



## **Statement of the Empire State Campaign for Child Care On the New York State Assembly and New York State Senate Budget Resolutions**

In response to the overwhelming demands from parents, providers, employers and all those impacted by our failing child care system, the NYS Senate and Assembly have both prioritized investments in child care in their one house budgets. Between now and April 1, the Empire State Campaign for Child Care will work non-stop to lift up the best of both proposals; and urge Governor Hochul to join the critical march to universal child care for New York State.

Both proposals call for an unprecedented investment in child care in this year's budget, with the Assembly committing \$3 billion in total spending. This is the minimum amount it will take to begin to properly support parents and providers, and put our state squarely on the road to a quality, universal child care system that ensures New York's economic recovery.

Specific elements in each one house budget proposal demonstrate the work of important legislative champions and the extent to which they have been listening to those most impacted by the collapse of our child care system during the pandemic.

Those elements that ESCCC consider essential include:

- ▶ Providing access to free or low-cost child care to all New York children without exception, beginning this year with children from low-income families. Every child deserves access to quality child care.
- ▶ Implementing sustained increases to workforce compensation beginning this year. It has become impossible for child care professionals to sustain this work while earning poverty level wages. They are leaving this field and forcing programs to close without additional educators in the pipeline to replace them. New York must take bold steps to invest in workforce compensation to address the child care staffing crisis.
- ▶ Ensuring all expansions to subsidy eligibility apply to all children (aged 6 weeks to 13 years). The Senate proposal to exclude school-age children ignores the extent to which many child care programs serve both school-aged and young children, and parents of school-age children, including children in pre-K, depend on child care programs for before- and after-school care. This proposal would also mean that within many families, younger children would be subject to one set of eligibility standards, and older (school-aged) children, another.
- ▶ Implementing an increase in operating support for providers to bring rates closer to the true cost of care.

ESCCC applauds both houses of the Legislature for proposing historic investments in child care. We look forward to working with the Assembly, Senate and Governor Hochul to ensure that New York State's FY 2023 Budget moves the State quickly to universal child care for all New York families.

*March 16, 2022*

*Empire State Campaign for Child Care is statewide campaign dedicated to achieve equitable access to child care in New York State. Founded in 2017, ESCCC counts in its membership nearly 100 organizations, along with hundreds of parents and child care providers from every corner of New York State. Every day, our membership is growing; more than 600 New Yorkers participated in our February 9, 2022 Day of Action.*