

Early Childhood Advocacy Coalition Huddle

Monday, September 28, 2026 · 1:00–2:00 pm ET on

- **Fund Delaware's Future Launch**
 - Reflections on the September 22 kickoff
- **Policy Priorities**
 - Discussion: proposed policy agenda for the year ahead
 - Federal update: potential impacts on Delaware, including Medicaid & SNAP
 - What are you hearing from your communities and networks?
- **Advocacy & Engagement**
 - Video Project: Sharing details about the concept & gathering input
 - Year-of-advocacy calendar: Upcoming events and opportunities to engage

Please introduce yourself in the chat

Who's in the Room?



Mrs. Marlette's Colorful World Daycare



Sunshine House
EARLY LEARNING ACADEMY



Department of Human Resources



**JEANS LOVE-N-CARE
DAYCARE**



**Little People's Learning
Academy, LLC**



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First State Pre-K is a coalition of partners working together to expand access to publicly funded, high-quality early care and education for Delaware's children and families.

Pre-K in Delaware refers to child care programs for children ages 0-5.

Upcoming Events

- **Making a Difference Conference: Friday, October 16, 2026**
 - Annual statewide convening hosted by the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood, bringing together early childhood professionals, educators, and system leaders. Register [here](#). If you have questions, contact Diane Frentzel at madccoordinator@gmail.com.
- **5th Annual 1st State Family Child Care Conference: Saturday, Oct 17, 2026**
 - Milestone anniversary event focused on supporting and elevating Delaware's family child care providers through networking, learning, and professional development. Registration is now closed.
- DRT Kickoff to Kindergarten Registration

Anything else to elevate for the group?

We Don't Do This Alone

A growing network of partners in early care and education



A Look at the (Partial) Landscape

The types of organizations working on early care and education in Delaware

■ Government

Sets policy & administers programs

Department of Education (DDOE): Runs the state's Pre-K and K-12 systems

Department of Health & Social Services (DHSS):
Administers POC

IRMC*: Under the Lt. Governor's office; coordinates cross-agency child care investment

■ Programmatic Efforts

Convene, coordinate, do the work on the ground

Delaware Reads Campaign:
DE Literacy Alliance effort promoting lifelong literacy

Delaware Readiness Teams:
Leads the early childhood part of that work

■ Advocates (like us)

Build coalitions, push for change

First State Pre-K (FSPK):
Coalition with a policy & advocacy focus

↳ deaeyc, the Y, Rhonda's Little Angels, Leap of Faith, LWV, Hilltop, WRK Group, Lake Forest, Rodel, & so many others (see slide 2)!

Fund Delaware's Future (FDF):
EC + K-12 political pressure campaign for state investment

*The Interagency Resource Management Committee

BRIDGES GOVERNMENT & PROGRAMMATIC

DE Early Childhood Council (DECC)

Governor-appointed advisory body; sets direction for the state but doesn't run programs directly

Fund Delaware's Future

Launch Recap: September 22nd at the Route 9 Library

Speakers

- Gov. Matt Meyer
- Rep. Sarah McBride
- Sen. Laura Sturgeon, Rep. Kim Williams

Local leaders

- Tameka Mays (DSEA)
- Meedra Surratte (PIC of Delaware)
- Jamie Schneider (deaeyc)
- Marcus Wright (Seaford School Board, PEFC)

Key Themes

- ★ Delaware has made historic investments and has major momentum, but we will need continued, sustainable investments to meet our goals.
- ★ Need to be open to various potential forms of revenue.
- ★ Need to balance investments with accountability and transparency.

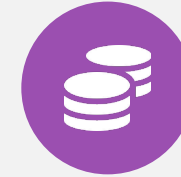
Introducing Fund Delaware's Future

And how it relates to our work



First State Pre-K

- Delaware's dedicated **policy** vehicle for early care & education (ages 0–5)
- A long-term, ongoing effort building toward lasting policy change
- Mobilizes a broad coalition to expand access to early care and education for Delaware's children and families



Fund Delaware's Future

- A push for the sustainable state **dollars needed to invest** in those policies
- **Two priorities: early care & education AND K-12**
- Founding partners: Rodel, DSEA, and Network Delaware

Both are needed to build a stronger future for Delaware's children, families, and communities, and we hope FSPK members will join FDF

Reflecting on FY27 & Introducing FY28 Policy Priorities

Reflecting on Last Year

FSPK's FY27 policy priorities

- How will last year's wins impact the field this year?
 - Thinking about children, families, educators, centers, and communities.
- How has the momentum we have built overtime changed things for you and folks that you know?
- What are some of the challenges that we continue to face, as individual partners and a coalition?

***Draft* Policy Agenda & Feedback**

FSPK's FY28 policy priorities

Support families and employers: Continue to invest to expand access

Department of Education: Increase access to state-funded Pre-K (ECAP)

- a. **Expand access** for hundreds of children, toward DDOE's goal of 40% of children ages 0-5 by 2028, and **increase eligibility** to serve families up to at least 300% of the Federal Poverty Level
- b. **Provide infrastructure funds to expand early care and education capacity** through grants and by allowing public school capital funding to cover Pre-K

Department of Health and Social Services: Increase access to child care (Purchase of Care) for more families

- a. **Increase per-child Purchase of Care rates** closer to the cost of care so programs can keep up with increasing costs, open more classrooms, and increase staff pay and benefits
- b. **Expand eligibility** to serve families up to at least 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (making thousands more families eligible)

We want your feedback: does this reflect what you're hearing from the field?

Federal Update: Impacts on Delaware

- **Medicaid and ACA Changes**
 - -\$73M to DE's GDP in 2026-2027
 - +7,000 uninsured Delawareans
 - Premium increases by around \$5,700 on average
- **SNAP Changes**
 - Up to 37,000 Delawareans may lose some or all benefits
 - \$38M in lost federal support to maintain Delaware's SNAP budget, plus \$10.1M in administrative costs
- **Dismantling the Department of Education**
 - Disruption of IDEA and Title 1 funding
 - Civil rights concerns under the DOJ

Federal Update: Proposed Rules for the Head Start Program

- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for Head Start***
- Nearly every rule/regulation will be revised or rescinded, reducing regulations to around 12 pages.
 - **Highlights**
 - *Eligibility:* Ends housing cost allowances, ends self-attestation (~8% of enrolled students)
 - *Staffing:* Removes many support staff qualification requirements, programs only required to provide 3 hours of instruction, cuts to health care coordination
 - *Impacts on Immigrant and MLL Students:* Requirement for English-only instruction across all programs and cuts to positions for multilingual instructors.
 - Public comment period ends **October 6th**. Visit the [NPRM Page at the Federal Registry](#) to submit a comment.

Advocacy & Engagement

Video Project Update

Quantitative Data Refresh

Coming Fall 2026

- Refresh of key findings from existing ECE research and surveys
- Highlights trends, outcomes, and statewide data points
- Available in fall to support early legislative engagement

Video Storytelling Project

Coming Winter 2027

- Short video featuring community voices
- Brings the data to life through personal experiences
- Launching during session to help mobilize support for expanded access

Both efforts support our goal of expanding access to publicly funded, high-quality early care and education for Delaware's children and families.

Advocacy Calendar: Look Ahead

State Budget Timeline





Delaware General Assembly 2027 Legislative Calendar

January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April						
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				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May						
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						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	*17	18	19
20	21	22	23	*24	25	26
27	28	*29	30			

	Legislative Session
	JFC Hearings
	DEFAC

	Spring Recess
	Bond Hearings
	JFC Markup

* June 17: DEFAC & Legislative Session

* June 24: Legislative Session & Bond Bill Markup

* June 29: Legislative Session & JFC - GIA Drafting

Holidays
January 18: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 15: Presidents' Day
March 26: Good Friday
May 31: Memorial Day
June 19: Juneteenth (Observed June 18)

Acronyms
DEFAC: Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council
GIA: Grant-in-Aid
JFC: Joint Finance Committee

Thank You

Please take a moment to fill out our brief end-of-call survey so we can get a better idea of what you'd like to see at these meetings in the future!

