

## Division of Early Childhood Updates

Thursday, May 15, 2025

### Licensing Branch

- On Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, information about the Outdoor Nature Based Child Care Pilot was released, and the application is posted on our website.
- 2025 Legislation that passed with upcoming impact to child care:
  - [House Bill \(HB\) 150 Child Care Centers - Certificated Staff Ratio Requirement – Alteration](#)
    - Altering a requirement that a child care center that has 20 or more children in attendance have a certain ratio, set by the Department, of staff to children who hold a certificate in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation under certain circumstances. (Effective 7/1/2025)
      - The next step will be to draft proposed regulations.
  - [HB 389 Property Tax - Day Care Centers, Child Care Homes, and Child Care Centers](#)
    - Exempting personal property used in connection with certain large family child care homes from valuation and taxation; authorizing the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City or the governing body of a county or a municipal corporation to grant, by law, a property tax credit against the real property tax owed on the portion of real property used for certain large family child care homes; increasing the maximum amount of a property tax credit that may be granted for certain child care homes and centers and day care centers; etc. (Effective 6/1/2025)
  - [HB 1343 Anne Arundel County - Property Tax - Day Care Centers and Child Care Centers](#)
    - Exempting personal property used in connection with certain large family child care homes from valuation and taxation in Anne Arundel County; authorizing the governing body of Anne Arundel County or the governing body of a municipal corporation in Anne Arundel County to grant, by law, a property tax credit against the real property tax owed

on the portion of real property used for certain child care centers and day care centers; etc. (Effective 6/1/2025)

- [HB 785 Common Ownership Communities and Zoning Authorities - Operation of Family Child Care Homes – Limitations](#)
  - Prohibiting a provision in certain documents of certain cooperative housing corporations from prohibiting or restricting the establishment or operation of certain family child care homes; prohibiting a provision in certain documents of certain cooperative housing corporations from limiting the number of children for which certain family child care homes provide family child care below the number authorized by the State Department of Education; etc. (Effective 10/1/2025)

## **Child Care Scholarship (CCS) Branch**

- Effective April 21, 2025, the CCS Program:
  - Provided 44,562 children the opportunity to attend quality early care and educational opportunities.
  - Supported 29,818 families with payment assistance for one of the highest items in their monthly budget.
  - Directly supported the stabilization of child care for the 3,618 providers participating in the CCS Program, while indirectly supporting the stabilization of the remaining 3,000+ providers that are regulated or licensed by Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).
- Effective May 1, 2025, the CCS Program implemented Frozen Status.
  - All information, updates, and frequently asked questions (FAQs) related to Frozen Status can be found on MSDE's website, [Money4ChildCare.com](https://www.maryland.gov/MSDE/Pages/Money4ChildCare.com).

## **Quality Improvement Initiatives**

- Maryland EXCELS
  - As of March 15, Maryland EXCELS has seen a 25% increase over the last year in programs achieving a Quality Rating 3, 4, or 5.
  - Between July 1, 2024, and January 1, 2025, Maryland EXCELS has increased bonus distribution by 57% over the same period of the previous fiscal year.

- In March 2025, a mentoring pilot launched with the goal of helping new providers improve quality through peer support. Currently, five mentors have been recruited and are being trained.
- Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund (CCCPDF)
  - For Fiscal Year (FY) 26, CCCPDF accepted a record-high 150 students into the program.
- Maryland Accreditation
  - Currently, 999 programs are participating in Maryland Accreditation with Public Pre-K participation growing by 48% in FY25.
  - The expansion to a five-year accreditation status continues to be successful. As of March 2025, more than 60 Annual Updates have been submitted and approved.

## **Office of Early Learning & Instruction**

- High-Quality Instructional Materials
  - Early Learning & Instruction developed Prekindergarten 4s Evidence of Quality points for the MSDE high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) English Language Arts (ELA) companion guide to the curriculum review rubric. The workgroup submitted the additions on April 4<sup>th</sup> to HQIM.
  - Current work includes reviewing federal and state models of approved Early Childhood Education (ECE) curriculum in consideration of adopting a list for Maryland's FY26 grant-funded and accredited programs.
  - Early Learning awaits the finalized companion guide to the MSDE HQIM Math rubric (May 2025) to develop Prekindergarten 4s Evidence of Quality points.
- Pre-K Expansion and Mixed Delivery
  - The FY26 Pre-K Expansion Grant application closed on April 11, 2025. Applications are currently being reviewed and scored.
    - All final notifications of award status will be sent by May 15, 2025.
- The Early Childhood E-Community
  - Approximately 450 Early Learning teachers, leaders, and instructional oversight staff have joined the E-Community, of which 159 are actively engaged on the platform.

- The E-Community team met last month to discuss ideas for re-engaging stakeholders and providing relevant and timely resources through announcements, resource pages, and targeted messaging.
  - Early Learning and Instruction's goal is to obtain 75% engagement.
- Professional Learning/Learning Modules
  - The following Maryland Early Learning Standards modules have been developed (total of 22 modules):
    - Introduction to the Social and Emotional Development Domain
    - 5 Strands of Social and Emotional Development
    - Introduction to the Approaches to Learning Domain
    - 2 Strands of Approaches to Learning
    - Introduction to the Language and Literacy Domain
    - Strands 2 and 4 of Language and Literacy
    - Introduction to Early Cognition and STEAM
    - 4 Strands of Early Cognition and STEAM
    - Introduction to Physical Well-Being & Motor Development
    - 4 Strands of Physical Well-Being & Motor Development
- Development and presentation of two professional learning sessions to library staff:
  - Early Learning Standards: Division of Early Childhood (DEC) - March 13
  - Incorporating the Maryland Early Learning Standards in a Library Setting - March 20
- ECE Content Collaborative Meetings
  - Early Learning & Instruction just led a Combined Content Collaborative meeting for both English Learner (EL) directors and private providers (Pre-K Expansion grantees) on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, as well as an ECE Content Collaborative meeting specifically for private providers on Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup>.
    - Upcoming scheduled Content Collaborative Meetings are as follows:
      - EL Directors ONLY – May 28<sup>th</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup>
      - Private Providers ONLY – August 14<sup>th</sup>
      - Combined (EL Directors and Private Providers) – July 30<sup>th</sup>
- Training Approval Reminders for Child Care Professionals – when looking for training:

- Search the Maryland Child Care Training Calendar:  
<https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/for-providers-training/maryland-child-care-training-calendar-0>
- Utilize the Trainer lists on the Division of Early Childhood Website:  
<https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/training>

### **Office of Family Support Services & Head Start Collaboration**

- Seven Judy Center Early Learning Hubs opened for full-service implementation this program year.
  - Dorchester County: Hurlock Elementary
  - Howard County: Stevens Forest Elementary
  - Montgomery County: Weller Road Elementary
  - Prince George's County: Oxon Hill Elementary
  - Talbot County: Tilghman Elementary
  - Washington County: Lincolnshire Elementary
  - Wicomico County: West Salisbury Elementary
- Prince George's Child Resource Connect is providing Child Care Resource Center (CCRC) services in Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's counties.
- Patty Center Family Support Services Request for Proposals (RFP) is available on the Maryland Family Network website for interested organizations.

### **Communications and Engagement**

- [Healthy Beginnings](#) calendars have been delivered to hospitals, birthing centers, Judy Centers, libraries, local health departments, and other community-based programs statewide.
- The Communications team has added new technical-assistance opportunities to the Push to Pre-K initiative for the SY 26-27 Prekindergarten Expansion Grant.
  - Outreach and engagement will now include targeted small-group "Group Chat" discussions and grant-management sessions. Providers can expect to see communications beginning in August.