



EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE

Committee Report to Board of Commissioners

September 6, 2022

Presenters: Kit Cramer, Leslie Anderson, Wendy Wieber



BUNCOMBE COUNTY



BUNCOMBE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Focus Area

Educated and Capable Community



GOAL: INCREASE KINDERGARTEN READINESS

EARLY CHILDHOOD FUND

- Resolution # 18-10-16, adopted October 30, 2018
- Authorized the creation of an **Early Childhood Education and Development Fund** for the purpose of annually investing \$3.6 million, beginning in the FY2020 budget with an annual increase of 2% in future years



EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE

15-member committee charged with:

- **engaging with community partners,**
- **soliciting public input, and**
- **making policy and funding recommendations to the Board of Commissioners**



Leslie Anderson
Jasmine Beach-Ferrara
Philip Belcher
Brandy Bowman
Kit Cramer



Marsha Davis
Rich Johnston
Linda McDaniel
Susan Mims
Robert Pressley



Misty Reising-Cogbill
Carol Steen
Mark Taft
Al Whitesides
Wendy Wieber



FUNDING STRATEGIES

Support early care & education for children birth through kindergarten with an emphasis on pre-kindergarten:

- Increase **slots** for enrollment
- Increase **quality**
- Develop/diversify early childhood **workforce**
- Support **families**
- Enhance effectiveness of overall **system**



FY2022 GRANTEES

Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 (FY2022)

- Buncombe County Schools/
Verner Center for Early Learning
- Buncombe Partnership for
Children
- Colaborativa la Milpa
- Community Action Opportunities
- Eliada Homes
- Evolve Early Learning
- Irene Wortham Center
- On Track Financial Education &
Counseling
- Read to Succeed
- Southwestern Child Development
- Swannanoa Valley Child Care
Council (Don Collins Center)
- The Christine Avery Learning
Center
- YWCA



FUNDED PROJECTS



- Behavioral health support
- Classroom supplies & furnishings
- Construction of new classrooms
- Cooperative & home-based care
- Curriculum, assessments & licensing
- Matched savings program
- Outdoor space
- Outreach & parent engagement
- Student nutrition
- Take home library
- Teacher pay
- Technology
- Workforce development for existing & new professionals



PERFORMANCE REPORTING

- Grant awards are administered via **performance contracts**
- Grantees submit **quarterly reports** on project performance
- Grant reports are published on the Early Childhood Fund website at www.buncombecounty.org/grants



PERFORMANCE RESULTS

Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 (FY2022)



**71% of all goals were met
across 21 funded projects**

- Most difficult goals to attain this year were around enrollment, attendance & staffing
- Good success on goals related to student achievement



IMPACTS OF COVID

- Young children weren't yet eligible for COVID vaccinations
- Programs unable to have as many classrooms open due to lack of staffing
- Enrollment lower as families chose other care/learning options
- Non-program staff repurposed for classroom operations
- Teacher/student attendance impacted by COVID exposures & infections
- Volunteer engagement limited due to public health precautions



SUCCESS EXAMPLES

Fiscal Year July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 (FY2022)

382 Parents improved their education or income status (YWCA)

164 Family learning kits were provided for kindergarten readiness (Read to Succeed)

17 Participants in the bilingual early childhood cooperative network (Colaborativa la Milpa)

708 hours of behavioral therapy were provided (Irene Wortham Center)

10 Workforce development participants successfully completed EDU119 (Partnership for Children)

89 Early care & education professionals enrolled in the matched savings program (On Track)



OVERALL IMPACT

Fiscal Years July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2023 (FY2020-2023)

\$14.8 + M invested so far, supporting the creation of 393 new slots

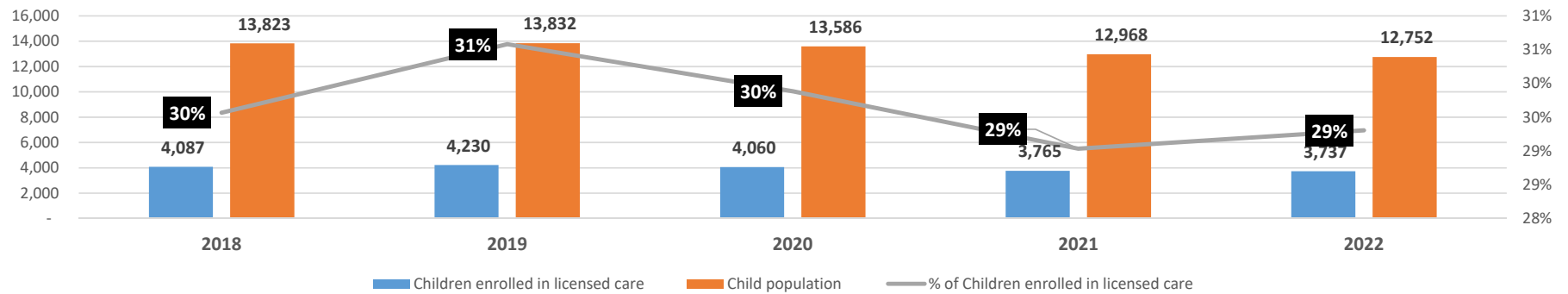


	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023 (projected)
Amount Granted	\$3,600,000	\$3,672,000	\$3,745,440	\$3,820,349
# Projects	19	19	21	22
# Funded Agencies	13	14	12	17
# New Slots Created	102	132	119	40
Existing Slots Supported	805	794	551	899

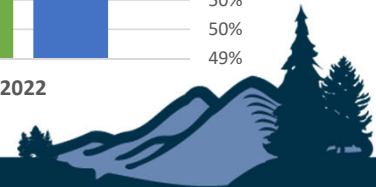
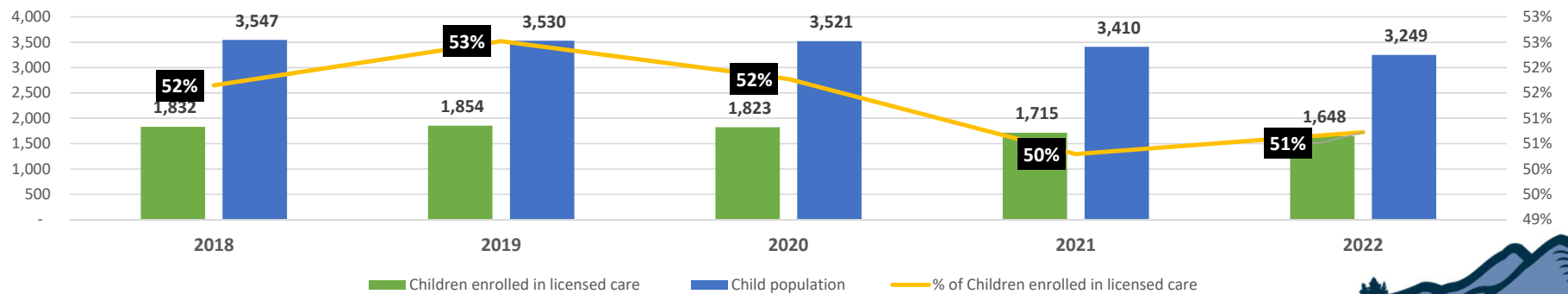


COMMUNITY INDICATORS: Children Served

All Children Birth-Kindergarten (0-5 pre-k)

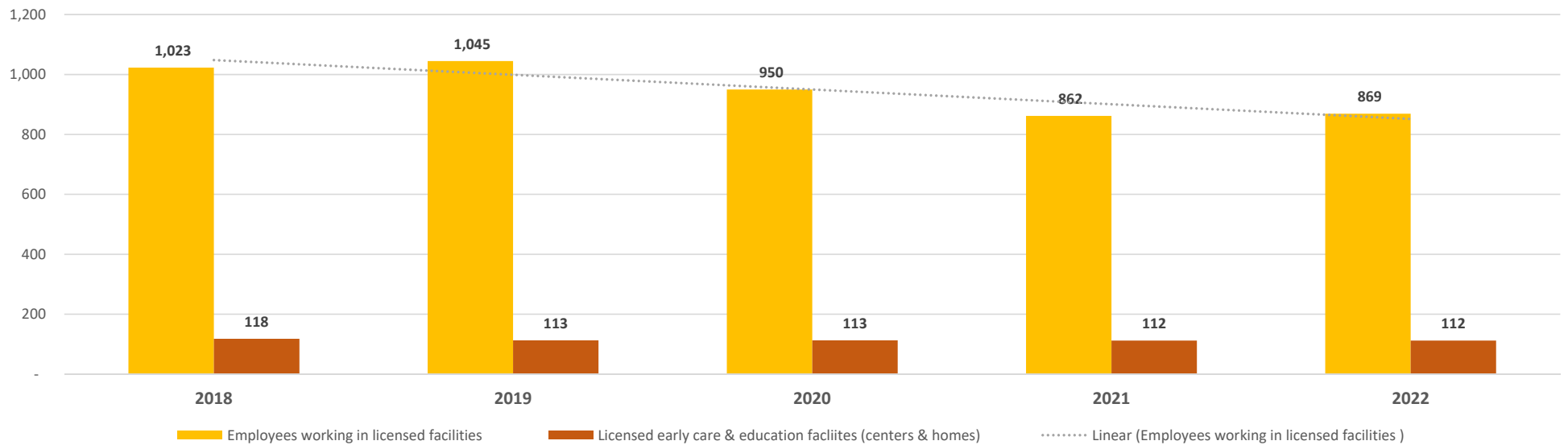


Pre-k Only (4 y.o. & 5 y.o. pre-k)



COMMUNITY INDICATORS: Workforce

Staffing Levels



COMMUNITY INDICATORS: Kindergarten Readiness

- New unified assessment used by both school systems at kindergarten entry
- NC Early Learning Inventory (NC ELI) administered by teachers within the first 30 days of entering kindergarten
- Includes 14 developmental measures with a focus on 7 that address early language, literacy & math

Language and Literacy

1. Notices and discriminates rhyme
2. Notices and discriminates alliteration
3. Tells about another time or place
4. Follows directions

Cognition and General Knowledge

5. Counts
6. Quantifies
7. Connects numerals with quantities

Approaches Toward Learning

8. Attends and engages

Physical Well-being and Motor Development

9. Uses fingers and hands

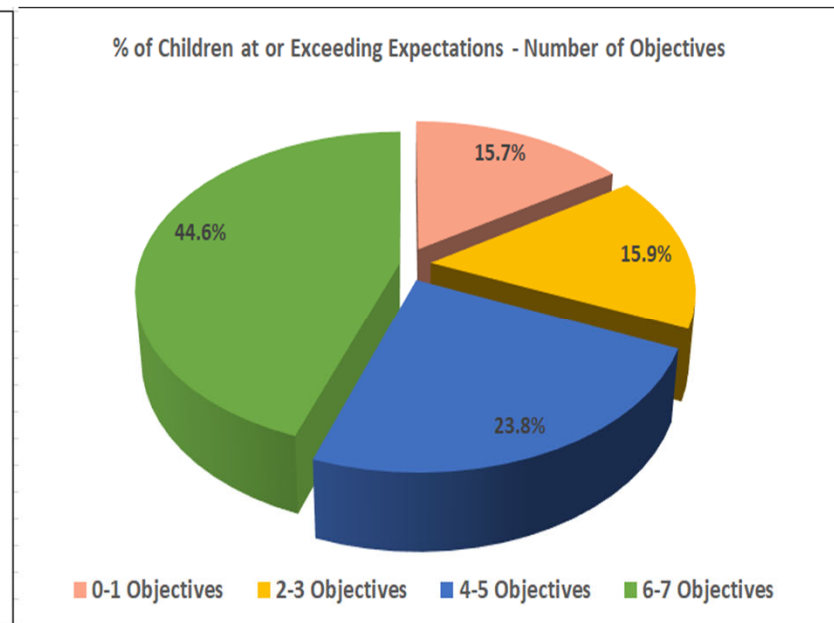
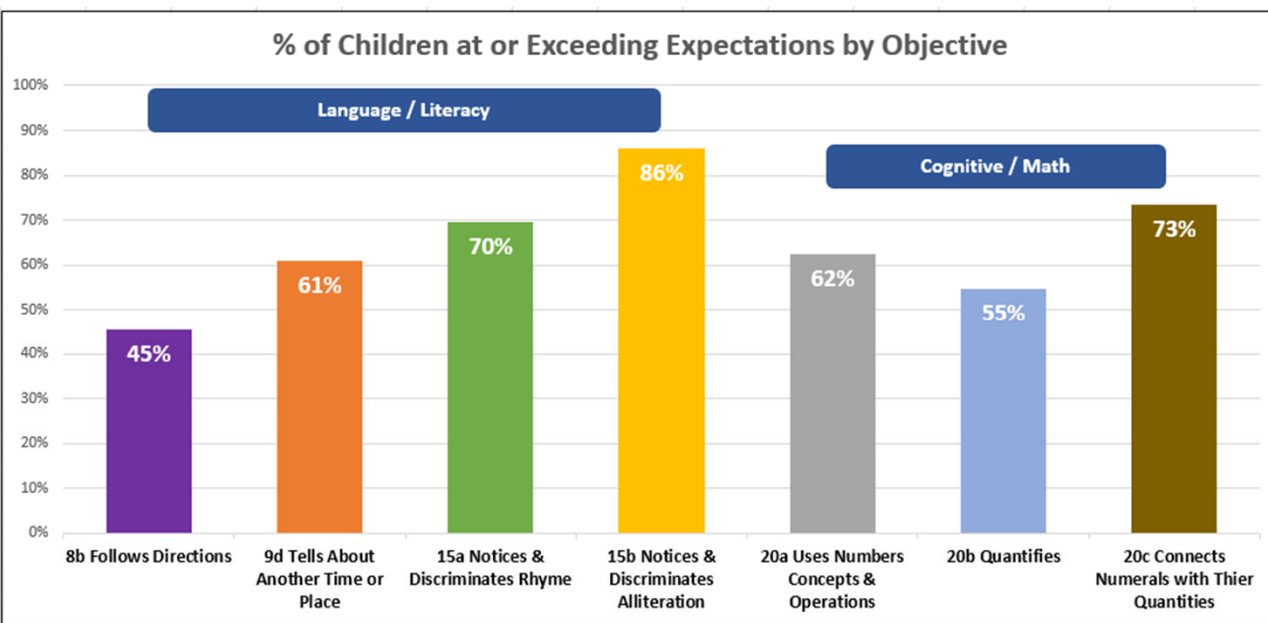
Social and Emotional Development

10. Manages feelings
11. Follows Limits and Expectations
12. Responds to emotional cues
13. Interacts with peers
14. Solves social problems



COMMUNITY INDICATORS: Kindergarten Readiness

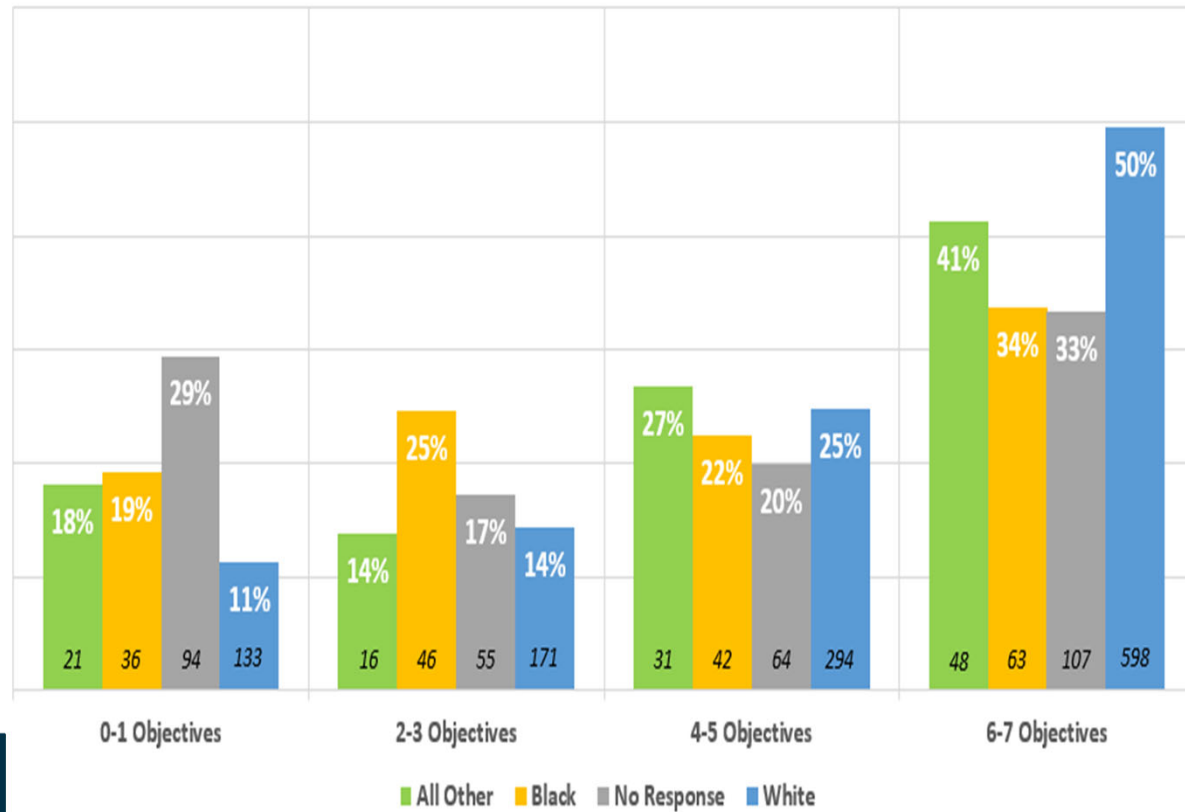
- 1,819 children in were assessed in 2020
- 69% of children met or exceeded the majority of selected objectives



COMMUNITY INDICATORS: Disparities in School Readiness

	Children Assessed	Met or Exceeded Majority of Objectives (4+)	%
Black	187	105	56%
White	1,196	892	75%
All Other	116	79	68%
No Response	320	171	53%
Total	1,819	1,247	69%

% of Children & Count at or Exceeding Expectations - Number of Objectives



KINDERGARTEN READINESS DATA



New data partnership will allow us to:

- Study impact of participation in pre-k
- Understand disparities
- Map trends & impacts
- Adjust investments and programming to meet needs



NC PRE-K EXPANSION IN BUNCOMBE

- Partnership for Children was awarded \$3.2 M COVID Recovery Funding through Buncombe County
- 2-year pilot project, FY2023-FY2024
- Intended to increase stability and equity, expand high-quality providers and licensed teachers, and make it easier for eligible families to take advantage of NC Pre-k's proven benefits



SUMMARY

- Proven, lifelong benefits of early learning as part of an educated and capable community
- A wise investment in children & families, existing and future workforce
- Early Childhood Fund off to a great start, demonstrating early successes
- Unprecedented circumstances with pandemic
- Strategies at the ready to build a strong and equitable recovery from the pandemic





Thank you!



BUNCOMBE COUNTY

