

**Testimony of New York City Public Schools  
On 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers  
To the NYC Council Committee on Education**

February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Good afternoon, Chair Joseph and the members of the Education Committee here today.

My name is Dr. Kara Ahmed and I am the Deputy Chancellor for Early Childhood Education for NYC Public Schools. I am pleased to be joined here today by First Deputy Chancellor, Dan Weisberg. As a former early childhood educator and principal, this work is personal to me. And it is personal to our Chancellor, who rightly proclaims that bold futures begin with bright starts. We are both proud of what has been accomplished in a short amount of time and are confident in the progress that we will continue to make. We are committed to offering a range of high-quality, birth-to-5 programs in every neighborhood, based on the needs and preferences of our families.

We are grateful to have the capacity to serve over 140,000 children, which includes more than 10,000 infants and toddlers. We are providing 3K and Pre-K in every district in the city in a variety of settings, including both district elementary schools and standalone Pre-K Centers, as well as family childcare programs, charter schools, and community-based organizations (CBOs). I want to publicly thank all our early childhood educators and program and school leaders, who have devoted themselves to serving our children and their families. We could not do this work without them.

New York City Public Schools has a budget of \$2.2 billion for our early childhood education portfolio, which represents the largest early childhood education program in the nation and includes all programming serving children from birth to five years old. Approximately \$456 million, or 21% of our budget, comprises one-time federal stimulus funds. Approximately 25 percent of our overall budget includes state funding, primarily for our programming for four-year-olds, and approximately 6 percent of our budget is funding from the childcare block development grant that supports our 3K and Pre-K extended day and year seats, as well as our infant and toddler seats across our portfolio.

High-quality early childhood education that meets the needs of our young children is an essential part of our school system and a priority of this administration. We want to continue to build on what is working while addressing any gaps that adversely impact our children and their families. When I came before the Education Committee in October, I outlined the work my team has done in hearing from our programs and schools on the ground as we worked towards developing a comprehensive vision for a high-quality birth to five program built on an inclusive, mixed-delivery model that:

- Optimizes seats to provide high-quality programs aligned with family needs and preferences;
- Guarantees sustainable, equitable, and responsible financial support for programming;
- Develops and fairly compensates its workforce;
- And ensures safe, high-quality care and learning across NYC, for every child in every zip code

As we plan for the long-term success of early childhood education, we know there have been and continue to be a lot of challenges in this work. We are proud that Chancellor Banks announced last year our commitment to help stabilize the CBO sector. Our CBO leaders are invaluable partners in this work – a workforce comprised primarily of women, in particular women of color. So many of our CBO partners are cornerstones of their communities, and it is important to work in partnership to ensure we are serving their neighborhoods well.

A great example of this is the ongoing work our team has been doing to support our partners with the Shirley Chisholm Daycare center in Central Brooklyn. In collaboration and genuine partnership with the leadership of this program as well as elected officials in the community, our team has provided targeted supports and coaching on an ongoing basis that has helped to facilitate a successful program delivering high-quality early childhood education for children and supportive services for families. Our office continues to work in collaboration with this program, ensuring critical structures are in place, such as adequate and proper staffing, sound fiscal operations, developmentally appropriate teaching and learning systems, and health and safety practices. This type of work is what we are committed to practicing across the sector to support our programs and ensure the focus remains on our students receiving high-quality services.

More broadly, in early November the Chancellor announced a number of steps to support the CBO sector:

- a rapid response team to ensure every provider with unsubmitted invoices got the 1 to 1 help they needed;
- a commitment to pay invoices in a timely manner; and
- a new stabilization fund to pay providers 75% of their FY22 contract values regardless of their expenses and their enrollment

We are very pleased we were able to meet all those commitments in just a few months' time. The rapid response unit made thousands of calls, sent e-mails, and held meetings with providers, walking them through the processes to get their invoices submitted. We changed our invoice processing to speed payment, and we got the stabilization fund up and running. Since the Chancellor's announcement of our added support to stabilize the sector just twelve weeks ago, I am proud to report that we have been able to assist our CBO partners in submitting over 3700 back invoices from the previous fiscal year, resulting in over \$119 million in payments in just a short amount of time, totaling more than \$1 billion over the course of FY22. We also have delivered on the city's commitment to stand up stabilization fund grants and have already identified dozens of eligible vendors who have received, in total, millions of dollars in stabilization payments — numbers that will grow in the coming weeks.

In order to sustain this crucial work, we must ensure its financial sustainability. The system that we inherited unfortunately has been plagued by some deep flaws in the system that still hinder our progress. This includes a grave problem in our system of oversaturation —too many similar seats in one geographical area— while not meeting the demand in other communities. That leads to thousands of empty seats in some communities and long waitlists in others. Not only is this not the best use of

resources, but the imbalance creates unhealthy competition between and among our early childhood programs and schools, ultimately resulting in under-enrollment across the system. That has destabilized the sector, especially our community-based organizations that our city has relied on for years and are led mainly by women, and primarily of women of color. In addition, we are dealing with inequitable pay rates per child across settings, inadequate processes within DOE for supporting our CBO partners, and a 3K expansion that was funded through stimulus dollars that now faces a fiscal cliff.

I want to be clear: we are **not** reducing current funding to 3K. We currently have enough seats for every 3-year-old who needs one. We are pushing this work forward by building a birth to five program that will include 3K and Pre-K based on the needs and preferences of families and their communities, though we acknowledge the big challenge of determining how we will fund it considering the impending fiscal cliff.

But we *will* solve this problem, in collaboration with you, because our children's successful educational journey absolutely depends on it. We arrived at this place with city, state, federal help, and we will continue to need city, state, federal help to build on it. But we have to change our landscape by creating a sustainable and responsible financial plan that can fund our long-term commitments to children and guarantee stability for their families.

Our administration also believes that every child from every zip code must have access to a high-quality early childhood experience, and that includes our children with disabilities. Last December, we announced that our early childhood education system would include a strategic and intentional focus on serving young children living with disabilities and their families. New York City Public Schools is addressing these historic inequities by not only expanding the number of seats available, but also ensuring that existing seats can remain in place, giving our families and providers stability. We are ensuring pay parity to those providers and access to the same length of the school day that a child would receive in any of our early childhood classrooms. And many of these newly expanded special education preschool seats exist in under-resourced communities. Families of students with disabilities need reliable childcare, and we are committed to making that a reality in New York City. We thank Chair Joseph and the Council for its immense leadership on this issue.

### **Legislation**

I will now turn to the proposed legislation. We have not yet had an opportunity to fully examine the proposed legislation but look forward to working with the Council.

While there has been incredible progress made, let me be clear that this is certainly just the beginning. High-quality early childhood education that meets the needs of our young children is an essential part of our school system and a priority of this administration and our mission isn't close to accomplished. We have a lot of work ahead of us, and we aim to continue on this path in service to children and their families across New York City. Thank you all for your time and I look forward to answering any questions that the committee may have.



## Early Childhood Education Briefing

February 15, 2023

# FY22: Challenges + Solutions

- November 3rd = ~4,500 unsubmitted FY22 invoices, dating back to July 2021
- Tech systems needing improvements
- Destabilized CBO sector

## **Solution: Rapid Response Team**

Integrated approach  
Restructured vendor outreach  
Funding alignment

## **Solution: Tech System Changes**

Multiple Invoicing  
Decoupled Enrollment + Attendance Entry from Invoicing Submission  
  
Reduced Vendor Data Entry for Returning Children

## **Solution: Stabilization Fund**

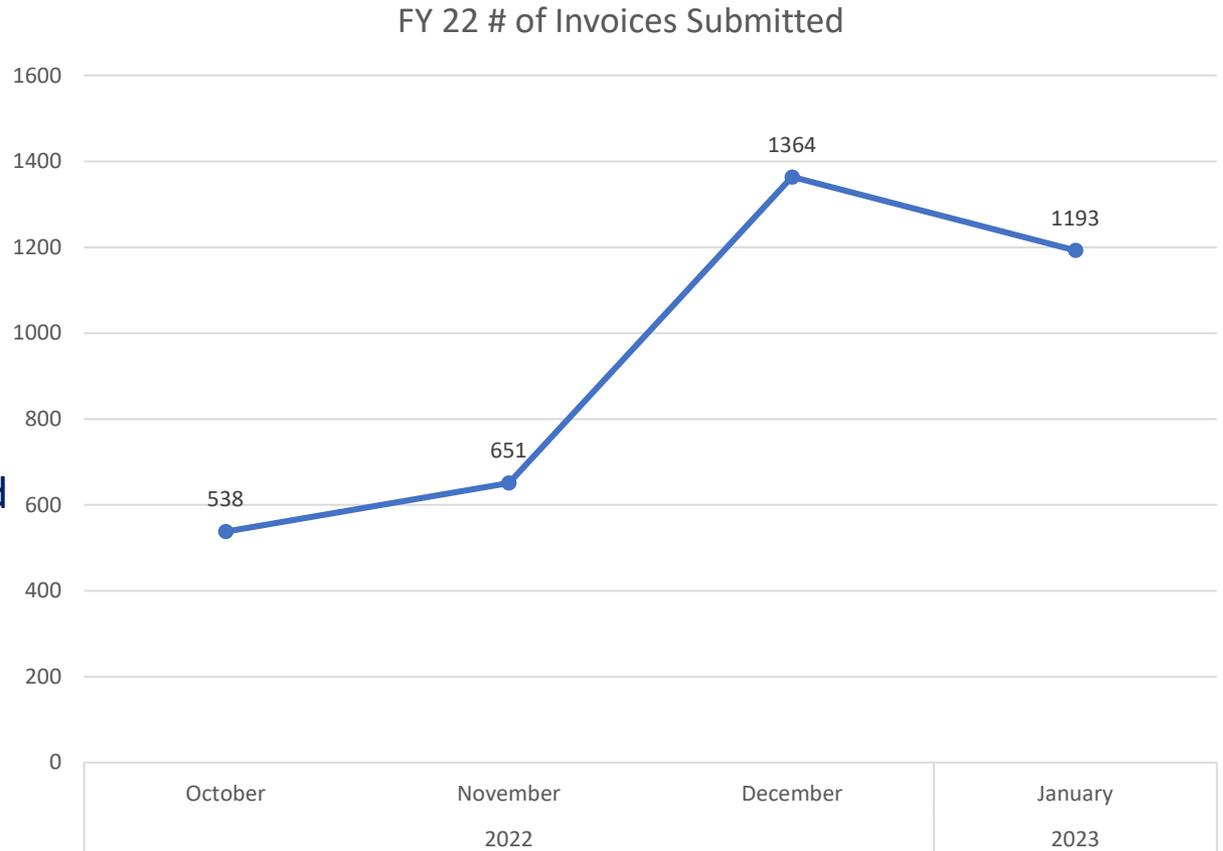
Payment up to 75% of FY22 Contract if not earned via Invoice Payments

Irrespective of Enrollment + Expenses

Eligible once all FY22 Invoices Submitted

# FY22 Sprint: Rapid Response Team

- Start of FY22 Sprint:
  - 11.3.23
  - over 4K unsubmitted invoices
- In less than 3 Months:
  - ~3,800 invoices submitted
  - Totaling over \$122M



# FY22: Stabilization Fund

Providers will be Paid up to 75% of their FY22 Contract:

- if they did not earn that amount in invoice payment
- after submitting all FY22 invoices
- irrespective of enrollment and expenses for FY22

YTD Outcomes:

- ~100 Programs
- ~\$10M Paid to Providers
- Numbers Will Continue to Grow

# FY23: Current State

Anticipated Total Payment for FY23

\$1,208,856,563

Total Amount of Money for Advances Issued to Date  
Over \$468M

Invoices Resolved/Paid

Received: 2,736 / Paid: 2,245 totaling ~ \$162M

Average FY23 Interval between Invoice Receipt and Payment

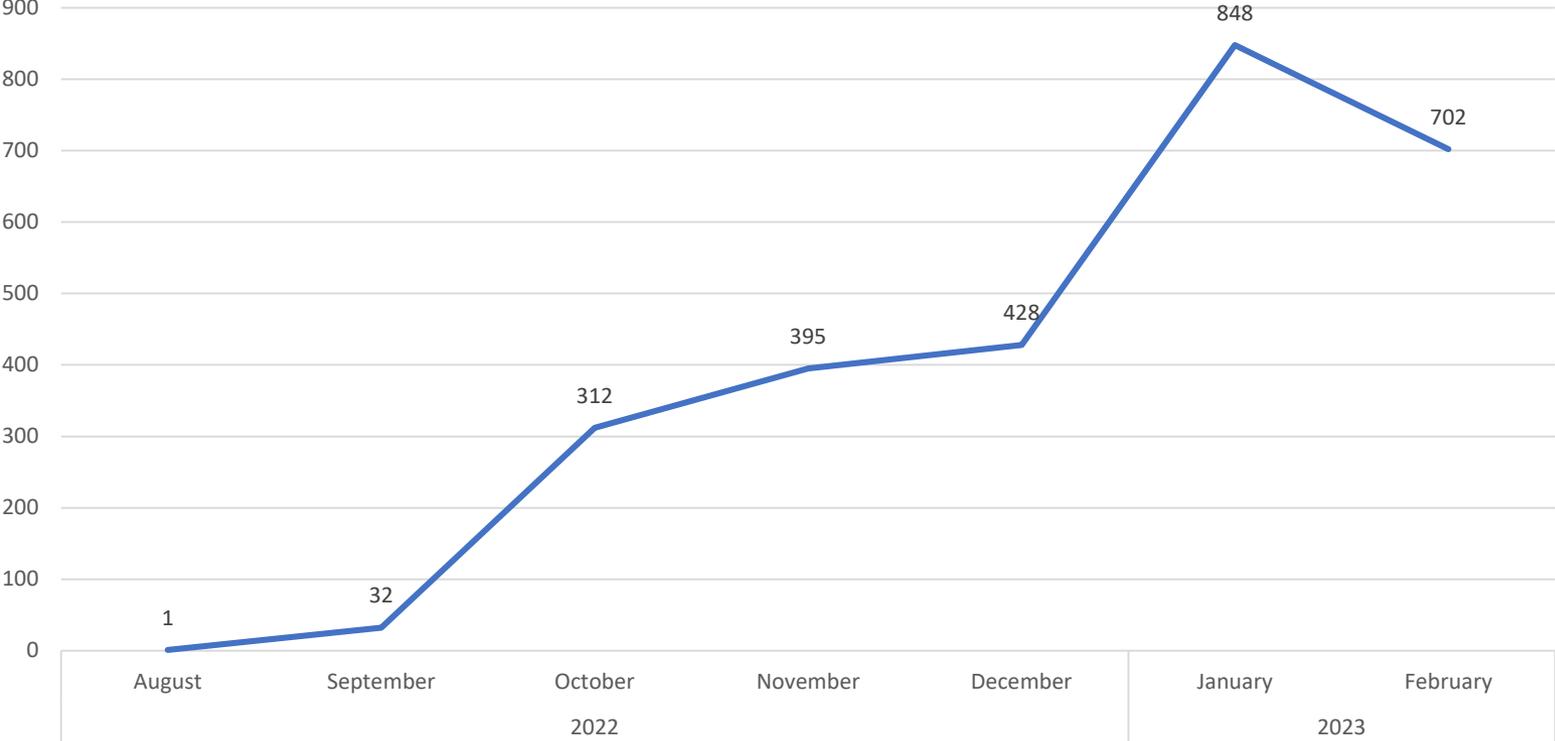
17.45 Business Days

Number of FY 23 Invoices Pending Over 30 Days – as of 2.15.23

25

# FY23 Invoice Submission + Payments

FY 23 # of Invoices Submitted





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**Testimony of Sarita Subramanian**  
**Assistant Director, New York City Independent Budget Office**  
**To the New York City Council Committee on Education Regarding Oversight**  
**of 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Payments to Early Childhood Providers**  
**February 15, 2023**

Good afternoon, Chair Joseph and members of the Education Committee. My name is Sarita Subramanian and I am the assistant director for education at the New York City Independent Budget Office. Thank you for the opportunity to testify at this oversight hearing on 3-K funding and payments to early childhood providers. In my testimony, I will first discuss the Department of Education's (DOE's) total early childhood expenditures—which include 3-K for three-year-olds, universal pre-K for four-year-olds, Early Learn for NYC contracted care, and Head Start programs which are operated through federal contracts administered by the city.

Then I will focus on payments to 3-K and universal pre-K providers as of the Mayor's Preliminary Budget released last month. I will report on the following amounts: the budget for this fiscal year, the commitments (reflecting contracts that are registered, invoices that are submitted and approved for payment, or invoices already paid), and expenditures (reflecting payments made). Expenditures are a component of commitments, therefore a large difference between the two numbers suggests a potential delay in payments after DOE has agreed to make payments. I will compare these amounts to those from the Preliminary Budget last year to see if a larger share of payments has been made so far this year. Finally, IBO supports the passage of Intro 843 as it would bring increased fiscal transparency to payments to early childhood providers.

**Early Childhood Expenditures and Estimated Budget over Ten Years**

The DOE's expenditures for early childhood programs have more than doubled since the 2017-2018 school year, the first year that 3-K was launched and when the Early Learn programs (and subsequently Head Start programs) were first transitioned to DOE's purview from the Administration for Children's Services. During the last school year (2021-2022), DOE expenditures for early childhood were more than \$2 billion—up from about \$911 million in 2017-2018.

Almost half of last year's early childhood spending (\$1 billion, 47 percent) funded the city's universal pre-K program. As 3-K expanded to citywide (although not universal) access during the last school year, it comprised about 27 percent of the early childhood budget (\$569 million). Early Learn and Head Start accounted for 21 percent and 6 percent of early childhood expenditures, respectively.

<b>Early Childhood Expenditures at DOE Have More than Doubled Since 2017-2018 School Year</b>						
<i>Dollars in millions</i>						
Early Childhood Program	School Years					
	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Universal Pre-K	\$849	\$893	\$954	\$920	\$922	\$1,008
3-K	-	7	52	153	168	569
Early Learn	-	11	18	404	382	441
Head Start	-	-	66	189	169	128
<b>Total Early Childhood</b>	<b>\$849</b>	<b>\$911</b>	<b>\$1,090</b>	<b>\$1,666</b>	<b>\$1,641</b>	<b>\$2,146</b>

SOURCE: IBO analysis of city's Financial Management System data. *New York City Independent Budget Office*

From 2020-2021 to 2021-2022, 3-K enrollment more than doubled from 15,480 students to 34,300 students based on the city's audited enrollment data. As with pre-K, 3-K is offered in the city's traditional public schools and in contracted New York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs), which include programs operated by community-based organizations, Early Learn programs, and Head Start programs. However, the city's 3-K expansion has relied increasingly on participating NYCEECs: last school year, 74 percent of 3-K students attended NYCEECs. In contrast, only 51 percent of pre-K students attended NYCEECs.

Also, unlike pre-K where the city secured additional state funding for universal access, the city's 3-K expansion relies on federal Covid aid that will expire by the 2024-2025 school year. Last school year, two-thirds of 3-K expenditures were funded by federal aid, with a similar share expected to pay for 3-K this year and next year. In the Mayor's November Financial Plan, the plans for 3-K expansion were scaled back and the projected budget for 2023-2024 (and annually thereafter) was reduced by \$283 million citing lower than expected enrollment. As a result, the reliance on federal relief aid was reduced for that year and the next. With additional city funds included for 2024-2025, only 13 percent of the 3-K budget will be supported by the federal aid. After the expiration of those relief funds, a gap of \$92 million remains for the 2025-2026 school year based on projected 3-K expenditures.

In addition, the Adams administration's Preliminary Budget, released last month, included \$70 million in a fund managed by the city's Economic Development Corporation as part of an effort to expedite payments to the city's contracted early childhood education providers that were not paid for at least 75 percent of their annual contract by the DOE from the last school year. Another \$1 million is being dedicated to a childcare marketing campaign, which may include 3K. These funds were included in the corporation's fiscal year 2023 budget.

<b>DOE Budget for 3-K Relies Primarily on Federal Covid Relief Aid Through 2023-2024</b>						
<i>Dollars in millions</i>						
3-K Funding Source	School Years					
	2020-2021	2021-2022	Projected 2022-2023*	Projected 2023-2024	Projected 2024-2025	Projected 2025-2026
City Funds	\$162	\$186	\$242	\$242	\$619	\$619
Federal Covid Relief Funds**	6	383	469	469	92	-
<b>3-K Total</b>	<b>\$168</b>	<b>\$569</b>	<b>\$711</b>	<b>\$711</b>	<b>\$711</b>	<b>\$619</b>

SOURCE: IBO analysis of city's Financial Management System data.  
NOTES: \*Projected 2022-2023 figures excludes an additional \$70 million in the city's Economic Development Corporation budget for expedited payments for 3-K providers from the previous school year.  
\*\*The city received \$2.1 billion in education aid from Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) to be spent by September 2023 and an additional \$4.8 billion in education aid from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to be spent by September 2024.

*New York City Independent Budget Office*

### Tracking Payments to 3-K and Pre-K Childcare Providers

Because over half of 3-K and pre-K students are served by contracted providers, IBO also analyzed how payments to providers for these students this year compared with payments last year, when many providers began reporting payment delays. The payment process is divided into four steps— first, the DOE must register contracts with the city's Comptroller's Office; second, providers must submit invoices based on actual enrollment; third, the DOE must approve invoices and finally, the DOE makes payments to providers. Delays in payments last year were due to issues with providers submitting invoices and issues with DOE processing payments. Lower than expected enrollment in 3-K has resulted in not only a reduction in the budget by the Adams administration, but also affected invoice submission by providers, who were unable to meet enrollment targets. In testimony at the City Council hearing in October 2022, the DOE reported on improvements to invoice processing and making payments faster by reducing paperwork for providers, and ensuring there was sufficient DOE staff to process invoices and provide training so providers could submit invoices according to DOE specifications.

Based on our analysis, it appears that fewer delays in registering contracts and receiving and processing invoices from providers—reflected in a greater level of commitments—have led to an increase in overall expenditures this year compared with last year. As of the release of the Preliminary Budget this year, 79 percent of budgeted funds to 3-K and pre-K providers had been committed, meaning the city had agreed to make payments to providers. As of the Preliminary Budget last year (which was released about a month later than this year), only 61 percent of funds had been committed.

In terms of actual expenditures, a larger share of this year's budget has been expended compared with a similar time last year. This year, 60 percent of budgeted funds have been spent (\$500 million) as of the release of the Preliminary Budget, compared with 44 percent of last year's budgeted funds as of the release of last year's Preliminary Budget (\$335 million). When we looked at expenditures as a share of commitments, however, we found a similar share this year (77 percent) compared with last year (73

percent) indicating that once the DOE agrees to make payments, there does not appear to be much difference in the timing of payments compared with last year. As of the release of the Preliminary Budget this year, \$152 million had been committed but not yet expended.

<b>Payments to 3-K and Pre-K Providers Are Higher This Year Compared with Last Year</b>			
<i>Dollars in millions</i>			
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Commitments</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>
2022	\$758	\$461	\$335
2023	828	652	500

SOURCE: IBO analysis of city's Financial Management System data.  
NOTES: Amounts for each fiscal year are reported as of the Mayor's Preliminary 2023 and 2024 Budgets, respectively.  
*New York City Independent Budget Office*

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any questions.



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

# Jumaane D. Williams

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**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS  
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
FEBRUARY 15, 2023**

Good afternoon,

My name is Jumaane D. Williams, and I am the Public Advocate for the City of New York. I would like to thank Chair Joseph and the members of the Committee on Education for holding this important hearing.

In 2021, then-Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that every three-year-old child in New York City would be guaranteed a 3-K seat by September 2023, expanding free 3-K to all 32 school districts. The benefits of early childhood education (ECE) are well-established in research: children who attend a high-quality ECE program are more likely to graduate, less likely to repeat a grade or to need accessible education support, and perform better on standardized tests.<sup>12</sup> Those who attend ECE programs have even been found to have higher levels of employment and income.

Last year, however, Mayor Adams and the Department of Education announced that they will not be expanding universal 3-K. This was a blow to already existing childcare providers who have not received the funding that they were promised and that they need to avoid going under—and some have already closed. It is unacceptable and unfair to expect organizations to provide a service on behalf of the city without the funding they need, and it is our children and families who suffer the consequences.

Universal pre-K and 3-K is also life-changing for parents, many of whom spend a large portion of their incomes on childcare. For many families, universal 3-K would allow parents to return to work or stop paying thousands of dollars per month on childcare costs. New York City is the most expensive city in the United States, and families relying on the promise of universal 3-K this September may be forced to either relocate or go into debt.

Like any resource, particularly when it comes to education, all ECE programs are not created equal. One study of New York City's ECE programs found that, during the initial years of Pre-K for All, quality lagged in sites mainly serving Black and Latinx children and those in the city's poorest census tracts.<sup>3</sup> Despite its flaws, New York City is unique in its commitment to providing universal preschool, as only a handful of other states offer it, and even fewer provide universal 3-K. These disparities signify a need for increased investment, coordination, engagement, and oversight.

One reason the mayor is no longer expanding 3-K is that many seats went unfilled: enrollment

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.umassglobal.edu/news-and-events/blog/what-is-purpose-of-early-childhood-education>

<sup>2</sup> <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/ejroc/early-childhood-education>

<sup>3</sup> [https://gse.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/nyc\\_pre-k\\_research\\_brief\\_r9.pdf](https://gse.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/nyc_pre-k_research_brief_r9.pdf)

declines due to the pandemic and combined with a lack of education and outreach meant that 3-K seats in the poorest communities most impacted by COVID-19 were left empty, while preschools in the wealthiest neighborhoods had long wait lists. Rather than engaging with families and simplifying enrollment in the communities with the most open seats, the mayor is simply pulling the plug, leaving the children whose families are already struggling without access to this vital programming. Engagement also needs to be in the languages spoken by those in the community, as many people who speak languages other than English may not know about the ECE options available to them.

However, a lack of engagement is not the only reason that seats have gone unfilled: most of the open seats are ones that do not work for working families, such as those DOE school-based programs with partial day hours (9 am to 2 or 3 pm) and more holiday closures, as opposed to community-based programs that have full day hours, similar to daycares. For parents and caregivers who work full-time, these half-day seats are not meeting their needs. To increase participation, the city must either increase community-based seats or adapt the school-based seats to fit the needs of families.

Despite the promise of universal pre-K and expanded 3-K, many non-profit childcare providers have reported extensive delays in receiving funds from the city. Last fall, Mayor Adams and Chancellor Banks committed to paying at least 75 percent of the value of FY 2022 DOE contracts for all community-based ECEs, and city-funded Rapid Response Teams will conduct weekly meetings with ECE providers until all FY22 invoices are submitted and up-to-date. However, these providers need the full amount of funding promised to them to meet their expenses. These delays come at great personal cost for providers, with many taking out loans and lines of credit or investing their own money just to avoid closing their doors entirely. School started five months ago, and too many providers haven't seen even one dollar that they were promised. This is unacceptable, and I look forward to learning today what is causing the delays and how we can fix it.

Thank you.



**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT VANESSA L. GIBSON**

February 15, 2023

RE: City Council Committee on Education Oversight Hearing on 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers

Good Afternoon, Chair Joseph and the members of the City Council Committee on Education. I am Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, and I want to thank you for convening this important hearing today. Like you, I have serious concerns about the ongoing crisis affecting our community-based early childhood education providers. These providers are an essential part of the preschool and early care and education landscape in The Bronx and across the city. However, they are under immense financial strain due to several interconnected factors, many of which are related to policies and procedures enacted by the Department of Education (DOE). These issues have been brewing for several years, but we now have the opportunity to address these problems and make things right for our providers.

Community-based providers have been the anchor of early childhood education since before the beginning of the rollout of Universal Pre-K. In The Bronx, we are particularly dependent on these providers, and they provide an essential service in our neighborhoods that school-based programs cannot always replicate. The community-based providers often have opportunities for extended evening and night hours as well as summer hours. They are also the only programs available for children under three years old. These options are critical to families whose work schedules may not cooperate with the standard school options.

Many of these early childhood education providers are led by women and people of color, with a deep rooted and long history of serving our most vulnerable children in The Bronx. They should not feel ignored nor undervalued when they are needed the most. They provide local jobs, hire from within our communities and have the unique ability to understand the needs of our children.

These providers have been under increased stress for years, and this difficulty has only increased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The slow rate of reimbursement from the DOE to these providers has made their continued operation more difficult, and in some cases non-viable. A three-week turnaround time is viewed as the norm, and invoices can be outstanding for months. Some of the providers that I have spoken with have outstanding invoices from Fiscal Year 2022, which ended more than six months ago. This is an unacceptable delay in getting these providers the money they need to stay in operation.

These reimbursement delays have led to difficult choices for the people who run these programs. I have heard from providers who have had to miss payroll, leaving their hardworking teachers out in the cold, unable to support their families despite providing an essential service to our city's children. Additionally, these providers have often had to miss payments to their vendors or on their rent, imperiling their ability to retain these services in the future. These providers said that they often feel like they are in competition with DOE instead of working as your partners. They feel like the DOE has not been sufficiently communicative, and I agree that improvements must be made. This reimbursement situation is an unacceptable reality that imperils the early childhood education landscape in The Bronx.

Many of the providers that I spoke to believe that the DOE is deprioritizing the community-based providers in favor of the schools-based programs. While the schools-based programs are essential to achieve universal preschool, the community-based providers remain underenrolled. The demand for these programs exists in the community, so we must find a way to better connect families to these providers.

Additionally, there are important issues that DOE must address around enrollment practices, invoicing and other billing practices, teacher hiring, and persistent problems stemming from the closures during the COVID-19 pandemic that are of concern to these providers. Should this crisis go unaddressed, I fear that many of these providers will have to shut their doors, leaving many children without a place to get early education and leaving families in the lurch.

There are many possible solutions that can be explored to improve this difficult situation. In consultation with the Day Care Council of New York, I am calling for the enactment of the following proposals:

- The DOE must immediately pay out on all outstanding claims from these providers for Fiscal Year 2022.
- The invoicing and payment processes should be moved out of the DOE PreKids system into the PASSPort system at the Mayor’s Office of Contract Services, which would simplify the process for providers.
- The DOE must pay all Fiscal Year 2023 invoices promptly, move to multiple month invoicing, and ensure that the lag between invoicing and reimbursement never extends beyond one month.
- Do not penalize providers for enrollment lower than capacity so long as DOE controls enrollment.

I support the passage of Int 843 which would improve reporting by DOE about reimbursements in invoicing for early childhood care and education providers. While I have heard from a large number of providers about these issues, it will be beneficial to understand the whole scope of the problem from the whole universe of providers. Transparency about DOE’s failure to pay our providers in a timely manner is the best way to create a solution.

Bronx families, particularly from Black and Hispanic communities, rely on community-based daycare and preschool providers. These providers no longer being able to serve these communities would be a serious blow to the ideal of universal high quality early childhood education in our city. The DOE simply does not have the capacity to take on all of these children should these programs go under. Together, we must ensure that our early childhood providers will be able to serve Bronx children – and children from all over the city – for years to come.



# Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn since 1971

## Testimony to be Delivered to the New York City Council Committee on Education

### Re: 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers

February 15, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss early childhood education in New York City. My name is Betty Baez Melo, and I am an attorney and Director of the Early Childhood Education Project at Advocates for Children of New York (AFC). For more than 50 years, Advocates for Children has worked to ensure a high-quality education for New York students who face barriers to academic success, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. Every year, we help thousands of families navigate the education system, starting from the time children are born.

We appreciate the Council's focus on early childhood education today. It is now widely accepted that the first few years of a child's life are fundamental to their development and that preschool programs are crucial in preparing young children for kindergarten and setting them up for success later in life. Over the past ten years, the City has greatly expanded access to early childhood programs by launching Pre-K and 3-K for All and, most recently, by implementing Promise NYC to increase access to programs for children who are undocumented. However, making 3-K truly universal is not only a matter of adding seats, but of ensuring access to preschoolers with disabilities and other historically marginalized groups of children.

At AFC, we have heard from numerous families who needed a preschool special education classroom placement for their child but were told that there was no seat available. At the end of last June, 800 preschoolers with significant disabilities were waiting for seats in their legally mandated preschool special education classes. Many of these children are diagnosed with autism, are non-verbal, or have delays in multiple areas of development. These children stand to benefit significantly from early childhood programs, and the City cannot leave these children behind.

We have also heard from families whose children with disabilities are in 3-K and pre-K general education classes but are not receiving their legally mandated special education services – such as part-time special education teacher services, speech

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therapy, or counseling. According to DOE data, one in four children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in 3-K and Pre-K for All programs did not receive their full mandated services by the end of the 2020-2021 school year, in violation of their legal rights.

While there is more work to do, with the Council's support, the City has taken some important steps to help address these systemic legal violations – including opening hundreds of new preschool special class seats, committing to addressing the shortage of seats by the spring, opening integrated classes, and hiring dozens of related service providers and staff to help address delays with preschool IEPs.

However, the City is relying on \$88 million in federal COVID-19 stimulus funding this year to fund these initiatives—funding that will be expiring in the fall of 2024. As you consider next steps on sustaining and expanding 3-K, it is critical to also work to sustain and expand these preschool special education programs and services.<sup>1</sup> Serving children with disabilities is not optional.

Similarly, while some seats remain empty, the City's 3-K and Pre-K programs are under serving children in temporary housing, who could greatly benefit from having a safe, consistent, high-quality preschool program, and children from immigrant families who have historically been excluded from certain programs because of their immigration status. Plans to assess need and determine the location of classrooms need to include increased access and outreach to families whose children are disproportionately left out of these programs. To sustain recent progress, we urge you to ensure the City extends funding for [Promise NYC](#) so that children can access all 3-K and Pre-K for All programs regardless of their immigration status. Funding for this program, which just launched in January, will expire in June unless it is extended in the upcoming city budget.

We look forward to working with you to ensure the City has an early childhood system that meets the needs of all young children and families in New York City, including children from immigrant families, children in temporary housing and children with disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about long-term education programs currently funded with one-time federal COVID-19 relief funding, see [Sustaining Progress for NYC Students: A Call to Action for Policy Makers](#).

**Testimony by Chris Banks, Board Member, Boulevard Nursery School Inc to the New York City Council Committee on Education re: T2023-2972, Oversight - 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers, Wednesday, February 15, 2023 1:00pm, City Council Chambers**

Good afternoon, Chair Joseph and other distinguished members of the New York City Council's Committee on Education. My name is Chris Banks, a lifelong resident and advocate for the great Brooklyn neighborhood of East New York. I presently serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Boulevard Nursery School, Incorporated, located at 2150 Linden Boulevard in East New York Brooklyn. This early education facility provides daily early educational programming for up to 70 children per day, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8am to 6pm.

These services allow many parents and caregivers to have a safe space for their children while they go to work, attend school, or respond to other daily obligations. The majority of the parents, caregivers, children, and staff are from the East New York community, which is one of the poorest and most disadvantaged districts in New York City.

I am here today to provide testimony on behalf of the staff, the parents, and most importantly, the children who benefit from the invaluable services provided by the Boulevard Nursery School. The school provides several programs to these families that include Childcare services, Universal Pre-K, an Early Learn Program, that is made specifically for a child's social and intellectual development. Services include on-site programming for children ages three to four-years-old, a pre-kindergarten program that is offered to all four-year-olds in partnership with the NYC Department of Education.

From the Nursery School's on-site EarlyLearn NYC program, parents and children can experience care five days a week, up to ten hours a day, 12 months of the year in a safe, clean, and nurturing environment. Experienced, certified, and trained teachers, serve all participating children including those with special needs. Participants receive free, daily nutritious meals and snacks, access to community resources such as dental and medical screenings, and developmentally appropriate educational instruction. Children also receive Private Care as the Boulevard Nursery School understands that some children

don't feel comfortable when surrounded by other children or other people in general and provides private care services that are designed to cater to a child's educational needs while he or she is in a place, like his or her home or a center, where learning is conducive.

The center also provides General Education Development (GED) classes for the purpose of expanding the choices to parents regarding the career path they may wish to take in the future.

These programs are critical services to residents of a traditionally underserved community such as East New York and preserving the existence of these types of programs are critical to my neighborhood and others like it.

However, in the recent past, the Boulevard Nursery School has faced the possibility of closing due to no fault of their own. Delays in payments from the City have threatened the school's ability to make payroll on several occasions since October of 2022! These are not wealthy people, but they are members of the community who are dedicated to providing the best possible outcomes for their youth who are often forgotten and cast aside leading to poor outcomes as they get older. We cannot and must not allow administrative bureaucracy to threaten programs like the Boulevard Nursery School as the consequences will be felt by the staff, the parents, and most importantly, the children of this low-income community.

I ask the committee to please look into the causes of these payment delays that have threatened the existence of this quality program and others like it across the city. The early education safety net must be protected, or we will pay a much greater price in the future.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today, and look forward to answering any questions you may have.



**New York City Council Education Committee Oversight Hearing:  
3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers**

***Testimony for Submission: Children's Aid***

**Tuesday, February 15, 2023**

Thank you to Chair Rita Joseph, members of the Education committee, and the New York City Council for the opportunity to submit this testimony for the record on behalf of Children's Aid for the New York City Council's oversight hearing on 3-k funding cuts and payments to early childhood care and education providers.

With a mission to help children living in poverty to succeed and thrive, Children's Aid provides comprehensive support to children, youth, and their families in some of the most under-resourced neighborhoods in New York City. Since our founding in 1853, Children's Aid has been anchored in the knowledge that poverty cannot be overcome with a single service delivered at a single point in time. We are a solutions-driven, multi-service agency employing a holistic strategy that serves children and their families at every stage of development, from cradle through college and career; and in every key setting — home, school, and community. Today our 2,000 full- and part-time staff members empower 50,000 children, youth, and their families through our network of 40 locations, including early childhood education centers, public schools, community centers, and community health clinics. Our comprehensive services are in Harlem, Washington Heights, the South Bronx, and the north shore of Staten Island. Children's Aid provides early childhood education programs for 850 infants, toddlers and preschoolers across a total of 9 sites. Five of our sites are co-located in NYCDOE public schools.

As an organization with a strong city advocacy and legislative campaign, Children's Aid is a member and supports the platforms of Campaign for Children (C4C), Fair Futures, Human Services Council (HSC), and the New York City Coalition for Community Schools Excellence (CCSE). As a member of HSC, we support the #JustPay Campaign, which is a racial equity and gender justice campaign committed to ending the government's exploitation of human services workers by demanding that sector employees under contract with the New York City and State be paid fair wages for their labor.

***Recommendations for Early Childhood Education Sector:***

Children's Aid is a Steering Committee member of the Campaign for Children (C4C), a coalition of over 150 organizations, parents, and advocates, formed in 2011 to improve and expand New York City's early childhood education and youth services ecosystem. C4C recognizes that families



need access to year-round, high-quality, affordable child care and youth programs in order to survive and thrive in New York City, and that protecting, strengthening, and expanding availability of these services is critical at this moment.

At a time when early childhood education providers in contract with the City's Department of Education continue to suffer severe financial hardships due to delayed payments for FY'22 and FY'23, the FY 2024 Budget moves New York City away from the path to Universal Child Care. The FY2024 Preliminary Budget cuts the expansion of 3-K for All programs and fails to take action on investments and operational reforms needed to stabilize and strengthen the early childhood education system and meet the needs of children, families and the workforce.

Campaign for Children's Early Childhood Policy Priorities are designed to ensure that New York City's FY 2024 Budget not only keeps the promise of 3-K for All but puts New York City solidly on the path to universal child care.

#### **Immediate action and operational reforms to achieve fiscal stability in FY'23:**

- Immediately complete back payments, bringing all center based providers to no less than 75% of their full contract value for FY'22.
- Increase FY 2023 advance payments to 75% of full contract value to address emerging and serious payment delays for the current fiscal year.
- Extend provider's ability to batch and submit multiple months of invoices and maintain DOE rapid response teams charged with assisting providers to FY 2023 and for future years.
- Release an RFP for the expansion of 3-K for All supporting NEW extended day year round seat capacity start in July and services to start in September;
- Separate the system supporting enrollment data collection from the system responsible for invoicing & payments and migrate DOE invoicing and payments out of the PreKids system and into Passport by FY'24.

#### **Meet Child and Family Needs by Keeping the Promise of 3-K for All in FY'24:**

- Commit to fund current 3-K program levels and restoring the timeline for the 3-K expansion.
- Convert existing 3-K school day / school year seats, to extended day, year round seats and ensure 3-K expansion efforts prioritize creating new capacity for extended day, year round seats.
- Invest a robust level of resources (*potentially city and philanthropic*) in linguistically and culturally appropriate on the ground and multi-media



marketing, community engagement and enrollment efforts for 3-K and early childhood education programs.

- Reform enrollment procedures so that community based organizations have the option of directly enrolling children whose families apply for 3-K, Pre-K or child care.

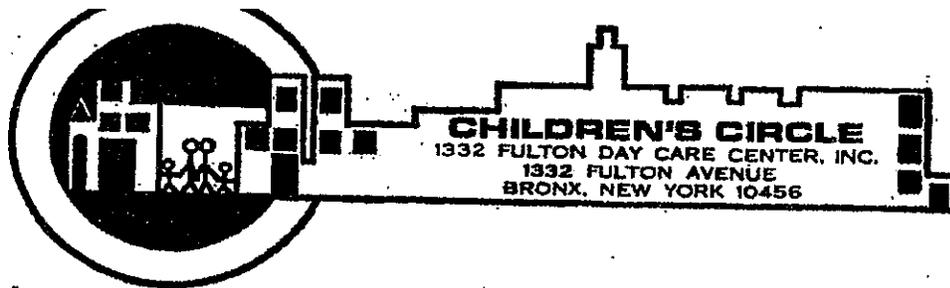
**Invest in the early childhood workforce in FY'24:**

- Fund a new labor contract that advances childhood education parity between center and school based services – ensuring staff left out of the first phase of parity (early childhood directors, support staff in community based organizations and preschool special education teachers and support staff ) are included, that longevity factored into salary increases, and that a minimum wage floor of \$25 is established for all support staff.
- Ensure home-based family child care providers benefit from the increased market rate (reimbursement has increased to 80 percent from 65 percent).

**Put New York City on a solid path to Universal Child Care:**

- Prioritize meeting the full day, year round needs of children and families across all settings - – supporting both center based and family child care network contracts that ensure extended day, year round care is offered
- Ensure children with developmental delays and disabilities can receive mandated developmental and special education supports and services in center-based birth to five programs and that preschool special education capacity meets demand.
- Build upon the successes UPK and new 3K marketing and community engagement efforts to continuously improve the take up of services across age ranges and modalities (family child care and center based care).

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. If you have any questions about this testimony, please contact me at [lbilik@childrensaidnyc.org](mailto:lbilik@childrensaidnyc.org).



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Fax. (718) 378-2536

February 15, 2023

I thank the City Council for hosting this meeting. It seems D.O.E. refuses to honor their word when it comes to Community based Daycares. Centers are still going through tremendous hardships when it comes to funding. You have directors paying their staff out of their own pockets. Centers should not have to keep taking out Bridge Loans to pay their expenses. When Chair Joseph and Chancellor Banks had the press conference in the Katter part of 2022, we were assured everything would be worked out, but it still has not happened. When have to come to an agreement and D.O.E. has to honor their word.

Thank You

Joyce McClammy

Vice President of Local 205

Chair Joseph and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Mary Cheng and I am the Director of Childhood Development Services at the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC). CPC's FCC, Early Childhood and School Age Centers are critical safety nets for thousands of working-class, AAPI, and immigrant families. In addition to providing childcare for low-income families, CPC's Childhood Development Services (CDS) staff are instrumental in supporting the growth of children of color with disabilities.

As we head into another year of contracting with the DOE we continue be frustrated by the Vendor Portal system, which is a system created by DOE in hopes of unifying, enrollment, attendance, budget and invoicing. But the system is plagued with issues. For example, FY23, we were severely delayed in payments, still to date we are still awaiting 5 months of outstanding invoices for our service. The DOE only changed their system for FY22 to allow for multiple months invoicing to try and rectify the severe delay of FY22. But instead of learning from last year's inadequacy, for FY 23 they went back to month-to-month invoicing which has resulted in severe delays in payment for FY23. To date for FY23 we have only received July 2022 payment and we are in the month of Feb. I understand a notice came out this week to allow for multiple invoicing starting at the end of Feb but this just shows how inadequate the system is.

Also, we are facing multiple issues with certifying attendance which is linked to allow us to invoice. The issue is that we are plagued with an enrollment and attendance system that isn't accurate, and unfortunately we also have no way to rectify the discrepancies on our own, we have to diligently await the OA (occupational analyst) to correct the issues we find. This is taking upwards to 4-8 weeks to correct. This delay in rectifying the issue, leads to delay in invoicing for the work we are doing. Not to mention that we receive multiple notifications to state that "we must certify our attendance by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month after. Providers that fail to meet the above requirements may be subject to the following:

- Letters to file that document delinquencies in attendance submission, which may be considered in future city contract awards
- Mandatory training on attendance recordkeeping and other business processes
- Site visits to observe Providers' attendance-keeping and data entry processes
- Non-payment
- Any other actions deemed necessary by the DOE

It is the tone in which this was written which is very penalizing on the part of the provider- however the issues lie with DOE providing the CBOs with not only an accurate attendance list but also timely as well. We analyze the enrollment/attendance list so closely because it is directly linked the % of reimbursement we are to receive back from DOE, so we must do our due diligence. However it is very frustrating when we can't hold them accountable or penalize them for creating this systemic issue.

We call for DOE to decouple attendance from invoicing, as we still are required anticipate to service the amount of children we are contracted for and a reevaluation of the Vendor portal system.

Unfortunately, with a centralized enrollment system, we have no control over who DOE awards seats to. Every year, we have seen a fluctuation in number of awarded children to our center that does not meet our capacity amount. Families usually enroll on the online system without truly understanding the discrepancies details of each seat. This confusion isn't just with immigrant families, but even within educated English speaking families as well. Navigating a public system, should not be so hard for families. We want families to walk in and make their choices based on the full knowledge of our program not from behind a screen, this way we can support the process and they truly also feel supported through it all.

We families feel unsupported and confused by the system, they blame the CBO's for not being transparent and it leads to jumping between schools. But at the end of the day CBO's are left holding the rest of the bill because DOE didn't provide enough children into our programs to begin with.

All these issues leave directors really standing behind a computer screens instead of focusing on the children. There is a gross imbalance between the business aspect of education and the quality and care of education. We understand the need for both as providers, but in DOE's current state, it is severely straining our program quality and sound fiscal practice at risk.

**This is why we are demanding that the City Council and the Mayor correct the gross inadequacy of the DOE invoicing and enrollment system and to fully invest in our workforce to ensure that our children receive the quality education they deserve.**

We are contracted to serve NYC children under the same capacity; to educate with the same curriculum, credentials, assessments and requirements. But **YET** CBO's, FCC's and DYCD Programs are funded disproportionately to their counterparts within DOE. It is wrong that the DOE STILL does not invest equitable benefits and salary parity to staff THEY considered essential during this pandemic. Support staff without longevity are paid a mere 30 cents above minimum wage due to the contract negotiated with the City. We are seeing an exodus of staff from the Child care system, due to the disparity, many of the support staff have left for substitute positions within DOE, which pays a rate of \$33 an hour. The exodus of staff compromises the quality of programming for our children.

**CPC calls for equitable investment towards Pay Parity for the staff within ALL Center Based Organizations and further investment towards an increase in child rates for home-based childcare providers.**

I would also like to note a counter argument to DOE's First Deputy Chancellor, Dan's comment at the testimony. He had shown a power point slide in which he noted that providers were to blame for not submitting their invoices timely in July and August of 2022 for FY 23. I would like to state that DOE had a system failure, providers were unable to submit FY 23 budgets until late Sept because the vendor portal system was not ready to allow us to create. They also mandated that we would need to submit our budgets no later than October 14, 2022. The earliest budget approval was in Nov. 2022. Which meant the earliest we could submit an invoice is about Nov of 2022 for July. The last of my budgets was just approved on Feb 9, 2022. This is 6 months past the start of the FY. Yet the advancement given only covers a little over 3 months of the FY. His statement covers up that the actual problem is starts within DOE not the in providers. We unfortunately get looped into the confusion because DOE can not give us proper communication and guidance. There are no phone



numbers for all the OA's or their directors provided to us, so we can only rely on email until they outreach back to us.

**This lack of responsibility, ownership and leadership from the DOE administration is unacceptable, and in the end hurts the city's children and the mission of why we chose to collaborate with the city. We choose to do the much needed work, because we as providers believe that the children, it's community need and deserve quality childcare representative of them. Unfortunately, at this point as providers distrust and are skeptical of DOE's true reason for servicing the early childhood sector.**

I appreciate your time and would be happy at any time to discuss more in-depth about the challenges with DOE B-5 issues.

Mary Cheng, Director of Childhood Development Services  
[mcheng@cpc-nyc.org](mailto:mcheng@cpc-nyc.org)

## Action Required: 2022-2023 Attendance Submission



You forwarded this message on Wed 1/11/2023 9:55 AM



EarlyChildhoodPolicy <EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov>



To: Chan-Hong Yang; Donald Kwan; Edgar Pereira; Karrie Chan; Kim To; Kitty Wong; Mamie Chan +3 others

Wed 1/11/2023 7:58 PM

Dear Provider,

Accurate recordkeeping of attendance is a critical safety practice. In August and then again in the fall we sent the [2022-2023 Updated Enrollment & Attendance Protocols](#) notifying all providers of the expectations for this school year and moving forward.

All programs are expected to record and certify daily attendance in PreKIDS. For EDY (Extended Day and Year) and Head Start programs, attendance records are required starting from July 2022, and for SDY (School Day and Year) programs, they are required since the first day of school in September. As a reminder, daily attendance for all programs must be entered into PreKIDS by 11:00 am daily, and EDY programs must also enter students' times out by 11:00 am the following day. Programs must certify their attendance no later than the 5th of each calendar month.

- According to our records, your program has not entered all attendance records for **September, October, November and December 2022 for MAUU and MBKU**. Your program is out of compliance with contractual requirements, and city and state law, as applicable. As a next step, please submit all your attendance records for July 2022- December 2022 by **January 17, 2023**. Additionally, please ensure that for the remainder of the year, you are following the attendance record-keeping protocols required by your contract and outline in [2022-2023 Updated Enrollment & Attendance Protocols](#).

Providers that fail to meet the above requirements may be subject to the following:

- Letters to file that document delinquencies in attendance submission, which may be considered in future city contract awards
- Mandatory training on attendance recordkeeping and other business processes
- Site visits to observe Providers' attendance-keeping and data entry processes
- Non-payment
- Any other actions deemed necessary by the DOE

Barring any extenuating circumstances, providers that miss three or more monthly attendance deadlines in a program year may be subject to additional measures, including a Corrective Action Plan and contract termination.

Best,

DECE Strategy & Policy Team



**Testimony of Elysia Murphy  
Deputy Executive Director  
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York**

**Presented to the New York City Council Committee on Education  
Oversight: 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers  
February 15, 2023**

Since 1944, CCC has served as an independent, multi-issue child advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that every New York child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. CCC does not accept or receive public resources, provide direct services, or represent a sector or workforce. We document the facts, engage and mobilize New Yorkers, and advocate for New York City's children and their families.

CCC has a long history working with our partners in advocacy and city leaders to ensure that actions are taken to protect and expand early care and education services (ECE) in New York City. Over the past decade, we have seen tremendous growth in the city's contracted ECE system with the expansion of universal Pre-K, the introduction of universal 3-K and the transition of EarlyLearn contracts from ACS (Administration for Children's Services) to DOE (Department of Education). In the data slides attached to our testimony, you can find information illustrating this growth, with pre-pandemic enrollment of the contracted system reaching just over 92,000 children in school year 2019/2020, including 67,000 in Pre-K, 17,000 in 3-K, and 7,000 in infant and toddler care (Slide 2). By 2020, 70 percent of the city's contracted ECE system supported school-day and school-year services, and most children served were 4-year-olds (slide 4).

At the same time, CCC and our partners on the Campaign for Children have heard countless accounts from staff and leadership at contracted early care and education programs about the challenges experienced during this time. As we entered the pandemic, an entirely new system was coming online due to new DOE contracts; with new Family Child Care contracts beginning in the summer of 2020 and center-based birth-to-five contracts beginning Summer 2021. Like many nonprofit social services programs, the contracted early care and education community experienced significant disruptions throughout the pandemic. Both Family Child Care and centers experienced a shuttering of their doors in the initial days, followed by hybrid and then in-person services. Not only were these providers serving communities hardest hit by the health-related impacts of the pandemic and significant loss of income and jobs experienced by caregivers, but the young children these providers serve were not eligible for vaccines until the Summer of 2022 (Slide 5).

Adding to an already challenging situation, we see that as new contracts came online, the DOE prioritized school-day and school-year services over extended-day, year-round services. In fact, new Family Child Care contracts added 3,000 seats and almost all of them were for school-day, school-year care (slide 6), and new center-based contracts added 12,000 school-day, school-year seats and reduced year-round, full-day care by 3,000 (slide 7). From our discussions with providers and partners, we know that the confluence of these factors has had a significant impact on enrolling and retaining families.

We see illustration of this in the data, while enrollment system-wide hovered at over 81 percent prior to the pandemic, it dropped to 74 percent by the 2022 school year; with 33,000 seats unfilled in school year 2022 (Slide 8). This underutilization is highly problematic given how much the demand for early care and education (for infants, toddlers, and three-year-olds) outstrips system capacity (slide 3).

Furthermore, the transition to new leadership in the DOE and considerable loss of staffing within city agencies has led to unacceptably long payment delays. In September of 2022, Seachange reported \$464 million owed to child care providers for the FY'22 fiscal year (a fiscal year that concluded in June 2022). And while the DOE has committed to meet the center-based contract payment floor of 75 % of the full contract value and has employed rapid response teams to work with providers and permitted the batching of multiple months of invoices to help expedite catching up, we continue to hear distress from providers about payments owed for FY'22. Now, we fear that payment delays for FY'23 are adding to an already unacceptable level of fiscal strain and instability.

Sadly, at a time when early childhood education providers in contract with the City's Department of Education continue to suffer severe financial hardships due to delayed payments for FY'22 and FY'23, the FY 2024 Budget moves New York City away from the path to Universal Child Care. The FY 2024 Preliminary Budget cuts \$568 million from 3-K for All and fails to take action on other investments and operational reforms needed to stabilize and strengthen the early childhood education system and meet the needs of children, families, and the workforce.

CCC and our Campaign for Children partners have identified Early Childhood Policy Priorities that are designed to ensure that New York City's FY 2024 Budget not only keeps the promise of 3-K for All but puts New York City solidly on the path to universal child care.

Today, I am echoing the calls of my colleagues to take the following action steps:

#### **Immediate action and operational reforms to achieve fiscal stability in FY'23**

- Immediately complete back payments, bringing all center-based providers to no less than 75% of their full contract value for FY'22.
- Increase FY 2023 advance payments to 75% of full contract value to address emerging and serious payment delays for the current fiscal year.
- Extend provider's ability to batch and submit multiple months of invoices and maintain DOE rapid response teams charged with assisting providers to FY 2023 and for future years.
- Release an RFP (Request For Proposal) for the expansion of 3-K for All supporting NEW extended day year-round seat capacity start in July and services to start in September.
- Separate the system supporting enrollment data collection from the system responsible for invoicing & payments and migrate DOE invoicing and payments out of the PreKids system and into Passport by FY'24.

#### **Meet Child and Family Needs by Keeping the Promise of 3-K for All in FY'24**

- Commit to fund current 3-K program levels and restoring the timeline for the 3-K expansion.
- Convert existing 3-K school-day/ school-year seats, to extended day, year-round seats and ensure expansion efforts prioritize creating new capacity for extended day, year-round seats across all age cohorts.

- Invest a robust level of resources in linguistically and culturally appropriate on the ground and multi-media marketing, community engagement and enrollment efforts for 3-K and all other early childhood education programs.
- Reform enrollment procedures so that community-based organizations have the option of directly enrolling children whose families apply for 3-K, Pre-K or child care.

#### **Invest in the early childhood workforce in FY'24**

- Fund a new labor contract that advances salary parity between center and school-based service teachers and staff – ensuring staff left out of the first phase of parity (early childhood directors, preschool special education teachers and all support staff) are included, that longevity factored into salary increases, and that a minimum wage floor of \$25 is established for all support staff.
- Ensure home-based Family Child Care providers benefit from the increased market rate (reimbursement has increased to 80 percent from 65 percent).

As we focus on an equitable pandemic recovery and acknowledge the central role that high quality early education plays in young child development, school readiness, and parental workforce stability and mobility, it is critical that we do all we can to improve access to full-day, year-round early education services and invest in the early childhood workforce.

We want to express our profound appreciation for Chair Josephs and her fellow committee members for hosting this hearing today. CCC and our Campaign for Children partners look forward to working with the City Council to advance these goals and put children and families front and center as the budget process proceeds.

A photograph of young children in a classroom playing with colorful blocks. One child in the foreground is focused on stacking blocks, while another child to the left is holding a yellow block. In the background, an adult is sitting on the floor, and another child is visible. The scene is brightly lit and shows a typical early childhood education environment.

# City Council Committee on Education

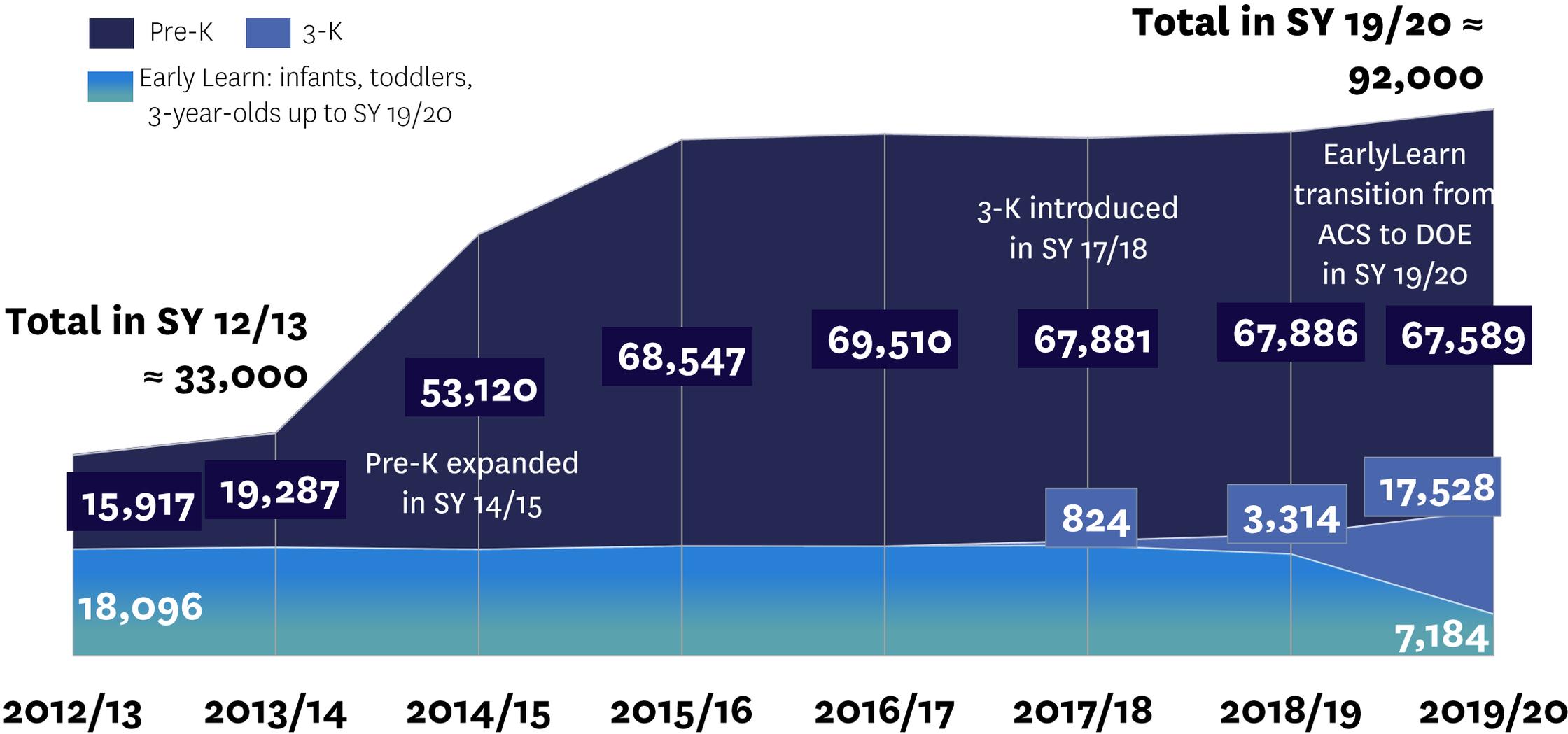
## Oversight Hearing on 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers



Citizens' Committee  
for Children of NEW YORK

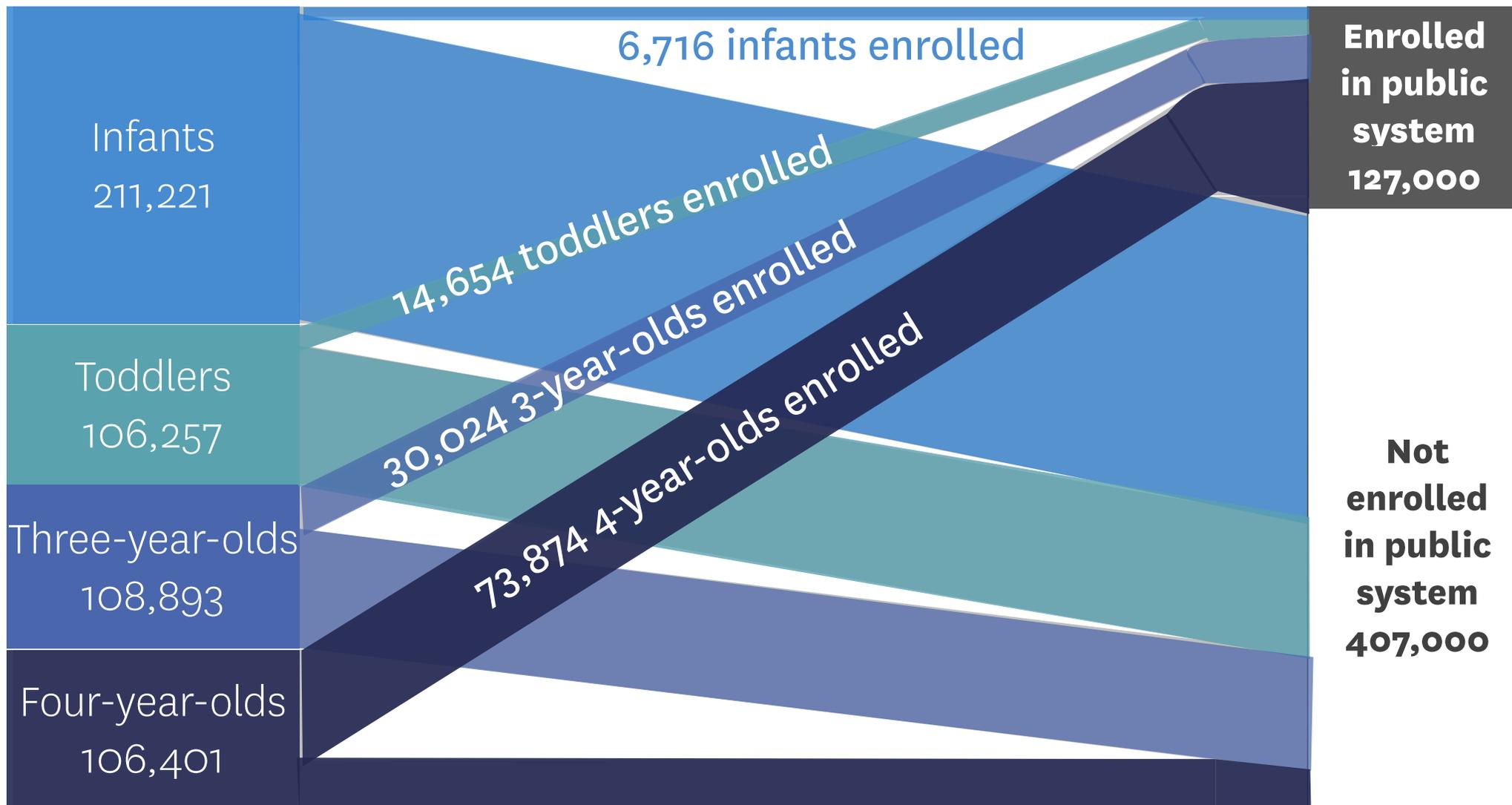
February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

# NYC has made historic investments in public ECE programs



Note: This chart does not incorporate more recent capacity and enrollment data

# The publicly funded system primarily enrolls 3- & 4-year-olds. Most children under five in NYC are infants & toddlers.



Sources: CCC's analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, PUMS File, Combined 5-Year Estimates (2015-2019); New York City Administration for Children's Services. Child Care Data (vouchers). Reported as of February 2020.

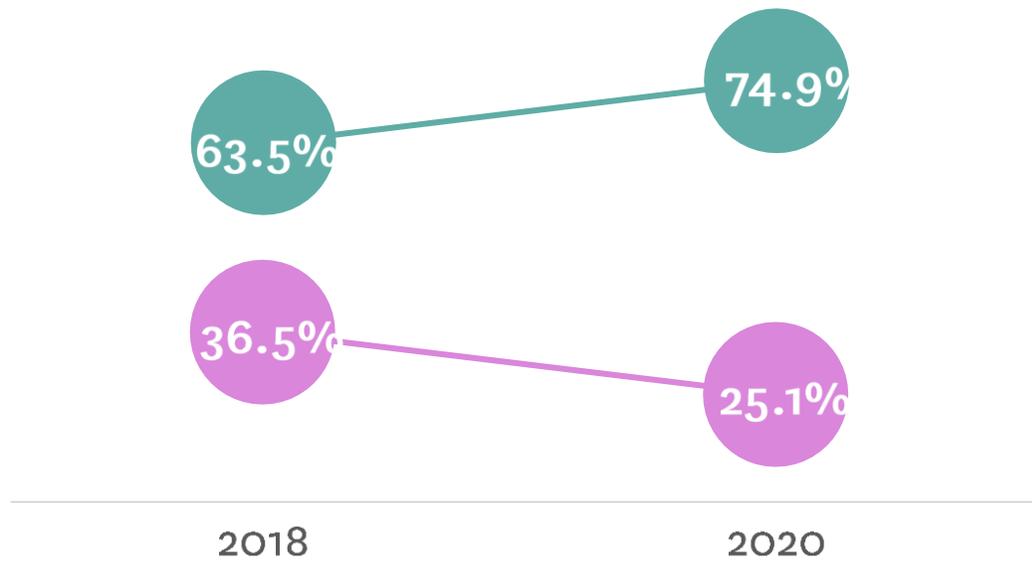
New York City Department of Education. Enrollment and Capacity in Contracted Early Care and Education Sites (SY 2019-2020). Reported as of 10/31/2019. Unpublished data, obtained through CCC's data request with the DOE and ACS.

# Citywide more than 70% of contracted system is largely reliant on school day/year slots.

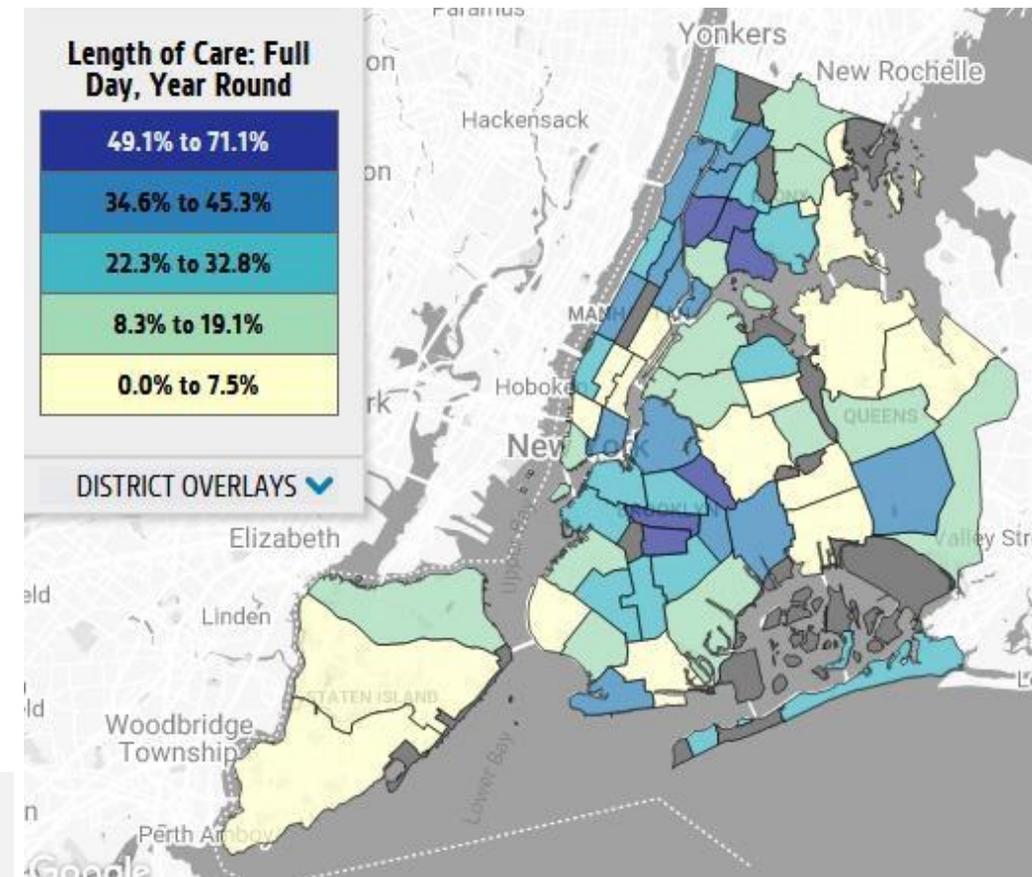
**Full-Day/Year-Round:**  
8 or 10 hour a day; 225 or 260 days a year.

**School-Day/School Year:**  
6 hours and 20 min a day; 180 days a year.

- Full Day, Year Round (≈ 23,000 in 2020)
- School Day, School Year (≈ 69,000 in 2020)

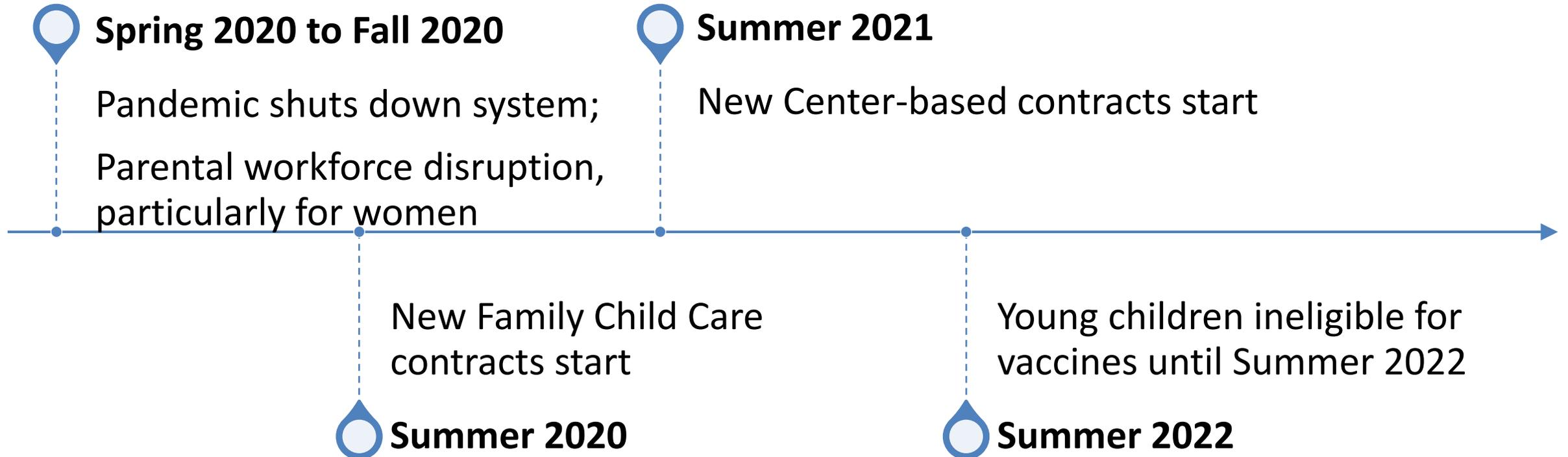


## Children Under Five in Full Day, Year Round Contracted Care by Community District, 2020

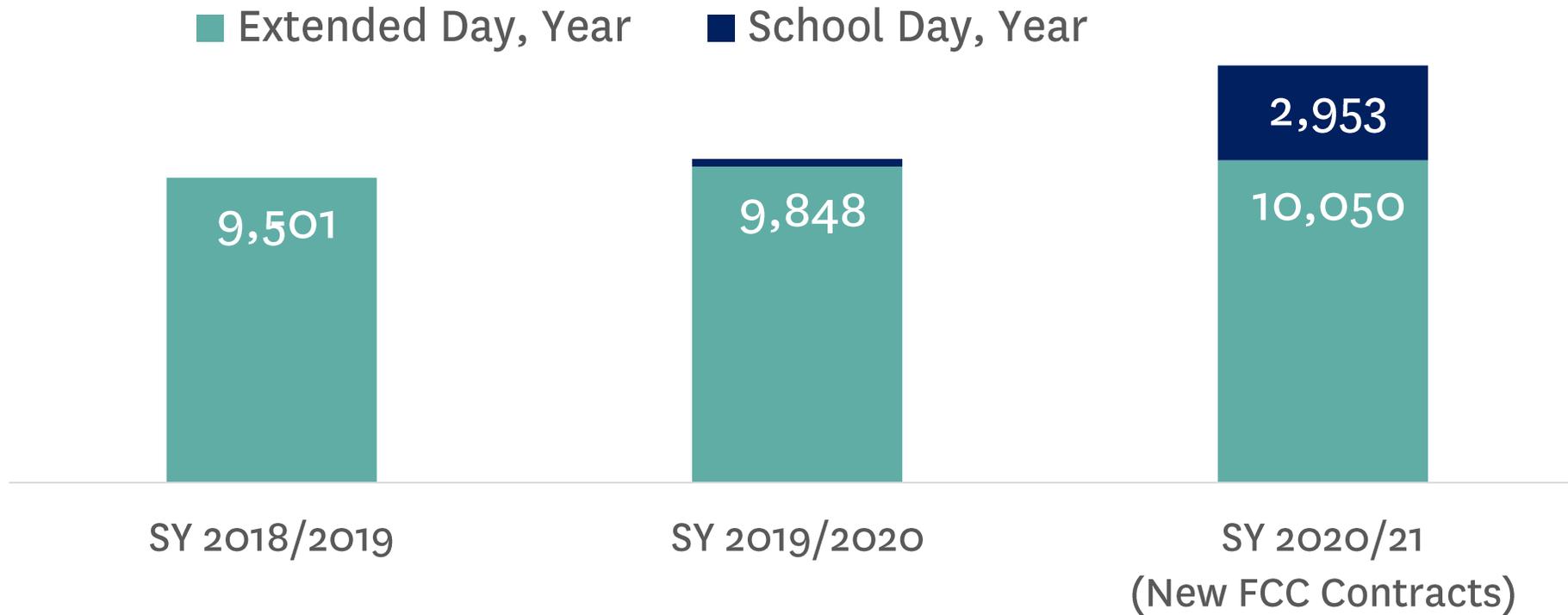


Sources: CCC's analysis of the Administration for Children's Services. Child Care Data. (SY 2017-18). Reported as of March 2018 and Department of Education Demographic Snapshots for SY 2017-18. New York City Department of Education. Enrollment and Capacity in Contracted Early Care and Education Sites (SY 2019-2020). Reported as of 10/31/2019. Unpublished data, obtained through CCC's data request with the DOE and ACS. Available at Keeping Track Online: <https://data.cccnewyork.org/data/map/1305/enrollment-in-contracted-care-for-children-under-5#1503/533/3/1841/99/a/a>

# System Changes and Disruptions



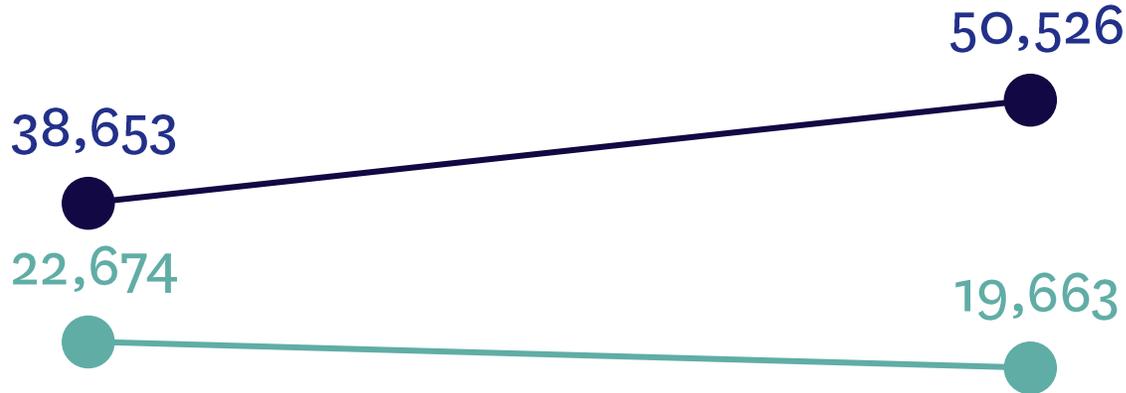
# New FCC contracts that started in SY 2020-21 added 3,000 seats, almost all school day/year slots for 3-K.



Sources: CCC's analysis of the New York City Administration for Children's Services. Child Care Data. (SY 2018-19). Reported as of March 2019.  
CCC's analysis of the New York City Department of Education data.  
Enrollment and Capacity in Contracted Early Care and Education Sites (SY 2019-2020). Reported as of 10/31/2019.  
Family Child Capacity with Contracts started in SY 2020-21. Data reported as of as of 2/28/2021.  
Unpublished data, obtained through CCC's data request with the DOE and ACS.

# New center-based contracts that started in SY 2021-22 added close to 12,000 (31%) school day/year seats, and reduced full-day/year-round capacity by 3,000 seats (13%)

● School Day, Year      ● Extended Day, Year



SY 2019/20

SY 2021/22  
(New Center-based Contract)

Sources: CCC's analysis of the New York City Department of Education data. Enrollment and Capacity in Contracted Early Care and Education Sites (SY 2019-2020). Reported as of 10/31/2019. Center-based Capacity with Contracts started in SY 2021-22. Data reported as of as of 11/31/2021. Unpublished data, obtained through CCC's data request with the DOE.

# The number of unused seats increased from 21,000 to 33,000, between SY 2019-20 and SY 2021-22. The overall system capacity increased with new contracts.

Children under five in contracted system,  
SY 2021-22 and SY 2019-20

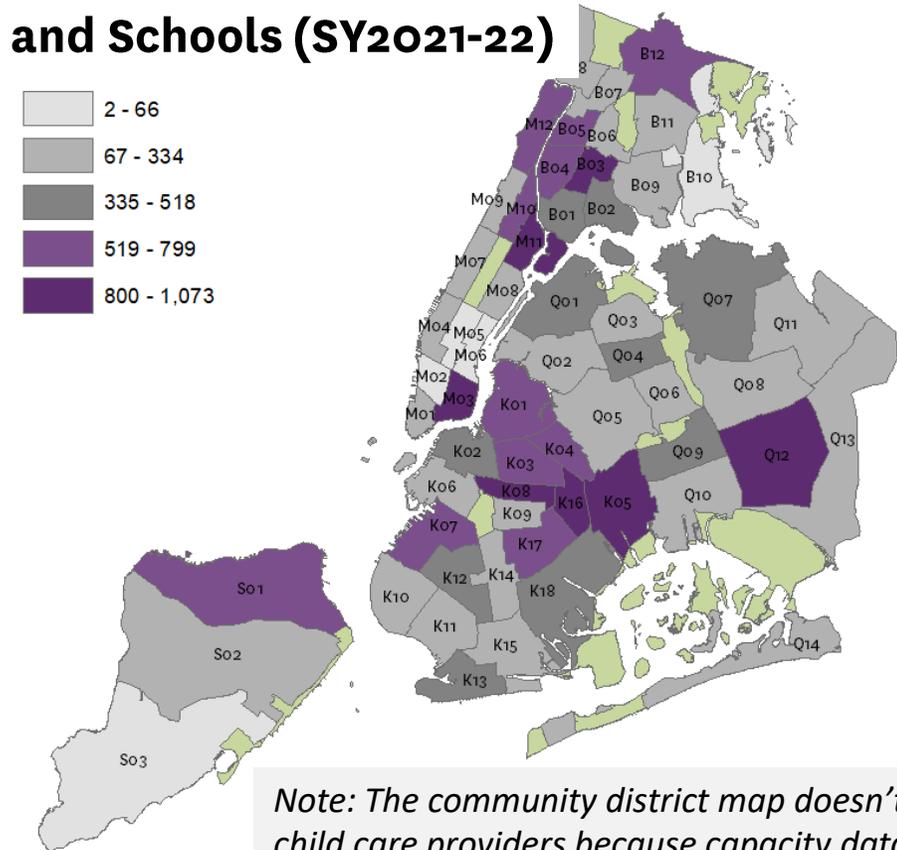
Year	Enrollment	Capacity	Unused Seats	Enrollment Rate
SY 2019-20	91,430	112,644	21,214	81%
SY 2021-22	94,444	127,200	32,756	74%

Sources: CCC's analysis of the New York City Department of Education data. Enrollment and Capacity in Contracted Early Care and Education Sites (SY 2019-20; SY 2021-22).

Unpublished data, obtained through CCC's data request with the DOE.

\*The analysis of the SY 2021-22 data is preliminary as we are working with the DOE to obtain more complete dataset.

Unused Seats in Centers and Schools (SY2021-22)



Note: The community district map doesn't capture family child care providers because capacity data are available only for Family Child Care Networks, which doesn't allow for utilization analysis on a neighborhood level.

**We welcome  
your questions  
and feedback**

**Please contact**

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**TESTIMONY**

**NYC COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
CHAIR, RITA JOSEPH**

*Oversight - 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to  
Early Childhood Providers*

**Presented on  
Wednesday, February 15, 2023**



**The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators  
Henry Rubio, President  
Rosemarie Sinclair, Executive Vice President  
Dale Kelly, First Vice President**

**40 Rector Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
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Good afternoon, Chair Joseph, and distinguished members of the City Council. My name is Rosemarie Sinclair, and I am the Executive Vice President of CSA, the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators. As you know, we represent the thousands of professionals who provide leadership in our public schools, central offices, and in our city-funded early childhood centers. Thank you for the chance to speak on behalf of our Early Childhood Directors and Assistant Directors at this essential committee hearing.

As you know, early childhood education programs not only prepare children for kindergarten, but lay the foundation for their entire education, as well as their eventual careers. Extensive research, including prominent studies conducted by the National Education Association, has confirmed how early childhood programs positively impact students, communities, and neighborhoods. Between the ages 1 and 5, children's brains develop faster than at any other time in their lives, and they are as malleable as they will ever be. This is their most critical learning period, which can put them on a path to becoming happy, healthy, productive citizens. Strong early childhood programs often result in greater social adjustment, higher scores on future standardized literacy and math tests, and a lesser likelihood of grade repetition as the years go by. Those who have been enrolled in preschool programs are more likely to hold better jobs and have higher incomes than those who have not had the same early opportunity. In the long run, investment in early education makes good economic as well as moral sense.

Given all this evidence, elected officials have highlighted the importance of strengthening and expanding early childhood education for decades. Unfortunately, there is a contradiction between what our city says is paramount and the resources given to support these priorities.

At this committee's oversight hearing on Early Childhood Programs in New York City in October, we shared that our system had early childhood programs with unapproved budgets, which leads to payrolls not being met and prevents necessary resources from getting to centers to support their day-to-day operations. Our members reported that they repeatedly received disapproval budgetary notices that hindered them from efficiently running their centers and prevented them from performing essential functions such as certifying attendance and invoicing properly. Since that hearing, we are pleased to share that we have been meeting with the DOE on a regular basis to help ensure budgets are approved and some progress has been made. We will continue to work collaboratively to ensure members are getting budget approvals and invoice payments in a timely manner.

Like our public schools, centers are also currently struggling with low enrollment for a myriad of reasons. The DOE has a central enrollment process for early childhood education which gives them control over the placement of students in both city-funded centers and schools. As a result, they are currently competing for student population. We believe that the enrollment should not be centralized and that centers should have the autonomy to register students.

Finally, the educational leaders of these centers still earn far less than their counterparts who work in public schools. They supervise large staffs, observe, and evaluate teacher performance,

guide and review lesson plans, and assess incoming children. They also have substantial additional administrative duties, which range from maintaining attendance rolls, payroll, and budgets to writing RFPs and grant proposals. Their day-to-day responsibilities mirror those of their DOE counterparts. So why aren't they paid the same?

The historic pay inequity is particularly troubling because these ECE Directors and Assistant Directors are mostly women of color. Since the city would not bargain in good faith to resolve this inequity, CSA was forced to file a discriminatory lawsuit against the de Blasio administration in 2021 on behalf of the 171 CSA-represented Community-Based Organization Directors.

The disparity is particularly egregious given all that our ECE directors have done for our city throughout this pandemic. Since March of 2020, they have been a lifeline for our city's families and epitomize the term "essential worker" as they have worked in-person, often 10-hours each day, serving students at great risk to their own health. On the frontlines of this tragedy, they provided stability and a much-needed sense of normalcy for our children in uncertain, challenging times. In the early days of the pandemic, many of the learners they served were the offspring of other essential workers. Because ECE Directors kept going to work, others were able to perform their jobs while their children were being cared for.

They did this all without a contract since September of 2020. In November of 2019, the city embarked on a pay parity initiative to ensure that teachers in community-based organizations were paid equally to those working in district schools. Yet, they have left out the Directors of these same organizations.

These educational leaders have been anticipating and seeking ways to address the profound new social and emotional needs that have arisen and will continue to arise from the varied impacts of the pandemic, particularly in low-income communities. While in their most formative years, many of these children have experienced trauma, as often occurs in pandemic conditions. Covid-19 cast a harsh light upon the educational and income inequities in our city and across the nation. Thankfully, these educational leaders have dedicated their lives to achieving equity for the children of their communities. Ironically, in doing so, their opportunities for their own economic and social mobility have been stymied, and their incentives for staying in the system have been undercut.

We believe that hiring well-trained educators is the most essential factor for the success of ECE centers. Adequate, fair pay is fundamental in attracting and retaining the best educators at any level in the education system. The inability of these centers to recruit and hold on to directors threatens to impact the quality of their programs. The children at ECE centers are no less important than the children in public school buildings. These children are also our future doctors, engineers, mathematicians, teachers, and artists. ECE centers strive to achieve the same level of social, physical, intellectual, cultural, creative and emotional development as the programs in public school buildings. However, as long as the directors of ECE centers are paid on a lower scale and treated like second-class citizens, they are branded as less important.

We know that pay equity, and particularly pay equity for women of color, is a priority of the City Council. In August of 2021, Council Speaker Adams proclaimed that the Council was renewing their “efforts and commitment to achieve pay parity and eliminate harmful inequities that exist in our workforce.” The Council subsequently passed the NYC Pay Transparency Law in December of 2021, recognizing that “it is apparent that the gender wage gap is more acute for women of color.” In September in 2022, the Speaker’s “Pay Equity in New York Report” found that large pay gaps in the NYC municipal work force between men and women and between Black and White employees persist. And just two weeks ago, the council passed the Pay Equity Package, providing necessary tools to help address occupational segregation and retention of city workers. We thank you sincerely for all these efforts.

Yet, the Council’s renewed emphasis on equity and pay parity has unfortunately not reached all City workers.

We ask that the City Council continue to stand with CSA to demand equity for these leaders who have been taken for granted for far too long. We ask that help ensure that the city budget includes funding for the equitable salaries they deserve and have earned.

Sincerely,

Rosemarie Sinclair  
CSA Executive Vice President



**Testimony of Day Care Council of New York  
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education,  
Honorable Rita Joseph, Chair  
At the Oversight Hearing for 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to  
Early Child Care Providers**

**February 15th, 2023**

Presented By Gregory Brender, Chief Policy and Innovation Officer

Thank you Chair Joseph and members of the Committee on Education for the opportunity to testify and for your work to ensure that New York City's children can access high quality education especially during the crucial earliest years. The Day Care Council of New York (DCCNY) is the membership organization of early care and education providers across New York City. DCCNY sees a future where all children have access to quality early childhood education and where early childhood providers and their workforce have the tools and resources necessary to offer the highest quality early childhood education.

DCCNY supports its member organizations and New York City's early childhood field a through policy research and advocacy, labor relations and mediation, professional development and training for early childhood educators, directors and staff and referral services for parents looking to find child care. DCCNY member organizations provide early care and education at over 200 sites in neighborhoods across all five boroughs.

Most DCCNY member organizations operate with contracts with the New York City Department of Education (DOE), while a smaller portion work with federally funded Head Start contracts or through private funding. DCCNY member organizations seek to provide quality early care and education services to New York's children and families across all five boroughs. DCCNY member organizations employ over 4,000 New Yorkers— the majority of whom are Black and Brown women.

Day Care Council of New York is an active member of Campaign for Children and our testimony reflects the agenda of that coalition.

## **Cuts to Universal 3-K**

We are deeply disappointed that that in the Mayor's Preliminary Budget New York City is moving away from the path to Universal Child Care. When the mayor released his November Budget Modification, it indicated that the City's commitment to the promise of 3-K for all of New York City's children would no longer be fulfilled. This cut was also reflected in the Preliminary Budget Proposal. This is devastating to families around New York City that were planning to rely on this service. Child care is extremely expensive, and families can spend up to \$20,000 a year on child care alone. This universal program would give families some financial relief, especially in an increasingly expensive city.

The administration has cited underenrollment in 3-K programs as a justification for this cut. While we acknowledge underenrollment in many programs, systemic reforms that both DCCNY and many members of the City Council have long supported are a more appropriate solution.

The system faces enrollment challenges, because of a lack of outreach and awareness, the significant administrative barriers to enrollment and the large number of child care to enrollment will continue to exist without adequate funding to increase the capacity and reach of our childcare providers.

The City must act NOW and reform its current 3-K system so that all children in New York City have the opportunity to access early childcare, not only a select few. We at the DCCNY recommend that New York City immediately enact the following recommendations:

- Release an RFP for the expansion of 3-K for All allowing contracts for expanded programs to start in July and services to start in September
- Commit to fund current 3-K program levels and restoring the timeline for the 3-K expansion.
- Convert existing 3-K school day / school year seats, to extended day, year round seats and ensure 3-K expansion efforts prioritize creating new capacity for extended day, year round seats.
- Invest a robust level of resources in linguistically and culturally appropriate on the ground and multimedia marketing, community engagement and enrollment efforts for 3-K.
- Reform enrollment procedures so that community based organizations have the option of directly enrolling children whose families apply for 3-K, Pre-K or child care.
- Convert existing school day, school year seats to full-day and full-year seats and ensure any new capacity prioritizes meeting the full day, year

round needs of children and families.

- Ensure children with developmental delays and disabilities can receive mandated developmental and special education supports and services in center-based birth to five programs and that preschool special education capacity meets demand.
- Build upon the successes UPK and new 3K marketing and community engagement efforts to continuously improve the take up of services across age ranges and modalities (family child care and center based care).

## **Late DOE Payments**

Late payments continue to put New York City's early childhood education providers at risk of closure and in a state of crisis. At the October 19th hearing of this committee, we shared the results of a survey we conducted of 159 centers and Family Child Care Networks operating through FY 2022 contracts with DOE. The survey uncovered that:

- 29% of respondents had at least one unregistered contract
- Only 13.2% of respondents were able to submit an invoice through PreKids Vendor Portal for their June 2022 expenses
- 41.5% of respondents had missed payroll or delayed vendor payments due to delayed payments from DOE

We also reported on a research note using data from Checkbook NYC that SeaChange Capital released in September showing:

- A cumulative cash flow deficit of \$464 million in City contracts when comparing the funds approved to invest in early childhood education and the funds received by providers
- Nineteen organizations with a deficit of \$5 million or more
- Deficits were as high as \$35 million in individual organizations.<sup>1</sup>

Thanks in large part to the City Council bringing attention to the issue, the Department of Education made a public commitment to:

- Pay all providers at least 75% of their negotiated contract value for FY 2022. Providers were guaranteed this level of funding in the requests for proposals which they responded to in 2019.
- Establish a rapid response team to help providers address issues with their FY 2022 invoices

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<sup>1</sup> SeaChange Capital Partners. *Early Childhood Education: How Much More Can Nonprofits Endure?* September 23, 2022

<http://gd7xi2tioeh408c7o34706rc-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SeaChange-Research-Note-Early-Childhood-Education.pdf>

DOE also took the important step of allowing providers to invoice for multiple months at the same time, it was only this week that that functionality was enabled for FY 2023 invoices.

However, these actions have not stopped the crisis. Many providers have still not been paid for their full FY 2022 contract value. A recent follow-up analysis from SeaChange Capital uncovered that, based on the information publicly available in Checkbook NYC:

- There is a \$95 million gap between what has been paid to providers for their FY 2022 contracts and the guaranteed 75% minimum of contract value
- There is a \$398.8 million gap between what has been paid to providers for FY 2022 and funds budgeted for their contracts

And this is just for FY 2022. We are now more than eight months into FY 2023 and the outdated systems that DOE uses continue to prevent providers from being paid on time.

This crisis is causing:

- Missed payroll, forcing ECE committed staff members to look for new jobs or struggle to make ends meet
- Missed payments to vendors
- Missed payments for employee benefits

The City must act immediately to fix its systems. DCCNY makes the following recommendations:

- Immediately complete back payments, bringing all center based providers to no less than 75 % of their full contract value for FY'22.
- Increase FY 2023 advance payments to 75 % of full contract value to address emerging and serious payment delays for the current fiscal year.
- Extend provider's ability to batch and submit multiple months of invoices and maintain DOE rapid response teams charged with assisting providers to FY 2023 and for future years.
- Separate the system supporting enrollment data collection from the system responsible for invoicing & payments and migrate DOE invoicing and payments out of the PreKids system and into Passport by FY'24.

### **Crucial FY 2024 Budget Actions- Salary Parity for the Early Childhood Workforce and Furthering Access to Early Childhood Education and Youth Services**

As the representative of New York City's early care and education provider organizations, DCCNY works with the City and our partners in organized labor to come to a labor agreement that reflects the skills and hard work of the teachers, staff and directors who work every day to make high-quality education available to the youngest New Yorkers.

In the FY 2024 Budget, the City must act to ensure that these essential but underappreciated workers receive salary and benefits on par with their counterparts in public schools.

DCCNY makes the following recommendations:

- Fund a new labor contract that advances childhood education parity between center and school based services – ensuring staff left out of the first phase of parity (early childhood directors, support staff in community based organizations and preschool special education teachers and support staff ) are included, that longevity factored into salary increases, and that a minimum wage floor of \$25 is established for all support staff.
- Ensure home-based family child care providers benefit from the increased market rate (reimbursement has increased to 80 percent from 65 percent).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions and can be reached at [gbrender@dccnyinc.org](mailto:gbrender@dccnyinc.org).



2/13/23

Invest in New York's Children and Families:

### **A Plan for Early Childhood Education and Youth Services in Fiscal Year 2024**

The Campaign for Children (C4C), is a coalition of over 150 organizations, parents, and advocates, formed in 2011 to improve and expand New York City's early childhood education and youth services ecosystem. C4C recognizes that families need access to year-round, high-quality, affordable child care and youth programs in order to survive and thrive in New York City, and that protecting, strengthening, and expanding availability of these services is critical at this moment. C4C is committed to working with City leaders to ensure the early childhood education and youth service providers, their workforce and the children, youth and families they serve have the investments and supports needed to not only recover from the social-economic insecurity wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic but to thrive.

#### Early Childhood Priorities

At a time when early childhood education providers in contract with the City's Department of Education continue to suffer severe financial hardships due to delayed payments for FY'22 and FY'23, the FY 2024 Budget moves New York City away from the path to Universal Child Care. The FY2024 Preliminary Budget cuts the expansion of 3-K for All programs and fails to take action on investments and operational reforms needed to stabilize and strengthen the early childhood education system and meet the needs of children, families and the workforce.

Campaign for Children's Early Childhood Policy Priorities are designed to ensure that New York City's FY 2024 Budget not only keeps the promise of 3-K for All but puts New York City solidly on the path to universal child care.

- **Immediate action and operational reforms to achieve fiscal stability in FY'23:**
  - Immediately complete back payments, bringing all center based providers to no less than 75% of their full contract value for FY'22.
  - Increase FY 2023 advance payments to 75% of full contract value to address emerging and serious payment delays for the current fiscal year.
  - Extend provider's ability to batch and submit multiple months of invoices and maintain DOE rapid response teams charged with assisting providers to FY 2023

- and for future years.
- Release an RFP for the expansion of 3-K for All supporting NEW extended day year round seat capacity start in July and services to start in September;
  - Separate the system supporting enrollment data collection from the system responsible for invoicing & payments and migrate DOE invoicing and payments out of the PreKids system and into Passport by FY'24.
- **Meet Child and Family Needs by Keeping the Promise of 3-K for All in FY'24:**
    - Commit to fund current 3-K program levels and restoring the timeline for the 3-K expansion.
    - Convert existing 3-K school day / school year seats, to extended day, year round seats and ensure 3-K expansion efforts prioritize creating new capacity for extended day, year round seats.
    - Invest a robust level of resources (*potentially city and philanthropic*) in linguistically and culturally appropriate on the ground and multi-media marketing, community engagement and enrollment efforts for 3-K and early childhood education programs.
    - Reform enrollment procedures so that community based organizations have the option of directly enrolling children whose families apply for 3-K, Pre-K or child care.
- **Invest in the early childhood workforce in FY'24:**
    - Fund a new labor contract that advances childhood education parity between center and school based services – ensuring staff left out of the first phase of parity (early childhood directors, support staff in community based organizations and preschool special education teachers and support staff ) are included, that longevity factored into salary increases, and that a minimum wage floor of \$25 is established for all support staff.
    - Ensure home-based family child care providers benefit from the increased market rate (reimbursement has increased to 80 percent from 65 percent).
- **Put New York City on a solid path to Universal Child Care:**
    - Prioritize meeting the full day, year round needs of children and families across all settings - – supporting both center based and family child care network contracts that ensure extended day, year round care is offered
    - Ensure children with developmental delays and disabilities can receive mandated developmental and special education supports and services in center-based birth to five programs and that preschool special education capacity meets demand.
    - Build upon the successes UPK and new 3K marketing and community engagement efforts to continuously improve the take up of services across age ranges and modalities (family child care and center based care).

## Youth Services Priorities

### Immediate action and operational reforms to achieve fiscal stability in FY'23

- The City must make immediate payment of all outstanding contracts for work done in Summer 2021 and 2022, in accordance with the goals of the Mayor's Office of Nonprofit Contracting.

### Raise Afterschool & Summer Rates to Pay Staff a Competitive Wages in FY'24

The labor market has changed significantly since the last COMPASS Elementary and SONYC RFPs in 2015, which would have been the most recent opportunity to ameliorate these rate concerns. The delayed release of a new RFP has resulted in program rates remaining stagnant and providers not being compensated for the true cost of overseeing afterschool and summer programs. Currently, CBOs now have to provide programming after inflation has increased 6.1%<sup>1</sup> in the New York City metropolitan area, in a more competitive labor market where CBOs are competing with national chains who might pay higher minimum wages, and with positions that allow for remote work. To begin to address the staffing challenges facing CBOs, and address youth and family needs, the Campaign for Children offers the following recommendations:

- **Increase the cost-per-participant rates to set a wage floor at \$21 an hour**, allowing providers to offer competitive salaries and compensate staff for the important, quality work that they do. A wage increase for both afterschool and summer programming will help with staffing challenges and to stabilize the youth development workforce to prevent the sector from losing more talented individuals to other employers. This is also in line with the rate that Department of Education (DOE) paraprofessional substitutes received for similar work during Summer Rising 2021.<sup>2</sup> City contracts must allow agencies to pay a livable wage to staff and any attempts to address wage increases need the City's financial backing to avoid agencies taking on unfunded mandates.
- **Shift to a K-8 summer programming model to draw on the best aspects of Summer Rising and Summer Camp models.** Aspects of Summer Rising have been tremendously positive, including ensuring that young people who do participate in summer school can access camp as well (something that was previously difficult with conflicting schedules) and the increased investment in cost-per-participant rates resulted in wider access for families. Key ingredients in a new model should include permitting providers to:
  - Design programming to be responsive to local needs and parent choice
  - Manage their own budgets with SACC licensing ratios of staff to youth without having to go through inefficient processes to justify their spending and secure approval
  - Allow CBOs to enroll families, especially families who need additional digital and

language support to apply for programming, and maintain their own rosters.

**Put New York on a solid path to universal year round youth services:**

- The City must establish year-round, 12 month youth service contracts moving forward and streamline the procurement process.
- The City must release a new RFP for the SONYC and COMPASS contracts that include:
  - Indirect rates must be paid in full, in accordance with the City’s Indirect Cost Rate Initiative.
  - Providers must be able to claim those rates at the outset, not have a placeholder rate that later gets amended.
  - Cost escalators must be included in the contracts, in accordance with inflation.
  - Funding must support staffing ratios appropriate for School Age Child Care (SACC) licensing for all 12 months of the year.

**Shared Priorities - Agency Headcount - Expedite Comprehensive Background Checks**

The Campaign for Children is supportive of the *Blueprint for Child Care and Early Childhood Education in New York City’s* recommendation that the DOHMH hire an additional 40 staff to expedite the Comprehensive Background Check (CBC) process. There are still significant backlogs in the CBC process that impact child and youth programming, with some CBO staff reporting that it takes several months to clear staff. The *Blueprint* also indicated DOHMH was developing an online platform for prospective employees to submit their documents, aiming to make the background check process more efficient.

- DOHMH has developed a new online Comprehensive Background Check system that aims to make the background check process more efficient, and is currently conducting user testing of this new platform with providers before the official rollout.
- Lastly, we encourage DOHMH to collaborate with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) on any issues at the state level impacting the timely completion of comprehensive background checks.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the [New York State Comptroller’s Economic and Policy Insight Brief](#), April 2022

<sup>2</sup> The DOE used paraprofessional substitutes to assist with staffing shortages during the DOE and CBO portions of the day in Summer Rising 2021. Paraprofessional substitutes were not available to support staffing shortages in the Summer Rising 2022 program. Intro 0510-2022 requires this \$21 wage floor.



## The Education Trust–New York

### NYC City Council Oversight Hearing: 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers February 18, 2023

Thank you, Chair Joseph and distinguished members of the New York City Council Education Committee, for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am Lara Kyriakou, Associate Director of Early Childhood Policy and Advocacy at [Education Trust–New York](#), a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to educational equity. We work to attain educational justice through research, policy, and advocacy that results in all children – especially those who are from low-income backgrounds or students of color – achieving at high levels from early childhood through college completion.

Ed Trust–NY coordinates the [Raising NY coalition](#), which is a diverse statewide coalition of parent, early childhood, education, business, and health organizations dedicated to supporting the learning potential of all children, with a focus on improving long-term outcomes for infants and toddlers who are low-income, children of color, and other under-served groups.

As New York City continues to endure the impacts of the pandemic, both families and early childhood providers continue to face barriers to economic recovery. In the fall of 2022, a Raising NY parent poll revealed that 49% of parents of young children felt that their child care situation was “not very workable”. Additionally, 73% of Black parents, the most of any group, reported traveling more than 10 minutes from home to their child care program. The lack of available, high-quality care continues to impact parents’ participation in the workforce, particularly for Black women.<sup>1</sup> Reducing barriers to accessing high-quality early care and education programs is a critical conduit to strengthening the economic security and success for all working families.

Wages for child care and early educators remain in the bottom 3% of earners<sup>2</sup>; without consistent and livable wages, the child care workforce shortage will continue. A recent Education Trust–NY series of child care provider [focus groups](#) in the Fall of 2022 indicated that the biggest challenges to stabilizing the workforce continue to be a lack of sufficient, consistent funding. Providers identified the need for higher pay for the workforce, including benefits, as the most pressing need in order to efficiently manage their business and provide quality, stable care. Immediate action is needed in order to expand access and capacity for high-quality early childhood programs.

We respectfully submit the following recommendations to ensure that the early care and learning systems in New York City are able to meet the needs of all families:

1. **Streamline and align early childhood invoicing, licensing, and enrollment systems to ensure equitable access for providers.** In recent [focus groups](#), providers identified systemic challenges in communicating with city agencies and licensing agencies. In order to ensure that providers are compensated consistently, promptly, and equitably, barriers to completing reimbursement invoices must be addressed and improvements implemented in order to prevent future challenges.

- **Increase access to 3K programs for home-based programs, particularly for those who are not in-network.** The DOE must ensure that 3-K programming is offered in a variety of settings as a critical conduit to supporting parent choice, particularly for families who need extended day hours, non-traditional hours of care, and prefer small group settings, all of which home-based programs are more likely to provide.
- **Prioritize the most vulnerable children for enrollment.** New York City currently has thousands of empty slots, yet there is tremendous need for early child care and education programs. In New York City, nearly a third of all children under 5 who are eligible for child care assistance are infants and toddlers.<sup>3</sup> However, almost 60% of New York City is considered a child care desert, with even less availability for infant and toddlers slots.<sup>4</sup> We must ensure ample capacity and access to infant and toddler slots, particularly for families who are unhoused, survivors of domestic violence, or involved in the foster care system.

The Education Trust–New York is committed to the success of all families. We are grateful for the opportunity to submit this testimony and offer strategies to create a comprehensive early childhood system that equitably supports all families, particularly the most vulnerable and under-served.

Please feel free to contact me at [lkyriakou@edtrustny.org](mailto:lkyriakou@edtrustny.org) with any questions regarding this testimony. Thank you.

1 <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Equity-in-Child-Care-is-Everyones-Business-February-2022.pdf>

2 <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes399011.htm>

3 <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/14/nyregion/child-care-nyc-adams.html>

4 <https://childcaresdeserts.org/2018/index.html?state=NY>



**Testimony of Educational Alliance  
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education  
Oversight: Early Childhood Programs in New York City  
Councilmember Rita Joseph, Chair  
Submitted February 15, 2023**

Thank you Chair Joseph and members of the Education Committee for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Elizabeth Bird and I am the Director of Public Policy at Educational Alliance, a settlement house with community centers located throughout the Lower East Side and East Village that offer individuals and families high-quality, multi-generational programs and services that enhance their well-being and socioeconomic opportunities.

Among the services we offer, Educational Alliance is a well-established and nationally renowned provider of high-quality early childhood education programs. In 1965, we were one of the first Head Start pilot programs in the nation, and subsequently opened one of the first Early Head Start programs in 1995. Today, we offer center- and home-based education for approximately 250 children ranging from birth to age five, with programs including Home-based, Early Head Start, Head Start, DOE Universal Pre-K and 3-K.

At the Manny Cantor Center, Educational Alliance's flagship location, our early childhood program operates under an innovative braided funding model, integrating a tuition-based program and a Head Start program to ensure all children served have the same access to high-quality experiences, regardless of socioeconomic status. The program is rooted in education research that shows that integrated classrooms can ameliorate existing disparities in kindergarten readiness and school choice by providing equal access to resources and supports.

Our high quality early childhood programs have been widely recognized for our unique program design; ours is the only Head Start Program in the Lower East Side -- and one of only 29 programs nationwide -- to receive national accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. We have also been chosen as one of 100 programs nationally to mentor new Head Start Directors. To reach these significant milestones, our program standards, curricula, child assessments, teachers, families, community relationships, and program administration are rigorously evaluated as we continually strive to improve.

As long-standing provider of high quality early childhood education programs, we value this opportunity to offer feedback on New York City's delayed contract payments and proposed funding cuts for early childhood education.

My testimony today will address:

- Contracting concerns and late payments from FY22;
- Impacts of proposed UPK funding cuts on top of current underfunding.

You belong here.

## Delayed contracts

Delayed contracts impact our ability to provide services. We operated our contracted early childhood programs without a registered contract for FY22 for over six months. Without a registered contract we are unable to submit invoices for costs of running our program, forcing us cover all costs associated with payroll and expenses. In FY22, this totaled \$754,000. Our contract for FY23 is still unregistered, now six months after the school year began.

Because we cannot invoice the City for payments until our contract is registered, we must look to other sources to fund the services we provide. Delays like this require us to draw down funds raised through private philanthropy, siphoning off valuable resources needed for other programming. **This is a fundamentally flawed approach to contracting.** **When the City delays its payments to providers, it essentially borrows interest-free from our bottom line through the funds we must leverage to cover the costs of programming.** Meanwhile, the City is never held accountable for these additional costs, and elected officials do not have to account for this covert way of operating.

## Proposed cuts

I would now like to address the proposed cuts to the early childhood sector included in the Mayor's Preliminary Budget.

The FY24 Preliminary Budget includes a 42 percent reduction in funding for personnel for early childhood education, from \$91 million in the FY23 Adopted Budget to \$53 million in the FY24 preliminary budget. This proposed cut is in addition to the \$568 million cut to 3-K expansion that was included in the November 2022 budget modification.

We urge the Council to question the administration about these proposed cuts and their potential impacts on New York City's children and families.

**As it is, our contracts with DOE for 3K and UPK do not fully cover the cost of providing the high quality early childhood programs we offer.** Three primary factors contribute to this budget disparity. First, we budget for classroom needs around fixed costs for staff, supplies, building maintenance, and other expenses that do not and cannot change from month to month. Yet, our Birth to Five contract with the Department of Education uses a 'pay for enrollment' policy which penalizes us for any fluctuations in enrollment in a given month. Even though our operating costs do not change from month to month, our payments from the City can change due to temporary fluctuations in enrollment.

The second factor that contributes to this funding shortfall is that **DOE centralizes control over enrollment.** This means that we are unable to directly enroll families, even if we know we have available seats. But because DOE only pays us for enrollment, we suffer the consequence if a program is under-enrolled from month to month.

The third and most significant contributing factor to the budget gap is that our DOE **contracts do not support a competitive wage for staff.** DOE currently reimburses providers \$20/hour for classroom support staff -- less than what DOE itself pays for these positions. Our early childhood staff engage in their work with deep care and professionalism and we recognize that their efforts are crucial to the high quality programs we provide. Yet we are not supported

through our DOE contracts to provide bonuses to encourage staff retention, supports for professional development, or incentives for pursuing higher education. In the current landscape, the City faces enormous challenges recruiting and retaining educators, and should reconsider the approach it takes to this valuable and highly necessary workforce.

Rather than reducing budgets for early childhood education, we urge city leaders to stabilize the field which is still struggling from a long history of underpayment as well as the historic challenges we experienced during pandemic. The City can do this by:

- **Ending 'pay for enrollment' policies** which penalize providers for temporary fluctuations in student enrollment.
- Allowing community-based organizations with existing DOE UPK and 3K contracts to **directly enroll families**.
- **Increasing wages to a minimum of \$25 per hour for classroom support staff**, in line with the rates DOE pays to substitutes and paraprofessionals in DOE-run schools.
- Provide longevity bonuses for teachers, staff and directors.
- Offer incentives to grow the early childhood educator workforce through loan forgiveness/tuition reimbursements and partnerships with institutes of higher education to provide meaningful preparation programs; build career ladders for paraprofessionals or other entry-level staff to advance their careers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



**Testimony of FPWA**

**Presented to:**

**New York City Council Committee on Education  
Oversight Hearing on 3-K Funding Cuts  
and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers  
Hon. Chair Rita Joseph  
Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Jennifer Jones Austin  
Executive Director/CEO**

**Prepared By:  
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Good morning committee members and Chair Joseph. Thank you for hearing testimony on 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers.

FPWA is an anti-poverty policy and advocacy organization committed to advancing economic opportunity, justice, and upward mobility for New Yorkers with low incomes. Since 1922, FPWA has driven groundbreaking policy reforms to better serve those in need. We work to dismantle the systemic barriers that impede economic security and well-being, and strengthen the capacity of human services agencies and faith organizations so New Yorkers with lower incomes can thrive and live with dignity.

Nonprofit and community-based organizations (CBOs) have been critical to our city historically, during Covid-19, and now. Their inherent ability to make deep connections with the communities they serve, and to quickly adapt to changing needs therein has provided lifelines for residents living through these prolonged health, social, and economic crises, largely at the expense of 3-K and early childhood education (ECE) providers.

It is deeply disappointing to share with you again that the Department of Education (DOE), which holds the highest number of the City's contracts, still desperately needs structural reform in order to meet the funding imperatives to which it is contractually obligated. This noncompliance on the City's part to the terms to which procurement of services were agreed has led to providers having to make the painful decision to close their doors to the children and families they serve. Many more may be forced to the same fate if the City does not take action and this avoidable crisis is allowed to continue.

As New York City continues to climb the mountain of recovery, we want to acknowledge the steps being taken to lead us in new directions. For example, after City Council brought attention to the issue, DOE publicly committed to paying all providers at least 75% of their negotiated contract value for FY 2022, which providers were guaranteed in the requests for proposals which they responded to in 2019, and to establishing a rapid response team to help providers address issues with their FY 2022 invoices. DOE also took the important step of allowing providers to invoice for multiple months at the same time, although as of this date, that functionality has only been enabled for FY 2022 invoices.

We greatly appreciate the partnership with the City Council in addressing contracting issues ECE providers face and are pleased with the collaboration between Mayor Adams and Comptroller Lander on the Joint Task Force to Get Nonprofits Paid on Time. This is a significant achievement, however, these actions have not stopped the crisis.

Most 3-K and ECE providers have not been paid for their full FY 2022 contract value, and using data from Checkbook NYC as well as analysis from Day Care Council of New York and SeaChange Capital released in September we can see:

- A cumulative cash flow **deficit of \$464 million** in City contracts when comparing the funds approved to invest in early childhood education and the funds received by providers
- Nineteen organizations with a **deficit of \$5 million** or more
- Deficits were as high as **\$35 million in individual organizations**.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 SeaChange Capital Partners. Early Childhood Education: [How Much More Can Nonprofits Endure?](#) September 23, 2022

These funding issues manifest in myriad concrete ways for providers. For example:

- Missed payroll, forcing ECE committed staff members to look for new jobs or struggle to make ends meet, which only deepens the staff shortage crisis in the sector
- Missed payments to vendors
- Missed payments for employee benefits.

The City must act immediately to fix its systems. FPWA stands in solidarity with the sector and makes the following recommendations:

- Pay **ALL** providers their full contract value for FY 2022 **immediately**;
- **Migrate** invoicing and payment processes from DOE's PreKids system to Mayor's Office of Contract Services Passport system, in line with other human services contracts thereby simplifying the process for providers;
- **Pay FY 2023** invoices promptly assuring the ability for providers to bill for more than one month at a time and that the lag between invoicing and reimbursement **never exceeds 30 days**.

Without procurement reform, ECE providers face an ongoing crisis created by structural barriers and systemic underfunding. Again, providers are reporting such massive deficits stemming from inadequate government reimbursement levels that it has become unsustainable to contract with the City. If ECE providers are continually ignored there soon will be none left with which the City can partner to meet its service provision mandates.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. FPWA hopes that you will consider our recommendations, and we look forward to working closely with you to ensure that New Yorkers of all ages receive the services they need in order to thrive.



**The New York City Council Committee on Education  
Honorable Rita Joseph, Chair**

**City Council Hearing:  
February 15, 2023**

**Testimony of the New York Immigration Coalition**

Good afternoon and thank you Chair Joseph and members of the New York City Council Committee on Education. The New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) is an umbrella policy and advocacy organization for more than 200 groups serving immigrants and refugees across New York State. The NYIC wishes to thank you, Hon. Council Member Rita Joseph for your leadership and concern for immigrant families.

**We are here to request that the City make access equitable and boost enrollment by:**

- **Committing \$4 million to expand the NYIC's LIFE Project - a proven, piloted program - to assist limited English proficient, technologically disconnected immigrant families with applying to and enrolling in Pre-K/3-K programs**
- **Committing \$20 million to the Promise NY program in FY24, which would allow for continued support for undocumented immigrants to receive subsidized child care**
- **Continuing the 3-K for All expansion as planned**
- **Converting existing 3-K school day / school year seats to extended day, year round seats and working with the state to use the Public Education exemption to federal CCDBG funding to allow more immigrant families to access early education and care**
- **Ensuring that child care provider contracts are paid out timely**

**LIFE Project:** For the last five years, the NYIC has led the Linking Immigrant Families to Early Childhood Education (LIFE) Project, alongside its partners LSA Family Health Service, Masa, and Fifth Avenue Committee. Officially launched in December 2017, the LIFE Project focuses



on assisting immigrant families in enrolling in Pre-K and 3-K in communities where the Department of Education identified lagging or under-enrollment in these programs. The Project also makes referrals and provides Early Intervention support. The New York City is home to around 156,000 parents of children ages 0-4 who are limited English proficient. Among all parents of children ages 0-4, a staggering 100,000 lack access to a computer, with around 61,000 lacking access to the internet. As New York offers increasingly complex educational choices and moves information and access to those choices further online, the language and digital barriers have become nearly insurmountable without adequate support.

To address these barriers, the LIFE Project encompasses extensive culturally and linguistically responsive outreach to inform families about Pre-K and 3K programs. Project partners then provide families with one-on-one, comprehensive support. This support begins with creating an email address and account and learning to navigate MySchools, and accompanies the family through identifying school options, filling out the application, and accepting offers to programs.

Our LIFE partners have given more than 600 immigrant families the tools to navigate the school system and enroll their children in pre-K and 3-K programs. Over the last five years, our pioneering model has proven to be incredibly successful and effective: **4 out of 5 families** assisted by the LIFE project stated they could not have applied to these programs without LIFE assistance. Significantly, despite a large drop in enrollment in 2020, when New York City's preliminary data reported that enrollment in 3-K programs fell by 8% and pre-K



programs fell by 13%, LIFE project partners saw no drop in enrollment within the families we assisted.

In order to continue and expand this successful model citywide, we are asking for \$4 million to fund 20 CBOs across the five boroughs to provide culturally responsive and linguistically diverse outreach, application and enrollment support, referral services, and early intervention support to immigrant families of 3- and 4-year olds.

**3K Expansion:** It is through the LIFE project that we have seen the extent to which families have struggled to apply for and enroll in Pre-K and 3-K programs. Without support, the barriers facing families are immense and absolutely prevent many of our families from applying, in spite of their strong interest in providing their children with this educational opportunity. It is absolutely wrong for the City to abdicate its commitment to making 3-K accessible to all families on the basis of enrollment levels when it is so obvious that these barriers prevent many families from enrolling. Despite the high enrollment rates reported by the DOE for Pre-K/3-K seats, there are still many immigrant and LEP families with children who have not been reached by these programs. Though we agree that the DOE should be strategic about the locations of these programs, this should not mean a stop to the expansion. New York City must continue to invest in our children’s education to ensure a vibrant future for our City and economic mobility for all our families.

**Renew and Expand Promise NYC at \$20M:** The NYIC has worked on the Promise NYC campaign since its inception last year. We recognize ACS for its commitment to ensuring



undocumented families feel as safe as possible in applying for this child care subsidy. In particular, the program's use of trusted community based organizations to do intake and enrollment directly, allowance of self-attestations around eligibility and income, and clarity on data privacy for families are commendable and follow the recommendations of the immigrant community. However, the \$10M Promise NYC program will only cover an estimated 600 families for the 6 months left in this fiscal year. In order to provide at least the same level of coverage and ensure that undocumented children have safe, affordable child care, the City must renew the Promise NYC program and double funding to \$20M.

**Expand Extended-Day/Year Programs:** Pre-K/3-K for All has been a massively successful program for New York families. Unfortunately, for many families, the hours available do not cover the full need for early childhood education and care because they only provide services for 6 hours and 20 minutes each day. These shortened days end early in the afternoon and often let out while parents are still mid-workday. In order to ensure that children have child care coverage for a full workday, the City should expand all Pre-K/3-K to include extended day/year hours.

Currently, extended day/year programs are supported in part by federal CCDBG funding. This funding has restrictions on citizenship, which blocks non-citizen children from accessing additional care. There is, however, a major exception to these requirements – the “Public Education Exemption.” Immigrant restrictions do not apply to children receiving CCDBG-funded services in settings that are subject to public educational standards, including public and private pre-kindergarten settings (including pre-kindergarten delivered in



private child care settings) and settings subject to educational standards used for care during out-of-school time. California has been utilizing this exemption for its extended day/year programs for years, including during the Trump administration, with no pushback from the federal government. The City must work with its partners at OCFS to push New York State to utilize this exemption and expand access to extended day/year programs.

**Pay Providers On Time:** Finally, in order to ensure that the early childhood education and care system does not collapse, it is obviously imperative that child care providers are paid in a timely manner for all early childhood contracts. We echo the many child care providers citywide who have been stretched thin by reimbursements that are months late and have already led to the closing of child care providers across the city. The DOE must prioritize redressing these payment issues immediately.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Submitted by:

Liza Schwartzwald

Senior Manager of Economic Justice and Family Empowerment

New York Immigration Coalition

## The Vital Importance of Universal 3-K to the City of New York

Testimony for the New York City Council's  
Committee on Education - Rita Joseph, Chairperson

by

Northside Center for Child Development, Inc.  
Northside Center for Child Development Day School

All of us at Northside are grateful to Chairperson Joseph, as well as Education Committee Members and Staff for conducting this hearing on the impact of budget cuts to Universal 3K. We greatly appreciate all the hard work the Committee is doing to protect the City's children.

We're aware that on January 11, 2023, the Citizen's Budget Commission projected that without a recession, in the next three years, the City might face annual budget shortfalls of \$1.1 billion to \$2 billion and that if there is a recession, City tax revenue shortfalls over a three year period could be \$13 billion.<sup>1</sup> Knowing that to survive these possible shortfalls, the City is considering eliminating Universal 3k, the data supplied here demonstrates that such cuts would be a "false economy" that will, in the long run, cost the City more than it saves, both in dollars spent and in the overall mental health and well-being of the City's Children and Families.

In an April 28, 2017 Century Foundation piece titled, "The Benefits of Universal Access in Pre-K and "3-K for All," Fellow Halley Potter's work supports the theory that City dollars spent on Universal 3k will pay for themselves. Her two most pertinent paragraphs state:

Access for children of all backgrounds creates the potential for diverse classrooms. Universal pre-K creates the potential to bring together children of different racial and socioeconomic backgrounds into the same pre-K classrooms. The ability to construct **classrooms that are diverse by race and class is a huge advantage**, because **diversity is an important part of quality in early education**. Recent research shows that preschool **children learn more in socioeconomically integrated environments**, as opposed to attending high-poverty classrooms, and they **develop greater racial tolerance when learning alongside racially diverse peers**.

Middle-class children benefit from pre-K, too. Research on outcomes in early education has historically focused on low-income children, showing, for example, that **high-quality early education targeting disadvantaged families can yield returns on investment of as much as \$8 for every \$1 spent**. But more recent research shows that middle-class children benefit from early education as well. Both middle-class and low-income children in universal pre-K programs in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Boston,

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<sup>1</sup> [What to Look for in the NYC Fiscal Year 2024 Preliminary Budget | CBCNY](#)

Massachusetts **showed cognitive gains as compared to peers who did not attend pre-K**. Likewise, economist Tim Bartik has found that **middle-class children show lifetime earning gains as a result of attending high-quality pre-K programs that are almost on par with the gains shown by low-income children**.<sup>2</sup>

We believe that the reduction in racial intolerance generated by Universal 3K that Ms. Potter reports in the first paragraph above is a vastly under-appreciated value. Amplifying Fellow Potter's other points, in September 2022 Chalkbeat New York reported Reema Amin stated:

Several studies have found that preschool is beneficial for children. A 2019 study out of South Carolina found that **children who attended public preschool programs had higher test scores in grades 3-5, improving the academic environment for their peers, too**. The students who attended the program were also **less likely to be disciplined**. Another study found that the siblings and children of students who attended preschool did better academically, had **better employment outcomes, and were less likely to be involved with crime**.<sup>3</sup>

Beyond the research showing that Universal 3k pays for itself, the consensus of Northside Center's Mental Health and Education Professionals is that many children who did not attend 3k, but who later came to Northside for psychoeducation evaluation and or services suffered untreated trauma and other mental health issues that would have been better addressed earlier if these children had been under the watchful eyes of 3k providers.

The early socialization opportunities provided by Universal 3k extend to the neurological level. Psychologist Susan Pinker noted that "direct person-to-person contact triggers parts of our nervous system that release a "cocktail" of neurotransmitters tasked with regulating our response to stress and anxiety."<sup>4</sup> **Universal 3k is the best way to ensure that while parents work, all of the City's children get these benefits from socialization**. The attached, fact rich article titled, "Socialization Benefits of Early Childhood Education"<sup>5</sup> further amplifies the broad range of the positive effects of early socialization.

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<sup>2</sup> [The Benefits of Universal Access in Pre-K and "3-K for All" \(tcf.org\)](https://www.tcf.org/press-releases/2022/02/23/the-benefits-of-universal-access-in-pre-k-and-3-k-for-all/)

<sup>3</sup> [Adams rethinks NYC's 3-K program as it's set to hit a fiscal cliff - Chalkbeat New York](https://www.chalkbeat.com/story/adams-rethinks-nycs-3-k-program-as-it-sets-to-hit-a-fiscal-cliff/2022/09/01/)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321019#Face-to-face-contact-is-like-a-vaccine>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.himama.com/blog/socialization-benefits-of-early-childhood-education/>

We believe that preserving Universal 3K would help ensure that succeeding generations in East Harlem don't stay behind their neighbors in the following, recent critical measures:

- Elementary School Absenteeism is 30% in East Harlem versus an 18% average in Manhattan.
- The Graduation Rate in East Harlem is 67% and the average in Manhattan is 73%.
- Poverty afflicts 23% of East Harlem residents, whereas the average in Manhattan is 14%<sup>6</sup>

We believe it's axiomatic that in floods, fires and childhood, the earlier children can socialize and that professionals can spot and address emotional and physical problems, the faster, least expensive and most effective the results. As such, we urge the Council and the City to consider eliminating Universal 3k only as a perilous last resort. **If budget cuts are necessary, we urge the City to cut elsewhere.**

As we believe other 3K providers will testify, DOE often takes weeks to approve invoices. It would greatly benefit providers if DOE's invoice approval process could be accelerated.

We thank Chairperson Joseph, the whole Education Committee and its staff members for conducting the hearing and for considering this testimony.

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<sup>6</sup> At <https://www.nyc.gov/site/doh/data/data-publications/profiles.page#mn> see the East Harlem Community Profile

# Socialization Benefits of Early Childhood Education

from <https://www.himama.com/blog/socialization-benefits-of-early-childhood-education/>

POSTED BY [RON SPREEUWENBERG](#)

SEPTEMBER 8, 2015

IN POSTED IN [PARENTING](#)

Language, teamwork, sharing and respect some of the key socialization benefits of early childhood education.

Socialization with adults and children outside of the family forms the foundation upon which many other aspects of childhood development are established and grown over time. Exposing children to others is beneficial from a very early age, helping them to gain self-confidence and overcome any feelings of shyness.

In order for a child to live successfully within our society, they must be able to interact with others in a positive and healthy manner. Therefore, it is essential that we encourage and watch over the social interactions of our children and teach them productive ways to interact with their peers and adults. These skills must be developed over time through instruction, reinforcement and lots of practice. A child care center offers a safe, supportive space for children to develop social skills with children of all ages as well as adults in the form of caregivers, volunteers and guests.

Here is a look at some of the valuable socialization benefits of **early childhood education**:

## **Language**

When children have the opportunity to play and interact with other children of their own age or older, their language skills start to develop more rapidly. Spending time in a childcare setting can contribute positively to a child's understanding of the spoken word as he or she engages in storytelling, dramatic play, or simply through conversation with others.

## **Teamwork**

One of the great benefits of early childhood education centers is that they often offer the chance for children to work together with their peers. Many activities for preschool aged children are focused on teamwork to allow children to learn essential skills such as respecting the opinions of others, careful listening, equality and cooperation.

## **Sharing**

In most child care facilities, toys and equipment must be shared among all children in the group, and if a child wants to play, they must wait for their turn. An excellent social benefit of early childhood education is that your child will begin to form an understanding of the concept of sharing, which will be modeled by caregivers to encourage cooperation and equality among children.

## **Respect**

A daycare or preschool setting will allow children to not only learn to interact with peers, but also how to listen to authority figures outside of their parents. The social benefits of early childhood education extend beyond respect for authority to include a respect for their surroundings and belongings. This type of respect is easily taught in a child care center, where toys and supplies must be shared and cared for by all members of the group.

Though it may seem like a difficult task to teach a child some of the subtleties of social interaction such as being polite, taking turns in conversations and distinguishing both verbal and non-verbal social cues, they are not impossible to learn over time. When a child attends a child care or preschool program, they are exposed to a variety of people and different kinds of social interaction that will help them learn how to interact with others in a polite and productive manner. Ultimately, proper socialization can offer a child many benefits well into their adult life.



## **TESTIMONY: UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK**

### **Oversight Hearing: 3-K Funding Cuts and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Providers**

**New York City Council Committee on Education  
Honorable Rita Joseph, Chair**

**Submitted by:  
Faith Behum, UJA-Federation of New York**

**February 15, 2023**

Thank you Chairperson Joseph and members of the Committee on Education for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Faith Behum, and I am a Senior Advocacy and Policy Advisor at UJA-Federation of New York.

Established more than 100 years ago, UJA-Federation of New York is one of the nation's largest local philanthropies. Central to UJA's mission is to care for those in need—identifying and meeting the needs of New Yorkers of all backgrounds and Jews everywhere. UJA has more than 50 thousand engaged donors in the New York area, supports an expansive network of nearly 100 nonprofit organizations serving those that are most vulnerable and in need of programs and services, and allocates over \$150 million each year to strengthen Jewish life, combat poverty and food insecurity, nurture mental health and well-being and respond to crises here and across the globe.

UJA's network of nonprofit partners provide early childhood education programs including UPK and 3-K throughout New York City. Each of these programs is in multi-service community centers that offer children full-day care if it is needed by their families. These programs were in place before the implementation of UPK and provided the existing infrastructure that helped create the broader UPK system in New York City.

Delayed reimbursement from the Department of Education (DOE) has made it increasingly difficult for UJA's nonprofit partners to continue to provide these services to their communities. In October 2022, the DOE committed to improving the timeliness of payments for Birth to Five contracts. After this announcement, 3-K and UPK providers in the UJA network of nonprofits saw some positive changes. For example, many received advances that they had been waiting for since before the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year and were reimbursed partially for work they completed in FY22.

Despite these positive developments, four months later, early childhood providers continue to wait to be compensated. The two biggest issues nonprofits in UJA's network face are waiting

for both approval of monthly invoices and approval of budgets and/or students. Programs cannot invoice if their budgets are not approved. Students must also be approved before a program can invoice. One provider in UJA's network has 15 students that have been waiting to be approved since September-because of this delay they have not been able to submit invoices since September. Almost every provider with a Birth to Five contract in the UJA network has pending invoices, most date back to September and some date back to May. The Department of Early Childhood Education Finance Team recently notified providers that as of February 20th, 2023, multiple FY 2023 invoices could be submitted at once. Before February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, providers could only submit FY 2023 invoices monthly; additional invoices could not be submitted until the initial invoice was approved. If a provider had an invoice pending from September, they could not submit subsequent invoices. It remains to be seen how submitting multiple invoices will impact reimbursement delays.

To improve the fiscal stability of the entire City funded early childhood education sector, the current Administration must:

- Immediately bring all providers to no less than 75% of their full contract value for FY22
- Increase FY 2023 advance payments to 75% of their full contract value to address payment delays in the current fiscal year
- Extend provider's ability to submit multiple months of invoices and commit to never exceeding thirty days between invoicing and reimbursement to providers
- Maintain DOE's rapid response teams beyond FY 2023 to assist providers when they have questions about submitting invoices or payment delays
- Separate the enrollment data collection system from the system responsible for invoicing and payments
- Migrate DOE invoicing and payments from PreKids system to Passport by FY 2024.

UJA's nonprofit partners entered into contracts with the DOE, agreeing to be funded by the City to provide high-quality early childhood education programs to the communities they serve. These nonprofits have kept up their end of that agreement and need the City to do the same in order to maintain a thriving early childhood education system in New York City.

### **Conclusion**

UJA-Federation of New York respectfully urges your consideration and support of these recommendations that will strengthen early childhood programs across the city. Thank you for your time and if you have any questions please contact me at [behumf@ujafedny.org](mailto:behumf@ujafedny.org) or 212-836-1338.



**Testimony of United Neighborhood Houses  
Before the New York City Council Committee on Education  
Councilmember Rita Joseph, Chair**

**Oversight: Funding Cuts to 3-K  
and Delayed Reimbursements to Early Childhood Education Providers**

**Submitted by Irene Lew, Senior Research Analyst  
February 15, 2023**

Thank you Councilmember Rita Joseph and members of the Council Education Committee for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Irene Lew, and I am the Senior Research Analyst at United Neighborhood Houses (UNH). UNH is a policy and social change organization representing 46 neighborhood settlement houses, 40 in New York City, that reach 765,000 New Yorkers from all walks of life. UNH is also a founding member of the Campaign for Children (C4C), a coalition representing more than 150 children and youth service providers, advocates and community-based organizations in New York City.

New York City settlement houses in the UNH network operate 70 Department of Education (DOE)-contracted center-based child care programs which provide year-round, full-day programs for children 0-4 years old, and/or Pre-K for All and 3-K for All Programs that offer school-day programs. Nine settlement houses run DOE-contracted Family Child Care Networks, and 10 operate Head Start or Early Head Start programs directly contracted with the federal Office of Head Start. Several also run fee-for-service early childhood education programs. Collectively, settlement houses serve an estimated 12,000 children under the age of 5 citywide.

In Mayor Eric Adams' *Blueprint for Child Care and Early Childhood Education* released on June 28, 2022, one of his priorities is to "lay a foundation for a multi-pronged approach to child care that focuses on accessibility, quality and equity for families and the child care workforce." His blueprint detailed many actions for system accessibility and expansion. Last fall, Mayor Adams signed the Universal Child Care Act, a package of seven child care bills that he claimed would help fulfill the commitments he laid out in the blueprint to expand access to child care. While the Adams Administration's goal of creating a universal child care system is well-intentioned, the Administration and the Department of Education have failed to adequately address the systemic and persistent challenges facing the City's CBO early childhood education providers, especially around prompt payment for the hundreds of millions of dollars still owed to providers. Further, this Administration's actions undermine this goal, per the \$568 million cut to expanding the 3-K program for FY 2024 initially proposed in the FY 2023 November budget modification.

We urge the Administration to prioritize paying providers, as well as undertake critical operational reforms needed to stabilize and strengthen the City's early childhood education system.

## ***Addressing Debilitating Delays in Payments to Providers***

Early childhood education providers who contract with the DOE face a debilitating crisis of delayed contract reimbursements for FY 2022 and FY 2023. One of our members operating several center-based EarlyLearn programs and a Pre-K program reported that the City still owed them nearly \$1.3 million for FY 2022 contracts, as of January 13. Nearly eight months since the start of the current fiscal year, a number of our members still have not received any reimbursement for FY 2023 aside from advances. At the same time, the DOE notified providers earlier this week that they would begin recouping FY 2023 advances starting with February 2023, although providers are still owed eight months of payments for their FY 2023 contracts.

In an effort to address delayed payments to providers, the DOE announced a partnership with the Mayor's Office in November 2022 to deploy a "rapid response team" of cross-functional analysts and operational personnel that would provide 1:1 support to CBO early childhood providers with submitting their invoices for FY 2022, ensuring that they are up to date on FY 2023 invoices, and helping them get paid promptly. While providers have acknowledged contact from a member of the Rapid Response Team and some support with addressing issues in PreKids, the electronic vendor portal system for invoice submission, they continue to experience significant difficulties in getting FY 2022 and FY 2023 invoices paid, as well as significant delays in having their FY 2023 budgets approved. One of our members shared that they have worked with as many as 20 different DOE staff members to resolve an issue. Other members have shared that communication and messaging from the DOE is often disjointed and inconsistent when it comes to certifying attendance reports, approving and discharging enrollment, further adding to payment delays. Rather than devoting their time to delivering high-quality early childhood programming to children and families in their communities, providers are spending as much as 12 hours a day to ensure that budgets are approved and to verify children in the system. As one of our members noted, this work is "extremely time-consuming and exhausting. We're paid to serve the community but that energy is getting eaten up by this dysfunction."

Providers in the UNH network are experiencing severe financial cash flow hardships due to delayed payments for FY 2022 and FY 2023. One settlement house member informed us that as of January 30, they are still owed more than \$200,000 for FY 2023, and are currently deferring the purchase of classroom supplies or non-essential items so that they have enough money for payroll. The member notes that they are working with a budget deficit at the beginning of the school year, but must then scramble to spend the \$200,000 remaining in their budget by the end of the fiscal year after the DOE has finally approved their invoices: "We are working with nothing in the beginning and trying to hold on to it."

To ensure FY 2023 and future contracts are paid on time, the City must fix their complex back-end system for invoice submission and approval. DOE recently adjusted its vendor portal system to allow providers the option of submitting multiple monthly invoices at one time for FY 2022 contracts, and informed providers this week that this option is now available for FY 2023 invoices. However, the DOE has not indicated whether they would permit providers the option of batch invoice submission beyond FY 2023. This is troubling given that multi-month submission can help address the backlog in payments; without this option, providers can only upload material one month at a time and must wait for each month to get approved before they can move on to input the subsequent month. One of our members reported that they have not received any payment for FY 2023 invoices due to backlogs in monthly invoice submission and approval; since their July

2022 invoice has not been approved and paid out, they are unable to input other invoices for FY 2023, which has now put them six months behind in invoicing.

UNH urges the City to take the following steps to ensure that providers achieve financial stability:

- Immediately complete back payments and bring all center-based providers up to no less than 75 percent of their full contract value for FY 2022
- Increase providers' FY 2023 advance payments to 75 percent of full contract value to address emerging and serious payment delays for the current fiscal year
- Extend providers' ability to batch and submit multiple months of invoices for FY 2024 and beyond, as well as maintain DOE Rapid Response Teams for FY 2023 and future years
- Separate the system supporting enrollment data collection from the system responsible for invoicing and payments; and migrate DOE invoicing and payments out of the Pre-KIDS system and into MOCS (Mayor's Office of Contract Services) PASSPort system by FY 2024.

Furthermore, UNH supports Intro 843, which would require the DOE to report on invoices received from early childhood care and education providers that the DOE has contracted with to provide these services. The bill would require the DOE to report on metrics such as the number of invoices in total, the number of fully or partially paid invoices, the average amount of time it takes to process, and the number of invoices outstanding in value and percentage. We believe these reports provide much-needed clarity and transparency for providers on the status of submitted invoices, as well as hold the DOE accountable for paying providers promptly and on time. In addition, we recommend that these reports be made available to the public, similar to the way in which PASSPort data on contract processing and registration from MOCS is easily accessible online via PASSPort Public. For these reasons, we urge the City Council and Administration to pass Intro 843.

### ***Aligning 3-K Seats to Match Families' Needs and Preserving 3-K For All***

The City has increasingly turned to CBOs to expand the 3-K program. The Independent Budget Office (IBO) found that during the last school year, nearly three-quarters (74 percent) of 3-K students attended contracted New York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs), which include programs operated by CBOs, Early Learn programs, and Head Start programs. The City's expansion of 3-K for three-year-olds has largely been fueled by federal COVID-19 relief funding that will expire by the 2024-2025 school year.<sup>1</sup> The impact of this federal investment has been notable: the number of children enrolled in 3-K has roughly doubled since the 2019-20 school year, rising from 17,500 in 2019–20 to 35,700 in 2022–23. Now the DOE guarantees a seat for every 3-year-old in 12 of the City's 32 community school districts.<sup>2</sup>

Yet, the expansion of 3-K is at risk. After COVID-19 relief funds expire, the IBO projects that the 3-K program will be faced with a shortfall of \$92 million for the 2025-2026 school year.<sup>3</sup> However, rather than increasing its investment to address this funding gap, the City's response to the

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/Testimony\\_DOE\\_EarlyEducationHearing\\_101922.pdf](https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/Testimony_DOE_EarlyEducationHearing_101922.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/sustaining\\_progress\\_call\\_to\\_action.pdf?pt=1](https://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/sustaining_progress_call_to_action.pdf?pt=1)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/early-childhood-education-testimony-nys-senate-january-2023.pdf>

expiration of federal COVID-19 relief in 2026 has been to cut \$568 million to the 3-K expansion over two years in the November 2022 modification to the City's FY 2023 budget. The Administration noted that this is a reallocation of federal stimulus funds to reflect a "right-sizing" of the program and unfilled seats. The Administration has argued that these cuts do not represent a rollback of its promise to expand 3-K, noting that it would redistribute an estimated 40,000 unfilled seats to better match demand from families.

The rapid expansion of the 3-K and Pre-K programs created excess seats for 3- and 4-year-olds in certain communities. However under-enrollment or unfilled 3-K seats in these neighborhoods are not a reflection of reduced demand from families for this program—instead, it reflects a mismatch between the type of early childhood care and education needed by the City's families and the seats that are currently available to them. Available 3-K seats are typically school-day/school-year seats that do not meet the needs of working families who require full-day/full-year care. Yet, providers awarded seats under the DOE's new birth-of-five system are hamstrung by limited flexibility in converting seat types based on the preferences of the families they serve, which hinders their ability to effectively respond to the needs of their communities. Providers in our network have reported struggling to meet the demand for extended-day seats for 3- and 4-year-olds: one settlement house reported that families have approached them with requests for extended-day seats for 3-year-olds but they did not have the flexibility to open up more seats and were unable to change over seat types to accommodate families. One settlement house noted that they have considered offering these seats as private-pay seats in order to fill them, but families cannot afford to pay even the lowest estimated price required to pay for supplies.

Under-enrollment in 3-K is also representative of the ways in which the City has failed to work directly with CBO providers to address unfilled seats in their programs and best target outreach to families in their respective communities. As DOE controls the enrollment process, parents do not have the ability to connect directly with community providers to enroll their children when seats do become available. CBO providers have shared that they are often competing with neighboring DOE schools to fill open 3-K and Pre-K seats.

Ultimately, the proposed \$568 million cut to 3-K moves New York City away from the path to universal child care and fails to keep the promise of 3-K for All. Many families who may have counted on early care and education for their three-year-olds will no longer have a subsidized option. As of 2022, the estimated annual cost of care and education for preschoolers in New York City is \$16,900, which would consume 23 percent of the City median household income for families with three- or four-year-olds.<sup>4</sup>

To order to preserve 3-K for All, UNH urges the City to:

- Commit to fund current 3-K program levels and restore the timeline for the 3-K expansion.
- Convert existing 3-K school day / school year seats, to extended-day, year-round seats and ensure 3-K expansion efforts prioritize creating new capacity for extended day, year round seats.
- Invest a robust level of resources in linguistically and culturally appropriate on-the-ground and multimedia marketing, community engagement and enrollment efforts for 3-K.

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<sup>4</sup> NYS office of Children and Family Services. 2022 Child Care Market Rate Survey. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/reports/2022-Child-Care-Market-Rate-Survey.pdf>; UNH tabulations of 2021 American Community Survey data from US Census Bureau. Accessed via IPUMS.

- Reform enrollment procedures so that community based organizations have the option of directly enrolling children whose families apply for 3-K, Pre-K or child care.

### ***Meeting the Childcare Needs of Immigrant Families***

Furthermore, in addition to an investment in culturally-appropriate outreach on 3-K to families, the City should invest in an extension of the Promise NYC program to provide subsidized child care to low-income undocumented children. Due to restrictions on certain funding sources, the only public programs that undocumented children can currently join are 3-K and Pre-K programs and federal Head Start. This leaves a major gap in care for undocumented immigrants, including the more than 44,000 recent asylum seekers in New York City. Under Promise NYC, four providers, including three settlement houses, have contracted with the City to implement the child care voucher program in each of their respective boroughs. The 6-month program is expected to serve 600 children citywide for the remainder of the school year from January through June. Although Promise NYC was funded with \$10 million in the City's FY 2023 budget, this funding was secured before the majority of new asylum seekers arrived in New York City, and it was not baselined. We urge the City to baseline funding for Promise NYC in the FY 2024 budget so that undocumented families can continue to access the affordable, subsidized child care they need.

### ***Investing in Salary Parity for the CBO Early Childhood Education Workforce***

As part of preserving the promise of 3-K for All and creating a more equitable and accessible early childhood system that meets the needs of the City's families, the City must also invest in the child care workforce, specifically staff at early childhood education programs operated by settlement houses and other CBOs who have historically been underpaid relative to their counterparts at the DOE. UNH settlement house members report that the main obstacle for hiring and retaining staff in early childhood education programs is low salaries, which are required due to low contract values. On average, a head teacher with a master's degree working for a settlement house-run early childhood education program earned \$63,507 a year in 2021, 24 percent below the annual average salary earned by their DOE counterparts.

Lack of parity between the DOE and the CBOs is leading to higher vacancy rates and making it difficult for CBOs to fill and retain critical positions. One settlement house member reported that 20 percent of staff positions in their early childhood education programs were vacant as of September 1, 2022. Center-based programs are left with staff shortages, preventing them from running at full capacity due to required children-adult ratios. One settlement house reported that their enrollment is impacted by staffing issues, noting that "one of our enrollment challenges continues to be competition with the DOE for certified teachers and other staff so we can't enroll more children beyond who we can safely serve." Another reported that it has received requests for child care support from asylum-seeking families but are unable to serve them due to staff shortages: "We have a waiting list of about 65 kids and a bunch of empty classrooms, but we don't have the staff." Similarly, another member is operating an early childhood program that is half-staffed and half-enrolled, noting that it is difficult to recruit staff when their certified teachers earn \$10,000 less than what DOE pays for certified teachers at a school-based site. Furthermore, high turnover rates threaten the stability and continuity of care that is necessary for young children's behavioral and cognitive development.

In 2019, the City attempted to address pay parity concerns by reaching a contract with certified early childhood education lead teachers working in community-based centers that brought their salaries on par with the salary of an entry level 10-month DOE teacher. However, the agreement

did not account for regular increases or longevity bonuses, nor did it cover special education teachers. The last scheduled wage increase took effect in October 2021, and we are concerned that in the absence of negotiations to address outstanding issues from the 2019 agreement, the field will face a serious crisis in finding and retaining qualified, dedicated teachers to lead both general and special education classrooms.

Furthermore, the lack of pay parity between center-based program directors working for CBOs and their equivalent counterparts in the DOE remains an issue. In 2019 and 2020, discussions of pay parity for early childhood program directors were delayed, and directors are still working without a contract. Early childhood program directors, similar to DOE principals, dedicate their time and energy into making their programs the highest quality for the children they serve, and they deserve salary increases on par with DOE principals. UNH members have expressed their frustrations around losing program directors to the DOE, who they noted have been enticed by higher salaries. One early education administrator at a settlement house noted: "I can't pay my director \$100k. I can do \$85k, although I know it's not comparable to the amount of work that they do."

Early childhood education support staff are also in urgent need of wage increases. The 2019 contract awarded the support staff a 2 percent increase which brought wages up to \$15.75/hour. This rate is not only significantly lower than DOE equivalent jobs, but it is also lower than what some big box retail companies pay their employees in NYC. According to UNH's 2021 member salary survey, a teacher's aide or assistant working at a settlement house-run early childhood education program earned an average annual salary of about \$33,600 in 2021—not far off from the federal poverty line of \$26,500 for a family of four with two adults and two children. The City must increase wages for support staff to a minimum of \$25 per hour so that community-based organizations can retain their experienced staff by offering competitive wages.

Furthermore, any parity agreement and wage increase incentive should also apply to staff working at family child care providers. Family child care providers account for a sizable share—61 percent—of the City's child care providers licensed and registered by the NY State Office of Children and Family Services. Family child care providers, who are educators, but also small business owners, face unique challenges. New York State's FY 2022-2023 enacted budget included \$324 million in additional state funding to increase child care provider reimbursement rates from the 69th percentile to 80th percentile of the market rate. However, it is necessary to ensure that family child care providers are reaping the benefits of these higher market rates.

To stabilize the early childhood education workforce in FY 2024, UNH urges the City to:

- Fund a new labor contract that:
  - Advances childhood education parity between center and school based services, ensuring staff left out of the first phase of parity (early childhood directors, support staff in community based organizations and preschool special education teachers and support staff) are included
  - Factors longevity into salary increases
  - Establishes a minimum wage floor of \$25 for all support staff.
- Ensure home-based family child care providers benefit from the increased child care provider reimbursement rate to 80th percentile of the market rate.

Thank you for your time. To follow up, you can contact me at [ilew@unhny.org](mailto:ilew@unhny.org).

Feb 10 2023

Dear Councilmembers and City Administration,

I am writing to emphasize my families' support for fully and promptly funding the city 3K program. This program is a huge step forward in creating an equitable education system for the city's children, our future. High quality early childhood education is a huge help to children from every area of the city to enable them get the best start and become the leaders of tomorrow. We live in Flatbush and the childcare options for my two daughters are limited. There are waiting lists and exorbitantly high prices for many child care centers and day cares. We were very happy to find a great program for my two year old where she is thriving, and we are depending on the city financing for her 3-K year to be able to continue next year. This program will allow me to work and generate income for my family and tax income for the city. It stands as a model for the rest of the country.

I was outraged to hear that some programs have had to close due to payment delays from the city. Childcare workers are underpaid heroes. They have given their all to carry the families of this city through the pandemic. To think that they have lost their jobs due to delays is shameful and heartbreaking. Our city needs this essential program more than tax breaks for developers or other benefits for the rich! Provide the money already allocated and commit to fully funding and expanding this essential program for the future of New York immediately!

Sincerely,  
Claire Chandler  
Ryan Garrett  
Alma Garrett  
Robin Garrett

Brooklyn NY 11210

Dear Members of the New York City Council,

My name is Dana Abrassart and I am writing as a constituent of District 40, a district that has been subject to lack of 3K provider payments by the DOE for months now. I have been a resident of this district for nearly 7 years and a proud New Yorker for 15. I am also the proud parent of a very opinionated & vibrant 18-month old daughter.

Having recently entered the dizzying world of navigating NYC's early childhood education and care system, I can attest to the challenges many parents face: high costs, provider shortages, months and months of waitlists. At a time when life is already very hectic as a working parent, finding a reliable form of care only adds to the list of challenges.

When I learned about the 3K program from family members in my neighborhood, I was beyond delighted. At first, it was mostly because it felt like part of a huge financial burden had been lifted. However, when I dug deeper into the concept of early childhood education, I realized that the potential benefits of such a program extended far beyond my immediate concerns about finances. I learned about how unique and forward-thinking a program like this is and came to understand how critical the early years - from birth! - are for neurodevelopment in children. Since the program is also universal, the 3K program provides what seems like an increasingly rare opportunity within our school system for children to learn in a diverse, socioeconomically integrated environment.

I now view NYC's seminal 3K program not only as a necessary enrichment to the children of this city AND a sorely needed support system to the parents of NYC, but also a model for other cities across the nation to expand socially-funded education programs to the very youngest of our citizens.

I say all this to emphasize the fact that NYC needs to invest in early childhood education and the fact that some local providers are struggling to keep their doors open as a result of lack of contractually-obligated funds should be viewed by the council as nothing less than an embarrassment to the city of NYC.

The 3K program should be funded and expanded, so every child in the city has a seat at the table. Providers, who continue to work long and hard, should be paid livable wages with benefits

I'll leave you with a nicely summarizing quote from perhaps a very unlikely source, former NBA All-Star and coach of the Brooklyn Nets (don't hold that against him), Steve Nash. The quote is his response to the book entitled *Parent Nation* by Dr. Dana Suskind. The book itself examines the recent neuroscience of early childhood development and how in order to support children during this critical time means we as a society have to support parents:

"[This book is] a powerful reminder that we know too much about the critical importance of early brain development to continue treating children's first years as anything other than a paramount driver of health in our communities. Supporting children means supporting the adults that care for

them; calling for and investing in coordinated, quality early childhood systems, and elevating businesses and governments that provide these vital structures – that's the work of all of us."

I implore the council to continue funding the 3K program and paying the providers of this vital service to our society in a timely fashion.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana Abrassart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right from the end of the name.

Dana Abrassart

My name is Emily Hoffman. I am a 12-year resident of Brooklyn. I currently live in the Kensington neighborhood. My family has been in New York City since fleeing here from Eastern Europe in the late 1800s, and it has always been my dream to be able to raise a family here.

As the mother of a 1 year old, I have been gutted to read about the possibility of cuts to the 3K program. Universal pre-Kindergarten programs are a big part of what allow people like me, who have chosen a career of service, to live comfortably here. My husband and I love our daughter's daycare, but it costs close to \$20,000 a year. Between those fees and our ever-climbing rent, we are hardly able to save. And we know we are among the lucky ones.

We have been counting on 3K and pre-K for a reprieve— we dream of the ability to put money away for our daughter's future while she gets a world-class public education. Again and again, studies have shown that universal, and not means-tested, preschool achieves the best results for children of all backgrounds. The little New Yorkers who are currently enrolled in 3K and UPK are on the path to a bright future, and I hope the Council and administration will work together to continue to widen that path. Our kids are counting on it. Thank you.

To members of the City Council Committee on Education:

I wanted to write in support of your efforts (special shout-out to my councilmember Rita Joseph) to keep the Adams administration accountable with regard to timely payment to 3k/Early education providers. It is absurd that 6 months into the school year, they have still not figured out a system to support our most vulnerable citizens and their caretakers. I know Mayor Adams' lukewarm support for universal 3K, despite the scientific evidence clearly showing enormous benefits, so my hope is that this committee, and the NYC City Council as a whole, can keep the pressure up on the administration, save early childhood providers from closing their doors and sending parents scrambling for care, while trying to keep their jobs.

From my personal experience, early childhood centers were a life-saver during early days of COVID. Even with the uncertainty of the world, they were there to give our kid a safe space, full of love, learning and camaraderie. To realize that other parents in these safer times are losing the same lifeline is maddening.

Thank you for staying on top of this important issue.

With best regards,

Ilya M.

Hello,

My name is Julia Frey and I live at 910 Caton Avenue in Brooklyn. My wonderful 3-year-old son is fortunate to attend 3-K For All at GATED Academy on Church Avenue. His teachers are kind, loving, patient, and committed. His classroom is diverse racially, ethnically, and economically, and he benefits from interacting with children from all sorts of families. His classroom reflects New York! It make me excited to raise him in our incredible, multifaceted city.

I am appalled to learn that payments from the city to several 3-K programs, including GATED, have been delinquent. These are businesses, serving communities and neighborhoods for years, put under great financial strain with no explanation. Teachers are wildly underpaid across the country, and to pull the rug out from under their employer in unconscionable.

This inaction strikes me as the Adams administration sabotaging a valued program that helps so many. The childcare at 3-K centers helps adult caretakers work to support their families, but more importantly they provide crucial, quality early childhood education to all New Yorkers. My son and his classmates are learning to collaborate, problem solve, and investigate the world around them. His teachers emphasize appropriate skills he needs to focus on at this age — in his case, fine motor skills, like tearing paper. They have supported every child, helping their parents guide towards milestones: potty training, writing their names. Parents would be lost without these experienced, certified, devoted teachers.

Applications are currently open for 3-K For All, but the distain that the city is showing for this valued program is frightening. Families are counting on it. It must continue. And the 3-K centers that are serving our children RIGHT NOW must be paid RIGHT NOW.

Thank you very much. And big thanks to my councilperson Rita Joseph, who has been working to address this.

Sincerely,  
Julia Frey

Dear Councilmember Hanif,

I am a constituent of District 39. I am a parent of a 3 year old and a newborn. I am writing about the upcoming hearing regarding 3K funding.

My daughter is currently in a 3K program. She is thriving and loves going to “school” every day. The program is rich in content, nurturing, and supporting her educational, as well as, social/emotional development in ways I could not touch as a parent.

I urge you to advocate for full funding of these programs to continue and for our current providers to be paid in full so that they can maintain these invaluable programs.

Many people I work with comment about how 3K and 4K are what keep them living in NYC. Having stable and fruitful childcare/schooling for your child removes an incredible burden parents feel. The more people who stay for these programs are more people to contribute to our economy and help our city continue to rebound from the pandemic.

Children in my daughter’s class also receive IEP services. While they can receive those services anywhere, there should be acknowledgement of the added value they have of receiving them within a school setting. This allows them to not only receive the additional help but also to learn from their typically developing peers. Less 3K programs means less exposure to different learners, something that helps all our children grow.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my thoughts, and thank you for all you have done for our district!

With appreciation,

Rebecca Newcomb  
rebeccaforlenza@gmail.com

As a single mother to a 3 year old in Brooklyn, currently enrolled in a universal 3K seat at a childcare center that also offers extended hours, I can say unequivocally that access to this childcare program is the only thing keeping me in the workforce and out of poverty. Mayor Adams and his administration should be ashamed for even considering cuts to the childcare sector, the very backbone upon which the rest of the city's economy, and its recovery depends.

Withholding payments to those who care for and nurture our littlest New Yorkers is disgraceful, and should not even be considered if we want to see ourselves as American economic leaders.

Our family and all other families we know rely on 3K for their children's education. Likewise, where we send our child to daycare/school relies on consistent and timely funding of its 3K program to pay the amazing teachers that are working the program.

Families have been through a lot since the start of COVID, it is imperative that 3K be fully funded, consistently administered and supported.

It is a matter of equity and our children's futures. Our children are the citizens and voters of tomorrow.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elysia Murphy

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Citizen's Committee For Children

Address: 14 Wall Street, NY, NY 10010

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kara Ahmed

Address: DOE

I represent: DOE

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DAN WEISBERG

Address: 52 CHAMBERS ST. NYC 10007

I represent: NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/15/2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mary Cheng

Address: 150 Elizabeth St, NY 10012

I represent: Chinese American Planning Council

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 843 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/15/23

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Irene Lew

Address: 45 Broadway

I represent: United Neighborhood Houses

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: Feb. 15, 2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rosemarie Sinclair

Address: 40 Rector St. NYC 10006

I represent: CSA-Executive Vice President

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2-11-23

Name: Joyce McCLANNY (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Daycare Workers

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: DR. Sanayi Beckles-Canton (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: NYC 10037

I represent: Chloe Day Services LLC

Address: 300 West 134th St. NYC 10030

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Sarita Subramanian (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: NYC Independent Budget Office

I represent: 110 William St NY, NY 10038

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gregory Brender

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Day Care Council of New York

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: Feb 15, 2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth Bird

Address: Educational Alliance

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 0164

in favor  in opposition

Date: 2/15/2023

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Patricia Lett

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Bklyn Sunday School Union

Address: 125 Ft. Green Place Bklyn 11217

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms