



The Association of Early Learning Coalitions provides coordinated statewide leadership for an integrated, comprehensive system of early care and education across Florida, promoting services of the highest quality, advocating for all of Florida's children and their families, and supporting one another's professional growth

Federal Legislative Priorities 2011-12

Priorities

Increase the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and Head Start funding

- *Increases for CCDBG will enable more families to work and more children to receive high quality early learning services,*
- *Increases for Head Start will help sustain services to infants and toddlers of low-income families,*
- *Sustain and expand the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund to ensure that important infrastructure is in place to support high quality early learning systems*
- *Build Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements and supports*

Support reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and make sure that it includes a focus on early learning opportunities, including

- *Continuation of Title 1 funding support for preschool,*
- *Increase in Promise Neighborhood funding with a birth to college to career agenda,*
- *Sustain and expand Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Fund, including a focus on young children,*
- *Provide Investing in Innovation Program to support promising and proven educational strategies, including early learning programs that improve outcomes for young children,*
- *Develop joint professional development for school staff and early learning educators and support for professional development systems for early learning teachers*
- *Build more appropriate child assessment systems*
- *Develop more Ready Schools and appropriate transition plans*

Increase funding for Part C and section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act to ensure critical access to early intervention services

- *Ensure that all children are screened and have access to further assessment and evaluation,*
- *Provide timely assessment and referral*
- *Enable provision of early intervention services for a wider array of needs*

WHY INVEST IN THESE PROGRAMS?

- *Families with young children require child care in order to work; many families are forced to depend on more costly forms of assistance (e.g., family support, food stamps) without child care subsidies*
- *Child care businesses make significant contributions to local economies – adding over \$1.1 billion in wages and \$1.8 billion for industries that support child care businesses in Florida*
- *School readiness and prekindergarten programs provide critical supports for ensuring children are ready for school and future success as Floridians and US citizens*
- *Quality early learning services are critical components of economic development, enabling families to work while their children are prepared to enter school ready to learn, have fewer special education placements, read at or above grade level by 3rd grade, graduate high school on time, and be employed with higher earnings.*

Reference: Florida AWI Office of Early Learning, 2011