Early Childhood Care & Education Commission
October 5, 2021

Agenda

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Approval of the Minutes of March 2, 2021 Meeting

IV. Consideration of a Report on the Current Landscape of Early Childhood Care and Education in Louisiana

V. Consideration of the Purpose of the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission and a Recap from the 2020-2021 Early Childhood Care and Education Commission

VI. Consideration of Updates from the 2021 Legislative Session

VII. Consideration of Louisiana's Plan for Supporting Early Care and Education with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding

VIII. Consideration of the Goals and Objectives for the 2021-2022 Early Childhood Care and Education Commission

IX. Adjournment

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Approval of the Minutes of March 2, 2021 Meeting

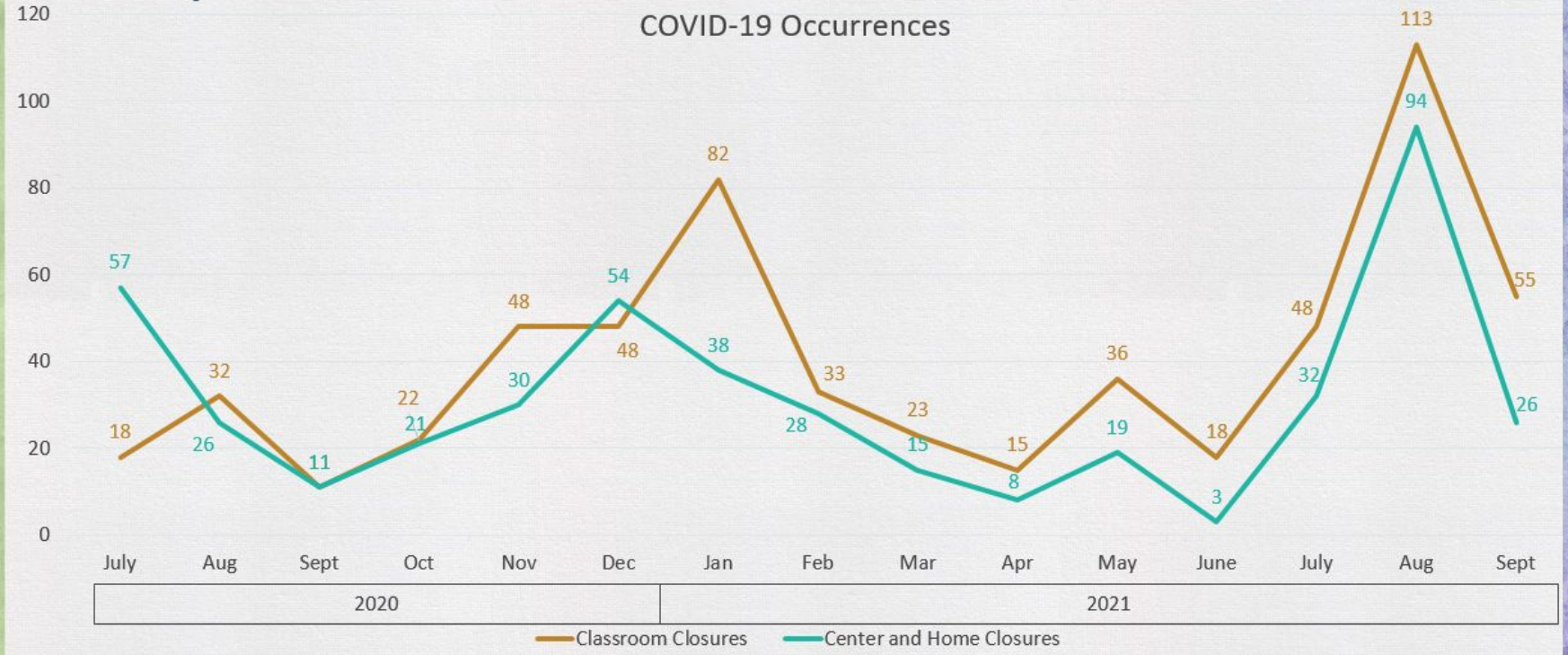
IV. Consideration of a Report on the Current Landscape of Early Childhood Care and Education in Louisiana

Current Landscape:
Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Child Care

The impacts of COVID-19 on the early childhood field, and the child care sector in particular, are significant.

- Surveys conducted by the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (LPIC) found that from March 2020 to January 2021, the child care sector experienced an estimated $245 million loss (nearly $200,000 per center).
- Without immediate stabilization that began in 2020 and will continue into 2022, child care providers would still be at risk of closing their doors permanently. This would be devastating to children, families, and our economy; and Louisiana cannot let this happen.

Current Landscape:
Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic--Provider Closures



Current Landscape:
Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

In response to the critical staffing shortages in acute care hospitals, LDOE in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Health, opened the CCAP Pandemic Application to support essential hospital personnel in acute care hospital settings.

Essential hospital personnel include the following:

- Nurses, LPNs, RNs, APRNs
- Nursing Assistants - Medical Assistants, Aides, Personal Care Attendants
- Therapists - OT, PT, Respiratory
- Mental Health, Social Worker, Counselors
- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Laboratory Staff
- Nutritional Staff
- Janitorial Services
- Other employees that provide direct care

Current Landscape:
Impact of Hurricane Ida on Child Care

Hurricane Ida has impacted early childhood providers and families in need of care in many parishes in Louisiana.

Current Child Care Provider Closures and Suspensions*

11 percent of child care providers (centers and registered homes) in parishes included in the Major Disaster Declaration remain non-operational.

- Licensed Centers: 12 percent (104 of 864) of centers are closed
  - 51 long-term closures (more than 30 days) that will likely become suspended
  - 52 suspended licenses (as a result of significant damages sustained)
  - 1 closure due to Hurricane Ida and COVID-19
- Family Child Care and In-Home Providers: 7 percent (9 of 133) are closed
  - 2 long-term closures
  - 7 suspended registrations

**Data as of September 30, 2021*

Current Landscape:
Impact of Hurricane Ida on Child Care

Jones Kingdom Kids - Jefferson Parish
Type III
License Capacity - 45

Color My World - Lafourche Parish
Type II
License Capacity - 60

Current Landscape:
Impact of Hurricane Ida on Child Care

Little Harvard
St. John Parish
Type III
License Capacity - 83

Mimi's Lil Schoolhouse - St. Charles Parish
Type III
License Capacity - 87

Current Landscape:
Impact of Hurricane Ida on Child Care

Family Child Care
(Home) Provider
Tangipahoa Parish
Capacity - 6 children

Current Landscape:
Response to Hurricane Ida

The Department has taken action to support the recovery of impacted providers, families, and children, both prior to and since landfall of Hurricane Ida.

- Provided information to 211 on Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for families experiencing homelessness due to Hurricane Ida landfall
- Providing CCAP application and mental health support information
- Provided respite child care at large shelters in central and north Louisiana
- Working in conjunction with DCFS on Social Service Block Grant to assist child care in repairing and rebuilding and in replacing lost supplies (e.g., furniture such as cribs, learning materials)

Current Landscape:
Support for Providers Impacted by the Pandemic and Hurricanes

In response to the urgent need to stabilize the child care sector, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided grants to states, to support states in working to stabilize the child care sector.

This ARPA funding gives states an opportunity to address the financial burdens faced by child care providers during and after the COVID-19 public health emergency and the instability of the child care market as a whole.

States must spend most stabilization funds as subgrants to qualified child care providers to support the stability of the child care sector during and after the COVID-19 public health emergency. Providers can spend these funds on a variety of key operating expenses, including wages and benefits, rent and utilities, cleaning and sanitization supplies and services, and many other goods and services necessary to maintain or resume child care services.

Providers in hurricane-impacted communities now have even greater need for these stabilization funds.

Current Landscape:
Key Takeaways

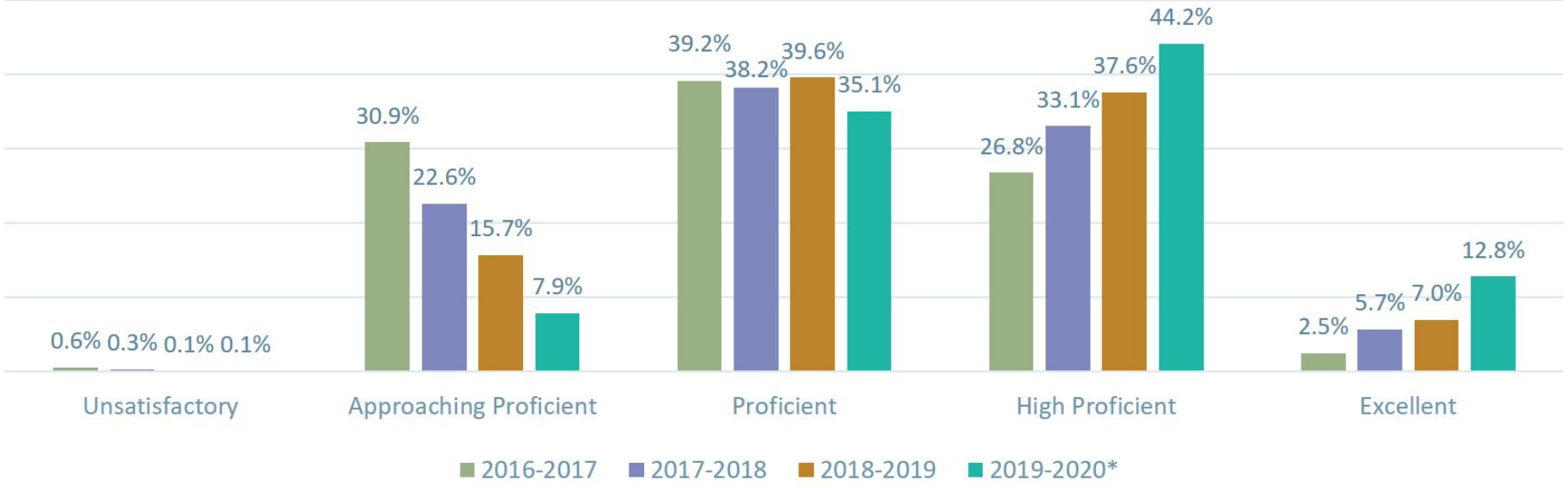
Even prior to COVID-19 and Hurricanes Ida there was a staggering unmet need for early care and education for children younger than four in Louisiana.

The COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricanes Ida 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.

- The Department recognizes that, unlike K-12 schools, child care centers are small businesses that currently operate on extremely narrow profit/loss margins in the best of circumstances.
- Without greater financial support, many Louisiana child care providers will continue to face possible closure, workforce shortages, quality challenges related to workforce challenges and will continue to struggle to meet the needs of families and our economy.

Current Landscape
Performance Ratings Over Time

Since the 2016-2017 school year, there has been a decrease in the sites rated "Unsatisfactory" or "Approaching Proficient" and an increase in the sites rated "High Proficient" or "Excellent" across Louisiana.

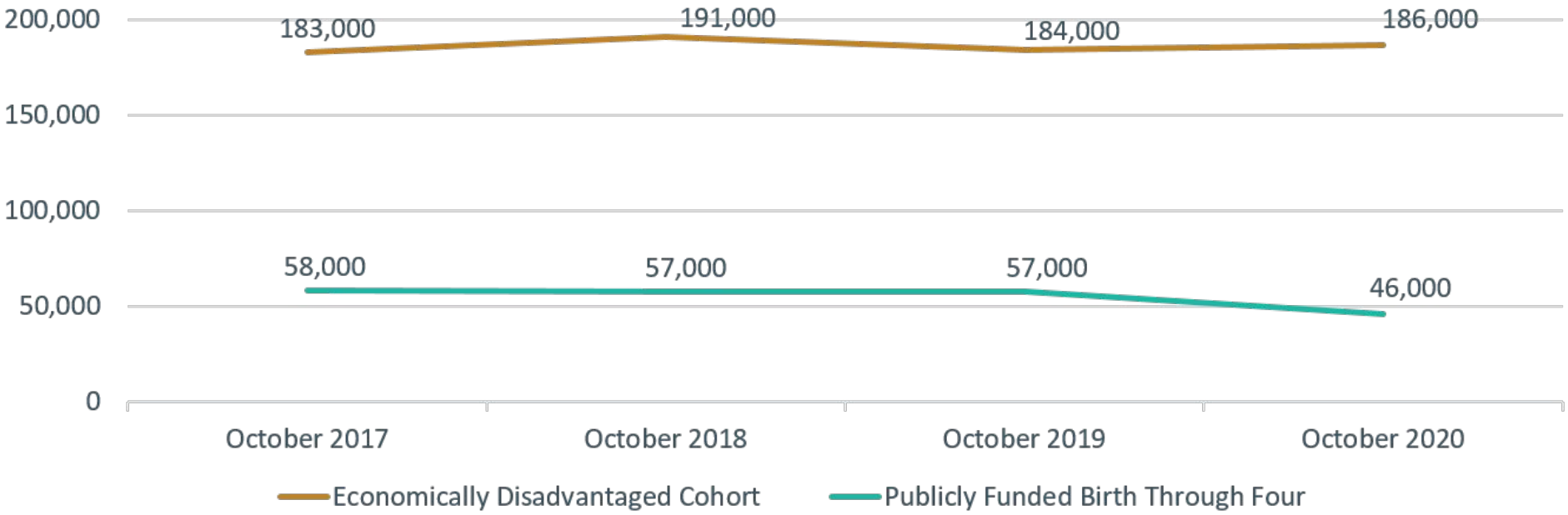


Believes

* 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

Trends in Enrollment Over Time

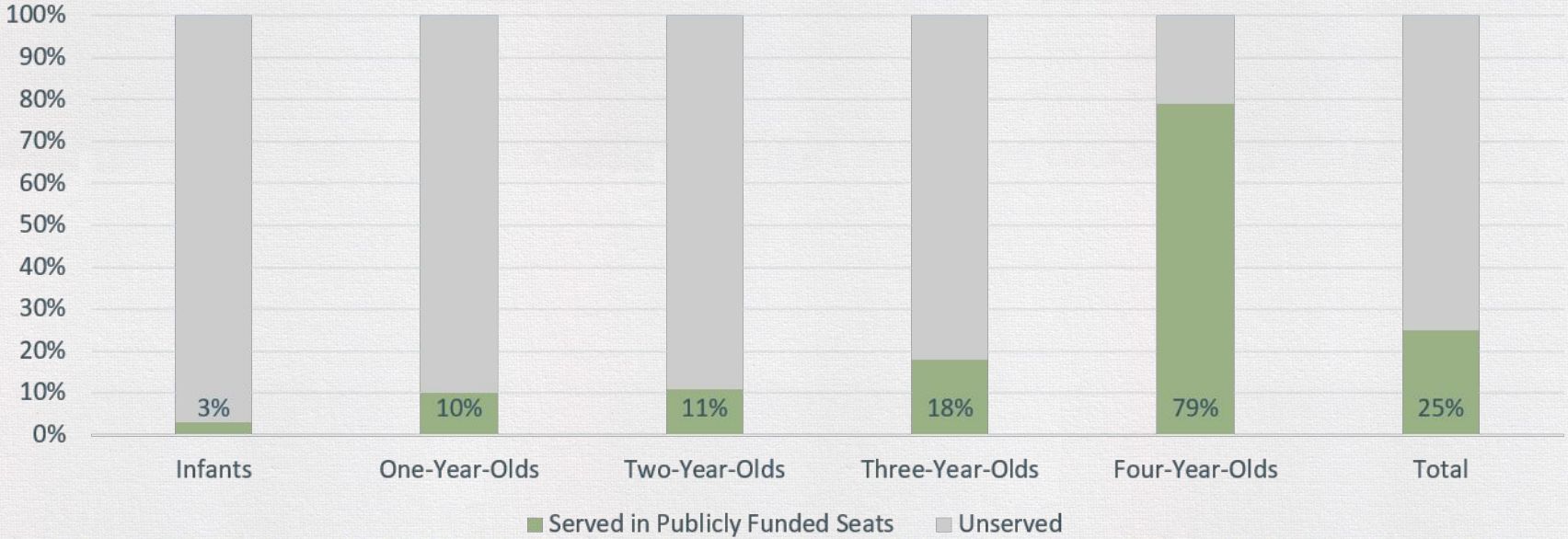


Estimates round to the nearest thousand. Publicly funded B-5 data reflects estimated child count from October 1 of each year.

Current Landscape

Access to Early Childhood Education by Age Group

In Louisiana gaps in access to early childhood education remained largest for children ages birth through three years old during the 2020-2021 school year.



V. Consideration of the Purpose of the ECCE Commission and a Recap from the 2020-2021 ECCE Commission

Purpose of the ECCE Commission
Overview

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 to make an increased investment 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 loses an estimated $1.1 billion annually due to absences related to child care issues.
- **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 at least a $7.30 return on investment.

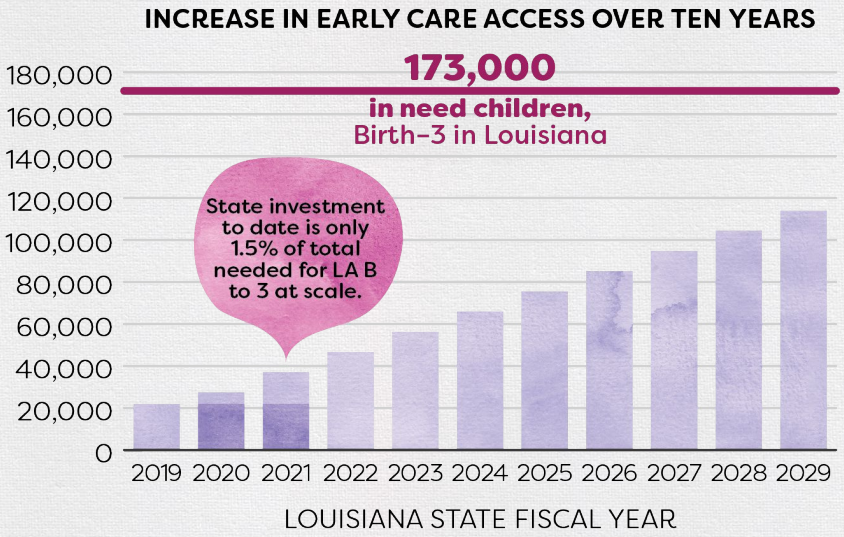
Purpose of the ECCE Commission
Overview

While the Louisiana Legislature has invested some 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 and 2022 State Fiscal Years, 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.



Purpose of the ECCE Commission
Recap of Year 3

Prior to the beginning of the Legislative Session, the ECCE Commission released a report with recommendations for the Louisiana Legislature.

- **RECOMMENDATION 1:** Make a bold investment of $85.8 million in early care and education this year, and an increase of nearly that amount annually over the next decade to fully fund LA B to 3.
- **RECOMMENDATION 2:** As part of the total investment, ensure that at least $4 million is appropriated to the Early Childhood Education Fund prior to the 2021-2022 school year to match current local investment, and identify a robust source of ongoing funding for the Fund as future local investment grows.
- **RECOMMENDATION 3**: Facilitate local investment in early childhood by removing barriers to local revenue generation.

Purpose of the ECCE Commission
Revenue Generation Options

The Commission report included specific recommendations on the revenue generation options that the Legislature could consider.

- Commit all revenue raised from sports betting, both in-person and online, to the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.
- Prioritize early care and education for funding opportunities created during ongoing tax reform efforts.
- Prioritize early care and education for funding generated by future annual economic growth.
- Take advantage of settlements (e.g., opioid, tobacco), as they occur, to fund early care and education.
- Consider promising revenue-generation strategies used successfully by other states.

VI. Consideration of Updates from the 2021 Legislative Session

2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap: Wins for Early Care and Education

25% of sports betting revenues will go to the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.

The Legislature passed SB 142, which commits 25% of sports betting revenues up to $20 million to the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund (Fund). The Fund offers local entities a dollar-for-dollar state match on local investments in early care and education. Sports betting will provide significant recurring revenue to the Fund and incentivize local governments across Louisiana to make investments in early care and education that are eligible for a 100% match with state dollars. Special thanks to Senator Rick Ward who authored the bill.

Source: LPIC, *2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap*

2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap: Wins for Early Care and Education

50% of NBA Pelicans specialty license plate revenues will go to the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund.

The Legislature also passed HB 601, which commits 50% of revenue generated from the Pelicans specialty license plate to the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund. Special thanks to Representative Jonathan Goudeau who authored the bill.

Source: LPIC, *2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap*

2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap: Wins for Early Care and Education

Diapers and menstrual hygiene products will no longer be taxed in the state of Louisiana.

The Legislature passed HB 7, which removes the sales tax on diapers for children and adults and menstrual hygiene products and makes these essential items more affordable for everyone in our state, including parents, families, and child care providers. Special thanks to Representative Aimee Adatto Freeman who authored the bill.

Source: LPIC, *2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap*

2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap: Wins for Early Care and Education

A new post-secondary community college grant program for adults will explore child care benefits for award recipients.

The Legislature passed SB 148, which creates the M.J. Foster Promise Program that offers grants to adults seeking education and training in high-demand careers through the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. The program will explore options to provide potential benefits such as child care supplements to support award recipients who have young children. Special thanks to Senator Page Cortez who authored the bill.

Source: LPIC, *2021 Louisiana Legislative Session Recap*

VII. Consideration of Louisiana's Plan for Supporting Early Care and Education with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding

2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
Stakeholder Engagement

The Department conducted listening sessions and a survey with stakeholders from April to June and used feedback in the development of Louisiana's ARPA plan.

Stakeholders participating in these engagement opportunities included:

- Child care providers
- Lead agencies
- Families
- Child Care Resource & Referral agencies
- The Mental Health Consultation program
- Early Childhood Care and Education Commission and Advisory Council members
- Other early childhood advocates and policymakers, including DCFS and LDH

Common themes from the feedback received include the need for additional workforce incentives for recruitment and retention, incentives for expanding infant and toddler care, affordable rates for families, and more.

Overview of Louisiana's Plan to Support Child Care

Based on feedback from the statewide survey and listening sessions with stakeholders, the Department plans to focus on the following priorities to support more families to access high-quality child care for their children.

- **Priority 1:** Louisiana develops and implements a long-term strategy to **build a better child care system** that meets the needs of all families and supports the stabilization of the child care sector.
- **Priority 2:** Louisiana **empowers communities to expand supply and access** to high-quality early childhood options for families and to identify opportunities to sustain that expansion long-term.
- **Priority 3:** Louisiana ensures that **teachers are prepared and supported** to lead classrooms and provide **high-quality interactions** that meet the developmental needs of children every day.
- **Priority 4:** Louisiana establishes a **statewide family engagement framework and empowers families** to access tools and resources to support their children's development.

Priority 1: Build a Better Child Care System
Proposed Activities

Louisiana develops and implements a long-term strategy to build a better child care system that meets the needs of all families and supports the stabilization of the child care sector.

1. **Stabilize Child Care**: Offer ARPA Stabilization Grants to child care providers
2. **Strengthen Child Care Financing**: Explore key revisions to the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to support the long-term stability of the child care sector and set payment rates and structures to better cover the actual cost of operating a quality child care program
3. **Recruit and Retain a Qualified Child Care Workforce**: Offer child care providers grant funding to support the early childhood workforce and explore ways of supporting the field to increase child care teacher compensation and benefits
4. **Strengthen Child Care Businesses:** Grow and strengthen business practices, including by launching an RFP for statewide child care business consultation, trainings, and loans
5. **Support Family Child Care:** Expand strategies to support the expansion of registered and certified Family Child Care and provide additional quality supports via optional Academic Approval for those providers
6. **Modernize Data Systems**: Replace outdated systems and provide greater data integration

Priority 2: Expand Supply and Access
Proposed Activities

Louisiana empowers communities to expand supply and equitable access to high-quality early childhood options for families and to sustain that expansion long-term.

1. **Launch LA B to 3:** Fund Ready Start Network grant requests to expand supply and access to high-quality child care for roughly 3,000 children birth to age three and sustain until end of grant period and ensure local networks plan for sustainability
2. **Match Local Funding for B-3 Seats:** Incentivize local investment in projects that expand supply and access to high-quality child care for B-3 seats by offering a 1:1 match for all local dollars raised until there is sufficient funding in the ECE Fund or the end of the grant period
3. **Fund Community-Level Child Care Supply Building Planning and Activities:** Fund communities to develop and implement plans to expand child care supply and access locally
4. **Ready Start Transform:** Provide exemplar Ready Start Networks the opportunity to accelerate their work and develop innovative plans to achieve equitable access to high-quality early care and education at the community-level
5. **Codify Ready Start Networks:** Define the roles, responsibilities, and guardrails for Ready Start Networks in policy

Priority 3: Support Classroom Quality
Proposed Activities

Louisiana empowers communities to expand equitable access to high-quality early childhood options for families and to sustain that expansion long-term.

1. **Support the Development of a Statewide Child Care Coaching Model:** Ensure that every child care teacher receiving coaching in Louisiana receives consistent support for improvement that reflects best practice in both early instruction and child care coaching
2. **Provide High-Quality Instructional Tools:** Ensure all early childhood classrooms are utilizing high-quality curriculum and receive professional development to support effective implementation of instructional tools
3. **Support Social-Emotional Learning:** Support the social and emotional wellness of children and teachers with additional mental health resources and trauma-informed supports
4. **Expand Developmental Screening:** Prepare communities and teachers to identify children in need of intervention through a universal developmental screening process and provide the supports needed to prepare children for school success
5. **Strengthen Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) Program Quality:** Develop a system for measuring and reporting the quality of BESE-approved BESE programs and align supports to promote quality improvement

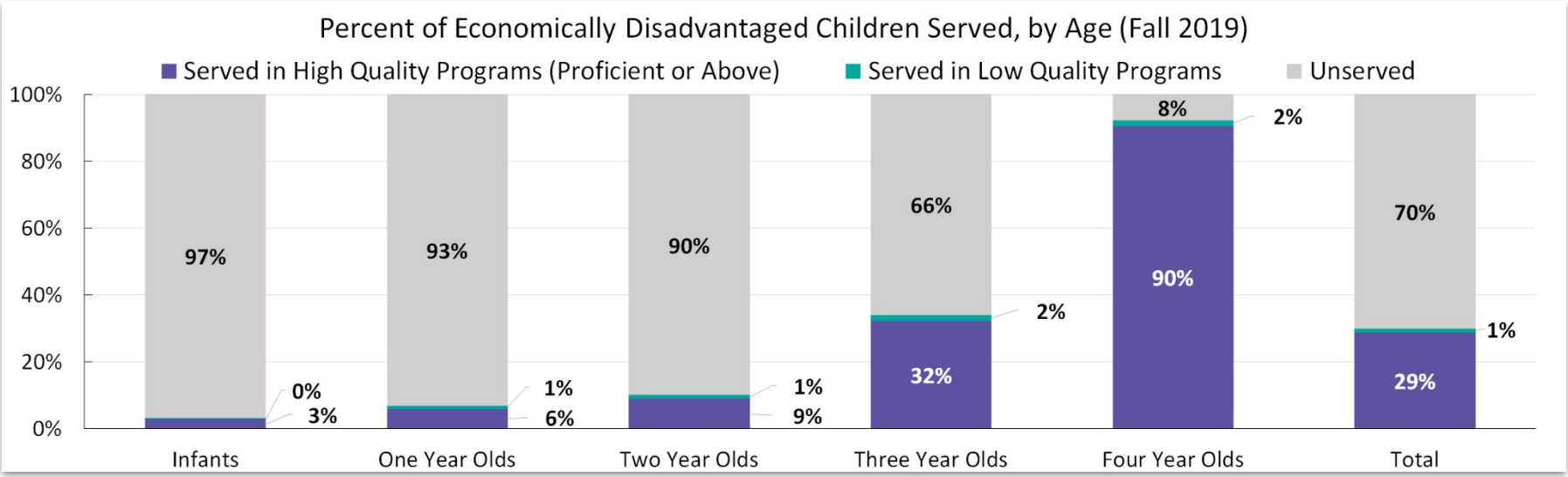
Priority 4: Bolster Family Engagement
Proposed Activities

Louisiana establishes a statewide family engagement framework and empowers families to access tools and resources to support their children's development.

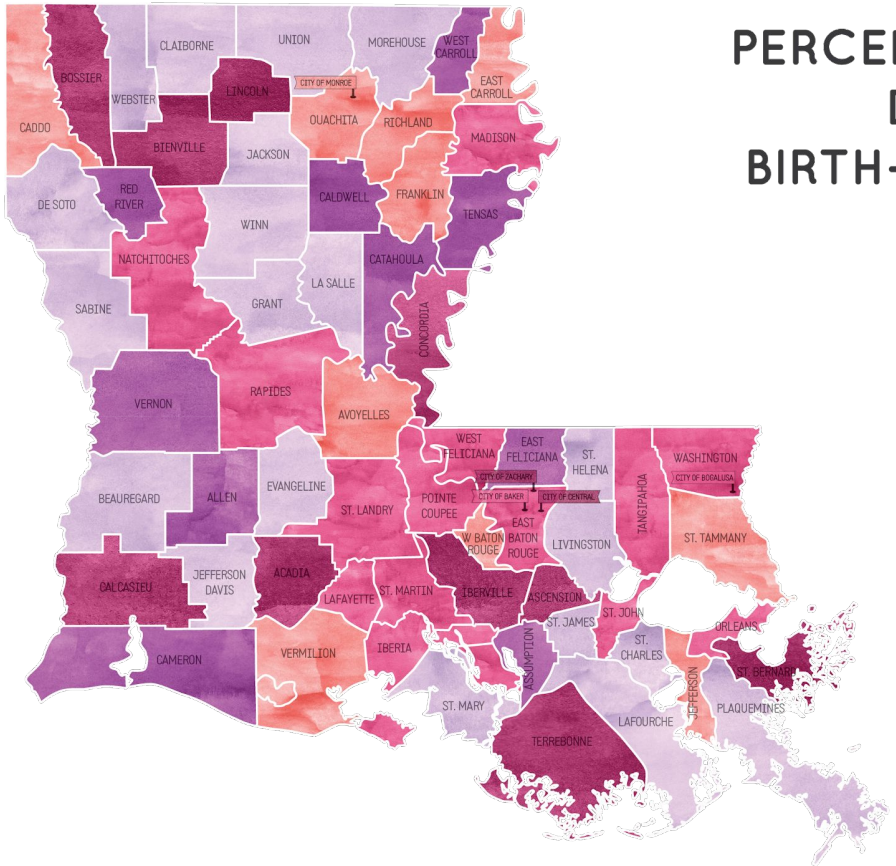
1. **Develop the Statewide Family Engagement Framework:** Plan strategies, in conjunction with families and the organizations who support them most closely in communities, to engage and communicate more effectively with families
2. **Launch Family Engagement Website:** Connect families to critical resources, from a centralized and family-friendly location, to support families in meeting the developmental needs of their children
3. **Support Communities to Pilot Family Engagement Strategies:** Provide community networks with opportunities to offer at-home learning and support activities that meet the individualized needs of families
4. **Coordinate Child Developmental Support Services for Families Locally:** Link families directly with support in their community for assessing their children's development and receiving intervention services that will better prepare children for future success

Priority 2: Expand Supply and Access
Overview

Even prior to COVID-19, fewer than 7% of economically disadvantaged children birth to two years old, and less than 33% of three year olds, had access to high-quality child care in Louisiana.

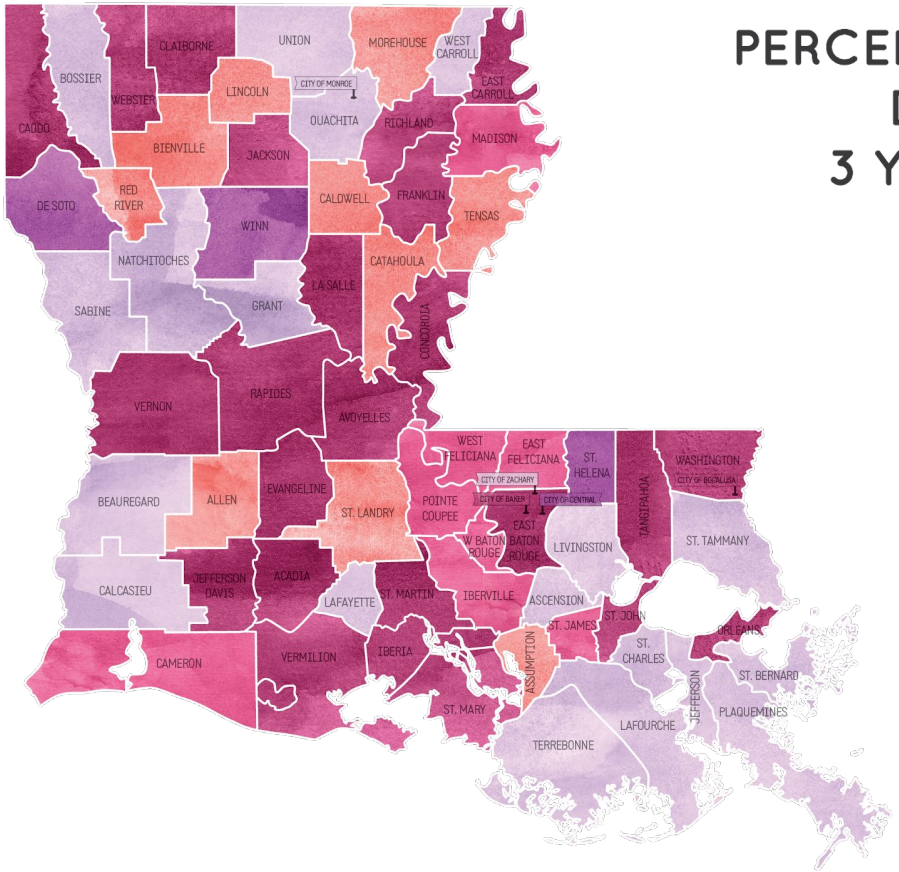


PERCENT OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED BIRTH-2 YEAR OLDS SERVED



- LESS THAN 1%
- 1-2%
- 3-5%
- 6-7%
- 8% OR MORE

PERCENT OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED 3 YEAR OLDS SERVED



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

Priority 2: Expand Supply and Access
Proposed Activities

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5. **Codify Ready Start Networks:** Define the roles, responsibilities, and guardrails for Ready Start Networks in policy

Match Local Funding for B-3 Seats
Overview and Proposed Activities

Ready Start Network	Local Funds Raised	ECE Match Funds	Total for ECE
Orleans	$3,250,000	$3,250,000	$6,500,000
Caddo	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$2,000,000
Jefferson	$200,000	$200,000	$400,000

Other networks, including these, anticipate securing additional local funds in the coming months.

Use of state funding awarded from the ECE Fund:

- At least 70% of any funding awarded to the applicant will be used to fund B-3 children in Type III early learning centers rated "Proficient"
- Funding is to support children meeting Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) eligibility criteria, otherwise defined as *economically disadvantaged*
- Remaining funds can be used to administer the program, improve quality offered (e.g., professional development, curriculum, enrollment initiatives, etc.), and cover other costs

Fund Community Supply Building and Access Expansion

Overview and Proposed Activities

Community networks will pursue innovative strategies to expand child care supply and access for high-quality early childhood care and education this year.

The Department released a unique grant opportunity for early childhood community networks that allow these networks to:

- Develop a plan to address gaps in access to child care through supply building, including
  - Establishing partnerships with existing child care providers to expand supply and access
  - Expanding infant and toddler child care classrooms in existing facilities
  - Leveraging community-based facilities to expand child care options
  - Building child care supply in areas with limited to no options for high-quality early childhood care and education
- Access national TA that will help communities complete a landscape and gap analysis and develop a strong implementation plan

ARPA funding will allow the Department to award funding to subsequent cohorts of communities.

Launch Ready Start Transform
Vision

The aim of Ready Start Transform is for communities to create a transformative vision and aligned strategy for achieving equitable supply and access to high-quality early care and education.

As part of this opportunity Ready Start Networks will be required to:

- assemble a team of high-level partners, community leaders, and stakeholders who will work with the network to develop and implement this innovative vision
- address multiple variables affecting early childhood quality, supply, and access including, but not limited to:
  - workforce development, recruitment, and retention
  - quality improvement
  - supports for all children and their families
  - funding and sustainability at the local level
- secure financial commitment through matching funds

VIII. Consideration of the Goals and Objectives for the 2021-2022 ECCE Commission

Goals for 2021-2022
Early Childhood Care and Education Commission

The Early Childhood Care and Education Commission will continue to explore sustained funding for early childhood.

- Engage the taskforce in a deep dive on local funding, identifying barriers, if any, and opportunities to increase local revenue generation.
- Discuss the need to sustain emergency funding for continued expanding access and economic recovery and potential opportunities to do so with both additional state and federal funding.
- Provide a report of its findings and recommendations no less than fourteen days (February 28, 2022) prior to the first day of the regular session (March 14, 2022).

Calendar of Meetings

Date	Time	Attendees	Venue
October 5	12 - 2 p.m.	Full Commission	Zoom
October 19	12:30 - 2:30 p.m.	Task Force	Zoom
November 16	12 - 2 p.m.	Task Force	Zoom
December 8	12 - 2 p.m.	Task Force	Zoom
December 17	10 a. m. - 12 p.m.	Full Commission	in-person
January 13	10 a. m. - 12 p.m.	Task Force	in-person
February 17	10 a. m. - 12 p.m.	Full Commission	in-person

IX. Adjournment