

**Testimony to the City Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood
Education**

Monday, March 2, 2026

Emmy Liss

Executive Director

Mayor's Office of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

Good morning to Chair Dinowitz, Chair Gutierrez, members of the City Council Committee on Education and Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education, and all Council members joining today's hearing. My name is Emmy Liss and I am the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. I am joined today by Simone Hawkins, Deputy Chancellor for Early Childhood Education at New York City Public Schools. I am grateful to be here for the Subcommittee's first-ever hearing and for the opportunity to share more about the Mamdani Administration's vision for universal child care.

As we begin today's hearing, I want to recognize the incredible commitment of Chair Gutierrez and so many others in the Council who pushed for child care and early education to be a top priority for City government. Chair Gutierrez has also been a strong advocate for the Mayor's Office of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, and as I will outline in my testimony today, we believe this office will be critical to mobilizing an all-of-government approach to implementing universal child care.

I also want to recognize the many decades of labor and organizing by child care providers, educators, parents, and advocates, many of whom I know will offer testimony later today. We have collectively reached a moment where government is poised to act and implement an expansive vision for universal child care that, if successful, will be life-changing for families, educators, and our economy and City at large.

In my testimony today, I plan to outline our vision for universal child care, the role that my Office will play in delivering this vision, and how we will work with many partners across City and State government and the nonprofit and business communities to implement this vision. I will also speak briefly to the legislative proposals being considered at today's hearing. I then look forward to your questions, and to the testimonies that early care and education providers, advocates, and community members will deliver.

Our vision for universal child care is a system in which every family has access to free, high-quality, culturally-responsive care and education for all children under five, with care offered in a range of settings and delivered by caregivers and educators who are respected and fairly compensated.

Successfully implementing this vision will have a profound effect on our City:

- Children who have access to high-quality early care and education will build developmentally-appropriate skills that put them on a trajectory for stronger outcomes in elementary school and beyond.
- Parents will save an average of \$26,000 annually, which is money they can spend in our local economy and use to build economic security for their families. Universal child care will increase the share of parents in the workforce, with more caregivers and in particular, more mothers, likely to seek employment opportunities.
- All together, we expect universal child care to keep more young families in our City, reversing the high rates of out-migration we see today for families with children under six.

- With universal child care, New York City businesses will see lower rates of employee turnover and more stability in their workforce, and our overall economic output will grow.

This sounds like a fantastical vision, but there is evidence to support all of our claims. All across the country, including here in New York, there is demonstrated proof that access to early care and education boosts children's social-emotional development and kindergarten readiness, not to mention their high-school graduation rates and long-term employment outcomes. When New York City expanded access to 3-K, maternal employment rose in neighborhoods with free preschool education and mothers were more likely to stay employed even after their child finished 3-K. Many New York City businesses have seen employee retention rise when their workers have access to child care benefits, driving down their recruitment and training costs. And when Quebec first implemented universal child care over 20 years ago, the increase in income tax revenue exceeded the municipal costs to implement the program, demonstrating the true return on investment for early care and education.

In January of this year, just days after Mayor Mamdani took office, the Governor and Mayor announced a commitment of over \$1.2 billion in state funding for New York City to put us on the path to universal child care. With these new resources, we will stabilize the child care voucher program. We will ensure every family has access to a high-quality 3-K and Pre-K seat this fall, with expanded 3-K capacity in areas of the City that have historically had unmet family demand. We will also launch 2-K, providing high-quality early care and education to approximately 2,000 two-year-olds in fall 2026. 2-K will grow to serve another approximately 10,000 two-year-olds in fall 2027, and by the end of the Mayor's first term, we will provide access to every two-year-old in the City. We will build this program in partnership with community-based child care providers and home-based family child care providers. And we recognize that as we expand, we also need to address critical operational gaps facing our child care provider community to ensure they have the resources they need.

Delivering a responsive and sustainable universal early child care and education system will take an all of government approach. This is where the Mayor's Office of Child Care and Early Childhood Education comes in. My office is responsible for setting the Administration's child care strategy, coordinating work across City agencies to deliver a high-quality early care and education system that is responsive to child care providers and meets family needs, collaborating with a range of partners internal and external to City government, and engaging with the public.

We will serve as a central hub for citywide policy implementation and coordination across more than a dozen agencies, including New York City Public Schools, the Administration of Children's Services, the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, and the Department of Social Services, among many others. Our City agency partners will continue to drive policy and implementation forward, and they are experts at what they do. My office will not stand in the way of their critical work; we are here to ensure alignment across agencies and to make sure the work is properly resourced and supported. We will also foster strategic partnerships with all levels of government, private entities, nonprofits, and foundations, and work closely with families and providers to ensure their voices are represented in the design and

implementation of City policy and programs. Across all of the City's early care and education work, we will be tracking and monitoring progress to ensure we are on track to meet our goals.

As this Administration begins our critical work to expand access to high-quality early care and education for all families, we are able to build on a foundation of existing, strong programs here in the City. We also recognize there is opportunity to make this system work better for families and for child care providers.

New York City Public Schools administers the City's 3-K and Pre-K program, which I was proud to help build under former Mayor de Blasio. These programs, which are offered inside the City's public schools and with over 1400 contracted early childhood partners, currently serve about 100,000 three- and four-year-olds. Thousands more children in the City have access to free and subsidized child care today through the Child Care Assistance Program administered by the Administration for Children's Services and Human Resources Administration, as well as infant and toddler programs contracted by NYC Public Schools.

Across all of our existing programs, we have important work to do to ensure all families can seamlessly access care that works for them. My office will coordinate efforts across all City agencies that work with families, and we will launch new tools to increase access to information. We will continue on-the-ground outreach to ensure all families enroll in the program for this fall, and especially our city's most vulnerable families like those living in shelter and families who may have been fearful to apply because of their immigration status. We also need to ensure all children, including children who face developmental delays and disabilities, have access to early care and education programs that meet their needs.

The City's child care providers do essential work, but too often with insufficient resources, and they face a complicated web of regulations and requirements to operate. There is good reason for these regulations: When parents entrust their children in the care of a child care provider, nothing is more important than health and safety. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene works hard every day to ensure that child care programs are physically safe and developmentally-appropriate for young children and staffed by caregivers who are background-checked and properly trained. While holding all programs to a high bar for health and safety, we can and will continue to take steps to support child care providers to meet critical regulatory requirements and to make those processes less burdensome. We must have child care providers at the table with us as we make policy decisions so that our policies and priorities reflect the needs of the child care community.

In particular, under this Administration we will focus on the needs of home-based family child care providers, who are largely women of color caring for children in their communities. These caregivers and educators have too often been ignored in public policy. We will ensure the City's child care systems and policies are designed to support family child care providers so they can continue to provide critical services to children and families.

To deliver universal child care, we will need to significantly expand the number of trained professionals working in child care. However, the child care workforce has been underpaid and under-respected for too long. We will invest in building the pipeline of child care workers, supporting and sustaining the existing workforce, and creating growth opportunity for child care professionals.

We know this work will not be easy: it will take all of our partners in City government, in labor, and in the private and civic sectors to deliver on these priorities. We are grateful for the role that City Council has played over the past several years to elevate the importance of child care, and we know your partnership with the creation of this new Subcommittee under Chair Gutierrez's leadership will be pivotal as we move forward together.

The Subcommittee will consider several pieces of legislation today. I want to briefly speak to each of the proposed bills:

- **Int. 0008:** Intro 8 would establish a pilot program to make vacant commercial premises suitable for use by child care programs. Our Office agrees we need to increase the physical space capacity for child care. Currently, there is one licensed child care seat for every two children under five, and the gaps are even more acute for infants and toddlers and in parts of the City that are considered "child care deserts." Addressing space needs for child is a priority to the Administration and will take an all of government approach to ensure we are maximizing currently vacant space and looking to find new spaces, across both private and public property.
- **Int. 580:** Intro 580 calls for the establishment of the Office of Child Care. As the Office of Child Care, we agree that creating an Office of Child Care to deliver City's universal child care system is necessary. The duties laid out in the bill are already functions contemplated for the Office, while there are some duties that will require expansion of staffing capacity and resources to ensure compliance especially around reporting. We look forward to discussing the details of the bill with Council as we refine the scope of the Office's work.
- **Int. 009:** Intro 009 calls for a study and report on expediting the child care permitting process. Our Office agrees that the process to obtain a child care center permit should be as expedient as possible while ensuring compliance with the NYC Health Code. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and Office of Child Care have been reviewing current licensing processes to identify opportunities to streamline and clarify the process. We look forward to sharing the outcomes of that work with the Council in the coming weeks.
- **Int. 128:** Intro 128 would require the provision of child care services, upon request, for certain meetings open to the public. Our office understands the spirit of the bill; families who need child care should have access to care that meets their needs, and child care needs should not prevent New Yorkers from engaging with their local government. However, we have concerns about ensuring the health and safety of children being cared for in spaces that may not be safe or appropriate for child care. The requirements of this bill are subject to appropriation and there is no funding for this bill.
- **Intro 579:** Intro 579 would require the DOE to develop and implement an education and outreach campaign to enroll students in 3-K and pre-K. Currently, as part of our outreach families are contacted directly through general and targeted email campaigns, outbound calls to families in districts with low application rates, as well as virtual information sessions, street teams, text messaging, and robocalls. The DOE also leverages community and faith-based organizations to conduct outreach in their communities. We support the goals of this bill and look forward to working with the City Council.

- **Intro 631:** Intro 631 would require DOE to report on early childhood education seat availability, outreach, and staff vacancies. We welcome Council's continued commitment to transparency to highlight where there is the most need for 3K and PreK seats in communities that need it most. However, we would like to note our concern regarding certain provisions of the bill. Specifically, our ability to provide detailed reports on staffing pertaining to charter schools and community-based organizations is limited, as these entities operate independently, and their employees are not part of New York City Public Schools. NYCPS would like to speak more with the Council regarding the proposed reporting requirements to ensure they are consistent with what we capture in our data systems.

Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony before this Subcommittee today. We are grateful for the energy and attention that the Council has put toward universal child care; we would not be here today without your efforts. I look forward to working closely in partnership with you in the months and years to come, and look forward to your questions today.



**JUMAANE D.
WILLIAMS**

**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION
MARCH 2, 2026**

Good morning,

My name is Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate for the City of New York. I would like to thank Chair Gutiérrez and the members of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education for holding this important hearing.

Childcare is unaffordable for 80 percent of New York City families.¹ The 80th percentile of families pay between \$14,000 and \$20,000 a year for care for a child five years old or younger, which amounts to a significant portion of a household's income. This burden is felt most heavily by low-income families in the Bronx and Brooklyn,² and has driven many families out of NYC altogether—in particular, Black families.³ Though critics may lament the cost, universal childcare would benefit our city's economy: a report by then-Comptroller Brad Lander's office found that a higher labor-force participation and increased work hours for mothers could increase labor income by nearly \$900 million, and the disposable income of families could increase by up to \$1.9 billion due to the avoidance of child care costs, which in turn could be spent at local businesses.⁴

The city must ensure that the availability of childcare seats aligns with a community's needs. Some neighborhoods have lengthy waiting lists, while others have empty seats. In May of last year, only about 70 percent of the city's 130,000 childcare spots had been filled.⁵ This may also be reflective of a lack of outreach, including outreach in various languages. More than 6,000 students last year hadn't been placed in any of the locations their parents had listed on their applications, leaving them with long commutes. A truly universal childcare program must also be accessible and convenient for parents.

The previous administration's actions made providing childcare difficult by failing to fulfill contracted funding on time. Providers all over the city have reported for years that the city fails to make its contracted payments, often amounting to tens of thousands to more than one million

¹ <https://gothamist.com/news/why-child-care-is-so-expensive-in-nyc-that-its-become-a-crisis>

² <https://www.fox5ny.com/news/nyc-child-care-costs-summer-2024>

³ <https://fiveboro.nyc/childcare/>

⁴ <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/child-care-affordability-and-the-benefits-of-universal-provision/>

⁵ <https://www.chalkbeat.org/newyork/2025/05/20/preschool-offers-long-commutes-empty-seats/>

dollars, sometimes dating back years.⁶⁷ Any plan for universal childcare must include a plan for paying providers on time, as well as pay parity for non-DOE provider employees. A report from The Century Foundation in 2024 found that, in the year prior, 44 percent of New York childcare providers raised tuition, and a third lost staff.⁸ This is, in part, due to the expiration of pandemic-era federal funds, but that makes fulfilling contracts on time even more crucial. Many childcare workers make minimum wage, and some childcare center owners are just breaking even or losing money.⁹ No provider should be forced into using their savings or going into debt in a childcare crisis because the city is not fulfilling its responsibilities to our children.

Any universal childcare plan must explicitly include special education services for children with disabilities. Though the previous mayor promised a special education preschool seat for every child who needs one—and is legally entitled to one—it never materialized for many children with disabilities.¹⁰ At this time last year, there were about 450 children sitting at home instead of in a classroom where they could receive the support and services they needed. It is important to reiterate that these seats are legally required, and students’ rights are being violated every day that they are not receiving special education services. I am heartened that Mayor Mamdani has identified this failure as an area of focus and invested an additional \$70 million for preschool special education.¹¹

It is now more urgent than ever to ensure that our undocumented students and newest New Yorkers have access to the services and support they need. In January 2023, the city launched Promise NYC, which helps families who previously didn’t qualify for other state or federal programs due to their immigration status, including undocumented parents and asylum-seekers.¹² It is especially important for recently arrived children to have access to early childhood services, as many are English language learners, and many have experienced significant stress and trauma on their way to New York. This program allows around 1,000 children to enroll in early care and education programs, but the current \$25 million funding will expire at the end of June.¹³ The Mamdani Administration and the City Council must ensure that this funding is renewed.

Thank you.

⁶ <http://uft.org/news/press-releases/uft-demands-nyc-pay-childcare-providers-money-they-are-owed>

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<https://ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/education/2024/07/31/bronx-daycare-providers-say-they-haven-t-been-p-aid-since-may>

⁸ <https://nysfocus.com/2024/10/01/child-care-funding-century-foundation>

⁹ <https://gothamist.com/news/why-child-care-is-so-expensive-in-nyc-that-its-become-a-crisis>

¹⁰

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/newyork/2025/01/29/eric-adams-preschool-students-with-disabilities-still-waitin-g-for-seats/>

¹¹ <https://advocatesforchildren.org/policy-resource/statement-nyc-preliminary-budget-fy-2027/>

¹² <https://www.nyc.gov/content/getstufdone/pages/promise-nyc>

¹³ <http://advocatesforchildren.org/policy-resource/budget-priorities-2027/>



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ANTONIO REYNOSO

Brooklyn Borough President

City Council Sub-Committee on Early Childhood Education Oversight Hearing: The Path to Universal Childcare March 2, 2026

Thank you, Chair Gutiérrez, and members of this subcommittee, for holding this hearing today and for your steadfast leadership in advancing early childhood education. Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso remains a committed partner in prioritizing families and our youngest learners, and he supports many of the measures proposed here today to strengthen accountability, transparency, and the expansion of early childhood programs.

The need for affordable, high-quality programs for NYC families continues to grow, yet we fall short of securing the necessary seats to meet that demand. In Brooklyn alone, childcare costs can represent up to 63% of a family's income. According to the same study, more than 80% of NYC families with children under age five are unable to afford childcare.¹ Brooklyn's child poverty rate is above 25%, highlighting the urgent need for accessible support for our youngest learners and their families.² When families cannot access affordable childcare, parents, particularly single parents and female-led households, are forced out of the workforce or into unstable employment, furthering economic inequality. A 2025 NYC Comptroller report notes that nearly half of NYC mothers reported at least one childcare-related work challenge and 29% of NYC mothers in the workforce reported dropping out due to childcare concerns.³ By providing parents access to childcare, we increase household income, level the playing field, and reduce economic inequality.

This is not just about economics. Decades of research continue to support the overwhelming benefits of high-quality early childhood education programs, and their relationship to student achievement and social and emotional development. Children who participate in early learning programs demonstrate significantly greater gains in vocabulary, reading, and math skills including reasoning and logic, compared to their peers without access.⁴ The impact goes beyond school, with children benefiting from social and emotional outcomes such as emotional regulation, impulse control, reduced behavior problems.⁵ Over time, these benefits carry into adulthood, with improved high school graduation and college completion, increased lifetime earnings, and lower rates of crime.⁶ All of these benefits are more than double for low-income families and historically disadvantaged populations.⁷

¹ [Link](#)

² [Link](#)

³ [Link](#)

⁴ [Link](#)

⁵ [Link](#)

⁶ [Link](#)

⁷ [Link](#)

Despite the positive effects of investing in early childhood education, we continue to fall short. Just last year, Borough President Reynoso stood with you all opposing the proposed closure of four childcare centers in Brooklyn.⁸ This was due to DOE's lack of proper seat configuration, expiring leases, and failure to pay and properly support our providers in this work.

This is a reminder that we need pay parity for our teachers, some of whom earn a starting wage of less than \$36,000 a year.⁹ The same single, women-led households that struggle to access affordable childcare are also disproportionality represented in the workforce.¹⁰ The system isn't just broken, it stacks the deck against those who need it most: our children, their families, and the educators caring for them.

We must do right by our city. Borough President Reynoso stands alongside the Council and the Mayor, supporting many of the steps proposed. Whether it's increasing reporting and accountability within New York City Public Schools; piloting programs that expand suitable locations for childcare where real estate is scarce and expensive; or expediting the childcare permitting process, we must act to ensure every family has access to quality early childhood education. Thank you.

⁸ [Link](#)

⁹ [Link](#)

¹⁰ [Link](#)



SUPPORTS



The United Federation of Teachers represents more than 190,000 employees including teachers and classroom paraprofessionals, along with school secretaries, attendance teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, adult education teachers, administrative law judges, nurses, laboratory technicians, speech therapists, and 60,000 retired members. We also represent teachers and other employees at a number of private educational institutions and some charter schools.

Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education

Int. 0009-2026 (Menin): A study and report on expediting the child care permitting process

Summary of Legislation

Int. 0009 would require the Child Care Advisory Board, in consultation with the Department of Buildings and the Fire Department of the City of New York, to conduct a study and submit a report on expediting the child care permitting process. The study would identify barriers faced by child care providers in the permitting process and recommend steps to expedite the process and make it more effective.

Statement of Support

The United Federation of Teachers (UFT) supports Int. 0009, which would commission a study on the barriers faced by child care providers in the permitting process and recommend steps to expedite this process. A study of this nature is critically important right now as Mayor Zohran Mamdani and Gov. Kathy Hochul have committed to making 3-K truly universal and rolling out 2-Care in New York City. Making this commitment a reality will require opening additional child care programs and expanding the provider workforce, which has dwindled in the years since the pandemic.

Prior to 2020, the UFT represented over 25,000 home-based child care providers; now, our union represents under 10,000 of these providers. The reduction in this workforce is due to myriad factors, including low payment rates, delayed payments to providers and regulations that prevented home-based providers from owning and operating multiple child care businesses. However, the success of the city's child care initiatives hinges on reversing this trend, as home-based providers will be critical in creating 2-Care seats. These providers are uniquely positioned to provide culturally responsive care and to accommodate families who need nontraditional hours of care. We will also need to ensure we have the early childhood educators we need to provide special education and related services to our youngest learners.

To retain and recruit the providers the city will need in the coming years, we must identify and understand any additional barriers to opening new programs and expanding our provider pool. Including providers on the Child Care Advisory Board will ensure the report commissioned by this legislation addresses how to overcome those barriers. According to Local Law 102 of 2022, the board may include "such other members as

UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS



The United Federation of Teachers represents more than 190,000 employees including teachers and classroom paraprofessionals, along with school secretaries, attendance teachers, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, adult education teachers, administrative law judges, nurses, laboratory technicians, speech therapists, and 60,000 retired members. We also represent teachers and other employees at a number of private educational institutions and some charter schools.

deemed necessary by the mayor, who shall also be appointed by such mayor.” Therefore, in addition to supporting Int. 0009, the UFT recommends adding language for the mayor to appoint providers to the Child Care Advisory Board.

FOR THE ABOVE-MENTIONED REASONS, THE UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS SUPPORTS THE PASSAGE OF THIS LEGISLATION.

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Testimony – Emmanuel Novy, Chief of Strategic Initiatives, City’s First Readers

Good morning, Chair and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

New York City’s investment in universal childcare is bold, historic, and necessary. It will open doors for families across this city. But if we want this investment to truly change children’s lives, universal childcare must be more than a place to be—it must be a place where learning begins.

Childcare is not just “care”.
It is the first chapter of a child’s education.

Learning to read does not start in kindergarten. It starts at birth—with the words children hear, the books they touch, and the relationships that make learning feel safe and joyful. These early, play-based interactions build the brain architecture for language, self-regulation, and learning.

This is where City’s First Readers comes in.

Universal childcare is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to move from remediation to prevention. City’s First Readers ensures that this historic investment translates into real outcomes by strengthening what happens every day in community settings—childcare programs, homes, libraries, clinics, and neighborhood spaces.

We ground our work in the science of early learning, strengthening oral language, vocabulary, and early literacy through joyful, relationship-based, play-centered practices. And we work directly with families, because parents and caregivers are children’s first teachers. When families are supported, learning becomes part of daily life—not just something that happens in classrooms.

Last year, City’s First Readers reached over one million family touchpoints, distributed hundreds of thousands of books, issued tens of thousands of library cards, and supported over a thousand early educators. But this work cannot live on the margins. It must be embedded into the universal childcare system itself.

Universal childcare expands access.
Universal literacy ensures impact.

By integrating City’s First Readers into universal childcare, New York City can ensure this historic investment strengthens community-based programs, supports educators, engages families, and delivers lasting, equitable outcomes for children in every neighborhood.

Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to testify.

Testimony – Sejal Kothari, Director, Upper Manhattan Early Childhood Connect (UMECC)

Good morning, Chair and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

New York City's investment in universal childcare is bold and necessary. But if it is going to truly change outcomes for children, childcare must be paired with early, coordinated support for families—before challenges become crises.

Learning and literacy do not start in kindergarten. They start at birth—with early language, communication, and social-emotional development. When developmental delays go unidentified or families cannot navigate complex systems, children lose critical time. And by the time they reach school, gaps are already wide.

This is where Upper Manhattan Early Childhood Connect plays a vital role.

UMECC helps families navigate Early Intervention and CPSE—systems that are essential, but often confusing, fragmented, and difficult to access. Our call center is staffed by local mothers who have lived this experience themselves. Families speak to someone who understands their language, their fears, and their realities. That trust is what turns referrals into action.

Early Intervention is literacy work.
CPSE is literacy work.

When we support speech, language, and social-emotional development in the earliest years, we are building the foundation for learning to read later on. Universal literacy is not possible without early identification, warm handoffs, and culturally responsive family navigation—especially in communities facing systemic barriers.

Universal childcare gives us the infrastructure to reach families.
UMECC helps ensure families can actually use that system.

By embedding navigation, developmental support, and family-centered guidance into universal childcare, New York City can move from late intervention to early prevention—and ensure this historic investment reaches children who need it most.

Universal childcare is powerful.
Universal literacy is what makes it transformative.

Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to testify.



Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

Testimony to be Delivered to the New York City Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education

Re: The Path to Universal Child Care
March 2, 2026

Thank you for the chance to discuss the expansion of early childhood care and education programs and how the City should use this opportunity to create a fully inclusive and accessible system. My name is Betty Baez Melo, and I am an attorney and the Director of Early Childhood Education at Advocates for Children of New York (AFC). For more than 50 years, Advocates for Children has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. Every year, we help thousands of families navigate the education system, starting from the time children are born.

We are pleased with the City's commitment to strengthen 3-K and Pre-K and launch 2-K to expand access to free high-quality programs for two-year-old children. As the City undertakes these expansion efforts, it must ensure that early childhood care and education programs serve all New York City families, including families who often struggle to access care, such as families of young children with disabilities, families who speak a language other than English, and families in temporary housing.

In recent years, we've seen families of young children with disabilities experience hurdles in securing the preschool placements and services their children need, in violation of their legal rights—families waiting weeks to hear back after requesting evaluations, families desperate for their children's services to start so they can benefit from 3-K alongside their peers, and families whose children are sitting at home due to the City's shortage of preschool special education classes. Unfortunately, we know that the experiences we hear from families are not uncommon. As of May 2025, 7,156 (29%) of preschoolers with disabilities were missing one or more of their legally mandated services like speech therapy or counseling; more than half of those children—3,729 preschoolers—were receiving none of their mandated preschool special education services. Additionally, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) recently posted information online projecting a shortage of preschool special education classrooms this spring that could leave hundreds of young children with

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disabilities with the most intensive needs sitting at home in violation of their legal rights while their peers benefit from preschool programs.

Child care can only be universal if it provides children with disabilities with the support they need to fully participate. We appreciate that the Mayor extended and baselined \$70 million for preschool special education in the preliminary budget. The City must invest the resources needed to meet its legal obligation to preschoolers with disabilities and ensure they are not left behind.

As the City launches 2-K, it must ensure that families are not turned away because their child has a disability and it must support providers to meet the needs of toddlers with delays or disabilities in their care. Among other things, the DOE will need to work closely with the Early Intervention (EI) program to develop processes to help identify children in need of referral or services and to coordinate the provision of EI services in all 2-K settings. Because EI generally provides only part-time services, the City must also ensure that 2-K programs can fully support children with disabilities during all program hours. Among other steps, we encourage the City to develop a plan for children to get needed accommodations and to set aside resources that providers can access for things like professional development, learning materials and equipment, or staffing support to appropriately serve children with disabilities.

Young children living in shelters also disproportionately miss out on early childhood education opportunities. We appreciate efforts the DOE is already making to increase 3-K and Pre-K applications and enrollment of children in shelter, including conducting targeted outreach during the application processes and making automatic offers to 3-K and Pre-K for families in shelter who did not apply, but more support is needed. We call on the City to convene an interagency initiative focused on improving the education of students in temporary housing, including access to early childhood education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to working with you to ensure that universal child care truly meets the needs of all the City's children and families.

TESTIMONY

**NYC COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
CHAIR, JENNIFER GUTIERREZ**

Oversight – The Path to Universal Child Care

**Presented on
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**The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators
Henry Rubio, President
Dale Kelly, Executive Vice President
Stamo Karalazarides Rosenberg, First Vice President**

**40 Rector Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10006
(212) 823-2020
www.csa-nyc.org**

Good afternoon, Chair Gutierrez, and members of the Sub-Committee of Early Childhood Education. My name is Henry Rubio, and as president of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators, I represent nearly 18,000 in-service and retired educational leaders across New York City's public school system.

It is significant that today's oversight hearing on The Path to Universal Child Care is the first convening of the City Council's new Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education. The decision to establish this subcommittee and to begin its work with oversight of universal childcare reflects a collective understanding that early childhood education is a core public infrastructure.

As with any element of public infrastructure, stability depends not only on funding and policy, but on the strength and continuity of its workforce and leadership. Labor organizations like ours play a critical role in that stability.

As you know, organizations like CSA do more than advocate for our students and school administrators. We help professionalize roles, stabilize working conditions, and support governance structures that allow institutions to function predictably and at scale. As we often say, our members' working conditions are students' learning conditions. When we advocate, we advocate for the common good.

Since assuming office, Mayor Mamdani has spoken publicly about expanding early childhood education to include 2-Care and moving New York City toward universal childcare. The Governor has likewise made that a statewide goal. Advocacy organizations, providers, educators, policy analysts, and unions like ours have broadly supported this vision. At the same time, we have been clear in the press and in public forums that expansion cannot repeat the structural mistakes of the past. If we expand without correcting those structural weaknesses, we will scale instability along with access.

We believe we have a unique vantage point to highlight those structural mistakes and offer solutions. CSA is often referred to in shorthand as "the principals union." In reality, we represent principals, APs, and a range of supervisory leaders throughout New York City, including early childhood directors and assistant directors in centers that fall under the umbrella of the Day Care Council of New York (DCCNY).

As a result, we have direct experience with how funding models, governance structures, procurement systems, and compensation frameworks affect the stability of ECE centers across both DOE-operated and community-based settings. Where CSA represents directors, we can support, protect, and advocate regarding issues that directly impact program continuity. That advocacy strengthens not only individual leaders but the institutions they run.

At the same time, we recognize that many early childhood directors across the city operate without the same structural support that CSA can help provide. The challenges facing those leaders do not remain isolated to individual sites; they affect the broader ecosystem. When supervisory leadership is unstable anywhere in the system, the effects ripple across neighborhoods, families, and public dollars. So, when we advocate on behalf of our members leading CBO-based centers, we are also advocating for directors who do not yet have union representation.

ECE History

New York City's early childhood system did not begin with Pre-K for All. It was built decades earlier by community-based centers and the leaders who ran them. CSA has been part of that history since the 1970s.

In 1974, CSA organized New York City directors of day care centers for representation and professional recognition. Those leaders were formally brought into collective bargaining, and we negotiated the first contract for early childhood educators in the nation in 1976. For over fifty years, CSA has advocated for the professionalization of early childhood leadership, fair labor standards, and the recognition that center directors operate complex educational institutions with responsibilities comparable to other public-school leaders.

The system has always been mixed delivery. Community-based centers and DOE-operated sites have long coexisted. Long before "universal" became policy language, CBO-based centers were the backbone of care and education for working families.

When the City launched Pre-K for All and later 3-K, it dramatically expanded access and reframed early childhood as public infrastructure. Seats increased at unprecedented speed. Early childhood gained political prominence and budgetary scale. Importantly, the City relied on the existing CBO network to deliver that expansion. Community-based centers added classrooms, met academic standards, integrated into DOE oversight structures, and helped fulfill the City's promise.

There were real achievements: expanded access for families across boroughs, full-day programming at no cost to families, greater integration of early childhood into the broader education strategy, and recognition that CBOs are essential delivery partners. But expansion at speed also hardened structural inequities.

A two-tier workforce became embedded in policy. Leaders and educators performing comparable instructional work operate under different compensation structures depending on whether they are in DOE-run sites or CBO sites. Institutional stability diverged as a result. Enrollment-driven and contract-based funding placed significant operational risk on small providers. Administrative centralization increased contracting complexity, creating recurring delays in the flow of city funds to community-based centers.

Universal access was a bold and necessary step. The next step must be structural alignment. If universal childcare is to succeed, the system must correct the structural imbalances that expansion exposed.

There are three interlocking problems that must be resolved if universal childcare is to succeed in New York City. First is pay parity between CBO-based educators and their DOE counterparts. Second is structural funding equity between DOE-operated programs and community-based organizations, including how seats are funded. Third is procurement and reimbursement reform.

If we do not correct these on the path to universal childcare, expansion in New York City will once again scale instability and inequity, this time at an even larger scale.

Pay Parity

In December 2025, the Day Care Council released a comprehensive report on the challenges within the ECE workforce authored by Emmy Liss. A month after the report was released, she was appointed by Mayor Mamdani as the Director of the Office of Childcare. Her report provides a clear economic portrait of the workforce on which universal childcare depends.

According to the report, the licensed childcare workforce includes nearly 37,000 classroom educators operating across more than 10,000 licensed programs. This workforce is 95 percent female. Approximately 75 percent are non-white or multiracial women. More than 40 percent identify as Hispanic. More than half were born outside the United States. Universal childcare rests on the labor of immigrant women and women of color.

The report finds that the median annual wage for all occupations in New York City is less than \$65,000. The median wage for childcare workers is approximately \$38,000. Childcare workers earn less than 95 percent of all occupations in the city. They are twice as likely as other employed New Yorkers to live in poverty. Almost 15% rely on Medicaid. A significant share relies on SNAP. More than one third of workers between ages 45 and 55 have saved \$10,000 or less for retirement. National experts cited in the report found that center-based programs would need nearly \$12,000 more per infant or toddler per year simply to pay staff a living wage.

Within early childhood, inequities are stark between DOE-operated programs and CBOs. Two publicly funded systems perform comparable instructional work under fundamentally different compensation structures. Many have documented how this leads to increasing turnover for ECE teachers and makes recruitment and hiring an incredible challenge for CBO-based centers.

The workforce report estimates that a truly universal birth-to-five system would require at least 30,000 additional childcare workers, nearly doubling the current workforce. Even without expansion, approximately 5,000 new educators are needed annually simply to replace turnover. 57 % percent of programs report being short staffed. 52% percent report that new teachers leave within five years. This is not an expansion problem alone; it is a retention crisis.

As we have long argued, pay disparity impacts ECE Directors and Assistant Directors uniquely, both in terms of their workload and compensation. According to the report, there are nearly 3,000 administrators across the sector. Since CSA represents principals who oversee ECE programs in elementary schools, principals who oversee DOE-based centers, and directors in participating community-based organizations, our cross-system representation gives us direct visibility into how compensation inequities destabilize leadership across delivery models.

Leaders in community-based centers supervise staff, evaluate teacher performance, guide curriculum implementation, manage attendance and payroll systems, oversee budgets, ensure regulatory compliance, and in many cases write grant proposals and respond to Requests for Proposals, responsibilities that mirror those of DOE administrators. Directors in community-based organizations manage instructional quality, regulatory compliance, labor oversight, nonprofit governance, budgeting, and city contracting obligations. They operate educational institutions and small businesses simultaneously. Yet they are compensated on a lower scale than their DOE counterparts, despite equivalent credentials and parallel supervisory obligations.

The Day Care Council analysis shows that directors in community-based organizations lose more than \$2.2 million over a 25-year career by remaining in CBO programs rather than moving into DOE roles. CBO directors experience the largest pay-parity penalty anywhere in New York City's early childhood system. No system can sustain leadership stability when its directors face a multi-million-dollar penalty for staying where they are most needed.

The workforce data also reveal what labor economists describe as a "hollow middle." There is a large share of young educators entering the field, high early-career attrition with more than half leaving within five years, a significant cohort of veteran educators nearing retirement, and too few mid-career professionals to provide sustained continuity. In that environment, directors and assistant directors become the primary stabilizing force within early childhood centers. With fewer mid-career educators available, directors must mentor early-career teachers, model effective classroom practice, anchor curriculum implementation, steward long-term family relationships, and carry institutional knowledge.

If expansion requires tens of thousands of additional educators, most of whom will be early-career entrants, directors will be tasked with managing larger onboarding pipelines, higher attrition, diminished access to experienced mentors, and increased compliance risk. Expansion therefore requires not only additional teachers but expanded leadership capacity capable of absorbing workforce churn while maintaining program quality.

An essential part of this landscape is the Family Child Care Network (FCCN) model. FCCNs are organizations that support and contract with licensed home-based childcare providers. These are often small, family-operated programs serving mixed-age groups in residential settings, while still ensuring they meet city, state, and DOE quality standards. During prior expansions of publicly funded early childhood seats, New York City relied heavily on FCCNs to scale capacity quickly, particularly in neighborhoods where center space was limited. We anticipate that any future expansion will similarly depend on FCCNs to meet demand.

CSA represents leaders across these delivery models, including FCCN-based administrators who carry system-level responsibilities comparable to center directors and DOE administrators. Rather than operating large center-based classrooms, FCCNs coordinate dozens, sometimes hundreds, of affiliated providers. The network leadership is responsible for instructional oversight, regulatory compliance, professional development, data reporting, health and safety monitoring, enrollment coordination, and city contracting requirements across dispersed sites.

If the City's position is that families should experience equivalent standards, curriculum expectations, and accountability regardless of whether their child attends a DOE school, a center-based CBO, or a home-based provider affiliated with an FCCN, then compensation must reflect that. Our leaders ensure quality across decentralized, community-rooted programs; parity in standards must be matched by parity in pay for the educators and leaders who uphold them.

Pay parity for directors is not solely a matter of fairness. It is a structural workforce stabilization strategy. In a system that depends on supervisory continuity to anchor classrooms, stabilize staff, and ensure compliance, leadership compensation cannot remain misaligned.

Funding Equity

The second issue contributing to two unequal systems relates to how seats are funded. Under the de Blasio administration, expansion of Pre-K and 3-K relied on contracting community-based centers for a projected number of seats. Centers submitted capacity numbers through a Request for Information process, and contracts were executed based on those projections.

However, those contracts were funded per student, not per class. Under the current model, funding to CBO providers is not provided as a flat annual grant; it is largely based on a per-seat allocation multiplied by the number of children actually enrolled. A provider's operating budget is directly tied to how many seats are filled. If demand slips below projections, funding declines with each unenrolled student. Even modest enrollment dips can produce meaningful budget gaps. For independent nonprofits operating on thin margins, a difference of two or three students can translate into tens of thousands of dollars in lost revenue over the course of a year.

In DOE schools, funding structures are more stable. School budgets are built around institutional continuity, not year-to-year enrollment volatility at the classroom level. DOE schools are not forced to absorb enrollment risk in the same way small community-based providers are.

The New York City Comptroller has examined the DOE's planning and allocation process for CBO-based UPK on multiple occasions. Several recurring themes have emerged.

First, there are many impactful enrollment forecasting challenges. DOE projections do not always align precisely with actual demand patterns. Some neighborhoods are over-seated, others under-seated, and mid-year adjustments become necessary. When those adjustments occur, funding allocations shift and contracts must be modified. For a nonprofit provider, that means staffing plans and financial assumptions change after the school year has already begun.

Second, we must have more allocation transparency. Audits have raised questions about how funding formulas are determined, how seat reductions or reallocations are calculated, and how those changes are communicated to providers. When methodology is unclear, directors cannot confidently plan hiring, retain staff, or make long-term commitments.

As the City once again scales its ECE system and works toward universal childcare, we must confront questions of systems design. If CBOs are expected to function as delivery partners for public infrastructure, they cannot be financed as if they are operating speculative businesses. If the City relies on CBOs to deliver a substantial share of publicly funded early childhood seats, then the funding and contracting structure must reflect the operational realities of nonprofit providers and distribute risk in a manner consistent with public responsibility.

Procurement & Reimbursement Reform

The third structural problem stems from persistent challenges in procurement and reimbursement on the CBO side. In recent years, payment delays have reached a scale that threatens operational stability. Whatever the cause, the DOE must identify the breakdown and correct it.

Even when seats are filled and funding is approved, payment may lag due to contract registration backlogs, procurement review processes, or budget modification cycles. CBOs front payroll,

rent, utilities, insurance, benefits, and instructional materials. They then seek reimbursement through the Department of Education's contract process. If reimbursement is delayed, the provider must still meet payroll and pay its bills. Providers cannot operate when payments are delayed or unpredictable. Small organizations cannot absorb months of cash flow disruption.

In centers where CSA represents directors, we can elevate procurement failures and advocate for corrective action. In centers without union representation, leaders face these disruptions with fewer protections, even though the impact on children and families is the same.

This challenge becomes more acute during expansion. When the City expanded Universal Pre-K rapidly, multiple pressures increased at once: contract volume increased, enrollment volatility increased, the number of participating providers increased, and budget complexity increased. Each new classroom did not simply add students; it added a contract, a budget schedule, compliance documentation, payment processing, and the possibility of amendments if enrollment shifted. As the system scaled, the number of transactions moving through the Department of Education's procurement and contract registration pipeline multiplied.

At the same time, the infrastructure responsible for processing those contracts did not expand at the same pace. Service delivery capacity scaled quickly, but fiscal processing capacity did not scale proportionally. When incoming contract volume exceeds processing capacity, a backlog forms. Backlogs lead to delayed payments. Delayed payments create cashflow strain. Enrollment volatility and mid-year seat adjustments multiply contract amendments, each of which re-enters the procurement pipeline and increases delay risk. The result is predictable system congestion.

The lessons from the ECE expansions that began in 2014 are straightforward. Program expansion is not just about funding seats; it is about scaling the administrative machinery that supports those seats. When a city increases publicly funded classrooms, it must also increase procurement staff and review capacity, contract registration throughput, budget analysis capacity, payment automation systems, and forecasting tools that reduce mid-year amendments. Expansion without proportional administrative scaling guarantees friction.

Universal childcare requires predictable funding streams. If procurement systems are unstable, expansion will simply expand financial risk. As has been raised in prior hearings, the DOE does not operate under the same budgeting and procurement oversight systems that govern other city agencies. A public system of this scale should be subject to transparent and consistent procurement standards. If other agencies operate under accountable structures, there is no reason the DOE should not do the same.

CSA Proposals

Without structural adjustments, we will continue to see avoidable instability in a system that children and families depend on. As the City considers further expansion of early childhood programs, we respectfully propose structural guardrails.

The City must fund Director and Assistant Director pay parity in the City budget. Salary parity for CBO Directors and Assistant Directors aligned to DOE equivalents is foundational to workforce stabilization and leadership retention.

Public funding must also include automatic cost escalators. Early childhood contracts should incorporate annual inflationary or cost-of-living adjustments so programs do not lose purchasing power year after year and are not forced to absorb rising operating costs without corresponding revenue.

Expansion should be conditioned on workforce capacity. Before adding large numbers of new seats, the City should demonstrate measurable progress toward vacancy reduction, hiring and retention improvements, and leadership parity milestones. Expansion without demonstrated workforce capacity risks replicating current instability at greater scale.

Seat growth must be accompanied by proportional investment in procurement staffing, contract review capacity, registration throughput, and payment systems. Growth in classrooms must be matched by growth in fiscal infrastructure. Program scale and administrative capacity must increase in tandem.

Funding models should incorporate stability mechanisms, so minor fluctuations do not trigger mid-year de-scoping and repeated amendment cycles. Public infrastructure should not be subject to destabilizing revenue swings based on short-term enrollment volatility.

The DOE must strengthen its data modeling to estimate neighborhood demand with greater precision. Universal childcare cannot operate on speculative enrollment projections that expose small providers to collapse. There are neighborhoods where supply exceeds demand and others where families remain waitlisted or underserved. Planning must distinguish clearly between these conditions and respond deliberately rather than uniformly.

Expansion will also require physical space. The need for additional school buildings is now a two-pronged issue: compliance with K–12 class size mandates and expansion of early childhood education. Capital planning must explicitly include early childhood as a priority along with class size targets. Partnerships with community-based providers, shared space models, and all new school construction must also be evaluated through an early childhood lens.

Finally, the DOE must commit to transparent and predictable payment timelines so nonprofit operators are not forced to operate for extended periods without reimbursement. Timely payment is not an administrative courtesy; it is a prerequisite for operational stability.

Conclusion

Universal childcare is achievable. But it is not simply a matter of adding seats. It is a matter of building a system that can sustain those seats with stability, equity, and continuity.

Together, we must resolve pay parity between DOE and community-based educators and directors. We must fund community-based classes in a structurally equitable manner. We must invest in capital projects and neighborhood demand mapping to align supply with need. We must reform DOE procurement and reimbursement systems to ensure timely and predictable funding. We must strengthen supervisory leadership infrastructure so that expansion is supported by aligned, protected, and professionally stabilized directors across the system.

Expansion without these corrections will not fail immediately; it will erode slowly through vacancies, churn, delayed payments, and leadership attrition. The warning signs are already visible. Thank you again for holding this hearing to ensure that the next phase of growth does not repeat those patterns at greater scale.

CSA has been part of New York City's early childhood system for more than five decades. We represent leaders across DOE-operated programs and community-based organizations. That cross-system vantage gives us visibility into how policy decisions translate into operational reality. It also gives us a responsibility to surface structural risks before they become crises.

As the City advances toward universal childcare, supervisory stability must expand alongside classroom capacity. A universal system requires not only more educators, but more supported, professionally stabilized leaders capable of anchoring institutions through workforce transition and growth.

We stand ready to work with this Subcommittee, the full City Council, the Administration, and the Office of Child Care to ensure that expansion is aligned with workforce stability and structural equity. We welcome continued dialogue and collaboration to strengthen the leadership infrastructure that universal childcare will depend upon.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses
Before the New York City Council**

**Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education
Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez, Chair**

**Submitted by Paula Inhargue
March 2nd, 2026**

Thank you, Chair Gutierrez and members of the New York City Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education for convening today's hearing. United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) is a policy and social change organization representing neighborhood settlement houses that reach over 800,000 New Yorkers from all walks of life at 770 locations. A progressive leader for more than 100 years, UNH is stewarding a new era for New York's settlement house movement. We mobilize our members and their communities to advocate for good public policies and promote strong organizations and practices that keep neighborhoods resilient and thriving for all New Yorkers. UNH leads advocacy and partners with our members on a broad range of issues including civic and community engagement, neighborhood affordability, healthy aging, early childhood education, adult literacy, and youth development. We also provide customized professional development and peer learning to build the skills and leadership capabilities of settlement house staff at all levels.

Settlement houses have pioneered early childhood education in New York City, starting some of the first kindergartens over a century ago and now operating over 80 early childhood education programs serving nearly 8,500 children under the age of 5 each year. They care for children in center-based programs under contract with New York City Public Schools (NYCPS), oversee Family Child Care Networks to care for children in home-based settings, and contract with the federal government to provide Head Start and Early Head Start programming. New York City must work towards creating a high-quality, free, equitable, and universal child care system that meets the needs of all children and families and includes strong supports for workers and providers.

Early childhood education is finally getting the attention it deserves, and United Neighborhood Houses applauds the Mamdani Administration and the New York City Council for their commitment to creating a universal, high-quality early childhood education system. Mayor Mamdani has made significant strides in recent weeks by prioritizing and investing in early childhood education, and more must be done to stabilize the existing system while expanding access to care for families across the city. Our testimony will focus on recommendations to support crucial education programs, and preserve access to care for families across the City.

Support and Strengthen the Early Childhood Education Workforce

One of the main challenges in early childhood education programs is the hiring and retention of staff, mostly due to low salaries. These low salaries are a direct result of low contract values set by the New York City Department of Education (DOE). For community-based providers across New York City, this

means that their staff often earn less money than teachers and paraprofessionals who work for the DOE, even though their qualifications and credentials are often the same.

This lack of parity between pay scales at the DOE and community-based organizations (CBOs) leads to higher vacancy rates at CBOs and makes it difficult for CBOs to fill and retain critical positions. CBOs are left with staff shortages, preventing them from running at full capacity due to required child-to-adult ratios. Furthermore, high turnover rates threaten the stability and continuity of care that is necessary for young children's behavioral and cognitive development. At its core, the system needs more educators and staff to meet families' needs, and it needs to pay the workforce we already have significantly better to retain them.

At the same time, New York City is at an important moment, with anticipated City and State investments to strengthen and expand the early childhood education system, including the continued expansion of 3-K and the development of a new program for two-year-olds. These initiatives present a real opportunity to build a more equitable and comprehensive system for families. However, their success will depend on whether the City meaningfully addresses longstanding workforce challenges. Without enough qualified staff, and without compensation that reflects the value and complexity of this work, expansion efforts will fall short of their intended impact.

The City must get back on the path to parity that was started by the de Blasio Administration in 2019 by re-examining pay scales between community-based and DOE staff, committing to raising salaries for CBO staff to be on par with their DOE counterparts, and address discrepancies in health insurance, retirement support, and longevity differentials as well.

Fix Contracting and Payment Challenges

New York City is making historic investments in early childhood education programs, but it must adequately expand and strengthen its infrastructure as well if it is to create a sustainable system that will last.

Currently, contracting delays and payment backlogs cause CBO providers, including settlement houses, undue hardship. Late and inconsistent payments create significant challenges for providers operating on extremely thin margins. The contracting and payment process at DOE has long been filled with delays and confusion, particularly around budget approvals, enrollment management, and invoice submissions.

Providers are often unable to invoice for services because student rosters have not been approved, and even when invoices are submitted, payments are frequently delayed beyond 30 days. [A recent United Neighborhood Houses brief](#) explored these challenges, with some settlement houses reporting that it has taken nearly a full fiscal year to be paid for services already delivered. In the absence of timely payment, providers have delayed filling vacancies, postponed vendor payments, or taken on lines of credit simply to make payroll and keep classrooms open.

The City cannot build a universal system that meets families' child care needs without resolving these infrastructure and payment challenges and ensuring that CBOs are fully and promptly paid for delivering essential services.

Furthermore, ECE providers are often not reimbursed the true cost of operating programs under the current Birth to Five contract structure. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) sets forth staffing, health, and safety regulations that all providers must follow, and providers also must cover their overhead costs such as rent and liability insurance. These costs are typically fixed, meaning that if you have one child in your program or 10, you still have to pay rent, have enough staff present, pay your electricity bill, etc. It can be extremely challenging for providers to incur these costs but not be

guaranteed to have a fully enrolled program, since overall enrollment for Pre-K and 3-K programs are managed centrally by the DOE. If we are to move to a universal system, the City must recognize that providers have higher fixed costs and that those must be covered in full.

The City must amend its pay for enrollment practices and ensure that all fixed costs are covered under the next early childhood education procurement.

Invest in Infrastructure

Ahead of the 2-K expansion in the next few years, the City must examine space needs and ensure that there are enough appropriate places for 2-K programming to take place. This will include identifying new sites, while also providing capital funding to repair and upgrade existing locations so they can continue serving families safely and effectively. Expanding access will require both bringing new capacity into the system and stabilizing the infrastructure that already exists.

At the same time, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) must work closely together to ensure that permits, inspections, staff clearances, and background checks are processed in a timely and coordinated manner. Delays in these processes can prevent classrooms from opening, disrupt services, and create uncertainty for families and providers alike. A streamlined and collaborative approach across agencies is essential to avoid interruptions in care and to guarantee continuity of services as the system grows.

Before undertaking any major expansions of early childhood education programming, the City should ensure that providers have access to capital funds to create or retrofit new spaces, and ensure that DOHMH has the capacity to permit and new spaces.

Restore Outreach Funding and Ensure Language Access

The FY26 Adopted Budget included one-time funding for early childhood education outreach to help families better understand and access available programs. **We urge the City to restore \$5 million in outreach funding** to ensure all families have the support they need to find child care that meets their needs and to maintain continuity of services citywide.

This funding helps families understand their options, navigate complex systems, and access care equitably, while also supporting stable and predictable enrollment for providers. It is especially important that outreach include robust multilingual services and culturally responsive strategies to reach immigrant families and families with limited English proficiency who may face additional barriers navigating enrollment and eligibility systems. Several of our members provide this type of outreach and enrollment support and have seen strong results. We strongly support restoring this funding so these efforts can continue and expand.

Additionally, United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) supports Intro 0579, which would require the New York City Department of Education (DOE) to develop and implement an education and outreach campaign targeting families with children eligible to enroll in 3-K or pre-K. However, we believe the legislation should be expanded to also include infants and toddlers, ensuring that families of younger children receive timely information and support to access available early childhood education and child care programs.

Prioritize Support for Family Child Care Providers

Family Child Care (FCC) providers are often a great care choice for families due their small, nurturing nature, their ability to accommodate siblings of different ages, their responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity, and their convenient locations in communities that also offer non-traditional hours

care. They often serve infants and toddlers because of their small scale. FCC providers were unable to participate in the City's Pre-K for All program when it was launched in 2014, leaving them without a stable source of participants and revenue. They can be 3-K for All providers, but the reimbursement rates to do so are quite low. They also can take ACS vouchers, which can be a stable income source, but are not guaranteed particularly as many children are on waitlists today for vouchers.

If the City is serious about expanding to a universal system to serve infants and toddlers, it must prioritize involving FCC providers in the overall system. This means strengthening the network system so that FCC providers are incentivized to opt into networks, raising reimbursement rates so that providers can earn livable wages, and giving providers access to training and support so that they can run their small businesses successfully.

Prioritize Quality Programming

Lastly, as the City expands its early childhood education services, it must prioritize not only access, but also quality. Expansion should include strong investments in professional development so educators are well-trained, supported, and equipped to meet the developmental needs of young children. High-quality programs require ongoing training, coaching, and clear career pathways.

In addition, the City should support two-generational approaches that work with the whole family, not just the child. For infants and toddlers especially, care must include meaningful engagement with families. Providers need the resources to conduct outreach, build strong family partnerships, and connect them to additional supports. Many of our members have implemented two-generational programming and have seen the positive impact of holistic models. As expansion moves forward, investments must strengthen both the number of seats available and the depth and quality of services provided.

New York City has a historic opportunity to build a stronger, more equitable early childhood education system. But expansion alone is not enough. To truly meet families' needs, the City must invest in the workforce, fix contracting and payment challenges, strengthen infrastructure, restore outreach funding, and prioritize quality programming. With thoughtful planning and sustained investment, we can ensure that growth in the system translates into stable providers, supported educators, and high-quality care for children and families across the city.

Thank you for your time. To follow up, you can contact me at pinhargue@unhny.org.



**Testimony of the Alliance for Quality Education
at the NYC Council Hearing:
Monday, March 2nd 2026**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. My name is Dante Bravo, and I serve as the Alliance for Quality Education's child care Organizing Coordinator. The Alliance for Quality Education is a statewide coalition of organizers centering the needs of low-income Black, brown, and immigrant parents and their families. Together, we advocate for the well-being of their children, starting at birth and throughout their early and school years. We are committed to education for liberation, translating to racial, economic, and social justice for all. AQE is also a core member of the Empire State Campaign for Child Care, the statewide campaign fighting for Universal Child Care where all families have access to free, high quality child care that meets their needs and a workforce that is compensated on par with its K-12 counterparts.¹

We thank this Council for its attention to the issue of Early Childhood Education and other forms of child care that are critical for working families across our city, which serve children ages 0-13 and include summer school and after care, which many families struggle to find year after year. Many of the bills proposed today speak to the incredible need our communities have, and this particular package of bills serves as a starting point for this ongoing conversation. We are excited to collaborate with you all on making the dream of universal child care a reality for all of New York City's children.

In November 2025, the ESCCC released a comprehensive [plan](#) for achieving our goal of statewide universal child care, including rollout principals to achieving that goal in a manner that prioritizes the lowest income New York families, and avoids unintended consequences, like destabilizing the home-based child care sector, or reducing the number of infant and toddler seats. A December 2025 [sign-on letter](#) to Governor Hochul from more than 140 organizations representing New York parents, child care providers, child and family advocates, and business leaders from every corner of the state indicates widespread support for this vision in New York City and around the state.

¹ The Empire State Campaign for Child Care is a statewide coalition of parents, educators, and advocates who believe that every family in New York State deserves high quality, universal child care and that every child care educator deserves to earn a thriving wage. The campaign was founded in 2017, and advocates at the state and federal level for investment in child care that best serves the needs of New York's families and child care educators. Many of the organizational and individual leaders and members of our campaign are New York City residents.

We are happy that Mayor Mamdani has made child care a core part of his campaign and of the first few months of his administration. We are excited to see the expansion of access to care and education.

AQE applauds the City Council for its commitment to ensuring access to child care during public meetings held by mayoral agencies ([Int. No. 128](#), Cabán), recognizing how critical outreach is to ensuring families from all walks of life apply for a spot in the city's 3-K and Pre-Kindergarten programs ([Int. No. 579](#), Gutierrez), and supporting the Empire State Campaign's demand via [Res. No. 1388](#) (Riley) to implore the State government to remove the minimum wage and hours requirements for applicants for child care assistance.

We also appreciate the Council's commitment to ensuring that growing families have access to some of the best child care possible through public dollars. [Int. No. 0631](#) (Restler) would be an incredible step towards transparency measures that help ensure that Pre-K and 3-K seats are equitably distributed across our city, and [Int. No. 0580](#) (Gutierrez) points to the need for a mayoral office specific to the needs of making universal child care possible.

At the same time, we're disappointed to see that within this set of bills none addresses the biggest crisis impacting the field of child care educators: workforce retention and the need for wage increases for child care workers across the city, where some child care educators make as little as \$7 per hour.

The greatest barrier for child care providers to run successfully is high turnover due to low wages for their essential work. How do you retain a quality workforce when they can make more working a fast food job than caring for children? According to our colleagues at the Daycare Council in their latest report, "Building a Stronger Child Care Workforce for New York City," child care workers have the lowest average income of any care workers in NYC at just \$25,000. More than half (52%) of child care centers in New York City reported having new teachers leave their organizations within five years, making this turnover rate even higher than educators in K-12 settings. Transitions and the loss of consistent caring adults are especially damaging to our children. On average, it takes at least six months to recruit, train, and hire a new child care educator to replace an existing educator. Child care programs have to function with lower capacity while this process happens.

Fewer educators mean that no matter how many seats a child care space physically holds (of any modality of child care, be it residential (home based), commercial, center-based, or more), providers cannot safely enroll new students to the actual capacity of their classroom. These skyrocketing rates of turnover are especially concerning when we consider that the child care workforce is 97% women, 82% people of color, and primarily made up of an aging population.

We know that child care services need physical spaces and buildings within our city to operate successfully, and that the city has a responsibility to balance this with the need to regulate and ensure our providers are held to the highest standard when caring for New York City's youngest. Our concern is that without a clear commitment from this City Council to wage equity for the

child care workforce, an emphasis on vacant commercial spaces at best diverts important resources away from supporting our ailing child care workforce. At worst, this emphasis on commercial spaces opens the door wide open for for-profit, private equity firms to take over the industry because they can afford our current real estate market rates for commercial spaces as well as higher wages for staff, reinforcing the starvation cycle within our public child care ecosystem.

We call on this Council to join us in pushing for higher wages for our child care educators on the state level, and to champion these wage increases through the city tax levy within its budget negotiations this year for Fiscal Year 2027, **regardless of Albany's investments in New York City in its budget**. We also call on this Council to ensure that all child care workers are paid equitably – regardless of whether they are employed at a Department of Education Pre-K or 3-K site, a community-based organization, or are small business owners – and on a scale that compensates these educators for their years of service as well as their levels of higher education. Finally, we call on this Council to fight for cost-of-living adjustments for this workforce every year, as well as access to benefits like health insurance and public pensions for every child care worker in this city compensated through public dollars. This must happen if our goal is to build a sustainable, equitable, and quality system.

AQE urges the City Council to collaborate with their colleagues at the Administration for Children's Services to ensure that the agency has everything it needs to clear the astronomical waitlists for the 15,000 families seeking child care vouchers for child care, including after school, summer and school break care.

Universal child care is possible within our lifetimes, but it can only be achieved when the people tasked with delivering these services day in and day out are treated like the educators they are, compensated enough to afford living in the city they serve and recognized for their decades of service, and allowed the stability to keep young talent in the field as a permanent career choice. At AQE we believe that universal child care and education are public goods that strengthen our economy, stabilize families, and expand opportunity, and so we invite everyone to join us in that belief by taking action. Thank you for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing. For more information, please email me at dante@aqeny.org

Below we also include the Empire Campaign Recommendations, which are fully reflective of our position and we fully endorse.

Urgent Universal Child Care Recommendations for the New York City Council for 2026

- **New York City leaders should join the child care community and state lawmakers calling for the 2026-2027 New York State Budget to implement a child care workforce compensation fund to provide ongoing and reliable compensation supplements to all members of the child care workforce until New York has achieved statewide universal child care that pays providers adequate rates to pay the workforce a thriving wage (\$1.2 billion).** Neither New York State nor New York City can achieve universal child care without recruiting and retaining far more professionals in the field, which is not possible without a significant, sustained, compensation hike.

- **Fully meet demand for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) as we build toward universal child care.**
 - New York City leaders should urge New York State leaders to adopt the Governor's proposed \$1.2 billion in new investment in the Child Care Assistance program and add the funding necessary to meet demand for CCAP /vouchers in New York City as the City and State move toward statewide universal child care.
 - New York City leaders must ensure that New York City meets any matching requirements to draw down all CCAP funds.
 - New York City must act without delay to ensure that no early childhood seats are left empty while children from low-income families are languishing on the voucher waitlist.
 - ***If CCAP enrollment closures and waitlists are allowed to persist, the success of New York State and New York City's plans to expand pre-K, 3-K and 2-K will be undermined – and could result in the exclusion of low-income families. Pre-K expansions alone will not ensure low-income parents can work and achieve economic stability because without CCAP, many families will be unable to afford child care for younger children and/or for before and afterschool care for their pre-K, 3-K, 2-K and school-aged children. As the state expands universal child care, the CCAP program can be scaled down.***
- Adopt the Governor's proposal to invest \$73 million to launch 2 K in New York City focusing initially on high-need areas, and ensure that 2 K is implemented in a manner that guards against the loss of (already scarce) infant and toddler seats, with flexibility to adjust the model to a multi-age, community care or other model if these issues arise. Further, it is essential that all modalities of child care—including center and home-based child care providers—are able to fully participate in 2 K.

How New York State and New York City Implements Universal Child Care Matters

Low-income families must be prioritized, along with the workforce, which is among the lowest paid occupations in the state. Further, the rollout must be structured to avoid unintended consequences like increased tuition for middle-income families, a loss of already scarce infant and toddler capacity, or the destabilization of community-based and family child care programs by pulling older children, who cost less to care for, into school-based settings.

An Equitable Rollout of Universal Child Care and Pre-K and 3-K Expansion Must Include the Following Investment and Actions:

- **Immediately increase workforce compensation through a state-funded workforce compensation fund.** There is no path to universal child care that does not start with raising compensation for the child care workforce. For so long as child care remains a public-private market, with most families paying tuition on their own, the only way to raise the wages of the child care workforce without raising private-pay tuition is by paying state-funded workforce supplements until the state has made the transition to a truly universal system, paying rates that support a thriving workforce wage. Compensation supplements will also guard against an exodus of child care educators from community based organizations to school based pre-K programs, which has been the case in other periods of pre-K expansion.

The 2026-2027 New York State Executive Budget allocates **no funds** for the child care workforce. If no funding is added before the budget is finalized, this will be the second year

in a row since the pandemic that there are no funds for the child care workforce. In 2023, one-time [retention bonuses](#) were awarded to child care educators: \$3,000 full time; \$2,300 afterschool. In 2024, bonuses of \$2,250 for full time educators; \$1,725 for afterschool.

- **Fully meet demand for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) as we build toward universal child care.** CCAP (also referred to as vouchers) currently helps the families of approximately [168,000 low-income children](#) around New York State afford child care, with about 110,000 of those children residing in New York City. For those families able to access CCAP, this assistance can be life-changing. They can see their annual child care bill for one infant in home-based child care drop from [\\$16,000 to \\$500](#). Unfortunately, notwithstanding a surge in state funding into the CCAP program in recent years, demand still far outpaces funding. To manage this shortfall, as of January 2026, [34 counties and NYC](#) have closed enrollment or started waitlists, leaving thousands of eligible families across the state scrambling to patch together care for their children, with some having to reduce their work hours, or leave the workforce altogether. In New York City, the CCAP /voucher waitlist currently includes more than 16,000 children. Notably, more than [20,000](#) pre-K and extended day, extended year pre-K seats went unfilled in fiscal year 2025. The State Executive Budget proposes \$1.2B in new, recurring funding for CCAP - the largest increase to CCAP in New York State history. Unfortunately, even this historic level of investment is unlikely to permanently end waitlists and closures – particularly in New York City given the size of the waitlist. It is not clear yet what percentage of these new funds would be directed to New York City, but currently, New York City receives about [61%](#) of the state's annual CCAP allocations. Of note: the Executive Budget proposes that \$475 million of the new CCAP funding be earmarked for New York City contingent upon New York City matching those funds. The Administration for Children's Services estimates the funding need for New York City CCAP to be \$1.2 billion – but that would only keep the voucher caseload at close to its current level; the waitlist would persist.
- **Expand pre-K and 3-K in coordination with full funding of CCAP.**
- **Prioritize communities with high rates of low-income families with young children for universal projects and pre-K expansions.**

Other Core Principles

- **Middle-income families must be protected from rate hikes, benefits cliffs, and shifting supply as we scale up to universal child care.** Creating a state-funded child care workforce compensation fund allows for workforce wages to be increased without raising tuition for middle class families not yet able to access universal care. A capped-fee universal program for middle income families that is targeted to serve families just over the CCAP eligibility limit would be an approach that would address one of the sharpest benefits cliffs facing families who make just over the CCAP income limit.
- **Universal child care must be understood to include afterschool care, summer care, and evening and weekend care for children 0 to 13, and be inclusive of children with disabilities, and regardless of immigration status.** Families' need for child care extends beyond weekdays 9 to 5 (or 9-3 in the case of many pre-K programs), and long after a child enters pre-K or Kindergarten.
- **Infant and toddler seats must be preserved in pre-K and universal child care rollouts.** Rates to care for babies and toddlers are the highest because caring for very young children

(appropriately) requires the most hands-on attention; as a result, these are already the hardest seats to find. Any rollout plan must be sure not to incentivize programs to switch scarce infant and toddler seats to care for older children.

- **All settings must be supported in pre-K and universal child care expansions** to ensure families have the freedom to choose the care setting that best meets their needs – home, center, and school-based.

NYC Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education
Oversight Hearing: The Path to Universal Child Care
Monday, March 2nd, 2026

Testimony Submitted by the Committee for Hispanic Children & Families (CHCF)

Thank you, Chair Gutierrez and the Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education for convening this hearing as New York City's Path to Universal Child Care. My name is Ramon Peguero, I am the President & CEO for the Committee for Hispanic Children & Families (CHCF), better known by its acronym, CHCF. CHCF has a long history of supporting child care programs – predominantly Family Child Care programs and providers whose primary language is other than English – and families in navigating access to high-quality care options and child care voucher support. We currently serve as one of New York City's four Child Care Referral Agencies within the New York City Child Care Resource and Referral Consortium, in addition to leading a Family Child Care Network in partnership with NYCPS DECE, and delivering Early Head Start in contract with the Federal Office of Head Start.

As New York State and City are making historic and substantial commitments to address the child care crisis for families, and moving NYS to a Universal Child Care system, we want to take the time to ensure that systems are developed in a way that sustains the existing quality care programs and build toward an equitable, thriving system that can truly deliver on City and State leaders' promises. The recent announcements by the Governor and Mayor, making committed investments in expanding eligibility and access to free and reduced-cost care for New York families, certainly deserve to be celebrated for moving the state and city in the right direction towards a universal system. There are, however, several points of concern about leadership's preparedness and willingness to meaningfully address such a substantial shift in systems design without causing unintended disruptions to families and the child care workforce who we continue to rely on.

Leaders must address the current system that dictates family access to child care and financial supports, while simultaneously building out towards universal system that is equitable for all families and the for the entire child care sector and workforce.

CHCF continues to hold concerns about equitable incorporation of Family Child Care programs, both affiliated and independent, in New York City childcare systems design. While there is a growing awareness of this modality of care, the impact that these providers continue to have in their communities and the families and children they serve continues to be largely undervalued.

Family Child Care are licensed ECE programs delivered in residential settings, including both Family Day Cares (programs with capacity up to 8 children) and Group Family Day Cares (programs with capacity up to 16 children). This option of care offers a different

structure than center-based care and is valuable in its own right. FCC programs offer family-based settings in which children in mixed age groups can learn and grow together. FCC programs also are the modality that serve the majority of infants in care in NYC. Families are able to enroll their children starting at 6 weeks and keep them with the same care provider through school age, transitioning from full-time care to out-of-school-time care as they get older. Families can keep their children together in the same program and truly build an extended system of support for their child(ren)'s growth and learning; establishing stability and strong, long-term bonds, which research shows is best for child development. Further, FCC programs more often offer flexible care hours, particularly for families that work non-traditional hours.

Based on a recent study released by the New School, in partnership with the NYC Child Care Resource and Referral Consortium, provider groups, and organizations that support the FCC sector, the FCC workforce is 94% female, 90% POC, 62% Hispanic, over 70% immigrant. When we discuss the need and desire for culturally and multi-lingually responsive care and early learning, this sector has already been delivering this programming yet are not recognized for the value they have in fostering multiculturalism in New York. These programs are an integral part of their community and often become an extended family for those that they serve. And yet, our city systems have continued to overwhelmingly fail to show up for this sector.

Not only is this modality of care a preferred choice by many parents, which must be maintained in order to honor a parent's right to select programs that will best meet their family and child's needs; this modality of care is an undisputable necessity in order to deliver on the promises being made to launch 2-K and in ultimately realizing Universal Child Care in NYC. Yet there continues to be general marginalization of this sector in systems design spaces, and we continue to see glaring inequities in existing partnerships with the city, with signals that this treatment will remain into new contracting and partnership, with continued devastation to the sector.

As the city has developed out systems to deliver Pre-K and 3K, they have failed to meaningfully incorporate this modality of care into their designs and as a result have stood by while over 1,300 programs closed between 2014 and 2019 (even before the pandemic) as a result of shifts enrollment practices. Only 20% of Family Child Care programs in New York City are affiliated with NYCPS through direct contracts or Networks, with 80% of the sector remaining independent and left to face the unintended consequences of their system on destabilizing enrollment. This tiered level of engagement and access to resources, based on a provider's interest and ability to affiliate with a network is inherently inequitable – not only for the providers running programs, but for the children and families

who are receiving care through these programs. Independent providers have continued to deliver high-quality, developmentally appropriate early care and learning programming, despite having resources and supports withheld from them.

This predominantly female, person of color, and immigrant-led sector has also been willfully held to some of the lowest wages across all occupations in New York State. For the 20% of the FCC providers that are affiliated and delivering Early Learn and 3K seats, the rates being paid are barely in line with the state-set market rates, rather than reflecting the true cost of the care they are tasked with delivering. State market rates pay 80% of the reported amount that providers charge families, which is held to levels that families can afford to pay, rather than the true cost of delivering care. With both voucher and contracted care rates held at levels insufficient to cover the true cost of care, providers carry the cost disparity on their shoulders. This, in addition to waning enrollment due to severe CCAP voucher waitlists and NYCPS centralized enrollment, which takes away the autonomy of providers to directly support interested families to enroll and be placed in their program, has left providers with grossly low take-home pay.

The recent New School report found that the median take home pay – based on current enrollment trends – for Family Day Care providers (max. capacity enrollment up to 8 children) is just over \$19,000; and for Group Family Day Care (max. capacity up to 16), it is roughly \$15,400. When accounting for the additional hours worked by providers, beyond the compensated care and learning hours, the median hourly rate for FDC providers is \$4.81, and for GFDC providers is \$4.16. If programs were engaged in city systems equitably and supported to maintain “good enrollment” (considered 6 or more children in FDC, and 10 or more children in GFDC), the median take home pay rises to roughly \$58,600 and nearly \$48,000 respectively, with median hourly rates at \$15.52 for FDC and \$11.07 for GFDC.

As New York City is preparing to expand 3-K and 2-K, with an expectation that Family Child Care will carry a significant amount of this enrollment, how are city leaders comfortable moving forward without caring for this workforce’s well-being and stability? On a human level, it is incomprehensible that city leaders would willingly maintain practices that perpetuate inequitable engagement and enrollment practices that maintain near poverty wages and drive this invaluable workforce out of business, thereby depleting care options for families; or that they would supplement the cost of delivering and expanding these programs on the backs of the child care professionals who do so much for our communities, NYC families and children, and the economy. On a practical level, we need our current capacity and to build back additional capacity to deliver on Universal Child Care in the future. Currently, licensed FCC providers in NYC hold roughly 42% of the non-

SACC child care capacity – that capacity has consistently been shrinking as programs have been forced to close over the years.

In addition to the above concerns, there are outstanding details needed from the administration, that have yet to be given. We want to ensure to support the administration accordingly in addressing the ongoing realities of the child care system and in supporting successful provider engagement as the system expands and shifts to universal.

1. Will 2-K, a name that has shifted from 2-Care, provide full day, full year care to appropriately meet the care needs of families with 2-year-olds?
2. How will the administration proactively act to sustain the existing child care sector, particularly if they do not pursue or are not awarded an affiliation or contract with the city?
3. How will city agencies will work collaboratively to connect all families in need of care to the least restrictive and most financially supportive option as we address the longstanding malfunctions of the current child care system in New York City and begin transitioning to a truly universal early learning and care system for children birth to 13 years old?
4. How is the administration addressing the current waitlist for CCAP vouchers, which has grown to over 15,000 families?
5. How will the administration work to ensure that the balance of available affordable care is not further disrupted for families with children outside of the 2-4 age range, particularly infants?
6. How will the administration address inequitable enrollment practices so that FCCs can maintain enrollment that supports their financial stability and survive as a business?

These matters must be addressed as we continue on the path to Universal Child Care, as we cannot hope to meaningfully fulfill that promise for families if we allow existing capacity to disappear, and disproportionately collapse program models that excel at meeting the family cultural and linguistic preferences, and at providing mixed age and flexible care options to better support family dynamics. FCC programs are an embedded part of their community and serve as extended support systems for families navigating so many challenges in a city becoming more and more unaffordable to live in. We believe that NYC can do better, and advocates, providers, and families are eager to work in support of moving NYC along the path to a universal child care system that works for families *and* the workforce that is dedicated to provide quality care and early learning for our children.

CHCF is a non-profit organization with a 44-year history of combining education, capacity-building, and advocacy to strengthen the support system and continuum of learning for children and youth from birth through school-age. To find out more about our organizational work or to ask questions of the provided testimony, please reach out to Danielle Demeuse, Director of Policy for CHCF, at ddemeuse@chcfinc.org.

CWE Testimony to the NYC Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education on the Path to Universal Child Care

Jocelyn Mazurkiewicz, Assistant Director of the Facilitated Enrollment Child Care Programs & Lead Organizer of the New York Union Child Care Coalition

Good morning Chairwoman and Members of the Committee. My name is Jocelyn Mazurkiewicz and I serve as the Assistant Director of the Facilitated Enrollment Child Care Programs at the Consortium for Worker Education, the workforce development arm of the NYC Central Labor Council. As part of our mandate to provide a worker-centered approach to workforce development, for over 20 years our child care programs have connected working New Yorkers with streamlined access to affordable child care. Long before child care reached the national stage we have been working to bridge the gap between policy and the practical needs of the workforce. We help families navigate the child care voucher system, train workers, support union child care funds, and conduct research on the impact of child care funding. Further, we lead the New York Union Child Care Coalition, a group of unions working together to address work/family balance and change the workplace to better reflect the needs of families.

What we have learned from this work is that a truly universal child care system is not simply one in which every child has a seat, but one in which those seats meet the diverse, ever-changing needs of every family. Irregular working hours for parents, accommodations for children with special needs, and child care deserts present challenges that must be addressed. Alongside members of the New York Union Child Care Coalition, we are actively working on solutions to close these gaps. To document the diversity of experiences faced by working families, we [compiled the stories](#) of the individuals we serve into an interactive map, which we would gladly share with the members of this committee.

We are encouraged by the legislation before this Committee focused on expanding capacity and easing the permitting process around child care centers, a problem we are intimately familiar with. Lastly, we know that raising working standards as we expand child care capacity is not a given. It is something that unions, advocates, and lawmakers will have to proactively secure to ensure that workers are not left behind.

Our city faces a generational opportunity to tackle this issue. Ensuring that the systems we put in place are able to uplift child care workers and serve the diverse needs of working families will be essential. CWE and the New York Union Child Care Coalition stand ready to partner with the Council as we move forward together towards universal child care. Thank you.



Testimony from Dads for All

Before the New York City Council

Committee on Education, Honorable Eric Dinowitz, Chair &
The Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education, Honorable Jennifer Gutierrez, Chair

March 3, 2026

Prepared by Justin Cohen, Founder, Dads for All

Dads for All is national movement of dads, working across political, racial, and socioeconomic difference to improve communities for our kids. By uplifting Dads, sharing our stories, and building camaraderie, we work to create positive local change that benefits working families.

In offering this testimony, we stand with the Empire State Campaign for Child Care - and other aligned organizations, individuals, and formations - to outline important steps the city and state should take to achieve truly universal child care. As the Council, its committees, and subcommittees negotiate the New York City Budget, work with the Mayor to develop an implementation plan for expanding 3-K and implementing 2-K, and continue to monitor New York State budget negotiations, we urge you to consider the following recommendations.

- New York City leaders should join the child care community and state lawmakers calling for the 2026-2027 New York State Budget to implement a child care workforce compensation fund to provide ongoing and reliable compensation supplements to all members of the child care workforce until New York has achieved statewide universal child care that pays providers adequate rates to pay the workforce a thriving wage (\$1.2 billion). Neither New York State nor New York City can achieve universal child care without recruiting and retaining far more professionals in the field, which is not possible without a significant, sustained, compensation hike.
- Fully meet demand for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) as we build toward universal child care.
 - New York City leaders should urge New York State leaders to adopt the Governor's proposed \$1.2 billion in new investment in the Child Care Assistance program and add the funding necessary to meet demand for CCAP /vouchers in New York City as the City and State move toward statewide universal child care.
 - New York City leaders must ensure that New York City meets any matching requirements to draw down all CCAP funds.
 - New York City must act without delay to ensure that no early childhood seats are left empty while children from low-income families are languishing on the voucher waitlist.
 - *If CCAP enrollment closures and waitlists are allowed to persist, the success of New York State and New York City's plans to expand pre-K, 3-K and 2-K will be undermined – and could result in the exclusion of low-income families. Pre-K expansions alone will not ensure low-income parents can work and achieve economic stability because without CCAP, many*

families will be unable to afford child care for younger children and/or for before and afterschool care for their pre-K, 3-K, 2-K and school-aged children. As the state expands universal child care, the CCAP program can be scaled down.

- Adopt the Governor’s proposal to invest \$73 million to launch 2 K in New York City focusing initially on high-need areas, and ensure that 2 K is implemented in a manner that guards against the loss of (already scarce) infant and toddler seats, with flexibility to adjust the model to a multi-age, community care or other model if these issues arise. Further, it is essential that all modalities of child care—including center and home-based child care providers—are able to fully participate in 2 K.

How New York State and New York City Implements Universal Child Care Matters: Background

Low-income families must be prioritized, along with the workforce, which is among the lowest paid occupations in the state. Further, the rollout must be structured to avoid unintended consequences like increased tuition for middle-income families, a loss of already scarce infant and toddler capacity, or the destabilization of community-based and family child care programs by pulling older children, who cost less to care for, into school-based settings.

An Equitable Rollout of Universal Child Care and Pre-K and 3-K Expansion Must Include the Following Investment and Actions:

- Immediate and sustained increase in workforce compensation through a state-funded workforce compensation fund. For so long as child care remains a public-private market, with most families paying tuition on their own, the only way to raise the wages of the child care workforce without raising private-pay tuition is by paying state-funded workforce supplements until the state has made the transition to a truly universal system, paying rates that support a thriving workforce wage. Compensation supplements will also guard against an exodus of child care educators from community based organizations to school based pre-K programs, which has been the case in other periods of pre-K expansion.

The 2026-2027 New York State Executive Budget allocates no funds for the child care workforce. If no funding is added before the budget is finalized, this will be the second year in a row since the pandemic that there are no funds for the child care workforce. In 2023, one-time retention bonuses were awarded to child care educators: \$3,000 full time; \$2,300 afterschool. In 2024, bonuses of \$2,250 for full time educators; \$1,725 for afterschool.

- Fully meet demand for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) as we build toward universal child care. CCAP (also referred to as vouchers) currently helps the families of approximately 168,000 low-income children around New York State afford child care, with about 110,000 of those children residing in New York City. For those families able to access CCAP, this assistance can be life-changing. They can see their annual child care bill for one infant in home-based child care drop from \$16,000 to \$500. Unfortunately, notwithstanding a surge in state funding into the CCAP program in recent years, demand still far outpaces funding. To manage this shortfall, as of January 2026, 34 counties and NYC have closed enrollment or started waitlists, leaving thousands of eligible families across the state scrambling to patch together care for their children, with some having to reduce their work hours, or leave the workforce altogether. In New York City, the CCAP /voucher waitlist currently includes more than 16,000 children. Notably, more than 20,000 pre-K and extended day, extended year pre-K seats went unfilled in fiscal year 2025. The State Executive Budget proposes \$1.2B in new, recurring funding for CCAP - the largest increase to CCAP in New York State history.

Unfortunately, even this historic level of investment is unlikely to permanently end waitlists and closures – particularly in New York City given the size of the waitlist. It is not clear yet what percentage of these new funds would be directed to New York City, but currently, New York City receives about 61% of the state’s annual CCAP allocations. Of note: the Executive Budget proposes that \$475 million of the new CCAP funding be earmarked for New York City contingent upon New York City matching those funds. The Administration for Children’s Services estimates the funding need for New York City CCAP to be \$1.2 billion – but that would only keep the voucher caseload at close to its current level; the waitlist would persist.

- Expand pre-K and 3-K in coordination with full funding of CCAP.
- Prioritize communities with high rates of low-income families with young children for universal projects and pre-K expansions.

Other Core Principles

- Middle-income families must be protected from rate hikes, benefits cliffs, and shifting supply as we scale up to universal child care. Creating a state-funded child care workforce compensation fund allows for workforce wages to be increased without raising tuition for middle class families not yet able to access universal care. A capped-fee universal program for middle income families that is targeted to serve families just over the CCAP eligibility limit would be an approach that would address one of the sharpest benefits cliffs facing families who make just over the CCAP income limit.
- Universal child care must be understood to include afterschool care, summer care, and evening and weekend care for children 0 to 13, and be inclusive of children with disabilities, and regardless of immigration status. Families’ need for child care extends beyond weekdays 9 to 5 (or 9-3 in the case of many pre-K programs), and long after a child enters pre-K or Kindergarten.
- Infant and toddler seats must be preserved in pre-K and universal child care rollouts. Rates to care for babies and toddlers are the highest because caring for very young children (appropriately) requires the most hands-on attention; as a result, these are already the hardest seats to find. Any rollout plan must be sure not to incentivize programs to switch scarce infant and toddler seats to care for older children.
- All settings must be supported in pre-K and universal child care expansions to ensure families have the freedom to choose the care setting that best meets their needs – home, center, and school-based.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am happy to answer any questions and can be reached at justin@dadsforall.com.



**Testimony of Day Care Council of New York
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education
Honorable Eric Dinowitz, Chair and
The Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education
Honorable Jennifer Gutierrez, Chair
Oversight: The Path to Universal Child Care**

March 2nd, 2026

Prepared by Gregory Brender, Chief Policy Officer and Shelby Lohr, Senior Policy Analyst

Thank you, Chair Dinowitz and Chair Gutierrez, and members of the Committee on Education and the Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education, for the opportunity to testify. Over the past several years, the City Council has fought hard to save child care centers threatened with closure and to increase the salaries of teachers, directors, and support staff in community-based child care centers and home-based programs. We know that many of you share our excitement about Mayor Mamdani's commitment to expand early childhood education and the historic investments that Governor Hochul and Mayor Mamdani have proposed. We are counting on you and all our partners in government to ensure that this expansion stabilizes and strengthens early childhood education provider organizations and the early childhood education workforce.

The Day Care Council of New York (DCCNY) is the membership organization of early care and education providers across New York City. DCCNY envisions a future in which all children have access to high-quality early childhood education and providers and their workforce have the tools and resources needed to deliver it.

DCCNY supports its members and the broader early childhood field through policy research and advocacy, labor relations and mediation, workforce training and professional development, and referral services for families seeking child care. Our member organizations operate more than 200 sites across all five boroughs.

Most DCCNY member organizations contract with the New York City Public Schools, while others rely on child care vouchers issued by ACS and HRA, federally funded Head Start contracts, or private funding. Collectively, DCCNY member organizations employ over 4,000 New Yorkers – predominantly Black and Brown women - and serve children and families citywide.

Early Childhood Expansion

Governor Hochul and Mayor Mamdani recently announced several historic investments in early childhood education, which have since been included in the Governor's Executive Budget Proposal. These include:

- The launch of 2-K in both community-based organizations and with home-based providers New York City, beginning this year in two school districts,
- Completing the unfinished expansion of 3-K, and
- A \$1.2 billion State investment in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) that can get families off waiting lists for vouchers and expand access to desperately needed Expanded Day/Expanded Year programs in community-based organizations.

These investments will only succeed if early childhood providers and the workforce have the infrastructure needed to operate sustainably. DCCNY looks forward to working with the administration and City Council to ensure that these expansions create stability for early childhood education provider organizations and fair compensation for the early childhood workforce who have been undervalued for too long.

Support the Early Childhood Education Workforce

In every type of early childhood education setting, the workforce is underpaid and underappreciated. The early childhood workforce is overwhelmingly women, and in New York City, it is overwhelmingly women of color. Yet teachers, staff, directors, and home based providers continue to earn significantly less than their counterparts in public schools.

This means that people who have the skills, knowledge and education to be great early childhood educators, leaders, and support staff often cannot and do not stay in their roles because they cannot sustain their lives with lower salaries.

In order to address these inequities and ensure that child care provider organizations can attract and retain a quality workforce, DCCNY offers the following recommendations:

- 1) **Establish consistent expectations for pay based on experience:** Establish a defined career ladder for early educators and an articulation of appropriate compensation at each rung of that career ladder.
- 2) **Set a wage floor:** The city can define a minimum wage for child care workers that recognizes their labor and the skill required. This would, in particular, benefit teaching aides and staff in other support roles whose salaries are currently pegged to the citywide minimum wage.
- 3) **Use contracts to drive toward parity across settings:** The city can work with labor and management to address inequities in the current collective bargaining agreements. Notably, future contracts should include longevity increases comparable to what UFT members earn and provisions to address the longer day and year that many child care center teachers work. Contracts should include cost escalators so that salaries can keep up with inflation and COLAs.
- 4) **Establish a wage fund:** As part of the Empire State Campaign for Child Care, DCCNY is advocating for a dedicated fund to increase child care worker compensation at the State level. A fund like this on the city level could close the gap between what families are able to afford to pay for care and what programs need to appropriately compensate their workforce.

Provide universal health insurance coverage for child care workers

- The city could expand health care coverage by providing access to free or very low-cost insurance plans inclusive of the center-based and home-based workforce. In the past, the city had a health insurance program that CBOs could opt into. The city should revisit this model and determine how it could be made more effective.

Expand access to pension plans

- A majority of early childhood educators do not have access to employer- or union-supported retirement plans and are unable to save for retirement themselves. There are some existing publicly-supported retirement systems, including the Cultural Institutions Retirement System (CIRS), which already includes some child care workers. The city could work with CIRS to expand

eligibility criteria, allowing more private child care programs to opt in for their employees.

Provide housing support

- City workers are already eligible for priority in housing lotteries, including public school teachers. However, this priority does not currently include child care workers. The city could create specific priorities within the Department of Housing Preservation and Development's affordable housing lotteries to ensure that child care workers have the same priority as other categories of essential workers.

Create career exposure and dual enrollment training programs for high school students

- As NYCPS continues to expand opportunities for workforce development and career exploration in high school, there are opportunities to expose high school students to child care work and give them opportunities to work in early childhood programs. Programs of this type have the dual benefit of attracting new people into the child care workforce, while also filling immediate gaps in staffing.

Launch a city-funded apprenticeship program

- New York City could develop a city-funded apprenticeship program that matches current and aspiring caregivers with existing home-based or center-based programs to give them paid, on-the-job learning opportunities while simultaneously matching them to low-cost or tuition-free credential programs. New York already has [a robust infrastructure in place](#) to support apprenticeships across sectors. Given the fragmentation in child care and the small scale of most child care programs, an apprenticeship program would likely have to be driven at the sector level by the city or an intermediary, like DCCNY, rather than by individual child care programs.

DCCNY also urges New York City to work with New York State to:

Speed up the background check process for new staff

- The city must continue to focus on expediting the background check process so that teachers can begin working in programs faster. The city should also explore making background checks portable. Currently, educators must go through the background check process again if they start at a new program, which may inhibit some educators from staying in the field. There is some precedent for

expanding portability; currently, staff can work in different sites operated by the same organization. Moving to full portability would require state action.

Experiment with new credentialing models

- Across the country, including [elsewhere in New York](#), community colleges are introducing new stackable [microcredentials](#) to support current or aspiring early childhood educators who are looking to enhance their qualifications, but may not have the time, budget, or interest to work toward a full degree. With buy-in from the city that microcredentials could be tied to pay increases for early childhood educators, community colleges and child care programs could work together to develop coursework that addresses specific learning gaps they are seeing in the workforce. For child care workers, this could be a mechanism to build particular skills and be compensated for it.

Create substitute teacher pools

- When a child care worker is absent, programs typically have to scramble. Child care centers that contract with the city can access NYC Public Schools substitute teachers. However, they are required to pay those substitutes the UFT-negotiated rate of about \$50 an hour, which is more than centers can afford - and highly problematic internally when their own substitute teachers and support staff earn minimum wage (or \$18 per hour, if subject to DC-37's CBA). New York City could launch its own substitute pool, in collaboration with the state or on its own.

Stabilize Early Childhood Education Providers

Despite the overwhelming enthusiasm for early childhood education, child care providers continue to struggle day to day to keep their doors open and pay their bills on time. New York City must take action to support the organizations and small businesses that provide early childhood education.

In order to stabilize community-based early childhood education providers, DCCNY offers the following recommendations:

Ensure On-Time Payments

- DCCNY is grateful to Chair Gutierrez and the City Council for the passage of legislation that will provide greater transparency on how quickly contracted early childhood education providers are paid. The City must continue to work to secure on time payments for providers by reducing regulatory burdens and fully staffing the Division of Early Childhood Education.

Increase advances to 75% of contract value.

- Center-based providers with contracts for Pre-K, 3-K and Extended Day/ Extended Year programs are guaranteed at least 75% of contract value under the Birth-to-Five contracts; advancing the guaranteed portion would improve cash flow and allow for more effective planning and budgeting.

Hold providers harmless from enrollment-based penalties while NYCPS controls enrollment.

- As long as enrollment is managed through a centralized system, providers should not be penalized for under-enrollment, consistent with protections afforded to early childhood programs operating in public schools.
- Center-based and home-based programs should be held harmless for under-enrollment when NYCPS' district schools are held harmless for under-enrollment in their 3K and Pre-K classrooms.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We are happy to answer any questions and can be reached at gbrender@dccnyinc.org and slohr@dccnyinc.org.



**Testimony of the Empire State Campaign for Child Care
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education
Honorable Eric Dinowitz, Chair and The Subcommittee on
Early Childhood Education, Honorable Jennifer Gutierrez, Chair
Oversight: The Path to Universal Child Care**

March 2, 2026

Prepared by Shoshana Hershkowitz, Campaign Manager, Empire State Campaign for Child Care, and Dede Hill, Vice President of Policy, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy

Thank you, Chair Dinowitz and Chair Gutierrez, and members of the Committee on Education and the Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education, for the opportunity to testify.

The Empire State Campaign for Child Care (ESCCC) is a statewide coalition of parents, educators, and advocates who believe that every family in New York State deserves high quality, universal child care, and that every child care educator deserves to earn a thriving wage. The campaign was founded in 2017 and advocates at the state and federal level for investment in child care that best serves the needs of New York’s families and child care educators. Many of the organizational and individual leaders and members of our campaign are New York City residents.

In November 2025, the ESCCC released a comprehensive [plan](#) for achieving our goal of statewide universal child care, including rollout principals to achieving that goal in a manner that prioritizes the lowest income New York families, and avoids unintended consequences, like destabilizing the home-based child care sector or reducing the number of infant and toddler seats. A December 2025 [sign-on letter](#) to Governor Hochul—from more than 140 organizations representing New York parents, child care providers, child and family advocates, and business leaders from every corner of the state—indicates the widespread support for this vision in New York City and around the state.

We were thrilled to stand with New York Governor Hochul and Mayor Mamdani in early January—on the Mayor’s eighth day in office—when Governor Hochul proposed the state’s single largest investment in child care and pre-K in state history, and framed these investments as steps toward achieving statewide universal child care. This is a defining, consequential moment for New York State child care. If City, State, local and community leaders work together to invest boldly, and choose the rollout path thoughtfully, we could truly transform child care—and the lives of families in New York—for generations. We urge you to act directly at the city level—and indirectly by calling for action at the state level—to ensure the rollout to universal child care is equitable, prioritizes low-income and marginalized communities, and

increases compensation and supports for the early childhood education workforce beginning this year.

As you negotiate the New York City Budget, work with the Mayor to develop an implementation plan for expanding 3-K and implementing 2-K, and continue to monitor—and we hope, weigh in on—New York State budget negotiations, we urge you to consider the following recommendations.

Top Urgent Universal Child Care Recommendations for the New York City Council for 2026

- **New York City leaders should join the child care community and state lawmakers calling for the 2026-2027 New York State Budget to implement a child care workforce compensation fund to provide ongoing and reliable compensation supplements to all members of the child care workforce until New York has achieved statewide universal child care that pays providers adequate rates to pay the workforce a thriving wage (\$1.2 billion).** Neither New York State nor New York City can achieve universal child care without recruiting and retaining far more professionals in the field, which is not possible without a significant, sustained, compensation hike.
- **New York City leaders should urge New York State leaders to adopt the Governor’s proposed \$1.2 billion in new investment in the Child Care Assistance program and add the funding necessary to meet demand for CCAP /vouchers in New York City as the City and State move toward statewide universal child care.**
 - New York City leaders must ensure that New York City meets any matching requirements to draw down all CCAP funds.
 - New York City must act without delay to ensure that no early childhood seats are left empty while children from low-income families are languishing on the voucher waitlist.
 - ***If CCAP/voucher enrollment closures and waitlists are allowed to persist, the success of New York State and New York City’s plans to expand pre-K, 3-K and 2-K will be undermined—and could result in the exclusion of low-income families. Pre-K expansions alone will not ensure low-income parents can work and achieve economic stability because without CCAP, many families will be unable to afford child care for younger children and/or for before and afterschool care for their pre-K, 3-K, 2-K and school-aged children. As the state expands universal child care, the CCAP program can be scaled down.***
- Adopt the Governor’s proposal to invest \$73 million to launch 2-K in New York City focusing initially on high-need areas, and ensure that 2-K is implemented in a manner that guards against the loss of (already scarce) infant and toddler seats, with flexibility to adjust the model to a multi-age, community care or other model if these issues arise. Further, it is essential that all modalities of child care—including center and home-based child care providers—are able to fully participate in 2-K.

How New York State and New York City Implements Universal Child Care Matters: Background

Low-income families must be prioritized, along with the workforce—which is among the lowest paid occupations in the state. Further, the rollout must be structured to avoid unintended consequences like increased tuition for middle-income families, a loss of already scarce infant and toddler capacity, or the destabilization of community-based and family child care programs by pulling older children, who cost less to care for, into school-based settings.

An Equitable Rollout of Universal Child Care and Pre-K and 3-K Expansion Must Include the Following Investment and Actions:

- Immediate and sustained increase in workforce compensation through a state-funded workforce compensation fund.** For so long as child care remains a public-private market, with most families paying tuition on their own, the only way to raise the wages of the child care workforce without raising private-pay tuition is by paying state-funded workforce supplements until the state has made the transition to a truly universal system, paying rates that support a thriving workforce wage. Compensation supplements will also guard against an exodus of child care educators from community-based organizations to school based pre-K programs, which has been the case in other periods of pre-K expansion.

The 2026-2027 New York State Executive Budget allocates **no funds** for the child care workforce. If no funding is added before the budget is finalized, this will be the second year in a row since the pandemic that there are no funds for the child care workforce. In 2023, one-time [retention bonuses](#) were awarded to child care educators: \$3,000 full time; \$2,300 afterschool. In 2024, bonuses of \$2,250 for full time educators; \$1,725 for afterschool.

- Fully meet demand for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) as we build toward universal child care.** CCAP (also referred to as vouchers) currently helps the families of approximately [168,000 low-income children](#) around New York State afford child care, with about 110,000 of those children residing in New York City. For those families able to access CCAP, this assistance can be life changing. They can see their annual child care bill for one infant in home-based child care drop from [\\$16,000 to \\$500](#). Unfortunately, notwithstanding a surge in state funding into the CCAP program in recent years, demand still far outpaces funding. To manage this shortfall, as of January 2026, [34 counties and NYC](#) have closed enrollment or started waitlists, leaving thousands of eligible families across the state scrambling to patch together care for their children, with some having to reduce their work hours, or leave the workforce altogether. In New York City, the CCAP/voucher waitlist currently includes more than 16,000 children. Notably, more than [20,000](#) pre-K and extended day, extended year pre-K seats went unfilled in fiscal year 2025. The State Executive Budget proposes \$1.2B in new, recurring funding for CCAP—the largest increase to CCAP in New York State history. Unfortunately, even this historic level of investment is unlikely to permanently end waitlists and closures—particularly in New York City given the size of the waitlist. It is not clear yet what percentage of these new funds would be directed to New York City, but currently, New York City receives about [61%](#) of the state’s annual CCAP allocations. Of note: the Executive Budget proposes that \$475 million of the new CCAP funding be earmarked for New York City contingent upon New York City matching those funds. The Administration for Children’s Services estimates the funding need for New

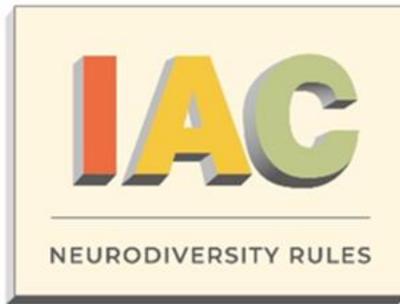
York City CCAP to be \$1.2 billion, but that would only keep the voucher caseload at close to its current level; the waitlist would persist.

- **Also of concern: the voucher waitlist is playing a role in keeping compensation for child care educators low, particularly those working in home-based settings.** A November 2025 report by the New School’s Center for New York City Affairs, [Dignified Pay for Quality Care](#), demonstrates the extent to which under-enrollment in New York City home-based programs contributes to low-pay. The report found that home-based provider average hourly wages in 2023 were \$7.33 for Family Child Care and \$5.98 per hour for Group Family Child Care, their hourly wage increased threefold if they had full, or close to full enrollment, to \$18.84 and \$17.62, respectively. However, only 29 percent of the FCC providers and 51 percent of GFCC providers surveyed had “good enrollment” in 2023. Across the state, licensed home-based providers serve 38% of families receiving CCAP/vouchers, leaving this modality of care particularly vulnerable to the impacts of low-enrollment because families are languishing on a CCAP/voucher waitlist.
- **Expand pre-K and 3-K in coordination with full funding of CCAP.**
- **Prioritize communities with high rates of low-income families with young children** for universal projects and pre-K expansions.

Other Core Principles

- **Middle-income families must be protected from rate hikes, benefits cliffs, and shifting supply as we scale up to universal child care.** Creating a state-funded child care workforce compensation fund allows for workforce wages to be increased without raising tuition for middle class families not yet able to access universal care. A capped-fee universal program for middle income families that is targeted to serve families just over the CCAP eligibility limit would be an approach that would address one of the sharpest benefits cliffs facing families who make just over the CCAP income limit.
- **Universal child care must be understood to include afterschool care, summer care, and evening and weekend care for children 0 to 13, and be inclusive of children with disabilities, and regardless of immigration status.** Families’ need for child care extends beyond weekdays 9 to 5 (or 9-3 in the case of many pre-K programs), and long after a child enters pre-K or Kindergarten.
- **Infant and toddler seats must be preserved in pre-K and universal child care rollouts.** Rates to care for babies and toddlers are the highest because caring for very young children (appropriately) requires the most hands-on attention; as a result, these are already the hardest seats to find. Any rollout plan must be sure not to incentivize programs to switch scarce infant and toddler seats to care for older children.
- **All settings must be supported in pre-K and universal child care expansions** to ensure families have the freedom to choose the care setting that best meets their needs—home, center, and school-based.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. We are happy to answer any questions and can be reached at shershkowitz@empirestatechildcare.org and dhill@scaany.org.



Testimony to
New York City Council
Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education
Councilmember Jennifer Gutierrez, Chair

Oversight Hearing on The Path to Universal Childcare

Submitted by
Kate Hoy, LMSW
Vice President for Children's Services

On behalf of the
Inter Agency Council of Developmental Disabilities Agencies, Inc.
150 West 30th Street
New York, NY 10001
kate@iacny.org

March 2nd, 2026

IAC is a non-profit membership organization serving the five boroughs of New York City metropolitan area, Long Island, the Hudson Valley, and regions throughout New York State. We represent a diverse coalition of over 200 member agencies, including nonprofit early intervention providers, 4410 special education preschool and 853 school-age programs, family groups, and independent practitioners dedicated to supporting children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Our mission is to ensure that people with I/DD have the resources, services, and opportunities they need to live full and productive lives.

Good afternoon, Chair Gutiérrez and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today on this critical issue.

This subcommittee has rightly focused on five crucial pillars for early childhood education: expanding access, supporting providers, advancing pay parity, improving transparency, and lifting up the lived experiences of families and educators. IAC shares this vision. However, we are submitting this testimony to issue an urgent warning: **True universal childcare cannot be achieved if the path forward excludes children with developmental disabilities.**

The Threat of Systemic Collapse and Provider Closures

As the City rightfully focuses on expanding overall early childhood access, particularly the rollout of childcare for two-year-olds, our nonprofit Early Intervention (EI) and 4410 special education providers are being pushed to the brink of collapse. Just this past month, two legacy Early Intervention providers—agencies that helped build this system from the ground up—were forced to close their doors.

Right now, some of our members are operating early intervention programs at a severe deficit, surviving only through annual private board grants. They absorb these losses because their mission is to deliver life-changing services to infants and toddlers with disabilities. But goodwill is not a sustainable business model. If this framework doesn't change and if New York City can't work with the State to resolve EI's funding and rate reimbursement crisis, these foundational programs will inevitably collapse, leaving our most vulnerable children with nowhere to go.

The Workforce Cliff & Penalty for Operating Inclusive Programs

If we want to lift up the lived experiences of our families, we must acknowledge that their current reality is defined by months-long waitlists for multidisciplinary evaluations, closed classrooms limiting placement opportunities, and high staff turnover, much of which is unintuitively driven by Department of Education (DOE) special education program growth.

We have the physical space and children who desperately need services, but we are facing an unprecedented workforce crisis and insufficient support for actual program costs.

We are also facing an impossible regulatory environment. Our programs have been increasingly isolated as Early Childhood programs in New York City expand. Leaving the 4410 and EI sectors tethered to stagnant, inadequate reimbursement rates creates a devastating disparity. 4410s are being penalized because the State's educational policy (inclusion) has evolved, but the State's fiscal policy (the Reimbursable Cost Manual or RCM) is stuck in an era of segregated special education silos that won't permit programs to develop the innovative, inclusive programs that both the NYC DOE and State are asking us (and we are eager!) to create.

For example, operating a 4410 program means complying with the RCM and submitting a Consolidated Fiscal Report (CFR) to the State. Operating a UPK program means complying with City/DOE invoicing, contracts, and distinct regulatory standards. If you are operating a UPK classroom within your agency, you must pay the UPK-mandated salary to attract and retain a general education teacher. However, the special education teacher in that exact same classroom (or down the hall) is funded through the 4410 rate. If you raise the special education teacher's salary to create internal equity and prevent them from jumping to a UPK role, you will likely exceed the NYSED regional salary screens. The RCM treats that excess salary as a non-allowable cost. An agency has to pay the higher salary to keep the staff, but the State won't reimburse them for it, forcing the program to drain agency reserves, or, as is more common, to close the integrated program altogether.

Additionally, in the same example, if a UPK contract pays \$10,000 per child, but the actual cost to run that high-quality, inclusive seat is \$14,000, NYSED does not care. The State will strictly carve out the general education portion of the classroom costs and refuse to reimburse it. Our programs are left absorbing the deficit for the UPK seats, while the UPK revenue they *do* receive actively drives down the calculated per-care-day rate for their 4410 students. 4410s take on the massive administrative burden of managing a braided funding model, and their reward is a lower 4410 rate and an unfunded deficit on the general education side. Still, our programs are regularly admonished for not being inclusive, even though most providers would eagerly open their doors to neighborhood children without IEPs. Our providers fundamentally believe in the importance of inclusion and strive to support children in the least restrictive setting. In fact, most programs have tried for years to operate UPK and integrated classrooms. Without regulatory and rate rationalization, the problems will persist: children with and without disabilities will have fewer options for programming and staff salaries and benefits will remain unequal.

Finally, the City is currently operating a one-way street when it comes to hiring. A waiver that would allow retired and former DOE staff to work in our programs has been “in progress” for years. Currently, retired teachers, social workers, and related services therapists are not permitted to work in our programs for two years after DOE employment, yet our staff are frequently poached by the DOE with 24 hours' notice to a 4410 program. Staff are often told they must accept an offered DOE position within a day or two, leaving our programs in the lurch and resulting in children with unfulfilled IEP mandates. Our programs are publicly funded and serve public school students. Why are our providers paid so much less, placed in a disadvantaged regulatory environment, yet expected to do as much and more? To become true partners, and to achieve the vision of true universal childcare, these issues must be prioritized and resolved.

Bureaucratic and Administrative Burdens: The "Zero-Interest Bank"

Beyond the workforce crisis, we must address the crushing bureaucracy our providers face. If we are going to build a universal system, the City must treat 4410 and Early Intervention providers as true partners, not as an afterthought and a barrel from which to pluck a fully-trained, experienced workforce at will.

Right now, that partnership does not exist. Our 4410 programs are routinely forced to act as a zero-interest bank for the City, draining their own reserves to float the City's obligations for up to 10 months of the school year. Providers who opted in to the Contract Enhancement four years ago have dealt with missing start-up funds and advances, shifting guidelines where expenses approved one year are inexplicably rejected the next, and administrative bottlenecks where they are bounced between departments with no clear point of contact.

Basic coordination and respect is sometimes lacking. Last week, providers received confusing communication regarding who was permitted to close due to the snow. Simultaneously, they received an abrupt request for detailed information about staff salaries of related services providers from a DOE office that had never asked for this information previously. Attempts to understand the reason for this highly sensitive data request were ignored; the only response provided was, “it’s a new request.”

If these were traditional public-school classrooms, the lights would stay on and the funding would flow automatically. But because our providers operate in specialized, independent non-profit settings, they are pushed to the financial brink just to get their invoices paid. You cannot tell families that their children with disabilities are a priority while treating the schools that serve them as second-class.

Legislative Support & Recommendations

We support Intro 631 and ask that all reporting metrics explicitly include nonprofit 4410 and Early Intervention providers. Furthermore, we encourage the Council to ensure our programs are permanently included in all workforce initiatives, benefits programs, and universal and early childcare advisory boards.

We urge the Council to ensure that any plan for universal childcare coordinates with City and State agencies to actively support and stabilize EI and 4410 providers. We need mandated salary and benefit parity for special education teachers, teacher assistants, and related services providers. A system that structurally disadvantages disabled children isn't universal—it is exclusionary. We stand ready to partner with you to build a system that works for every child. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony today.

For questions regarding this testimony, or to speak with one of our nonprofit Early Intervention or 4410 providers about their experiences, please contact: Kate@iacny.org

TESTIMONY OF NORTHSIDE CENTER FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT, INC.

New York City Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Education & Youth Services

Oversight Hearing: The Path to Universal Child Care

Submitted by Paula Magnus, President

March 2, 2026

Good morning, Chairperson and members of the Subcommittee.

My name is Paula Magnus, President of Northside Center for Child Development, Inc. Northside was founded in Harlem in 1946 and has operated continuously as a community-based provider for over 80 years. We operate Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Brooklyn, and embed licensed mental health clinicians directly in those early childhood settings. That operational experience, running licensed programs at scale, in high-need neighborhoods, across multiple funding streams and regulatory frameworks, is the perspective we bring to today's hearing.

We strongly support the package of legislation before the Subcommittee. These bills address the real structural barriers: space, permitting, governance, outreach, data, and caregiver equity. Together they address what has prevented universal child care from becoming operational rather than aspirational. We offer our testimony on each measure in turn.

Int. 0008-2026 – Pilot Program for Vacant Commercial Premises (Menin)

Northside strongly supports this bill and commends Speaker Menin for her leadership on it. We speak to this from direct institutional experience: five years ago, we finished building out and opened our new 28,000 square foot East Harlem headquarters, and we run child care programs across three boroughs, in Harlem, the South Bronx, and Brooklyn. That experience is instructive for the design of this pilot.

The obstacle is not that suitable space is scarce. It is that landlords willing to rent to child care providers are. Landlords have rational economic reasons to prefer national retail tenants like pharmacy chains and banks, whose financial strength allows landlords to borrow more favorably against their properties. Child care programs carry the additional perception of regulatory complexity and expensive fit-out requirements. Landlords who cannot secure a preferred tenant will often leave space vacant for years rather than accept what they view as a less attractive alternative.

The rise of e-commerce has contracted national retail and left ground-floor commercial space soft across the city, giving the City more leverage than it has had in years. But vacancy alone will not drive landlords to child care tenants. For universal child care to be politically viable and genuinely universal across the City, it must be available in Tremont and in Tribeca. The financial incentives have to be sufficient to make child care providers attractive tenants in a broad range of neighborhoods, not only where landlords are already struggling to fill space.

New York City already has a property tax abatement for landlords who build out or convert space for child care (<https://www.nyc.gov/site/childcare/for-businesses-and-employers/child-care-center-property-tax-abatement.page>). It is a meaningful start. But it has a fundamental limitation: it is a build-out incentive. It rewards the landlord for the construction cost, not for the ongoing decision to keep a child care provider in the building. It does not answer the question a landlord actually asks: is this a tenant I want long term, and will it affect the property's resale value?

I suggest we look to Rhode Island, which has moved beyond "bricks and mortar" incentives. Their state law allows landlords to claim a tax credit equal to 30% of "foregone rent," the gap between fair market value and what they charge a licensed provider (<https://tootris.com/edu/blog/government/business-child-care-tax-credits-incentives-by-state-2023/>).

By rewarding the ongoing discount rather than just the initial build-out, Rhode Island has created a sustainable model that keeps child care centers in high-need neighborhoods long after the construction dust has settled.

We suggest that New York adopt the same principle: reward the ongoing tenancy, not just the build-out. The Council may wish to consider a continuous exemption from real property income taxation on rental receipts from licensed child care providers, or an ongoing property tax occupancy credit that runs for the life of the tenancy, or both. Either approach, modeled on Rhode Island's foregone rent credit, would change the economics of the landlord's decision in a way the existing abatement does not.

We also recommend that the pilot target Community Districts with documented child care deserts and that fit-out support be structured to meet NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Article 47 licensing standards, the compliance threshold that determines whether a space can actually be used. We suggest that technical assistance in navigating Article 47 be made available to landlords and providers alike, and that DOHMH be engaged as a partner in site selection from the outset rather than arriving at the end of a conversion to approve or reject.

Int. 0009-2026 – Study and Report on Expediting Permitting (Menin)

Northside strongly supports this bill. Speaker Menin has identified a problem that every community-based child care provider in this city knows firsthand. The permitting process requires approvals from multiple city agencies, including DOHMH, DOB, and FDNY, and those reviews are currently processed sequentially. The result is approval timelines of 12 to 18 months or longer, during which families remain on waitlists and capital investments sit idle. This problem falls with equal force on expansions of existing licensed providers, which is where most near-term capacity growth will actually come from.

We suggest that the study mandated by this bill proceed from the premise that concurrent interagency review is the appropriate standard, and structure its inquiry around what is required to achieve it: a single application portal, coordinated review timelines, and adequate staffing at each reviewing agency. The goal of the study should not be to ask whether concurrent processing is feasible but to determine what implementation requires. We recommend that its findings produce enforceable timelines with consequences, not recommendations that sit on a shelf.

Int. 128-2026 – Childcare Services at Public Meetings (Cabán)

Northside strongly supports this bill. The absence of child care at public meetings is a structural barrier to civic participation that falls most heavily on the low-income families with the greatest stake in child care policy. Requiring child care at public meetings is a concrete expression of the City's commitment to inclusive governance.

We ask the Council to ensure that adequate resources are appropriated to implement this requirement and that it does not become an unfunded mandate for community-based organizations that host or co-sponsor public meetings.

Int. 579-2026 – 3-K and Pre-K Outreach Campaign (Gutiérrez)

Northside strongly supports this bill. Enrollment in 3-K and pre-K remains well below capacity in the communities we serve, not for lack of demand but for lack of information and the complexity of the enrollment process. Many families, particularly recent immigrants, non-English speakers, and those without stable housing, are unaware of available seats or unable to navigate registration without assistance.

A sustained, multilingual, community-based outreach campaign is the right intervention. We recommend that the campaign be carried out in close partnership with community-based organizations already embedded in target neighborhoods rather than relying exclusively on City agency channels. Peer outreach and trusted messenger networks consistently reach families that mass media campaigns miss.

Int. 580-2026 – Office of Child Care (Gutiérrez)

Northside strongly supports the establishment of an Office of Child Care. Child care policy in New York City is currently fragmented across ACS, DOHMH, DOE, and DYCD, each with distinct funding streams, licensing standards, data systems, and program models. The result is a system that is incoherent from the family's perspective and inefficient from the provider's. No single agency is accountable for the system as a whole.

A dedicated Office of Child Care with authority to coordinate across agencies, set citywide standards, and track progress toward universal access is urgently needed. We suggest the legislation include: a mandate to engage community-based providers in planning and oversight; a public-facing data dashboard tracking seat availability, waitlists, and subsidy utilization by Community District; a formal role in the City's annual budget process to ensure child care funding is sustained and expanded; and an explicit mandate to address rate adequacy, ensuring that City contracting rates allow community-based providers to offer competitive salaries.

We recommend that the Office be designed to strengthen, not supplant, the network of mission-driven community-based organizations that have delivered these services in high-need neighborhoods, in many cases for decades. Any governance structure that consolidates authority without preserving that network risks dismantling the institutional knowledge and community trust that cannot be rebuilt quickly.

Int. 631-2026 – DOE Reporting on Early Childhood Seat Availability (Restler)

Northside strongly supports this bill. Transparent public reporting on seat availability, outreach activity, and staff vacancy rates is a prerequisite for accountability. Policymakers, providers, and families cannot identify gaps or direct resources effectively without reliable, disaggregated data.

We flag the staff vacancy data as particularly significant, and we speak to it directly. Community-based early childhood providers cannot offer salaries competitive with DOE-employed staff. City contracting rates have not kept pace with what it costs to recruit and retain qualified teachers, assistant teachers, and embedded mental health clinicians. The result is chronic vacancies that directly constrain enrollment capacity and program quality. Reporting on vacancies is necessary, but it will only matter if the data is used to make the compensation gap visible and to drive the rate adequacy reforms needed to close it.

Res. 165-2026 – Paid Family Leave Transfer to Grandparents and Designated Caregivers (Williams)

Northside strongly supports this resolution. A significant portion of the families we serve rely on grandparents and other extended family members as primary caregivers, a reality that reflects both cultural norms and economic necessity in our communities. The current limitation of Paid Family Leave to parents creates a gap that leaves these caregiving arrangements without support at the moment of greatest need.

We call on the State Legislature and the Governor to enact legislation allowing unused Paid Family Leave to be transferred to grandparents and other designated caregivers. This is a practical, low-cost

measure that reflects the actual diversity of caregiving arrangements in which New York's children are raised.

Conclusion

The legislation before this Subcommittee addresses the right problems: space, permitting, governance, outreach, accountability, and caregiver equity. These are the structural barriers that have prevented universal child care from becoming operational rather than aspirational. Northside strongly supports each of these bills and urges the Subcommittee to advance them promptly.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify and welcome any questions.

Contact:

Paula Magnus, President

Pmagnus@northsidecenter.org

(212) 426-3430

Northside Center for Child Development

1475 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10029

northsidecenter.org

From: [Park, Carol](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for Path to Universal Childcare Hearing
Date: Friday, February 27, 2026 12:31:47 PM

Good afternoon Chair and Members of the New York City Council:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding New York City's universal childcare and early childhood education initiatives under the Adams administration. I want to begin by acknowledging the Mayor's commitment to making New York City a more affordable and equitable place for families, and for elevating early childhood education as a central policy priority. Investing in universal childcare and stabilizing funding are important and necessary steps that will benefit many New York City families.

As the City continues to expand access to early learning opportunities, **it is critical to recognize that universal childcare will also result in increased identification of children with developmental delays and disabilities. This is an expected and positive outcome of broader participation in early childhood settings**, where children are observed, screened, and supported at earlier ages. However, these children will then be referred into **the existing Early Intervention (EI) and Preschool Special Education (CPSE) systems, which are already overwhelmed and under-resourced.**

Currently, there are significant gaps in the special education service delivery system. Too many children who are eligible for EI and CPSE services experience delays in evaluations and service initiation due to provider shortages, high caseloads, and insufficient funding. These challenges are especially acute for children with complex developmental needs and medically fragile children, who require specialized providers, coordinated care, and timely intervention to maintain health and developmental progress.

Without a corresponding increase in funding and capacity for EI and CPSE, the anticipated rise in referrals generated by universal childcare expansion will exacerbate existing inequities. Children with disabilities may face longer wait times for legally mandated services, placing families in crisis and undermining the very goals of early childhood investment. For medically fragile children in particular, delays in services can result in developmental regression, increased medical risk, and unnecessary family hardship.

A major contributor to these system gaps is the lack of pay equity for the professionals who work in Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education. Therapists, special educators, and service coordinators are often paid significantly less than their counterparts in healthcare or school-age settings, despite similar qualifications and responsibilities. This has led to persistent workforce shortages, high turnover, and an inability for agencies to recruit and retain qualified staff. Any meaningful expansion of early childhood services must include

targeted investment in workforce compensation to ensure system stability.

Additionally, EI and CPSE programs operate under strict **state and federal mandates**, including timelines required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. **When systems lack the funding and staffing needed to meet these mandates, the City risks falling out of compliance with state and federal law. This not only exposes the City to legal and fiscal consequences, but also compromises the rights of children with disabilities to receive timely and appropriate services.**

As the City advances its universal childcare agenda, I respectfully urge the Council to ensure that early childhood expansion is aligned with proportional investments in special education infrastructure. This includes increased funding for EI and CPSE agencies, pay equity for the workforce, expanded support for medically fragile children, and proactive capacity planning to meet increased demand.

Universal childcare has the potential to be transformative for New York City families. To truly achieve equity, however, it must include children with disabilities and ensure that early identification leads to timely services, not longer waitlists. With thoughtful planning and comprehensive investment, New York City can strengthen its early childhood system while remaining in compliance with its legal obligations and its moral responsibility to children and families.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Park
Director of Early Education

Carol Chou Park, MEd

Director of Early Education
St. Mary's Healthcare System for Children
29-01 216th Street, Bayside, NY 11360

P: 718.281.8501

F: 718.281.8819

www.stmaryskids.org

supermoon

New York City Council *Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education*
Council Chambers at City Hall

February 26th, 2026

Hearing Testimony: Thoughts from a Provider

My name is Magin Schantz, and I am the owner and director of Supermoon Art Space, a small day care center in Ridgewood, Queens. We have been in operation for 8 years, and over that time have served hundreds of families in our community, many of whom we are still in touch with. Through creativity and diligence we have devised systems to assure that our students, their parents, and our staff, feel happy, healthy and nurtured. Staff retention is not a problem for us, and we have no issues with enrollment, filling our program from year to year based on our excellent word-of-mouth reputation alone. However, despite all these successes, it remains an enormous struggle to cover our costs from month to month. Our hard-working and qualified staff barely earn a living wage, and I frequently choose to forgo pay entirely in order to maintain our budget.

I was very excited to submit an RFI for 2K recently, and look forward to learning more about that initiative, since we would love to offer our program for free. However, I am aware that many small day care centers like ours with 3K contracts have not received funding in a timely manner, so I am also skeptical as to whether partnering with the DOE would help us grow and thrive, or send us into deeper financial struggles.

Outside of our day care center, Supermoon has worked over the past three years to pilot and activate a series of after school programs for 3K and PreK students in neighboring public school buildings. After school care for 3-5 year olds is very hard to find, and we set these programs up in order to meet the needs of families in our community who had been asking for care for years. The programs are set up through the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), as School Age Child Care (SACC) programs, with a "PreK Waiver" that allows us to work with the younger children. We currently run three programs, and are setting up a 4th. Each time we open a new license application we have to start from zero again, re-explaining what we are doing, and the licensing process takes months. This is administrative time we are not compensated for. With one program, we spent months setting up the license, only to learn that the DOE would charge us \$20,000 to use one classroom for after school for the year, which we could not afford, and we had to cancel the program and turn families away.

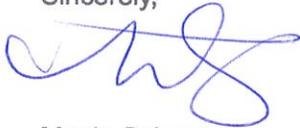
supermoon

Despite these challenges, we have been able to provide high quality care with skilled and passionate staff, and these programs too have earned us a positive reputation among families and our public school partners. My understanding is that programs like these are very rare, even though there is a serious need for them. When we reached out to the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) to see if we were eligible to receive funding and offer our programs for free, we learned that DYCD does not currently fund programs (summer camp or after school) for children under 6.

We imagine that filling this gap, and providing out-of-school care for 3K and PreK students in public school buildings, is on the city's radar now with so much attention and momentum in place for childcare. And so we hope to be involved in the process of growing programs like these, since my understanding is that very few providers take it on, and we have gained a fair amount of perspective and experience in the process of making them happen.

I'd like to thank Councilmember Gutierrez and this sub-committee for creating the opportunity to share these thoughts with you. I am grateful to be in the room as these efforts to support families and caregivers come into focus.

Sincerely,



Magin Schantz
Owner, Director
Supermoon Art Space

753 Onderdonk Ave.
Ridgewood, NY 11385

P: 718-249-7558

The Path to Universal Child Care

New York City Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education

Monday, March 2, 2026

Testimony of Halley Potter

Director of Pre-K–12 Education Policy, The Century Foundation

potter@tcf.org

Thank you for your leadership on child care policy and for holding this essential hearing on the path to universal child care. My name is Halley Potter, and I am the director of pre-K–12 education policy at The Century Foundation, a national think tank with offices in New York City and Washington, DC. The Century Foundation has been doing research on education for more than two decades, including research on New York City’s school enrollment policies and its pre-K program. Since 2020, we have also run the Bridges Collaborative, a national network of school systems and housing organizations working to advance integration that includes several of New York City’s community school districts and intentionally diverse charter schools.

I want to focus on two things today: first, why universal child care is so important for New York families; and second—the area in which I hope to add something that other testimony may not cover—why diversity and integration must be a central priority, not an afterthought, as we build toward universal child care.

I’ll start with something personal. Pre-K is the reason my family came back to New York City. During the pandemic, we left the state and moved in with my parents in order to get their help with child care for our 2-year-old after our daycare closed. But when my daughter was old enough for free pre-K, we came back. Now my younger daughter is in 3-K, and the savings from these programs have allowed our family to open college savings accounts for our kids for the first time. And as a parent, I’ve noticed the increased attention this year to remind us to apply for pre-K. I loved getting a call from Mayor Mamdani reminding me to sign up! These programs have meant the world to our family, and I know we are not alone.

Why Universal Child Care Matters

My colleagues at New Yorkers United for Child Care and The Century Foundation’s Women’s Economic Justice team have outlined the case for universal child care compellingly, and I want to briefly echo those points before turning to my main focus.

New York City families depend on and have benefited enormously from 3-K and Pre-K For All. These programs have given children a strong foundation and given parents—especially mothers—the ability to work, build financial stability, and stay in this city. Families want and

need this to expand further: extending universal, publicly funded care to two-year-olds and younger children is the natural next step.

The research is clear that high-quality early childhood programs produce lasting benefits for children’s cognitive and social development. They also produce economic returns for families and society. And the outreach the city has done this year to help families enroll in 3-K and pre-K has been noticed and appreciated. New York City is leading the nation in early childhood education—and it should keep going.

Why Diversity in Early Education Matters—and Why It Won’t Happen on Its Own

As we build toward universal child care, I want to make a case that is less often heard in these conversations: that diversity and integration are not just nice-to-haves. They are a core component of program quality, and they require intentional policy—because without deliberate effort, the fractured landscape of early childhood care will sort families by income and race, not bring them together.

Chancellor Samuels has rightfully named integration as one of his three core priorities, alongside academic rigor and safety. This must be a priority from high school down to our youngest learners in child care and early education programs.

The racial and socioeconomic diversity of preschool classrooms is a key component of their educational quality. Decades of research on K–12 education show that low-income students see gains to their reading and math skills from learning in socioeconomically integrated environments as opposed to attending schools with high concentrations of poverty.¹ Racially integrated classrooms also help foster critical thinking skills and reduce racial biases—important traits in today’s complex, multicultural world.²

New research finds that the benefits of diverse learning environments begin before kindergarten.³ One study using data from eleven state pre-K programs found that preschool children in classes with higher average socioeconomic status learned more on average than those in low-SES classrooms—regardless of the children’s own backgrounds.⁴ A follow-up analysis found that racial diversity of pre-K classrooms was independently associated with children’s outcomes, offering advantages for all students.⁵

¹ “The Benefits of Socioeconomically and Racially Integrated Schools and Classrooms,” The Century Foundation, <https://tcf.org/content/facts/the-benefits-of-socioeconomically-and-racially-integrated-schools-and-classrooms/>

² Amy Stuart Wells, Lauren Fox, and Diana Cordova-Cobo, “How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students,” The Century Foundation, February 9, 2016, <https://tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/>

³ Jeanne L. Reid and Sharon Lynn Kagan, “A Better Start: Why Classroom Diversity Matters in Early Education,” The Century Foundation and the Poverty & Race Research Action Council, April 2015, <https://tcf.org/content/report/a-better-start/>

⁴ Jeanne L. Reid, “Socioeconomic Diversity and Early Learning: The Missing Link in Policy for High-Quality Preschools” in *The Future of School Integration*, ed. Richard D. Kahlenberg (New York: The Century Foundation, 2012), 67–126, <https://tcf.org/content/book/the-future-of-school-integration/>

⁵ Jeanne L. Reid, “The Racial and Ethnic Composition of Pre-Kindergarten Classrooms and Children’s Language Development,” *Penn State Law Review* 119, no. 3 (2015): 645–85, <http://www.pennstatelawreview.org/print-issues/the-racial-and-ethnic-composition-of-prekindergarten-classrooms-and-childrens-language-development/>

Even after controlling for instructional quality in the classroom, children in diverse preschool settings still show increased learning outcomes. This suggests that peer effects may be at work—children learn by interacting with peers in the classroom. Because children’s exposure to math and language skills outside the classroom is highly correlated with their socioeconomic background, low-SES children benefit, on average, from having some middle- or high-SES classmates.⁶

Perhaps even more importantly, diverse preschool classrooms can help young children learn to empathize and coexist with people from other races and classes. Children typically develop awareness of racial and social categories by kindergarten, and exposure to peers helps shape these perceptions.⁷ Research suggests that children in racially integrated classrooms may be less likely than those in homogeneous classrooms to show racial bias toward other groups.⁸

Creating more racially and socioeconomically diverse settings for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in New York City will help unlock these important cognitive and social-emotional benefits for more children and lay a foundation for diversity in K–12 classrooms.

NYC’s Strengths and Challenges

New York City has many of the right ingredients in place already to create diverse early learning environments. The city has a diverse population and has made large public investments in early learning. NYC is ahead of the curve nationally in providing universal access to early childhood education for four-year-olds and three-year-olds.⁹ As of 2023–24, 59,841 children were enrolled in pre-K and 43,914 were enrolled in 3-K.¹⁰ The city also has a robust subsidized early education program for eligible low-income infants and toddlers using federal child care funding and Head Start programs. And with all of these programs now operated through New York City Public Schools, there is the opportunity for a coordinated approach.

However, despite these investments, NYC’s early childhood options—even those touted as universal—are still highly segregated by race and class. According to analyses published by The Century Foundation, pre-K and 3-K classes in public schools are typically as racially segregated as kindergarten classes in those schools, while pre-K and 3-K classes in community-based programs show significantly higher levels of racial segregation. Publicly available data from the most recent year available, 2018–19, shows that half of all children in community-based pre-K programs were in fairly racially homogeneous settings where 71–100 percent of the student body comes from a single racial/ethnic group, and only one in five were in highly diverse settings with

⁶ Jeanne L. Reid and Sharon Lynn Kagan, “A Better Start: Why Classroom Diversity Matters in Early Education,” The Century Foundation and the Poverty & Race Research Action Council, April 2015, 11, <https://tcf.org/content/report/a-better-start/>

⁷ Jeanne L. Reid and Sharon Lynn Kagan, “A Better Start: Why Classroom Diversity Matters in Early Education,” The Century Foundation and the Poverty & Race Research Action Council, April 2015, 12, <https://tcf.org/content/report/a-better-start/>

⁸ Adam Rutland, Lindsey Cameron, Laura Bennett, and Jennifer Ferrell, “Interracial Contact and Racial Constancy: A Multi-site Study of Racial Intergroup Bias in 3-5 Year Old Anglo-British Children,” *Applied Developmental Psychology* 26 (2005): 699–713, <https://kar.kent.ac.uk/26168/4/rutland%20et%20al%20JADP.pdf>

⁹ “State of Preschool 2024 Yearbook, New York State Profile,” National Institute for Early Education Research, 2025, <https://nieer.org/yearbook/2024/state-profiles/new-york>

¹⁰ “Utilization Up, Capacity Down: A Look at 3-K and Pre-K Trends in New York City,” New York City Independent Budget Office, May 2025, <https://www.ibo.nyc.gov/assets/ibo/downloads/pdf/education/2025/2025-may-utilization-up-capacity-down-a-look-at-3k-and-prek-trends-in-nyc.pdf>

no racial or ethnic group comprising more than 50 percent.¹¹ (Unfortunately, more recent data is not publicly available because the demographic data published by NYCPS from 2019 to 2025 no longer includes data on pre-K and 3-K in community-based organizations, which are the majority of pre-K and 3-K programs.¹²) For children under three, the landscape of early care and education is largely divided between public programs that offer access to eligible low-income families and a private market serving higher-income families as well as lower-income families that are not served by public programs.¹³

This segregation occurs at the same time that the city is losing families with young children who are moving away because the city’s cost of living—and the cost of child care—is too high.¹⁴ Expanding access to high-quality, affordable care is essential to keeping and attracting these families. But if we expand a segregated system, we will have missed an opportunity to create something better.

The Path Forward: Ensuring Universal Child Care Is Also Integrated Child Care

We need policy changes and increased public investment in early education to expand access to diverse early learning environments for more of our youngest New Yorkers and help keep more families with young children in the city. In particular, the city should take the following steps:

1. **Ensure enough seats for Pre-K, 3-K, and 2-K** to serve all families that want them, with locations and program hours that match their needs. This will require expanding options for enrolling children in programs before school, after school, and during school breaks.
2. **Continue and expand outreach efforts**, ensuring that families of all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds across the city understand the early education options available to them and how they can benefit their families.
3. **Expand the pilot of non-income-tested care for children 0–2.** These programs build off the work started with Pre-K For All, 3-K, and 2-K to extend the benefits of universal access to even younger children and create more opportunities for integration.
4. **Work toward simplifying systems to allow and encourage providers receiving different public funding streams to blend their programs in order to integrate classrooms.** These funding streams include Head Start and Early Head Start, universal-eligibility school-day-and-year seats, and extended-day-and-year seats with additional eligibility criteria. The administrative burden of blending programs should shift more to the central office rather than placing it on individual providers. The complexity of

¹¹ Halley Potter, “Creating Integrated Early Childhood Education in New York City,” The Century Foundation, October 28, 2019, <https://tcf.org/content/report/creating-integrated-early-childhood-education-new-york-city/>

¹² See Information and Data Overview, Demographic Snapshot, NYC Public Schools InfoHub, <https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/students-and-schools/school-quality/information-and-data-overview#jump-to-heading-3> (accessed March 2, 2026).

¹³ Halley Potter, “Creating Integrated Early Childhood Education in New York City,” The Century Foundation, October 28, 2019, <https://tcf.org/content/report/creating-integrated-early-childhood-education-new-york-city/>

¹⁴ Andrew Perry and Emily Eisner, “Who Is Leaving New York State? Part II: Social and Labor Characteristics,” The Fiscal Policy Institute, June 3, 2024, <https://fiscalspolicy.org/new-families-with-young-children-in-search-of-housing-drive-state-population>; and Karen Yi, “Families Flee NYC in Droves Over Child Care Costs, Affordability,” Gothamist, August 8, 2024, <https://gothamist.com/news/families-flee-nyc-in-droves-over-child-care-costs-affordability>

managing multiple funding streams with different requirements currently creates an undue and often unmanageable burden on many early childhood providers, particularly single-site programs or family child care programs with limited administrative staff.¹⁵

5. **Encourage more early childhood providers to house public programs as well as private-pay seats, and require blending of programs for those that do.** Creating these opportunities for socioeconomic integration requires individual day care centers to receive different funding streams and then mix children from different programs in individual classrooms. Until universal child care reaches all neighborhoods and all ages 0-5, blending private-pay and public programs provides the best chance for integrated classrooms for infants and toddlers.
6. **Include discussion of and data on birth-to-five programs in broader conversations about socioeconomic and racial diversity across grades in the public school system.** The work on school integration and early education should not remain separate. Integration efforts need to be coordinated from birth through high school graduation, and NYCPS's demographic snapshots should include data on all 2-K, 3-K, and pre-K programs, including those in community-based programs.

Conclusion

The path to a racially just and thriving future for the next generation must include creating high-quality early education programs for all families who want them, where children of all backgrounds can learn together. New York City has important building blocks already in place, but it will take considerable problem-solving and intentional work—from policymakers and providers—to capitalize on existing opportunities for integration as well as open additional opportunities.

Diversity is a key aspect of program quality for early childhood education. If we work merely to expand a system of siloed opportunities, the city runs the risk of cementing lines of segregation that perpetuate inequality, even when we achieve universal access. As New York City continues to expand and improve early childhood education, we must seize opportunities for diversity where they exist and lay the groundwork for broader integration throughout the early education system.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these important issues affecting our youngest New Yorkers.

¹⁵ Halley Potter and Casey Stockstill, "Early Childhood Programs That Blend and Braid Funding to Achieve Diversity," The Century Foundation, November 18, 2024, <https://tcf.org/content/report/early-childhood-programs-that-blend-and-braid-funding-to-achieve-diversity/>



[The Path to Universal Child Care](#)

**New York City Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education
Monday, March 2, 2026**

Testimony of Julie Kashen

I'm Julie Kashen, the Director of Women's Economic Justice and a Senior Fellow at [The Century Foundation](#), a national think tank with offices in New York City and Washington, DC. I am a national expert on child care policy.

Thank you for your leadership on child care policy and for holding this essential hearing on the path to universal child care.

I want to focus on three things today:

1. What universal child care should look and feel like.
2. The three pillars of strong child care policy.
3. What we've learned from national experience.

First: What universal child care should look and feel like.

When New York City achieves universal child care, every family will be able to **find, afford, and choose** the child care option that best meets their needs.

Children from all backgrounds will be safe, healthy, and learning.

The people who teach and care for our youngest children will be well compensated — with living wages, benefits, professional development, and real pathways to build strong unions and long-term careers. They will be able to support their own families as they nurture the next generation.

Parents will experience less financial strain and more peace of mind.

That is the vision: thriving children and families; valued child care teachers.

Second: The Three Pillars

Strong child care policy rests on three pillars:

- **Affordability for families**
- **A well-compensated, skilled workforce**
- **A robust supply of diverse child care options**

Think of it as a three-legged stool. The child is sitting on top.

If even one leg is weak, the stool wobbles. If one leg is missing, the child falls.

But when all three legs are strong, the child is supported — and can thrive.

Affordability

Child care is one of the largest expenses families face.

For many New York families, care for two young children can cost more than **\$35,000 per year** — rivaling college tuition.

Today, families are already facing unaffordable housing, rising food and utility costs, and looming increases in health care expenses. When child care is unaffordable, parents are forced to cut back on work or leave the workforce entirely — making it even harder to absorb these rising costs. This disproportionately impacts women who are more likely than men to forgo work for care.

Making child care affordable is not optional. It is foundational to family economic security.

Workforce

Child care is expensive for parents — but educators are still underpaid.

Early educators are the foundation of this system. That's because quality child care is labor-intensive. It depends on stable, skilled professionals. Yet low wages and staffing shortages make it extremely difficult to recruit and retain early educators.

Providers cannot raise wages without public investment that reflects the true cost of care.

Parents understand that who their child’s teacher is matters enormously. That is just as true in child care as it is in K–12 education. Parents therefore have a direct stake in ensuring that early educators earn wages and benefits that reflect the essential nature of their work. Without these investments, staffing shortages will continue and families won’t be able to find the child care they need.

Supply

Families need real choice — including care during nontraditional work hours.

Public investment must support diverse settings:

- Centers
- Family child care homes
- Faith-based programs
- Pre-K in public schools

Providers must have the resources they need to support children’s healthy development, meet cultural and linguistic needs, and fully include children with disabilities.

Universal means universal.

Third: Lessons from the National Experience

The child care crisis is a textbook example of market failure.

The private market alone cannot deliver affordable care for families while also paying educators fairly and maintaining supply. Public investment is essential.

And we have proof that investment works.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government invested more than **\$50 billion** in child care stabilization funding. That unprecedented investment helped more than 200,000 providers nationwide — including over 15,000 in New York State — keep their doors open, pay staff more, and operate safely under extremely challenging conditions.

Families' costs were lowered. Programs stabilized. The system held.

States such as New Mexico, Connecticut, Vermont, and Massachusetts are now building on those lessons with sustained state-level investments.

The evidence is clear: when we fund child care, it works.

Conclusion

When I had my son in New York City, I wanted to stay home with him for his first four months and then gradually return to work — part-time at first, then full-time.

I wish I could say I was able to do that because of strong public policy.

The truth is, I was able to do it because of my own financial circumstances and privileges — advantages that many families simply do not have.

When my son turned four and entered New York City's Universal Pre-K program, our family finally stopped dipping into savings to pay for child care. He was in class with children from all over Brooklyn — an extraordinary diversity of families that enriched his experience. He learned from wonderful teachers. He built on the social foundation he gained in child care. And even with after-school care and summer camp costs, our income finally exceeded our expenses again.

Those choices and opportunities should not depend on privilege. They should be a promise to every child.

That is why I have spent my career fighting for child care for every family.

And that is why I commend your leadership in moving New York City forward on the path to universal child care.



220 Westchester Avenue
West Harrison, NY 10604
phone 914.607.7600
fax 914.607.7602

Director
Dr. K.T. Korngold, Ed.D
Assistant Director
Dr. Terri-Lyn Castillo, Ph.D

www.montessorichildrency.com

Testimony of the Empire State Campaign for Child Care
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education
Honorable Eric Dinowitz, Chair and The Subcommittee on
Early Childhood Education, Honorable Jennifer Gutierrez, Chair

The Path to Universal Child Care

March 4, 2026

Thank you, Chair Dinowitz and Chair Gutierrez, and members of the Committee on Education and the Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education, for the opportunity to testify.

The Montessori Children's Center was the first Montessori center in the United States and the first in Westchester to offer year-round, full-time Montessori child care for infants, toddlers and preschools, from 3 months to 6 years of age. We opened our doors in 1992, and in 2019 moved to West Harrison, where we have a capacity of 91 children. We have set a standard for high-quality child care and are a role model for Montessori education in Westchester County, New York State, and nationwide. Through our teacher education program, we helped support Montessori programs opening in public schools (such as Yonkers, NY), charter schools (such as in the Bronx), child care centers (such as ours), and independent schools— with children ranging from infants and toddlers to preschool, from elementary to middle school, to high school. Although Montessori is single pedagogy – in fact it has the largest number of schools sharing a single pedagogy in the nation, it encompasses a broad range of age groups and demographics as well as political affiliations of parents and guardians.

We were proud when New York Governor Hochul and Mayor proposed the state's single largest investment in child care and pre-K in state history, and framed these investments as steps toward achieving statewide universal child care. This is a defining, consequential moment for New York State child care. If City, State, local and community leaders work together to invest boldly, and choose the rollout path thoughtfully, we could truly transform child care – and the lives of families in New York – for generations.

The Montessori community wants to be part of this, and we want to help. We are here to support and participate and would like to help with the planning and details.

We urge you to ensure the rollout to universal child care is equitable, includes curriculums such as Montessori and mixed-age groupings, and increases compensation and supports for the early childhood education workforce beginning this year.

As you negotiate the New York City Budget, work with the Mayor to develop an implementation plan for expanding 3-K and implementing 2-K, and continue to monitor – and we hope, weigh in on – New York State budget negotiations, we urge you to consider the following recommendations.

1) New York City leaders should join the child care community and state lawmakers calling for the 2026-2027 New York State Budget to implement a child care workforce compensation fund to provide ongoing and reliable compensation supplements to all members of the child care workforce until New York has achieved statewide universal child care that pays providers adequate rates to pay the workforce a thriving wage (\$1.2 billion). Neither New York State nor New York City can achieve universal child care without recruiting and retaining far more professionals in the field, which is not possible without a significant, sustained, compensation hike.

2) Adopt the Governor’s proposal to invest \$73 million to launch 2 K in New York City focusing initially on high-need areas, and ensure that 2 K is implemented in a manner that guards against the loss of (already scarce) infant and toddler seats, with flexibility to adjust the model to a **multi-age** for programs that offer a multi-age curriculum, such as Montessori.

3) Further, it is essential that all modalities of child care—including Montessori providers—are able to fully participate in universal child care.

An Equitable Rollout of Universal Child Care and Pre-K and 3-K Expansion Must Include the Following Investment and Actions:

1) Immediate and sustained increase in workforce compensation through a state-funded workforce compensation fund. For so long as child care remains a public-private market, with most families paying tuition on their own, the only way to raise the wages of the child care workforce without raising private-pay tuition is by paying state-funded workforce supplements until the state has made the transition to a truly universal system, paying rates that support a thriving workforce wage.

Compensation supplements will also guard against an exodus of child care educators from community-based organizations to school based pre-K programs, which has been the case in the past.

The 2026-2027 New York State Executive Budget allocates ZERO funds for the child care

workforce. If no funding is added before the budget is finalized, this will be the second year in a row since the pandemic that there are no funds for the child care workforce. In 2023, one-time retention bonuses were awarded to child care educators: \$3,000 full time; \$2,300 afterschool. In 2024, bonuses of \$2,250 for full time educators; \$1,725 for afterschool.

Remember how essential the child care workforce was during COVID? Without childcare, parents cannot work.

2) Middle-income families must be protected from rate hikes, benefits cliffs, and shifting supply as we scale up to universal child care. Creating a state-funded child care workforce compensation fund allows for workforce wages to be increased without raising tuition for middle class families not yet able to access universal care.

3) Infant and toddler seats must be preserved in pre-K and universal child care rollouts. Rates to care for babies and toddlers are the highest because caring for very young children (appropriately) requires the most hands-on attention; as a result, these are already the hardest seats to find. Any rollout plan must be sure not to incentivize programs to switch scarce infant and toddler seats to care for older children. Nor to destabilize the current child care programs who have mixed age groupings in their toddler and preschool curriculum.

4) All settings, including MONTESSORI, must be supported in pre-K and universal child care expansions to ensure families have the freedom to choose the care setting that best meets their needs— home, center, and school-based, and the Montessori curriculum should be accepted as a viable option.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am happy to answer any questions, to be a resource, and to participate in any planning to help Montessori be part of this process.

I invite you to visit our Montessori child care center in Westchester if you are in the area.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K.T. Korngold", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. K.T. Korngold, Ed.D

Written Testimony in Support of \$10 Million for City's First Readers

Chair and Members of the New York City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of a **\$10 million investment in City's First Readers**, the City's only public, citywide early literacy initiative. This funding is essential to ensuring that New York City's youngest children, particularly those growing up in under-resourced communities, enter school ready to learn, thrive, and succeed.

City's First Readers (CFR) is a powerful example of what New York City does best: leveraging collaboration across systems to create equity and deliver results. Since its creation by the City Council in 2014, CFR has served as the backbone of the City's early literacy ecosystem, aligning families, childcare providers, libraries, healthcare systems, and community-based organizations across all 51 Council districts. Using the Science of Reading as its foundation, CFR ensures that children from birth through age five build the language, vocabulary, and early literacy skills that are essential for long-term academic success.

CFR's mission is clear and urgent: **using the power of early literacy and the strength of collaboration to create equity for children in every New York City neighborhood**. Together, CFR partners ensure that children from all backgrounds have a strong foundation to start school successfully and succeed beyond their school years.

Reach Out and Read: Leveraging Healthcare to Advance Early Literacy

Reach Out and Read of Greater New York is proud to be a core partner in the City's First Readers coalition. Reach Out and Read integrates early literacy into pediatric healthcare by providing developmentally appropriate books and guidance to families during well-child visits from birth through age five. By embedding literacy support into routine medical care, Reach Out and Read reaches families where they already are and help build that trust and value guidance from healthcare providers.

In New York City, Reach Out and Read serves over 200,000 children annually across clinics in every borough, with a particular focus on underserved clinics. Pediatricians and healthcare providers are uniquely positioned to reinforce the message that reading aloud and talking with young children from birth is not just educational, it is essential to healthy brain development.

Decades of research show that children who participate in Reach Out and Read demonstrate stronger vocabulary development, improved language skills, and more frequent reading at home. These outcomes directly support the City's goals around kindergarten readiness, literacy achievement, and long-term educational equity. Through CFR, Reach Out and Read is able to align its healthcare-based approach with complementary literacy supports in childcare programs, libraries, and community settings, creating a seamless, citywide web of support for families with young children.

Why Increased Investment Is Needed Now

City's First Readers has demonstrated measurable, citywide impact. In the past year alone, CFR partners generated more than **one million family literacy touchpoints**, distributed over **400,000 books and literacy kits**, issued **30,000 library cards** to children ages 0–5, trained more than **1,100 early educators**, and operated across **587 locations**, including **155 library branches**. Families engaged with CFR read more frequently with their children, have more books in their homes, and use evidence-based practices that support how young children learn.

Yet despite rising costs, inflation, and increased demand, particularly from newly arrived immigrant families, CFR funding has remained flat for several years. This has strained partner organizations at the very moment

when the City is making historic investments in Universal Childcare and 2-Care. Access to childcare alone is not enough. Without intentional investment in early language and literacy, the promise of these systems will not be fully realized.

An increase to **\$10 million** will allow City's First Readers to:

- Embed evidence-based early literacy into Universal Childcare and 2-Care settings
- Strengthen and retain a skilled early literacy workforce aligned with NYC Reads
- Leverage healthcare systems to reach families with young children through trusted providers
- Expand culturally responsive, multilingual services for immigrant, migrant, and refugee families
- Increase access to books and educational materials in multiple languages
- Strengthen shared data, technology, and outreach systems
- Expand CFR's presence in neighborhoods with the highest indicators of need

Expansion is not simply about doing more, it requires stronger infrastructure, deeper coordination, and robust evaluation to ensure quality and equity at scale. This is especially true for collective impact initiatives like CFR, where success depends on alignment across multiple independent organizations and systems.

A Smart, Preventive Investment

The achievement gap begins as an opportunity gap. Investing in early literacy is one of the most effective and cost-efficient strategies to improve educational outcomes and reduce the need for later intervention. City data show that children who receive early language support and transition out of English Language Learner services by third grade are among the highest-performing students citywide. Supporting children before they enter kindergarten strengthens long-term outcomes for students, families, and schools and maximizes the return on public investment.

City's First Readers is prevention at its best: evidence-based, equity-driven, and deeply embedded in the communities it serves. Reach Out and Read and our fellow CFR partners stand ready to scale our impact, reach more families, and ensure that every child in New York City has the foundation they need to thrive.

On behalf of Reach Out and Read of Greater New York and the City's First Readers coalition, I respectfully urge the New York City Council to support a **\$10 million allocation for City's First Readers** in the upcoming budget. This investment will help ensure that New York City's youngest learners are not only cared for but truly prepared to succeed.

Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to New York City's children and families.

Respectfully submitted,

Kari Kurjiaka

she/her/hers

Director of Literacy & Public Policy

Reach Out and Read of Greater New York

kkurjiaka@reachoutandreadnyc.org

www.reachoutandreadnyc.org



Testimony before the
Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education
hearing on *Oversight: The Path to Universal Child Care*

March 2, 2026

Lauren Melodia
Director of Economic and Fiscal Policy
Center for New York City Affairs at The New School

Thank you, Chair Gutiérrez and members of the City Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education for holding this hearing. My name is Lauren Melodia, and I am the Director of Economic and Fiscal Policy at the Center for New York City Affairs (CNYCA) at The New School.

CNYCA is an applied economic research institute. We analyze economic data at the city and state level to identify how broader economic changes affect New Yorkers. Today, I will focus on how the Center's labor market analysis of wages in the child care sector and economic research on the unique mix of business types in the sector point to urgent needs for City Council oversight of the path to universal child care.

Through my research, I've learned that most people who work in child care believe universal child care is the only solution to the sector's problems. So why are these proponents who work in the sector so concerned about the path to universal childcare that the Mamdani administration has put forward?

The plan to age-down the system through expansion of DOE-contracted 3-K and now 2-K is structurally unsound. While it sounds nice conceptually, it is built on a misunderstanding of how the child care sector and current public policy in the city operate, so it misidentifies problems to be solved. As a result, it offers a phase-in approach that would actually destabilize the child care programs particularly those owned and operated by experienced, dedicated and hard-working immigrant women and women of color work. It would put these programs at risk of closing and could very likely lead to the capture of NYC's child care sector by private equity.

The risks of this phase-in approach, which relies on DOE's current contracting model that requires licensed home-based programs to be a member of an FCC network are structural. They cannot be remedied by just knowing the risks or writing a better contract.

So what's the alternative? And what should City oversight of the path to universal child care include?

- 1. The City needs to define what universal child care is in order to understand the program design, revenue needs, and the steps that must be taken each year, given fiscal constraints.** Will it ultimately cover a parent's work- or school-day? Is it for children year-round, zero to 12?

With no clear sense of the ultimate goal, City Council can't really have oversight of the path and whether or not the City is on it.

This definition should not be dictated by one agency or even by the city government; it should be co-designed with people who work in and run child care programs in home-based and center settings.

Parent input is also important, and the City is about to invest in a representative survey of parents about their specific child care needs, which will be a huge asset for informing the ultimate goals and consideration of different phase-in approaches.

But child care educators in home- and center-based programs are our city's early child development experts. Rather than invite them to react to a plan, which currently is the case with 2-K, why not bring them to the table to design the end goal and the path. Not only are they child development experts, providers and directors understand how to deliver quality care with budget constraints. There is no better group to work with to evaluate the State and City resources now available to figure out how to make the most of them to provide short-term relief to as many parents as possible and invest in a long-term path towards a high-quality, stable universal system.

CNYCA is actively constructing a cost model utilizing Prenatal to Five Fiscal Strategies true cost of care models and incorporating an urgently needed sector-wide career ladder and salary scale developed under the leadership of CUNY's Professional Development Institute (see Appendix C) that can be a critical tool in these efforts.

2. **The City must establish an advisory board with real authority of program providers, directors, workers, and non-profit support agencies.** In recent history, programs and systems have been designed without sufficient input from these groups, which has wasted City resources and efforts intended to solve problems and alleviate bottlenecks. Keep in mind, universal child care depends on these private sector partners; it is foolish to build a system and path that doesn't give these entities a formal role in policy design and oversight. Such a board should have real authority and be a permanent part of the City's system.

The board should be invited to provide policy, program and system design input, but also providing feedback throughout the testing, piloting and implementation phases. Many existing technologies and systems are duplicative or poorly designed, creating bottlenecks in hiring, payment processing, and matching parents to programs. These will have to be addressed to create an expanded, efficient program. Stakeholder engagement must be built into an oversight plan; it can no longer be an afterthought.

3. **The plan must include consolidating all ECE programming under one agency.** The City should not design a universal program that completely ignores the billion-dollar CCAP program administered by ACS, the 17 CUNY campus child care centers, or the lessons from legacy and pilot programs serving vulnerable populations, like Head Start and Promise NYC. A path must include incorporating the best systems and lessons from all of the current City programs. Without a plan to consolidate contracted care and CCAP vouchers into one program and user experience, the City runs the risk of building a class-based, unequitable child care infrastructure that offers

higher quality care to middle- and high-income families at the expense of quality and access for low-income families.

4. Now that we have a commitment to universal child care from the Governor and Mayor, this year is about piloting new ideas and evaluating the outcomes of both current and pilot programs to inform the best path forward.

The City doesn't have a clear, concrete vision of what universal child care means, nor does it have sufficient funding to implement it this year. Without both, we run the risk of serious missteps, including creating conditions that reduce the supply of child care. So aside from the planning I've discussed, the City should test multiple pilots this year, not just contracted 2-K and take a comprehensive look at existing programs across all agencies and their outcomes.

I am extremely concerned about the combination of an aged-down approach alongside the DOE's current contracted care model. Last year the City Council invested in the 0-2 contracted care pilot. What was learned? I believe this is a far less risky contract expansion approach than a focus on 2 year-olds only.

But if the City wants to focus on 2-year olds only (or can't figure out how to rebrand its plan), I strongly recommend the City use a voucher mechanism to pilot this program. While I do not think a voucher is the best long-term match-making tool, I believe it is a better mechanism for implementing an expansion today given the existing mechanisms in place across various agencies and the current policy and business environment for several reasons.

First, it provides parents with access to the full supply of licensed child care, rather than constraining them to ones that are part of the DOE's contracted system. Only 20 percent of licensed home-based providers are part of the DOE's programs today. Constraining supply to only the licensed programs that have jumped through additional, and potentially unnecessary hoops for infant and toddler care, imposes limitation on program utilization and success.

Second, it removes the primary source of instability in the 2-K proposal. If the city uses contracts for 2-K, many existing programs will not receive contracts and will be forced into a situation to only care for infants, which has high staffing ratio costs that must be passed onto private pay families. If parents cannot afford these rates, programs will rapidly close and parents will not be able to find infant care, which is already in short supply. A voucher that a parent can spend at any licensed program doesn't exclude any licensed providers. No programs will be forced into the unsustainable business model of only providing infant care.

This is also in the best interest of children under the age of three who benefit greatly from long-term bonds with their caregivers at this age. With a voucher mechanism, any parent already using care for a child under the age of two would be able to stay at that program. That is extremely unlikely using a contract mechanism, given the distribution of contracts across program types in the city today.

The City already has systems in place for parents and programs to connect via a voucher mechanism. It's a wildly popular program that 70 percent of home-base programs participate in and with a waitlist of 15,000 eligible children. While the current voucher is means tested in order to comply with federal funding regulations, a universal program could easily be built using this

existing mechanism on the back-end, adding new quality control measures if needed and without a means-tested application process for parents.

5. **Stabilize the sector by fully funding the CCAP program and establishing a wage subsidy program.** From 2014 to 2019, when the DOE rolled out the Pre-K and 3-K contracts, the city permanently lost 1,300 licensed home-based programs. Given what we know today about the administration’s plans for the 2-K program I expect that the closures will be even greater with the roll-out of 2-K, and I hope the City will rethink its phase-in approach. But there is risk in any phase-in proposal, which is why the City must incorporate stabilization programs alongside its phase-in plan.

There are two stabilization efforts that people who work in the field have identified and are currently advocating for in the State budget. The City Council and Mayor must actively lobby the State to fund and implement these stabilization efforts and commit to whatever balance of funding is needed to implement them in the City.

First, the CCAP voucher program must be fully funded – not just to maintain vouchers for parents currently using the program but to make it available to any family who is income eligible. This is critical because it directly supports 70 percent of licensed home-based providers who are simultaneously at risk of losing children to any contracted care pilot programs. These licensed providers know that the voucher program isn’t perfect, but while a new system is being designed, they know this is the quickest way to stabilize their staffing and capacity and meet the needs of the city’s families. The CCAP program must be fully funded until a comprehensive plan has been designed, funded and systems are in place to implement them. **The city’s CCAP budget needs an estimated additional \$1 billion in the next fiscal year to achieve this goal.**

Second, a wage subsidy fund is needed. Please see Appendix B for an explanation of this policy recommendation. A path to universal, by definition, includes some programs and ages but leaves many seats in a broken private market. A wage subsidy is needed to retain the existing workforce, while revenue is being secured for a fully universal system with a sector-wide salary scale. **Advocates are demanding the FY27 State budget include a \$1.2 billion statewide wage subsidy, the majority of which would flow to child care workers in the city.**

CNYCA is committed to supporting the city in developing an evidence-based, comprehensive and financially feasible path to universal child care as well as to evaluate proposal and solutions to mitigate them. I look forward to the opportunity to work directly with the Council on this. Thank you.

Appendixes:

- A: Excerpt from “Dignified Pay for Quality Care: What New York’s Family Child Care Providers Need to Thrive,” Center for New York City Affairs, November 2025.
- B: Explanation of labor policy solutions for sector, including wage subsidy, submitted to the State Joint Legislative Budget Hearing Committee on Human Services, February 2026.
- C: Memo submitted to transition committees regarding sector-wide career ladder and salary scale

Appendix A: Excerpt from “Dignified Pay for Quality Care: What New York’s Family Child Care Providers Need to Thrive,” Center for New York City Affairs, November 2025.

Dignified Pay for Quality Care: What New York’s Family Child Care Providers Need to Thrive



Center for
New York City
Affairs

**Lauren Melodia
Alex Madge Paredes**

November 2025



so many agencies. Many providers describe a lack of coordination across agencies resulting in slower processes and redundancies. These create extra work for providers, who often have to submit the same paperwork to multiple agencies or spend countless hours following up with agencies to check on the status of issues that disrupt their daily operations.

Providers' major challenges with City and State agency engagement include:

- Inadequate orientation regarding OCFS regulations, the role of City agencies, and small business law.
- Unclear timelines, poor communication, and the inability to receive human technical assistance regarding licenses, background checks, CCAP voucher and 3-K applications, and inaccurate or late payments.
- Inconsistencies with the inspection process.
- Lack of knowledge of existing efforts to support them, such as scholarships for training and CDA certificates and free dental and vision benefits from UFT.

"They're always asking me for the same document, the same. I go back and I send it, send it to the supervisor, upload it to FAM, bring it in personally, and like they said, you get your receipt and two days later they're asking for it again. I have one [assistant] for eight months and the other for a year and a half and they're not fully approved yet." – L., age 52, GFCC provider in Bushwick, Brooklyn.

"If you have something wrong somewhere, you'll have a six-year violation! Parents these days will check online to see if your center is good...One time I had a violation. Do you know why? The doctor forgot [to] write down a dose he administered." – W., age 49, GFCC provider in Flushing, Queens.

“If you have something wrong somewhere, you’ll have a six-year violation!”

Policy Recommendations

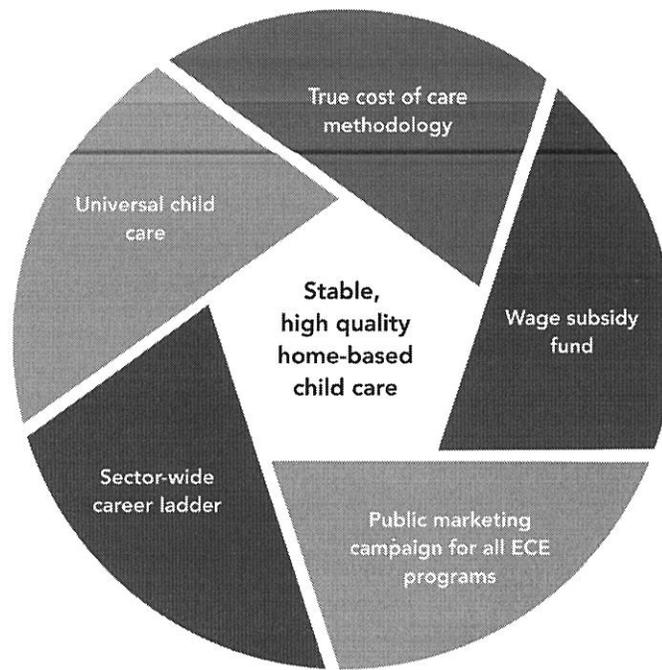
Based on our research with providers, this report recommends policy actions that will immediately and in the long term align ECE supply and demand, decrease the cost burden on families, improve quality, and fairly compensate hard-working providers, who are currently living at or near poverty.

All such actions must:

- Involve meaningful FCC and GFCC provider input.
- Prioritize language justice for a widely multi-lingual provider universe.
- Provide adequate agency staff for human technical assistance and support to providers.
- Involve inter-agency cooperation and collaboration with the NYC CCR&R.

Business instability and low take home pay are the result of structural and systemic challenges that demand policy reform and public investment. There is not simply one policy solution. Our research demonstrates that a five-part policy package can resolve the challenges presented here and result in a high-quality, stable, home-based child care sector. As our research demonstrates, home-based child care is a critical component of early care and education and will continue to be for any plans to expand access to more parents through subsidized or universal care.

Figure 3



- 1. A true cost of care methodology** for all public vouchers and contracts would tie public rates to the actual costs of running an ECE program, including adequately compensating staff and providers. If adopted, this would immediately increase provider take home pay, staff wages and benefits, and ECE business stability for the 70 percent of providers that accept CCAP vouchers, and the 22 percent that provide contracted care for NYCPS.
- 2. Universal child care** in New York, meaning that all families, regardless of income level or immigration status, can access ECE subsidized by the government (with no or low-cost co-pays for families). All seats in a universal system would be paid through public vouchers or contracts. Therefore, low private pay rates would be eliminated and would no longer put downward pressure on business stability, provider take home pay, and staff wages.
- 3. A sector-wide career ladder** that guarantees compensation for similar work across all program modalities will have numerous benefits. Not only will it fairly compensate people that have been historically undervalued (based on working hours, experience, and credentials), it can bring new people into the ECE workforce, reduce the loss of existing ECE staff and providers, and remove pay disparities that cause turnover and quality difference across modalities.
- 4. A public marketing campaign for all ECE programs** should describe all such programs and clarify that 3-K and Pre-K are part of a broader sector. It should educate parents about the unique characteristics of FCC and GFCC programs, such as a mixed-age learning, that was overshadowed by the launch of universal Pre-K and 3-K. Such a campaign will immediately improve enrollment at FCC and GFCC programs. If all FCC and GFCC programs had good enrollment, provider take home pay would increase threefold.
- 5. A wage subsidy fund** at the State or City-level would be used to fill the gap between current salaries and a minimum wage standard for each ECE occupation. This gap may exist because of low or unstable

enrollment, low private pay rates, or vouchers or contracts using a market rate methodology. As independent contractors or small business owners, providers do not have the protections of an employment contract, so a wage subsidy fund is a necessary protection for them. If the City had a wage subsidy fund for ECE workers today, 6,500 FCC or GFCC providers and their staff would have immediate improvement to take home pay and wages.

“The only time we hear about anybody is when they want their name on a ballot...They send a thousand of the same fliers during the week. I don't know you. I've never seen you in my community before. But you say, 'Oh, we're going to do this for child care workers.' Then you get into office...and now that I helped vote you in? I'm just mud.” – K., age 45, FCC provider in Mott Haven, Bronx.

In addition to these systemic changes, our report includes 33 specific policy actions that range from short- to long-term and no-cost to requiring significant public investment. Fifteen of them, listed here, are actions the City can take today.

The Mayor's Office should:

1. Replace or improve current City websites, like MyCity.nyc.gov, with one that houses all information about childcare supply and options for families. An improved marketplace will increase public awareness about current ECE options and help the City and advocates understand where (by neighborhood or program modality) there is a supply and demand mismatch. It should educate the public about modalities (home-based, center-based) and program types (full-day care, Pre-K programming) and their unique values. Users should be able to

“The only time we hear about anybody is when they want their name on a ballot...They send a thousand of the same fliers during the week. I don't know you. I've never seen you in my community before.”

search by key criteria and locate programs on a map. It should easily connect families to application processes for subsidized ECE (CCAP vouchers and NYCPS programs).

2. Develop a new marketing campaign to educate the public about all ECE programs simultaneously and about options for families to affordably access these programs. Integrating a quality rating and improvement system into this marketing (and the related website above) can also improve matchmaking between parents and ECE programs.
3. Commit to using City revenue to guarantee that existing subsidized ECE options are accessible to all eligible families regardless of whether or not Child Care and Block Grant (CCBG) funds adequately cover costs.
4. Submit an annual report to the City Council that evaluates capacity and utilization across private and public ECE programs. Without this knowledge, public programs cannot be expanded in ways that prioritize vulnerable families and established ECE programs.
5. Work with the Fund for the City of New York to amend the rules governing its Returnable Grant Fund (RGF) program so that FCC and GFCC providers can access interest-free loans in the event of late payments from City agencies.

The City Council should:

6. Hold an annual public hearing with all agencies involved in the ECE system as well as relevant community-based organizations (such as the NYC CCR&R), FCCNs, ECE program staff and providers, and parents to respond to the mayor's annual report

(see recommendation #4) and share their perspectives on the current ECE system. This hearing can break down silos between ECE businesses, parents, and agencies; improve understanding across these groups of what is currently working (and not); and facilitate democratic planning for the ECE system.

7. Amend its laws to include FCC and GFCC providers in the existing public pension programs (a process that would also include state legislation).

The Administration for Children's Services (ACS) should:

8. Overhaul the Childcare Attendance & Payment System (CAPS) or replace it with a better one, so that providers can enter enrollment and attendance to be paid accurately and on time.
9. Implement presumptive eligibility, as has been permitted by the governor, permitting the City to use CCBG funding to cover the cost of care while ACS determines family eligibility for a CCAP voucher.

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) should:

10. Communicate expected processing times for licenses and staff background checks, as well as contact information for appropriate staff for applications, inspections, and grievances to providers. Work with OCFS to identify strategies for improving license and staff background check processing times.
11. Work with OCFS to develop a written policy in layman's terms and in multiple languages for site visits, violations, and grievance processes that prioritizes education and safety.
12. Facilitate an inspection process that strikes a balance between technical assistance and public safety, pairing providers with the same inspectors when appropriate.

The Human Resources Administration (HRA) should:

13. Partner with the NYC CCR&R and other community-based organizations to actively assist FCC and GFCC providers to maintain their Medicaid, SNAP, and other benefits in light of the 2025 One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) should:

14. Use a true cost of care methodology for its next five-year contract with FCCNs to deliver programs such as 3-K.
15. Work with FCCNs and their affiliated providers to improve the ability of providers to engage with parents during the 3-K enrollment process.



**Testimony before the
Joint Legislative Budget Hearing Committee on
the 2026-27 Executive Budget Proposal:
Human Services**

February 5, 2026

**Lauren Melodia
Director of Economic and Fiscal Policy
Center for New York City Affairs at The New School**

Good morning distinguished chairpersons and members of the New York State Legislature. My name is Lauren Melodia, and I am the Director of Economic and Fiscal Policy at the Center for New York City Affairs (CNYCA) at The New School.

The Center for New York City Affairs is an applied economic research institute. We analyze economic data at the city and state level to identify how broader economic changes affect New Yorkers. Today, I will focus on how the Center's labor market analysis of wages in the child care sector and economic research on the unique mix of business types in the sector point to urgent gaps in the Governor's 2026-27 Human Services budget on child care and ways the Legislature can address those gaps.

Governor Kathy Hochul's Executive Budget released last week includes \$4.5 billion for public child care programs for SFY 2026-27. This marks a major step toward phasing in a universal child care system. The governor proposes to continue and expand existing programs (3-K, Pre-K and Child Care Assistance Program – called "CCAP" – subsidies for low-income families) while also piloting new initiatives (phasing in "2-Care" in New York City and instituting universal 0-3 care in Broome, Dutchess, and Monroe counties).

Existing child care centers and home-based providers will be the vehicle for this expansion. That makes sense. These programs are already licensed and trained to care for infants and toddlers, who benefit from small, intimate settings that are culturally and linguistically responsive to them and their families. They're the right places for starting to shape an equitable, efficient, and universal system.

In time, all these programs must be braided together, to eliminate inefficiencies and inequities arising from running them through multiple agencies under multiple contracts. An illustrative example: currently over 15,000 children from low-income New York City families do not have care they are eligible for, because insufficient CCAP funds were

allocated in this current fiscal year – even as the City budget also maintains funding for nearly 8,000 empty 3-K seats.¹

But there's one thing that cannot wait to be sorted out later: Ensuring adequate compensation for now woefully underpaid child care programs and workers. Such a commitment is missing from the governor's Executive Budget, and has been widely reported on public radio and print media. It's an omission the State Legislature has the authority and responsibility to correct this legislative and budget session.

As I mentioned, the child care sector is split across a variety of sectors (home-based small businesses, non-profit centers, and public schools) and includes a mix of publicly funded seats and seats paid for out of pocket by parents. This creates a unique set of challenges not seen elsewhere in the economy and vulnerabilities that will be tested through a phase-in approach to universal child care. It will require a three-policy solution to address low wages, pay disparities and the impact these have on the supply of and aquality of child care.

That means the State Legislature must adopt these three essential measures:

1. There must be a clearly defined and sector-wide salary scale and career ladder.

- Currently, the early care and education (ECE) field's low starting pay discourages prospective workers, who can earn comparable wages in retail or fast food jobs that don't require lengthy background checks or upfront, unpaid training. As the graph below shows, experienced professionals in the field also face significant pay and benefit disparities depending on whether or not they work in a public school, non-profit center, or home-based program.

¹ Lauren Melodia, "How Mamdani Can Take a First Step Toward Universal Child Care," Center for New York City Affairs, December 10, 2025, <https://www.centernyc.org/urban-matters-2/how-mamdani-can-take-a-first-step-toward-universal-child-care>.

Child care workers earn less than other workers with similar education requirements

Median hourly wage, 2023

	New York City	New York State
Home-based provider*	\$6.01	\$11.09
Center ECE worker**	\$13.85	\$13.74
Public ECE worker**	\$13.33	\$12.50
Worker with High School diploma	\$18.14	\$18.38
Center Pre-K teacher	\$23.08	\$18.06
Public Pre-K teacher	\$31.25	\$31.25
Worker with Bachelor's degree	\$33.65	\$32.39

*NYC results include licensed FCC and GFCC providers from CNYCA survey; State results include all home-based providers from the American Community Survey.

**ECE worker includes lead and assistant educators.

Source: CNYCA GFCC/FCC Provider Survey, January - August 2024; CNYCA analysis of American Community Survey 2023 5-Year Data, U.S. Census Bureau

For example, child care staff working in New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) are covered by a union contract with generous benefits and a salary scale that incentivizes obtaining additional education and experience. But NYCPS’s 3-K and Pre-K contracts with center and home-based programs (and the unions that represent their workers) don’t include a comparable salary scale and benefits package.

These factors contribute to high worker turnover, compromising the ability of programs to establish the long-term relationships so critical in early childhood development. That leaves many child care programs without the legally required staff levels needed to reach their licensed capacity of children.

A sector-wide wage scale and career ladder would address these issues by guaranteeing compensation for similar work across all program modalities and incentivize people to grow professionally in the field. It would bring new people into the workforce, reduce the drop-off of experienced staff and providers, and eliminate pay disparity as a cause of turnover and quality difference across modalities. This can be achieved by sectoral collective bargaining or a wage board at the State level.

2. The true cost of care must be the standard in contracts and vouchers for early care and education.

The State instead now uses a “market rate methodology” to determine public rates paid to home- and center-based providers for CCAP vouchers. The City also uses this methodology in its 3-K contracts with home-based providers. What this means, in

essence, is that the State Office of Children and Family Services periodically surveys the local market for private child care services, determines what providers are charging, and sets public reimbursement rates accordingly.

But this all rests on a fallacy. Program directors and providers know that parents cannot afford the true cost of care, and therefore discount private rates. A public rating setting built on this market failure leads to programs having inadequate funding to keep their businesses open and pay their staff.

The City's use of this methodology for 3-K contracts with home-based programs penalizes home-based programs vis-a-vis non-profit child care centers requiring identical programming and credentials for teachers. For example, the current extended day contract for NYCPS 3-K care pays home-based programs \$10,573 per year per child less than it does the average center-based programs. This creates significant downward pressure on wages and offerings in home-based programs.

It also leads to most home-based providers themselves earning less than the minimum wage. They are small business owners whose personal income is whatever is left after all business expenses are paid. The Center for New York City Affairs collected survey data from a representative sample of over 450 licensed home-based providers. In a report of that study's findings published in November 2025, I found that their median take-home pay in the city is only \$6.01 per hour.²

Legislation is needed to transition the State towards a true cost of care methodology that will correct these existing problems and establish a sound future framework for all public child care programs.

3. The legislature must enact an early care and education wage subsidy fund in the State FY2026-27 budget.

As the City and State phase in universal child care, not every family will immediately have access to public options. Private sector center- and home-based programs will continue to be the norm, many serving a mix of families, some with access to public programs and some who pay out of their own pockets.

Without a wage subsidy fund, providers continuing to serve a mix of clients will face several options – all bad. They can improve salaries by increasing tuition for already financially hard-pressed private pay families. Or they can shrink their programs to only serve public clients, which will make child care less available to parents not yet eligible for phased-in new public programs. This is a particular concern for families needing infant care now, which is not included in Mayor Mamdani's approach to "age down the system." Or they can maintain their existing private tuition rates – but then they won't be able to adequately pay their staff according to a sector-wide salary scale.

² Lauren Melodia and Alex Madge Paredes, "Dignified Pay for Quality Care: What New York's Family Child Care Providers Need to Thrive," *Center for New York City Affairs*, November 2025, <https://www.centrernyc.org/reports-briefs/dignified-pay-for-quality-care-what-new-yorks-family-child-care-providers-need-to-thrive>.

A wage subsidy fund is the only policy tool that can mitigate these problems. It would be used to fill the gap between current salaries and any minimum wage standards established through in a sector-wide career ladder. For example, assistants at child care centers currently earn \$18 per hour in New York City. If this were to become a sector-wide standard, the fund would provide a subsidy to home-based providers in the city so that they can pay their assistants that wage.

This is the most critical of the three elements I've outlined today. While the other two will take time to implement, a wage subsidy fund can quickly address staffing shortages and wage differentials in the field. This will stabilize the supply of child care as well as the cost of care for private pay families waiting for universal child care to come to their neighborhood or their infants.

A Child Care Workforce Pay Equity Fund bill (S.5533 (Brisport)/A.492 (Hevesi)) has been introduced in both the State Assembly and Senate. The Empire State Campaign for Child Care advocates putting \$1.2 billion in this fund for the coming fiscal year. That would enable the State to provide a flat wage subsidy of \$12,000 to all child care staff and providers. This is similar to the average \$14,000 supplement that Washington D.C. implemented in 2022, which has been credited with significantly reducing turnover in the field, boosting child care educator employment, and expanding capacity.

Addressing low wages and wage disparities in our complex system of private and public child care modalities is critical for building a stable, high-quality system that can meet the increased demand that a universal child care system will likely create. Otherwise, the very programs city and state policymakers are relying on today and in the future could well go belly up.

Many of these policies have been championed by legislators and child development experts and advocates for years. This is the year to turn them into State policy.

Appendix C: Memo submitted to transition committees regarding sector-wide career ladder and salary scale

MEMORANDUM

Re: Child Care Workforce Compensation
Fund and implement early care and education sector-wide compensation standards and a career ladder

To: Members of Mayor-Elect Mamdani's Transition Team Committees

From: Members of the Child Care Workforce Collaborative:
Dona Anderson, CUNY Early Childhood Professional Development Institute
Tara Gardner, Day Care Council of New York
Lauren Melodia, Center for New York City Affairs at the New School
Dede Hill, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
Lara Kyriakou, All Our Kin
Kristen Kerr, NY Association for the Education of Young Children
Jenn O'Connor, Jenn O'Connor Consulting, LLC

Date: December 12, 2025

Several policy proposals and cost estimates for City- or State-wide universal child care have been publicized, though very little detail has been published about the underlying assumptions included in these estimates. This is concerning given historically low wages in the field that have contributed to staffing shortages and current, flawed State law (embedded in City contract rates) that contributes to these staffing shortages, as well as program closures. **If low wages and lack of growth opportunities continue to plague the child care workforce, supply will not be able to meet the demand unlocked by policies that make child care free or more affordable.**

The incoming Mayor campaigned to pay child care workers on par with K-12 public school teachers. Pay parity for teachers across all program modalities (center-based, home-based, and public) is critically important to the quality of care and sustainability of the workforce. Early care and education (ECE) is a profession that requires a specific set of skills, knowledge, and competencies to carry out the sophisticated work of developing brain architecture in young learners, 90% of which is formed before age five. Yet compensation remains dramatically unequal, predicated only on whether an educator works in a community-based center, a school classroom, or a family child care home. Teachers in community-based centers earn on average \$22,000 *less* than their counterparts in public schools, and they work the whole year, while public school teachers work only ten months. The disparities in benefits packages, including health insurance and retirement, are even greater.

These compensation inequities diminish the availability and the quality of ECE for working families. Community-based centers, which make up the majority of licensed capacity, are unable to open available classrooms due to staffing shortages. Assistant teachers and family child care (FCC) providers are leaving the sector for better pay in fast food and gig work. Teachers move from centers to public schools as soon as job openings become available, making it almost impossible for centers to offer the high-quality education that requires stable teacher-child relationships and a strong team culture.

On the path toward universal child care, **the City and State first need to stabilize the current ECE workforce.** A career ladder and salary scale are the foundational planning tools needed for the workforce fund that will address the economic gap within publicly funded programs, as well as the economic failure that still exists for many families trying to privately pay for the public good of child care.

Over the last two years, **ECE experts have developed a career ladder and salary scale that addresses these concerns.** The Child Care Workforce Collaborative, led by CUNY's Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (PDI) and key stakeholders that have actively participated in the State's Child Care Availability Task Force, developed a City-specific and statewide career ladder that complies with City and State regulation for the required credentials of different child care occupations and program types. The ladder is pegged to the salaries of K-12 public school teachers and provides compensation incentives from the occupations in the field that require the least experience and credentials to roles with greater responsibilities and requirements (lead teacher, director, or home-based provider). This career ladder is necessary to incentivize New Yorkers entering this career and staying in the field to serve a universal child care system.

This career ladder and salary scale have been well-vetted with key stakeholders, including child care workers across the City and State. The Collaborative has held several focus groups to obtain input from child care workers and shared the proposal with numerous policymakers and leaders, including the NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council and the NYS Office of Children and Family Services. The Collaborative held three focus groups during summer 2025 with administrators, directors, and family child care providers throughout the State, including focus groups targeted to professionals based in New York City. The Collaborative is scheduled to host four additional focus groups by the end of January 2026. Attached to this memo below is the description of the Collaborative's career ladder and salary scale.

Budget Efficiencies are Possible, but not at the Expense of Child Care Personnel

It is imperative that policy proposals and cost estimate models utilize this career ladder and salary scale to inform budget proposals and planning. Funding a stable, high-quality universal child care system will require significant revenue raisers and political commitment. However, under-funding the necessary staffing requirements and compensation levels will lead to implementation issues, quality concerns, and insufficient supply to meet parent demand. There are other policy design choices that will improve program implementation and outcomes that could further reduce budget estimates. Some of these include:

- combining all existing ECE programs into one unified program,
- being strategic with the use of expensive contracts compared to vouchers, and
- streamlining administrative management costs—from the use of FCC Networks to better coordination between State and City agencies.

The Day Care Council of NY also recently released a report on the current status of the City's child care workforce, and the Center for New York City Affairs (CNYCA) recently released a report on the City's FCC providers. Both confirm the need for a career ladder, not just a wage floor. In addition, CNYCA has developed a cost model for child care expansion that incorporates the career ladder and salary scale. It finds that the City will need an additional \$6.7 billion (beyond its FY2026 adopted budget allocations for existing child care programs) to finance a comprehensive, fully implemented universal child care program for children five years old and younger. CNYCA is currently working on a statewide estimate. This model can be easily adjusted to estimate costs for a phase-in towards a fully universal system.

Policy Recommendations we urge your Committee to advance:

- **Implement the career ladder and salary scale** in current programming and contracts as well as incorporate it into planning towards an expanded public child care system.
- Given the complexities of child care policy, we know it will take time to implement a sector-wide career ladder and salary scale. **New York City and state leaders can take immediate steps to create an ongoing public fund to increase child care worker compensation.** The fund should include \$1.2 billion in the FY2027 budget for a wage supplement for existing staff and should be sustained until such time that the child care system is fully public, with rates paid at a level sufficient to pay the workforce according to the agreed upon career ladder and salary scale.
- As an initial step, New York City and state leaders can stabilize the existing child care system and workforce by **investing sufficient funds to serve all families on the NYC child care child care assistance waitlist.** The lack of assistance is destabilizing programs that serve the highest need families that cannot afford to cover the full cost of child care on their own.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss any of the recommendations here, the complex policy landscape, and our insights on multi-year strategic planning and budget targets with you in more detail.

Appendix 1: Child Care Workforce Collaborative Career Ladder and Salary Scale

New York’s early childhood workforce does not presently have a career ladder or salary scale that connects career progression with increasing credentials and degrees with more responsibility and higher pay. This lack of clarity makes it difficult to understand how to enter the field and harder still to grow professionally. Different funding streams and regulatory agencies also contribute to the confusion by requiring different credentials for the same role in different settings. A career ladder connected with predictable increases in compensation ensures the workforce is fairly compensated and encourages retention.

The career ladder below is inspired in part by Power to the Profession’s Unifying Framework, a national collaboration to define the early childhood profession. It is rooted in opportunities that currently exist for New York early childhood providers/educators, including center- and home-based professionals. While the ladder is based around formal education opportunities, we also propose that professionals receive higher compensation based on years of experience in the field and additional responsibilities, such as the supervision provided by center directors and the many roles held by a FCC provider.

New York State Early Childhood Education Career Ladder

Level	Credential
Pre-Level	High school diploma or its equivalent. Depending on role and regulatory agency, these professionals are required to have annual professional development in health and safety.
ECE I	Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, NYS Infant Toddler Credential, or an Early Childhood Certificate with 12 credits in Early Childhood Education (ECE).
ECE II	Associate’s degree in early childhood education that includes at least 12 credits in ECE.
ECE IIA	Associate Degree in ECE (or in another area with at least 12 credits in ECE) + 30 credits towards a Bachelor’s degree in ECE (verified academic study plan in Aspire)
ECE III	Bachelor’s Degree in ECE or Bachelor’s Degree in another area with at least 24 credits in ECE
ECE IIIA	Bachelor’s Degree Program in ECE + NYS ECE Initial Teacher Certification
ECE IIIB	Bachelor’s Degree in ECE + NYS ECE Certification + Some Graduate Coursework in ECE (Verified Academic Study Plan in Aspire)
ECE IV	Master’s Degree in ECE or Master’s Degree with at least 15 credits in ECE
ECE IVA	Master’s Degree Program in ECE + NYS ECE Initial Teacher Certification
ECE V	Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education + NYS ECE Professional Certification
ECE VI	PhD or EdD in Early Childhood Education

Proposed Parity Compensation Scales

The skill and knowledge required to do this work must be recognized through equitable compensation at parity with similarly skilled professionals. We recommend that New York State establish compensation for the early childhood workforce that is at parity with similarly credentialed K-12 teachers. An early childhood provider/educator who has earned their Bachelor’s Degree in ECE and has a teaching

certification (ECE IIIA) should earn the same compensation and benefits as a K-12 educator. Providers/educators with a credential or an associate degree would earn a percentage of that compensation.

Teacher: The compensation scale below sets the starting salary for a Teacher at Level ECEIIIA equal to the 5th percentile K-12 teacher salary in New York City and the Rest of the State. Pre-level for a teacher is 65 percent of this baseline, with increasing salary as professionals earn degrees and credentials. This represents a starting point based on career ladder level, but progression beyond this initial scale should recognize years of experience in the field.

Teacher Salary Scale (Average)

Ladder Level	Pre-Level	ECE I	ECE II	ECE II A	ECE III	ECE III A	ECE III B	ECE IV	ECE IV A	ECE V	ECE VI
NYC	\$49,637	\$53,456	\$61,398	\$65,696	\$70,294	\$76,365	\$78,656	\$81,016	\$83,446	\$85,950	\$88,528
ROS	X	\$40,483	\$46,498	\$49,753	\$53,236	\$57,833	\$59,568	\$61,355	\$63,196	\$65,092	\$67,045

Assistant Teacher or Assistant Family Child Care Provider: Assistant teachers have fewer responsibilities than a lead teacher, and thus their salary starts at 55 percent of the 5th percentile K-12 teacher salary.

Assistant Teacher Salary Scale (Average)

Ladder Level	Pre-Level	ECE I	ECE II	ECE II A	ECE III	ECE III A	ECE III B	ECE IV	ECE IV A	ECE V	ECE VI
NYC	\$42,001	\$45,819	\$49,637	\$53,112	\$56,830	X	X	X	X	X	X
ROS	\$31,808	\$34,700	\$37,592	\$40,223	\$43,039	X	X	X	X	X	X

Director and Family Child Care Provider: Directors and family child care providers have a wider set of responsibilities than providers/educators. Center directors have administrative duties and supervise providers/educators and other site-based staff, while family child care providers play the role of business owners, educators, and administrators. The pay scale proposal below outlines a higher base rate of pay for those who fill these roles. For these roles, pre-level is 75% of the 5th percentile K-12 teacher salary.

Family Child Care Provider Salary Scale (Average)

Ladder Level	Pre-Level	ECE I	ECE II	ECE II A	ECE III	ECE III A	ECE III B	ECE IV	ECE IV A	ECE V	ECE VI
NYC	\$57,274	\$61,092	\$64,911	\$69,454	\$74,316	\$81,711	\$84,162	\$86,687	\$89,288	\$91,966	\$94,725
ROS	\$43,375	\$46,267	\$49,158	\$52,599	\$56,281	\$61,882	\$63,738	\$65,650	\$67,620	\$69,648	\$71,738

Director Salary Scale (Average)

Ladder Level	Pre-Level I	ECE I	ECE II	ECE II A	ECE III	ECE III A	ECE III B	ECE IV	ECE IV A	ECE V	ECE VI
NYC	X	X	X	X	\$74,316	\$81,711	\$84,162	\$86,687	\$89,288	\$91,966	\$94,725
ROS	X	\$46,267	\$49,158	\$52,599	\$56,281	\$61,882	\$63,738	\$65,650	\$67,620	\$69,648	\$71,738

Salary Progression with Years of Experience in the field: The salary scales represent a base salary. Pay scales traditionally include increases given years of experience. We recommend a 5 percent increase to recognize certain experience levels to recognize the importance of experience and encourage retention in the field. Below is an example of how this might look for a provider/educator at pre-level.

Example: Salary Scale for Pre-Level Family Child Care Provider with Experience

Years of Experience	0-3 years	3-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years	20 + years
NYC	\$57,274	\$60,138	\$63,145	\$66,302	\$69,617	\$73,098
ROS	\$43,375	\$45,544	\$47,821	\$50,212	\$52,723	\$55,359

Good morning. My name is Elizabeth Ghunney, Director of Home-Based Childcare Services at the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation, WHEDco.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the proposed local law establishing an Office of Child Care and creating a path to free childcare for all city residents within four years.

WHEDco strongly supports this law's vision to make childcare equitable and accessible for every family. It will be successful if it includes both informal and licensed family childcare providers, promoting economic opportunity and a practical solution to increasing access in neighborhoods that need it most.

For 30 years, WHEDco has advanced this very vision. We support informal and licensed family childcare providers as both early educators and small business owners.

Home-based childcare is essential infrastructure for working families. Providers offer trusted, flexible, and culturally responsive care in neighborhoods where community relationships matter deeply. They create developmentally appropriate environments for infants and toddlers by offering small group sizes, individualized attention, and consistent caregiving relationships that support early attachment, social-emotional development, and responsive learning.

WHEDco's research and direct engagement with providers highlight several urgent needs that a dedicated Office of Child Care could address.

First, family childcare businesses require consistent and accessible human resources support. Centralized HR assistance could help providers navigate employment regulations, improve retention, and professionalize their operations.

Second, many home-based providers lack the capital needed to expand capacity, improve facilities, or adopt new educational resources. A coordinated office could streamline grant opportunities, reduce administrative burdens, and ensure equitable access to funding for home-based businesses.

Third, informal providers who care for thousands of children need more pathways for professional development and growth. A coordinated office should leverage and support the expertise and adaptive programming of local community networks like WHEDco's to help informal providers tap into skill-building, capital, and other resources that support quality care.

WHEDco stands ready to partner with the Council and this Office to ensure that informal and licensed family childcare providers are included meaningfully in the design and implementation of universal care. Thank you.

Good morning,

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Rebecca Schneider-Kaplan (Ms. Becky) and I'm a UPK 4 teacher at Stepping Stones Preschool in Staten Island.

As the city looks to the future on their new journey of Universal Childcare, please don't forget to look back and remember us, your Community Based UPK staff.

I support the plan for Universal Childcare because every family deserves access to a free, quality early childhood education. A positive start to a child's education, will help to determine future social, emotional, and academic success.

I wish there was Universal childcare in 2009 when I was a newly single mother with a toddler. I struggled to find full day childcare as I completed student teaching. It took me two semesters to finish the required fieldwork hours.

I support the plan for Universal childcare, but I beg you to please stop and look in your rearview mirror first. You will see the dedicated men and women responsible for educating the majority of our city's UPK programs. We are waving our hands and begging not to be forgotten. Please don't forget our assistant teachers, please don't forget our directors, please don't forget our students, and please don't forget our families and the implications it has on them as well. We are all in the rearview mirror.

I would like to suggest one idea to help resolve these issues and that is for the NYC DOE to "hire" all of your cbo staff members directly. We are not "external" employees. Our credentials are the same and our curriculum is the same. We deserve the same contracts, the same union (uft), the same cost of living accommodations, and the same respect. Please hire us directly before you expand any further.

I Teach NYC because I want to make a profound impact on the lives of my students in the city I love. Please teach NYC that you will not turn your backs on us!

I came across an upbeat Facebook post at 6:00 AM from Mayor Mamdani entitled "Big News For Little Ones March 3rd." I can only hope that this also includes the "little ones" in the rearview mirror.

Thank you



Did you tell Ms. Rachel?



A letter from Ms. Becky in response to the realities of Universal Childcare.



•••••

This morning, Ms. Rachel and I visited District 2 Pre-K Center, where we sang and read with the wonderful students and educators. We also discussed universal childcare - and how we're making it happen for NYC!



Dear Mayor Mamdani & Governor Hochul



Rebecca Becky Schneider-Kaplan · 6h

Did you tell Ms. Rachel that this is a horrible plan? You are making promises for new expanded childcare/ early childhood education programs, yet, there's a broken system already in place. Did you tell her how grossly underpaid the staff in your community based organizations are?

These are the upk 3 and UPK 4 sites that the NYC doe has contracts with. We make up the majority of the city's early childhood educators because these programs cannot be housed in the brick and mortar doe buildings (due to insufficient space). Did you tell Ms. Rachel that we are held to the same standards and teach the same curriculum? Did u tell her that I have nearly \$70k in student loan debt in order to obtain 2 degrees in order to become a dual certified early childhood educator and I cannot afford to pay this back? Did you tell her that I'm in a panic mode because my own child is going to college next year? Did you tell her that my colleagues and I put our hearts and our souls into our classes each day while being treated "less" than our colleagues in UFT UPK positions? Our union dc37 local 205 is horrible. Did you tell Ms. Rachel that our medical and dental coverage is inadequate as compared to





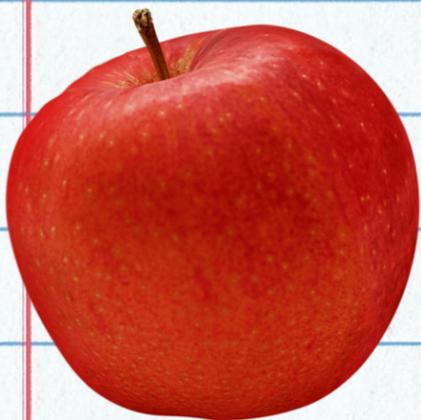
UFT for teachers'? I've faced countless battles in order to obtain sufficient, timely care for my family and I. Did you tell her that we had to wait forever and beg for our raises, retro pay, and ratification bonuses? Did u tell her that our directors had to fight for us to get what we are entitled to? Did u tell her that we are now battling for cost of living modifications. Did u tell ms Rachel that my directors and countless others around NYC were "forced" into a horrible new contract as well?" Did u tell her that the doe doesn't fund our programs enough to have sufficient breaks during the day? Did u tell her that we eat lunch while tending to children that should be resting, but do not usually all rest as we attempt to organize our curriculum, prep, and complete assessments, and log our observations, etc. Did you tell ms Rachel that our students are not fortunate enough to have access to the same "tools" as their peers in the "big schools?" They do not have crisis teams in place like the other schools. Did u tell ms Rachel that students have to leave the classroom when a child is escalated? Did u tell her that teachers have to step in and try to de escalate students with their directors and colleagues and try their best while Also protecting the rest of the class? Did u tell ms Rachel that it takes months for these children to get support by

a proper evaluation through cpse? Yet this will only occur if a parent initiates this process. Did u tell ms Rachel that cpse denies countless requests for services and if a child isn't evaluated before they reach 4k, they will more than likely fall between the cracks and receive minimal help until they reach k. Did u tell Ms.Rachel, that eventually there will be a sufficient lack of quality educators in these programs?

Reply



1



Sincerely,
Ms. Becky



Part 2:



**A Follow up song from Ms. Becky...
to Mayor Mamdani and Ms. Rachel (also
sung to "if you're happy and you know it).**



Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani is with Ms Rachel and 2 others.
4h · 🌐

If you're excited for universal child care and you know it, clap your hands! 🙌





If your child had to go to the ER last week for an ear injury which could've been fixed in an ENT's office, but you couldn't find a Dr that accepts your coverage as a teacher, clap your hands.

If the appointment with a follow-up ENT you finally found was canceled the day before the appointment because they realized they do not accept your coverage after all (after waiting a week) clap your hands.

If it has taken 2 parents to locate an ENT locally that accepts your coverage, clap your hands.

If your child was disappointed because they're in pain and afraid of permanent ear damage, clap your hands.

If your child has to miss school in order to travel into Manhattan 2 boroughs away to finally find a Dr, clap your hands.

If you're a full-time dual certified UPK4 teacher in a community based organization, clap your hands!

If you struggle to easily find quality local care because you're a DC37 local 205 teacher and not UFT, clap your hands!

If you see every post about Universal Childcare as a slap in the face because you're an underpaid and under insured, teacher clap your hands!



Part 3



A Sing Along Response

The mayor on the bus says “hello friends, except for teachers in CBO’s. We’re going to show you less respect and break you down, until you can’t take anymore.” The mayor on the bus says “Hello friends- all through the town!”

Ms. Rachel on the bus is singing now. She’s paid generously, there’s no sweat on her brow! Ms. Rachel on the bus is singing now- all through the town!

The parents on the bus are smiling you see, they don’t realize that nothing is free. The parents on the bus are smiling now- all through the town!

The Governor on the bus pats the mayor on the back, all while knowing our contractual parities are a hack! The governor on the bus pats the mayor on the back- all through the town!

The CBO teachers on the bus are making a fuss, they can’t find many doctors that take MetroPlus. The teachers on the bus are making a fuss- all through the town!

Some CBO students on the bus are waiting for evals- this takes forever, and there’s no crisis team either somehow. Some CBO students on the bus are waiting for evals- all through the town!

The CBO teachers on the bus are crying on this tour! They just realized UFT teachers are paid much more! The CBO teachers are crying on this tour- all through the town.



Love,
Ms. Becky



Part 4

**CBO UPK
Teachers'**



Second Class Dental Coverage



**Twinkle twinkle chip on my card,
We're in another situation that's hard!
Another kid needs orthodontic work,
But my dental insurance makes my debt lurk!
A double payment plan because we're not UFT,
Zero Ortho benefits for my CBO friends and me!**

**PS: If you
Require any emergency dental
work, you're in trouble!**



Governor Kathy Hochul

Universal child care should reach every family in every corner of New York State.

We're starting here in Rochester with pilot programs that will expand access and save working parents thousands every single year.

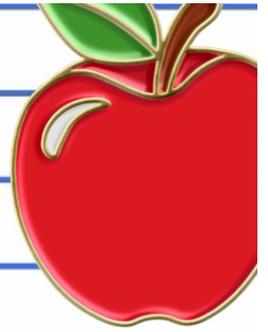


**PPS: Your
teeth look
great.
Im jealous!**





Isn't it ironic, don't you think...



Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani

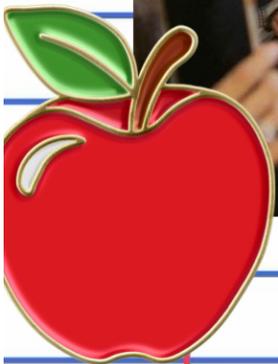
16h · 🌐

Corporations will not exploit working people in NYC.

Uber Eats, Fantuan & HungryPanda broke the law — shortchanging workers while raking in profits.

Today, we secured \$5M+ in restitution for 49,000 delivery workers.

Let this be a warning: steal wages, face the consequences.



It's like exploiting the workforce that makes up the majority of the city's UPK programs and paying them less because they do not work in the "big school..."

It's the lack of quality insurance that these educators have for their own families after taking care of everyone else's all day..

It's the absence of a cost of living accommodation from everyone's contracts, while barely affording to live in the communities you work in..

It's the constant struggle for cbo UPK programs to chase and justify their budget while money is "found" for other programs.

It's the student loan debt I have acquired in order to become a teacher, but can't afford to repay it...

It's the promise of universal childcare without helping our current students secure sufficient special education schools, or services...

It's scrolling on my day off and coming across a post that supports other members of the workforce and not us...

"A child's life is like a piece of paper on which every person leaves a mark." -unknown



***Be careful who leaves this mark.
Our society depends on it!***



Equality for all UPK teachers and centers



What the next mayor needs to know about early care and education in New York City

A report by
New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute
CU

Paths Forward to Salary Parity for New York
National Models for Equity in Early Childhood Education Compensation
Compiled by Lily Rosenfield and Emily Sherrick
January 2024

LEARNING STARTS AT BIRTH

Let's check the maps!

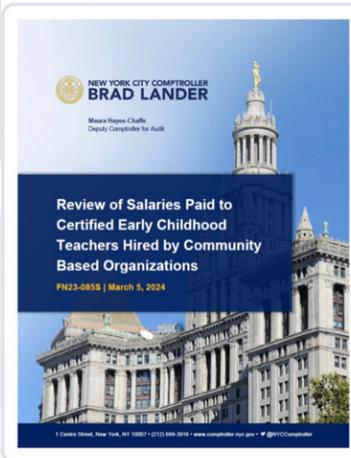
NEW YORK CITY COMPTROLLER
BRAD LANDER
Maura Hayes-Chaffle
Deputy Comptroller for Audit

Review of Salaries Paid to Certified Early Childhood Teachers Hired by Community Based Organizations
FN23-0858 | March 5, 2024

1 Centre Street, New York, NY 10007 • (212) 456-3918 • www.comptroller.nyc.gov • @NYCCComptroller

Ms. Becky's Lending Library

Scan Me



Scan Me



Paths Forward to Salary Parity for New York

National Models for Equity in Early Childhood Education Compensation

Compiled by Lily Rosenthal and Emily Sharrock
January 2024



LEARNING STARTS AT BIRTH



Scan Me





NAME: Ms. Becky



because every day it teaches me.

I TEACH NYC BUT NYC HAS TAUGHT ME THAT THE LOCATION OF MY CLASSROOM DETERMINES MY "WORTH."

I TEACH NYC, BUT NYC HAS TAUGHT ME THAT I AM REQUIRED TO TEACH THE SAME CURRICULUM AS TEACHERS IN THE "BIG" SCHOOLS; DESPITE SIGNIFICANT CONTRACTUAL PARITIES.

I TEACH NYC, BUT NYC HAS TAUGHT ME THAT "IT'S OK" TO RECEIVE LOWER QUALITY HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE.

I TEACH NYC, BUT NYC HAS TAUGHT ME THAT THEY WILL CONTINUOUSLY DELAY PAYMENTS TO MY DIRECTORS.

I TEACH NYC, BUT NYC HAS TAUGHT ME THAT COST OF LIVING INCREASES DO NOT NEED TO BE FACTORED INTO OUR CONTRACTS.

I TEACH NYC, BUT NYC HAS TAUGHT ME THAT OUR STUDENTS DO NOT NEED ACCESS TO ON SITE CRISIS COUNSELORS, OR SUFFICIENT RELATED SERVICES.

I TEACH NYC, BUT NYC HAS TAUGHT ME THAT I DON'T NEED ACCESS TO DAILY LUNCH BREAKS AWAY FROM MY CLASS.



#REFORMBEFOREEXPANSION





PRE-K
FOR ALL

WHERE'S THE...

EQUALITY
FOR ALL



DOE BLDG Teacher VS. DOE NYCEEC Teacher pay scale

**New teacher with
bachelor degree
No experience**

\$71,314

**30 year veteran
teacher certified
in a NYCEEC**

\$68,652



Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani + City of New York.
16h · 🌐

3K and Pre-K enrollment is still open! Apply at [myschools.nyc...](https://myschools.nyc.gov) more



These kids don't have a 3-K or Pre-K center in their district.

These Kids...

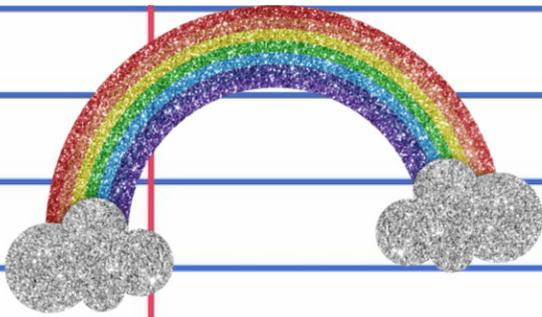
Another response from Ms. Becky

(a CBO UPK 4 teacher)



- These kids will be forced to change pediatricians multiple times because many providers refuse to accept MetroPlus Health.
- These kids will travel 2 boroughs away in order to find a quality specialist in a timely manner.
- These kids will watch their parents attempt to reach an Endodontist for an emergency visit, but never receive a returned call.
- These kids will watch their mother pay out of pocket for an emergency endodontist visit.
- These kids will not receive any orthodontic coverage from their mother's dental insurance.
- These kids will watch their mother cry in pain at the dining room table as she desperately begs to have a prior authorization completed and approved for medication to treat Stage 4 Endometriosis.





- These kids' mothers will tell her Dr not to prescribe the newer medication just the older one (because it will likely be denied and she cannot wait to feel better).
- These kids will hear "I need you to try to get as many scholarships as possible."
- These kids will constantly hear their mother's work be undervalued with each "Why don't you go work in the real school?" comment.
- These kids will watch their mother work at home late at night and early in the morning in order to "catch-up" (because there isn't enough funding for teachers to receive a "break" away from the class during the day).
- These kids will watch their mother sit and enjoy dinner with them and it will be the first stress-free meal of the day.
- These kids will listen to their mother speak with so much love and pride for her school.
- These kids will overhear returned calls to parents after hours.
- These kids' parents will be stressed with the rising cost of living, but an absence of a cost of living increase in their mother's contract.
- These kids will watch their mother be flabbergasted by the latest social media post promoting universal childcare.
- These kids will watch their mother tread water to stay afloat.
- These kids will see the lack of equality and respect for their mother and other teachers because they do not work in the "big" school.
- These kids want better for their family and every other Cbo upk staff members' family.
- These kids have a mother that is a UPK-4 teacher in a community based organization.



because every day it teaches me.



#ReformBeforeExpansion

From: [sabrina kennedy](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] testimony for NYCCBO hearing 3/2/2026
Date: Thursday, February 26, 2026 12:11:38 PM
Attachments: [testimony.pages](#)

Testimony on Behalf of CBO UPK/3k Teachers

My name is Sabrina Brown, and I am a CBO UPK teacher. I am writing today to speak about the deep inequity that CBO UPK/3K teachers face compared to our DOE counterparts, despite doing the same exact work and being held to the same exact standards.

CBO UPK/3K teachers are required to have the same certifications as DOE teachers. We teach the same curriculum. We are observed, evaluated, and monitored by the DOE. We are held accountable in the same ways and expected to meet the same benchmarks for student outcomes, family engagement, and classroom quality.

Yet, we are **not treated equally**.

CBO UPK/3K teachers do **not** make the same salary as DOE teachers. We do **not** receive the same benefits. We do **not** have access to a pension. We do **not** receive the same level of job security or long-term financial stability. This is inequity, plain and simple.

We are asked to do the same work, with the same level of professionalism, responsibility, and dedication—but without equal pay, equal benefits, or equal respect.

CBO UPK/3K teachers stay in this field not because it is easy or financially rewarding, but because we are deeply passionate about early childhood education. We are loyal to our centers, committed to the families we serve, and invested in our students' growth and success. We build strong relationships with children and families, often serving communities that need stability, consistency, and care the most.

That passion, dedication, and loyalty should **not** be exploited.

Loving what we do should not mean accepting less. Passion should not be used as a reason to deny fair compensation, benefits, or retirement security. Respect must be shown not just in words, but in policy and pay.

CBO UPK/3K teachers deserve **EQUAL PAY**.

We deserve **EQUAL BENEFITS**.

We deserve **EQUAL PENSIONS**.

We deserve **EQUAL RESPECT**.

If the expectations are equal, then the treatment must be equal.

Anything less sends the message that our work—and by extension, our students and families—are worth less. That is unacceptable.

We are not asking for special treatment. We are asking for **fair treatment**. We are asking for **equity**. We are asking to be valued the same way as DOE teachers because we *are* doing the same work.

CBO UPK teachers deserve **EQUAL EVERYTHING**. Thank you for listening.

From: [Alana Pompo](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CBO pay parity
Date: Friday, February 20, 2026 12:37:08 PM

>> Good Morning,

>>>

>>> My name is Alana Pompo. I am a preschool teacher at Stepping Stones Preschool in Staten Island, New York. I am writing based on my concerns that CBO should have equal pay as the public school teachers. The work we do is the same for our children, and with the cost of living increase it is necessary to support staff in our preschool. We have a duty to provide an educational experience for our children, and provide a learning environment equipped with the proper staff, and funding. I hope this message finds you well, and you understand my concerns. Thank you for your time, and consideration.

>>>

>>> Sincerely,

>>> Alana Pompo

>>> Sent from my iPhone

Subject: Concern Regarding Pay and Benefit Inequity for CBO Early Childhood Educators

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Diana Yudina, and I am a 3K teacher at Alphabet Academy on Staten Island, a Community-Based Organization (CBO) center. Our site includes two 3K classrooms and two Pre-K for All classrooms. I am writing to formally express my deep frustration and concern regarding the significant inequity in pay, benefits, and long-term security between educators working in non-unionized CBO programs and those working in public school settings—despite performing the same work under the same standards.

CBO teachers are required to deliver the exact same DOE curriculum, follow the same regulations and expectations, and meet the same professional requirements as educators in public school 3K and Pre-K classrooms. We are held to identical standards of instruction, classroom management, lesson planning, assessments, documentation, and compliance. In addition, we are required to hold the same credentials, including a master's degree and certification, matching the qualifications of public school early childhood teachers.

However, despite doing the same work and meeting the same requirements, CBO teachers do not receive equitable compensation. Many of us are denied the benefits that public school teachers receive, including competitive salary, union protections, pension eligibility, and health insurance. Additionally, we are not paid during the summer months, which creates serious financial hardship and instability for educators and their families.

As a professional educator and a parent of two children, I am doing everything possible to support my family and build a stable life—providing for housing, transportation, childcare, and daily living expenses. The lack of fair wages, dependable summer income, and adequate health insurance places an unreasonable and ongoing burden on my household. This disparity is not only unfair, but it is also discouraging to dedicated educators who are fully committed to supporting New York City's youngest learners.

I strongly believe that if CBO educators are expected to provide the same educational program, meet the same standards, and hold the same qualifications as public school teachers, then we should receive the same pay, benefits, and pension opportunities. Equity must extend beyond the classroom and include the educators who make early childhood education possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope this concern will be taken seriously and that meaningful steps will be taken to address this ongoing issue of inequality.

Sincerely,

Diana Yudina
3K Teacher, Alphabet Academy
Staten Island, NY

From: [Katie Byrne](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony for CBO budget increase
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 9:32:13 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a parent of a child attending Queensview Nursery and Kindergarten school. It is an incredibly nurturing, engaging, playful and wonderful early childhood education program that is a CBO. My son's teachers are incredibly dedicated, experienced and professional. It has come to light that the school is facing dire budget issues and I urge you to consider to increase their budget.

As an early childhood educator with my masters in Early Childhood General and Special Education, this concerns is personal and extremely important. Early childhood education is essential to foster and support a young child's development which will greatly impact their school success and readiness in later years. Finding a quality early childhood program in NYC was very challenging as I toured programs for 3k and Prek that had inexperienced teachers without their masters or teaching experience and programs with high teacher turnover rate. As a parent this was concerning and the reason I did not send my son to a 3k program.

I feel extremely lucky and fortunate to have my son attending an incredible Prek program at Queensview. His teachers are veteran teachers who hold masters degrees and deeply understand child development. They have shaped my son in so many ways and he has flourished and grown so much since starting in September.

It is a shame knowing his teachers are underpaid in comparison to the DOE. They hold higher credentials and decades of experience yet are paid less than first year inexperienced DOE teachers, this is beyond upsetting and unfair.

In addition, the cost of running a school has increased since the last budget contract. It seems impossible for his school to continue to operate at such caliber and quality if programs like Queensview (CBO) are not given an increase in their budget to reflect the cost of living increase and inflation.

Please help future families and children experience and benefit from such a quality early childhood education program.

Best,

Katie Byrne, M.S. Ed.
Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT)



From: [Emanuel Saris](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NYC Council Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education
Date: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 7:56:32 AM

Dear Council Members:

I am not a teacher. However, I submit this testimony following my 40 years of witnessing class after class graduate from Queensview Nursery School and Kindergarten. I am proud of the students' next steps, growth and successes thereafter. These students have left an indelible mark upon an Astoria community that has evolved into the center of cultural diversity for all of New York City. The children feel like they belong wherever they go, having been nurtured by the most loving educators during their most pivotal formative years. Their enduring success and accomplishments, and ability to interact to the benefit of every group they become a part of, is a testament to their dedicated and caring teachers. These educators have unwaveringly strived selflessly on behalf of their charges.

However, it now appears that the ever increasing cost of living threatens the early childhood educator's passion and ability to make ends meet, and has interfered with their mission. These teachers are, at least, every bit as qualified and integral as the instructors fully compensated by the Department of Education. Parity in teacher pay and benefits are essential to continuing an education that fosters a proper foundation upon which the child may build, and all subsequent learning is based. It is a simple and basic concept rooted in much more than fairness. It is necessary to ensure that a child's proper foundation is not replaced by a system of baby-sitting and daycare that lacks the core essentials for success. In short, we cannot afford to lose these early childhood educators to other fields of employment just so they are able pay their bills. Our early childhood educators instill lessons and the confidence that prepare the child for the challenges of life from a vantage point of stability and strength.

Thus, I respectfully implore the City Council to take all steps necessary in furtherance of equal pay and parity of benefits for all teachers. Our kids cannot get the now more than ever necessary advantage unless our early childhood educators are there from the start to set them on the proper path.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Manny Saris
[REDACTED]
Bronx, NY 10465
[REDACTED]

From: [Early Childhood Educators On The Move](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Cc: [District34](#); [District6](#); [District26](#); [District40](#); [District47](#); [Finance](#); [District8](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony – Subcommittee on Early Childhood Education (From 680+Parents/Educators)
Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 6:11:25 PM
Attachments: [1_100 ECE Written Testimony from Parents and Educators Sent 3 4 2026.pdf](#)
[101 to 200 ECE Written Testimony from Parents and Educators Sent 3 4 2026.pdf](#)
[201 to 300 ECE Written Testimony from Parents and Educators Sent 3 4 2026.pdf](#)
[301 to 400 ECE Written Testimony from Parents and Educators Sent 3 4 2026.pdf](#)
[401 to 500 ECE Written Testimony from Parents and Educators Sent 3 4 2026.pdf](#)
[501 to 600 ECE Written Testimony from Parents and Educators Sent 3 4 2026.pdf](#)
[601 to 689 ECE Written Testimony from Parents and Educators Sent 3 4 2026.pdf](#)



Chair Jennifer Gutiérrez,

Attached to this email are over **680 testimonies** submitted by parents and family child care educators connected to **ECE on the Move**. Many of these testimonies include **individual written statements** from parents and educators describing their experiences with the current early childhood education system. Others indicate their agreement with the three priorities listed below. In those PDFs where the statement reads “**agree**,” the individual is expressing their support for these priorities and has **signed the statement with their name and contact information** to affirm that they are constituents, members of our organization, and families and educators directly impacted by these policies. We respectfully encourage you to review each testimony, as these submissions represent the real experiences and perspectives of those providing and relying on child care every day. Thank you for the opportunity to share the voices of our community.

Here are the 3 priorities that the educators and parents are referring to when they say that they agree:

Priority 1. The Child Care Assistance Program Waiting List

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) must be fully funded so families can come off the waiting list and access care when they need it, not months later. Right now, parents are forced to cut work hours or turn down jobs, siblings are split between different systems, and family child care educators are asked to hold spots, wait on payments, or stretch already limited resources while families sit in limbo. Fully funding CCAP would bring stability to families, protect the livelihood of family child care educators, and strengthen the communities that depend on reliable child care every day.

Priority 2. Permanent Supplemental Workforce Compensation

Family child care educators need a permanent supplemental workforce fund because many are working long hours caring for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, school-age children, and children with special needs, yet still struggle to pay themselves a stable salary. Educators are often trying to pay assistants at least minimum wage — which is difficult to sustain and only the bare

minimum — while families depend on individualized care and extended hours that require skill, flexibility, and commitment. A permanent supplemental workforce fund would allow educators and their assistants to earn wages and benefits that reflect the responsibility they carry every day while the larger payment system is improved.

Priority 3: 2K Program Design

The current design of the 2K/2Care program feels too similar to past models that required family child care educators to give up independence without receiving meaningful improvements in compensation, benefits, paid time off, or long-term stability. Educators want enrollment processes that are simple for families and contracts that recognize the unique strengths of their programs, rather than agreements that overlook the realities of how family child care operates. Family child care educators will not fully participate in 2K unless it is implemented in a way that values their work through fair compensation, autonomy, and support that allow their programs to truly thrive.

Respectfully,

Gladys

--

Gladys Jones
Founder - Chief Executive Officer
Early Childhood Educators On The Move
telephone: 718-928-5215

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RABBI DAVID NIEDERMAN

Address: 32 PENN ST

I represent: U. S. O

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yolanda Morales

Address: _____

I represent: Cuddles playground

Address: 329 Broadway

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ana Fuentes

Address: _____

I represent: Cuddles playground

Address: 329 Broadway

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

31

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KELLY CALDER

Address: [REDACTED] 11226

I represent: NYUC

Address: 85 Broad St

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Debra Sue Lorenzen

Address: [REDACTED] BKlyn

I represent: St Nick's Alliance

Address: above

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GRACE RAUH

Address: _____

I represent: CITIZENS UNION, SBOB

Address: INSTITUTE

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: March 2, 2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Stamo Karalazarides Rosenberg

Address: 40 Rector Street

I represent: CSA Council of Supervisors + Administrators

Address: 40 Rector Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dep Chancellor Hawkins

Address: _____

I represent: NYCPS

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Emmy Liss

Address: _____

I represent: office of child care / education

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Albania Jimenez (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Literacy in Community

Address: 5030 Broadway, New York 1

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/2/26

Name: Emmanuel Navy (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 5030 Broadway

I represent: City's First Readers

Address: City-wide

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/2/2026

Name: Ramon Requero (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 75 Broad Street NY NY 1004

I represent: Committee for Hispanic Children & Families

Address: 75 Broad Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sejal Kathari

Address: 5838 Broadway

I represent: Upper Manhattan Early Childhood Connect

Address: 5838 Broadway, NY, NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lauren Melodia

Address: [Redacted] Brooklyn 11221

I represent: Center for NYC Affairs, New School

Address: 79 5th Ave, NY, NY 10003

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/2/2026

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lara Kyriakou

Address: [Redacted] Bronx, NY

I represent: All Our Kin

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jocelyn Madurkowski

Address: 305 7th Ave, NY NY 10001

I represent: CWE/NYCCO

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/2/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MEREDITH ANSELL

Address: _____

I represent: PLAYREADVIP @ NYU GROSSMAN SCHOOL OF

Address: 227 E 30th St. 6th FL NY, NY 10016 MEDICINE

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 03/02/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Leonela Tutasiq

Address: _____

I represent: PlayReadVIP @ NYU Grossman School of

Address: _____ Medicine

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gregory Brender

Address: _____

I represent: Day Care Council of New York

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 3/3/76

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Betty Baez Melo

Address: 151 W 30th, NY, NY 1001

I represent: Advocates for Children of NY

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anna L. Vacces

Address: [REDACTED] 10D

I represent: Queensview Nursery School

Address: 21-36 33 ROAD LIC, NY 11106

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/2/20

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Judy Blumenthal

Address: 3239 Riverdale Ave

I represent: Early Starters International

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE Date: 3/2/2020

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PEGGY ROX RODRIGUEZ

Address: ELADIA'S KIDS - 266A FLATBUSH AVE

I represent: ELADIA'S KIDS

Address: 266 + 266A FLATBUSH AVE, BKLYN, NY

11217

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LATOYA SIMON

Address: [REDACTED] Bklyn NY 11208

I represent: LATOYA SIMON

Address: _____



**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 3.2.26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Paula Magnus

Address: Northside Center for

I represent: Child Development

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 3/2/26

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Magin Schantz

Address: 753 Onderdak Ave

I represent: Superman Art Space

Address: same as above

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KAMILA FARUK

Address: CBO PAY PARITY & COZA.

I represent: Manhattan Schoolhouse

Address: 1624 First Ave.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/2/2006

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ellen McHugh

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Paula Inhargue

Address: _____

I represent: United Neighborhood Houses

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Albania Gemenez

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: Literacy In Community (LINC)

Address: 5030 Broadway suite 641



Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Donovan Swanson

Address: 209 Lorain St.

I represent: Office of the Brooklyn Borough President

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jessica Wallenstein

Address: _____

I represent: NYCPS

Address: _____

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LORE POPVESH

Address: 520 8th Ave, NYC

I represent: INCLU DEALY

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PAULA INHARGUE

Address: _____

I represent: UNITED NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSES

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms