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Good morning:

We are writing to you again today in our capacity as members of the Child Care Availability Task Force, and child care professionals and/or advocates from around the State. Because things are evolving so fast, we are writing again with some new concerns and requests based on what we are hearing from providers across the state.

We want to start by expressing our deep appreciation for the swift action taken by New York to address this crisis, and to recognize that with things moving so quickly, it is impossible to timely meet every emerging need. With respect to child care, we appreciate the steps taken so far by the Governor, OCFS, State Ed, counties, NYC and beyond to meet the ever changing needs of families and children.

Here is a list of critical additional steps we urge New York State to take immediately; many are the same we raised in our last email that have not yet been addressed. This list is not exhaustive as needs are changing seemingly every hour; we are available and eager to participate in at your convenience if possible.

- Identify the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency in each region of the state as the Early Childhood lead. That lead should coordinate with the Governor's office, State Education, school district, BOCES, and with county leadership to ensure that all essential workers have access to child care; that child care providers that are staying open during the crisis have the qualified personnel that they need (possibly drawn from child care providers who close during the crisis, and from the education sector).
- Create a system for all essential workers in this crisis to access child care, including evening, weekend and overnight care, as needed. OCFS should lead this effort, and should ensure that payments flow quickly, and without delay to child care providers providing this essential service.
- Immediately make emergency funds available to meet emergency needs of child care providers operating during this crisis including: cleaning supplies, masks, gloves; diapers, wipes, blankets; food for all children; sufficient funds to pay staff premium/hazard pay due to the health risks, and to pay for coverage for non-traditional hours.
- Direct all parents to withdraw their children from child care except those that are performing essential work, or are receiving preventive services or are otherwise at risk of child welfare involvement, and direct school age to open slots in child care center/providers.
- Prepare a message for child care programs that will lose revenue and potentially go out of business as a result – provide assurance that supports will be forthcoming to revive this sector after the crisis abates. Offer educators from programs that must close during the

crisis priority positions in the programs that remain open.

- Immediately provide child care providers with cleaning supplies, bleach, disinfectant, masks, diapers, and all other supplies they need to operate safely. Give child care providers priority for testing, medical care, and all supports they need in this time of crisis.

- Ensure that child care providers are not putting themselves, or their staff, or the children in their care at unnecessary risk. Classroom density must be limited according to the latest CDC requirements; providers must be paid as if at full capacity; provide clear guidance on screening children and staff every day; provide thermometers, gloves, etc.

- Direct counties to continue paying subsidies to providers for enrolled children even if their program closes or can no longer serve them because they're not essential workers throughout the crisis.

- Direct counties to cover all families unable to pay tuition or make their co-pays.

- Direct counties to prioritize making payments to child care providers, including by immediately releasing February subsidy payments to providers; assist those counties struggling on a skeleton staff to make these payments in a timely manner; counties running low on funds should be able to easily access emergency funds from NYS.

- Direct counties to assess the child care needs of its essential workforce, coordinating with OCFS and the regional CCR&R.

- Hold regular (daily) calls with representative members of the child care field from around the state (could pull from the membership of the Child Care Availability Task Force) to assess and adjust the state child care response as events unfold. This call should be focused on actual needs on the ground.

- Extend emergency paid leave such that it is available to all child care providers, including those that are self-employed.

Thank you for all you are doing to keep all of us safe during this difficult time.

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