



**NORTH CAROLINA
EARLY EDUCATION COALITION**

Legislative Update Webinar

April 27, 2022

Goals for Today

- Review the Coalition's 2022 Legislative Agenda
- What to expect from short session
- Federal update
- Advocacy tips and resources
- Exciting upcoming opportunities
- Answer your questions

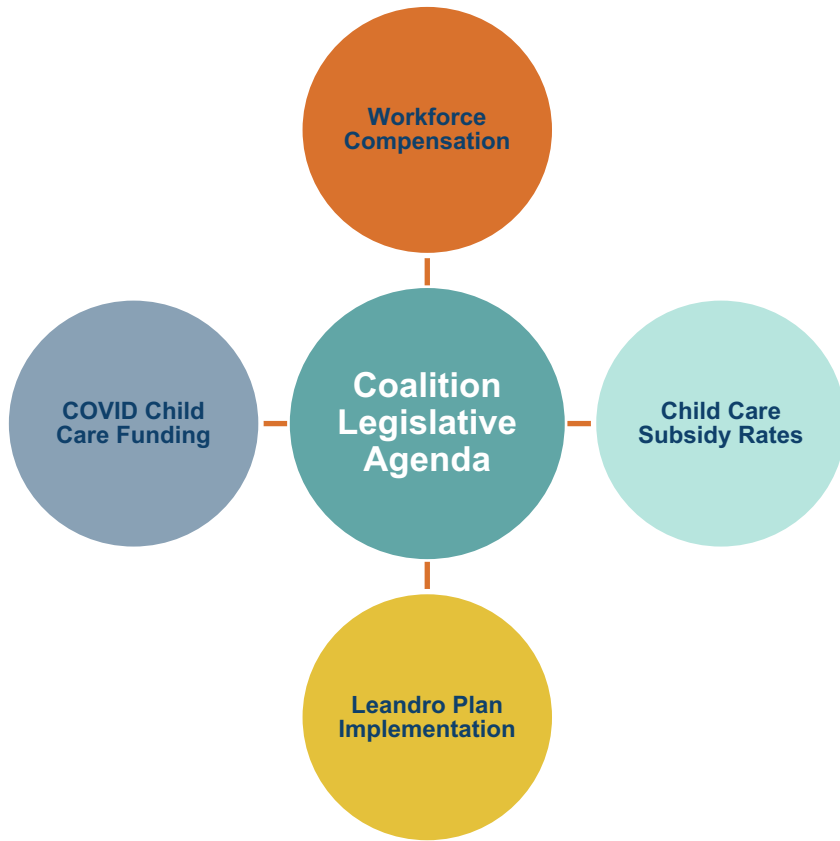




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The Short Session

2022 Early Education Policy Priorities



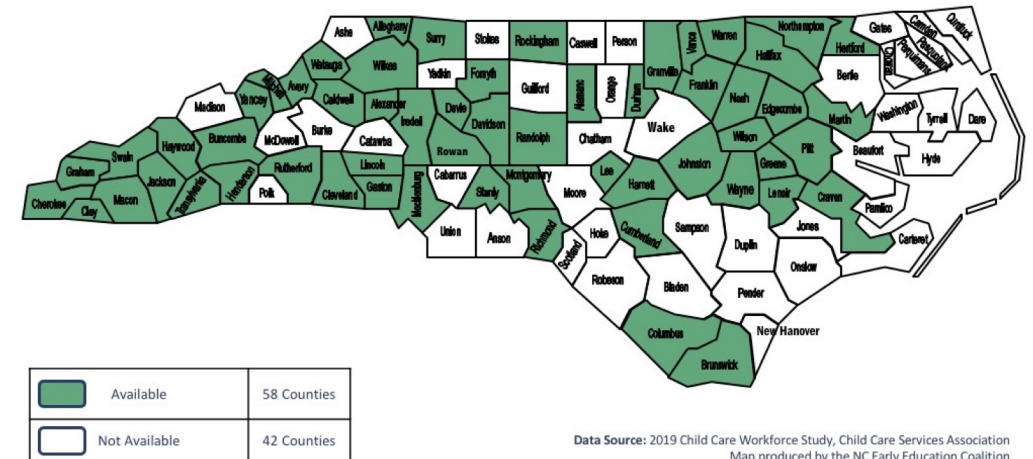
- **Child Care Workforce Compensation**
 - Expand Child Care WAGE\$ statewide
- **Child Care Subsidy Rates Improvements**
 - Establish a statewide “floor” to provide adequate and equitable reimbursement rates
- **Fund and Implement the Leandro Action Plan**
 - Including expanded funding for Smart Start, NC Pre-K, Child Care Subsidy Assistance, Early Intervention, and more
- **COVID Child Care Funding**
 - Continue to invest in child care as opportunities arise

Expanding Child Care WAGE\$ Statewide

North Carolina has an early childhood workforce crisis: parents can't afford to pay more, and teachers can't afford to make less.

- Child Care WAGE\$ isn't widely available or funded enough to serve all eligible teachers.
- In FY2020, 3,800 early childhood teachers—just 14% of the total workforce—received supplements through WAGE\$
- Making WAGE\$ available statewide and fully funding it would provide financial relief to more teachers.

Child Care WAGE\$ Program Availability 2021



Data Source: 2019 Child Care Workforce Study, Child Care Services Association
Map produced by the NC Early Education Coalition

Child Care Subsidy Rate Improvements

- Child care subsidy reimbursement rates are inadequate and inequitable, which impacts child care programs, teachers, and families
- House Bill 574 would:
 - Set new subsidy rates at the county level based on the most recent 2018 survey of provider rates.
 - Establish a new “statewide floor” based on the *statewide* rates for all counties; holds harmless counties with higher rates.
 - Eliminate the requirement that subsidy rates cannot be higher than private tuition rates, which allows child care programs to receive the higher rates without raising the cost for parents.

Monthly Subsidy Rates for Infants in 5-Star Child Care Center

County	Current rate	Proposed new rate	Proposed Increase
Cumberland	\$971	\$1,222	\$251
Mecklenburg	\$1,194	\$1,278	\$84
Pasquotank	\$768	\$1,222	\$454
Union	\$1,020	\$1,222	\$202
Forsyth	\$861	\$1,222	\$361
McDowell	\$797	\$1,222	\$425

Fully Fund and Implement the Leandro Action Plan

- The Leandro Action Plan is a court-ordered equitable funding plan to fulfill every child's constitutional right to a sound, basic education.
- This 30-year-old case is still ongoing... next step is the NC Supreme Court.
- Judge Robinson ruled yesterday that the 2021 budget underfunded the Leandro Plan by about \$785 million, or about half of the amount necessary to fund the first two years. Read more here: <https://www.ednc.org/2022-04-26-judge-michael-robinson-amends/>
- Just the first two years of the Leandro Plan includes approximately \$190M for early education:
 - \$71.9 M to expand NC Pre-K and improve rates
 - \$40 M for Smart Start
 - \$36 M to expand the Child Care WAGE\$ program
 - \$20 M to improve Child Care Subsidy reimbursement rates
 - \$18.45 M for early intervention
 - \$1.75 M for workforce recruitment strategies and professional development
 - \$1.7 M for early childhood workforce data system

What We Know about the 2022 Legislative Session

- Begins on May 18th
- It will most likely be SHORT
- Redistricting took a long time, so legislators are very anxious to get on the campaign trail before the general election in November
- A few “big ticket” items – Medicaid expansion, infrastructure projects, sports betting, medical marijuana, and potentially others – could create some tough votes that members don’t want to take before the general election

We want to hear from you!

**What questions do you have
about our legislative agenda
and/or the legislative session?**





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Federal Updates

What We Know and What We Don't Know

What We Know

- Although Build Back Better passed the House last fall, it stalled in the Senate and is no longer the vehicle for federal child care investments
- However, there are several conversations happening between key players on how to get a slimmed down version of BBB passed through reconciliation
- Senator Burr introduced a bill to reauthorize CCDBG that includes many of the policies from BBB, but none of the money.

What We Don't Know

- When anything will happen
- What it will look like
- If the child care investments will be included in the reconciliation package
 - Take action now for child care:
<https://www.thinkbabies.org/take-action-email-congress-reconciliation-mind-the-gap/>



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Advocacy Tips and Resources

The Power of Advocacy

- This is a great time to connect with state legislators!
- Primary election is May 17th - many of them are out on the campaign trail and in their home districts now.
- Elected officials want to represent the best interests of their constituents who live in their counties and districts.
- Help your policymakers understand the issues on the ground.
- Don't assume they know – they don't unless you tell them.



Tools You Can Use

Advocacy Resources

- [Action Center](#)
- Advocacy toolkits
- Talking points, sample emails, and other templates
- Social media toolkits
- Infographics
- Fact sheets, state and county level data
- Policymaker contact information
- Resources available here:
www.NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org



Worthy Wages Campaign 2.0 - Coming Soon!

We're relaunching the Worthy Wages Campaign for 2022!

- It's time to keep fighting for worthy wages for worthy work.
- Early educators are the workforce behind the workforce, but they are underpaid and undervalued
 - Earn \$12/hour, 1 in 5 has no health insurance during a pandemic, 38% rely on public assistance
 - 62% have an associates or higher, but they are 7 times more likely to live in poverty than public kindergarten teachers
- We still have a workforce crisis: high turnover and the pipeline is shrinking

Join the Worthy Wages Campaign

- Take action now:
 - <https://nearlyeducationcoalition.org/take-action/worthywagespetition>
- Check out the Worthy Wages Advocacy Toolkit:
 - <https://nearlyeducationcoalition.org/worthywagestoolkit/>
- Save the Dates!
 - May 2: Worthy Wage Day
 - May 6: Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day



Early educators help build the future.
They deserve worthy wages for worthy work.

#WorthyWagesNC

nearlyeducationcoalition.org/worthywages



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Events and Opportunities

Unpack the Leandro Plan for Early Education

A Community Engagement Series Promoting
Equitable Funding in Education



What the **LEANDRO PLAN** means for **Early Education**

programs serving children
from birth to age 5



**Every
Child NC**
everychildnc.org

online event: **Mon. May 9th 7 - 8 p.m.**

registration - <https://bit.ly/UnpackEarlyEd>



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National Think Babies™ Events

- State of Babies Yearbook: 2022 release event - May 3rd, 3pm
 - Register now:
<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/4373-state-of-babies-yearbook-2022>
- National Strolling Thunder - May 17th



Other Events and Opportunities

- Early Childhood Educators Advocacy Academy
 - Application coming soon!
- Infant-Toddler Landscape Study Webinar - May 25th
 - Register now:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAuc-6upz4sH9xLmj4Okf6aIQ1JQQXZ3K-Z>
- Strolling Thunder: A Think Babies™ NC Advocacy Day
 - Thursday, June 9th at the NC General Assembly
 - Stay tuned for more information soon!
- Celebrating Child Care Heroes: A Night with the NC Early Education Coalition
 - Thursday, June 16th
 - Award nominations and ticket sales coming soon!



Thank you!

www.NCEarlyEducationCoalition.org

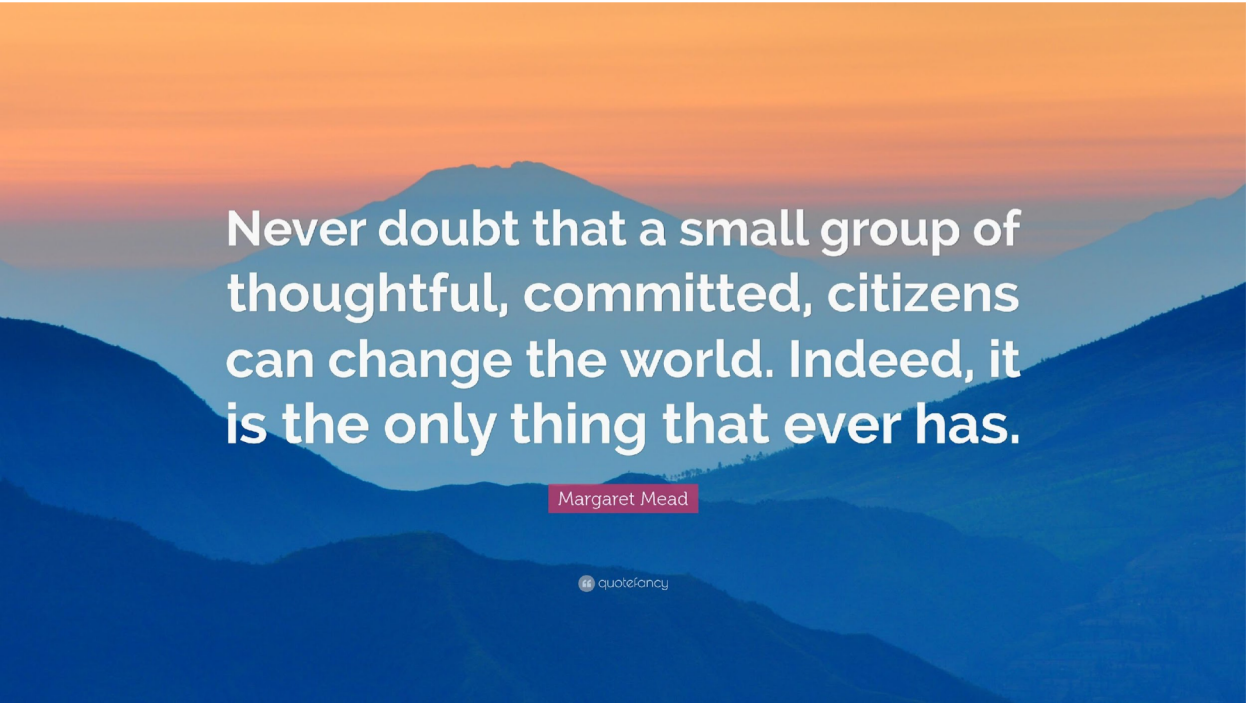
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
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Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

 quoteancy