Governor Pence and the Indiana General Assembly:

Since its inception in late 2013, Indiana’s Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) has had as its mission to help promote accessibility, affordability, and high quality in early childhood experiences. The fact that 2/3 of families in the Hoosier State require care for their children ages 0-5, brings an added urgency to this mission - an urgency underscored by the fact that only 1 out of 10 of these children are currently in a known high quality setting.

These and other key benchmarks are found in the pages that follow. By dimensionalizing the need, ELAC hopes to provide sound, fact-based data for use in legislation and decision-making in this important arena. But ELAC’s role encompasses more than just reporting numbers. The 150+ volunteers that comprise the 7 ELAC workgroups use their significant expertise to research and develop best-practice based tools and recommendations to advance our shared mission. Just in the past 12 months, this has included toolkits that equip providers to engage more effectively with families, definitions that align the work, and documents that frame the funding sources available. We’re also proud to have been part of Indiana University’s evaluation of our first cohort of 4-year old participants in the pilot pre-K Early Education Matching Grant program. These results show conclusively the impact of high-quality pre-K in enabling at-risk children of poverty to make up lost ground on the way to kindergarten readiness. You’ll find all of this and much more on our new dedicated website, www.ELACIndiana.org.

Your collective investments in high-quality pre-K ARE paying off. By continuing to advance this work, you are paving the way for future generations to thrive educationally and play significant workforce leadership roles in the Hoosier state. The volunteers of ELAC remain committed to assist and equip all of Indiana’s stakeholders in this critical endeavor.

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Bain
Chairman, ELAC
Executive Director/CEO, Welborn Baptist Foundation
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Executive Summary ....................................................... 4

II. Needs Assessment .......................................................... 6

   A. Hoosier Children and Families ........................................... 7
   
   B. Accessibility ............................................................... 8
   
   C. Affordability .............................................................. 10
   
   D. High Quality .............................................................. 12
   
   E. Kindergarten Readiness ................................................... 15

III. Recommendations ........................................................ 18

IV. Endnotes ........................................................................ 19
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Annually, Indiana’s Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) conducts a comprehensive needs assessment on critical early learning indicators to identify recommendations for the Governor’s Office and the Indiana General Assembly. This report is a culmination of the needs assessment completed in 2015.

ELAC is working to ensure that children ages birth to 8 years and their families have access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education programs that keep children healthy, safe and learning.

Based on the information that ELAC has collected this past year and included throughout this report, Indiana is making progress in some areas and still has work to do in others.

PROGRESS

- More children are enrolled in high quality programs than ever before.
- In the past five years, Indiana has nearly doubled the number of high quality programs available for children and families.
- Through the additional pathway for public preschools, 28 public schools are now participating in Paths to QUALITY.
- Indiana has made available a high quality early learning experience for nearly 2,200 low-income three and four-year old children through the implementation of state and local-funded pilot preschool programs.

AREAS TO IMPROVE

- While Indiana has expanded access to high quality programs, there is still a significant gap in the availability to match the need. For all children likely in need of care, high quality seats are only available for 13 percent of them.
- In Indiana, we do not consistently assess the readiness of children entering kindergarten. Therefore, we do not know how ready our children are for school.
- An increasing number of children are being retained in kindergarten costing the state over $22 million this past school year.
- Indiana has a projected shortfall for early childhood education teachers based on current demand.
- Indiana is lacking the critical infrastructure needed to ensure that Hoosier children ages birth to 8 years and their families have access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education programs.

APPOINTED COMMITTEE MEMBERS

KEVIN BAIN, Chairman, Welborn Baptist Foundation, Inc.
ROBIN ATKINS, Indiana Head Start State Collaboration Office
MELANIE BRIZZI, FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning
CINDY FREY, Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce
CHARLIE GEIER, Indiana Department of Education
CONNIE SHERMAN, St. Mary’s Child Center
CHRISTOPHER STOKES, Eli Lilly

1 High quality is defined as participation in Paths to QUALITY Level 3 or Level 4.
2 The pilot preschool programs include On My Way Pre-K, Early Education Matching Grant and Indy Preschool Scholarship Program.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACTION TAKEN

In response to the need, ELAC accomplished the following items in the past year:

- Developed a five-year strategic plan.
- Created a family engagement toolkit.
- Issued a report on funding that supports early childhood programs and services in Indiana.
- Conducted a comprehensive needs assessment of the early childhood education workforce and higher education institutions.
- Developed an overview of kindergarten readiness assessment definitions.
- Surveyed the current kindergarten readiness assessment practices of Indiana school corporations.
- Developed a white paper on data sharing and privacy considerations.
- Developed a white paper on the importance of health in young children.
- Defined child health for young children.
- Launched a new website: www.ELACIndiana.org. The above resources are available on this website.

STRATEGIES

Over the next five years, ELAC will be focused on the following strategies to address the need and ensure that critical early childhood local and statewide infrastructure will be in place and delivering increased accessibility, affordability and high-quality.

1. Establish baselines and future needs.
2. Provide system development tools.
3. Facilitate community partnerships.
4. Demonstrate impact.
5. Secure resources.
2016 ELAC Dashboard

**Hoosier Children and Families**

- **2014:** 505,090
- **2011:** 517,115

**Young Children Living in Poverty**

- **2014:** 24%
- **2011:** 26%

**Percent of Annual Income a Family in Poverty Pays for High Quality Care**

- **2015:** 42%
- **2011:** 41%

**Indiana’s Children Live in Households Where All Parents Work and Likely Need Care**

- **2014:** 66%
- **2011:** 67%

**A High Quality Early Care and Childhood Education**

- **Children Enrolled in Known Programs:** 2015: 113,393 (2014: 109,681)
- **Children Enrolled in High Quality Programs:** 2015: 42,299 (2011: 24,961)
- **High Quality Seats in Known Programs:** 2015: 37% (2011: 34%)
- **High Quality Seats Available for All Children Likely in Need of Care:** 2015: 13% (2011: 11%)

**Early Childhood Workforce**

- **Early Childhood Education Workforce:** 2015: 25,227 (2012: 23,400)
- **Early Childhood Education Workforce With Any BA Degree:** 2015: 27% (2010: 23%)
- **Annual Median Wages for Preschool Teachers:** 2015: $24,030 (2011: $23,890)
- **Projected Early Childhood Education Workforce Deficit:** 2014: 8,043 (2012: N/A)

**Kindergarten Readiness**

- **Children Enrolled in Kindergarten:** 2015: 92% (2011: 89%)
- **Children Retained in Kindergarten:** 2015: 5% (2011: 3%)
- **Cost of Retention:** 2014: $22,712,393
- **Children Ready for School:** 2015: ?

Data sources are available in the Citations section.
Indiana has over 500,000 children ages 0-5 from 334,000 families. Over half (254,629) of our youngest children live in low-income families compared to the national average of 48 percent. Of those children, 24 percent are living in poverty.

Indiana's families are working families. Two of every three children from birth to five years old in Indiana require care because their families are in the labor force. This is a total of 330,000 children who, each day, are learning and growing away from a parent's view.

Indiana's ability to assure that children are ready for school, can read at grade level, graduate from high school, pursue a post-secondary education and contribute to the economy is influenced by the healthy development of our youngest children.

---

3 Families and children are defined as low-income if the family income is less than twice the federal poverty threshold - $48,500 for a family of four with two children in 2015.

4 For children living in a married-couple family, this means that both parents are in the labor force. For children living in a single-parent family or subfamily, this means the resident parent is in the labor force. The civilian labor force includes persons who are employed and those who are unemployed but looking for work.
THE EARLY LEARNING LANDSCAPE IN INDIANA

While parents are children’s first teachers, early childhood education programs provide early learning opportunities for thousands of young children daily and can have a significant impact on their development and readiness for school. Every week in Indiana, approximately 333,000 children younger than age six are in some type of child care arrangement. Of the 330,000 children likely in need of care, we know that approximately one-third of them are enrolled in a “known setting” (licensed homes, licensed centers and registered ministries). The majority of children (over 216,000), however, are receiving care in “informal settings” from a family member, friend or neighbor.

NEED

Indiana has a strong mixed delivery system and prides itself on providing families with choice in selecting the type of care that best fits their family’s needs and values. As displayed in the bar graph, family home providers are the largest source of child care available to Hoosier families followed by registered ministries and licensed centers respectively.

INDIANA’S MIXED DELIVERY SYSTEM

Data Source: Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2015.
Another key component of having accessible care for families is **having a strong workforce** to open classrooms and care for children. In 2015, there were approximately **25,227 individuals employed in known programs**. While this does provide a baseline of information about the current child care workforce, it does not provide a complete picture of the workforce. At this time, we are unable to report the number of individuals working in public and private preschools (that are not licensed or registered) as well as the individuals employed at informal care programs (unlicensed, exempt, part-time programs).

When we look more closely at two occupational codes in the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ - Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers - by 2022, Indiana is projected to need 22,773. Indiana currently has 14,730 Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers employed in the field. Therefore, we **project a demand for 8,043 additional teachers by 2022**.

Over the past five years, more public schools are making pre-k available to families as depicted by the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Public Pre-K Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>11,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>9,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>9,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>14,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>16,206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accessible care for families is **having a strong workforce** to open classrooms and care for children. In 2015, there were approximately **25,227 individuals employed in known programs**. While this does provide a baseline of information about the current child care workforce, it does not provide a complete picture of the workforce. At this time, we are unable to report the number of individuals working in public and private preschools (that are not licensed or registered) as well as the individuals employed at informal care programs (unlicensed, exempt, part-time programs).

When we look more closely at two occupational codes in the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ - Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers - by 2022, Indiana is projected to need 22,773. Indiana currently has 14,730 Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers employed in the field. Therefore, we **project a demand for 8,043 additional teachers by 2022**.

Another key component of having accessible care for families is **having a strong workforce** to open classrooms and care for children. In 2015, there were approximately **25,227 individuals employed in known programs**. While this does provide a baseline of information about the current child care workforce, it does not provide a complete picture of the workforce. At this time, we are unable to report the number of individuals working in public and private preschools (that are not licensed or registered) as well as the individuals employed at informal care programs (unlicensed, exempt, part-time programs).

When we look more closely at two occupational codes in the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ - Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers - by 2022, Indiana is projected to need 22,773. Indiana currently has 14,730 Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers employed in the field. Therefore, we **project a demand for 8,043 additional teachers by 2022**.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Over the past five years, more public schools are making pre-k available to families as depicted by the table below.

**PUBLIC PRE-K ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>11,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>9,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>9,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>14,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>16,206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT NEEDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Child Care Workers</th>
<th>Preschool Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>10,230</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022 with 30% turnover</td>
<td>12,926</td>
<td>5,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>16,033</td>
<td>6,740</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Projected shortfall of 8,043 teachers by 2022.**

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- ELAC has spent the past year working to establish the baseline on the current availability of care for children and families as well as the type of care options. In order to accomplish this important action item, ELAC has brought together all of the key partners at FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning and Indiana Department of Education to align data.
- ELAC’s Workforce and Professional Development workgroup spent the past year understanding the current child care workforce supply and future demand for the workforce.
- ELAC worked closely with the Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR) in launching their new online data center to give stakeholders on-demand, real-time access to county and regional supply and demand data that aligns with the ELAC state-level dashboard in this report. To access the Data Center, visit: [http://datacenter.iaccrr.org/](http://datacenter.iaccrr.org/).
High quality early childhood care and education will be more affordable for at-risk families.

COST OF CARE IN INDIANA

Parents in the labor force face numerous decisions when balancing their work and home life, including the type of care to provide for their children while they work. Child care arrangements and their costs are significant issues for families. Having access to reliable, affordable care impacts a family’s ability to be employed and contribute to the economy.

NEED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFFORDABILITY OF EARLY CARE AND CHILDHOOD EDUCATION</th>
<th>AVERAGE COST OF ALL CARE</th>
<th>AVERAGE COST OF HIGH QUALITY CARE</th>
<th>A FAMILY IN POVERTY PAYS OF THEIR INCOME FOR HIGH QUALITY CARE</th>
<th>FAMILIES ON THE CCDF WAITLIST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$7,498</td>
<td>$8,473</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>10,975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Indiana the cost of care varies dramatically depending on the type of provider and level of quality. The cost of a home provider is typically less expensive than the cost of a licensed center. In addition, the cost of care for an infant is significantly higher than the cost of care for a preschooler. When comparing the cost of care for all types of care versus high quality care, the cost is approximately $1,000 more. In the past five years, the cost of care has increased approximately $750 or an average of $14/week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVERAGE COST OF CARE (AGES 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL CARE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 $6,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 $7,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH QUALITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 $7,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 $8,473</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015 AVERAGE COST OF HIGH QUALITY CARE BY PROGRAM TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFANT/TODDLER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTERS $11,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOMES $6,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINISTRIES $9,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESCHOOL $8,983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVG 0-5 $10,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8,812</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral.

Data Source: Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2015.
In Indiana, with the average annual cost of high quality care at $8,473, low-income families can be priced out of the market and middle class families may struggle with the cost – particularly for families with more than one young child in need of care. For a family of three living in poverty, \(^5\) 42 percent of their income would go to pay for high quality care. Even median income families \(^6\) would contribute 15 percent of their income for high quality care. \(^\text{xxii}\)

The cost of care, let alone high quality care, is unaffordable for most Hoosier families. Indiana ranks 29th and 31st for least affordable center-based infant and four-year old care respectively. The average costs for two children in child care \(^7\) ($15,678) is nearly double the cost of annualized rent and 15 percent higher than the annualized cost of a mortgage. \(^\text{xxiii}\) When putting the cost of child care into context of other expenses in Indiana, infant care costs the same as full-time, in-state public college tuition. \(^\text{xxiv}\)

Child care assistance can help families work and contribute to the economy, especially for low-income families. In Indiana, we currently have 10,975 eligible families waiting to receive a child care voucher. \(^\text{xxv}\) In North Carolina and in New York City, one-third of families on the waiting list for child care either lost their job or were unable to work before they received a child care subsidy. The benefits of child care assistance are particularly strong for single parents, who are nearly 40 percent more likely to maintain employment over two years compared to those who do not have help paying for child care. \(^\text{xxvi}\)

In 2015, ELAC’s Funding Streams workgroup completed a report on the Analysis of Funding that Supports Early Childhood Programs and Services in Indiana. From this analysis, ELAC identified that 35% of funding is available to help subsidize early childhood care and education for families from state and federal sources. However, the majority (62%) of funding comes from families paying for care.

**INDIANA EARLY LEARNING FUNDING SOURCES FOR BIRTH TO AGE FIVE**

- **Private** 62%
- **Philanthropy** 29%
- **Federal** 6%
- **State** 3%
- **Local** 0.3%

Data Source: Analysis of Funding that supports Early Childhood Programs and Services, 2015.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- In the past year, Indiana has made high quality early childhood care and education available for approximately 2,200 low-income preschool children through implementation of On My Way Pre-K, Early Education Matching Grants, and the Indy Preschool Scholarship Program. Low-income families who most likely would not have been able to afford high quality care for their preschooler were able to receive this benefit.

- In addition, 518 infants and toddlers were able to enroll in high quality Early Head Start and child care programs through the new federal Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant program.

- Key state agencies; FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning and Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) have both been working to assist early childhood education programs in layering their funding to support more families. For example, IDOE has developed guidance for public schools on how to use their Title 1 funding to support preschool; similarly FSSA has provided guidance to public schools on how to layer CCDF funding with their funding sources to serve more low-income children and families. With the addition of the new state-funded pre-k pilot programs, state officials and early childhood education programs are both learning new ways of layering funding to help more families access and afford high quality early childhood care and education.

---

\(^5\) Income for a family of three in poverty is $19,790.

\(^6\) Median income for a family with children (under age 18) in Indiana is $56,800.

\(^7\) Center-based child care costs include the sum cost of one infant and one four-year-old in child care.
HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Strong and consistent evidence demonstrates that participation in high-quality early learning programs can lead to positive outcomes for all children, especially children from low-income families.\textsuperscript{xix} Research has shown the multiple benefits of attending preschool programs that are of high-quality, including increased school readiness, lower rates of grade retention and special education placements, improved high school graduation rates, reduced interaction with law enforcement, and higher rates of college attendance and completion.\textsuperscript{xxvii}

NEED

In the past five years, Indiana has increased the number of high quality programs available for children and families from 520 in 2011 to 968 in 2015. As a result, more Hoosier children are enrolled in high quality programs as evidenced in the chart.

With the implementation of the Paths to QUALITY pathway for public schools, 28 additional public preschools have achieved the designation of “high quality” and are reflected in the “Center Exempt” category chart.

COUNT OF HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMS 2011 - 2015

Data Source: Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PATHS TO QUALITY UTILIZATION</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Centers</th>
<th>Homes</th>
<th>Ministries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of known programs</td>
<td>4,254</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>3,035</td>
<td>696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of programs in Paths to QUALITY</td>
<td>2,425</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>1,865</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of “high quality” programs</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral.
CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE ENROLLED IN HIGH QUALITY PROGRAM

State Average: 13% of children in need of care are enrolled in high quality program

Data Source: Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2015.
When we look closer at the distribution of high quality seats across the state, there are significant gaps in the availability based on the community. **Most Hoosier children are not enrolled in a high quality program.** There are eight Counties with no high quality program available for families. With only one County having greater than half of the children in need of care enrolled in a high quality program, there is opportunity to increase the number of high quality seats available for children likely in need of care because all parents work.

While Licensed Homes are the largest source of care available to families, the majority of high quality seats are offered in licensed centers compared to homes and ministries. In addition, there are more preschool children enrolled in high quality programs compared to infants and toddlers.

### TYPES OF HIGH QUALITY SEATS AVAILABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Seats Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Ministry</td>
<td>5,442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Center</td>
<td>45,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Home</td>
<td>6,403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HIGH QUALITY ENROLLMENT BY AGE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants</td>
<td>1,892</td>
<td>3,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddlers</td>
<td>6,297</td>
<td>10,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool</td>
<td>16,772</td>
<td>28,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total High Quality Enrollment</td>
<td>24,961</td>
<td>42,299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral. December, 2015

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- With the implementation of the pre-k pilot programs, additional capacity of high quality programs and seats were created to support the enrollment of these programs. Through a partnership between FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning, Early Learning Indiana and United Way of Central Indiana building grants were awarded to early childhood education programs in the five pilot counties that added over 500 high quality seats.
- New Early Learning Guidelines (The Foundations)
- Family Engagement Toolkit
- Early Education Matching Grant Year 1 Program Evaluation Summary Results
Determine the readiness of children entering school in Indiana.

We define kindergarten readiness as: In Indiana we work together so that every child can develop to his or her fullest potential - socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively and academically. Through growth in all of these domains, the child will become a healthy, capable, competent and powerful learner.

Nationally, slightly less than half of low-income children are ready for school at kindergarten. Even among non low-income families, 25 percent of children are often not ready for school.\(^{xxxvi}\) Children from low-income families often start kindergarten 12 to 14 months (or one-year) behind their peers in pre-reading and language skills.\(^{xxxvii}\)

In Indiana, we are currently unable to determine the readiness of children entering kindergarten. Indiana does not have a uniform kindergarten readiness assessment tool that is used statewide. ELAC’s Evaluation of Child Outcomes workgroup completed a survey to identify the current Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) practices of Indiana school corporations through an online survey administered to school districts. Of the 139 public school corporations who responded, 74% reported some form of KRA in place. The majority of KRAs used were locally-developed, so there is not one consistent tool used statewide to gather data.

In Indiana, we know that the rate of children being retained in kindergarten has increased as well as the cost of kindergarten retention. In taking a closer look at who is being retained, a significant portion of the students were low-income, boys and children of color.

Increasing access to high quality early childhood education, particularly for at-risk families, can help children begin kindergarten ready for school and stay on track with their peers as demonstrated in the evaluation results of the first year of the Early Education Matching Grant pre-k pilot program summarized below.

### Indiana Kindergarten Enrollment and Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children Enrolled in Kindergarten</td>
<td>78,161</td>
<td>80,610</td>
<td>80,603</td>
<td>78,856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Children Enrolled in Kindergarten</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Retained in Kindergarten</td>
<td>2,419</td>
<td>2,902</td>
<td>3,750</td>
<td>3,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Children Retained in Kindergarten</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Indiana Department of Education.
BACKGROUND

The Early Education Matching Grant (EEMG) program, enacted in 2013 state legislation, represents Indiana’s first broad scale pilot in high quality pre-K education. Thirty programs in 15 counties, totaling approximately 50 classrooms, participated in the pilot during the 2014-2015 school year. These classrooms were housed in licensed centers, registered ministries, Head Starts and public school programs; were a mix of full- and half-day, Levels 3 and 4 on the Paths to Quality rating system; and, served rural and urban communities. The EEMG classrooms served approximately 484 four-year old children coming from home environments at or below 100% of the poverty level. Indiana University completed an evaluation of the first year. These evaluation results focus on pre-post measures of participants, as funds were not appropriated for control group comparisons. The full EEMG Year 1 evaluation report can be found at www.elacindiana.org/resources.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM RESULTS

• The EEMG Year 1 evaluation demonstrated that high quality preschool experiences resulted in significant gains and overcoming gaps in delays for the majority of the children involved.

• Children in EEMG programs showed significant gains in all areas of development including receptive language and vocabulary development, concept learning (i.e., letter and number identification), and social competence as well as a decrease in anxiety.

• The number of children identified as delayed at the start of the program year was significantly reduced by the end of the program year.

• Children in EEMG programs made accelerated gains in school readiness skills and in all domains as measured by the ISTAR-KR, as seen below. Children made approximately 13 months of gains in English Language Arts and Math after only 8 months of participating in EEMG programming.

• Both families and teachers reported a significant increase in family engagement over the length of the EEMG program.

• The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) was used to study the quality of interactions in the EEMG classrooms. Three domains are studied through CLASS: emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. EEMG program classrooms demonstrated similar scores to national and state data in the domains of emotional support and classroom organization. The domain of instructional support had a larger difference between EEMG program classrooms and national / state data.

AVERAGE LEARNING GAINS IN MONTH

Data Source: Indiana University, 2015

Children made 13 months of gains after only 8 months in pre-k.
IMPLICATIONS

High Quality Preschool Positively Impacts Children and Families

Research shows children are at-risk for developmental delays and later academic challenges when they live in home environments where annual income is at 100% or less of the poverty level. The EEMG Year 1 evaluation demonstrated that high quality preschool experiences resulted in significant gains and overcoming gaps in delays for the majority of the children involved. Growth was demonstrated in all areas (i.e., receptive language, vocabulary development, concept development, social competence, school readiness skills) and the number of children identified as delayed at the start of the program year was significantly reduced by the end of the program year. The data suggest that the majority of the children who participated in EEMG will be better equipped to succeed in school. Additional studies have shown that investing in a high-quality pre-K experience can save future expenditures by reducing the number of children retained in Kindergarten and/or who need special education services, hence, reducing the associated costs with retention and remediation.

Families who are living in poverty have a lower level of engagement in their children’s education. The EEMG Year 1 evaluation, however, demonstrated that the high quality preschool environment provided more opportunities for families to engage. The teachers and families both noted increases in engagement as well as improved opportunities. When a family is more involved in their child’s education, a child is more successful and achieves greater gains in readiness outcomes.

Indiana Must Invest in Infrastructure to Continue and Expand Positive Outcomes.

Certain elements are critical to driving the positive outcomes of these results. The quality of the EEMG Level 3 and 4 Paths to Quality programs was adequate to deliver improved child and family outcomes. These positive outcomes can be further expanded through selective investments in areas identified in the research. For example, program observations suggest that classroom curriculum and instructional support could be further improved. With proper best-practice technical assistance and training, improvements in classroom curriculum and instructional support have an excellent chance to further drive positive outcomes for children and families. This could take the form of access to proven high-quality professional development and resources for continued growth in teacher skills and professional practices. The degreed professional teachers in these programs are the front line of results. By offering high quality opportunities for teachers to grow their own skills, we will undoubtedly see consequent gains in child and family outcomes.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The state has made considerable progress in ensuring that young children have access to a high quality, affordable early childhood experience. In order for Indiana to continue to enhance accessibility, affordability, and quality for Indiana’s children, critical early childhood local and statewide infrastructure needs to be in place:

1) A better understanding of the state’s current baseline and future needs; 2) More rigorous definitions of the desired outcomes; and 3) Enhanced coordination of efforts: cross-functional cooperation among the organizations that serve and report, as well as efficient and effective public/private funding streams.

Towards that end, ELAC offers the following recommendations:

**Better Understanding of the State’s Current Baseline and Future Needs**

1. We recommend relevant state agencies identify, collect and release when available (according to all state and federal laws) essential data elements to answer important early learning research questions. This may include information such as: the reporting of preschool capacity, enrollment and funding sources; the reporting of Indiana Head Start programs’ child outcome data; and the reporting of the preschool teacher and child care workforce.

**More Rigorous Definitions of the Desired Outcomes**

2. We recommend IDOE and FSSA designate a liaison to work with ELAC to align and integrate their programs and standards with the ELAC-approved definition for kindergarten readiness.

3. We recommend that IDOE and FSSA designate a liaison to work with ELAC to align and integrate their programs and standards with the ELAC-approved definition for family engagement.

4. We recommend that FSSA and Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) designate a liaison to work with ELAC to align and integrate their programs and standards with the ELAC-approved definition for child health.

5. With these approved definitions of desired outcomes, we recommend that the identified agencies work to widely disseminate, share and promote these definitions and supporting tools and resources to the public and key stakeholders via their website and other communication tools.

**Enhanced Coordination of Efforts**

6. We recommend that IDOE and FSSA provide early learning data that will link to the Indiana Network of Knowledge’s statewide longitudinal data system of pre-k to career data.

7. We recommend that FSSA, ISDH and the Department of Child Services (DCS) coordinate the enrollment of families and their young children in evidence-based home visiting programs and high quality early childhood education programs.
ENDNOTES

i 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B17024
iv 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B17024
vii Indiana Department of Education, 2014 – 2015 school year
viii Indiana Department of Education, 2013-2014 ISTEP English/Language Arts results for 3rd grade students.
ix Indiana Department of Education, 2014 – 2015 school year
x U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey
xi Ibid.
xii Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 - 2014 American Community Survey.
xiii Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2015.
xiv Ibid.
xv Indiana Family and Social Services Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, December 2014.
xvi Indiana Family and Social Services Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, December 2015.
xviii Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2015.
xix Ibid.
xx Indiana Family and Social Services Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, December 2015.
xxi Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2014; Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 through 2014 American Community Survey.
xxiv Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2014.
xxviii Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2015.
xxix Ibid.
xxxii Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, December 2015.
xxxiv Ibid.
xxxv Ibid.
Sources For Elac Dashboard

Hoosier Children and Families

Young Children Ages 0-5: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates, Table B17024.


Affordability of Care: 2009 - 2013 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates, Table B17024; Indiana Association of Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), 2015. Calculated as the mean cost of high quality care for children ages 0-5, divided by the median salary of a family in poverty (100% FPL) family of 3.

Children Likely in Need of Care: Children “likely in need of care” are considered to be those who live in households where all parents are in the workforce. Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 - 2014 American Community Survey.

High Quality Early Childhood Education

Children Enrolled in Known Programs: Indiana Association of Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), 2015. Indiana Department of Education data for Title 1 and Special Education preschool funded children.

Children Enrolled in High Quality Programs: Indiana Association of Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), 2015. Indiana Department of Education data for Title 1 and Special Education preschool funded children.

Availability of High Quality Seats: Indiana Association of Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), 2015. Indiana Department of Education data for Title 1 and Special Education preschool funded children. Calculated as the number of children enrolled in high quality programs divided by number of children enrolled in known programs.

High Quality Seats for All Children Likely in Need of Care: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 - 2014 American Community Survey, www.datacenter.kidscount.org, Indiana Association of Child Care Resource and Referral (IACCRR), 2015. Calculated as the number of children enrolled in high quality programs divided by the number of children who live in households where all parents are in the workforce.

Early Childhood Workforce

Early Childhood Education Workforce: Effective July 1, 2014, Indiana State law required all child care applicants, workers and volunteers, as well as household members over the age of 18 residing within child care homes, to receive a comprehensive background check that includes a national fingerprint based check of the FBI database, a check of the Child Protection Index and a check of the Sex Offender Registry. At this time, Indiana’s child care data system, CCIS, was modified to collect information on these comprehensive checks for applicants, staff, volunteers and household members for all regulated provider types including licensed centers, licensed child care homes, registered ministries and CCDF certified licensed exempt providers. The data reflects the number of staff (not volunteers or household members) at known program who submitted background checks for 2015.


Projected Early Childhood Education Teacher Shortage: Indiana Workforce Development, Research & Analysis. 2014 Occupational Employment Statistics: Employment and Wage Report; “Working in Child Care in Indiana.” 2014 Indiana Child Care Workforce Study by the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children. Calculation: The state currently has 14,730 Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers employed in the field. By 2022, Indiana is projected to need 22,773 Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers. By 2022, with a 30% turnover rate (factoring in average annual openings, growth, and turnover), there will be a shortfall of 8,043 in the workforce.

Kindergarten Readiness

Children Enrolled in Kindergarten Full-Time: Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), 2015. Note: This only includes students reported to IDOE and does not include community based preschools and private schools with kindergarten programs that do not report data to IDOE.

Children Retained in Kindergarten: Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), 2015. Note: This only includes students reported to IDOE and does not include community based preschools and private schools with kindergarten programs that do not report data to IDOE.

Cost of Retention: Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), 2015. Calculation: Based on the kindergarten funding formula of half of the foundational grant per student ($3,320.50 in FY 2015), plus the full day kindergarten grant of $2,472 per student, the cost of retaining a student in kindergarten was approximately $5,792.50. Therefore, the approximate cost of a second year of kindergarten for those students (3,921) not ready to advance to first grade in 2015 was $22,712,393.

Children Ready for School: Indiana currently does not have a uniform, adopted kindergarten readiness assessment to determine the percent of children that are ready for school. Therefore, no data is currently available at the state level.
The Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) would like to thank several organizations for their assistance in the development of this report, including the seven ELAC Workgroups, Indiana Association for Child Care Resource and Referral, Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children, Indiana Department of Education, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, and Indiana University’s Early Childhood Center.

The report was written by Amanda Lopez, President, Transform Consulting Group.