



# EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE

---

Committee Report to Board of Commissioners

September 6, 2022

Presenters: Kit Cramer, Leslie Anderson, Wendy Wieber



# 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](http://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**

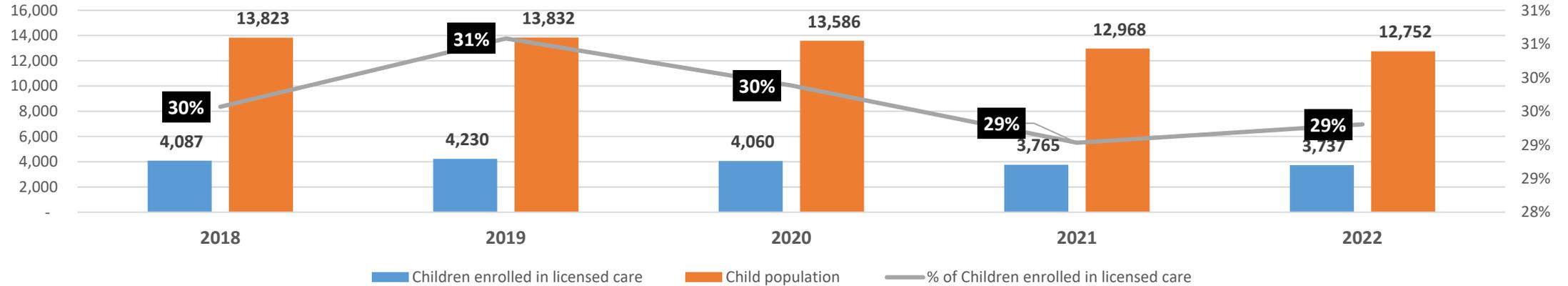


	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023 (projected)
Amount Granted	\$3,600,000	\$3,672,000	\$3,745,440	\$3,820,349
# Projects	19	19	21	22
# Funded Agencies	13	14	12	17
# New Slots Created	102	132	119	40
Existing Slots Supported	805	794	551	899

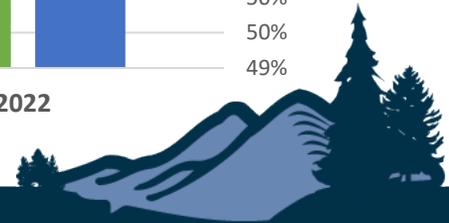
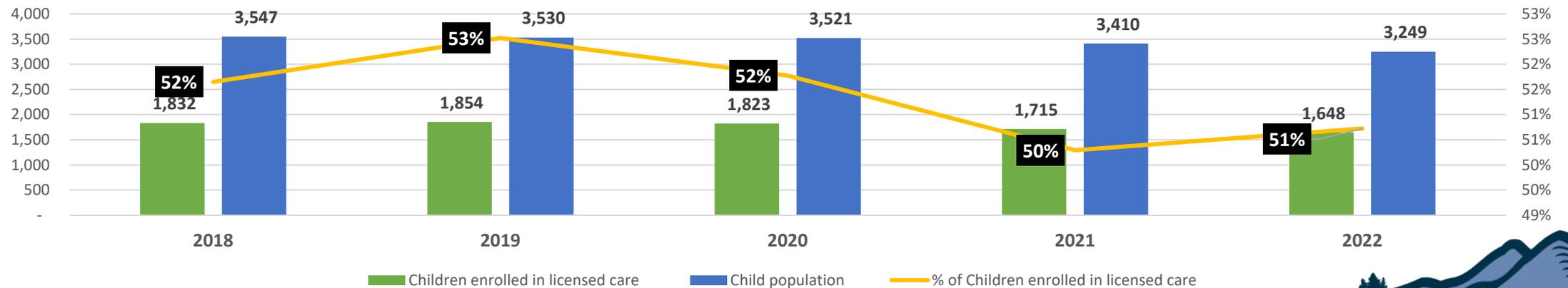


# COMMUNITY INDICATORS: Children Served

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

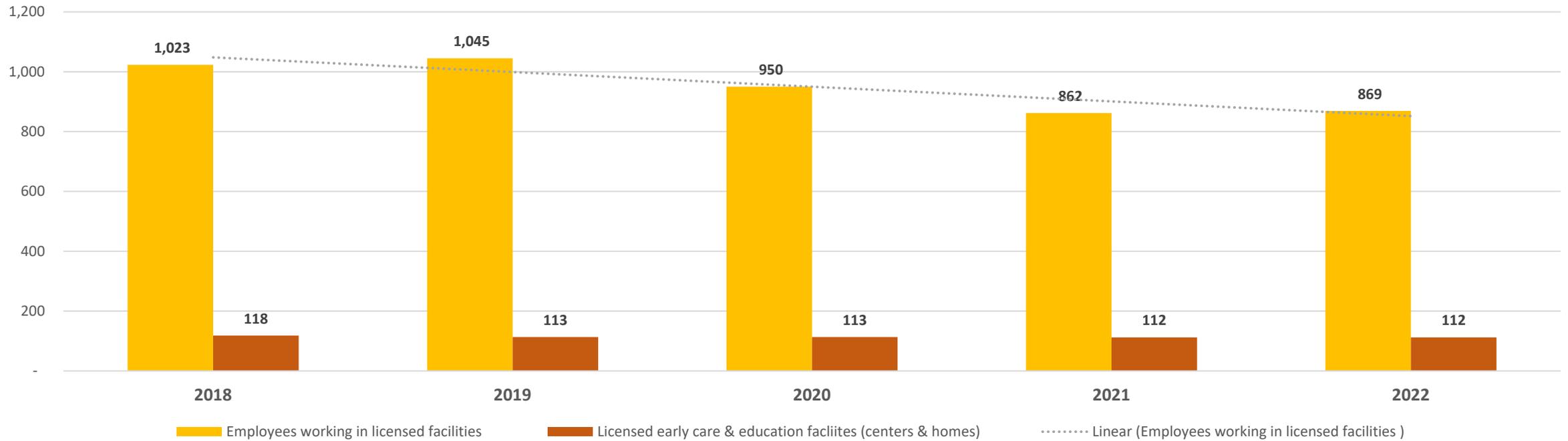


## Pre-k Only (4 y.o. & 5 y.o. pre-k)



# 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

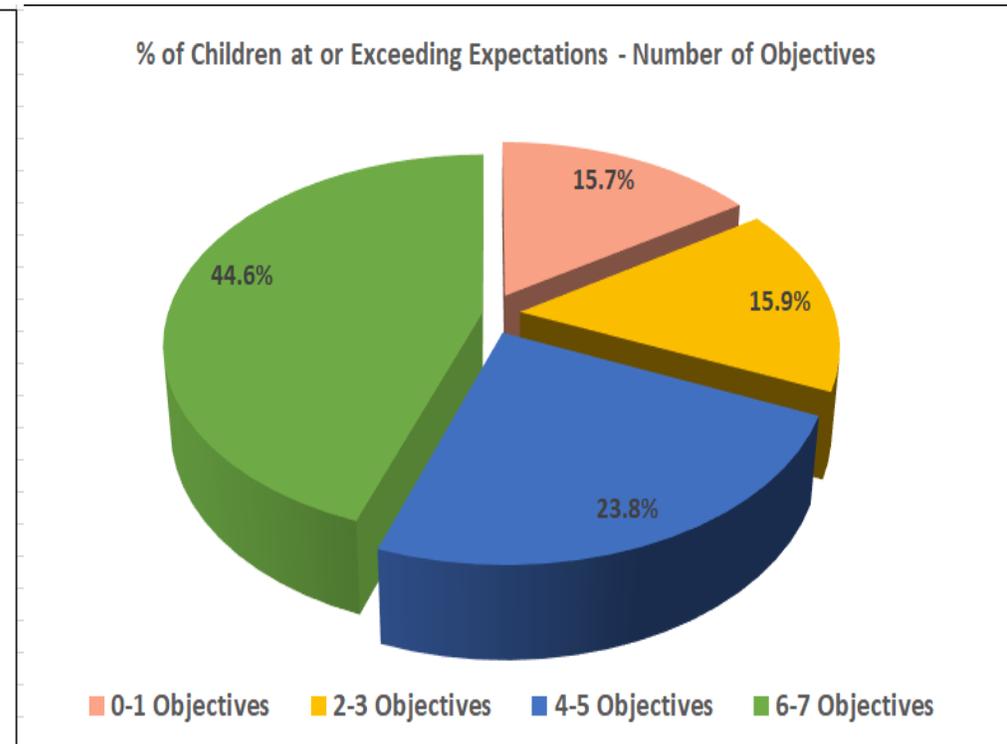
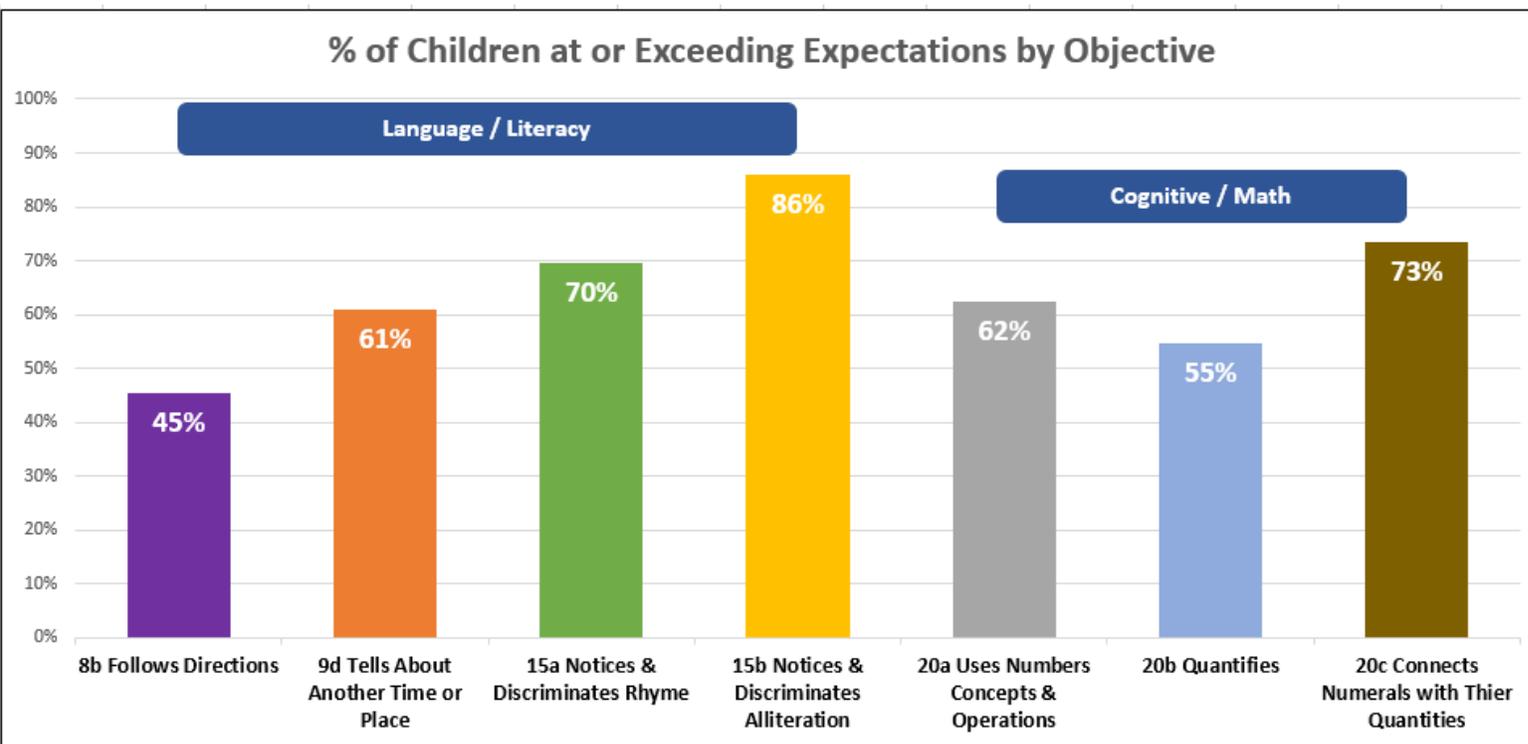
## **Social and Emotional Development**

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

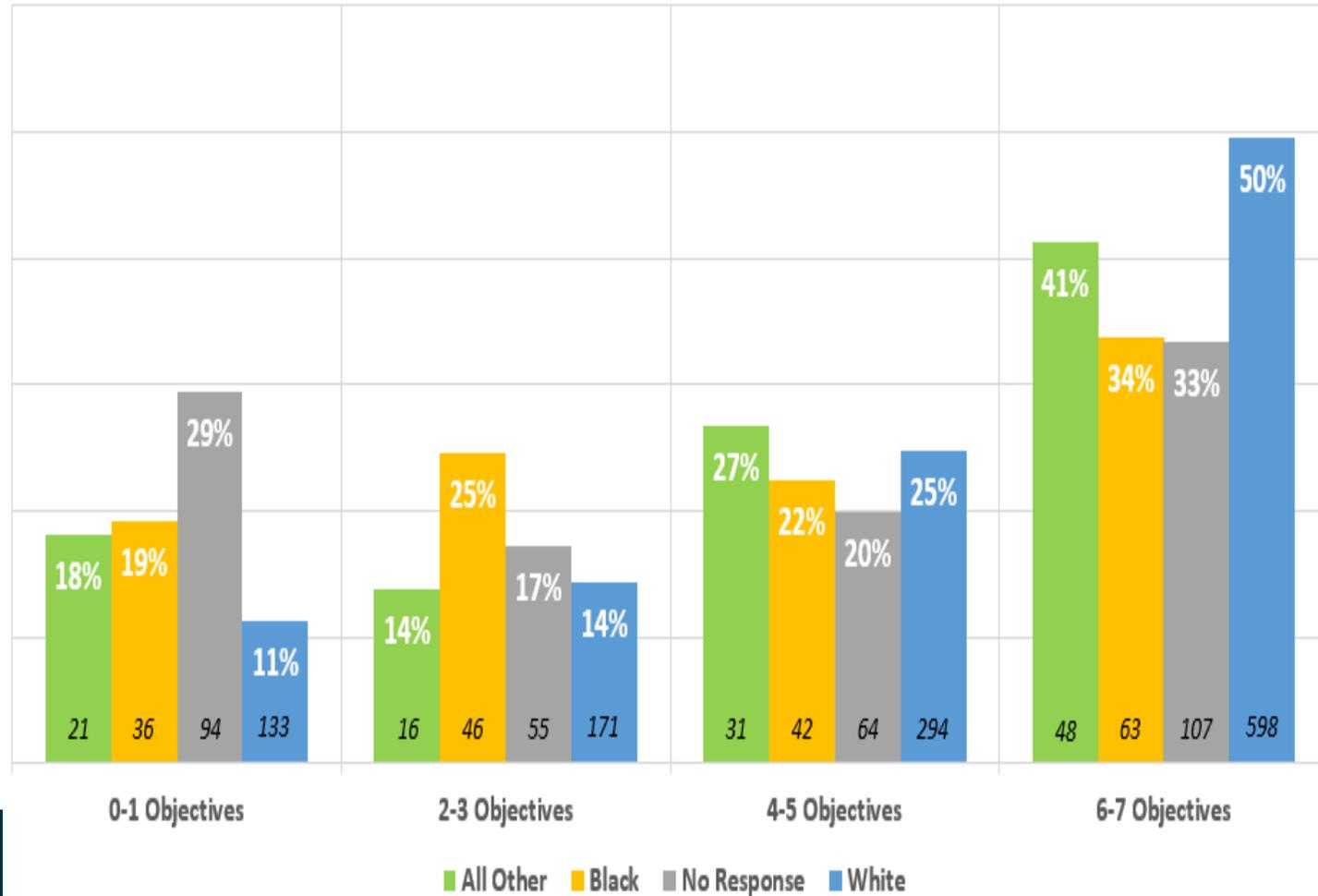


# COMMUNITY INDICATORS:

## Disparities in School Readiness

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

% 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**

