

# Legislative Update: House Budget and Bill Action

*May 20, 2019*



**NORTH CAROLINA  
EARLY EDUCATION COALITION**

The NC Early Education Coalition is a proud partner in the national ZERO TO THREE Think Babies™ campaign and in the Pritzker Children's Initiative's National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers.

# Goals

- Review Legislative Session to Date
- Highlight the House Budget for early childhood education
- Key Issues Needing Senate Action
  - Early Childhood Budget
  - Update on H882/S634
- Take your questions
- Provide advocacy tools and resources

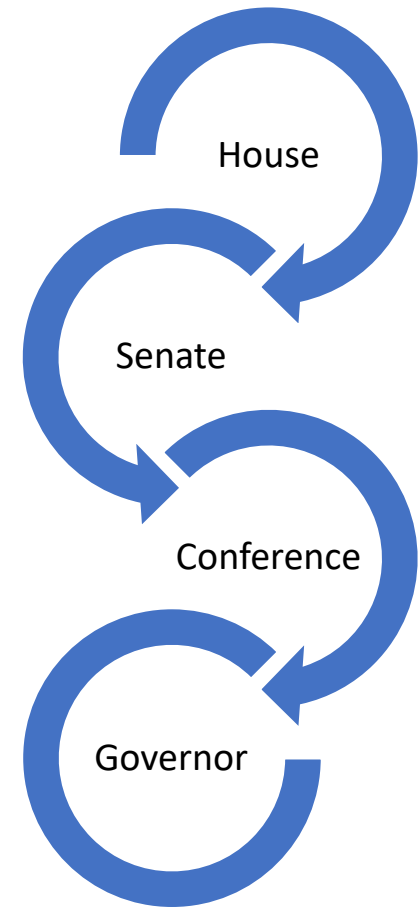
# Legislative Session Process

- Budget Cycle

- House passed its budget
- Now goes to the Senate
- Senate likely to pass its budget soon
- Then goes to Conference Committee
- When passed – off to the Governor for signing or veto

- Timing

- Could be completed by end of June.



# Legislative Session Process

- **Bill Action**

- Bills had to make “crossover” deadline of May 9<sup>th</sup> to still be eligible
- Exceptions
- Bills that passed House or Senate go on to the other Chamber for consideration next
- Once passed by both Chambers
  - If Different - will go to Conference Committee to work out differences
  - If Same – go to the Governor for signing
- Timing – by the end of the legislative session

# House Budget Summary

- **Smart Start**
  - Includes \$7M over two years – non-recurring funding
  - Focus on child care related activities, family support, and child health; NOT subsidies
- **NC Pre-K**
  - Maintains \$9M in expansion funding passed last session
  - Replaces state funding with federal TANF funds
  - Provides rate expansion – 2% in FY 19/20 and 6% in FY 20/21
  - Rates dedicated to salaries for teachers in private child care programs
- **Child Care Subsidies**
  - Adds \$7M in child care subsidies, to serve approximately 1,100 children
  - Decreases parent co-pay from 10% to 9%

# Goal on the Senate Side

- House budget goes to the Senate now
- Goals –
  - Increase Child Care Subsidy Assistance to \$31 million
  - Change non-recurring funding to recurring
  - Replace federal funding for NC Pre-K with state or lottery funds
- Take Action Now!
  - Child Care Subsidy Assistance Action Alert:  
<https://www.ncearlyeducationcoalition.org/action-alerts.html>

# Questions on House Budget?



# Early Childhood Workforce Bill – H882/S634

## **H882/S634 does 3 simple things:**

- Puts into law basic early education standards for lead early childhood teachers that are already in place by practice or through the state's QRIS star-rate license system.
- Creates a teacher compensation program for qualified lead teachers through the existing child care subsidy program.
- Creates a model Infant Toddler Program based on the NC Pre-K program to address the acute shortage of qualify infant toddler programs.



# Current Legislative Status

- H882 passed the House 111-0, moved to the Senate.
- House amendment deleted provision requiring participation of religious sponsored programs.
- House budget had no appropriation.
- Senate did not pass S634 – will likely take up H882 as amended.
- Senate may consider amendments
  - Add back in religious exemptions?
  - Take out core competencies?
  - Make other changes
  - Add appropriation either in the bill or through the budget process

# Education Standards

- **Focus only on lead teachers in child care programs and Family Child Care Homes.**
- **Effective January 1, 2020 -**
  - Mostly changes the NC Early Childhood Credential requirement. Required to have NC Early Childhood Credential as a pre-service requirement.
  - Lead teachers who only have the Credential also required to obtain Infant Toddler or Preschool Certificates within 18 months by July 2021.
  - Family child care homes will have to have the NC Early Childhood Credential before they apply for a new license and will have 18 months to obtain the Infant Toddler or Preschool Certificate by July 2021.

Note: Does *not* apply to Lead teachers who already have Early Childhood Diploma or Associate Degree or higher. These qualifications *exceed* the new standards.

# Professional Core Competencies

- **Purpose:**

- Creates professional standards that are explicitly stated and not just embedded in coursework.
- Gives teachers opportunity to demonstrate they have the equivalent skills.

- **What?**

- Requires DCDEE to develop professional core competencies based on the Infant Toddler and Preschool Certificates and a process for teachers to demonstrate they have the required skills.
- Additional Sources: NAEYC and National Academies of Science report, “Transforming the Workforce for Children from Birth through Age 8”

**Note:** Required in H882. Not included in S634.

# Compensation

## **New strategy – goes into effect July 1, 2020**

- A new incentive program through the child care subsidy system to support teachers with higher education receiving additional compensation.
  - Differentiated based on the level of degree attained.
  - Eligibility: child care programs must use a salary scale and only employ lead teachers who have obtained an associate degree in child developed or related field.
- **Adds to existing compensation strategies already in place**
    - Child Care WAGE\$<sup>®</sup> Program
    - Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$<sup>®</sup> Program

# Model Infant Toddler Program

- Requires DCDEE to develop a feasibility and cost study to create a program modeled after the North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) program for classrooms for children birth through 3 years of age.
- Components are indicated in the bill (see FAQ).
- DCDEE is required to report to the legislature on this program by April 1, 2020.
- No funds are appropriate for this component. Action to create and fund could be done during the 2020 legislative session.

# Next Steps

- Bill considered by the Senate
- NC Early Childhood Education Coalition Advocacy Tools
  - FAQ
  - Talking Points
  - List of Senate legislative leaders, Health Committee, HHS Appropriations Committee
  - Script for talking to legislators
  - Send out updates and alerts through the Action Center
    - Note you must sign up for the Action Center to receive updates/alerts directly.
    - Sign up here: <https://www.nearlyeducationcoalition.org/take-action.html>

# Take Action Now!

- Urge Senate to increase funding for Child Care Subsidy Assistance
  - Fact Sheet – shows wait list and eligibility
  - Every county has eligible families not able to receive services. Download your county's Child Care Profile for local data on subsidy and availability (age 0-3 and age 0-5 profiles available)
- Urge Senate to add recurring state money to Smart Start and NC Pre-K
- Urge Senate to pass H882/S634 and add money for compensation

# Questions?

