



RI Department of Human Services

Responses to CEC November 2024 Follow-Up Questions

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

- There has been a decrease in CCAP subsidies being used for preschool over the last couple of years. Is this due to an increase in universal pre-K slots? Can you confirm there has been an increase in slots in these programs?

Answer: Yes, there continues to be a decrease in CCAP subsidies for preschool programming, and that is in part due to the increase in universal pre-kindergarten slots in both DHS-licensed and non-DHS licensed programs.

There has been an increase of 470 seats in universal pre-kindergarten over the last state fiscal year. This includes both DHS-licensed programs and LEAs within the school districts (local education agencies), which are overseen by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

In many cases, a family does not renew their CCAP voucher if they enter into the universal pre-kindergarten lottery and get a slot. The reason is because they have found alternative care for the additional hours they need outside of the six-hour school day. In addition, many programs that do not have universal pre-kindergarten will not take this age group for before and after-school only. As a result, it is more challenging to find care. DHS is working closely with the Rhode Island Department of Education to support the needs of families who need care for their children for an entire working day,

- Please provide the most up-to-date expenditures on the TEACH program through State Fiscal Recovery Funds. Do you have an anticipated spending plan? Do you foresee any barriers to spending all of the funding?

Answer: As stated in caseload testimony, the current TEACH program spend to date is \$379,564. There is an invoice in the approval process for \$38,022 and the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC) is anticipating an invoice of approximately \$124,500 for October.

This will put DHS at about \$542,000 to-date for the TEACH spending with more than 15 months left in the contract for State Fiscal Recovery Funds. The initial launch was challenging due to the development of new pathways (a new master's program, for example) needing to be approved by Higher Education, but there are no expected barriers that would prevent spending down the additional funding. In addition, DHS has monthly meetings with the Pandemic Recovery Office to track spending and will continue to monitor to ensure the program has accounted for the slower start-up.