

# Early Childhood Advocacy Coalition

May 1st, 2024, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Zoom

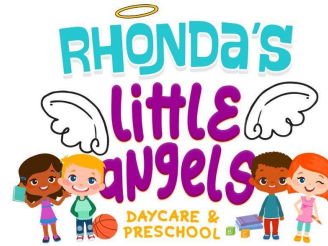
## Objectives

- Welcome
- Advocacy Day Prep
- Call to Action
- Updated Ask for Legislature
- 2024 Elections and Candidate Commitments
- Upcoming Events and Next Steps

Please introduce  
yourself in the chat

# Who's in the Room

**Rodel**  
A GREAT EDUCATION  
CHANGES EVERYTHING



eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**  
Delaware



**Kingswood**  
Community Center



**montessori**  
**WORKS**  
Creating Communities of Learners



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF DELAWARE



**DELAWARE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE**  
Delaware Public Health Association



**American Heart Association.**



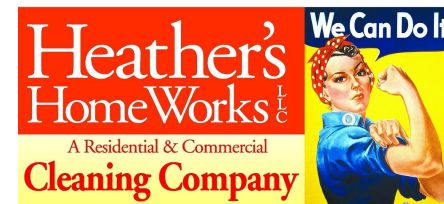
**Colonial**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT



**Sussex Preschools**



Little Leaders LLC



# Policy Updates: Budget

*in addition to Governor's Recommended budget which expands ECAP by 200 children and eligibility for POC to 200% FPL*

- **Child Care Market Rate Survey anticipated in May** – DHSS committed to 100% of 75th percentile of 2024 Market Rate for FY 25 (beginning July 1)
  - anticipating this will be a 9% increase
  - *will be tracking this through budget process*
- **DHSS filing regulations to decrease copayments** for 75% of Purchase of Care families and increase paid absence days to 10 / month

***Not yet addressed (focus of our advocacy!)***

1. *increasing eligibility to 250% of federal poverty level*
2. *statewide rate*
3. *special education rates*
4. *pay based on enrollment*

**Discussion: Reactions to this progress and our updates? Which of these would help the most and how?**

# Policy Updates: Legislation

## Anticipated legislation on early care and education

- **Child safety:** employee records and service letters; increasing licensing capacity; modernizing licensing system; establishing protections for children during complaints (more on [Rodel Blog](#))
- **Pre-k:** streamlining pre-k language ECAP and Redding to provide flexibility for future expansion
- **Funding system:** establishing a Commission to make recommendations on early childhood and K-12 funding systems

## Related Legislation

- [HB 345](#) (passed House) - Medicaid coverage for postpartum doula visits
- [HB 17-1](#) (in House) - sick time and safety leave for every 30 hours worked

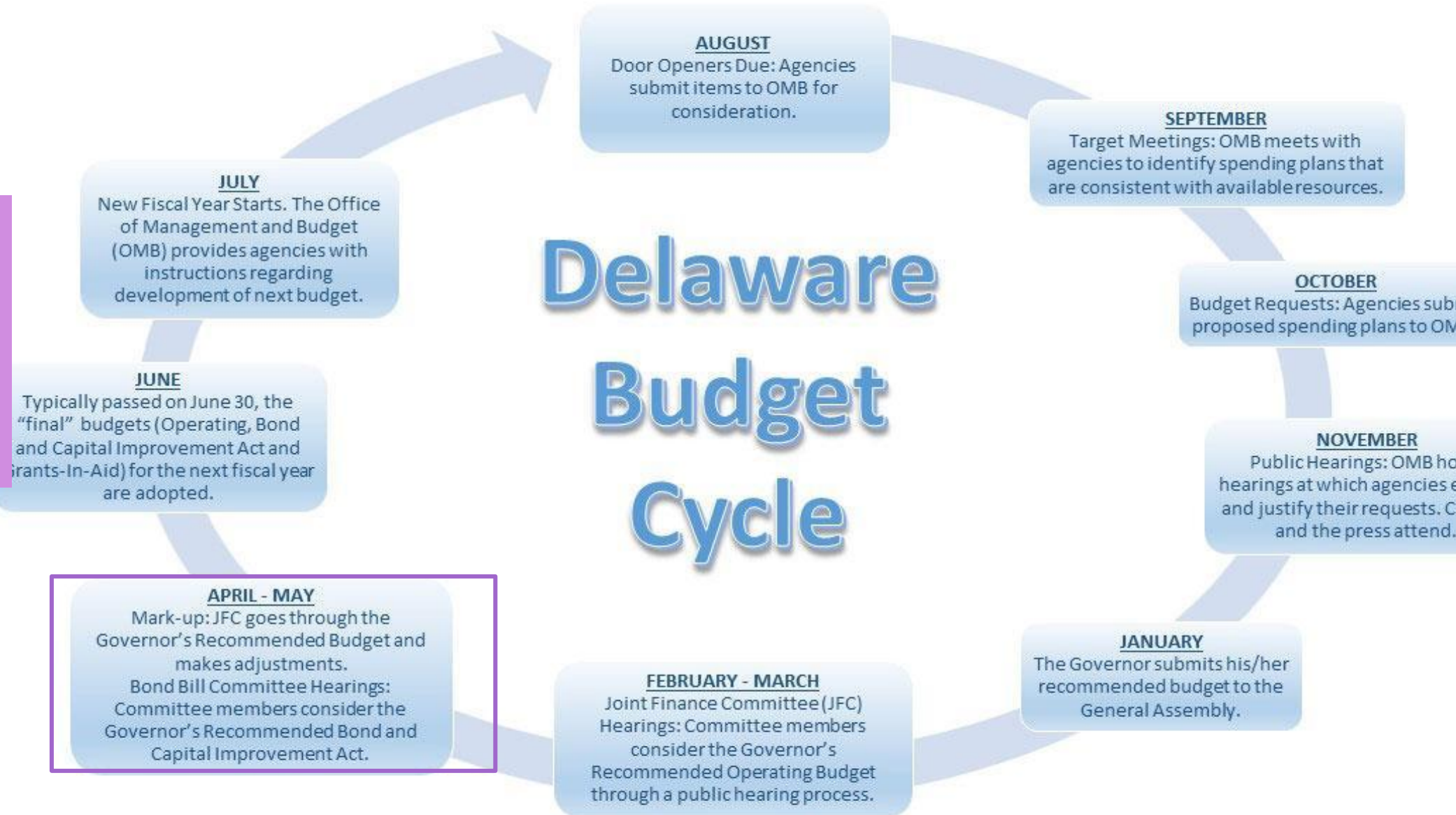
**Other legislative activity to be aware of?**

## **Our Ask**

# FY25 Budget Cycle

Focus on Joint Finance Committee which meets end of May

## Delaware Budget Cycle



# Joint Finance Committee (JFC) Budget Ask now until June (*meetings May 28-June 6*)

**Expand eligibility** to serve families up to at least 250 percent of the Federal Poverty Level in pre-k (ECAP) and Purchase of Care

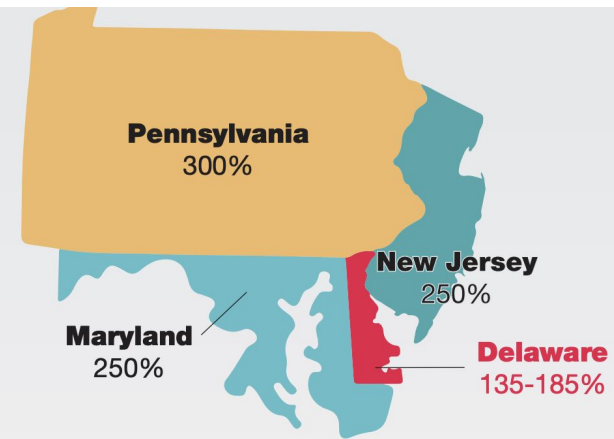
1. **Increase per-child Purchase of Care rates** so programs can open more classrooms and increase staff pay and benefits
2. **Expand eligibility** to serve families up to at least **250 percent** of the Federal Poverty Level (making about 5,000 more eligible)
3. **Pay a statewide rate**, increase rates in all counties to match the New Castle County Rate to ensure all providers are able to meet the needs of children.
4. **Increase special education rates** to cover costs of supporting children's needs
5. **Pay providers based on enrollment** to help providers cover fixed costs including staff, whether children attend or not—and it helps stabilize their finances when children are sick or families are away (Thirty-six states already pay based on enrollment)

## 2023 Eligibility for Purchase of Care by State

Neighboring states  
provide child care to more  
families than Delaware

\*\*Delaware Purchase of Care is at 185% and  
ECAP is at 135%.

Schulman, Karen. Precarious Progress: State Child  
Care Assistance Policies 2022. National Women's  
Law Center, May 2023.



[bit.ly/FY25ChildCareAsk](https://bit.ly/FY25ChildCareAsk)

# **Advocacy Day Preparation**

**Register, Promote, &  
Share With Others  
(Download a flyer)!**



# Early Childhood Advocacy Day 2024

May 16, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

A day for providers, advocates, and lawmakers to come together to discuss key issues, from supporting families and the early learning workforce to the local economy.



**Register here!**



[bit.ly/3VzGspw](https://bit.ly/3VzGspw)



# Advocacy Day Agenda & Speakers

## Morning Program: Dover Library

### 10 a.m. - Welcome and Legislator Remarks

- Panel 1: Opportunities to support Delaware families – a discussion with parents
- Panel 2: What it Takes to Serve Families: Investing in the Early Educator Workforce– a discussion with child care programs
- Panel 3: Early Childhood is Everyone's Business: How Greater Investments will Support our Community – a conversation with business and community leaders

### 11:45 a.m. LUNCH

### 12:15 p.m. Advocacy training and afternoon orientation

### Remaining Events at Legislative Hall

### 12:45 p.m. - Photo opportunity at Legislative Hall *Legislator meetings as scheduled*

**Register here!**



[bit.ly/3VzGspw](https://bit.ly/3VzGspw)

# Advocacy Day Tips and Tricks

- **Introduce yourself** and the organization you represent
  - Mention your connection to the legislator (if you live or work in their district)
  - State your interest in speaking with them about why additional investments in early childhood are needed
- **Thank policymakers for their support in the past**
- **Explain the problem you/r families are facing and the impacts of lack of affordable child care**
  - *Use stories of real people if possible!*
  - *Show them the lack of child care in their district!*
  - Make the ask
  - Explain the result this would have on the families you serve
  - Restate the ask
- **Thank them**

# Resource for Legislator Meetings:

*show them how many child care providers they represent, how there is a supply shortage or even child care desert*

## Child Care Supply In Your District

NNAMDI O.  
CHUKWUOCHA  
State House District 1



**Legislators, invest in early care and education!**

- Family Child Care
- Child Care Center

Licensed capacity<sup>1</sup>

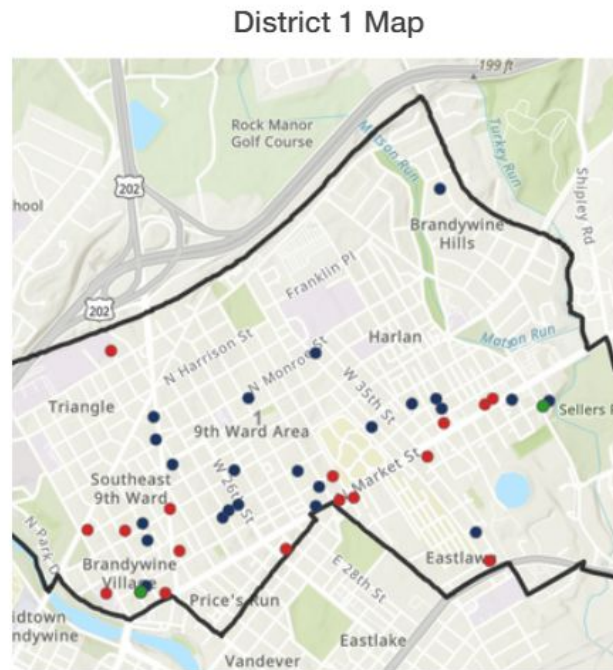
**1,566**

Total number of providers<sup>2</sup>

**42**

Estimated number of children 0-9 in district<sup>3</sup>

**2,429**



April 2024 [bit.ly/DEchildcaresupply](https://bit.ly/DEchildcaresupply)

- <sup>1</sup> Overstates number of children that can be served due to calculation based on square footage only rather than actual capacity, and most centers are not at full capacity due to underfunding and related staff shortages  
<sup>2</sup> Does not include unlicensed private and public schools  
<sup>3</sup> According to the U.S. Census

Creating using the [Dashboard](https://bit.ly/DEchildcaresupply) ([bit.ly/DEchildcaresupply](https://bit.ly/DEchildcaresupply)) that was created in partnership with ChildCareAware

### Working Families Can't Find or Afford Child Care: It's Holding Delaware's Economy Back

Kent County Parents Speak Up

"I have a good [child care center] but it's costing me quite a bit of money even with [Purchase of Care]."

"[My family] can't find or [is on a] waiting list for child care."

"As a full time school district employee with a self-employed spouse, my entire paycheck goes to child care, but I work so we can have benefits and so my daughters can have quality care that is so important. I hope we can help the families in our community get the same experience my daughters are getting, and provide it so that families do not have to sacrifice to access it."

### What You Can Do: Tell Legislators to Invest in Early Care and Education

- Increase per-child rates so programs can open more classrooms and increase staff pay and benefits
- Expand eligibility to at least 250% of the Federal Poverty Level
- Pay a statewide rate, increase rates in all counties to match the New Castle County rate
- Increase special education rates to cover necessary supports
- Pay providers based on enrollment to cover fixed costs

Send a message using this link



[bit.ly/ECCASK](https://bit.ly/ECCASK)

**deaeyc**

Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children

**FIRST STATE Pre-K**

**Rodel**

A GREAT EDUCATION CHANGES EVERYTHING

**Call to Action**

# Legislator Outreach Activity

Help us to help you by filling out this form:

<https://forms.gle/PvQnNGnCqAFh5AHn8>

Take a few minutes to check if your legislator has any upcoming events posted on their social media and/or sign up for their mailing list. Please continue to use this form in the future!



## Legislator Engagement

Thank you for your interest in engaging with your legislator(s). Filling out this form will help us keep track of which legislators have events and who all in our coalition is attending. You may not be able to find an event, and that is okay. It will also help us to understand who is interested in engaging with their legislator(s). You can fill out the form multiple times.

If you don't know your legislators, you can use the Delaware General Assembly's Find My Legislator tool: <https://legis.delaware.gov/FindMyLegislator>.

# What you can do and Next steps

- **Continue to contact JFC**

- Through this platform [bit.ly/FY25ChildCareAsk](https://bit.ly/FY25ChildCareAsk) or directly by email - [Find my legislator](mailto:legis.delaware.gov/FindMyLegislator) ([legis.delaware.gov/FindMyLegislator](mailto:legis.delaware.gov/FindMyLegislator) )
- Ask them to invest in early care and education
- Invite them to your early care and education program and let us know how we can help

- **Share your story**

- Let us know if you are willing to write a testimonial or letter to the [editor](mailto:firststateprek@gmail.com) ([firststateprek@gmail.com](mailto:firststateprek@gmail.com))

- **Post & Tag Your Legislators!**

- Tell them why to prioritize investments in early care and education
  - #InvestEarlyDE



[FirstStatePreK](https://www.facebook.com/FirstStatePreK)



[@FirstStatePreK](https://twitter.com/FirstStatePreK)

# Post & Tag Your Legislators!

Tell them why to prioritize investments in early care and education

“As a nurse who works in an acute care hospital full time, I am having to consider quitting my job due to lack of options for my new baby and toddler for child care. Which is one less nurse in the workforce.”

*-Parent, New Castle County*

“As a full time school district employee with a self-employed spouse, my entire paycheck goes to child care, but I work so we can have benefits and so my daughters can have quality care that is so important. I hope we can help the families in our community get the same experience my daughters are getting, and provide it so that families do not have to sacrifice to access it.”

*-Parent, Kent County*

“I stay home because we could not afford bills and child care. Even to stay home I am having to file bankruptcy because we can't even afford this but this was the better option compared to full time care so I can work. The cost of EVERYTHING is going up but job pay is increasing at a MUCH slower rate.”

*-Parent, Sussex County*



[FirstStatePreK](#)



[@FirstStatePreK](#)

## **Upcoming Events and Next Steps**

# 2024 Elections

## ***Long-term aspirations: Seeking Candidate Commitments***

- 1. Transformational investments*** to dramatically expand access to high-quality early care and education – likely requiring new revenue sources
- 2. Streamlined governance*** to simplify early care and education for programs and families

## ***See who is running in your district***

→ **Reach out and ask about their commitment to early childhood education**

# Looking to the Future: Delaware's Next Governor

- **Gubernatorial Candidate Education Forum hosted by the Vision Coalition (Madeleine)**
  - May 8th, 7:00 - 8:30, Polytech HS in Dover
  - [Register](#) and ask about early childhood when you reserve your spot
- **What candidates have said so far:**
  - **Collin O'Mara**
    - “We need a focus on universal pre-K for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds.”
    - “Improve access to affordable quality childcare by updating reimbursement rates (enacting Universal Pre-K will also help relieve some pressure on our childcare system).”
  - **Bethany Hall Long**
    - “Make sure every child regardless of their zipcode has access to early childhood education at birth and all the way to successful career and college opportunity.”
    - “Early Childhood Education is the most important foundation of the economy in our state”

# Join Upcoming Debates & Events

- [Early Childhood Advocacy Day](#)

- May 16th 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in Dover
- Panels in the morning, legislator meetings to follow

Register here!



[bit.ly/3VzGspw](https://bit.ly/3VzGspw)

- [Delaware Early Childhood Council](#)

- May 21 on Zoom, 1-3 p.m.(see public meeting calendar for link)
- *Ask state agency leaders about unspent funds and their commitments to increase rates, decrease copayments, increase absent days– and to pay prospectively based on enrollment*