

June 5, 2020

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Thank you for your leadership through the COVID-19 Pandemic. We are proud New Yorkers serving as your Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). Our nearly 50 members, representing public agencies and non-profit organizations across the state, support the state's regions in preparation to re-open, acknowledging how critical child care and family health and welfare is to our economic recovery and social fabric.

As you have acknowledged, there has been dramatic and disproportionate loss and suffering in our black and brown communities due to COVID-19 in New York State. Early childhood is not free from racial inequities and experiences: young black children are twice as likely to die in the first year of life. The ECAC is committed to race equity and is poised to partner with any initiative your office creates in order to better understand the challenges and develop tangible and actionable solutions for children and families.

The ECAC's commitment to race equity is demonstrated throughout our new strategic plan which focuses on developing systems, policies and practices to support the most underserved populations, over the next three years. Additionally, the ECAC recently hired a Family Engagement Coordinator to work across the state with our most vulnerable families to hear their voices, illuminate their needs, and generate solutions.

As New York 'builds back better' and seeks economic recovery through a strategic and phased reopening we must consider the impact each phase will have on working families with young children, always keeping our most vulnerable families as our focus. We offer comprehensive support. This includes, but is not limited to, the urgent need to address equitable distribution of technology to mitigate our current resource gap as we rely increasingly on telecommunication for medicine, education, and interpersonal support. The ECAC would like to offer our support and the expertise of our membership of early childhood experts in any and all ways we can be helpful to you. Our members are prepared to serve on a range of committees or task forces addressing racial disparity across systems.

Thank you,



Sherry M. Cleary  
Co-chair



Patricia E. Persell  
Co-chair