



ECACE Action Toolkit

Learn how to boost the early childhood teacher pipeline.



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We, the Village

We are a coalition of early childhood advocates who strive to make Illinois a state where ALL families and early childhood providers have the resources needed for children to succeed. One of our goals is enhancing and supporting the early childhood workforce through the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity Scholarship (ECACE).

<https://www.righttocareil.com/>



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Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship Program

The ECACE Scholarship Program supports individuals currently or previously working in early childhood education who would like to earn additional credentials or a degree in the field. It aims to address the shortage of qualified early childhood educators by helping build a stronger workforce.

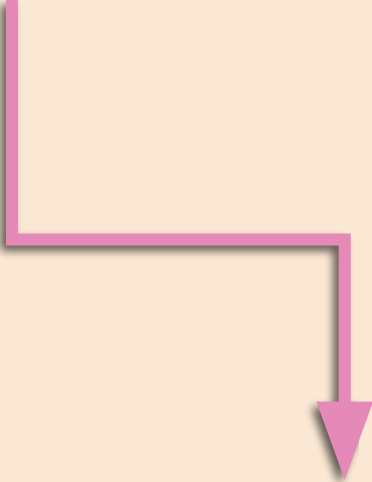
[ECACE one-pager](#)

[ECACE talking points](#)



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Why is ECACE important?



Early childhood workforce members, often full-time working adults, face challenges in accessing higher education. ECACE alleviates the financial burden of working full time while pursuing higher education.

ECACE was created to address workforce shortages, boost economic growth, and prevent negative impacts on families and children due to insufficient support for early childhood educators.

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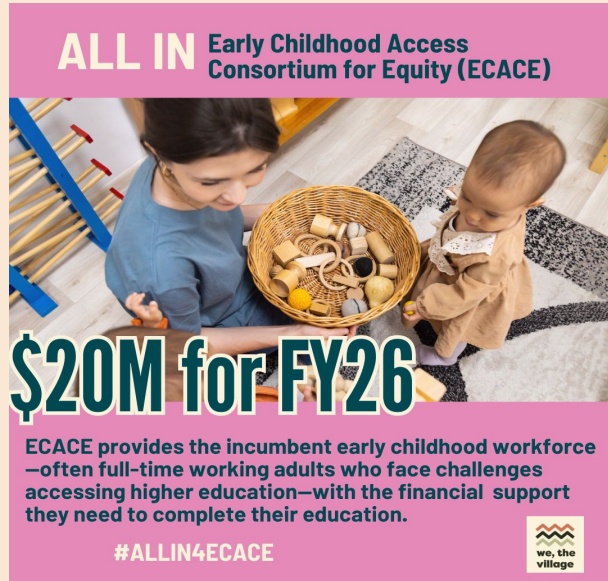
Call to Action

Fund \$20M
for ECACE in
FY26!

Funding for this critical program decreased from \$76M in FY24 to \$5M in FY25, impacting thousands of early childhood educators.

A total investment of \$20 million in ECACE funding in FY26 will empower thousands of educators, alleviate childcare deserts, and strengthen the Illinois economy and ECE workforce.

Take these Action Steps



ALL IN Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE)

\$20M for FY26

ECACE provides the incumbent early childhood workforce –often full-time working adults who face challenges accessing higher education—with the financial support they need to complete their education.

#ALLIN4ECACE

we, the village

This graphic features a woman and a baby playing with toys. The text is overlaid on a pink background.

Follow Our Social Media Calendar

[Click here to access posts you can share](#) on your personal or organizational social media channels. We also have a folder with [social media graphics here](#) to go along with your posts!



Email your Legislators

[Click here to access a handy letter to send to your legislators.](#) Feel free to add your own personal reasoning for why ECACE is important to you.



I AM

ALL IN

FOR ECACE!

#ALLIN4ECEC

ECACE is critical to strengthening our early childhood education and care workforce and is essential to the state's Smart Start plan to increase access to high-quality early childhood programming across the state.

we, the village

This graphic features a dark teal background with a collage of diverse people's faces forming the letters 'ALL IN'. A hand icon is next to 'I AM'. The text is in white and pink.

Reshare this Toolkit

Share our toolkit with other parents, educators, providers, and community members. We are stronger in numbers, and it is imperative that ECACE is funded in 2026.

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Tag Governor Pritzker and the following legislators in your social media posts

The following names may not be found on all three platforms—X, Facebook, or Instagram—but may appear on a mix of them or not at all.

Governor's Office

- Governor JB Pritzker

Senate Committees

- Approps Ed
- Higher Education

House Committees

- Approps Higher Ed
- Child Care Access & Early Childhood
- Higher Education

Budgeteers

- Representative Robyn Gabel
- Representative Kambium Buckner
- Representative Eva-Dina Delgado
- Representative Will Guzzardi

House Committee Chairs

- Childcare Access and ECE – Representative Joyce Mason
- Ed Approps - Representative William "Will" Davis
- Ed - Representative Michelle Mussman

Senate Committee Chairs

- Ed Approps Chair – Representative Michael Halpin
- Ed Chair –Senator Meg Loughran Cappel