

2025 Public Policy Forum

In Person Agenda

Sunday and Monday sessions take place in Salons ABCHJK, except for afternoon breakouts.

Please note that all Public Policy Forum sessions are closed to press and off the record

Sunday February 23

Registration opens at 11 AM

1:00-1:45 PM: Welcome and Introductions

- Michelle Kang, NAEYC
- Daniel Hains, NAEYC
- *Sponsor Remarks:* Danielle Yenser, HighScope
- *Sponsor Remarks:* Rebecca Berlin, Kaplan
 - Recognition of scholars

1:45 – 3:45 PM: Advocacy and State Policy Plenaries

- **1:45-2:30 PM: Educators' Advocacy Journeys**
 - Nicole Lazarte, NAEYC; Laura McCarty, Northern Virginia AEYC, Jana Boddy, MDAEYC; Gabrielle Ruiz, FLAEYC
- **2:45-3:45 PM: Building Towards the Future of the ECE Profession: Progress on Realizing and Aligning to the Unifying Framework**
 - Bridget Barden, Shunk Child Care; Kimberlee Burt-Hendricks, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership; Mary Harrill, NAEYC; Lauren Hogan, NAEYC; Michelle Kang, NAEYC

3:45-4:00 PM: Break to Breakouts

4:00-5:00 PM: Concurrent Breakout Sessions Focused on State Policy Opportunities

- **Steps to the Vermont Statehouse: Strengthening Our Workforce, Building On Investment, and Creating an ECE Profession (Rosslyn I & II)**
 - Sharron Harrington, VTAEYC; Sherry Carlson, Let's Grow Kids; Kaitie Northey, University of Vermont

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- **Advancing Language Equity in Nevada: Empowering Families and Educators in Early Childhood Language Policy (Salon D/E)**
 - Rachel Stepina, Nayesi Badillo, Kate Pflughoeft, Nevada Department of Education
- **Increasing Access to ECE Higher Education Credentials: The Role of Credit for Prior Learning and Apprenticeships (Salon F/G)**
 - Mary Harrill, NAEYC; Karen Yarbrough, UIC Collaborative for Young Children and Families; Elizabeth Kelleher, UIC Collaborative for Young Children and Families; Rachel Hirsch, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning
- **Rethink: Quality (Salon I)**
 - Alissa Mwenelupembe, NAEYC and Marica Cox Mitchell, Bainum Family Foundation
- **What Providers Need to Know to Have Successful Partnerships for IDEA Birth-5 Inclusion (Salon II)**
 - Sharon Walsh, Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children

5:00 PM: Happy Hour Welcome Reception (Grand Foyer A-C/ Skyview) Appetizers and a free drink included for every registrant. Cash bar will be available.

Enjoy time in the evening, and dinner in and around Washington, DC!

Monday, February 24

7:45-8:30 AM: Breakfast (Grand Foyer A-C)

8:30-8:45 AM: Welcome

- Tonia Durden, NAEYC Governing Board President

8:45 – 10:45 AM: Congressional Advocacy Plenaries

- **8:45-9:15 AM: Congressional Staff Perspectives on Effective Hill Advocacy**
 - Iris Hinh, Senate HELP Committee; Emily Hopkins, Office of Representative Suzanne Bonamici
- **9:15-10:00 AM: Taxes and Child Care: Opportunities and Threats in the Upcoming Congressional Debates**

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- Daniel Hains, NAEYC; Sarah Rubinfeld, First Five Years Fund; Amy Matsui, National Women's Law Center
- **10:00-10:05 AM: Stretch Break**
- **10:05-11:00 AM: Preparing for Your Visits to Capitol Hill**
 - Daniel Hains, NAEYC; Paola Andujar, NAEYC; Sharon Walsh, Division for Early Childhood

11:00 – 11:15 AM: Break to Breakouts

11:15 AM – 12:15 PM Concurrent Breakout Sessions Focused on Key Federal Policy Issues

- **How the Changing Climate is Impacting Early Childhood Education and What Educators and Advocates can do to Take Action (Salon D/E)**
 - Joan Lombardi, PhD, Early Opportunities Initiative; Kit Harrington, North American Association for Environmental Education; Shelly Masur, Low-Income Investment Fund; Nsedu Obot Witherspoon, Children's Environmental Health Network
- **Critical Issues for State Level Partnerships for Inclusive Child Care (Salon F/G)**
 - Peggy Kemp, Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children; Amanda Quesenberry, Illinois State University
- **PPF First Timers: How to Have a Successful Meeting with Policymakers (Rosslyn I & II)**
 - Amy O'Leary and Marisa Fear, Strategies for Children
- **What Advocates Need to Know About Budget Reconciliation (Salon I)**
 - Daniel Hains, NAEYC; Julie Kashen, The Century Foundation; Anne Hedgepeth, Child Care Aware of America
- **Centering and Supporting Immigrant Early Educators to Enter, Remain, and Advance in the Field of Early Childhood Education (Salon II)**
 - Karla Coleman-Castillo, National Women's Law Center; Tania Villarroel, Unidos; Patricia Alvarado, Adelante Mujeres
- **Data to Spark Advocacy (Pentagon)**
 - Paola Andujar, NAEYC; Diane Girouard, Sandra Bishop, Child Care Aware of America; Valeria Garcia, RAPID Survey Stanford Center on Early Childhood

12:15-1:15 PM: Lunch (Grand Foyer A-C)

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1:15 – 2:00 PM: Plenary – Enhancing Quality ECE Through Supportive Licensing

- Casey Peeks and Haley Gibbs, Center for American Progress; Eric Bucher and Rosemarie Allen, Children’s Equity Project

2:00-2:15 PM: Break to Breakouts

2:15 – 3:15 PM: Concurrent Breakout Sessions Focused on Advocacy Strategies

- **Engaging Religious Providers in Policy and Advocacy (Salon D/E)**
 - Rachel Anderson, HOPE & Consulting; Lauren Hogan, NAEYC; Kathy Pomer, Gather Round Consulting
- **The Importance of Parent-Provider Advocacy Partnerships in Advancing Quality ECE (Salon I)**
 - PennAEYC Parent-Provider Advocacy Teams, SCAEYC Parent-Provider Advocacy Team; Chenae Russell and Malissa Griffith, Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
- **Staffed Family Child Care Networks: Strategies for Engaging Family Child Care Educators in Policy and Advocacy (Salon II)**
 - Becca Smith, All Our Kin; Jade Thomas, All Our Kin; Jerletha McDonald, ADFW Family Child Care Network
- **Adding Our Voices: How Utah is Changing the Conversation on Child Care (Pentagon)**
 - Rev. Brigitte Weier, Utah Care For Kids; Kristy DeGraaf, FCC Owner; Becca Gerber, Park City Chambers of Commerce
- **Empowering Voices (Salon F/G)**
 - Lisa Garlie, IECMH-E Equity Steering Committee; Bianca Hill, TenderCare Christian Child Care Center; Claire Lindstrom, Chippewa Valley Technical College; Heather Murray, Arthouse Preschool LLC

3:15 – 3:30 PM: Back to Main Room

3:30 – 4:15 PM: Plenary – Whole and Sound: Prioritizing the Wellness and Healing of Members of the Early Childhood Education Profession

- Lucy Recio, Third Bloom Consulting; Tonia Durden, NAEYC Governing Board President; Angela Carolina Garcia, SEIU Education & Support Fund and

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Engage:think.feel.connect; Ronnell Nathaniel, Educare DC; Jamie Bonczyk, Greater Twin Cities United Way

4:15 – 4:30 PM: Stretch Break

4:30 – 5:15 PM: Dedicated State Team Planning Time

6-8:30 PM: Make a Circle Screening + Dinner (Alamo Drafthouse, 1660 Crystal Dr., Arlington VA)

**RSVP required, space is limited and registration is first come, first serve.*

Tuesday, February 25: Hill Day!

7:00- 9:00 AM: Breakfast, State Team Meetings, and Bus Boarding to the Hill (Salons AK)

- 7:30 am: First Group Boards the Bus at the front of the hotel (Leave at 7:45 am)
 - 8:30 am: Second Group Boards the Bus at the front of the hotel (Leave at 8:45 am)
- Note: Shuttles are only available for travel to Capitol Hill in the morning, participants will want to utilize Metro or a taxi service to return to the hotel in the evening. The nearest metro station to the Senate Office Buildings is Union Station (Red Line), and the nearest to the Houe Office Building is Capitol South (Blue, Orange, Silver Lines)*

9:00 AM– 5:00 PM: Congressional Office Meetings (Coordinate with STL)

5:00 – 7:00 PM: Child Care Means Business Reception (Cannon House Office Building Caucus Room – Cannon 390)

- Participants who want to attend should RSVP ahead of time using this [link](#).

