



# Family Child Care Involvement in Prekindergarten Expansion:

Legislative Report



Produced by the Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland  
September 2020

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This report was produced by the Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland on behalf of the Division of Early Childhood Development, Maryland State Department of Education.

September 2020

### Principal Author

Donna Fowler, *Content and Implementation Partnerships Manager, Teaching Strategies, LLC*

### Contributors

Bill Hudson, *Interim Executive Director, Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland*

Jody Lambert, *Family Child Care Provider*

Debbie Moore, *Attorney, Retired*

Erin Moxley, *Family Child Care Provider*

Sonia Pruneda-Hernandez, *Director of Early Childhood Initiatives, Montgomery College*

The Family Child Care Alliance of Maryland is building a collaborative network of national, state, and local partners working to advance the field of family child care for the benefit of providers, children, families, local communities, and the State of Maryland.

<https://www.familychildcarealliance.org/>

For more information, please contact Bill Hudson at [bill.hudson@fcc-associates.com](mailto:bill.hudson@fcc-associates.com).

## The National State of Family Child Care

Family Child Care (FCC) is professional care that happens in a family child care provider's home for one or more children of mixed age for a fee. The small businesses can be designated as a large or small FCC home depending on the number of children in care and, depending on the state, may or may not need to be regulated or licensed to provide services.

Family child care is the most common form of child care in the US. Families choose this option for a variety of reasons: FCC is generally more affordable than centered-based care; parents like the like environment; parents can choose a FCC home that shares their culture and language; by choosing FCC, parents can keep siblings together; FCC homes can be geographically closer, particularly in rural areas; and finally, FCC homes often provide the flexibility needed by shift and weekend workers

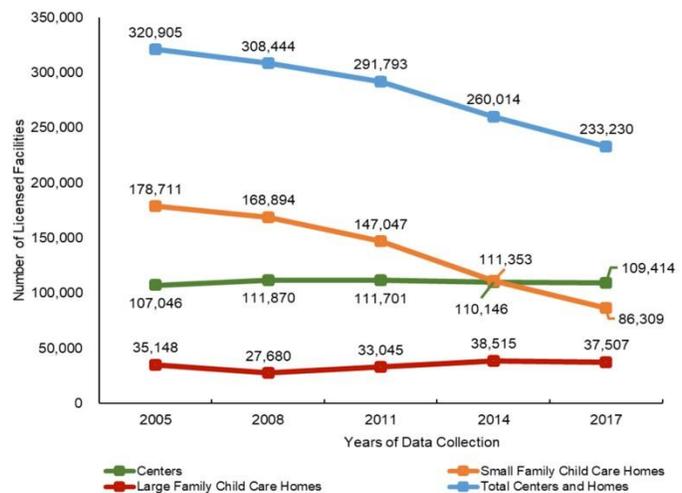
According to a now outdated 2016 report, *Characteristics of Home-based Providers of Early Care and Education* by the National Survey of Early Care and Education, approximately 118,000 FCCP providers care for approximately 750,000 children birth to five-years-old who are not yet in kindergarten. Data from ACF also tells us that of those 750,000 children, approximately 31% are children in the preschool/prekindergarten age range.

Even though large FCC homes have seen a slight increase, small FCC homes have decreased by 48% nationwide over the past 15 years, which means that families have few choices in care for their children, according to the *National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance* (2020).

In some localities, a decrease in FCC homes will result in:

- A lack of parental choice that fits a family's language, culture, backgrounds, and values.
- Hardships on families who need non-traditional care such as night and/or weekend.
- An increase in child care deserts, especially for rural communities where FCC may be the only option.
- A dramatic decrease in the availability of care for infants since few centers offer infant care, and FCC is the most predominant choice by families for infant and toddler care.

Figure 1. Number of Licensed Child Care Facilities, 2005–2017



Source: National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance. (2020). Analysis of responses to the National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA) Child Care Licensing Programs and Policies Surveys from the 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2017 Child Care Licensing Studies. Unpublished data.

- States meeting their Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) requirements to "permit parents to choose from a variety of child care categories, including...(ii) Family child care; and (iii) In-home child care.

One reason that many FCC homes are closing is because the business model is no longer viable. FCC providers care for smaller numbers of children; thereby, open slots can be devastating to the business's bottom line, causing the FCC providers to close. One reason for the declining enrollment for some FCC providers is they are losing preschool/prekindergarten age children to state-funded prekindergarten initiatives. According to a National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) report, *The State of Preschool 2019*, states have increased their prekindergarten slots by 34% and preschool slots by 6%. Since 2002, States have doubled their preschool/prekindergarten slots, and unfortunately, most states do not include FCC in their preschool/prekindergarten community-based options. A report from a California Resource and Referral Agency confirmed that an increase in State-funded prekindergarten is a contributing factor to the decline in (*The Decline in the Number of Family Child Care Homes*, <https://ccrc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=45e2842b1e0649f4863b3fe9468c58dc>).

There are many reasons why family child care is declining, and there is no one solution. What we do know is that when FCC providers are left out of statewide initiatives for quality enhancements and service delivery, it only exacerbates the problem.

Since NIEER's first survey in 2002, state-funded pre-K has changed markedly, though the year-to-year change has been slow and uneven. States have added more than 930,000 seats, the vast majority of these for 4-year-olds. Enrollment of 4-year-olds has expanded by 20 percentage points to where 34% are enrolled in a publicly funded prekindergarten. Enrollment of 3-year-olds increased only three percentage points to six percent. More states fund preschool than in 2002. State financial investments in preschool have more than doubled since 2002 when adjusted for inflation. Quality standards have generally improved (2019 NIEER Report).

(continued on next page)

The State of Family Child Care in Maryland

The current Maryland data showing where high-quality Family Child Care providers can help boost kindergarten readiness:

Table 1: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Results, PreK Enrollment, and FCC Providers by Jurisdiction (2019-2020)

County	Kindergarten readiness	PreK enrollment	FCC providers 08/2019	Level 4 FCC providers	Level 5 FCC providers	NAFCC accredited FCC providers
Allegany	50%	72%	50	0	0	14
Anne Arundel	46%	34%	453	2	7	9
Baltimore City	37%	(UPK) 1%	484	0	5	11
Baltimore Co	48%	43%	708	0	14	3
Calvert	51%	35%	97	0	3	2
Caroline	55%	72%	64	0	2	0
Carroll	59%	21%	120	0	0	0
Cecil	44%	48%	73	0	0	3
Charles	44%	41%	191	0	3	0
Dorchester	44%	70%	48	0	0	2
Frederick	57%	35%	308	0	3	3
Garrett	53%	(UPK) 66%	14	1	1	1
Harford	45%	30%	251	0	1	7
Howard	57%	28%	305	1	4	0
Kent	54%	(UPK) 83%	17	0	0	56
Montgomery	53%	34%	833	2	41	10
Prince George's	35%	45%	749	0	3	1
Queen Anne's	48%	45%	71	0	1	1
St. Mary's	45%	63%	164	0	0	1
Somerset	63%	(UPK) 93%	23	0	1	0
Talbot	43%	81%	44	0	0	2
Washington	44%	52%	151	0	3	1
Wicomico	43%	53%	96	0	1	1
Worcester	64%	81%	25	0	1	14

Regulated FCC providers in Maryland have decreased by 57% since 1996. In 2019, Maryland Family Network reported that in November 1996, there were a total of 12,514 FCC homes. That number fell to 4,946 as of October 5, 2020. In their most recent report, *Child Care Demographics 2020*, Maryland Family Network predicts that number to drop to 3418 in the next 4 years (Maryland Family Network, 2020).

The Maryland Family Network made Family Child Care one of its top 10 priorities in the 2019/2020 legislative session (2019). They are encouraging the advocacy of policies that recruit and expand small and large family child care homes. The *Child Care Demographics 2020* report states that families named "proximity to home, school, and work" as a major factor in choosing care for their child (Maryland Family Network, 2020).

To be successful in recruiting and retaining family child care providers, small business owners must see a career pathway that is financially sustainable and gives them the supports they

need to provide quality care and education for the families they serve.

This can be accomplished by opening up the opportunities for family child care providers to participate in state and local early childhood education service opportunities such as Head Start, Early Head Start, and community-based prekindergarten.

### **What are the policies of other states or localities that partner with family child care providers to deliver prekindergarten?**

There is little data on FCC providers participating in states' community-based prekindergarten initiatives, and it is very complex. Most states are combining the data for community-based child care centers and family child care providers. According to *The State of Prekindergarten Report* (NIEER, 2019), sixteen states reported that FCC providers were eligible to receive funding directly from the state. An additional nine states offered funding through subcontracting agencies such as local education administrations, non-profit organizations, and resource and referral agencies.

Despite the eligibility in seventeen states currently, FCC providers are only participating in prekindergarten initiatives in nine states or localities. In the nine states or localities, FCC participation is very low or declining. FCC providers may find it very hard meeting the prekindergarten certified teacher qualifications.

Studies, such as the *Kindergarten readiness for low-income and ethnically diverse children attending publicly funded preschool programs in Miami* (2016) and *Year 4 Report: Seattle Preschool Program Evaluation* (2019) that focus on the success of state-funded preschool initiatives often lump FCC in with all cohorts of community-based prekindergarten groups or do not use family child care evaluation-based tools to measure success. This inhibits our understanding of the efficacy specific to FCC homes and other forms of community-based prekindergarten.

The *Kindergarten readiness for low-income and ethnically diverse children attending publicly funded preschool programs in Miami* (2016) report specifically compared how children fared by type of preschool but does not give us a clear picture. Specifically, a study by Ansari and Winsler found that "children who attend family child care have been found to exhibit larger disparities in school readiness throughout preschool than children enrolled in center-based and pre-k (2016). However, the study left many questions unanswered, such as:

1. What were the demographics of the teachers/educators/FCC providers who were included in the study? (age, race, language, socio-economic status, etc.)
2. What were the educational levels and years of experience of the teachers/educators/FCC providers?
3. What level of mentoring and coaching did each teacher/educator/FCC providers receive?
4. What level of access did teachers/educators/FCC providers have to training, materials and equipment, research-based curriculum, planning, and preparation time?

The *Year 4 Report: Seattle Preschool Program Evaluation* (2019) report by NIEER measured child care center success by using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECCERS-3) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) for preschool. FCC provider success was measured using CLASS for preschool, CLASS for Infants, and CLASS for Toddlers, none of which were designed to assess quality in a mixed-age group. The Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (FCCERS-R) was not used. Using evaluation tools that were not designed to measure quality, specifically in family child care, can lead to incorrect and, most importantly, inequitable data.

In order to summarize how well children fare across different types of prekindergarten settings, we must first look to ensure that equitable supports and evaluations are in place.

Below is a chart of the states and localities that currently have FCC providers participating in community-based preschool and/or prekindergarten.

**Table 2. States and Localities with FCC Providers Participating in Community-Based Preschool and/or Prekindergarten**

State	Provider Qualifications	Teacher certification required	Is there an alternative to teacher certification	Coaching and mentoring included	Quality evaluations	Ratio
Arkansas <sup>1</sup>  7 hours per day for 178 days	Licensed  BA in ECE or Child Development  FCCRS-R Level 5  Mandatory business training	No	Yes  Practicum can be done in a child care center, but not a family child care home as the evaluation of skills is based on NAEYC Associate Standards	N/A	Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (FCCERS-R)	1:10 3- and 4-year-olds  No more than 16 children total  Reimbursed: \$4860 Per child
California -CSPP <sup>2</sup>  3- to 4-hours per day for 175- to 185 days per year	Licensed CDA or California Child Development  Associate Teacher Permit (12 hours of semester work in ECE plus 50 hours of experience in an instructional capacity) or 105 clock hours every 5-years to maintain.	No	No	N/A	Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (FCCERS-R)	1:8 3- and 4-year-olds  Reimbursed: \$48.28 per day per child for full-day or \$29.90 per day per child for part-time

1. Arkansas: Only a handful of FCC providers participate in the program as it has been flat-funded since it's pilot.  
2. California: Less than 1% of FCC providers are participating in Head Start.

Table 2. States and Localities with FCC Providers Participating in Community-Based Preschool and/or Prekindergarten (cont.)

State	Provider Qualifications	Teacher certification required	Is there an alternative to teacher certification	Coaching and mentoring included	Quality evaluations	Ratio
<b>Florida</b>  Funded through Early Learning Coalitions  3-hours per day for 5-days per week	Licensed  CDA or equivalent  Plus, Florida Child Care Professional Credential  10 clock hours per year	No	No	Determined locally	N/A	1:11  4-year-olds  \$2437 per child for academic year
<b>Massachusetts</b>  Full day or part day	Minimum of Level 3 in state QRIS  9 college credits (or more) in ECE  20 clock hours per year.  FCCERS-R average of 3.5 or higher  CLASS 3.5 or higher in Positive Classroom Climate  Accredited	No	No	Determined locally	Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R)  CLASS  BAS  Arnett-Caregiver Interaction Scale	1:6  3- and 4-year-olds  Reimbursement not to exceed \$20,000 per year
<b>New York</b> 3K program  Only participate if part of a family child care network	CDA  175 clock hours every 5-years	No	No	Yes, from certified teachers on staff.	Determined locally	1:6  3-year-olds  Reimbursement varies

1. Florida: All Florida 4-year-olds can attend any setting for prekindergarten as long as the setting/provider meets the minimum qualifications. In the 2017/2018 school year there were 55 FCCP's who participated servicing 319 children.
2. Massachusetts: FY2021 UPK grants suspended.
3. New York. In July of 2019, the DOE revised its RFP process and the city outlined a vision for FCC Networks where they can apply on FCC providers' behalf for PreK-3 without being attached to a child care center. The 3K budget has been cut for the 2020/2021 school year.

Table 2. States and Localities with FCC Providers Participating in Community-Based Preschool and/or Prekindergarten(cont.)

State	Provider Qualifications	Teacher certification required	Is there an alternative to teacher certification	Coaching and mentoring included	Quality evaluations	Ratio
<b>Ohio<sup>1</sup></b> Preschool Promise	AA with 9 college credits or more in ECE  20 clock hours every 2-years	No	No	Yes	Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R)  Or The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool Fidelity Tool	1:10  3- and 4-year-olds  Reimbursement \$4000 per child
<b>Oregon</b> Preschool Promise	CDA  Level 4- or 5- QRIS,  20 clock hours per year	No	No	No	CLASS	1:10  3- and 4-year-olds  No reimbursement rates listed
<b>Pennsylvania</b>  PHLpreK <sup>2</sup>	Licensed  15 clock hours per year	No	No	Yes	The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool Fidelity Tool	1:10  3- and 4-year-olds  No reimbursement rates listed
<b>Vermont<sup>3</sup></b>  10 hours per week for 35-weeks	BA  Level 3 in QRIS  15 clock hours per year	Yes	Yes	No	Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R)  CLASS	1:10  3- and 4-year-olds  Reimbursement is \$3445 per child

1. Ohio: Only 2 FCC providers participated in Dayton, Ohio's Preschool Promise Pre-k.
2. Pennsylvania: Program just finished its first year. Thirty FCC providers participated in the first year. No data is available yet on the success of the program.
3. Vermont: Note: During 2016/2017, 46 FCC providers participated. Participation has dropped each year in all program types. This is most likely due to the fact that the state stopped paying for the certified teacher and left it to the FCC provider and other programs to pay out of pocket. Champlain College, Vermont has begun a Pathways to Teacher certification that allows providers to serve their student teaching in their own program.

Table 2. States and Localities with FCC Providers Participating in Community-Based Preschool and/or Prekindergarten (cont.)

State	Provider Qualifications	Teacher certification required	Is there an alternative to teacher certification	Coaching and mentoring included	Quality evaluations	Ratio
Washington (Seattle Preschool Program)	AA  20 clock hours per year	No	No	Yes	Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R)  CLASS	1:10  3- and 4-year-olds  Reimbursement is \$8018 for part-day and \$10,916 for full-day

**How can access to FCC consortiums, community hubs, and shared-services benefit FCC providers?**

Even though FCC is one of the most prevalent child care arrangements in the United States, research and evidence-based approaches to supporting FCC provider is limited. State and local organizations struggle to understand how to meet the needs of and increase the quality of such an ethnically, culturally, socio-economically, and educationally diverse group of educators.

According to Bromer & Korfmacher, "implementing quality improvement initiatives for home-based child care (HBCC) at the state and community levels has been elusive because the research base to inform policy and program directions is limited" (2017).

States and localities are looking to family child care networks as one option to support and improve services to providers with the larger outcome of improving the quality of services for children and families.

Family child care networks currently operate in a variety of organizations such as resource and referral agencies, family child care associations, Head Start or Early Head Start Partnerships, for-profit and non-profit organizations, school districts, shared serviced alliances, and family child care unions. To date, we do not know how many family child care networks or similar organizations exist at the state and or local level.

The 2019 study *Mapping the Family Child Care Network Landscape* (2019) cast a wide net to better understand who was identified as a family child care network, who they served, and what services they offered. Out of the 505 possible organizations that they identified, only 275 organizations responded. After elimination, the study looked at 177 programs. The authors realized that this may not give us complete information on the numbers of organizations supporting family child care networks in some capacity.

The study did find that of the 177 programs that were surveyed, 48% had been providing services for more than 20 years, 46% served at the local level, 45% were urban, 29% suburban,

and 27% were rural. Of those, 42% served 1-50 programs (center and family child care), 15% served 51- 100 programs, 31% served 101-500 programs, 3% served 501-999 programs, and 9% served more than 1000 programs. Of the 177 programs, 61% served both child care centers, and FCC and 39% served only FCC providers. 94% of the programs were publicly funded at the federal, state, or local level (Bromer & Porter, 2019).

Family child care networks are developed by state and local entities for a variety of reasons. While the list below is not all-inclusive, some motivations of states and localities to develop family child care networks are:

- Recruitment and retention of home-based providers;
- Increasing the availability of care for families participating in child care subsidies;
- Increasing participation in the states QRIS;
- Increasing participation in Head Start, Early Head Start, or Migrant Head Start Partnerships;
- Increasing participation in the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP); and
- Increasing the number of nationally accredited FCC providers through the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)

Bromer & Porter (*Mapping the Family Child Care Landscape*, 2019) state that of the 177 programs surveyed, 81% supported licensing, 70% QRIS, 10% subsidy, 62% CACFP, 34% NAFCC Accreditation, and 17% public pre-k.

Based on other studies, Bromer & Porter hypothesize that there are combinations of services that could increase quality in FCC: 1) high-frequency home visiting (defined as more than monthly) (Bromer et al., 2009; McCabe & Cochran, 2008) 2) use of an evidence-based curriculum (Burchinal, 2018) and 3) offering resources for children and families such as developmental screening, mental health consultation, health and nutrition services, and/or family counseling (NSECE, 2015a) (*Mapping the Family Child Care Landscape*, 2019).

A key finding of the study was that of the 177 programs surveyed, only 9% had high-frequency visits, evidence based-curriculum, and comprehensive services for children and families.

To date, only two studies have examined the effects of family child care networks on provider quality, *The Family Child Care Network Impact Study* (Bromer, Van Haitsma, Daley, & Modigliani, 2008) and a 2014 evaluation of All Our Kin, a family child care network in Connecticut (Porter & Reiman, 2016). Based on these two evaluations and other quasi studies, the Office of Child Care, an office of the Administration for Children and Families has singled out family child care networks as a means to quality improvement in FCC.

One study found that "Network affiliation has a significant and positive association with higher global quality scores when comparing network-affiliated providers with unaffiliated providers, even after controlling for other provider and program characteristics associated with quality, such as provider's relevant education, household income of the provider, and ages of children in the family child care program" (Bromer, et al, 2008).

Results from the 2014 evaluation of All Our kin, found that FCC providers in the network scored 53% higher on FCCERS-R and 30% higher on the Parent Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Inked to Outcomes (PICCOLO) than those not in the network (Porter, et al, 2016).

More research needs to be conducted on the impact of networks on FCC. We can infer from the limited research we do have that family child care networks, when designed and funded effectively, can be a powerful tool for:

- Recruitment and retention;
- Increasing quality; and
- Supporting FCC providers to participate in other federal and state initiatives such as Head Start, Early Head Start, QRIS, and publicly-funded community-based prekindergarten initiatives.

### **Examining child care credentialing and alternative pathways to prekindergarten teaching certification.**

Alternative teaching certification programs have existed for decades and across most states. The process of alternative teaching certificates can be burdensome and costly. The program was mainly designed for those who already hold a BA degree in a subject, but do not have the education classes that support working with students. Another part of the alternative teaching certification is the practicum portion, which requires the alternative teaching candidate to "student teach" in an approved program and/or school.

For FCC providers, that would require them to close their business for a period of time while they completed the student-teaching practicum requirement.

In the states where FCC providers are participating in community-based prekindergarten, only Vermont requires that the teacher have a valid teaching certification with a concentration in early childhood or child development. For the first two years of the program, the state paid for a traveling certified early childhood teacher who taught in the FCC home. The state no longer pays for the certified teacher, and the programs must pay for it on their own. This may be why there has been a drop-off of programs that participate in the community-based prekindergarten program.

Champlain College in Vermont has designed an alternative teaching certificate program that does not require the FCC providers to conduct the student-teaching practicum outside of their program. According to the Champlain College website, "Students who are seeking Vermont Licensure will develop a reflective professional portfolio following the guidelines for the Vermont Licensure Portfolio. This portfolio serves as a tool to collect, select, reflect, and synthesize the students' teaching experiences and college-level knowledge through mentoring and peer interaction. The students provide evidence and analyze their proficiency for each of the ten Vermont Core Teaching Standards and reflect on the Early Childhood Endorsement area. The portfolio supports the application for Early Childhood Initial Licensure in the state of Vermont." In order for the FCC providers to qualify for this alternative method of certification, they would have to have a BA, complete required testing, and have 3-years of experience in the field of Early

Education or Early Childhood Special Education.

An alternative to teacher certification may be to look at the Power to the Profession Task Force's, Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession, completed in March 2020.

The Power to the Profession Taskforce developed recommendations to create career pathways for educators in the early childhood education profession. Their recommendation is the development of three distinct designations for those who work in the early childhood education field: Early Childhood Educator 1, Early Childhood Educator 2 and Early Childhood Educator 3. Educators would need to complete an accredited/recognized professional preparation program, complete field experience, and pass an assessment of competencies (Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession, 2019).

The recommendation from the Power to the Profession Taskforce for the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) levels is as follows:

**Table 3. Recommendation from the Power to the Profession Taskforce**

	ECE I	ECE II	ECE III
<b>Preparation</b>	Certificate/Credential Program in Early Childhood Education	Minimum of AA in ECE	BA in ECE Or M. Ed
<b>Time and Duration</b>	Minimum of 120 clock hours	Minimum of AA in ECE	Minimum of a BA in ECE or M. Ed.
<b>Program Award</b>	Certificate or Credential	Degree issued by institutions of higher education	Degree issued by institutions of higher education
<b>Additional</b>			Graduates can support ECE I and ECE II in their instructional practices

(Unifying Framework for Early Childhood Education Profession, 2019)

**What is a model for involving family child care providers as eligible recipients of State funding to expand prekindergarten?**

It is recommended that Maryland include FCC providers in all early childhood initiatives using the Power to the Profession Taskforce recommendations and the implementation of the Conceptual Model for Quality in Home-Based Child Care.

The Conceptual Model for Quality in Home-Based Child Care is based on three broad components (Blasberg, et al, 2019):

1. Foundations for the sustainability of care;
2. Lasting relationships; and
3. Opportunities for Learning and Development

The Maryland State Department of Education, through the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant

program, is funding the development of a Family Child Care Network (FCCN) and Shared Services model to pilot a community-based prekindergarten initiative for FCC providers for the 2020-2021 school year. The FCCN and shared services will develop a 3-5-year plan not only to include FCC providers in community-based prekindergarten, but also to discover what supports are needed to recruit, retain, and improve the quality of FCC providers statewide through a partnership approach.

The FCCN has developed the pilot FCC hub of providers in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. In future years, expansion will occur in additional counties based on data from the Maryland State Department of Education that support counties and families with the highest need for community-based prekindergarten.

FCC providers who participate in the pilot hold at least a level 4 or level 5 in Maryland EXCELS. They are coached by a Master level educator.

Level 4 MD EXCELS	Level 5 MD Excls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domain-based activities provide opportunities for whole group, small group and individual learning experiences that include adequate time for transitions, literacy, and reading opportunities</li> <li>• Television, computers or other media are used only when directly related to facilitated learning experiences; and no screen time for children under 2-years-old</li> <li>• Developmental screenings are conducted on all children within 90-days of enrollment and at scheduled intervals as determined by MSDE; results are shared with families, and referrals are made when appropriate</li> <li>• Information provided to families includes a mission and/or philosophy statement and policies and practices for: health and safety; positive behavior practices; tuition/enrollment; inclusion of children with disabilities or special health care needs; communicating with families; physical fitness; nutrition; and curriculum and child assessment</li> <li>• Families provided with information upon enrollment and written receipt is documented</li> <li>• Provider participates in CACFP</li> <li>• Providers serves whole grains, fresh fruits and/or vegetables at least three times a week, and limits fat, sugar, and salt in food served by the program. The program monitors meals provided from home and supplements as necessary to ensure that children are receiving nutritious, balanced meals and snacks</li> <li>• Families provided with at least four different types of opportunities to be engaged in the program</li> <li>• Provider conducts family conferences at least twice a year</li> <li>• Copy of child's IFSP/IEP is requested and provider works with the family and early intervention or special</li> </ul>	<p>experiences that include adequate time for transitions, literacy, and reading opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Television, computers or other media are used only when directly related to facilitated learning experiences; and no screen time for children under 2-years-old</li> <li>• Developmental screenings are conducted on all children within 90-days of enrollment and at scheduled intervals as determined by MSDE; results are shared with families, and referrals are made when appropriate</li> <li>• Information provided to families includes a mission and/or philosophy statement and policies and practices for: health and safety; positive behavior practices; tuition/enrollment; inclusion of children with disabilities or special health care needs; communicating with families; physical fitness; nutrition; and curriculum and child assessment</li> <li>• Families provided with information upon enrollment and written receipt is documented</li> <li>• Provider participates in CACFP</li> <li>• Providers serves whole grains, fresh fruits and/or vegetables at least three times a week, and limits fat, sugar, and salt in food served by the program. The program monitors meals provided from home and supplements as necessary to ensure that children are receiving nutritious, balanced meals and snacks</li> <li>• Families provided with at least five different types of opportunities to be engaged in the program</li> <li>• Provider conducts family conferences at least twice a year</li> <li>• Copy of child's IFSP/IEP is requested and provider works with the family and early intervention or special education service providers to support child and family outcomes</li> <li>• Staff meetings conducted monthly</li> <li>• Staff performance is evaluated in writing at least</li> </ul>

## Family Child Care Involvement in Prekindergarten Expansion

<p>education service providers to support child and family outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff meetings conducted monthly</li> <li>• Staff performance is evaluated in writing at least annually, and as needed for professional improvement</li> <li>• Staff policies developed and included in written handbook provided to all staff members at hire, which includes policies and procedures related to: health; safety; child development; inclusion of children with disabilities and special health care needs; training; positive behavior practices; and staff roles, responsibilities, and benefits</li> <li>• Provider maintains written receipt of staff handbook from all employees</li> <li>• Incremental salary scale based on education and experience; employee benefits</li> <li>• Information about community resources including referral resources for children with disabilities and special health care needs is kept current and available to families and staff</li> <li>• Community resources are accessed and used, including but not limited to local public library services</li> <li>• Transition plans developed for children, including individualized plans for children with disabilities and special health care needs, which include policies for sharing information on child assessment and developmental progress</li> </ul>	<p>annually, and as needed for professional improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff policies developed and included in written handbook provided to all staff members at hire, which includes policies and procedures related to: health; safety; child development; inclusion of children with disabilities and special health care needs; training; positive behavior practices; and staff roles, responsibilities, and benefits</li> <li>• Provider maintains written receipt of staff handbook from all employees</li> <li>• Incremental salary scale based on education and experience; employee benefits</li> <li>• Information about community resources including referral resources for children with disabilities and special health care needs is kept current and available to families and staff</li> <li>• Community resources are accessed and used, including but not limited to local public library services</li> <li>• Transition plans developed for children, including individualized plans for children with disabilities and special health care needs, which include policies for sharing information on child assessment and developmental progress</li> </ul>
<p><i>Credential Level 4 (Minimum)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 135 clock hours of training; or</li> <li>• CDA, or</li> <li>• Montessori Teaching Credential</li> <li>• 2 years working directly with children in a licensed child care program</li> <li>• Three Professional Activity Units</li> </ul> <p>24 clock hours annually to renew OR</p>	<p><i>Credential Level 4+ (Minimum)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 135 clock hours and Program Accreditation; or</li> <li>• 135 clock hours and 15 college credit hours of approved coursework; or</li> <li>• 135 clock hours, enrollment in an approved college course of study toward a degree, and accumulation of 55 points by earning 5 points for each additional early childhood college credit course and/or each year of experience</li> <li>• 2 years working directly with children in a licensed child care program</li> <li>• Four Professional Activity Units</li> <li>• 24 clock hours annually to renew</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p>
<p><i>Administrator Credential Level 1 (Minimum)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 240 clock hours of core of knowledge training</li> <li>• 2 years working directly with children in a licensed child care program</li> <li>• 24 clock hours annually to renew</li> <li>• Four Professional Activity Units</li> </ul>	<p><i>Administrator Credential Level 2 (Minimum)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 240 clock hours of core of knowledge training</li> <li>• 2 years working directly with children in a licensed child care program</li> <li>• 30 clock hours annually to renew</li> <li>• Five Professional Activity Units</li> <li>• Achievement of one of the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of the National Administrators Credential (NAC); or Completion of at least 30 college credits of approved coursework</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Any FCC provider at a level 4 in Maryland EXCELS is required to reach a level 5 by the end of the grant period. Technical assistance to FCC providers is provided through the Maryland EXCELS Branch in the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Early Childhood.

Both the FCC providers and the Master Educator participate in professional development opportunities to improve practices in implementing a research-based curriculum and assessment.

FCC providers are coached by a Master Educator who holds a master's degree in ECE or related field and holds a current Maryland Teacher Certification. The Master Educator observes and coaches providers and develops shared goals in the use of curriculum, assessment, and quality improvements through a strength-based model. Coaching occurs at least two times per month either in person or online. The Master Educator is responsible for keeping coaching logs, data on fidelity use of curriculum and assessment, analysis of child outcome data in order to drive instruction, approval of lesson plans, and leading peer learning community sessions with providers to support reflective practices.

FCC providers participate in peer learning communities to build relationships with their peers, plan, and develop shared goals.

Providers administer and are reimbursed for a 6.5-hour prekindergarten program per day for a 180 day academic school year. Just as in center-based community providers participating in the Prekindergarten Expansion Grants program, FCC providers are permitted to charge additional fees for wraparound care (before, after, and summer care). Providers will be reimbursed for substitute care in order to participate in professional development opportunities.

Additional funds are available to FCC providers for supplies, materials, and equipment based on program evaluation data (CLASS, FCCERS-R, and/or The Creative Curriculum® Fidelity Tool). Funds are available for fieldtrips that support children's development and learning.

The Master Educator is paid at the rate of a Teacher holding a BA+45 or MA Step 1 rate of the highest salary based on counties served (i.e., the Master Educator receives the salary rate of a teacher of Montgomery county if the pay scale is higher than that of Prince George's County).

Enrollment in the Prekindergarten Expansion Grants is limited to three- and four-year olds from families at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level or have a current Individual Family Service Plan/Individual Education Plan. Each child receives nutritious meals based on the Child and Adult Care Food Program requirements.

Children are evaluated using a Maryland approved screening tool within 90-days of enrollment and according to the MSDE schedule. Families will be informed of results, individualized observation, and weekly plans are developed, and referrals will be made if necessary. Children are evaluated at least twice per year using the Maryland Early Learning Assessment, and the FCC providers will develop an individualized plan for the child's development and learning. Children also receive a hearing and vision screening.

FCC providers will develop a family engagement plan based on the Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework and implement an evidence-informed and research-based family curriculum.

### **The FCC home and Master Educator are coached using the Five Stages of Family Child Care©.**

There is no consistent model that supports the "whole" FCC provider. When looking at most networks, they often only focus on increasing quality in supporting children and families, navigating the licensing system, or business practices. The professional development firm, Community Coaching, has identified five stages in the career of a family child care provider. There are quality and opportunities for growth at each stage.

The five stages are as follows:

1. Family Child Care Business Owner
2. Early Childhood Educator
3. Early Childhood Education Professional
4. Early Childhood Leader
5. Beyond Family Child Care

### **Considerations for this model**

There is very little research and evaluation of family child care networks and FCC providers who are participating in community-based prekindergarten. MSDE has the opportunity to develop a model for other states and localities to mirror.

Through this pilot, MSDE is seeking to answer the following questions:

1. What was the growth of the FCC providers teaching practices over the course of the pilot year?
2. What was the growth of the FCC providers programmatic quality over the course of the pilot year?
3. Did child outcomes improve for children over the course of the pilot year?
4. Were children fully ready for kindergarten by the end of the pilot year?
5. Did coaching and mentoring have a positive effect on teaching practices?
6. Did FCC providers feel less isolated as part of the family child care hub, peer learning communities, and coaching?
7. What were the strengths of this model and considerations for improvements for future funding?

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