Regional Action Plan

Capital Area Child Care Coalition

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PSC

PUBLIC SECTOR CONSULTANTS

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Executive Summary

Background

In 2022, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) awarded the Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) a planning grant to form a regional child care coalition, conduct regional research, and write an action plan to improve access to child care in Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties. Regional leaders formed the Capital Area Child Care Coalition (CACCC) which is co-led by LEAP, Capital Area Michigan Works!, and the United Way of South Central Michigan. The CACCC convened a coalition comprising representatives from economic development organizations, local governments, child care providers, parents of young children, and other relevant community partners. The CACCC also worked with Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to facilitate coalition meetings, collect and analyze primary and secondary data, and assist in the action planning process.

Defining Child Care Gaps

PSC reviewed publicly available data, fielded surveys, and conducted discussion groups to gather and analyze data related to parents, child care providers (both business owners/administrators and staff members), employers, and municipal representatives in the region. The top challenges are outlined below.

Child Care Is Unaffordable for Families

- Child care is not affordable for the majority of families in the region. For those making the median household income, families are spending 14 percent of their income on child care.
- Only half of eligible families in the region are receiving the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services's (MDHHS) Child Development and Care (CDC) subsidy.
- When a family cannot access or afford child care, their current or prospective employment opportunities may suffer, impacting their economic well-being.

Providers Face Challenges Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Staff

- Every county in the region is facing a child care staffing shortage.
- Child care business owners are unable to recruit qualified child care staff members due to unsatisfactory wages and benefits, staff burnout, and insufficient funding.
- Child care wages are significantly lower than the regional median household income and may even represent a poverty wage for some workers depending on their family size.

Care Families Need Is Not Available

- After the cost of care, lack of available child care slots is a top barrier to accessing child care in the region.
- Many child care providers are unable to staff their child care program sufficiently to the capacity for which they are licensed due to child care staffing issues.
- Many families do not have access to the kind of child care they need (after-school care, weekend hours), or the type of care they need is not available within a reasonable travel radius.

Providers Cannot Access the Resources They Need to Thrive and Expand

- Many providers are willing to expand their child care program but lack the resources to do so.
- Child care business owners and administrators need additional support to successfully manage or expand their programs.

Regional Action Plan

The CACCC has drawn on the aforementioned data to create a regional action plan to improve the state of child care for Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties. The key points of the plan are outlined below.

Advocate for State and Local Policy Change

- Engage in and support advocacy efforts to increase access to high-quality early childhood initiatives.
- Ease administrative obstacles for existing, new, and expanding child care businesses.
- Inform and support advocacy efforts to create wage and benefits parity among all early childhood educators with their K–12 peers.

Create Business Development Supports

- Develop a resource hub encompassing the dispersed technical assistance (TA) resources available and offer additional educational opportunities when existing TA is insufficient.
- Assess existing regulatory processes and procedures that are barriers to business development to inform and support changes to the regulatory processes.

Strengthen and Expand the Talent Pipeline

- Improve access to early childhood education credentials.
- Publicly promote possible careers in the child care industry to expand the talent pipeline.
- Engage and educate employers about how to best support employee child care needs.

Support and Provide Technical Assistance within the Child Care Ecosystem

- Build the capacity of regional Resource Centers to act as navigators for all technical assistance needs.
- Strengthen connection and support for child care providers by facilitating relationships among child care providers and between child care providers and families.

Introduction

Project Background

In 2022, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced Regional Child Care Planning Grants to help expand access to affordable child care throughout Michigan. The Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) awarded these grants to lead agencies charged with forming regional coalitions and writing an action plan to contribute to child care expansion.

ECIC awarded LEAP with a grant to fund this work in Eaton, Clinton, and Ingham Counties, commonly associated with state prosperity Region 7. This tri-county region is home to the Michigan state government and Michigan State University (MSU), which represent large employers in the area. Other industries such as health care, manufacturing, and insurance also represent large employers in the area. As such, child care is a crucial factor in the region's continued ability to attract employees to the region.

Regional leaders formed the CACCC to lead the work to expand access to child care in the region. The coalition is co-led by LEAP, Capital Area Michigan Works!, and the United Way of South Central Michigan. These co-leads are further supported by a six-member steering committee, which offers additional thought partnership on the coalition's direction and will be critical to supporting implementation. The steering committee includes:

- A parent or family member of a young child
- Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency
- Eaton County Regional Educational Service Agency
- Caterpillar Corner Child Care
- Cradle to Crayons Child Care
- Lansing Community College Small Business Development Center
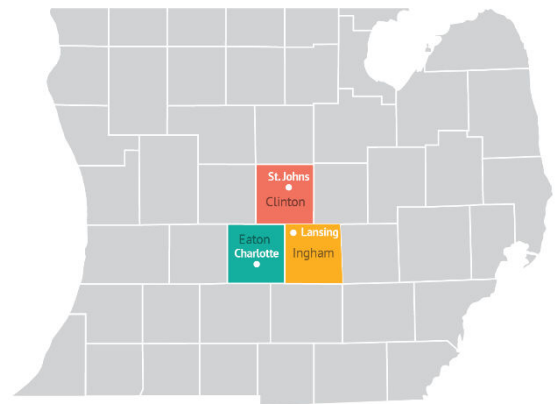
The 67-member coalition includes child care business owners, parents and family members of young children, businesses, local government leaders, local intermediate school districts, nonprofits, K–12 schools, higher education, and economic development organizations. By convening the business community, child care providers, municipal partners, education partners, and families, the CACCC has created a space to have conversations, gain shared insight, and join forces with a mutual aim of improving child care in Region 7. Throughout this year, the CACCC has welcomed anyone with a stake in the quality and availability of child care to join and contribute their perspectives. Please see Appendix A for a complete roster of the CACCC members.

In developing a plan to increase access to child care in the region, the CACCC considered the current child care gap (i.e., that the need for child care is greater than the number of available spots), staff recruitment and retainment, barriers to enter the child care provider market, and the cost to families seeking care. The coalition's data collection process, key findings, and goals, objectives, and strategies to expand access to affordable, quality child care are presented below.

Data Collection Approach

After the CACCC determined a set of research questions, PSC collected primary data through a variety of methods to understand the perspectives of parents and family members, child care business owners, child care staff, and businesses. Data collection included identification and analysis of publicly available data; surveys of parents and family members of young children, child care business owners and staff, regional employers, and municipalities; and discussion groups with parents and child care business owners and administrators. Each of these data collection methods is detailed in the following section, and the key findings from the data collection efforts are outlined in the Defining Child Care Gaps section.

Analysis of Publicly Available Data

To create a baseline, PSC collected and analyzed publicly available data to understand the child care environment in the CACCC counties and the region as a whole. This data included information on the number of child care providers across the three counties, the number of slots available for children, child care costs, operating hours, and quality, among other factors. Additionally, PSC included data on staffing, such as educational requirements, salaries, and the current workforce shortage in the desktop research analysis. PSC used sources such as Great Start to Quality, Lightcast, the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children, and the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). A complete reference list is included in this report.

Additionally, while the CACCC was interested in understanding the percentage of child care businesses that were either nonprofits or for-profit businesses, this information is not easily available. This is a variable the state should consider reporting in its database of child care providers. Data collection activities have allowed the coalition to better understand the needs of our region and how they connect to systemic issues within the child care industry. The desktop research summary is attached in Appendix B.

Surveys of Key Stakeholders

The CACCC leveraged its network of community partners to solicit feedback from community members regarding child care via online surveys. The coalition distributed one survey for each of the following populations: families with children younger than six years old, child care business owners and administrators, child care employees, regional businesses and employers, and local municipalities. For each survey, the CACCC created a social media and promotions toolkit (Appendices C–F), which the co-leads and members of the coalition used to recruit survey participants in their respective networks. Most surveys were open for one to two months to collect a robust response from community members. Upon each survey's close, PSC completed a data-cleaning process, which verified the authenticity of the responses based on criteria such as IP addresses and location data to ensure respondents were within the coalition's tri-county service area.

The CACCC was able to gather meaningful feedback from community members and identify regional child care concerns, although there are some limitations and additional data considerations. While the CACCC had strong engagement from all participant groups, more work may be needed to reach underrepresented parents and child care providers. Additionally, although stipends were offered to compensate parents and child care providers, it still proved challenging to garner higher participation rates from these populations. Approximately 330 community members responded to at least one survey. Below is a brief description of each fielded survey, including the intended audience, the length of time it was open, the

number of responses recorded, and the appendices that contain the corresponding list of survey questions and the full summary of findings.

Survey Audience	Open Dates	Number of Responses	Relevant Appendices
Parents and family members of young children	April 3–May 1, 2023	166	• Survey questions: Appendix G • Summary of findings: Appendix H
Child care business owners or administrators	April 26–May 31, 2023	47	• Survey questions: Appendix I • Summary of findings: Appendix K
Child care staff	July 25–September 6, 2023	58	• Survey questions: Appendix J • Summary of findings: Appendix L
Businesses/employers	June 1–July 20, 2023	58	• Survey questions: Appendix M • Summary of findings: Appendix N
Municipal employees	At the time of this report's publication, this work is still in progress. As a result, a summary of the municipal survey will be published at a later date as an addendum to this report.		

Discussion Groups with Parents and Child Care Businesses

To supplement survey data and provide more nuanced information on research questions, the coalition facilitated discussion groups with parents and family members of young children and child care business owners. Discussion group recruitment efforts mirrored the methods used for survey distribution; the CACCC created a social media and promotions toolkit (Appendix O) for the parent and family discussion group to be distributed by the co-leads and members of the coalition and utilized the CACCC membership network to recruit child care administrator participants. The CACCC provided participation incentives in the form of $25 Visa gift cards.

Feedback from the session with parents and family members of young children is included in the parent and family members summary, located in Appendix H. The discussion guide can be found in Appendix P. Feedback from the session with child care business owners and administrators is included in the child care business owner and administrator summary, located in Appendix K. The discussion guide can be found in Appendix Q.

Defining Child Care Gaps

Access to child care is a worsening crisis across the state of Michigan and within the CACCC region. Findings from the CACCC's data collection process showed a number of challenges that parents, providers, and employers face, some of which are worsened by county or regional factors. The top challenges identified through the research are outlined below.

Child Care Is Unaffordable for Families

The cost of child care is high for many capital area region families, considering the average cost of child care, the region's median household income, and the average percentage of family's household income spent on child care. Infant and toddler care costs are slightly higher than those for preschool and school-age children, with Ingham being the most expensive of the three counties. While costs of care vary significantly by county and the age of the child(ren) (Exhibit 1), survey respondents spend an average of $861 monthly ($10,332 annually) on care for children under the age of two. This amount far exceeds what would be considered affordable for households in the region that earn the median household income ($72,173) or less. "Affordable child care" is defined as no more than 7 percent of a household's income (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2016). For a household at the median household income, affordable child care would amount to $5,052 per year. A household in the capital area earning the regional median household income is likely to spend 14 percent of its income on child care for a child under the age of two, twice the amount that is defined as affordable. Among survey respondents, the cost of care was cited as the top barrier for those with a household income of less than $100,000 annually (Exhibit 2).

A household in the capital area earning the regional median household income is likely to spend 14 percent of its income on child care for a child under the age of two, twice the amount that is defined as affordable.

EXHIBIT 1. Parent Survey Respondents' Average Amount Spent on Child Care per Month by County

	Age 0–2	Age 3–5	Age 6–12
Eaton County	$625	$379	$229
Clinton County	$505	$653	$291
Ingham County	$1,003	$776	$358

N varied by age group and county.

EXHIBIT 2. Parent Survey Respondents' Top Barrier to Child Care Access by Income

Income	Percentage
More than $150,000	76%
$100,001–$150,000	74%
$50,001–$100,000	93%
$50,000 or less	95%

N varied by income; N = 20, 54, 38, and 41 for households making $50,000 or less, $50,0001–$100,000, $100,001–$150,000, or more than $150,000, respectively.
Note: Percentages total more than 100 because more than one response could be selected.

Families who cannot afford child care may be eligible for MDHHS's Child Development and Care (CDC) subsidy; however, not all eligible families receive the subsidy (MDHHS 2023). In November 2023 alone, only about half of the eligible children in each county received a CDC subsidy (Exhibit 3). Child care administrators discussed their perspective on the barriers to accessing the subsidy, including their own difficulties in helping families apply for the subsidy (finding time to do so and adhering to privacy practices), and the delayed payment time frame. Delayed payment from MDHHS poses a financial risk to the child care provider who continues to provide child care to applicant families without receiving payment from MDHHS. According to child care administrators, this payment lag may be months, impinging on their already tight profit margins as a child care provider, but they do not want to refuse the family service.

EXHIBIT 3. Total Children Eligible for a CDC Subsidy and Total Children Receiving a CDC Subsidy by County, November 2023

County	Total Children Eligible for a CDC Subsidy	Total Children Paid a CDC Subsidy	Percentage
Clinton County	266	150	56%
Eaton County	708	373	53%
Ingham County	2,075	1,023	49%
Region	3,049	1,546	51%

Note: Some children may be members of the same family case.
Source: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services 2023

The costs of child care are not just financial; parents' employment may suffer for a variety of reasons. When a family cannot access or afford child care, one or both parents—and sometimes other family members—may have job attendance issues. Nearly three-quarters of parent and family members survey respondents said they have experienced job attendance trouble because of their child care circumstance, and nearly two-thirds said they have experienced productivity or performance trouble. In tandem with these parent responses, 75 percent of employer survey respondents said that their employees had missed work, arrived late, or left early because of child care issues; and nearly two-thirds said their employees either frequently or occasionally have reduced regular work hours from full- to part-time because of unmet child care needs. Insufficient access to affordable child care can be detrimental to one's economic opportunities and greatly impact a family's well-being.

The Care Families Need Is Not Available

Survey respondents reported that limited availability of open slots that meet their needs was the second-most prevalent barrier in the region after the cost of care. To examine the supply of child care providers within the region, the CACCC used data from LARA to determine the number of child care providers in the region and their licensed capacity. While not all families with children under the age of five need or desire child care, no county in the region has enough child care spots to support the number of children under the age of five. In total, the region has 25,765 children younger than five years old, with only 17,999 child care slots available based on provider-licensed capacity, a significant gap between the number of children and the number of child care slots available (LARA n.d.).

Adding to the crisis of availability, 35 percent of providers surveyed also reported that all of their licensed slots are not actually available due to staffing issues. According to the child care administrator survey, no respondents have an enrollment equal to their licensed capacity by age, but still have a waitlist as they are unable to fully staff their program to their potential capacity (Exhibit 4). This indicates that the shortage based on the number of licensed slots is more severe than the official data may suggest.

According to the child care administrator survey, no respondents have an enrollment equal to their licensed capacity by age, but still have a waitlist as they are unable to fully staff their program to their potential capacity.

EXHIBIT 4. Child Care Administrator Survey Respondents' Licensed Capacity Contrasted with Current Enrollment and Waitlist

Age Group of Children Served	Average Number of Children Served	Median Number of Children Served	Range of Number of Children Served
Infants			
Licensed capacity (N=29)	8	8	1–16
Current enrollment (N=28)	6	5.5	0–16
Waitlist (N=20)	8	4.5	0–33
Toddlers			
Licensed capacity (N=31)	16	12	2–48
Current enrollment (N=33)	13	9	0–48
Waitlist (N=18)	11	7	0–50
Preschool			
Licensed capacity (N=32)	26	19	2–80
Current enrollment (N=33)	23	15	2–66
Waitlist (N=17)	7	5	0–25
School-age			
Licensed capacity (N=16)	19	18	0–48
Current enrollment (N=17)	15	14	0–47
Waitlist (N=9)	4	4	0–15

N varied by response and is listed in the table.
Note: Data is shown as reported by survey respondents. Respondents reported having both capacity (licensed capacity minus currently enrolled) and children on a waitlist.

Additionally, available slots may not meet the diverse needs and preferences of parents and family members of young children, and many families do not have access to care that is available during the hours they need. Families may need care before or after school, in the summer, or on weekends, among other times beyond traditional workweek hours. Exhibit 5 shows some of the times during which parents need but do not have access to child care according to the parent and family member survey.

EXHIBIT 5. Types of Child Care Survey Respondent Families Need but Cannot Access

Type of Care	Percent of Families Who Need Care but Are Unable to Access
Sick-child care	28%
Care during daytime hours	21%
Drop-in/emergent care	21%
After-school care	21%
Summer break care	18%

N = 136

Child Care Providers Struggle to Recruit and Retain Qualified Staff

Families' child care needs are harder to meet when providers are faced with the difficulty of recruiting and retaining qualified staff, and child care business owner survey respondents cited staffing as their top challenge. Seventy-seven percent of respondents reported that they are experiencing a staffing shortage, and 35 percent said they could not operate at full capacity as a result of these shortages. The Michigan State University Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship Child Care Mapping Project showed each county in the CACCC region is experiencing the staffing shortages shown below (Michigan State University 2023):

- Eaton County: 14 percent
- Clinton County: 15 percent
- Ingham County: 19 percent

Seventy-seven percent of respondents reported that they are experiencing a staffing shortage, and 35 percent said they could not operate at full capacity as a result of these shortages.

The Child Care Mapping Project defined staffing shortages as either high priority or urgent, considering factors such as population and child poverty rates in addition to staffing concerns. Clinton and Ingham Counties were both defined as experiencing an urgent shortage in child care staffing, and Eaton County was defined as high priority. Additionally, the MSU mapping data was sourced in 2022 and may not accurately reflect additional changes in staff shortage data over the last year. Staffing shortages have continued to be exacerbated by COVID-19; 32 percent of survey respondents said they did not experience shortages prior to the pandemic.

According to Lightcast data, the median compensation ($11.72/hour) for child care staff positions in the CACCC region is 22 percent lower than the national median wage ($15.01/hour) (Lightcast 2023). Lightcast data shows that child care staff who earn the region's median compensation rate and work full time (40 hours per week for 52 weeks) earn approximately $24,396 per year. Notably, child care staff

surveyed by the CACCC reported a higher median annual wage of $33,800 ($16.25/hour). However, even these slightly higher reported wages are less than half of the regional median household income of $72,173 and may even be a poverty wage for some workers depending on their family size. Staff at the current level of compensation may not be able to afford the costs of living in any of the three counties in the CACCC region (Exhibit 6). Over 70 percent of respondents said that they at least occasionally struggle to make ends meet, highlighting the need to increase pay and improve benefit options for child care staff.

EXHIBIT 6. Average Cost of Living for Two Adults and Two Children Compared to Regional Child Care Median Income
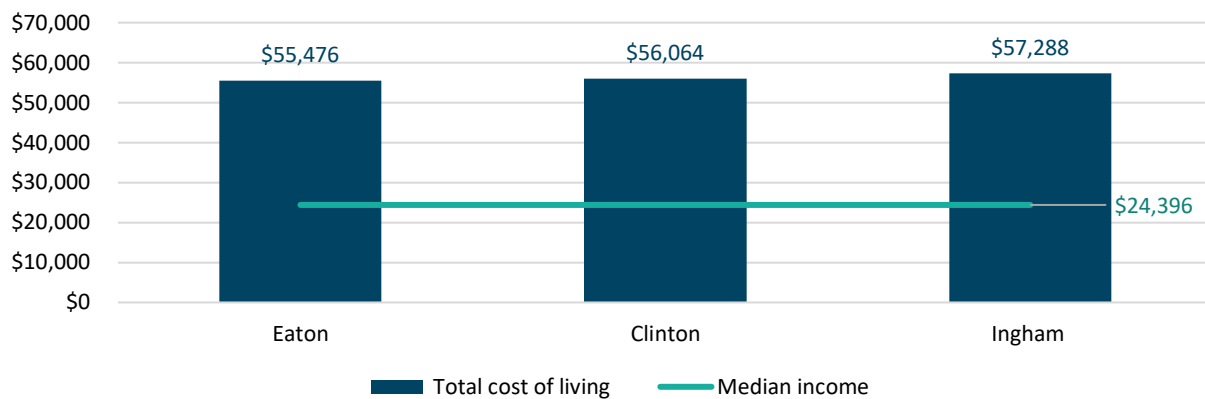
Sources: Center for Neighborhood Technology n.d.; United for ALICE 2021

Benefits, another factor that could help entice new hires to the child care profession, are sometimes too high of a cost for providers to offer. While nearly 70 percent of child care staff survey respondents said their employer offered paid time off, only 37 percent offered medical insurance, and even fewer offered a retirement savings plan (29 percent), dental insurance (27 percent), and vision insurance (24 percent). Child care staff survey respondents indicated that wages and benefits were the top priorities when seeking a position in the child care field.

Though nearly two-thirds of child care staff survey respondents rated themselves as "very committed" to their career in early childhood education and care, the risk of leaving the profession remains high. Child care staff ranked the highest contributing factors that may lead to leaving their position as burnout or exhaustion (68 percent), insufficient wages (58 percent), and no benefits or unsatisfactory benefits (48 percent). Some of these factors are mirrored in child care administrators' survey responses when they were asked to list the main challenges in recruiting staff—administrator respondents listed wages (82 percent), underqualified candidates (58 percent), and no benefits or unsatisfactory benefits (55 percent).

Child Care Providers Cannot Access the Resources They Need to Thrive and Expand

Opening more child care businesses, or expanding the capacity of existing ones, to create more child care slots requires sustained financial and technical support for providers. Over 45 percent of child care administrator survey respondents said that, given the appropriate resources, they would be willing to consider expanding their licensed capacity at their current location. More than one-third said they would be willing to consider expansion either at their current location or a new location. The main resources child care business owners cited to facilitate expansion included additional staffing, a grant or loan to cover remodeling costs, and funding to purchase property and/or build a new building.

Over 45 percent of child care administrator survey respondents said that, given the appropriate resources, they would be willing to consider expanding their licensed capacity at their current location.

Additional support is desperately needed for some child care providers to continue to operate. All child care administrator survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were concerned about how they were going to afford higher wages and benefits for themselves and/or their employees. Concerningly, more than three-quarters of respondents strongly agreed or agreed they were concerned about the ability to afford compliance improvements, and 68 percent were concerned about how their business was going to stay afloat. These responses highlight the possibility of current child care providers leaving the field due to lack of business support, which would further restrict the already limited choices for child care in the region.

Framing the Problem

As demonstrated, parents cannot access affordable and quality care that meets their needs. Likewise, child care providers do not have the resources to recruit and retain qualified staff or increase the number of slots they have available. There are several root causes from which many of the worsening challenges in the child care sector stem, including market failure, workforce gaps, and limited supply.

Market Failure

There is a continuing gap between the market rate and true cost of child care, and supporting the true cost is a struggle for most current child care business owners. Securing adequate staffing, offering competitive wages and benefits, affording compliance improvements, and identifying funding sources are only some of the challenges that child care business owners and administrators are facing.

When grouped with high operational costs and insufficient financial support from the federal and state government, this gap in the market leads to higher costs for families, who then may exit the workforce and not contribute to the financial health of their households or the general economy. On average, those using or seeking child care in Ingham County are spending more per child on child care than those in Eaton or Clinton Counties. Despite these differences, between 74 percent and 93 percent of parents and family members of young children across all three counties identified cost as their top barrier to accessing child care in all but the highest income bracket (those earning more than $150,000). With area families

spending 14 percent of their household income on early childhood education costs, the capital area is far from providing affordable child care.

> Unfortunately, the consequences of low child care staff wages extend to families seeking care when child care providers leave the field for higher-paying jobs, further shrinking the number of available child care spots.

The market failure has led to poverty wages for early childhood education staff; many child care staff are not currently paid a livable wage and struggle regularly to make ends meet. Capital area child care workers reported an average hourly wage of $16.25, with most respondents (84 percent) working either full time (40 percent) or more than full time (44 percent). Furthermore, over 70 percent of respondents said that they at least occasionally struggle to make ends meet for their own family's needs. Unfortunately, the consequences of low child care staff wages extend to families seeking care when child care providers leave the field for higher-paying jobs, further shrinking the number of available child care spots. Between the costs of retaining qualified staff and staff turnover, child care wages directly impact the number of spots providers can offer families.

Workforce Gap

The staffing shortage in Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties is mirrored around the state and nation. There is a shortage of early childhood workers who possess the proper credentials and can deliver high-quality early childhood educational opportunities. Potential child care workers face challenges entering the field, including the cost of educational credentials, unenticing wages, limited or nonexistent benefits, and unclear or lacking career pathways within the field.

Often, the time and cost required to obtain Early Childhood Education (ECE) credentials is a significant barrier to becoming credentialed. While the most common early childhood credential (an associate degree) is offered at 27 colleges or universities around the state, it comes at the average cost of $7,344, which is a significant investment for a child care worker making $16.25 an hour. The cost of obtaining a credential will likely take years to recoup based on average regional wages.

Child care business owners and administrators are struggling to recruit and retrain staff in part due to low wages and inadequate benefits. All child care business owners and administrator survey respondents said that wages were a main challenge to recruiting qualified staff; other top challenges included underqualified candidates and unsatisfactory benefits. Provider benefits varied; nearly 70 percent of surveyed child care staff said their employer offered paid time off, but only 37 percent offered medical insurance, and fewer offered a retirement savings plan, dental insurance, and vision insurance. None of the home-based program owner respondents reported offering any type of retirement contributions. Child care staff survey respondents said that lack of satisfactory benefits, burnout or exhaustion, and insufficient wages were the top factors that could lead to them leaving their current position in child care.

> Child care staff survey respondents said that lack of satisfactory benefits, burnout or exhaustion, and insufficient wages were the top factors that could lead to them leaving their current position in child care.

The existing capacity for child care spots is already restricted without additional workers leaving the field. Some local child care providers are managing waitlists for their programs because they are unable to fully staff their program to their licensed capacity. More than 80 percent of child care business owners and administrator survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they were worried about staffing recruitment. Around two-thirds strongly agreed or agreed that they were concerned about retaining current employees. Of those child care business owners and administrators working through a staffing shortage, nearly three-quarters said they had to take on tasks in addition to their usual duties, and more than half said they cannot complete their usual duties, they work longer hours, or they are less able to take time off. Concerns about staffing, running a viable business, and on-the-job stressors increase the risk of burnout and an intensified child care shortage if those businesses close.

Limited Supply

As evidenced by the results of the parent survey and data collected through desktop research, there are not enough early childhood educational settings that meet families' needs and preferences. While not all families with children under the age of five need or desire child care in a professional setting, no counties within Region 7 have enough licensed child care spots to support the number of children under the age of five. Market failure and the workforce gap are linked to limited supply, but there are also regulatory barriers to expanding that supply.

> While not all families with children under the age of five need or desire child care in a professional setting, no counties within Region 7 have enough licensed child care spots to support the number of children under the age of five.

A number of child care provider coalition members expressed that state licensing regulations prevented them from providing care to more children. For example, one provider said that they have had to limit the number of children from one family they were able to serve due to compliance with licensing ratios, thus turning away some siblings while providing care for the others. Additionally, lack of access to the CDC subsidy due to lack of awareness, policy constraints, and slow reimbursement processes not only affects families' access to care, but also impacts providers' ability to financially sustain their business.

Coalition members also highlighted a number of concerns related to local zoning ordinances, commonly citing the complicated requirements and intimidation that accompany approaching municipal leaders who lack a clear understanding of the ordinance. Another concern was that the differences among ordinances and enforcement policies across municipalities not only prevented new providers from entering the field due to a lack of clarity, but also prevented current providers from expanding across municipal lines.

Finally, employers often lack understanding of the importance of child care for their employees. This can lead to a lack of supportive workplace policies such as paid time off, sick time, flexible schedules, or paid parental leave, all of which limit a parent's ability to engage in the workforce and provide care for their children. Employers also may not be aware of, or understand, the positive impacts that offering child-friendly employment benefits like onsite child care, flexible spending accounts, or other benefits could have on their ability to recruit and retain employees.

Charting a Course of Action

The CACCC took part in a strategic action planning process to develop a regional plan to address access to child care. This process included ongoing collaborative efforts, outlined in the following section, and planning for implementation.

Action Planning Process

After conducting qualitative and quantitative research efforts, including desktop research, surveys, and discussion groups, PSC presented an overview of the findings during a data sharing coalition meeting in September. Both the findings and outcomes from the discussion that ensued helped lay the groundwork for action planning. The CACCC hosted two two-hour, full-coalition action planning sessions followed by several meetings with CACCC co-leads to further refine the strategies discussed. During the two action planning sessions, PSC facilitated activities, including a brief review of the work that had been done prior to the session, individual and partner brainstorming, and a group consensus-building activity. Coalition members generated ideas for goal categories and future objectives to inform the CACCC's strategic plan during the consensus building activity and continued to refine their ideas throughout the second session. Following the second action planning session, PSC worked with co-leads to refine the objectives and actions to ensure alignment with the goals.

Regional Action Plan

The capital region needs a stronger, more sustainable child care education pipeline, with tangible professional development opportunities available and room to grow in a child care career. In addition to greater institutional support for career development, child care business owners and administrators need greater funding, technical assistance (TA), and business development materials to maintain and expand their facility capacity. This regional action plan is intended to be updated and changed to meet the coalition's needs as the CACCC begins implementation. The details included for each objective are the priority as determined by the coalition, the planned CACCC actions, support that the CACCC needs to reach the goal (often state level work), opportunities for regional collaboration, and an estimate of the resources needed to attain the objective stated. Each objective has a column containing the estimated anticipated costs. "$" means that few or no additional financial resources are anticipated, "$$" indicates that moderate financial resources are anticipated, and "$$$" denotes that significant financial resources are anticipated.

The CACCC regional data analysis and the consensus building identified several key issues on which the coalition will offer support to other regional child care coalitions as opposed to leading the work independently to avoid duplication of effort. These objectives remain included below to represent the coalition's consensus building process and community-led goal setting.

Alignment with Statewide Initiatives

As the CACCC developed its regional action plan, several statewide child care initiatives were underway, including the Early Care and Education Registered Apprenticeship program and the PreK for All expansion. The Early Care and Education Registered Apprenticeship program seeks to increase the number of available pathways for early childhood professionals to receive child care credentials. Grants

were awarded to regional workforce development organizations—including Capital Area Michigan Works!—and coalition members identified objectives and activities to leverage this work during the consensus-building process. A PreK for All action group was formed in late 2023 to identify a pathway towards implementing PreK for All in Michigan. The PreK for All roadmap was released in February 2024 with activities to support the initiative's implementation. The community-led consensus-building process was completed before the PreK for All implementation roadmap was released, but the CACCC has identified multiple places where our goals and objectives will support the ECE ecosystem, including the PreK for All initiative. To honor the community-driven coalition and the goals and objectives determined through consensus building, we have kept our established goals but identified ways in which those goals can support PreK for All.

Goal One: Advocate for State and Local Policy Change

Regional data analysis and the CACCC consensus-building process identified that state and local advocacy are necessary to improve access to child care, ease obstacles for child care business expansion, and create wage parity for early childhood educators. These actions are objectives one, two, and three, respectively. The Macomb County Child Care Coalition (MCCCC) established a robust advocacy campaign with dedicated resources to accomplish their aims. Given the overlap of priority areas and the applicability of statewide advocacy efforts, the CACCC will not lead this work independently, but will support the MCCCC in their efforts where possible. The objectives outlined below are representative of the CACCC's consensus-building process and the priorities identified therein. Italicized actions denote those that CACCC will support but not lead; actions in roman font indicate those that CACCC will lead.

Work to address and remove barriers for parents and providers that are caused by policy failures.

Possible Resources

- Great Start to Quality
- *2023 KIDS COUNT in Michigan*, Michigan League for Public Policy
- *The Child Care Development and Care Subsidy*, University of Michigan Poverty Solutions
- *The Case for State-level Child Tax Credits*, MSU Institute for Public Policy and Social Research
- *Expand the Child Tax Credit for the 19 Million Children Who Receive Less than the Full Credit*, Center for Budget and Policy Priorities

- MI Regional Child Care Planning Grant Resources
- Think Babies Michigan
- Child Care Providers Association of Michigan
- Civitas Strategies

Root Causes Addressed	Problem Statements Addressed
• Market failure • Limited supply • Workforce gap	• Child care is unaffordable for families • The care families need is not available • Child care providers cannot access the resources they need to thrive and expand • Child care providers struggle to recruit and retain qualified staff

Objective One: Support advocacy efforts to improve access to child care for lower-income families

Engage in and support advocacy efforts to increase access to high-quality early childhood initiatives for all families, with a focus on lower-income families.

Priority: High		Anticipated Costs: $		
CACCC Actions	**Support Needed**	**Opportunities for Collaboration**	**Key Considerations**	**Tracking Progress**
• *As needed, inform child care providers about, and empower them to participate in, advocacy avenues, including LARA listening sessions.* • *As needed, create a policy priority agenda documenting issues related to the MDHHS CDC subsidy and child care tax credits and provide to MCCCC for state-level advocacy.* • *Support state-level advocacy by participating in discussions with local leaders and offering advocacy support to parents and child care providers.*	• *The CACCC requests ECIC's assistance in providing facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.*	• *While advocating for changes to improve access to child care is a priority, the CACCC will not lead this work independently. The MCCCC has established a robust advocacy campaign, which the CACCC will support.*	• *Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including connecting with child care providers, documenting related issues, and providing MCCCC with a policy priority agenda. The CACCC is willing to provide ongoing staff time to support MCCCC's state-level advocacy efforts.*	• *The CACCC will not lead the evaluation of this objective.*

Objective Two: Support advocacy efforts to ease obstacles for child care businesses

Ease administrative obstacles for existing, new, and expanding child care businesses (both licensed and unlicensed).

Priority: Medium		Anticipated Costs: $		
CACCC Actions	**Support Needed**	**Opportunities for Collaboration**	**Key Considerations**	**Tracking Progress**
• Distribute child care–friendly ordinance examples as best practices to local municipalities. • *As needed, create a list of advocacy action items related to child care business expansion, including more accessible background checks and a simplified state grant process for new child care providers, and provide to MCCCC for state-level advocacy.* • *Support state-level advocacy efforts related to administrative burdens by participating in meetings as needed and activating local child care provider engagement, including for PreK for All.*	• *The CACCC requests ECIC's assistance in providing facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.*	• *While advocating for changes to ease obstacles for child care business expansion and creating child care-friendly municipal ordinances are priorities, the CACCC will not lead this work independently. The MCCCC has established a robust advocacy campaign and similar municipal efforts, which the CACCC will support.*	• Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective. The effort required to distribute child care–friendly ordinances will be a one-time resource investment. • *Other staff efforts will include an upfront investment of time to research and compile an advocacy action list. The CACCC is willing to provide ongoing staff time to support MCCCC's state level advocacy efforts.*	• *The CACCC will not lead the evaluation of this objective.*

- *Objective Three: Support advocacy efforts to create wage parity*
- *Inform and support advocacy to create wage and benefits parity among all early childhood educators with their K–12 peers.*

Priority: High		Anticipated Costs: $		
CACCC Actions	**Support Needed**	**Opportunities for Collaboration**	**Key Considerations**	**Tracking Progress**
• *As needed, conduct research to inform a wage and benefits advocacy campaign, including regional wage parity, sick leave labor laws, health care subsidies, and union membership.* • *As needed, create and provide an informational brief to MCCCC to support state-level advocacy to increase child care provider wages.* • *Support state-level advocacy efforts for wage parity by participating in meetings as needed and activating local child care provider engagement, including for PreK for All.*	• *The CACCC requests ECIC's assistance in providing facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.*	• *While advocating for child care wage parity is priority, the CACCC will not lead this work independently. The MCCCC has established a robust advocacy campaign, which the CACCC will support.*	• *Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including an upfront investment of time to research and compile an informational brief to provide to MCCCC. The CACCC is willing to provide ongoing staff time to support MCCCC's state-level advocacy efforts.*	• *The CACCC will not lead the evaluation of this objective.*

Goal Two: Create Business Development Supports

Regional data analysis and the CACCC consensus-building process identified the need to inform and support changes to regulatory processes to best support child care businesses (objective two). The MCCCC has established a robust advocacy campaign with dedicated resources to accomplish their aims. Given the overlap of priority areas and the applicability of statewide advocacy efforts, the CACCC will not lead this work independently, but will support the MCCCC in their efforts where possible. The objectives outlined below are representative of the CACCC's consensus-building process and the priorities identified therein. Italicized actions denote those that CACCC will support but not lead; actions in roman font indicate those that CACCC will lead.

Create business development supports for child care providers to improve access to child care.				
Possible Resources				
• Wonderschool • Child Care Technical Assistance Network • Eastern Regional Resource Center • LARA Licensing Technical Assistance and Navigators • Civitas Strategies		• PNC Grow Up Great • LEAP One and All • Early Childhood Support Network • Family Child Care Network • *3 Ways States Can Expand and Sustain the Infrastructure Workforce by Meeting Child Care Needs*, The Center for American Progress		
Root Causes Addressed • Workforce gap • Limited supply		**Problem Statements Addressed** • The care families need is not available • Child care providers cannot access the resources they need to thrive and expand		
Objective One: Create a Resource Hub				
Develop a resource hub and make it available online and in brick-and-mortar organizations.				
Priority: High		Anticipated Costs: $$$		
CACCC Actions	**Support Needed**	**Opportunities for Collaboration**	**Key Considerations**	**Tracking Progress**
• Evaluate existing TA resources to ensure they meet the needs of child care providers and identify any needs for additional content creation. • As needed, create or request from ECIC additional how-to/resource guides for child care providers on topics issues identified by the coalition (including business development support, simplifying zoning and planning issues, licensing requirements, etc.). • Evaluate and compile existing resources for parents (providers, cost support, etc.). • Develop and launch a marketing and outreach campaign to build awareness for the hub.	• The CACCC anticipates that the technical assistance needs will be similar to those identified by other regional child care coalitions (including business development support, simplifying zoning and planning issues, licensing requirements, etc.). The CACCC requests the assistance of ECIC to create these technical assistance materials tailored to child care business owners and administrators to support their need for customized child care business support.	• Partnerships may include the ISDs/RESAs, Great Start to Quality Resource Center, economic development organizations, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). These partners are all current coalition members. • LARA, MiLEAP, and ECIC, are all possible partners that are not current members of the coalition.	• Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including evaluating TA and compiling resources, building the resource hub website itself, and marketing the resource hub. Ongoing staff time will be required to maintain the website.	• **Indicators:** Output measures include the utilization of the resource hub via website traffic. • **Results:** Outcome measures include an improvement in TA resource utilization for child care providers, and an overall improvement in the confidence and know-how of the child care providers as indicated through a brief survey sent to those who access the resource hub website (see also Goal Four, Objective Two). • **Performance:** Measures include a successfully launched resource hub as noted through community feedback.
Objective Two: Inform and support changes to regulatory processes				
Review and assess existing regulatory processes and procedures that are barriers to business development.				
Priority: Medium		Anticipated Costs: $		
CACCC Actions	**Support Needed**	**Opportunities for Collaboration**	**Key Considerations**	**Tracking Progress**
• *As needed, conduct research to inform state-level advocacy to change regulatory barriers to business development, including evaluating existing requirements for redundancy and undue burden.* • *As needed, create and provide an informational brief to support state-level advocacy.* • *Support state-level advocacy efforts related to rules and regulations by participating in meetings as needed and activating local child care provider engagement, including for PreK for All.*	• *The CACCC requests ECIC's assistance in providing facilitated collaboration among other regional child care coalitions to provide cohesive messaging and enhanced impact.*	• *While advocating for changes to the regulatory process is a priority, the CACCC will not lead this work independently. The MCCCC has established a robust advocacy campaign, which the CACCC will support.*	• *Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including an upfront investment of time to research and compile an informational brief. The CACCC is willing to provide ongoing staff time to support MCCCC's state-level advocacy efforts.*	• *The CACCC will not lead the evaluation of this objective.*

Goal Three: Strengthen and Expand the Talent Pipeline

The CACCC consensus-building process identified the need to create an optimal child care–friendly business certification to promote the benefits of employers supporting their employee's child care needs (objective three). The Livingston and Washtenaw Counties Child Care Coalition (LWCCCC) is pursuing this objective. Given the overlap of priority areas, the CACCC will not lead this work independently, but will support the LWCCCC in their efforts where possible. The objectives outlined below are representative of the CACCC's consensus-building process and the priorities identified therein. Italicized actions denote those that CACCC will support but not lead; actions in roman font indicate those that CACCC will lead.

Strengthen the child care talent pipeline by improving access to ECE credentials and promoting early childhood education as a professional career.

Possible Resources

- Pulse Employer Roadmap
- Economic Development Research Partners Program
- ECE apprenticeship grants
- Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children

- First Children's Finance
- Going PRO Talent Fund
- *3 Ways States Can Expand and Sustain the Infrastructure Workforce by Meeting Child Care Needs*, The Center for American Progress
- Michigan Reconnect

Root Causes Addressed
- Market failure
- Workforce gap
- Limited supply

Problem Statements Addressed
- Child care is unaffordable for families
- The care families need is not available
- Child care providers cannot access the resources they need to thrive and expand
- Child care providers struggle to recruit and retain qualified staff

Objective One: Strengthen the talent pipeline

Improve access to ECE credentials to strengthen the potential talent pipeline.

Priority: High Anticipated Costs: $

CACCC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
• Work with school district Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs to promote ECE as a viable career path • Work with ISDs and CTE programs to connect students to child care apprenticeship opportunities • Partner with diverse community-based organizations to diversify the candidate field, including gender, race, and ethnicity	• No external support was identified at this time	• Partnerships may include the ISDs/RESAs, community colleges, and four-year university early childhood education programs. These partners are all current coalition members. • Additional partnerships will include CTE programs that are not yet engaged with the coalition.	• Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective. Identifying educational and CTE partners will require staff time upfront, and cultivating those relationships will require ongoing staff time.	• **Indicators:** Output measures include the number of educational partnerships and the number of current or potential child care providers who engage in the opportunities, including successful apprenticeships. • **Results:** Outcome measures include an improvement in the workforce gap in comparison to the workforce gap established during the planning period of the grant. Additional outcome measures include a diversified child care workforce as measured by a regional child care survey in comparison to the baseline survey administered during the planning period of the grant. • **Performance:** Measures include established community connections between CTE programs, ECE apprenticeships, and current or future child care providers.

Objective Two: Expand the talent pipeline

Promote possible careers in the child care industry to expand the talent pipeline.

Priority: Low Anticipated Costs: $$

CACCC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
• Develop, or request from ECIC, and distribute a media campaign about child care careers that include family and staff perspectives • Establish regional career exploration events to build awareness about the field	• Due to the potential cost and the statewide application of a media campaign and its associated materials, the CACCC requests ECIC's assistance in creating media materials for CACCC regional distribution.	• Partnerships may include current coalition members such as local economic development organizations, Michigan Works!, and chambers of commerce. • Additional partnerships may include ECIC and local business networks that are not current coalition members.	• Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including the distribution of a media campaign and the creation of regional career exploration events. Partnerships as identified are possibilities for a more sustained level of engagement without ongoing staff time if career events can be wrapped in with established career events or chamber events.	• **Indicators:** Output measures include the number of media campaign contacts, the number of career event attendees, and the number of partners interested in promoting ECE at their ongoing network events. • **Results:** Outcome measures include an improvement in the workforce gap over time in comparison to the workforce gap established during the planning period of the grant. • **Performance:** Measures include an improved community perception of child care as a professional industry.

Objective Three: Educate employers on employee child care needs

Engage and educate employers about how to best support employee child care needs.

Priority: High Anticipated Costs: $$

CACCC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
• Provide technical assistance webinars to employers to highlight methods by which employers can support employees with child care needs • Hold a CEO roundtable event to promote employer engagement • Identify and facilitate creative solutions for businesses to support a variety of employee needs • Facilitate employer-to-employer learning opportunities focused on how to create and adopt new policies, develop relationships with providers, etc. • *Develop and promote an "optimal" badge of certification for being child care-friendly*	• Due to the anticipated need for employer education and technical assistance provision across the state, the CACCC requests that ECIC support the regional coalitions by creating any additional employer technical assistance materials that may be utilized in this effort. • The CACCC would appreciate ECIC's facilitation of employer-to-employer learning opportunities around the state to expand the network of those who may be interested or those who have experience to share.	• Partnerships may include current coalition members such as local economic development organizations, SBDC, Michigan Works!, and chambers of commerce. • Additional partnerships may include ECIC and local business networks that are not current coalition members. • *While developing and promoting an "optimal" badge of certification is a priority, the CACCC will not lead this work independently. The LWCCCC has established a similar goal and the CACCC will support their implementation.*	• Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including the upfront time investment of creating informational webinars for employers (which the CACCC will record for future use without additional resources) and facilitating the CEO roundtable event. Sustainability measures may include local chambers of commerce buy-in to promote the badge of certification as part of their ongoing work and the possibility of employer-to-employer learning opportunities becoming a part of SBDC or Michigan Works! programming.	• **Indicators:** Output measures include the number of webinars created, attendees, and those who access the recorded version at a later time. Additional measures include the number of CEO roundtable attendees. • **Results:** Outcome measures include a post-technical assistance survey and comparing employer levels of interest and knowledge of child care to the initial survey baseline findings. Additional measures include completed event feedback cards at the CEO roundtable that have shown employers' interest in, and utility of, the event. • **Performance:** Measures include local employees who have felt supported in their child care needs by their employers as measured by a brief poll distributed to regional parents of young children through social media and email listservs.

Goal Four: Support and Provide Technical Assistance within Child Care Ecosystem

Provide technical assistance and education within the child care ecosystem, including families and child care providers.

Possible Resources	
• Wonderschool • Child Care Technical Assistance Network • LARA Licensing Technical Assistance and Navigators • Great Start to Quality Regional Resource Centers	• PNC Grow Up Great • Early Childhood Support Network • Family Child Care Network

Root Causes Addressed	Problem Statements Addressed
• Workforce gap • Limited supply	• Child care providers cannot access the resources they need to thrive and expand • Child care providers struggle to recruit and retain qualified staff

Objective One: Build Resource Center capacity
Build the capacity of regional Resource Centers to act as navigators for all the technical assistance needs.

Priority: Low	Anticipated Costs: $$

CACCC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
• Create a coordinating council that brings together all areas of technical assistance expertise in coordination with the creation of the resource hub • Consolidate the technical assistance needs of child care providers under the regional Great Start to Quality Resource Center and the resource hub • Facilitate partnership opportunities for regional Resource Centers	• No need for external support was identified at this time.	• Partnerships may include the Great Start to Quality Resource Center and the Great Start Collaborative, which are current coalition members. • Additional partnerships may include ECIC, MiLEAP, and LARA, which are not current members of the coalition.	• Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective, including the upfront investment of creating relationships among technical assistance providers and inventorying the current resources available. Facilitating these partnerships will require ongoing staff time; however, once established, the regional Resource Center can absorb the work within their current practices, albeit with more robust resources.	• **Indicators:** Output measures include the number and range of engaged technical assistance experts. • **Results:** Outcome measures include an improvement in TA resource utilization for child care providers and parents, and an overall improvement in the confidence and knowledge of the child care providers as indicated through a brief survey sent to those who access the available resources (see also Goal Four, Objective Two). • **Performance:** Measures include established regional Resource Center partnerships and a more cohesive network of technical assistance opportunities, managed by those who are already engaged in the work.

Objective Two: Strengthen connection and support for child care providers
Facilitate connections and relationships among child care providers and between child care providers and families.

Priority: High	Anticipated Costs: $$

CACCC Actions	Support Needed	Opportunities for Collaboration	Key Considerations	Tracking Progress
• Establish at least one regular child care administrator peer learning group • Utilize resource hub to connect families to representative child care options • Audit capacity for current providers vs. licensed capacity potential • Provide technical assistance webinars to child care providers on topics identified by the coalition	• The CACCC anticipates that the child care technical assistance priorities will be similar to those identified by other regional child care coalitions (including business development support, simplifying zoning and planning issues, licensing requirements, etc.). The CACCC requests the assistance of ECIC to create these technical assistance materials tailored to child care business owners and administrators to support their need for customized child care business support (see also Goal Two, Objective One).	• Partnerships may include current coalition members such as the Great Start to Quality Resource Center, the Great Start Collaborative, local municipal representatives, and the SBDC. • Additional partnerships may include ECIC, LARA, and the Child Care Network, which are not current coalition members.	• Staff time will be the main resource to accomplish this objective. The effort required to provide technical assistance will depend somewhat on the provision of educational materials from ECIC. There will be an upfront time investment to prioritize TA needs, communicate with ECIC, organize learning opportunities and recruit participants. The CACCC will plan on recording the online opportunities to allow participants to review these again or at a later date, reducing the burden for future participating organizations. • Additional considerations may include engaging shared service networks, family child care networks, and other established efforts to encourage self-sustaining efforts.	• **Indicators:** Output measures include the number of child care administrator peer learning participants, and the number of technical assistance opportunities offered and respective participants. • **Results:** Outcome measures include the results of a post-technical assistance session child care provider survey (comparable to the baseline survey distributed during the planning grant) showing an improved level of understanding after participating in technical assistance. • **Performance:** Measures include well attended and widely distributed technical assistance opportunities and a stronger network of child care business owners and administrators in the region.

Conclusion

Using Regional Child Care Planning Grant funding, the CACCC completed a variety of data-gathering activities and engaged with key stakeholders, the sum of which confirmed that there is critical need for intervention in the child care sector in Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties. Surveys, discussion groups, analysis of publicly available data, and conversations at coalition meetings have demonstrated that child care is widely inaccessible, costs are grossly unaffordable for families, and the care they need is not available. These issues are complexly interwoven with the challenges that providers face. Wages and benefits for child care staff are not competitive in today's economy, and many child care staff are considering leaving the field. Even when a provider may have the desire to expand, they face regulatory barriers and do not have the financial or technical resources they need.

In response to these issues, the CACCC created an action plan and will begin implementation planning in January 2024. The goals of this action plan include advocating for state-level policy change that will reduce barriers for child care providers and families alike, providing business development support and technical assistance to child care providers, promoting the talent pipeline, and engaging employers to support their employees' child care needs. The CACCC will continue to work within the coalition, coalitions from other regions, and ECIC to meet these goals.

The CACCC would like to thank and acknowledge the many stakeholders, parents, child care providers, and community partners for their time and expertise as coalition members and cocreators of the regional action plan. A broad coalition membership allowed for shared experiences that enriched the coalition's discussions, and the solutions developed collaboratively are more representative of the capital region's needs because of its members' contributions.

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Appendix A: Capital Area Child Care Coalition Roster

Appendix B: Desktop Research Summary

Appendix C: Social Media Toolkit—Parent and Family Survey

Appendix D: Social Media Toolkit—Child Care Business Owner and Administrator Survey

Appendix E: Social Media Toolkit—Child Care Staff Survey

Appendix F: Social Media Toolkit—Employer Survey

Appendix G: Parent and Family Survey Questions

Appendix H: Parent and Family Survey Summary

Appendix I: Child Care Business Owner and Administrator Survey Questions

Appendix J: Child Care Staff Survey Questions

Appendix K: Child Care Business Owner and Administrator Survey Summary

Appendix L: Child Care Staff Survey Summary

Appendix M: Employer Survey Questions

Appendix N: Employer Survey Summary

Appendix O: Social Media Toolkit—Parent and Family Discussions

Appendix P: Parent and Family Discussion Guide

Appendix Q: Child Care Business Owner and Administrator Discussion Guide