

## eAdvocate July Newsletter



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### In this Issue

In this month's issue of eAdvocate we share exciting news about legislative updates (including CCAP), celebrate parent work, and provide opportunities to get involved in early childhood advocacy over the summer!

### Illinois Legislative Updates



Throughout this past spring, IAFC shared updates on several exciting pieces of early childhood legislation moving through, and ultimately passed by, the Illinois General Assembly. As of today, most of those bills have been sent to the Governor for his signature. IAFC encourages Governor Pritzker to sign the following bills into law:

- HB 2878 (Stuart, Pacione-Zayas), establishes the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity to support the incumbent early childhood workforce access and complete higher education degree and credential programs
- HB 3620 (Collins, Pacione-Zayas), ensures that income eligibility for the Child Care Assistance Program cannot be reduced below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Law
- SB 267 (Villanueva, Guzzardi), creates a process for higher education institutions to collect demographic data on students, including if they are parents
- HB 3739 (Robinson, Bush), establishes the Lead Service Line Replacement Act, which requires communities to develop comprehensive plans for replacing lead service lines and for those plans to prioritize early childhood facilities and places where children are present
- HB 3308 (Jones, Harris), maintains the availability of telehealth services in Early Intervention and requires

private insurance companies to pay providers/therapists the same rates for telehealth as in-person services

For many of these bills, the Governor's signature does not mean the work is done! IAFC will share updates and ways for you to engage in implementation efforts moving forward.

## July 1 CCAP Policy Improvements

At the end of June, Governor Pritzker announced several improvements to the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) that will improve access and affordability for families and better support child care providers. These changes were effective July 1, 2021. You can read the [Governor's full press release here](#).

- Copay relief for parents:
  - Families with incomes at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) will pay \$1 per month
  - Copays will remain capped at 7 percent of family income, with the majority of families paying below 7 percent of their income
- Supporting family income growth:
  - Families receiving CCAP will maintain eligibility until their income reaches 250 percent of FPL (previously 225 percent of FPL). Once a family's income grows to above 250 percent FPL, they will still have the three-month graduated phase-out period, if their income is still below 85 percent of the State Median Income (SMI).
    - This increase means a family of three can earn up to \$54,900 and continue receiving CCAP, and if that family's income increases again, but is still under \$69,708, their CCAP payments begin to phase out over the next 3 months.
      - Income eligibility threshold amounts were updated to reflect the current Federal Poverty Level guidelines and State Median Income. [See all income guidelines on the IDHS website](#).
  - Provider reimbursement increases:
    - 3.5 percent increase to CCAP reimbursement rates for all providers. [See IDHS website for all payment rates by provider type and region](#).
    - Providers will be paid for the full month if children receiving CCAP attend at least 70 percent of eligible days (previously 80 percent), as a step toward improved stability and predictability for providers.

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## Parent Leaders Taking Action!



The Family Advisory Committee (FAC) of the Early Learning Council held its first official meeting on May 27, 2021! Dena Chapman and Stacey Leatherman have been named co-chairs for the committee. The FAC is comprised of 16 parent leaders representing 7 regions across the state of Illinois. They have determined the following goals for their committee to work on this year:

1. increasing enrollment efforts in childcare settings across the state
2. creating a standardized process for implementing parent engagement across programs and systems in the state of Illinois
3. identifying barriers and solutions to inclusion related to disability, racial and economic disparities, and culturally responsive practices in Early Intervention and childcare settings.

The Family Advisory Committee meets every other month on the second Thurs of the month from 5-7 pm. Their next meeting is on Aug. 12. [Click here](#) for the meeting link and agenda.

Parent Leader, Courtney Hill, represented the Family Advisory Committee this month at the Partner Plan Act conference: *Equity from the Start: Reimagining the Early Childhood System*. Courtney was one of four panelists and the only parent on the panel. She spoke passionately and personally about the inequities in the early childhood system, particularly for families that have a child with disabilities. Courtney also underscored the value of parents sharing their wisdom and their personal experiences in the early care and learning system stating that systemic change becomes a reality when parent voice and perspective are front and center.

## Early Childhood Funding Coalition



Illinois' Early Childhood Funding Coalition continues its work through the summer in preparation for the launch of an early childhood Fall campaign! If you have not yet joined the coalition, you can do so by [filling out this form](#).

Already a coalition member? Don't forget there are plenty of opportunities to get involved in the efforts of each committee: Organizing Committee, Communications Committee, and the Policy Committee. Please email [Lilian Matsuda](#) if you would like to become a member of a committee or join their next meeting.

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