BUNCOMBE COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Focus Area

Educated and Capable Community

GOAL: INCREASE KINDERGARTEN READINESS
• 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
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
FY2023 GRANTEE

Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 (FY2023)

- AB Tech
- Asheville Jewish Community Center
- Bent Creek Preschool
- Buncombe County Schools/ Verner Center for Early Learning
- Buncombe Partnership for Children
- Colaborativa la Milpa
- Community Action Opportunities
- Eliada Homes
- Evolve Early Learning
- FIRST
- Irene Wortham Center
- On Track Financial Education & Counseling
- Read to Succeed
- Southwestern Child Development
- Swannanoa Valley Child Care Council (Donald S Collins Center)
- The Christine Avery Learning Center
- YWCA
LOCATION OF FUNDED PROJECTS
FUNDED PROJECTS

• Behavioral health support
• Classroom supplies & furnishings
• Cooperative & home-based care
• Curriculum, assessments & licensing
• Matched savings program
• Outdoor space

• Outreach & parent engagement
• Student nutrition
• 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, 2022 – June 30, 2023 (FY2023)

69% of all goals were met across 22 funded projects

• Most difficult goals to attain this year were around enrollment, attendance & staffing
• Good success on goals related to student achievement
### SUCCESS EXAMPLES
**Fiscal Year July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 (FY2023)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>292 Parents improved their education or income status</th>
<th>7 Classrooms received new technology</th>
<th>17 Participants in the bilingual early childhood cooperative network</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(YWCA)</td>
<td>(Bent Creek Preschool)</td>
<td>(Colaborativa la Milpa)</td>
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<tr>
<th>100% of staff who earn a living wage</th>
<th>13 Individuals received Start-Up Technical Assistance</th>
<th>22 Early care &amp; education professionals and parents completed the matched savings program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(The Christine Avery Learning Center)</td>
<td>(Partnership for Children)</td>
<td>(On Track)</td>
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NC PRE-K EXPANSION IN BUNCOMBE

• Partnership for Children was awarded $3.2M ARPA 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
• Year One report is online: www.buncombecounty.org/prekreport
NC PRE-K EXPANSION IN BUNCOMBE

Strategy 1: Fully Funded NC Pre-K

100% of pre-k teachers got a pay increase (avg lead teacher increase $8,500)
90% lead teacher retention (after strategies were implemented in August 2022)
4 NEW NC Pre-K private sites applied and approved (2 opened mid-school year; 2 opening August '23)
NC PRE-K EXPANSION IN BUNCOMBE

Strategy 2: Higher Ed Supports

- 26 participants enrolled (avg. years experience: 10.7)
- 54 additional teachers have expressed interest
- 100% responded they are more likely to keep teaching in ECE because of supports.
NC PRE-K EXPANSION IN BUNCOMBE

Strategy 4: Coordinated Outreach & Enrollment

- 638 apps submitted; goal for FY23-24 is 680, the pre-COVID high
- 88% of applicants were placed at their first choice
- 17% of applicants were English language learners
NC PRE-K EXPANSION IN BUNCOMBE

Strategy 3: Ramp up to NC Pre-K

10 classrooms will participate in ramp up

Strategies 5-6: Wrap-around & transport

60 families will participate in pilot programs
Thank you!