Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee

Family & Social Services Administration

Department of Education

Ivy Tech Community College
200 Daniels Way
Bloomington, IN

September 2023
1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Meeting Agenda

▶ **Call to Order**

▶ **Chair & Director's Reports**

▶ **Approval of Agenda and July Minutes**

▶ **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**

▶ **Community Spotlight: Monroe County Sub Pool Pilot**

▶ **ELAC Priorities: Updates and Discussion**

  ▶ Improve Learning and Readiness for Kindergarten

  ▶ Increase Affordability, Particularly for Vulnerable Families

  ▶ Improve and Increase System Capacity

▶ **Public Comment**

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Chair's Report
Recent State Updates and Accomplishments

Maureen Weber
ELAC Chairwoman

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Dolly Parton Imagination Library
Overview

Marcus Whited
Program Director, Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County

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Director's Report

2023 Recommendations Report Update

Courtney Hott

Early Learning Advisory Committee Director

Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee

Improve Learning & Kindergarten Readiness

➢ Define Kindergarten Readiness & update standards Completed

➢ Build & Deploy an assessment system In process

➢ Update PTQ to incorporate objective measures of quality In process

➢ After update, require PTQ participation for all providers receiving public funding In process

➢ Design & implement a strategy to strengthen kindergarten readiness across the mixed delivery system In process

➢ Adopt or develop data systems & technology to improve analytics across the birth-school continuum In process

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Increase the Supply & Sustainability of High-Quality Providers

➤ Increase reimbursement rates to improve provider sustainability Completed, additionally provide development to providers to accurately calculate their true cost of care

➤ Encourage and reward operational efficiency and scale for HQ providers In process

➤ Create a streamlined pathway to enable LEA's to qualify on PTQ to then accept OMWPK dollars In process, high priority for 2024

➤ Enable new models of care to meet demand, especially in high-need areas

➤ Target financial incentives to grow capacity for high-need areas and populations In process

➤ Design and implement strategy to encourage new workforce training models In process

➤ Increase scholarship supports for EC workers In process

➤ Use matching workforce funds or other incentives to support recruitment and competitive compensation and working conditions for effective early learning educators In process

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Increase Affordability for families, particularly vulnerable families

➢ Expand income eligibility for CCDF vouchers Completed, continue to advocate for more expansion and funding

➢ Expand income eligibility and remove work requirement for On my Way Pre-K Income increased, continue advocating to remove work requirement

➢ Align OMWPK voucher process to K-12 when possible for ease of administration In process

➢ Improve business sector support through technical assistance and tax credits Completed and continue to expand

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Improve & Increase System Capacity

➢ Focus on system-level improvements to be carried out by government In process

➢ Enable blanket waivers in place of frequent variances In process

➢ Modernize the statutory and regulatory environment In process

➢ Update licensing systems to increase automation & streamline reporting In process

➢ Refine licensing compliance with efficient and abbreviated inspections In process

➢ Evaluate structures and processes for determining eligibility and establish user-centered systems and approaches to build equity In process

➢ Establish targets for percentage of subsidies allocated through providers qualifying under "agreement center" contracts In process

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Discussion

Provider and Community Spotlight
Monroe County Early Learning Substitute Educator Pool

Jennifer Myers
Director, Monroe Smart Start

Courtney Penn
Director, Office of Early Childhood & Out-of-School Learning
Family and Social Services Administration

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Shared Services Hub

Bloomington, Indiana

Stronger Together

Our shared service model is part of the **Stronger Together Initiative.**

With support from **Early Learning Indiana**, Stronger Together grants **institute the creation of regional shared service offerings** that provide **economies of scale** for providers' **operating expenses** and allows them to **focus their limited time and resources on the business of learning.**

Provider Profiles

14 Level 3 & 4 PTQ programs participating:
- 7 FCCHs
- 6 Centers
- 1 Ministry

Total capacity:
- 770 children
- Infants- age 5
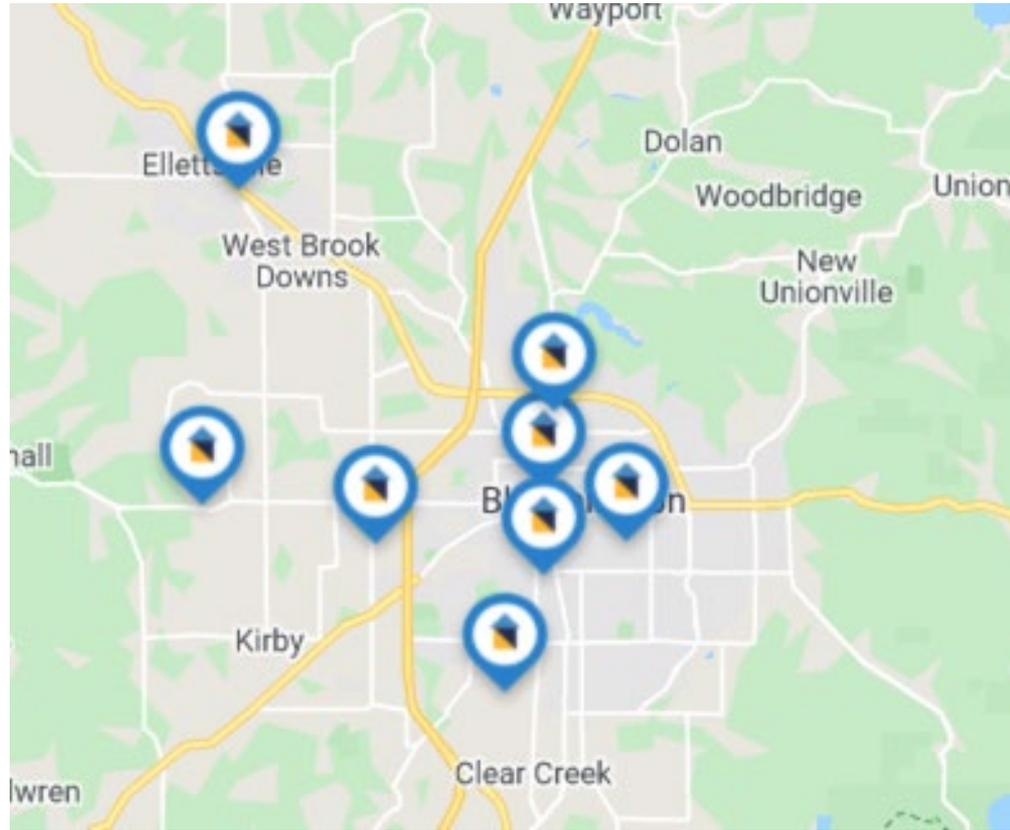
Childcare Management Software Solutions

Wonderschool
- Hub members develop business leadership that helps to ensure full enrollment, tuition collection, reporting, marketing and accounting support.

ChildcareMatters
- Helps resolve staffing issues through a substitute pool which also serves as a means for staff recruitment.
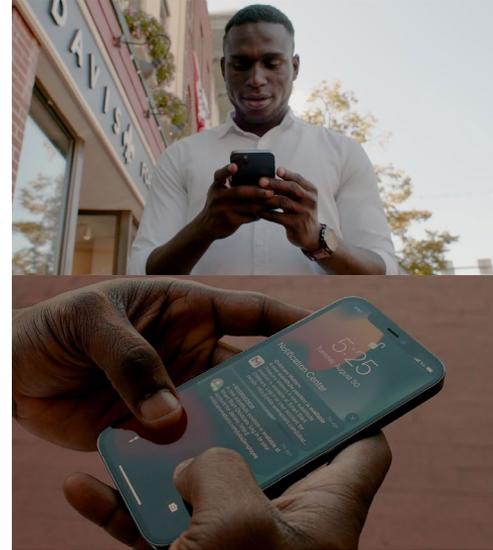
We Know Childcare Matters

High-quality care for young children is a **foundational need** for their **development and well-being:**

- Children need **consistency of care** with familiar faces;
- Directors need substitute **staff that is available and well-trained**;
- Families need **assurance that staff is well-prepared**; and
- Staff need the **opportunity to be away** from the classroom **for professional development and personal needs.**

Monroe Smart Start
A Birth-to-Five Initiative
Ready for School ▸ Ready for Life.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
BLOOMINGTON • MONROE COUNTY

ChildcareMatters Platform

Smart Start Child Care is an easy-to-use platform that connects Early Learning Substitute Educators to temporary jobs in local child care programs all from a mobile device or computer.

Substitute positions are posted to the platform and ELSEs get notified via email and text message. With one click from a phone or computer, ELSEs apply for substitute positions. Childcare programs review ELSE profiles; text alerts are sent when they become hired.

Anticipated Outcomes

- **Reduce/eliminate** child care program **waitlists** due to teacher shortages

- Increase the educator **pipeline**

- Increase educator **credentials**

- Increase educator **wages**

- Improve **local economies**
    - Tax implications of **more parents in the workforce**
    - Tax implications of **more educators in the workforce**

Timeline

- **October 2021**: CFBMC licensed the substitute pool technology platform
- **December 2022**
  - Registered as a Coordinating Agency (CA) in Indiana's I-LEAD Portal and paired provider members
  - Signed MOUs with Alliance Hub members to allow use of substitutes
  - Began substitute recruitment marketing efforts
- **January 2023**
  - Held Early Learning Substitute Educator (ELSE) information sessions
  - Hosted mobile service for background checks and fingerprinting services
  - Began offering ELSE onboarding sessions
- **February 2023**: Launched Smart Start Childcare Substitute Service
- **July 2023:** Expansion efforts began

ELSE RECRUITMENT

February 2023
- Completed the onboarding process for one ELSE
- Matched ELSE with provider

March 2023

Onboarded Two ELSEs

April 2023

Onboarded Four ELSEs

May-June 2023
- Onboarded 10 new summer ELSEs
- Began expansion efforts
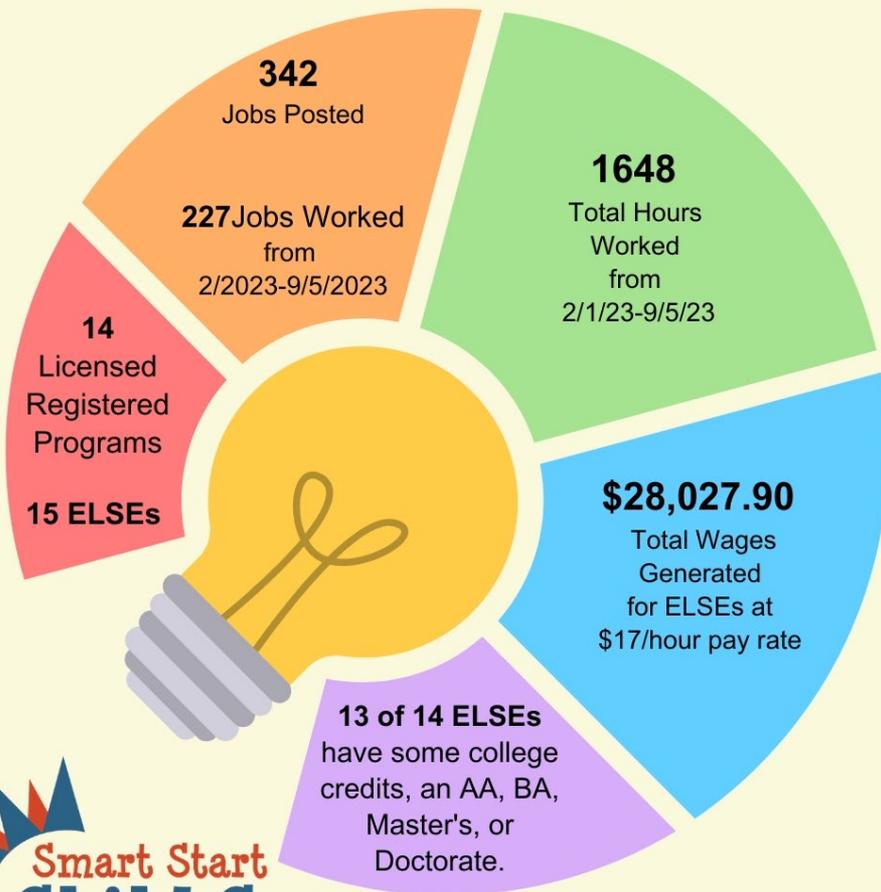
Smart Start Child Care

DATA OVERVIEW

342
Jobs Posted

227 Jobs Worked from 2/2023-9/5/2023

1648
Total Hours Worked from 2/1/23-9/5/23

14
Licensed Registered Programs

15 ELSEs

$28,027.90
Total Wages Generated for ELSEs at $17/hour pay rate

13 of 14 ELSEs
have some college credits, an AA, BA, Master's, or Doctorate.

Smart Start
Child Care

Cost of Turnover

The collective loss among Hub members due to staff turnover from March 2022- March 2023 is between **$498,767.90** (30% turnover estimate) and **$831,279.83** (50% turnover estimate).

According to a 2017 *Work Institute* report, staff turnover is estimated to cost 33% of the worker's annual salary. A study by the Society for Human Resource Management posited that the cost of turnover is equal to 50-75% of the employee's salary, or 6-9 months worth of pay.

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Meet Our ELSEs
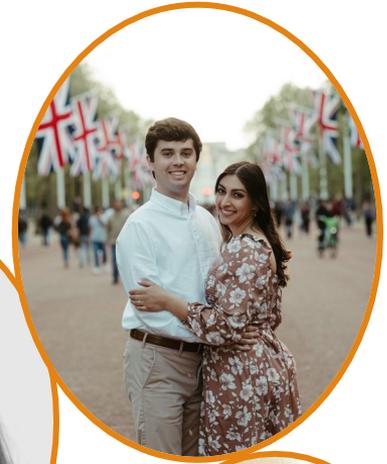
Voices from the Field

WHAT IS MOST REWARDING ABOUT BEING AN EARLY EDUCATOR?

Follow
Our Journey

Jennifer Myers, Director
Monroe Smart Start
jennifer@cfbmc.org

www.monroesmartstart.org

Advancing ELAC Priorities
Update and discussion of efforts planned and underway

Courtney Penn

Director, Office of Early Childhood & Out-of-School Learning
Family and Social Services Administration

Courtney Hott

Director, Early Learning Advisory Committee
Family and Social Services Administration

Sue McKinney

OECOSL Director of Operations
Family and Social Services Administration

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📊 Priority 1
Improve learning and readiness for kindergarten

- HEA 1591 Update – Paths to Quality Recommendations

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HEA 1591 Implementation

- Stakeholder group list is finalized

- Starting process to engage families to participate

  - Short interest form to fill out

  - Communication through eligibility offices, OMWPK managers and policy consultants

- First contact going out this week

- First virtual stakeholder group is with parents on Sept. 22

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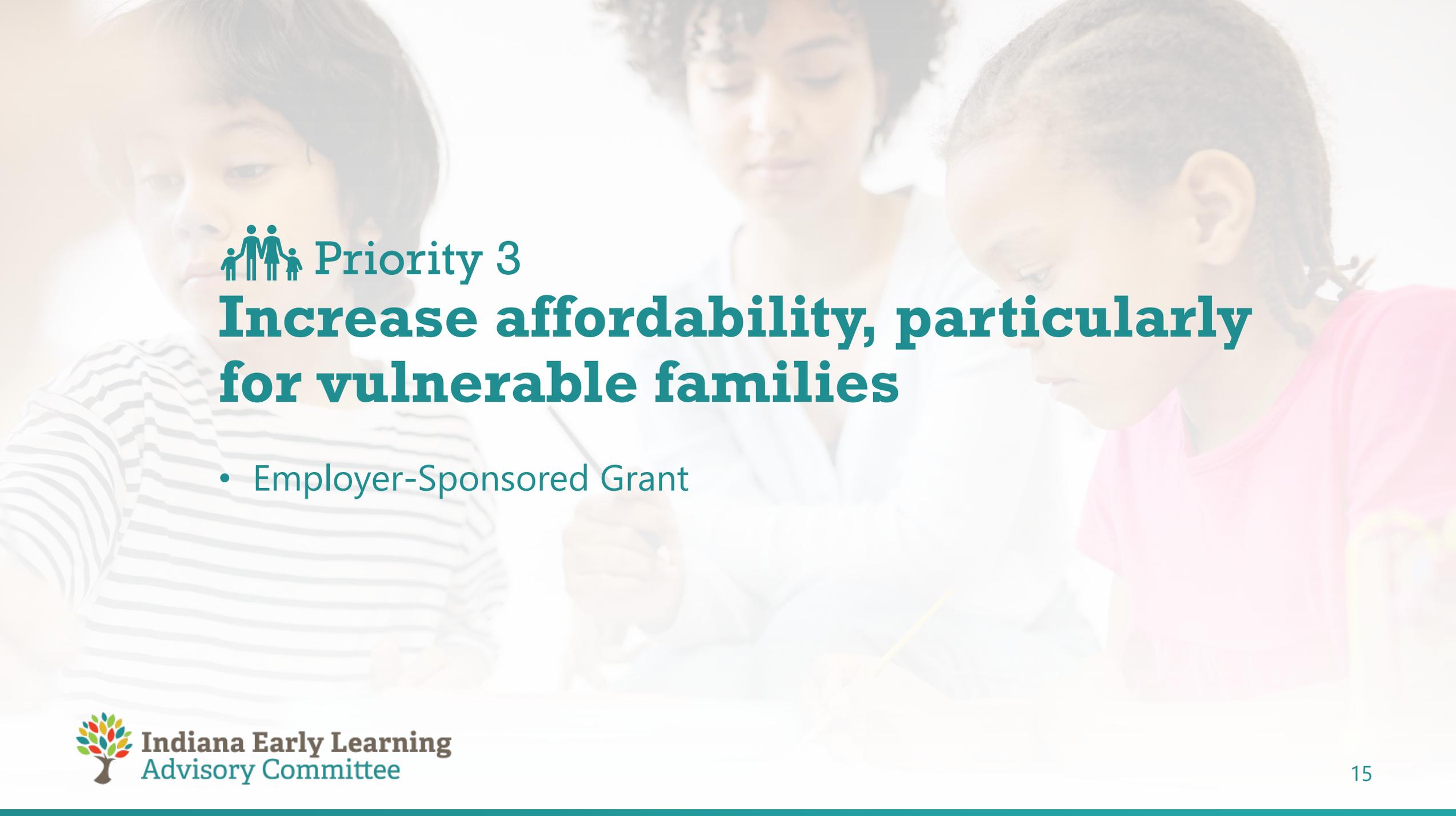
Priority 3
Increase affordability, particularly for vulnerable families

- Employer-Sponsored Grant

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The Employer-Sponsored Child Care Fund

- The $25M competitive grant effort will launch as a partnership between the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

- The Fund provides seed funding for employers and nonprofit organizations to create or expand employer-sponsored child care benefits for Hoosier families.

- Funding is available to support the implementation of a range of child care benefit offerings, enabling employers and communities of all sizes to participate.

- Award selections will prioritize support for small-to-mid-sized businesses where data shows both the greatest need and opportunity for impact.

FSSA Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
Office of Early Childhood & Out-of-School Learning
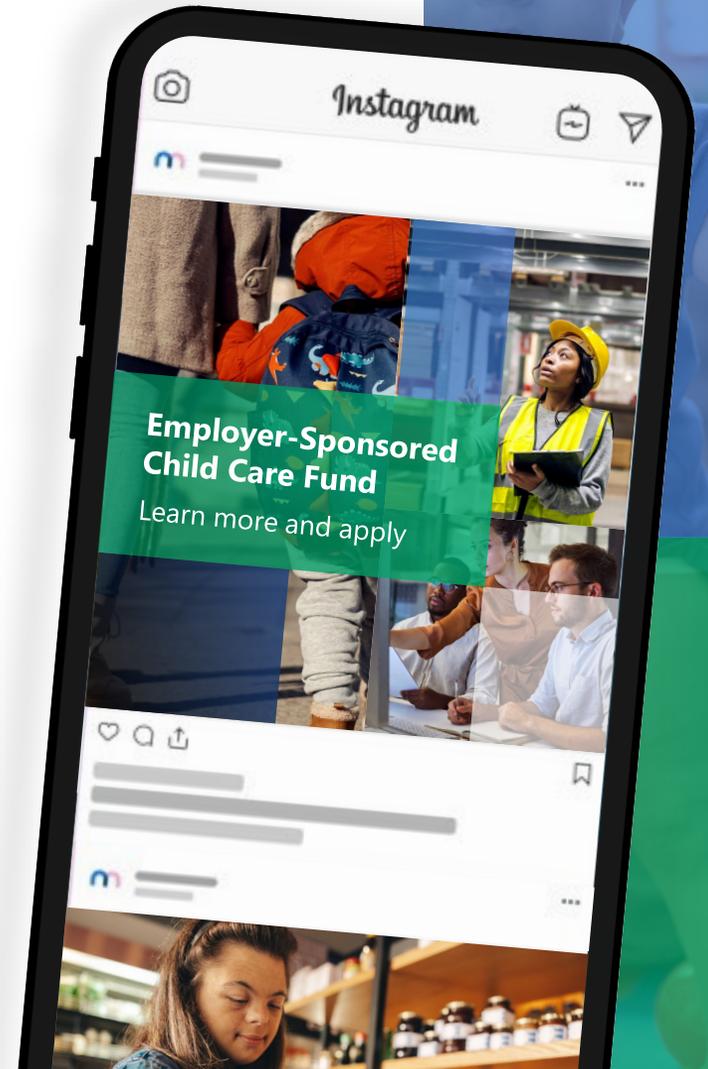
Uses of Funding

- Applicants may request funding to expand or implement a range of child care benefits, empowering them to choose what is most appropriate for their business or local employer community.

- Allowable expense categories have been determined and supporting materials are being developed to assist applicants in understanding each model option.

- Allowable uses of funding prioritizes investments in high-quality child care where possible.

Allowable Uses of Funding:

Dependent Care Assistance Plans (DCAPs)

Near-Site Child Care

Priority Waitlist Partnerships

Tuition Benefits

Reserved Seats in Local Child Care Programs

Backup Care Options

TriShare Programs

Community Infrastructure Investments

Planned Applicant Supports

Robust supports will be provided to eligible applicants as they consider and act on this grant opportunity. Planned supports include:

- Case-making resources for employer-supported child care

- Tools and resources for employers to assess the child care needs of their workforce

- Information and data regarding the current state of access and quality in a specific community

- Information and resources for different child care benefit models

- Connections to model experts and/or local child care providers

- Information on the requirements of operating a licensed child care center at or near the workplace

- Tuition benefit models and implementation practices, including tri share models

- Examples of current employer-supported models within Indiana
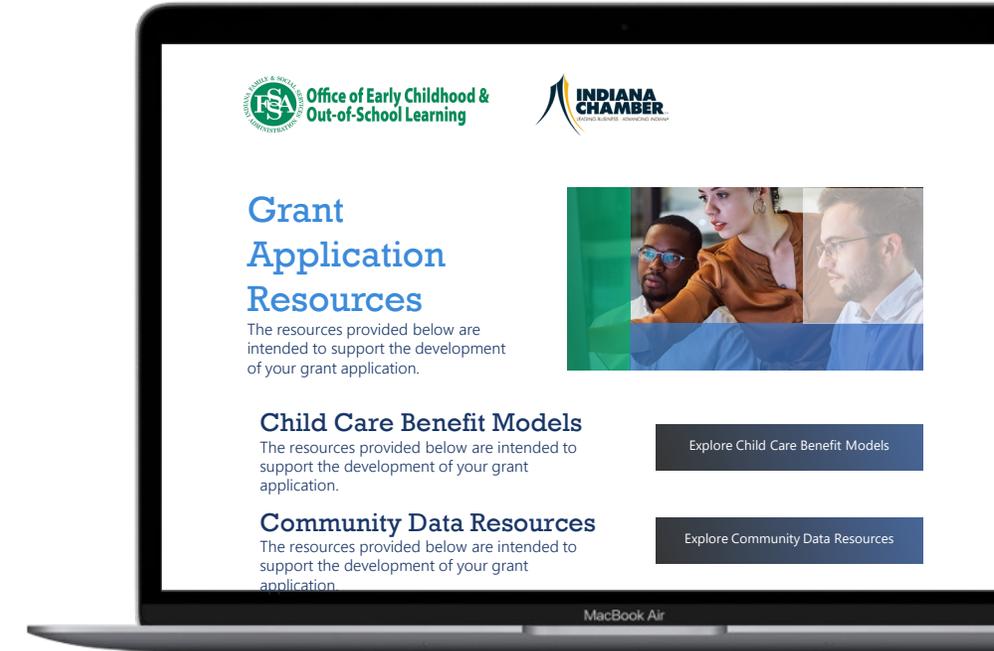
While created for this effort, these assets will remain available to employers after the grant period to further support.

Office of Early Childhood & Out-of-School Learning

Learn More & Get Engaged

- Additional details regarding the fund, including award formulas and caps, will be shared via the fund webpage.

- Promotional toolkits will also be made available to support partners in promoting the opportunity within local communities.

Office of Early Childhood & Out-of-School Learning

Upcoming OECOSL Engagements

Stay tuned for upcoming quarterly OECOSL Townhalls in mid-October for child care providers and community stakeholders. There will be three opportunities for engagement including an evening offering.

Topics Include:

- Fiscal Update of Federal Relief Dollars
- Grant Updates
- OECOSL Upcoming Initiatives

Stay tuned to Monday Must Know and email messages for registration information!

For questions please email: **oecoslproviderinquiry@fssa.in.gov**

Office of Early Childhood & Out-of-School Learning

Priority 4
Improve and increase system capacity

- Licensing Work Group – Next Steps
- Alignment of Proposed Federal Rulemaking & Indiana's Priorities

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Regulatory Review: Licensing Workgroup Update

- Analysis of licensing rules and regulations (health & safety vs quality)

- Reconnect with Licensing Workgroup members

- Emerging Provider Specialists

- Recommendation mapping

- Internal policy, procedures and practices

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Alignment of Proposed Federal Rulemaking & Indiana's Priorities

Sue McKinney, OECOSL Director of Operations

Proposed Federal Rulemaking

- This Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) proposes policies designed to:
    - Lower family costs for child care
    - Increase child care options for families
    - Strengthen payment practices for providers
    - Make program enrollment easier and faster for families

- This is the first proposed rule change since 2016.

Estimated Timeline

July 13 – August 28, 2023 — Public comment period

Fall 2023 — ACF reviews comments and drafts responses and final rule

2024 — Final rule published

60 Days from publication — Final rule effective
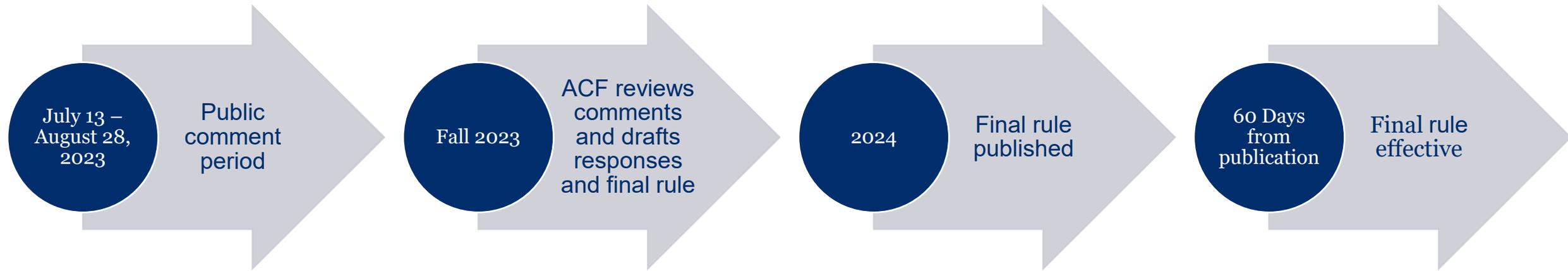
Encourage States to Pay the Established Subsidy Rate

Status:

- Cost-based reimbursement rates effective July 31, 2024

- Subsidy reimbursement rate is paid even if higher than provider rate

- Additional data collection and analysis beginning this month to further refine model estimates

- Tiered reimbursement in place for QRIS engagement and advancement

- Applies to all 4 ELAC priorities

Expand Sustainable Payment Practices

Status:

- Current attendance tracking and reporting is a barrier to provider participation

- Transition to Pay by Enrollment system (DDI) is underway and includes delinking payments and occasional child absences

- Applies to all 4 ELAC priorities

Prohibit Family Co-payments That Are a Barrier to Child Care Access

Status:

- Proposed cap is 7% for all co-pays

- Currently, they range from 5%-26% with an average payment of 9% of income

- No co-pay for families with incomes at or below 100% of FPL

- Applies to all 4 ELAC priorities

Allow Lead Agencies to Waive Co-Payments for Additional Families

Status:

- On My Way Pre-K Family Co-Pays are waived

- Additional co-pay waivers for licensed foster families & CPS referrals

- Applies to all 4 ELAC priorities

Build Supply with Grants and Contracts

Status:

- Currently there are 31 contracts with providers for slots in 9 counties with

- Plan to implement a new contracted slot model to include provision to address acute lack of supply for types of care (infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and nontraditional hour care)

- Applies to all 4 ELAC priorities

Encourage Faster Eligibility and Verification

Status:

- Multiple state eligibility systems in use across FSSA and are not currently integrated

- Various levels of eligibility across state agencies

- Contracting is in progress with an experienced vendor to assess opportunities to implement presumptive eligibility

- Applies to all 4 ELAC priorities

Minimize Disruptions to Families

Status:

- Online application (EEC) available to all families

- Family Navigator partnerships with 211 and Covering Kids & Families

- Applies to all 4 ELAC priorities

Public Comment

Adjourn

Information regarding today's meeting, including slides and materials, can be found at www.elacindiana.org

Next Business Meeting:

- Date: November 8, 2023
- Location: Indianapolis, IN

Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee

For media inquiries, questions or feedback, please contact us at www.elacindiana.org/contact-us.

Thank you!

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The Need

- Indiana understood the need more ECE workforce staffing in child care programing.

- Issues with citations by licensing for temp staff or subs at programs without the correct or current documentation.

- OECOSL needed an organization already doing work in the overall shared services space to assist with the needs of the field for a pilot.

The Opportunity

- The Community Foundation of Bloomington Monroe County (CFBMC)/Monroe Smart Start (MSS) partnered with OECOSL to become the pilot site for Substitute Educator Project in early 2022 as our first Coordinating Agency (CA).

- Within 2022, in collaboration with our team and partners updates were made to I-LEAD to accommodate Coordinating Agency registration, associations to be made between the CA and providers, associations between providers and Early Learning Substitute Educators (ELSE), and all document uploads.

Where We're Going:

- We are beginning Phase II of the project with Monroe Smart Start expanding to serve more providers within their area.

- Phase II will also include expansion into SDA 1 (Lake County) and SDA 5 (Vanderburgh County)

- Our goal for SDA 1 and SDA 5 is to have an identified coalition or organization to become the Coordinating Agency for their respective counties and have identified associated providers.