general child care and development programs, and children ages 0 to 5 served in family child care home networks, by authorizing providers to utilize existing subsidized child care funds to provide services that increase access to critical early childhood mental health consultation services.

Monitor Funds: SB 1004 (Wiener) would establish a strategic, statewide focus for how counties utilize funds generated by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) for prevention and intervention to address the origins of mental health needs.

Family Resiliency:

College Saving Accounts: AB 1785 (Nazarian) excludes the principal and interest of a 529 college savings plan from any asset or resources test to determine Medi-Cal eligibility. Additionally, it ensures qualified distributions from 529 savings accounts are not counted as income for a Medi-Cal asset or resources test. AB 1785 was signed by the Governor in July 2018.

Lactation Rooms at Workplaces: AB 1976 (Limn) would codify federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) protections in California law by requiring that employers provide nursing mothers with a space other than a bathroom to express breast milk.

Family and Sick Leave Policy for Public Schools: AB 2289 (Weber) would establish a statewide family and sick leave policy for young parents enrolled in California public schools in order to support their academic success and allow them to bond with and care for their children.
Recent Policy Changes

Family Resiliency:

Lactation Rooms at Colleges: AB 2785 (Rubio) would ensure that California Community Colleges and California State Universities provide lactation accommodations to their students by including access to a private and secure room on campus for the purposes of nursing an infant or addressing other needs related to lactation.

Database for Parents to Access Childcare Information: AB 2960 (Thurmond) would require the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a consumer education database for parents to access child care information and referral tools online, and convene a stakeholder workgroup for the purposes of evolving the database into a comprehensive online portal for early education and expanded learning programs.

Maternal Mental Health: AB 3032 (Frazier) would require hospitals with perinatal units to develop and implement a program relating to maternal mental health conditions including, but not limited to, postpartum depression.

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COLORADO

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Continue work to ensure all kids get a healthy start, with a particular focus on mental and behavioral health and discipline policies.

• Expand access to quality, affordable, and available child care, with a focus on infant and toddler care.

• Increase access to pre-K and full-day kindergarten.

• Support the early childhood workforce by utilizing outcomes from state research studies to advance a policy agenda and assist with implementation of the new state professional development plan.

• Leverage early intervention to pursue two-generation supports for children and families.

• Address maternal and infant mortality disparities.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Working in partnership with 9to5 Colorado’s FAMLI Coalition, explore paid family leave, and lend the expertise of the early childhood field on the importance of paid family leave for families.

• Child and child care tax credits put forth by the School Readiness and Early Childhood Legislative Committee and other family economic security policies.
State Budget Updates

- Colorado Child Care Assistance Program Funding Increase: +$21,100,000
- Funding for Early Childhood Councils’ systems-building work: +$1,000,000
- Creation of a new line item for the evidence-based parenting and educator training program, The Incredible Years: +$600,000
- New line item to support the training and certification of the early care and education workforce: +$500,000
- Additional 1,000 preschool and full-day kindergarten slots: +$4,150,000
- Additional funding for the Expelled and At-Risk Student Services grant program: +$2,000,000
- Additional funding for the Early Literacy Grant program: +$1,000,000
- Oral health programs, including “Cavity Free by Three”: +$500,000
- Full funding for full-day kindergarten
- Creation of a new line item for the evidence-based parenting and educator training program, The Incredible Years: +$600,000”
- New line item to support the training and certification of the early care and education workforce: +$500,000

Recent Policy Changes

Reauthorization of the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit (CCCTC): HB 18-1004 [Coleman & Wilson/Tate & Kefalas] continues the CCCTC until January 1, 2025. A 50% tax credit is available to individuals and businesses that contribute to child care, after-school programming, youth-serving organizations, youth shelters, residential treatment centers access, affordability, and quality in Colorado (Fiscal Note estimates ~$66 million in contributions).

Expansion of the Child Care Expenses Tax Credit: HB 18-1208 [Duran & Winter/Martinez Humenik] keeps the child care expenses tax credit available to those earning less than $60,000 per year and, for all eligible taxpayers, expands the size of the tax credit that can be claimed from the current level of 10%-50% (depending on income) to 50% for all taxpayers (Fiscal Note estimates $3.7 million investment in offsetting child care costs).

Expand Access to the Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE) Program in the Colorado Preschool Program by 1,000 slots: HB 18-1379’s [Pettersen & Wilson/Hill] additional slots are used for preschool and full-day kindergarten for children with risk factors affecting school readiness. Also per-pupil revenue (PPR) is increased by $475 (Colorado Preschool Program PPR is increased by $237).
Recent Policy Changes

**County Child Care Assistance Program Block Grants:** HB 18-1335 [Young/Lundberg] sets a new statewide floor up from 165% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 185% FPL, extends eligibility income to 85% of State Median Income, and restricts county opt outs from state rates and income/eligibility setting, which allows for longer periods of non-temporary disruptions in eligible activities. It also changes the county block grant allocation process.

**Substitute Placement Agency Licensure:** SB 18-162 [Martinez Humenik/Buckner & Wilson] authorizes Colorado Department of Human Services to license entities to hire and place substitute early childhood educators.

**Use of Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) Positions:** HB 18-1134 [Pettersen & Wilson/Merrifield & Martinez Humenik] requires that children who receive funding through the Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE) program so that they can access a full-day of kindergarten must meet the CPP eligibility requirements (as is current policy for ECARE slots used to support access to preschool).

**Align Early Childhood Quality Improvement Programs:** SB 18-099 [Merrifield & Priola/Pettersen & Wilson] revises the School Readiness Quality Improvement (SRQIP) and Infant-Toddler Quality and Availability (ITQA) grant programs to align with recent quality improvement initiatives.

**Infant Newborn Screening:** HB 18-1006 [Hamner & Liston/Moreno & Gardner] expands newborn screenings to include items not currently covered such as comprehensive hearing and some metabolic screening.

**Concerning Part C Child Find Responsibilities of State Departments:** HB 18-1333 [Young/Lambert] directs Colorado Department of Education and Colorado Department of Human Services to recommend to the Joint Budget Committee policy changes to better align Part C Child Find responsibilities.

**Training Program for Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse:** HB 18-1064 [Michaelson Jenet/Coram & Fields] expands access to training programs on preventing child sexual abuse for people who work with young children, including early care & education providers.

**Reauthorization of the Early Childhood School Readiness Legislative Commission (ECSRLC):** SB 18-163 [Martinez Humenik & Merrifield/Pettersen & Wilson] continues the ECSRLC, that was set to expire, until 2023.

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FLORIDA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Support opportunities to improve access to quality early learning and accountability measures for School Readiness, Voluntary Prekindergarten and Kindergarten readiness, and family support services such as Help Me Grow.

• Ensure that changes to our healthcare laws improve on existing healthcare coverage for Florida's families; support legislation to expand access to dental care for children.

• In 2018 we urged the Florida Legislature to invest $1.2 million in state funding to expand the capacity of tax preparation assistance programs statewide and not to sweep the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust (keep the state & local housing trust fund monies in Florida's housing programs). We made a $1.2 million budget request to expand the capacity of tax preparation assistance and financial education programs statewide, but it was not included in the final 2018-19 budget (despite successful program outcomes, including a significant increase in Florida families filing for EITC and child tax credits in 2016). The Sadowski Trust Fund was swept, leaving $109M for affordable housing out of more than $300M in the Trust Fund.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• School Readiness offers financial assistance to low income families for early child education and care so families can become financially self-sufficient and their young children can be successful in school. Last year the legislature passed HB 1091 which requires the Florida Office of Early Learning (OEL) to adopt program quality and accountability measures for providers, and to identify an observation-based child outcome measure. We will monitor the adaptation of HB 1091 School Readiness accountability measures for providers and to identify an observation-based child outcome measure.

• Improve accountability through developmentally appropriate assessments of children up to kindergarten. This could improve quality and reduce the readiness gap.
State Budget Updates

Representative Grall from Vero Beach sponsored HB 1091, which passed on a nearly unanimous vote. The bill requires the Florida Office of Early Learning (OEL) to adopt program quality and accountability measures for School Readiness providers. (An appropriation of $6M in federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) trust fund dollars will pay for these baseline assessments.) The bill also requires OEL to identify an observation-based child outcome measure.

$22 million increase for the School Readiness program (to help low-income, working families obtain affordable childcare)

$15.5 million to maintain School Readiness Performance Funding (to improve child care program quality)

$10 million to restore T.E.A.C.H. program funding (for Early Learning teacher scholarships) to previous level

$382,000 increase for Help Me Grow

$1.6 million increase in Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) funding to cover additional enrollment (but the VPK base student allocation maintained at $2482/student)

Florida United Way Financial Stability $1.2 million budget request, to expand the capacity of tax preparation assistance and financial education programs statewide, was not included in the final 2018-19 budget (despite successful program outcomes, including a significant increase in Florida families filing for EITC and child tax credits in 2016).

KidCare bill (HB 293-Duran/SB 108-Campbell) would have streamlined KidCare enrollment and program administration.

The Sadowski Trust Fund was swept, leaving $109M for affordable housing out of more than $300M in the Trust Fund

Recent Policy Changes

Program Accountability Measures: HB 1091, a landmark bill, is considered to be the most impactful childcare legislation since the School Readiness Act (Florida’s subsidized childcare program) passed in 1999. The new law will require the Florida Office of Early Learning (OEL) to adopt program accountability measures to weed out the lowest performing providers and establish a baseline for improvement and performance-based reimbursement. An appropriation of $6M in federal CCDBG trust fund dollars will pay for these baseline assessments. The law will also require the OEL to identify an observation-based child outcome measure to strengthen quality improvement strategies, improve early childhood teaching practices, and increase positive child outcomes.

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GEORGIA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

- Increase reimbursements rates for child care subsidies, including enhanced base rates for infant and toddler care as well as increased tiered reimbursement rates for Quality Rated Providers.
- Continue to manage implementation of the public awareness campaign for Quality Rated that launched in spring 2016.
- Support the State’s two-generation efforts.
- Continue to work for the inclusion of early education in the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act plan.
- Increase the capacity and improve the quality of the infant-toddler workforce
  - Increase funding to Georgia’s Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Scholars Program to expand opportunities for financial benefits for teachers who improve their credentials.
  - Work with higher education community, particularly technical colleges, to increase access to improving Years 0-3 credentials.
  - Ensure that the training opportunities for infant-toddler credentials are of high quality.
- Create a legislative study committee on Adverse Childhood Experiences and infant/toddler mental health to learn about ways to prevent, identify, and intervene with infants and toddlers.

State Budget Updates

- $2.26 Million added for care coordinator positions to improve mental health outcomes for children in foster care.
- $1.1 Million added to increase the occupational and physical therapy rates in the Babies Can’t Wait program.
- $2 Million added to address maternal mortality in Georgia.
State Budget Updates

- $500,000 added to establish criteria and implement reimbursement for Centering Pregnancy programs.
- $736,000 Added for enrollment growth and training and experience in preschool disability services.

Recent Policy Changes

**School Suspension PreK-3rd Grade:** HB740 will require schools to screen a student in preschool through third grade for underlying factors by applying a multi-tiered system of supports before giving more than five days of out-of-school suspension. Bill passed and signed by the Governor.

**Mental Health Training:** HB763 will require that school climate be addressed as part of student attendance protocol and increase mental health training to help educators identify signals of children who need mental health support. Bill passed and signed by the Governor.

**Early Childhood Education:** The state will use new Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) funding to raise child care quality and increase access to high-quality early childhood education, with an emphasis on infant-toddler care; expand inclusion services; increase workforce professional learning supports; and maintain high safety standards. The Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning's plans include increasing the base reimbursement rate for infant-toddler care, increasing the tier reimbursement rates for 1-, 2-, and 3-Star Quality Rated providers, reducing family fees for families receiving Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) scholarships, expanding the number of Quality Rated Subsidy Grant (QRSG) slots, and increasing QRSG reimbursement rates to 50% above the base reimbursement rate. It also includes increasing supports for teachers in addressing children's social-emotional needs and expanding workforce professional development and learning supports.

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2018 Agenda

• Advocate for a significant increase to the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) in FY2020 — beyond the expected $50 million ask connected to the federal preschool grant. This is in response to the overwhelming demand for funds in the FY2019 re-competition and the need to provide infrastructure supports to programs to meet the increasing needs of children and families.

• Increase funding to Part C Early Intervention to provide rate increases to providers in order to be ensure availability of needed therapists for children.

• Increase funding to Department of Human Services-funded home visiting to expand access to home visiting programs.

• Increase investments in the Child Care Assistance Program to continue progress in implementing Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) rules, as well as investments needed to support quality, including compensation and adequacy of reimbursement rates to better provide for the cost of quality care.

• Educate Lawmaker and policymaker education as a result of fall elections

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Expansion of Illinois Family Connects’ outreach to new communities, utilizing existing or new funding sources

• Development of short and long-term strategic actions to improve the early childhood workforce pipeline

• Governance structure changes in order to further work towards a quality system of care across funding streams

• Cost modeling to more adequately support a system of quality education and care that accounts for the kinds of infrastructure and quality support programs need in order to serve children, particularly those who face multiple barriers
State Budget Updates

The FY19 state budget included a $50 million increase to the Early Childhood Block Grant. Illinois’ Department of Human Services-funded home visiting programs continued to be level-funded, providing important stability as they recover from the state budget impasse. Part C Early Intervention was also level-funded and the Child Care Assistance Program was funded (state and federal funds) at a level that finally allowed for implementation of 12-month eligibility and graduated phase-out effective 10/1/18.

Recent Policy Changes

**State’s Teacher Shortage:** SB1829 (Public Act 100-645) provides that for a five-year window, authorizes a preschool teacher to teach in the state’s Preschool for All (PFA) program so long as they hold a Level 5 credential in the Gateways to Opportunity credentialing system or a transitional bilingual educator endorsement with the appropriate content knowledge. The bill became effective upon signing on July 27, 2018.

**Alternative Licensure Program:** SB3536 (Public Act 100-822), a compliment to SB1829, affords Gateways Level 5 teachers in community-based Preschool for All (PFA) programs the chance to secure a teaching license through an alternative licensure program while staying in their current jobs. Previous law limited supervision of candidates in the alternative licensure program to principals, and the bill adds “or qualified equivalent” to play a similar role for those working in community-based organizations. The bill was signed into law on August 13, 2018 and becomes effective January 1, 2019.

**12-month Child-Care Assistance:** HB4965 (Public Act 100-909) implements 12-month child care assistance eligibility as required by federal law and becomes effective October 1, 2018.

**State’s Early Learning Council:** The state’s Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG), which funds programs for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers through grants with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), has been competitively bid since its inception. Despite tremendous growth over the last several years, the ECBG still does not serve all at-risk children. In Fiscal Year 2019, all providers – current or potential - were required to apply (or reapply) for its grant. The full re-competition process revealed challenges; the current appropriation level is insufficient to meet the state’s needs and the RFP process itself did not adequately provide for the kinds of supports programs need to serve families facing significant challenges. The state’s Early Learning Council (ELC), in collaboration with ISBE, plan to establish an ad hoc committee on early childhood investments to review the outcomes of the FY19 re-competition process and develop recommendations for improvements. The group will work to ensure children who need access to these early childhood programs the most are able to find, enroll, and be served by them.

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INDIANA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Secure renewed funding of the state's existing pre-K pilot program.

• Work to expand the state's pre-K pilot program statewide, securing additional funding and creating a permanent administrative framework to guide growth.

• Monitor implementation of pre-K expansion and advocate for any legislative fixes if need arises.

• Work with partner organizations to develop a robust, statewide policy agenda focusing on children birth-to-five.

• Continue to develop the talent pipeline strategy to build a sustainable model to attract, retain, and develop talented ECE teachers.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Secure administrative authority to expand state-funded pre-K program to eligible providers or communities without future legislative approval; set threshold/standards for approval based on quality/need.

• Develop trust fund to allow private citizens/corporations to donate to support pre-K funding with a tax benefit.

• Create a work around for Child Care Development Fund work requirement that is also required by the state program.

• Incentivize efforts to build capacity statewide by requiring future participation in state's QRIS system to receive state or federal dollars.
State Budget Updates

The state’s pre-K pilot was expanded from 5 counties to 20 counties total, with total funding of $22 million per year. Funds are used for scholarships for children at/or below 127% of FPL and for capacity building grants.

Requested $50 million for state’s pre-K pilot.

Recent Policy Changes

The state’s pre-K pilot was expanded from 5 counties to 20 counties total, with total funding of $22 million per year.

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IOWA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Support a comprehensive and integrated early care, health and education system by restoring funding to Early Childhood Iowa (ECI).

• Expand Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP) to additional low-income children.

• Strengthen the child care subsidy by increasing eligibility to at least 160% of the federal poverty level and raising reimbursement rates.

• Incorporate additional provisions within managed- and accountable-care activities under Medicaid to promote comprehensive, preventive services that respond to social as well as biomedical determinants of health.

• Promote achieving school readiness for all children and closing disparities and inequities as a priority for the Iowa General Assembly.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Restoring funding to the First Years First Public Private Partnership Fund
State Budget Updates

⚠️ The Governor and both Chambers proposed extreme tax cuts. After some compromise on all sides a tax cut was passed despite cuts to many programs. Advocacy efforts were successful to spare preschool, child care and early education programs.

🔍 The legislature agreed to increase the provider rates for infants and toddlers to the 75th percentile of 2014 market rate for providers who participate in the Quality Rating System. Quality set aside dollars will be used for this expansion, and the amount of funding available will determine how far down the QRS scale this increase will go. An additional $3 million was appropriated from the general fund to address low reimbursement rates for all providers at or below 2014 market rate 50 percentile. Providers will see incremental rate increases starting with the rates furthest from that reimbursement level. The above rate increases take place in January, 2019.

❌ Despite an increase from the federal government for Child Care Development Block Grant, there was no increase in the child care assistance eligibility level.

Recent Policy Changes

🌿 **Children’s Mental Health**: The Governor signed an executive order to create a Children’s Mental Health Board providing the first of many steps to establish a children’s mental health system in Iowa

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KANSAS

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

Our policy priorities are being approved by our Board at a late-September meeting. See “Ideas or Topics in Development” below for areas of interest.

Ideas or Topics in Development

- Increase high-quality early education in formal and informal learning settings (e.g. home-based, local nonprofit, and school settings, delivered) with qualified and fairly compensated professionals.

- Advocate for low- and moderate-income families to have easier access to early care and education opportunities through the state’s child care assistance program. Children’s critical early years are not the time to take shortcuts, but such high-quality programs can consume 20 percent or more of a family’s annual income.

- Thriving and nurturing home environments start with parents and caregivers but don’t end there.

- Promote healthy diets and opportunities for physical activity for children, as well as responsive relationships with caring adults.

- Ensure Kansas supports critical anti-poverty programs for working parents and children. Maintaining the nearly 20-year commitment to working families through the Earned Income Tax Credit and exploring tools such as paid family leave can anchor our commitment to kids and families.

- Promote routine health care for children and adults, and untreated illness can have lifetime ramifications. Ensure access to health care for expectant moms to improve birth outcomes and ensure strong starts for Kansas kids. Support expansion of programs such as KanCare can make sure every Kansas kid and their parents are healthy and thriving.
$4.2 million from the Children's Initiatives Fund will support the Kansas Preschool Program. This means that more Kansas students are eligible to benefit from preschool opportunities that prepare them to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

$1 million more in FY 2018 and $1 million in FY 2019 will support tiny-k, also known as Infant-Toddler Services, to provide mandatory early intervention services for infants and toddlers with special needs.

$1 million more from the Children's Initiatives Fund will allow Parents as Teachers to provide life-changing home visiting services to more Kansas families.

$1 million from the Children's Initiatives Fund will begin Communities Aligned in Early Development and Education, a pilot program to increase early learning opportunities in Wyandotte County.

Lawmakers began repairing past damage done to investments in kids by restoring $2.4 million from the Children's Initiatives Fund (CIF) previously cut from the Early Childhood Block Grants, the Child Care Quality Initiative, Autism Diagnosis, Family Preservation, and the Healthy Start/Home Visitor program, putting CIF investments back at levels of support prior to the years-long budget crisis.

After years of damaging sweeps, for the second-year lawmakers left remaining resources intact in the Children's Initiatives Fund and the Kansas Endowment for Youth, totaling more than $17 million available for future opportunities.

The Legislature passed a school finance plan that increases state aid for the expanded 4-year-old-at-risk program by $2 million.

Amending work requirements for parents accessing childcare assistance, allowing access to assistance when parents become unemployed and removing the lifetime limit of 24 months access to assistance for parents pursuing post-secondary education. As introduced it was estimated at approximately $50 million including a blend of both federal and state general funds.

Increasing the child care and dependent tax credit. As introduced it was estimated at approximately $9.2 million of state general funds. Kansas restored this credit during the 2017 session and with this bill sought to double the value.
Recent Policy Changes

**Inclusion of 3-year old in ECE:** Legislature expanded the 4-year-old at-risk program to allow school districts to serve 3-year-old children if space is available.

**Background Checks:** Legislature passed a bill to implement comprehensive fingerprint-based background checks for individuals working, residing or regularly volunteering in a child care facility, keeping Kansas in compliance with the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant, and reducing the likelihood that a known dangerous individual would have access to children in Kansas child care facilities.

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LOUISIANA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Increase state funding for early care and education, especially for the Child Care Assistance Program for children from birth through age 3.

• Develop a Master Plan for Early Childhood Care and Education in Louisiana. Ensure that the Plan includes a long-term vision and goals with clear strategies for implementation, and that it identifies the amount of funding needed to increase access to and improve the quality of early care and education for all children from birth through age four. The Plan will also recommend policies that prioritize the allocation of future funding.

• Continue to monitor the new early care and education rating system, new coordinated funding system and new coordinated enrollment system, examine their effectiveness and make recommendations for improvement.

• Engage the business community across Louisiana in advocacy for increased investment in early care and education in the state, including promoting the Policy Institute’s study on worker productivity when access to stable child care is lacking.

• Develop platforms to elevate early care and education issues. Ensure these issues are included in the agendas of candidates in races for Governor, the Legislature and the State Board of Education, which will take place in the fall of 2019.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Create a dedicated funding stream for early care and education through the use of increased gaming revenues.

• Conduct research on the upcoming pilots on local governance structures for early care and education in Louisiana.
State Budget Updates

Despite serious budget-cut threats, funding for Louisiana’s Pre-K Programs remained level, ensuring that over 90% of Louisiana’s at-risk four-year-olds maintain access to a full day Pre-K Program again this school year.

$28 million of new federal funds will be used for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to fund 4,500 children on the waiting list, representing the first substantial increase in CCAP funding in nine years.

The School Readiness Tax Credits for child care teachers, who are earning an ancillary teaching certificate and working in the child care sector for at least two years, will double.

Louisiana’s Early Income Tax Credit will increase from 3.5 percent to 5 percent of the federal credit from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2025.

A bill, which would had allocated $10 million of the annual sale of unclaimed property to the Child Care Assistance Program, did not pass.

Recent Policy Changes

Creation of a Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Commission: Act 639 of the 2018 Legislative Session received rare bipartisan legislative support and was part of the Governor’s package. Act 639 mandates the creation of a Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Commission and the development of recommendations for a Master Plan for Early Childhood Care and Education for Louisiana prior to the 2019 Legislative Session.

Refinement of Louisiana’s new Unified Early Care and Education Rating and Improvement System: Rules were passed by the State Board of Education to differentiate higher performing “proficient” sites by adding a fifth rating level, and integrating infant classrooms into the system over the next three years. In addition, the State Board passed rules requiring “low proficient” and “unsatisfactory” sites to participate in improvement planning as a condition of receiving public funding or licensure.

Expansion of Eligibility for all State Pre-K Programs: Rules were passed by the State Board of Education to align eligibility for all state Pre-K Programs to the K-12 definition of “at-risk,” thus expanding eligibility for Pre-K from 185% (free and reduce lunch eligibility) to 200% (Medicaid eligibility) of poverty.

Reduction of Minimum Teacher-to-Child Ratios: Rules were passed by the State Board of Education to lower teacher-to-child ratios by one child for “Type I Centers” in each age group, infant through age four. The changes will be implemented in phases over three years.

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Funds Held Level  Pending or Proposed Increased/Restoration  Budget Proposal Did Not Pass  Policy Change

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MAINE

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Continue to advance key recommendations resulting from the social-emotional learning and development project, including a statewide early childhood consultation program. In early 2017, a final report that included data and recommendations for evidence-based policies that promote the social-emotional development of young children from birth through age eight was submitted to the Legislature’s Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs.

• Support and promote state-funded Head Start, Maine Families/home visiting, child care and public preschool as critical elements in Maine’s early childhood system.

• Expand access to high-quality child care programs by reducing barriers for families to find care, supporting high-needs families in accessing care through contracts, and creating incentives for high-quality programs to develop in underserved regions.

• Support policy changes to Maine’s early intervention system, Child Development Services, and monitor legislative committee that will be meeting in the fall of 2018.

• Monitor and review proposed child care subsidy and licensing regulations, including the submission of major substantive rules relating to background checks for child care staff.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Promoting changes to Maine’s Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) program.

• Support changes to better utilize Medicaid dollars in Maine’s public-school system.

• Support new early learning department as part of state government reorganization.

• Advancement of Help ME Grow in Maine to identify vulnerable children, link families to community-based services, and empower families to support their children’s healthy development.
State Budget Updates

Changes to Maine’s school funding formula in 2017 will result in a $9 million increase to the total allocation for public preschool program in Maine. There were also changes to the preschool and kindergarten student to teacher ratio (from 17-1 to 15-1). This change will add $8 million new dollars to the total allocation.

$6.5 million was allocated to increase rates paid to child care centers up to the 75th percentile in the child care subsidy program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families - Additional Support for People in Retraining and Employment Program (ASPIRE).

One-time funding of $3.7 million to support Early Intervention Services (Part C) and Preschool Special Education (Part B, Section 619). The funding is to address a budgetary shortfall for the Child Development Services system.

$1.1 million investment in a background check system for Maine’s child care staff to meet obligations under Child Care Development Block Grant.

An investment of $21 million to improve Maine’s child welfare system, including improved computer systems, foster care payment increases, 16 new staff members, and a rate study for MaineCare reimbursement for trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy.

Proposal to create a pilot project for mental health consultation passed in the House and Senate, but was vetoed by the Governor. A vote to override the veto passed in the State Senate, but failed in the House.

Recent Policy Changes

- **Increasing High-quality ECE**: Legislation to require the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a plan for increasing the supply of child care providers participating in steps 3 and 4 of the child care quality rating system.

- **Changes to Family Child Care (FCC) regulations**: Legislation to amend the FCC rules that were adopted by the Department of Health & Human Services in 2017.

- **Reorganization of early intervention system**: A legislative working group will study a proposal to change the organization of Maine’s early intervention system.

- **Rehabilitation and Reunification set as Priorities**: Changes to Maine’s child welfare statutes including making family rehabilitation and reunification a “priority” to requiring “reasonable efforts” to achieve them.

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MASSACHUSETTS

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda


• Advocate for continued state investment in preschool expansion through the state budget. Support local planning, system building and advocacy, while communicating progress and lessons learned to state policymakers. Update and refile legislation, An Act Ensuring High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education. Sustain Preschool Expansion Grant classrooms by continuing program with state and local funds after federal funds expire in summer 2019.

• Supports information sharing and advocacy for increased investments in workforce quality, credentials and compensation. Build on FY17 — FY19 state investments in early education and care rate increases. Explore new opportunities via the Department of Early Education and Care’s workforce policy proposals and the Early Education and Care Workforce Council created in the FY19 budget.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Dual-language learners: coalition-building, data sharing, advocacy, policy change.

• Local B-5 governance: to improve local B-5 system coordination and achieve local kindergarten readiness goals. Document local Massachusetts governance examples and studying models from other states. Preparing legislative proposals.
State Budget Updates

The FY19 state budget passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Baker includes $613 million for early education and care, a $51.5 million increase over FY18 spending. The governor made no vetoes to early education and care line items. This year’s budget is the first in 10 years to surpass the pre-recession high point (FY09, $571 million) of state funding for early education and care. It reflects steady progress since the mid-recession low point of $488 million in FY13. Budget highlights include $20 million for the early educator salary rate reserve, $10 million for a new early educator workforce development initiative, $5 million for preschool expansion. Also included are funding increases for child care access accounts, resource and referral agencies, and level-funding to continue support for early childhood mental health consultation. QRIS again received a $4 million earmark, with a minimum of $2 million required to be spent on direct grants to programs. All FY19 early education budget proposals passed this year, in some cases with the Legislature going beyond what advocates requested.

Recent Policy Changes

Renovations and Construction of ECE facilities: A Housing Bond Bill signed into law in May 2018 re-authorizes the Early Education and Out-of-School Time Capital Fund at through 2023, and authorized $45 million for this fund. The EEOST Capital Fund program is a unique source of funding for early education and care and afterschool programs throughout the Commonwealth. It supports major renovation and construction projects for facilities serving low-income children. In August, $4 million in facilities grants were awarded to four EEOST programs statewide.

Minimum Wage and Paid Family Leave: In June 2018, the governor signed so-called “Grand Bargain” legislation that raises the state’s minimum wage to $15 an hour (phased in over five years), implements a guaranteed paid family and medical leave program, establishes a permanent sales tax holiday, and includes a new payroll tax. The bargain keeps three related questions off the November ballot, and was expedited by the State Supreme Judicial Court’s ruling against a proposed ballot question to raise income tax on individuals who earn more than $1 million per year.

Preschool Expansion: Preschool planning and sustainability grants (funded in FY18 state budget) implemented in seven communities. Currently a total of 18 communities have completed preschool expansion plans, thanks to state grant funding in FY16-FY18.

Preschool Expansion: The preschool expansion legislation An Act Ensuring High-Quality Pre-Kindergarten Education (S.240/H.2874) did not pass. However, this bill was redrafted as H.4665 and passed in the House. The new bill did not include funding, but addressed multiple early education items: preschool suspensions, mental health, child care rates, and preschool expansion sustainability.
Recent Policy Changes

**Outdated K-12 funding formula:** K-12 funding formula bills did not pass, despite much debate towards the end of the legislative session. There is broad consensus that the state’s K-12 funding formula is outdated, as it underestimates the cost of health care, and delivering special education services. Advocates and lawmakers also proposed increasing the formula rate for dual-language learners and economically disadvantaged students.

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MICHIGAN

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Improve the state’s child care subsidy system by focusing on increasing provider rates, increasing eligibility and increasing access to child care for populations who face the most challenges to accessing subsidized care, including families with infants and toddlers, families that work non-traditional hours, and foster parents.

• Build upon recent state investment in Early On—Michigan’s Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C program.

• Support statewide expansion of funding for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants.

• Maintain other state investment in Flint for early childhood programming, including Early On, home visiting, child care and preschool.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Creation of child care tax credit benefits for families, providers, professionals, and businesses.

State Budget Updates

- $36.9 million of the new federal Child Care Development Block Grant funds was allocated to shift child care provider reimbursement structure from hourly to bi-weekly.

- $5 million in School Aid Funds allocated for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C Early On special education for infants and toddlers, a first ever statewide appropriation increase.

- $2.5 million in additional federal funding for TEACH Scholarship.

- $400,000 General Fund dollars to abuse and neglect prevention programming through the Children’s Trust Fund, first state funding increase since early 2000s.

- $1 million in funding for the Children’s Trust Fund, final amount reduced through negotiations.

- Allocate the full $62 million in new Child Care Development Block Grant funds to raise family income eligibility threshold from 130% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 150% FPL and increase reimbursement rates for lower-star providers.

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NEBRASKA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Introduce legislation to expand participation in Nebraska's early childhood professional record system and QRIS.

• Introduce legislation to clean up the school readiness tax credit to increase the number of child care employees and child care providers eligible to apply.

• Support legislation allowing for economic development funds to be utilized to expand early childhood infrastructure in communities.

• Support legislation requiring cities to include an assessment of their early childhood infrastructure in their comprehensive plans.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Pursue policies that will allow child care subsidy reimbursement rates to be based on a child care provider quality cost model.

• Utilize studies from APA Consulting to inform alternative rate methodology and other policy changes as it relates to setting reimbursement rates.

• Explore policies to expand shared services statewide in Nebraska with an already-developed shared services model at Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative.

• Create an early childhood integrated data system in Nebraska.

• Develop an early childhood business toolkit for the private sector.

• Explore possible opportunities to include early childhood in economic development statutes.
State Budget Updates

- Early childhood programs sustained a 2% cut for FY2018-2019 and a 4% cut for FY2019-2020, translating to a loss of $527,000 in funding across both fiscal years, as a part of an across-the-board cut for the state budget.

- Legislation was introduced to require public schools to accept children of 3 and 4 into early childhood programs, but it was unsuccessful. First Five Nebraska submitted testimony stating that in a time of budget cuts, it is fiscally responsible to focus funds on closing the achievement gap for those most likely to struggle upon entering kindergarten.

- Legislation was introduced to increase funding to Nebraska public schools to support pre-schools. First Five Nebraska submitted testimony stating that in a time of budget cuts, it is fiscally responsible to focus funds on closing the achievement gap for those most likely to struggle upon entering kindergarten.

Recent Policy Changes

- **Teaching Certification**: Legislation was passed that would allow the State Board of Education to adopt rules and regulations to determine if an early childhood program could be exempt from the teaching certification requirement.

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NEW HAMPSHIRE

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Ensure that Children and families in New Hampshire have the best opportunities for early and life-long health.
  – Ensure access to affordable health care for families.
  – Strengthen New Hampshire’s capacity to promote healthy social emotional development of infants, toddlers, other young children and their families and to provide mental health services and supports.
  – Develop/Expand community-based programs targeting sources of toxic stress, such as violence, crime, abuse, neglect, extreme poverty, substance abuse and severe caregiver mental illness, and ensure effective treatment for those who need it.

• Promote effective learning opportunities in all settings including the home, child care and afterschool programs, preschools and elementary schools from birth through the primary grades.
  – Expand access to proven and effective early childhood education for all infants, toddlers and other young children through grade three.
  – Increase opportunities for learning outside of the school day, including summer.
  – Ensure all children are screened for developmental concerns and receive the services needed to promote their optimal development.

• Ensure families have the skills, basic resources, and supports to promote their children’s development and learning starting before birth and continuing through the primary grades.
  – Ensure housing and energy assistance to low-income families.
  – Expand access to proven and effective home visiting and family support programs.
  – Ensure hard work pays by raising the minimum wage, supporting parents’ job readiness and expanding access to higher education.

• Ensure New Hampshire’s young children and their families have the benefit of well-coordinated early childhood programs and services that work effectively together on their behalf.
  – Establish an integrated, cross-agency statewide early childhood data system to improve program effectiveness and child and family outcomes.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Fund a system of Family Resource Centers of Quality
• Develop and fund a Quality Rating and Improvement System
• Expand access to home visiting programs
• Develop and Fund a paid family Leave program
• Fund Full-Day Kindergarten
State Budget Updates

HB 592 — off-budget year appropriation of funds for child protection and family support programs including, new Attorney and Staff Positions at the Division of Children Youth & Families (DCYF), as well as:

- $1.5 million to fund Voluntary Services for at-risk children and families.
- $250,000 increase of allowable TANF funds to expand childcare services for eligible families with priority to foster families.
- $250,000 increase in TANF home visiting services.
- $500,000 for community based prevention programs.

Recent Policy Changes

- **Increased Protection against Childhood Lead Poisoning:** SB 247 mandates universal blood testing for 1 and 2 year-olds and lowers the action level that triggers response by the state, among other provisions.
- **Medicaid Expansion Reauthorization:** SB 313 reauthorized Medicaid Expansion for five years.
- **Increased Access to Childcare Subsidy:** SB 570 allows parents in approved substance use disorder treatment or mental health treatment to access childcare subsidy.
- **Play-based Kindergarten:** HB 1499 mandates that standards for kindergarten must be play based and include unstructured time for the discovery of each child’s individual talents, abilities, and need.
- **Safe plan of Care:** SB 549 directs health care providers to develop a safe plan of care for any child born exposed to drugs or alcohol.

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NEW JERSEY

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Expand access to quality child care for infants and toddlers.
• Expand access to high-quality preschool.
• Expand affordable child care for families.
• Maintain and expand the availability of home visitation services.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Secure additional funding to increase the child care reimbursement rate for infants.
• Secure additional funding for expanding quality preschool in additional districts and maintaining the high standard in existing districts.
• Facilitate the NJ Think Babies Coalition in order to work collaboratively with stakeholders in developing coordinated systems of care for infants and toddlers.
• Continue work with preschool and kindergarten administrators to reduce chronic absenteeism.
• Advocate for a bill that would expand and improve family leave.
State Budget Updates

An increase in funding to support existing state-funded preschools and expand New Jersey’s national model to additional communities, totaling $83 million, including:

- $50 million to support both new expansion districts and those that began expanding during the 2017-2018 school year;
- $33 million of additional funds for the 31 former Abbott districts and four additional districts that have implemented the state preschool standards for nearly 10 years.

An inclusion of a child care and dependent tax credit, which will provide families earning less than $60,000 with financial help to care for their children or another dependent.

A proposed budget resolution of $20 million which would have been used to increase the child care subsidy reimbursement rate for infants was not included in the final budget.

Recent Policy Changes

**Child Care Subsidy Rate:** An estimated $15 million was appropriated in the state fiscal year 2018 budget for the first child care subsidy rate increase in 10 years. While all centers receiving subsidy reimbursements benefited from a 1-4 percent increase, those participating in NJ's QRIS system, Grow NJ Kids, particularly those serving infants, saw the highest subsidy increases, including a 24 percent increase for infants in a “five star” program.

**Separation of Infants and Toddlers in Subsidy:** Recognizing that infants require more care than toddlers the state separated the infant child care subsidy rate from the toddler rate. Lastly, there is currently movement towards federal child care dollars being used to provide additional dollars for the child care subsidy for infants and to strengthen the state’s tiered reimbursement rate system.

**Breakfast:** A new law requires all high poverty schools to serve breakfast in a way that reaches at least 70 percent of its low-income students.

**Chronic Absenteeism:** A new law requires schools with 10 percent or more of their students identified as being chronically absent to develop a specific plan on how the school will respond to and reduce chronic absenteeism. Parent input is also required.

**Census Count:** A new law created the Census Complete Count Commission, which will be tasked with developing outreach strategies and coordinating state services to ensure a complete count of all New Jersey residents, including groups with the highest need for these programs are also the most difficult to count. Racial and ethnic minority groups, recent immigrants, renters and children under age 5 are often at higher risk of not being counted.

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NEW MEXICO

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Expansion of full-day New Mexico PreK to additional 3- and 4-year-olds.
• Increased access to home visiting services.
• Increased access to early childhood scholarships and wage supplements to advance professional development and wage supplements to early learning professionals.
• Increased funding for high-quality child care to meet new federal regulations without reducing quality or eligibility.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Amending the statewide early childhood governance system to improve coordination between state agencies responsible for the various early childhood programs.

State Budget Updates

Overall, the early childhood budget increased 14 percent, from $269 million to $306 million, significantly outpacing appropriation increases across other areas of state government.

State funding for home visiting increased $1.5 million, from $18.7 million to $20.2 million.

New this year, the state’s Human Services Department received $2.9 million to pilot Medicaid-funded home visiting and serve an estimated 431 families.

An additional $10.5 million was appropriated for PreK, including $2.5 million to continue to grow the state’s pilot program for three-year olds. This brings the PreK total to $64 million between the Children, Youth, and Families Department and the Public Education Department.

The Childcare Assistance Program received an additional $22 million from the general fund and $3 million from Technical Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

For the first time, the Department of Health received $250,000 to make long-acting reversible contraception (LARCs) publically available.

Similar to prior years, a number of bills focused on identifying new revenue streams for early childhood education, particularly increasing distributions from the state’s sovereign wealth funds, did not pass.

Two bills establishing a stand-alone department of early learning did not pass.
Recent Policy Changes

**Standards for Licensure of Early Childhood Care Programs:** New Mexico passed a Child Care Accountability Act in the Children’s Code, establishing “specific standards for licensure and registration” of licensed early childhood care programs. Among other things, the bill requires that, beginning in 2019 the Children, Youth, and Families Department report annual licensed child care outcomes to the Legislature and the governor.

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NEW YORK

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

Our 2019-20 budget agenda is not yet final, but we expect it to include advocacy of a robust expansion of full-day pre-K outside of New York City, and new investment quality improvement strategies and infrastructure, for a total budget ask of $150 million. Our agenda includes these specific priorities:

• Continue to establish a right to pre-K as part of a sound, basic education, supported by a sustainable, equitable and appropriate financing and funding strategy, with close attention to the need for appropriate compensation for pre-K teachers in community settings.

• Increase the investment in pre-K to both expand access and improve quality in all settings, with special attention to the need for appropriate compensation for teachers in all settings

• Advance proposals to fund infrastructure necessary to ensure quality pre-K, such as quality improvement strategies and technical assistance centers

• Advance proposals to ensure appropriate funding, standards and best practices for pre-K programs serving 3-year-olds.

• Advance proposals to establish an aid formula for the long-run with funding levels that support the true costs of quality, including the necessary infrastructure to support a quality implementation.

• Strengthen the state’s use of a mixed-delivery system for pre-K to ensure pre-K funding and policy is positioned as a key component of the state’s prenatal to age 8 system.

• Support in developing and advancing a systems-change package that moves the state toward the larger goal of expanding access to high-quality child care to all NY families that need it. Support the Empire State Campaign for Child Care, which is leading (with input from Winning Beginning NY) the Ready for Kindergarten, Ready for College Campaign, and the Network for Youth Success (afterschool and summer learning).
**Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities**

**2018 Agenda**

- Increase investment in New York’s subsidy program to expand access to more eligible families, particularly those with babies and toddlers, and increase reimbursement rates so that providers can afford to accept subsidies and cover rising costs, including the state’s increasing minimum wage.

- Increase the amount of child care expenses creditable under the state's Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit to better reflect the true cost of care.

- Advance policies that provide families more stability and certainty regardless the county in which they live, including 12-month eligibility; a cap on co-pays; making subsidies transportable among counties; requiring all counties to maintain subsidy waitlists.

- Support mitigate the immediate workforce crisis and to begin exploring an innovative approach to the structural problem. Center directors and home-based providers report that increased operating costs may force them to close, leaving New York’s families with few or no options to access quality child care programs.

- Support in re-instate the 75th percentile formula to establish reimbursement rates. Reimbursement rates have been essentially flat funded since 2015.

- Develop a fund and mechanism to assist child care centers and group family day care providers serving children receiving child care subsidies to cover increased wage costs as the new minimum wage standard is implemented across the State.

- Advocate to increase funding for program operation. The state Early Childhood Advisory Council put forth a recommendation to the Governor’s office for the investment in the system to be increased by an additional $5 million, bringing the total to a $10 million investment to operate and expand the program.

- Advocate for increase funding of Home Visiting. In addition to a budget request for each individual research-based program, advocates will request a continued investment in the pilot projects recommended by the 1,000 Days of Medicaid Initiative and an investment of $200,000 in the NYS Home Visiting Coordination Initiative.

- Support early intervention (EI). Advocates expect to request a restoration of reimbursement rates by increasing the current rates by at least 5% (same as last year’s request).
Ideas or Topics in Development

• Expanded Learning: The Network for Youth Success is finalizing its agenda, which we expect will include a request for funding based on an increased per pupil amount. The Network is also requesting that 25% of any revenue from the legalization of recreational marijuana go to afterschool programs, which can help young people make informed choices about drug use.

• First 1,000 Days on Medicaid Initiative: In 2017, New York State Medicaid kicked-off a first-in-the-nation initiative to develop recommendations for how Medicaid could improve outcomes for the youngest New Yorkers, aged 0-3 years, sixty percent of whom are covered by Medicaid. An expansive, cross-sectoral workgroup submitted a 10-point plan of actions that Medicaid should undertake to improve outcomes. The 2018-19 NYS budget included a $1.45 investment, and promised an increased investment to $5.8 million in 2019-20 to begin implementing the recommendations of the First 1,000 Days workgroup, including recommendations to strengthen and expand home visiting and early childhood screening.

• National Academy of Medicine report: New York participated as part of the third cohort of states with the National Academy of Medicine to develop a state implementation plan for selected recommendations from the Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation. New York's plan is focused on recommendations 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 12 from the report. A report to the Governor's office from the Early Childhood Advisory Council will focus on recommendations to:
  – Improve early childhood teacher preparation programs
  – Amend existing scholarship programs to increase access to higher education for the incumbent workforce and prioritize credential/degree programs
  – Create new paradigms of ongoing professional learning that deepens practitioners' knowledge and competencies specific to their role, promotes degree attainment and helps them navigate clearly established career pathways.

• NYS Board of Regents Early Childhood Blue Ribbon Committee: There is significant opportunity to move pre-K and other early care and learning recommendations through a new blue-ribbon committee on early learning convened by the Board of Regents. In addition, New York City's new 3K for All initiative, offers new opportunities to advance pre-K as an educational service and as a component of a prenatal to third grade system.
State Budget Updates

The Child Care budget included more than $100 million in new investment in child care subsidies, with $7 million coming from State funds, and approximately $97 million flowing from new federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds. The budget indicated that the new funds are to be allocated as follows: (1) up to $80 million are to cover infant and toddler activities and to cover new federal health, safety and quality requirements; (2) at least $10 million to expand access to subsidized child care; and (3) additional funds may be directed to implementing and increasing subsidy reimbursement rates.

The State added $15 million in new funding for Pre-K expansion for 3- and 4-year-olds. All districts may apply, with priority for districts without any Pre-K services and proposals that target the highest-need schools and students and maximize total number of eligible children served. Priority is also given to proposals that include students of all learning and physical abilities in integrated settings. The final budget continues all other Pre-K funding streams for FY2018-19 at current levels, including the state's $25 million Federal Preschool Development Grant which funds 2500 full-day seats.

Funding was increased for Advantage After School by $2.5 million over the previous year and for the Empire State After-School program by $10 million from the previous year. The new $10 million will be used to expand the program to (a) school districts or community-based organizations eligible to participate in the 2017 round of awards, (b) to districts with high rates of student homelessness, or (c) to districts in at-risk or high-needs areas in Nassau or Suffolk counties.

All home visiting programs were flat-funded except for an increase of $1.6M for the Nurse-Family Partnership program.

Enhanced Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. This year, a bill passed the Senate and received wide support in the Assembly to enhance the New York State child and dependent care refundable tax credit to double the creditable amount of child care expenses for one child from $3,000 to $6,000, for two, from $6,000 to $12,000, with additional increased amounts for additional children.

Lawmakers were unable to reach a final resolution on an Office of Children and Family Services program bill to enact statutory changes necessary to comply with CCDBG. Unresolved issues surrounded hearing rights for legally-exempt provider applicants, differing interpretations of who must be subject to background checks in legally-exempt care and guidance on training for all providers.
Recent Policy Changes

**Professional Development:** Office of Children and Family Services issued a policy change establishing coaching as allowable professional development for state child care training requirements. [https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/policies/Childcare-Policy-17-07.pdf](https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/policies/Childcare-Policy-17-07.pdf)

**Access to Child Care:** Legislation was signed into law establishing a child care availability taskforce to evaluate the need for and availability of child care throughout the state. The taskforce will examine the need for child care, barriers to accessing child care and the impacts on economic development and the workforce. This information will help guide decisions to better meet the needs of working families across the State.

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OKLAHOMA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Prioritize a focus on equity in early childhood by identifying policies that contribute to disparities and advocating for changes/revisions or enactment of new policies.

• Ensure health insurance coverage for parents of young children are not negatively impacted under new work requirements for Medicaid recipients passed by the Oklahoma legislature.

• Elevate support from Oklahoma’s new governor and predominately new legislature after the November elections to prioritize an early childhood integrated data system to capture an unduplicated count of early care and education program participation and inform future investments in early childhood.

• Support revisions to the child care subsidy Family Eligibility and Copay scale to increase the affordability of child care services to low income families. This scale has not been revised since 2018.

• Continue to support increased state investments for and improved coordination between health, early care and education, and family support services through legislative advocacy and public awareness.

• Continue to inform Oklahoma’s efforts on establishing a kindergarten assessment by piloting a second year of implementation of comprehensive, observations assessments, and examining the costs and benefits to inform future expansion.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Clarify and strengthen policies to encourage mixed-delivery systems in early care and education programs

• Strengthen policies to improve pre-K quality and facilitate transitions to kindergarten.

• Increase collaborations to support improved cross-sector professional development opportunities.
State Budget Updates

The 2018 session resulted in long-overdue salary increases for teachers and state employees. Overall, the state appropriations increased by 10.5% with the department of education receiving a 19% increase from FY2018 to FY2019. These pay increases benefited Oklahoma's public school pre-K teachers and state employees in health, mental health and human services who directly provide health, parent support, eligibility/case management, licensing services, etc.

Home based family support (home visiting) program contracts were initially eliminated in the Fall, 2017, but were reinstated in the Summer of 2018. Bids are currently being received to establish contracts to deliver home visiting programs across the state.

Recent Policy Changes

**Healthcare:** HB 2932 was signed into law during the 2018 legislative session establishing work requirements for Medicaid recipients. The Governor also issued an Executive Order related to this legislation. It directs the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, Oklahoma's Medicaid agency, to establish rules to identify population exceptions and work/training requirements and then to request a waiver from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The rule making process is currently underway.

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OREGON

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

Preschool:
• Expand Preschool Promise to serve an additional 10,000 children statewide.

• Advocate for full funding of Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten to support programs moving to full day, ensure high quality comprehensive services, increase staff wages to ensure salary parity across all state-funded prekindergarten programs, and with local kindergarten teacher salaries, and ensure children have true access to Head Start by including provisions for transportation.

• Strengthen the early childhood workforce through expansion of Oregon’s Professional Development Consortia, which creates a pathway for early childhood educators to strengthen their practice and earn college credits. The Consortia have been particularly effective in expanding opportunities for linguistically and racially diverse early childhood educators.

• Support expansion of the Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation Fund focused on shared professional development to support meaningful progress on instructional alignment

• Expand Coaching and Support for Child Care Providers. Increase competency based professional learning through the addition of quality improvement specialists through local Child Care Resource & Referrals (CCR & R) to provide technical assistance for focused child care support network.

Child Care:

• Build the supply of quality infant-toddler child care with contracted slots. Support 400-600 child care providers to provide affordable high-quality care to approximately 1,000 additional infants and toddlers.

• Strengthen the child care subsidy system. Oregon has some of the highest parent co-pays for child care in the nation. At the same time, providers earn poverty wages and children receive care in under-supported environments. Oregon needs a comprehensive approach to reducing co-pays, increasing reimbursement rates, supporting quality, and streamlining processes to make a program that works for children, families, and providers. We are supporting a newly proposed “pre-payment” process for certified centers receiving Employment-Related Day Care program (ERDC) payments as well as increasing the maximum reimbursement rate for ERDC providers to 75th percentile based on the 2018 market rate study, while reducing co-pays for families receiving ERDC.
Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

Special Education:

• Provide recommended service levels for children in early intervention and early childhood special education (EI/ECSE). Currently, only 29% of children enrolled in Early Intervention in Oregon receive the recommended levels of service to appropriately address their disabilities or delays.

Family Partnerships:

• Invest in programs proven to strengthen parent-child bonds and prevent abuse. Increase access to support systems for families through enhanced home visiting programs, access to relief nursery services, increased access to community-based parenting education programs and an equity fund to support community-based culturally specific early learning and parenting education programs.

• Increase the state investment in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) to serve the growing number of eligible children identified by expanded developmental screenings, and increase the number of children receiving the recommended level of service.

• Launch universal home visiting model to connect families with critical services from birth. There is currently no universal access point for family supports that is non-stigmatizing and that can help identify families that may have deeper needs. Families often aren't aware of services available to them.

• Create an Early Childhood Equity Fund to prevent opportunity gaps before they start. Children of color face the greatest opportunity gap, yet we lack an investment in the community-based support tailored to family need. An Early Childhood Equity Fund would meaningfully increase the capacity and reach of community-based providers to work with families across Oregon most impacted by opportunity gaps and neglected by current state-funded programs.

Proof Points:

• Expand local birth-to-eight policy work through launching two new local demonstration sites with an emphasis on preschool through fifth grade instructional alignment and continue work with two Early Works sites.
State Budget Updates

The Early Learning Division received $2 million to begin efforts to increase safety in child care settings.

During the 2018 5-week legislative session, we had hoped legislators would restore small cuts made to early childhood programs in the 2017 session. That did not occur.

Recent Policy Changes

Safety Regulations: Oregon House Bill 4065 strengthened child care safety regulations regarding background checks and coordinated investigations between the Early Learning Division and the Department of Human Services, who co-administer child care funds.

Special Education: Oregon House Bill 4067 allows children to be eligible for special education services under a “developmental delay” eligibility through 3rd grade. Previously, this eligibility category ended at Kindergarten entry, excluding hundreds of children from needed special education services.

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PENNSYLVANIA

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Improve child care reimbursement rates in order to move toward the subsidizing the cost of high-quality care.
• Grow investments in the newly created home visiting state line item which was established in the final FY 2017-18 budget as a grant program open to all evidence-based home visiting models operating in the commonwealth.
• Work to gain increased investments in high-quality pre-k programs in state FY 2018–19 budget.
• Work to increase state investments in basic and special education funding and protect the basic education funding formula.
• Ensure that children enrolled in Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are appropriately screened and provided with all opportunities for their healthy development.
• Improve health coverage outreach, enrollment and renewal practices, including gaining approval to implement continuous eligibility for children in Medicaid.
• Work at the federal level to protect against negative changes to Medicaid, CHIP and/or the Affordable Care Act, and increase appropriations for the Child Care and Development Block Grant and Head Start.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• For the upcoming 2019-20 state legislative session we will again be advocating for increased investments in high-quality pre-k programs, child care and home visiting. However, during the approaching session it is anticipated there will be an opportunity to address Pennsylvania’s chronic budget deficits by passing revenue enhancements. We will be continuing our discussions on political positioning and strategy on any revenue debate for the remainder of 2018 and will focus our advocacy on the need for additional revenues to benefit programs aimed at children.
• Exploratory work in advocating for increased state dollars for the state’s birth-to-three and three-to-five early intervention programs, as this has been an area in which we have not recently been engaged.
Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Expanding advocacy of basic education funding and special education funding to include additional emphasis on career and technical education funding. Additionally, work will need to be done to protect the state's basic education funding formula enacted in 2016 as well as the special education funding formula which is approaching its reauthorization date.

• Ensure that children enrolled in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) are receiving high quality care, with a focus on managed care performance.

• Improve health coverage outreach, enrollment and renewal practices, including expanding continuous eligibility for children in Medicaid beyond the current population of 0-3 years.

• As needed, work at the federal level to protect against negative changes to Medicaid, CHIP and/or the Affordable Care Act.

• Increase awareness of the need for lead screenings for children aged 2 and under and work to improve screening percentage rates leading to a statewide testing mandate.

State Budget Updates

The state budget passed in late June, marking a rare occasion where the legislature and administration met the June 30th budget deadline. The total budget spend of $33.7 billion was slightly below Gov. Wolf's proposed budget spend of $33.9 billion.

An increase of $25 million for pre-k was in the budget, with $20 million going to the Pre-K Counts Program and $5 million going to the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program. The governor proposed a $40 million increase.

Home visiting services also saw a substantial increase in funding, receiving an additional $6.7 million in state dollars (the governor proposed $6.5 million). These funds will be used for training for child welfare, treatment and home visiting staff, and a long-overdue COLA for Nurse Family Partnership and Family Centers-Parents as Teachers programs. This important increase builds on the state's past investment and expands resources to help 800 families suffering from the ravages of the opioid crisis to improve their capacity to raise their young children.

Child care funding received just over a $6.7 million increase to address the Child Care Works waiting list. The governor proposed a $23 million increase.
State Budget Updates

On the basic education front, the budget included a $100 million increase (as the governor proposed) driven out through the basic education funding formula, a $15 million increase for special education (the governor proposed $20 million), and a total increase of $30 million for career and technical education. Those dollars will be allocated to both the base formula for career and technical education as well as an initiative to expand apprenticeship and industry partnerships in the Departments of Labor and Industry and Education.

It is noteworthy that the overall spending increase for the budget is 1.7 percent in state funds. This makes the meaningful increases realized, particularly in areas such as home visiting (combined 33 percent state increase) and pre-k (combined 11 percent state increase), more laudable.

Proposed changes to the state’s Medicaid program, including work requirements were not included in supplemental budget legislation (human services code).

Recent Policy Changes

Medicaid: Administrative implementation of continuous eligibility in Medicaid from birth to age three was completed by the Department of Human Services in March 2018.

Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP): State reauthorization of the CHIP statute occurred in December 2017 and did not contain policy changes proposed by the legislature including a ban on coverage for gender reassignment surgery and related services.

Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG): Pennsylvania used its federal CCDBG funds ($63 million received in total) to lift the freeze on Maximum Child Care Allowance (MCCA) rates for STAR 1 and 2 providers (the freeze was previously lifted for STAR 3 and 4 providers) and to provide a 2.5 percent increase to base MCCA rates for all care levels, provider types, and STAR levels. Additional funds will also support high-quality professional development, be allocated for a pilot to contract for slots for infants and toddlers and will be used to comply with CCDBG requirements related to background checks.

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RHODE ISLAND

Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Preserve and expand access to Rhode Island State Pre-K and Head Start.
• Update tiered quality rates for the Child Care Assistance Program to meet the 75th percentile of the 2018 Market Rate Survey and establish tiered quality rates for family child care and for school-age care.
• Expand paid family leave to 8 weeks and change financing to improve wage replacement rates so low-wage workers can afford to take paid family leave.
• Establish a state funding stream for evidence-based family home visiting programs.
• Establish a state infant/toddler credential and develop a wage enhancement strategy to attract and retain qualified and effective early childhood educators that work with infants and toddlers and their families.
• Ensure child care licensing inspection reports are posted on the web and that licensing data is used to improve the quality of care.

Ideas or Topics in Development

• Develop state plan to implement kindergarten entry assessment as part of a high-quality kindergarten transition process, connecting schools to families and early learning programs.
• Promote routine, universal developmental screening from birth through kindergarten entry with follow-up, referral, and enrollment in Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, Section 619) and Early Intervention (IDEA Part C). Address disparities in access to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services.

State Budget Updates

The FY 2019 budget includes a $3.6 million increase in federal funding to increase and establish tiered quality rates for children under age six enrolled in centers through the Child Care Assistance Program. Programs will receive up to a 33% increase for infants and toddlers and up to a 21% increase for preschool-age children. The budget also includes a $1.1 million increase in federal funding for children enrolled in family child care through the Child Care Assistance Program to cover a flat rate increase and to enable providers to take sick time.
State Budget Updates

The Rhode Island State Pre-K program received a $1.1 million increase in new state funding.

The FY 2019 budget included $100,000 in state funding to provide training to kindergarten teachers implementing a high-quality, research-based curriculum where children learn through play.

Although a state funding increase was proposed by the governor, the FY 2019 budget increase for the Child Care Assistance Program relied on federal funding.

The Child Care Assistance Program budget did not include $200,000 in funding for a new pilot program to allow parents enrolled in one of the state’s public institutions of higher education to qualify for child care assistance.

Recent Policy Changes

Rates for High-Quality Programs: Established tiered quality rates in statute for children under age six in the Child Care Assistance Program. Rates for infants and toddlers meet the federal benchmark for equal access to quality child care (high quality programs are paid at or above the 75th percentile of the 2015 Market Rate Survey).

Licensure Regulations: The child care licensing statute was updated to allow for progressive intermediate sanctions, including fines and suspensions, to promote compliance with child care licensing regulations.

Paid time-off: The Healthy and Safe Families and Workplaces Act was implemented, requiring employers with 18 or more workers to provide annual paid sick and safe leave time to include time off to care for sick children or to bring children to preventive health care appointments. Smaller employers must provide time off for this purpose, but they are not required to offer paid time. As of July 2018, employees must be offered at least three days per year of sick and safe time.

Paid Family Leave: The state’s paid family leave program (Temporary Caregivers Insurance) was not expanded beyond the four weeks required by law. Also, proposed financing changes were not enacted to help more low-wage workers take paid family leave.

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Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Support successful implementation of the Early Start Act through administrative advocacy. This includes ensuring that changes to Early Achievers, Washington’s Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), are driving improved child outcomes; data collection and analysis is sufficient to evaluate impact; the cost of quality is funded; child care subsidy is accessible; and new aligned standards for licensed child care, Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and Early Achievers support increased access to high-quality, culturally responsive early learning.

• Expand Washington’s State pre-K, ECEAP, by at least 2,600 slots, to make progress toward a statutory commitment to full entitlement for eligible children by the 2022-2023 school year. Expansion priorities include additional slots, a slot-rate increase, and an investment in facilities and support for a mixed-delivery system that includes child care centers and family child care homes.

• Expand access to ECEAP by increasing current eligibility of 110% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to include automatic eligibility for children with certain risk factors unrelated to income, and to increase income eligibility to 130% FPL.

• Commit the Legislature to acting upon the recommendations of the legislatively mandated technical workgroup on compensation, convened to identify approaches to address recruitment and retention in the early childhood educator professional workforce.

• Expand access to affordable high-quality child care by increasing child care subsidy reimbursement rates so they are closer to market rates.

• Determine the cost of quality in child care centers and family child care homes and increase rates paid to child care providers so they reflect the true cost of quality.

• Sustain and expand access to a portfolio of home visiting programs.

• Support new revenue to fund a continuum of early learning from birth-to-five.
Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

Ideas or Topics in Development

- Long term solution to increase access to child care and make it more affordable for all families by changing eligibility for child care subsidy to support more low-income families in paying the high costs.
- Complete a cost of quality study that identifies elements of quality which improve child outcomes and determines the true cost of these elements so that state investments in subsidy, Pre-K and QRIS reflect the cost of providing quality care.

State Budget Updates

**Expanded access to high-quality prekindergarten:** $25 million. Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) helps kids furthest from opportunity arrive at Kindergarten ready to succeed. Our advocacy succeeded in growing access for an additional 1800 children as well as a 6% vendor rate increase.

**New Early Learning Facilities fund:** $30 million. Advocacy resulted in the creation of the Early Learning Facilities fund which will provide opportunities for child care provider and ECEAP programs to expand facilities to offer high-quality early learning.

**Expanded access to home visiting programs:** $2.3 million. The state provided sufficient state investment to expand access to home-visitation service across Washington State and directed the Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF) and the Heath Care Authority to identify opportunities to leverage Medicaid funding for home visiting programs.

**Trauma informed care:** $74,000. Funding is provided for DCYF to convene an advisory group to develop a five-year strategy to expand training in trauma-informed child care to early learning providers statewide.

**Child Care Business training:** $163,000. Funding is provided for DCYF to develop a community-based training module in managing and sustaining a child care business for child care providers and entrepreneurs and offer the training as a pilot in Jefferson and Pierce counties.

**Child Care Taskforce:** $240,000. Funding is provided for the Department of Commerce to convene, facilitate, and provide staff support for a child care collaborative task force focused on child care affordability and business community engagement.
State Budget Updates

Reduction of resources for WA QRIS, Early Achievers: The Early Start Act was a careful balance of new requirements and resources to meet them. This reduction undermines that balance of resources. The reduction is directed at the professional development components of Early Achievers and represent a reduction of approximately 25% to those components.

Increased reimbursement rates for center-based child care providers: $40 million. Increase the child care subsidy reimbursement rates to the 75% of market rate.

Expand access to PreK: $180 million. Expand access to Pre-K by increasing income eligibility from 110% FPL to $185% FPL.

New Early Learning Facilities Fund

Trauma Informed Care

Child Care Business Training

Recent Policy Changes

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) allocation: Successful advocacy resulted in a budget proviso that named priorities and a process for allocating the federal increase in CCDF funds. Identified priorities included: (I) Increasing child care rates comparable to market rates based on the most recent market survey; (II) Increasing access to infant and toddler child care; (III) Increasing access to child care in geographic areas where supply for subsidized child care does not meet the demand; (IV) Providing nurse consultation services to licensed providers; (V) Allowing Working Connections Child Care consumers who are full-time community or technical college students to attend college full-time and not have to meet work requirements; and (VI) Meeting new or expanded federal mandates. Funds are expected to be disbursed in October, 2018.

New Department: On July 1, 2018, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families was created, dissolving Washington’s Department of Early Learning, and merging that agency’s functions with the state’s child welfare services. The new department projects a new commitment to a holistic and preventative approach to child and family services.

Teaching Credentials: Early childhood educator credentials required for child care licensing have expanded. New credential equivalencies are in development.

Homeless Child Care Program: Improving access to child care for homeless families, available federal resources will be utilized to establish a four-month grace period before requiring proof of eligibility in the Working Connections Child Care program for children who are homeless and additional funding is provided to expand access for these individuals across the state.
Recent Policy Changes

**Expulsion in Child Care Settings:** A new child care licensing rule was adopted in August 2018 regarding expulsion in child care. Child care providers must have an expulsion policy in their handbook that is shared with parents and the policy must: (a) Provide examples of behavior that could lead to expulsion from the early learning program; (b) Detail steps the provider takes to avoid expelling a child including, but not limited to, environmental and staffing changes; (c) Detail how the provider communicates to the parent or guardian of a child the steps taken; and (d) Include information that may benefit an expelled child including, but not limited to, community based resources. The rule goes on to state: (1) To promote consistent care and maximize opportunities for child development and learning, an early learning provider must develop and follow expulsion policies and practices. (2) An early learning provider may expel a child only if: (a) The child exhibits behavior that presents a serious safety concern for that child or others; and (b) The program is not able to reduce or eliminate the safety concern through reasonable modifications. (3) If a child is expelled, an early learning provider must: (a) Review the program’s expulsion policy with the parent or guardian of the child; (b) Provide a record to the parent or guardian about the expulsion and the steps that were taken to avoid expulsion. The record must include the date, time, early learning program staff involved, and details of each incident that led to expulsion; and (c) Provide information to the parent or guardian of the child that includes, but is not limited to, community-based resources that may benefit the child. (4) The early learning provider must report to the department when children are expelled. The information must include: (a) Child demographic data including, but not limited to, the age, race, ethnicity, and gender of the child; (b) The reason the child was expelled; and (c) The resources that were provided to the parent or guardian of the child.

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Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

2018 Agenda

• Expand access to high quality early learning programs, particularly for vulnerable children with less opportunities. For the upcoming 2019-2021 State Budget, the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) calls for:
  – A substantial increase in payment rates for our State’s child care subsidy program (Wisconsin Shares)
  – The establishment of a program of quality sustainability grants to early education programs participating in Wisconsin QRIS (YoungStar)

• Promote a well-prepared, sustainable child care workforce by improving compensation. For the upcoming 2019-2021 State Budget, the ELC and the Governor’s Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) call for:
  – A refundable tax credit in the range of $2,000 to $4,000 to early educators who have some college level education (Registry Level 12 or higher) and work in programs participating in YoungStar (3-star level or higher)
  – Additionally, the ELC calls for enhanced funding for current compensation initiatives that have a proven success record: T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Program and REWARD Stipend program

• Improve the health of young children and families, focusing on prevention. For the upcoming 2019-2021 State Budget, the ECAC calls for:
  – Expansion of Maternal and Child Health Home Visiting in areas that are still underserved, including rural and tribal communities without access to the service and communities where need outpaces availability

• Set policy priorities specific to Wisconsin’s infants and toddlers, and their families. The new Wisconsin Pre-to-Three Coalition calls for:
  – Policy that promotes home visiting programs to partner with high quality Infant/Toddler child care and mental health specialists
  – Increased funding to implement Pyramid Model on a continuum in infant/toddler child care
  – Raise the Wisconsin Shares reimbursement rates for infant/toddler care with a designation for I/T teacher wages
Birth-to-Five Policy Priorities

Ideas or Topics in Development

• State family leave policy has been proposed by Keeping Families First Coalition
• There is some interest in exploring a “large family child care” option in the state, although it would take some consensus building to move forward with this concept.

State Budget Updates

In December 2017, the REWARD Stipend Program was awarded a one-time increase of $1,045,000 in Race to the Top funding. These additional funds successfully eliminated our REWARD waiting list. The stipend program rewards retention of well-educated early childhood educators (average stipend is $550 annually).

In February 2018 a bill passed the legislature and was signed into law that uses surplus Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to provide a $16,000,000/year boost in funding for Wisconsin Shares payment rate increases, a portion of which will be dedicated to enhancing tiered reimbursement bonuses for the most highly-rated child care providers as determined by YoungStar: from 10% to 15% rate increase for 4-star programs and from 25% to 30% rate increase for 5-star programs. This change is to take place in 2019. (Note that according to a recent report by our Department of Children and Families (DCF), Wisconsin is reimbursing at the 15th percentile.)

In June 2018 the Governor approved an additional $10 million annually to: 1) raise the Wisconsin Shares subsidy rate by 5% for the youngest children (infants through age 4), 2) establish a statewide minimum subsidy rate of $5/hour for infant care in licensed programs, and 3) reduce the penalty imposed on parents who choose 2-Star programs (from 5% to 1%).

Due to budget surplus, in June 2018 the Governor provided a one-time $100 per child tax rebate (all children under 18 years of age, no income requirements) and in August 2018 a one-week sales tax holiday for the purchase of school supplies.

The Governor has just recently proposed an increase in the Wisconsin Dependent Care Tax Credit as part of his 2018 campaign platform.
Recent Policy Changes

**Teaching Credentials:** YoungStar will refine its 3 Star educational threshold for Lead Teachers/Group Leaders and Family Child Care providers to address cost and other structural barriers to higher education completion and to support family child care programs.

**Developmentally Appropriate Materials:** YoungStar will now require programs to demonstrate developmentally appropriate materials, interactions, and learning centers for 3, 4, and 5 Star programs. Programs previously earned “optional” points in this area.

**Family Engagement:** YoungStar will simplify the rating criteria language for Family Engagement, reducing the current options down to the four indicators that most align with child outcomes.

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