State of Childcare
in Buncombe County
DCDEE data as of Sept '23

Buncombe Partnership for Children - Jenny Vial

Update for Buncombe County ECEDF Committee

January 2, 2024

Buncombe Partnership for Children

a partner in the Smart Start network

THE BUNCOMBE WORKFORCE – BY THE NUMBERS

- Number of teachers = 808
- Number of administrators = 107
- Number of support staff = 76
- On average, the early care and education teaching staff made $13.37 per hour and directors made $24.00 per hour.
- WAGE$ salary supplement program participants = 114 teacher/administrators in 54 facilities
- Turnover rate of WAGE$ recipients = 19%
- TEACH Early Childhood scholarship program = 66 participants in 28 facilities
- Facilities receiving unrestricted Smart Start grants from Buncombe Partnership for Children to maintain high quality = 63

STABILIZATION

Child care was identified as an essential service under the Stay Home, Stay Safe order. Centers that wished to remain open and agreed to meet updated health, safety and operational guidelines applied to NC DCDEE to remain open or reopen following a short closure. Enrollment continues to remain low due to workforce shortages. DCDEE continues to provide limited stabilization grants for salary increases.

	Feb-20	May-20	April-23	% change
Children enrolled (ages 0-12)	5473	921	4571	-16.84%
# facilities (serving ages 0-12)	113	54	112	-.88%

Workforce Impacts on Early Childhood Grantees

We polled funded providers to gather baseline data including impacts of workforce shortages

We asked providers for:

- Licensed Slots, Enrollment & Wait List
- NC Pre-K, Head Start & Subsidy Slots & Enrollment
- Workforce – Teachers, Assistant Teachers & Vacancies

Slots

Licensed Slots	Enrollment	Wait List
1,034	782	3,514

NC PreK Slots	NC PreK Enrollment	Head Start Slots	Head Start Enrollment	Subsidy Enrollment
167	151	123	113	231

- Providers are enrolled at only 76% yet are carrying wait lists more than 3 times their total licensed capacity
- NC PreK slots are enrolled at 90% and Head Start at 92%

Building Capacity in Buncombe County to Expand NC Pre-K Availability & Accessibility

Buncombe Partnership for Children - Deanna LaMotte

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Six Strategies to Build NC Pre-K Capacity

Increase K readiness • Expand access to Pre-K • Reduce racial disparities

Barriers to PROVIDING

- Fully funded NC Pre-K
- ECE Higher Ed Supports
- Ramp up to NC Pre-K

Barriers to ACCESSING

- Coordinated Outreach & Enrollment
- Expanded access to wrap-around care
- Expanded access to transportation

Fully Funded NCPK (slots & workforce)

FUNDING

- Supplement 432 NC Pre-K slots:
  - $906,820 (to date)
- Support K-12 parity for private site teachers
  - $82,986 (to date)

IMPACT

- 43 classrooms
- 432 slots stabilized (97% enrolled)
- 4 new NC Pre-K sites
- 43 leads at K-12 parity
- Avg 90% lead teacher retention
- ↑ professionalism & stability

Words from the field…

- *On my license, I'm a 13-year teacher. Before that raise, I made less than a first year [K-12] teacher. I have to keep up a teaching license and also have to follow childcare rules. It is a lot of work to make so very little. NC Pre-K teacher*

- *We would have had to decrease our number of NC Pre-K slots in favor of private pay slots had the county not provided this funding. -Director*

- *We have two NC Pre-K classrooms with teachers who have over 20 years of experience. There is no way we would be able to pay… certified teachers with that many years of experience without the supplemental funding. -Director*

Higher Ed Supports (workforce)

FUNDING

- Higher Ed Coach (1FTE)
- Tuition or stipends
  - $35,000/yr
- Barrier reduction & study groups
  - $10,000

IMPACT

- 49 veteran educators
- Leverages T.E.A.C.H., WAGE$, AWARD$ Plus, Pell grants, local college programs
- Supported 22 programs

Words from the field…

- *"I am so thankful for this project and my coach…! This has definitely helped me be able to get through college and given me so much support!"*

- I am more likely to stick with my certificate/degree program.
  - 82% definitely 18% somewhat
- I feel more supported as a professional.
  - 86% definitely 14% somewhat
- I am more likely to keep teaching in ECE.
  - 86% definitely 14% somewhat

Ramp Up to NC Pre-K (slots & workforce)

FUNDING

- Ramp-up Coach (1FTE)
- Stipends for participants
  - $15,400 (projected)
- Curricula and assessments
  - $25,800 (projected)

IMPACT

- 10 private classrooms "NC Pre-K ready"
  - All 4 BCS CTE classrooms
  - 5 other private centers
- Elevating quality/professionalism

Buncombe Pre-K Single Portal (accessibility)

FUNDING

- Bilingual Outreach & Enrollment Coordinator (1FTE)
- Secure application portal
  - $12,000/yr
- Coordinated Outreach
  - $10,000/yr

IMPACT

- Over 700 families engaged with ONE site/number/person
- Opportunity for concrete data
- Opportunity to expand to all pre-k apps

Words from the field…

- *I had no idea where to start. Buncombe Pre-k helped me every step of the way… Hands down a great experience and amazing placement for my little one! We could have easily been left alone to figure out this new chapter in our family's lives, but with the help of BPK we are in such a good place now!*

Transportation & Wrap (accessibility)

FUNDING

- Community-based research
  - $80,000 (contracted)
- Direct supports to families
  - $75,000 (projected)

IMPACT

- 14 families getting monthly gas cards
- 4 families getting wrap-around
- 2 summers of care for those who wouldn’t have that continuity

Questions?