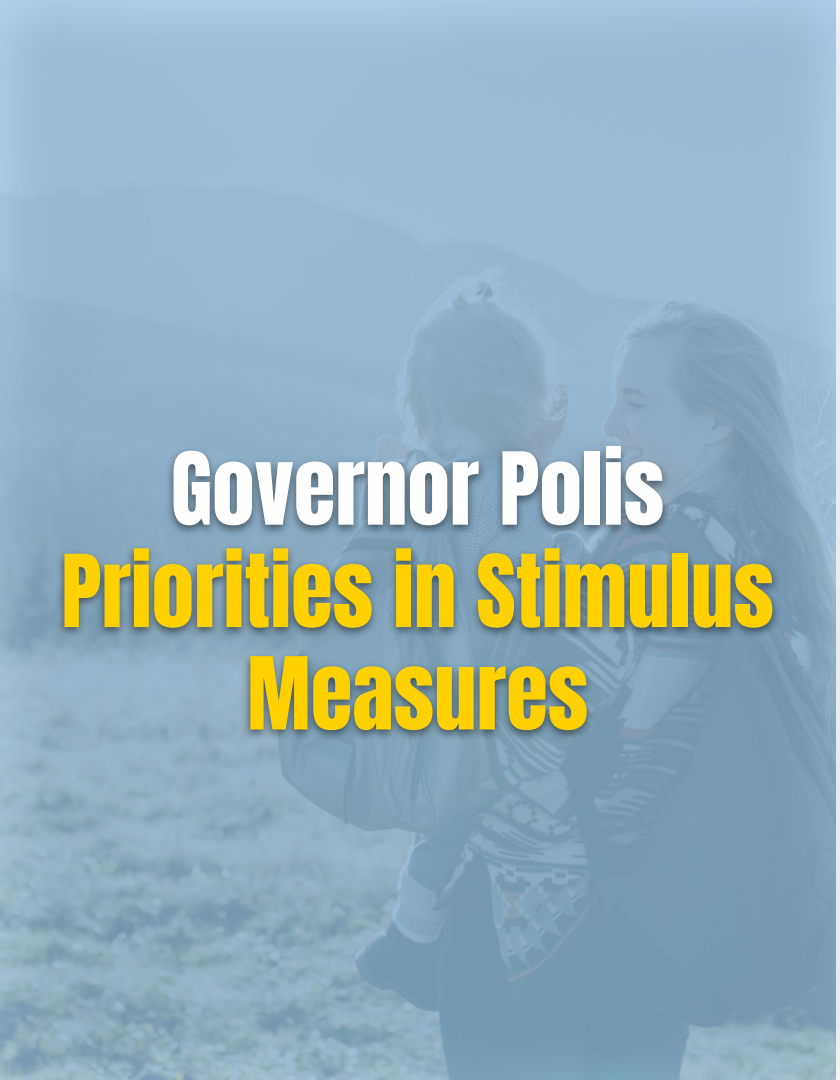
State & Federal Stimulus Funding: Colorado's Early Childhood Strategies

Colorado Office of Early Childhood (OEC)

COLORADO
Office of Early Childhood
Department of Human Services



Governor Polis Priorities in Stimulus Measures

- Parent Affordability
- Child Care Program Stability
- Early Childhood Workforce
- Facilities Expansion
- Infant and Toddler Care
- Continuous Quality Improvements
- Family Child Care Homes
- Child Health and Mental Health
- Indoor Environmental Quality

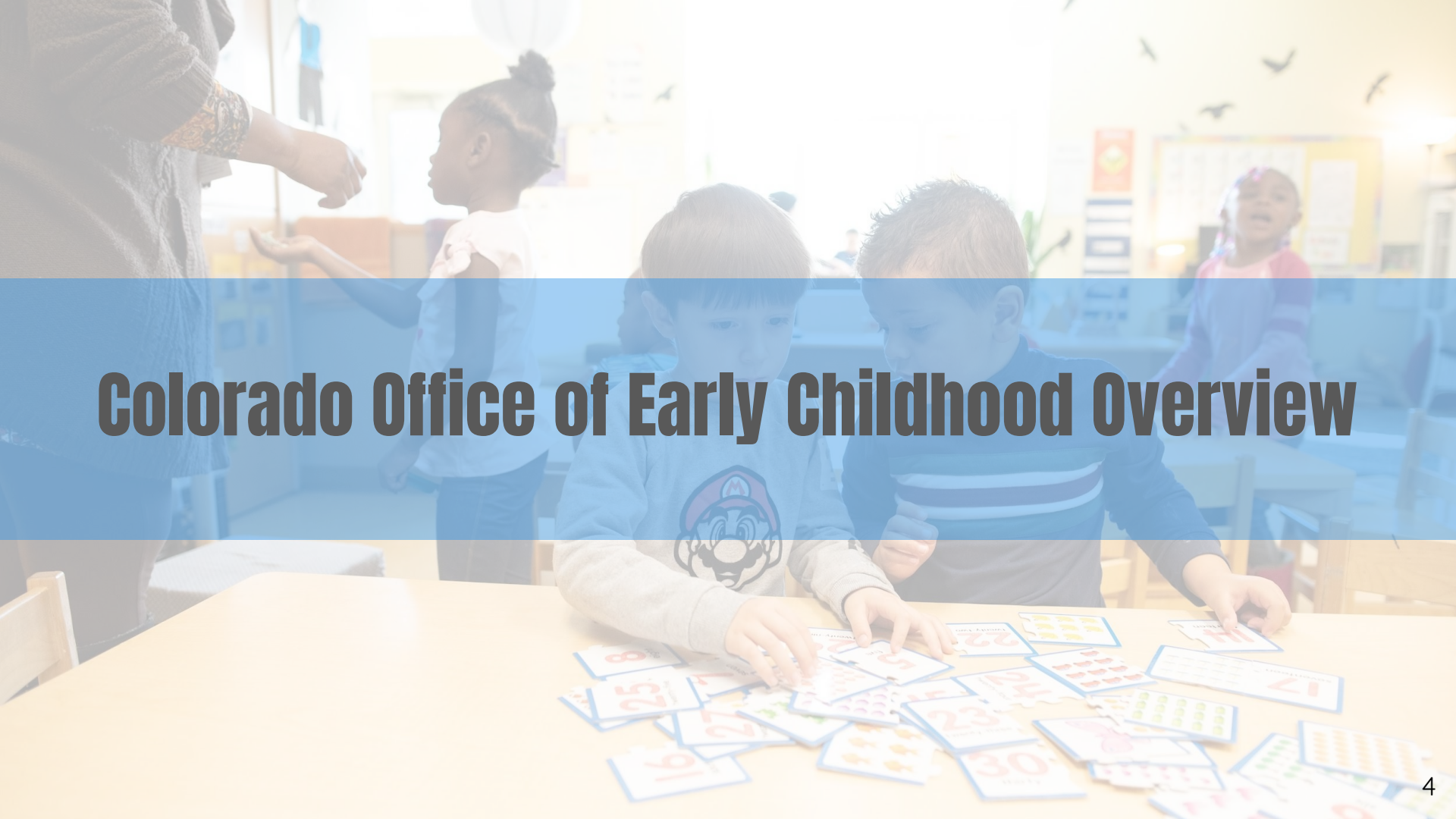


TODAY'S FOCUS

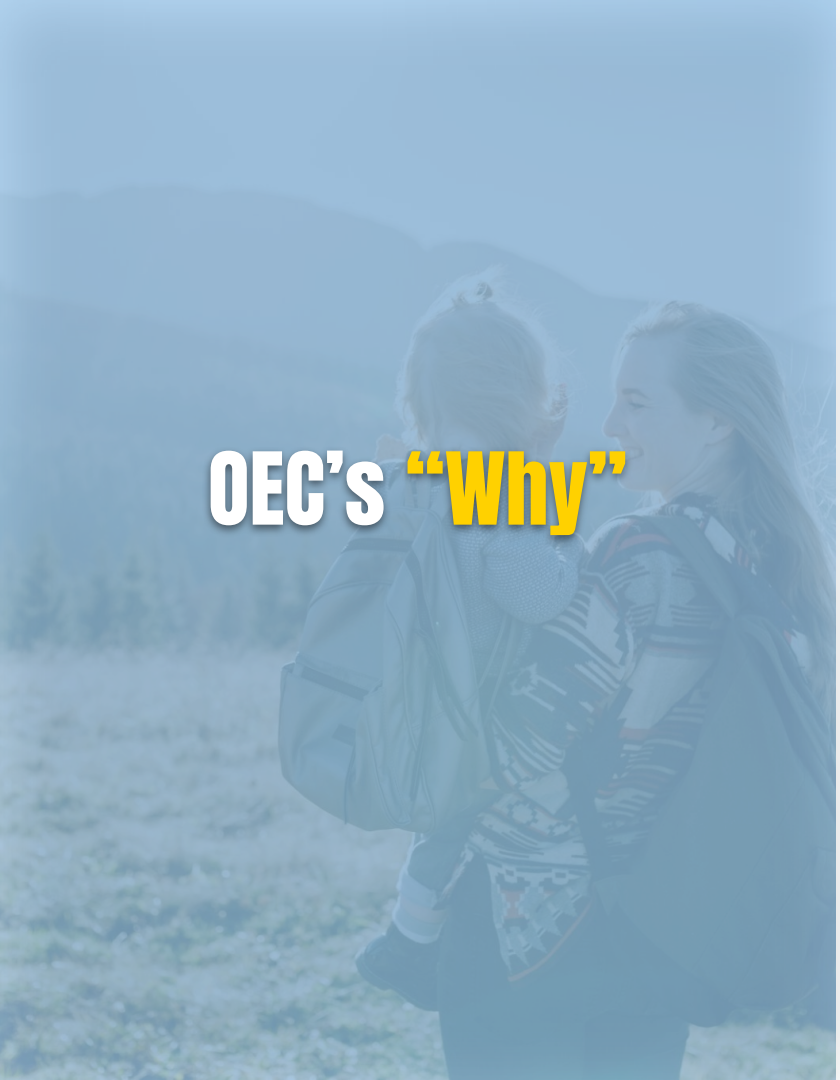
- **New! American Rescue Plan (ARP) Child Care Stabilization Grant - 90% Direct Aid:** $257M directly to child care providers and associated administrative costs.
- **Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act**: $119.3M to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.
- **State Stimulus:** $17.6M State General Fund through HB20B-1002 and SB21-236.

Strategies for Later Discussion:

- 10% flexible reserve from the Child Care Stabilization Grant award
- $178.5M flexible CCDF Supplemental Discretionary award



Colorado Office of Early Childhood Overview



OEC's "Why"

Our Mission

We support families and communities so every child in Colorado thrives.

Our Vision

To ensure all children in Colorado are valued, healthy, and thriving, we lead bold and innovative programming, remove barriers, and implement systems change.

OEC Programs

See handout "Office of Early Childhood Programs" for more information.

The OEC's "How"

The 6 Strategies to ensure all children are valued, healthy, and thriving:

Strategy 1 Access

Ensure all families have equitable and easy access to high quality early childhood services so that all children start school ready to succeed.

Strategy 2 Workforce

Support the early childhood workforce, so that they have the tools to nurture and teach children in their care.

Strategy 3 Family Strengthening

Provide communities and families with the support they need so children have a strong environment in which to thrive.

Strategy 4 Educate

Educate the public and policymakers about the evolving needs of young children and families to ensure effective advocacy and systems change.

Strategy 5 Alignment

Align available public and private funding streams to simplify administration and amplify the impact of early childhood services.

Strategy 6 Culture

Align our work with our mission, vision and values to ensure we implement bold, effective and innovative early childhood programming.

Stimulus Funding Areas of Priority

Strategy 1
Access

Ensure all families have equitable and easy access to high quality early childhood services so that all children start school ready to succeed.

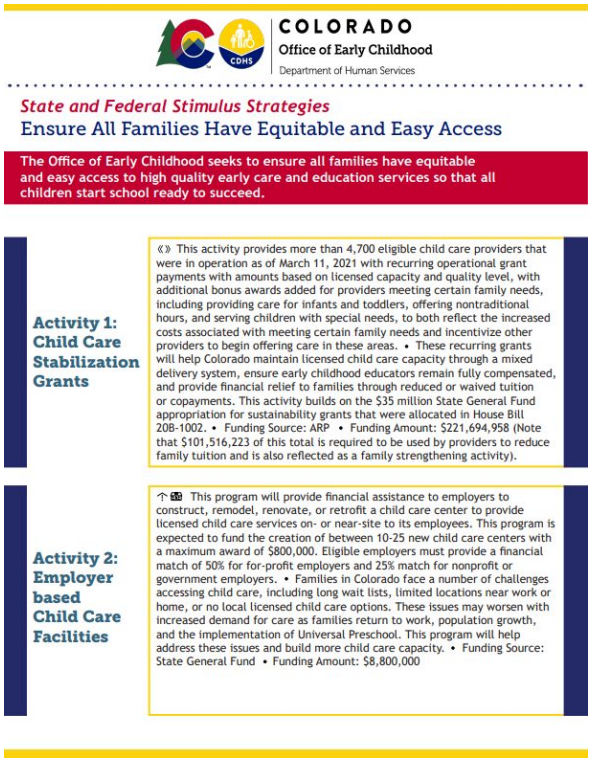
Strategy 2
Workforce

Support the early childhood workforce, so that they have the tools to nurture and teach children in their care.

Strategy 3
Family Strengthening

Provide communities and families with the support they need so children have a strong environment in which to thrive.

Stimulus Funding Overviews



COLORADO
Office of Early Childhood
Department of Human Services

State and Federal Stimulus Strategies

Ensure All Families Have Equitable and Easy Access

The Office of Early Childhood seeks to ensure all families have equitable and easy access to high quality early care and education services so that all children start school ready to succeed.

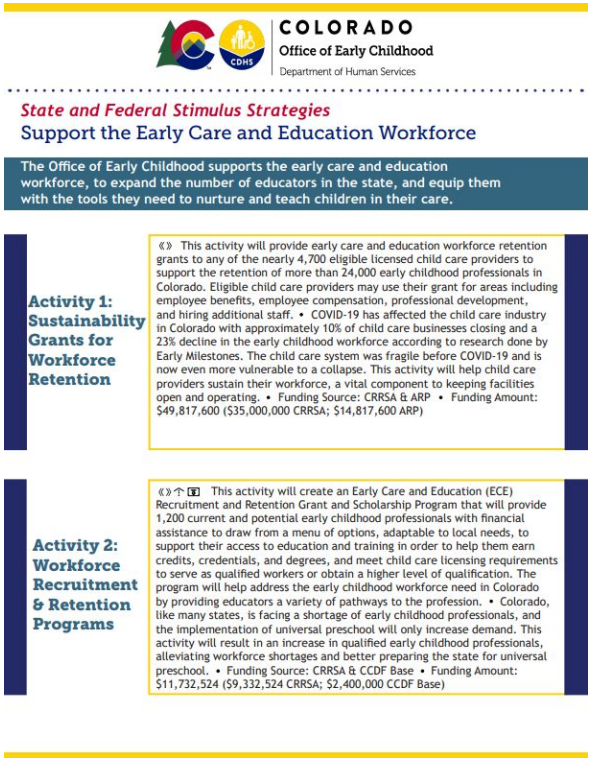
Activity 1: Child Care Stabilization Grants

This activity provides more than 4,700 eligible child care providers that were in operation as of March 11, 2021 with recurring operational grant payments with amounts based on licensed capacity and quality level, with additional bonus awards added for providers meeting certain family needs, including providing care for infants and toddlers, offering nontraditional hours, and serving children with special needs, to both reflect the increased costs associated with meeting certain family needs and incentivize other providers to begin offering care in these areas. • These recurring grants will help Colorado maintain licensed child care capacity through a mixed delivery system, ensure early childhood educators remain fully compensated, and provide financial relief to families through reduced or waived tuition or copayments. This activity builds on the $35 million State General Fund appropriation for sustainability grants that were allocated in House Bill 20B-1002. • Funding Source: ARP • Funding Amount: $221,694,958 (Note that $101,516,223 of this total is required to be used by providers to reduce family tuition and is also reflected as a family strengthening activity).

Activity 2: Employer based Child Care Facilities

This program will provide financial assistance to employers to construct, remodel, renovate, or retrofit a child care center to provide licensed child care services on- or near-site to its employees. This program is expected to fund the creation of between 10-25 new child care centers with a maximum award of $800,000. Eligible employers must provide a financial match of 50% for for-profit employers and 25% match for nonprofit or government employers. • Families in Colorado face a number of challenges accessing child care, including long wait lists, limited locations near work or home, or no local licensed child care options. These issues may worsen with increased demand for care as families return to work, population growth, and the implementation of Universal Preschool. This program will help address these issues and build more child care capacity. • Funding Source: State General Fund • Funding Amount: $8,800,000

[Access]



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State and Federal Stimulus Strategies

Support the Early Care and Education Workforce

The Office of Early Childhood supports the early care and education workforce, to expand the number of educators in the state, and equip them with the tools they need to nurture and teach children in their care.

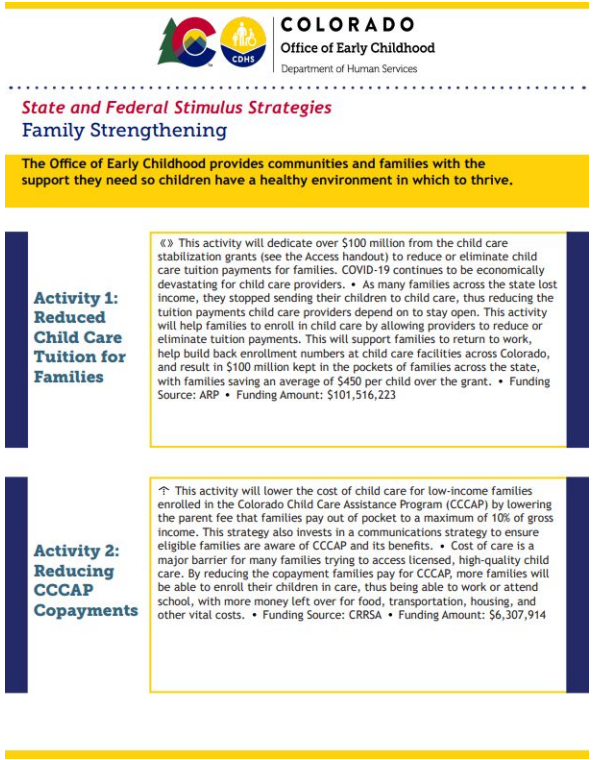
Activity 1: Sustainability Grants for Workforce Retention

This activity will provide early care and education workforce retention grants to any of the nearly 4,700 eligible licensed child care providers to support the retention of more than 24,000 early childhood professionals in Colorado. Eligible child care providers may use their grant for areas including employee benefits, employee compensation, professional development, and hiring additional staff. • COVID-19 has affected the child care industry in Colorado with approximately 10% of child care businesses closing and a 23% decline in the early childhood workforce according to research done by Early Milestones. The child care system was fragile before COVID-19 and is now even more vulnerable to a collapse. This activity will help child care providers sustain their workforce, a vital component to keeping facilities open and operating. • Funding Source: CRRSA & ARP • Funding Amount: $49,817,600 ($35,000,000 CRRSA; $14,817,600 ARP)

Activity 2: Workforce Recruitment & Retention Programs

This activity will create an Early Care and Education (ECE) Recruitment and Retention Grant and Scholarship Program that will provide 1,200 current and potential early childhood professionals with financial assistance to draw from a menu of options, adaptable to local needs, to support their access to education and training in order to help them earn credits, credentials, and degrees, and meet child care licensing requirements to serve as qualified workers or obtain a higher level of qualification. The program will help address the early childhood workforce need in Colorado by providing educators a variety of pathways to the profession. • Colorado, like many states, is facing a shortage of early childhood professionals, and the implementation of universal preschool will only increase demand. This activity will result in an increase in qualified early childhood professionals, alleviating workforce shortages and better preparing the state for universal preschool. • Funding Source: CRRSA & CCDF Base • Funding Amount: $11,732,524 ($9,332,524 CRRSA; $2,400,000 CCDF Base)

[Workforce]



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State and Federal Stimulus Strategies

Family Strengthening

The Office of Early Childhood provides communities and families with the support they need so children have a healthy environment in which to thrive.

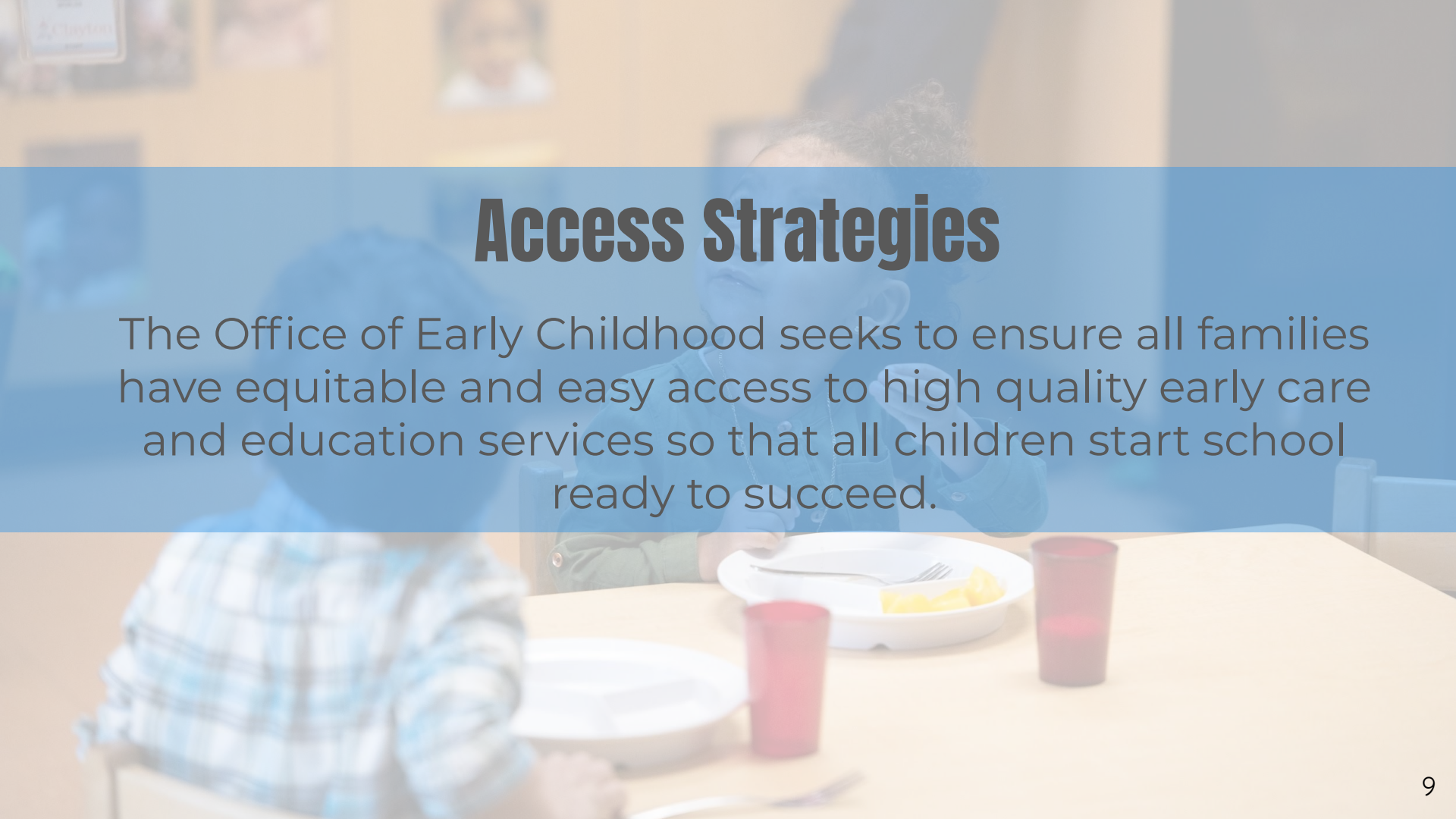
Activity 1: Reduced Child Care Tuition for Families

This activity will dedicate over $100 million from the child care stabilization grants (see the Access handout) to reduce or eliminate child care tuition payments for families. COVID-19 continues to be economically devastating for child care providers. • As many families across the state lost income, they stopped sending their children to child care, thus reducing the tuition payments child care providers depend on to stay open. This activity will help families to enroll in child care by allowing providers to reduce or eliminate tuition payments. This will support families to return to work, help build back enrollment numbers at child care facilities across Colorado, and result in $100 million kept in the pockets of families across the state, with families saving an average of $450 per child over the grant. • Funding Source: ARP • Funding Amount: $101,516,223

Activity 2: Reducing CCCAP Copayments

This activity will lower the cost of child care for low-income families enrolled in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) by lowering the parent fee that families pay out of pocket to a maximum of 10% of gross income. This strategy also invests in a communications strategy to ensure eligible families are aware of CCCAP and its benefits. • Cost of care is a major barrier for many families trying to access licensed, high-quality child care. By reducing the copayment families pay for CCCAP, more families will be able to enroll their children in care, thus being able to work or attend school, with more money left over for food, transportation, housing, and other vital costs. • Funding Source: CRRSA • Funding Amount: $6,307,914

[Family Strengthening]



Access Strategies

The Office of Early Childhood seeks to ensure all families have equitable and easy access to high quality early care and education services so that all children start school ready to succeed.

Activity 1: Child Care Stabilization Grants

$221,694,958 ★ Funded by ARP (Note: $101,516,223 required to be used to reduce family tuition)

- Description:
  - Grant payments to eligible providers for operational expenses.
  - Amounts based on licensed capacity and quality.
  - Bonus awards for offering infant and toddler care, non-traditional hours, and children with special needs.

- How to access funds:
  - Entitlement grant; all eligible providers must still complete a brief application (expected to open mid-November).
  - Exempt providers may become eligible for the stabilization grants by becoming licensed or CCCAP qualified-exempt.

Activity 1: Child Care Stabilization Grants (cont.)

$221,694,958 ★ Funded by ARP (Note: $101,516,223 required to be used to reduce family tuition)

Total Grant*

Capacity Grouping	Level 1 & 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Qualified- Exempt
Qualified-Exempt					$761
0-4	$1,820				
5-14	$8,587	$8,952	$9,310	$9,659	
15-39	$24,405	$25,442	$26,460	$27,452	
40-59	$42,388	$44,189	$45,957	$47,680	
60-89	$63,796	$66,507	$69,167	$71,761	
90-149	$96,645	$100,753	$104,783	$108,712	
150+	$114,176	$119,028	$123,789	$128,432	

Per Month Payments*

Capacity Grouping	Level 1 & 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Qualified- Exempt
Qualified-Exempt					$85
0-4	$202				
5-14	$954	$995	$1,034	$1,073	
15-39	$2,712	$2,827	$2,940	$3,050	
40-59	$4,710	$4,910	$5,106	$5,298	
60-89	$7,088	$7,390	$7,685	$7,973	
90-149	$10,738	$11,195	$11,643	$12,079	
150+	$12,686	$13,225	$13,754	$14,270	

*Base grant amount prior to bonuses to providers serving certain family needs and before Workforce Sustainability Grants. Half of a provider's total grant must be used to offset family tuition.

Activity 2: Employer-based Child Care Facilities

$8,800,000 ★ Funded by State General Fund

- Description:
  - Financial assistance for employers to create on-site child care.
  - Expected to fund 10-25 new child care centers.
  - Maximum award of $800,000.
  - Financial match of 50% (for-profit) or 25% (nonprofit or government).

- How to access funds:
  - Competitive grant process; interested applicants to complete the interest form until application opens.
  - Employer-Based Child Care Design Lab will provide technical assistance to selected lab participants until February.

Activity 3: CIRCLE Grants

$24,800,000 ($16,800,000 CRRSA; $8,000,000 ARP) ★ Funded by CRRSA & ARP

- Description:
  - Innovation grants to providers and partners to address child care challenges facing Colorado.

- How to access funds:
  - Competitive grant process; application to open in late-November.
  - Applicants will receive technical assistance to apply.

Activity 4: Quality Improvement Incentive

$3,278,380 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Bonus payments for new and existing programs that increase their quality level.
  - Amounts range from $2,000-$2,500 for family homes and centers serving infants and toddlers moving from Level 1 to 2 and $3,500-$4,000 for moving from Level 2 to 3-5.

- How to access funds:
  - Programs apply through the existing Colorado Shines QRIS system.
  - Quality Navigators will provide technical assistance.
  - Expected time for completing the rating process is 4-6 months for programs seeking a high quality rating (Levels 3-5).

Activity 5: Licensing Incentive

$2,400,000 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - One-time bonus payment of $5,000 to become a licensed child care provider, or $500 to become a qualified exempt provider.
  - Newly licensed or qualified exempt providers in operation on March 11, 2021 will become eligible for the Stabilization grants.
- How to access funds:
  - Programs apply to be licensed through the existing license application process; for a provider to become qualified exempt, a family receiving CCCAP must request through their county.
  - The licensing process can take 60-120 days to complete; programs could receive this one-time bonus by January.

Activity 6: Availability and Outreach of Child Care, Especially for Infants and Toddlers

$3,352,466 ★ Funded by CRRSA

- Description:
  - Supports Early Childhood Councils to collect and report real-time supply data for parents, as well as to understand provider capacity to serve special populations, such as infants and toddlers.

- Next steps include:
  - Early Childhood Councils will receive additional funding for dedicated staff to conduct outreach and report available slots.

Activity 7: Family Child Care Home Navigator Program

$3,352,466 ★ Funded by CRRSA

- Description:
  - Provides funding to Early Childhood Councils to hire dedicated staff to recruit and support family child care home providers.
  - Navigators connect providers with support and resources to improve business practices, support quality, create a sense of community, and retain and grow their business.

- How to access funds:
  - Early Childhood Councils will receive additional funding for dedicated staff to support new and existing family child care home providers.

Activity 8: Access to Inclusive Care

$1,257,957 ★ Funded by CRRSA

- Description:
  - Supports provider access to adaptive materials, technical assistance, and training.
  - These supports will help providers better meet the needs of children with developmental delays, disabilities, and special needs.

- How to access funds:
  - Providers can access the Universal Design and Inclusion Kits and online quick tip videos beginning in March, 2022.
  - Providers can apply for tiered technical assistance and materials packages to create universally designed, inclusive classrooms beginning in February, 2022.

Activity 9: Emerging & Expanding Grant

$8,800,000 ★ Funded by State General Fund

- Description:
  - Grants between $3,000 to $200,000 for expanding an existing or opening a new child care program.
  - Priority for expanding child care capacity for child care deserts, infants and toddlers, and children with special needs.
  - Must serve children ages birth to five to be eligible.

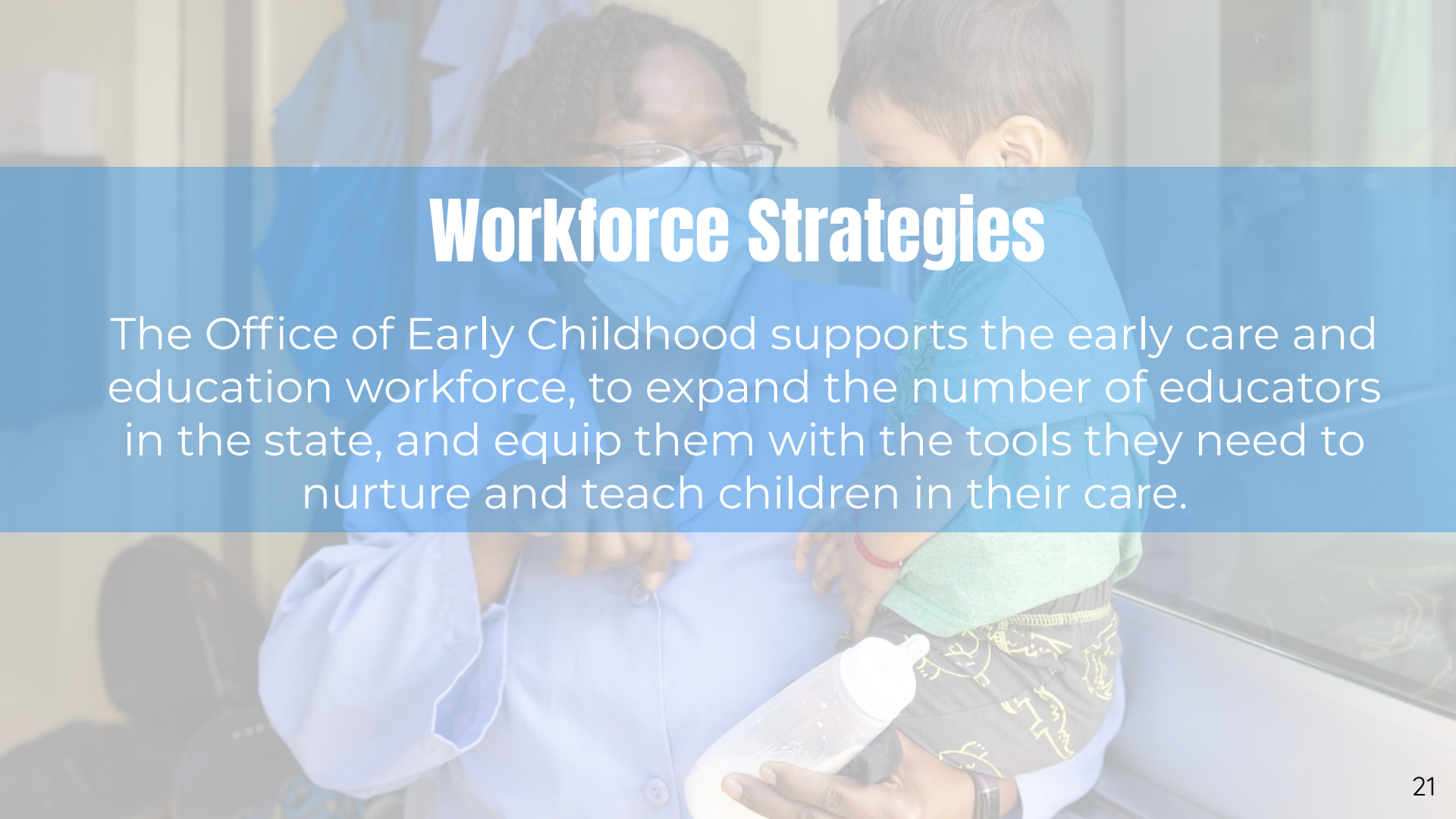
- How to access funds:
  - Competitive grant; application is open and can be accessed through the OEC website.
  - Interested providers can receive assistance through their Child Care Licensing Specialists and Early Childhood Councils.

Activity 10: CCCAP Rates & Payments

$36,823,976 ★ Funded by CRRSA

- Description:
  - Increases the minimum number of monthly absence payments to CCCAP providers. Counties have the flexibility to pay over the minimum.
  - Increases the daily reimbursement rates paid to CCCAP providers to reflect the higher costs of care due to COVID.

- How to access funds:
  - Beginning August 1, 2021, the minimum number of monthly absences paid to CCCAP providers increased; reimbursed through the existing reimbursement process.
  - Beginning September 1, 2021, CCCAP providers with and active Fiscal Agreement received an increased daily reimbursement rate through existing reimbursement process.
  - Providers that are interested in accepting CCCAP can enter into a fiscal agreement through their county department of human / social services.



Workforce Strategies

The Office of Early Childhood supports the early care and education workforce, to expand the number of educators in the state, and equip them with the tools they need to nurture and teach children in their care.

Activity 1: Sustainability Grants for Workforce Retention

$49,817,600 ($35,000,000 CRRSA; $14,817,600 ARP) ★ Funded by CRRSA & ARP

- Description:
  - Workforce retention grants to eligible licensed child care providers to support staff retention.
  - Grants may be used for employee benefits, employee compensation, professional development, and hiring additional staff.

- How to access funds:
  - Entitlement grant; all eligible providers must still complete a brief application (expected to open mid-November).

Activity 1: Sustainability Grants for Workforce Retention

$49,817,600 ($35,000,000 CRRSA; $14,817,600 ARP) ★ Funded by CRRSA & ARP

Total Grant*

Capacity Grouping	Level 1 & 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Qualified- Exempt
Qualified-Exempt					$176
0-4	$421	$0	$0	$0	
5-14	$1,988	$2,072	$2,155	$2,236	
15-39	$5,650	$5,890	$6,125	$6,355	
40-59	$9,812	$10,229	$10,639	$11,038	
60-89	$14,768	$15,396	$16,012	$16,612	
90-149	$22,372	$23,323	$24,256	$25,166	
150+	$26,431	$27,554	$28,656	$29,731	

Per Month Payments*

Capacity Grouping	Level 1 & 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Qualified- Exempt
Qualified-Exempt					$20
0-4	$47				
5-14	$221	$230	$239	$248	
15-39	$628	$654	$681	$706	
40-59	$1,090	$1,137	$1,182	$1,226	
60-89	$1,641	$1,711	$1,779	$1,846	
90-149	$2,486	$2,591	$2,695	$2,796	
150+	$2,937	$3,062	$3,184	$3,303	

*Sustainability Grants for Workforce Retention are in addition to base Stabilization Grants; providers will have to attest to using this portion of their monthly grant specifically for workforce retention.

Activity 2: Workforce Recruitment & Retention Programs

$11,732,524 ($9,332,524 CRRSA; $2,400,000 CCDF Base)★ Funded by CRRSA & CCDF Base

- Description:
  - Creates an Early Care and Education (ECE) Recruitment and Retention Grant and Scholarship Program.
  - Provides financial assistance for a menu of options to support access to education and training.

- How to access funds:
  - Competitive grant process; application expected to open in January.
  - Some programs administered through State agency partners, such as scholarships through Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE).

Activity 3: CCCAP Teacher Salary Increase

$3,000,000 ★ Funded by CCDF Base

- Description:
  - Creates grant program to increase compensation by $1,000-$1,200 annually for assistant early childhood teachers and early childhood teachers employed by Levels 3-5 programs participating in CCCAP.

- How to access funds:
  - Competitive grant program; application for CCCAP providers is expected to open in mid-December.
  - Provider recipients will have to attest to using the funds only to increase the salaries of early childhood staff.

Activity 4: Free 101 and 103 Coursework

$2,600,000 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Provides the minimum coursework to become Early Childhood Teacher Qualified, ECE 101 and ECE 103, for free for two years.
  - Available at all community colleges and public institutions of higher education beginning in the Fall 2021 semester.

- How to access funds:
  - Students can enroll in the ECE 101 and ECE 103 courses at no cost.

Activity 5: Apprenticeship Program

$2,600,000 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Provides an alternative career pathway for individuals into the early childhood workforce through paid work experiences.
  - Builds on the free ECE 101 and ECE 103 courses by providing the work experience needed to be licensed to teach.

- OEC will work with a contract partner to:
  - Create an application for interested professionals.
  - Help identify child care programs to serve as employer sponsors.
  - Align opportunities with the teacher peer mentor model being developed.

Activity 6: Teacher Peer Mentorship

$374,464 ($124,464 CRRSA; $250,000 ARP) ★ Funded by CRRSA & ARP

- Description:
  - Creates a Teacher Peer Mentorship Program to improve the retention of new teachers.
  - Incentivizes existing educators and directors to serve as mentors with one-time payments.

- Next steps will include:
  - Hiring an OEC FTE to create the program in winter, 2021/2022.
  - Creating an application for interested programs to apply (must have experienced teachers interested in mentoring and new teachers as mentees).
  - Launching a small pilot cohort in spring, 2022.

Activity 7: Free Online Director Training

$276,930 ★ Funded by CRRSA

- Description:
  - Develops a free Director Training Sequence for child care center directors through the Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System (PDIS).
  - Available in English and Spanish.
  - Focus on administration and business, instructional leadership, and teacher development.

- Next steps will include:
  - Hiring instructional design staff to manage course development.
  - Outreach to higher education partners and stakeholders for feedback on course development.
  - Design and launch courses.



Family Strengthening Strategies

The Office of Early Childhood provides communities and families with the support they need so children have a healthy environment in which to thrive.

Activity 1: Reduced Child Care Tuition for Families

$101,516,223 ★ Funded by ARP (Included in Access - Activity 1)

- Description:
  - $100 million from the Child Care Stabilization grants (see Access Activity 1) to reduce or eliminate child care tuition payments for families.

- How to access funds:
  - Entitlement grant; all eligible providers must still complete a brief application (expected to open mid-November). This will be the same application as the Child Care Stabilization Grants.
  - Providers will have to attest that half of their total Stabilization grant will be used to offset family tuition.

Activity 2: Reducing CCCAP Co-payments (Parent Fees)

$6,307,914 ★ Funded by CRRSA

- Description:
  - Decrease the parent fee for many families enrolled in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP).

- How to access funds:
  - CCCAP families benefiting from the new parent fee structure should have received notification of the decrease in parent fee from the County Department of Human Services effective August 1, 2021.

Activity 3: Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants

$4,976,213 ($4,076,213 CRRSA; $900,000 ARP) ★ Funded by CRRSA & ARP

- Description:
  - Maintains the additional Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) consultants recruited in July, 2020, and adds eight new consultants, bringing the total to 52 statewide.

- Next steps will include:
  - Amending existing contracts with ECMH consultants.
  - Hiring 1 State FTE to provide training and technical assistance to ECMH consultants.

Activity 4: Health and Mental Health Grants

$6,400,000 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Offers child care providers funding for a menu of options related to health and mental health.

- How to access funds:
  - Competitive grant; application expected to open in early-December.

Activity 5: Health and Mental Health Programs

$1,930,000 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Funds evidence-based health and mental health programs, including Incredible Years, Pyramid, and Conscious Discipline.

- Next steps will include:
  - Funding State intermediaries and Early Childhood Councils to implement programs to providers.

Activity 6: Indoor Air Quality Improvement Grants

$3,000,000 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Provides funds for child care providers to update or replace inefficient or outdated heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.
  - Addresses the growing need for filtered indoor air, highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased frequency of wildfire smoke in Colorado, and improves energy efficiency to reduce utility costs for providers.

- How to access funds:
  - Competitive grant; application expected to open in mid-December.

Activity 7: Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting

$829,563 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Additional funding through the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program.
  - Supports families in the existing MIECHV sites with grocery store cards, technology for virtual visits, and training and support for home visitors.

- Next steps will include:
  - Amending site contracts.
  - Scheduling professional development opportunities.

Activity 8: Promoting Safe and Stable Families

$285,019 ★ Funded by CRRSA

- Description:
  - Additional funding through the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program.
  - Provides respite, fatherhood, and adoption support services to families, along with access to technology.
  - Increases professional development for the workforce and data collection capacity.

- How to access funds:
  - Solicitations for funding opportunities are posted on the Colorado Vender Self Service System.

Activity 9: Community Based Child Abuse Prevention

$4,200,999 ★ Funded by ARP

- Description:
  - Provides direct services to families with young children and norms campaign to improve community connectedness.
  - Strengthens system through workforce, collaboration, data collection, local planning efforts, and compensation of parent leaders and individuals with lived experience to co-create solutions.

- How to access funds:
  - Solicitations for funding opportunities are posted on the Colorado Vender Self Service System.


THANK YOU.
Questions?
CDHS
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