



May 2026: Top Child Care Legislative Priorities

The proposed 2026-2027 New York State Budget – still not finalized as of May 1, 2026 – seems poised to include historic funding for early childhood education in New York State. Included will likely be new investments in the Child Care Assistance Program, statewide universal pre-K, funding for 2K in New York City and for universal child care pilots outside of New York City. Our campaign applauds these investments, while continuing to advocate for permanent funding to recruit and retain the early childhood education workforce necessary to deliver universal child care in New York State and sufficient funding to fully meet demand for Child Care Assistance.

Outside of budget, the Empire State Campaign for Child Care is prioritizing passage of the following bills that would help to make New York’s child care system more equitable and create the infrastructure to support statewide universal child care:

Child Care Assistance Reform Act: Creating a uniform system that delivers child care assistance fairly to families around the state. —[A.10494 \(Clark\)/S.9529 \(Baskin\)](#)

This bill would transfer much of the administration of the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) outside of New York City from 57 different local social services districts by transferring processing and payment administration to the state and ending block granting of CCAP funds to the counties. This will make CCAP more efficient and equitable; direct resources expeditiously to meet demand; and create scaffolding around which to build statewide universal child care.

Consistent, Predictable Child Care Assistance, Decoupled from Parents’ Exact Hours of Work— [A.3174 \(Hevesi\)/S.2001 \(Brisport\)](#)

This bill would dismantle a significant barrier that keeps New York families from accessing the child care they need by ending the State’s practice of tying the exact hours a caregiver works to the care and education that children can receive when using the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). The current rule denies children consistent early education and predictable schedules that allow them to thrive, and disproportionately burdens the lowest-income New Yorkers—including those who work part time, have inconsistent or rotating schedules, are homeless, or work in the growing gig economy. Ending this restriction will be a significant milestone on the path to building a system of universal child care that meets the needs of all families.

Child Care Assistance Enhanced Rate for Services for Children with Disabilities and Development Delays — [A.10586 \(Hevesi\)/S.9396 \(Fahy\)](#)

This bill would help eliminate barriers to accessing child care for families of children with disabilities and developmental delays by increasing the enhanced Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) rates for providing services to children experiencing disabilities and developmental delays to 30% of the market rate (up from 15%). New York must also take steps to make it easier for child care programs to access the enhanced rate.

Additional Legislative Priorities

- **Provide Automatic Rate Increases for Child Care Providers** – [A.1001-A \(Clark\)/S.4472-A \(Ramos\)](#)
- **Eliminate Minimum Earnings Requirements for CCAP Eligibility** – [A.2218 \(Clark\)/ S.1994 \(Ramos\)](#)

The Empire State Campaign for Child Care is a statewide coalition of parents, child care 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. Learn more at <https://empirestatechildcare.org/>