

16 September 2016

The Hon Mike Baird MP
Premier
Parliament of New South Wales
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Premier Baird,

The Australian Childcare Alliance New South Wales, the largest industry association representing privately owned long daycare services, is pleased and troubled with the NSW Government's announcement on 14 September 2016 of a \$115 million boost into early childhood education.

As part of the Commonwealth Government's National Partnership Program, we understand that \$30 million of the \$115 million will be allocated to private and not-for-profit long daycare centres over 18 months beginning 1 January 2017.

The National Partnership Agreement on Early Childcare Education, more commonly known as the Universal Access Agreement, commits all Australian governments to achieving universal access to early childhood education for all children in their year before school, delivered by university qualified Early Childhood Teachers, of 15 hours per week over 40 weeks per year.

Our sector is grateful for the NSW Government's allocation of additional funding that is purposed to benefit vulnerable and disadvantaged families in order to have children increase their participation in early childhood education.

However, we are disappointed that the ratio of funding fails to recognise that there are more than twice as many children in NSW receiving their preschool education in long daycare services as those attending *9 am to 3 pm preschools* due to the demands of parents wanting to synchronise their children's childcare needs with their work hours.

One of the main goals of Universal Access funding for preschool programs of over 600 hours in the year before school is so as to make a demonstrable difference between a child flourishing or struggling in their first year at school. This is even more important for children who are vulnerable or from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Given that private and not-for-profit long daycare services have by far the largest share of the state's total childcare services that offer and can offer preschool programs, we do not understand why the NSW Government is not leveraging that in order to realise agreed social and economic aspirations for children and their parents.

We will raise this with your Minister for Early Childhood Education, the Hon Leslie Williams MP, with a view of hopefully addressing this issue for the benefit of all children and their families across New South Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Chiang Lim
CEO