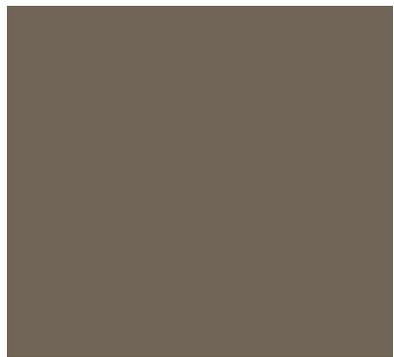




Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee



2017 Annual Report



Acknowledgments



The Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee would like to thank several organizations for their assistance in the development of this report, including the seven ELAC Workgroups, Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children, the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Indiana Head Start Association, Indiana Network of Knowledge, Indiana State Department of Health, and Indiana University’s Early Childhood Center. A special thank you to the data teams: those from Indiana Department of Education, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning and Early Learning Indiana’s Partnership for Early Learners.

The report was written by Amanda Lopez with assistance from Sara Anderson, Monica DiOrio, Amanda Schortgen and Kyle Wehmann at Transform Consulting Group.

A Letter From...

The CHAIRMAN

Governor Pence, Governor-Elect Holcomb, and the Indiana General Assembly:

This represents ELAC's fourth installment in our annual efforts to update the state of knowledge about early childhood education in Indiana. Each year, we're able to share more facts about where Indiana excels, as well as the gaps in making high-quality early learning more accessible to all, and more affordable to those most in need of it. What makes this year particularly exciting, is the extent to which Indiana's increasing knowledge is translating into action.

The documented success of Indiana's pilot efforts with four-year olds – included in the pages that follow – is mobilizing a diverse group of stakeholders to recognize the value of pilot expansion. That's because more Hoosier families could immediately benefit from the positive child and family outcomes we're seeing in these high-quality pilot settings. So, many communities that are not yet part of these pilots are busy building collaborations to address new capacity. Struggling Indiana families below median income levels are at last realizing a path to self-sufficiency, as their need for high-quality affordable care is being addressed. In recognition, funders are also coming together to contribute to the necessary infrastructure and support services that can augment the state's scholarship dollars.

Throughout this 2017 report, ELAC's seven workgroups – staffed with 150+ content experts - have tirelessly captured baseline data and best practice-based recommendations for different aspects of this complex work. Their extensive documentation can be found at www.ELACIndiana.org/resources/. This report represents their best efforts to uncover the most effective path forward for Indiana. We're hopeful that all who review this report, and the supplemental information on our website, find it a ready resource to shape these essential investments going forward. As the critically-important 2017 legislative session arrives, the members of ELAC stand ready to provide additional information and insights that can inform your efforts. Thanks in advance for your demonstrated commitment to this vital work ... work that ensures success for Indiana's current and future workforces and families.

Sincerely,



Kevin R. Bain
Chairman, Early Learning Advisory Committee

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Executive Summary

Annually, Indiana's Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) conducts a comprehensive needs assessment on the state of early learning in Indiana and presents recommendations addressing those identified needs to the Governor's Office and the Indiana Legislative Committee. This report offers a thorough look at the findings and implications from the needs assessment completed for 2017; please note that the data sources in this report vary in terms of the specific timeframe covered. The primary focus of this report is young children ages 0-5 with a particular emphasis on the preschool years.

ELAC's Vision

Working to ensure that children ages birth to eight (8) years and their families have access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education programs that keep children healthy, safe, and learning.

Indiana's Progress

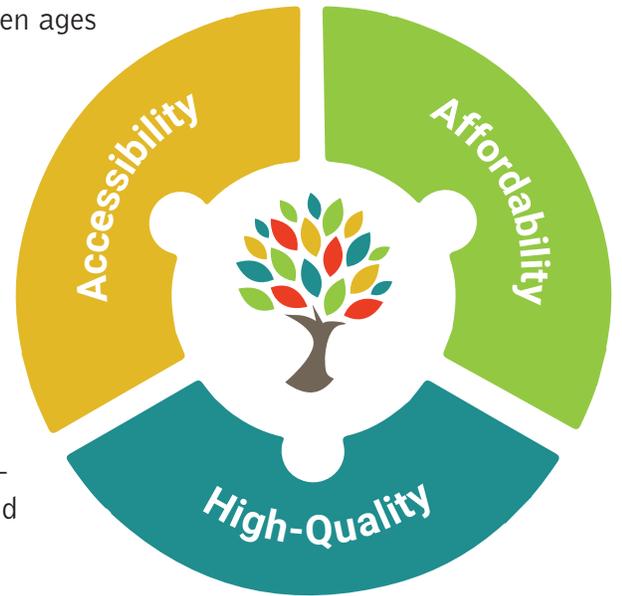
In 2016, Indiana has made progress in improving the accessibility, affordability, and high quality of early care and education for our youngest children and their families.

- ✓ There are more high-qualityⁱ, diverse early care and education programs.
- ✓ Indiana successfully implemented two pre-k pilots for low-income families in 22 counties across the state.
- ✓ New research identified a positive \$1:4 return on investment for high-quality pre-k in Indiana.
- ✓ The wait list of children waiting to receive a Child Care voucher has been eliminated.

Areas to Improve

While Indiana is making progress in some areas, there is still work to do in others.

- Indiana still has gaps in making high-quality early care and education available for all families, and affordable for families who need it the most.
- Indiana has critical infrastructure that is missing or needs to be enhanced to support expansion in our early learning system (e.g., capacity building, coaching and assessment).
- Indiana is unable to identify the readiness of all Hoosier children entering Kindergarten.



Appointed Committee Members

Kevin Bain, Chairman,
Welborn Baptist Foundation, Inc.

Cindy Frey,
Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce

Nicole Norvell,
FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out of
School Learning

Connie Sherman,
St. Mary's Child Center

Christopher Stokes,
Eli Lilly

Nathan Williamson,
Indiana Department of Education

ⁱ High quality is defined as participation in Paths to QUALITY Level 3, Level 4 or nationally accredited by an approved accreditation body.

Key Strategies

ELAC is focused on the following 5 key 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.



Accomplishments

Through its partners and collaborative relationships, ELAC has accomplished the following items in the past year.

- ✓ Significant expansion of the knowledge-base of statewide and county-level early learning data to inform appropriate action steps at every level.
- ✓ Development of new county-level dashboards that mirror state-level data ELAC is tracking.
- ✓ Jointly sponsored the first annual Indiana Summit for Economic Development via Early Learning Coalitions with key partners where over 500 diverse stakeholders attended.
- ✓ Modeled the cost of scaling pre-k through using a new Cost of Preschool Quality Tool developed by the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) and 3Si.
- ✓ Issued an updated report on funding sources that support early childhood programs and services in Indiana (released November 2016).



- ✓ Identified over 25 communities that have an intentional focus on improving the earliest years for their youngest citizens and working to inform, equip, and support their efforts.
- ✓ Monitored the progress and evaluation of the pre-k pilot programs - by providing technical expertise to FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning (OECOSL) and the evaluators - both of which are showing positive child and family outcomes from the state's investments.

Recommendations

ELAC and its seven workgroups comprised of statewide early learning providers, educators, health experts, philanthropists, academics and business leaders, have spent almost four years working across sectors on behalf of young Hoosiers to ensure that every boy or girl arrives at kindergarten ready to learn on his or her first day, and ultimately, are prepared to complete high school, pursue post-secondary education and secure a well-paying job. This document is the product of dozens of concerned citizens who've spent thousands of hours reviewing best practices, studying Indiana's particular assets and challenges and identifying the best ways to serve young children and their families.

Based on all of the information that follows, the needs assessment informs the following broad-scale recommendations:

- **Pre-K expansion beyond the pilot is warranted**, providing increased access to high-quality providers for all, and making it more affordable for low-income families
- Both additional income levels and risk levels as well as counties should be served:
 - county expansion is limited by the match requirement
 - private and federal sources can supplement state investments in other ways
- Successful expansion will require these elements in **local communities**, to effectively serve more families:
 - more seats and staff in high-quality programs
 - more staff supports like coaching, technical assistance, and retention incentives
 - standardized measures of outcomes
- Successful expansion will also require these **state infrastructure** elements:
 - additional ELAC members to ensure alignment across state agencies
 - a dedicated position to coordinate coalition building efforts at the community level
 - identification number assignment for longitudinal progress tracking
 - marketing outreach to encourage provider participation in Paths To Quality™, Indiana's quality rating system

More specifics about these recommendations can be found on page 31.

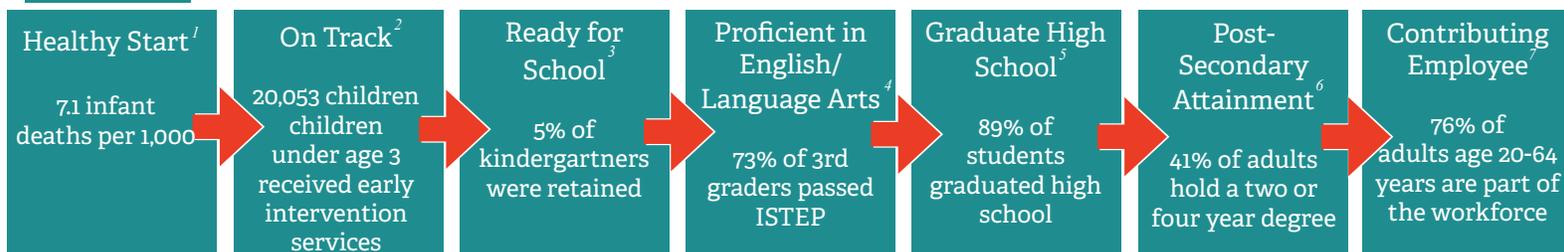


Needs Assessment

When children are on track developmentally at the youngest ages, positive outcomes occur that put them on the pathway to success including being ready for school, reading at grade level, graduating from high school, and pursuing a post-secondary education (See Figure 1). That is why ELAC focuses its efforts early on the developmental spectrum, beginning prenatally.



FIGURE 1: INDIANA PATHWAY TO SUCCESS



Unserved Pre-Kindergarteners

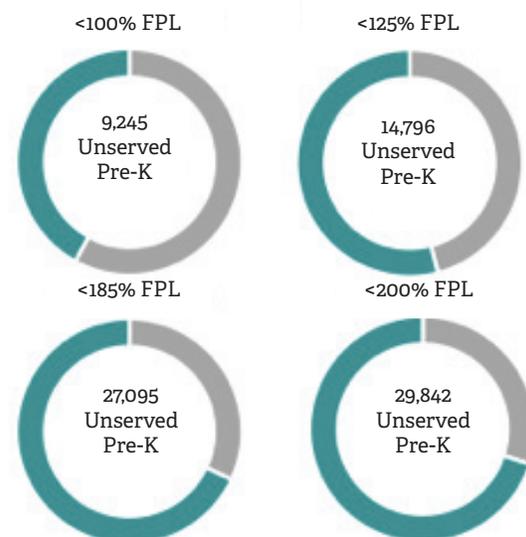
There are 27,095 unserved low-income four-year old children not in a high-quality subsidized pre-k program.

The positive outcomes identified above are only realized when young children benefit from having high-quality interventions and programs available at the earliest age. While Indiana has made progress in reaching the neediest of four-year old children through the pre-k pilot programs, geographic and income barriers limit its reach. Through other federal and state funding sources, more pre-k children in need are able to receive a high-quality early care and education. However, Indiana still has many children not being reached and potentially not on track for success.

FIGURE 2: UNSERVED PRE-KINDERGARTNERSⁱⁱ

As Figure 2 displays, Indiana has 84,333 four-year old children and approximately half are low-income.^{8,iii} Based on the data in the following chart, there are 27,095 unserved low-income (185% FPL) four-year old children not in a high quality subsidized pre-k program.

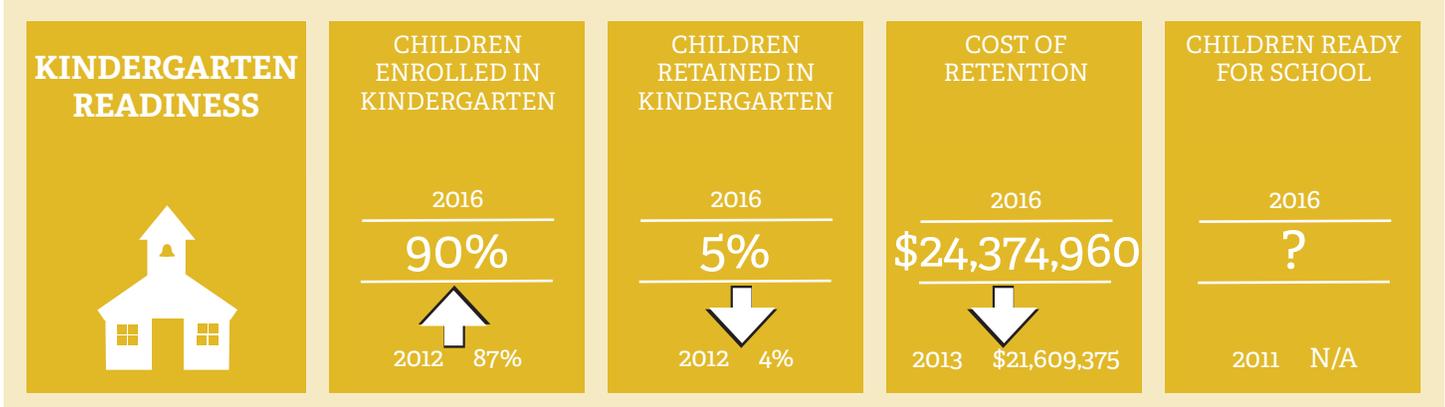
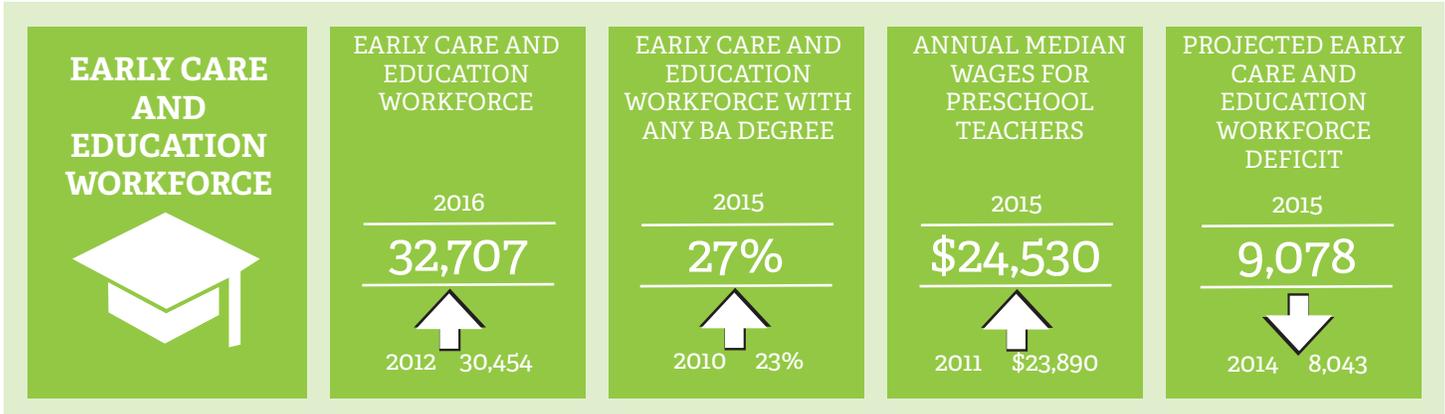
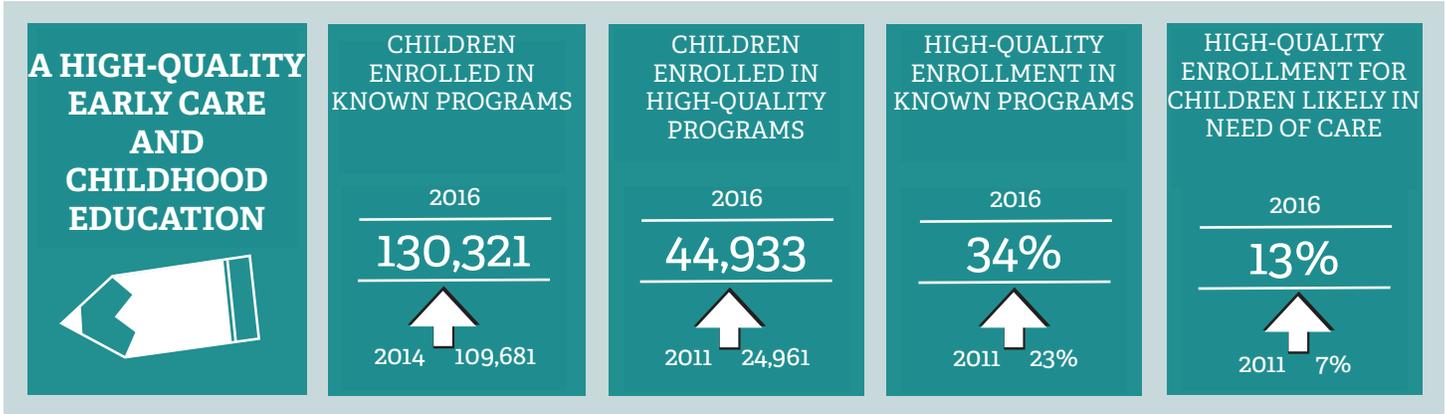
All Children Age 4 ⁹	84,333
Children <100% FPL	21,920
Children <125% FPL	27,471
Children <185% FPL	39,770
Children <200% FPL	42,517
Children Enrolled in Head Start ¹⁰	7,313
Children Enrolled in CCDF ¹¹	3,061
Children Enrolled in EEMG ¹²	408
Children Enrolled in OMW ¹³	1,893
Subtotal of Children Served	12,675



ii. While Title I and Special Education, Part B, also provide subsidized pre-k, their data is not included in this chart for the following reasons: the data is currently not reported by single age groups; not all schools meet the ELAC definition of "high-quality"; and special education is not meant to provide traditional preschool but rather address the student's developmental needs according to their disability.
 iii. Families and children are defined as low-income if the family income is less than twice (200%) the federal poverty threshold.

2017 ELAC Dashboard

 Improved
  Worsened



Data sources are available in the Citations section on page 34.

Children and Families



Need

- Two-thirds of Indiana families with children ages 0-5 need child care because the parents work.^{14, iv}
- Even so, half of Indiana's children still live in low income families.¹⁵

KEY INDICATORS

Indiana's Young Children 2015 (Ages 0-5) ¹⁶	Infant (under 1)	Toddler (ages 1-2)	Preschool (ages 3-4)	Kindergarten (age 5)
504,906	83,603	167,433	168,454	85,416

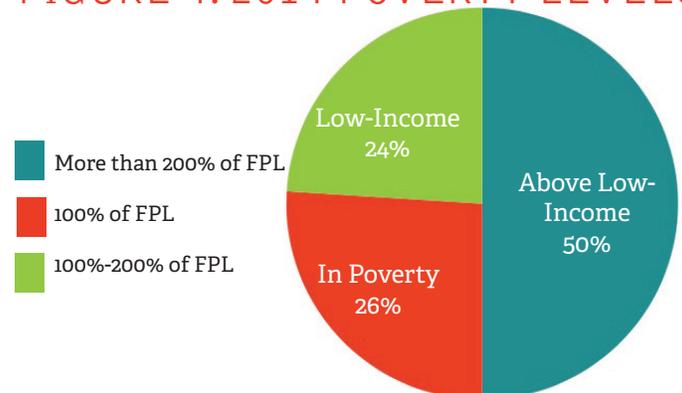
Indiana has 504,906 young children ages 0-5.¹⁷ Indiana's birth rates have remained consistent; Indiana adds approximately 84,000 newborns annually. Approximately one-fourth of our youngest children are living in poverty and half are living in low-income families compared to the national average of 48 percent.¹⁸ The chart below shows the annual income for families of various household sizes based on the 2016 Federal Poverty Level (FPL). A family of three living in poverty earns just a little over \$20,000.

FIGURE 3: FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES

	Less than 100% FPL	100%-125% FPL	125%-185% FPL	185%-200% FPL
Family Size	A family in 100% poverty makes less than the following annual income.	A family within 100% to 125% of poverty makes less than the following annual income.	A family within 125% to 185% of poverty makes less than the following annual income.	A family within 185% to 200% of poverty makes less than the following annual income.
2 People	\$16,020.00	\$20,025.00	\$29,637.00	\$32,040.00
3 People	\$20,160.00	\$25,200.00	\$37,296.00	\$40,320.00
4 People	\$24,300.00	\$30,375.00	\$44,955.00	\$48,600.00

Data Source: 2016 Poverty Guidelines, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

FIGURE 4: 2014 POVERTY LEVELS



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey.

The majority of Indiana's families with young children under age 6 are working families. **Two of every three children from birth to five years old in Indiana require some type of care because all of their parents are in the labor force.**¹⁹ This is a total of 332,937 children who, each day, are in a learning environment outside of their home.

iv. 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.

Accessibility

2020 ELAC Goal

High-quality early care and education will be more **accessible** for all children and families.



Need

- Less than 40 percent of children 0-5 are in formal care like centers, homes, or ministries.
- Formal care access varies tremendously across Indiana counties.
- Availability of formal care depends on trained, well-compensated staff; Indiana is facing a significant shortfall over the next 8 years.

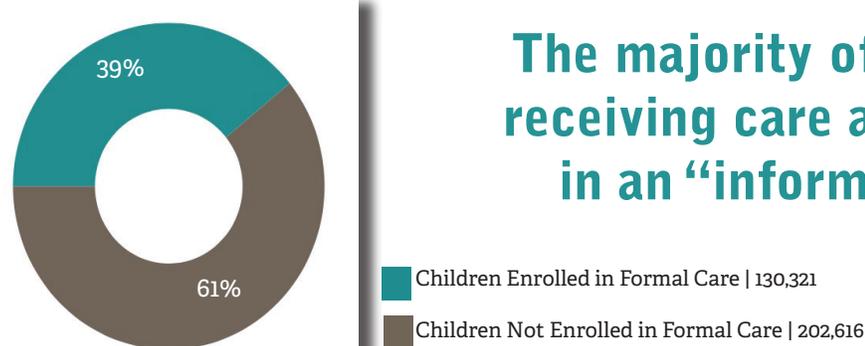
KEY INDICATORS

Accessibility of Early Care and Education ²⁰	Children under 6 likely in need of care ²¹	Children enrolled in known programs (ages 0-5) ²²	Availability of care is in family child care homes ²³	Individuals employed in early childhood education workforce ²⁴
504,906	332,937	130,321	56%	32,707

In Indiana, families have many choices when deciding where to send their child for formal early care and education.^v Families have the option of choosing an in-home family child care provider, a registered ministry, a child care center, or a public or private preschool. Through Indiana's "mixed-delivery system" of early care and education, families can select the formal care that best fits their family's needs and values.

Indiana has 5,333 registered and licensed early care and education programs that provide early care and education to 130,321 children ages 0-5 annually.²⁵ That means that of the 332,937 young children that need early care and education,²⁶ ELAC is only able to document where approximately one-third of them are receiving it. The majority of young children (202,616) in families that work, therefore, are receiving care and education in an "informal setting" from a family member, friend, or neighbor - where the quality is unknown.

FIGURE 5: CHILDREN ENROLLED IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL CARE



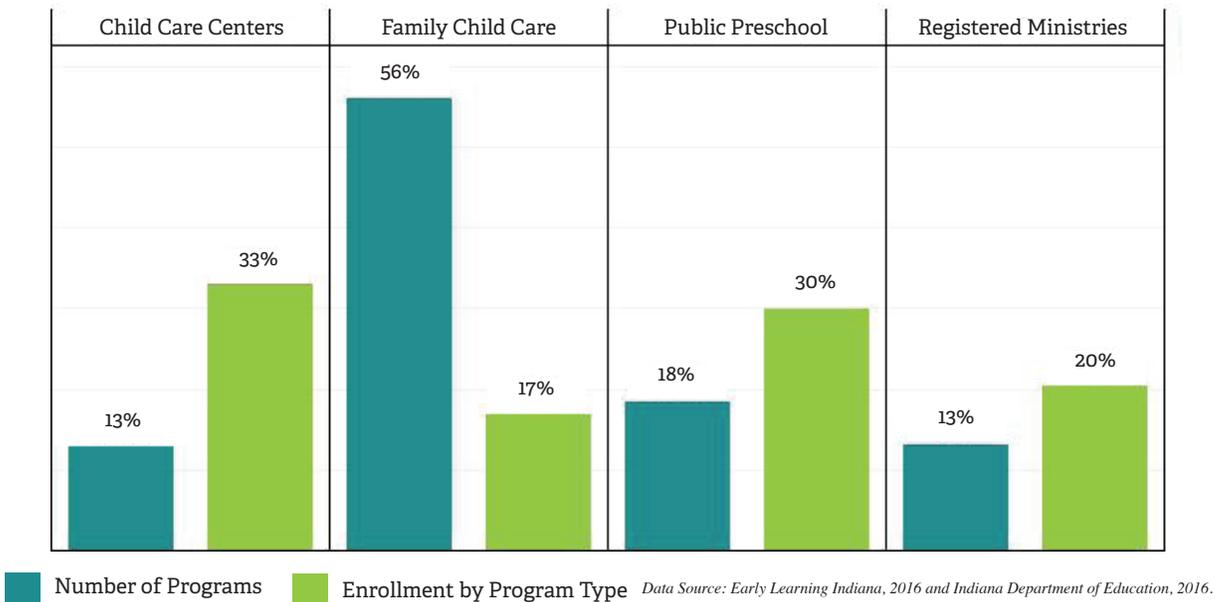
The majority of children are receiving care and education in an "informal setting."

Data Source: Early Learning Indiana, 2016, Indiana Department of Education, 2016 and U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates.

v. "Formal care" is program-based care, that is licensed, registered, certified, or otherwise recognized by the State of Indiana. The data in this report identifies four types of formal care: child care center, family child care, registered ministry or public school (including charter schools).

As displayed in Figure 6, family child care providers are the most prevalent source and option of formal early care and education available for Hoosier families followed by registered ministries and licensed child care centers, respectively. While there are significantly more family child care programs (56%), the majority of children are enrolled in child care centers.

FIGURE 6: INDIANA'S FORMAL EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION



vi. Head Start programs are reflected in either the Child Care Center or Public Preschool category depending on their registered setting as a provider.

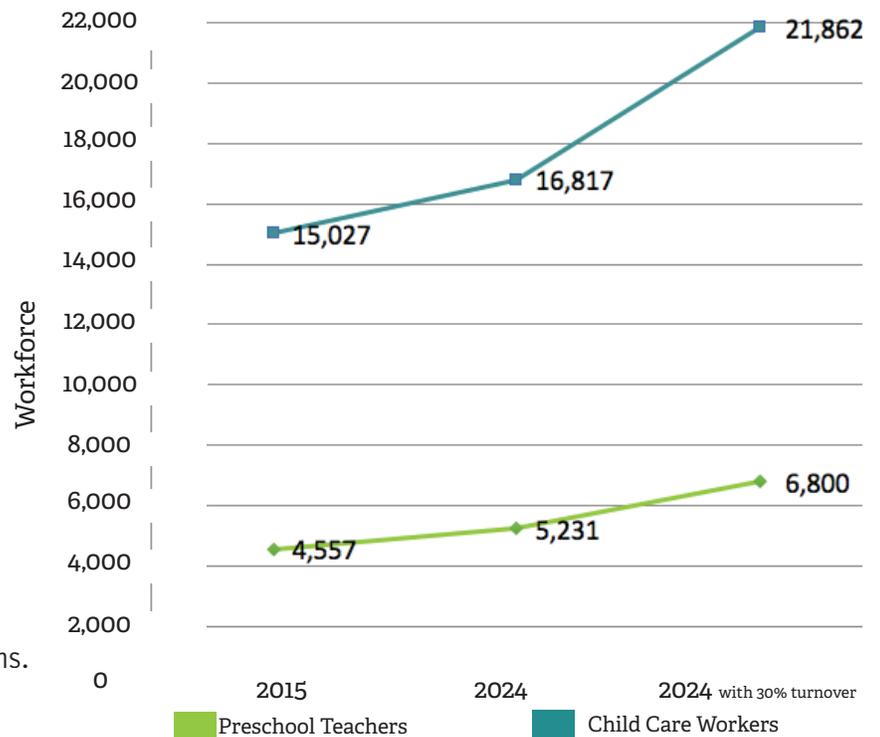
Early Care and Education Workforce

“The research picture is clear---quality of care and education matters to the lives of young children, and teachers and caregivers are central to providing that quality.”

(Institute of Medicine & National Research Council, (IOM & NCR), 2012, p.ix)²⁹

FIGURE 8: PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT NEEDS

Indiana’s availability of early care and education programs is dependent upon individuals willing to staff and teach in these classrooms. Indiana has 32,707 individuals³⁰ who are caring for and teaching the 130,321 children in our formal early care and education programs. The following provides a baseline of available information about the current formal early care and education workforce, although it does not provide a complete picture of the workforce. Data is unavailable on the number of individuals employed at informal care programs.



Data Source: Indiana Workforce Development, Research & Analysis. 2014 Occupational Employment Statistics: Employment and Wage Report; Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children (2014) Indiana Child Care Workforce Study.

Nonetheless, ELAC is able to project the early care and education employment need in ten years. By focusing on two specific occupations in the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data set - “Preschool Teacher” and “Child Care Workers” - ELAC can estimate the future demand for individuals in these two occupations. The most current 2014 BLS data for those two occupation codes shows that Indiana has 4,557 preschool teachers and 15,027 child care workers employed in the field.³¹ Using a national annual turnover rate of 30%, ELAC estimates a projected demand of 9,078 additional individuals needed in the early care and education workforce by 2024.³² Please note that this is a conservative estimate as it does not reflect the individuals needed outside the classroom (i.e., cooks, bus drivers, directors, etc.) not included in the BLS data.

ELAC estimates a projected demand of 9,078 additional individuals needed in the early care and education workforce by 2024.

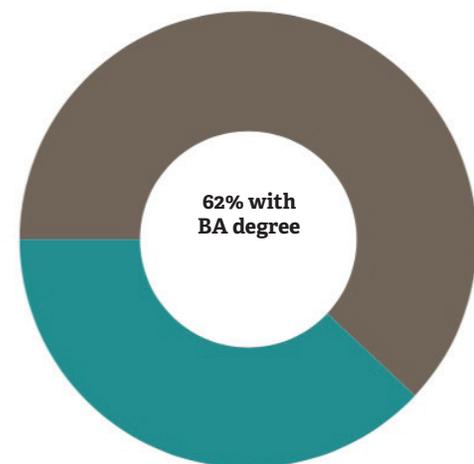
Only 27 percent of those staffing formal early care and education programs have a bachelor degree in any subject.

Not only does Indiana have a shortage of the supply of early care and educators, but the post-secondary educational attainment of these educators varies. Based on the most recent Indiana Child Care Workforce Study completed in 2014, only 27 percent of individuals who completed the survey reported having a bachelor's degree in any subject. Half of the of directors, teachers, and family child care home providers reported having an associate's degree or higher in early childhood education.³³ In taking a closer look at some of the workforce, however, **Indiana is making progress in having a high-quality workforce.**

Head Start Teachers

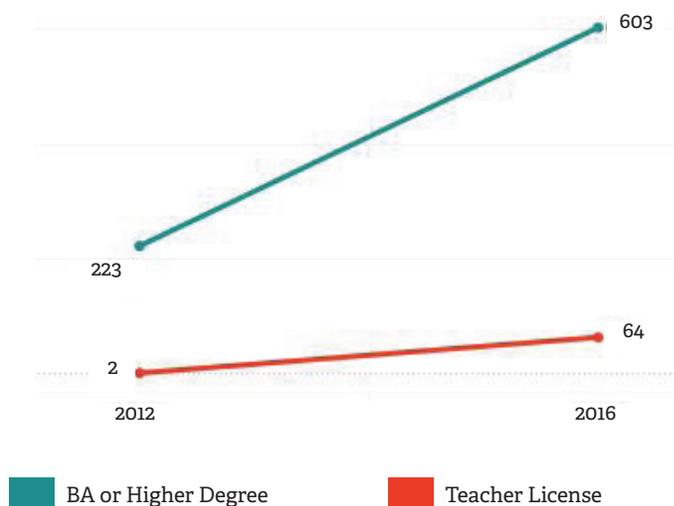
One example is Indiana Head Start. Federal regulations call for half of Head Start teachers nationwide to have bachelor's degrees beginning in 2013. Indiana's Head Start teachers have already exceeded that federal requirement. **Nearly two-thirds (62%) of Indiana Head Start lead teachers have a bachelor degree or higher**, and 24 percent of assistant teachers have at least an associate degree in early childhood education or a related field.³⁴

FIGURE 9: INDIANA HEAD START TEACHERS WITH BA DEGREE OR HIGHER



Data Source: Indiana Head Start Program Information Report, 2015.

FIGURE 10: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF PUBLIC PRESCHOOL TEACHERS 2012 - 2016



Data Source: Indiana Department of Education, 2012, 2016.

Public Preschool Teachers

Of the 633 public preschool teachers in Indiana, 95 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher and 11 percent have a license. As displayed in Figure 10, there has been an increase in the supply of public preschool teachers with post-secondary attainment in the past four years.³⁵

T.E.A.C.H.[®] Scholarship Program

One way Indiana has been working to improve the quality of the early care and education workforce is through the Teacher Education And Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.)[®] Early Childhood Indiana Project. The T.E.A.C.H.[®] Early Childhood INDIANA Project^{vii} provides scholarships for teachers, directors, and family child care providers to pursue post-secondary educational attainment.

Since its inception in 1997, the T.E.A.C.H.[®] Early Childhood Indiana Project has helped advance the education levels of **18,500** early care and education teachers in all 92 counties in Indiana. For a nominal investment of approximately \$2.5 million annually, the T.E.A.C.H.[®] Early Childhood Indiana Project awards nearly 1,600 educational scholarships each year.³⁶ Over the past six years, as depicted in Figure 11, the number of individuals using their scholarship for a bachelor's degree has increased while the number of individuals pursuing a credential has decreased. This supports the desired outcome: **individuals are advancing their education.**

HIGHER EDUCATION

In the past few years, Indiana has seen an increase in early childhood professionals pursuing their associate or bachelor degree in early childhood education. Since Indiana implemented the Transfer Single Articulation Pathway (TSAP) in 2015, students may complete an associate degree in Early Childhood Education and then seamlessly continue their pursuit of a bachelor's degree in a related degree. The following higher education programs have noted increases in student enrollment:

Ivy Tech Community College

- 2015-16: 15 percent increase in statewide enrollment in its Early Childhood Education associate degree programs. The majority of students are enrolled in the TSAP Associate of Science degree designed to articulate to bachelor degree programs in the state.

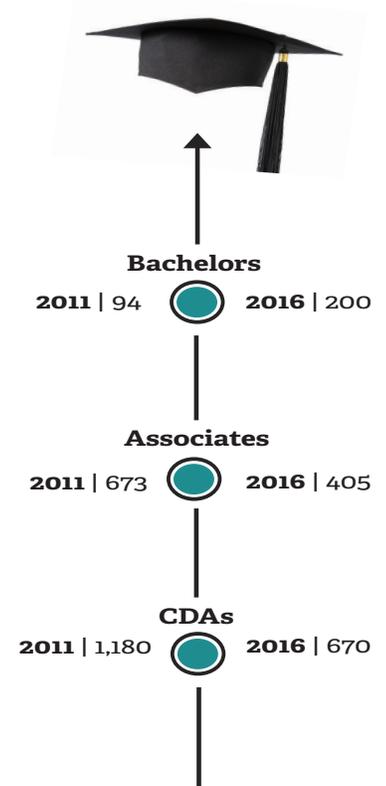
Ball State University

- 2015-16: 50 percent increase in the new online Bachelor of Science Early Childhood Education degree completer program from the previous year. Students enrolled in this program must have completed an Associate of Science degree prior to enrollment.
- 2016-17: 30 percent increase from the previous year.

Purdue University

- 2015-16: 30 percent increase in Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies degree.
- 2016-17: 30 percent increase from the previous year.

FIGURE 11: T.E.A.C.H.[®] EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOLARSHIPS



Data Source: Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children, 2011, 2016.

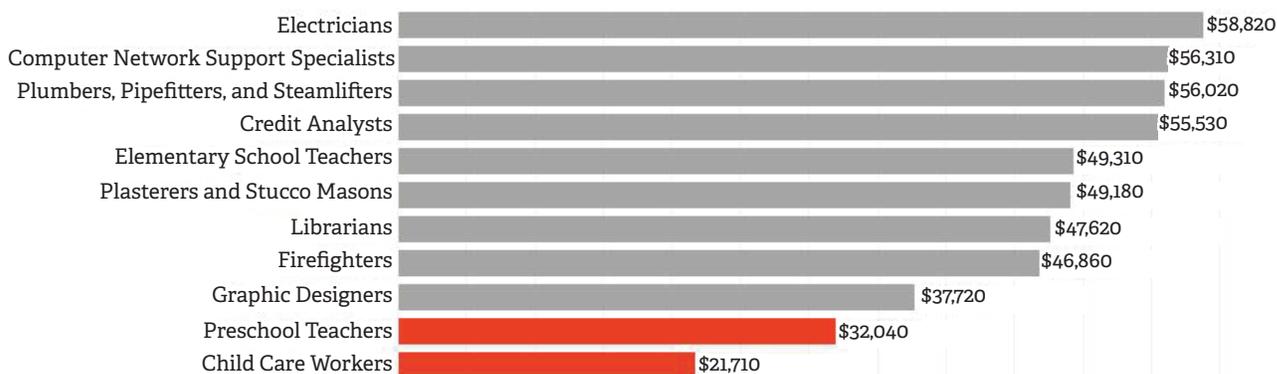
vii. The T.E.A.C.H. Project is made possible through funding received from FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning via Child Care and Development Funds. It is administered by the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children.

In the past year, several national reports have been released that illustrate the earnings gap in the early childhood industry compared to other industries and occupations that require similar education levels. When ranking all occupations nationally by annual earnings, child care workers fall in the second-to-last percentile. Preschool teachers are in the 16th percentile.³⁷

When ranking all occupations nationally by annual earnings, child care workers fall in the second-to-last percentile.

In reviewing the two primary occupations - Child Care Workers and Preschool Teachers - in the early care and education field, the individuals in these positions are making an average of \$9.77 - \$13.74 per hour or \$21,710 - \$32,040 respectively annually.³⁸ When comparing these occupations to other occupations with similar or less educational requirements, the compensation is much higher in other occupations as displayed in Figure 12.

FIGURE 12: INDIANA MEDIAN SALARIES



Data Source: 2015 Occupational Employment Statistics: Employment and Wage Estimates Indiana.

Even within the early childhood industry, the pay that a teacher receives varies dramatically by the type of setting - child care center, family child care home, preschool or registered ministry. This means that early care and education professionals may move to higher paying positions at different programs as their education advances. In Indiana, a teacher at a Child Care Center may move to a Head Start program and then transfer to a Public School Preschool program to receive higher compensation as they advance their education. This results in potentially less qualified (educated) teachers in child care centers, which are often serving the children that have the most need. It also means that the community-based centers have the most challenge recruiting, paying, and retaining the higher-qualified workforce.

Research shows that when children are enrolled in programs where there is lower turnover and where providers earn higher wages, they spend more time engaged in positive interactions and developmentally appropriate activities with peers and teachers, which contributes to healthy development and school readiness.³⁹

Research shows that when children are enrolled in programs where there is lower turnover and where providers earn higher wages, they spend more time engaged in positive interactions and developmentally appropriate activities with peers and teachers, which contributes to healthy development and school readiness.⁴⁰

Affordability

2020 ELAC Goal

High-quality early care and education will be more **affordable** for at-risk families.



Need

- The price of formal care is unaffordable to low income families – ranging from \$6,800 to \$11,000 per year, per child.⁴¹
- Federal and state funding sources provide some assistance, but only to the lowest income levels.
- Current state scholarship programs like On My Way Pre-K only cover about 2/3 of the total costs participating providers are incurring.

KEY INDICATORS

Affordability of Early Care and Education	Average annual cost of all early care and education ⁴²	Average annual cost of high-quality early care and education ⁴³	A family in poverty pays their income for high-quality early care and education annually ⁴⁴	A low-income family pays for high-quality care and education annually ⁴⁵
	\$7,362	\$8,482	42%	21%

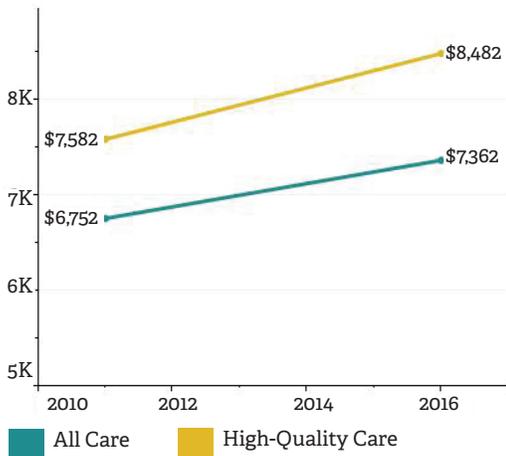
For the two-thirds of Hoosier families that work and need care for their young children,⁴⁶ selecting an early care and education provider is one of many decisions working parents face. Having access to reliable, affordable care impacts a working parent’s ability to be employed and contribute to the economy. As discussed in the previous section, families have many options to consider when selecting an early care and education provider for their young child(ren). The following graphs illustrate that the cost of care varies greatly by the provider, the age of the child, and the geographic location. These cost differences can significantly limit a family’s choices.

FIGURE 13: 2016 AVERAGE COST OF HIGH-QUALITY CARE BY PROGRAM TYPE AND AGE

	Infant/Toddler	Preschool	Average 0-5
 Child Care Centers	\$11,122	\$9,044	\$10,170
 Family Child Care	\$7,029	\$6,417	\$6,778
 Registered Ministries	\$9,810	\$8,010	\$8,976
 State Average	\$9,320	\$7,824	\$8,482

Data Source: Early Learning Indiana, 2016.

FIGURE 14: AVERAGE COST OF CARE AGES 0-5

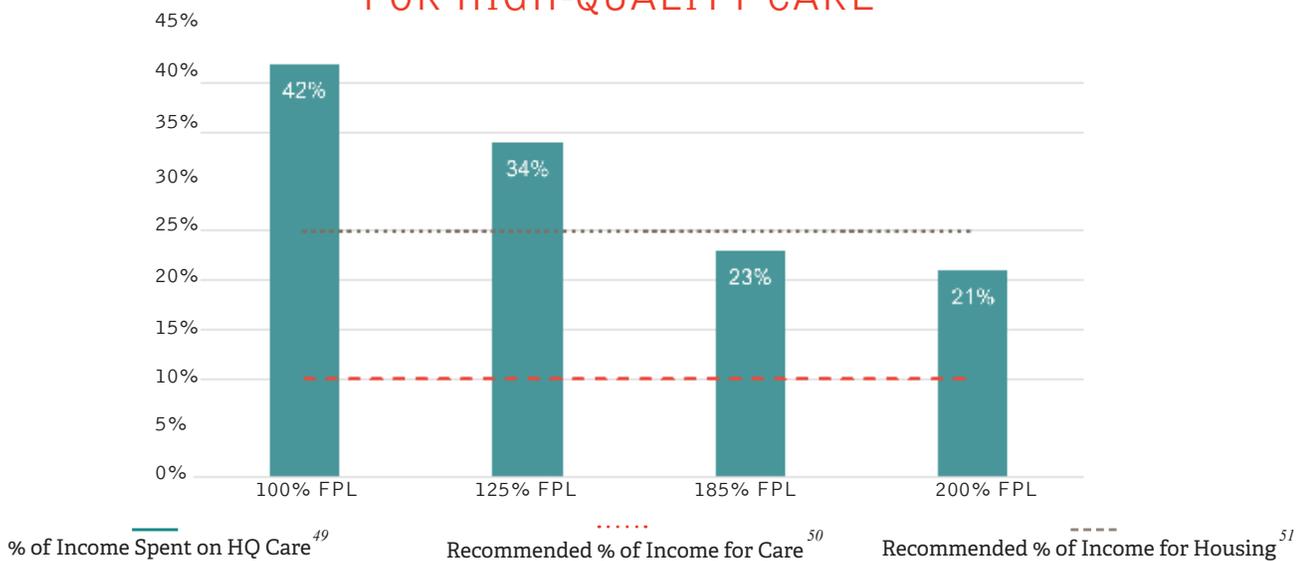


Data Source: Early Learning Indiana, 2016.

As displayed in Figure 14, the cost of care has increased by about \$1,000 over the past five years. The cost difference for high quality care versus all care is about \$1,000. Low-income families can be priced out of the market and middle class families may also struggle with the cost – particularly for families with more than one young child in need of care. **A family in poverty pays almost half (42%) of their income to provide high quality care for one child, and a low-income family could pay almost a fourth (21%).**^{viii.}

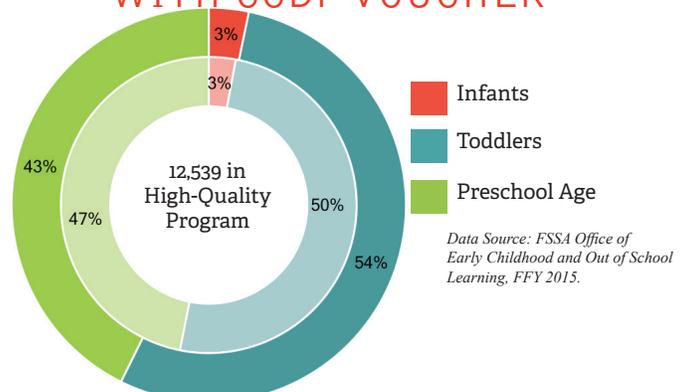
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services considers 10% of family income for child care as a benchmark for affordable care.⁴⁷ Yet many families spend significantly more than 10% of their income on child care. In Indiana, the average cost of high-quality care and education is \$8,482 annually or \$707 monthly for one child. **The cost of high-quality infant care is almost the same cost as public college tuition and annual median rent payments.**⁴⁸

FIGURE 15: 2016 PERCENT OF ANNUAL INCOME A FAMILY PAYS FOR HIGH-QUALITY CARE



In Indiana, the largest source of financial assistance for families to receive early care and education is through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program. In the past year, there were 29,559 children ages five and under that received a CCDF voucher to provide care. Of those children with a CCDF voucher, less than half (42%) were using it at a high-quality program. The majority of young children (83%) receiving a CCDF voucher were ages 2-5, while less than 1,000 were under the age of one.⁵²

FIGURE 16: CHILDREN SERVED WITH CCDF VOUCHER



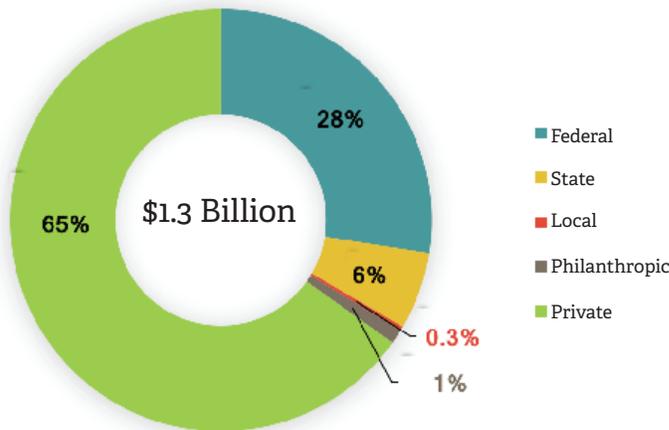
Data Source: FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, FFY 2015.

viii. A family of 3 in poverty earns less than \$20,160/year. A two parent, low-income (200% of the federal poverty level) household with one child earns less than \$40,320/year.

Many Hoosier families need assistance in being able to pay for high-quality care. In order to better understand how care is currently being paid for, in November 2016, ELAC's Funding Streams workgroup completed an updated report on Indiana's Early Childhood Program Funding Analysis.

FIGURE 18: INDIANA'S EARLY LEARNING FUNDING SOURCES

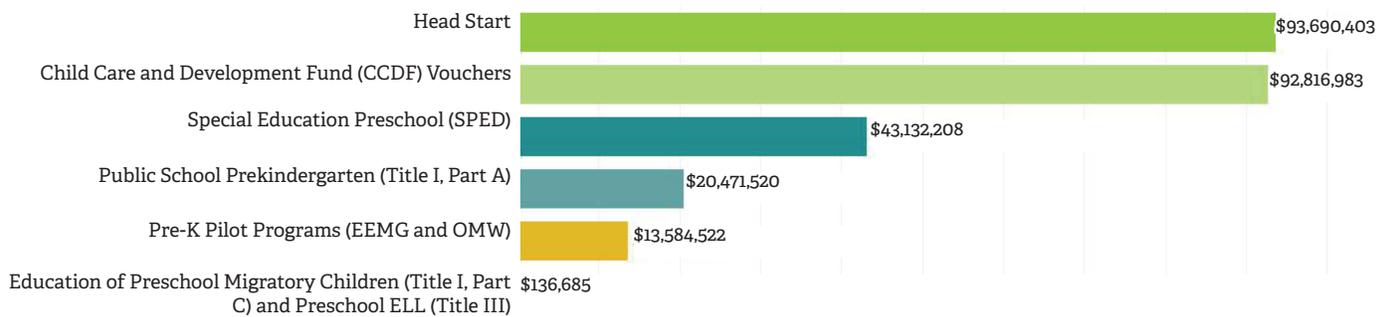
Based on the information collected, it is estimated that \$1.3 billion supports early learning (birth to age five) in Indiana.⁵⁴



Indiana's early learning funding comes from multiple sources - federal, state, local, philanthropic and private. The largest source (65%) of early learning funding is private - which means directly from the families' own income - followed by federal funding at half the levels of private (28%).

From this analysis, ELAC identified that half (51%) of the \$1.3 billion supports preschool ages services.

FIGURE 19: PRESCHOOL PUBLIC FUNDING SOURCES

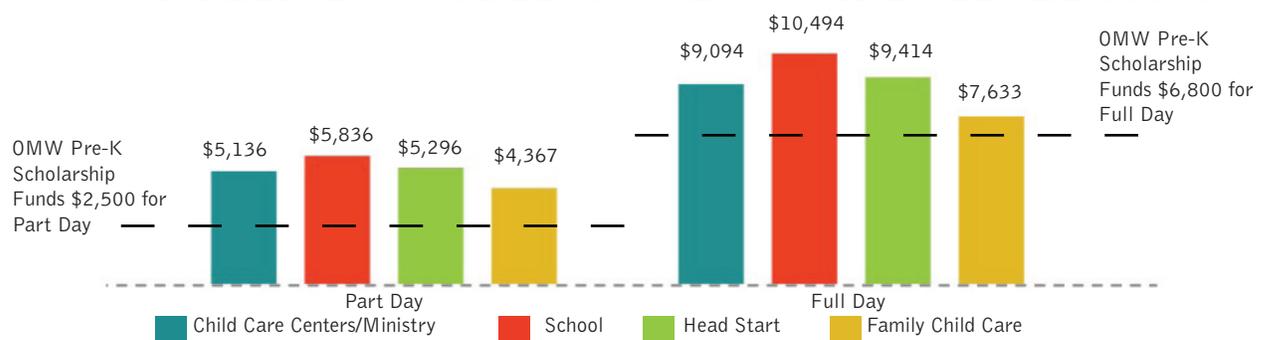


Data Source: Indiana's Early Childhood Program Funding Analysis, November 2016.

Cost of Scaling Pre-K

In order to quantify the costs of providing the needed assistance to at-risk families, the ELAC Funding Streams workgroup, in consultation with the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) and 3Si, piloted a new Cost of Preschool Quality (CPQ) tool. This tool helps states build models to estimate the real costs associated with running publicly funded preschool programs. Through this analysis, the estimated costs-per-child slot in high-quality Indiana preschools range from about \$4,400-\$5,800 (avg. \$5,158) for part-day programs and \$7,600-\$10,500 (avg. \$9,158) for full-day programs.^x

FIGURE 20: ESTIMATED HIGH-QUALITY SLOT COSTS BY DOSAGE AND DELIVERY MODEL (STATE PROVIDER LEVEL COSTS)



x. A part-day program is 2.5 - 4 hours; A full-day program is 5 or more hours.

The current scholarship rate for the On My Way Pre-K program is \$2,500 for part-day and \$6,800 for full-day. Based on the analysis completed in the CPQ tool, the pre-k scholarship is only covering about half (48%) of the part-day and three-fourths (74%) of the full-day costs. Based on the enrollment numbers for the past two school years, the majority of working families understandably are selecting full-day care where the scholarship does not cover the full costs. As a result, pre-k providers are having to cover the costs through other funding sources, where possible, such as philanthropy, Head Start and Title 1.

How to fill the rest?

- CCDF
- Head Start
- Title 1
- Family Pay
- Philanthropy

The current Pre-K Voucher is only covering 2/3 of the true costs as depicted by this image.



Most of the differences in the provider cost are due to variation in personnel expenses, including salaries. Personnel expenses comprise anywhere from 57-65 percent of the total provider cost, using the CEELO pre-k modeling tool.

As shown on p. 17, however, this expense is not at all due to excessive wages among the childcare workforce. In fact, almost half (46%) of early care and education professionals are qualifying for and utilizing public support programs (i.e., food stamps, welfare assistance)⁵⁵. Often, the employees themselves cannot afford to pay for the care of their own children.

Half (46%) of early care and education professionals are qualifying for and utilizing public support programs (i.e., food stamps, welfare assistance).

High-Quality

2020 ELAC Goal

High-quality early care and education will be supported by best practices in all communities.



Need

- Providers must deliver a high-quality educational experience for low income children to benefit long-term.
- Currently, only 13 percent of children ages 0-5 who need care are in high-quality formal settings.
- Quality of care varies tremendously across Indiana counties.

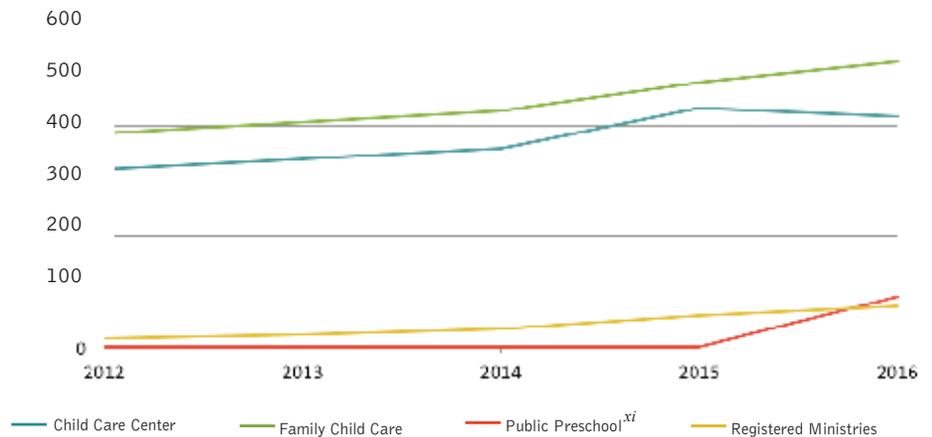
KEY INDICATORS

High-Quality Early Care and Education	High-quality early care and education programs. ⁵⁶	Children enrolled in high-quality programs. ⁵⁷	High-quality enrollment for children likely in need of care. ⁵⁸	Counties with no high-quality program. ⁵⁹
	1,098	44,933	13%	9

An overwhelming number of evaluations and research studies demonstrate that high-quality early care and education programs provide academic, social, and economic benefits to children, especially low-income children. Based on this research, Indiana has been working to increase the number of high-quality early care and education programs across the state, as well as the number of children enrolled in those programs.

In the past six years, **Indiana has doubled the number of high-quality early care and education programs** from 520 in 2011 to 1,098 in 2016. In 2011, there were only 24,961 children enrolled in high-quality early care and education; currently there are 44,933 children enrolled.⁶⁰

FIGURE 21: NUMBER OF HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAMS 2012-2016

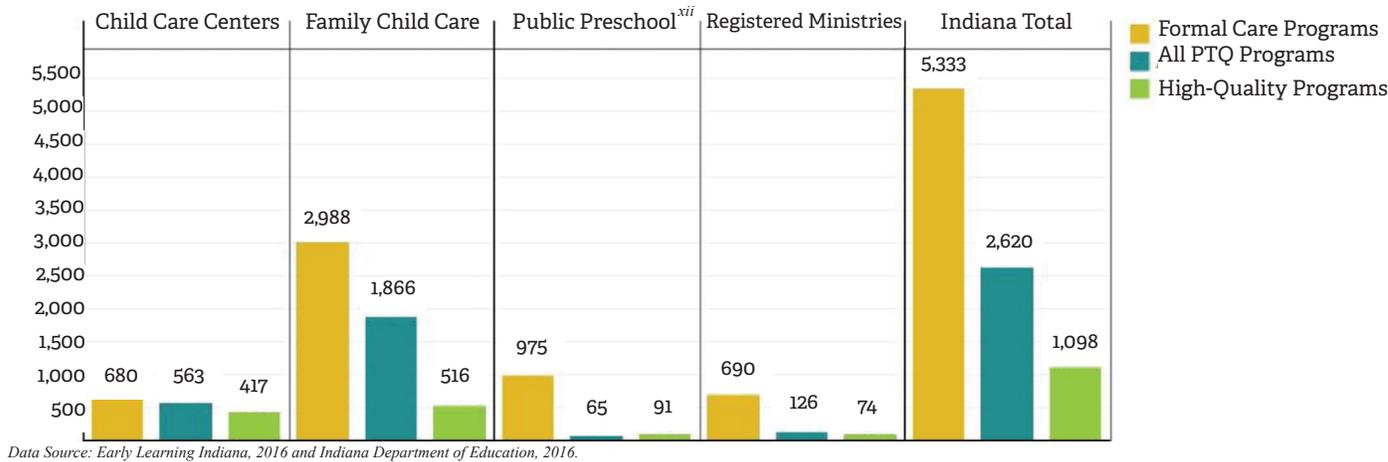


Data Source: Early Learning Indiana, 2016.

xi. In 2015, Indiana implemented an additional pathway for public preschools to participate in Paths to QUALITY.TM Some public preschools are also a licensed child care center, and their data is identified with the child care center provider type category.

Of the total 5,333 formal early care and education programs, approximately half (49%) are participating in Paths to QUALITY™ (PTQ) and only 21 percent are considered high-quality.⁶¹ In the past year, Indiana added approximately 130 high-quality programs and enrolled an additional 2,200 children in high-quality programs.⁶² The majority of the increases took effect in the communities participating in the two pre-k pilot programs.

FIGURE 22: HIGH-QUALITY BY TYPE OF PROVIDER

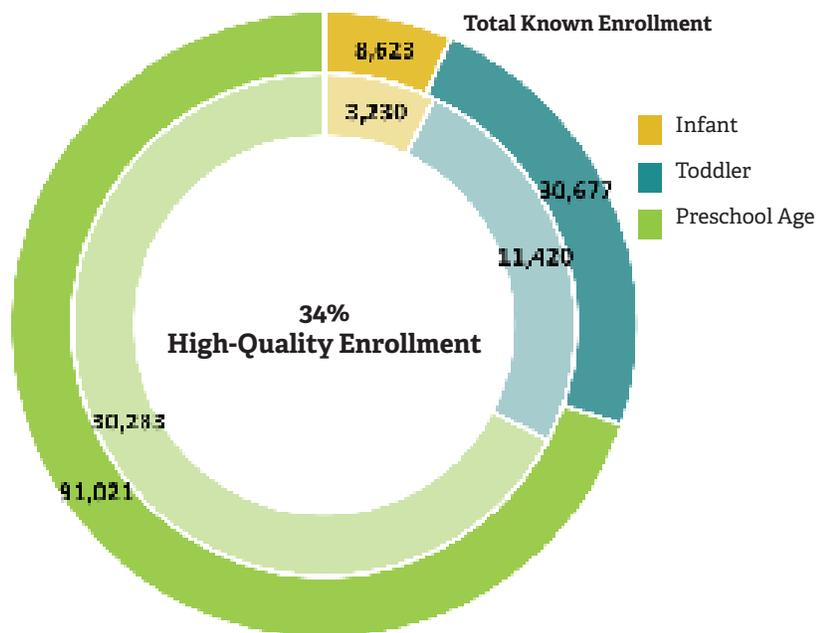


As previously explained, the majority of provider options available to families are family child care homes. They are participating in the state’s voluntary quality rating system, PTQ, at a high rate (62%) but only 17 percent of family child care providers are rated high-quality. By comparison, the majority of child care centers (81%) are rated as high-quality, but there are fewer of them across the state – and the availability varies tremendously by county. Registered ministries, family child care providers, and preschools also provide tremendous opportunity to grow the number of high-quality programs across the state.

FIGURE 23: ENROLLMENT OF CHILDREN BY AGE AND QUALITY LEVEL

Even while two-thirds of all Hoosier children ages five or under need some type of care because their parent(s) work, the enrollment of children by age groups varies. The majority of children enrolled in known care and high-quality care are preschoolers. **Fewer infants and toddlers are enrolled in known care and high-quality care.**

Looking closer at the distribution of high-quality seats across the state, there are gaps in the availability based on zip code. While nearly all counties have at least one high-quality program, there are still **nine counties with no high-quality program option for families.**



Data Source: Early Learning Indiana, 2016 and Indiana Department of Education, 2016.

^{xii} Some public preschools are nationally accredited and not enrolled in PTQ. Therefore, there is a higher number of high-quality public preschools than those that are in PTQ.

Community Support that Fosters High-Quality Learning Environments

ELAC's Provider Participation and Advancement (PPA) workgroup identified an opportunity to promote the advancement of high-quality early care and education programs by supporting the communities across the state who are interested in advancing early learning locally. With a goal of gaining a better understanding of existing coalitions and their work, the PPA workgroup held panel discussions, invited members of existing coalitions onto the workgroup, and reviewed national research regarding best practices in coalition building.

As a culmination of this work, the PPA workgroup has started developing an Early Learning Coalition Building Toolkit to support all communities, at whatever stage in development, with the goal of improving positive change for children and families. This Early Learning Coalition Building Toolkit is intended to support communities with the following three components:

1. A **Framework** describing the philosophical basis for early learning coalition building.
2. An **Early Learning Coalition Building Self-Assessment** that provides a roadmap for ongoing program improvement by identifying the coalition's **Stage of Growth** assessed by 22 indicators in **Four Key Elements**, all of which are defined in the following case studies.
 - a. Four Stages of Growth - Entering, (re-) Emerging, Progressing, and Excelling.
 - b. Four Key Elements - Engage Stakeholders, Understand the State of Community, Create Collective Vision, and Implement Continuous Improvement.
3. A set of **Coalition Building Resources** supporting coalition building work.

In the Appendix are case studies of four existing early learning coalitions at various stages of growth representing Wabash County, Northwest Indiana region, Bartholomew County and St. Joseph County.

Look for more information regarding the Early Learning Coalition Building Toolkit in 2017!



Kindergarten Readiness

2020 ELAC Goal



High-quality early care and education will be supported by best practices in all communities.

Need

- Indiana has no consistent way to measure a child’s kindergarten readiness.
- Custom measures of kindergarten readiness in pilot programs show substantial gains for low-income children, and additional income/education benefits for their parents.
- The number of children being retained in Kindergarten continues to increase.

KEY INDICATORS

Kindergarten Readiness for School ⁶³	Children entering kindergarten	Children retained in kindergarten	State cost of kindergarten retention	Children ready for kindergarten
	90%	5%	\$24 million	?

ELAC officially defines Kindergarten Readiness this way: 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.

The purpose of all of Indiana’s early childhood efforts and investments is to present children at the kindergarten door, optimally ready to learn. However, **Indiana, is currently unable to determine the readiness of children entering kindergarten.** Indiana does not have a uniform kindergarten readiness assessment tool that is used

FIGURE 25: INDIANA KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

	2011-12	2015-16
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten	76,765	77,038
% of Children Enrolled in Kindergarten	87%	90%
Children Retained in Kindergarten	2,823	3,638
% of Children Retained in Kindergarten	4%	5%

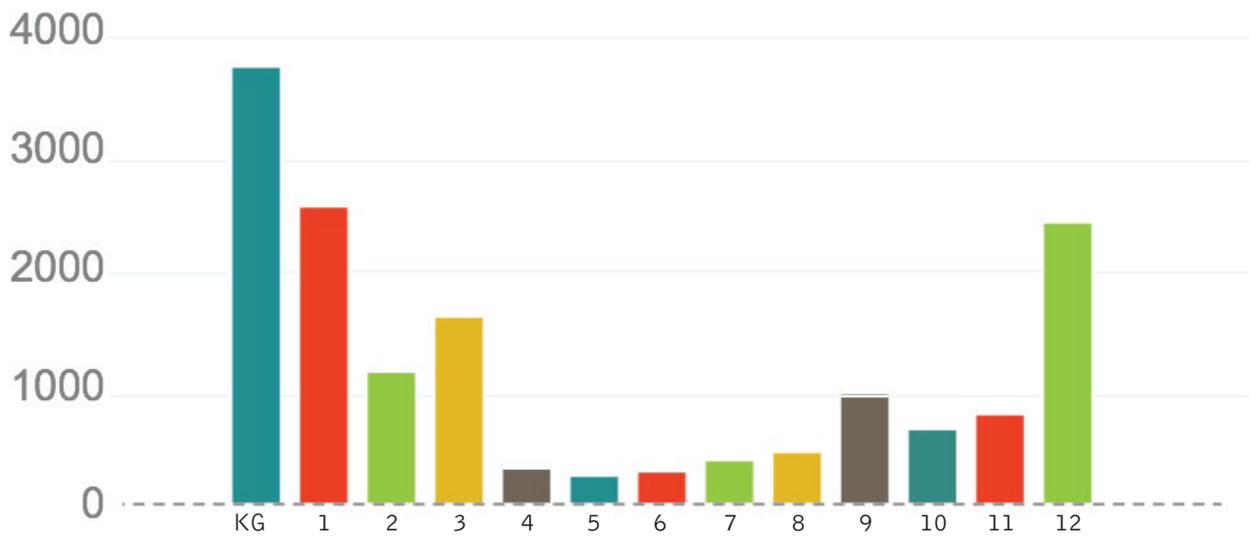
Data Source: Indiana Department of Education, 2016.

statewide. The continued unavailability of such a baseline makes progress tracking impossible. In the absence of such assessment, ELAC has been utilizing a surrogate: the percent of children being retained in kindergarten. In the past five years, the number of children retained in kindergarten has been increasing.

Nearly three-fourths (74%) of the kindergarten students being retained were eligible to receive free or reduced lunch assistance.⁶⁴ This picture is consistent with national findings. Children from low-income families often start kindergarten 12 to 14 months behind their peers in pre-reading and language skills.⁶⁵ As a result, they run a greater risk of being retained in kindergarten.

In order to put the retention of kindergarteners into context, the ELAC Data Coordination and System Integration workgroup further explored the retention rates for students from kindergarten through 12th grade. As displayed in the chart below, the number of students being retained in kindergarten (3,638) is significantly higher than any other grade.⁶⁶ Research shows that children who are retained in early grades are also more likely to later drop out of school.^{67,68}

FIGURE 26: NUMBER OF STUDENTS RETAINED IN K-12TH GRADE (2015-16)



Nearly three-fourths (74%) of the students being retained were eligible to receive free or reduced lunch assistance.

As the number of children being retained in kindergarten has increased, so have the costs of kindergarten retention. The cost of kindergarten retention for the 2015-16 school year was \$24 million, which is an increase of an additional \$2 million from the last school year.⁶⁹ This is a conservative estimate since the cost only includes state costs and does not include a more comprehensive dollar amount representing federal and local costs.

Indiana spent \$24 million on kindergarten retention.



Summary of Child Outcomes

- ✓ The EEMG and OMW progress reviews demonstrate that high quality preschool experiences result in noteworthy gains and overcoming gaps in delays for the majority of the children involved.
- ✓ Children in EEMG programs show accelerated gains in kindergarten readiness skills in English Language Arts and Math - demonstrating over 15 months of gains in English Language Arts and Math after only 9-10 months of participating. Social Skills show significant gains as well.
- ✓ Children who were identified as having moderate to high levels of at-risk behaviors at the start of the year show a significant decline in at-risk behaviors by the end of the year.
- ✓ Of the children identified as delayed at the start of the program year, the majority exited at or above their age level by the end of the program year.
- ✓ Children in OMW programs show greater gains than the comparison group in kindergarten readiness skills of language comprehension and early literacy skills.
- ✓ Children in OMW programs also show greater gains than the comparison group in developmental skills of executive functioning and social skills leading to reduced behavior problems.

Children made substantial gains in kindergarten readiness, overcoming delays and decreasing at-risk behaviors.

Summary of Family Engagement

- ✓ Well over half of the families surveyed (68% EEMG; 56% OMW) are headed by parents who are either single, divorced, or separated. Family income ranges do not exceed \$29,000 annually.
- ✓ Nevertheless, the families of children enrolled in EEMG programs report overwhelmingly positive family outcomes with the program's assistance such as using positive parenting, sharing information with the program, trying ideas at home, and identifying any needed resources.
- ✓ An overwhelming majority of families of the children enrolled in OMW programs report being satisfied or very satisfied with OMW program.
- ✓ Families of children enrolled in OMW programs report that they increased work or school hours (51%), were able to get a new job (35%), or began school or job training (33%).
- ✓ Of the children enrolled in OMW programs, 34% would be at home if not for the OMW program.

Positive impact on families, including improved earnings and/or education for parents.

Summary of Program Quality

- ✓ The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) was used to study the quality of interactions in the both EEMG and OMW programs. Three domains are studied through CLASS: emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support.
- ✓ Quality classroom interactions are taking place, according to both EEMG and OMW assessments. Classroom average scores are higher in emotional support and classroom organization than in instructional support.
- ✓ EEMG program classrooms demonstrate similar scores to national and state data with slight improvements in the scores as compared to the year 1 progress report.
- ✓ OMW program classrooms demonstrated similarities to national and state data. However, no significant differences were found from the comparison program classrooms.

Recommendations

The state has made considerable progress in ensuring that young children have access to a high-quality, affordable early care and education 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. Toward that end, ELAC offers the following recommendations:



1. Indiana needs to increase the quality and access to pre-k education for young children in the following ways:

- Expand statewide over a period of five years to ensure that appropriate state and local infrastructure is in place to support positive child outcomes.
- Target expansion to families in greatest need using income levels and other risk factors for families where potential return on taxpayer investment is highest.
- In addition to pre-k scholarships, invest in capacity building to add the high-quality seats needed to ensure that all families have access to high-quality pre-k regardless of their zip code.
- Enhance the provider supports in place, such as coaching, monitoring and technical assistance so the quality of pre-k is consistent and aligned with best practices.
- Support the recruitment, development and retention of a high-quality workforce.
- Develop or adopt a standardized approach to measure efforts via a kindergarten readiness assessment (KRA) and/or kindergarten entry assessment (KEA), inclusive of the cost and training parameters to implement a KRA and/or KEA, so continuous improvement in readiness can be measured.
- Remove the local community match required so children in counties where need is great can participate and so private/philanthropic dollars can provide supplemental services.
- Align the standards of the two pre-k programs (Early Education Matching Grant and On My Way Pre-K) to improve efficiencies and program quality.
- Seek additional and diverse funding streams to support statewide pre-k expansion by applying for more federal funding when available and expanding state-funded pre-k.

2. Any preschool-aged child enrolled in an early care and education program that receives state, local or federal funding should be assigned a unique identification number (e.g., STN), with parent permission, to support continuous improvement and measure student outcomes.

3. Since Indiana has numerous local community coalitions with an early learning focus, the state should allocate resources to identify, inform, support and equip these coalitions to support their functioning at an optimal level.

4. In order to support increased access to high-quality early care and education, the state needs to increase support to augment current marketing and outreach activities to increase participation and advancement in Paths to QUALITY™ and target outreach to communities with no or limited high-quality care and education.

5. Funding that supports early learning programs should be flexible and guiding policies should ensure the maximum ability to layer all eligible funding for high-quality early learning programs. For example, to support working families with full-day care, CCDF / Head Start / On My Way Pre-K funding could be layered to efficiently accomplish this goal.

6. Based on the current early childhood workforce shortage identified and the research that supports the important role of a high-quality workforce to support positive child outcomes, Indiana needs to devote additional resources to increase the quality and supply of the early childhood workforce.

7. To fully represent the programs that serve children from birth through age five and in kindergarten through third grade, we request the addition of new ELAC members to include State agency coordinators from both Part B, section 619, and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and State agency representative(s) responsible for health and mental health. We believe the current balance of the private and public sectors is advantageous. Additional ethnic and geographic diversity would also be a plus. These additional members will ensure a comprehensive and well-balanced advisory committee as well as help qualify Indiana for potential new federal funding to support the expansion of preschool in Indiana.



Endnotes



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Sources and Technical Notes for ELAC Dashboard

Hoosier Children and Families

Young Children Ages 0-5: U.S., Census Bureau, 2010 - 2014 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates, Table B17024.

Young Children Living In Poverty: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates.

Percent of Annual Income a Family in Poverty Pays for High-Quality Care: Early Learning Indiana, 2016; 2016 Poverty Guidelines, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Calculated by taking the income for a family of 3 with one child (ages 0-5) in poverty (\$20,160) divided by the average cost of high-quality care (\$8,482).

Indiana's Children Live in Households where all Parents Work: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates, Table B23008.



A High-Quality Early Care and Childhood Education

Children Enrolled in Known Programs: Early Learning Indiana, 2016; Indiana Department of Education, 2016. Calculated by adding the number of children in child care programs as of May 2016 plus the number of children in public preschools for the 2015-2016 school year. The public preschools that are registered with FSSA (via child care licensing or Paths to QUALITY™ were not counted in the total number to ensure an unduplicated count.

Children Enrolled in High-Quality Programs: Early Learning Indiana, 2016. Calculated by adding all Paths to QUALITY™ Level 3, Level 4 and approved nationally accredited programs as of May 2016.

High-Quality Enrollment in Known Programs: Early Learning Indiana, 2016; Indiana Department of Education, 2016. Calculated as the number of children enrolled in high quality programs divided by the number of children enrolled in known programs as of May 2016.

High Quality Enrollment for Children Likely in Need of Care: Early Learning Indiana, 2016; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates, Table B23008. Calculated as the number of children enrolled in high quality programs as of May 2016 divided by the number of young children who live in households where all parents are in the workforce.

Early Care and Education Workforce

Early Care and Education Workforce: Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning, 2016; Indiana Department of Education, 2016. The data reflects the number of child care staff (not volunteers or household members) at known programs who submitted background checks to FSSA, and the number of public school preschool teachers identified by the Indiana Department of Education in the 2015-2016 school year. The public school teachers that were identified in schools registered with FSSA were not counted in the total number to ensure an unduplicated count.

Early Care and Education Workforce with Any BA Degree: Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children (2014). Indiana Child Care Workforce Study, available here: <http://secure.iaeyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2014-Indiana-Child-Care-Workforce-Study-FINAL.pdf>.

Annual Median Wages for Preschool Teachers: Indiana Workforce Development, Research & Analysis. 2015 Occupational Employment Statistics: Employment and Wage Report. Note: While the median wage reported in 2015 is higher and signifies an improvement compared to 2011, the actual "buying power" of that wage is lower when factoring the cost of inflation.

Projected Early Care and Education Workforce Deficit: Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Research & Analysis, 2012-2022 & 2014-2024 Occupational Employment Projections; Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children (2014). Indiana Child Care Workforce Study. Calculation: Based on the Occupational Employment Projections, the state currently has 19,584 Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers employed in the field. By 2024, Indiana is projected to need 28,662 Preschool Teachers and Child Care Workers. Factoring an annual 30% turnover rate, there will be a projected shortfall of 9,078 in the early care and education workforce for these two occupations by 2024.

Kindergarten Readiness

Children Enrolled in Kindergarten: Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), 2016; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 - Year Estimates. 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. Calculated by taking the number of students enrolled in Kindergarten divided by the Census population for 5 year olds.

Children Retained in Kindergarten: Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), 2016. Calculation: Kindergarten retention represents the number of students who repeated Kindergarten from the 2014-2015 school year to the 2015-2016 school year. The retention rates were calculated using data from the Indiana Department of Education. Specifically, "Membership Enrollment" from Period 1 was used to compare student test numbers (STN) from year to year. Membership Enrollment is used as the sole source of data to obtain a local education agency's (LEA) average daily membership (ADM). ADM is used to determine the tuition support for an LEA. If a student was counted as a Kindergarten student from 2014-2015 to 2015-2016, the student was determined to be retained.

Cost of Retention: Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), 2016. Calculation: The state cost of retention represents the formulaic amount generated per ADM for the school corporation where the student was retained. Since the tuition support cost only accounts for an LEA's general fund revenue, actual costs to an LEA may be much higher. The costs do not include local, some state, or federal revenue.

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.



Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee

Appendix

Case Study of Four Early Learning Coalitions in Indiana

Stage of Growth	Key Elements
<p data-bbox="516 751 704 793">“Entering”</p> <p data-bbox="347 840 873 1024">The community has formed an organized structure to intentionally convene around early learning and is gathering information to understand the current state in the community.</p>	<p data-bbox="943 751 1333 793">“Engage Stakeholders”</p> <ul data-bbox="878 840 1401 1024" style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the right people• Stakeholders agree to work together• Develop and maintain participation, roles, and responsibilities• Establish trust

Community Foundation of Wabash County

While interested stakeholders in Wabash County have not formally initiated the coalition-building process, they are coalesced around the importance of early learning in their county. Julie Garber of the Community Foundation of Wabash County says it is “more the result of strong working relationships between the foundation, schools, private early education partners, and ancillary organizations, such as the YMCA libraries, churches, the Honeywell Foundation, and others.”

Many collaborations have taken place in Wabash County that demonstrate an agreement among stakeholders to work on behalf of children and families in Wabash County. One such initiative is spear-headed by the Wabash County YMCA called the Wabash County Promise. This movement brings together community partners such as the YMCA, businesses, the hospital, and schools to ensure all families with children in kindergarten through third grade are enrolled in College Choice 529 accounts. The Community Foundation of Wabash County builds on this program, offering students in grades 4-8 college and career scholarships, which are awarded into students’ 529 accounts.

The stakeholders involved in the early learning arena in Wabash County have spent more than ten years establishing trusted relationships that will benefit children and their families. Julie Garber sees the time as “ripe” to develop a more formal coalition, just as the community is coalescing around place-based initiatives, such as a Regional Cities grant to rebuild and enlarge an early learning center, a Stellar Community designation, a Deluxe Small Business Revolution Prize, and national recognition for the Wabash County Promise and Promise Scholarships programs.



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Stage of Growth

Key Elements

“(re-)Emerging”

The community has formed an organized structure to intentionally convene around early learning and is gathering information to understand the current state in the community.

“State of Community”

- Assess community need and capacity
- Understand scope and skill (assets)
- Gather information & understand data

Northwest Indiana Early Learning Coalition (NWI EL)

The NWI EL uses data collected by previous coalitions such as those sponsored by United Way Success by Six and current head start community assessments that are revised every three years to identify key research questions that the coalition wants to answer. Two questions of focus for the NWI EL would be how might the community increase the percentage of registered ministries enrolled in Paths to QUALITY™ and how will the community increase the number of qualified and educated teachers in the early education community.

Sandy Kauffman of the NWI EL says, “[The NWI EL members] have already identified multiple strengths to build on, but in many cases those strengths range from narrowly available to not widely known.” To message these strengths to the appropriate populations, the coalition is researching how it might gain access to current data more consistently and how this data can be shared across sectors to engage more stakeholders. It is the coalition’s intention to share current data and performance expectations in hopes of moving the early learning community to greater change.

NWI EL uses the local child care resource & referral data which span four counties and multiple communities. A full community assessment must be completed by all head start grantees every three years which is also available to the coalition. Members will also make available and pertinent reports from their respective sectors.



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Stage of Growth	Key Elements
“Progressing” <p>The community has formed an organized structure to intentionally convene around early learning and is gathering information to understand the current state in the community.</p>	“Collective Vision” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the compelling issue• Identify and prioritize catalytic projects and pilots• Develop a future state picture• Create and sustain a shared vision• Develop and use a strategic plan

Bartholomew County Early Learning Coalition

Engaging 30 stakeholders to-date, the Bartholomew County Early Learning Coalition is using the processes developed by the Institute for Coalition Building. The “Grand Challenge” description given to us by Kathy Oren states, “The objective of the Bartholomew County Early Learning Coalition is to become a community coalition focused on the goal of ensuring all families have access to affordable, high quality early learning programs and opportunities.” Five goals intended to realize this vision for Bartholomew County are: (1) provide accessible and affordable early learning for children and families, (2) ensure teachers are educated and supported, (3) engage families and support their needs, (4) increase the number of high quality programs and facilities, and (5) have a community that is educated on the importance of early learning.

As a group, the Bartholomew County Early Learning Coalition has decided to focus on two of the stated goals as initial priorities. The goals being to ensure early learning is accessible and affordable and ensure teachers are educated and supported. The coalition recognizes that to impact these two area of opportunity, strategic partnerships and projects must be designed and implemented with visible outcomes and consistent benchmarking. Engaged stakeholders believe that by increasing access, affordability, education, and support, the percentage of kindergarten ready children can increase to 85%.

With a long list of engaged stakeholders, the Bartholomew County Early Learning Coalition keeps the community informed by sharing an Early Learning dashboard of pertinent data across sectors. By creating a broad coalition, it should be easier to bring the right stakeholders together to organize and implement future projects.



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Stage of Growth	Key Elements
<p data-bbox="509 506 704 541">“Excelling”</p> <p data-bbox="370 590 846 772">The community has formed an organized structure to intentionally convene around early learning and is gathering information to understand the current state in the community.</p>	<p data-bbox="927 506 1386 541">“Continuous Improvement”</p> <ul data-bbox="878 590 1435 848" style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct projects with deliverables and metrics• Disciplined continuous improvement• Implement outcomes and evaluation strategies to inform collaborative work• Understand systems development and the impact of systems change

Ready to Grow St. Joe

Ready to Grow St. Joe, the Saint Joseph County Early Learning Coalition recognized early that the current system of supports provided in their community were fragmented and disjointed, leaving children and families without access to comprehensive services. To counteract this trend, the coalition created a Family Resource List with community partners. The objective of the document is to “minimize duplication and streamline communication across various service providers in the community who serve children and families.” Now in the implementation phase of the project, engaged stakeholders and identified members are distributing the Family Resource List throughout the county.

Engaging a diverse group of stakeholders through the work of core workgroups that are charged with identified short-term successes, the coalition is focused on accomplishing long-term goals such as (1) Improve communication, build trust and eliminate existing silos, through community engagement, collaboration and leadership, (2) Create a coordinated, comprehensive, family-focused system of community resources that gives every child the opportunity to begin school ready and eager to learn, and (3) Determine measurable outcomes that drive our collective work, how data will be collected and how we will hold ourselves accountable.

Emily Rupchock says that the Early Childhood Coalition of St. Joseph County “work(s) through our members to engage the community, build systems and empower families, with efforts focused on developing and implementing collaborative strategic plans in the following key focus areas: Health & Wellness, Quality Early Learning, and Family Support.”