

## **2019-2020 Child Care Executive Budget Request**

Reforming New York's child care system to ensure access to high quality child care to all families is essential to the well-being of New York families, children, and the State's economy.

It is our expectation that the new Child Care Availability Task Force will be empowered to develop a bold, comprehensive plan to expand equitable access to high-quality child care for all families that need it, and ensure a family sustaining wage for all child care educators. While we work with the Task Force to develop a long-term plan, **the State must increase investment now to restore short term stability to both the child care provider and subsidy systems, and to expand access to subsidies for low-income working families whose ability to participate in the work force depends on securing quality care for their children.**

The State should make the following investments in child care this year:

1. **Increase State funding to counties for child care subsidies and program operation to expand equitable access to quality child care to more working families.**
  - a. \$51 million would restore the child care subsidy program to the level attained in 2016 – the highest in recent years – adjusting for four years of inflation;
  - b. \$20 million to improve quality and increase slots dedicated to serving infants and toddlers by at least 1,000, with \$2.5 million directed to the expansion of the Infant-Toddler Specialist Network, and \$2.5 million to train and recruit new providers to the field.
  - c. \$26 million to revise the copayment formula so that no family receiving a child care subsidy contributes more than 20% of its gross income exceeding the poverty level as the parent share while maintaining the number of families receiving subsidies; and
  - d. necessary funds to enable all counties to maintain updated subsidy waitlists.
2. **Increase State funding to stabilize the child care workforce and infrastructure by reinstating the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile formula for setting reimbursement rates, and increasing funding to cover those costs.** Increasing the percentile formula this year would mitigate the immediate crisis increased operating costs are causing providers while New York is exploring different ways to determine reimbursement rates that more accurately reflect the true cost of providing quality care.
3. **Increase State funding for the Child Care Facilitated Enrollment Projects** in order to expand access to subsidies available to working families at higher income eligibility levels.
4. **Strengthen the child and dependent care tax credit to better reflect the true cost of care.** Double the maximum creditable amount to \$6,000 for one child, and \$12,000 for two or more children so that a family could receive a maximum of \$2,310 (or \$4,620 for two or more children) at tax time.
5. **Ensure immigrant families have access to quality child care.** Implement comprehensive, culturally and linguistically responsive outreach and education to immigrant communities to ensure that immigrant families understand their rights with respect to public benefits and to mitigate barriers to accessing those benefits, including to quality child care. Public education surrounding rights and

access to public supports and benefits are essential to ensuring that families are aware that children continue to have the right to access programs and supports, regardless of parent immigration status.

- 6.** We support continuing investment in SUNY/CUNY Campus Child Care, the New York State Agri-Business Child Development Program, and QUALITYstarsNY.

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