

TRANSFORMING EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN BATTLE CREEK: TIMELINE



In the early 2010s, following years of disinvestment, diminishing resources and a shifting population, the early care and education system of Battle Creek, Mich., wasn't able to meet the needs of local families. With support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), community leaders, government, philanthropy, nonprofits and providers worked together as a coalition to reinvest in and reimagine the system. Over a decade, they transformed the system and tripled the number of children who started kindergarten ready to learn.

2012

A coalition of local philanthropic, government, nonprofit, private sector and community leaders came together to map out a vision for the city's early care and education system.

2013

The coalition focused on building an effective, efficient and equitable early care and education system in Battle Creek.

2014-2015

Michigan State University fielded surveys on community access to early care and education and analyzed the root causes of these gaps.

2017

The coalition expanded its focus to include supporting children's social and emotional well-being and developing the early care and education workforce.

2017

Battle Creek Public Schools (BCPS) developed the Kindergarten Success Program, a free, full-day summer learning program that helps incoming kindergartners build foundational skills in reading, math and social-emotional development.

2015-2016

The coalition launched an effort to share data among programs involved in the transformation.

2017

Pulse at the W.E. Upjohn Institute and the Calhoun Intermediate School District (CISD) began organizing early care and education leaders into Action Teams focused on specific goals and areas of work.

2017

The Action Teams launched Fast Five Surveys to expand organizations' capacity to gather data about families' lived experiences.

2017

Pulse and CISD launched the Calhoun County Home Visiting Hub to coordinate home visits with children and families across the county.

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2018-2019

Community Action Agency and a team of organizations — including Battle Creek Community Foundation, BCPS, Battle Creek Shared Services Alliance, Pulse, CISD, Child Care Resources, Kellogg Community College and Michigan Works! Southwest — piloted the ECE Educator Pipeline to improve marketing, access and support in order to strengthen and diversify the early care and education workforce.

2017

The Public Will Building Action Team (later known as the Early Childhood Jobs Systems Action Team) launched a shared marketing campaign to raise awareness of the importance of early care and education and share information about available slots.

2019

Early childhood leaders worked with Pulse to pilot a joint Data Carousel, which brought CISD and Head Start data together for community partners to review, provide feedback and explore possible strategies to address what was learned.

2019-2020

WKKF's Battle Creek program team identified kindergarten readiness as the north-star measurement of success for all investments in Battle Creek.

2021-2022

The coalition focused more deeply on connecting the formal and informal early care and education systems.

2020

Pulse began participating in the ECE Community of Practice, a statewide group led by Policy Equity Group, which brings together early care and education leaders and organizations across Michigan to align on policy and advocacy priorities.

2020

The coalition launched efforts to serve children and families virtually.

2021-2022

Pulse hosted the When Early Childhood Works, We All Work Summit to celebrate kindergarten readiness results, revisit collective efforts and focus on the early care and education workforce.

2023-2024

Battle Creek's kindergarten readiness data reached its highest point: 55%.

To learn more about how the Battle Creek community collaborated to transform its early care and education system, visit wkkf.co/battle-creek-kindergarten-readiness.