



# Building a Foundation for Success:

## *Delaware's Early Learning Progress & Sustainability*



# Creating Opportunity for Our Youngest Learners

- Our Story
- Our Investment
- Our Future



A young girl with dark skin and braided hair, wearing a yellow shirt, is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a solid dark green color.

# Why Early Learning Matters

- College & Career Readiness
- Global Competiveness
- Economic Well-Being
- Crime Reduction
- Thriving Communities

If you care about these issues, you care about high-quality early learning and development.

# ***Sustaining Early Success***

Delaware's Strategic Plan  
for a Comprehensive  
Early Childhood  
System

**2013**



A Healthy Start for  
All Children

High Quality Early  
Childhood  
Programs and  
Professional

Aligned and  
Effective B-8  
System

Sustained System  
Improvement



# Investing in A Healthy Start

- 28,000+ children received developmental screenings since 2011
- 6,000+ young children & families linked to follow-up services
- Doubled state's capacity to provide Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation



# Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

- Classroom-wide consultation
- Child-specific consultation
- Training for program staff and families
  - building positive relationships
  - child development
  - recognizing signs of trauma
  - promoting social-emotional wellness



# ECMHC Impact

Cases

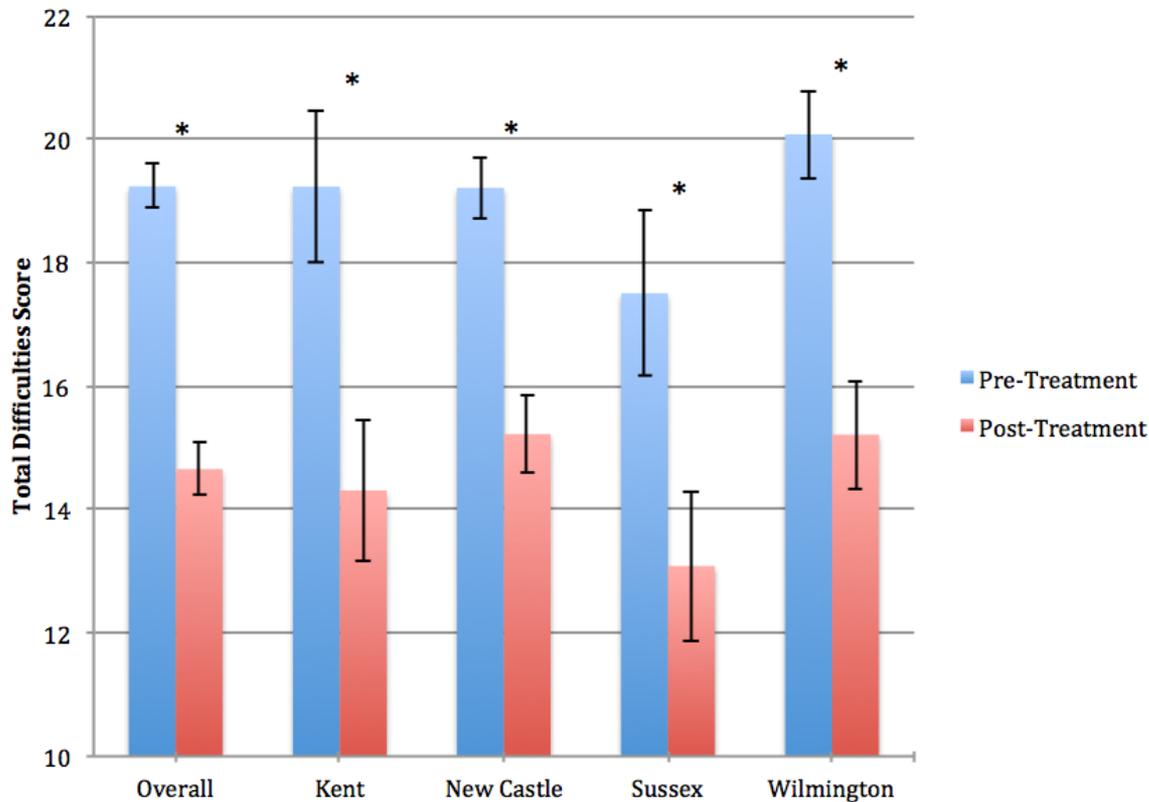


165 Early Learning Programs

2,400 Children

Average 9 Sessions  
& 10 Hours per  
Case

# Changes in Overall Child Difficulties Before and After Treatment

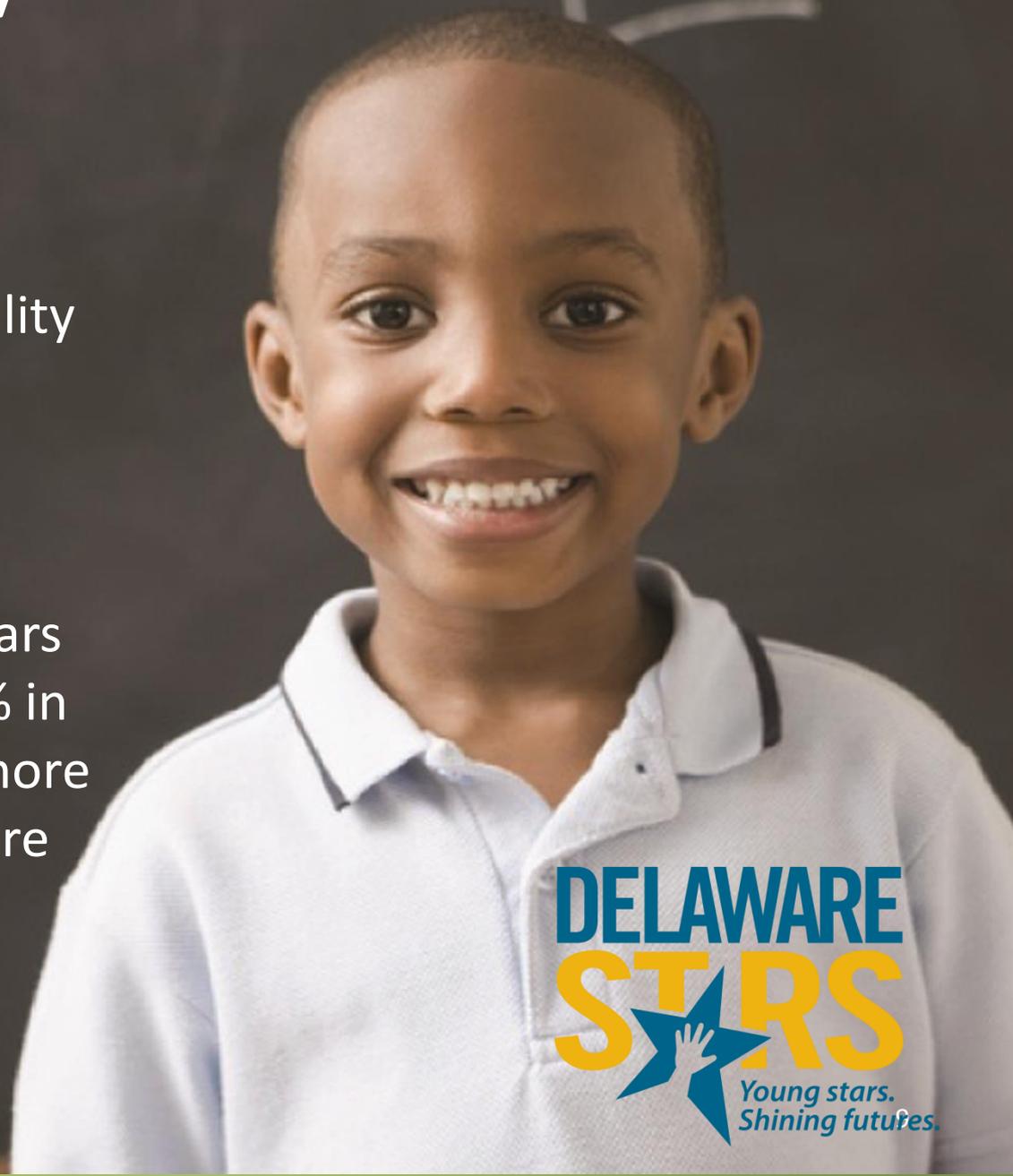


\*  $p < 0.05$

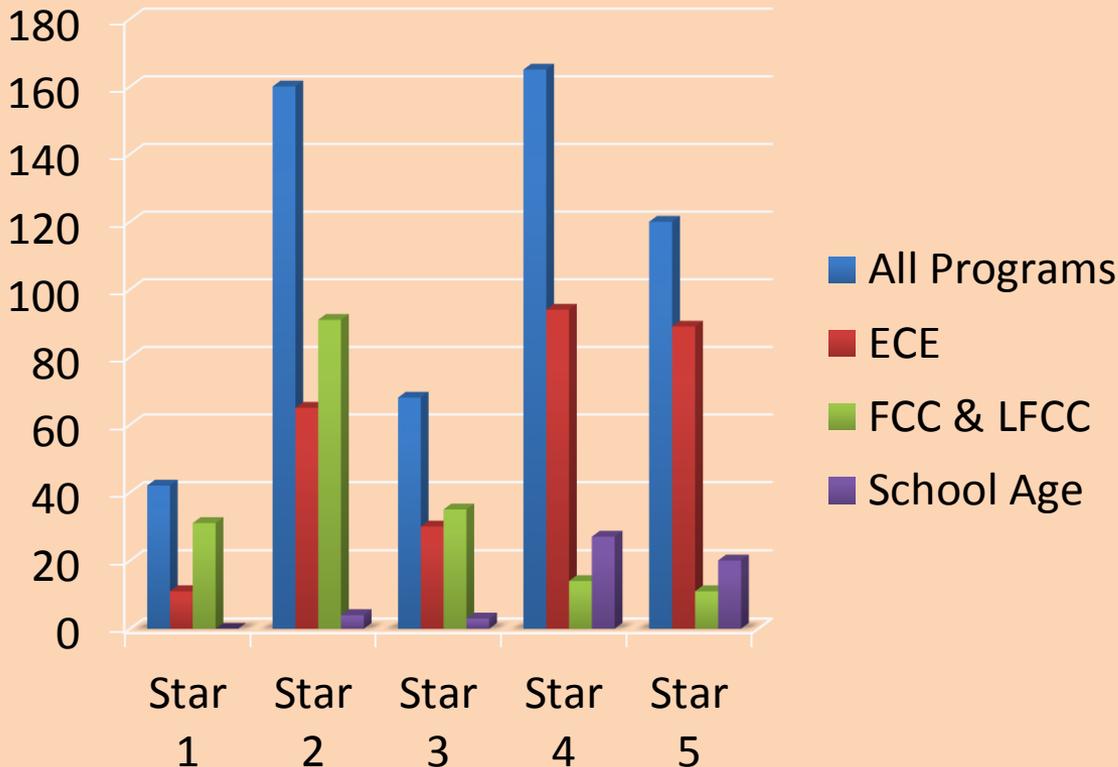
99% success rate in preventing expulsion

# Investing in High-Quality Early Learning

- 59% of early learning programs rated in top quality tiers
- 58% of children with high needs in child care are enrolled in highly rated Stars programs, up from just 5% in 2011 – that's thousands more children in quality child care



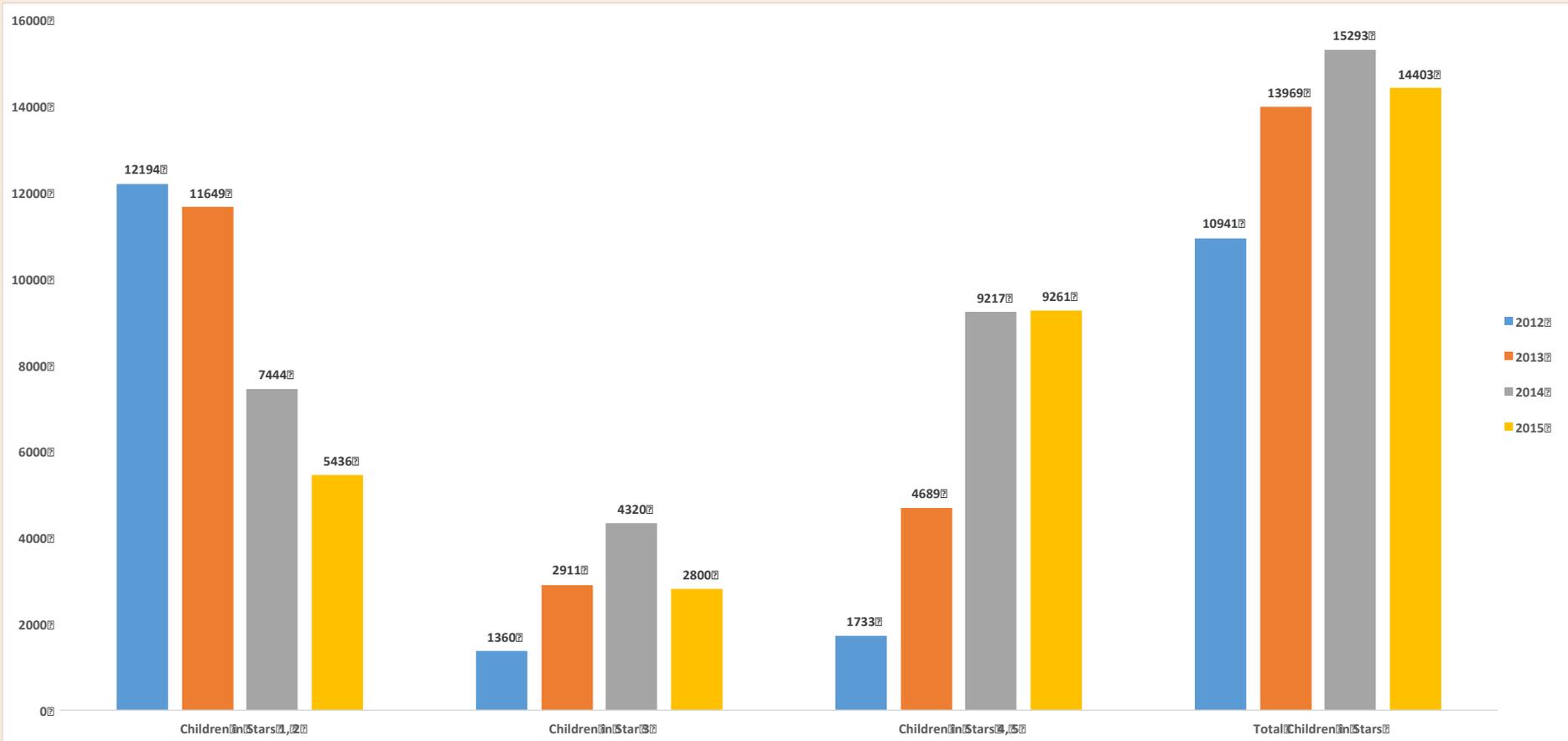
# Stars Participation



555 Programs

- 75% of Centers
- 29% FCC & Large FCC

# Children Receiving Purchase of Care in Stars Programs



\*2015 data is for Jan – July only



# Investing in Our Workforce

- 209 T.E.A.C.H. Scholars in 2015
- 1,600+ CORE Awards
- 7,000+ participants in professional development

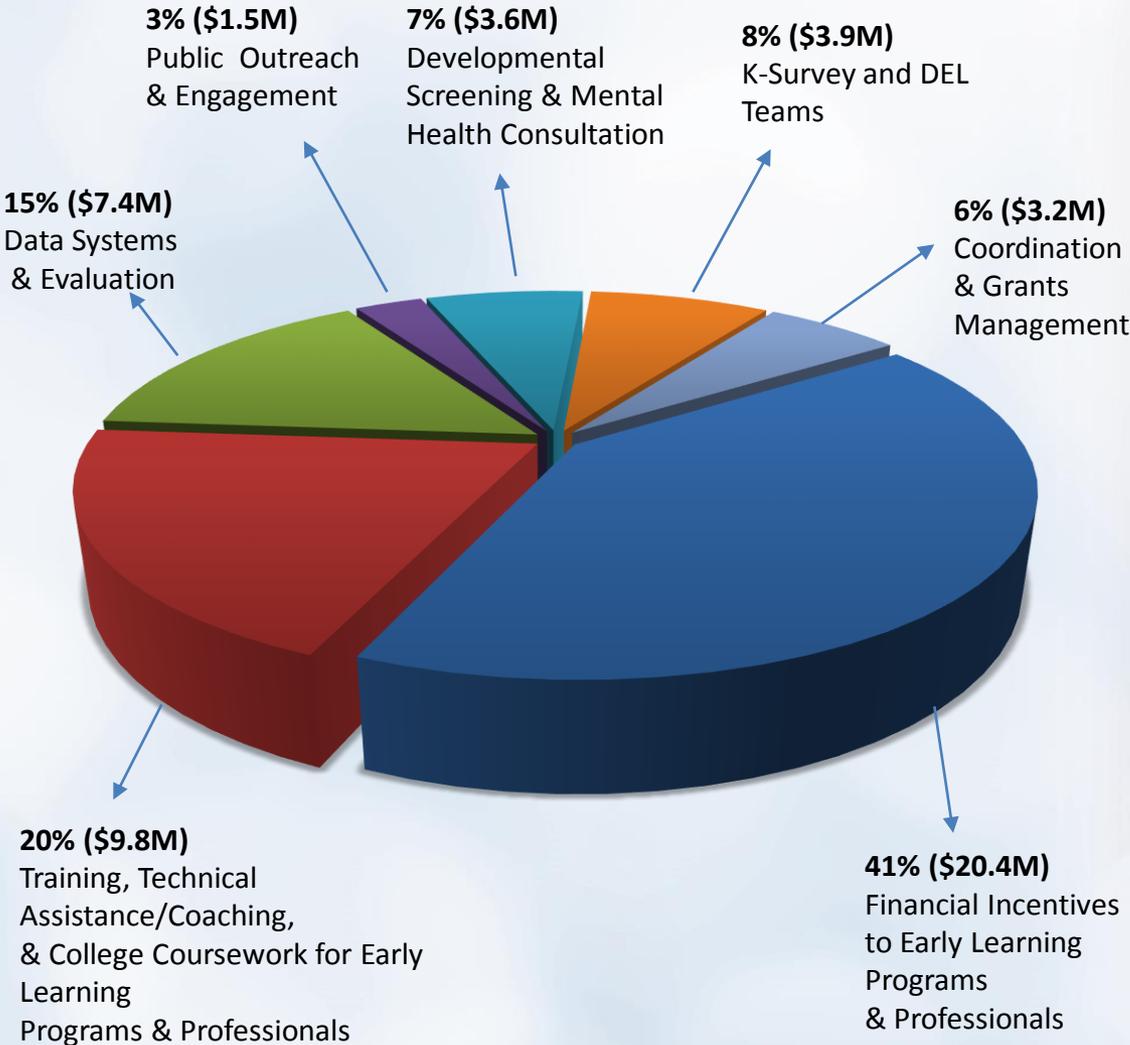


# Investing in An Aligned & Effective System

- Stars for all programs!
- 9,000 families used new website to find information about Stars, early learning, and more
- 21 Delaware Readiness Teams active in high needs communities with low performing elementary schools



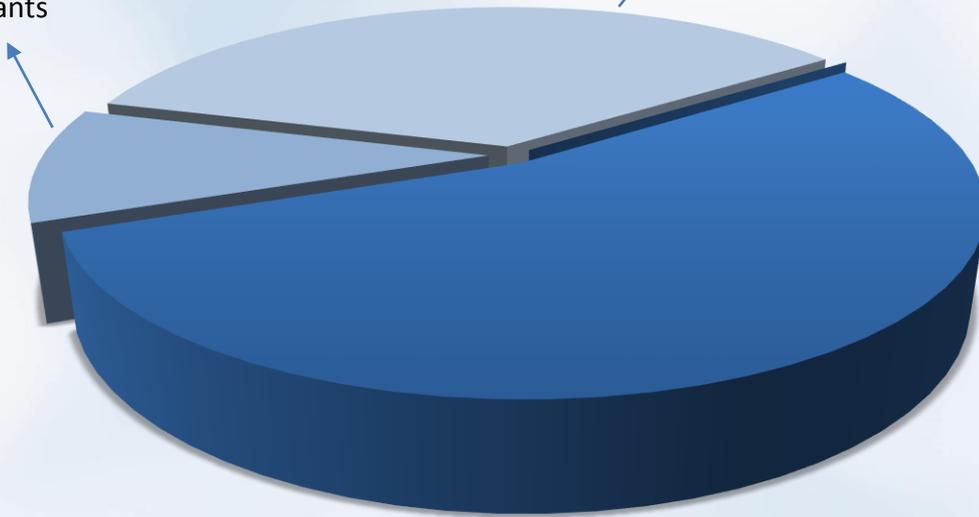
# Investing Wisely – Early Learning Challenge



# Financial Incentives

**10% (\$2M)**  
Curriculum &  
Infrastructure  
Grants

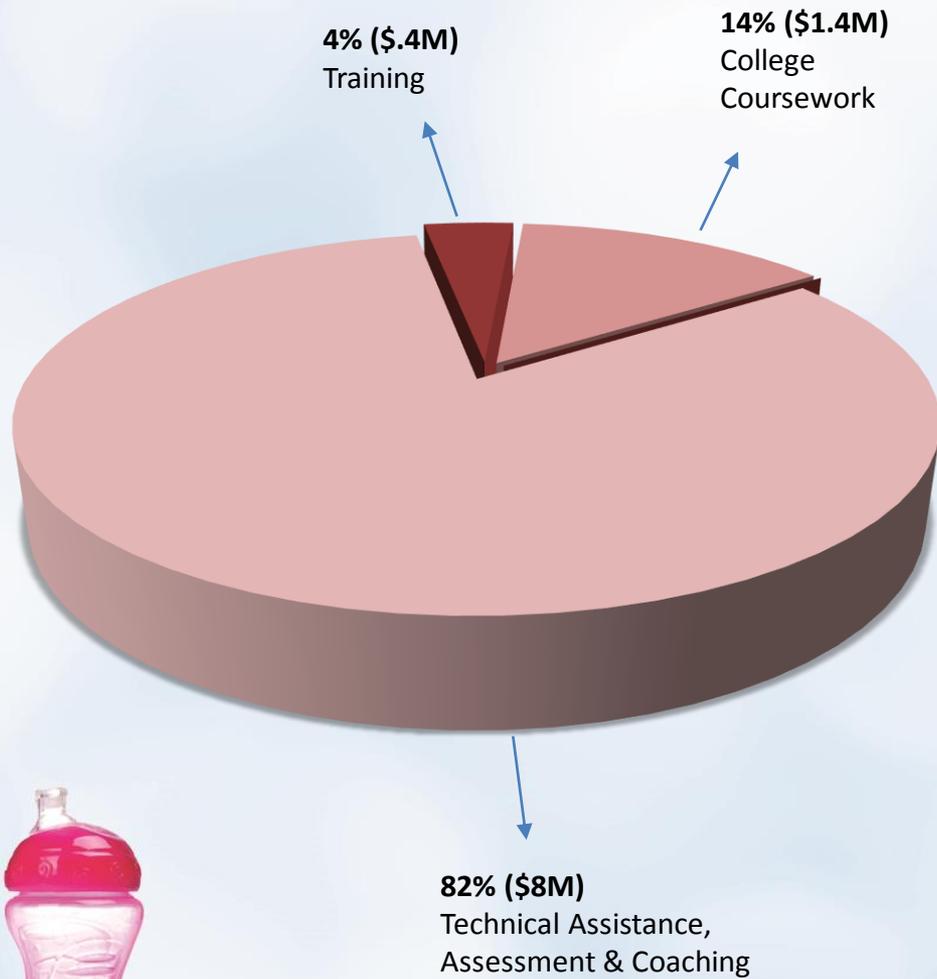
**36% (\$7.4M)**  
Salary Supplements to  
Early Learning  
Professionals



**54% (\$11M)**  
Tiered Reimbursement

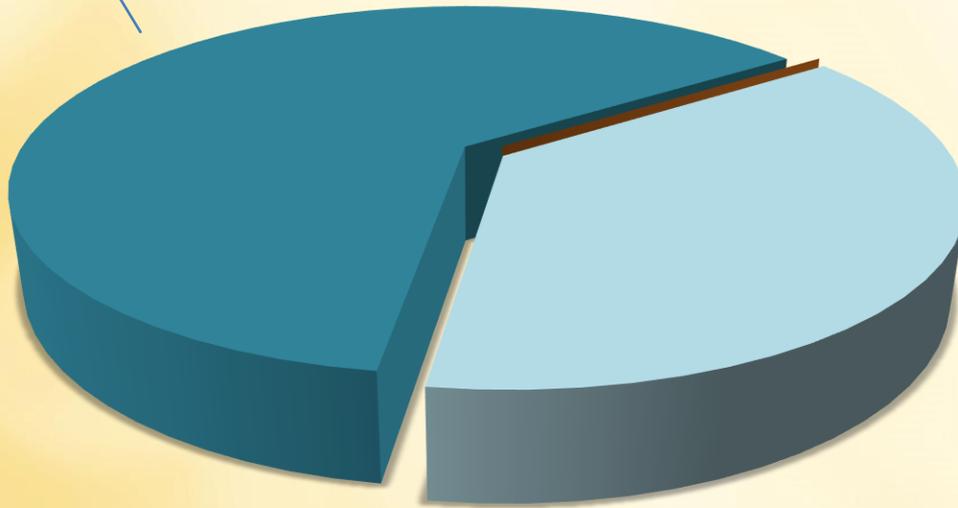


# Training, TA & College Coursework



# Developmental Screenings & Mental Health Consultation

**63% (\$2.3M)**  
Developmental  
Screenings,  
Promotion, Referral &  
Follow-up



**37% (\$1.3M)**  
Early Childhood Mental  
Health Consultation

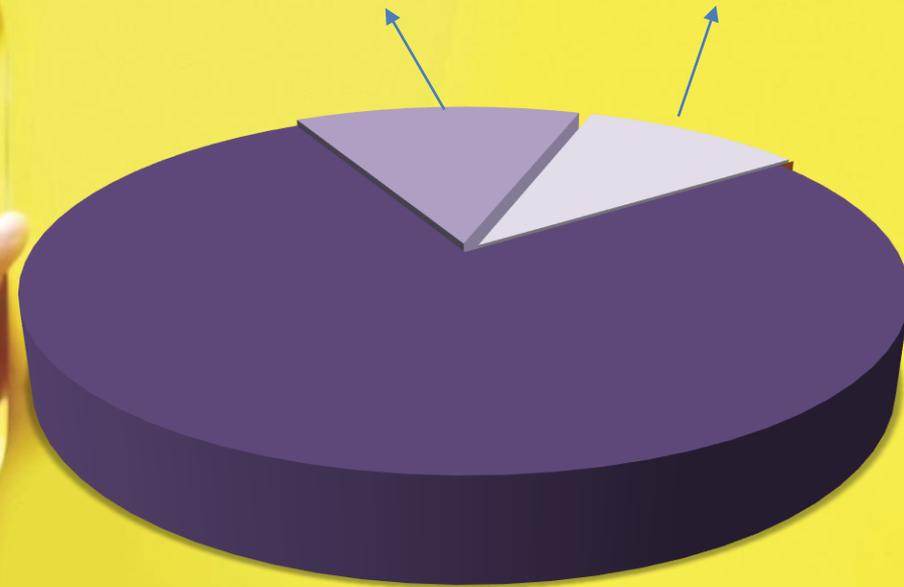




## Public Outreach and Engagement

**13% (\$.2M)**  
Outreach to Early  
Learning Programs

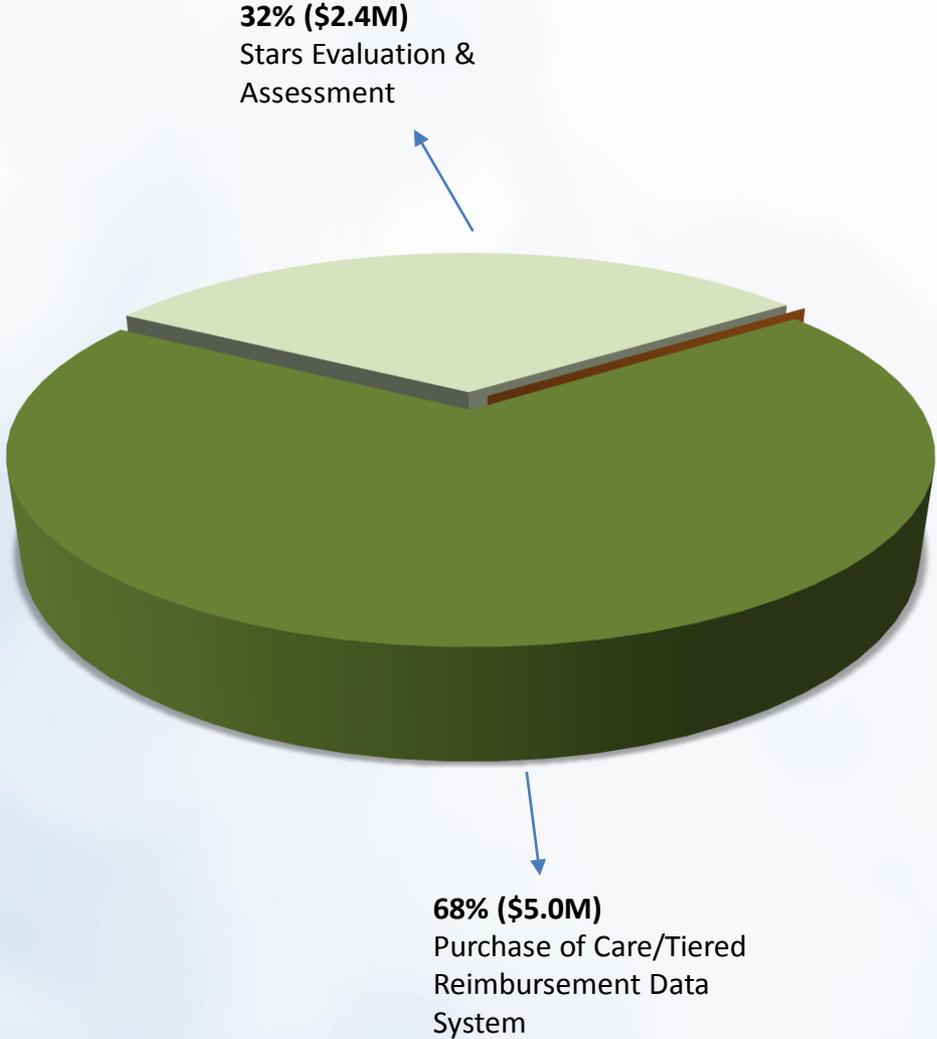
**10% (\$.1M)**  
Outreach to Business  
& Community



**77% (\$1.2M)**  
Outreach to Families

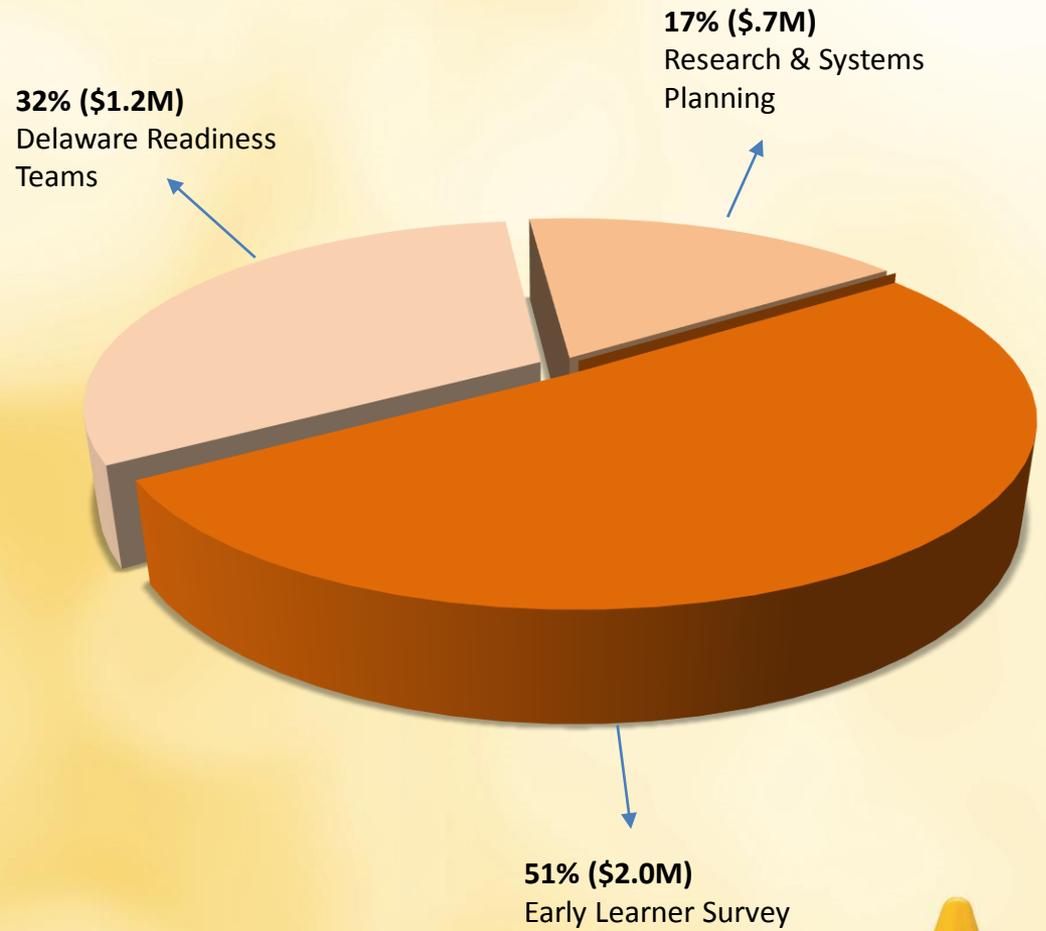


# Data Systems and Evaluation





## Birth to 8 System Alignment





# Our Future

- Early Learner Survey Results
- Stars Evaluation Results
- Alignment of Efforts
- Sustaining Progress
- Future Goals & Outcome Targets





## Stars Evaluation: What Have We Learned?

- TAs help programs meet Stars standards and move up
- Programs serving children with high needs participate & move up
- Stars financial incentive are effective and equitably used
- Consumers still don't know a lot about Stars
- We need better data systems





## Stars Evaluation: What Will We Learn?

- Do tiers reflect different levels of program quality?
- Do children in higher rated programs show higher gains?
- What domains of Stars are most relevant for child outcomes?





# What about Research, Quality & Stars?

## **Structural Features** – *Set conditions for success*

- Ratio/group size
- Physical environment
- Staff qualifications

## **Process Features** – *Predict better child outcomes*

- Intentional, engaging instruction
- Serve and return interactions
- Warm and responsive classroom

## **Common Sense Features**

- Family engagement
- Developmental screening
- Sound business practices





## ***Delawareans Support High-Quality Early Learning!***

- 7 Focus Groups held around state in April – 152 diverse participants
- 561 Delawareans responded to online survey about early learning priorities
- 75% ranked all current initiatives as medium to high priorities



# Survey Results - Top 4 Priorities

1. Financial Incentives (Tiered Reimbursement)
2. Technical Assistance
3. Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC)
4. Salary supplements (CORE Awards)



# Why Tiered Reimbursement Matters

Monthly POC Rate For Toddler in Kent County	POC + 4 Star Tiered Bonus	2015 Market Rate (75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile of Actual Fees)
\$416.20	\$581.20	\$700



# Sustaining Progress

## Early Learning Challenge – \$12.5 Million Request

- Tiered Reimbursement for Achieving and Maintaining Higher Stars
- Technical Assistance to Improve Program Quality
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants
- Developmental Screening & Referrals
- Professional Development for Early Learning Providers
- Salary Supplements for Education & Retention
- Developmental Assessment for PreK & Kindergarten
- Community Teams to Promote School Readiness
- Community Engagement and Program Evaluation
- 1 Staff Position



# Alignment

- Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
- Vision Coalition – Student Success 2025
- State Board of Education Literacy Campaign
- Early Childhood Council Strategic Plan
- Strategic Plan for Professional Development
- Revised Early Learning Standards



# 2018 Milestones

- Increased rates of follow-up health and behavioral health services
- Increased immunization rates
- Reduced levels of childhood obesity
- Ensured access to quality early learning for all children
- Increased levels of school readiness
- Increased number of children reading by third grade
- Decreased retention rates
- Decreased numbers of children requiring special education services



# Join Us!

*We are in the middle of a great story—a story about giving our state’s children a great start in school and in life.*



