



Ready for Kindergarten, Ready for College Campaign

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Early Childhood Advocates and Legislative Leaders Make a Final Push for Early Childhood Care and Education Investments in the 2019-2020 NYS Budget

ALBANY, N.Y. (March 26, 2019) — Assemblymember Ellen Jaffee joined the Ready for Kindergarten Ready for College Campaign, other legislative champions, child advocates and parents at the State Capitol Tuesday to make a final push to ensure that proposed investments in early childhood education end up in the final budget.

Speakers called on lawmakers to adopt the Senate and Assembly proposals to: increase funding for child care subsidies by \$20 million; increase funding for new pre-K seats; include transportation aid for pre-K students; increase reimbursement rates for preschool special education; and increase rates for all Early Intervention services.

"It is critical for the well-being of our children and families to ensure that every family in New York State, regardless of their income, has access to safe, reliable, and affordable, quality childcare. Lack of subsidies hurts families in many ways, from inadequate care for their children to loss of income. Our child care providers need an increase in subsidy reimbursement rates to keep their doors open, and our child care educators need a wage increase to sustain their own families. Investing in child care and early child hood education makes good economic sense. It's up to us in New York State to make this investment now," said **Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee**.

"In order to pave the way for a prosperous future for our children, we must make pre-kindergarten programs available to all. Successful and well-funded pre-K programs encourage children to be active learners, to ask questions, and to approach the world as critical thinkers and problem solvers. A lack of these resources can also directly impact the workforce development, as the cost burden of child

care is often too great for a family to bear. I will continue to fight for the needs of the third Senatorial district, especially when it comes to our children and their future,” said **Senator Monica Martinez**.

“Our Assembly budget proposal makes the critical investments in child care and prekindergarten programs that New Yorkers need, and it’s essential for them to be included in the State’s final enacted budget. We can’t talk about economic development or public education without talking about access to child care and early childhood education, and this funding will be an absolute game changer for working families on Long Island and across the State of New York,” said **Assemblywoman Jean-Pierre**.

“We know that children are capable of learning so much at an early age, and it is our obligation as legislators to ensure that every child in New York has access to the services and supports they need to thrive,” said **Assemblymember Harry Bronson**. “That is why I am proud to join Assemblymember Jaffee and our colleagues in calling for additional funding for child care, pre-K opportunities, and an increase to the reimbursement rates of early intervention and pre-school special education providers. New York must take bold action to solve these issues, and I will continue to fight for a budget that does just that.”

“I thank Speaker Heastie and my colleagues for funding critical investments in childcare and early childhood education in the Assembly budget,” said **Assemblymember Patricia Fahy**. “School districts across the state recognize the serious transportation need for its pre-k students, yet are ineligible for state reimbursement. Lack of access to reliable transportation is the primary barrier low-income families face when enrolling their kids in a pre-k program. Including pre-k in the state transportation aid formula will assist in the expansion of Universal Pre-Kindergarten, allow more school districts to participate, and encourage more parents to enroll their kids in UPK.”

“I proudly stand with my colleagues in urging the state to increase funding for childhood education in this year’s budget. The additional funding proposed by both houses will provide New York’s youth with essential tools to help them succeed later on in life,” said **Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi**.

“As the final details of the NYS budget are negotiated, lawmakers must keep the nurturing and development of our youngest children in mind. The state must invest in their current wellbeing and future success through increased funding in programs that we know are effective, such as child care, pre-k and preschool special education,” said **Jessica Klos Shapiro**, Director of Policy and Community Education, Early Care and Learning.

“For children with developmental delays and disabilities, getting intervention early in life is critical, but too many children have to wait months for the services they need due to provider shortages. In addition to increasing funding for pre-K and child care, the State must increase the reimbursement rates for Early Intervention providers and preschool special education programs by at least five percent to help address this growing crisis,” said **Kim Sweet, Executive Director, Advocates for Children of New York.**

“We need more funding for child care subsidies and more funding to reimburse providers who provide subsidy slots. We can’t continue to ask those who provide daily care to our youngest children to absorb the shortfall in the state’s funding for child care,” said **Blue Carreker, Facilitator, Empire State Campaign for Child Care.** “In the end, our children suffer, which means all of us pay the price down the line of kids who did not have the safe, secure and stimulating environment they needed in their formative years.”

“Thank you to our legislative champions — Assemblymember Jaffee and Senator Montgomery, chief among them — for carrying our message that we need significant investment in child care, pre-K, preschool special education and Early Intervention this year. Next year will be too late to provide pre-K to the 4-year olds shut out – they will be five by then. Next year will be too late for the early childhood educators unable to make ends meet on low salaries; too late for families who can’t access Early Intervention for developmental delays and disabilities because therapists can’t keep their doors open; too late for parents eager to work more to achieve family economic security, but cannot because they cannot access safe, quality child care. New York State has the resources; we need leaders to make our children a top priority in the 2019-2020 budget,” said **Kate Breslin, President and CEO, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy.**

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