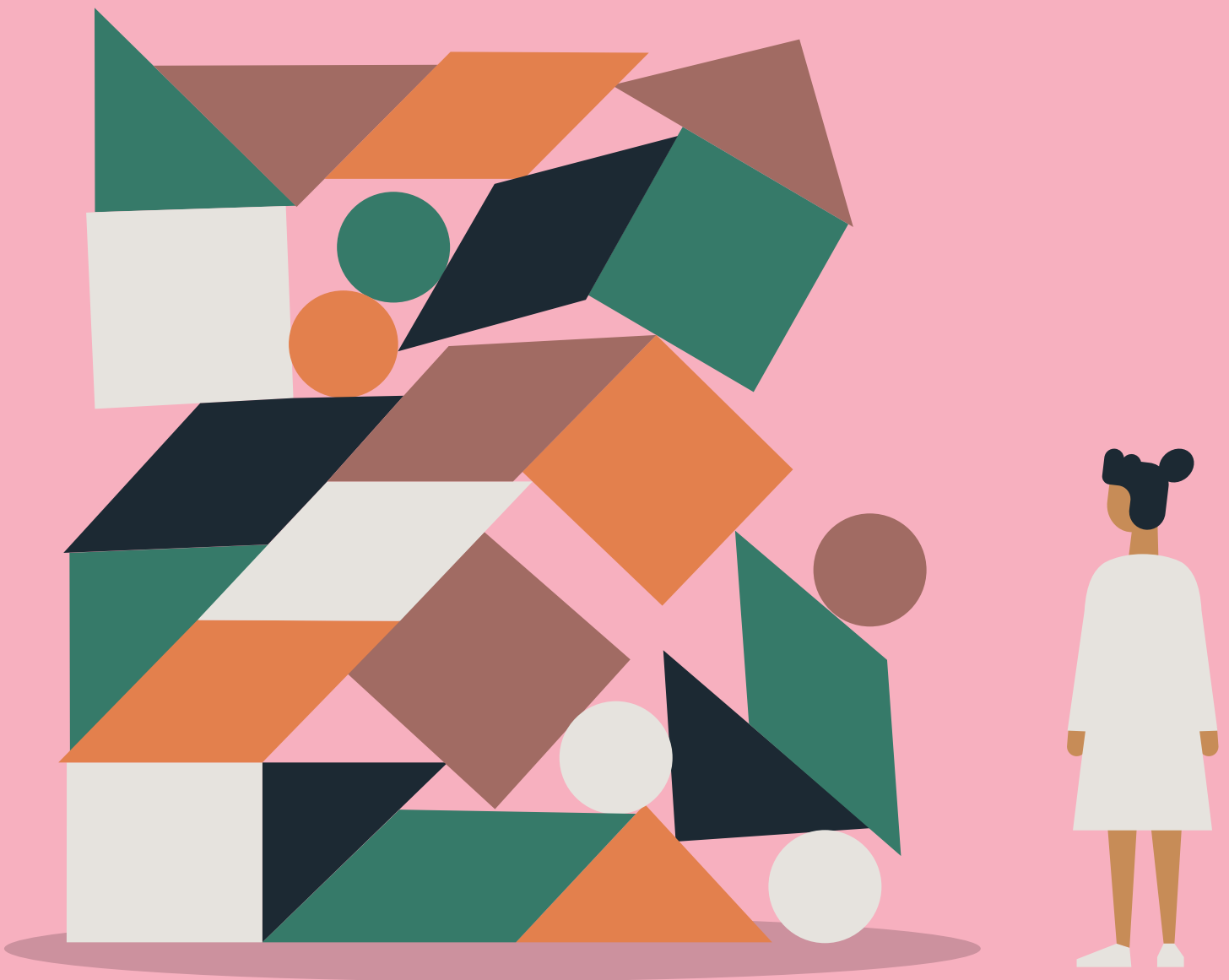


WORK IN PROGRESS

State Child Care and Early
Education Updates 2024



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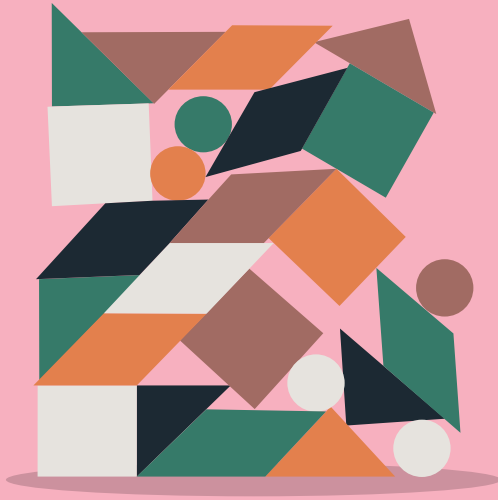
ABOUT THIS REPORT

The information in this report was gathered from state child care advocates' emails and other communications, materials available on state child care advocacy organizations' websites, and the National Conference of State Legislatures Early Care and Education Bill Tracking database. A preliminary draft of the report was sent to state child care advocates to review, verify, and update. The authors are very grateful to the state child care advocates who shared and verified the information included in this report.

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INTRODUCTION

Child care and early education are essential for children’s growth and development and parents’ opportunities to work or obtain education and training. By supporting the current and future workforce, child care and early education are also crucial to the nation’s economic well-being.¹ Yet, despite its dual role in fostering economic growth and nurturing the next generation, child care has long been vastly underfunded. The strain on the child care sector has been exacerbated by the expiration of the temporary federal pandemic relief funding for child care provided under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)—including \$24 billion in stabilization grants for child care programs and \$15 billion to supplement the existing federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program, which provides funds to states to help low- and moderate-income families afford child care and invest in the supply and quality of child care.

As a result of insufficient child care funding, families are struggling to find and afford the child care they want for their children and early educators are receiving very low wages that make it challenging to support themselves and their families—or even stay in the field.

Many states worked to address these gaps in child care and early education in their 2024 legislative sessions, as shown in the state-by-state summaries in this report.² States made great strides in their policies and investments—increasing funding for child care assistance, improving early educators’ compensation through wage supplements or other efforts, creating initiatives to increase the supply of child care, expanding access to prekindergarten and early intervention programs, implementing new or improving existing child care tax credits, and/or adopting other strategies.

States’ actions this legislative season are noteworthy and indicate an increasing recognition of the critical role that child care and early childhood education play in supporting families, children, and the nation’s economy. Yet, ensuring a strong, stable child care sector that offers access to affordable care to all families and fair compensation and good working conditions to all early educators across the country will require that state efforts be accompanied by sustained, significant federal investments.

STATE UPDATES



ALABAMA

approved legislation establishing a refundable facility tax credit for child care providers, an employer tax credit for employers that support child care for their employees, and a grant program for nonprofit child care providers.³ Through the facility tax credit, a child care provider can receive \$1,000 to \$2,000 per child enrolled and receiving child care assistance, depending on the facility's quality rating under the Alabama Quality STARS program, up to a total credit of \$25,000. The facility tax credit has an annual aggregate cap of \$5 million for all child care providers, of which 25 percent is reserved for child care facilities operating exclusively in rural areas.⁴ The employer tax credit can be claimed by employers that provide financial assistance for child care expenses to their employees (who earn less than \$80,000 a year) or establish and/or operate child care facilities for their employees.⁵ An employer may claim a tax credit for 75 percent of the eligible child care expenses incurred, or 100 percent of eligible child care expenses if the employer is a small business (defined as having fewer than 25 employees), with a \$600,000 limit on the amount of qualifying expenses that an employer can claim.⁶ The employer tax credit has an annual aggregate cap of \$15 million for 2025, \$17.5 million for 2026, and \$20 million for 2027, with 25 percent of each annual cap reserved for small businesses and employers headquartered in rural areas. The tax credits will be in effect starting January 1, 2025, and sunset as of December 31, 2027, unless an extension is granted by the legislature.

In addition, the state increased funding for its First Class Pre-K program by \$3.9 million for FY 2025 to support a pay raise for teachers.⁷ Further, the state maintained a \$48 million appropriation for the Alabama Quality STARS program.



ALASKA approved child care legislation (House Bill 89, as incorporated into Senate Bill 189) that, as of 2026, will expand eligibility for child care assistance to families with incomes up to 105 percent of state median income, supported by an additional \$6.1 million in funding annually; allows the state to consider the actual cost of providing care, rather than the market rate, when setting its payment rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance; and establishes tax credits for employers that make donations to child care facilities (employer-run or nonprofit) for their employees' children or that make payments to offset their employees' child care costs.⁸

In addition, Alaska increased its state supplement for Head Start by \$2.6 million, to a total of \$9.4 million.⁹ Finally, the state budget included \$7.5 million in one-time funding to support direct operating grants to child care providers.¹⁰



ARIZONA'S FY 2025 budget includes \$12 million in one-time state funds, from the general fund, to support the child care assistance program. At least 10 percent of this funding is reserved for child care providers that are located in outside of the densely populated counties of Pinal, Pima, and Maricopa. Although there was an increase in state funds, it was not enough to prevent a waiting list for the child care assistance program; the waiting list started as of August 1, 2024.¹¹

The state did not renew the \$2.5 million in one-time funding that had been provided the previous year for the Nurse-Family Partnership Program, a home-visiting program that pairs nurses with low-income, first-time mothers during pregnancy and the first two years of their children's lives.¹² However, unspent funds were carried over into the next fiscal year.¹³



ARKANSAS' Department of Education's Office of Early Childhood announced it would begin allowing child care workers who work in a licensed or registered child care or early childhood facility and foster parents who become adoptive parents to qualify for child care assistance regardless of income.¹⁴ The Department of Education also made other improvements to the child care assistance program, including reducing the number of school and/or work hours parents must complete to qualify for child care assistance from 30 hours to 20 hours per week; starting to adjust the income limit for assistance for the updated state median income estimate every year, instead of every two years; expanding the group of families for whom copayments are waived from those

with incomes at or below 40 percent of state median income to those with incomes at or below 75 percent of state median income; removing the 60-month lifetime limit on child care assistance, allowing eligible families to qualify indefinitely; and establishing one application for both the child care assistance program and the state prekindergarten program (Arkansas Better Chance).¹⁵

CALIFORNIA'S FY 2024–25 budget includes statutory language to reflect a previous agreement to expand the child care assistance program by 200,000 children, but delays fulfillment of that goal until 2028, with expansion to resume in FY 2026–27. As part of the expansion plan, the budget includes \$228.6 million to add 11,000 new child care assistance slots for FY 2024–2025.¹⁶ The budget also allocates \$106 million to the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program, which provides foster parents with time-limited child care assistance, serving an estimated 6,000 children, and guidance in finding and selecting child care.¹⁷ Finally, the budget includes language establishing a timeline for implementation of a cost-of-care model, where payment rates for providers in the child care assistance program are based on the cost of care, and ensuring that payment rates based on this model do not result in a reduction in rates below 2024 levels.¹⁸

The state enacted legislation (Assembly Bill 1808) that aligns the eligibility period for CalWORKS Child Care—which provides child care assistance to families receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)—with the eligibility period for the state's other child care assistance programs, allowing all families 24 months of continuous eligibility.¹⁹

COLORADO approved legislation making several improvements to the child care assistance program and bringing the state's program into compliance with recent federal CCDBG regulations (House Bill 1223). The measure simplifies the process for families applying to receive or retain assistance by limiting the application requirements to only what is necessary to determine eligibility; prohibiting counties from adding eligibility requirements; and requiring recipients to provide only information that has changed when applying for redetermination. The legislation directs that child care providers be paid based on enrollment rather than attendance and be paid a weekly rate in advance; limits copayments for families receiving child care assistance to 7 percent of income and permits employers to cover copayments; and authorizes grants and contracts for care for underserved populations. In addition, the legislation creates a pilot program for unlicensed providers to seek license-exempt status and qualify for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) separate and

distinct from the parent-initiated process and appropriates funds for a study of potential alternative approaches for establishing family, friend, and neighbor care providers' eligibility to participate in CACFP, separate from the child care assistance program.²⁰

The state approved a state income tax credit for care workers that provides a refundable credit of \$1,200 for tax years 2025 through 2028 (House Bill 1312).²¹ The tax credit is available to employees and operators of licensed child care centers and licensed family child care homes and family, friend, and neighbor care providers registered with the Department of Early Childhood's Professional Development Information System, as well as direct care workers who are employed by a long-term care employer or provide community-based services.²²

The state also established the Family Affordability Tax Credit (House Bill 1311), which provides families with a refundable tax credit of up to \$3,200 per child ages 5 and younger and up to \$2,400 for each child ages 6 to 17 (with the amount of the credit gradually reduced for families at progressively higher income levels).²³

In addition, the state created a grant program to support organizations offering academic enrichment and other services to school-age children when school is not in session, such as before or after school or during the summer break. The grant program will serve about 15,000 young people each year.²⁴ The program will be appropriated \$3.5 million each year for state fiscal years 2024–25, 2025–26, and 2026–27.²⁵

The state enacted a measure (House Bill 1332) extending the rulemaking authority of the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC), which began operating in 2022 and oversees and coordinates a variety of early childhood services and programs, for an additional seven years.²⁶ Additionally, the state approved legislation (House Bill 1009) to establish a Bilingual Licensing Unit within CDEC to support Spanish-speaking child care providers in obtaining licensure, such as by ensuring necessary materials are translated and providing interpretation assistance.²⁷

Finally, the state approved legislation creating three new programs designed to encourage the development of child care facilities, including: a child care facility development toolkit and technical assistance program to help child care providers, developers, employers, public schools, institutions of higher education, and local governments better understand the technical aspects of planning, developing, building, and co-locating child care facilities; a child care facility development planning grant program to incentivize and support local governments in identifying and making regulatory updates or improvements to community planning, development, building, zoning, and other regulatory processes to support the development of child care facilities; and a child care facility development capital grant program to provide matching grants to local governments, public schools, institutions of higher education, or public-private partnerships to support the development of licensed child care and construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care facility.²⁸



CONNECTICUT

increased early childhood education spending for FY 2024–2025, allocating \$38.8 million for the child care assistance program (Care4Kids) and \$15 million to raise payment rates for state-funded school readiness (prekindergarten) programs from \$8,939 to \$10,500 for full-day/full-year spaces. The legislature also allocated \$18.8 million of its remaining ARPA funds to Care4Kids, enabling 23,000 children per year to receive child care assistance.²⁹

The legislature enacted a measure (House Bill 5002) establishing a wage supplement program for FY 2025 that will provide a one-time payment of at least \$1,800 to early childhood teachers and teacher assistants in state-funded child care and prekindergarten programs; the Office of Early Childhood is required to use \$9 million of its FY 2025 general fund appropriation for these wage supplements. The legislation also establishes and allocates \$1.8 million in ARPA funding for a Tri-Share Child Care Matching Program for New London County in which child care costs are shared equally among participating employers, employees, and the state. In addition, the measure establishes the Early Childhood Care and Education Fund into which public and private contributions, gifts, and grants can be invested; a 23-member board consisting of elected officials, state officials, early childhood providers and advocates, a business representative, and parents is responsible for reviewing and reporting on the fund's financial health and status and developing a five-year plan for fund expenditures to address the state's early childhood education and child care needs.³⁰



DELAWARE'S

final FY 2025 budget includes an increase of \$10.4 million for the child care assistance program. The legislature approved raising provider payment rates for the child care assistance program to the 50th percentile of 2024 market rates, which lifted payment rates by an average of 15 percent. The legislature also approved an increase in the income eligibility limit for child care assistance from 185 percent to 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The state increased funding for the state prekindergarten program, the Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP), by \$3.4 million, opening 200 more seats for children. The state also approved legislation to update the rules and processes for ECAP (Senate Bill 305).

Finally, the state strengthened the screening process for child care workers, requiring employers at child care centers to submit information to the Department of Labor about current and past employees that engage in prohibited acts (as outlined in Delaware licensing regulations) or concerns about the employee providing care to children (Senate Bill 295).³¹



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

allocated \$70 million for the Early Childhood Pay Equity Fund (ECPEF), which supplements salaries for child care teachers, in FY 2025. This amount leaves the fund—which was at risk of being eliminated entirely—with a \$17 million shortage. The city is in the process of implementing recommendations from the Early Childhood Educator Compensation Task Force on addressing this budget gap and making the Pay Equity Fund more equitable and efficient; one of the task force's recommendations was to reduce or eliminate required salary minimums for educators who have not yet met the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's credentialing requirements.³²

The Prekindergarten Enhancement and Expansion Program (PKEEP), which funds community-based early learning programs to provide quality prekindergarten education programming, received a \$7.2 million increase in one-time funding for a total of \$21.2 million for FY 2025.³³

Funding for the child care assistance program was reduced by \$10 million, to \$73.5 million.³⁴ The Office of the State Superintendent of Education made several updates to its Child Care Subsidy Policy Manual to improve the child care assistance program for families and child care providers. With these updates, parents no longer have to meet a 20-hour work or education requirement to qualify for child care assistance; parents are no longer required to participate in work or education activities to qualify for assistance if their child has special circumstances (is receiving protective services, has disabilities or a parent with a disability, is enrolled in Head Start, Early Head Start, or the Quality Improvement Network (QIN), is in a family experiencing homelessness or domestic violence, has a teen parent or elder caregivers, or has a parent or guardian participating in an addiction recovery program); and family interviews will no longer be required as part of the application process. Also under the updated policies: copayments will be eliminated for more families, including families with incomes below 150 percent of poverty and children with special circumstances; any income earned from employment at a licensed child development facility will not be counted in determining a family's income eligibility for child care assistance; a family's eligibility for child care assistance must be determined within 10 business days of their completed application being received; children in QIN and PKEEP programs will be eligible for child care assistance regardless of citizenship or immigration status; and child care providers will receive full payment when a child is absent, regardless of whether the absences are excused or unexcused.³⁵

Finally, the District established the Access to Quality Child Care for Children With Disabilities grant program to expand the supply of care for infants, toddlers, and school-age children with disabilities; the grants are expected to create an estimated 78 child care slots for children with disabilities.³⁶



FLORIDA

increased payment rates for child care providers serving children in the child care assistance program (School Readiness) for the first time in two years with a \$46.4 million investment. The state also provided \$23 million for School Readiness Plus, under which families receiving child care assistance can continue receiving it at recertification with incomes up to 100 percent of state median income, higher than the previous exit eligibility limit of 85 percent of state median income. In addition, the state increased funding for the T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships to early educators working toward credentials or degrees and financial bonuses and other supports to reward those who complete their credentials or degrees, by \$7 million to \$17 million.³⁷

The state increased funding for its Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program by 3 percent. The state also established the Summer Bridge Program to offer early literacy instruction during the summer before kindergarten to VPK students who score below the 10th percentile in their final prekindergarten assessment.³⁸

Lastly, the state approved a tax credit for employers that establish on-site child care facilities or that subsidize child care for the children or grandchildren of their employees. The state will allow a maximum of \$5 million in total employer tax credits for child care annually for the next three years.³⁹



GEORGIA'S

FY 2025 budget increased funding for the state's lottery-funded Pre-K program by \$97 million. This increase includes \$19.4 million that will go toward improving pay parity for Pre-K lead and assistant teachers' salaries with K-12 teachers, with Pre-K assistant teachers' base salaries increasing from \$20,190 to \$25,741;⁴⁰ \$9.5 million to reduce Pre-K class sizes from 22 to 20 students; \$13.4 million to increase start-up grants for new classrooms from \$8,000 to \$30,000 and offer refresh grants of \$15,000 every five years; \$4.1 million in increased funding for transportation for Pre-K students; \$11.5 million to increase operations budgets for private Pre-K providers; and \$9 million to maintain current enrollment levels for the Summer Transition Program.⁴¹

The final budget also includes \$9.3 million for the child care assistance program (Child Care and Parent Services, or CAPS, program) to increase provider payment rates. In addition, the budget includes \$1.55 million to support a \$2,500 increase in the base annual salary of teachers of preschool-age children with disabilities under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); \$775,000 to increase payment rates for providers in the early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays (Babies Can't Wait) under Part C of IDEA; and \$1.1 million to expand a pilot to provide home visiting in rural areas of the state.⁴²

The state approved an expansion of the dependent exemption from \$3,000 to \$4,000 per dependent (House Bill 1021) and doubled the number of weeks (from three to six) of paid parental leave for state employees and public school teachers (House Bill 1010).⁴³ Lastly, lawmakers approved the creation of a Senate Study Committee on Access to Affordable Child Care.⁴⁴

HAWAII

approved legislation authorizing the use of unused public-school facilities and other state-owned properties for early learning programs (Act 152). The measure promotes the establishment of these programs through public-private partnerships, extending them beyond traditional Department of Education campuses and prioritizing underserved areas. The state also established a year-round application period for the Preschool Open Doors Program, increased the program's income eligibility limit, and reduced parent copayments, doubling the number of families served compared to previous years.⁴⁵

IDAHO'S

Department of Health and Welfare temporarily paused enrollment in the child care assistance program for all families except certain groups (families experiencing homelessness, applying for or receiving TANF, caring for a child with a disability, caring for a foster child, or receiving preventive services through child welfare) from August 2024 through mid-January 2025 due to a projected budget deficit.⁴⁶ When enrollment is reopened, the agency plans to reduce the income eligibility limit to qualify for child care assistance from 175 percent to 130 percent of poverty. The state also plans to delay implementation of updated payment rates for providers serving families receiving child care assistance until July 2025.⁴⁷

ILLINOIS

approved legislation to establish a new Department of Early Childhood, consolidating responsibilities that have been spread across various state agencies (Senate Bill 1). This new department will serve as the primary state entity overseeing resources and programs for early childhood care and education, including child care, early intervention, home visiting, and preschool programs and child care licensing. The legislation creates the new agency effective July 1, 2024, with a two-year process to develop agency infrastructure and revise programs based on input from providers, parents, educators, and other community partners before early childhood programs are transferred to the new department beginning July 1, 2026. The final state budget for FY 2025 includes \$14.2 million in operational funding for the agency.⁴⁸

The FY 2025 budget provides \$158.5 million (a 27.3 percent increase) for the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) to fund Smart Start Workforce Grants, which are provided to child care programs to support wage increases for child care teachers, and to support increased enrollment in the child care assistance program. The budget also includes \$75 million (an 11.1 percent increase) for the Early Childhood Block Grant, which will help create 5,000 additional preschool slots; \$6 million (a 3.8 percent increase) for the early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays to support increased enrollment; \$5 million (a 21.8 percent increase) for evidence-based home visiting programs to expand access to services and improve compensation for service providers; and \$5 million for the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships for early educators pursuing degrees and credentials in early education (but no additional funding to ensure current scholarship recipients can finish their programs).⁴⁹

The state established a permanent state Child Tax Credit for families who are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit and have children under age 12 (including families with Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs) and families caring for disabled adult dependents or seniors). This credit is refundable and worth approximately \$300 to \$600 depending on the number of household dependents.⁵⁰

The state approved a measure (House Bill 4491) that gives greater staffing flexibility to child care programs by allowing an experienced early childhood teacher—a teacher who has a minimum of 2,880 hours of experience or who has been employed by the facility continuously for at least two years—to be present during the first and last hour of the workday and at the open or close of the facility in place of a qualified child care director.⁵¹

Finally, the state approved legislation expanding eligibility for the Early Childhood Construction Grant (ECCG) program for nonprofit early childhood providers that rent or lease from another nonprofit entity (Senate Bill 2675).⁵²

INDIANA approved legislation (Senate Enrolled Act 2) that allows child care workers to qualify for child care assistance for their own children, as long as the family has an income below the federal income limit of 85 percent of state median income and meets other eligibility criteria. The legislation also streamlines the process for public, charter, and non-public schools to participate as providers in the state prekindergarten program (On My Way Pre-K). In addition, the legislation establishes a micro facility pilot program in order to develop a regulatory model applicable to licensed or registered child care providers that serve three to 30 children, with the goal of increasing the supply of child care in areas with a critical shortage of regulated child care.⁵³

The state enacted another measure (House Enrolled Act 1102) that makes modest updates to regulations for home-based child care providers; extends the duration of licenses for child care centers from two to three years; and ensures that local zoning ordinances do not hinder the opening of home-based child care facilities.⁵⁴



IOWA

enacted legislation that increases payment rates for providers that serve families receiving child care assistance to between the 65th and 80th percentile of 2023 market rates (House Bill 2658). The measure also extends for another year a pilot project that streamlines child care workers' eligibility for child care assistance for their own children and requires the state's Department of Human Services to publish data on children and families who are served by the pilot.⁵⁵



KANSAS

approved legislation that, among other changes to the state's tax policies, doubled the state match of the federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) from 25 percent to 50 percent.⁵⁶

Child care advocates and early educators blocked a legislative proposal that would have weakened the state's child care health and safety standards.⁵⁷



KENTUCKY

appropriated \$112.45 million in the FY 2025–26 biennium for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), the Employee Child Care Assistance Partnership (ECCAP) Program, and Early Childhood Educator Scholarships, up from the \$21.2 million provided in the previous biennium. The state also allocated \$2 million in FY 2025 for an Innovation in Early Childhood Services Delivery Fund,⁵⁸ which will focus on providing start-up funding for creative approaches to early childhood education programs, such as employee-based early education, school systems establishing early education programs for their staff members' children, or early childhood education being offered during nontraditional hours.⁵⁹ In addition, the state budget included \$45.11 million in Kentucky tobacco settlement dollars for the Early Childhood Advisory Council and regional collaboratives, home visitation, and maternal and child health services.⁶⁰

The state established the Adaptive Kindergarten Readiness Pilot Project, which will provide a select cohort of eligible preschool children with access to educational technology programs that use family engagement to improve kindergarten readiness (House Bill 695).⁶¹

The state approved legislation (House Bill 561) that establishes the Certified Child Care Community Designation Program, which aims to encourage local governments to examine and reform local land-use and zoning policies that create barriers to the availability of child care programs.⁶² The measure also makes permanent, and encourages efforts to promote awareness of, the Employer Child Care Assistance Partnership Program, under which the cost of child care is shared by a family, the family's employer, and Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS).⁶³

Finally, the state enacted legislation that allows foster parents to qualify for child care assistance while working remotely in the home; previously, these parents could only qualify if they were working at least 20 hours a week outside the home (Senate Bill 240).⁶⁴



LOUISIANA'S

approved state budget for FY 2024–25 restored \$15 million of the \$24 million that had been cut from the child care assistance program, protecting 1,200 out of 2,000 seats that would have been lost with the full cut. The state also approved a measure to reform the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission, revising quorum and membership requirements to ensure input from child care providers and the business community (House Bill 190). In addition, the state enacted legislation on the production and regulation of hemp products, a source of funding for the Early Childhood Education Fund, which matches local investments in early education for children birth through age 3.⁶⁵



MAINE'S

FY 2024–25 supplemental budget allocated nearly \$12 million in one-time grants for child care providers.⁶⁶ The budget also authorized the use of appropriated funds for a two-year pilot program to enable child care staff to receive child care assistance for their own children to attend licensed child care; an evaluation will be conducted to inform recommendations on how to design a permanent program.⁶⁷ In addition, the budget included \$25 million to improve early education services for preschool-age children with disabilities.⁶⁸



MARYLAND

significantly expanded funding for its child care assistance (Child Care Scholarship, or CCS) program, with increases of \$218 million for FY 2024 and \$270 million for FY 2025, bringing state funding to \$328.5 and total funding from all sources to \$412.4 million in FY 2025.

The legislature rejected a proposal that would have given the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) sole discretion to implement an enrollment freeze and re-establish a CCS waiting list. In 2023, the legislature had approved a provision to prevent such unilateral action, requiring the agency to give the General Assembly the opportunity to review any proposed cost-cutting measures for CCS and take corrective action. The legislature applied this provision when, in January 2024, MSDE proposed to reimpose copayments for families participating in CCS, blocking the proposal.

The state approved legislation (House Bill 1441) that aims to expand child care providers' access to participation in the state prekindergarten program by establishing viable alternative pathways to certification that recognize experience-based criteria and build on providers' strengths and by creating a network of hubs to support professional development and provider participation. The legislature also provided funding and approved legislation to extend the Growing Opportunities for Family Child Care (GOFCC) pilot program, which was established in 2021 and supports the opening and ongoing operation of family child care homes, for an additional two years.⁶⁹

MASSACHUSETTS'

FY 2025 budget invests more than \$1.5 billion in early education and care. This investment includes \$475 million to sustain Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Grants, which are provided to child care programs to help them support and stabilize the early education and care workforce and address the programs' operational costs. The budget made the grant program permanent in Massachusetts statute and directed the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) to create a career ladder with salary and benefit guidance by January 2025.⁷⁰ The state will not allow any large for-profit provider (a for-profit provider operating more than 10 center-based programs in the commonwealth) to receive more than 1 percent of total C3 funding, and will require these large for-profit providers to demonstrate a willingness to accept children receiving child care assistance at each of the provider's program locations and to dedicate a portion of their C3 grant funds to improving their early educators' compensation.⁷¹

The early education and care investment also includes \$18 million to reduce the waiting list for child care assistance and (subject to appropriation) increase the income eligibility limit for assistance from 50 percent to 85 percent of state median income; \$45 million to annualize increases in payment rates for providers serving children receiving child care assistance that were implemented in FY 2024 and \$20 million for additional payment rate increases for child care centers and family child care homes; \$7.5 million for an early education and care educator scholarship program; and \$7.5 million for an early education and care educator loan forgiveness program.⁷²

In addition, the funding for early education and care includes \$2.5 million for a competitive matching grant pilot program aimed at incentivizing employer investments in early care and education. Participating employers must fund at least 50 percent of infrastructure, startup, employment, or other costs related to creating new early education and care slots; certify that early educators who serve children in slots funded by the program receive compensation consistent with guidelines established by EEC; and ensure that early education and care providers funded through this program enroll or commit to enrolling children receiving child care assistance. In selecting grantees, EEC must prioritize those that will serve children in low-income families, families in rural areas or in areas with a shortage of early education and care slots, and/or historically underserved populations, such as infants, toddlers, families with nontraditional work hours, and families with children with high needs.⁷³

EEC and MassDevelopment, the state's development finance agency and land bank, partnered to create the Family Child Care Capital Grant Program, through which providers who are homeowners can apply for up to \$25,000 to support space improvements and build program capacity.⁷⁴

MICHIGAN'S

FY 2025 budget increases funding for the child care assistance program by \$18.9 million, to \$69.5 million, to support a 15 percent boost in payment rates for child care providers serving families receiving assistance. The budget also includes a \$1.36 million increase in funding for Early On, the early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and delays under IDEA Part C, bringing funding for the program to \$23.67 million. Funding for out-of-school-time programs was increased by \$50 million, with an additional \$25 million in one-time funding, largely earmarked for specific programs.

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), the state preschool program, received an increase of \$85 million. This additional funding will allow the state to expand eligibility to families with incomes up to 400 percent of poverty and serve 5,000 more children as well as increase per-child funding by 6 percent (to \$10,185 for a full-school-day program). In addition, GSRP received \$25 million for classroom start-up grants to support the expanded enrollment. Finally, the state retained a long-standing requirement that Intermediate School Districts contract with community-based providers to fill at least 30 percent of their GSRP slots, as the legislature rejected a proposal to eliminate the requirement.⁷⁵


MINNESOTA

approved education supplemental appropriations legislation (House File 5237) that includes \$500,000 in one-time funds for 2025 for Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate funding for early educators; \$350,000 per year (\$700,000 for the biennium) in ongoing funding beginning in 2025 for the Office of the Family Child Care Ombudsperson to support providers with licensing, compliance, and other needs; and \$1.125 million in one-time funds for 2025 for Child Care Facility Improvement Grants. The legislation also increases the number of voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) and school readiness plus (SRP) seats by 5,200 (from 7,160 to 12,360) for FY 2025. In addition, the legislation requires that child care programs serving families participating in the Early Learning Scholarships program receive payment before or at the beginning of the delivery of services, rather than after services have been provided, and allows the Department of Education to use up to \$12 million in Early Learning Scholarship funds to create information technology systems for the program, and up to \$2.4 million annually for maintenance. Finally, the legislation establishes an intergovernmental advisory committee to offer guidance to the Commissioner of Children, Youth, and Families on planning, funding, evaluating, and

providing services to children, youth, and families; each of the state's federally recognized Tribal Nations has the option to participate in the committee.

The state approved Omnibus Higher Education legislation (House File 4024) that includes \$500,000 in one-time funding for FY 2025 for the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to partner with the National Head Start Association and the Association of Community College Trustees to establish Head Start centers on college campuses. The state also enacted Omnibus Energy and Agriculture legislation (Senate File 4929) that modifies the farm-to-school program requirements to include child care facilities, giving them access to food and agricultural products. Meanwhile, the Omnibus Jobs/Workforce legislation (Senate File 5289) includes \$1 million in one-time funds for FY 2025 for an additional grant to WomenVenture for their work supporting child care businesses. The Omnibus Judiciary measure (House File 5216) includes protections for family child care providers operating in homeowner association settings; under the measure, private entities cannot prohibit or unreasonably restrict a dwelling owner from providing child care under a family or group family child care provider license and cannot impose a fee, assessment, or other cost upon a dwelling owner in connection with providing child care.

Finally, the state approved legislation modifying some child care licensing requirements. The legislation includes language directing the Commissioner of Children, Youth, and Families to develop and implement a weighted risk system that provides a tiered enforcement framework for child care licensing and to provide documented technical assistance to a child care license holder in place of a correction order under specified circumstances.⁷⁶



MISSISSIPPI increased funding for the Early Learning Collaborative Program—the primary state prekindergarten program, which offers prekindergarten through partnerships among schools, Head Start programs, child care providers, and/or other community-based organizations—from \$24 million to \$29 million. This increase will support a boost in the per-pupil funding rate from \$2,500 to \$3,500, allowing early learning collaboratives to keep pace with rising costs, maintain high-quality educational offerings, and expand to enroll more children. Of the total appropriation, \$7.8 million will come from the general fund and the remaining \$21.2 million will come from lottery funds. The state also increased funding for prekindergarten coaches slightly, to \$3.25 million, but the increase is not sufficient to keep pace with the expansion of the prekindergarten program. Meanwhile, the State-Invested Pre-K (SIP) program—which, unlike the Early Collaborative Program, has no requirement for schools to partner with other early learning programs, no local match, and no quality requirements—received \$13 million in funding.⁷⁷

The state enacted legislation (House Bill 1669) increasing the flexibility of criteria for assistant teachers in the Early Learning Collaborative Program. Under this measure, assistant teachers can meet the criteria if they possess a

high school diploma or GED, along with a Child Development Associate credential, Montessori certification, or an equivalent qualification; previously, assistant teachers had to have at least an associate degree.⁷⁸

The Mississippi Department of Human Services allocated ARPA funds to a number of projects, including \$355 million in Child Care Strong Grants to over 1,100 child care programs; \$80 million to expand the child care assistance program, adding over 11,000 children; \$60 million for the Teacher Payment Incentive Program for over 6,400 child care teachers; \$8 million to a Room Refresh program that will go to over 1,500 child care programs; a teacher scholarship program; and a new and first-time substitute teacher pool.⁷⁹

MISSOURI expanded its prekindergarten program by allowing schools to count more children between ages 3 and 5 who attend an early childhood education program operated by a school district or a charter school and who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch as part of the school's daily attendance; however, the state did not provide additional school funding to cover these additional prekindergarten children. The state also increased provider payment rates for the child care assistance program, from the 58th to the 100th percentile of market rates for care for infants and toddlers and from the 58th to the 65th percentile of market rates for care for preschoolers and school-age children.⁸⁰ However, the state reduced funding for the child care assistance program by \$23.4 million.⁸¹

NEBRASKA approved legislation (Legislative Bill 904) that allows the state's Department of Health and Human Services to determine provider payment rates for the child care assistance program by assessing both market rates and the costs of providing care. The measure also establishes the 75th percentile of market rates as the baseline for payment rates.

The state enacted legislation (Legislative Bill 856) that enables child care programs to receive subsidy payment for children under the care of their own employed parents and allows licensed providers meeting eligibility criteria for child care assistance to enroll their children elsewhere for subsidized care.

The state also approved legislation (Legislative Bill 874) that modifies and simplifies various child care licensing regulations, provides for the transfer of background check information between providers, institutes a regular regulatory review of licensing regulations, and standardizes local oversight of child care. In addition, the state established the Child Care Capacity Building and Workforce Grant Program and the Family Child Care Home Grant Program.

The state appropriated \$900,000 per year over two fiscal years from the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund for evidence-based early intervention home visiting programs and \$500,000 from the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund for evidence-based early intervention nurse home visiting programs.

Lastly, the state approved a measure (Legislative Bill 1178) creating the Intergenerational Care Facility Incentive Grant Program to help eligible applicants to make capital improvements and purchase materials or equipment necessary to co-locate child care programs with nursing homes and assisted living facilities.⁸²

NEW HAMPSHIRE

approved a one-year pilot program to allow early childhood educators to qualify for child care assistance for care for their own children, regardless of their household income, as long as they work at a certified child care program at least 25 hours per week (Senate Bill 404).⁸³ In addition, the state approved legislation expanding the definition of children with special needs or disabilities—to include children at risk of or diagnosed with a disability or delay in their physical, cognitive, communication, social, emotional, and/or behavioral development—for the purposes of determining whether a child care program serving a child receiving child care assistance is eligible for a supplemental payment.⁸⁴

NEW JERSEY'S

FY 2025 budget allocates \$482.5 million for the child care assistance program, allowing the program to pay child care providers based on enrollment rather than attendance. The budget also includes \$124 million to fund existing state-funded prekindergarten programs, including \$20 million to expand prekindergarten programs to new districts. In order to encourage a mixed delivery system, the state will require school districts receiving Preschool Education Aid (PEA) for the first time to demonstrate efforts to partner with all willing and able licensed child care providers and Head Start programs in their communities or neighboring areas to provide preschool programs; school districts that demonstrate efforts to partner with licensed child care providers and Head Start programs will be given preference for grant funding.

The state allocated \$17 million in surplus ARPA funding to upgrade and expand child care facilities through the New Jersey Economic Development Authority Child Care Facilities Improvement Program, fully funding all eligible applications in phase one of the program. This investment brings total support for child care facility improvement through the program to \$143 million.⁸⁵

Additionally, the state budget provides \$23 million for the Statewide Universal Newborn Home Nurse Visitation Program.⁸⁶



NEW MEXICO'S

FY 2025 budget includes \$75.7 million for child care, allowing the state to maintain expanded income eligibility for child care assistance at 400 percent of poverty; support contracted child care slots for infants and toddlers; and increase staffing for the Child Care Services Bureau to handle increased caseloads. The budget also provides \$18 million for child care quality initiatives, including a pay parity program (a limited version of a wage and career ladder) for teachers and assistant teachers providing early care and education for infants and toddlers (\$5 million); research-based assessments, coaching, professional development, and technical assistance as part of the redesign of the state's child care quality rating and improvement system; and prekindergarten coaching and professional development on early literacy and social and emotional development.⁸⁷ In addition, the budget includes \$17.6 million for New Mexico PreK and Early PreK, allowing the programs to expand to 1,300 additional children, and \$3.3 million for Tribal Early Childhood Investment, to support the renovation and improvement of early childhood facilities in tribal communities. The legislature protected and increased the annual distribution from the New Mexico Early Childhood Trust Fund, which is one of the key sources of funding for the state's early care and education programs and initiatives.⁸⁸



NEW YORK'S

FY 2024–25 budget appropriates approximately \$2.036 billion for child care assistance, a nearly \$800 million increase from FY 2023–24. The funding total for FY 2024–25 includes \$997 million from the state general fund (up from \$459 million in FY 2023–24), up to \$576 million in federal CCDBG funding, and nearly \$464 million in federal TANF funds.⁸⁹

The state enacted legislation allowing for statewide presumptive eligibility for the child care assistance program, enabling families to receive assistance while waiting for their application processing to be completed (Assembly Bill 4099).⁹⁰

New York City's budget includes an additional \$20 million to create more preschool slots for 3-year-olds as well as an additional \$25 million to expand days and hours at more preschool programs and help fill vacant preschool seats for 3- and 4-year-olds. The city's budget also boosts funding for preschool special education by \$30 million and increases funding for Promise NYC, a program providing child care assistance to families with undocumented children, by \$9 million.⁹¹



NORTH CAROLINA'S

General Assembly approved \$67.5 million to extend child care stabilization grants through December 2024, replacing a portion of expiring federal ARPA child care funding.⁹² In late November, the House and Senate approved \$900 million in relief dollars for those impacted by Hurricane Helene. This funding included \$10 million to support the reopening of Western North Carolina child care facilities and \$33.75 million for child care stabilization grants to be continued through March 2025 at the current levels.⁹³



OHIO'S

Department of Children and Youth (ODCY), which was established in 2023, launched a new child care assistance program, the Child Care Choice Program, to serve families who did not qualify for the state's existing child care assistance program, Publicly Funded Child Care; while the Publicly Funded Child Care program allows families to qualify for assistance with incomes up to only 145 percent of poverty, the Child Care Choice Program allows families with incomes from 146 to 200 percent of poverty to qualify for assistance. The state allocated \$140 million for the new program.⁹⁴

ODCY and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) also allocated \$85 million in ARPA funding for five types of grants to support expansion of and improve access to child care programs; five categories of grants are: new center start-up, program expansion, program repairs, conversion from family child care type B (programs that care for one to six children) to type A (programs that care for seven to 12 children); and increase capacity for children with special needs.⁹⁵ Additionally, ODCY converted its child care quality rating system (Step Up To Quality) from a system with ratings of one to five stars to a system with bronze, silver, and gold ratings.⁹⁶ Lastly, ODCY launched a pilot child care cost-sharing program, Child Care Business Partnership Grant program, that connects child care programs to local businesses that are looking to create child care benefits for employees who need child care.⁹⁷ This program is starting in two counties and open to expanding.⁹⁸

The state enacted legislation (House Bill 7) that revises the law governing Help Me Grow by requiring ODCY to streamline its central intake and referral system to ensure that services are received from home visiting programs appropriate to each family's level of need, such as the Early Head Start Home-Based option. It also requires ODCY to determine which Step Up to Quality Program ratings tier corresponds with minimum Head Start program performance standards and which Step Up to Quality Program ratings tier corresponds with National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, and, beginning July 1, 2025, rate each licensed child care center and family child care home operating a Head Start or Early Head Start program or accredited by NAEYC accordingly.⁹⁹



OKLAHOMA

increased funding from \$12 million to \$14 million for the Oklahoma Early Childhood Program,¹⁰⁰ a public-private initiative that aims to improve the quality of early education and expand access to services for children from birth through age 3 by offering ongoing professional development to early educators, technical assistance and other resources for child care and early education programs, and family supports.¹⁰¹ The state also provided \$2 million for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, which mails books to children every month, from birth through their fifth birthday, at no cost to families.¹⁰² Finally, the state extended the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OSPR), which had been scheduled to sunset in 2024, until 2029,¹⁰³ OSPR engages and informs policymakers and the public, leads public and private partnerships, and uses data, research, and best practices to identify and advance strategies for promoting children's health and development.¹⁰⁴



OREGON

allocated \$99 million to the child care assistance (Employment Related Day Care) program to address the funding deficit for the program and the growth in applicants for assistance. The state also designated an additional \$72 million in a special purpose account to help reduce the waiting list for child care assistance in the coming year.

The state approved \$7.5 million in funding for CHIPs & Child Care to expand child care options near semiconductor chip manufacturing centers.¹⁰⁵ In addition, the state provided \$9.4 million for Birth Through 5 Literacy Grants, split between culturally specific grantees and the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation (KPI) program (which encourages early literacy through parent education, parent-child interaction, and kindergarten transition supports); \$22 million for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities and developmental delays; \$2.7 million for Relief Nurseries, which offer comprehensive and integrated early childhood therapeutic and family support services; and \$3.2 million for Nurse-Family Partnerships, which offer visits to mothers from a registered nurse starting early in pregnancy and through a child's second birthday.¹⁰⁶



PENNSYLVANIA'S

FY 2024-25 budget provided some minor funding increases for child care and early education programs, including an increase of \$26 million for child care services, which will be used to maintain the exit eligibility limit for child care assistance at 300 percent of poverty or 85 percent of state median income (whichever is lower) and increase payment rates for child care providers serving families receiving

assistance to the 75th percentile of market rates; an increase of \$15 million for the state prekindergarten program (Pre-K Counts), which will raise payment rates from \$10,000 to \$10,500 for full-school-day students and from \$5,000 to \$5,250 for part-day students; an increase of \$2.7 million for the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program; an increase of \$9.1 million for the early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays (IDEA Part C); and an increase of \$32.9 million for the early intervention program for preschool-age children with disabilities (IDEA Part B Section 619).¹⁰⁷

Beginning in 2025, Pennsylvania employers may claim a child care tax credit for contributions made during the year toward employees' eligible child care costs. The tax credit equals 30 percent of an employer's total contributions toward child care expenses for its workers, counting only the first \$500 in contributions made per employee. The credit will not be considered income on the employee's personal income tax return.¹⁰⁸

RHODE ISLAND

approved an increase in the income eligibility limit for child care assistance to 261 percent of poverty starting in January 2025. The state also raised payment rates for child care centers serving children receiving child care assistance by 5 percent as of July 2024 (a boost similar to that negotiated by family child care providers through collective bargaining). In addition, the state extended for another year (through July 2025) a pilot program allowing child care educators with family incomes up to 300 percent of poverty to receive child care assistance for their own children.

The state provided \$7.1 million in new general revenue for its state prekindergarten program (RI Pre-K). Of this new funding, \$1.1 million was allocated to improve access to high-quality infant/toddler child care and Early Head Start. Some of the remaining new state prekindergarten funding will be braided with Head Start funding to help improve early educators' wages and prevent classroom closures and some of the funding will be used to support existing child care classrooms for 3- and 4-year-olds that are being converted to RI Pre-K classrooms.

The state increased provider payment rates for IDEA Part C (Early Intervention) services for infants and toddlers with developmental delays and disabilities and for First Connections newborn home visiting programs. In addition, the state approved the Early Care and Education Workforce Data Act, which establishes a state early care and education workforce registry and requires an annual report on the status of educators who work directly with children in licensed child care and early learning centers and family child care homes, including demographics, education levels, and turnover.

Finally, Rhode Island extended the amount of paid family leave allowed under its Temporary Caregivers Insurance (TCI) program, which covers individuals caring for new babies, adopted or foster children, or seriously ill family members, from six weeks to seven weeks as of January 2025 and eight weeks as of January 2026. The state also increased the minimum dependent allowance under TCI from \$10 per week to \$20 per week beginning January 2025.¹⁰⁹



SOUTH CAROLINA

approved legislation (Senate Bill 862) that requires caregivers employed in a licensed or approved child care center after June 30, 1994, to have at least a high school diploma, high school equivalency credential recognized by the State Board of Education, Certificate of Completion, or South Carolina High School Employability Credential and to complete 15 hours of health and safety training within 30 days of being employed; caregivers must be supervised by a staff person with at least one year of experience until the training is completed. The legislation also extends regular approval, regular licenses, and renewal licenses for public child care centers, group child care homes, private child care centers, and licensed family child care homes from two years to three.

South Carolina's FY 2025 budget allocates an additional \$23.9 million for the Child Early Reading and Development Program (CERDEP), the state prekindergarten program for at-risk 4-year-olds.¹¹⁰



TENNESSEE

allocated \$15 million for the Childcare Improvement Fund, marking the second of three payments toward the \$45-million initiative started in 2023. This fund, which is administered by the Department of Human Services, supports grants to nonprofits for innovative strategies to address child care challenges.

The state approved and funded two new studies related to child care. The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) is tasked with identifying laws, regulations, and rules at the state and local level that impose costs, financial burdens, or operating delays on child care business owners or prospective owners but are not necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of children (Senate Bill 2374/House Bill 2317). TACIR is also required to study the current landscape of child care workers in the state; the establishment, feasibility, and impact of implementing a program that covers the cost of child care for the children of specific child care employees; the feasibility and impact of expanding financial support for early educators, including a target compensation scale; and whether the income eligibility limits for the child care assistance program create a benefits cliff (Senate Bill 2063/House Bill 2232).¹¹¹



UTAH

approved legislation allowing child care workers to qualify for child care assistance regardless of income, if federal funding allows (House Bill 461). The state also enacted legislation (Senate Bill 220) streamlining its School Readiness Grant Program, which supports high-quality preschool programs.¹¹²

In addition, the state enacted the Child Care Revisions Act (House Bill 153), which increased the number of children an unlicensed provider can watch, for pay, without requiring a safety inspection, first aid, or CPR training, from six children to eight. The measure was amended to require unlicensed providers to undergo a background check and to limit the number of children under age 3 a provider can care for to two; however, there is no enforcement mechanism. The legislation also expands eligibility for the state's nonrefundable Child Tax Credit from families with children ages 1 through 3 to families with children ages 1 through 4, with specific income requirements.¹¹³



VERMONT

strengthened Act 76, which was enacted in 2023 to significantly expand access to child care assistance and build the state's child care infrastructure, by amending the statute to make the state's child care assistance program an entitlement program—meaning that the state must find the funds necessary to serve all families who apply and qualify—and fully funding Act 76 in SFY 2025.¹¹⁴



VIRGINIA'S

biennial budget provides over \$1.1 billion for early care and education services, including state general fund investments of \$366 million in FY 2025 and \$461 million in FY 2026. The early care and education funding includes \$390 million in FY 2025 and \$424 million in FY 2026 in state and federal funding to provide assistance to more than 42,000 children in FY 2025 and 45,000 children in FY 2026 through the Child Care Subsidy Program; \$38.8 million in state funding each year to serve more than 2,500 children each year in the state's Mixed Delivery Grant program; and \$157 million in FY 2025 and \$156 million in FY 2026 in state funding for the Virginia Preschool Initiative.¹¹⁵ The investment also includes \$20 million in FY 2025 for RecognizeB5, which provides financial incentives to early educators working in publicly funded child care centers and family child care homes.¹¹⁶

The state approved legislation to help ensure sustainable, stable child care funding (House Bill 419/Senate Bill 54) as well as legislation to improve and streamline the background check process for child care providers (House Bill 1277).¹¹⁷



WASHINGTON

approved over \$57 million in new funding for early childhood education. These new investments include \$5.6 million to raise the monthly infant rate enhancement for providers serving families receiving child care assistance (from \$90 to \$180 per month per child as of July 2024), and \$772,000 to raise the nonstandard-hour bonus for providers delivering over 30 nontraditional hours of care per month per child for families receiving child care assistance (from \$135 to \$150 per month per child as of July 2024). The new funding also supported an increase in payment rates for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)—the state's preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds—by 5 percent for full-day services and 9 percent for extended-day services.

The state provided \$1.31 million to Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA-WA) to offer coordinated recruitment and enrollment for the Transition to Kindergarten (TTK) program, which aims to support children who are at least 4 years old by August 31 and have been identified through a screening process to be in need of further preparation prior to kindergarten; and an additional \$1.75 million to CCA-WA to support staffing for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation across the state.

The state provided \$26.9 million to fund early learning facilities across the state, including \$4.5 million for competitive grants, \$2.35 million for minor renovation projects, and \$20.38 million for 14 designated projects.

The state approved legislation to streamline eligibility requirements for its early care and education programs. Under one measure, as of November 2024, children who are eligible for or receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are considered income eligible for the child care assistance program (Working Connections Child Care, or WCCC) and are considered eligible for ECEAP and early ECEAP (a comprehensive early care and education program for children up to age 3) if they meet the age criteria. Under another measure, a family's participation in early ECEAP or Head Start will now satisfy the work requirement for WCCC. The state also enacted legislation making all licensed or certified providers who work in ECEAP, early ECEAP, Head Start, and Early Head Start eligible for WCCC.

The state approved legislation requiring the Department of Children, Youth, and Families to offer fingerprinting/background check services at a minimum of seven of their child care offices across the state.

The state expanded the Washington State Business and Occupation Tax exemption on child care services to include income from serving children up to age 12 and children with special needs up to age 17.

Lastly, the state enacted legislation mandating that state task forces, work groups, and advisory committees must have at least three individuals with direct lived experience in the subject matter starting in January 2025.¹¹⁸



WEST VIRGINIA

raised payment rates for child care providers serving families receiving child care assistance; rates increased by \$2 to \$4 per day, depending on the type of care, age of the child, and quality level.¹¹⁹



WISCONSIN

expanded the state's nonrefundable child and dependent care tax credit from 50 percent to 100 percent of the federal credit and increased the maximum qualifying care expenses that may be claimed for one qualifying individual from \$3,000 to \$10,000 and for two or more qualifying individuals from \$6,000 to \$20,000.¹²⁰



WYOMING

enacted a measure (House Bill 126) that allows family child care (for up to 10 children) as a residential use of property for the purposes of any restrictive covenant on residential property that does not clearly and expressly prohibit child care.¹²¹

The state approved a budget amendment (SF 19) that increases the amount per child distributed to developmental preschools—providers offering early care and education services to children birth through age 5 with developmental delays or requiring special education under IDEA—to \$12,300 per child (from \$7,633 for children birth through age 2 and \$9,390 for children ages 3 through 5 previously). The legislation also modifies the student count date used in determining payments from December 1 of the year in which the budget request is prepared to May 1 of the school year immediately preceding the budget request. To cover these changes, the measure increased the cap on funding for developmental preschools to \$12 million.¹²²

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