

**Early Childhood Care
and Education Commission
October 26, 2020**

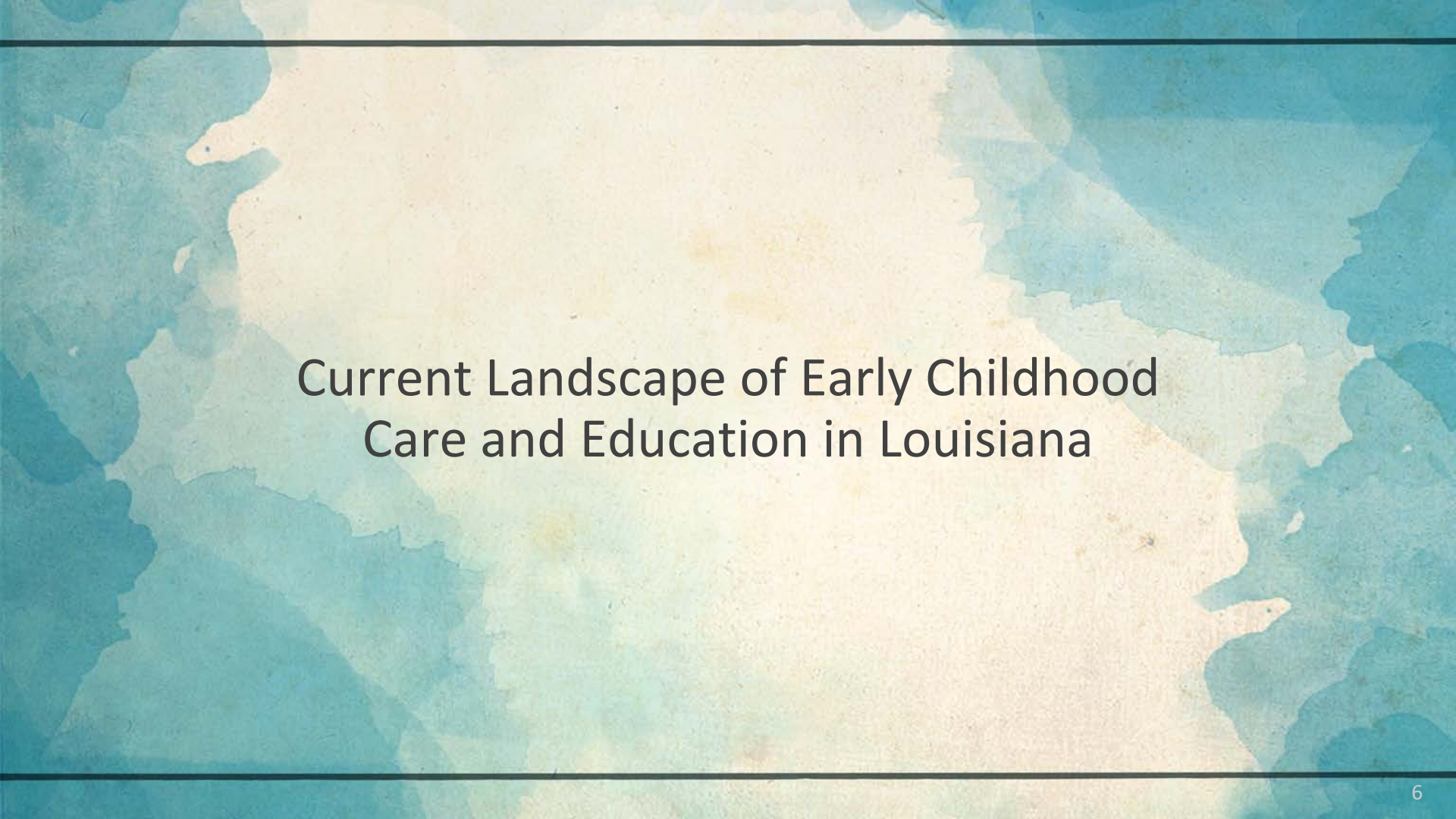
Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of the Minutes of January 30, 2020
- IV. Consideration of the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission membership
- V. Consideration of a report on the current landscape of early childhood care and education in Louisiana
- VI. Consideration of a report on the Impact of COVID-19 on Louisiana's Child Care Providers from the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children
- VII. Consideration of a review of the legislative charge for the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission
- VIII. Consideration of the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission's Task Force
- IX. Public Comment
- X. Adjournment

Roll Call

Approval of the Minutes of January 30, 2020

Consideration of the ECCE Commission Membership



Current Landscape of Early Childhood Care and Education in Louisiana

Current Landscape

Louisiana's Early Childhood Vision

*Louisiana's vision for early childhood is that **every child in the state has access to the high-quality experiences in their early years of life that research shows prepare children for success in kindergarten.***

Louisiana has made considerable strides toward achieving this vision:

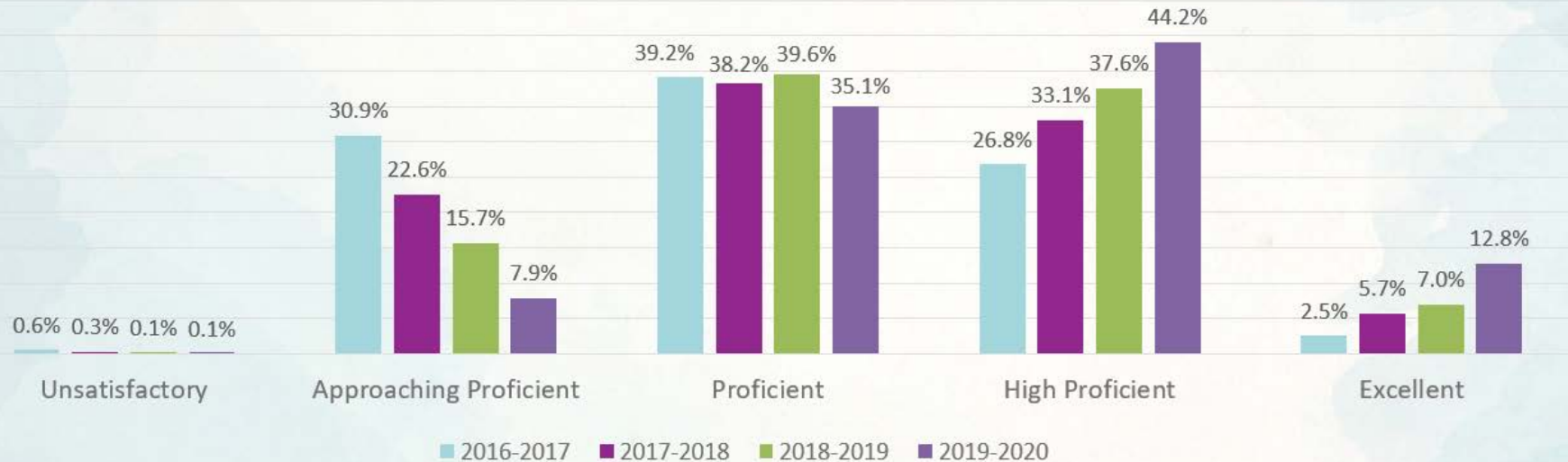
- **Full implementation of Act 3:** Louisiana unified its early childhood system under a single governing body (LDOE), established a community network in every community in the state, implemented a statewide unified quality rating system, and aligned quality improvement supports to the unified quality rating system.
 - Since implementing the statewide unified quality rating system, there have been steady improvements in classroom quality across all program types, with the greatest rate of improvement occurring in child care.
- **Establishment of Ready Start Networks:** Louisiana now has 26 communities that have become Ready Start Networks, committed to achieving bold and ambitious goals of improving both access to and quality of early childhood at the local level.
- **Initial State Investment:** As a result of the recommendations put forth by the Commission, the Louisiana Legislature invested nearly \$20 million in early childhood in State Fiscal Year 2020 and sustained that investment in State Fiscal Year 2021. This was the largest state investment in early childhood in a decade.

Despite these successes, there are still far too few children under four from in need families that have access to high-quality child care.

Current Landscape

Quality Improvement Since 2016-2017

This year, nearly 92% of sites will receive a rating of Proficient or higher in the state's unified quality rating system.*

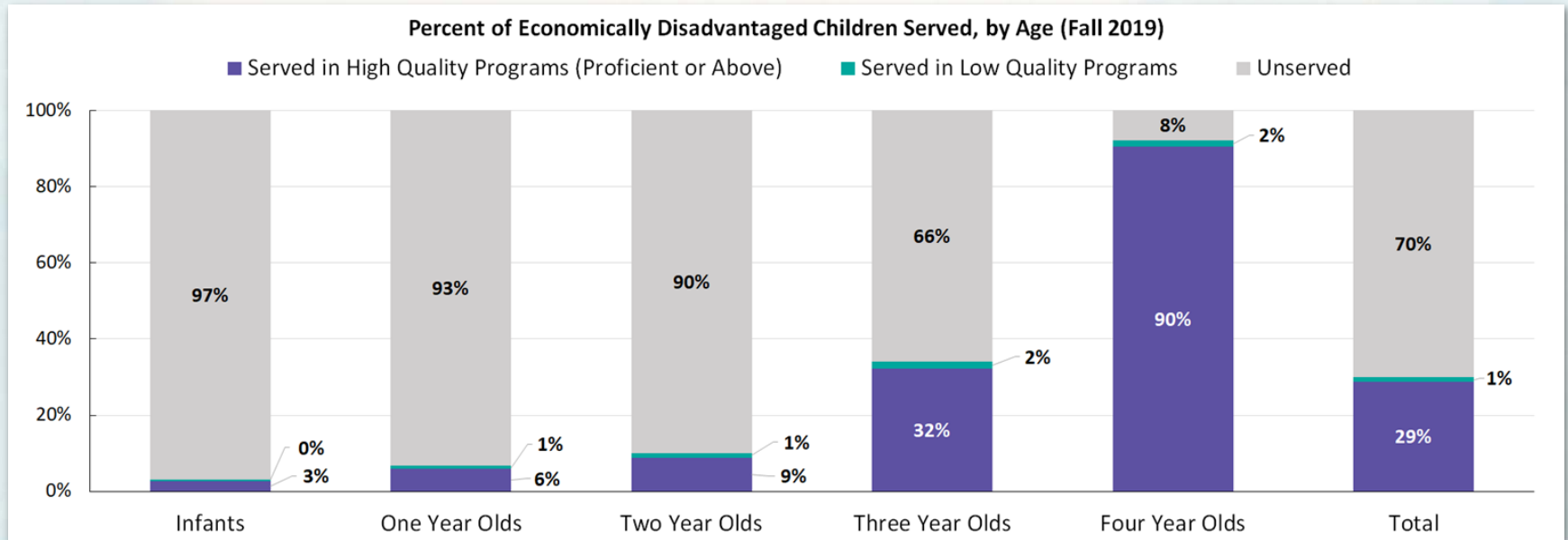


* These results reflect the Department's 'hold harmless' approach, which allowed sites to opt into the higher score across the past two years.

Current Landscape

Access to Child Care Pre-Pandemic

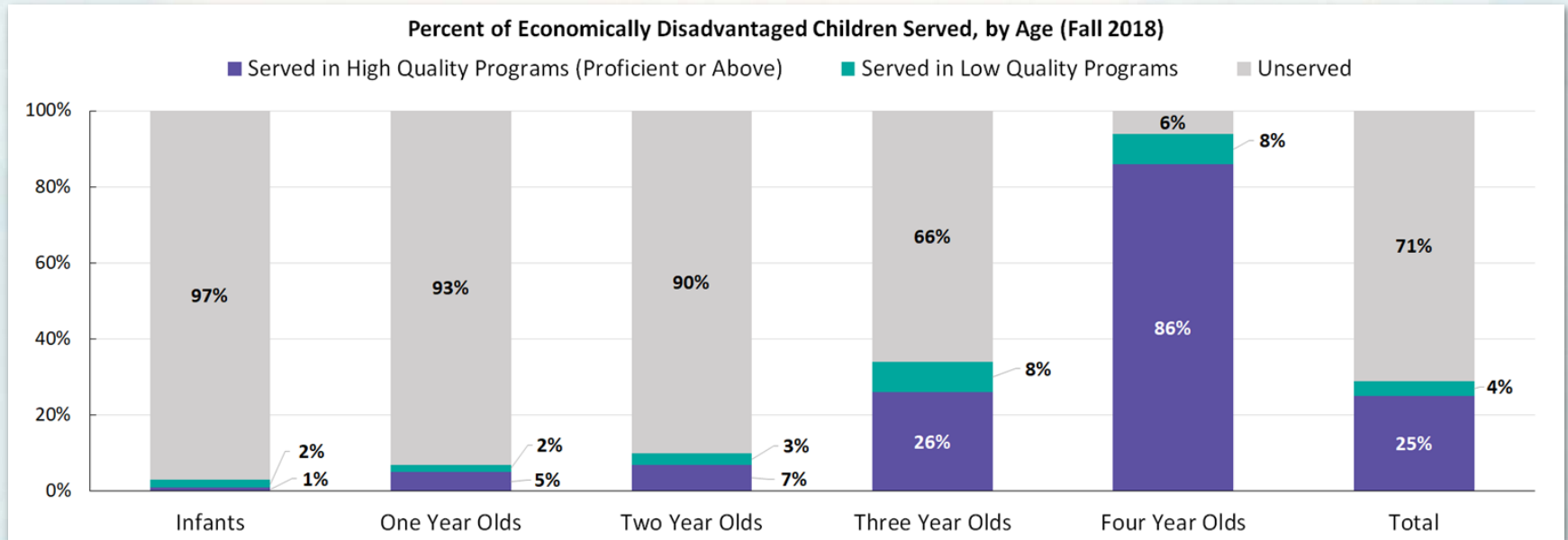
Despite these quality improvements, even prior to COVID-19, fewer than 7% of in need children birth to two years old, and less than 33% of three year olds, had access to high-quality child care in Louisiana.



Current Landscape

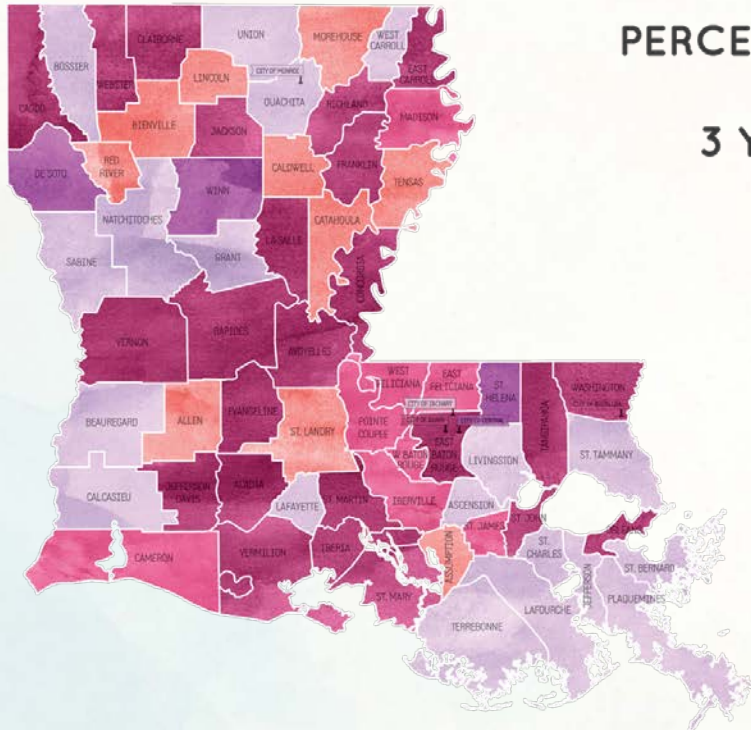
Access to Child Care Pre-Pandemic

Looking across years, there is very little change in the percentage of children served, despite gains in quality.



Current Landscape

Geographic Disparities in Access to Quality, 3 Year Olds



PERCENT OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED 3 YEAR OLDS SERVED

- LESS THAN 10%
- 10-29%
- 30-49%
- 50-69%
- 70% OR MORE

Current Landscape

Family and Workforce

Though data on the impact of COVID-19 on working parents is still being collected, it can be understood that this pandemic is profoundly and adversely affecting working parents across the state.

With nearly 1 million women currently in the Louisiana workforce (according to LWFC), the contribution of women to the economy cannot be minimized; however, working families face significant challenges:

- Two out of three children under the age of five have both parents or their single parent working.
- In 2019, there were 183,666 mothers with children birth through age 5 that were served through WIC.
- According to Child Care Aware of America, in 2018 Louisiana had 127,802 single, working mothers.
- 68% (368,770) of Louisiana children in low-income families live with a single parent.
- According to the NCCP, 13% of Louisiana mothers of young children have no high school degree, with another 27% of mothers of young children having only a high school degree.
- As of July 2020, Louisiana has a 9.9% unemployment rate.

Current Landscape

Child Care Closures as a Result of COVID-19

The already-fragile child care industry in Louisiana has experienced widespread closures and reported financial devastation during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

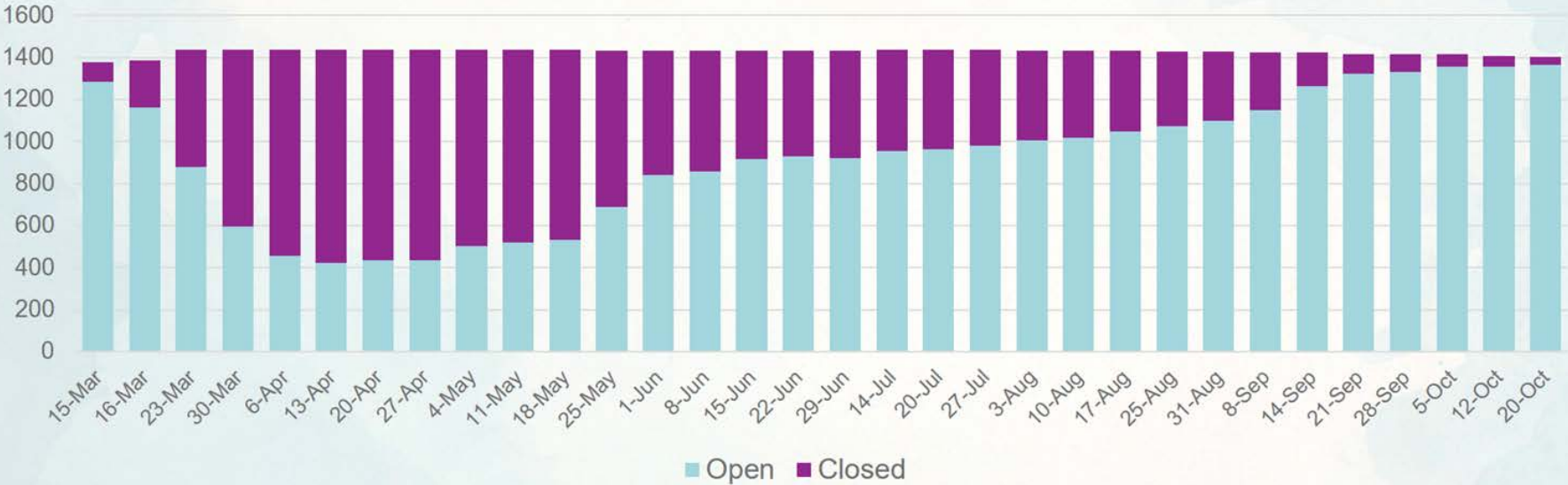
Many child care providers have chosen to close or have been unable to stay open at some point during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- After Governor Edwards issued the Stay At Home Order on March 23, 43% of licensed centers (630 centers) and 2% of home-based providers (2 homes) closed.
- Over the following weeks, 429 additional licensed centers and home-based providers closed, resulting in a peak of 70% of licensed centers closed and a total of 64% of all providers (1063 centers and homes) closed temporarily.
- As of October 21, 46 child care providers have closed permanently since the beginning of the pandemic; another 40 (2%) are temporarily closed.

Current Landscape

Closures Since Pandemic, All License Types

Since the Governor's Stay at Home order on March 23, many early childhood providers have closed temporarily or permanently. As of October 21, 2% of all licensed providers remained closed.



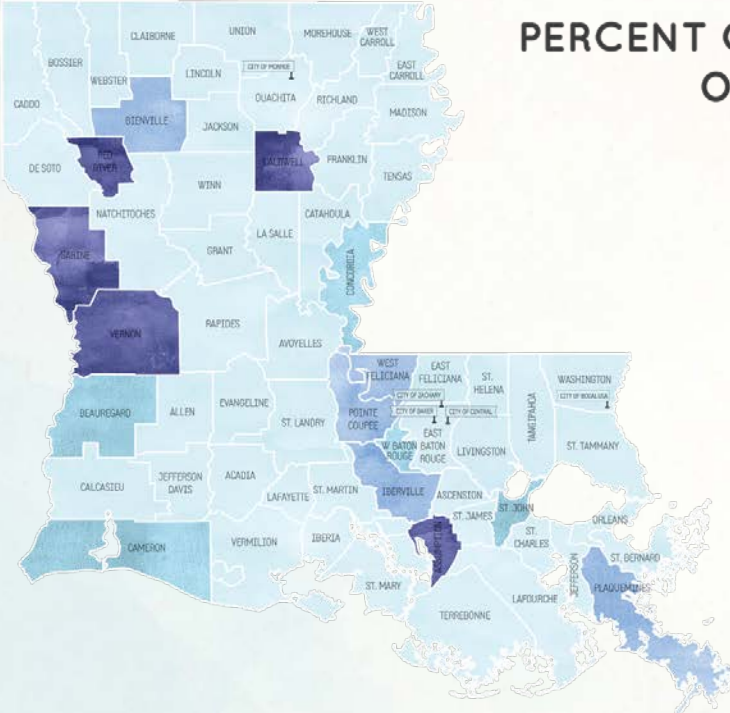
Current Landscape

Closures Since Pandemic, Type III Providers

The Department provided direct financial support to Type III centers to facilitate quick reopening. As of October 21, 2% of Type III providers are closed.



Current Landscape Closures Since Pandemic

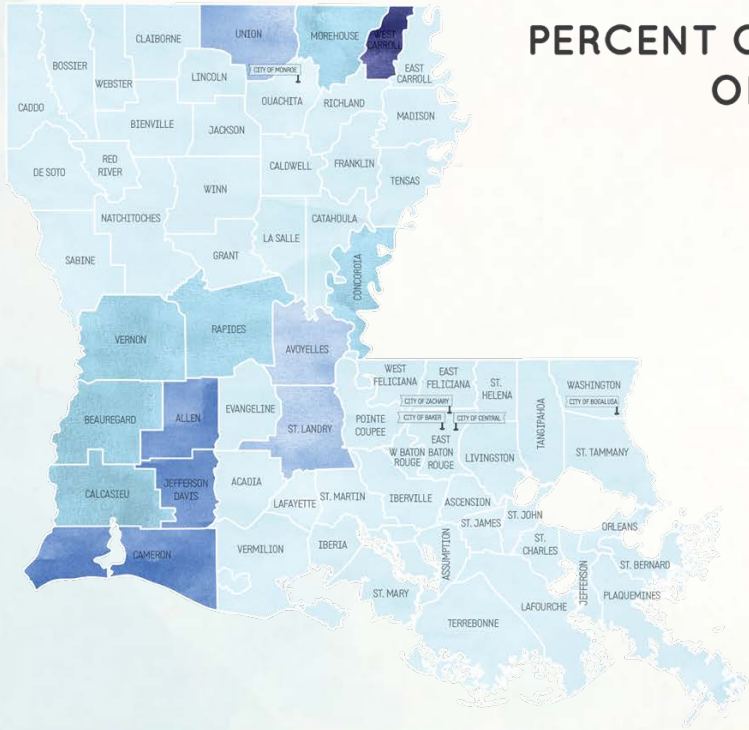


**PERCENT OF ALL LICENSED CENTERS
OPEN ON 3/15/2020**

- LESS THAN 20%
- 20-39%
- 40-59%
- 60-79%
- 80% OR MORE

Current Landscape

Closures Since Pandemic



PERCENT OF ALL LICENSED CENTERS OPEN ON 9/15/2020

- LESS THAN 20%
- 20-39%
- 40-59%
- 60-79%
- 80% OR MORE

Current Landscape

Strong Start 2020

In May, the Department released the ECE Strong Start 2020 framework to ensure that Louisiana does not lose traction on the work to date to strengthen early childhood quality and access in the state.

The ECE Strong Start 2020 Framework outlines priorities and funding opportunities to ensure:

- **All child care centers have the tools and resources they need to reopen safely** and in accordance with Office of Public Health guidelines;
- **Communities sustain and/or increase access** to opportunities for early childhood care and education in the near and long-term;
- **Teachers are prepared to lead classrooms and provide high-quality interactions** for children every day;
- **Families are supported to re-enroll** children in early childhood programs **or to provide quality care and education in their homes** if programs are unable to reopen or remain open.



Current Landscape

Supports for Families Seeking Care During COVID-19

By working in partnership with CCR&Rs, LDH, and child care providers around the state, the Department helped to ensure that essential workers had access to child care during the early stages of the pandemic.

Emergency CCAP	New In-Home, FCC, and Type III Providers	Respite Care Contracts
<p>Since expanding CCAP eligibility to accommodate essential workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Over 5,200 critical personnel and over 7,600 children have been approved for emergency CCAP.60 Type I and II providers have converted to Type III to support these families.	<p>Since expediting the process to become a CCAP provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">100 individuals have become newly certified as in-home or family child care providers, and more are in processSince the beginning of the pandemic, there have been 28 new Type III providers to become licensed	<p>LDOE worked with CCR&Rs to identify child care centers for respite care contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">21 child care centers contracted with the LDOE to provide respite careEach center served an average of 15 children per dayRespite care services ended May 17 and contracts ended on June 30

Louisiana received \$67M in CARES Act funding; more than 69% has been used to support child care with another 31% planned to be spent to support child care this fiscal year.

Current Landscape

Supports for Child Care Providers During COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, the Department has prioritized ensuring lead agencies and child care centers have the information, funding, and support they will need to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

- **CCAP Supports:** The Department supported the financial sustainability of child care centers by reimbursing for all authorized children based on enrollment rather than attendance, using the maximum daily CCAP rate, waiving CCAP copayments for families, expanding CCAP eligibility to include children of essential workers among other financial supports, and allowing part-time children to qualify for full-time care.
- **Direct Financial Support for Providers:** The Department provided multiple rounds of LaCAP grants and the Community Recovery Grant to financially support centers.
- **Licensing and CCCBC Supports:** The Department absorbed fees for license renewals and CCCBCs, extended dates for license renewals, streamlined change requests (age ranges, hours of operation), and streamlined registration/certification of home-based providers, among other adjustments.

Current Landscape

Supports for Child Care Providers During COVID-19

Throughout the pandemic, the Department has prioritized ensuring lead agencies and child care centers have the information, funding, and support they will need to recover from the impact of COVID-19.

- **Trauma-Informed Supports:** To address the increased stress of the pandemic on families, their children, and teachers, LDOE has increased mental health services to anyone interacting with young children, and has also provided a training series to coaches and trainers that can provide trauma-informed awareness, skills, and supports within their communities.
- **OPH Guidelines for Child Care:** In partnership with Office of Public Health, the Department developed required and suggested [guidelines](#) for child care centers to use as they operate/reopen.
- **Communication:** The Department hosted regular webinars and continuously provided updated guidance to support and inform early childhood providers during the pandemic.
- **PPE:** The Department issued PPE (no touch thermometers, sanitizing supplies, masks, gloves, etc) to all providers with the help of the R&Rs. Additional masks were provided via GOHSEP.

Current Landscape

Testimonials from Child Care Directors



Current Landscape

Testimonials from Child Care Directors



Current Landscape

Testimonials from Child Care Directors

We invite testimonials from child care center directors in attendance today.

Current Landscape

Impact of Hurricane Laura/Delta on Child Care

Hurricane Laura has impacted early childhood providers and families in need of child care in many parishes in Louisiana, which has further destabilized the field.

Current Child Care Provider Closures*

16 percent of all child care providers (centers and registered homes) in parishes included in the Major Disaster Declaration are closed.

- Licensed Centers: 17 percent (47 of 280); 37 of the 47 licenses are suspended due to significant damage (e.g. significant structural damage, roof damage, water damage)
- Family Child Care and In-Home Providers: 11 percent (7 of 62); 7 registrations are suspended due to significant damage (e.g. major structural damage)
- Calcasieu Parish has the most long-term closures (over 30 days) with 3.
- Note that Hurricane Delta has resulted in 2 licenses suspended (Vermilion and Jefferson Davis)

**Data as of October 21, 2020*

Current Landscape

Impact of Hurricane Laura on Child Care



Toddler Junction, DeQuincy, LA
Type I, Licensed Capacity - 41



University United Methodist Day School, Lake Charles, LA
Type III, Licensed Capacity - 171

Current Landscape

Impact of Hurricane Laura on Child Care



Heaven's Precious Angels Daycare, Sulphur, LA
Type III, Licensed Capacity - 49



Hayleigh's Childcare Learning and Development Center, Lake Charles, LA
Type III, Licensed Capacity - 39

Current Landscape

Support for Impacted Providers, Families, and Children

The Department has taken recovery action regarding Hurricane Laura/Delta prior to landfall and continues to do so.

- Provided information to 211 on Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for families experiencing homelessness prior to Hurricane Laura landfall
- Providing CCAP applications and mental health consultation information
- Assessed the need for Respite Care and on-site CCAP application processing complicated by COVID-19 precautions
- Working with FEMA on child care assistance for families
- Working in conjunction with DCFS on Social Service Block Grant to assist child care in rebuilding and replacing lost supplies (furniture, cribs, etc).

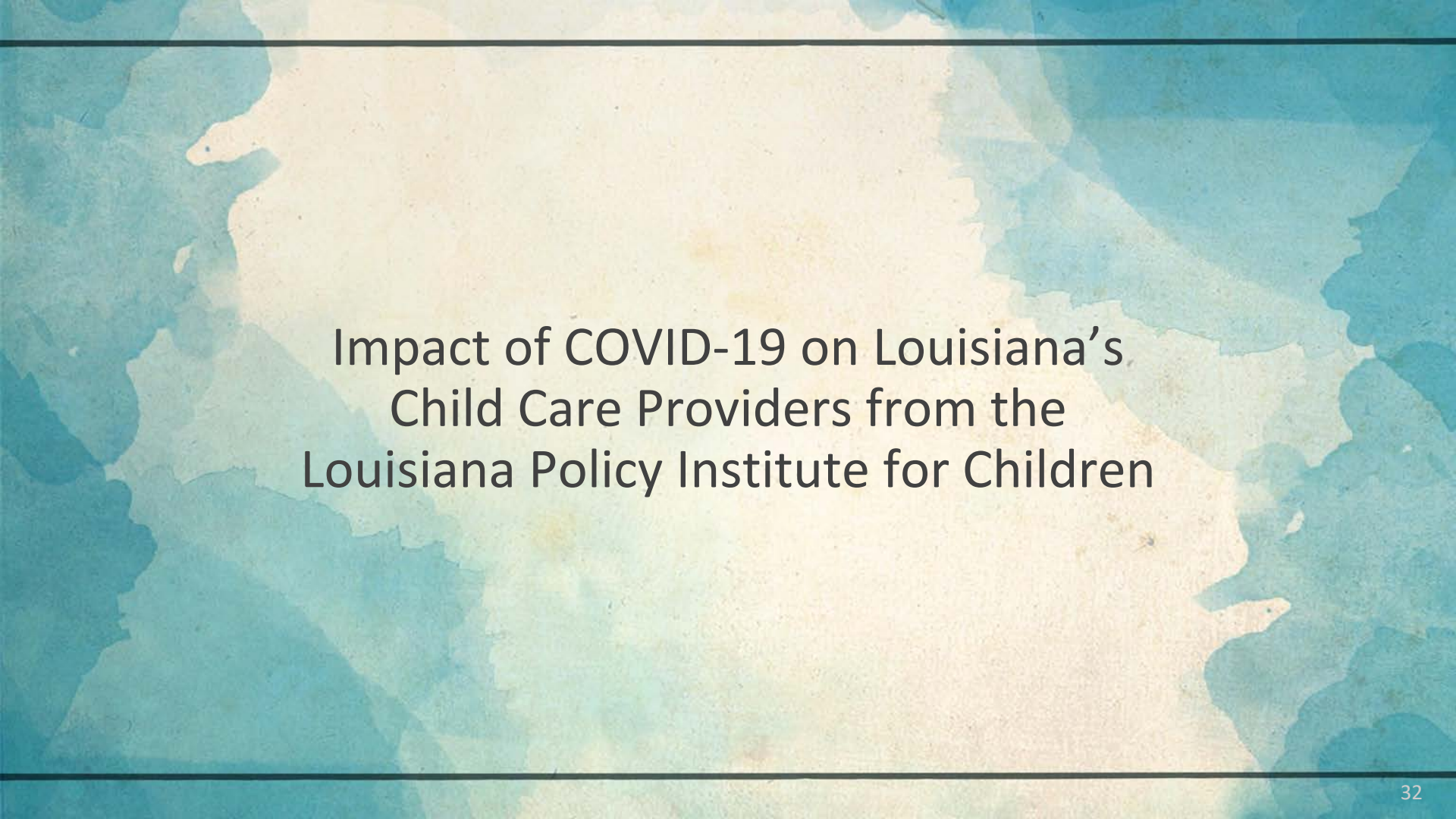
Current Landscape

Key Takeaways

Even prior to COVID-19 and Hurricane Laura/Delta, there was a staggering unmet need for early care and education for children younger than four in Louisiana.

The COVID-19 pandemic and recent hurricanes have exacerbated what was already true: the child care ecosystem in Louisiana is extremely fragile and there is insufficient funding to support the need in our state.

- We recognize that unlike K-12 schools, child care centers are small businesses that operate on extremely narrow profit margins in the best of circumstances.
- Without greater financial support, many Louisiana child care providers are at risk of closing their doors permanently. This would be devastating to children, families, and our economy.



Impact of COVID-19 on Louisiana's
Child Care Providers from the
Louisiana Policy Institute for Children



Impact of COVID-19 on Louisiana Child Care Providers

Libbie Sonnier, Ph.D. | September 2020

Overview

- While Governor John Bel Edwards ordered all public schools to close as of March 16, child care centers were permitted to remain open, recognizing **child care is a fundamental support for essential employees to be able to work.**
- Given both the **importance of the early care and education sector to the overall economy** and its frequently **precarious financial state**, it is critical to understand the impact that COVID-19 is having on the early care and education sector and the kinds of supports providers will need in order to stay in business now and after the crisis is over. **Without a robust early care and education sector, Louisiana will struggle to get back to work.**
- To help us understand what it will take to support early care and education providers, **the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children conducted a series of surveys of child care providers across Louisiana** in partnership with Agenda for Children, Childcare Connections for Northeast Louisiana, Louisiana Association of United Ways, On Track by 5 Alliance, Pointe Coupee Early Childhood Education Coalition, United Way of Southeast Louisiana and Volunteers of America

Survey 1: March 16 - March 23, 2020

- A majority of child care providers reported **losing revenue**.
- A significant number of child care providers **had closed or were planning to close**.
- Closed child care providers experienced **financial losses** from multiple directions.
- **One-third** of child care providers reported an extended closure will force them to **permanently close**.
- A majority of providers requested **support to pay their employees**.

March 9, 2020: The first confirmed case of COVID-19 in Louisiana is diagnosed in the New Orleans region.

March 11, 2020: The World Health Organization designates COVID-19 as a pandemic and Gov. Edwards declares a public health emergency in Louisiana.

March 13, 2020: Gov. Edwards encourages social distancing, mandates all public gatherings of 250 people or more be postponed or canceled, and closes all public schools until April 13, 2020.

March 16, 2020: LPIC #1 Survey Opens

March 22, 2020: Gov. Edwards issues a Stay at Home Order to begin at 5pm on March 23rd.

March 23, 2020: LPIC Survey #1 Closes

Survey 2: April 13 - April 20, 2020

All Providers

- As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, more providers experienced **financial losses**.
- **One-third** of child care providers continued to expect an extended closure will force them to **close permanently**.
- **Almost half** of providers **laid off staff** and most expected **additional layoffs** if faced with an extended closure.
- **Grants and forgivable loans** remained most requested supports.

April 13, 2020: LPIC Survey #2 Opens

April 15, 2020: Gov. Edwards signs order closing Louisiana schools for the remainder of the current school year, remote learning will continue.

April 20, 2020: LPIC Survey #2 Closes

May 18, 2020: Louisiana moves to Phase One of reopening.

Survey 3: June 15 - June 22, 2020

- **Financial losses** for providers **continued to grow** substantially during the pandemic.
- Majority of open providers saw **reduced enrollment rates**.
- Almost half of providers had a **waiting list**.
- More providers experienced **challenges** with **purchasing** needed **cleaning, PPE supplies**.
- Less than 1-in-4 open providers expected being able to **survive long-term operations** with current smaller group sizes.

June 5, 2020: Louisiana moves to Phase Two

June 15, 2020: LPIC Survey #3 Opens

June 22, 2020: Gov. John Bel Edwards announces that Louisiana will stay in Phase Two; **LPIC Survey #3 Closes**

July 13, 2020: Gov. Edwards begins statewide mask mandate, closes bars to on premises consumption as COVID-19 spreads

July 21, 2020: Gov. Edwards extends Phase Two, with mask mandate until Aug. 7.

Aug. 6, 2020: Gov. Edwards extends Phase Two, with mask mandate and bar closures until Aug. 28.

Aug. 28, 2020: Gov. Edwards extends Phase Two, with mask mandate and bar closures until Sept 11.

September 11, 2020: Gov. Edwards moves Louisiana into Phase 3 until October 9.

Consideration of Legislative Charge for Year 3

Legislative Charge for Year 3

The Importance of Investing in Early Childhood

*In previous years, the Commission put forth a recommendation for the state to make a **bold initial investment of \$85.8 million to create [LA B to 3](#), and an increase of nearly that amount annually over the next decade.***

The **need** for early childhood is significant, as is the return on investment.

- **Many young children in need:** There are 173,000 children economically in need, birth to three years old, currently living in Louisiana.
- **Many working families:** Two out of three children under the age of five have both parents or their single parent working. **Louisiana's economy lost \$1.1 billion due to absences related to child care breakdowns.**
- **Few quality early care and education options:** A child's brain is 90 percent fully formed by age 5. Yet, fewer than 7 percent of in need children birth to two years old and less than 33 percent of three year olds can access quality child care in Louisiana.
- **Early care and education works:** Significant research shows that for every \$1 invested in high-quality early care, the state yields a \$7.30 return on investment.

Legislative Charge for Year 3

State Investments in Early Childhood

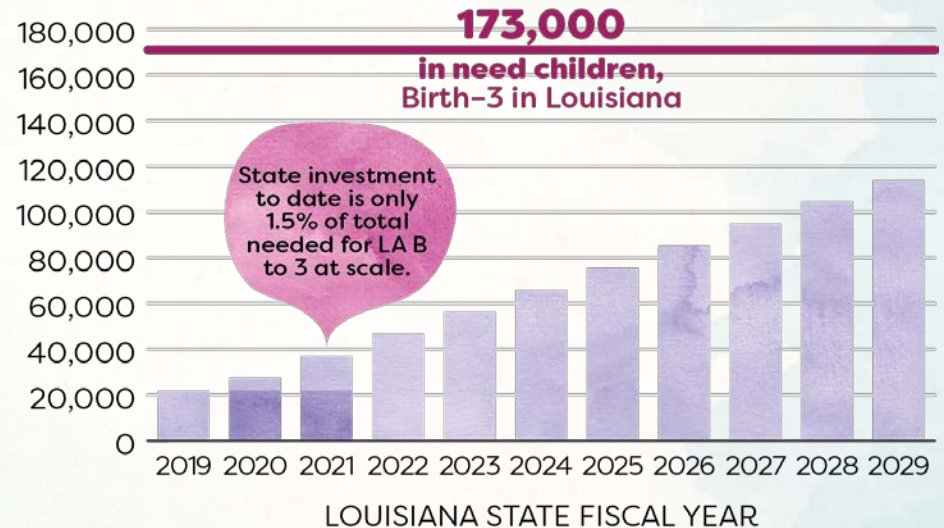
While the Louisiana Legislature has followed recommendations from the Commission to invest state funding in early childhood, a bolder investment is needed to achieve the ambitious goals set forth by the Commission.

Prior to the work of the Commission in 2019, Louisiana was serving roughly 22,000 B-3 children.

The Louisiana Legislature invested \$11.2 million additional state dollars in the budget for B-3 seats for the 2020 State Fiscal Year, and that amount has been sustained in the budget for the 2021 State Fiscal Year, which only funds roughly 1,400 B-3 seats at a quality rate.

A greater investment is needed to keep on-pace with the Commission's recommendation to serve all B-3 children in need of care by year 10.

INCREASE IN EARLY CARE ACCESS OVER TEN YEARS



Legislative Charge for Year 3

Public and Political Will

The January 2020 Commission Report Addendum finds that there is significant public and political will to increase state funding for early childhood in Louisiana.

- Polling data from April 2019 (commissioned by the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children) showed that 86% of likely voters in Louisiana said that quality, affordable child care and education is an important issue in their communities and 6 in 10 support increasing state funding for quality early care and education that would benefit working families.
- Related questions were asked of gubernatorial candidates during their September 2019 debate, and all gubernatorial candidates said that they will prioritize early childhood education. Governor John Bel Edwards, who won the election, has consistently confirmed that early care and education will be a top priority in his second term.

Legislative Charge for Year 3

Legislative Charge of the Commission

In the 2020 Legislative Session, the Legislature reauthorized the Commission for a third year to pursue proposals to establish sustainable, dedicated funding for B-to-3 seats at the local, regional, and/or state level.

The key tasks of the Commission in Year 3:

- Gather and analyze data relative to early childhood access, quality, and affordability and use this data to drive recommendations.
- Determine the amount of funding needed to achieve affordable access to quality care and education for all children from birth through age four and recommend policies that prioritize the allocation of future funding.
- Gather and analyze data, laws, and policy in Louisiana and other states where children are in the care of family child care providers and consider and make recommendations relative to the incorporation of such providers into the early childhood care and education network.
- Establish and appoint members to a task force to identify and recommend alternative state and local funding strategies for quality early childhood care and education.

Legislative Charge for Year 3

Commission Task Force

Legislation requires the Commission to establish and appoint members to a task force, and to incorporate the task force's findings and recommendations into the report that the commission produces.

In Year 3, the Commission is charged with establishing and appointing members to a task force that will:

- Identify and recommend **alternative state and local funding strategies for quality early childhood care and education.**

The task force will examine approaches to strengthening and sustaining investment by studying:

- Approaches to funding, including utilization of the Louisiana Early Childhood Trust Fund and enabling local funding options to empower Ready Start Networks
- Strengthening the statewide early childhood system through Family Child Care and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Consideration of Task Force Membership

Consideration of Task Force Membership Positions

The Commission establishes and appoints members to a task force to identify and recommend alternative state and local funding strategies for quality early childhood care and education.

- I. The two co-chairs of the Commission, each of whom may designate someone to serve in their place.
- II. One representative of the business community.
- III. One person with significant experience in the generation and administration of local government revenue.
- IV. One representative of a statewide public policy organization involved in early childhood issues.
- V. One representative of a statewide foundation or nonprofit organization involved in early childhood issues.
- VI. One representative of a child advocacy or community organization.
- VII. One representative of a public postsecondary education institution in Louisiana representing the discipline of economics with experience in the study of local, state, and regional fiscal policy.
- VIII. One parent of a child in a publicly funded childcare center, Early Head Start Center, Head Start Center, or stand-alone prekindergarten program.

Consideration of Task Force Membership

Ideal Task Force Profile

The ideal task force member is available to participate in and contribute to meetings specifically addressing the need for sustainable funding of early care and education in Louisiana.

Strong nominees for task force membership demonstrate:

- Subject area expertise, according to their qualifying designation
- Interest in and engagement with early childhood education
- Diversity of backgrounds, experiences, etc.
- (Required) Availability to participate in two in-person meetings
 - November 12, 2020
 - December 14, 2020
- If able, availability to participate in full Commission meeting on January 21, 2021.

Based on expertise and/or engagement in early childhood, the Commission was given the opportunity to recommend Task Force members and/or speakers.

Individuals not formally appointed to the task force may still be able to participate in or present at task force meetings. This may include subject area experts, Commission members, or other relevant stakeholders.

Public Comment

Early Childhood Care and Education Commission

Upcoming Meetings

A current list of Commission members and meeting dates can be found [online](#).

Date	Space	Time	Who
Thursday, November 12, 2020	Rapides Room	12pm-2pm	Task Force
Monday, December 14, 2020	Rapides Room	12pm-2pm	Task Force
Thursday, January 21, 2021 *changed*	Louisiana Purchase	11am-2pm	Full Commission