

Annual Report on  
**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION GRANTS**  
FISCAL YEAR 2021



Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs are an important investment in Ohio’s youngest learners. Ohio has worked to increase the availability of high-quality early learning programs for preschool children by providing the Early Childhood Education grants. Funded programs deliver high-quality, comprehensive learning environments focused on healthy development and intellectual, social and emotional success. Research is clear: children who participate in high-quality early learning programs begin school better prepared for educational success.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

### FY 21 Programs

Number of state-funded grantees: 353

Number of site locations: 759

Total state funding: \$71,480,000

State-funded per-child amount: \$4,000

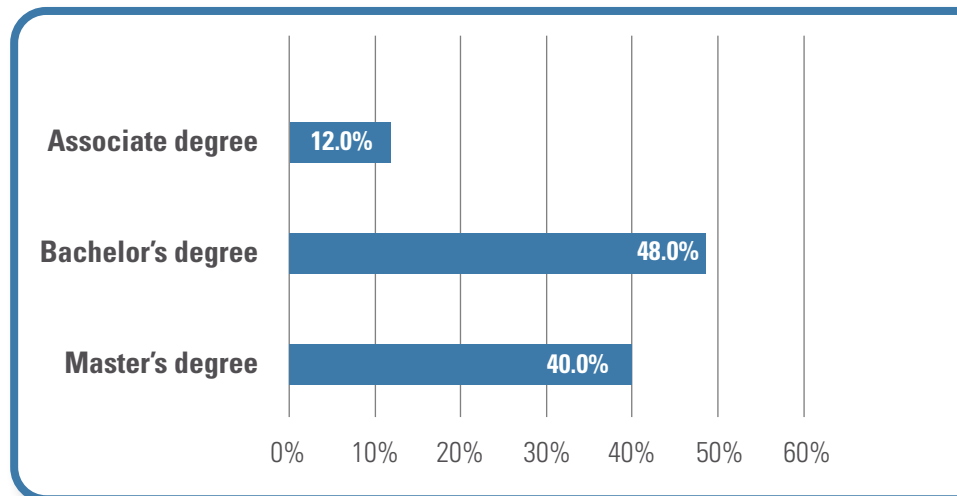
Total number of children funded: 17,870

In Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021), 353 Early Childhood Education Grant-funded programs served 15,052 children because of the \$71,480,000 investment in state funding. These grantees included public school districts, educational service centers, joint vocational schools, community schools, chartered nonpublic schools and community-based child care providers who earned 3-, 4- or 5-star ratings in Ohio’s quality rating system, Step Up To Quality

## TEACHER CREDENTIALS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Education programs must meet the teacher credential requirements in early childhood education or a field approved by the Ohio Department of Education. Teachers in Early Childhood Education programs are required to complete 20 hours of professional development every two years to increase their knowledge of current best practices to support children’s learning.

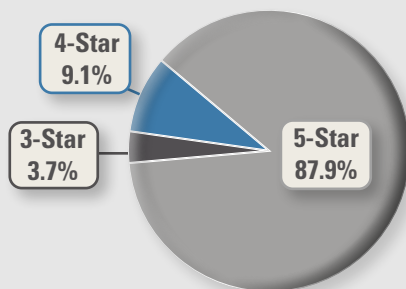
The chart illustrates the highest degrees achieved by lead teachers in all Early Childhood Education programs.



\*Programs participating in Step Up To Quality can meet teacher credential requirements by using Ohio’s Career Pathways in lieu of having associate or bachelor’s degrees. The Career Pathways model recognizes a professional’s years of experience, ongoing professional development and credentials in assigning a Career Pathways level. Level 3 and above are recognized in highly-rated programs.

## STEP UP TO QUALITY

Step Up To Quality is Ohio's tiered quality rating and improvement system for early learning and development programs. The purpose of the five-star system is to improve the quality of early learning and development programs by serving as a roadmap for continuous improvement efforts. All Early Childhood Education programs must participate in Step Up To Quality and meet high-quality program standards. The chart below illustrates the percentage of high-quality ratings for those programs currently participating in Step Up To Quality.



To view the program standards and learn more about Step Up To Quality, please visit [earlychildhoodohio.org](http://earlychildhoodohio.org).

## CHILD ASSESSMENTS

The experiences and opportunities afforded to children in the early years affect the knowledge, skills and dispositions they acquire before entering kindergarten. Children enter preschool at varying levels of development and with different early learning experiences. The Department requires Early Childhood Education programs to assess children to determine where they are in terms of growth and development toward kindergarten readiness. Children are assessed twice per year using Ohio's Early Learning Assessment.

## Sharing Success Stories

Please note that in order to maintain confidentiality, the names of children and family members have been changed.

Anne Stockard supervises several Early Childhood Education Grant locations for Toledo Public Schools. During virtual instruction as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, she spent a lot of time delivering supplies to students'



families, including food, clothing and educational materials to ensure all students were set up to be as successful as possible. She truly understands the importance of early childhood education, and there was no stopping her in making sure her families had what they needed! Kudos to Anne and the entire early childhood team at Toledo Public Schools for their efforts during this pandemic. Many of our families reached out to share how impressed they were

with all of the efforts to ensure their students had the supplies they needed while we were in virtual instruction. One family shared these photos of their daughter when she received her curriculum bag. She recognized immediately that these must have come from her teacher and couldn't wait to get dig in. Mom stated she doesn't know what she would have done without the help during the past school year and how thankful she was that the team kept her daughter engaged. When it was time to return to the classroom, she said her daughter was more excited than ever to go to school!

I want to start off by saying how greatly I appreciate the amount of trust, care, stability and reliability I got from the staff at Sara Beegle Daycare. I was updated almost daily with pictures and growth and support ideas to help my son in different ways. It felt like a big extended family there! The learning started in the toddler room, then progressed into the early childhood education prekindergarten room where he began to learn the structure of a school setting. He learned everything from colors, size, shapes, alphabet, left and right, days of the week and the weather to different feelings and how to deal with them correctly, patience, sharing, raising his hand and waiting his turn. Each day he had a new experience to tell me about. He has had a great time so far in kindergarten thanks to the staff at Sara Beegle. He knew what to expect and was very excited to meet new people and learn new things as a school-ager. I wholeheartedly believe this program has given my son the confidence and skills to be the successful student he is now. I'm forever thankful to all the staff.

Sincerely,

A Thankful Kindergarten Mom

The Early Learning Assessment is a comprehensive formative assessment used to assess children 36-72 months of age and aligns to Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards. The assessment includes 32 Learning Progressions in the areas of social foundations, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and physical well-being and motor development. Programs are required to report on 10 of these Learning Progressions.

Ohio's Early Learning Assessment aligns to Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, allowing the relationship between scores assigned in the Early Learning Assessment during preschool and kindergarten to be known across time.

## FY 21 Profile of Children Served

Total Children Served: **15,052**

Children served by age (as of Dec. 1, 2020):

3-year-olds: **2,431**

4-year-olds: **12,621**

Children who are English learners served: **246**

Children with disabilities served: **2,338**

## PROGRAM MONITORING AND SUPPORT

In FY21, the Ohio Department of Education provided support to early childhood education programs to help them assure they met requirements. A webinar offered grantees information on program updates and clarification on policy implementation. Using a risk-assessment matrix, Department staff members identified grantees to take part in program monitoring and conducted 61 desk reviews. They also provided individualized technical assistance to programs through conference calls and making sure program staffs understood requirements and sharing suggestions and best practices related to system and program policy development.

## 3-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN SERVED

In FY21, early childhood education programs that could not fill their allocated slots with 4-year-old children by Oct. 1, 2020, could submit applications to serve 3-year-old children. The Department approved 160 programs to serve up to 2,612 3-year-old children. To receive approval, programs had to explain their recruitment efforts, including working with other local early learning programs, and describe strategies used to locate hard-to-reach families with eligible 4-year-old children.



This annual report meets the requirements of [Section 265.20 of House Bill 110](#), which says:

*"The Department shall provide an annual report to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate and post the report to the Department's web site, regarding early childhood education programs operated under this section and the early learning program standards."*