



*Early Childhood*  
IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS

---

# Early Childhood Care and Education Commission: Review of Workgroup Recommendations

January 30, 2020

---

# Agenda

- I. Welcome
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of Minutes
- IV. Consideration of Commission Recommendations and Draft Report
- V. Public Comment
- VI. Adjournment

# The Legislative Charge of the Commission

- Gather and analyze data and develop a plan focused on family access, affordability, and quality.
- Consider research, local coordination currently established in Louisiana, and related work done in other states to determine best practices that inform and foster continued development of local governing entities.
- Determine a sustainable infrastructure to ensure quality programs, including workforce and professional development, monitoring and assessment, coordinated enrollment, and data-informed decision making.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination.
- Define a timeframe for achieving the vision and determine benchmarks for the intervening years.
- 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.

# Review of Past Commission Discussions

*At the August 20 meeting, the Commission received updates on the legislative session and efforts to strengthen efficiencies in the early learning marketplace.*

- In the 2019 legislative session, a portion of the Commission's recommendation to increase access to quality child care was funded.
- This resulted in the continuation of a program for four year olds, and additional seats for 1,400 children birth to three. More funding is needed to meet the service goals of the Commission.
- The Commission learned about the Department's shared services work to increase efficiencies and stretch funding in early learning centers including cost saving opportunities, substitute teaching pools, and business management supports.

# Review of Past Commission Discussions

*At the September 19 meeting, the Commission heard from a panel of Ready Start Network community leaders about the local governance model.*

- The state will give communities authority, responsibility, and resources in the form of Ready Start Network (RSN) pilots, investing in increased local control to drive faster rates of improvement and expand access.
- Thirteen RSNs in the pilot representing many of the state's children birth through four are creating blueprints to serve more families and leverage funding.
- Twenty-seven communities are “getting ready,” creating plans for future action with community leaders.
- This model allows local communities to plan for their unique needs.

# Review of Past Commission Discussions

*At the November 18 meeting, the Commission learned about local funding strategies from national expert Elizabeth Gaines, as well as supports for all families.*

- States like Colorado and Florida and local communities across the country are implementing legislation that builds investment in early childhood education in local communities.
- Some of this legislation extends the abilities of local communities to develop structures to dedicate funds to early childhood.
- All families with young children need guidance to ensure that children receive the benefits of this critical time of development. Louisiana has a number of programs for families who do not participate in early care, like home visiting programs. Efforts to build awareness of these opportunities can increase participation.

# Leveraging Funding

*In 2019, Louisiana leveraged federal and local funds to build access to quality care.*

Two notable examples:

- Federal funds: Louisiana was one of only 20 states awarded the PDG Renewal Grant, which awarded Louisiana more than \$11 million each year for 3 years to begin chipping away at our access issues.
- Local funds: The New Orleans City Council has approved over \$2 million in investment over the past two years for an infant-toddler city seats program, and recently committed an additional \$3 million for the coming year.



---

# Consideration of Commission Recommendations and Draft Report

# Proposed Outline for Report Addendum

## **A. Early Childhood Care and Education Must Be a Louisiana Priority**

- The need is significant
- The Commission stands by its initial recommendations
- There is a significant benefit to our children
- There is a significant benefit to our economy

## **B. Early Progress**

- Preliminary investment of \$20 million
- Local leadership in Ready Start Networks
- Public and political will are in support of early childhood funding

## **C. Building Efficiencies and Leveraging Support Has Begun**

- Ready Start Networks build engagement and leverage dollars (Orleans, Rapides, and Washington examples)

## **D. Supports for all Families**

## **E. Shared Services**

## **F. Generating Support**

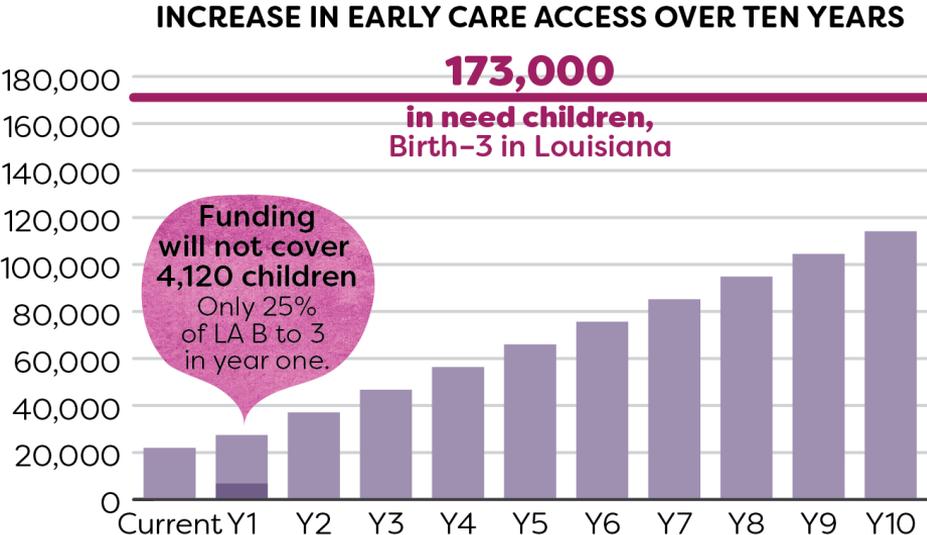
# LA B to 3: Early Childhood Care and Education Must Be a Louisiana Priority

The Commission reiterates its recommendation of an investment of \$85.8 million to begin LA B to 3, and an increase of nearly that amount annually over the next decade. State investment should launch this effort, and jumpstart local and philanthropic funding.

**Funds will:**

Expand quality seats to serve 114,000 Louisiana children in need, prioritizing children birth through three, an increase from only 22,000 children in that age range served today, and

Strengthen resources for all families, regardless of need, that support nurturing relationships with young children.



# LA B to 3: Early Progress

## Early Progress

Since the Commission's initial report, several promising steps have been made.

- **Preliminary investment.** The report prompted conversations that led to almost ~\$20 million in new state funding from the Louisiana legislature.
- **Local leadership.** Thirteen local communities ([Ready Start Networks](#)) in Louisiana are now leveraging federal funds to develop local governance while sustaining and improving early learning quality and access. In addition, twenty seven communities, known as Get Ready networks, have applied to learn more about how they might approach local planning and governance. Part of this work has included exploring options of unique ways that communities might approach local early childhood funding.
- **Public and political will.** 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 is an important issue in their communities and 6 in 10 support increasing state funding for quality child care that would benefit working class 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. Newly re-elected governor, John Bel Edwards, has said consistently that early care and education will be the top priority in his next term.

# Legislative Recommendation Overview

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Output by Year 10</b>	<b>Initial Year Funding</b>	<b>Total Funding in Year Ten</b>
Child Care Access	Expand access from 22,000 to 114,000 additional children, ages birth to three.	\$ 78.1 M	\$ 771 M
Quality Child Care	Scale quality supports for additional seats through measurement, professional development and coordination	\$ 6.7 M	\$ 67 M
Family Resources	Increase voluntary, evidence-based resources and supports for parents.	\$ 1 M	\$ 1 M
<b>Total Allocation</b>		<b>\$ 85.8 M</b>	<b>\$ 839 M</b>

# Building Efficiencies and Leveraging Support

**Ready Start Networks (RSNs).** RSNs are working to improve access to quality early learning and family supports by combining federal, state and local dollars. These local coalitions of community leaders include businesspeople, policy makers, law enforcement, faith leaders, nonprofit executives, and others – all committed to increasing local dollars to expand early learning. Every community in Louisiana is different, and RSNs are positioned to understand their communities’ needs for early learning and leverage local expertise to address them by:

- a. **Securing Local Funding.** Ready Start Orleans continually engages policymakers and community members from various sectors in conversations about the importance of early learning and the great need for publicly funded quality seats for infants and toddlers in that community. As a result, the City Council has approved over \$2 million in investment over the past two years for an infant-toddler city seats program, and recently committed an additional \$3 million for the coming year.
- a. **Improving Quality and Raising Community Awareness.** Ready Start Rapides continues to support quality improvement in their child care centers and is bringing information about these centers and other family supports to the public through a new website that is a hub for all early childhood resources in the parish.
- a. **Partnering to Expand Access.** Ready Start Washington recognized a need for more child care options for three-year-olds and an opportunity to strengthen partnerships. As a result, Regina Coeli Head Start and Washington Parish Schools used available data and resources to open a classroom for three-year-olds on an elementary school campus in an underserved area of the parish.

# Supports for all Families

**Several kinds of family supports exist in Louisiana** – including home visiting, early intervention support, and parent leadership programs – but many families are unaware of them.

**Included in the annual funds is a modest investment of \$1 million from the state, so Louisiana can expand existing family supports and create new ones**, including a comprehensive website that would provide all families with greater awareness of and access to supportive resources in their area or from the state. Regionally based coaching, classes, or text-based outreach to families on child development or interactions could guide a healthy start in life.

Additionally, the Child Care Assistance Program cannot serve all the children identified by the Commission as in need of support. To support all families who need it, the commission recommends adjusting the sliding fee scale to reach all children identified as in need in this report

# LA B to 3: Shared Services

**The state is building stronger infrastructure to support child care centers' efficiencies through innovative business partnerships.**

The state is working with centers in communities across Louisiana to identify and implement ways to work more efficiently, saving time and money so that every dollar invested in early care and education goes as far as possible.

Pilot projects range from shared purchasing for supplies and furnishings, to increased automation for early learning center operations and fee collections, to building a stronger network of substitute teachers. **By strengthening birth to three centers, more children can be served in quality settings.**

# LA B to 3: Generating Support

Part of making quality early care and education accessible to all families includes building public awareness and public will to support it.

Stakeholders at the state and local level are working to consistently build awareness and support among their connections and networks, generating media awareness and educating candidates for office about the importance of early learning and the many returns on investment.

Louisianians must continue to build on this work, helping more people understand the critical importance of early care and education for the state's future.

*LPIC has developed an LA B to 3 toolkit to help guide Commission members' engagement with the public to build support for its recommendations.*

# Public Comment

# Adjournment