

Louisiana has made strong initial investments in early childhood education and increased them during COVID-19 to stabilize our state’s workforce and economy. Continued investment will secure sustained returns for Louisiana’s families, workforce, and economy.

The Early Childhood Care and Education Commission recommends that the Louisiana State Legislature:

- 1. Invest \$98 million of additional state funds in high-quality early care and education now and annually over 10 years to ensure statewide access,** to ensure opportunity for an additional 7,800 children in 2024 and grow that number by 7,800 annually to reach more than 100,000 children by 2034.

**Why?** Every dollar invested in supporting the early years of critical brain development delivers a 13% return<sup>4</sup> in terms of educational attainment, which leads to a more skilled workforce, and improved health and social outcomes that contribute to greater self-reliance and stronger communities. It also delivers significant cost savings due to reduced demands on remedial education and social safety net programs, as well as reductions in crime.

**Louisiana’s return on early childhood investment can grow to more than \$1.8 billion by 2034.**

- 2. Enact legislation that guarantees the State’s commitment to the Early Childhood Education Fund (ECE Fund), to match and incentivize ongoing and increasing local investment.**

**Why?** The ECE Fund offers a dollar-for-dollar state match for non-federal and non-state funds secured by local entities. The current balance is \$32.8 million, and projections estimate that local funding will generate the need to match more than \$31 million from 14 parishes in 2024-2025. The state must continue to incentivize robust local investment by ensuring there are sufficient funds available to motivated communities.

- 3. Continue to review state and local revenue and resources to identify potential sustainable funding for early care and education.**

**Why?** The Legislature can carefully analyze the current tax revenue sources and collections practices to capture missing funding opportunities.

There are 78,000 more young children who are ready to learn and grow and still need access to high-quality early care and education. By investing in Louisiana’s children today, we secure a tremendous return on investment (ROI) for Louisiana’s families, workforce, and economy.



<sup>4</sup> Garcia, J.L., Heckman, J.J., Leaf, D. E., & Prados, M.J. (2017). Quantifying the Life-Cycle Benefits of a Prototypical Early Childhood Program. National Bureau of Economic Research. Available online at <https://heckmanequation.org/resource/faq-lifecycle-benefits-influential-early-childhood-program/>.