



The future of New Orleans depends on our investment in our children. Expanded access to high-quality early care and education (ECE) will prepare our youngest learners for a smart start in life, enable families to be productive in the workforce, and serve as an economic engine for our region. As a leader in our community, you can appreciate the extraordinary 13% return on investment ECE provides to a community and understand the impact that gaps in child care have on workforce productivity.

- Employee absences and turnover costs due to child care issues cost Louisiana employers \$816 million a year
- Childcare issues result in a \$1.1 billion loss annually for Louisiana's economy
- Louisiana loses almost \$84 million annually in tax revenue due to lost workplace productivity
- Over 40 percent of workers with young children missed work in a 90-day period due to child care issues

There is enormous demand for publicly-funded early care and education programs in New Orleans as 83% of low-income families lack access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education.

In response to this need, the New Orleans Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and partners worked with Orleans Parish elected officials to increase the city's ECE funding from \$0 in 2017 to \$3M in 2020. The city's investment is now eligible for matching funds through Louisiana's Early Childhood Trust Fund, providing access to up to \$6 million for high-quality ECE for the children and families of New Orleans.

Our city's historic commitment to funding ECE is a victory for New Orleans families, yet more resources are needed. Our long-standing partners at the Entergy Charitable Foundation announced a \$300,000 challenge grant to allow the city to take full advantage of the state's match. Entergy reports "if [ECE is] fully funded at \$3.6 million, New Orleans would potentially be able to draw down the full state match and increase the number of children served to 500, a 40% increase over 2019 funding."

We ask that you consider a minimum gift of \$12,500 toward Entergy's match, which represents the average annual cost of a high-quality early care seat with wraparound social services for one child.

Our city's leaders raised the banner on this critical issue, and we are calling on you to join us by March 31, 2020, to make this challenge a success.

Your investment, leveraged with the city's allocation, the state's match, and Entergy's challenge grant, turns every \$1 into \$4 for early care and education for our most vulnerable children and families.

Thank you for partnering with us on this incredible opportunity to invest in the education and future well-being of our city. To join the challenge, visit EducateNolaChallengeGrant.org.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Michael Williamson.

Michael Williamson
United Way of
Southeast Louisiana
President and CEO

Handwritten signature of Jennifer Roberts.

Jennifer Roberts
Agenda for Children
President

Handwritten signature of Bill Hammack.

Bill Hammack
Link Restaurant Group
Partner

Handwritten signature of Pres Kabacoff.

Pres Kabacoff
HRI Properties
Co-Founder & Executive
Chairman, Board of Directors