

# The Future Call: Employer-Supported Child Care



# ROAD TO THE WORK



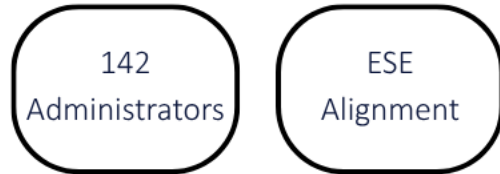
## JENNIFER MEKLER, DIRECTOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Elementary School Teacher
  - 11 years in kindergarten
- School Administrator
  - 6-year principal of PreK- 5<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school
- Director of Early Childhood Education
  - School-based programs
  - Community birth-to-five focus
  - Licensed child care



# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

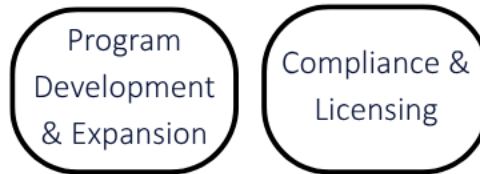
## Schools



68 Elementary Schools

2 High School Programs

## Child Care



Bette Ra Ivey Discovery Center

Little Manatees

## Community



ELC

COQEBS

PCLB

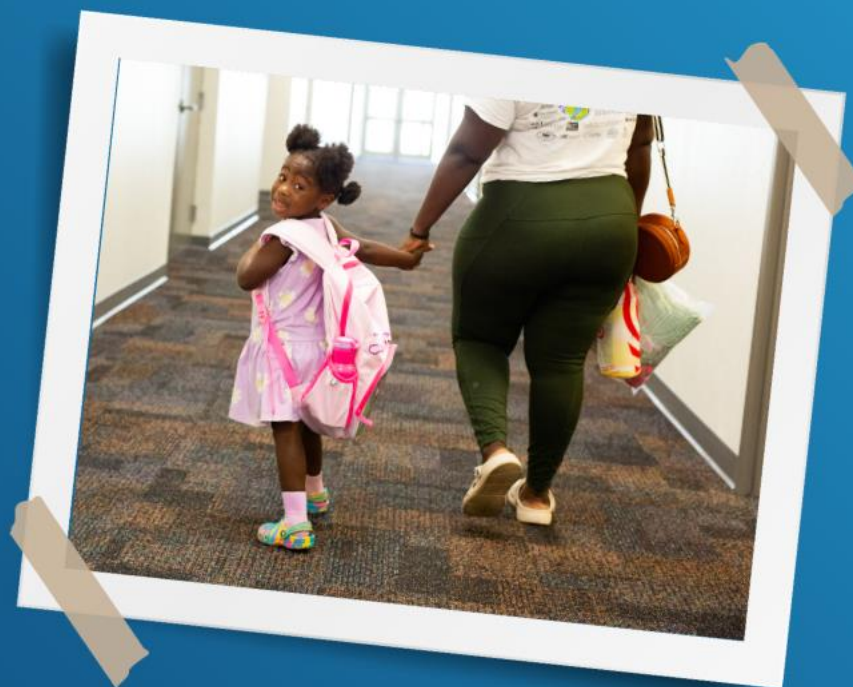
LSF

TB5

JWB



# How did we get here?



# PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS

## VISION

100% Student Success

## MISSION

Educate and Prepare Each  
Student for College, Career and Life



# EARLY LEARNING

## EXPANSION OF PROGRAMMING

- Before child care, we had early learning programs at 68 elementary schools and 2 high schools across the district
  - Reduced price for full-time benefit-eligible employees
  - Priority during application process
- Child care for infants to VPK
  - Supporting employees with the cost of child care
  - Increasing access to high-quality child care



# PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS

## CORE VALUES



## DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN



# DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

## POSITIVE STAFF EXPERIENCES

Objective 9: Attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff



## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE THROUGH INNOVATION

Objective 2: Expand Early Literacy Initiatives For All Students Pre-K through Grade 3



# Employer-Supported Child Care





# CHILD CARE

## EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED

- Children aged 6 months to VPK
- Access to Programming
  - Full-time benefit-eligible employees
  - Application
  - Lottery based on employment category
  - Length based on employee contract (days and hours)



# CHILD CARE

## EMPLOYEE BENEFIT

- Tuition-based program at approximately 50% of the Market Rate
- Contract with Early Learning Coalition for School Readiness

|         | Employee Rate | Market Rate | Employee Annual Saving |
|---------|---------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Under 1 | \$200         | \$392.50    | \$7,600                |
| Ones    | \$160         | \$310       | \$5,700                |
| Twos    | \$125         | \$250       | \$4,500                |
| Threes  | \$100         | \$200       | \$3,600                |



# CHILD CARE



Opened at the start of the 2024-25 school year with twelve classrooms to care for children 6 months through 3 years old.

- Summer programs for child care and district Summer VPK



Expansion site opening this year with eight classrooms to care for children 6 months through 3 years old.

- Co-located on an elementary school campus



# CHILD CARE

## FAMILY SURVEY

The PCS Employee Child Care Program is a valuable benefit that positively impacts my experience as a Pinellas County Schools employee.

|                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
|                            |              |
| <b>Completley Agree</b>    | <b>91.9%</b> |
| <b>Mostly Agree</b>        | <b>8.1%</b>  |
| <b>Mostly Disagree</b>     | <b>0%</b>    |
| <b>Completley Disagree</b> | <b>0%</b>    |

————— “ —————  
The employee childcare program has been a blessing to our family. Without it, we would not be able to afford childcare and give our son the school experience he has gotten. It is a great developmental stepping stone as he transitions into the district's pre-k program.

————— ” —————  
————— “ —————  
So much. The rooms are so clean and engaging for my little. He loves it there. I wish I could keep both of my kids here forever because the staff is so warm and welcoming. I can tell his teachers care about him and he feels safe with them. This program has changed our lives and we could not be happier

————— ” —————



# CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

## CHALLENGES

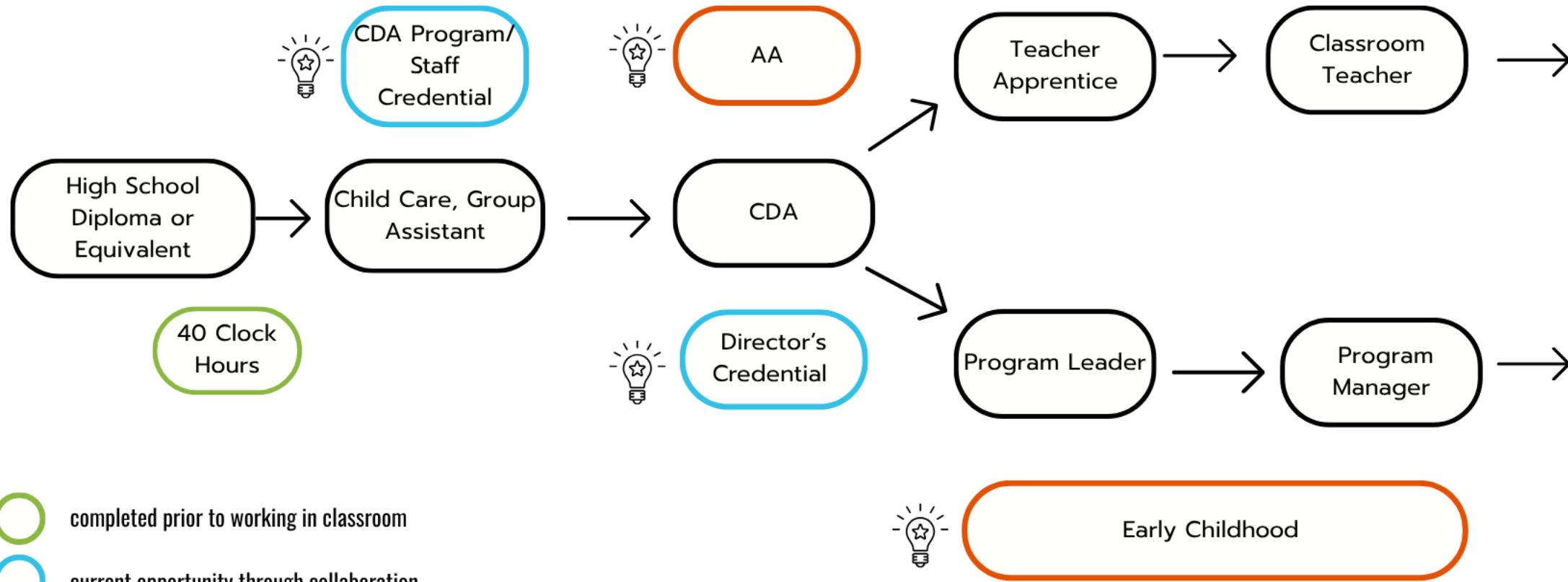
- Year-round programming
- Local licensing requirements
- Initial investment
- Meeting the need/interest
- Locations

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased funding for early childhood programs- School Readiness
- Career pipeline
- Kindergarten Readiness
- Building space usage
- Summer programs to support transition into VPK and K
- Partnering with other organizations to provide employer-supported care



# CAREER PATHWAY



-  completed prior to working in classroom
-  current opportunity through collaboration
-  partnership with local college/university



# Bosses for Babes





# IMPACT OF THE WORK

- Survey feedback
- Retention of staff
- Accreditation
- Expansion
- Career Pipeline
  - Child Development Associate
  - Child Care Director Credential
  - Teacher Apprentice





# MORE INFORMATION



PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS  
STRATEGIC PLAN



BOSSSES FOR BABIES



THRIVE BY FIVE  
TAMPA BAY



