

# Municipality of Anchorage's Child Care & Early Education (ACCEE) Fund



## **ANCHORAGE** CHILD CARE & EARLY EDUCATION **FUND**



*Prepared by: Trevor Storrs & Austin  
Quinn-Davidson  
For: Anchorage Assembly  
September 3, 2025*



## *Plan for Today*

- Share a **brief update** on the ACCEE Fund
- Discuss **implementation** of the 2025 ACCEE Fund **programs**
- Talk about **what's next** for the ACCEE Fund



# ACCEE Fund Board

- Trevor Storrs, Chair, President & CEO, Alaska Children's Trust
- Jessica Simonsen, Vice Chair, Early Head Start HV Operations Manager, Rural CAP
- Branwen Collier, Owner and Director, Early Learning for Everyone
- Khalial Withen, General Counsel, Alaska District Council of Laborers
- Isabel Broek, Preschool music teacher and UAA Research Technician
- Jessie Nessel, Director of Early Learning, Anchorage School District
- Mildred Parker, Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED) Manager, thread
- Kevin Berry, Professor of Economics, UAA, and thread board member
- Chuck Seaca, Director of Leadership Programs, Alaska Humanities Forum

## *The Board's Last Few Months*

- Implemented **ACCEE Fund programs**: child care subsidies, operational assistance, and pilot projects/capital
- Began **strategic planning** process, which will inform the Code-required **investment strategy**
- After months of listening sessions, produced a proposed **2026 budget**
- Held **monthly meetings**, **engaged with public & partners**, **responded to inquiries**, **produced communications**, **advised on Code changes**



# *Early Educator Child Care Subsidies: \$1.25M*

- **Alaska Family Services** selected this spring to administer program
- AFS and Board committee designed program, which pays for **child care for kids of sector workers** who work 20+ hours a week
- Program (1) **retains workforce** by providing a valuable benefit, (2) ensures workers' **children have quality care**, (3) creates **more spots for Anchorage families**, and (4) **benefits child care businesses** by providing a benefit for their employees

# *Early Educator Child Care Subsidies: \$1.25M*

- **76 families** enrolled; rolling application deadline
- **119 kids** whose care is now paid for
- 76 workers with better benefits = **hundreds of child care spots for the community** more reliably available

# *Early Educator Child Care Subsidies: \$1.25M*

- For workers who DO NOT receive benefits through the State Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), the ACCEE program pays **75% of the CCAP maximum rate** (ranges from \$663-\$851, age dependent) monthly
- For workers who DO receive benefits through CCAP, the ACCEE program pays **\$200 additional** monthly
- If more workers enroll, there are remaining funds to cover the cost. If not, we could increase the benefits paid per family

# *Early Educator Child Care Subsidies: \$1.25M*

- First payments went out **last week**
- Payments made **monthly**
- Those receiving benefits must participate in **data collection** so that we can better understand the sector & assess future budget needs
- AFS designing a **survey** to collect data. Will go out in October; results in November



## *Operational Assistance (Stimulus): \$2.4M*



- **thread Alaska** selected this spring to administer program
- thread designed program, with support from Board committee. Provides **flexible one-time operational payments** to child care businesses
- Checks started being mailed **two weeks ago**. Most payments made by **mid-September**

# Operational Assistance (Stimulus): \$2.4M

- Payments based on type of organization and capacity (for licensed entities). **Average payments:**
  - Licensed centers: ~\$22,000
  - Licensed family care (in-home): ~\$2,800
  - American Camp Association accredited (camps): ~\$11,500
  - License-exempt non relative provider: ~\$600
- Recipients of ACCEE operational funds were asked: *What amount of funding beyond your current revenue would be needed to steady your program operations each calendar year?*
- The **average response** was **\$63,875.10**



## *Operational Assistance (Stimulus): \$2.4M*

- Sector says this program is the **most helpful**
- thread distributed similar funding during COVID-19. Grant recipients within the Muni said the funding:
  - Helped **stabilize their organization** (97%)
  - Helped them **avoid closing** (93%)
  - Allowed them to **maintain and/or increase enrollment** (85%)
  - Played a crucial role in **avoiding layoffs or furloughs** (76%)
  - Helped **retain staff** through increased compensation (75%)
  - Allowed them to **reduce tuition costs** for families (69%)
- **thread** also designing a survey for ACCEE funding to evaluate effectiveness and benefits to sector



## *Pilot Project & Capital Funding: \$2M*

“Flexible financial assistance that drives innovation, increases access to quality, affordable child care, and brings further investment in the sector. Includes eligibility for capital projects”

## ***Pilot Project & Capital Process***

- **RFGP Drafted** by Austin and Tamiah, with input from **Eval Committee** (Trevor, Khali, Nolan, Jeannette Lee of Rasmuson)
- RFGP released April 3, closed May 15; ran **six weeks**
- Received **48 proposals** for over **\$5M** of funding
- Of these, **evaluation committee** recommended funding **13 capital** and **7 pilot projects**
- **Assembly approved** June 24

# *Pilot Project & Capital Process*

- Projects include:
  - **Repurposing** underutilized **ASD classrooms** to rent-free spaces for community-based child care
  - **Teacher training** programs
  - Program to transform business to **worker-led**
  - Feasibility study on **employer-supported child care cost sharing**
  - **Playground upgrades**
  - Multiple renovation projects to **add capacity**
  - Many others!
- Entities must **spend funds by Dec 2025**; working to release RFGP earlier next year, if program continues





## *PP/Capital Lessons Learned & Next Steps*

- **Online application system** (Bid Express) not always user friendly
- More **nontraditional applicants** than is typical for RFGP processes
- Add **technical support** and **translation services**
- More **need** than funding available
- Muni **insurance requirements** can be a barrier
- The sector has not only **great need**, but **great ideas**
- This is a program **worth continuing**
- **Survey** planned to improve the process: fillable application forms? Extra question sessions? TA/translation services? Something else?

# What's Next?

- Strategic planning
  - Sessions **tomorrow** and **Friday**
  - **Draft plan** discussed at **Oct 2** Board meeting
  - **Work session** with Assembly on **Oct 9**
  - Vote on **final plan** at **Nov 6** Board meeting
- **Budget** shared with you. Discuss at **Oct 9 work session**
- Evaluate how to **improve existing programs** and **implement new programs**. Continue implementation of existing programs
- Hire permanent **Executive Director**



*Questions?*



**ACCEE**  
FUND