



## **Need for Enhanced Childcare**

- **West Virginia's lack of available and affordable high-quality childcare is placing significant strain on our state's workforce participation rate.**
  - **Workforce participation rate: 54.9% compared to the U.S. average of 62.6%**
  - **Female workforce participation rate: 49.5% - the lowest in the country.**
- **Only nine counties in the state have a licensed Early Childhood Education (ECE) capacity above 50% for students under the age of 6.**
  - **Twenty-four counties have less than 250 licenses slots, while twelve counties have less than 100 slots.**
- **The average cost of childcare in the state is approximately \$800 per month per child – unaffordable for many West Virginia families.**
  - **State subsidy does help with low-income families, but families who are above the income thresholds still struggle.**
- **Quality childcare also helps with children's educational success in the future.**
  - **West Virginia still ranks near the bottom of states in the critical indicators of 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading and Math.**
- **Things the state can do:**
  - **Implement Tri-Share across the state.**
  - **Expand tax credits for employers starting and operating their own childcare centers for their employees.**
  - **Incentivize individuals to work in childcare centers.**
  - **Allow childcare providers to bill the parents of subsidized children based on enrollment.**
  - **Adjust reimbursement schedule for subsidized children to be twelve equal months rather than based on the days in a month.**