

Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)

- Child care is important to the families in our state, especially working and underserved families. Yet too many families who need help paying for care cannot get it.
- The new law is designed to improve the health and safety of child care settings, improve continuity of care for children receiving a child care subsidy, and expand access to high-quality child care, especially for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and those in underserved communities.
- The President has proposed significant new investments in his FY 2016 budget to increase access to child care for low-income working families, including \$100 million to foster innovation. While we are waiting to see the details of this proposal, we know that there are early childhood educators and providers in all 50 states that are willing to develop new, innovative ways of providing high-quality early learning programs for our nation's young children.
- While the new law takes many steps to improve quality and access, in order to fulfill the promise of reauthorization states and the federal government will need to provide additional resources.
- CCDBG funding levels have not kept pace with the rising cost of child care, and the value of the child care subsidy has decreased in real dollars by about 20 percent since 2003.

The Federal Budget

- Child care and early learning are building blocks that support our current and future economy. They do so by helping children enter school ready to succeed and by helping parents work.
- Even though more people recognize the importance of quality education in the early years of a child's life, there is still a long way to go to ensure that all children—especially our lowest-income children—have the early learning experiences they need.
- The President's budget recognizes this and invests heavily in early childhood programs to improve outcomes for young children and to support working families.
- The sequester cuts, however, if allowed to move forward will significantly impact early childhood programs. Programs that have already had to cut hours of service, serve fewer children, limit the services available, cut staff, lower compensation and make do with much less will see even fewer resources available in their states and communities.
- Congress needs to end the sequester and make significant investments in early childhood programs, including CCDBG and Head Start.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

- ESEA is an opportunity for promoting affordable high-quality early learning for all young children in our nation and in our state by building state systems; investing in early education; and ensuring quality in all programs.
- As ESEA progresses through the legislative process, we hope that Congress takes advantage of the opportunity to support a stronger federal-state partnership that increases access to high-quality programs, maintains state flexibility, and sets high-quality standards.
- State flexibility is crucial to enabling states to build upon their current early learning infrastructure, while maintaining the parameters that drive high quality.
- We want this reauthorization to create a continuum of learning from birth through third grade that includes developmentally appropriate and challenging standards, curricula, and instructional assessments, as well as comprehensive services and meaningful parent/family engagement.

The Workforce

- Highly educated early childhood educators are critical to making sure our state's children receive a high-quality early learning experience.
- Research has shown that children who attend high-quality preschool are better prepared to be successful in school and in their future careers.
- Currently, 39% educators in the workforce have at least a bachelor's degree (BA). About 19% have a high school diploma or less, 28% have some college credit but no degree, and 17% have an associate degree (AA).
- We need to make sure that professionals in the early childhood field have high-quality training and education themselves so they can be the best teachers for our young children.
- NAEYC recommends that Congress Fund Title VIII Part I of the Higher Education Opportunity Act to accelerate states' implementation of cross-sector, integrated professional development systems that will have a significant impact on quality, and improve compensation.