

2025 Progress Across 50 States and DC: State Policy Wins in Governance

North Carolina

Executive Order No. 10, which established the Governor’s Task Force on Child Care and Early Education, signaled a statewide commitment to strengthening affordability, access, and workforce stability within the early childhood system. The Task Force brings together state agencies, policymakers, business leaders, and community partners to develop long-term solutions to stabilize the child care system in North Carolina. Executive Order 10 created a formal structure for coordinated problem-solving across sectors, elevating early childhood as both an economic priority and a workforce issue. The Task Force is now developing actionable strategies to improve subsidy funding, address supply shortages, and support recruitment and retention in the ECE workforce. Implementation is ongoing. Because of this work, both chambers included additional investment in Child Care Subsidies. A state budget is yet to pass.

Target population: Child Care, Early Care and Education Workforce

State funding: No change in state funding related to this win

[Link](#)

[Press release](#)

Oklahoma

HB1575 Coordinated Eligibility and Application directs the Oklahoma Department of Human Services and the Oklahoma Health Care Authority to conduct a feasibility study on the potential establishment of a unified and streamlined eligibility and enrollment system for public assistance programs administered by the state that would promote efficiency, accessibility, and coordination of services across programs including, but not limited to: (1) The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); (2) The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program; (3) Child care subsidies; (4) The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); (5) The state Medicaid program; and (6) The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.

Target population: Families accessing safety net programs

State funding: Relatively small increase of state funding

Quantify: Under HB1575, Oklahoma Human Services (OHS), in partnership with the Oklahoma Health Care Authority and the State Department of Health, will conduct a feasibility study to explore the costs and options for creating a unified enrollment application system. This study will gather information from potential vendors and estimate the costs of developing and maintaining such a system. Once completed, OHS will submit a report to state leadership,

providing the data needed to consider implementation in a future legislative session. A unified system could help eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy, making it easier, faster, and less stressful for families to access the supports they need.

[Link](#)

This analysis of the year in early childhood state policy advocacy relies on data from a survey of early childhood policy advocates in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, conducted May 2025 through December 2025. The survey asked them for highlights from the year, so the results are representative and not comprehensive. Policy "wins" include legislation, funding increases, executive actions, and regulatory changes.

The survey was developed and executed by Dr. Lisa Kerber of Frontera Strategy. Frontera supports advocacy efforts nationwide by providing qualitative and quantitative research services, including needs assessments and environmental scans, program and policy evaluation, statistical analyses, and survey research for associations, foundations, and nonprofit service organizations active in state capitols.

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