January 2019

**NEW YORK STATE EXECUTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020**

Below are highlights relating to early childhood from the State Fiscal Year 2020 Executive Budget and State of the State released by Governor Cuomo. Additional details may be found in the Governor’s FY 2020 Executive Budget Briefing Book and the Governors’ State of the State Book. <https://www.budget.ny.gov/pubs/archive/fy20/exec/book/briefingbook.pdf>; <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/2019StateoftheStateBook.pdf>

**Ensure Child Care Availability.** As part of the Women’s Agenda, the Governor launched in December 2018 the Child Care Availability Task Force, a group of experts focused on developing innovative solutions that will improve access to quality, affordable child care in New York. The Task Force has begun its work examining access to affordable child care, the availability of child care for parents with non-traditional work hours, statutory and regulatory changes that could promote or enhance access to child care, business incentives to increase child care access, and the impact on tax credits and deductions relating to child care.

**Improve Child Care Health and Safety Requirements.** The Federal Child Care Development Block Grant’s (CCDBG) 2014 reauthorization enacted new requirements related to health and safety. The estimated cost to implement the health and safety requirements is $78 million and will be supported with Federal child care funding. The FY 2020 Executive Budget proposes legislation to authorize background checks and to amend licensing and registration requirements for child care programs to comply with the health and safety requirements.

**QUALITYstarsNY**. The State will continue its $5 million investment in the implementation of QUALITYstarsNY to ensure New York’s youngest students are enrolled in the highest quality prekindergarten programs possible.

**Create the New York State Employer-Provided Child Care Credit.** Create a new credit equal to 100 percent of the Federal credit for employers who provide child and dependent care facilities to their employees. The credit will enhance the opportunity for employers to provide quality child care services to their employees and is expected to save New York businesses $1 million annually.”

**Launch Child Care Worker Scholarship.** To ensure that New York State attracts and retains qualified employees to work in child care center state-licensed child care facilities, Governor Cuomo will launch a child care worker scholarship to cover tuition at SUNY or CUNY schools for part-time students who work at least 20 hours a week in state- licensed child care facility.

**Establish Common Application for Child Care.** Governor Cuomo will direct the Office of Children and Family Services to work with the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies to develop the first common application for child care in the country, easing the burden of filing multiple applications as families seek child care for their children. OCFS will work to ensure that this application is used across the state.

**Invest in Regional Strategies***.* As the drivers of New York State’s economic strategic planning, Governor Cuomo tasks the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) to include child care as a priority in their 2019 Strategic Plans. The 2019 REDC Guidebook will require each region to consider the child care needs of the region and the important impact access to affordable child care can have on the region’s economy and to develop a regionally-specific strategy to increase access to quality, affordable child care.

**Early Intervention (EI) Rate Increase.** The Budget supports a five percent rate increase for licensed rehabilitation early intervention service providers to improve access to care and expand service delivery for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

**Prekindergarten Expansion.** The Budget includes an additional $15 million investment in prekindergarten to expand high quality half-day and full-day prekindergarten instruction for 3,000 three- and four-year-old children in high-need school districts. Preference for these funds will be given to the few remaining high-need school districts currently without a prekindergarten program, and will focus on including students in integrated or community-based settings.

**Refugee and Immigrant Student Welcome Grants.** In 2018, the Federal government implemented a policy that separated thousands of children from their parents after being caught illegally crossing the U.S. southern border. Under Governor Cuomo, New York is putting out the “welcome mat.” To offer a broad array of services and resources for unaccompanied minor children, including immigrant children who have been separated from their parents, Governor Cuomo commits $1.5 million in funding for Refugee and Immigrant Student Welcome Grants. These funds will allow school districts with large or increasing populations of refugees and immigrants to provide additional wrap-around community schools services including free English classes, health care and mental health services, and hiring additional counselors and psychologists.

**Guarantee Workplace Breastfeeding Rights.** In June 2018, the Governor directed the Division of Human Rights to investigate allegations of pregnancy-related discrimination by several major companies, following reports of widespread instances of pregnant employees being passed over for promotions, demoted, denied reasonable accommodations, or fired. In addition, the Governor directed the Division of Human Rights, the Department of Labor and the Workers’ Compensation Board to launch a comprehensive, multiplatform, multilingual education and outreach campaign for employees to know their rights, and for employers to know their responsibilities to prevent unlawful pregnancy discrimination. Building on these efforts, and as part of the Governor’s Women’s Agenda, the Budget advances legislation to make absolutely clear that lactation is a pregnancy-related condition covered by the Human Rights Law and that employers must make reasonable accommodations for it in the workplace.

**2020 Census.** In 2019, Governor Cuomo will launch a comprehensive campaign to protect the integrity of the 2020 Census and to ensure that every New Yorker is counted. First, the Governor will launch a statewide media campaign to ensure that all New Yorkers are aware of the count. Second, the Governor will direct all state agencies to make New Yorkers aware of the Census and to help residents complete their online Census questionnaire. And third, Governor Cuomo will direct the Department of Labor and the Department of State to work with the New York City, the 57 counties outside New York City, local governments, and community-based organizations to develop local strategies and outreach campaigns to ensure that every New Yorker is counted and New York receives its fair share of political representation and federal funding