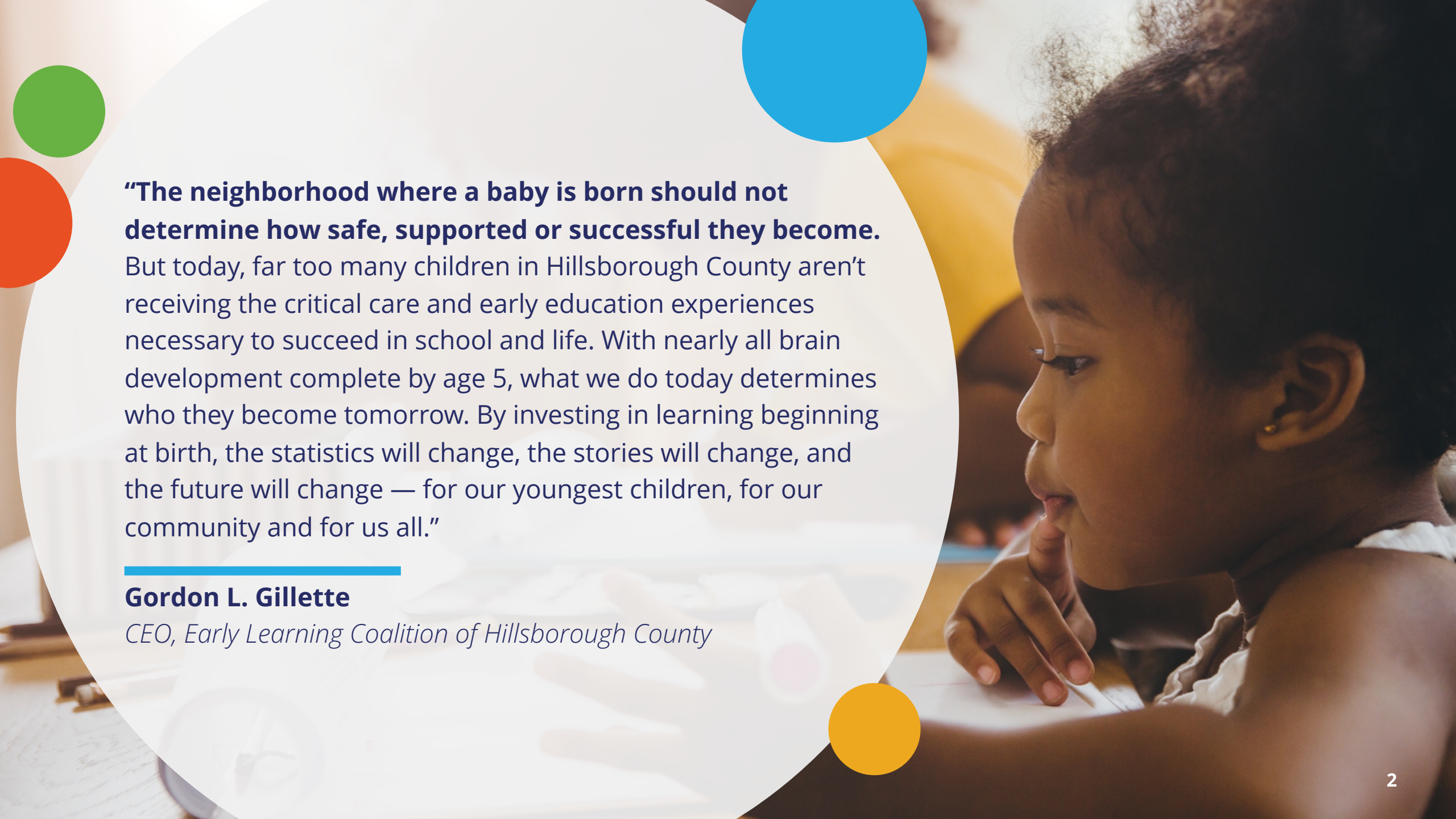


# Preparing Our Children & Community for Success from Day One

2020 Community Impact Report



**EARLY LEARNING**  
COALITION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY



**“The neighborhood where a baby is born should not determine how safe, supported or successful they become.** But today, far too many children in Hillsborough County aren’t receiving the critical care and early education experiences necessary to succeed in school and life. With nearly all brain development complete by age 5, what we do today determines who they become tomorrow. By investing in learning beginning at birth, the statistics will change, the stories will change, and the future will change — for our youngest children, for our community and for us all.”

---

**Gordon L. Gillette**

*CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County*



## In this report

### Report overview

- Purpose
- Partners
- Objectives
- Strategies

### Key learnings and results

- Increasing **access** to early learning
- Improving the **quality** of early learning experiences
- Advancing **education** of children and families

### Future implications

### Appendix

- Glossary to navigate the data



# Report Overview

Purpose | Partners | Objectives | Strategies







# **EARLY LEARNING**

COALITION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

## **What we do for children today determines who they become tomorrow.**

The Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County is a nonprofit that works to ensure all our community's youngest children grow up to achieve anything they can imagine by providing the best possible early learning experiences and supporting the families and teachers who care for them. Working together with families, educators and community partners to prepare every child for kindergarten, we're creating a brighter future for Hillsborough County and all who live and work here.

# Changing their first five years changes everything

Studies show that early childhood education, starting at birth, results in positive academic, economic and health outcomes — for our children and community. But today, too many children in Hillsborough County are unprepared. **Together, we will change that.**

**90%**

of a person's brain development occurs **before age 5.**

Source: [Neuropsychol Rev.](#)

**37%**

of families with children in Hillsborough County are **living in poverty** or don't earn enough to support their families.

Source: [United For ALICE, 2018](#)

**1/2**

of children in Hillsborough County are **not ready for kindergarten** when they start.

Source: Hillsborough County Public Schools

**Ready for kindergarten = ready for life**

**Children who are ready for kindergarten are more likely to:**

- ✓ Graduate from high school
- ✓ Earn higher incomes
- ✓ Have a lower risk of chronic disease and obesity



# Partnerships fuel children's potential

*Thank you to the partners involved in creating this impact report*

**FAMILIES**

**EARLY  
LEARNING  
PROVIDERS**

**LOCAL  
FUNDERS**

**CONN**  
MEMORIAL  
FOUNDATION

  
**Hillsborough County**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Preparing Students for Life

  
**EARLY LEARNING**  
COALITION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

**GOVERNMENT  
PARTNERS**

OFFICE OF  
**Early Learning**  
LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.

 FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF  
**EDUCATION**  
fldoe.org

**SYSTEMS  
PARTNERS**

 UNIVERSITY of  
**SOUTH FLORIDA**  
  
**UF** Lastinger Center  
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

# Objectives by fall 2023\*

## Increase ACCESS to early learning

- **Improve VPK participation** in Hillsborough County from 75% to 78%.
- **Decrease and maintain the School Readiness waitlist** from an average of 1,300 to fewer than 600 children.
- **Increase entry into School Readiness** for children whose families earn more than the qualifying income level but struggle to afford child care\*\* from 2,150 to 3,000 children.

## Improve QUALITY of early learning experiences

- Increase School Readiness sites that have a **minimum CLASS score of 4** from 55% to 90%\*\*\*.
- **Establish teacher retention, compensation and benefits benchmarks** to measure and improve future program effectiveness.

## Advance EDUCATION of children and families

- Improve **quality interactions with low-income families to 1,100 each quarter**
- Increase the percentage of VPK providers in Hillsborough County with at least 60% of their **children ready for kindergarten** from 62% to 66%.
- Increase the percentage of VPK providers in the **six poorest Hillsborough County ZIP codes** (33603, 33604, 33610, 33612, 33614, 33619) with at least 60% of their children **ready for kindergarten** from 30% to 45%.
- **Increase kindergarten readiness** for all students in Hillsborough County from 52% to 65%.

\*All baseline data is from the 2018-19 school year except for the School Readiness objective, which is from 2020-21.

\*\*Households with income above the federal poverty level (FPL) but below the defined basic survival income level (100-199% of FPL) are known as ALICE households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). ALICE > 150 refers to families that are not eligible for the School Readiness program because they are 150-199% above the FPL but still struggle to afford child care.

\*\*\*CLASS is the nationwide assessment used to measure the quality of interactions between early learning teachers and children. See slide 28 for more information.



# Strategies for success

## COLLABORATION

### ACCESS

- Facilitate access to early learning
- Execute best practice programs and services

### QUALITY

- Support early learning providers

### CHILD & FAMILY EDUCATION

- Educate and engage families from birth
- Develop/improve programs that positively impact educational outcomes
- Collaborate with community partners to improve educational outcomes



## Facilitate access to early learning and execute best practice programs and services

- Execute **School Readiness and VPK programs** with excellence
- Implement initiatives that increase access to School Readiness and participation in VPK for **families that earn above the federal poverty level but struggle to afford child care\***
- Enhance the **Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)** program to ensure families receive access to critical support and excellent service

\*Households with income above the federal poverty level (FPL) but below the defined basic survival income level (100 - 199% of FPL) are known as ALICE households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). This strategy focuses on families that are not eligible for the School Readiness program because they are 150-199% above the FPL but still struggle to afford child care. We refer to them as ALICE > 150.



## Support early learning providers

- Offer Continuing Education Credit-worthy **professional development** focused on improving the quality of early learning programs
- Execute **CLASS observations and quality improvement strategies**, including coaching and training, with efficiency and excellence
- Work toward adequate funding levels and competitive **teacher compensation**
  - Provide financial **INCENTIVE\$** to early learning teachers
  - Cover required fees for early learning educators to pursue higher education through the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship
  - Advocate for higher wages and benefits for early learning teachers
  - Advocate for long-term increases in the Base Student Allotment for VPK
- Support legislation that includes **education accountability enhancements for providers** (e.g., VPK program and learning gains assessment standards via HB 419)

\***INCENTIVE\$** is a Children's Forum program that provides financial rewards for early childhood teachers based on their education and continuity of employment.

\*\***T.E.A.C.H.** is a Children's Forum program that provides scholarships to eligible teachers to work toward earning a degree or national certification in early childhood education.



STRATEGY  
THREE

CHILD &  
FAMILY  
EDUCATION

## Educate and engage families from birth

- Continue supporting the Tune In, Talk More, Take Turns (3T) program and Hillsborough Infant and Toddler Initiative to **equip parents with resources** to promote their child's learning from day one
- Enhance available support for families through the **Child Care Resource & Referral program**

## Develop/improve programs that positively impact outcomes

- Test and grow early learning **programs that supplement School Readiness and VPK**

## Collaborate and innovate to improve educational outcomes

- Partner with government funders to ensure support continues to **execute mission-critical programs**, including optimal use of CARES funding and access to data
- Collaborate with HCPS and other community partners to enhance VPK and the **literacy, numeracy, social-emotional and executive functioning skills of 3 to 5-year-olds** to improve kindergarten readiness and transition
- Partner with social service agencies to connect families with **resources and referrals that support early learning**
- Participate with the Association of Early Learning Coalitions to **advocate for policies that strengthen early childhood outcomes**
- Identify, engage and empower **early learning community ambassadors**





# KEY LEARNINGS & RESULTS

Increasing access to early learning

Improving quality of early learning experiences

Advancing education of children and families



# Executive summary of report findings

INCREASE  
**ACCESS**  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING

## WHAT WE LEARNED

- COVID-19 significantly impacted **VPK participation** in both 2019-20 and 2020-21, with enrollment at a record low.
- Since 2015, the average **School Readiness waitlist** has decreased by 60% but is still too high at more than 1,300.
- We're currently serving just 2,150 of potentially 16,900+ children whose families earn too much to qualify for School Readiness but **struggle to afford child care.**

IMPROVE  
**QUALITY**  
OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES

- When providers participate in our training and coaching, **CLASS scores and quality** improve. In 2019-20, 56% of School Readiness sites received a CLASS score of 4 or higher, jumping to 62% in 2020-21.
- Although **compensation is correlated with retention**, teachers in Hillsborough County are earning poverty-level wages.

ADVANCE  
**EDUCATION**  
OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES

- Across all **VPK providers**, 62% had a **kindergarten readiness rate of 60% or higher**, compared to just 30% in Hillsborough County's six poorest ZIP codes during 2018-19. Readiness rates were not issued in 2019-20 due to COVID-19.
- **Kindergarten readiness** dropped from 54% to 52% **county-wide** from fall 2019 to 2020 given pandemic-related school, job and family disruptions.

## WHAT COMES NEXT

- **Prioritize entry to School Readiness for working families living 150-199% above the federal poverty level but struggle to afford child care.**
- **Focus on increasing access to School Readiness and participation in VPK for children in the six poorest ZIP codes in Hillsborough County.**
- **Increase coaching, training and professional development for teachers, especially those in low-income neighborhoods.**
- **Collaborate with partners to fund INCENTIVES\$ for more teachers and advocate for better pay and benefits.**
- **Prioritize access to and quality of early childhood education and care for our most economically disadvantaged families.**
- **Launch a community-wide initiative to prepare 3- to 5-year-olds for kindergarten.**
- **Increase positive interactions with families as children's first teachers.**



# UNDERSTANDING THE DATA

## Hillsborough County consists of six regions based on ZIP codes



- 1** 33556, 33558, 33548, 33549, 33559, 33626, 33625, 33624, 33618, 33635, 33615, 33634
- 2** 33614, 33607, 33602, 33609, 33629, 33606, 33611, 33616, 33621
- 3** 33612, 33604, 33603, 33605
- 4** 33647, 33613, 33620, 33617, 33592, 33637, 33610, 33675
- 5** 33565, 33584, 33527, 33563, 33566, 33510, 33594, 33567, 33511, 33596
- 6** 33619, 33578, 33534, 33569, 33579, 33572, 33573, 33598, 33570, 33547

INCREASE  
**ACCESS**  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING

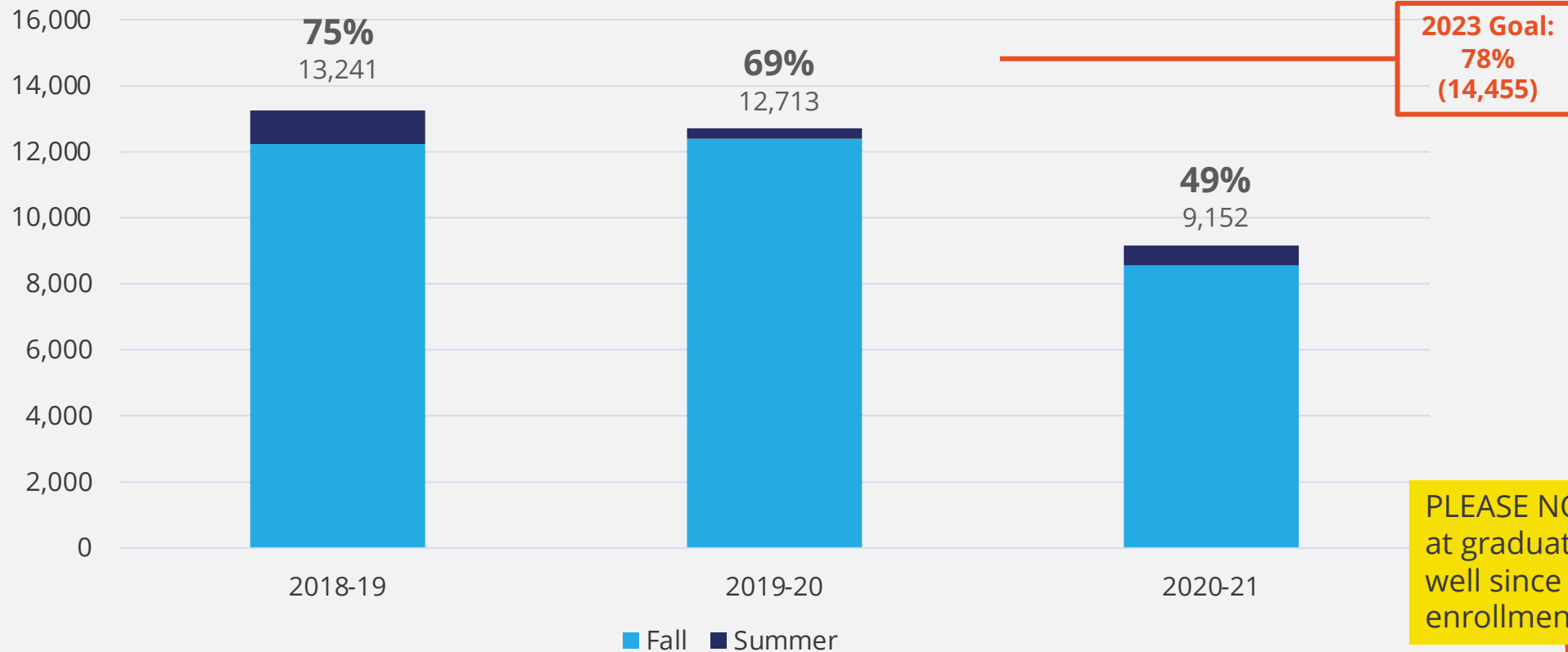


# RESULTS

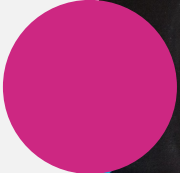
Increasing **access** to  
early learning

# COVID-19 significantly impacted VPK participation in both 2019-20 and 2020-21, with enrollment at a record low

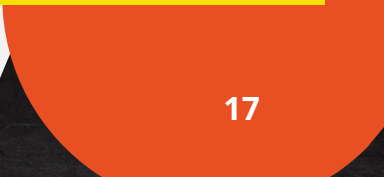
## Total Number of Students Enrolled in VPK



INCREASE ACCESS TO EARLY LEARNING



PLEASE NOTE: We looking at graduation numbers as well since these are only enrollment numbers.



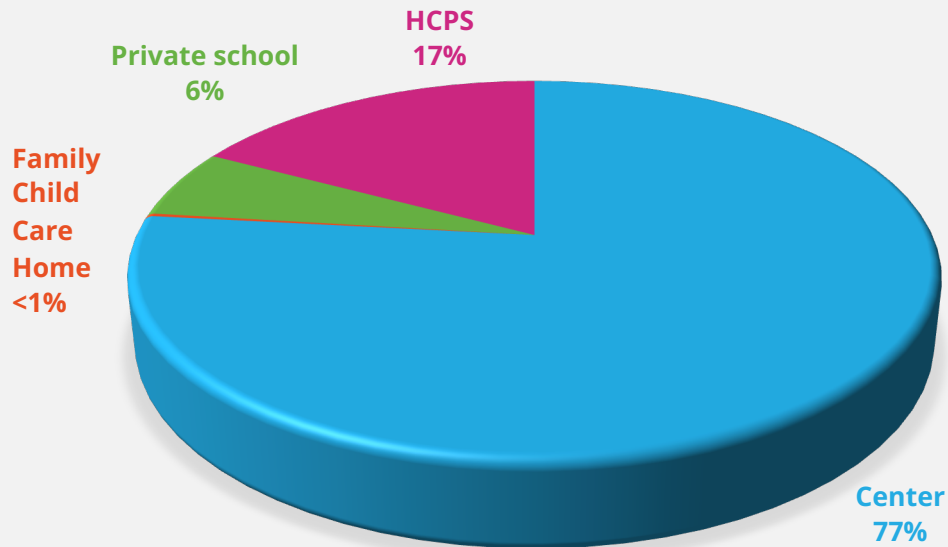
VPK enrollment data is based on information from the VPK Estimating Conference. There are an estimated 18,652 4-year-olds in Hillsborough County.



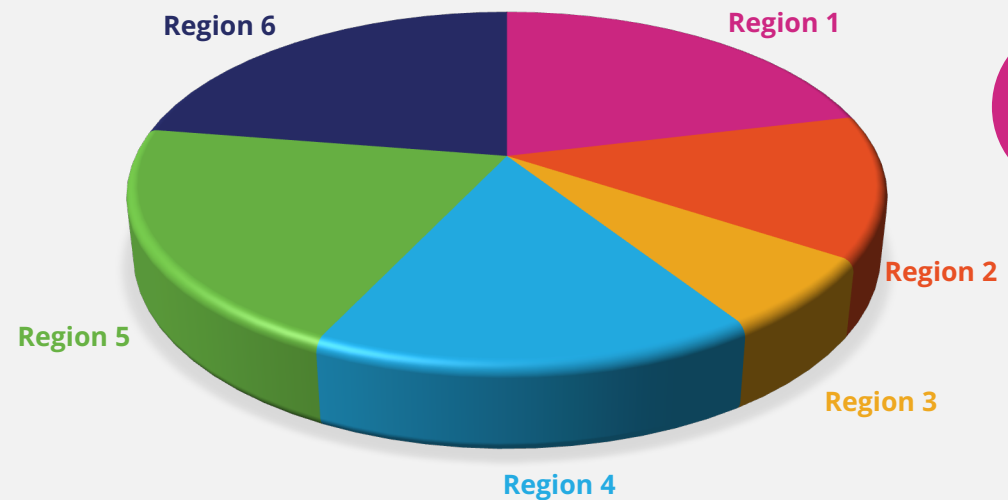
# Of the nearly 3 in 4 children who participated in VPK during 2019-20, the majority attended independent child care centers

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ACCESS  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING

## 2019-20 VPK Enrollment by Provider Type



## 2019-20 VPK Enrollment by Region



PLEASE NOTE: We are working to determine the percentage of the population reached in each region based on eligible children.

# By understanding where the other 1 in 4 children are, we can prepare more 4-year-olds for kindergarten



**Children who participate in VPK are much more ready for kindergarten than those who don't.**

Source: Department of Education

## Where are the 1 in 4 children who aren't enrolled in VPK?

- School Readiness sites (58) that don't offer VPK
- Private preschools that don't offer VPK
- Families not aware of VPK
- VPK sites not convenient or accessible to families (multiple children, transportation, job/home proximity, etc.)
- Unknown

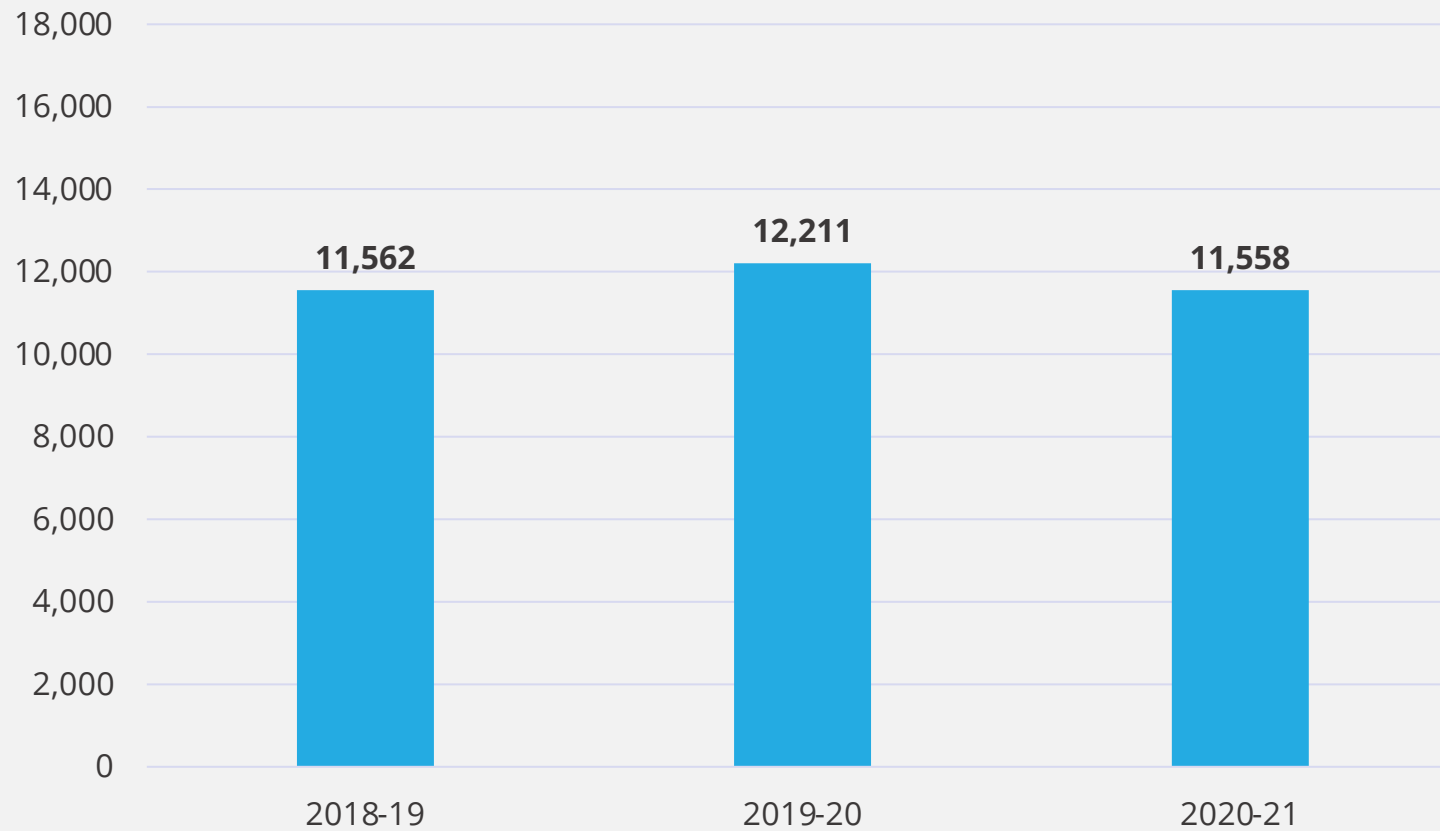
**Together, we'll understand where 4-year-olds are to better support them.**

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**ACCESS**  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING



# School Readiness enrollment has remained stable through the pandemic by funding care based on enrollment, not attendance, during Mar. through Dec. 2020

## Average Number of Students Enrolled in School Readiness by Year



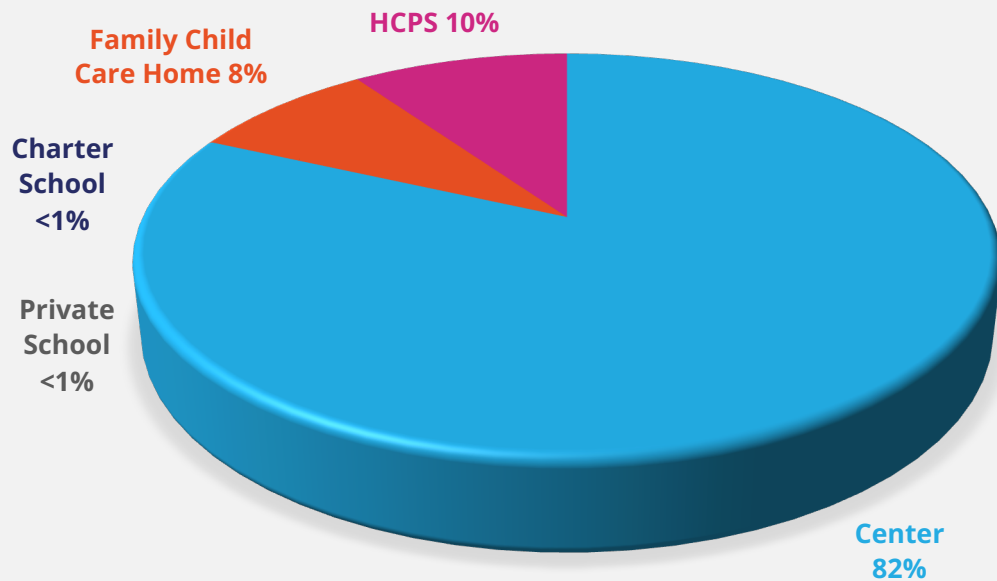
PLEASE NOTE: We will update each bar to break down total children served by age once that data is received (infants, toddlers, 2yo, 3 yo, 4 yo, 5 yo, school age) and reflect rolling average

INCREASE ACCESS TO EARLY LEARNING

# Most children who participated in School Readiness in 2019-20 attended an independent child care center

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**ACCESS**  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING

## 2019-20 School Readiness Enrollment by Provider Type



## 2019-20 School Readiness Enrollment by Region

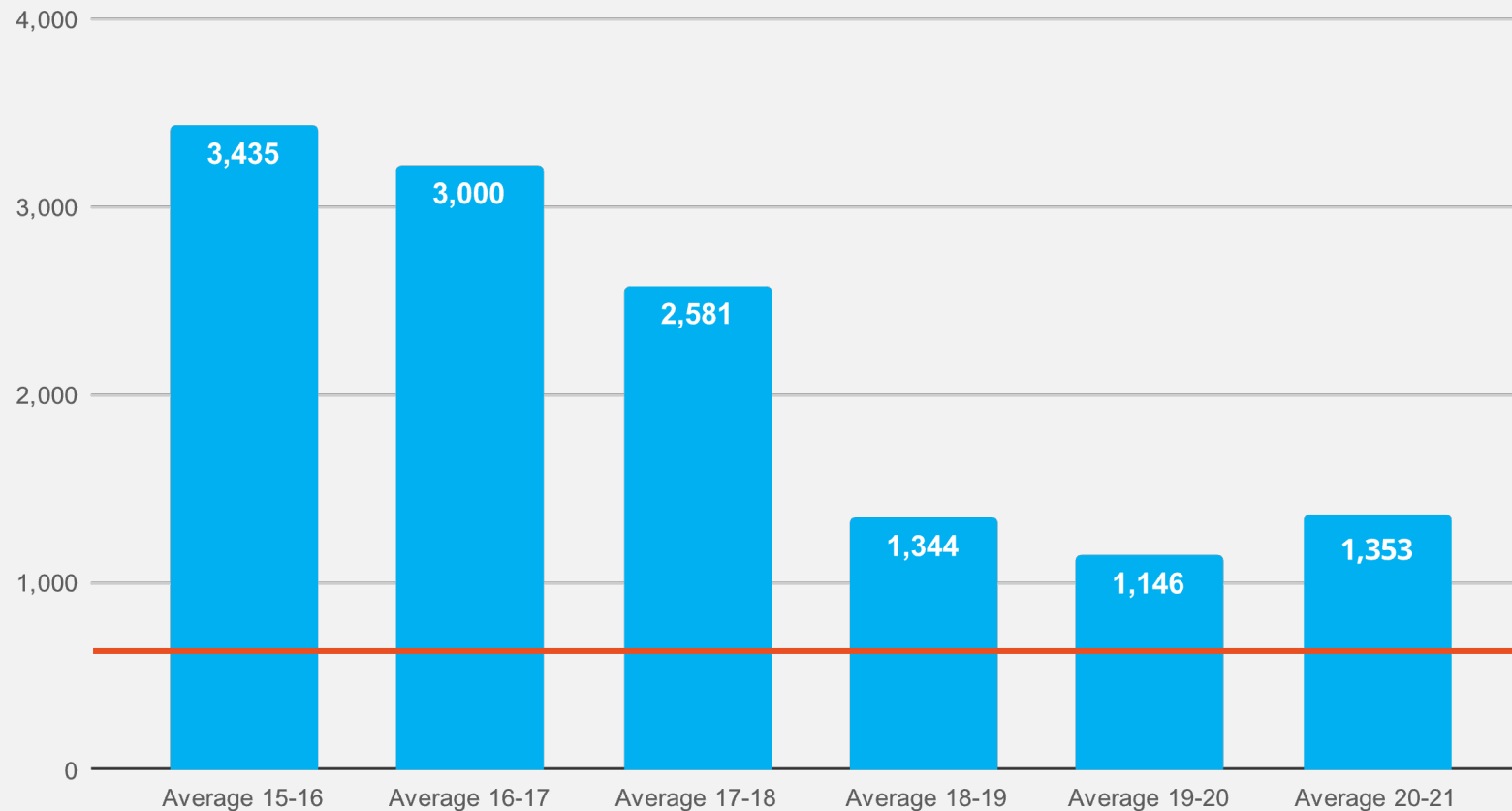
Include data to mirror approach on slide 18.

PLEASE NOTE: We are working to determine the percentage of the population reached in each region based on eligible children.



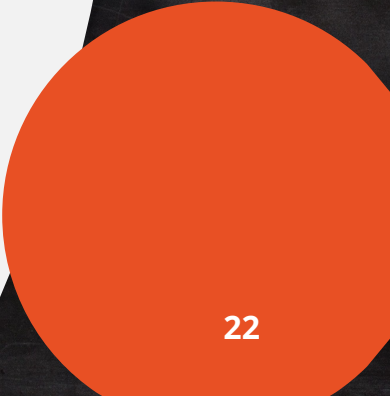
# Since 2015, the School Readiness waitlist has dropped 60%, increasing access to early learning for families in need

## School Readiness Waitlist Average by Year



**2023 Goal:  
600 or fewer**

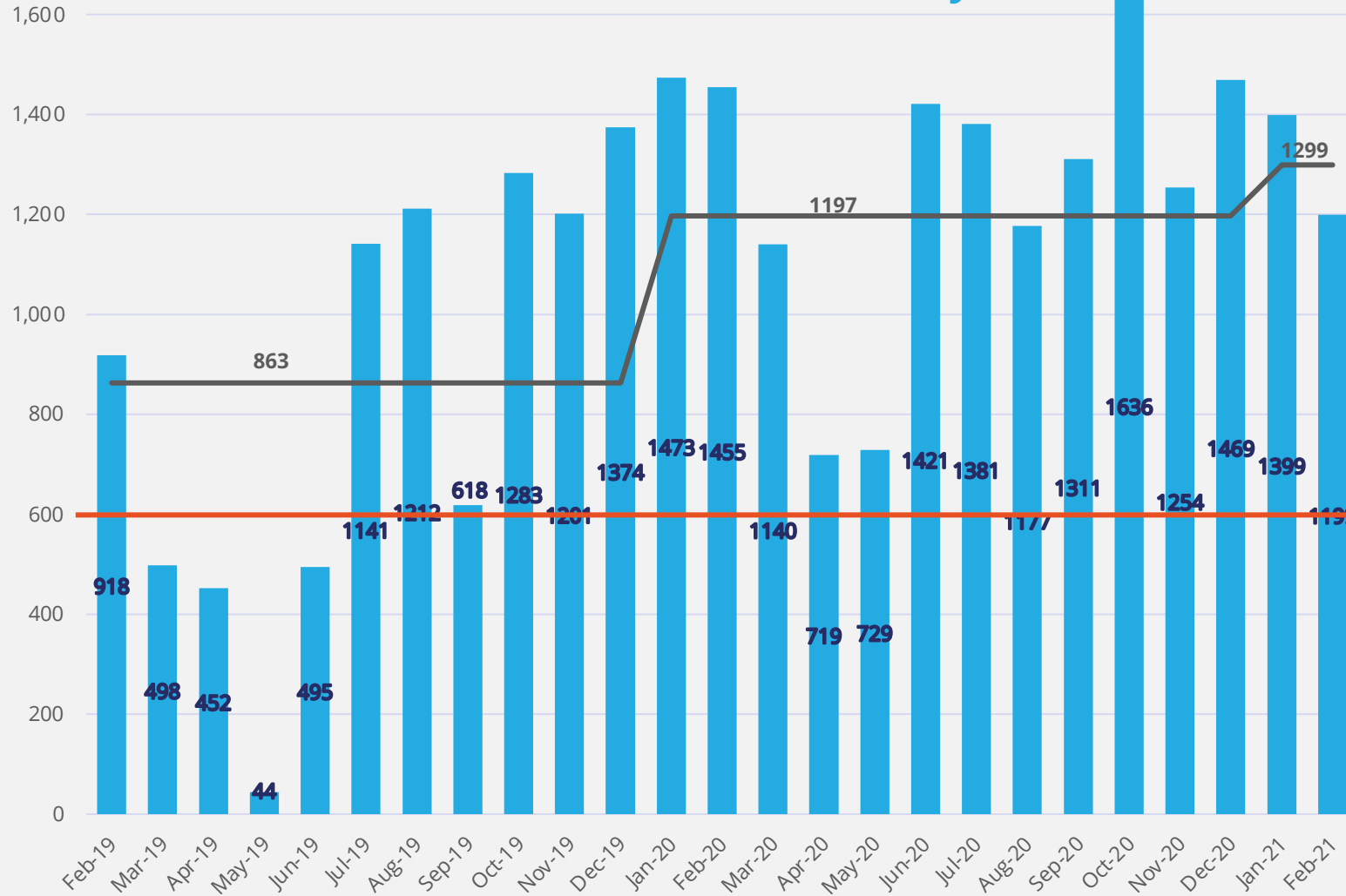
INCREASE  
**ACCESS**  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING



# Although the waitlist has decreased, the need remains high

INCREASE  
ACCESS  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING

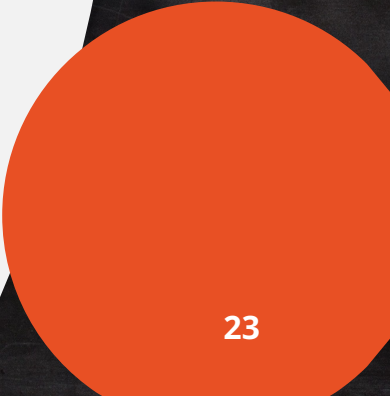
## School Readiness Waitlist Monthly Trend



By keeping our waitlist below 600, we can enhance families' economic independence and ability to work while improving children's educational outcomes.

**2023 Goal:**  
**600**

- Total
- Average per calendar year



# More than 13,000 households with children in Hillsborough County don't qualify for School Readiness but are living below the basic means for survival

**13,160**

Number of households in Hillsborough County with children (1.29 children on average) that earn too much to qualify for School Readiness but **struggle to afford child care** (ALICE > 150)\*

**\$1,020.36**

**Average School Readiness rate** for 90 days of care for one child (does not include parent co-pay and differential)

**\$13.4M**

Minimum average **cost to cover 90 days of School Readiness for one child** in every ALICE > 150 household in Hillsborough County

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**ACCESS**  
TO EARLY  
LEARNING

\*Households with income above the federal poverty level (FPL) but below the defined basic survival income level (100-199% of FPL) are known as ALICE households (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). ELCHC focuses on families that are not eligible for the School Readiness program because they are 150-199% above the FPL but still struggle to afford child care. We refer to them as ALICE > 150.



# Today, we're reaching just 2,150 of potentially 16,900+ children whose families earn too much to qualify for School Readiness but struggle to afford child care

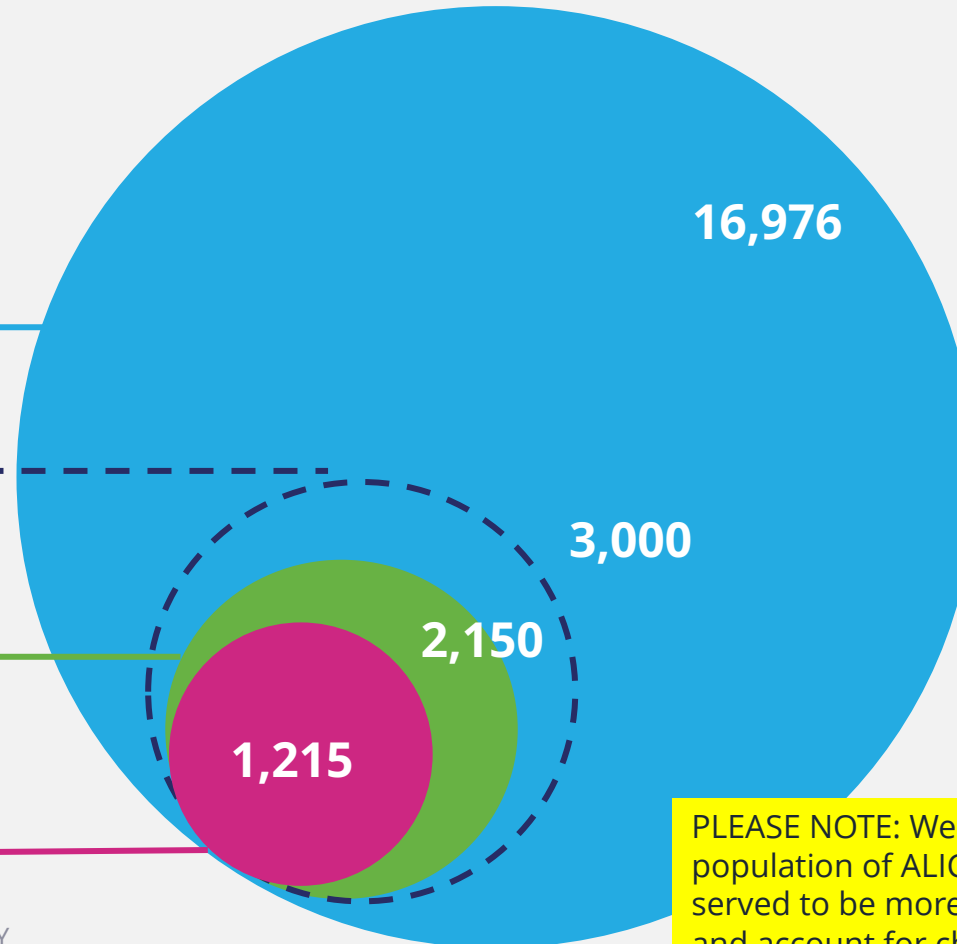
## Children from ALICE > 150 Households Served by ELCHC

Total number of children in ALICE > 150 households in Hillsborough County, assuming 1.29 children per household  
COST: \$13.4M for 90 days of care

ELCHC 2023 goal  
COST: 3.06M for 90 days of care

Children in ALICE > 150 households who entered the program in 2020-21  
LOCAL FUNDING PROVIDED: \$1.04M

Children in ALICE > 150 households who entered the program in 2019-20  
LOCAL FUNDING PROVIDED: \$305,000



### Funding Provided by:

Child Care Licensing  
Hillsborough Board of County Commissioners  
Office of Early Learning (State Match)  
St. John's Episcopal Diocese  
United Way Suncoast

INCREASE ACCESS TO EARLY LEARNING

PLEASE NOTE: We are working to identify what population of ALICE > 150 households are already served to be more accurate about the light blue section and account for children older than age 13.

## RECOMMENDATIONS to increase access to early learning

- Our greatest opportunity for impact is **increasing access to early learning programs for working families** that earn more than the qualifying income for School Readiness but struggle to afford child care. We spent \$1.04 million to serve 2,150 children from these households in 2019-20, but it will require community-wide collaboration and commitment to ensure the other 14,750 are not left behind.
- Because children who participate in VPK are much more ready for kindergarten, **focus on increasing access to VPK for all children, especially those in the six poorest ZIP codes** within Hillsborough County.

IMPROVE  
**QUALITY**  
OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES



# RESULTS

Improving **quality** of  
early learning experiences



# We currently measure provider quality with the CLASS assessment

Measures quality of interactions between teachers and children

**CLASS =  
C**lassroom  
**A**ssessment  
**S**coring  
**S**ystem

Used nationwide to help inform families of what types of interactions they can expect in their child's early education program

Important because the interactions children have with adults play a major role developing social-emotional and academic competencies

4.0 is the minimum standard for quality that an early learning provider must receive in Florida

IMPROVE  
**QUALITY**  
OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES

# While early learning providers with CLASS scores of 4.0 or higher are up from 56% to 62% year-over-year, we have a long way to go to reach our 90% goal

IMPROVE  
**QUALITY**  
OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES

## 2019-2020



## 2020-2021

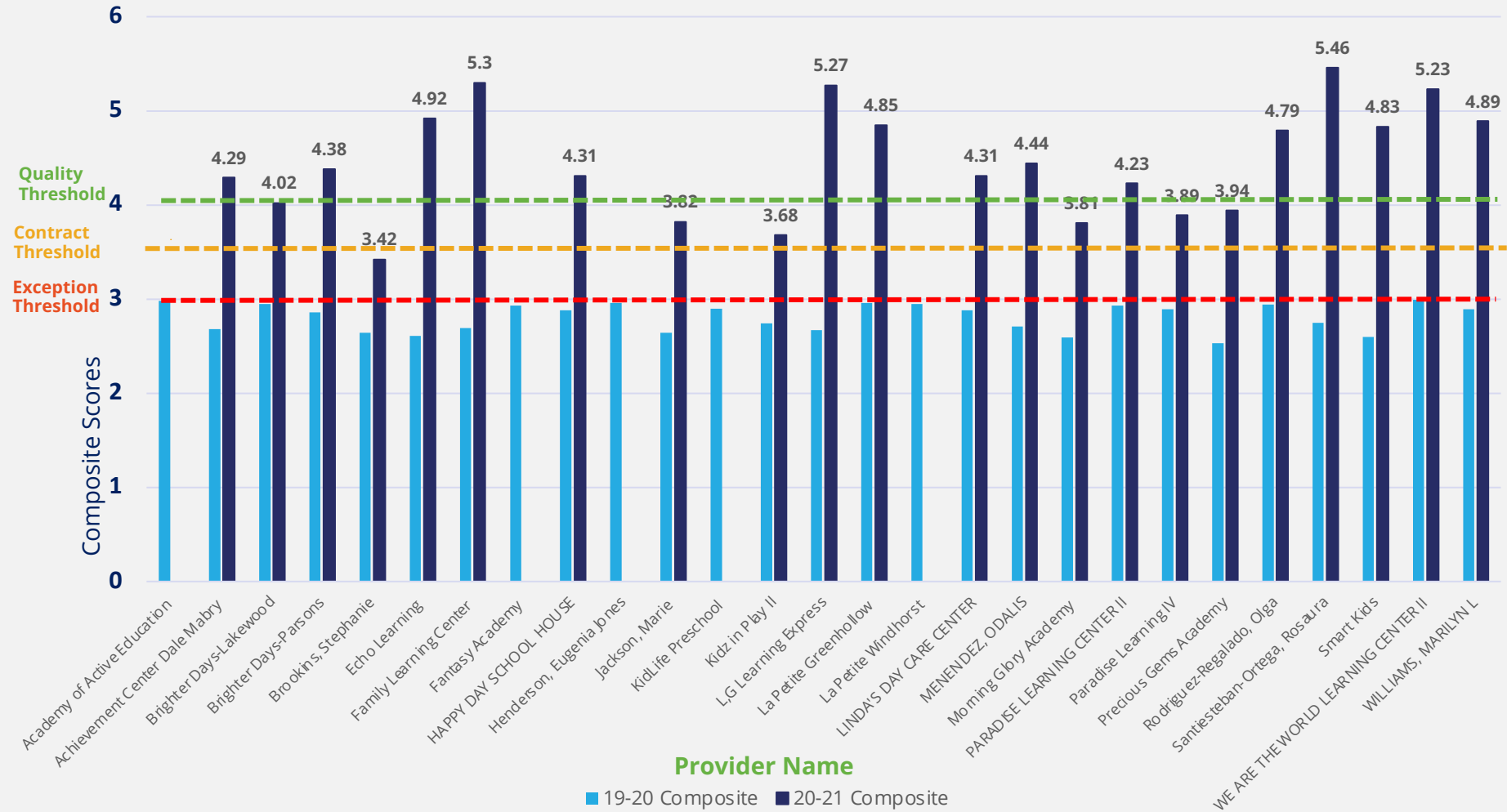


This chart shows CLASS scores for the 399 early learning providers that ELCHC observed by number of sites that earned a score within the ranges shown. 43 providers became non-exempt in 2020-21 and need new observations.

# When providers participate in training and coaching from ELCHC, child care quality improves

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OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES

Pre- & Post-CLASS Observations for Providers on a QIP during 2019-20



Providers without post-scores were unable to be evaluated due to COVID-19. QIP = Quality Improvement Plan



# Improving provider quality is critical to close the opportunity gap for low-income families

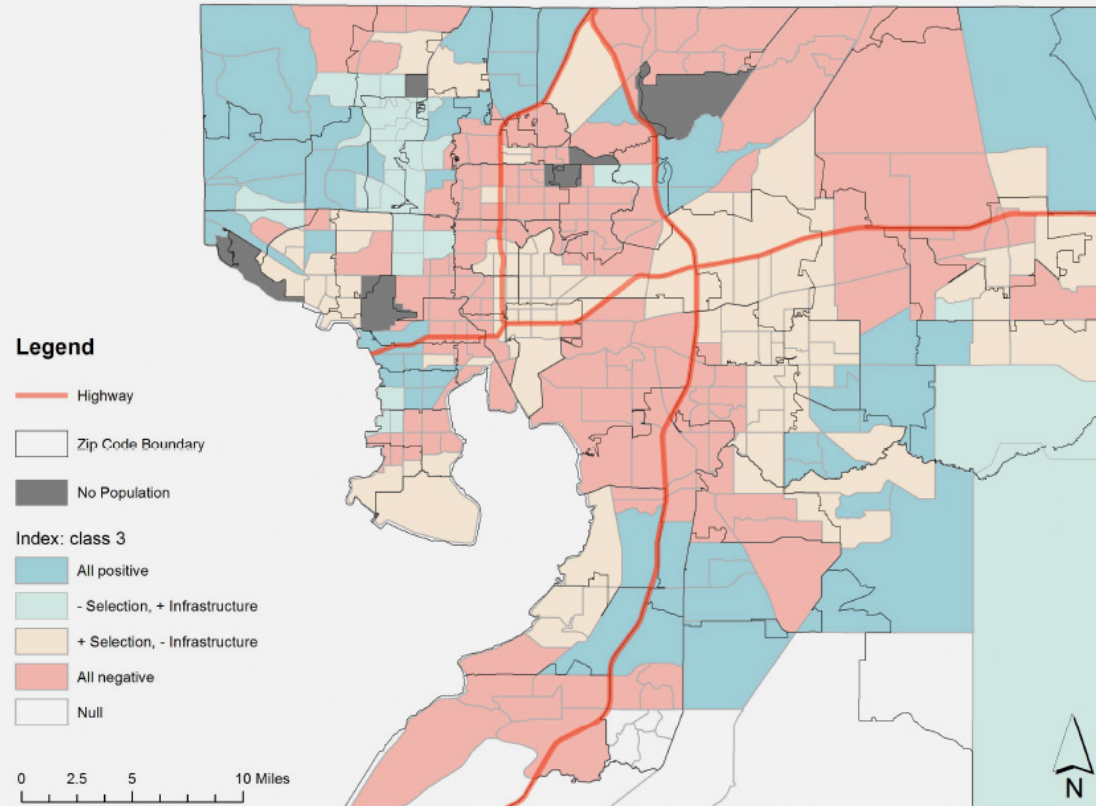
IMPROVE  
QUALITY  
OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES

## Hillsborough CLASS Data from March 2020

This map illustrates the quality of early learning providers in Hillsborough County. High quality is defined as a child care provider with a CLASS score of 4.0 or higher.

- Areas in dark teal and light green represent a favorable scenario for quality.
- Yellow and pink zones suggest a need for more high-quality slots.
- Light green and pink also indicate a need to improve parent selection of high quality child care programs.

In several areas, there is a need to increase access to high-quality child care for families seeking School Readiness services and, in many cases, parent education about program selection.



\* Calculated at census tract level with 2 mile buffers.

# Teacher compensation is correlated with retention

Today, early learning teachers with a significant role in influencing brain development receive poverty-level pay

IMPROVE  
**QUALITY**  
OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES



**\$11.51/hr**

\$23,941/year

average salary for early learning teachers in Florida, marginally above current minimum wage



**\$800**

average annual financial incentive for early learning teachers



**10%**

teacher turnover rate based on a small sample during 2019-2020

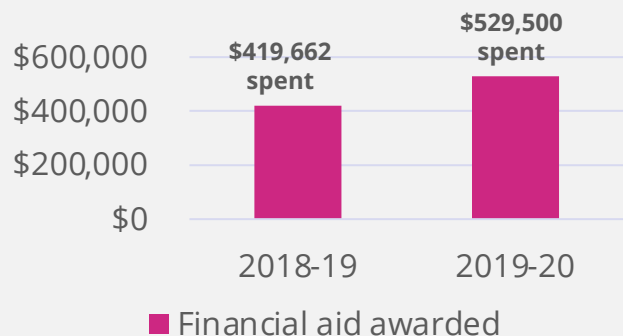
# Retaining high quality teachers improves children's development; better understanding their compensation, benefits and retention will enhance ELCHC's support

IMPROVE  
QUALITY  
OF EARLY  
LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES

## INCENTIVES\$

545 early learning teachers who received financial support through ELCHC's INCENTIVES\$ program in 2019-20 — just 8% of the estimated 7,000 early learning teachers in Hillsborough County

\$529,500 Financial aid awarded to early learning teachers in 2019-20



## T.E.A.C.H.

Teacher Education And Compensation Helps\*

178 Teachers with active scholarships

64 Laptop reimbursements

7 Laptops given directly to scholars

\*T.E.A.C.H. is a Children's Forum program that provides scholarships to eligible teachers to work toward earning a degree or national certification in early childhood education.



## RECOMMENDATIONS to improve the quality of early learning experiences

- Increase **coaching, training and professional development** for providers, especially those in low-income and underserved neighborhoods.
- Collaborate with partners to **fund INCENTIVE\$** for more teachers to achieve nationally competitive compensation and advocate for better pay and benefits.

ADVANCE  
**EDUCATION**  
OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES



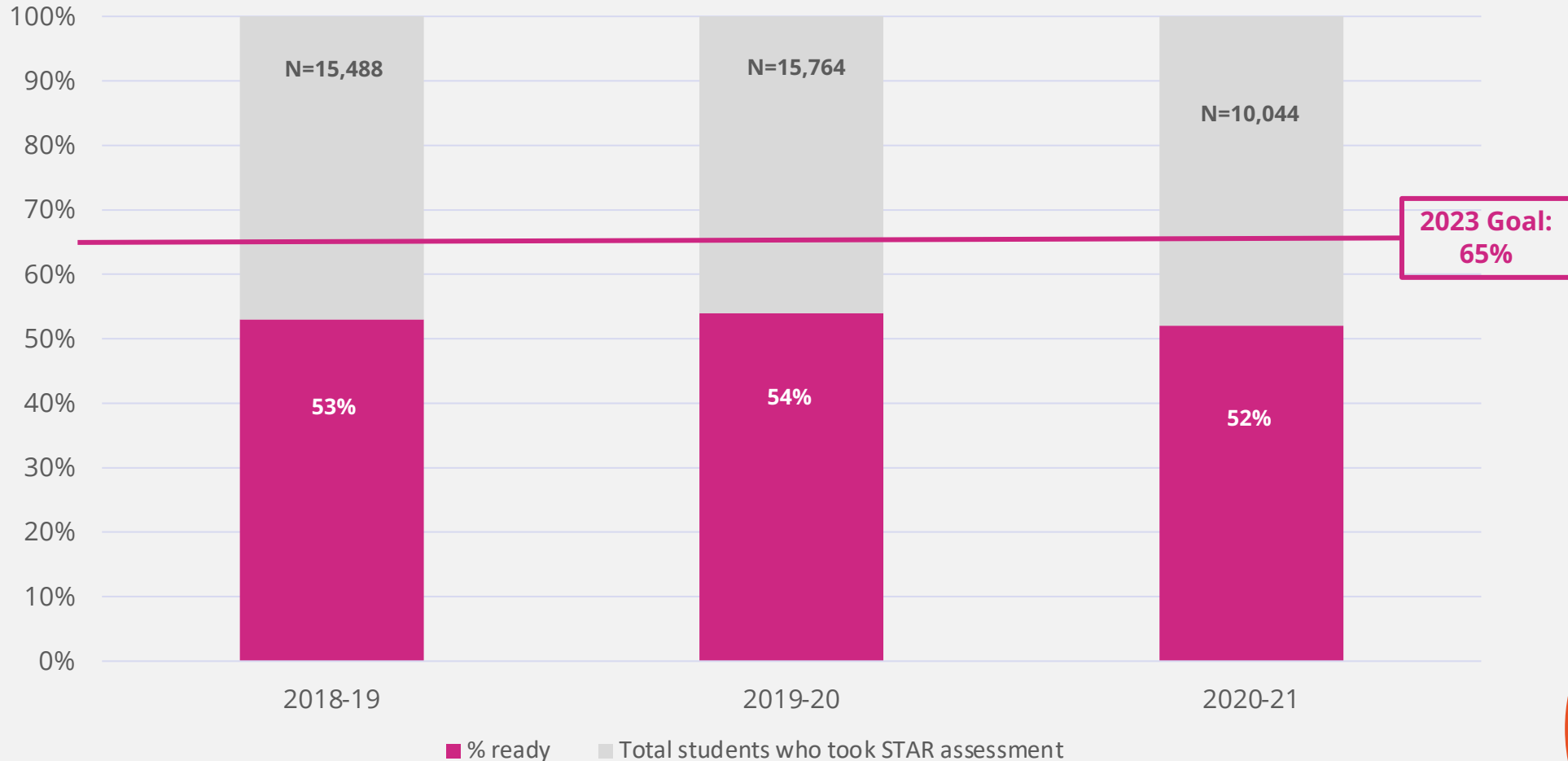
# RESULTS

Advancing **education**  
of children and families

# Today, 52% of children in Hillsborough County are ready for kindergarten; we can — and must — do better

ADVANCE  
EDUCATION  
OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES

## Hillsborough County Kindergarten Readiness Rates by Year

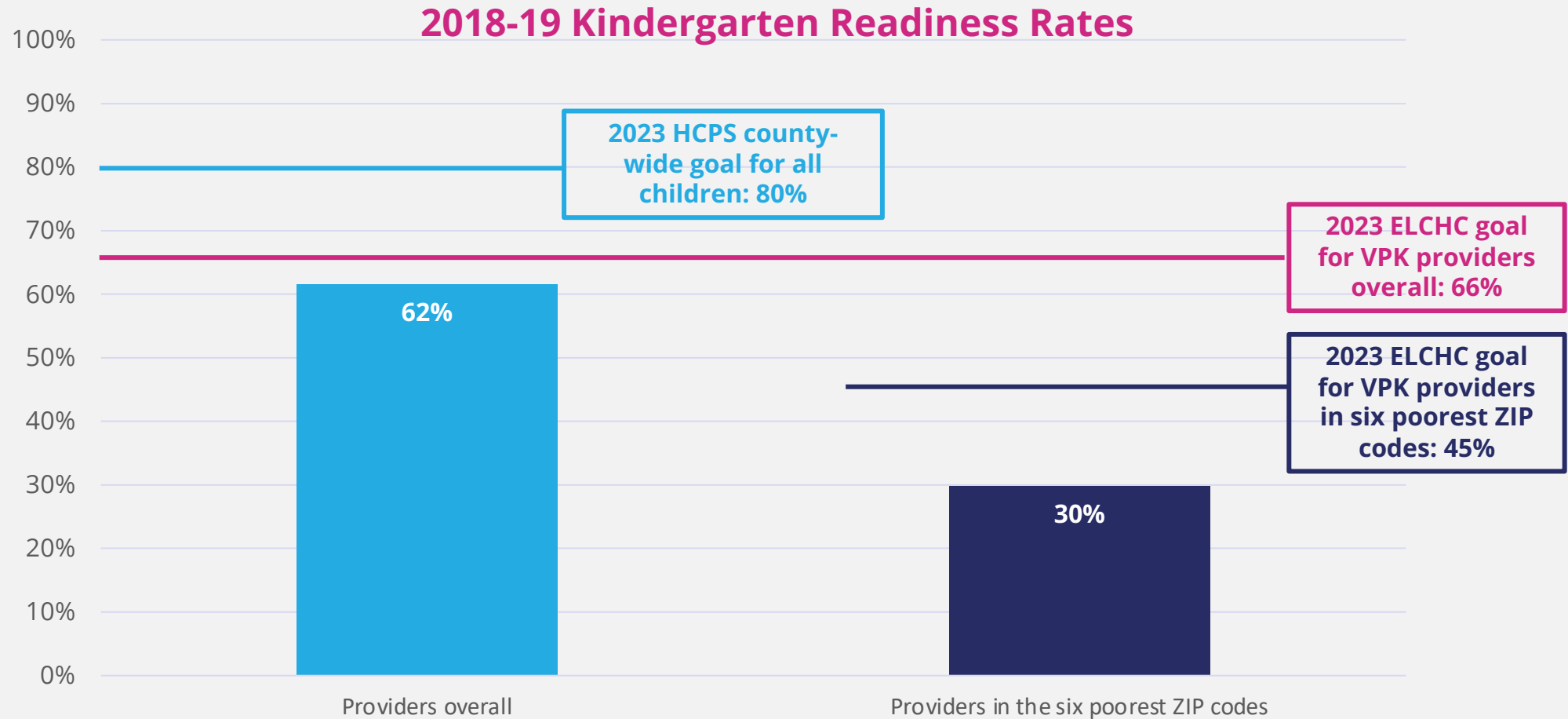


Children are considered ready for kindergarten if they score a 500 or higher on the STAR Early Literacy Assessment Tool conducted within the first 30 days of the school year. The grey shading shows total number of students who took the STAR assessment compared to the percentage who were identified as ready (pink) by year.

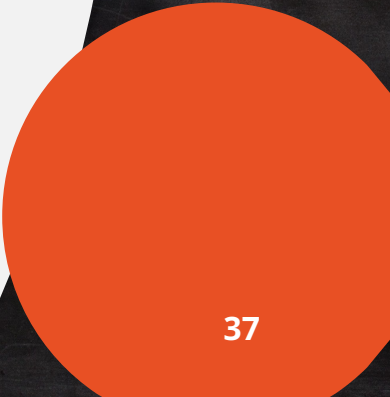


# Improving kindergarten readiness is especially important for children in the poorest ZIP codes, where quality and outcomes are correlated with income

ADVANCE  
EDUCATION  
OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES



This chart shows the kindergarten readiness rate in 2018-19 for all providers in Hillsborough County compared to those in the county's six poorest ZIP codes (33603, 33604, 33610, 33612, 33614 and 33619). 32 providers did not receive a rating in 2018-19. Florida did not issue kindergarten readiness rates in 2019-20 due to COVID-19.

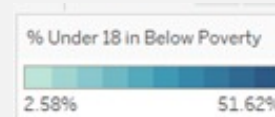
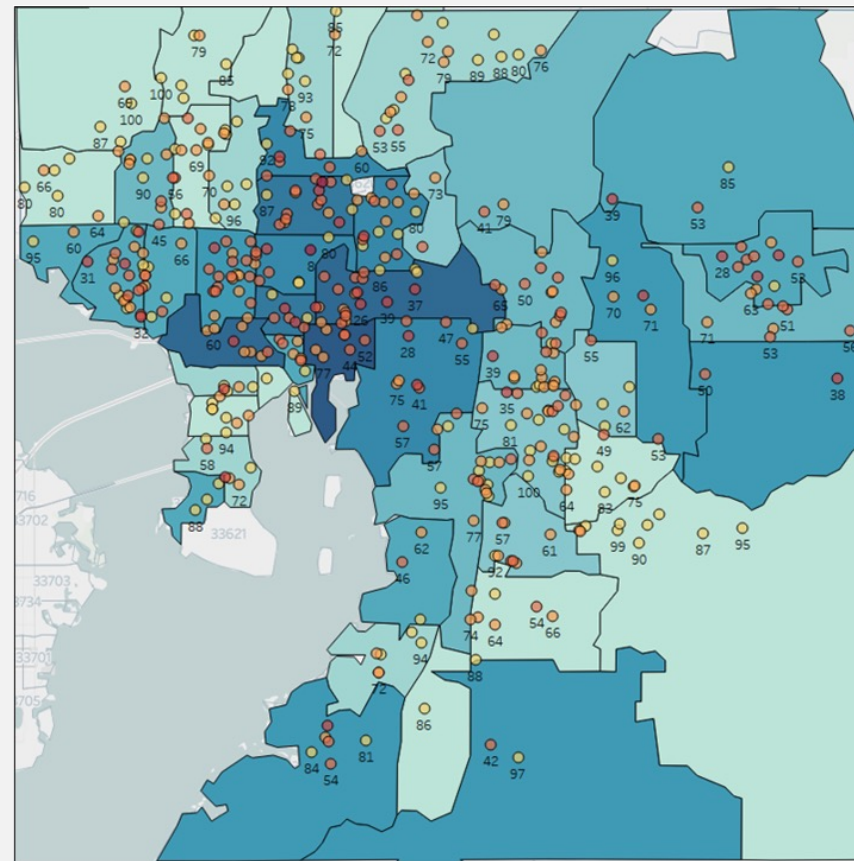


# Higher poverty areas in Hillsborough County have lower performing providers and student outcomes; investing in VPK programs in these areas will close the opportunity gap

ADVANCE  
EDUCATION  
OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES

This map shows poverty rates in Hillsborough County overlaid with the kindergarten readiness rates of VPK providers.

- The darker the shade of blue, the higher the poverty rate of children under 18 (2018 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau).
- Each circle on the map represents a VPK provider. The color of the circle and adjacent number represent the provider's kindergarten readiness rate for the 2018-19 school year.
- Yellow shades are the highest performing VPK providers, while darker shades of orange to red are the lower performing providers.
- The readiness rate is based on how VPK students perform on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (STAR assessment) during the first 30 days of kindergarten and the VPK Assessment that's administered at the beginning and end of VPK to show learning gains (accounts for up to 10% of score).



#### Sources

- 2018-2019 Readiness Rates
- 2018 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

# Increasing the number of School Readiness sites conducting assessments will inform better strategies and support

ADVANCE  
EDUCATION  
OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES

Total number of School Readiness sites in Hillsborough County eligible to provide assessments

361

ELCHC 2023 goal

64

School Readiness sites that conducted assessments in 2019-20

42



## RECOMMENDATIONS to advance children and family education outcomes

- Focus on increasing access to and quality of early learning programs in Hillsborough County's **six poorest ZIP codes**
- Launch a **new community-wide initiative** focused on enhancing kindergarten readiness for **3- to 5-year-olds**
- Expand **quality interactions with low-income families** to support their role as their child's first teacher
- Increase the number of School Readiness providers that are **conducting child assessments** to inform better strategies and support
- Identify, engage and empower **early learning community ambassadors**

# RESULTS

Our children are our future. By investing in our youngest residents, we can create a better future for Hillsborough County and all who live and work here.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	18-19	19-20	20-21*	2023 Objective	Percent Achieved
<b>INCREASE ACCESS TO EARLY LEARNING</b>					
Improve VPK participation in Hillsborough County	75%	69%	49%	78%	63%
Decrease/maintain School Readiness waitlist	1,344	1,146	1,353	≤ 600	44%
Increase School Readiness entry for ALICE > 150	N/A	1,215	2,150	3,000	72%
Increase funding for ALICE > 150	N/A	\$305,000	\$1.04M	\$3.06M	34%
<b>IMPROVE QUALITY OF EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES</b>					
Increase School Readiness sites with a minimum CLASS score of 4	55%	56%	62%	90%	69%
Establish teacher retention, compensation and benefits benchmarks	N/A	Unknown	TBD	Benchmarks established	0%
<b>ADVANCE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN &amp; FAMILIES</b>					
Improve number of quality interactions with families	N/A	N/A	#	#	#%
Increase VPK providers with a kindergarten readiness rate of 60% or higher	62%	COVID-19	TBD	66%	94%
Increase VPK providers with a kindergarten readiness rate of 60% or higher in six poorest ZIP codes	30%	COVID-19	TBD	45%	67%
Increase kindergarten readiness rate in Hillsborough County for all students (STAR)	53%	54%	52%	65%	80%

# FUTURE IMPLICATIONS





# The earlier we invest in our children, the greater the benefits to them and our entire community



## Strengthen Workforce

Investing in early learning **improves parents' ability to work** and earn more while preparing today's children to be **more productive in the workforce** tomorrow.

Source: James Heckman



## Boost Economic Growth

For every dollar invested in preschool children today, **savings range from \$2.50 to \$17 in the years ahead.**

Source: Institute for a Competitive Workforce



## Reduce Spending

**Every public dollar spent on preschool returns \$7** through increased productivity and savings on public assistance and criminal justice.

Source: Harvard University, Center on the Developing Child

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

## A better tomorrow depends on what we do today

- Focus on initiatives that **increase entry to School Readiness for working families** living 150-199% above the federal poverty level but who struggle to afford child care.
- Prioritize access to and quality of **VPK for all children, especially those in the six poorest ZIP codes** within Hillsborough County.
- Increase **coaching, training and professional development** for providers, especially those in low-income and underserved neighborhoods.
- Collaborate with partners to **fund INCENTIVES** for more teachers and advocate for better pay and benefits.
- Launch a **new community-wide initiative** focused on enhancing kindergarten readiness for **3- to 5-year-olds**.
- Expand **quality interactions with low-income families** to support their role as their child's first teacher.
- Work with School Readiness providers to increase sites that are **conducting child assessments** to inform better strategies and support.
- Identify, engage and empower **early learning community ambassadors**.

**Advocate for critical early learning policies** as part of HB 419 and its Senate companion, including coordinated screenings and assessments, an effective accountability system for VPK and increased family access to provider information and quality standards.

# How you can help



## Families & Community Members

- **Spread the message** that learning begins at birth.
- **Talk, read and interact with your child** daily to support brain development.
- **Contact your lawmakers to urge their support** for legislation that promotes early learning for children, families and teachers.



## Businesses & Foundations

- **Support family-friendly policies** for employees with children, and champion early learning within your organization.
- **Join community partnerships** and initiatives that promote early childhood education.
- **Provide funding** to open access to child care and early learning for families that struggle to afford it so they can become financially stable.
- **Fund INCENTIVES** to improve the quality of small businesses focused on early learning.



## Policymakers & Systems Partners

- **Continue to invest** in high-quality, early learning and child care for working families.
- **Increase support** for VPK, School Readiness and public-school based early childhood education.
- **Support better compensation and benefits** for early learning teachers.



“My family lost everything in Hurricane Maria. I relocated to Tampa with four diapers, \$5 and my 4-month-old daughter. I was totally lost. I had to drive four hours to and from work every day so my daughter could stay with a family member because child care is so expensive. Everything changed when I found the Early Learning Coalition. Today, I drive 19 minutes to my daughter’s daycare. I can work and have the peace of mind that she’s safe and with great people taking care of her. **You saved our lives and gave us a new hope by providing support and resources that have allowed us to become self-sustainable.**”

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**Grisel Robles, mom**



**EARLY LEARNING**

COALITION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

For more information:  
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# APPENDIX

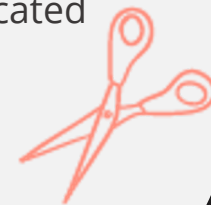


# Navigating the data



## GENERAL TERMS

- **School Readiness:** A state-funded program that offers financial assistance to low-income families for early child education and care so families can become financially self-sufficient, and their young children can be successful in school and life
- **VPK:** Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten — Free, state-funded pre-kindergarten program for 4 and 5-year-olds who reside in Florida; families must choose a half-day program for the school year or a full-day program for the summer
- **Head Start:** Federally-funded pre-kindergarten program for children from low-income families between ages 3 to 5, including those with special needs
- **PEEPS:** Pre-kindergarten Exceptional Education Preschool Services — provides educational opportunities for children ages 3 to 5 who have special needs
- **Kindergarten readiness:** Percent of students demonstrating readiness for kindergarten based on county (i-Ready) and state (STAR) assessments
- **Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):** Early learning providers who earned scores of 2.51 to 2.99 on the CLASS assessment are required to have a quality improvement plan, which includes ELCHC-facilitated group coaching, interaction training, professional development and certified coaching visits
- **INCENTIVES:** Financial rewards for early childhood educators based on their education and continuity of employment; by retaining early childhood teachers, children receive more stable relationships and better-educated teachers





# Navigating the data



## ASSESSMENTS

- **VPK Assessment:** A state-required assessment all private and public VPK providers must administer to children at the beginning and end of a VPK program; the assessment includes progress monitoring measures in the areas of print knowledge, phonological awareness, mathematics and oral language/vocabulary that are aligned with the standards for 4-year-olds
- **CLASS:** Classroom Assessment Scoring System — an observational tool used to evaluate teachers working with children from infancy through age 5 to evaluate how they interact with children
- **i-Ready:** A national assessment used by Hillsborough County Public Schools that's administered three times per year (beginning of year, mid-year and end of year) to students in kindergarten through fifth grade to assess reading and math levels
- **STAR:** The state-mandated assessment that evaluates kindergarten readiness for all children entering public schools



# Navigating the data

## ACRONYMS

- **ALICE:** Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed households — households with income above the official Federal Poverty Level but below a newly defined basic survival income level
- **CCR&R:** Child Care Resource and Referral program
- **FCCC:** Family Child Care Center
- **HCPS:** Hillsborough County Public Schools
- **N=:** Total number of students
- **QIP:** Quality Improvement Plan
- **T.E.A.C.H.:** Teacher Education And Compensation Helps grants — a program of the Children’s Forum — that provide scholarships to eligible teachers to work toward earning a degree or national certification in early childhood education
- **3Ts:** Tune In, Talk More, Take Turns — A program funded by PNC Great We Grow Foundation and administered by the Thirty Million Word Center that provides tools and resources to help parents of infants and toddlers support their child’s learning from the moment they’re born



# Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County Partners

**Improving our children's futures starts with collaboration.** We're grateful to the following community partners who make ELCHC's mission possible by investing in the success and well-being of Hillsborough County's youngest residents.

## Systems Partners

- Anita Zucker Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Studies, University of Florida
- Champions for Children
- Early Childhood Council
- Frameworks
- Healthy Start
- Hillsborough Community College
- Hillsborough County Public Schools
- Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department
- Hillsborough Early Learning Network
- Lastinger Center, University of Florida
- University of South Florida

## Government Funders

- Board of County Commissioners, Hillsborough County
- Child Care Licensing
- City of Tampa
- Florida Department of Education
- Office of Early Learning

## Local Funders

- Caspers Company
- Children's Board of Hillsborough County
- Community Foundation of Tampa Bay
- Conn Memorial Foundation
- Florida Blue
- PNC Bank
- Sunshine Health
- TECO
- United Way
- Vinik Family Foundation