

## Excellence in Early Childhood Workforce Initiative

*Winning Beginning New York* urges New York State to make a down payment of \$15 million to promote excellence in the State's early childhood workforce by launching the Excellence in Early Childhood Workforce Initiative. Research shows that a qualified workforce is critical to achieving positive outcomes for children. Yet the State's early childhood workforce has been left behind, poorly compensated and without the resources to seek the education and credentials they need to provide quality care and education. The State failed to renew the recruitment and retention program for the field and has not granted COLAs or loan forgiveness. The shortage of qualified early care and education professionals is at an all-time high, with turnover running to 30 to 40 percent in many community programs. A growing number are leaving the field permanently.

This Initiative targets new investments in the workforce to four key areas that will strategically enhance the qualifications of both the current workforce and any new professionals to the field. Taken together, these strategies provide a road map to building on the ambition, talent, and dedication of workers already on the job and to attracting the professionals to the field that the State needs to meet its goals to provide high-quality early learning and care, starting at birth.

- **Loan forgiveness** for early childhood professionals for every year they stay in the field.
- **Scholarship, mentoring and reward bonuses** for workers already in the field who seek to improve their education and training.
- **Equitable compensation** for early childhood professionals, regardless of setting.
- **Professional pathways** for informal providers who make a commitment to becoming regulated.

A more in-depth explanation of the Initiative follows.