

Background: Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) Helping Community College Student-Parents, Kids, and Our Economy

The USA's Changing Economy Needs Education Beyond High School

- By 2031, [72 percent of jobs](#) will require postsecondary education or training beyond high school. Increasing completion for all college students is an economic imperative for filling new jobs in each congressional district – and keeping them there.
- Community college graduates earn **over \$400,000 more over their lifetime than high school graduates** – and pay more in taxes back to the economy.

Today's College Students Are Not Like Days of Old

- Today, **1 in 5** undergraduates are parenting students.
- **More than 4 million college students** are not only juggling classes, papers, labs, finals, transportation, food, and housing, but also must cover childcare costs.
- Federal student aid may be used for tuition, fees, and living expenses – but it doesn't cover the cost of childcare.
- Parenting students are highly motivated to complete a degree and earn a brighter future for themselves and their families: **student parents have a higher average GPA, but are one-tenth as likely to complete a BA** in five years than non-parenting students.
- **Nearly half of parenting students are military-connected.**

Childcare is Essential for Parenting Students' College Completion and Wage Growth

- Childcare is essential for parenting students to get to class on time, study for coursework, and attend office hours, while ensuring their kids are safe and taken care of.
- [Mothers](#) who return to college can increase earnings by more than \$2,700 annually.
- Those that finish their degree see a wage increase of nearly \$9,000 per year.

High Quality Early Education Helps Kids, the Economy, and the Taxpayer

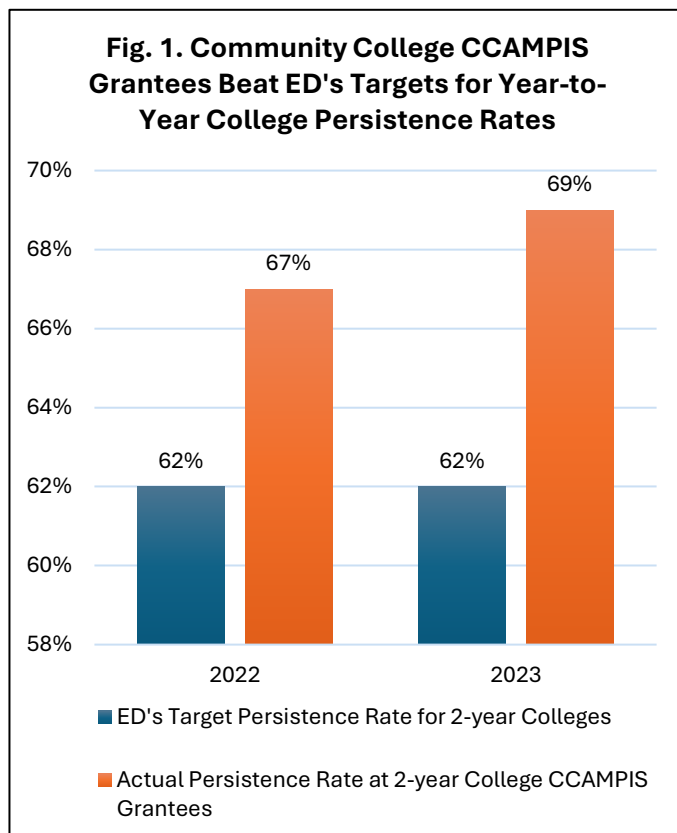
- **80 percent of a child's brain development** happens before they turn three, and 90 percent happens by age five.
- Kids of parenting college students who finish a degree have higher test scores, and are [38 percent more likely](#) to earn a college degree themselves.
- **Decades of research show: high-quality early learning and care can yield a return of \$4 for every \$1 invested**, because it helps young children enter kindergarten ready to learn and avoid falling behind, identifies special needs early, reduces special education costs, prevents dropout and crime, and reduces social services later in life.

The Federal CCAMPIS Program – Helping Parenting Students Complete College

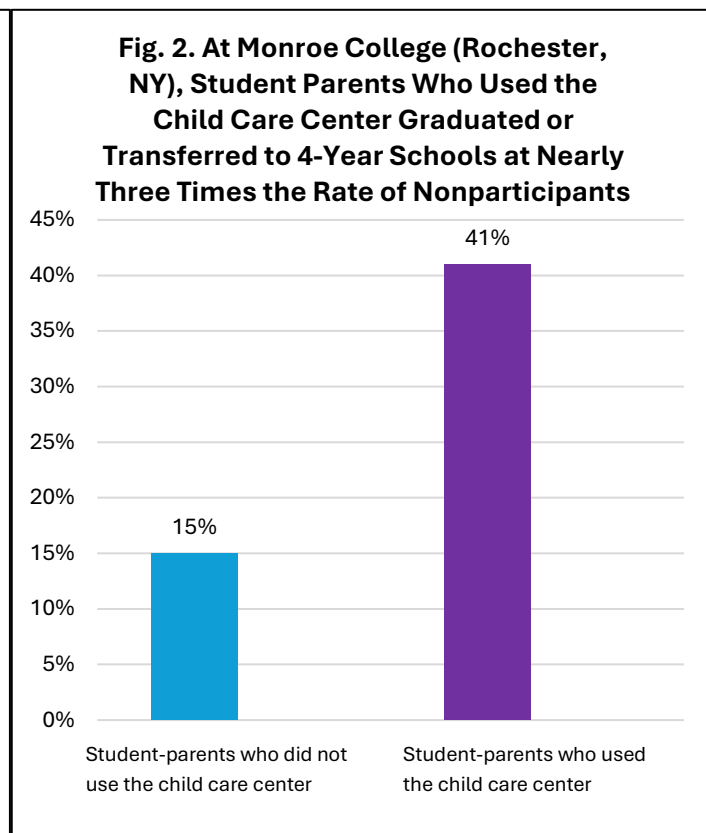
- Despite the huge demand for child care for parenting students, **only 36 percent of two-year institutions are able to provide on-campus child care.**
- Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) is a bipartisan U.S. Department of Education (ED) program that provides four-year grants to colleges so they can help parenting students afford childcare.
- The grants are highly competitive, so only the strongest plans win.
- Colleges may use CCAMPIS funds to operate or improve on-campus childcare centers or before- or after-school programs, or help students find childcare in the community.
- To be eligible, students must be parenting and be eligible for a Pell Grant (low-income).
- **CCAMPIS serves more than 4,000 students at more than 250 grantee institutions.**
- To view the **list of CCAMPIS community college grantees and funding levels by state and congressional district**, click [here](#). For a list of all institutions, click [here](#). For state totals, click [here](#).
- Unfortunately, due to limited federal funding, **CCAMPIS is only able to serve about 1 in 1,000 parenting college students.**

CCAMPIS – Life-Changing Results for Community College Persistence and Completion

- CCAMPIS has very strong results.
- ED sets targets for program performance each year. In the most recent data, community college CCAMPIS grantees beat ED's targets for year-to-year persistence.
- Community college CCAMPIS grantees had a year-to-year **persistence rate of 67 percent in 2022 and 69 percent in 2023**, compared to ED's target rate of 62 percent. (See Figure 1.)
- Separately, a study of Monroe Community College in Rochester, NY found that students using the child care center on campus were **almost three times as likely to graduate or transfer to a four-year college**, compared to parenting students who were unable to participate. (See Figure 2)



Source: ED Budget Justifications [FY26](#)

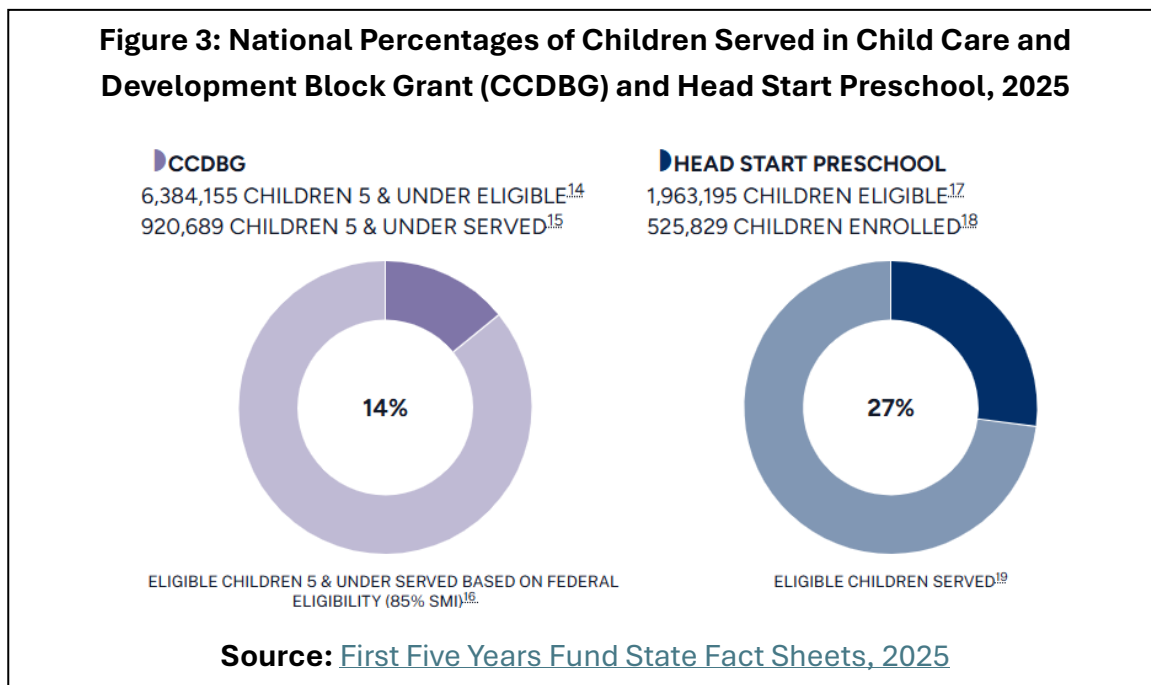


Source: Monroe College Institutional Research Office via [IWPR](#)

CCAMPIS – Effective, Well-Targeted, and Distinct from Other Child Care Programs

- The ED budget [request](#) and the House’s ED spending [bill](#) for FY26 **eliminate CCAMPIS**.
- ED and the House bill claimed CCAMPIS is “duplicative” of other childcare programs:
 - **Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG or “block grant”)** - formula grants to states, then subsidies to low-income parents to find childcare services. The block grant is also a critical program, but is significantly underfunded: [fewer than 1 in 6 eligible children](#) under age five can get childcare through a CCDBG subsidy.
 - **Head Start:** Grants to local providers for childcare and wraparound services. Thanks to a new partnership with ACCT and the National Head Start Association, some Head Start centers are now co-located on campus! To learn more, visit [KidsonCampus.org](#). Still, only [1 in 4 children](#) eligible for Head Start can get a spot in any Head Start preschool, so targeted CCAMPIS funding for parenting students remains critical.
 - Note: the ED budget proposal and the House bill both provide flat funding for CCDBG and Head Start in FY26, without increases to make up for eliminating CCAMPIS.

- States and communities vary widely in their level of access to Head Start and block grant-subsidized providers, and many parents face long waitlists. (See Figure 3.)



- Even if parents are lucky enough to get a CCDBG subsidy or a Head Start spot, the providers are often across town or open at inconvenient times for the reality of parenting college students who are juggling work and college.
- In contrast, **CCAMPIS provides parenting students with childcare support at a convenient time and location for the campus, plus a community of parenting students to support college completion.**
- Instead of an “either-or” approach to these effective early childhood programs, our nation’s students and workforce need a “both-and” approach to critical childcare supports. CCAMPIS is carefully adapted to parenting students, and needs more support.

Supporting Parenting College Students: A Longtime Bipartisan Effort in Congress

- Congress enacted CCAMPIS in the [Higher Education Amendments of 1998](#), with **Senators Susan Collins (R-ME)**, Dan Coates (R-IN), Mike DeWine (R-OH), Chris Dodd (D-CT), and Ted Kennedy (D-MA) joining Jim Jeffords (then R-VT) as original cosponsors.
- That year, the [House bill](#) was led by **Ed-Workforce Chairman Buck McKeon (R-CA)**, with cosponsors including Reps. Bill Goodling (R-PA), William Lacy Clay (D-MO), Mike Castle (R-DE), Ruben Hinojosa (D-TX), Fred Upton (R-MI), and Jim Greenwood (R-PA).
- Senators **Collins** and **Patty Murray (D-WA)** remain strong supporters of CCAMPIS funding today as Chair and Vice Chair of the Appropriations Committee.
- **Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Lori Chavez DeRemer (R-OR, now Secretary of Labor)** signed public letters supporting annual funding for CCAMPIS, joining CCAMPIS champions **Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Rep. Bill Foster (D-IL).**
- **Rep. Nathaniel Moran (R-TX) and Rep. Katherine Clark (D-MA)** introduced [Republican](#) and [Democratic](#) bills to preserve and strengthen CCAMPIS

- The Senate four times unanimously passed a [bipartisan resolution](#) by **Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Tom Carper (D-DE)** supporting September as the National Parenting Students Month. (ACCT [celebrated](#) the month this year as well, highlighting Kids On Campus childcare partnerships with community colleges.)

Preserve and Strengthen CCAMPIS – For Our Nation’s Economic Competitiveness

- Instead of a short-sighted FY26 cut to the effective CCAMPIS program, **Congress can look ahead to support America’s parents, kids, and our economic growth.**
- This summer ED cancelled 20 CCAMPIS grants, without a chance to revise applications. ED also did not run a FY25 competition, abruptly ending services for [over 100 grants](#) with no chance to reapply. In the next FY26 bill/CR, Congress should require ED to do a new competition and provide continuation funds until the next awards.
- For more information, contact PublicPolicy@ACCT.org or visit acct.org/advocacy



L: **Michaela** and her kids, participants in **North Central Michigan College** CCAMPIS program. (Photo credit: North Michigan Community College – Early Learning Center ([See video](#)));
R: [Borough of Manhattan Community College Early Childhood Center](#)

For questions on this piece or on CCAMPIS, please contact the ACCT Government Relations team at publicpolicy@acct.org

This piece was authored by Jonathan Elkin for ACCT - [LinkedIn](#) - [Uniting for Student Success, LLC](#)