



MASSACHUSETTS
**Department of
Early Education and Care**



Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Info Session

November 18, 2025

Agenda

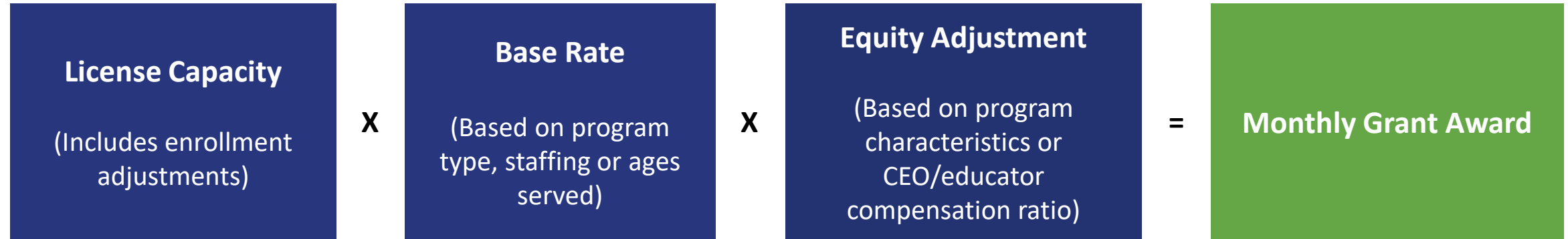
- C3 overview
- November 2025 updates
 - New attestation
 - Programs new to Child Care Financial Assistance
 - Fund use requirement (center-based programs only)
- FY27 planning

C3 Overview

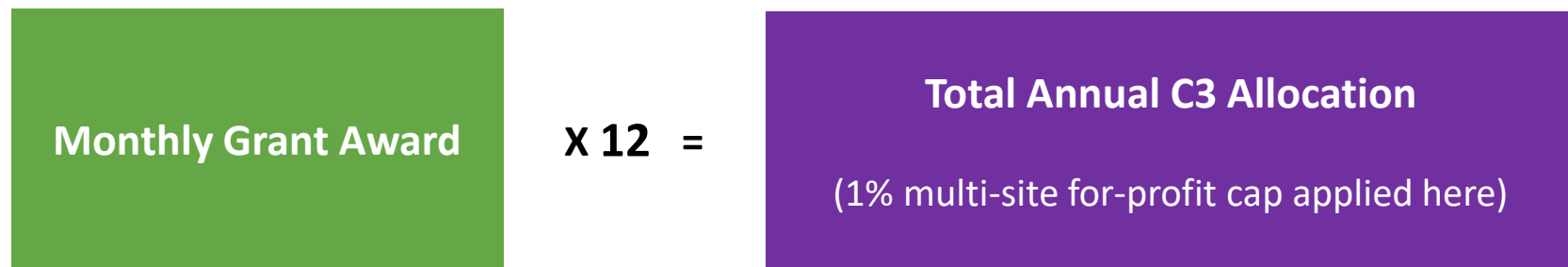
- C3 grants are non-competitive and provide operational funding to eligible EEC-licensed child care providers open and serving families in Massachusetts.
- C3 grants can be used for:
 - Workforce investments
 - Other investments to improve program quality such as supplies, curriculum, screening tools, etc.
 - Rent or mortgage payments, utilities, facilities maintenance and improvements, or insurance.

Current C3 Formula Calculations

Monthly C3 Funding Calculation



Annual C3 Funding Calculation



Current C3 Formula

| Base Rate | | |
|--|---|---|
| Licensed Capacity (Adjusted by enrollment*) | Standardized Base Rate (Based on youngest age group served, differentiated for part-time programs) | |
| | Center Based Care | Family Child Care |
| X | \$100 if serve infants (\$80 if open part time) | \$80 if Full Time Assistant (\$60 if open part time) |
| | \$80 if serve toddler (\$60 if open part time) | \$60 if Part Time Assistant (\$40 if open part time) |
| | \$70 if serve preschool (\$50 if open part time) | \$50 if No Assistant (\$30 if open part time) |
| | \$50 if only serve school age (including K) | |
| 1 | 2 | |

X

| Equity Adjustment | | |
|-------------------|--|-------|
| Tier 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves 25% or more children receiving EEC CCFA, or is a Head Start Program, or is located in a very low-opportunity area | X 3 |
| Tier 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves 1-24% children receiving CCFA, or Serves at least 25% of children with non-CCFA scholarship that covers at least 50% of tuition | X 2.5 |
| Tier 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not qualify for Tier 1 or Tier 2, or CEO compensation ratio equals or exceeds 30:1 | X 1 |
| 3 | | |

*Enrollment based on 12-month historical average. Centers with ≥75% average enrollment receive full base rates. Those with <75% average enrollment have base rate prorated accordingly. FCCs with ≥3 children enrolled on average receive full base rate. Those with at least 2 but less than 3 children enrolled on average over the last year receive 75% of base rate, at least 1 but less than 2 children enrolled on average receive 50% base rate, and more than 0 but less than 1 child enrolled on average receive 25% base rate. FCCs with 0 children enrolled not eligible.

November 2025 Updates

- Maintain current formula
 - Grant awards recalculated for the next 12 months
- Add attestation per new statutory requirement: Ensure that all programs receiving C3 demonstrate a willingness to enroll children receiving child care financial assistance
- For center-based programs only: expectation that 50% of C3 funding be applied to workforce investments
- Manage access to new providers based on funding availability
 - Next quarterly assessment anticipated for January 2026

Attestation

- Each month, all programs will need to attest to their willingness to enroll children who received CCFA to receive C3 funds, per new statutory requirement.

“If you have an available spot in your child care program and a family receiving EEC child care financial assistance expressed interest in enrolling, would you be willing to work with a Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency to enter into a voucher agreement?”

- ✓ *“Yes, if my program has an available spot and a family receiving EEC child care financial assistance expressed interest in enrolling, I am willing to work with a Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agency to enter into a voucher agreement if my program does not already have one in place.”*

- Providers are not required to have a voucher agreement in place at this time
- Programs may request an administrative review if there are barriers to participating in CCFA
- List of all willing programs will be publicly available on the [Education-to-Career \(E2C\) Hub](#)

Programs New to CCFA: What is CCFA?

CCFA is a state-funded program run by EEC to **help families pay for child care** also known as a “**subsidy or voucher.**” Families may receive help through vouchers or contracted slots.

Overview of CCFA

- CCFA helps families with low or moderate incomes or families in special situations like DTA or DCF involvement pay for child care.
- EEC administers three child care financial assistance programs accessible to families in the form of vouchers or contracted slots. (Income Eligible, DCF Related, DTA Related)
- Families access these programs through the EEC centralized waitlist or by referral from DCF or DTA and must meet eligibility rules.

CCFA Covers

- Child care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers
- Before-school, after-school, and summer programs for school-age children
- Care provided by:
 - Licensed child care centers
 - Licensed family child care homes
 - Approved license-exempt programs
 - Summer camps (do not need an EEC license)
CCFA helps parents work, go to school, search for work, or stabilize during life changes.

What is a CCFA Provider ?

A CCFA provider is a licensed child care provider who accepts CCFA vouchers as payment for child care services.

Eligibility

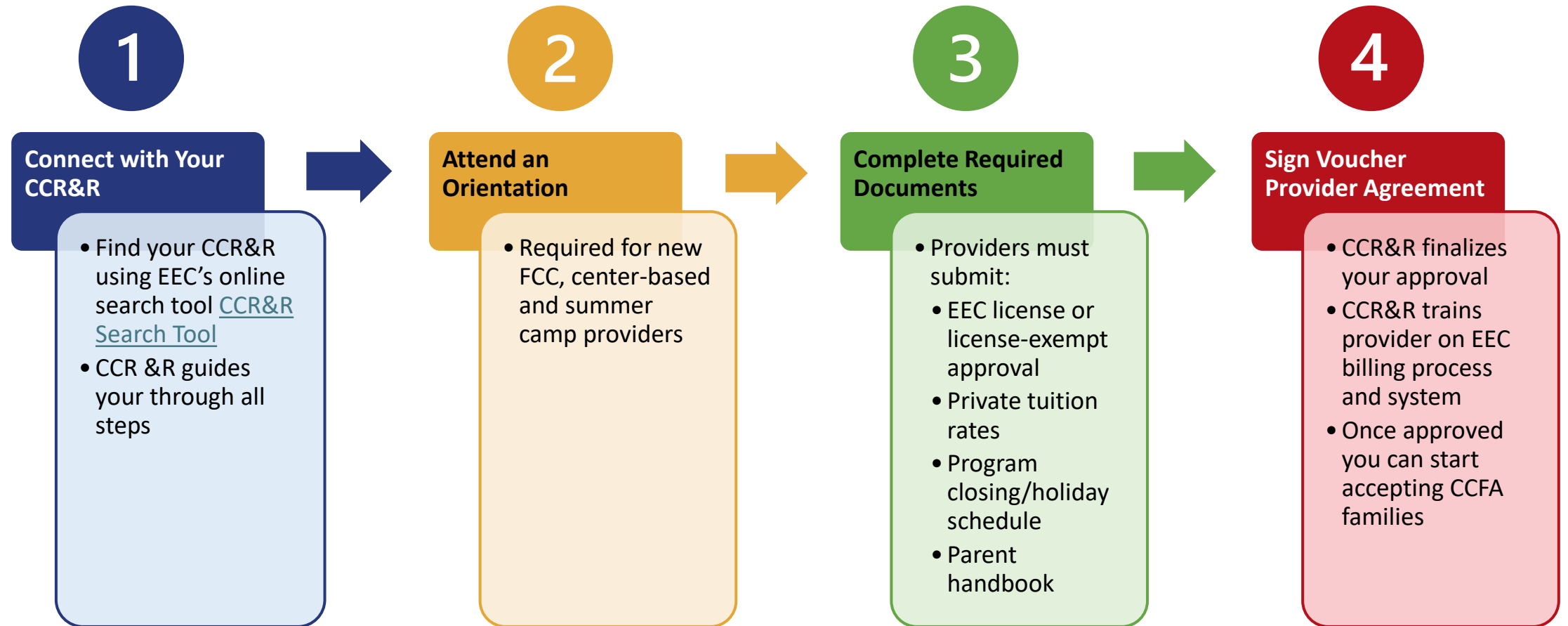
To accept CCFA a provider must:

- Already be licensed by EEC or approved as license-exempt
- Follow EEC rules for safety, attendance, and payment
- Maintain good standing with EEC

What it Means to Be a Provider

- You agree to accept EEC's daily reimbursement rate as payment
- You work with your local Child Care Resource & Referral agency (CCR&R)
- You share your program's private rates, closing schedule, and parent handbook
- You ensure children receiving CCFA have the same access and care as all other children

Becoming a CCFA Provider



Family Child Care

Family Child Care (FCC) providers in Massachusetts can operate independently or as part of a Family Child Care System. Depending on whether a Family Child Care provider is an Independent FCC (IFC) or part of a Family Child Care System (FCS), their process for becoming a CCFA provider may look a little different.

| | Independent FCC (IFC) | Family Child Care System (FCS/FSC) |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Definition | A single family child care home that operates independently. | A network of FCC homes supported by a system offering training and monitoring. |
| Responsibilities | Provider handles <i>all</i> licensing, paperwork, training, business operations, and voucher enrollment on their own. | System provides support such as training, technical help, monitoring, and referrals to services. |
| CCFA Voucher Enrollment | Provider signs voucher agreement directly with CCR&R and manages all steps. | Provider signs agreement with FCC system and system helps with the process and supports compliance including help finding families. |
| Provider Preference | Providers who prefer full independence and control of their program. | Providers who want added support or need help with administrative tasks. |
| What to Expect | More independence and administrative work. | More support but less independence in some areas. |

What CCFA Pays

Rate Reimbursement

CCFA reimbursement rates are set by EEC and depend on:

- Provider type (center-based, Family Child Care,)
- Region of the state
- Age of the child (infant, toddler, preschool, school age)
- Full-time or part-time care

Additional Payment Details:

- Families may have a **co-pay/parent fee** based on their income
- Providers receive one payment each month for the child care they have already provided.
- Direct deposit is recommended for faster payment

CENTER-BASED RATES

| | Center-Based Care | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------|----------|
| | Early Education | | | School Age | | | |
| | Infant | Toddler | Preschool | Before Only | After Only | Before & After | Full Day |
| Western, Central & Southeast (Regions 1, 2, 5) | \$ 105.00 | \$ 82.50 | \$ 58.09 | \$ 11.74 | \$ 24.68 | \$ 36.43 | \$ 49.69 |
| Northeast (Region 3) | \$ 110.25 | \$ 85.97 | \$ 59.09 | \$ 12.74 | \$ 27.58 | \$ 40.06 | \$ 51.38 |
| Metro & Boston Metro (Regions 4, 6) | \$ 121.31 | \$ 110.09 | \$ 81.33 | \$ 12.81 | \$ 28.31 | \$ 41.12 | \$ 52.81 |

FAMILY CHILD CARE RATES

Fiscal year 2025 rates for family child care providers have been finalized and ratified by the SEIU Local 509.

| | Family Child Care Provider (Contract Reimbursement Rates*) | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| | Providers: Under 2 Years of Age | Providers: 2 Years of Age and Over |
| Western, Central & Southeast (Regions 1, 2, 5) | \$59.03 | \$49.39 |
| Northeast (Region 3) | \$59.03 | \$49.15 |
| Metro & Boston Metro (Regions 4, 6) | \$88.54 | \$56.16 |

* FCC System Admin rates were separated from the daily reimbursement rate and incorporated into the Family Child Care System Administrative Management Cost Reimbursement contracts that EEC implemented on October 1, 2024. For more information, please see question #5 in the FCC Rate Increase Policy Advisory FAQ.

Ways Families Are Connected to You



How Families Find your program

- **CCR&R and Mass211** connects families to providers based on families preferences
- **DTA and DCF** refer families needing child care.
- **Family Child Care Systems (FCS)** may also connect you with families, either through vouchers or by placing children into one of the system's **contracted seats**.
- Families may also find you through:
 - Word of mouth
 - Your program website
 - Community partners
 - Local organizations



How it Works

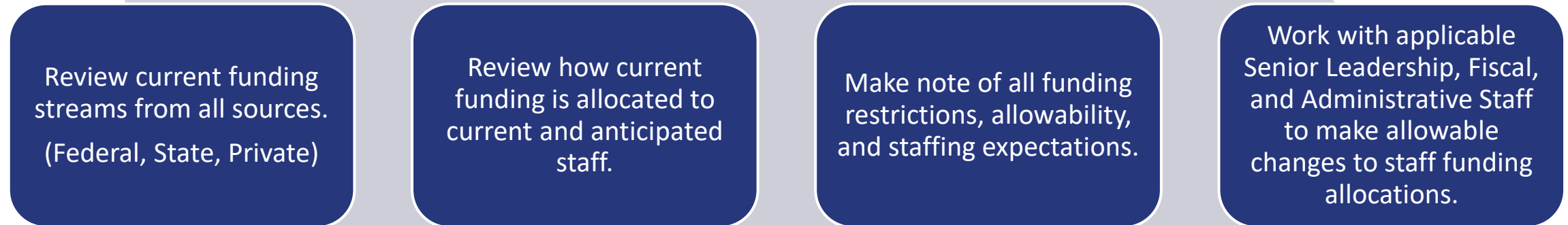
1. A family receives a voucher or is placed in a contracted seat.
2. They choose your program or are matched by CCR&R or a Family Child Care System.
3. CCR&R sends you the voucher authorization (or the system assigns a contracted seat).
4. You complete enrollment and begin care.
5. You receive monthly payments for the services you provide.

Fund Use Requirement

- ***Applies only to center-based programs***
- Requirement focuses on C3 funds - ensuring that 50% of what is granted is used towards workforce investments.
- Workforce investments include:
 - Personnel costs (salaries), benefits, stipends, and other supports for recruitment and retention;
 - Professional development and other investments to support staff in building educator qualifications;
- *Example:* If a program's C3 monthly amount is \$100,000, then \$50,000 must be allocated towards workforce investments
- We understand that providers need to consider C3 as one of many funding sources and consider program finances holistically.

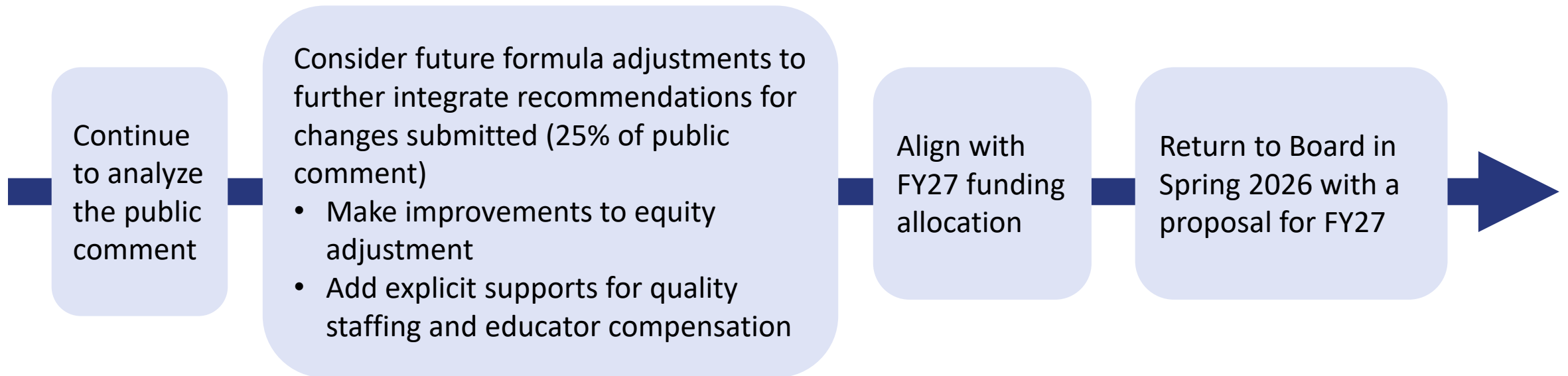
Fund Use Requirement – Technical Assistance

Developing holistic support for programs in taking preliminary steps towards meeting the Fund Use Requirement.



EEC will be hosting training and technical assistance sessions in early 2026 to support providers with this new requirement.

FY27 Planning





Appendix

FY26 Actions

- 1 Establish (maintain) current formula in FY26
 - Allows FY26 to focus on integrating growth into the current budget
 - Provides additional time to review and consider public/provider feedback
 - Creates time and a process to develop and plan for formula and/or other adjustments in FY27
- 2 Continue programmatic adjustments
 - Ensure all adjustments align with statutory requirements and manage funding
 - Attestation of willingness to accept applications from children with CCFA
 - Fund use requirements focusing funding on workforce investments
 - Manage access to new providers



Review of field feedback and consideration of proposals for FY27 during the fall

FY26 Board Decision

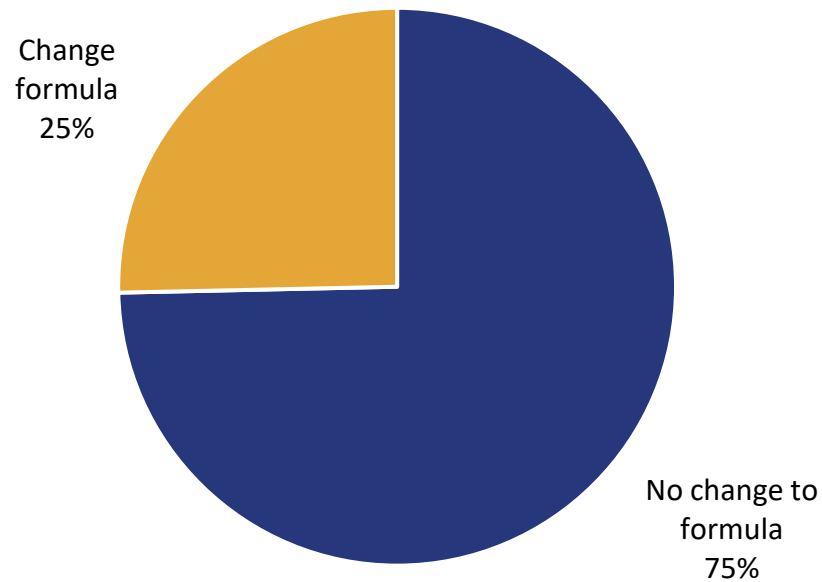
Nov 2025: Maintain (establish) current formula in FY26

- Revise application to recalculate grant awards for the next 12 months
 - All center-based programs will need to update their umbrella form
 - Monthly payments will adjust per new information
- Add attestation per new statutory requirement: Ensure that all programs receiving C3 demonstrate a willingness to enroll children receiving child care financial assistance
 - Make list of all willing programs publicly available
 - Collaborate with family access on implementation
 - Add admin review request to surface any barriers to CCFA participation
- Introduce expectation that 50% of C3 funding be applied to workforce expenditures

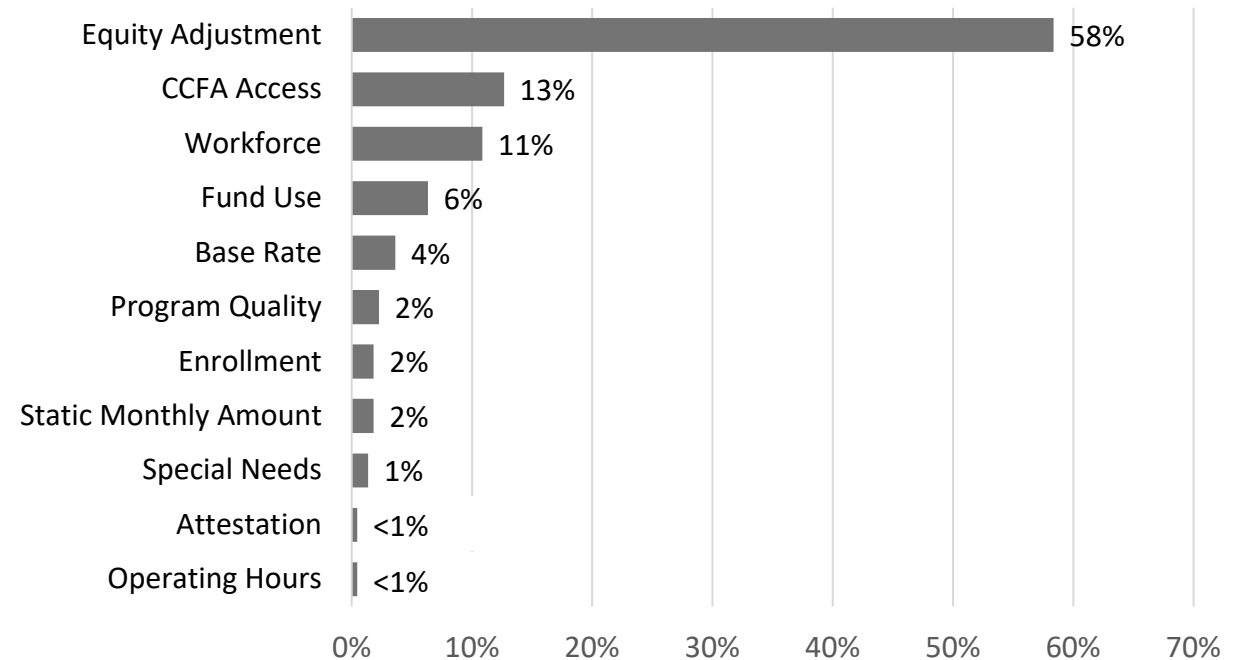
Public Comment Overview

- EEC received 221 public comments, 31 at the virtual Public Hearing and 190 written submissions
- Overall, 75% of comments supported no change to the current C3 formula for FY26

Formula Feedback



Topic Areas



Public Comment Feedback

| Key Themes | Context | Examples |
|--|---|---|
| Because of C3 I am able to ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase pay to retain existing staff and hire new staff• Delay tuition increases for families• Prioritize serving vulnerable children• Purchase nutritious food and provide meals• Invest in program quality• Stay open | “This grant has been vital for us in maintaining our workforce and the quality of our program. We have put a large amount of this funding into grant money for our staff in an attempt to keep them working in the field of early education in care.” |
| The C3 formula should also consider ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for comprehensive services• Other indicators of economic need• Workforce compensation | “C3 Grants should take into consideration programs that provide support to children who have needs that require additional classroom staffing.” |
| The C3 formula should change ... | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fixed monthly payments and allow for adjustments• CCFA calculations for equity adjustment, particularly when vouchers are not available• Enrollment calculations for school year programs to align with operations | “Subsidy freezes and long waitlists reduce our ability to enroll voucher children — even when we welcome them.” |

[Link to the Live C3 Public Comment Hearing](#)