Jumpstart is a national nonprofit focused on transforming the early care and education system. Because a child’s early years have lifelong impacts on their future learning, development, and success, we firmly believe that the most effective way to unlock the potential of every child and improve economic outcomes in underserved communities is to ensure that impactful early education, taught by qualified, well-compensated, and effective educators, is available to all.

Jumpstart works with an unwavering commitment to advancing equity through a multipronged approach. Using a research-based curriculum designed to build children’s language, literacy, and social-emotional skills, our program provides individualized support to children and helps college students and aspiring educators build professional skills and qualifications. We do this while operating within an inequitable system that must change, which is why we advocate for policies on a local and national level that benefit young children and the early care and education workforce.

Jumpstart’s New York State Policy Priorities on Equitable Access to Early Care and Education; Early Care and Education Workforce; and Equity & Justice follow:

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Policy Priorities

- **S.3245 Universal Childcare Act**

- **Empire State Campaign for Children Care (ESCCC) 2023 State Budget Proposal**

The early care and education sector in New York is in crisis. With 93% of New York families needing to pay more than 7% of their household income on care, and the workforce being drastically under-compensated with “65% of childcare providers receiv[ing] such low wages that they are eligible for several social safety net programs,” the sector needs immediate transformation.

To mitigate further collapse of the sector, Jumpstart advocates for the Universal Child Care Act, economic investments like the Children and Families Reinvestment Act, and a comprehensive budget proposal outlined in our ESSCC Executive Budget proposal that will expand access to ECE and combat economic exclusion.
Policy Priorities

• A.186 **Child care professionals loan forgiveness incentive program:**

Outstanding student loan burden remains a significant factor detracting qualified early educators and service professionals from the sector: “**incurring debt** increased the odds that students chose “substantially higher-salary jobs” and “reduce[d] the probability that students [chose] low-paid ‘public interest’ jobs.” As we push for a more diverse and inclusive ECE sector, we must address the **disproportionate impact** of loans on borrowers of color, primarily Black women who hold most of the nation’s student debt.

This incentive program will do the following:

• Provide loan forgiveness awards for applicants who choose a career in early education.
• Encourage an infusion of qualified early educators to remain in-state to offer services to the ECE sector by spreading loan forgiveness over five years.
• Qualified New York state residents with outstanding loans from a higher education institution can receive up to $25,000 in forgiveness, receiving 20% of their award upon each completed year with a qualified early education program.

Policy Priorities

• S.4522 **Prohibiting limiting childcare services based on proof of immigration status**

• **ESCCC Fund for Immigrant Families proposal**

While realizing a more supportive educational ecosystem for all, we must target unique historical marginalization and disinvestment spaces. Although “**roughly 544,000 (49%)**” of NYC Department of Education students are from immigrant families, **children of immigrant families** remain largely under-enrolled in early education settings. We must ensure that immigration status is not a barrier to receiving care by eliminating the requirement for proof of immigration status and establishing a fund for families excluded from subsidized child care as outlined in our ESCCC Fund for Immigrant Families proposal.
Since 2016, Jumpstart New York City has received funding through the City’s First Readers (CFR) initiative sponsored by the New York City Council. Of the $6.5 million CFR received, $438,114 has gone to Jumpstart for our community engagement work. Nearly 2.2 million families, across all 51 council districts, have received free early childhood services, books, and educational materials through the coordinated programs of 17 partner organizations. In 2023, through our annual advocacy with our advocates and coalition partners, we plan to push for our $6.5 million City Council budget ask to support early literacy programming across NYC.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about our policy priorities, please contact Jasmin Norford at jasmin.norford@jstart.org or Adanech Makey at adanech.makey@jstart.org