The 2017 General Assembly concluded its session on March 30. This session produced some good budgetary news for children, and several policy bills passed which, if signed, will be positive for child health, education, and well-being.

### Education

Looking ahead to 2018, it is important to remember that passing state legislation is often a multi-partnership. Already signed by the governor, the bill provides $350,000 in seed funds and will establish a nonprofit to privately raise funds for its own initiatives and establish public-private partnerships. This showcases the importance of collaboration between the private sector and government to support education initiatives.

There were several wins for children from this session:

- **Child Health**
  - **HB 154**: A bill that allows dental hygienists to practice in safety net settings (such as Title I schools) to help prevent decay and other bad oral health outcomes.
  - **SB 206**: A bill that enables physicians to delegate certain tasks such as the administration of certain medications.

- **Child Welfare**
  - **Two positive child welfare bills passed this session.**

- **HB 279**: A bill which includes $2.5 million for Medicaid behavioral health services to children.
  - **SB 125**: A bill which adds $20.2 million for an increased number of children in out-of-home care (foster care) and private provider rate bump that was sought by private child welfare provider contractors.
  - **SB 206**: A bill which enables physicians to delegate certain tasks such as the administration of certain medications.
  - **SB 206**: A bill which includes $1.3 million for Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) specialists to increase student achievement.

- **Education**
  - **HB 359**: A bill which provides $10 million for teacher incentives and instructional materials.
  - **SB 206**: A bill which includes $20.8 million to cover Medicaid behavioral health interventions and in order to ensure the best outcomes for children.

- **HB 338**: A bill which increases salaries for child welfare services workers by 19 percent.

- **HB 359**: A bill which provides $1 million to hire the CTO and to assist underperforming schools. The CTO will be responsible for improving school performance.

- **SB 206**: A bill which includes $1 million to hire the CTO and to assist underperforming schools.

- **HB 279**: A bill which includes $10 million for teacher incentives and instructional materials.

### Conclusion

This session was marked by a number of steps forward for children’s well-being, particularly in education, health, and safety. The coordination between state representatives and private sector organizations has resulted in significant investments in children’s future. As we look ahead to 2018, it will be important to build upon these successes and continue to advocate for policies that will improve the lives of Georgia’s children.