



Statement on Governor Hochul's Budget Proposals Related to Early Care and Learning

As Schuyler Center continues to analyze Governor Hochul's 2023-24 Executive Budget, we are pleased to see proposals that expand access to pre-K and child care, especially for families earning low incomes.

High-quality, affordable child care, pre-K, and afterschool programs strengthen families and communities by boosting women's workforce participation; cutting child poverty; reducing racial inequities in academic achievement; and preventing child welfare involvement.

Child Care Workforce: More Investment is Needed

Key to the success of any and all child care proposals will be a well-compensated, well-supported workforce. If New York is to make progress toward bolstering the child care system, real, meaningful, sustained investments in the child care workforce are essential.

New York's early childhood educators, 96% of whom are women and 56% who identify as people of color, are paid such low wages they live in poverty at more than twice the rate of New York workers in general. Many cannot afford to remain in the field. The Governor's proposal of \$389 million for supporting this workforce falls far short of the investment needed to both retain and rebuild the child care workforce, which was struggling long before the pandemic.

Promising Proposals to Expand Access to Early Care and Learning

The Governor's Executive Budget includes promising proposals that would streamline, centralize, and standardize the onerous child care assistance application process and eligibility criteria, and create uniform eligibility rules among counties.

As Governor Hochul noted, burdensome paperwork requirements and long processing times are too often barriers for families applying for child care assistance. We strongly support the Governor's proposal of instant eligibility for families receiving other forms of assistance.

The Governor's budget also would add \$125 million in new funding for an additional 17,500 children to attend pre-K.

As we continue reading and analyzing proposals within the 2023-24 Executive Budget, we are watching for investments that prioritize next steps to achieve high-quality, culturally responsive, universal child care and pre-K.

We are hopeful that this is the year New York State leads the way on transforming our child care system – these are the investments that pay off now, and for generations to come.

About Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA) is a leading statewide, nonpartisan, policy analysis and advocacy organization based in Albany, NY. SCAA works to shape policies to improve health, welfare, and human services for all New Yorkers, especially children and families impacted by poverty and inequitable systems.

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