MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care

January EEC Board Meeting

January 14, 2026

Agenda

Routine Business:

- Approval of minutes from December 10, 2025 Meeting – VOTE

Items for Discussion and Action:

- Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) FY26 Reimbursement Rate Increase: Overview and Proposal for Consideration
- Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Program Updates and 2025 Survey Results
- Employer Child Care Innovation Fund (ECCIF) Overview

CCFA FY26 Reimbursement Rate Increase: Overview and Proposal for Consideration

Child Care Financial Assistance Rates

EEC reimburses early education and out-of-school time programs that serve families receiving EEC child care financial assistance with a daily per child reimbursement rate.

These rates subsidize costs and provide purchasing power for families receiving child care financial assistance.

EEC's daily reimbursement rate for child care financial assistance is based on multiple factors including:

- Program Type
- Child's Age
- Location of Care
- Type of Care

Enabling Language for FY26 Rate Increase: FY25 Fair Share Supplemental Budget (H4227)

- For this fiscal year, $20 million was appropriated through a "Fair Share" Supplemental Budget to be used to increase CCFA reimbursement rates for both centers and family child care. The line-item included the following language to direct expenditures:

1596-2511: " … provided further, that not less than **$20,000,000 shall be expended for a reimbursement rate increase for subsidized early education center-based and family child care providers** in the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2026 … "



Recent Context: CCFA Rate Adjustments

EEC started research to develop a cost-based methodology in 2022. Since then, the team has continued to expand research and, when funding has been available through the annual state budget, to use the work to increase and reform CCFA rates to move them closer towards the cost of care.

2022

EEC worked with a research organization to do a comprehensive study of the cost of providing early education and care, which included costs by region, the age of children served, and the type of program (family child care and center-based).

2024

EEC received pre-approval from the federal Office of Child Care (OCC) to use a cost-based methodology to adjust CCFA rates and partnered with a research organization to update the cost research and models.

2025

Last winter, the EEC Board approved FY25 rate increases using the updated methodology and EEC submitted an amended 2025-2027 CCDF state plan to the OCC that included the adjusted CCFA rates.

Cost of Care: High-Level Findings

Cost Trends by Program Type

- The estimated cost of care per child for **center-based programs** increased between ***14%*** and ***26%*** from 2022 to 2024, depending on the region and age group served.
- The estimated cost of care per child for **family child care (FCC)** programs increased between ***12%*** and ***19%*** from 2022 to 2024, depending on the region and age group served.

% Cost of Care Increase, 2022-2024		
	Lowest	*Highest*
Center-based	14%	26%
Family Child Care	12%	19%

Cost Findings Compared to CCFA Rates

- Certain CCFA rates are both further from the cost of care and below median tuition prices, which can impact families' access to the market.
- Notable differences in cost of care are emerging across Western, Central, and Southeast regions (aligned regions that receive the same rates)
- Center-based rates for infants and toddlers and some preschool rates remain below the cost of care.
- FCC providers face similar costs for serving children under and over age 2, and FCC Over Age 2 rates are further from the cost of care.

CCFA Rate Increases FY23-FY25

Center-based Infant

Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25
Western	$66.70	$97.18	$105.00	57.4%
Central	$70.00	$97.18	$105.00	50.0%
Northeast	$82.50	$102.07	$110.25	33.6%
Metro	$101.60	$119.52	$121.31	19.4%
Southeast	$66.70	$97.18	$105.00	57.4%
Metro Boston	$97.00	$119.52	$121.31	25.1%

Center-based Toddler

FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25
$61.16	$75.48	$82.50	34.9%
$63.00	$75.48	$82.50	31.0%
$72.00	$84.70	$85.97	19.4%
$92.20	$108.46	$110.09	19.4%
$62.57	$75.48	$82.50	31.9%
$85.90	$108.46	$110.09	28.2%

Center-based Preschool

FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25
$46.51	$57.23	$58.09	25%
$50.00	$57.23	$58.09	16%
$50.66	$57.99	$59.09	17%
$70.00	$80.13	$81.33	16%
$47.74	$57.23	$58.09	22%
$68.00	$80.13	$81.33	20%

Center-based School-Age

Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25
Western	$42.76	$48.96	$49.69	16%
Central	$42.77	$48.96	$49.69	16%
Northeast	$44.22	$50.62	$51.38	16%
Metro	$45.46	$52.03	$52.81	16%
Southeast	$42.77	$48.96	$49.69	16%
Metro Boston	$45.46	$52.03	$52.81	16%

FCC Under Age 2

FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25
$47.07	$58.45	$59.03	25.4%
$53.79	$58.45	$59.03	9.7%
$53.79	$58.45	$59.03	9.7%
$80.67	$87.66	$88.54	9.8%
$53.79	$58.45	$59.03	9.7%
$60.50	$87.66	$88.54	46.3%

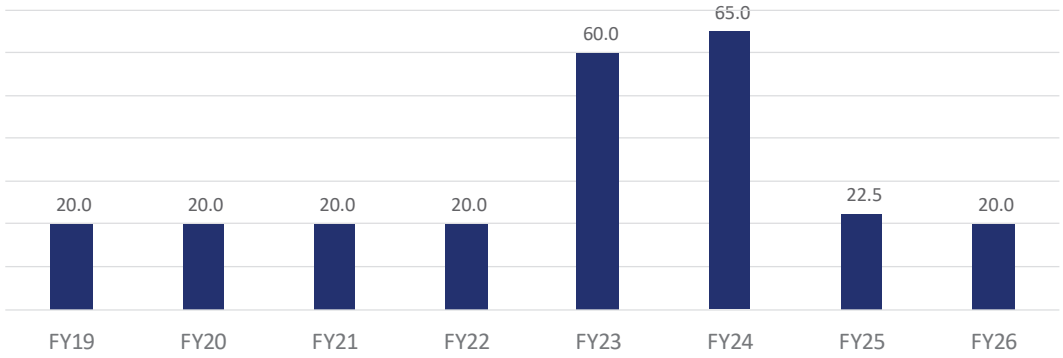
FCC Over Age 2

FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25
$40.58	$48.90	$49.39	21.7%
$42.71	$48.90	$49.39	15.6%
$42.79	$46.50	$49.15	14.9%
$50.00	$54.33	$56.16	12.3%
$45.00	$48.90	$49.39	9.8%
$43.93	$54.33	$56.16	27.8%

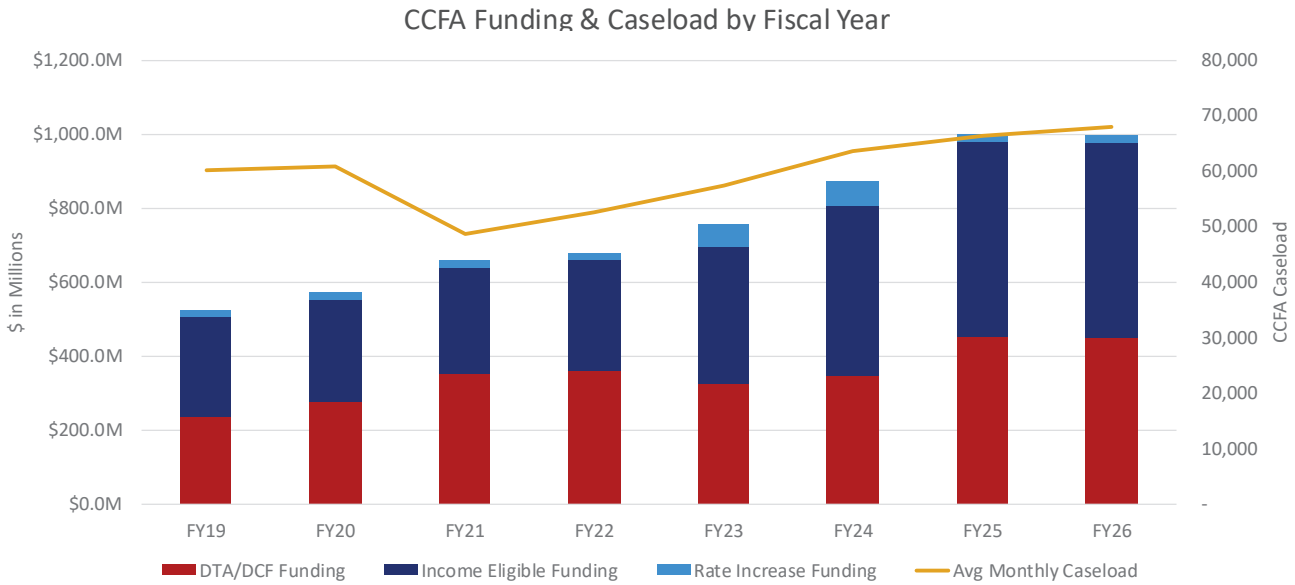
Consistent and much needed CCFA rate increases and reforms have also contributed to growth in caseload costs.

- In total, **$248 million** has been appropriated to increase reimbursement rates since FY2019.
- The average infant rate has more than doubled, with similar average increases across toddler and preschool rates.
- Higher CCFA reimbursement rates mean additional funds for program operations, which includes salary increases, and expanded options for families.
- Serving the same number of children the year following a rate increase is more expensive.

Funding for Rate Increase in Millions ($$)



CCFA Funding and Caseload by Fiscal Year



Data Note: FY26 average caseload figures include the first three months of the fiscal year (July 2025, August 2025, and September 2025).

CCFA Rates and # of Children Served

- CCFA rate increases are critical to expanding access for families, supporting program investments in staff salaries and recognizing increases in costs.
- Higher rates also mean that it costs more to serve even the same number of children and families from one year to the next, following a rate increase.
- With the Commonwealth serving more children and families than ever before, at higher rates, $20 million will not go as far as it would have in past years.

Fiscal Year	Funding for Rate Increases	Avg # of CCFA Children Served
2021	$20.0 Million	48,614
2022	$20.0 Million	52,598
2023	$60.0 Million	57,248
2024	$65.0 Million	63,482
2025	$22.5 Million	66,411
2026	**$20.0 Million**	**68,016**

Data note: FY26 average caseload figures include the first two months of the fiscal year (July 2025 and August 2025).

FY26 Rate Increase

GUIDING PRIORITIES



Continue to make data-driven decisions that focus on both the cost of care and tuition prices



Recognize that **costs are increasing for all programs** through an adjustment to all rates



Continue to pay attention to **geographic equity** and the rates in regions furthest from the cost of care



Support **program operations** and promote **family access and affordability**



Continue to make incremental progress toward covering the cost of care

FY26 CCFA Rate Increase

ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- **$20M** for rate increases represents roughly 2% of current caseload spending.
- EEC will **maintain existing regional alignment** of rates this year
  - Western, Central, Southeast
  - Metro Boston, Boston
  - Northeast
- Preschool rates and tuition often **cross subsidize or offset** the higher cost of infant and toddler care for both programs and families.
- FCC cost of care targets are based on center-based director salaries, which is generally **aspirational,** whereas center-based cost targets are based on average **current** salary levels.
- FY26 proposed rate increase is within the context of a **longer-term multi-lever funding strategy** to support incrementally reaching the goal of rates that are at or closer to the cost of care.

FY26 CCFA Rate Increase: Components

Across-the-Board (ATB) Increase

ATB adjustments apply a standard percent increase across all rate types for all CCFA providers.

Benefits:

- All rates get an increase, recognizing the increase in costs facing all programs.

Constraints:

- Resources are spread out evenly and do not target rates for cost of care or tuition prices.
- The nominal degree of increase is greater for rates that are already higher.

Cost-of-Care Focused Increases

Focused adjustments apply increases based on the cost of care with consideration to tuition prices.

Benefits:

- Data-driven strategy that focuses resources on rates furthest from the cost of care.

Constraints:

- Limited funding requires prioritizing certain rates to get an additional adjustment above the ATB.

FY25 Current Daily CCFA Rates

- Infant and toddler rates in the Northeast and Southeast are furthest from the cost of care for those age groups (75 percent of cost of care).
- Preschool rates in the Northeast and Southeast are now below 100 percent of the cost of care.
- FCC Over Age 2 rates in the Northeast and Metro Boston are furthest from the cost of care; the FCC Under Age 2 rate in the Northeast is significantly farther from the cost of care compared to other regions.

	Center-Based Rates				FCC Rates	
Region	**Infant**	**Toddler**	**Preschool**	**School Age**	**Under Age 2**	**Over Age 2**
Western	$105.00	$82.50	$58.09	$49.69	$59.03	$49.39
Central	$105.00	$82.50	$58.09	$49.69	$59.03	$49.39
Southeast	**$105.00**	**$82.50**	**$58.09**	$49.69	$59.03	$49.39
Northeast	**$110.25**	**$85.97***	**$59.09***	$51.38	**$59.03**	**$49.15**
Metro	$121.31	$110.09	$81.33	$52.81	$88.54	$56.16
Metro Boston	$121.31	$110.09	$81.33	$52.81	$88.54	**$56.16***

Note: Figures highlighted in blue are furthest from the cost of care within their age group. Center-based school age rates are at or above the estimated cost of care. Asterisks denote where rates are both below cost of care and below median tuition for that age group and region.

FY26 Center-based Rates (Proposed)

ACROSS-THE-BOARD INCREASE + FOCUSED COST-OF-CARE ADJUSTMENTS

- All rates receive an 0.5% (on average $0.40 per day) ATB increase.
- Additional cost-of-care adjustments are focused on preschool rates that have fallen below the cost of care and the Northeast toddler rate to bring it closer to median tuition prices.
- Adjustments recognize recent investments in infant and toddler rates and important market dynamics such as “smoothing” tuition prices across ages to offset the cost to provide infant and toddler care for programs and families.

	Center-Based Rates			
Region	**Infant**	**Toddler**	**Preschool**	**School Age**
Western, Central, and Southeast	$105.53 (+$0.53)	$82.91 (+$0.41)	**$58.78 (+$0.69)**	$49.94 (+$0.25)
Northeast	$110.80 (+$0.55)	**$86.96 (+$0.99)**	**$62.38 (+$3.29)**	$51.64 (+$0.26)
Metro and Metro Boston	$121.92 (+$0.61)	$110.64 (+$0.55)	$81.74 (+$0.41)	$53.07 (+$0.26)

Note: Rates highlighted in gold receive cost of care adjustments. All figures in the table include the ATB increase.

FY26 FCC Rates (Proposed)

ACROSS-THE-BOARD INCREASE + FOCUSED COST-OF-CARE ADJUSTMENTS

- All rates receive an 0.5% ($0.40 average) ATB increase.
- Additional cost-of-care adjustments are focused on FCC Over Age 2 rates that are furthest from the cost of care and the Northeast Under Age 2 rate to bring it more in line with similar cost regions.
- Finite resources limit the extent to which the gap between Over and Under Age 2 rates can be closed.

	Family Child Care Rates	
Region	**Under Age 2**	**Over Age 2**
Western, Central, and Southeast	$59.33 (+$0.30)	$49.64 (+$0.25)
Northeast	**$59.94 (+$0.91)**	**$50.01 (+$0.86)**
Metro and Metro Boston	$88.98 (+$0.44)	**$57.43 (+$1.27)**

Note: Rates highlighted in orange receive cost of care adjustments. All figures in the table include the ATB increase.
Pursuant to G.L. c. 15D, § 17(g) and the CBA between Local 509 SEIU and EEC, the rate structure for family child care providers is subject to negotiation.

Proposed FY26 CCFA Rate Increases

Center-based Infant

Region	FY25 Rate	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Western	$105.00	$105.53	0.5%
Central	$105.00	$105.53	0.5%
Northeast	$110.25	$110.80	0.5%
Metro	$121.31	$121.92	0.5%
Southeast	$105.00	$105.53	0.5%
Metro Boston	$121.31	$121.92	0.5%

Center-based Toddler

FY25 Rate	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
$82.50	$82.91	0.5%
$82.50	$82.91	0.5%
$85.97	$86.96	1.2%
$110.09	$110.64	0.5%
$82.50	$82.91	0.5%
$110.09	$110.64	0.5%

Center-based Preschool

FY25 Rate	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
$58.09	$58.78	1.2%
$58.09	$58.78	1.2%
$59.09	$62.38	5.6%
$81.33	$81.74	0.5%
$58.09	$58.78	1.2%
$81.33	$81.74	0.5%

Center-based School-Age

Region	FY25 Rate	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Western	$49.69	$49.94	0.5%
Central	$49.69	$49.94	0.5%
Northeast	$51.38	$51.64	0.5%
Metro	$52.81	$53.07	0.5%
Southeast	$49.69	$49.94	0.5%
Metro Boston	$52.81	$53.07	0.5%

FCC Under Age 2

FY25 Rate	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
$59.03	$59.33	0.5%
$59.03	$59.33	0.5%
$59.03	$59.94	1.5%
$88.54	$88.98	0.5%
$59.03	$59.33	0.5%
$88.54	$88.98	0.5%

FCC Over Age 2

FY25 Rate	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
$49.39	$49.64	0.5%
$49.39	$49.64	0.5%
$49.15	$50.01	1.7%
$56.16	$57.43	2.3%
$49.39	$49.64	0.5%
$56.16	$57.43	2.3%

FY26 Rate Increase
Proposed Approach & Comparative Analysis

	Across-the-Board + Cost of Care *(Proposed)*	***Across-the-Board (1%)***
All Rates Are Increased (Across-the-Board %)	Yes (0.5%)	*Yes (1%)*
Calibrated to Cost of Care	Yes	*N/A*
Considers Family Access to the Market (Tuition Prices)	Yes	*N/A*
Age Group Drivers for Cost-of-Care Adjustments	Centers: Preschool FCCs: Over Age 2	*Centers: Infants* *FCCs: Under Age 2*
Regional Drivers for Cost-of-Care Adjustments	Northeast, Southeast, and Metro Boston	*N/A*
Range of Rate Increase ($ Per Day)	Centers: $0.25 - $3.29 FCCs: $0.25 - $1.27	*Centers: $0.50 - $1.21* *FCCs: $0.49 - $0.89*
Estimated FY26 Budgetary Impact	$19.9M	*$17.5M*

For reference only
5% Across-the-Board estimated budgetary impact: $88M

Next Steps and Looking Forward



Consider and review EEC Board input and stakeholder feedback



Vote at February 2026 Board meeting



Examine informal care rates and discuss with Board this spring

Looking Forward

- EEC will continue to research and focus on the cost of care and how multiple funding mechanisms (e.g., CCFA rates and C3) help fill program revenue-expense gaps and support additional investment.
- With this broader knowledge of system and program financing, EEC plans to develop a multi-year resource strategy including and not limited to cost of care targets for CCFA rates.

Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Program Updates and 2025 Survey Results

Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3)

FY26 UPDATES

FY26 APPLICATION UPDATE

- Recalculated monthly grant amounts based on November 2025 inputs
- Per statutory requirement, introduced new attestation regarding willingness to enroll children with CCFA
- As of 12/7, 46 (15 center-based and 31 family child care) programs have attested “No” and unenrolled from C3
- Will launch technical assistance supporting allocation of 50% of C3 funds to workforce related expenses

JANUARY 2026

- Conduct fiscal assessment re: cost to enable new programs to participate in C3.
- Since July 2025, 600 newly opened programs not accessing C3

FY27 PLANNING

Ongoing discussions with the Board and stakeholders on the C3 formula and draft proposed regulations (under development)

Data Collection: C3 Application and Survey

- C3 application and survey provide predictable cadence for data collection from participating programs through point-in-time data collection.

C3 Application (monthly): Monthly recertifications are augmented by a full questionnaire every 6 months to inform C3 planning and future funding calculations

JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC

C3 Survey: Focuses on workforce and family access. 7,721 responses (86% of EEC licensed and funded programs statewide). Next release Feb 2026.

C3 Survey: Focuses on program spending. 7,749 responses (87% of EEC licensed and funded programs statewide)

- **Impact**: Provides regular information to support future costing, ongoing analysis of C3 impact and planning

C3 Supports



Program and System Growth



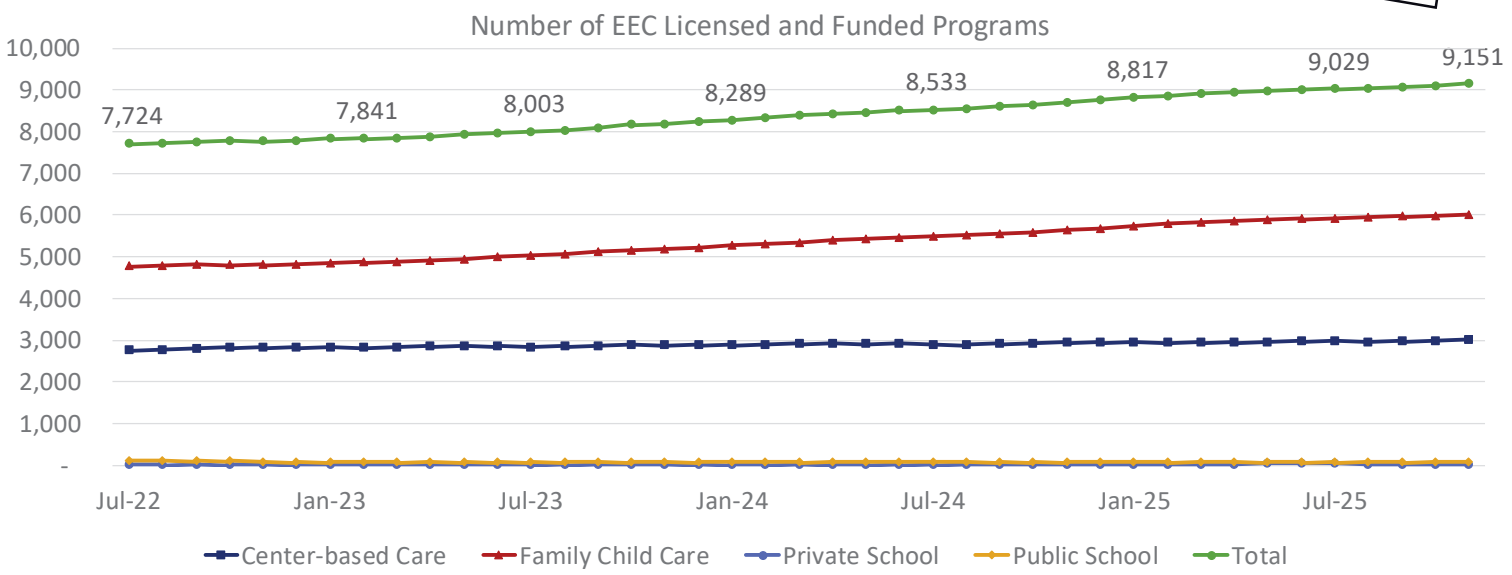
Workforce Stability and Investment



Family Affordability

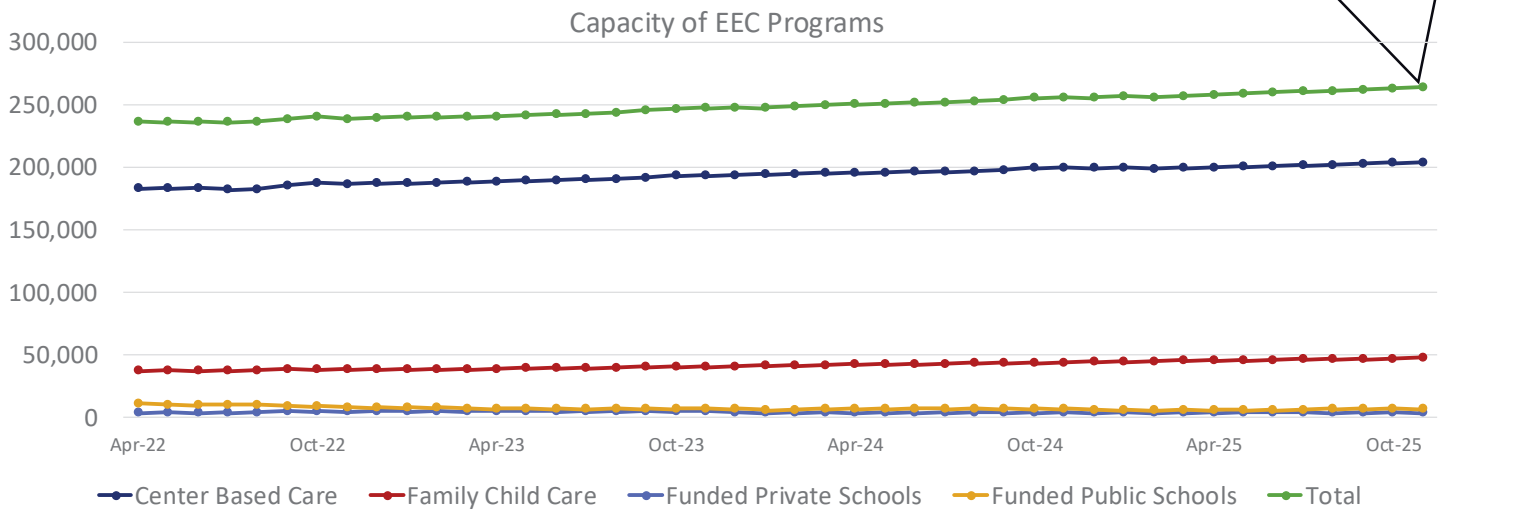
The number of early education and care programs statewide continues to grow.

There were 451 more EEC licensed and funded programs in Nov 2025 compared to Nov 2024.



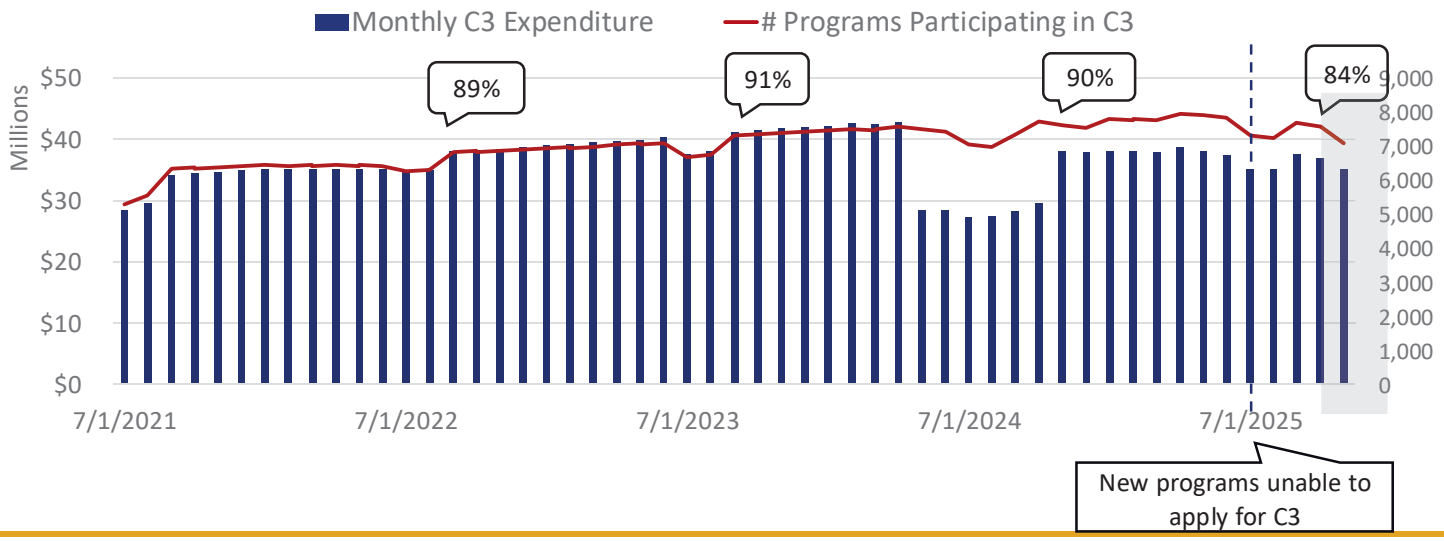
That same growth is seen in total capacity of early education and care programs, making more seats available for children and families.

There were 7,658 more EEC licensed and funded seats in Nov 2025 compared to Nov 2024.



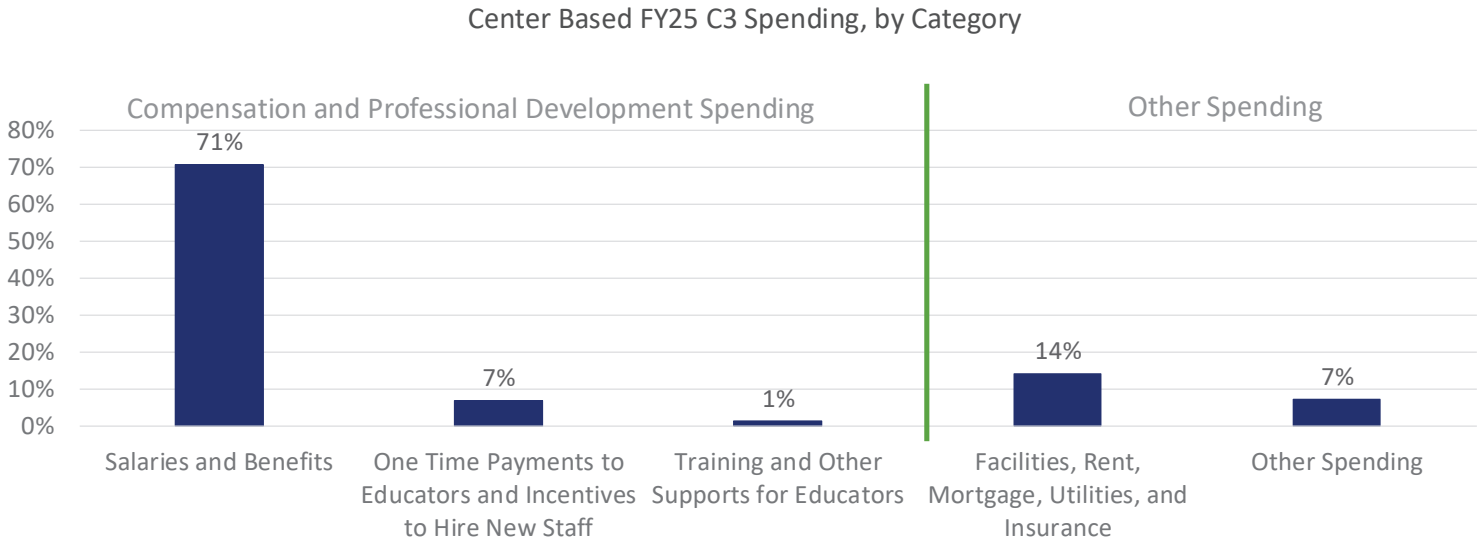
Growth in programs is outpacing the availability of C3 funds

C3 program participation "declines" 6 percentage points, as new programs open but are not accessing C3 funds.

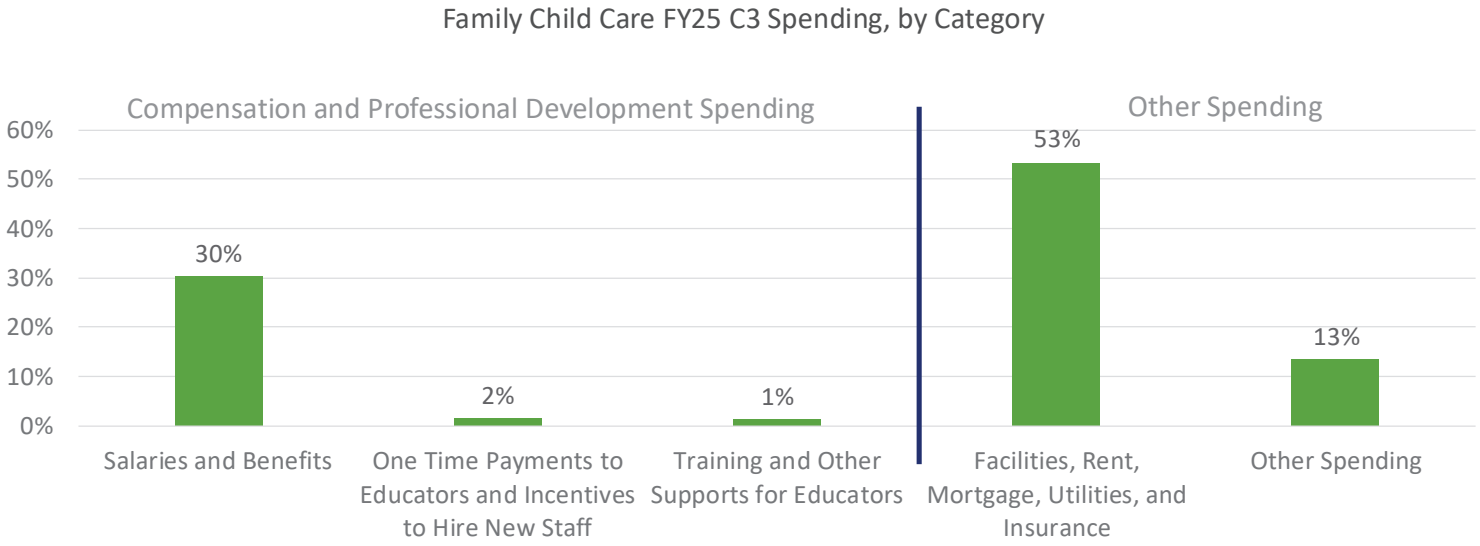


C3 Supports for the Workforce

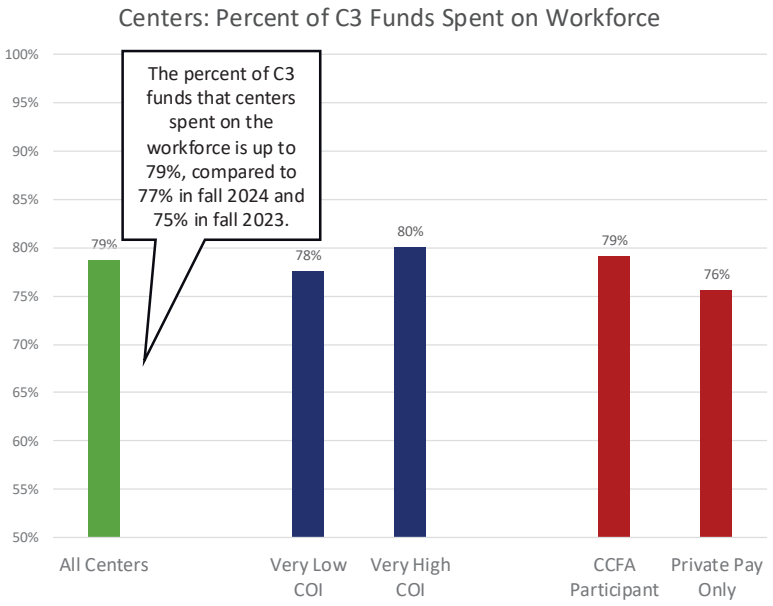
Overall, centers spent almost 80% of C3 funds on workforce related expenses in FY25



FCCs spent almost 90% of C3 funds on compensation, professional development, and occupancy related expenses in FY25



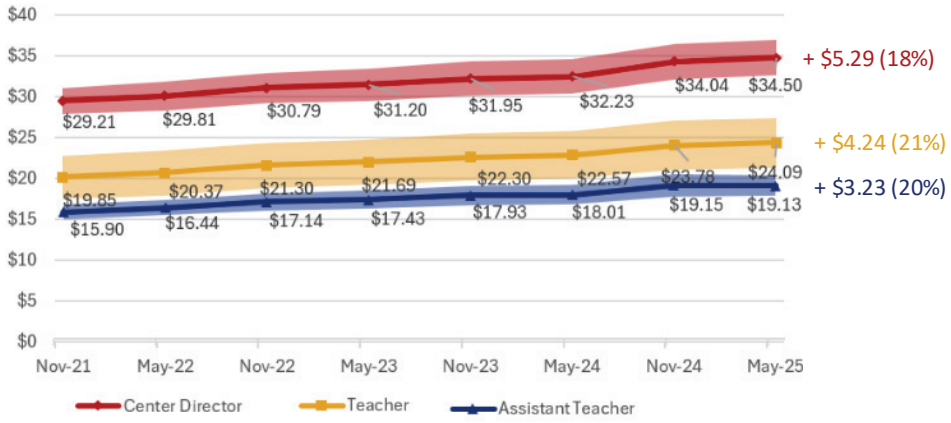
Centers spent a substantial proportion of C3 funds on workforce compensation in FY25



- Overall, centers spent 79% of FY25 C3 funds on the workforce.
- 80% of centers spent at least half of their C3 funds on the workforce.
- Of the 2,333 centers (85%) that spent at least some C3 dollars on educator/staff salaries, 1,857 (80%) used these funds to raise wages.

Educator wages are growing but remain low, especially when accounting for inflation

Average Hourly Wages – Center Based Early Education (Ages 0-5)



C3 data show an increase of more than $4 per hour in the average wage of a center-based educator in Massachusetts since the inception of the C3 program in 2021.

Analysis conducted by Boston University's Wheelock Education Policy Center (WEPC) indicates that this increase is equivalent to about $0.80 per hour after adjusting for inflation.

(Note: Data for school age positions show similar trends and are included in the appendix.)

Educators continue to leave their roles at high rates, although these rates are decreasing.

The C3 survey allows EEC to calculate a separation rate, or the rate at which educators are leaving the programs in which they are employed.

28%

of **CENTER-BASED TEACHERS** left their roles between 2021 and 2022 compared to

20%

between 2024 and 2025

53%

of **CENTER-BASED ASSISTANT TEACHERS** left their roles between 2021 and 2022 compared to

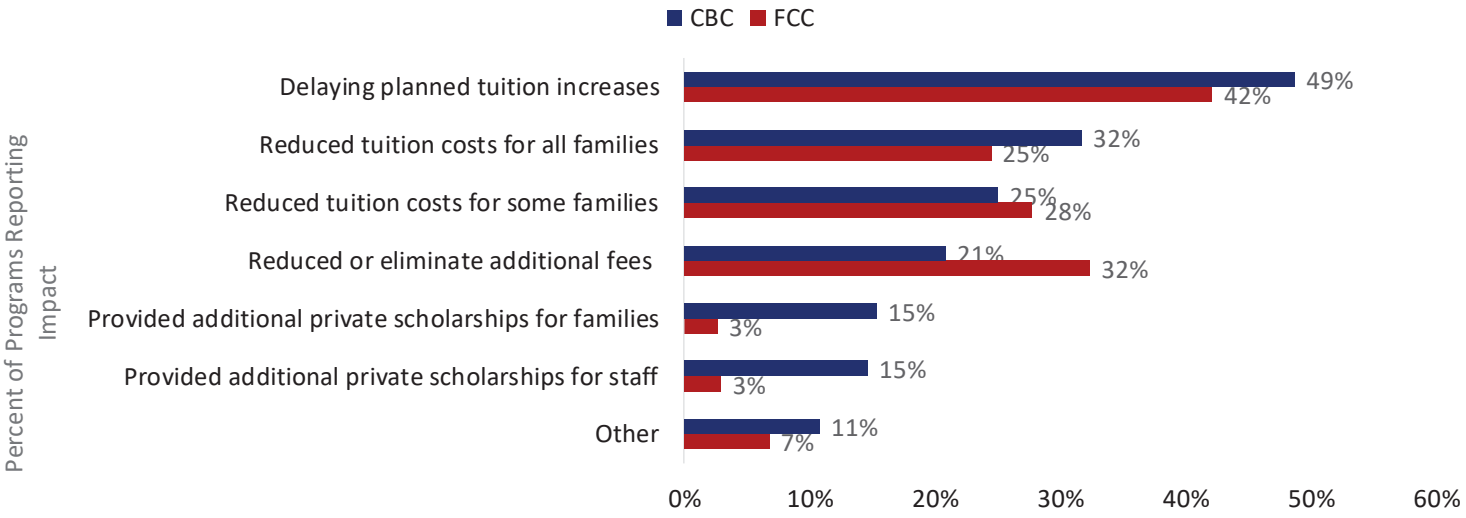
33%

between 2024 and 2025

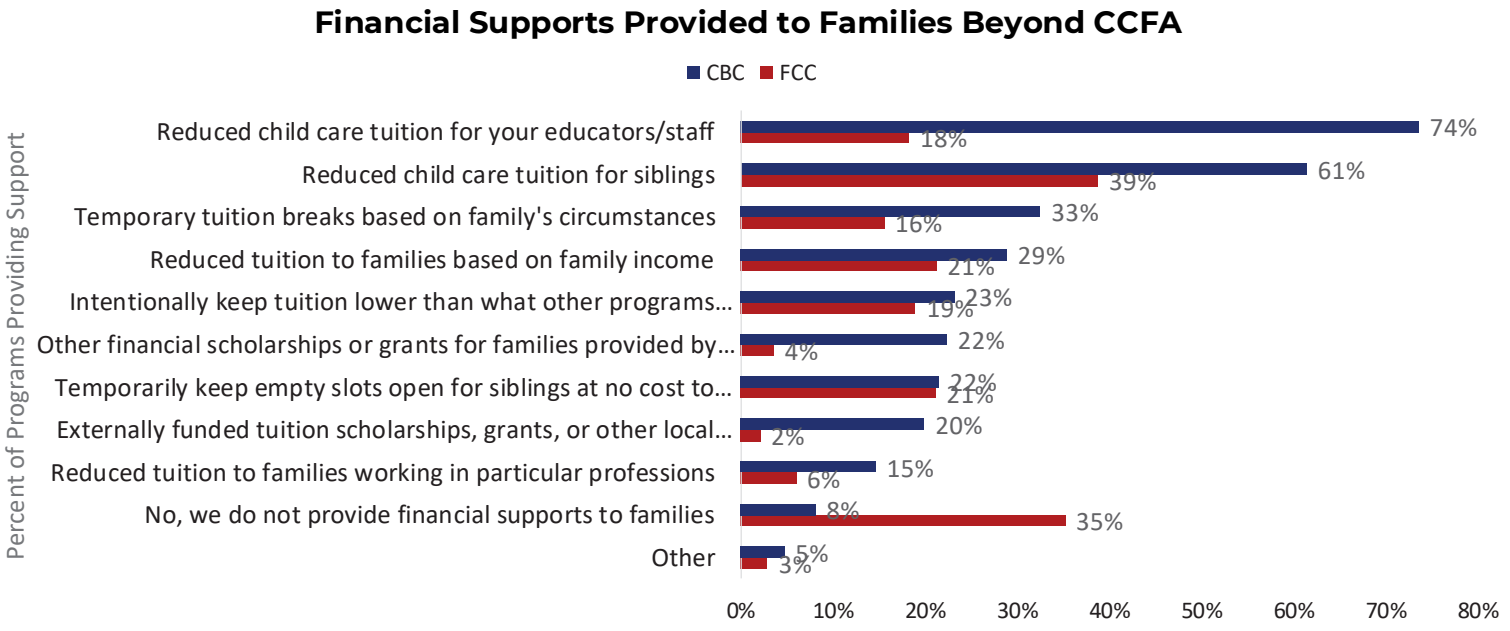
C3 Supports for Family Affordability

C3 is helping programs support family affordability

More than 75% of programs report that C3 funding has impacted affordability for families in their program, including …



Programs rely on a variety of strategies to financially support families beyond CCFA



Employer Child Care Innovation Fund (ECCIF) Overview

The Employer Child Care Innovation Fund



New pilot program encourages employer investment in affordable, high-quality child care to support working families and strengthen the Commonwealth's economy and workforce

In collaboration with the Executive Offices of Labor and Workforce, and Economic Development, and with the support of the Inter-Agency Early Education and Child Care Task Force, EEC's ***Employer Child Care Innovation Fund*** invites partnerships between the public and private sector to boost the economy and workforce.

Employer Child Care Innovation Fund

PROGRAM GOALS AND DESCRIPTION

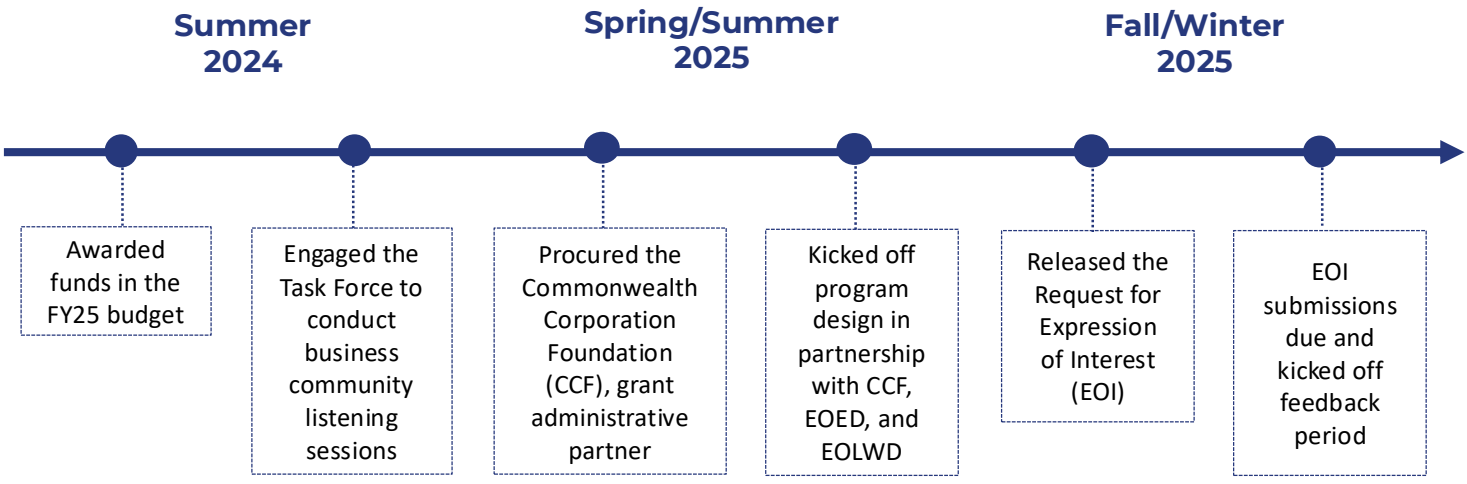
Program Goals

- Incentivize employers to advance family-friendly policies for their working parent employees.
- Expand access to affordable, high quality child care for working parents.
- Expand capacity in the early education and child care sector.

Program Description

- Competitive matching grant program to help employers support working families in the Commonwealth.
- Aligned with the Interagency Task Force on Early Education and Child Care and the Commonwealth's Workforce Agenda in high-demand industries.
- Eligible applicants include employers, group of employers, educators or providers (FCC or nonprofit center) partnering with an employer(s), and intermediaries (i.e., Chambers of Commerce, Community Foundations, etc.).

Key Dates and Milestones to Date

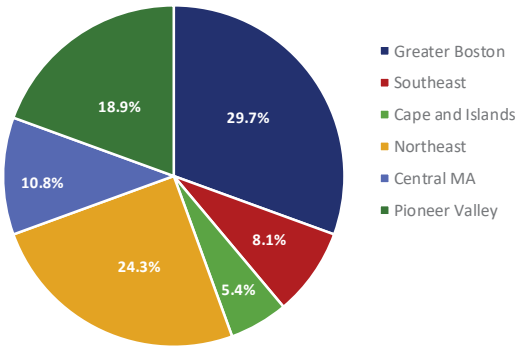


Submissions

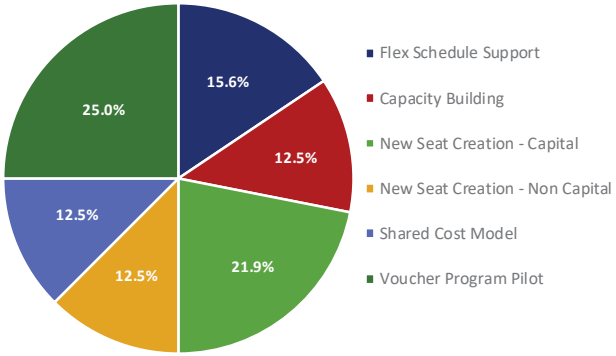
AT A GLANCE

- 37 Expressions of Interest (EOI) submitted
  - Comprised a variety of innovative concepts, from sector capacity building and capital investment grants, to shared cost models and more

Regional distribution



Concept types



Thank you!

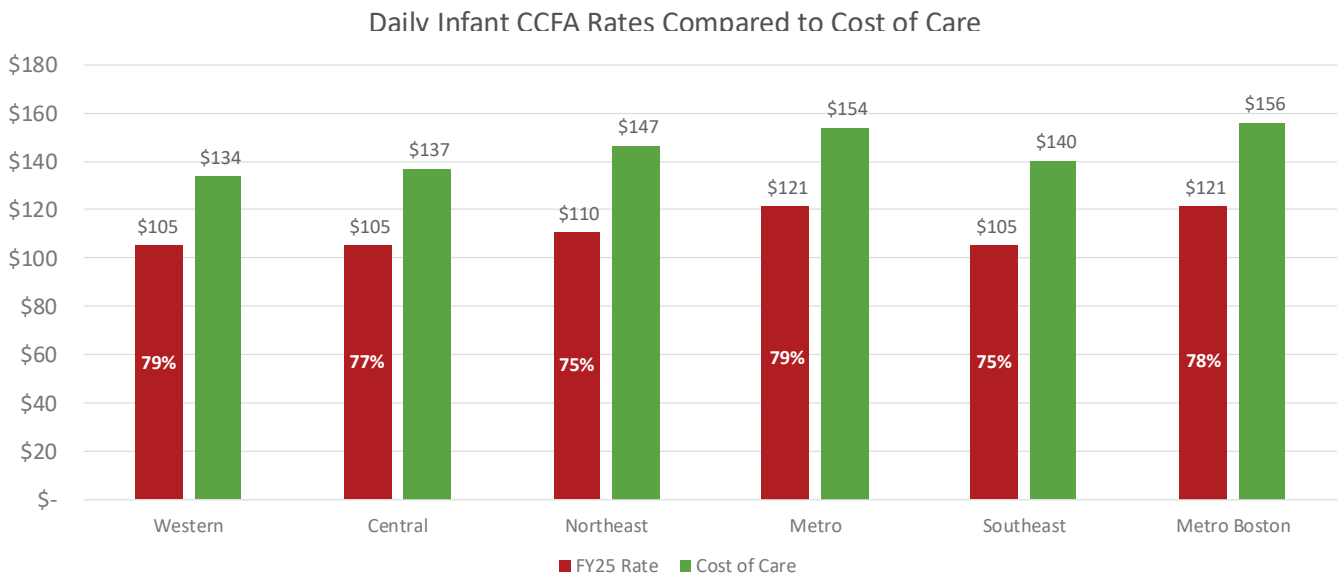
View Agency KPI Dashboards (updated monthly) here.

Next Meeting: February 11, 2026 (EEC's Boston Office)

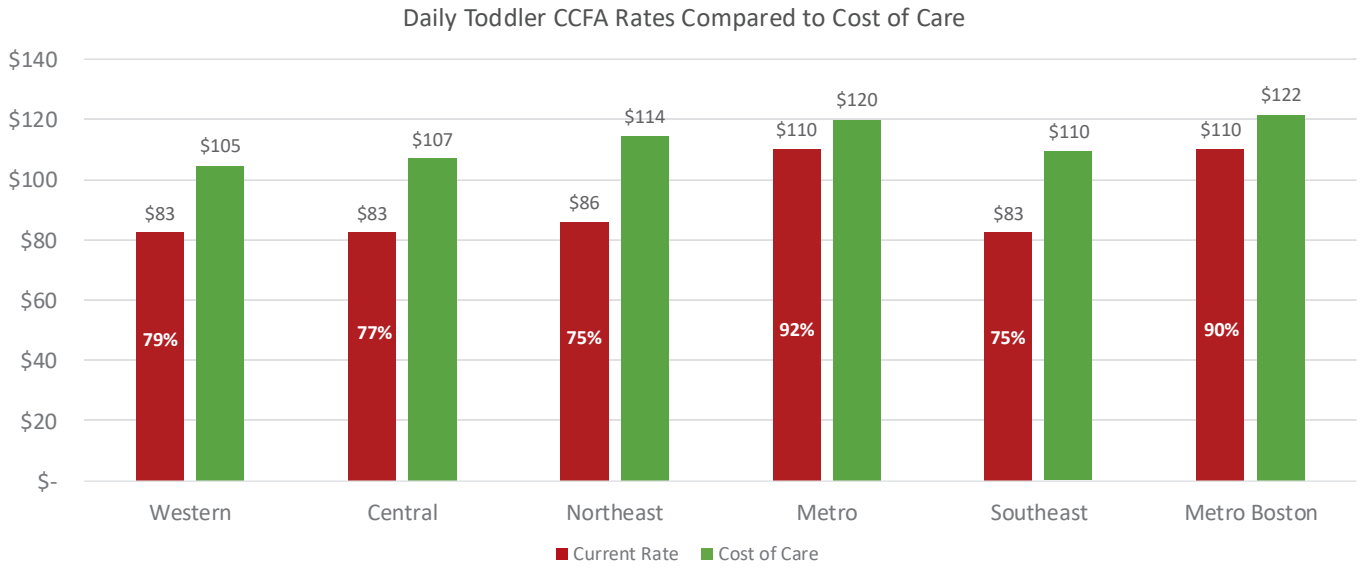
Appendix

Appendix A. CCFA Rates

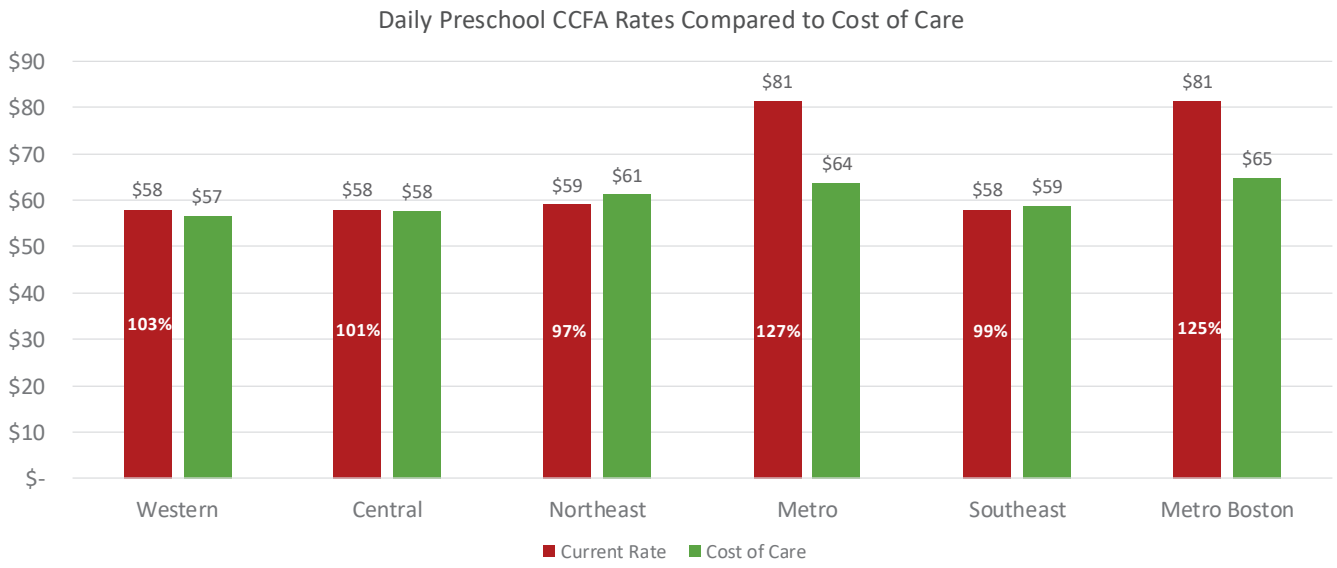
Center-Based Infant CCFA Rates Compared to the Cost of Care



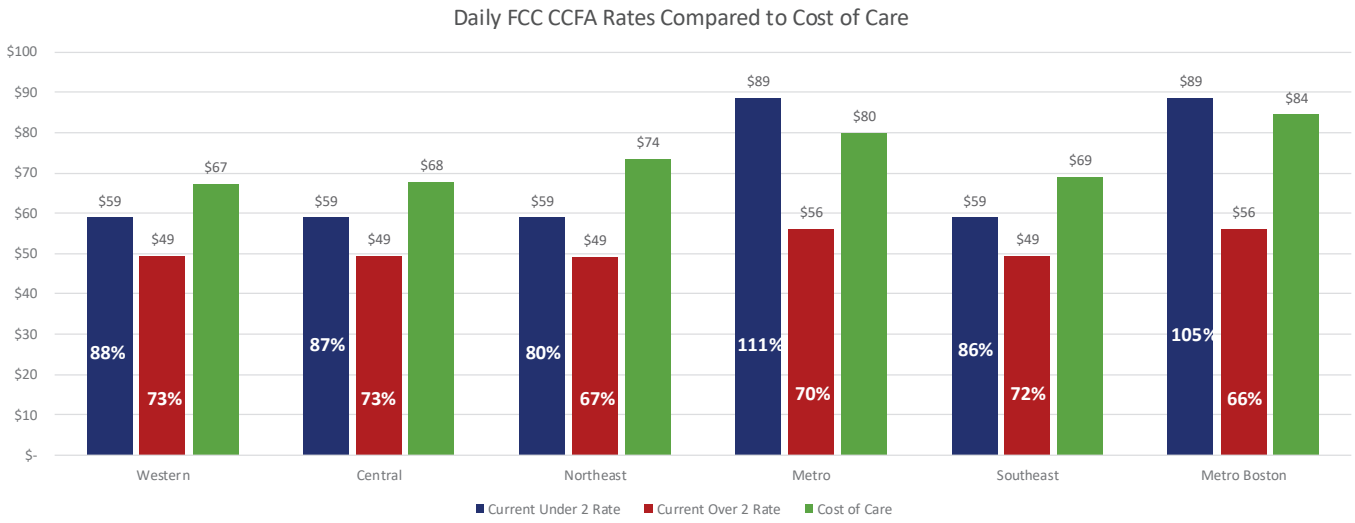
Center-Based Toddler CCFA Rates Compared to the Cost of Care



Current Center-Based Preschool CCFA Rates Compared to the Cost of Care



Current FCC CCFA Rates Compared to the Cost of Care



Current & Proposed Center-based Rates with Cost of Care %

	Center-Based Rates							
	Infant		Toddler		Preschool		School Age	
Region	Current Rate	Proposed Rate	Current Rate	Proposed Rate	Current Rate	Proposed Rate	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Western	$105.00 (79% Coc)	$105.53 (79% CoC)	$82.50 (79%)	$82.91 (79%)	$58.09 (103%)	$58.78 (104%)	$49.69 (113%)	$49.94 (113%)
Central	$105.00 (77%)	$105.53 (77%)	$82.50 (77%)	$82.91 (77%)	$58.09 (101%)	$58.78 (102%)	$49.69 (110%)	$49.94 (110%)
Northeast	$110.25 (75%)	$110.80 (76%)	$85.97 (75%)	$86.96 (76%)	$59.09 (97%)	$62.38 (102%)	$51.38 (110%)	$51.64 (111%)
Metro	$121.31 (79%)	$121.92 (79%)	$110.09 (92%)	$110.64 (92%)	$81.33 (127%)	$81.74 (128%)	$52.81 (108%)	$53.07 (108%)
Southeast	$105.00 (75%)	$105.53 (75%)	$82.50 (75%)	$82.91 (76%)	$58.09 (99%)	$58.78 (100%)	$49.69 (111%)	$49.94 (111%)
Metro Boston	$121.31 (78%)	$121.92 (78%)	$110.09 (90%)	$110.64 (91%)	$81.33 (125%)	$81.74 (126%)	$52.81 (107%)	$53.07 (108%)

Current & Proposed FCC Rates with Cost of Care %

	Family Child Care Rates			
% Cost of Care (CoC)	Under 2 Years of Age		2 Years of Age and Older	
Region	Current Rate	Proposed Rate	Current Rate	Proposed Rate
Western	$59.03 (88% CoC)	$59.33 (88% CoC)	$49.39 (73%)	$49.64 (74%)
Central	$59.03 (87%)	$59.33 (87%)	$49.39 (73%)	$49.64 (73%)
Northeast	$59.03 (80%)	$59.94 (82%)	$49.15 (67%)	$50.01 (68%)
Metro	$88.54 (111%)	$88.98 (111%)	$56.16 (70%)	$57.43 (72%)
Southeast	$59.03 (86%)	$59.33 (86%)	$49.39 (72%)	$49.64 (72%)
Metro Boston	$88.54 (105%)	$88.98 (105%)	$56.16 (66%)	$57.43 (68%)

Proposed Rates: Percent Increase of Center-based Rates Year Over Year

Center-based Infant

Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Region 1	$66.70	$97.18	$105.00	57.4%	$105.53	0.5%
Region 2	$70.00	$97.18	$105.00	50.0%	$105.53	0.5%
Region 3	$82.50	$102.07	$110.25	33.6%	$110.80	0.5%
Region 4	$101.60	$119.52	$121.31	19.4%	$121.92	0.5%
Region 5	$66.70	$97.18	$105.00	57.4%	$105.53	0.5%
Region 6	$97.00	$119.52	$121.351	25.1%	$121.92	0.5%

Center-based Toddler

Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Region 1	$61.16	$75.48	$82.50	34.9%	$82.91	0.5%
Region 2	$63.00	$75.48	$82.50	31.0%	$82.91	0.5%
Region 3	$72.00	$84.70	$85.97	19.4%	$86.96	1.2%
Region 4	$92.20	$108.46	$110.09	19.4%	$110.64	0.5%
Region 5	$62.57	$75.48	$82.50	31.9%	$82.91	0.5%
Region 6	$85.90	$108.46	$110.09	28.2%	$110.64	0.5%

Center-based Preschool

Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Region 1	$46.51	$57.23	$58.09	25%	$58.78	1.2%
Region 2	$50.00	$57.23	$58.09	16%	$58.78	1.2%
Region 3	$50.66	$57.99	$59.09	17%	$62.38	5.6%
Region 4	$70.00	$80.13	$81.33	16%	$81.74	0.5%
Region 5	$47.74	$57.23	$58.09	22%	$58.78	1.2%
Region 6	$68.00	$80.13	$81.33	20%	$81.74	0.5%

Center-based School-Age

Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Region 1	$42.76	$48.96	$49.69	16%	$49.94	0.5%
Region 2	$42.77	$48.96	$49.69	16%	$49.94	0.5%
Region 3	$44.22	$50.62	$51.38	16%	$51.64	0.5%
Region 4	$45.46	$52.03	$52.81	16%	$53.07	0.5%
Region 5	$42.77	$48.96	$49.69	16%	$49.94	0.5%
Region 6	$45.46	$52.03	$52.81	16%	$53.07	0.5%

Region 1 – Western; Region 2 – Central; Region 3 – Northeast; Region 4 – Metro; Region 5 – Southeast; Region 6 – Metro Boston

Proposed Rates: Percent Increase of FCC Rates Year Over Year

FCC Under 2

Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Region 1	$47.07	$58.45	$59.03	25.4%	$59.33	0.5%
Region 2	$53.79	$58.45	$59.03	9.7%	$59.33	0.5%
Region 3	$53.79	$58.45	$59.03	9.7%	$59.94	1.5%
Region 4	$80.67	$87.66	$88.54	9.8%	$88.98	0.5%
Region 5	$53.79	$58.45	$59.03	9.7%	$59.33	0.5%
Region 6	$60.50	$87.66	$88.54	46.3%	$88.98	0.5%

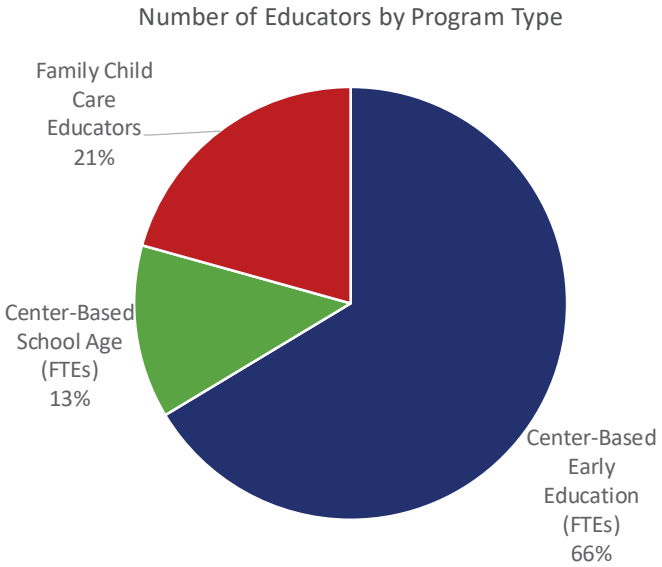
FCC Over 2

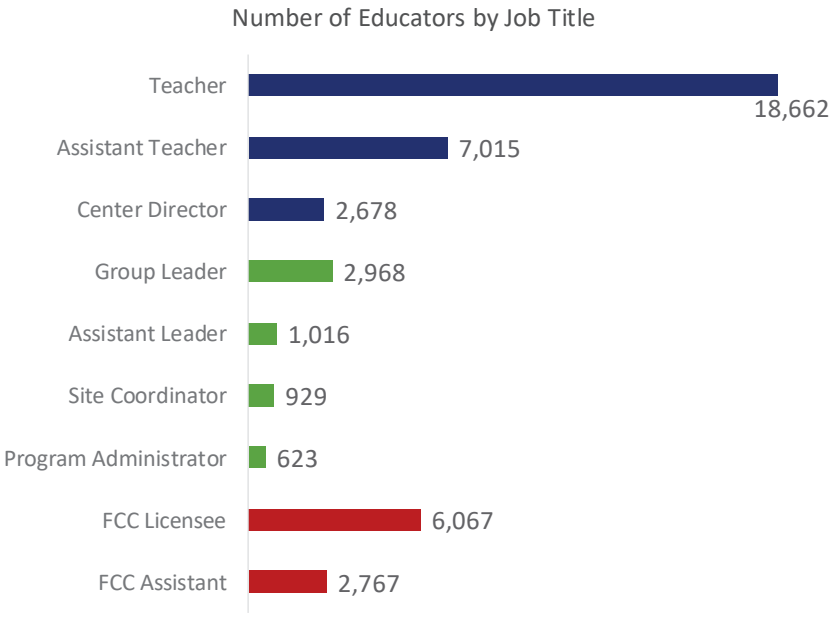
Region	FY23 Rate	FY24 Rate	FY25 Rate	Change FY23-FY25	FY26 Proposed Rate	YOY Change FY25-FY26
Region 1	$40.58	$48.90	$49.39	21.7%	$49.64	0.5%
Region 2	$42.71	$48.90	$49.39	15.6%	$49.64	0.5%
Region 3	$42.79	$46.50	$49.15	14.9%	$50.01	1.7%
Region 4	$50.00	$54.33	$56.16	12.3%	$57.43	2.3%
Region 5	$45.00	$48.90	$49.39	9.8%	$49.64	0.5%
Region 6	$43.93	$54.33	$56.16	27.8%	$57.43	2.3%

Region 1 – Western; Region 2 – Central; Region 3 – Northeast; Region 4 – Metro; Region 5 – Southeast; Region 6 – Metro Boston

Appendix B. C3

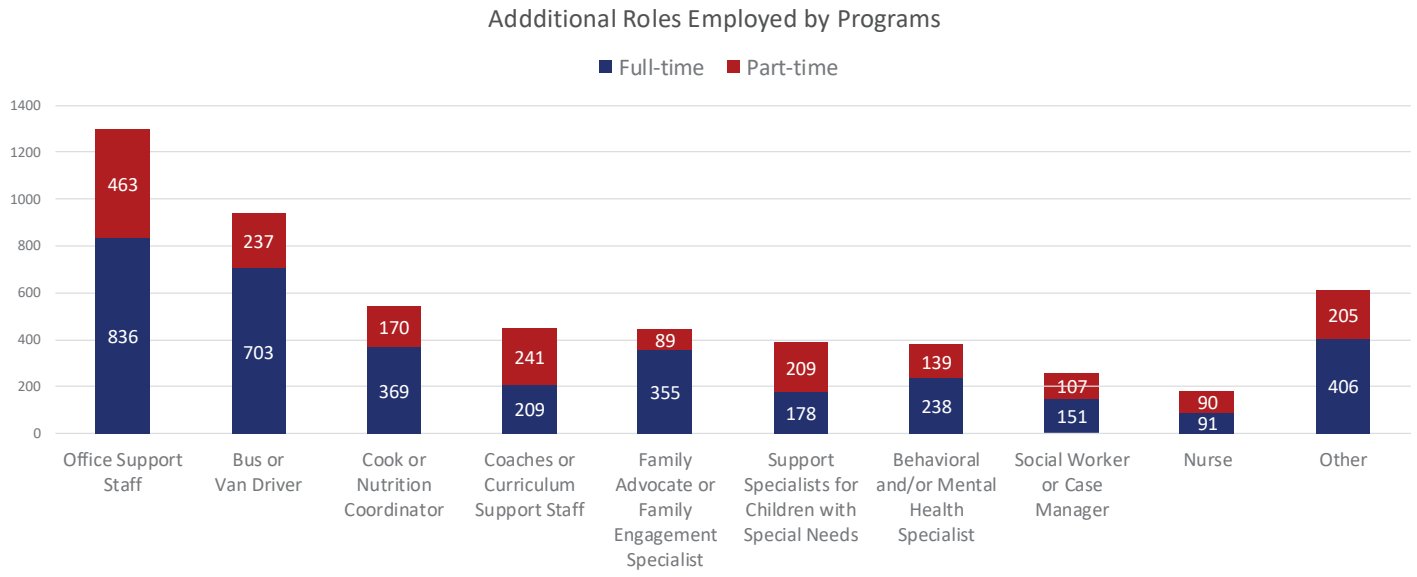
Across C3, programs report employing more than 42,000 educators.



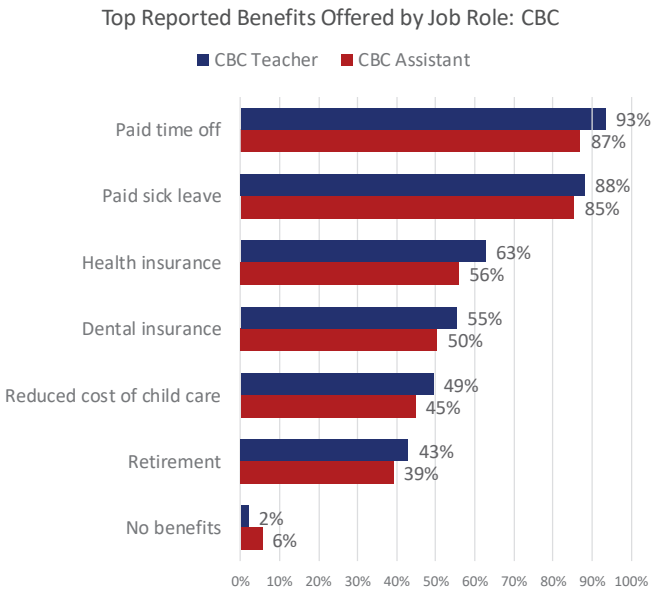


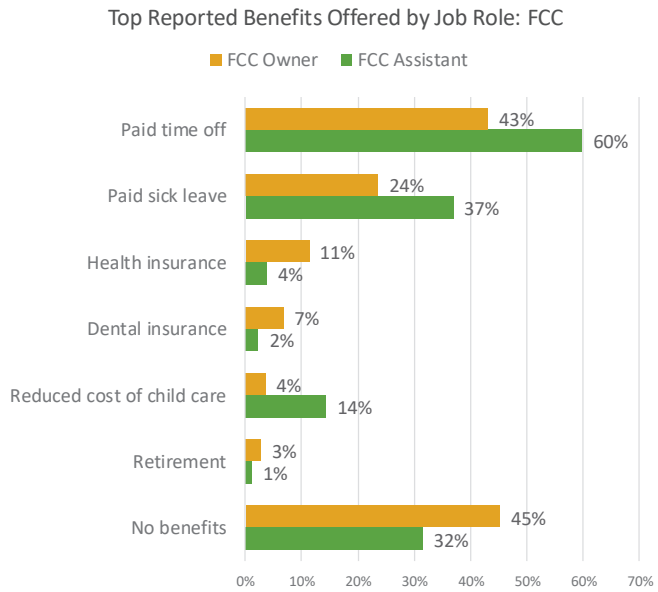
Data as of Dec 17, 2025. FCC licensee data are from LEAD. All other data are from programs' most recent C3 application and include all educators reported in programs applying for C3 in the past year.

Programs employ a number of other staff roles to support children and families, as well as program operations.

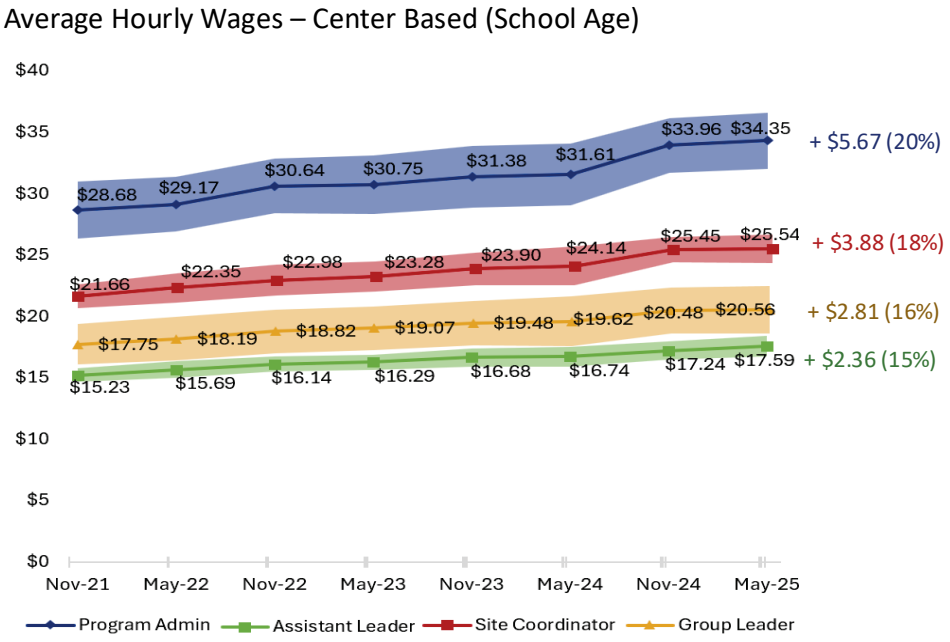


A substantial portion of center-based educators receive paid sick time and paid time off. Benefits are limited for FCC educators, although most FCC assistants receive paid time off.

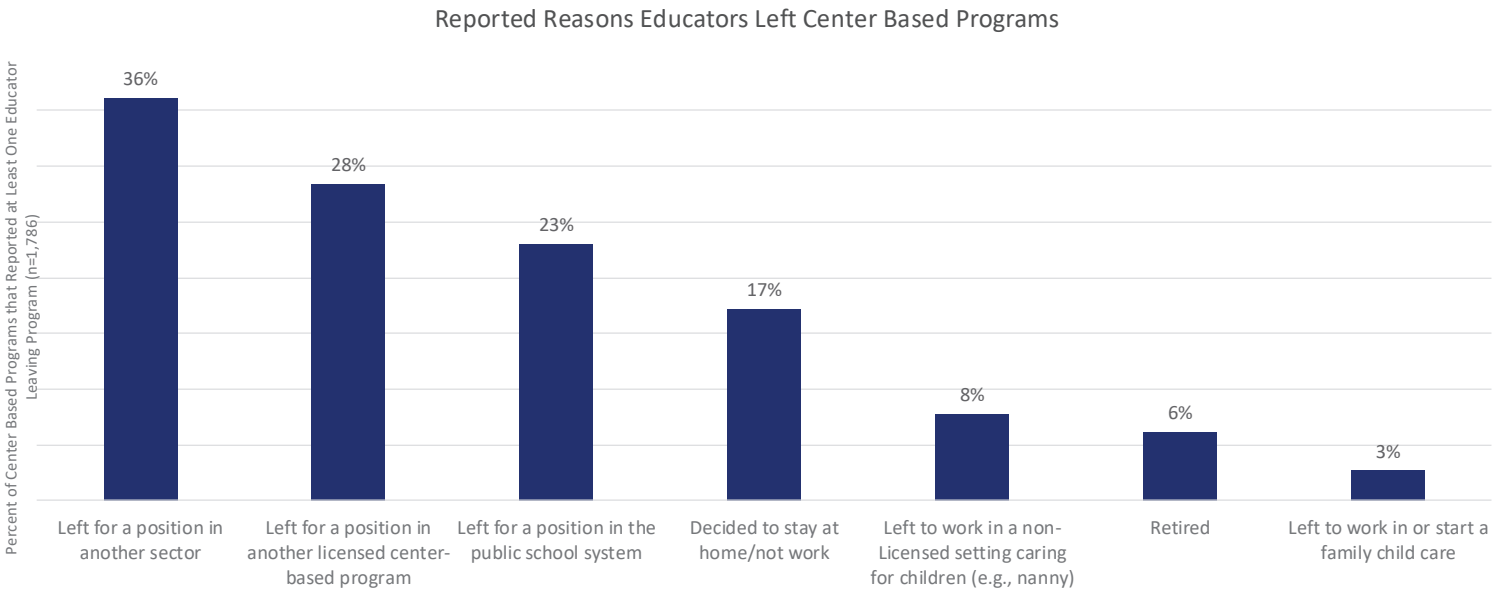




Educator wages are growing but remain low, especially when accounting for inflation.



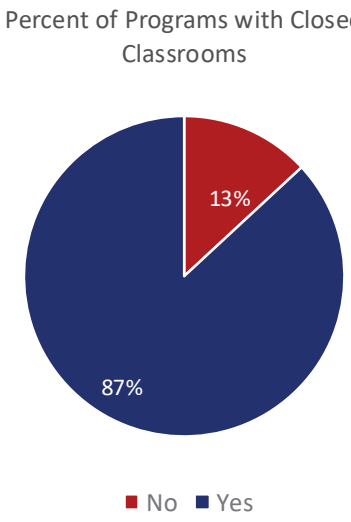
Educators leave programs for a variety of reasons, including opportunities outside of the early education and care sector.



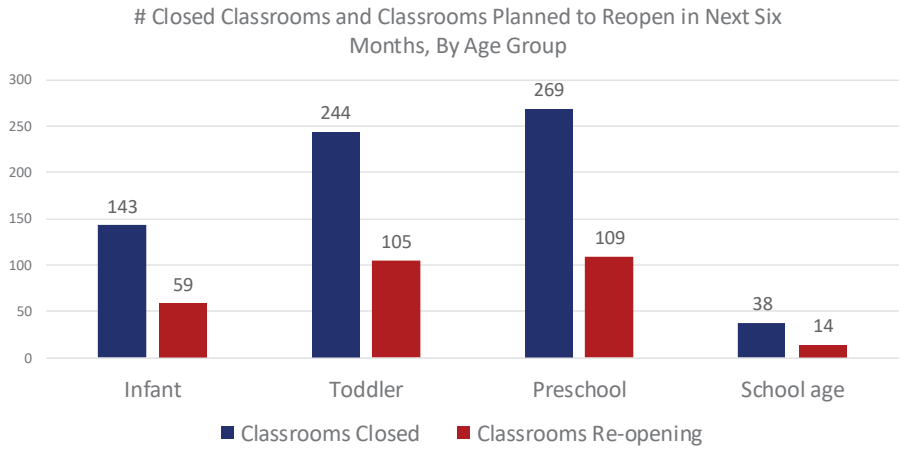
Note: Programs could select up to 3 reasons. Therefore, the percentages above add to more than 100%.

April 2025

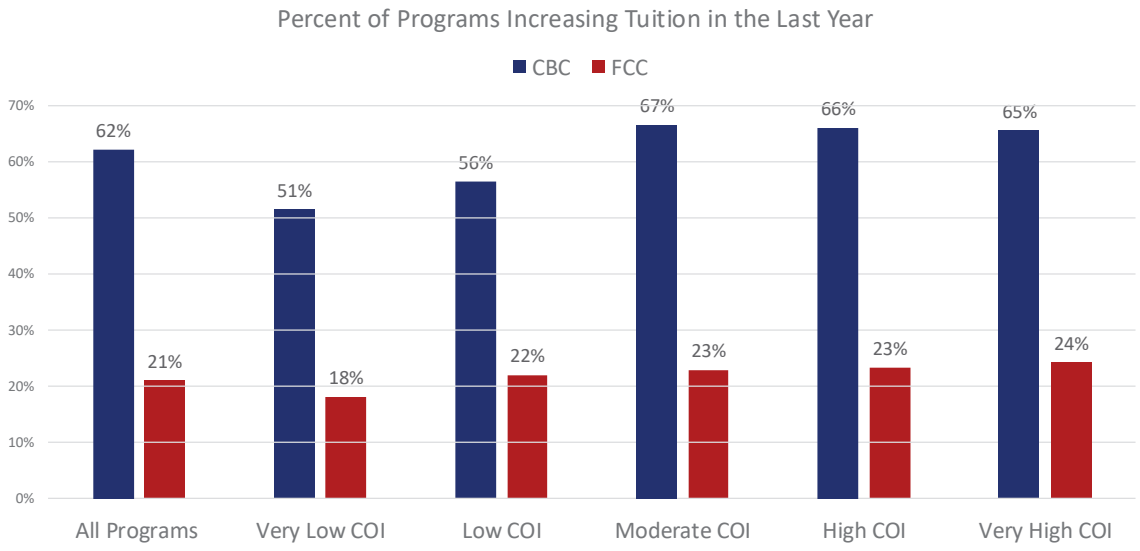
Statewide, 13% of all centers report having at least one closed classroom.



Overall, programs report a total of just under 700 closed classrooms, 41% of which are anticipated to open in the next 6 months.



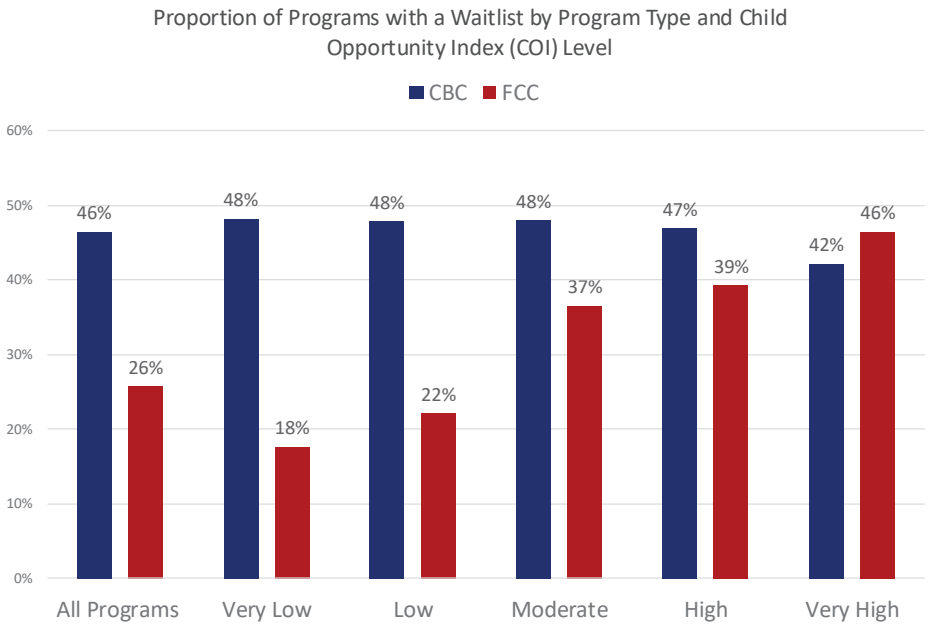
Most center-based programs have raised tuition within the last year, whereas most FCCs have not. More programs have increased tuition in higher COI communities.



Most programs that report increasing tuition have increased it by less than 5%.

Less than 20% of programs report increasing tuition more than 5%.

Just under half of centers and over one quarter of FCCs have their own program waitlists.



The proportion of center-based programs with waitlists is similar across Child Opportunity Index (COI) levels, whereas FCCs in higher COI communities are more likely to report having a waitlist compared to lower COI communities.

Most children on program waitlists are preschoolers (more than 17K) followed by toddlers (just over 15K).