



# Early Childhood Overview

Preparing All Louisiana Children for Kindergarten

# Challenge: Many Choices, But Little Clarity on Quality

*Research suggests that children who participate in high quality early childhood programs are more likely to enter kindergarten ready to succeed.*

- **Children do not have equal access to high quality early childhood programs.**
  - Quality and availability of programs varies across the state.
  - What matters most is the quality of interactions and instructions in the classroom.
- **Families do not have clear, comparable information on the quality of programs.**
  - Programs have different standards and measures of success which makes it difficult for families to compare the quality of programs.
- **Providers are held to different standards.**
  - Programs have different regulations and accountability which creates a range of quality.

# Vision for Unified System

***Act 3 (2012) sets a vision for unified system where all children enter ready for kindergarten.***

## Fragmented System

Children are falling through the cracks and are not consistently prepared

Teachers are not equally prepared nor rewarded for their work

Families do not have easy-to-use information to make the best choice

Providers are subject to inconsistent expectations and do not have equitable resources to achieve outcomes



## Vision for Unified System

High standards for what children should learn and what excellent teaching looks like

Teachers who are excellent at interacting with children and guiding learning are supported and rewarded

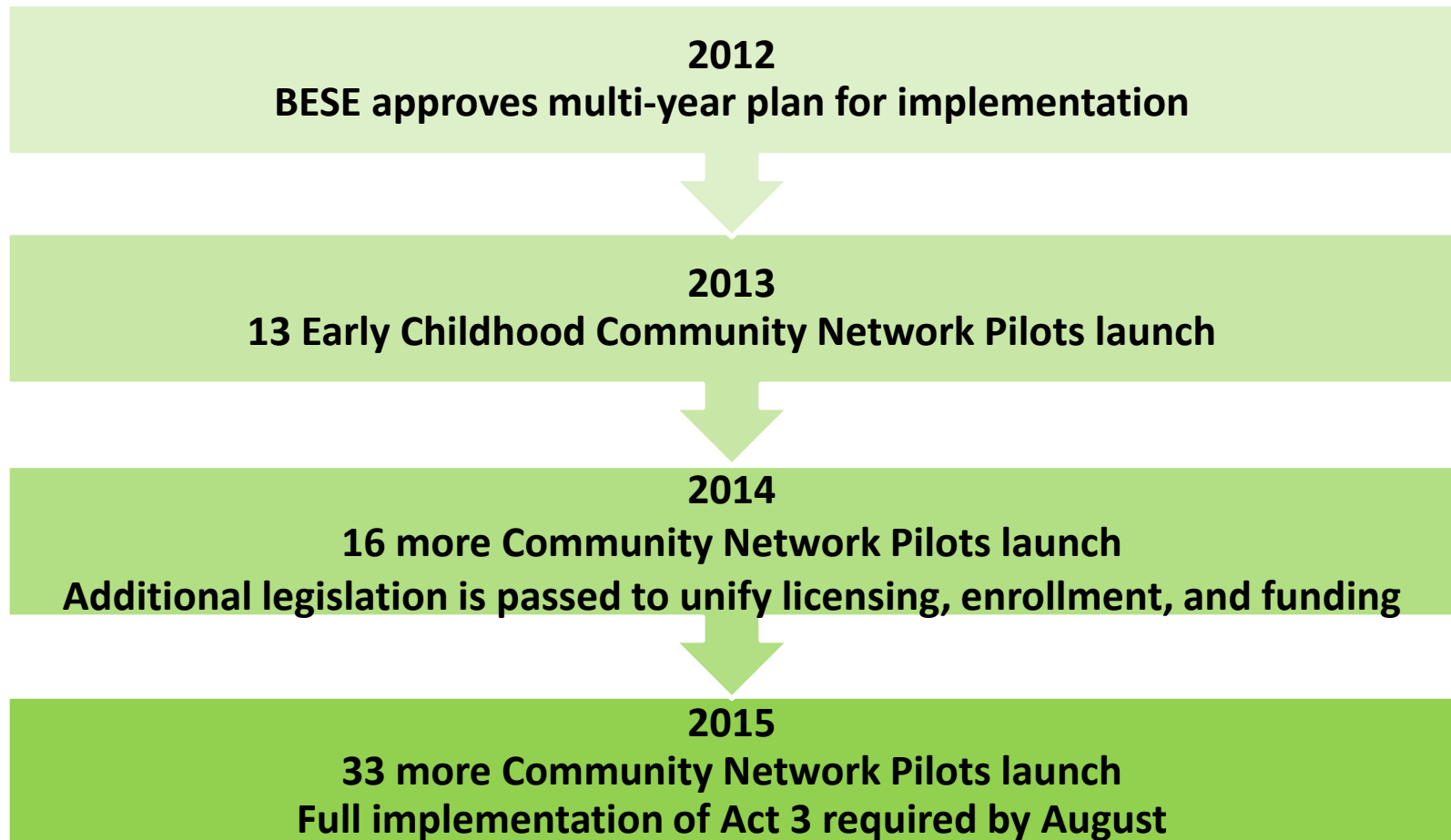
Families apply through shared processes and are satisfied with their children's experience

Consistent expectations for health, safety and learning, and adequate funding levels across programs based on serving children well

***Since 2012, Louisiana has unified policies and expanded support for programs and teachers in these areas.***

# Act 3: Unifying Early Childhood in Louisiana

*Louisiana's fragmented early childhood system led to Act 3 (2012), which calls for a unified system to ensure all children enter kindergarten ready.*



# Local Communities Lead the Way

## Community Network Pilots:

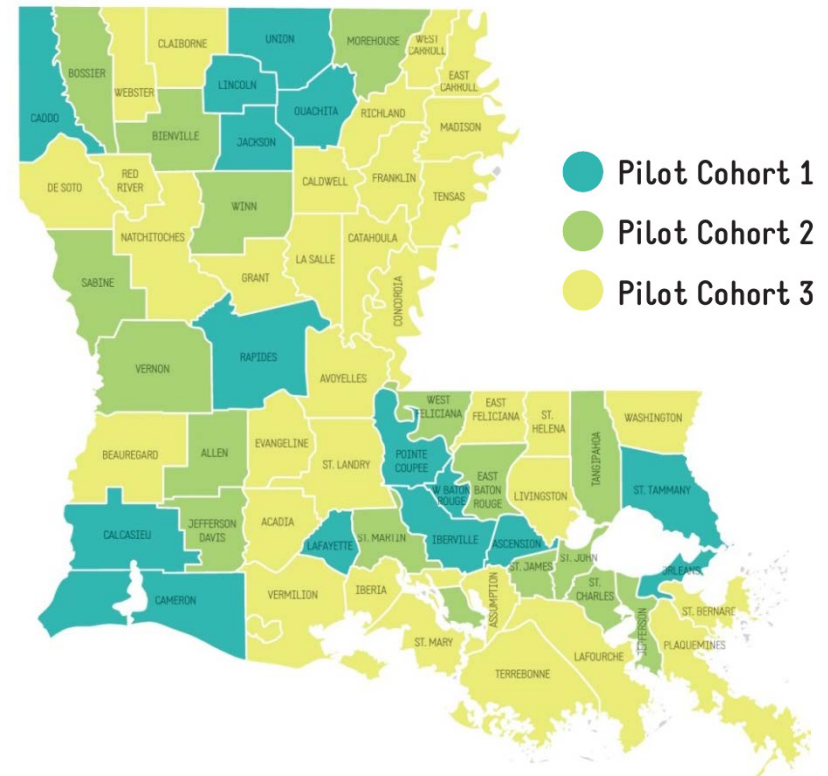
- Cohort 1 = 13 Networks (July 2013)
- Cohort 2 = 16 Networks (April 2014)
- Cohort 3 = 33 Networks (Jan. – March 2014)
- All parishes have opted in

## Each Community Network:

- Has a lead agency
- Includes all publicly-funded early childhood programs (child care, Head Start, PreK)

## Activities of Each Community Network:

- Account for every birth-to-age-5 at-risk child
- Assess and track progress of all children
- Observe every classroom and provide job-embedded PD for teachers based on the *CLASS* tool
- Implement coordinated enrollment
- Establish governance structure



# Bringing It All Together: Full Implementation

*Louisiana has made great progress since Act 3 was passed in 2012. Pilots have launched, communities have led the way, and important lessons have been learned.*

For full implementation by August 2015, Louisiana will ensure:

1. **Every community has its own Early Childhood Network Pilot**
2. **Policies are in place for a fully unified system**

## Unified Expectations

- All early learning centers operate under streamlined regulations with LDE license
- All publicly-funded programs are participating in the 2015-16 Learning Year for new unified quality rating and improvement system

## Supported Teachers

- Every teacher has access to ongoing training, feedback, and coaching to improve
- Teachers use scholarships to obtain CDA coursework at BESE-approved providers

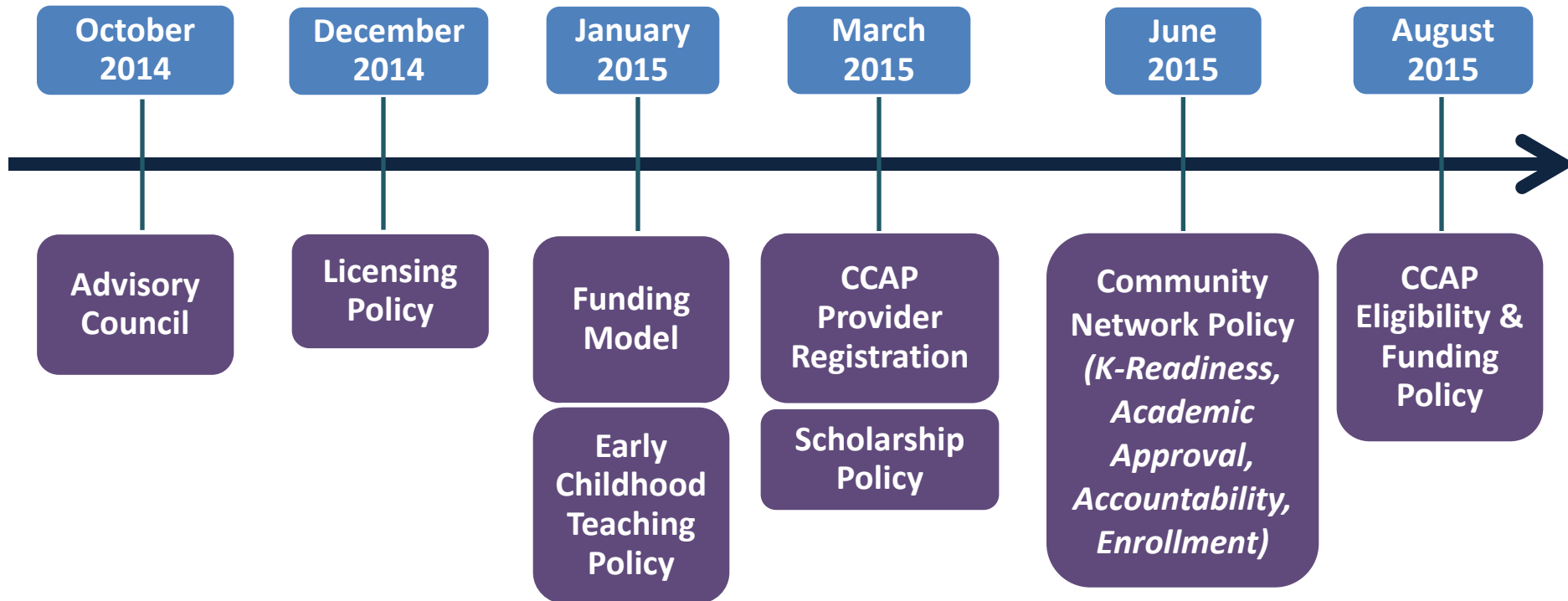
## Easier Enrollment for Families

- All communities are coordinating enrollment processes and applying for funding as networks for 2016-2017

3. **Funding is gradually increased to ensure families can choose a quality option for their children**

# Bringing It All Together: Policy Pathway

*Working closely with stakeholders and new Advisory Council, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) has reviewed a comprehensive set of policies in 2014-2015.*



*Network leaders have led local implementation and supported field through policy changes. For more, see new Early Childhood Guidebook at [www.louisianabelieves.com](http://www.louisianabelieves.com).*