



STATE BOARD of ELEMENTARY and SECONDARY EDUCATION

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A RESOLUTION

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Executive Director

John C. White
State Superintendent

To urge and request the Louisiana Legislature and the Governor to support increased funding for early childhood care and education as recommended by the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission established through Act 639 of the 2018 Regular Session.

Whereas, in 2012, the Louisiana Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law Act 3 to “create a comprehensive and integrated network through which to manage and oversee all programs funded through state or federal resources that provide early childhood care or educational services;” and

Whereas, in the Act, the Legislature declared its intent that “a comprehensive and integrated delivery system for early childhood care and education be created to ensure that every child enters kindergarten healthy and ready to learn;” and

Whereas, in 2014, the Louisiana Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law Act 868, which transferred oversight and administration of licensing and regulation of early learning centers from the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) as well as lead agency status for the federally established Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP); and

Whereas, no additional funding was provided to implement these critical reforms; and

Whereas, in response to these directives and using competitive and increased federal formula dollars, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the LDE, in consultation and collaboration with the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council and numerous stakeholders, have unified a once fragmented system of early childhood care and education into a statewide, unified network comprised of 65 local community networks that include every publicly-funded prekindergarten, child care, and Head Start program across Louisiana; and

Whereas, community networks now offer local coordinated enrollment systems that support families in identifying the best program for their children; and

Whereas, in 2017, Louisiana became the first state in the nation to release a Performance Profile for every publicly-funded early childhood site, giving Louisiana families valuable information about the quality of early childhood care and education options in their communities; and

Whereas, the LDE is supporting improved teacher-child interactions through increased access to high-quality curricula, training, coaching, and teacher preparation; and

Whereas, effective July 1, 2017, as a result of overwhelming demand from working parents and a shortage of funds, the LDE established a wait list for eligible families who applied to the CCAP, which now stands at approximately 3,300 eligible working families who remain unfunded; and

Whereas, the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission established through Act 639 of the 2018 Regular Session found that due to inadequate funding, the current system cannot meet present and anticipated future needs, particularly for children birth to three years old, and that this gap negatively impacts children's learning and their families' participation in Louisiana's workforce, as evidenced by:

1. There are 173,000 children in need, birth to three years old, living in Louisiana;
2. Two out of three children under the age of five have both parents or their single parent working;
3. Few quality early care and education options are available to Louisiana families, which has resulted in the state's economy losing \$1.1 billion due to absences related to child care breakdowns;
4. Significant research shows that for every \$1 invested in high quality early care, the state yields a \$7.30 return on investment; and

Whereas, the Commission recommended a bold and ambitious early childhood care and education agenda called "LA B to 3," calling for an investment of \$85.8 million to expand quality seats to 114,000 Louisiana children in need, prioritizing children birth through three; and

Whereas, the Commission's recommendations include financial support to ensure quality and evidence-based, voluntary family support services; and

Whereas, the Governor's proposed FY20 budget does not contain any increased funding for early childhood care and education, nor does it address the expiration of federal dollars next year; and

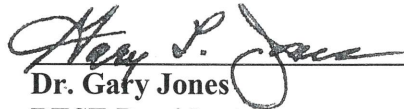
Whereas, as the Legislature considers much needed increases in public elementary and secondary school funding, teacher salaries, higher education funding, TOPS, and juvenile justice, it is imperative that strong consideration be given to supporting the entire continuum of education, including funding of child care centers that receive an average of less than \$6,000 per child and child care teachers who are paid an average of \$8.95 per hour.

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Legislature and Governor John Bel Edwards to support the funding and implementation of the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission's recommendations.

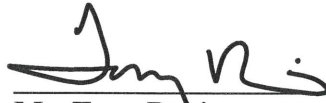
Be It Further Resolved that the state board urges and requests the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance Committee to convene a special hearing in which to hear the

Commission's findings and recommendations, receive public testimony, and consider funding needs and available financial resources.

Be It Further Resolved that the State Superintendent of Education transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Governor, the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, the House and Senate Committees on Education, the House Appropriations Committee, and the Senate Finance Committee, to accompany the proposed FY20 Minimum Foundation Program formula, for consideration of increased financial support of all of Louisiana's young learners.



Dr. Gary Jones
BESE President



Mr. Tony Davis
Chairman, BESE Administration and Finance Committee