FAIRFAX COUNTY
VIRGINIA



Beyond the Bell Pilot Update

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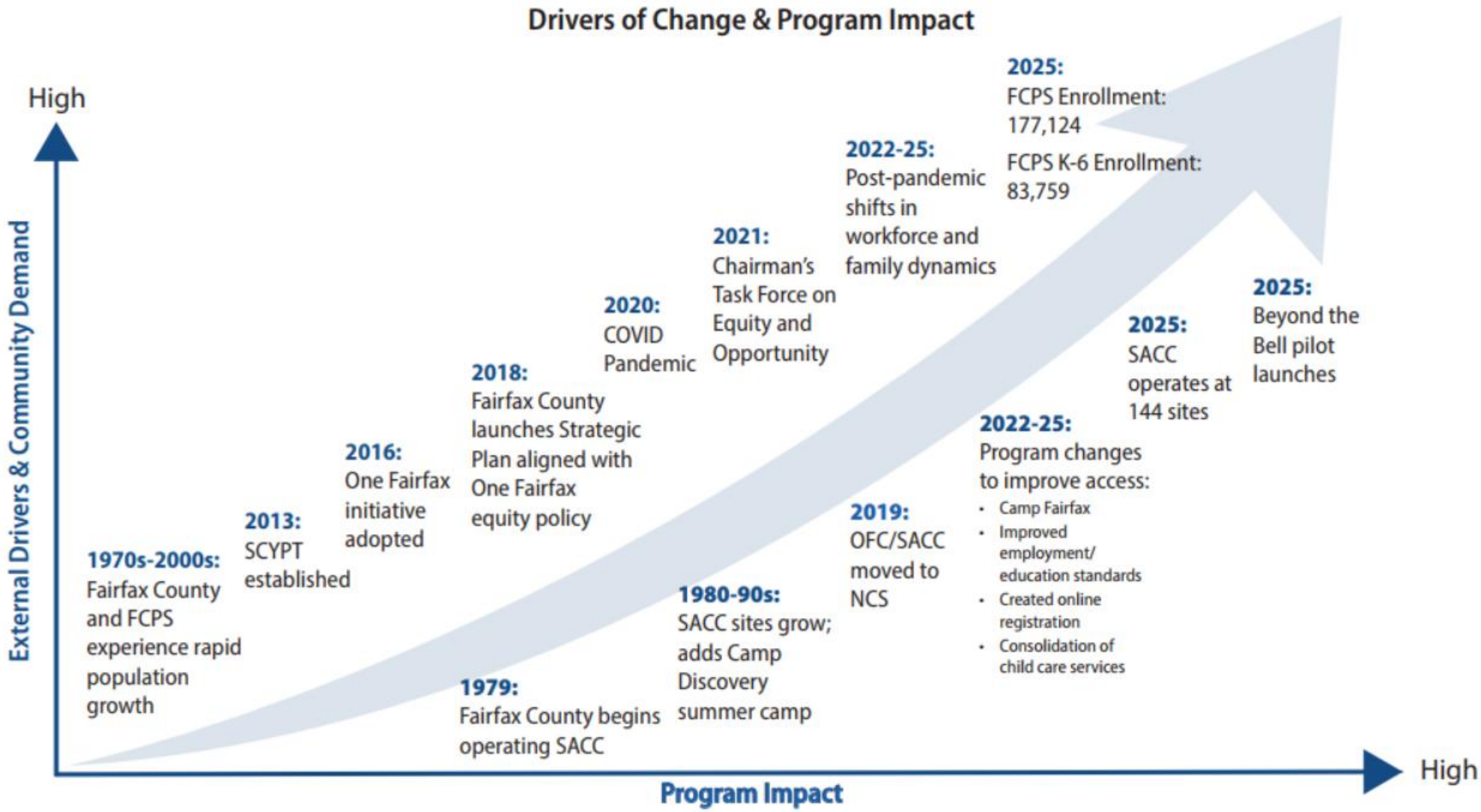
June 16, 2026

Fairfax County
Neighborhood and Community Services

Fairfax County School Age Child Care Programs



Drivers for Beyond The Bell Pilot

FOCUS	Chairman's Task Force Strategies	NCS Drivers
Access	**Universal Access**: Families have access to high-quality affordable care	**Unmet Demand**: Eliminate high child care waitlist & evolving student demographics
Workforce	**Economic Mobility**: Expand childcare options for parents' full participation in local workforce	**Staffing**: Respond to the urgent need to recruit and retain workforce
Equity	**Targeted Resources**: Align resource with One Fairfax and distribute to aid high-vulnerable areas	**Affordability & Access**: Close gaps in family income and care options
Quality	**Professional Growth**: Universal training for educators to guarantee uniform standards	**Program Standards**: Measure and raise quality of care through VDOE standards and certify staff
Space	**Facility Distribution**: Placing assets in high-need areas and establishing public-private partnerships (FCPS)	**Space Constraints**: Address physical limits on FCPS building capacities

Beyond the Bell Pilot Operational Cycle

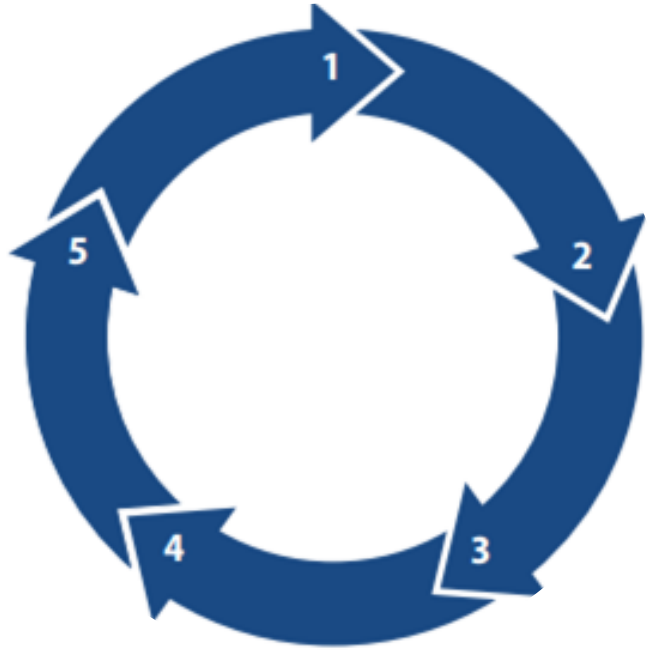
The structured operational actions established to design, test and evaluate a sustainable framework.

INITIATE

VDOE license-exempt standards analysis
School selection criteria
Uncompromising quality standards

PLAN

Align infrastructure with evolving system need
Address identified system gaps
Optimize assets to meet operational demands



ENGAGE & EVALUATE

Ongoing staff & family feedback
Infrastructure gaps & opportunity analysis
Forecast and trends

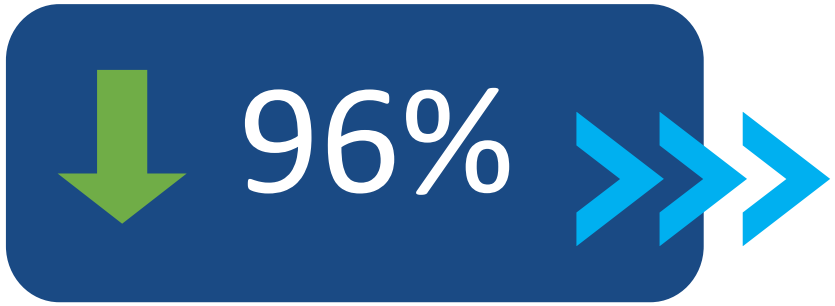
DESIGN & ANALYZE

Access expansion
Leadership oversight & governance
Design driven & informed by data

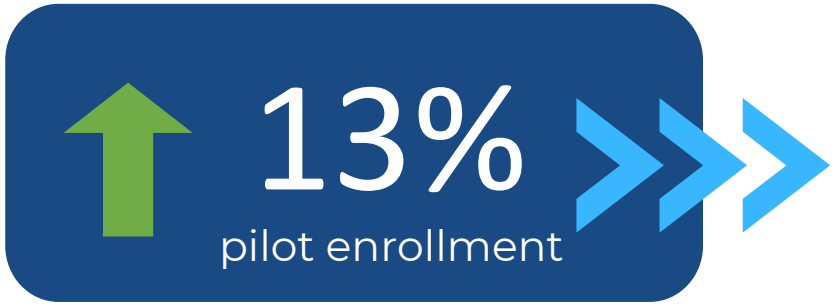
EXECUTE

Bypass administrative bottlenecks
Enrich & protect youth
System overhaul

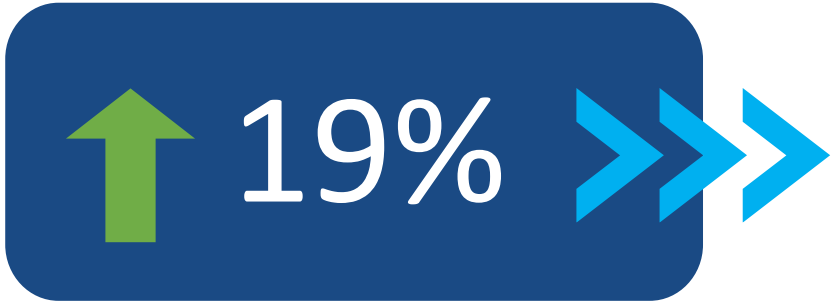
Pilot Program Successes



Waitlist Reduction
Average of 94% Before Care and 98% After Care



Maximized Capacity
✓Increased enrollment
✓Staff acquisition efficiencies



Financial Assistance
Increase in percentage of pilot families using sliding fee scale

Numbers reflects pilot site comparison from October 2025 to April 2026.

Key Pillars of Optimization

UNIVERSAL DESIGN & NEURO-INCLUSION

Advance a proactive approach to inclusion by embedding responsive supports that address the diverse needs of children across the program.

CERTIFIED CREDIBILITY

Strengthen program infrastructure by advancing accreditation and credentialing efforts that promote high standards of quality, safety and accountability.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

Create clear pathways for upward mobility through integrated training, certifications and professional development.

EXPANDED ACCESS TO CHILD CARE

Broaden program access through increased sliding fee scale utilization, targeted community outreach and strategic expansion of available classroom capacity.

Strengthening Supports for All Children

Beyond the Bell expands access while upholding Fairfax County and NCS' commitment to high-quality child care through rigorous standards, strong accountability, and an unwavering focus on the safety and well-being of children and staff.

QUALITY

Deliver engaging, inclusive and developmentally-appropriate programs that support every child's learning, development and well-being.

- Individualized & Purposeful Programming
- Neuro-Inclusion & Behavior Support
- Data-Driven Intervention
- Operational Accountability
- Community Responsiveness

SAFETY

Create safe, secure environments where children feel protected, supported and valued

- Proactive Behavioral Frameworks
- Standardized Field Operations
- Rigorous Infrastructure Compliance
- Modernized Hazard Oversight

STANDARDS

Establish consistent and transparent standards and accountability practices to ensure excellence and build trust with families, staff and the community.

- Streamlined Family Onboarding
- Equitable Access Tracking
- Continuous Compliance & Quality Audits
- Next-Generation Workforce Development

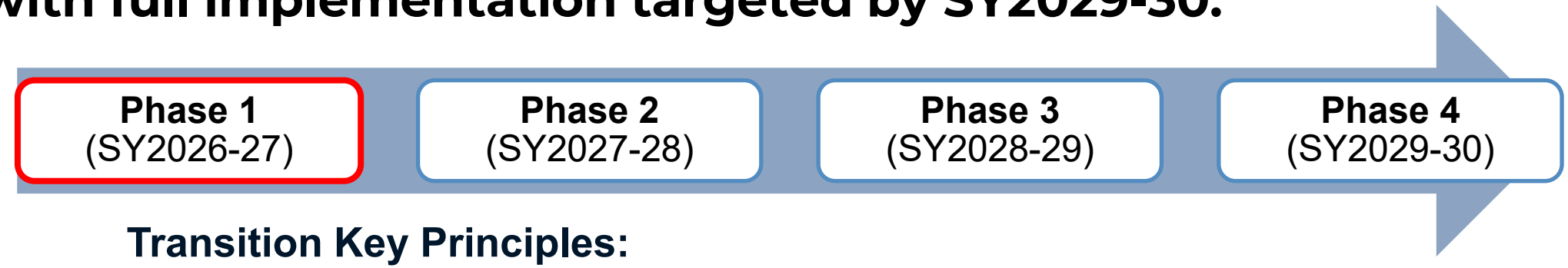
Child Care System Crisis in Fairfax County

To meet the evolving needs of children, families and staff, Fairfax County must build a more accessible, inclusive, sustainable and responsive child care system that:

- Aligns child care supply to meet demand
- Advances inclusive care for neurodiverse children
- Improves affordability and equitable access
- Prioritizes reliable, high-quality care
- Strengthens cross-agency coordination & support
- Optimizes staff-to-student ratios
- Offers a scalable and sustainable service delivery model

Beyond the Bell Pilot Transition

Phased transition of SACC sites to Beyond the Bell program with full implementation targeted by SY2029-30.



Transition Key Principles:

- Maintain collective impact partnership with FCPS
- Maintain school selection criteria and BOS district alignment
- Rely on data-informed monitoring and reporting
- Institutionalize and enhance operational infrastructure and program supports
- Prioritize continuous quality improvement and accountability
- Boost community awareness, access and outreach
- Ensure long-term program sustainability

Beyond the Bell Program Investment

Phase 1
(SY2026-27)

Program Expansion Investment:
Allocation of 18 positions, resources for food, training and operational supplies will support program success.

Return on Investment (ROI):
Costs will be fully offset by revenue generated from serving additional children.

Funding of Investment:
Resource approval will be sought through the FY 2026 Carryover Review.

Questions/Discussion






“Students need strong supports both inside and outside of the classroom to reach their fullest potential, and programs like **Beyond the Bell** do exactly that. By successfully increasing access to childcare before and after school, this program provides all families with more stability that translates to stronger academic performance in the classroom. Learning happens best in community, and we’re fortunate our Fairfax community includes strong student programs like **Beyond the Bell** – together, all things are possible!”

Michelle Reid, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Fairfax County Public Schools

FCPS