

# Basin Collaborative Needs Assessment

08.25.2020

Basin School District

100 Centerville Road

Boise, ID 83631



## Overview

The Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children (AEYC) has been awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) to support and enhance early childhood systems. Basin School District was then selected by the Idaho AEYC to conduct a local needs assessment for our community and develop a strategic plan which would address the identified needs. Through this grant, the state is analyzing and building upon current systems to maximize parental choice, share best practices, and improve program quality with the goal of enhancing early learning systems statewide to improve literacy outcomes. As part of the PDG B-5 grant, Idaho AEYC is working to accelerate the efforts of local collaboratives, to bring together important local stakeholders to assess early learning systems, resources, and opportunities for families with young children (ages birth through five) in their community.

Basin School District is the fiscal agent for the PDG B-5 grant and has established an advisory committee composed of several key stakeholders including School administrators, school early childhood educators, Boise County Community Justice, Boise Basin Library, and local daycare providers. The advisory committee is working closely with other community groups and stakeholders to complete the needs assessment and develop the East Boise County strategic plan.

The Basin Advisory Committee has analyzed services that use a mixed delivery system—a system of early childhood care and education services that are delivered through a combination of programs, providers, and settings, such as licensed family and center-based child care programs, public schools, and other community-based organizations. This process began in May 2020 with assistance, support, and guidance from Idaho AEYC and ACS.

The data collected through the needs assessment process will be compiled at the state level. It will also be used to develop local and state-level strategic plans for phase two of the grant.

## Governance Structure

We recruited committee members that would represent key organizations and community support systems. The following were committee members.

Jamie Pilkerton, Basin Elementary Principal and Lead Project Manager

Cynthia Gilbert, Basin Elementary Kindergarten Teacher

Stacey Hofer, Basin Elementary Preschool Lead Teacher

Sarah Nelson, Basin Elementary Preschool Educator

Amanda Leader, Boise County Community Justice Resource Officer

Marcy Moore, Boise Basin Librarian

Maleesha Wilmoth, Idaho City Daycare

The committee met virtually four times from June through August to discuss possible community needs, to develop the survey, and to analyze the findings. As the committee analyzed the survey results and the other data collected, need statements were developed and possible strategies were discussed. Meeting notes were taken each time which included topics discussed as well as action items for committee members which were to be completed between meetings.


## Goals and Objectives

**Goals:** *Identify the strengths and needs of early childhood programs and services in East Boise County.*

- Identify current childcare and early childhood educational opportunities that currently exist in East Boise County.
- Identify barriers that families face in accessing quality childcare and early childhood programming.
- Identify how childcare, or lack thereof, impacts local employers and agencies. How does it impact recruiting and retaining high-quality employees?
- Identify how our current childcare system impacts the economic/financial security of local families.
- Work collaboratively with community members and organizations to develop a plan that would reduce barriers and provide a comprehensive early childhood system to fit the needs of our local community.
- Implement the strategic plan, if awarded phase 2 of the grant.

## Methodology

The committee developed a list of survey questions that were sent out to the community. Amanda Leader, Boise County Community Justice representative, and Jamie Pilkerton, Basin Elementary principal presented the questions to the Boise County Board of



Commissioners to ask for approval for sending the survey out through the county employee email system. Permission was granted and the survey was sent out to all Boise County employees. Additionally, Basin School District used its student information system to send a mass email to all families with children enrolled in the district. Sixty-four people responded to the survey ([East Boise County Childcare and Preschool Development Grant Needs Assessment Questionnaire](#)).

Additionally, the group researched various websites and pieces of data that described Boise County census data and demographic information. The following sites and pieces of data were collected.

- [Boise County Census Data from Census.gov](#)
- [ALICE - Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed Data for Boise County](#)
- Census Poverty Data for Title IA Federal Programs

## Key Findings

### General Description of East Boise County and the Basin School District

Basin School District is located 40 miles northeast of Boise in Idaho City and includes residents from four distinct communities within East Boise County (600 square miles). Beyond the school district, the county offices and the Boise National Forest Service, there are limited employment opportunities in East Boise County. A large percentage of the residents commute to Boise for employment, or they find employment locally in seasonal recreational jobs.

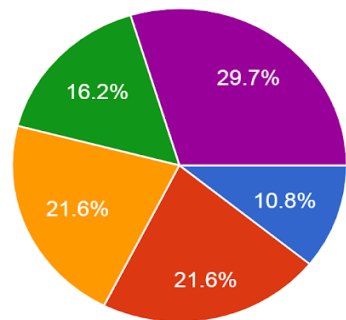
Basin Elementary is a Title I school with 43% - 52% (varies throughout the year) economically disadvantaged. Students live remotely (20 - 30 miles from Boise or Idaho City) and family supports and educational opportunities are not easily accessible. Basin School District takes great pride in being innovative, and one example is our school-based universal preschool which was initially funded through grants and then later Federal Forest Funds (Secure Rural Schools funding). Unfortunately, those funds have been significantly reduced, so we have maintained key elements by passing a series of supplemental levies which fund a portion of program costs. We have had to reduce the number of students served and charge a tuition fee (\$150 month). While it is much less expensive than typical programs, it creates a financial hardship for many families, and therefore, restricts access to a number of families that could benefit from an enriching early childhood program.

## Childcare Specific Findings

- There are no licensed daycare centers/programs in East Boise County.
- Over 85% of survey respondents said that finding childcare was difficult in East Boise County.

Rate the accessibility of childcare services in East Boise County.

37 responses

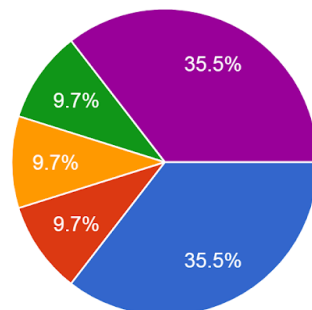


- I had no problems finding the type of childcare that was needed for my family.
- I had some difficulty finding the type of childcare that was needed for my family.
- It was difficult for me to find the type of childcare that was needed for my family.
- I was unable to find the childcare that was needed for my family.
- I had to seek childcare out of the East Boise County/Basin School District Area

- East Boise County lacks options for childcare which addresses the various types of childcare needed by families.
- A significant number of families have had to take their children outside of our local community in order to find childcare.

If you chose in Boise or Treasure Valley, was the decision based on:

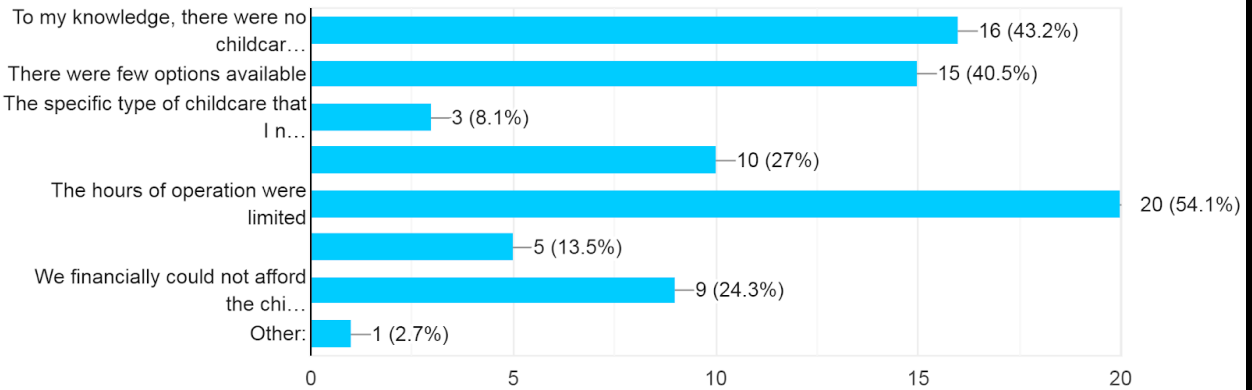
31 responses



- No childcare options were available in my area.
- The type of childcare that I needed was not available in my area.
- The quality of childcare available required me to take my child elsewhere.
- I was working in Boise or Treasure Valley so it was more convenient for me.
- I did not utilize childcare in Boise or Treasure Valley.

In looking for childcare in East Boise County, what barriers have you encountered? Check all that apply.

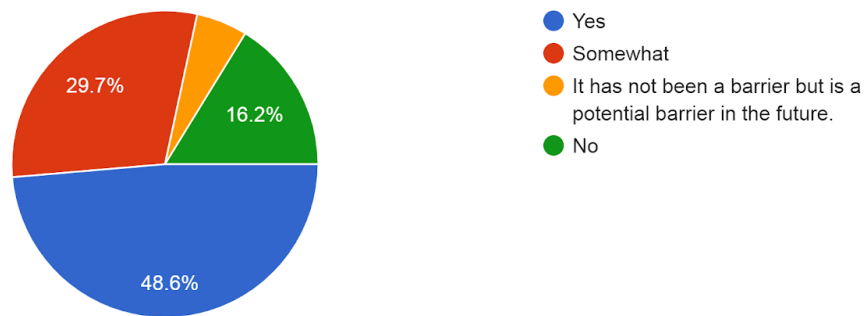
37 responses



- Over 50% of respondents reported that a lack of childcare was a barrier in seeking employment opportunities.

Was childcare a barrier for your family in making employment decisions?

37 responses

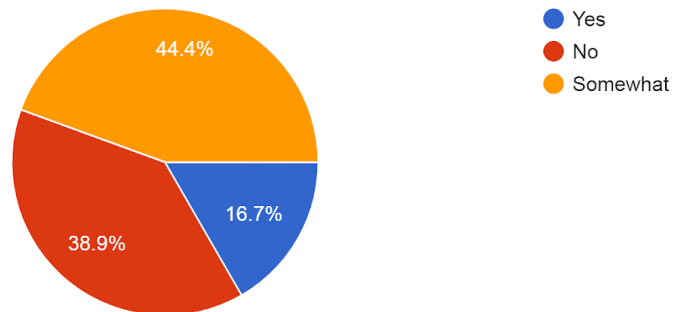


- Both the ALICE data and the community survey indicate that local families have difficulties accessing affordable childcare.
- While some of the ALICE and Census data look at the entire Boise County population, we did analyze two pieces of data that were specific to the Basin School District. The BSD free and reduced lunch count shows that between 43% and 52% of students qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch. The Title IA programming census data shows that the Basin School District has only 14.74% of the students living in poverty. The committee discussed that despite the low percentage of students

living in poverty according to the Title IA data, there are a number of families that struggle to make ends meet and to provide their children with quality childcare or early childhood education. Much of the district is rural and there are questions as to whether or not the census data fully captures some of the families due to mobility and doubled up housing arrangements.

Did cost make childcare inaccessible for your family?

36 responses



## IDAHO • 2018 COUNTY PROFILES



Counties are the core geography for ALICE data: They reveal variations often masked by statewide averages, and the data is reported regularly and reliably. Use the tool below to create a County Profile of key aspects of all counties in the state, including details related to county demographics, the cost of living, and the labor landscape.

### County Profile Tool



Boise

#### ALICE IN BOISE COUNTY

##### 2018 Point-in-Time-Data

<b>Population:</b>	7,163	<b>Number of Households:</b>	3,110
<b>Median Household Income:</b>	\$53,942 (state average: \$55,583)		
<b>Unemployment Rate:</b>	6.4% (state average: 4.0%)		
<b>ALICE Households:</b>	26.0% (state average: 28.0%)		
<b>Households in Poverty:</b>	11.0% (state average: 12.0%)		

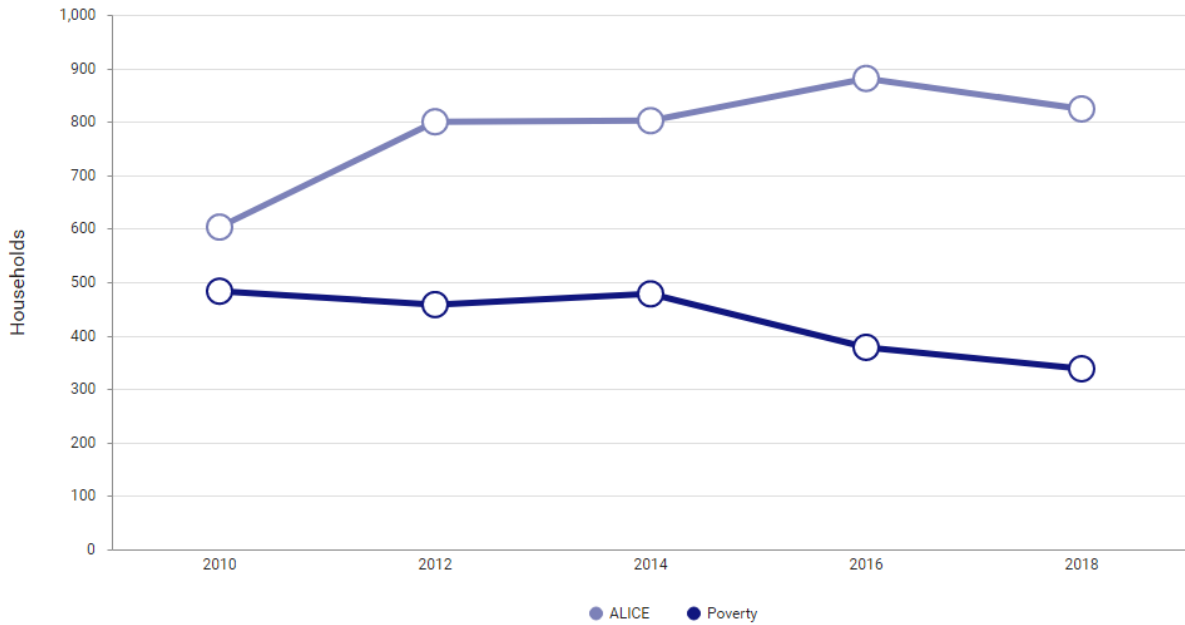
#### How Has the Number of ALICE Households Changed Over Time?

ALICE is an acronym for **ALICE** — **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed — households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county (the ALICE Threshold). While conditions have improved for some households, many continue to struggle, especially as wages fail to keep pace with the cost of household essentials (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan).



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### Boise County, Idaho, 2018

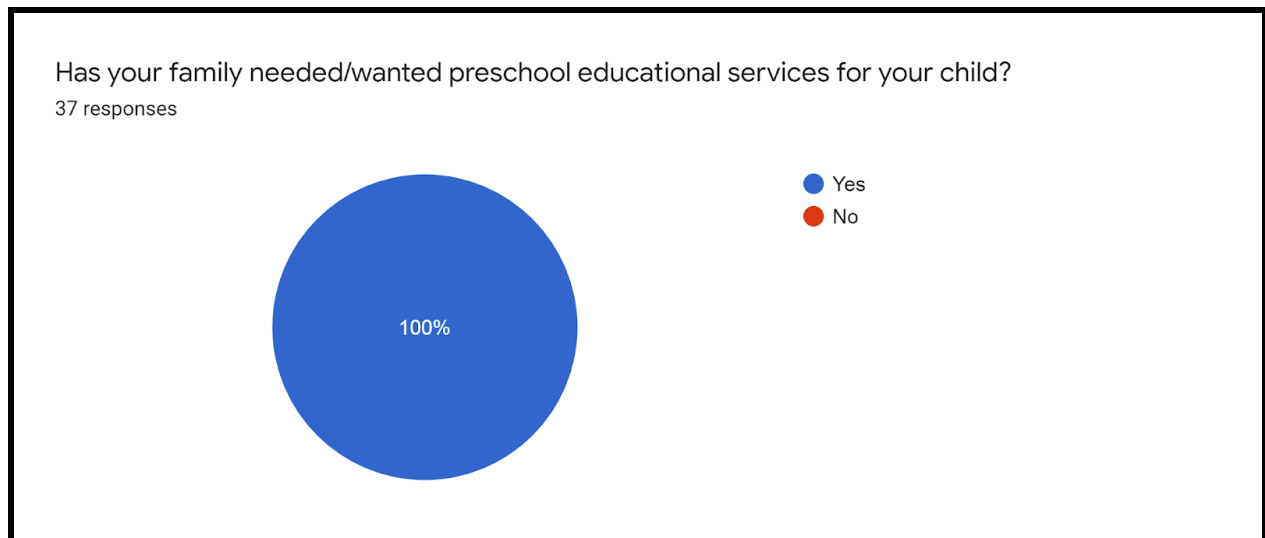
Zip Code	Total Households	% Below ALICE Threshold
ZCTA5 83622	886	35%
ZCTA5 83629	729	41%
ZCTA5 83631	422	50%



- Survey respondents had several suggestions for how to improve childcare and early childhood options in East Boise County (excerpt statements from comments on the survey).
  - Licensed Childcare Center
    - *A licensed, clean, professional, engaging early educational curriculum that prepares children for success.*
    - *A community center with a childcare program that might have a bilingual aspect to it.*
    - *A licensed facility that can pick up children from the school and provide them with a snack and a safe place to play, and/or do homework until their parents are off work is a huge need. I believe a lot of kids, that are probably too young to do so, go home on the bus and are alone until the evening. Parents are put in a difficult spot teetering between financial stability and their children being well cared for.*
    - *A childcare center is very much needed in East Boise County. It would need to be open early at 7 AM and stay open until at least 6 PM in order to serve parents that commute daily.*
  - Expanded Hours
    - *Something that is open year-round and not just on the school's schedule.*
    - *More hours at the Idaho City Daycare (at the school), for example, the option of staying open until 5 pm. Availability during evening school events.*
    - *I would love to see before and after school programs. I feel like it is a huge need, I have an older child that can participate in sports, but my younger child still had to take the bus home and coordinating transportation for both of them was a nightmare.*
    - *After school childcare hours.*
  - Affordable Options
    - *Something affordable with licensed providers that will be open for working parents on a realistic schedule.*
    - *Affordable and hours of operation.*

## Preschool Specific Findings

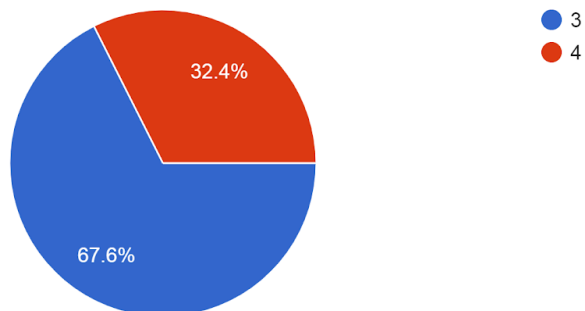
- The Basin School District has been operating since the fall of 1999 and is the only preschool program in East Boise County.
  - Program Description
    1. Follows the school district calendar from August through May
    2. Students attend three full days per week (8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.)
    3. Breakfast and lunch are provided. Students can purchase a lunch or bring their own.
  - Students Attending
    1. Offered to all 4-year-old students in the Basin School District
    2. Typically 15 - 25 students participate annually
    3. On average 2 - 4 of the preschool-aged students qualify for special education
  - Teacher Background and Education
    1. Preschool teachers do not hold an Idaho Teaching credential but they have extensive training provided by the school district and early childhood training programs.
    2. Preschool teachers and paraprofessionals earn between \$10 and \$20 per hour.
- Survey respondents indicated that preschool education and programming was a strong need within the community and a program that was valuable.



- The Basin School District preschool program only serves four-year-olds and special needs three-year-olds that qualify for special education services. However, the community recognizes a need for three-year-old preschool programming.

At what age would you like to send or have wanted to send your child to preschool?

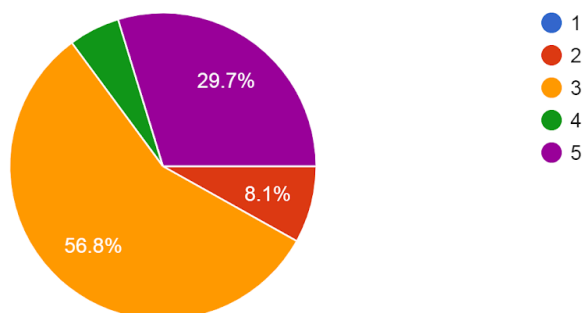
37 responses

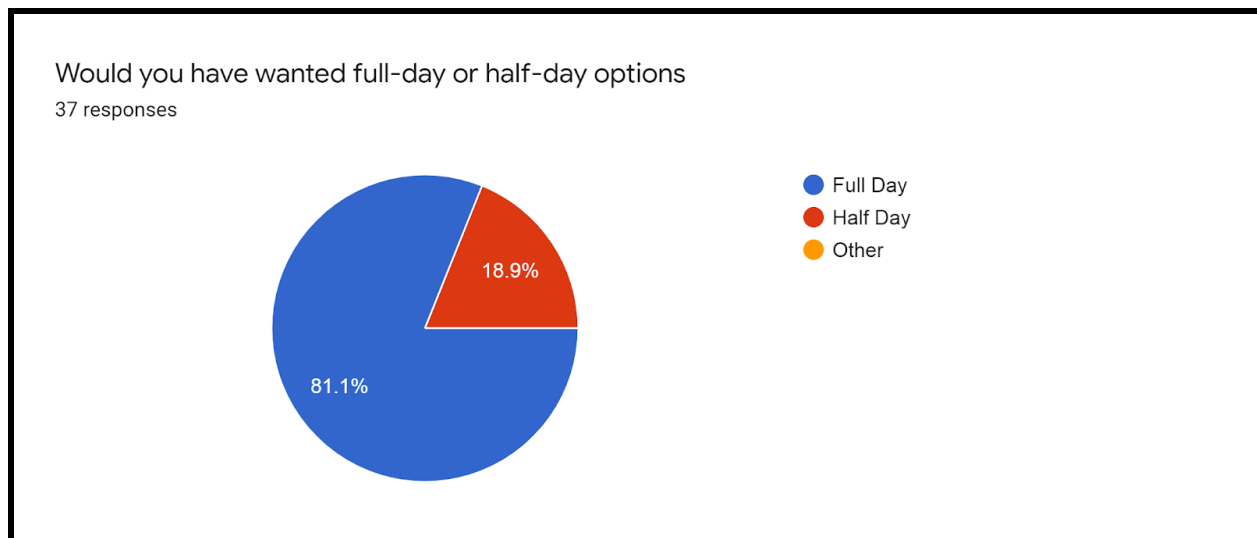


- Respondents also indicated that they would like a variety of options for preschool days and times.

How many days a week would you like to have or have wanted to have preschool services

37 responses





### Early Childhood Resources and Services Findings

- In the early 2000s, Boise County Community Justice had an outreach program for young families. The program included parent education programs, a resource kit with information on child development and programming as well as other services. This program was grant-funded and was discontinued when the funding was no longer available. Community members have expressed that having a similar program would be beneficial.
- The Boise Basin Library in Idaho City offers preschool and early childhood groups for parents and young children. However, they are not always attended regularly. They also offer after school programs for elementary-aged children.
- When survey respondents were asked, “What ideas do you have for services or resources available to families for early childhood education or enrichment (groups, parent resources, programs, etc.)?” they gave the following suggestions.
  - At-home programs
  - Parent Groups
  - Parenting Workshops
  - Play Groups



## ● Needs Statements

- Based on the rural status of our district/area, many families do not know about or know how to access community resources in our area (childcare, preschool, medical, WIC, child development resources). We need a resource directory as well as a way to distribute this information to families.
- Since East Boise County does not have a licensed childcare center or a licensed in-home daycare, parents need childcare services and options that are offered locally.
- Based on our poverty and ALICE Data, many families are not able to afford quality childcare. We need childcare programs that offer ICCP programming to assist families that live below the ALICE or poverty threshold.
- Early childhood education plays a crucial role in preparing children for kindergarten and beyond. Without high-quality childcare and preschool education, many of the East Boise County children would not have access to reading materials and resources within their own homes. We need a high-quality childcare center and programming for families.
- While preschool services are offered to four-year-olds in the Basin School District, there is a need for three-year-old services as well as other enrichment learning opportunities and support.
- There is a need to have parent and community involvement in developing parent workshops/classes and community-based programs for children ages 0 - 5.