VOICE
2023 Legislative Agenda

Pay for Enrollment

Counties pay providers for only when a child is in attendance, and not just for being enrolled in a program. This is different from private pay parents, who pay regardless of whether or not their child is in attendance. What this means is if a child is out sick for a prolonged period or is in quarantine for COVID-19 several times, the provider does not get paid. While the state requires counties to pay for a minimum number of absences for children, providers still face financial uncertainty if a child is out for a significant period of time. State law should better support providers so childcare funding mirrors how the state funds public schools – not only when a child is in attendance, but for being enrolled in a program

CSEA supports a transition from our current system of "pay for attendance" to "pay for enrollment" to better support providers throughout the state.

Increase Payments to Reflect "True Cost of Care"

New York State calculates payments to childcare providers based on a "market rate survey" and providers are then paid based on the 80th percentile of the survey. While these payments are an increase over previous years, they do not come close to paying for the true cost of childcare. According to the Center for American Progress, New York's subsidy system only covers 63% of the true cost of care in family childcare, leading to providers being unable to pay living wages or benefits to staff and having high turnover. Paying providers for the "true cost of care" will enable providers to increase wages, keep staff longer, and provide better care for children.

CSEA supports moving our reimbursement system to one that reimburses providers what it actually costs to care for children.

Provider Benefit Cliff

Due to the low reimbursement rates for home-based providers, many are forced to rely on public assistance to pay for their food, heat, or health insurance. Since 2020, the state has distributed stabilization grants to providers to keep programs operating during the pandemic. Due to the way that many providers structure their business, these grants are counted as income, causing many of them to become disqualified for these critical programs. Stabilization grants were used by providers to buy PPE, cleaning supplies, and other tools to help children maintain social distance and keep facilities open. However, it is being counted as income and can financially harm providers.

CSEA supports legislation that holds childcare providers financially harmless for these stabilization grants and not use the grants when determining eligibility for government programs.

For any questions or to discuss this further, please contact:
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