



# VOICE

## 2023 Legislative Agenda



### Who We Are

The Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)/VOICE represents 10,000 home-based childcare providers in every county outside of New York City. These providers offer quality and affordable childcare programs to subsidized and private pay families. They offer care to children who require non-traditional care, such as overnight or weekend care, as well as in childcare deserts throughout the state.

**Since 2017,**

**15%** of all home based providers have closed in New York State.



Resulting in the  
**loss of 18,000**  
affordable and quality  
childcare slots.

The loss of slots is creating hardships for New Yorkers. Working families face additional obstacles in finding quality licensed and affordable childcare, leading individuals to drop out of the workforce and education programs, or, for some, to place their children in unlicensed programs that do not meet basic safety standards.

While the state has made significant investments over the past two years in this area, we must continue to make childcare more affordable for New Yorkers while investing in the childcare workforce to ensure that the state has the capacity to handle all families in need of care.

### Increase Differential Payment Rate for Homeless and Non-Traditional Hours Care

New York is lacking providers who offer care to children from homeless families and those that require non-traditional care, such as overnight and weekends. The state requires counties to pay 5% additional per child that falls into one of these categories. Unfortunately, that is not enough to incentivize more providers to offer care to children in these categories. We need more providers that offer care to parents who work overnight and weekend hours and to families currently displaced from their home.

**CSEA supports  
an increase in the  
differential payment  
from 5% to 15%  
(2022 Bill:  
S.6077A-Brisport /  
A.7095-Clark)**



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### Pay for Enrollment

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Counties pay providers for only when a child is in attendance, and not just for being enrolled in a program. This is different from private pay parents, who pay regardless of whether or not their child is in attendance. What this means is if a child is out sick for a prolonged period or is in quarantine for COVID-19 several times, the provider does not get paid. While the state requires counties to pay for a minimum number of absences for children, providers still face financial uncertainty if a child is out for a significant period of time. State law should better support providers so childcare funding mirrors how the state funds public schools – not only when a child is in attendance, but for being enrolled in a program

**CSEA supports a transition from our current system of “pay for attendance” to “pay for enrollment” to better support providers throughout the state.**

### Increase Payments to Reflect “True Cost of Care”

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New York State calculates payments to childcare providers based on a “market rate survey” and providers are then paid based on the 80th percentile of the survey. While these payments are an increase over previous years, they do not come close to paying for the true cost of childcare. According to the Center for American Progress, New York’s subsidy system only covers 63% of the true cost of care in family childcare, leading to providers being unable to pay living wages or benefits to staff and having high turnover. Paying providers for the “true cost of care” will enable providers to increase wages, keep staff longer, and provide better care for children.

**CSEA supports moving our reimbursement system to one that reimburses providers what it actually costs to care for children.**

### Provider Benefit Cliff

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Due to the low reimbursement rates for home-based providers, many are forced to rely on public assistance to pay for their food, heat, or health insurance. Since 2020, the state has distributed stabilization grants to providers to keep programs operating during the pandemic. Due to the way that many providers structure their business, these grants are counted as income, causing many of them to become disqualified for these critical programs. Stabilization grants were used by providers to buy PPE, cleaning supplies, and other tools to help children maintain social distance and keep facilities open. However, it is being counted as income and can financially harm providers.

**CSEA supports legislation that holds childcare providers financially harmless for these stabilization grants and not use the grants when determining eligibility for government programs.**

For any questions or to discuss this further, please contact:  
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