From:	Dede Hill
To:	Kerri Neifeld (Kerri.Neifeld@exec.ny.gov); Kelli Owens (opdv.ny.gov); "Poole, Sheila (OCFS)"; Roberta Reardon (roberta.reardon@labor.ny.gov); Rider, Renee (CCF)
Cc:	Kristen Kerr ; Meredith Chimento (mchimento@earlycareandlearning.org); Jenn O"Connor; Jennifer Rojas (jrojas@childcaresuffolk.org); Beth Starks (bstarks@clake.org)
Subject:	URGENT - CHILD CARE - COVID-19
Date:	Wednesday, March 18, 2020 10:42:00 AM

Good morning:

We are writing to you in our capacity as members of the Child Care Availability Task Force, and child care professionals and/or advocates from around the State.

We have held a series of calls late yesterday and today with child care providers and union leaders representing various corners of the state. Providers and educators want to do all they can to serve the families and children that need care during this crisis, while also keeping themselves, their staffs, the children in their care safe. **There is an urgent need for the State to lead on this issue, and take the following steps immediately:**

- Give clear instructions to all counties/ all child care providers about how to operate safely during this crisis.
- Immediately identify who are essential workers in this crisis, and give their children priority in child care.
- Classify child care providers/ educators as part of the essential emergency workforce, and ensure they are given priority for testing, medical care, and all supports they need in this time of crisis.
- Direct all non-essential workers to withdraw their children from child care; open slots must go to the children of essential workers.
- Immediately provide child care providers with cleaning supplies, bleach, disinfectant, masks, diapers, all supplies they need to operate safely. Many do not have access to these supplies now.
- 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 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).
- Ensure that child care providers are not putting themselves, or their staff, or the children in their care at unnecessary risk. Classrooms must be limited to less than 10.
- Immediately direct every county to assess the child care needs of its essential workforce.
- 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.

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

Dorothy (Dede) Hill
Director of Policy

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy
540 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

dhill@scaany.org / www.scaany.org
(518) 463-1896 ext 138