

Report to The Vermont Legislature

REPORT ON ACT 76 MONITORING

In Accordance with No. 76, Section 19

Submitted to: House Committee on Human Services
House Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
Senate Committee on Education
House Committee on Ways and Means

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Report Date: January 15, 2024

Legislative Language

No. 76

Sec. 19. § 4605. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE; ACCOUNTABILITY In order to ensure the successful implementation of expanded child care, prekindergarten, and afterschool and summer care, Building Bright Futures shall be responsible for monitoring accountability, supporting stakeholders in collectively defining and measuring success, maximizing stakeholder engagement, and providing technical assistance to build capacity for the Department for Children and Families' Child Development Division and the Agency of Education. Specifically, Building Bright Futures shall:

- (1) ensure accountability through monitoring transitions over time and submitting a report with the results of this work on January 15 of each year to the House Committee on Human Services and to the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare; and
- (2) define and measure success of expanded child care, prekindergarten, and afterschool and summer care related to process, implementation, and outcomes using a continuous quality improvement framework and engage public, private, legislative, and family partners to develop benchmarks pertaining to:
 - (A) equitable access to high-quality child care;
 - (B) equitable access to high-quality prekindergarten;
 - (C) equitable access to high-quality afterschool and summer care;
 - (D) stability of the early child care education workforce; No. 76 Page 32 of 74
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 - (E) workforce capacity and needs of the child care, prekindergarten, afterschool and summer care systems; and
 - (F) the impact of expanded child care, prekindergarten, and afterschool and summer care on a mixed-delivery system.

Executive Summary

Act 76 (H.217) is an act related to child care and early education that became law on June 20, 2023. In accordance with our legislative mandate under Title 33, Chapter 46, and now Act 76 to monitor the early childhood system and support accountability, Building Bright Futures (BBF) has collaboratively developed the following vision and strategy for monitoring Act 76.

Early Childhood System Engagement in Monitoring: BBF executed a six-month partner engagement process to compile feedback from partners. The goal was to develop collective agreement on what success looks like for Act 76, determine what to measure, and develop strong mechanisms to monitor this data over the next 10 years to understand the impact of the investment on children, families, educators, and the early childhood system. We asked partners two key questions:

1. What would success look like across each area of legislative intent?
2. What are the top three things we would need to measure in order to understand the impact across each area of legislative intent?

We held 13 focus group convenings with a total of over 80 partners with content expertise and active engagement. We also fielded a statewide survey that yielded 79 cross sector responses.

Analysis and Review of Data: We analyzed all data and feedback through an iterative thematic coding process resulting in nine final themes and a snapshot of priority indicators. Future qualitative data will be analyzed thematically, and quantitative data will be compiled and reviewed annually.

Accountability and Measuring Success: Partners brainstormed over 150 indicators that could be used as baseline measures of the impact of Act 76 across all areas of legislative intent. Of the over 150 indicators, we only have existing data on approximately one third to support monitoring efforts. The partner engagement process showed us that no singular indicator was sufficient to measure the overall impact. Through thematic analysis and a prioritization process, an indicator snapshot was developed across nine themes: equitable access, experiences of those most impacted, early childhood workforce, affordability, quality, fiscal implications, program stability, economic impact, and child outcomes.

BBF has committed to maintaining a robust tracker of all indicators in partnership with key data stewards. The goal is to compile collected data across the nine themes and make it publicly available in 2024, and work with partners to develop mechanisms to capture data that does not exist.

Implementation Progress: Act 76 (H.217) became law on June 20, 2023; however, the law becomes effective in phases, with policy changes and required reporting occurring between July 2023 and January 2026.

Implementation Successes: While implementation has just gotten underway for many components of the law, initial qualitative data suggests that early educators, child care program directors, and other early childhood partners are overall impressed with the level and clarity of

communication coming from the Child Development Division. This strengthened communication has included things like a continuously updated Implementation Status and Summary chart outlining important milestones in policy and investment changes. At the time of this report, the Readiness Payment program is the most significant of investments and changes implemented from the law. We know from qualitative data that this program has resulted in some notable changes for child care programs, including expanding capacity, upgrading facilities, increasing compensation and benefits for staff, and more. Additionally, providers have noted that the application for the program was remarkably simple.

Challenges and Unintended Consequences: While for the most part, initial feedback suggests the impact of law has been positive, partners have also shared challenges to be aware of when monitoring progress and making future policy decisions. Some of these challenges include unrealistic implementation or report timelines, concerns about the potential burden of a rate cap, and confusion about the current status and upcoming changes expected to the Universal Prekindergarten Education program. As with any significant package of investments and policy changes, a number of necessary technical corrections are also anticipated.

Strengthening Data Systems: In order to successfully monitor the impact of this law over the next 10 years (and beyond), Vermont must collectively prioritize strengthening our data systems.

Priorities Underway: This includes key work that BBF is charged with to collaborate with state agencies to determine data availability and build capacity of agency data stewards; develop or strengthen systems to collect, compile and share key indicators with support from the Data and Evaluation Committee; and compile and make baseline data publicly available. BBF has many strategies through which these efforts are underway, including formalizing data sharing with key data stewards; making data publicly available through VermontKidsData.org; developing strategies to continuously collect needed data; and partnering with national experts.

Priorities Limited by Financial Resources: While significant progress has been made, barriers continue to challenge our ability to strengthen data systems in Vermont, including limited financial resources for building state data stewards' staffing capacity, continued needs for technological infrastructure for the state, and a need for increased support to strengthen and fund additional programmatic data collection.

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Building Bright Futures' Role in Vermont's Early Childhood System

Building Bright Futures (BBF) is Vermont's early childhood public-private partnership charged under Title 33, Chapter 46 and the federal Head Start Act to serve as Vermont's Early Childhood State Advisory Council, the mechanism used to advise the Governor and Legislature on the status of children in the prenatal period through age 8 and their families. State statute charges BBF with maintaining and monitoring the vision and strategic plan for Vermont's early childhood system. BBF's mission is to improve the well-being of children and families in Vermont by using evidence to inform policy and bringing voices together across sectors and within regions to discuss critical challenges and problem-solve.

The Building Bright Futures State Advisory Council (SAC) does not directly support or oppose any specific proposal or bill. BBF's role is to serve as an independent, quasi-governmental entity to convene key stakeholders; elevate the voices of families and communities; monitor the system by identifying and providing high-quality, up-to-date data to inform policy and decision-making; and advise the Governor and Legislature by making recommendations that move the early childhood system toward the four goals identified in Vermont's Early Childhood Action Plan (VECAP).

Early Childhood System Engagement in Monitoring

OVERVIEW

Engagement of the early childhood (EC) system partners was a key priority articulated in Act 76. The purpose of this EC partner engagement was to 1) develop statewide metrics to support accountability and 2) monitor the progress and impact of this law. **BBF executed a EC partner engagement process between July 1, 2023, and December 30, 2023, in which BBF gathered input and feedback to identify the most important measures that would allow BBF and EC partners to monitor the impact of changes to our early childhood system. This input and feedback was utilized by our team to develop strategies and methods to monitor implementation progress and outcomes over time.** BBF consulted experts in several rounds of feedback and analyzed their responses, eventually coming to conclusion on indicators based on collective expertise and knowledge, also known as a Delphi technique. This process supported shared buy-in and accountability for how to move this work forward and how it will progress in the coming years.

INITIAL PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Our partnership engagement strategy took two forms: focus groups and a statewide survey. Collecting feedback about what to measure from key early childhood partners in Vermont across multiple spheres was a critical component to create shared buy-in for monitoring this law.

BBF started by identifying the early childhood partners with knowledge of Vermont's early childhood system and whose input and feedback were critical to defining success and monitoring impact as it relates to Act 76 implementation.

This work was initiated with a small Vermont team that attended the Hunt Institute's Early Childhood Leadership Summit. During a workshop series, each state articulated a goal and started to develop a strategy for the coming year. BBF's Executive Director facilitated this discussion for Vermont. **Vermont's goal was to develop collective agreement on what success looks like for Act 76, determine what to measure, and develop strong mechanisms to monitor this data over the next 10 years, in order to understand the impact of the investment on children, families, early educators, early childhood professionals, and the early childhood system.** This team discussed the vision for defining success and started brainstorming metrics of success using the following prompts:

- What would success look like across each area of legislative intent?
- What are the top three things we would need to measure in order to understand the impact across each area of legislative intent?

We built on this original effort by convening 13 focus groups with a total of over 80 partners with content expertise.

The following entities and partners actively engaged in the focus groups:

Agency Leadership

- Joint group of leaders from the Child Development Division and the Agency of Education
- Vermont Agency of Education Early Education team
- The Child Development Division’s leadership team
- The Child Development Division’s data team

The Building Bright Futures Network Convenings

- The Vermont Early Childhood State Advisory Council
- Several Vermont Early Childhood Action Plan (VECAP) Committees
 - Early Learning and Development Committee
 - Data and Evaluation Committee
 - Families and Communities Committee

Additional partners with content expertise

- The Vermont Business Roundtable Early Childhood Education Task Force
- Public education partners on the State Advisory Council
- Vermont academic and research partners
- Workgroup of partners with relevant content expertise, including
 - Let’s Grow Kids
 - Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children
 - First Children’s Finance
- Vermont Afterschool

Each convening identified a wide range of process and outcome measures that could be used to monitor progress on the implementation of Act 76 and called attention to the most important measures that community members wanted to see prioritized. See the section titled [“Accountability and Measuring Success”](#) for 2024 Priority Indicators.

The curated list of over 150 indicators to monitor Act 76 was reviewed by the Child Development Division’s data team as the primary implementation partner. During this review, BBF and CDD discussed and identified what data is (and is not) available, and discussed and drafted limitations and gaps in existing data.

BBF shared what we had learned from the initial round of partner engagement and asked the SAC to review and prioritize the list of indicators. Feedback was compiled in three ways: 1) small group discussions prior to the full SAC meeting 2) discussion at the October 23 SAC meeting, and 3) through a survey in which we asked meeting attendees to rank the top three metrics that were most important when thinking about monitoring the law’s impact.

The small group and public SAC discussions yielded input about how to best prioritize the robust and somewhat overwhelming list of indicators developed. Each iteration of feedback

informed how we presented the information and engaged partners, and ultimately which indicators landed in the 2024 Act 76 Indicator Snapshot.

BBF then fielded a survey open to the early childhood system that resulted in 79 cross-sector responses. These included partners who had already been actively engaged in focus groups and the SAC meeting along with those not already represented in prior convenings. The survey asked,

- When you think about the impact of Act 76, how would we know that our investments and policy changes were successful?

Thematic Analysis Of Partner Feedback On Indicators

In the initial round of brainstorming, partners articulated over 150 indicators to monitor the law. In December, the BBF team qualitatively analyzed the full list of indicators developed, alongside the partner feedback about which indicators to prioritize. The most common metric requested was the desire to measure whether we had increased equitable access to child care, prekindergarten education, and afterschool.

Qualitative analysis focused on simplifying and aligning the topics, which resulted in nine final themes:

- Equitable access
- Experiences of those most impacted
- Early childhood workforce
- Affordability
- Quality
- Fiscal implications
- Program stability
- Vermont workforce
- Child outcomes

BBF then used the analysis to narrow down the top indicators across each theme, and created a table with the priority indicators across all themes. The indicators were then further broken down by whether the relevant data are currently collected or whether there is currently a data gap. Of note, the discrete parts of the EC system named in the bill—child care, prekindergarten education, and afterschool—have separate data collection systems, and data availability will vary because of these disparate systems.

Accountability and Measuring Success

OVERVIEW

BBF's robust engagement strategy supported a shared accountability approach to identifying key indicators to monitor Act 76. Each phase resulted in a more refined series of indicators and helped bring to light a range of data limitations. This section will provide an overview of the following:

1. Initial brainstorm of indicators
2. 2024 priority indicators
3. Benchmarks and targets
4. Data gaps and limitations

INITIAL BRAINSTORM OF INDICATORS

The table below shows the topic areas of indicators that partners brainstormed that could be used to measure the impact of Act 76 across all areas of legislative intent. Of note, the initial brainstorm included indicators related to monitoring only outcomes of implementation. Outcome indicators may include tracking things like change over time in the number of children receiving CCFAP, the number of children enrolled in prekindergarten education, the percentage of children identified as kindergarten ready, or the number of licensed educators. Separate from the more than 150 quantitative indicators, BBF will also monitor process indicators which may include tracking things like whether or not legislative deadlines are met (through CDD's Implementation and Status Chart), documenting limitations and challenges when deadlines are not met, documenting lessons learned, documenting change over time in partnerships and relationship dynamics, and documenting communication. These are just a few examples of the process and outcome metrics identified as part of the early childhood system engagement process.

Upon finalizing the original brainstorm, BBF met with the Child Development Division's data team, as the primary entity responsible for implementation and data efforts for Act 76, and reviewed the full list to determine the availability (whether data is already collected) of indicators. BBF also reviewed all other efforts currently underway to document data gaps and priorities, through our Data and Evaluation Committee and Data Development Agenda workshop series, to determine the availability of data across topics. **Of the over 150 indicators, we only have existing data on approximately one third to support monitoring efforts.** Of note, some indicators brainstormed will result in numbers and percentages, while others will require qualitative inquiry to understand the experiences of early childhood partners who are responsible for implementing, or EC partners being impacted by, the law. Table 1 shows the original number of indicators brainstormed by theme.

Table 1

Topic Area	Total Number of Indicators Brainstormed by Topic
Equitable Access	48
Experiences of those most impacted <i>*Quantitative and qualitative indicators and topics</i>	17
Early Childhood Workforce	31
Affordability	14
Quality	14
Fiscal Implications	9
Program Stability	5
Economic Impact/Vermont Workforce	5
Child Outcomes	11
Total Metrics/Indicators	154

While there are many indicators and metrics that would be of interest to track at baseline and over time, it is not currently possible to gather, compile, or collect every indicator identified.

The process of engaging early childhood partners allowed the team to continuously refine the most important indicators to monitor and report. After the original indicator brainstorm, our team used the SAC Meeting and a survey to refine indicators into 16 categories based on key questions articulated by partners.

Key Takeaways from October 2023 SAC Meeting
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Although partners would find it appealing to have a single indicator or metric that would indicate success, it’s not possible to distill the impact of this law to one indicator. 2. Attendees also named the importance of measuring at least one indicator that each respective group of partners felt was critical. 3. Finally, the SAC reiterated the importance of simplifying and grouping indicators by key questions outlined in the law—for example, “Does Vermont have equitable access to child care, prekindergarten education, and afterschool for all children?”

This information was then presented to the remaining focus groups and used to capture additional feedback to further refine indicators.

2024 PRIORITY INDICATORS

After the final rounds of focus groups in November and early December 2023, **BBF analyzed all feedback provided through focus groups and surveys across all phases to refine and finalize the Act 76 Indicator Snapshot.**

The [Act 76 Indicator Snapshot](#) represents the most critical indicators across all nine themes EC partners care about most. (See [Appendix A](#).) The indicators are broken down by whether data are collected or considered a data gap. Data categorized as “collected” means that an entity currently collects this indicator, however, it is possible that for some indicators, data have not been fully cleaned or analyzed, the indicator is the best available proxy measure, data is not easily extracted, and/or data is not publicly available. Data categorized as a “data gap” indicates that the indicator 1) may not be compiled at the state level, 2) there is no systematic mechanism in place to collect the data at all, or 3) that the indicator requires partnership and support to develop a stronger definition or innovation. Vermont currently uses proxy, national, and sample data, as well as data that does not capture the full picture to fill in gaps in data.

Additionally, BBF has utilized the results of the early childhood system engagement process to create a comprehensive tracker of the more than 150 indicators that were originally identified. BBF is committed to managing and monitoring these data indicators in partnership with key data stewards. Within this tracker, BBF has the ability to review each indicator by the following criteria: topic area; data collection status; if data is available for analysis, which entity is responsible for data collection and the data source; if the indicator is a priority and appears in the Act 76 Indicator Snapshot; if the indicator is also monitored under the Vermont Integration Project Birth to Five (VIP B-5); and whether there are data notes and limitations. This will be continuously updated based on the availability of data and refined based on continuous partner feedback. All indicators with data collected and available will be added to the VermontKidsData.org data portal and will be searchable by topic later in 2024.

The Act 76 Indicator Snapshot, internal tracker, and data portal are tools BBF has developed to help all EC system partners collectively hold our system and decision-makers accountable based on quantitative and qualitative data. BBF will provide annual opportunities to call attention to, and review, each tool across the network to ensure we focus on continuous quality improvement.

As previously mentioned, BBF is currently working with the Child Development Division, the Agency of Education, and a range of other partners to compile data that is collected, which will be available as soon as possible on VermontKidsData.org. BBF will also work with key VECAP Committees to develop plans for additional data collection (and maximizing existing data collection) efforts to address data that is currently unavailable or significantly limited. More information on developing new data collection mechanisms can be found in the [“Strengthening Data Systems”](#) section.

ESTABLISHING BASELINE & SETTING BENCHMARKS AND TARGETS

BBF is currently finalizing collectively agreed-upon indicators and compiling baseline data. Once we have compiled existing data and made plans to develop mechanisms to capture currently unavailable data, we'll launch a process to review baseline data and develop 3-, 5-, and 10-year benchmarks and a vision for overall targets. When launching the process to establish targets and benchmarks, it will be important to discuss when we would expect to see change, and how much change we should expect to see based on our baseline data, with significant input and discussion from our early childhood partners across areas of expertise and sectors. Due to the variability in data sources and availability of data, progress in this area will vary in scope. For example, progress in some areas may look like understanding the current baseline data for an indicator and establishing appropriate short- and long-term benchmarks with the appropriate partners. At the same time, for data that is currently unavailable, progress may look like providing technical assistance to state agency partners and documenting current and planned efforts to identify barriers to and improve their internal capacity for collecting, recording, analyzing, and reporting on high-priority metrics. As we continuously monitor the process of system transformation that was made possible by Act 76, it is important to recognize that some aspects of the system will transform and improve faster than others.

For example, if one of our key child outcomes is readiness for kindergarten, and in reviewing the 2021 data, 86% of students overall are entering kindergarten ready to learn based on our indicator of choice, how much improvement (what percent increase) would we expect to see overall? Would we expect to see improvements in readiness for specific subgroups because we prioritized equitable access? For indicators that have not been updated in more than five years, we will also work with key partners to determine if there are updates to the current measurement to increase alignment with national best practice.

Partners and decision-makers should expect to be engaged in a process to review existing baseline data; develop the vision for overall targets; develop 3-, 5-, and 10-year benchmarks; and create strategies for increasing the availability of currently unavailable data in 2024.

DATA GAPS AND LIMITATIONS

BBF has supported Vermont in continuously identifying data gaps and limitations through the VECAP Data and Evaluation Committee and a workshop series to build an Early Childhood Data Development Agenda (e.g. what data exists on a topic, gaps and limitations, data needed to inform decision making, questions and considerations, and the lead entity or data steward). These efforts are invaluable to monitoring Act 76, as we have a solid understanding of the gaps and limitations that inhibit the ability to report on the data indicators that Early Childhood system partners care about the most. Based on our work in this area, we have identified the following challenges related to providing high-quality data to inform decision making. Opportunities to strengthen data and monitoring systems are outlined below in the section on [“Strengthening Data Systems.”](#)

Limitation One - Lack of Access to Basic Early Childhood Data: Vermont does not have access to the most basic data needed to be able to measure the impact of Act 76. BBF and our early childhood partners are unable to capture much of the required data to monitor Act 76 due to a lack of standardized and centralized data collection and/or storage. As mentioned above, **only one-third of the identified monitoring indicators use data that is currently collected.** In addition, some data is collected, but not accessible because data have not been fully cleaned or analyzed, the indicator is the best available proxy measure, data is not easily extracted, and/or data is not publicly available. Table 2 below highlights some of the most critical data gaps, but is not a comprehensive list.

Table 2

Topic	Gaps
Enrollment & Utilization	Total number of children enrolled in regulated child care and afterschool programs annually. Available data on enrollment for children receiving CCFAP cannot be disaggregated by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographics (age, race, ethnicity), setting/program type, level of quality, or geography
Availability	The number of children who can be served based on availability of care,* disaggregated by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program schedules (full or part time, summer or school year only), setting/program type, level of quality, or geography
Cost & Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> True cost of care (including operational cost of programs and out-of-pocket costs for families) True demand** based on families’ needs for early childhood education and afterschool by program schedules (full or part time, summer, school year) setting/program type, level of quality, or geography
Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring and turnover rates, Estimated educators needed to meet demand, Annual and hourly wage and benefits by role, program type, credentials, and geography
Unregulated Programs	Data and information from child care, afterschool, and summer programs not regulated by the Child Development Division and/or the Agency of Education

*A licensed slot can serve more than one child

**Current proxy measure is “Likely to need care” based on Census estimate of children with all parents in the labor force

Limitation Two - Limited Ability to Examine Inequities: The majority of collected data are not able to be disaggregated by demographics, setting/program type, level of quality, or geography, which are some of the key ways to examine equitable access. This level of data collection and reporting is critical to understanding the needs of Vermont’s early childhood care and education system and prioritizing resources, especially as it relates to identifying, understanding, and addressing inequities in participating in or accessing the early childhood care

and education system for people of color, children with disabilities, and other marginalized groups in Vermont.

Limitation Three - Data and Technological Infrastructure: Vermont’s aging data infrastructure and inadequate capacity of those supporting data collection, management, and reporting, are increasingly limiting our ability to collect and access meaningful data to monitor Act 76 (and the early childhood system).

Linking: In addition to the lack of ability to disaggregate data, linking children across the programs they access is a huge undertaking and when it is occurring it is in a silo and in an ad-hoc manner based on available funding and urgency rather than a coordinated approach. This lack of the ability to link hinders our ability to inform policy and funding decisions.

Personnel: Consistent underfunding of the personnel required to collect, manage, and report on early childhood system data has resulted in critical collected data that is under- or unutilized. In addition, because the collected data are never reported back to those who are collecting the data, there is concern about the quality of the data because there is no buy-in.

Data Systems: Vermont’s data systems are antiquated and require work-arounds and funding to update and maintain.

Limitation Four - Lack of Alignment in Definitions and Reporting Periods Limits

Comparison: One barrier to data collection is the lack of an agreed upon definition within or across agencies or organizations. For example, there are different definitions of “high-quality,” “educator,” “exclusion,” and “demand,” which limits comparison across data collections. In addition, federal or legislative reporting requirements and capacity for data collection result in data being collected at different times or reported in different years. Early childhood data collections include school year, state fiscal year, and federal fiscal year, some of which are cumulative and some of which are average as well as point-in-time collections.

Limitation Five - Collecting Data: The majority of direct service providers and programs do not receive funding or protected time to support high-quality data collection and reporting. This creates a difficult choice for directors when they (or their staff) are being asked to prioritize both implementation of high-quality early childhood care and education and afterschool programming and rigorous data collection and reporting. For example, all kindergarten teachers are required to complete the Ready for Kindergarten Survey for each child; however, only 83% of students were captured in the 2021–2022 school year. While the general understanding is that required or additional data should be easy to collect and report on, this data is in fact burdensome to collect and report on due to the limitations such as the infrastructure issues noted above, a lack of shared definitions, reporting processes, and a lack of compensation.

Limitation Six - Family Needs and Preferences Aren’t Fully Understood: We do not currently have a rigorous way of understanding families’ needs and preferences for early childhood education, which is not specific to Vermont. We currently use proxy measures and point-in-time estimates to determine the amount of child care the state needs by program schedules (full- or part-time, summer, school year) setting/program type, level of quality, and geography.

Limitation Seven - Disruptions in Data Collection Due to COVID-19 and Measurement

Changes: Recurring data collections were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, while a change in measurement tools is often driven by continuous quality improvement considerations, without coordinated effort across programs and early childhood partners, it complicates interpretation of data, even when available. Third grade assessments are a key example of the way in which these challenges have converged, as one of the key indicators identified for monitoring Act 76 was educational assessments. Impacts on the assessment process from the pandemic mean that Vermont will have a four-year period without data to monitor and assess change over time in math and reading scores due to the following:

- SY 2019-2020 data were not collected
- SY 2020-2021 data are unable to be compared to other years
- SY 2021-2022 data were biased in who was not tested
- SY 2022-2023 data are from the first year of a new assessment

Implementation Progress

CURRENT STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Act 76 (H.217) became law on June 20, 2023; however, the law and its investments became and continue to become effective in phases, with policy changes and required reporting occurring between July 2023 and January 2026.

Between the law's passing in June 2023 and this report's publication in January 2024, the following notable components of Act 76 have been implemented to date:

- The Act 76 Readiness Payment program has committed \$17.3 million in payments to over 750 child care programs to support programs with costs associated with stabilization and expansion.
- Child care programs can no longer charge families that are eligible for CCFAP application or waitlist fees.
- CDD has amended Child Care Community Support Agencies' (CCCSAs') SFY24 contracts to include additional funding to support increased capacity due to soon-to-be-expanded CCFAP eligibility.
- The Prekindergarten Education Implementation Committee has held several meetings and identified and finalized a contract with an external facilitator to manage the project and committee.
- Reimbursement rates are no longer tied to a program's STARS level, and a new base rate was implemented, resulting in a higher CCFAP reimbursement for about 70% of children.
- CCFAP reimbursement rates increased by 35% above the July 2023 rates, and all programs are now reimbursed at CCFAP state rates without comparison to Provider Rate Agreements.

Note: these changes were effective January 1, so we do not yet have qualitative data on their impact.

Some elements of the law, as passed, have been more challenging to implement. Two notable components were scheduled to be completed or made effective but are still in development:

- CCFAP reimbursement is supposed to be based on enrollment (vs. the current system that is based on attendance) as of January 1, 2024. CDD has developed a proposed definition of "enrollment" and recommendations to streamline attendance categories and has received feedback from CCFAP Eligibility Specialists, the Early Learning, Development Committee, and the Office of Racial Equity. CDD has indicated that their next steps are to determine a timeline for related updates to CDDIS and to prepare for related policy and administrative rulemaking processes. In the meantime, CDD has suggested that if programs are finding the current allowable absences challenging, they should reach out to their Eligibility Specialist for support.
- A report from the AOE on current data related to the Universal Prekindergarten program was due to the Joint Fiscal Office on August 1, 2023. AOE has indicated they are working on compiling the data that is available to submit to the JFO.

6-MONTH SUCCESSES

Despite being in the early stages of implementation, since the law passed, there have been a multitude of notable successes identified by partners and the field.

Communication and administrative shifts: Partners noted a strong, immediate shift by the Administration, namely by the Child Development Division, to support strategic planning, timely communications, and implementation of required activities. More specifically, partners noted the following:

- **Communication** - A new [CDD Act 76 webpage](#) was established to centralize all information related to CDD's role under Act 76, including a [Summary and Status Report Table](#) that is being used to track responsibilities, timelines, and resources. This document outlines the elements of Act 76 that require action by the Department for Children and Families (DCF), primarily the Child Development Division (CDD), with the intention of keeping partners informed about plans related to its implementation. More targeted communications about specific changes have been and will continue to be provided to early childhood education and afterschool programs, families that access child care, and other partners. In addition, CDD has held a series of webinars and issued consistent communications to the field to inform partners about the law's status, articulate what's coming next, and answer questions and provide clarity. As the series of webinars has progressed, the field has reflected that the information shared is stronger and clearer.
- **Simplified applications** - Based on feedback solicited from the field, CDD developed a simplified application process for programs and providers to apply for and access funding to support stabilization, workforce, and expansion efforts through Act 76's Readiness Payment program. At the December 14 VECAP Early Learning and Development (ELD) Committee meeting, child care providers from around the state came ready to speak about their individual experiences applying for, receiving, and using Act 76 Readiness payments distributed by CDD. Directors from multiple child care programs noted the administrative ease of filling out and receiving the Readiness payments.
- **Additional staff to support implementation efforts** - Act 76 added 11 new permanent positions to DCF to support implementation and administration of the law and its changes to CCFAP. All but one of those positions at DCF have now been filled, and staff have been onboarded between November 2023 and January 2024. While onboarding continues, this additional capacity will support the team's efforts related to improving technology, policy and procedure, program integrity, communications, and licensing functions.

Quote from the field

"I'm on the board at [child care center]. We serve approximately 60 children from birth–PreK. We have our monthly meeting this week and I'm SO EXCITED to talk about how the approved childcare bill is going to positively impact us. We are currently doing our annual budgeting and review of our past year, and as is the case most years, we just about break even. This has inhibited our ability to pay off debt and to increase wages. Now we can confidently pay off that debt and not worry about being in the red each year going forward! We can also afford to pay our staff more! We recently raised our starting pay to \$15/hr. but could not afford to do more. We have been struggling to keep entry-level staff because of this. Now we can pay them competitive rates and keep staff on longer, thus increasing the quality of care and the availability of spots. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to helping Vermont's children, families, early childhood educators, childcare programs, and communities!!" – Child Care Center Board Member

Impacts on Child Care Programs: The goal from this first wave of new funding through the Readiness Payment program is to improve the overall quality of programs as well as help them prepare for expansion and more families coming into the system next year. Child care providers from around the state have reflected the following positive impacts:

- Many registered homes are talking about becoming licensed, which includes adding an assistant and expanding their capacity.
- Many programs are actively looking to hire staff to open additional classrooms and programs.
- Home and center-based programs have begun to receive new funding from Act 76 to help expand capacity, upgrade facilities, and increase compensation and support for staff through the Readiness Payment program.
 - Importantly, these funds can be used on facilities upgrades and renovations, which many other funding sources available to child care programs prohibit.
- Multiple programs increased PTO days for child care staff.
- Multiple programs provided supplemental payments to staff to support retention.
- Multiple programs increased staff hourly wages.
- Multiple programs gave out staff appreciation bonuses.
- Multiple programs spent funds on critical facility expenses.
- Programs mentioned spending funds on activities for children, specialized equipment for children, training opportunities for staff and wellness programs, and activities for staff.

Quotes from the field

“Once the [Readiness Payment program] application became available, I think I probably filled it within minutes of getting it. And it was super easy, so that aspect of it was really, really great.” - Alyston Grzyb, Director, Bennington Early Childhood Center

“We gave a 6% increase to all of our staff in the form of a bonus. When the rates increase by 35%, the 6% increase will be rolled into their regular salaries.” - Sonja Raymond, Owner, Apple Tree Learning Centers

“When I looked at how I was going to spend [the Readiness Payment funding] I looked at the three points of the program: infrastructure, staffing, and children, and wanted to touch on all of them. For infrastructure, I purchased a generator, so that I can stay open when the power is down, which in the Northeast Kingdom is important.” - Chris Nelson, Family Child Care Owner and Operator, Mountain View Child Care

6-MONTH CHALLENGES & UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

While for the most part, the impacts of the law to date have been positive in nature based on initial qualitative data, some feedback shared by partners includes challenges to be aware of when monitoring progress and making future policy decisions.

Unrealistic timelines: A number of the challenges noted by field and state partners have to do with effective dates or required reporting due dates being unrealistic in nature, some of which could have been foreseeable.

- **AOE’s Prekindergarten Data Report:** As noted in testimony to the Education Committees prior to Act 76 passing, the August 1, 2023, for the Section 2c report due to the Joint Fiscal Office was an unrealistic timeline. This component of the law has been challenging in that the Agency of Education didn’t have capacity to compile all of the data

available on pre-K within one month of the law’s passage, nor is all of the data outlined in 2c currently available for reasons expanded on in the gaps and limitations sections.

- **CCFAP Payment Changes:** Another expected change in Act 76 with a challenging effective date was the transition from attendance based CCFAP payments to enrollment-based ones. This transition has been challenging and CDD has indicated that additional time is needed to fully implement necessary research, stakeholder input, policy development, IT infrastructure changes, and associated rulemaking, especially since there are many other timely CCFAP changes to implement. CDD has communicated that programs and families can be granted exceptions if they run into limitations with the current attendance limits.

Change management and communication:

- **Rate Caps:** Act 76 establishes a cap on the rates that programs are permitted to charge. This year, based on the code outlined in the law, the cap was 7.2%. While CDD communicated and provided guidance through a memo on this topic, many programs remain confused and/or have expressed significant concerns about the change.
 - Child care programs and directors are confused about when rate caps are effective and what it means for them. Many programs have indicated that they artificially limited what they were charging families during the pandemic, and that the timing of this new requirement may cause undue financial harm on their ability to properly budget.
 - Many programs have also indicated that the rate caps are at odds with the Readiness Payment program and other components of Act 76 which encourage programs to invest in staff. For instance, programs have suggested that adding new benefits, such as health insurance, while possible now, may unintentionally become unsustainable in future years depending on the rate cap. Added elements of quality and staff support, such as health insurance, may rise in cost more than is allowable or accounted for by the law.
- **The Current Status of Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK):** Act 76’s components related to the Universal Prekindergarten Education program are challenging to communicate to partners. While legislative intent is to provide full-day, full-school year UPK to all 4-year olds in the 2025-2026 school year, there were no changes made to UPK implementation this year. The Universal Prekindergarten Implementation Committee will make recommendations to the legislature on how to expand prekindergarten education based on legislative intent. One example of the confusion this has caused is that school boards are seeing sections 3 and 3a of Act 76, which removes negative pupil weighting for prekindergarten students contingent on several provisions, as confirmation that they should move forward with building budgets based on this upcoming change. While long-term budgeting and projections are critical for our school districts, it is important that state partners identify ways to communicate that these changes are contingent upon future work, and that the Agency of Education and other partners are still working to identify how best to determine appropriate pupil weighting for prekindergarten education.
- **Technical Corrections:** As with any significant policy change and package of state investments, we expect there to be a number of necessary “technical corrections” to Act 76 that arise in the coming months and years. These changes are typically limited in scope and correct small errors in definitions or implementation descriptions. Making these corrections will be important in ensuring that state partners implementing the law are able to do so in a way that is aligned with the law’s intent.

Ongoing BBF Partner Engagement In Monitoring

It is important to understand the experiences of early childhood partners implementing the law, and those impacted by the law (families, providers, members of the workforce). These experiences cannot always be defined by a number. Due to the complexity of programmatic and policy changes occurring over the course of multiple years, there are many mechanisms by which BBF will monitor implementation progress in partnership with CDD, AOE, and a national team of experts from Child Trends:

- Focus groups with CDD and AOE leadership and implementation teams: BBF will continue meeting quarterly with the teams implementing the law to discuss the successes, challenges, and opportunities in implementing all components of the law.
- CDD's Status and Summary Chart: The Child Development Division has developed a status and summary chart that is periodically updated and publicly available on their website for the public to review the current status of implementation, timelines, current and updated resources, and a preview of what's coming next.
- Focus groups/interviews and surveys with families and providers: Building Bright Futures and the Child Development Division, in partnership with Child Trends, have just been awarded a 4-year grant from the Federal Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) to examine the impact of Act 76, specifically changes in child care subsidy policy on families, providers, and the workforce. The research questions are organized and prioritized by impacted group are as follows:
 - Families
 - Are families aware of the new policies?
 - How have child and family participation rates in CCFAP changed following policy changes? For which children and families?
 - Are families paying less? Which families? Eligible/enrolled in the program for longer periods of time?
 - Are families using higher-rated programs?
 - What are families' needs and preferences and how are they changing?
 - What are the unintended consequences for families and providers?
 - Providers & Programs
 - Are providers aware of new policies?
 - How have provider participation rates in CCFAP changed? For which providers?
 - How have payment policy changes increased revenue for providers?
 - What is the change in the number of higher-rated programs participating in CCFAP?
 - How have policy changes helped providers meet families' needs?
 - Workforce
 - How have policy changes impacted the supply of workforce?
 - How have policy changes impacted compensation for the ECE workforce?
 - How have policy changes supported the workforce in creating more high-quality programs?

- How have the policy changes helped the workforce meet families' needs in inclusive ways?
- Periodic statewide surveys: In coordination with CDD, AOE, Child Trends, and partners across the BBF Network, we will issue periodic surveys to gain insight into the perceived major successes, challenges, and opportunities resulting from Act 76.
- VECAP Committee Meetings: Over the course of each year, many VECAP Committees will hold Act 76-specific meetings to discuss major successes, challenges, and opportunities resulting from Act 76. These meetings will be recorded and compiled on the Act 76 page of VermontKidsData.org.
- Engaging in the Act 76 Prekindergarten Education Implementation Committee: BBF will also continuously participate in, and monitor progress on prekindergarten education, through the Prekindergarten Education Implementation Committee.
- BBF Early Childhood Emerging Priorities Tracker: BBF actively compiles issues and priorities elevated through all meetings, calls with families or early childhood providers, or raised at our network of Regional Councils and VECAP committee meetings. This tool supports our ability to track emerging questions, issues, and feedback from the Early Childhood field and communicate with agency leaders. This will be qualitatively reviewed for challenges and opportunities related to Act 76.

Strengthening Data Systems

As outlined in the limitations section, lack of high-quality data across the EC system limits knowledge of outcomes and services and undermines informed decision-making at the state and local levels. In order to successfully monitor the impact of this law over the next 10 years (and beyond), and in an effort to understand the impact of the investment on children, families, educators, and the early childhood system, Vermont must collectively prioritize strengthening our data systems. This will involve strengthening our ability to collect, analyze, share, and use data, which includes using a continuous quality improvement lens to monitor data practices and develop strategies to link data across sectors and build data repositories. The following priorities will help us move in that direction recognizing that it is not a linear process.

- Building capacity of agency data stewards
- Strengthening the state’s technological infrastructure
- Formalizing data sharing across key data stewards
- Compiling and making baseline data publicly available
- Continuously reviewing existing data, data gaps, and limitations
- Developing strategies and standardized mechanism to continuously collect data needed (mention child trends here)
- Supporting data literacy, buy-in, and incentivizing programmatic data collection statewide
- Partnership with other states re: best practices

PRIORITIES UNDERWAY

Formalizing data sharing across key data stewards

In the absence of a unified data system within state government, developing strong data sharing processes support our ability to centralize early childhood data at BBF through VermontKidsData.org. Related to Act 76, partnerships for data sharing are underway between BBF, the Child Development Division, and the Agency of Education. We will also work closely with the Department of Labor, Vermont Afterschool, Let’s Grow Kids, First Children’s Finance, and the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children, among many other data stewards.

Compiling and making baseline data publicly available

All available Act 76 accountability and monitoring efforts will be centralized and publicly available at VermontKidsData.org. Once we have finalized the review of currently collected and available data, BBF will compile it, and make it available through the Act 76 dashboard within the larger data portal. On an ongoing basis, BBF will partner with data stewards to review data collection efforts to ensure available data is published as soon as possible. The goal is to have quantitative data baseline measures reported and updated at least annually for all data that are currently available. The Act 76 Indicator Snapshot and data dashboard will also link to other

monitoring efforts by the Child Development Division and other partners. BBF is committed to making data publicly available as an important part of the feedback loop. It is integral to engaging community and state partners as active and equitable partners in the work of monitoring the early childhood system.

In addition, BBF will provide an annual update at an Early Childhood State Advisory Council Meeting and produce a point in time capture of the available indicators and qualitative data. Qualitative data may also be shared via blogs and data briefs, along with in our annual legislative report.

Separate from the publishing of priority indicators, it is important to note that agencies responsible for Act 76 implementation will be reporting out on their implementation efforts and impacts. BBF plans to partner with our key data stewards to support their reports and provide technical assistance and support when requested. While it is important that these individual entities provide information about their work, it is clear that BBF's role in collecting, centralizing, publishing, and analyzing data from various parts of the early childhood system is integral for having comprehensive and informed understanding of the impacts of Act 76 and its implementation and how that connects to other efforts happening in our state.

Developing strategies and standardized mechanism to continuously collect data needed

It is clear that data is not currently available for many of the priority indicators. For many indicators, it may mean we do not currently have a continuous mechanism in place or entity responsible for data collection.

Now that the Act 76 Indicator Snapshot is complete, BBF will work with the Child Development Division, the Agency of Education, and a range of data partners through the Data and Evaluation Committee to develop a strategy for data collection (and maximizing existing data collection) to address data that is currently unavailable or significantly limited. Strategies and suggestions for strengthening and developing these areas of need will be gathered by this expert community of data stewards, many of whom are our key data stewards for the Act 76 monitoring. We will prioritize utilizing existing data collection efforts to reduce survey fatigue and duplication.

One of the most important limitations documented, that was also named as the top priority for partners statewide, was being able to review data about enrollment, access, and capacity of child care, pre-K, and afterschool broken down by geography, demographics, quality, etc. This level of data collection is critical to understanding needs and prioritizing resources.

To address some of the gaps in child care data, BBF and CDD have just initiated a partnership with a national team of experts at Child Trends through a four-year federal grant to develop mechanisms to capture data specific to child care subsidy policy. This effort will significantly increase our capacity to address data gaps and limitations in this space.

It is possible that Vermont may need to continue partnering with other entities to secure funding for ongoing efforts.

National partnerships

While Vermont is unique and leading the country in many areas, there is much we can learn from engaging in discussions with national experts. We have initiated this work through a webinar series called Early Childhood Grand Rounds. Grand Rounds was created to bring experts from across the country (alongside Vermont experts) into a virtual webinar/discussion space to do a deeper dive into data challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned.

BBF also represents Vermont in the Hunt Institute's Early Childhood Leadership Consortium, which brings together leaders from all states to discuss challenges and opportunities for the sector. Through the Hunt sessions and other national conferences, there continues to be a focus on efforts to promote high-quality data collection, understand priority indicators and limitations in early childhood, use data to inform decision-making, and share best practices.

BBF is uniquely positioned to align this work with other ongoing EC data initiatives in the state of Vermont. For example, BBF is currently building a data development agenda, creating a EC data dashboard, and evaluating the state's implementation of the PDG grant (VIP B-5). Through our work monitoring Act 76, BBF is able to integrate the data collection and reporting requirements of the law with other ongoing efforts at the state level.

PRIORITIES LIMITED BY FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Building capacity of agency data stewards

There is limited (and overstretched) capacity of data teams across Agencies, Departments, and Divisions, supporting early childhood data efforts. Agency personnel capacity and expertise are needed to execute high quality data collection, management, and reporting. As we move forward with enhancing our monitoring efforts, sustained funding for dedicated staffing will be an important consideration.

Strengthening the state's technological infrastructure

Vermont's data systems are antiquated and require work-arounds and funding to update and maintain. Current systems do not provide a full picture of child and family outcomes and how the area of services supports better outcomes. Prioritizing the development and execution of existing information systems is critical to this effort.

Supporting data literacy, buy-in, and incentivizing programmatic data collection statewide

High quality data collection at the direct service level is time consuming and challenging to execute on top of existing responsibilities. Prioritizing sustained funding to support the collection and reporting of high-quality data to compensate direct service providers (e.g. child care directors and workers, educators/LEAs, etc.) will be an important consideration moving forward. In addition, providing training and technical assistance to support quality collection, analysis, and reporting will improve our collective monitoring efforts. Finally, as we initiate new and ongoing efforts, we must partner with impacted communities throughout the data cycle to ensure that marginalized communities, in particular, have ownership of their experiences and are empowered to advocate for and make decisions on behalf of themselves.

Appendix A: Act 76 Indicator Snapshot

This is a high-level snapshot of the most important data elements to monitor the impact of Act 76 implementation. Data categorized as “collected” means that an entity currently collects this indicator; however, it is possible that for some indicators, data have not been fully cleaned or analyzed, that the indicator is the best available proxy measure, that data is not easily extracted, and/or that data is not publicly available. Data categorized as a “data gap” indicates that 1) the indicator may not be compiled at the state level, 2) there is no systematic mechanism in place to collect the data at all, or 3) the indicator requires partnership and support to develop a stronger definition or innovation. Vermont currently uses proxy, national, and sample data, as well as data that does not capture the full picture, to fill in gaps in accessible data.

Equitable Access	
Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of programs: Number of regulated early childhood education programs and regulated afterschool programs by UPK status, STAR rating, county, and AHS District ● Programs opening and closing: Total number of regulated early childhood education programs opening and closing annually by program type, UPK status, STAR rating, county, and AHS District ● Licensed and desired capacity: The number of children a program is licenced to serve at one time and the number of children the program would like to to serve within that capacity ● Specialized child care: Number of regulated programs with specialized child care status by county and AHS District ● Special education: Number of children 0-5 receiving services/education on an IFSP/One Plan, IEP, 504 ● UPK enrollment: Total number of children enrolled in UPK by program type ● CCFAP utilization: Average number of children accessing Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) annually
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enrollment/utilization: Total number of children enrolled in regulated child care and afterschool programs annually disaggregated by demographics, setting/program type, level of quality, and geographic region ● Availability: Traditional hours of care and non-traditional hours of care (program schedules) disaggregated by demographics, setting/program type, level of quality, and geographic region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of children who can be served based on availability of care ● Demand: True demand (based on families’ needs) for early childhood education by program and geographic region (Current proxy measure = “Likely to need care” is based on census estimate of children with all parents in the labor force) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accounting for changes based on the time of year (summer care) ● Unregulated programs: Child care, afterschool, and summer programs not regulated by the Child Development Division and/or the Agency of Education
Experiences of Those Most Impacted	
Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communication of CCFAP policy changes: Providers’ and Parents’ Awareness of Policy Changes to Vermont’s Child Care Financial Assistance Program (Point in Time March/April 2023 and planned annually for 2024–2026 from Child Trends) ● Program preferences: Parents’ perceptions and preferences for early care and learning (NORC, 2019)
Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience with policy changes

Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Families having care coverage that meets their needs and preferences ○ Provider satisfaction with policy changes and state support ○ Unintended consequences of policy changes
Early Childhood Workforce	
Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Early childhood educators: Total number of early childhood educators working in early childhood education settings ● Afterschool professionals: Total number of afterschool professionals working in regulated settings ● Licensed teachers: Number of AOE licensed educators with an early childhood (ECE or ECSE) endorsement who are working in early childhood settings ● Provisional educator licenses: Number of provisional AOE educator licenses with an early childhood (ECE and ECSE) endorsement ● Qualifications: Qualifications and credentials of the workforce by role, program type, and geography ● Wages: Median hourly wage for full-time workers in Vermont’s early childhood education settings
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Turnover: Early childhood educator, licensed teacher, and afterschool professional turnover ● Workforce demand: Estimated number of early childhood educators, licensed teachers, and afterschool professionals needed to meet estimated demand by role and associated credential ● Benefits: Percent of the workforce with health insurance, retirement, professional development, paid time off ● Compensation: Annual and hourly wage by role, program type, credentials, and geography
Affordability	
Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programs accepting CCFAP: Number of programs (early childhood education and afterschool programs) accepting CCFAP ● Family share: Average and median CCFAP family share ● Living wage: Household income needed in Vermont to afford basic needs, including housing, food, child care, and transportation ● Ineligible families: Percent of families who do not meet the income criteria for CCFAP (by geography)
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Income spending on child care: Percentage of family income going toward early childhood education and/or afterschool by CCFAP eligibility ● Total cost of care: Percentage of the total cost of early childhood education and/or afterschool covered by CCFAP
Quality	
Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4 and 5 STARS Programs: Number of programs with 4 and 5 STARS ● Enrollment in 4 and 5 STARS Programs: Number of children receiving CCFAP enrolled in programs with 4 and 5-STARs ● Provisional educator licenses: Number of provisional AOE educator licenses with an early childhood (ECE and ECSE) endorsement
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cultural competence: Percentage of programs with culturally competent instruction and care ● Wraparound services: Percentage of programs providing family support services (wraparound services) similar to those provided in Head Start Programs

Fiscal Implications

Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cost of Act 76: Total statewide Act 76 expenditure for CCFAP, Readiness Payments, Incentive Payments
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cost of UPK: Current total statewide UPK program expenditure

Program stability

Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CCFAP rates: CCFAP reimbursement rates by program type ● Readiness Payments: Total amount of Readiness Payments made to ECE programs ● Programs Opening and Closing: Total number of regulated early childhood education programs opening and closing annually by program type, UPK status, STARS rating, county, and AHS District
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administrative Burden: Reduced administrative burden (# of hours/month associated with CCFAP administration for ECE programs) ● Turnover: Early childhood educator, licensed teacher, and afterschool professional turnover ● Readiness Payments: Program experiences with and uses of Readiness Payments

Vermont Workforce

Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unemployment rate ● Job openings: Total annual job openings in Vermont ● Workforce participation: Workforce participation by age and gender ● Relocation benefits: Number of Vermont relocation benefits distributed by geography
Data Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work choices: What factors are impacting families' decisions around who in the household is or is not working?

Child Outcomes

Collected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exclusionary Discipline ● Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) ● Test Scores and Assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3rd Grade Math and Reading (SBAC and Cognition) ○ Ready 4 Kindergarten (R4K!S) ○ Teaching Strategies Gold (social emotional) ○ Children Healthy and Ready to learn (National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH))
Data Gaps	<p><i>*There are many limitations to the outcomes listed above related to standardized data collection, COVID, and changes in collection tools.</i></p>