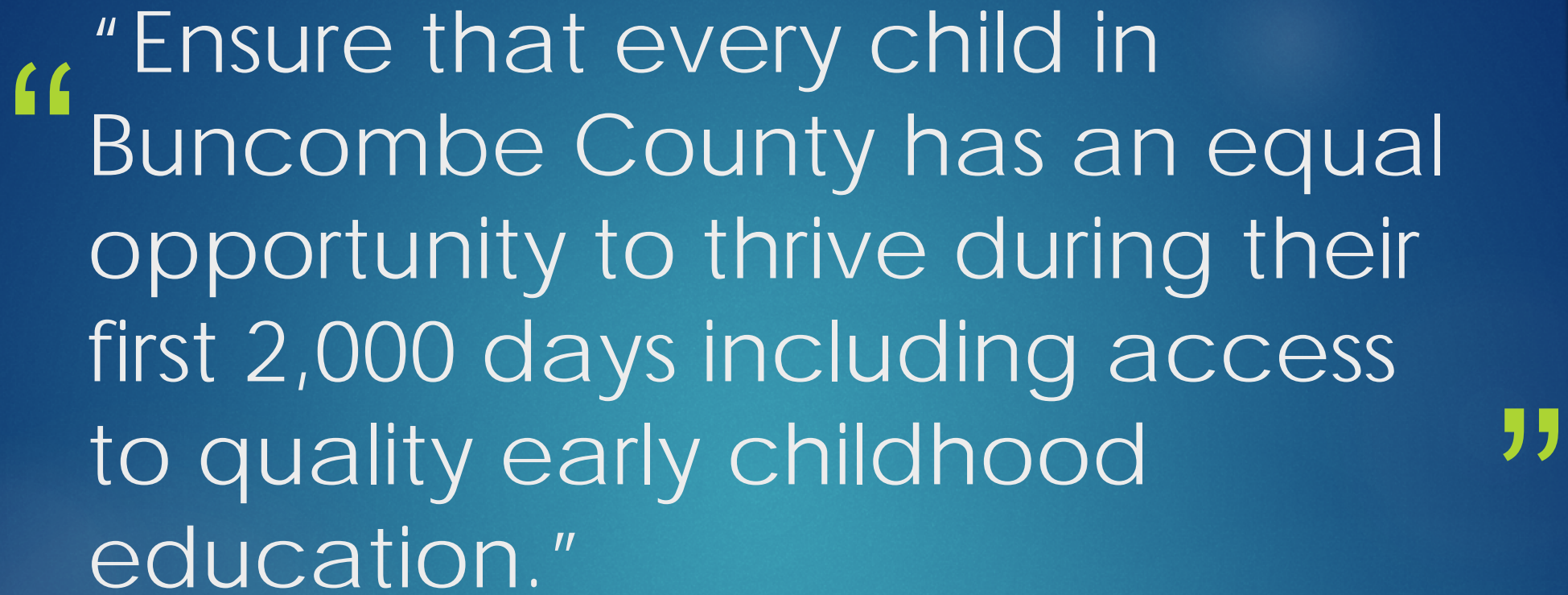




Helping Every Child Thrive

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN BUNCOMBE COUNTY





“Ensure that every child in Buncombe County has an equal opportunity to thrive during their first 2,000 days including access to quality early childhood education.”

- Board of Commissioners Strategic Priority, adopted December 2017.

BOC's Early Childhood Education Goals

- ▶ Collaborate with community leaders and stakeholders for a coordinated system approach.
- ▶ Increase the availability of high quality early childhood care and education with an emphasis on pre-k programs.
- ▶ Address issues of affordability, both for providers in a sustainable business model and for families in access to care.
- ▶ Support a robust career track in the field of early education, with development ladders from entry level to highly educated, credentialed, seasoned professionals.
- ▶ Cultivate a system that responds to the needs of families, such as those impacted by trauma, poverty and addiction.



The impact of early childhood education

- ▶ High quality early childhood education programs are proven to provide:
 - ▶ measurable short- and long-term results for children in the areas of education, health, and future earnings; and
 - ▶ measurable short- and long-term results for the peers, families and communities of children served by these programs.

Research shows a return on investment rate of 7 to 1 for every dollar invested in high quality early childhood education.



In the last 18 months,
BOC has supported:

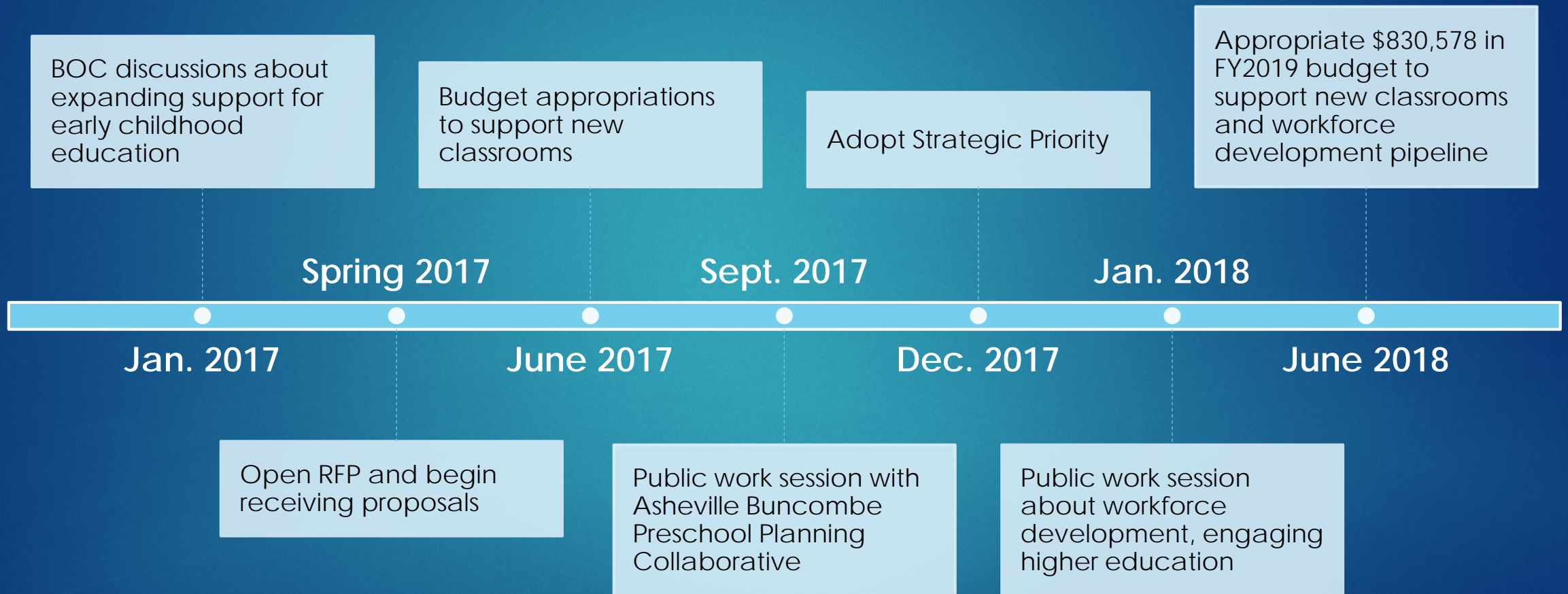
Classrooms: Supporting 8 classrooms,
including new ones

New classroom slots: 138

Workforce development pipeline:
collaboration between Buncombe County
Schools, Warren Wilson College, Verner
Center for Early Learning and AB Tech

FY2019 investment: \$830,578

Process and timeline to date

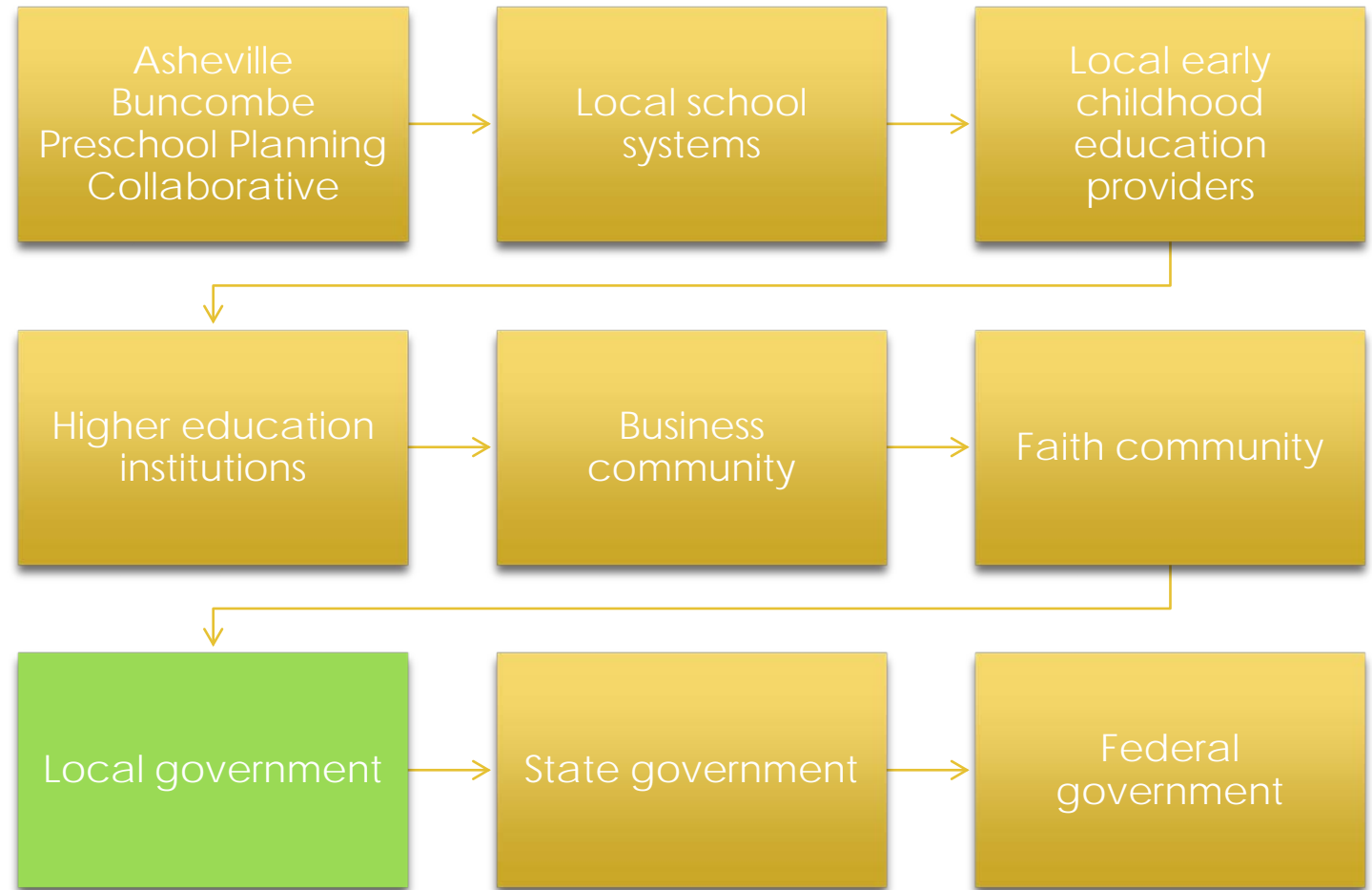


Teacher Recruitment and Retention

- Scarcity of Qualified Applicants
- Low Salaries and Benefits
 - Cost of Living in Business Cycle
- Teacher License & Qualification Barriers
 - Timeliness of licensure, background check, etc.
 - ECE/PST Requirements & UCCOL-Plan
- Substitute Pool & New Educators Requirements
- General stress of the role (competent help)



Collaborators





The need

- ▶ While increased investment is making an impact, the need persists:
 - ▶ 46% of children in Buncombe County live in poor or low-income homes; and
 - ▶ 21% of local children live in households that are food insecure.

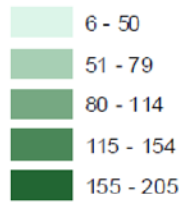
The need

- ▶ There is a well-documented local shortage of quality early childhood education programs;
- ▶ There is also a shortage of qualified teachers and other professionals to work in classrooms and centers; and
- ▶ Families face many barriers to accessing existing program, including affordability.

Child Care Supply and Demand in Buncombe County

February 2018

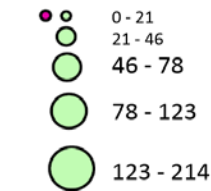
Number of children in the community*



Total: 11,646

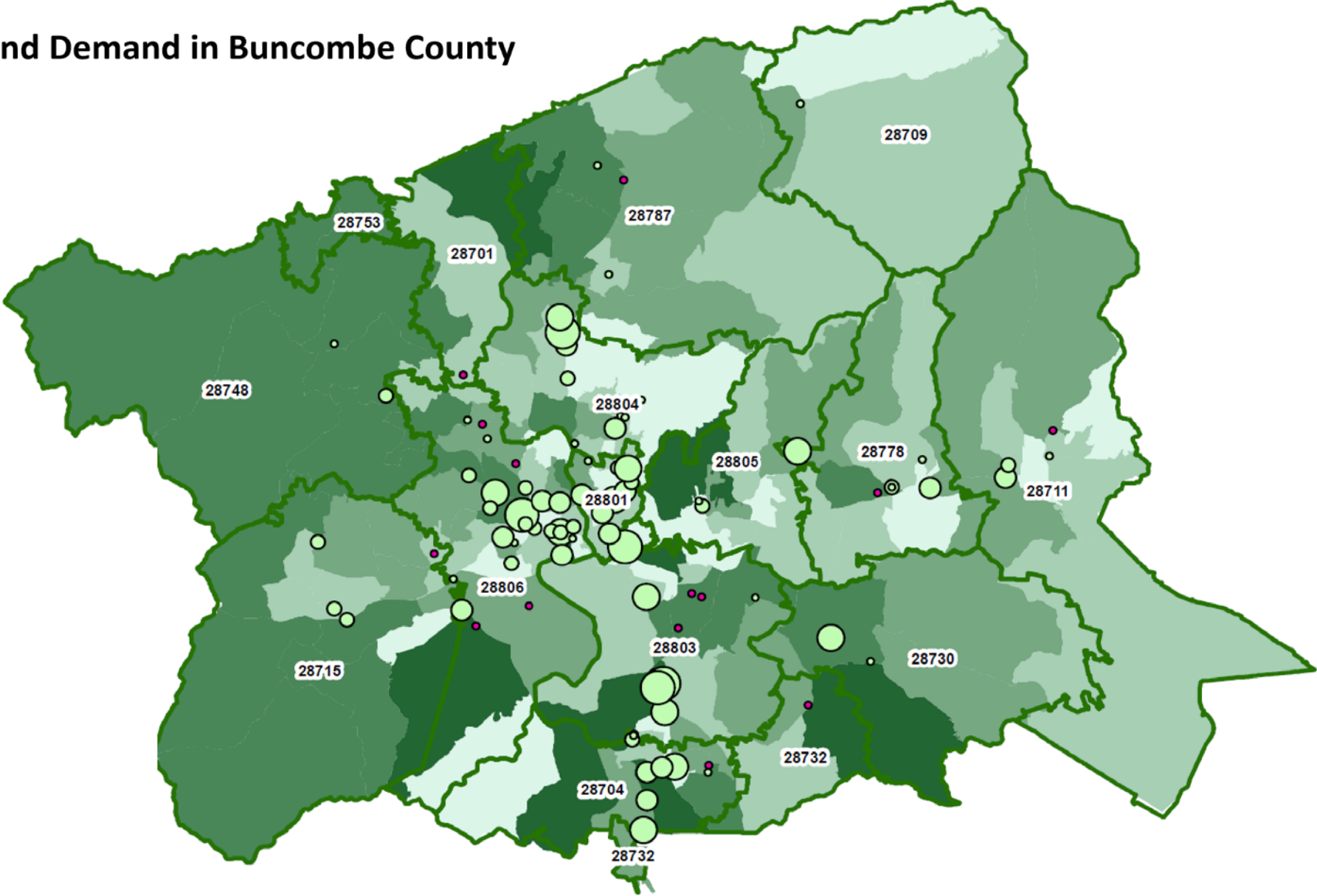
*ages 0-4 based on most recent available US Census data

Number of children served in licensed Child Care Centers and Homes**



Total: 4,141

**ages 0-5 based on DCD Quarterly Enrollment Reports



7,505 local children are not in licensed childcare.



Big picture

- ▶ Addressing this degree of need requires:
 - ▶ long-term investments across the entire 0-5 age spectrum; and
 - ▶ A mix of public and private funding and collaborations across sectors – providers, advocates, Buncombe County, business community, faith community, foundations, local school systems, and state and federal governments.

Big picture

For example, currently only 1/3 of the 6,100 three-and-four-year-olds in Buncombe County are enrolled in licensed programs.

Providing early childhood education to 50% of the children in this age cohort who are **not** currently enrolled – approximately 2,000 children – would require an estimated \$21.5 million annually.



The power of early investment from Buncombe County

Proposed next steps

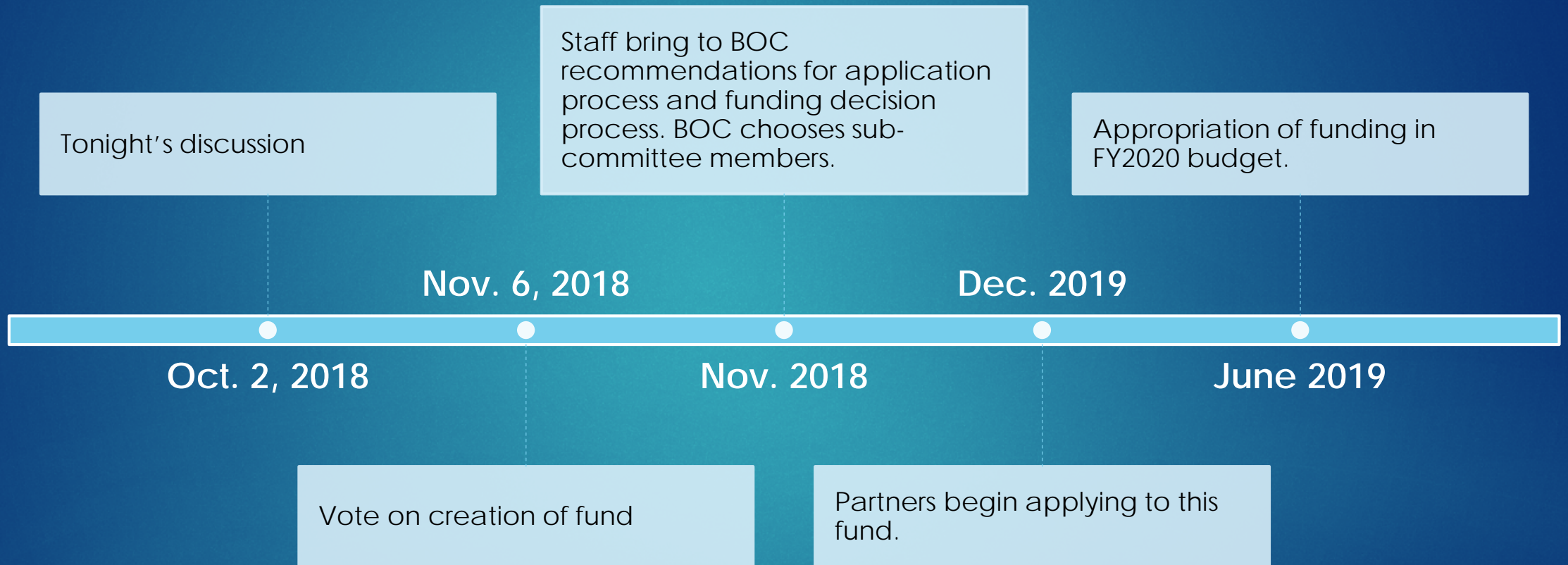
Early Childhood Education and Development Fund

- ▶ Create an **Early Childhood Education and Development Fund**.
- ▶ Appropriate \$3.6 million into fund in FY2020.
- ▶ Work with staff to create a clear, accessible application process and decision-making process.
- ▶ Create Commissioner Sub-Committee to play advisory role during implementation.

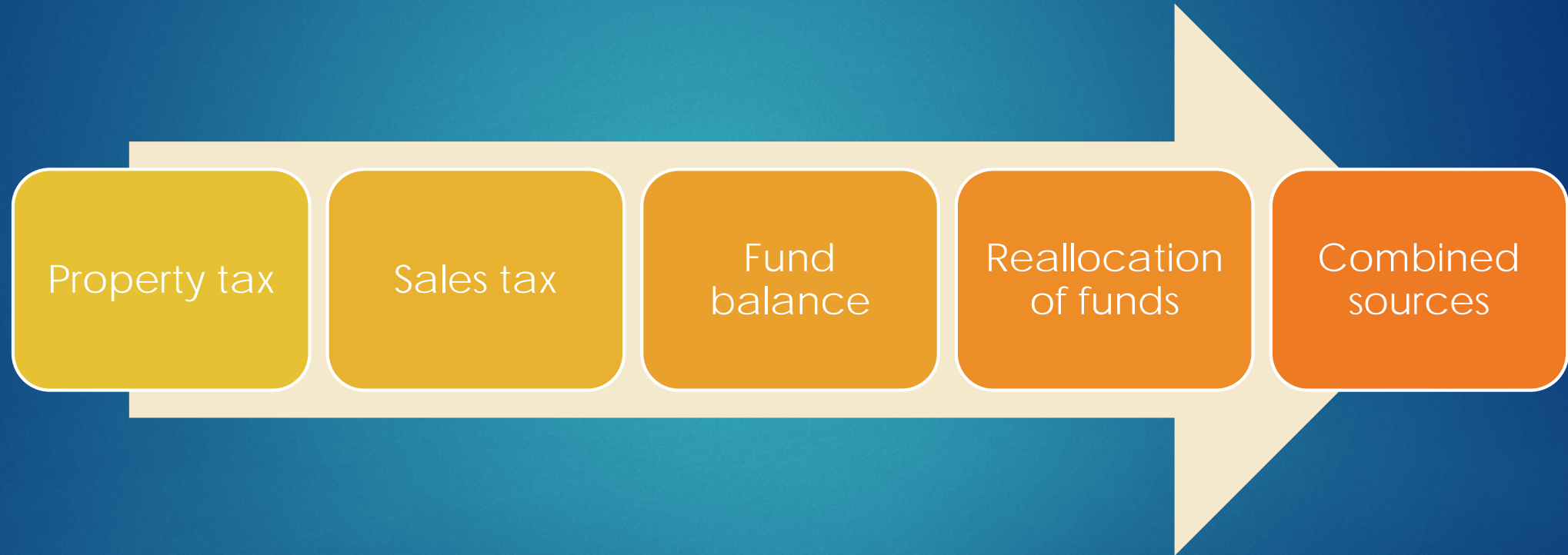
Funding Priorities


- ▶ Prioritizing programs serving children living in low and moderate income homes.
- ▶ New classrooms for children aged 0-5.
- ▶ Strategies to support coordinated system approach, e.g. shared services.
- ▶ Workforce development strategies to support a robust career track.
- ▶ Support services for children (0-5) and their families.

Proposed process and timeline



Funding options





If the proposed \$3.6 million in FY2020 is funded entirely with property tax, this would mean a \$25 increase for a homeowner whose house is valued at \$250,000.

Property tax issues

Legal Authority to fund community-based programs

- ▶ § 153A-376. Community development programs and activities.
- ▶ (a) Any county is authorized to engage in, to accept federal and State grants and loans for, and to appropriate and expend funds for community **development programs and activities**. In undertaking community development programs and activities, in addition to other authority granted by law, a county may engage in the following activities:
 - ▶ ...
 - ▶ (2) Programs concerned with employment, economic development, crime prevention, child care, health, drug abuse, education, and welfare **needs of persons of low and moderate income**.
- ▶ Link:
https://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_153A/GS_153A-376.html

Legal Authority to fund Pre-K at public schools

- ▶ Clear authority for counties to **fund public schools in operating Pre-K programs**; includes facilities and operating costs.
- ▶ Counties can fund **universal Pre-K**, serving all children, through public schools.





Thank you!

**Amy Barry,
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Buncombe
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**Kit Cramer,
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