



Rhode Island Early Learning Council

MARCH 27, 2024

9:00 - 11:00 A.M.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF RI

EARLY LEARNING RI

9:00	Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Meeting Overview	Angélica Infante-Green, RIDE Kimberly Merolla-Brito, DHS Paige Clausius-Parks, RI KIDS COUNT
9:15	Cross-Sector Discussion: Early Childhood Program Staffing Successes and Challenges	Council Members
9:30	Updates: Early Educator Recruitment/Retention Initiatives	Nicole Chiello, DHS Lisa Hildebrand, RI Association for the Education of Young Children Jennifer Kaufman, EOHHS Catherine Green, Head Start Collaboration
10:00	Discussion: Input on the Rhode Island Child Care and Development Fund Triennial Plan	Nicole Chiello, DHS
10:30	Update: Implementation of New Rules for the Child Care Development Fund to Help Families and Providers	Nicole Chiello, DHS
10:45	Announcements, Public Comments, & Next Steps	Angélica Infante-Green, RIDE Kimberly Merolla-Brito, DHS Paige Clausius-Parks, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

Cross-Sector Discussion: Early Childhood Program Staffing Successes and Challenges

Early Educator Recruitment/Retention Initiatives



Infant Toddler Registered Apprenticeship



Partnerships

Development and implementation of the DHS Infant Toddler Registered Apprenticeship Pilot wouldn't have been possible without the successful collaboration with institution of higher education and early childhood and industry partners:

- **Apprenticeship Intermediary** = Building Futures RI (Link to RI DLT)
- **Related Instruction** = Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College & University of Rhode Island
- **Professional Development** = Center for Early Learning Professionals
- **Program Evaluation:** University of Rhode Island & BrightStars (Pre/Post Assessment)
- **Funder Support & Involvement** = RI Department of Human Services



Program Benefits

APPRENTICE BENEFITS

- Earned Three (3) Wage Increases
- Cost of all Related Instruction Covered
- Free Chromebook
- Completion Bonus
- On Site Mentoring

MENTOR BENEFITS

- Received Three (3) Bonus Payments
- Free Chromebook
- Coaching, Professional Development & Mentoring by University of Rhode Island
- Completion Bonus

EMPLOYER BENEFITS

- Sign-on Bonus
- Wage Increase Subsidized by RI DHS
- Completion Bonus Awarded by RI DLT
- Staff Retention
- Staff Qualifications
- Pre & Post Assessment Helped towards QRIS Rating

Apprenticeship Levels

LEVEL I

- Teacher Assistants-Focused
- Related Instruction:
 - *CDA Credential + Required PD*
- Can be promoted to LT Role after Apprenticeship
- Credits can be folded into Pathways at CCRI
- Onsite Mentor = Lead Teacher

LEVEL II

- Lead Teacher-Focused
- Related Instruction:
 - *I/T Birth-3 Certificate at RIC (16 College Credits) + Required PD*
- Credits can be folded into BA Program or transferred back to CCRI
- Onsite Mentor = EC/Director

Participant Demographics from the Pilot

Registered Apprentices

Average age: 31 years

All female

85% Non-Hispanic

Majority Primary Language is English

6 participants have AA, AD, or BD

Average Years in ECE: 7

Average Salary: \$14/hr



Mentors

Average age: 40 years

All female

88% Non-Hispanic

Majority Primary Language is English

47% have a Bachelor's Degree

Average Years in ECE: 13

Average Salary: \$19/hr

Enrollment Data

PILOT PHASE (January 2022-June 2023)

A total of 24 participants enrolled in the Pilot phase and Registered with DLT

Level I Apprentices

8 Apprentices graduated – earned CDA Credential & Apprenticeship Certificate

5 Apprentices withdrew due to termination of employment

Level II Apprentices

8 Apprentices graduated – earned B3 Certificate @ RIC & Apprenticeship Certificate

3 Apprentices withdrew due to termination of employment

Sponsor Participation:

Level I: 7 Child Care Programs

Level II: 8 Child Care Programs

New Enrollment- January 2024

Level I: 8 apprentices

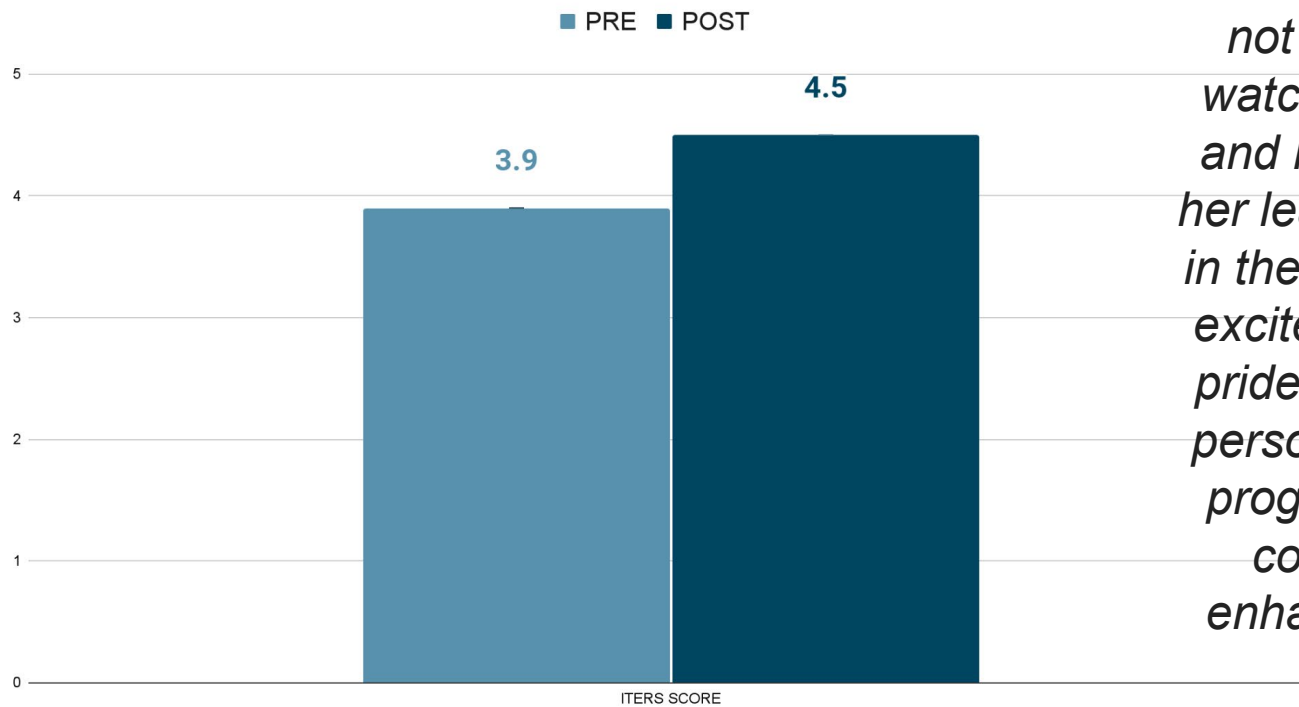
Level II: 11 apprentices



Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale Observations

All RA's received a pre and a post ITERS Observation as a part of the program that could then be used towards their program's BrightStars application for renewal or increase, if applicable.

Average ITERS-3 Scores



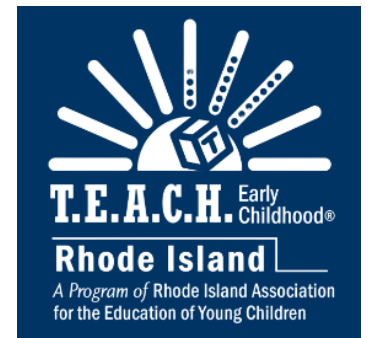
“Thank you so much for this opportunity, not just for me but for my RA. I have watched my RA grow in her profession and it literally makes me tear up to see her learn and implement what she learns in the classroom and to talk about it with excitement. She is motivated and takes pride in her work. My RA is an amazing person and I am truly proud of her. This program allowed her an opportunity to come out of her comfort zone and enhance the quality in her classroom.”



Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program

Supporting High School CTE Programs

- Partnership with URI, RIC and CCRI: URI CDC observation; discussion with teachers and directors; campus tours
- Career and college pathways into ECE- Speakers Opportunities
Materials for CTE students to learn and use
- Support for CTE Teachers in High Schools and CDA Training
- Tuition assistance opportunities (ex. TEACH Early Childhood RI Scholarship)



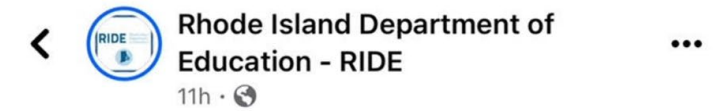
URI Child Development Centers host high school students for lesson in early education

State-URI partnership exposes high school students to potential careers in human development and education

High school Career and Technical Education students from around the state have gotten a first-hand look at child development and career pathways in the human development and education fields, thanks to a partnership between the URI Child Development Centers and the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC).



Students from Chariho and Woonsocket High School Career and Technical Education programs recently visited the URI Child Development Center in Kingston for a lesson in early childhood education.



"The CHARIHOTech CTE program continues to thrive under the guidance of new lead teacher Sarah Schofield, coming with decades of experience in the field of Early Childhood Education," said Amber Mangione, Career and Technical Education Counselor for the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children.

#CTEMonth Chariho Regional High School



Education Careers

Chariho Regional High School

The significance of the partnership echoes through the words of former CTE lead teacher Michele Merlino, who, upon her retirement, shared that "the collaboration is most definitely the most worthwhile partnership I have had in my 19 years in this position."

The CharihoTECH and Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC) partnership has:

- Allowed students to attend state college tours with observations at the RIC Cooperative Preschool and URI Child Development Center
- Establish meaningful connections with seasoned professionals through speaker events and professional development opportunities
- Provided paid internships and permanent employment opportunities in early learning centers



CTE Partnership Participant Testimonials

“Seeing a different preschool was such an interesting experience for my classmates and me. We could use the knowledge we’ve learned in class to have real discussions with other teachers and educators outside of our Chariho District. Being able to see the URI campus itself was also super exciting and helped our field trip feel inclusive to those who maybe aren’t planning to go into education or childcare in the future.”

~Caroline, Chariho CTE Senior

“The trip was amazing! Being able to tour the campus and the CDC really allowed my class to experience college life. The staff, teachers and students were happy to answer any questions the students had. I will definitely take this trip again in the future. It seems URI will be a new home for many of my students after this trip.”

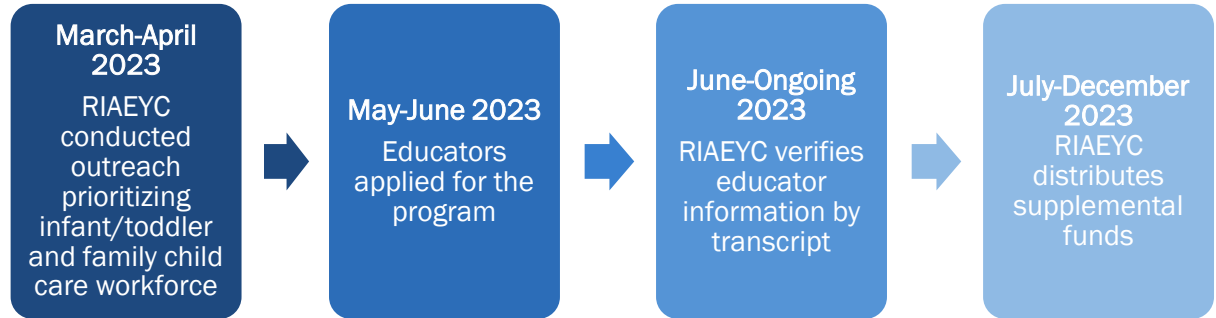
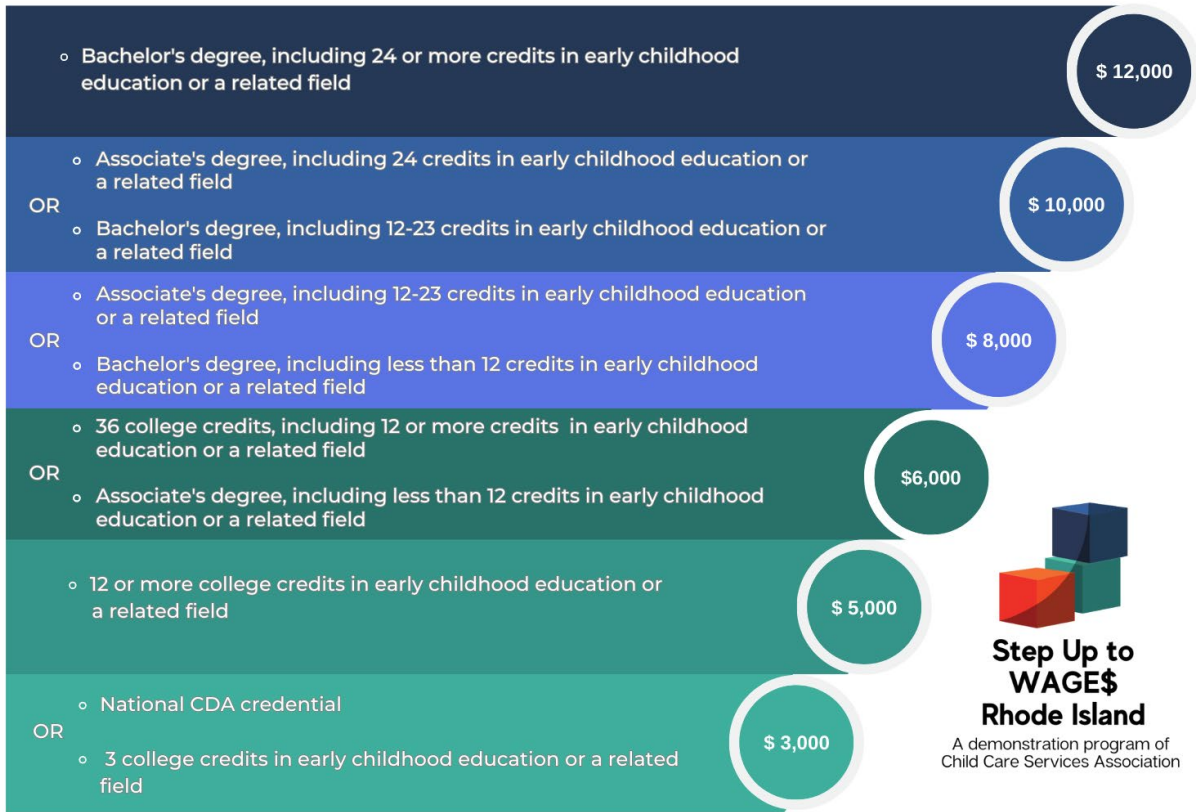
~Christine, Woonsocket High School
CTE Teacher



Step Up to WAGE\$ Pilot Update

Step Up to WAGE\$ provides supplemental compensation to educators based on their education and credentials

Supplement Qualifications & Totals



How is it going

Since the application opened in May 2023, Rhode Island's Step Up to WAGE\$ pilot program has received:

- 609 applications received
- 99% of the applicants are female
- 40% of applicants have a college degree (AA through MA)
- 29% of applicants have early childhood college credits but no degree
- 11% of applicants have a CDA credential

Award Level			Awardees by Role	
One	70	26%	Assistant Teacher	76
Two	46	17%	Lead Teacher	129
Three	38	14%	Ed Coordinator	16
Four	32	12%	Assistant Director	7
Five	58	21%	Director	11
Six	27	10%	FCC	32

- 271 (+2SA educators) Educators Awarded; \$1,607,000 awarded to date!
- The average wage of those being funded is approximately \$16.50 per hour

We expect to be able to do one more round of supplement payments to recipients before July 2024 due to an extension of PDG funds. Supplements may be reduced depending on retention numbers.

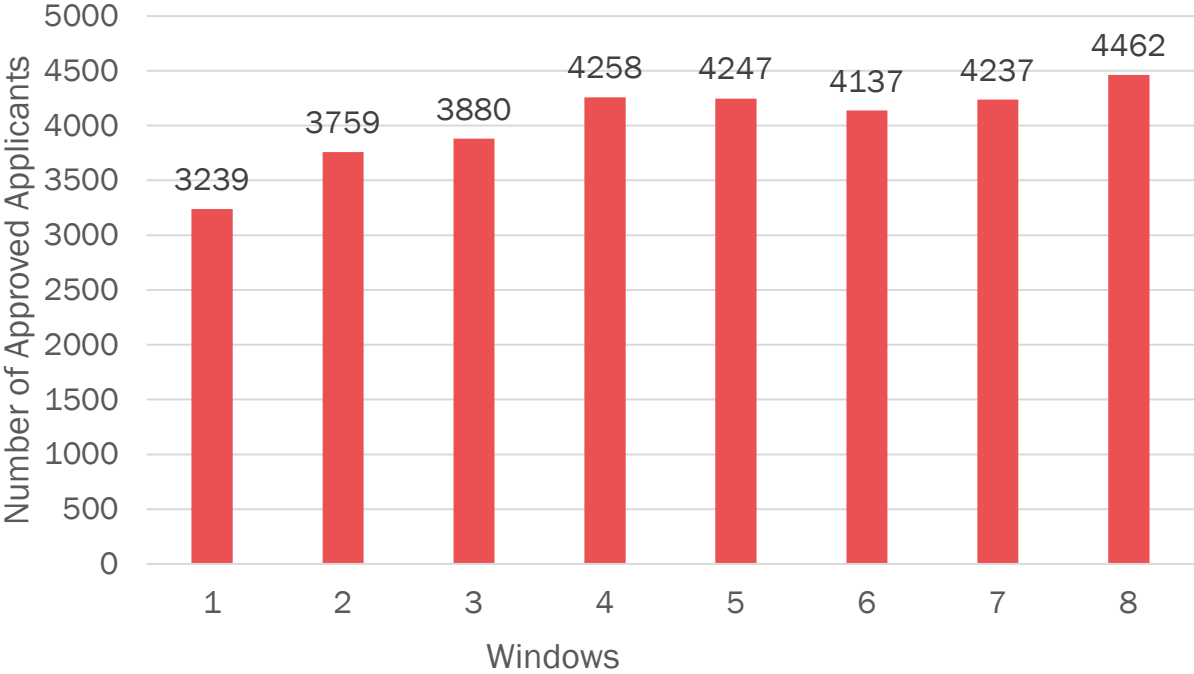


Pandemic Retention Bonus Update

Pandemic Retention Bonus Program Overview

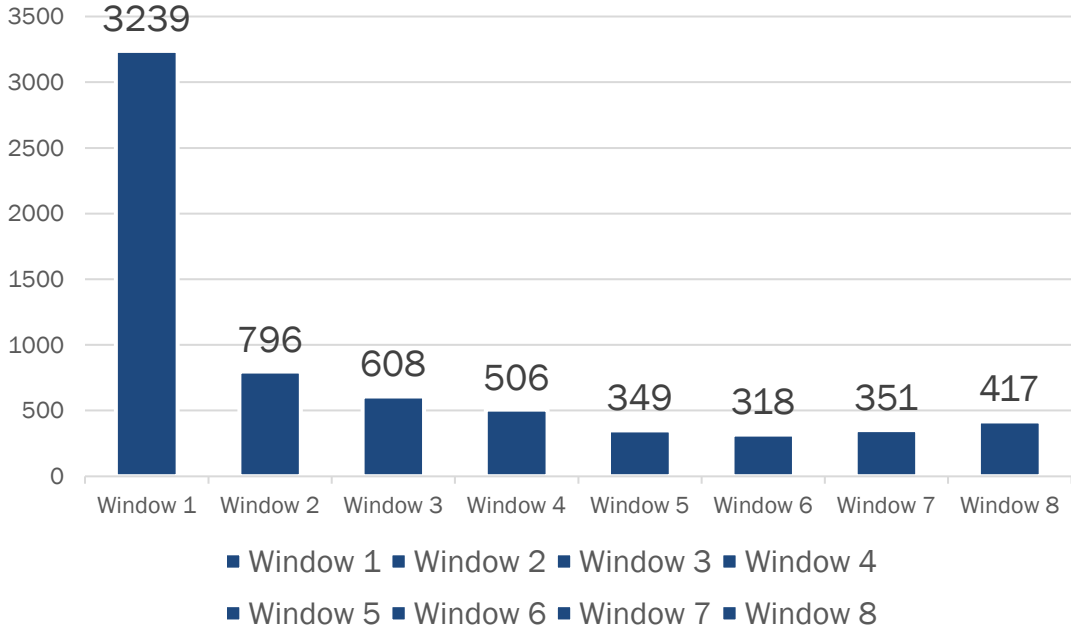
6584 unique applicants have been awarded across Windows 1-8 of the bonus program (from March 2022-Present).

Total Applicants in Each Window



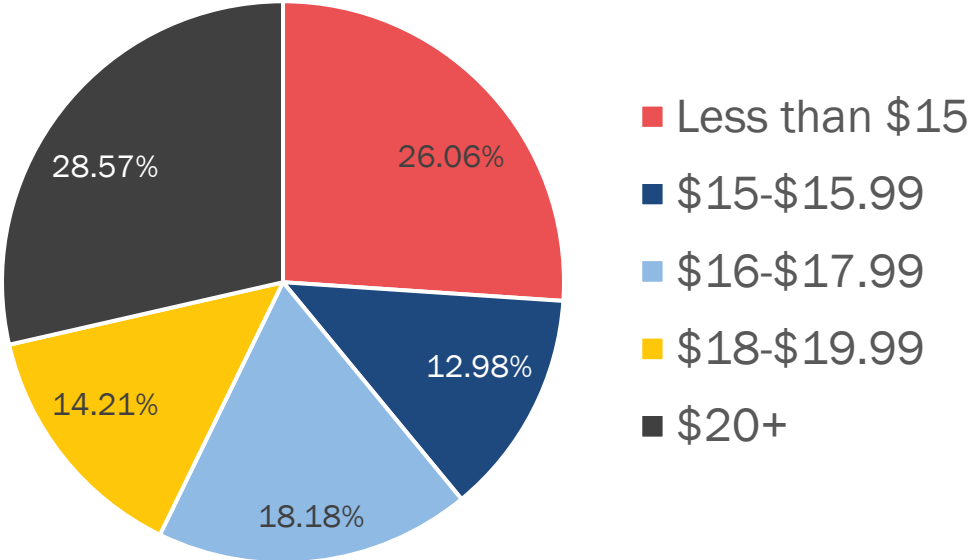
Window 8 had our highest number of applicants yet at 4462.

Number of Unique Applicants in Each Window



Pandemic Retention Bonus Program Overview - Demographics

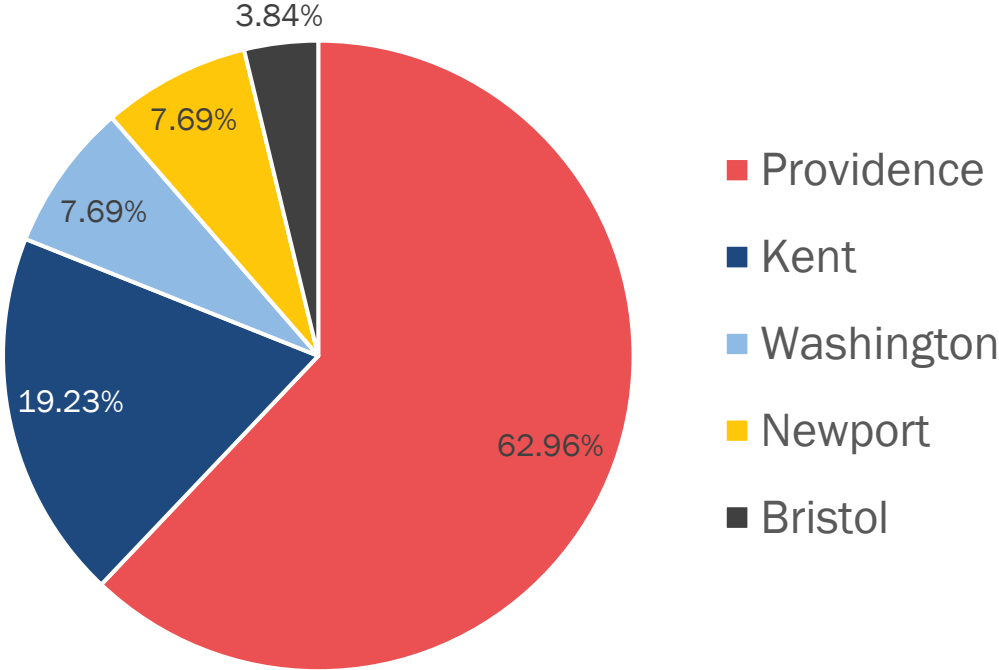
Applicant Hourly Wage



Interestingly, over 28% of the applicants self-attest to having an hourly wage of more than \$20 an hour. The second highest hourly wage is less than \$15 an hour, which is primarily attributed to the FCC community and how they calculate per hour rate in their self-employed status.

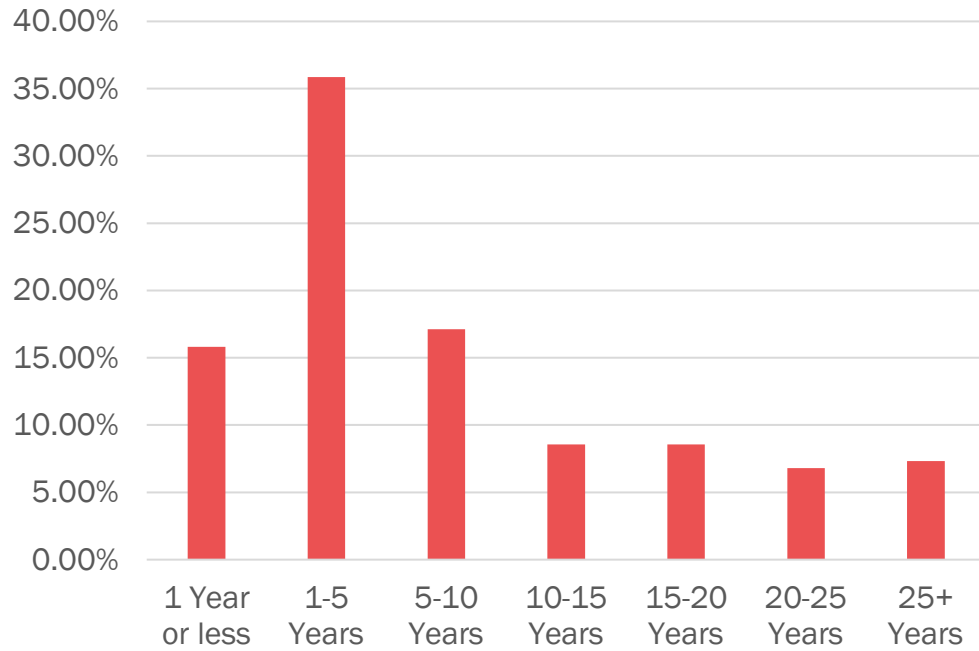
An overwhelming number of applicants live in Providence County, over 62%

Applicant Distribution by County

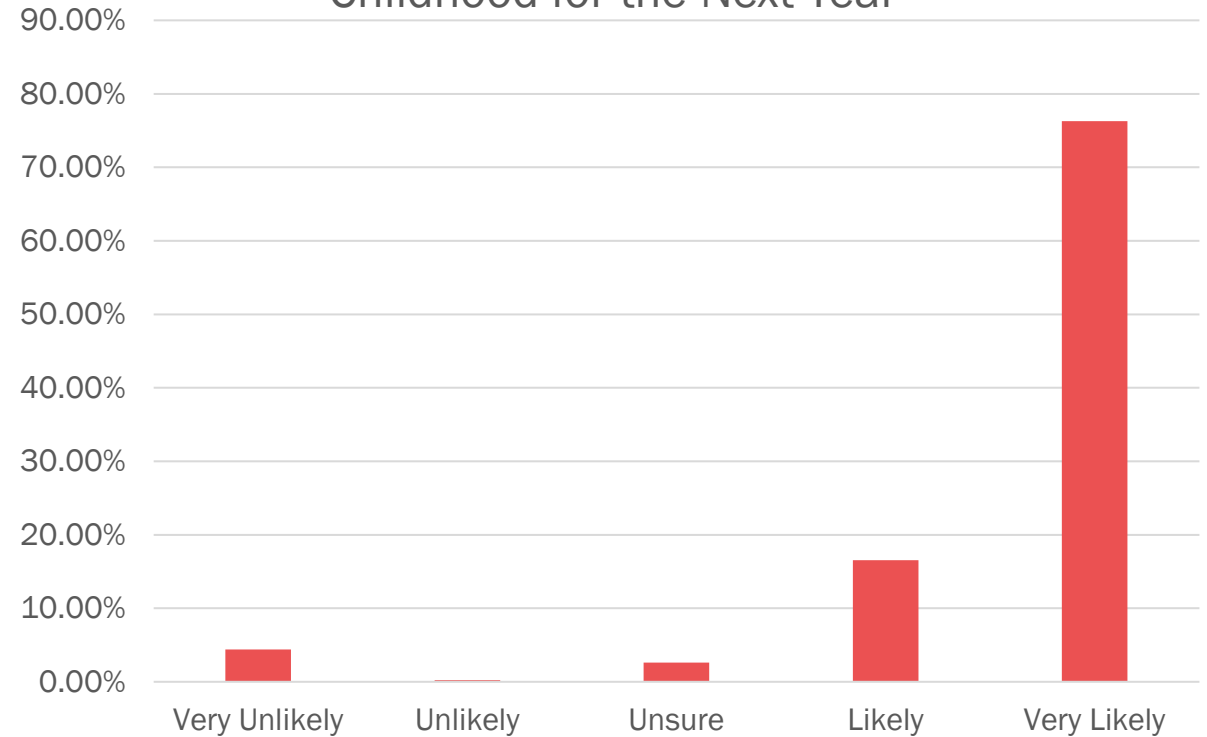


Pandemic Retention Bonus Program Overview – Additional Info.

Years Worked in the Field of Early Childhood Education



Likelihood to Remain in the Field of Early Childhood for the Next Year



Pandemic Retention Bonus Program Overview – Next Steps

- Window 9 will occur just like any other window.
 - Application window will open April 1.
 - Bonuses will be \$750 per applicant, as usual.
- In order to ensure a fair and equitable process, Window 10 awards will be calculated as follows:
$$\text{Total amount of remaining funds} / \text{Total number of approved applicants}$$
- A reduced (2-week) application window will ensure recipients receive bonus payments in a timely manner.
- All applications will be reviewed prior to awards being issued.
- Based on average amounts of applicants, we are approximating a Window 10 payment of **\$439** per recipient.***



PRB Impact

In a recent window, we asked the providers what the Pandemic Retention Bonuses have meant to them so far.

- Since the pandemic I do not have enough kids and the funds have helped me with business loss /financial aspects.
- The pandemic retention bonuses have served as supplement of funds that help in response to the rising costs of living.
- These funds have allowed me to catch up on my bills and focus more on my classroom.
- The bonus has impacted my professional career in the area of purchasing professional attire and college book for attending classes at Rhode Island College.
- The support of the pandemic retention bonus helps out so much especially since I'm a college student. Times are hard now and getting more expensive.
- It helped me better my daycare for the kids, such as new supplies etc.
- It helps to receive the retention bonus. It is very difficult to stay in this profession earning what we do. Things need to change. We are in a crisis, we do not have enough qualified early childhood teachers. We are losing teachers due to the lack of quality earnings.



CCAP for Child Care Pilot

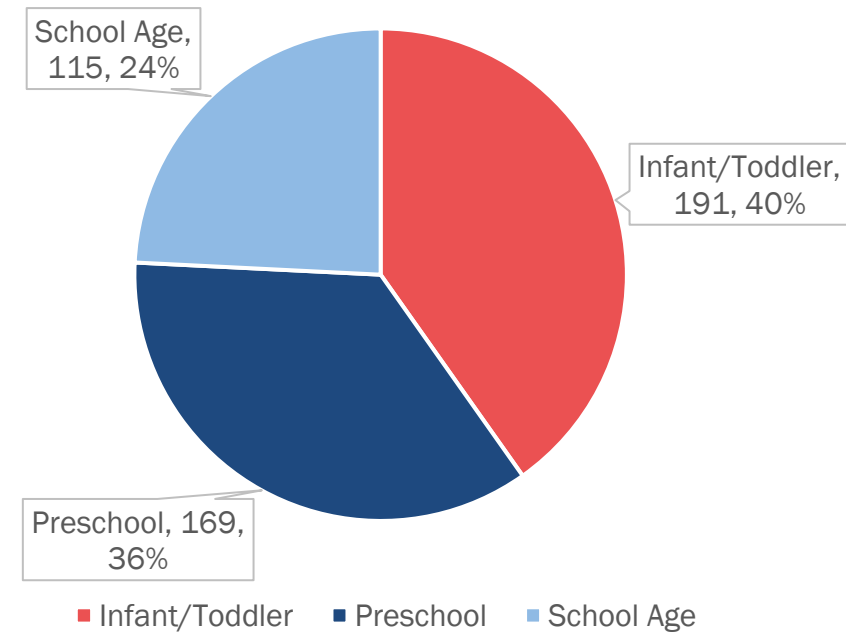


CCAP for Child Care Pilot – as of 3/19

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for Child Care Staff is a one-year pilot offering CCAP benefits to subsidize the cost of child care for eligible early childhood educators and staff working in DHS licensed child care programs.

- Pilot start date: Thursday, August 25th
- Total applications received as of 3/18: 440
 - Total completed applications: 432
 - In process: 8
- Count by Children:
 - Approved: 475
 - Denied: 105
 - Total: 580

Total Number of Children in Pilot



CCAP for Child Care Pilot – as of 3/19

Approved	Count by Children
CCAP Participant	110
Not a CCAP Participant	365
Total	475

Of the 475 approved children, only 23% of them are currently in the CCAP program, For those families who meet the criteria for regular CCAP, we are reaching out to support them through the CCAP application process now so they will not have care that is disrupted when the pilot ends.

Number of Programs Participating: Where Applicants Work

Approved	Centers	FCC	Total
Count of Programs	142	20	162



CCAP for Child Care Pilot

Provider Midpoint Survey Issued 3/12/24

- 86 of 324 responded as of 3/18/24. Survey closes March 25.
- 64 respondents are CCAP providers with pilot children enrolled.
- 61 respondents are DHS licensed providers who employ educators approved for the pilot.

Most respondents reported:

- a clear understanding of the pilot process, timely responses to applications and good or great experiences with technical assistance;
- finding the enrollment/disenrollment and attendance reporting processes to be clear and easy to implement;
- payments to be accurate with clear documentation.

Most respondents reported the pilot was useful in recruiting and retaining employees.



CCAP for Child Care Pilot Impact

- We have gotten many more applicants with employees who are looking to bring their child with them to work. It has really given us an opportunity to appropriately staff our center.
- This has been life changing for parents with small children to go back to work. We have truly benefited from this program as staff want to stay and work where their child attend.
- This has been an amazing experience. We were able to attract a top-notch toddler teacher who had chosen to stay home because the cost of child care was too high in comparison to her income.
- It has aided in the recruiting and retaining of staff who did not qualify for DHS child care assistance nor have the ability to pay out of pocket for quality child care. It has also helped to attract teachers with children who also do not qualify for assistance. The program helps reduce the financial burden for those families.
- Thanks to the pilot program, I recently hired two additional staff who are in the process of applying for the pilot program. This pilot program is financially supporting our staff with young children, allowing them to work in a field that otherwise does not pay well. They are a full of energy and a great asset to our program. I hope this program will continue to support the staff so they will continue to work in childcare.



Advocacy for Early Educators

[Early Educator Compensation Stabilization Act \(S2038, H7251\)](#)

[Child Care for Child Care Educators \(S2344, H7123\)](#)

How you can help:

- Take Action to email your elected officials: <https://rightfromthestartri.org/take-action/>
- Testify at a hearing/submit written testimony
- Film a video to share (contact info@riaeyc.org) for help
- Attend Strolling Thunder on May 9 at the State House!



Impact Update: Sustaining Early Head Start & Head Start

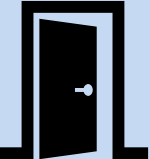
RI SFY24 Budget included \$3M to Sustain Early Head Start & Head Start. In collaboration with the Administration for Children & Families Office of Head Start and RI center-based Grant Recipients we developed a 2-fold distribution plan.

Two-fold Distribution:



1) Increased state cost per child for existing 130 Head Start slots.

- \$10,692 → \$15,192



2) Reopen two classrooms per center-based provider that were not operational during the 2022-2023 school year.

- 66% classrooms reopened

Reopening Classrooms:

- EHS Classrooms: 5
 - 100% Reopened (5 of 5)
- EHS Slots: 38
- HS Classrooms: 7
 - 29% Reopened (2 of 7)
- HS Slots: 99

Total Classrooms: 12

Total Slots: 137

Communities: Cranston, East Providence, Newport, North Providence, Providence, South Kingstown, Warwick, Woonsocket

Sustaining Programs Post-COVID:



Personnel

A) Mental Health & Disabilities

- Clinician
- Coordinator
- Case Management
- Lower Teacher/Child Ratios

B) Additional Classroom Staff

- Additional Support Staff/Teachers

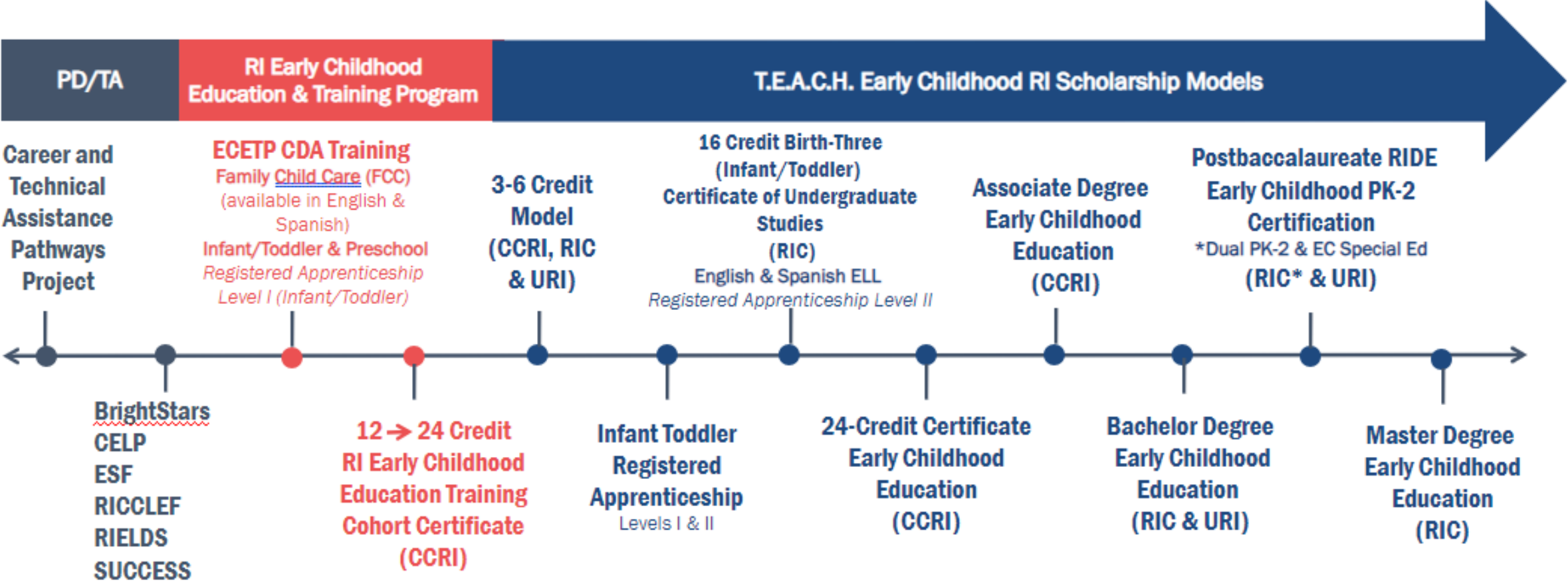
C) Retention Efforts

- Compensation



DHS Early Childhood Educator Workforce Development Pathways Resource

DHS pathways provide early childhood educators and programs access to free or low-cost training and higher education opportunities designed for the working professional and aimed at supporting high quality classrooms and career advancement starting with PD/TA through Master's level.



ECE Workforce Pathways

**A high level overview of what folks can find in the
DHS Early Childhood Educator Workforce
Development Pathways Overview Interactive
Resource Guide:**

- Table of Contents
- Acronyms & Definitions
- Pathways Graphic
- Program Descriptions
- Pathway Specific Overviews
- Program Testimonials
- Opportunity to submit inquiries for additional support



RI Early Childhood Education Training Program—CDA

RI Early Childhood Education Training Program—Child Development Associate (CDA)

Models	This FREE program is ideal for supporting educators with little or no formal higher educational experience in early childhood education to obtain the Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate, a nationally recognized early childhood credential. Available models include Infant/Toddler, Preschool or Family Child Care. Students who continue to the 12 and 24 credit pathways may receive credit for prior learning for CDA completion.	
Enrollment/Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fall, Spring & Summer (as needed)• Complete RIECETP application	
Meeting Structure	Online (In-person orientation required)	
Length	15 Weeks	
Coursework/ Program Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Google Docs Training• CDA Modules Training• Portfolio Preparation Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CDA Exam Preparation Support• Educators can earn up to 45 hours of DHS (CELP) approved PD for program attendance and assignments
Educator Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training is free• Free CDA materials & workbooks• Free Chromebook• CDA Exam fees + 1 renewal fees via TEACH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tutoring & TA available in Spanish• Eligible for up to 6 college credits• Educator receives \$100 T.E.A.C.H. Bonus upon receipt of CDA Credential & submission to T.E.A.C.H.
How to Apply	https://ccri.edu/hmns/RIECETP_CDA_TRAINING.html	
BrightStars Alignment	Completion may position educator to meet BrightStars Level 3 Teacher Qualifications. Educators with an Infant/Toddler CDA may be qualified for employment in Early Head Start.	

Catherine Green

Catherine.Green@dhs.ri.gov



HSCO



**Head Start
Collaboration Office**

Input on the Rhode Island Child Care and Development Fund Triennial Plan



CCDF State Plan FFY 2025-2027

This plan describes the CCDF program to be administered by the State or Territory for the period of 10/1/2024-9/30/2027

- The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan serves as the application for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds by providing a description of, and assurance about, the grantee's child care program and all services available to eligible families.
- CCDF is the primary federal funding source devoted to providing low-income families that are working or participating in education and training with help paying for child care and improving the quality of child care for all children.
- Every 3 years, RI must complete a new plan that is approved by the Federal Office of Child Care (OCC). OCC then reviews the plan and, if approved, issues funds for the next federal fiscal year.

Website for all DHS related CCDF plan information: <https://dhs.ri.gov/regulations/state-plans>

States and territories are required to post their submitted and final approved Plans, any plan amendments, and any approved waivers on a publicly available website.



CCDF State Plan – More recent changes

RI has worked hard over the last State Plan cycle to support changes in the system and address any non-compliances.

Regulatory (Licensing) changes include:

- Requirement of DHS Emergency Preparedness Plan to ensure compliance with all emergency response types in alignment with CCDF requirements
- Updated CPR and First Aid requirements to ensure all staff working with children are certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR (Center specific)
- Requirement of training hours for substitutes (Center Specific)
- Clarity of language in State Plan (not regulations) regarding interstate background checks
- Adding “unannounced” monitoring visits to Family Child Care regulations.



CCDF State Plan – More recent changes

RI has worked hard over the last State Plan cycle to support changes in the system and address any non-compliances.

CCAP changes included:

- Removal of Mid-Cert CCAP closure due to Child Support Sanction
- 7% Copay Cap
- Delinking provider payments from occasional child absence by expanding the child absent policy
- 12-month continuous certification system updates in progress

Lead agencies must hold at least one public hearing in the State or Territory, with sufficient Statewide or Territory-wide distribution of notice prior to such a hearing to enable the public to comment on the provision of child care services under the CCDF plan.



Consultation in Development of the State Plan

The Lead Agency is responsible for developing the CCDF plan and meaningful input and feedback from a wide range of representatives is critical for CCDF programs to continually adapt to the changing needs of families, child care programs, and the workforce.

Consultation involves meeting with or otherwise obtaining input from an appropriate agency in the development of the State or Territory CCDF plan. As part of the Plan development process, Lead Agencies must consult with the following:

- Appropriate representatives of units of general-purpose local government.
- The State Advisory Council (SAC) on Early Learning Education and Care or similar coordinating bodies
- Tribes or Tribal organizations within the State.

We are required to describe our coordination efforts in the development of the Plan, including how and how often the consultation occurred.

Also, we are required to identify other entities, agencies or organizations consulted on the development of the CCDF plan and describe those consultation efforts.



CCDF State Plan - Organization

RI must describe how they implement the CCDF program. The plan is organized into the following sections.

1. CCDF program administration
2. Child and Family Eligibility and Enrollment and Continuity of Care
3. Child Care Affordability
4. Parental Choice, Equal Access, Payment Rates and Payment Practices
5. Health and Safety of Child Care Settings
6. Support for a Skilled, Qualified, and Compensated Child Care Workforce
7. Quality Improvement Activities
8. Lead Agency Coordination and Partnerships to Support Service Delivery
9. Family Outreach and Consumer Education
10. Program Integrity and Accountability



CCDF State Plan - Implementation

Implementation and Oversight Framework: What is different from the last plan cycle?

Fewer, better focused and refined questions

Some changes to level of compliance decision

New Plan Appendix to support full implementation and improve transparency

Shorter timeframe between plan approval and on-site validation

More focused scope for on-site validation



CCDF State Plan - New Appendix Section

- Completed by Lead Agency within 60 days after October letters from OCC

How it works

- Each non-compliance listed in the October letter will link to the Appendix
- Lead Agencies must describe:
 - Action Steps including entity responsible for completing the step and expected completion date for major action
 - Overall Target Date for Compliance
- Lead Agency submits to OCC within 60 days

Purpose

- Support implementation oversight throughout FY2025-2027 Plan cycle to reflect amendments, onsite monitoring findings, and other relevant activities related to Lead Agency compliance with CCDF
- Facilitate clarity and transparency between OCC and Lead Agency on elements of requirement(s) that is unmet, how it is unmet, and Lead Agency's steps and timeline to fully implement unmet requirement

Scope

- ANY identified non-compliances in Plan Approval letters
- Includes those non-compliances for which a waiver has been requested and/or approved; those newly identified in FY2025-2027 Plan review; and outstanding non-compliances from past Plan and Monitoring cycle
- Will be updated throughout Plan cycle to reflect monitoring findings and amendments



CCDF State Plan – Office of Child Care Priorities

While the entire CCDF plan is beneficial for administering CCDBG funds efficiently, effectively, and collaboratively, we have approached and prioritized different topics depending on what is happening in Rhode Island and what could/should be prioritized.

Upcoming priorities for the Office of Child Care that relate to the strategic plan include:

1. Child and Family Eligibility and Enrollment and Continuity of Care
 1. Reducing barriers to family enrollment and determination
 2. Prioritizing services to vulnerable children and families
2. Parental Choice, Equal Access, Payment Rates and Payment Practices
 1. Assess Market Rates & Analyze the Cost of Child Care
 2. Payment Practices to Providers
3. Support for a Skilled, Qualified and Compensated Child Care Workforce



CCDF State Plan – Office of Child Care Priorities

While the entire CCDF plan is beneficial for administering CCDBG funds efficiently, effectively, and collaboratively, we have approached and prioritized different topics depending on what is happening in Rhode Island and what could/should be prioritized.

4. Quality Improvement Activities
 1. Quality Activities Needs Assessment
 2. Use of Quality Set Aside Funds
5. Lead Agency Coordination and Partnership to Support Service Delivery
 1. Coordination with Partners to Expand Accessibility and Continuity of Care
6. Family Outreach and Consumer Education
 1. Increasing Engagement and access to information



How can you help?

Many of the items in the state plan are reflective of the work that DHS and the Office of Child Care is currently doing as well as what is required of the agency in statute. However, we want to hear from the field about what you all think we could or should be doing differently.

Guiding Questions:

- 1. Do you think that you receive the information from us you should receive in a timely manner? How else can we communicate with you about what we are doing?*
- 2. How has DHS's collaboration been with stakeholders? In what ways can we increase collaboration with providers, families and other key stakeholders?*
- 3. In your current role, what is the best way to receive communication? Are emails sufficient? Are meetings helpful, not helpful? Are there other ways to provide information that we haven't thought of?*
- 4. Many aspects of the state plan are dependent on our statutes, such as CCAP eligibility. However, other aspects of the State Plan deal with program implementation. Are there implementation areas that you think we could improve in this next state plan?*
- 5. What level of information about the state plan and amendments to the state plan would be helpful going forward?*



Implementation of New Rules for the Child Care and Development Fund



CCDF Final Rule Changes

This final rule makes regulatory changes to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF).

These changes lower child care costs for families participating in CCDF, improve the program's child care provider payment practices, and simplify enrollment in the child care subsidy program. The final rule also includes technical and other changes to improve clarity and program implementation.

- **Effective:** April 30, 2024.
- **Temporary Waivers:** States and Territories that are not in compliance with the provisions of this final rule on the effective date may request a temporary waiver for *an extension of up to two years* if needed to come into compliance.



CCDF Final Rule Changes

Change Theme 1: Lowering Families' Cost for Child Care

- Requires States and Territories to establish co-payment policies for families receiving CCDF assistance to be no more than 7 percent of family income to help ensure family co-payments are not a barrier to accessing child care.

DHS Office of Child Care: Completed

- Requires States and Territories to establish and periodically revise co-payment policies that are “not a barrier to families receiving” CCDF assistance.

DHS Office of Child Care: Completed/Ongoing Review

- Makes it easier for Lead Agencies to waive co-payments for additional families, specifically for families living at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level, families with children in foster and kinship care, families with children with disabilities, families experiencing homelessness, and children enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start.

Recommended/Not a Requirement/Ongoing Review



CCDF Final Rule Changes

Change Theme 2: Strengthening CCDF Payment Practices to Child Care Providers and Increasing Families' Options

- Requires Lead Agencies use timely and enrollment-based payment practices for child care providers to align with generally accepted payment practices in the private sector.
 - Requires States certify that “the payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who receive [CCDF] assistance . . . reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who do not receive [CCDF] assistance . . . , so as to provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to serve children who receive [CCDF] assistance . . .” (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(2)(S)).

DHS Office of Child Care: Ongoing

- Requires States and Territories to show how they “provide for timely payment for child care services provided under [CCDF]” (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(4)(B)(iv)) - Including paying in advance of or at the beginning of service delivery. Payments to be based on enrollment or alternative that does not undermine stability. (§ 98.45(m)(1) and (2))

DHS Office of Child Care: Requesting Waiver to meet implementation timeline



CCDF Final Rule Changes

Change Theme 2: Strengthening CCDF Payment Practices to Child Care Providers and Increasing Families' Options

- Requires States and Territories to show how they “provide for timely payment for child care services provided under [CCDF]” (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(4)(B)(iv)) - Including paying in advance of or at the beginning of service delivery. Payments to be based on enrollment or alternative that does not undermine stability. (§ 98.45(m)(1) and (2))

DHS Office of Child Care: Not started

- Requires Lead Agencies to use some grants and contracts for direct child care services to enable CCDF to better address child care supply issues for participating families
 - Specifically requires Lead Agencies to use some grants and contracts for children in underserved geographic areas, infants and toddlers, and children with disabilities— populations that the statute identifies Lead Agencies must develop and implement strategies to increase the supply and quality of care. 42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)(2)(M).

DHS Office of Child Care: Not started



CCDF Final Rule Changes

Change Theme 2: Strengthening CCDF Payment Practices to Child Care Providers and Increasing Families' Options

- Clarifies that Lead Agencies are allowed and encouraged to pay child care providers the full agency established payment rate to account for the actual cost of care, even if it is higher than the price the provider charges private pay families.

DHS Office of Child Care: Completed/Ongoing Review



CCDF Final Rule Changes

Change Theme 3: Easier Enrollment for Families Through Reduced Bureaucracy

- Reduce bureaucratic and paperwork burdens for families and Lead Agencies in determining a child’s eligibility to receive child care subsidies.
 - Eligibility conditions or priority rules cannot “impact eligibility other than at the time of eligibility determination or re-determination.”
 - Recommend Lead Agencies reconsider families’ engagement with other benefits programs, such as child support, as preconditions for CCDF eligibility as this likely increases the bureaucratic burden for families and Lead Agencies.
 - When Lead Agencies use data from other benefits programs to verify CCDF eligibility requirements, Lead Agencies must ensure that the information is only acted upon at eligibility determination or redetermination and cannot be used to discontinue child care subsidies during the eligibility period. For example, a Lead Agency that requires child support cooperation as an additional CCDF eligibility requirement, can only assess cooperation at the time of CCDF eligibility determination or redetermination and cannot use failure to cooperate as a reason to discontinue child care subsidies between eligibility determination or re-determination.

DHS Office of Child Care: In Progress



CCDF Final Rule Changes

Change Theme 3: Easier Enrollment for Families Through Reduced Bureaucracy

- Establishes parameters for Lead Agencies that choose to implement presumptive eligibility with the goal of reducing barriers for Lead Agency uptake for this existing program flexibility and helping more families receive child care assistance faster.

Recommended/Not a Requirement/Ongoing Review

- Requires Lead Agencies to implement eligibility policies and procedures that minimize disruptions to parent employment, education, or training opportunities.

DHS Office of Child Care: Need to discuss



CCDF Final Rule Changes

Change Theme 3: Easier Enrollment for Families Through Reduced Bureaucracy

- Lead Agencies must comply with current regulations by offering at least a full 12 months of eligibility to all children receiving CCDF subsidies, even if there are additional children in a family already participating in CCDF.
 - Clarifies that the minimum 12-month eligibility requirement applies when children are newly added to families already participating in the subsidy program and encourages Lead Agencies to align eligibility periods to the new child's eligibility period. Allowing re-determinations to occur at the same time limits burden on the family and the Lead Agency. (§ 98.21(d) and § 98.16(h)(4)) This clarification benefits children currently participating in CCDF because it increases the length of time they would receive child care subsidies.

DHS Office of Child Care: In Process



Public Comment

2024 Early Learning Council Meetings (Big Brothers Big Sisters of RI):

- Wednesday, June 26th, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, September 25th, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 11th, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

See www.earlylearningri.org for meeting schedules, handouts, notes, and state reports