

# Vermont Education: Cradle to Career

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# Overview

- Pre-K and Early Childhood Education
- Afterschool and Extended Learning
- Career Technical Education
- Flexible Pathways and College and Career Readiness

# Early Childhood Education

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# Vermont's Universal Prekindergarten

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## Publicly Funded

- A minimum of ten (10) hours of publicly-funded prekindergarten education 35 weeks per year

## Inclusive

- 3, 4, and 5 year-olds not enrolled in kindergarten

## Portable

- Parent chooses where to enroll
- Funding follows the child

## "Mixed Delivery"

- Public Schools
- Community-Based Private and Nonprofit Programs
  - Child care centers
  - Head Starts
  - Family child care homes

# Publicly-funded UPK under Act 166 of 2014

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- Jointly administered by AOE Early Education and AHS DCF Child Development Division
- Funded by resident school districts (part of a school district's budget)
- Children enrolled in approved public school or community-based private prekindergarten education programs are school district's ADM count.
- Average Daily Membership (ADM) is .46 for at least 10 hours/week for at least 35 weeks
- School districts pay community-based private prekindergarten education programs for enrolled children
  - SY 2024-2025 UPK Tuition Rate per child is \$3,884.
  - Costs updated on an index each year

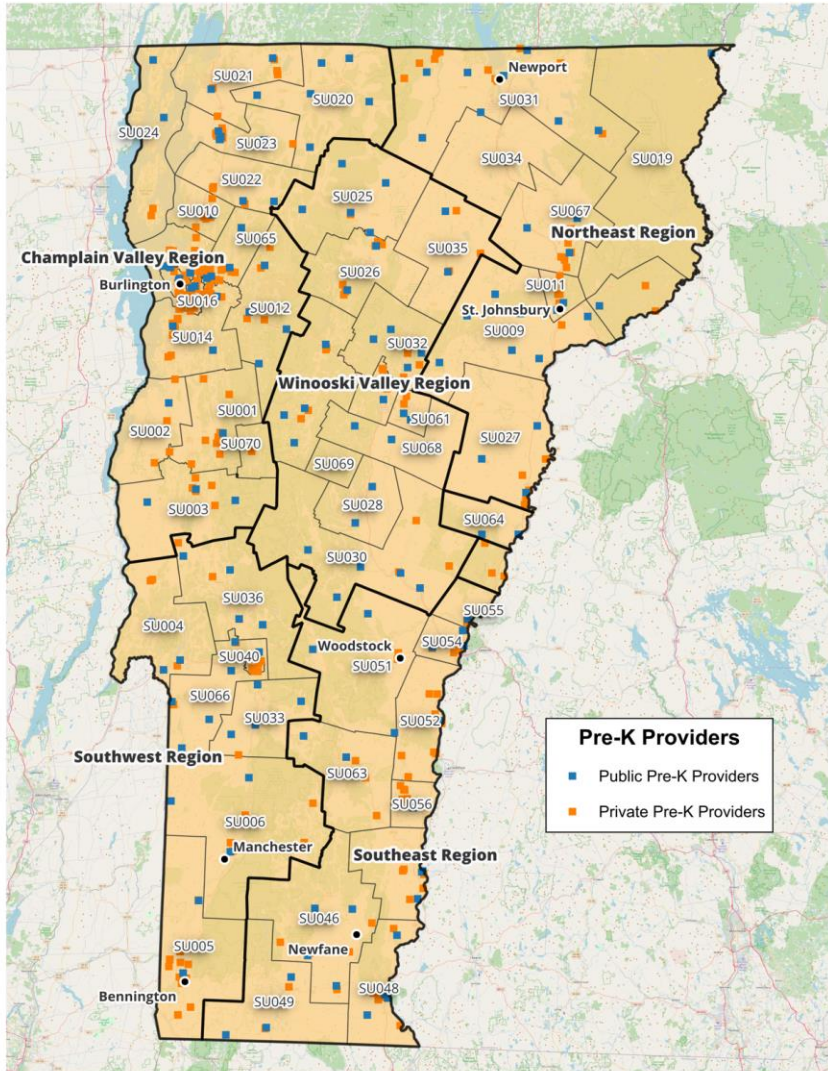
# Early Childhood Special Education and Inclusion in UPK

- The federal Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act places a strong emphasis on educating children with disabilities in settings with children without disabilities with needed supports and aids in regular education settings
- A regular education setting can be a private or public UPK programs, Head Start, family childcare, licensed childcare settings, e.g.).
- A regular education setting also needs to have 50% or more children without disabilities

— 34 CFR §§300.114–300.120, 34 CFR §300.133



## Pre-K Providers by SU



SUNION	SU_name
SU001	Mt.Abraham
SU002	Addison NW
SU003	Addison Central
SU004	Slate Valley
SU005	SW Vermont
SU006	Bennington-Rutland
SU007	Colchester
SU009	Caledonia Central
SU010	Milton Town
SU011	St.Johnsbury
SU012	Mt.Mansfield
SU014	Champlain Valley
SU015	Burlington
SU016	S Burlington
SU017	Winooski
SU019	Essex N
SU020	Franklin NE
SU021	Missisquoi Valley
SU022	Franklin W
SU023	Maple Run
SU024	Grand Isle
SU025	Lamoille N
SU026	Lamoille S
SU027	Orange E
SU028	Orange SW
SU030	White River Valley
SU031	North Country
SU032	Washington Central
SU033	Mill River
SU034	Orleans Central
SU035	Orleans SW
SU036	Rutland NE
SU040	Rutland City
SU042	Harwood
SU046	Windham Central
SU047	Windham NE
SU048	Windham SE
SU049	Windham SW
SU051	Mountain Views
SU052	Windsor SE
SU054	Hartford
SU055	SAU #70
SU056	Springfield SD
SU061	Barre
SU063	Two Rivers
SU064	Rivendell Interstate
SU065	Essex Westford
SU066	Greater Rutland County
SU067	Kingdom East
SU068	Central Vermont
SU069	Montpelier Roxbury

## PreK Providers Serving Publicly-funded PreK Students, 2024

Vermont families choose to enroll their children in a variety of PreK programs.

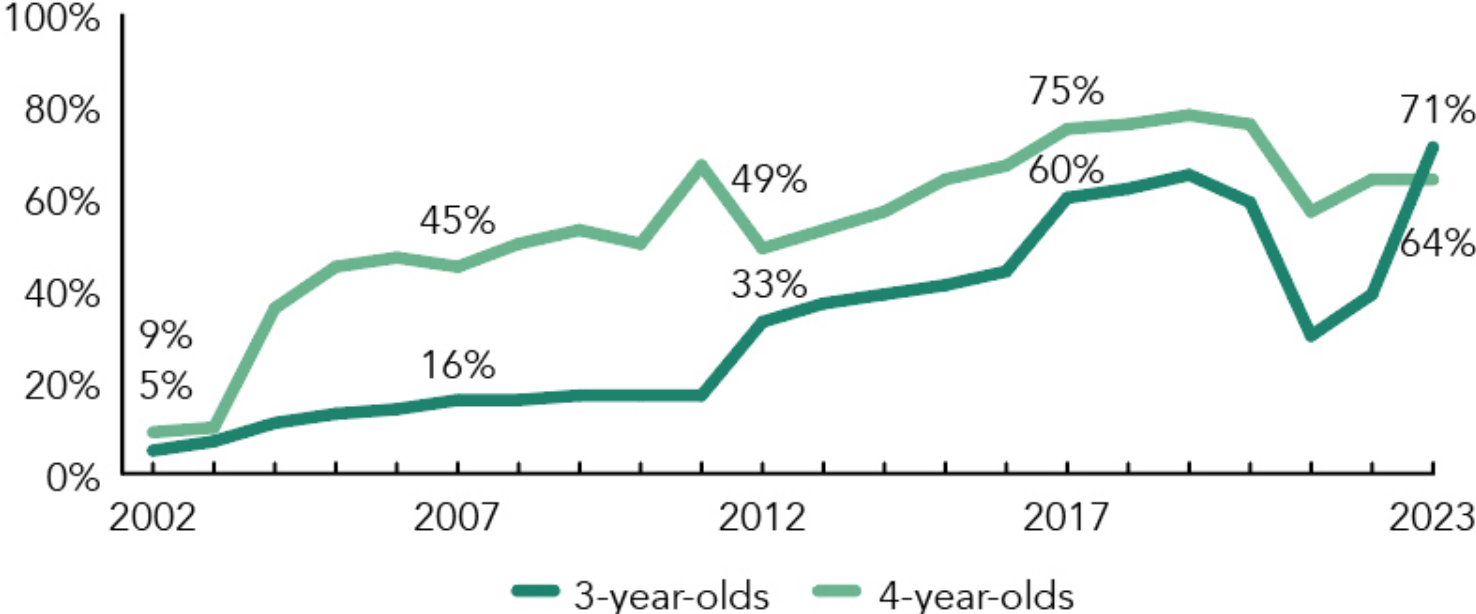
Factors include:

- Availability
- Hours and Schedules
- Location
- Cost
- Need for afterschool and summer care
- Family characteristics
- Special Education services

# Prekindergarten Uptake Trends

Nationwide in 22/23, Vermont had the 2nd highest enrollment of prekindergarten education for 3-year-olds in the nation at 71% of age-eligible children and the 6th highest uptake for 4-year-olds at 64%.

### PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



Source: Vermont | National Institute for Early Education Research



# PreK Committee formed by Act 76 of 2023

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- Charged committee with the following key changes to the existing UPK program:
  - Full school day, full-school year
  - One year of eligibility (4-year-olds and 5-year-olds not yet enrolled in kindergarten, transition 3yo to child care)
  - School district assigned responsibility of providing space for all eligible children
  - School district choice as whether to partner with community-based private programs or other public schools

# PreK Committee Recommendations

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The Committee was unable to vote on a full suite of recommendations, but had agreement on four foundational recommendations:

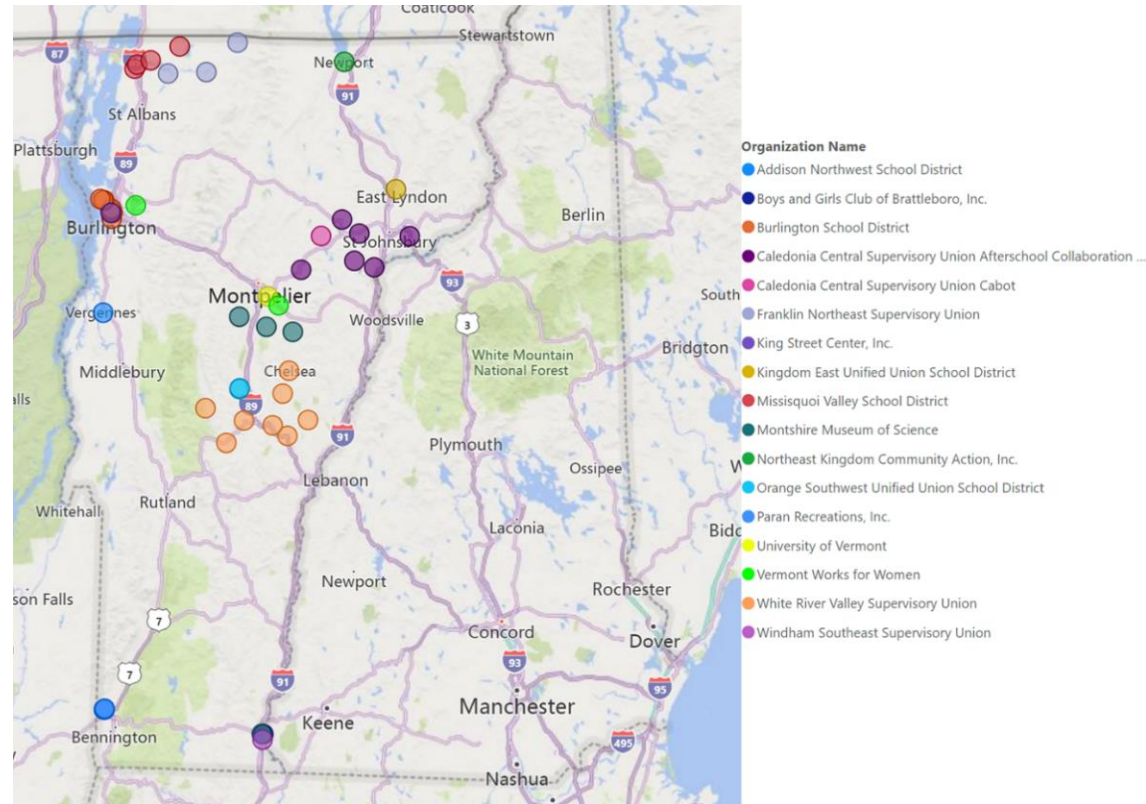
- Maintain the 10-hour/week (350 hour/year) benefit for both three-year-olds and four-year-olds.
- Expand prekindergarten, including hours and services, for four-year olds.
- Commission an analysis of Vermont's pupil weight for prekindergarten.
- Review methodology for establishing prekindergarten payments to non-school-based programs and propose updates.

# **Afterschool and Extended Learning**

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# Act 78 – Existing State Afterschool Awards

- 17 awards to 16 unique entities
- \$3.7 Million committed for three-year awards
- Sites located in 11 counties
- 73 named partner organizations across all awards
- New or expanded services for ~4,000 young Vermonters



# Act 78 – Available Grants

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## Capacity Building Grant

- Direct grants to providers
- Extremely small scope awards to facilitate readiness building

## Program/Center Track Grants

- Direct grants to providers
- Supports development and expansion of programming
- Multiple tracks to allow flexibility
- Open to public, private, and non-profit organizations

## Regional Provider Grant

- Larger grants to organizations with regional footprint
- Awards support delivery of program at multiple partner sites

## Technical Support Grant

- Statewide award
- Supports development/delivery of afterschool professional training
- Supports data collection/analysis
- Supports community of practice

# Act 78 - FY25 Competitions

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## Program Track

- Closed 12/18/24
- 27 applications received
  - 14 SU/SDs
  - 13 Community Based Organizations
- new or expanded services for 7,000 youth across 11 counties
- Total amount requested across all applications: \$9.2M

## Center Track

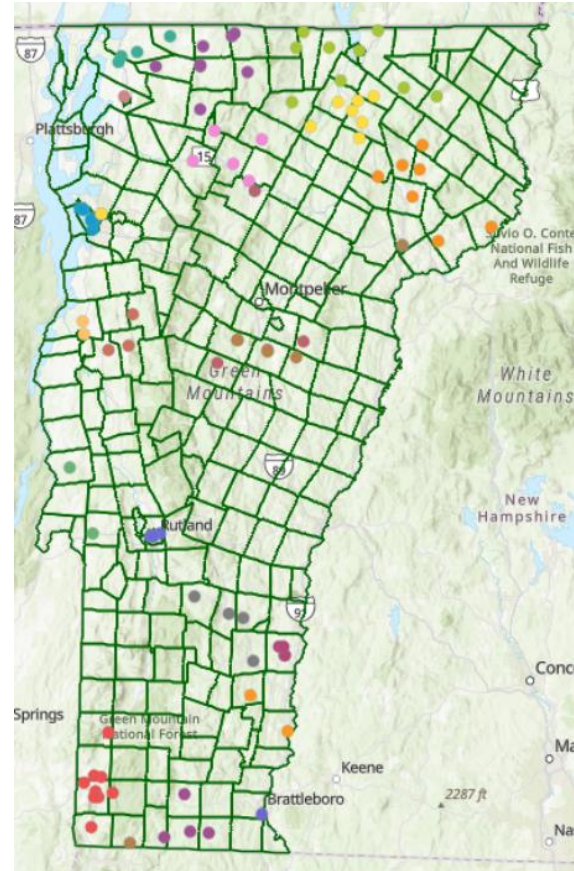
- Closes 1/29/25
- 22 applications are currently in progress
  - 12 SU/SDs
  - 10 Community Based Organizations
- Applications represent 12 counties

## Technical Support Grant

- To be built/launched in Q3 of FY 25

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

- State-managed, federal funding for multi-site afterschool centers
- Awards are competitive and granted on five-year cycles
- 99 sites run by 24 awardees
- Serving 11,000 young Vermonters
  - Including 5,000 young people attending >90 hours of program per year
- In FY 25 this system was supported by:
  - \$6M in federal funds
  - \$7.5M in other braided funds (e.g., state or federal grants, philanthropy, or local funds)



# Licensed Child Care for School-age Children

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DCF Child Development Division invests ~\$27.5M in afterschool and summer care each year.

## Regulated Child Care

- 13,000 spots for children 13 and under
- 686 regulated programs serving school-age children

## • Child Care Financial Assistance

- 3,000 school-age children; growing with Act 76
- \$25M paid on behalf of school-age children for afterschool, summer, and out-of-school time care
- Specialized Child Care for vulnerable children

## • Quality, Capacity, Workforce Development

- ~\$2.5M for STARS, Room for Me, Northern Lights @CCV, and Vermont Afterschool



# Community Schools

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## Existing Awardees

- CS model is at work in 28 schools across 5 SU/SDs
- Work is being maintained by blending of state funds, other grants, and local funds

## New Awardees

- 6 new SU/SDs were added in FY 25
- Priority work is hiring Community School Coordinators and completion of needs and assets mapping
- Braided funding plan between AOE and UVM partners

## Catamount Community Schools Collaborative

- AOE-UVM-practitioner partnership model
  - Providing implementation support, data collections and analysis, and building assessment tools
  - Manages Congressional Direct Spending Request and Leahy Institute for Rural Partnership award
- [Legislative Report: Act 67 Community Schools](#)

# Career Technical Education

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# CTE by the Numbers

During the 2022 – 2023 school year:

- **5,262** students participated in CTE
- Of those, **3,016** were program concentrators. A concentrator is a student who completes at least one full semester in a full day program or at least one full year in a half day program.
- **96.77%** of CTE concentrators graduated from high school in 4 years.

# CTE Program Quality and Student Success

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Of the CTE concentrators who graduated from high school in June 2023:

- **58.31%** earned one or more postsecondary industry recognized credentials.
- **39.88%** earned college credits in their CTE program or center.
- **44.49%** participated in work-based learning, including unpaid career work experience or paid cooperative employment/internship.
- **96.36%** were enrolled in college, pursuing advanced training, employed, or in the military in October 2023
  - 44% employed; 47% enrolled in postsecondary education/college; 7% pursuing advanced training, including registered apprenticeships; and 2% in the military.

# CTE Funding and Governance

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- AOE awaiting APA Consulting's recommendations for changes to CTE funding and governance. As context:
  - Vermont currently has 17 regional CTE centers and one comprehensive high school (Canaan) that provide state approved CTE programs. They operate under 4 different governance models. Two of the CTE centers are independent schools that provide public CTE.
  - This is unduly complicated – and contributes to inefficiencies and inequities.
  - Funding currently follows the student, leading to competition between sending districts and CTE students, in some cases limiting student access to CTE programs.

- Aligning CTE program content to high school graduation requirements, improving consistency and equity.
- Redesigning transportation to CTE to support full access to students. This will include redefining/rethinking CTE service regions to expand student access to programming.
- Potentially creating new CTE delivery models, including virtual CTE courses and programs.
- Having more clearly defined CTE program scope and sequence requirements, ensuring statewide consistency in CTE program content and assessment.

## **Strengthening Vermont's CTE System: Future Needs**

- Ensuring CTE center staffing models support academic integration and rigor, as currently only 44% of CTE concentrators are proficient in English and 53% are proficient in Math. Current staffing to support these efforts is inconsistent from region to region.
- Expanding middle school career exploration and 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade Pre Tech courses.
- Ensuring systems support CTE teacher recruitment, hiring, mentoring, and retention.
- Addressing existing challenges with how CTE teacher industry experience is recognized in pay schedules.
- Strengthening and streamlining the CTE teacher licensure process.
- Increasing AOE capacity to support CTE centers and address gaps in performance and other education quality concerns.

## **Strengthening Vermont's CTE System: Future Needs**

# College and Career Readiness

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# Flexible Pathways

- Flexible Pathways Initiative [created by Act 77 of 2013 /16 V.S.A. § 941.](#)
- Encourages and supports school districts to develop and expand high-quality educational experiences.
- Provides opportunities for Vermont students to demonstrate **college and career readiness** by taking college level courses through the state's **Dual Enrollment** and **Early College** programs.
- Students in a CTE program can also take college level courses through the **Fast Forward** program.

# Dual Enrollment

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- Includes college courses offered on a campus of an accredited postsecondary institution and college courses offered by an accredited postsecondary institution on the campus of a secondary school (can include online courses).
  - Offers eligible students the opportunity to experience college-level classes, take coursework not offered at their schools, and explore possible pathways to their postsecondary futures.
  - Students who successfully complete a Dual Enrollment course earn colleges credits while simultaneously meeting secondary school proficiencies.

# Dual Enrollment Outcomes

- The Dual Enrollment program had 100% participation among Vermont SU/SDs.
  - There was at least one student taking one or more dual enrollment courses from every Vermont public high school in those districts.
- 2,353 unique students participated in the Dual Enrollment program in SY23-24.
  - Students in 2,935 courses at nine different colleges in VT.
- In SY23-24, Dual Enrollment program very nearly met parity among students identifying as black, indigenous, or students of color, at 12.67% - compared to the overall statewide percentage of 12.76% for junior and senior students.

# Early College

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Vermont's Early College Program (ECP) allows eligible 12th grade students to enroll full-time for one academic year at one of the participating and approved higher education institutions.

ECP as a flexible pathway to meeting graduation requirements, simultaneously serves as a student's senior year of high school and one academic year of college, tuition free.

- Students who successfully complete an ECP earn colleges credits while simultaneously meeting secondary school proficiencies.
- Students have the option of completing ECP at three different VT institutions of higher learning: Community College of Vermont, Vermont State University, or Norwich University.
- There were 410 students who participated in the Early College program in FY24; this was the highest total in one year since the program's inception until the 451 students who began the program in FY25.

# Overall Participation in Post-Secondary Programs

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- Fast Forward: Federally funded program that affords eligible students in CTE programs with the opportunity to earn college credit for concurrent enrollment classes offered at their regional CTE center.
  - In FY24, 782 juniors and seniors in at least one college level course with CCV and VTSU through the Fast Forward program.
- In FY24, **26.47%** of all publicly funded juniors and seniors in VT participated in college level coursework in the Dual Enrollment, Early College, and Fast Forward programs,
  - 3,490 students out of 13,184 statewide

# Key Takeaways

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# Key Considerations

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- How can Vermont reduce the inequities in per pupil spending to ensure students with similar needs receive similar resources?
- How can we align funding and resources with student need to drive student outcomes and success?
- How can we create more meaningful opportunities for students and support a Whole Child approach to reduce absenteeism, and improve student engagement?
- How can we support effective and cost effective delivery of special education services in all districts and schools?
- How do we ensure that every student has a highly-qualified teacher in a safe, healthy and welcoming school environment?

# Education Transformation: How Do We Get There?

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Transform education funding



Modernize Governance and Scale



Improve Support and Guardrails for School Boards and Districts



Improve Education Quality and Equity



Tax Relief to Stabilize the System



# Questions?

