The Data Capacity of State-Funded Pre-K Programs Across the United States

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The Early Childhood
DATA
Collaborative

Child Trends.

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Agenda

- Introduction
- State-funded Pre-K Data Survey methods and findings
- Additional resources
- Action steps
- Questions

Introduction

Early Childhood Data Collaborative

The **Early Childhood Data Collaborative** (ECDC) promotes policies and practices to support policymakers' development and use of coordinated state early care and education (ECE) data systems.

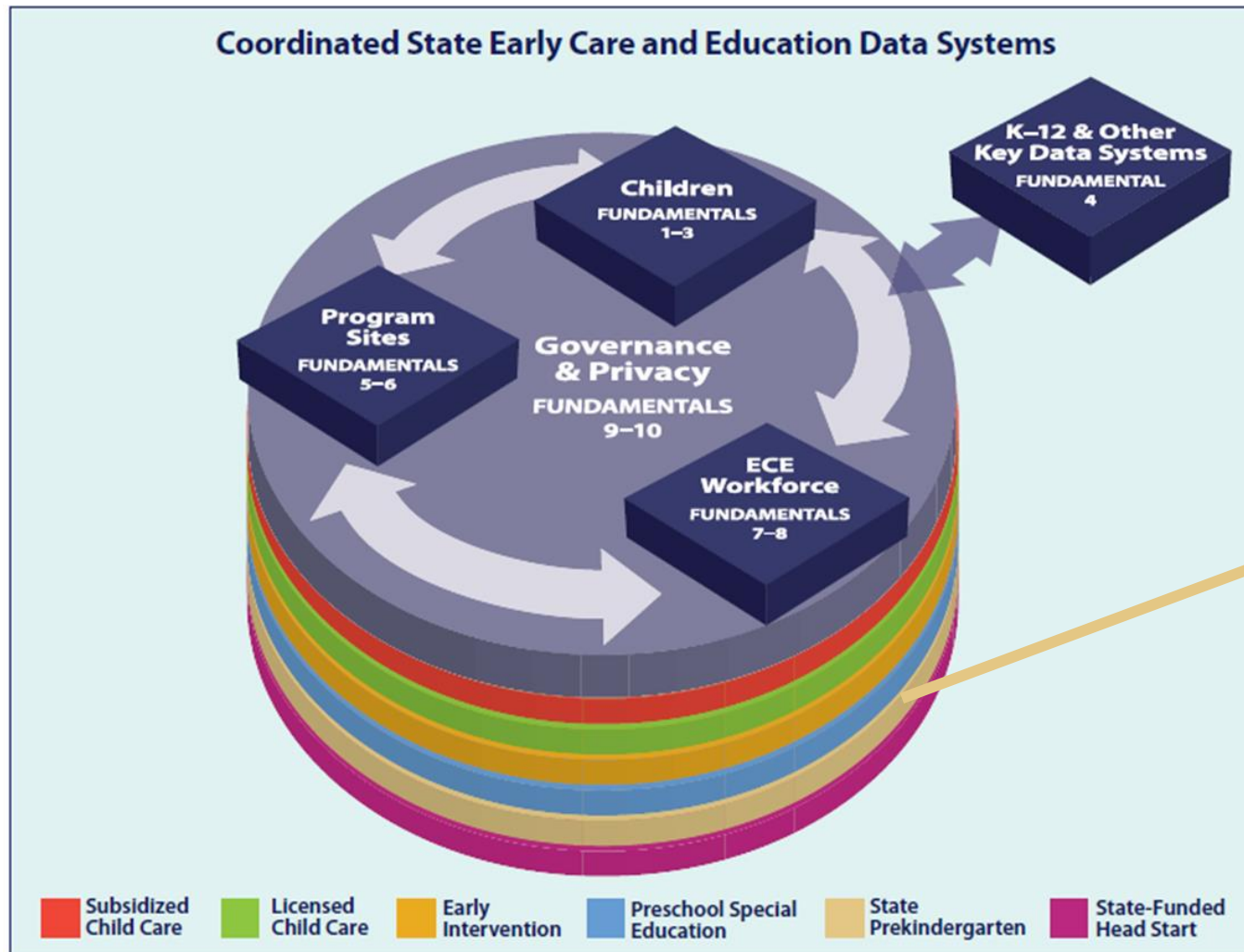**Effective use of data systems will help policymakers improve:**

- Access to high-quality programs
- Program quality
- ECE workforce quality
- Child outcomes

Equity Policy concerns:

- Equal access to high quality early childhood programs
- Preschool expulsion
- Equity for early learning professionals
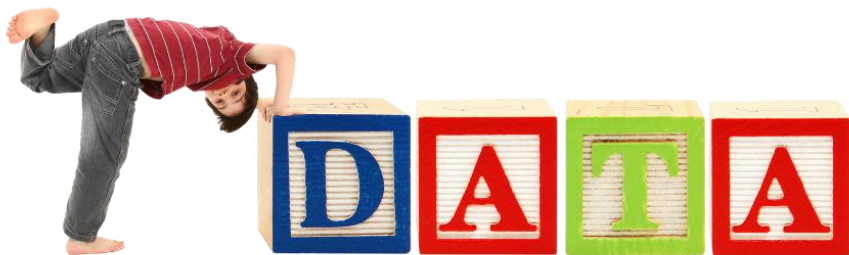
Early Childhood Data Landscape

Why are preschool data accessibility and infrastructures important?

Early care and education are fragmented, with multiple agencies at different levels (state and local) serving preschool-aged children in various settings (center-based, home-based, pre-K, etc.).

SCHOOL

CHILD CARE CENTER

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME

HOME WITH CAREGIVER

FAMILY, FRIEND, NEIGHBOR

Survey Design

Understand states' data capacity, infrastructure, and ability to use data

Data access and quality

Data uses and users

Data infrastructure and linking

Data storage

Developed in tandem with the STEP Forward with Data Framework
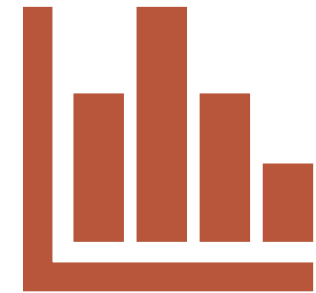
Distribution and Sample

Survey fielded: December 2022 - March 2023

Sent to multiple pre-K contacts within the 45 states

Received 39 survey responses from 35 states

Final sample: 43 states (35 survey responses + 8 states using public data)

Key Findings

- Data access and quality
- Data uses and users
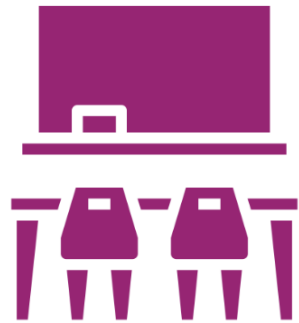- Data infrastructure and linking
- Data storage

Data Access

Data Access and Quality

93% of states had access to child-level data

93% of states had access to program-level data

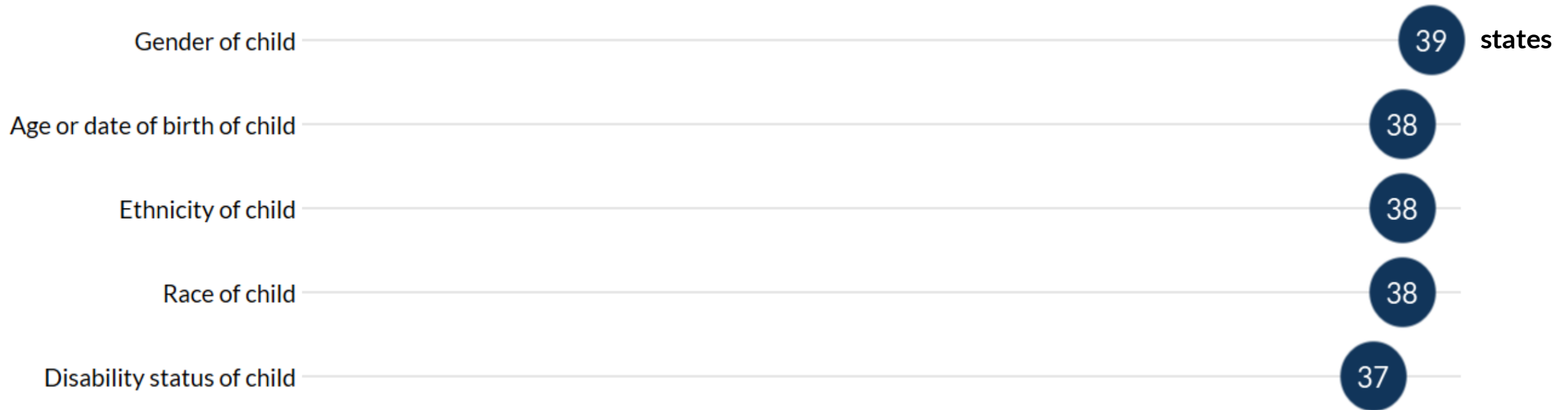**74% of states had access to workforce-level data**

84% of states could report on system-level data

Data quality concerns were raised across all data collected

What were the most accessible child-level data elements?(n=40)

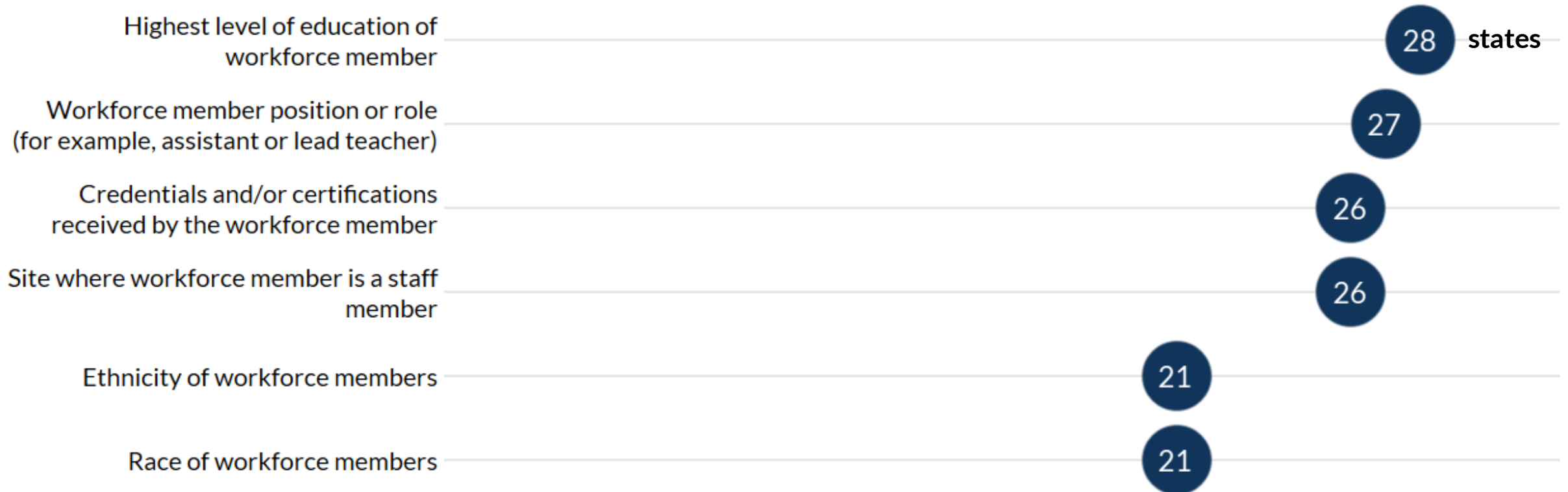93% of states had access to child-level data.

Gender of child	39 **states**
Age or date of birth of child	38
Ethnicity of child	38
Race of child	38
Disability status of child	37

What were the most accessible program-level data elements? (n=40)

93% of states had access to program-level data.

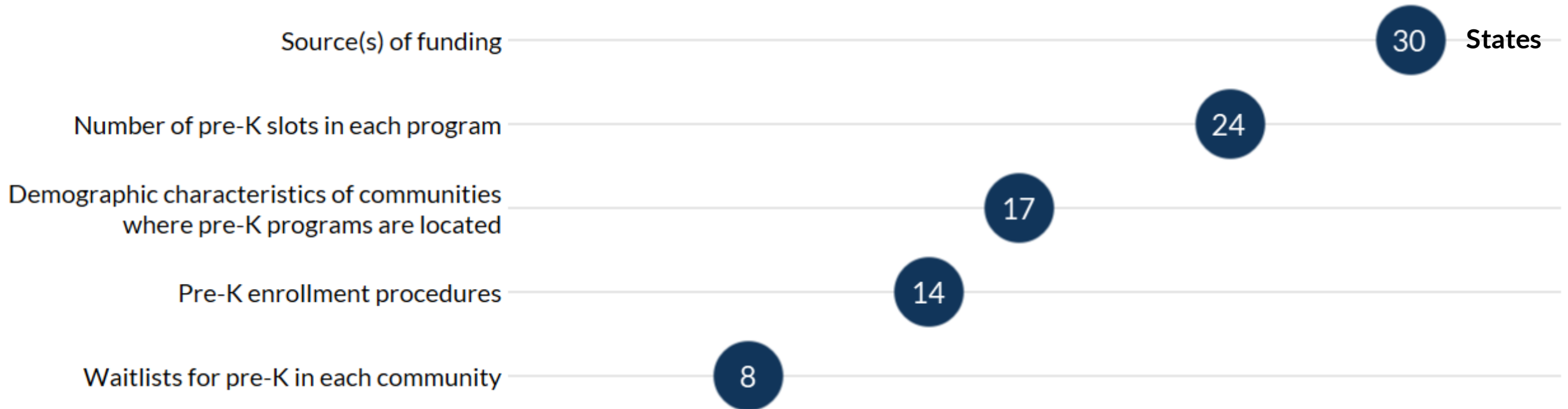|		states
Site or grantee location	38	
Ages of children served	37	
Funding per child	29	
Curriculum used	24	
Provision of services for children with a disability or developmental delay	23	

What were the most accessible workforce-level data elements? (n=32)

74% of states had access to child-level data.

Highest level of education of workforce member — **28 states**

Workforce member position or role (for example, assistant or lead teacher) — 27

Credentials and/or certifications received by the workforce member — 26

Site where workforce member is a staff member — 26
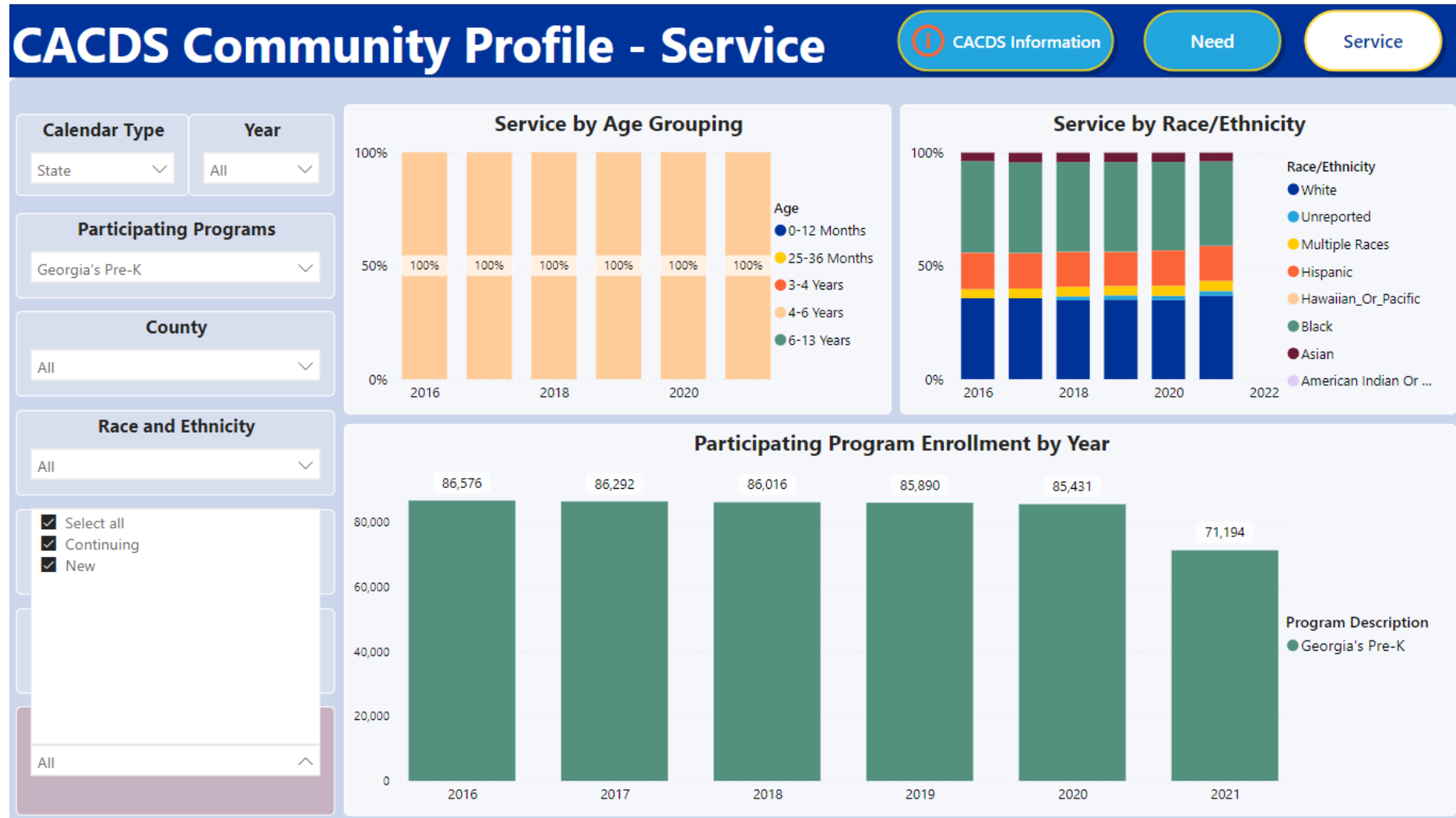
Ethnicity of workforce members — 21

Race of workforce members — 21

What were the most accessible system-level data elements? (n=36)

84% of states had access to system-level data.

Source(s) of funding — 30 **States**

Number of pre-K slots in each program — 24

Demographic characteristics of communities where pre-K programs are located — 17

Pre-K enrollment procedures — 14

Waitlists for pre-K in each community — 8

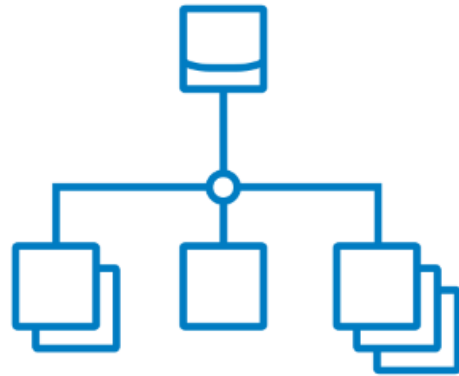# Georgia's Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS)

Data Uses and Users

Data Disaggregation

83% of states can disaggregate data by child and family characteristics

Less than half of states can disaggregate by income, tribal affiliation, and country of birth
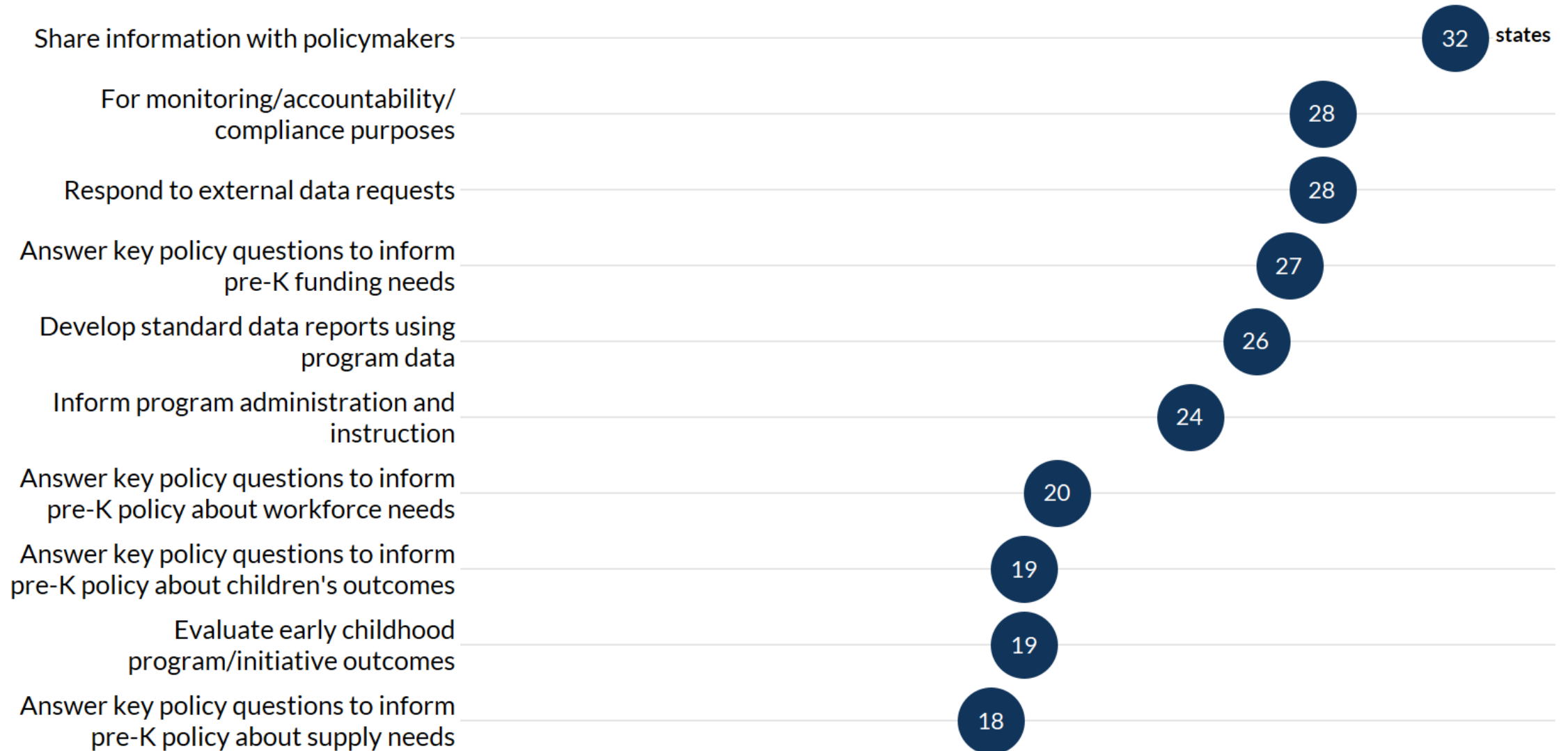
47% of states can report on their community demographics; 17% can report on families' needs.
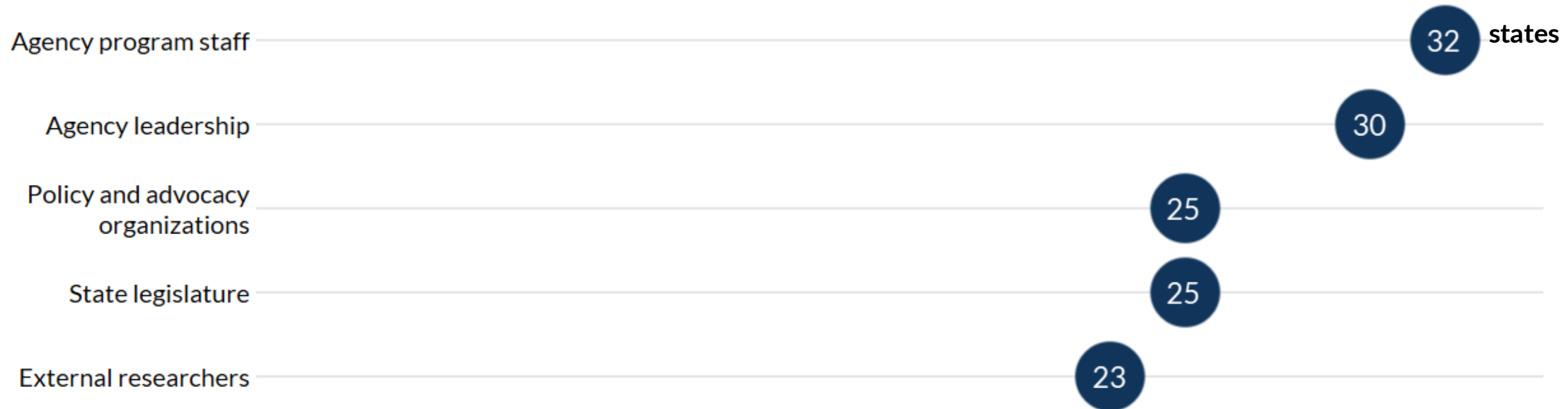
Can states disaggregate data by child and family characteristics? (n=35)

Characteristic	States
Child race/ethnicity	29 states
Child disability status	27
Family languages spoken	19
Family income	17
Family tribal affiliation	8
Child country of birth	7
Other	4
Data cannot be disaggregated	3

How do respondents use pre-K data? (n=35)

Use	States
Share information with policymakers	32 states
For monitoring/accountability/compliance purposes	28
Respond to external data requests	28
Answer key policy questions to inform pre-K funding needs	27
Develop standard data reports using program data	26
Inform program administration and instruction	24
Answer key policy questions to inform pre-K policy about workforce needs	20
Answer key policy questions to inform pre-K policy about children's outcomes	19
Evaluate early childhood program/initiative outcomes	19
Answer key policy questions to inform pre-K policy about supply needs	18

Source: Child Trends' State-funded Pre-K Data Survey.

Who uses pre-K data? (n=35)

Agency program staff	32 states
Agency leadership	30
Policy and advocacy organizations	25
State legislature	25
External researchers	23

North Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System (NC ECIDS)
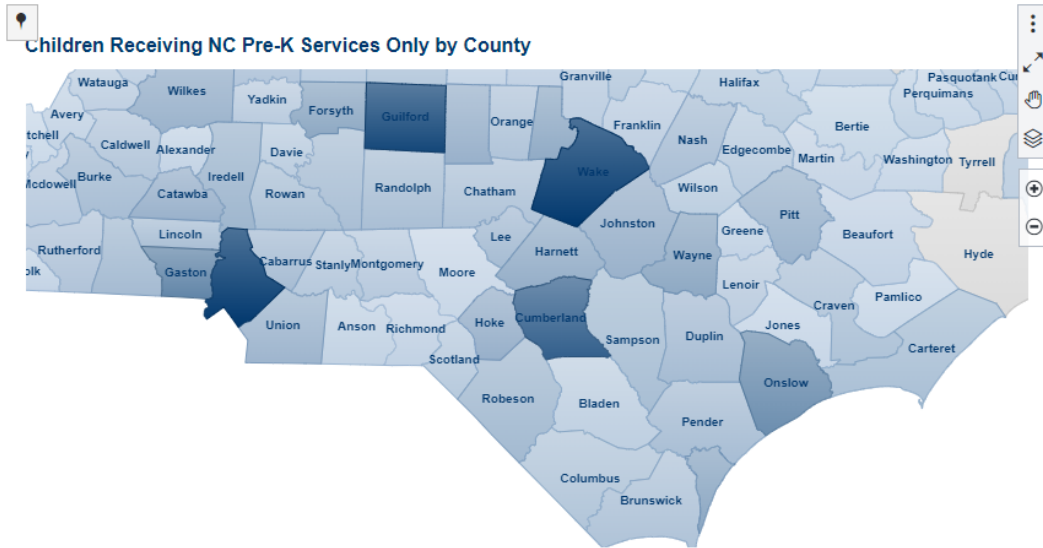
Select Filters ▾

Children Receiving NC Pre-K Services

28,417

Children Receiving NC Pre-K Services Only

12,436

Selected Filters: Fiscal Year: 2019-2020, Gender: <No item selected>, Race Ethnicity: <No item selected>, County: <No item selected>

Children Receiving NC Pre-K Services Only by County

Children Receiving NC Pre-K Services Only by Race Ethnicity and Gender

‹ | NC Pre-K Services Only by Race Ethnicity | NC Pre-K Services Only by Gender | ›

Race Ethnicity ▲	Number of Children	Percentage of Children
American Indian or Alaska Native	161	1.29%
Asian	456	3.67%
Black/African American	2,908	23.38%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	*	*
Hispanic/Latino	3,872	31.13%
White/Caucasian	4,476	35.99%
Multiple Races	551	4.43%
Unreported	*	*

Source: NC ECIDS.

Alabama Data Dashboard

First Class Pre-K Wait Lists by County 2022-2023

Legend:
- Waitlist Count
- Capacity

Total Waitlist Count = 4,173
Total Capacity = 26,316

Source: Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education.

Data Infrastructure and Linking

Data Infrastructure

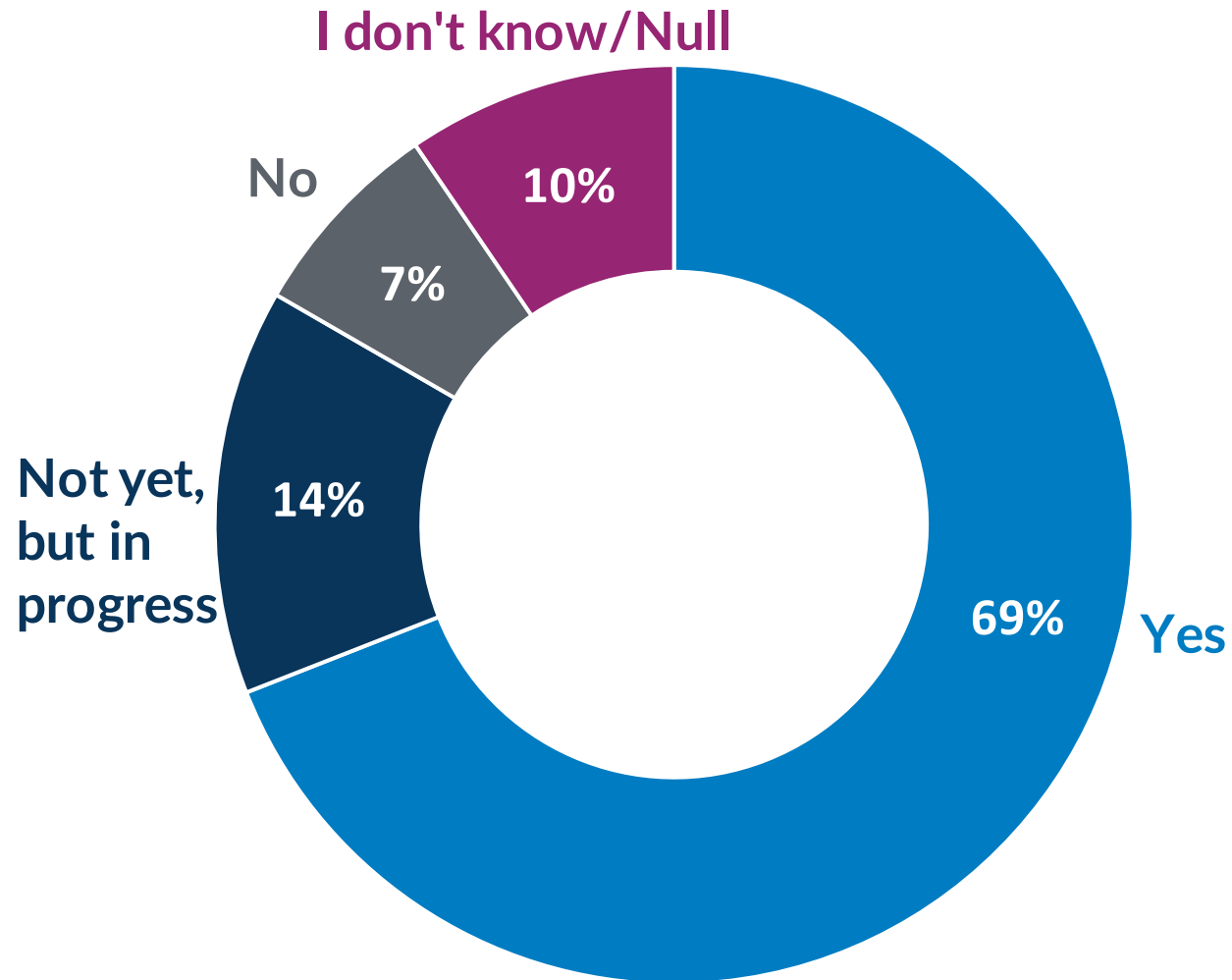**Over 2/3 of states can link pre-K and K-12 data**

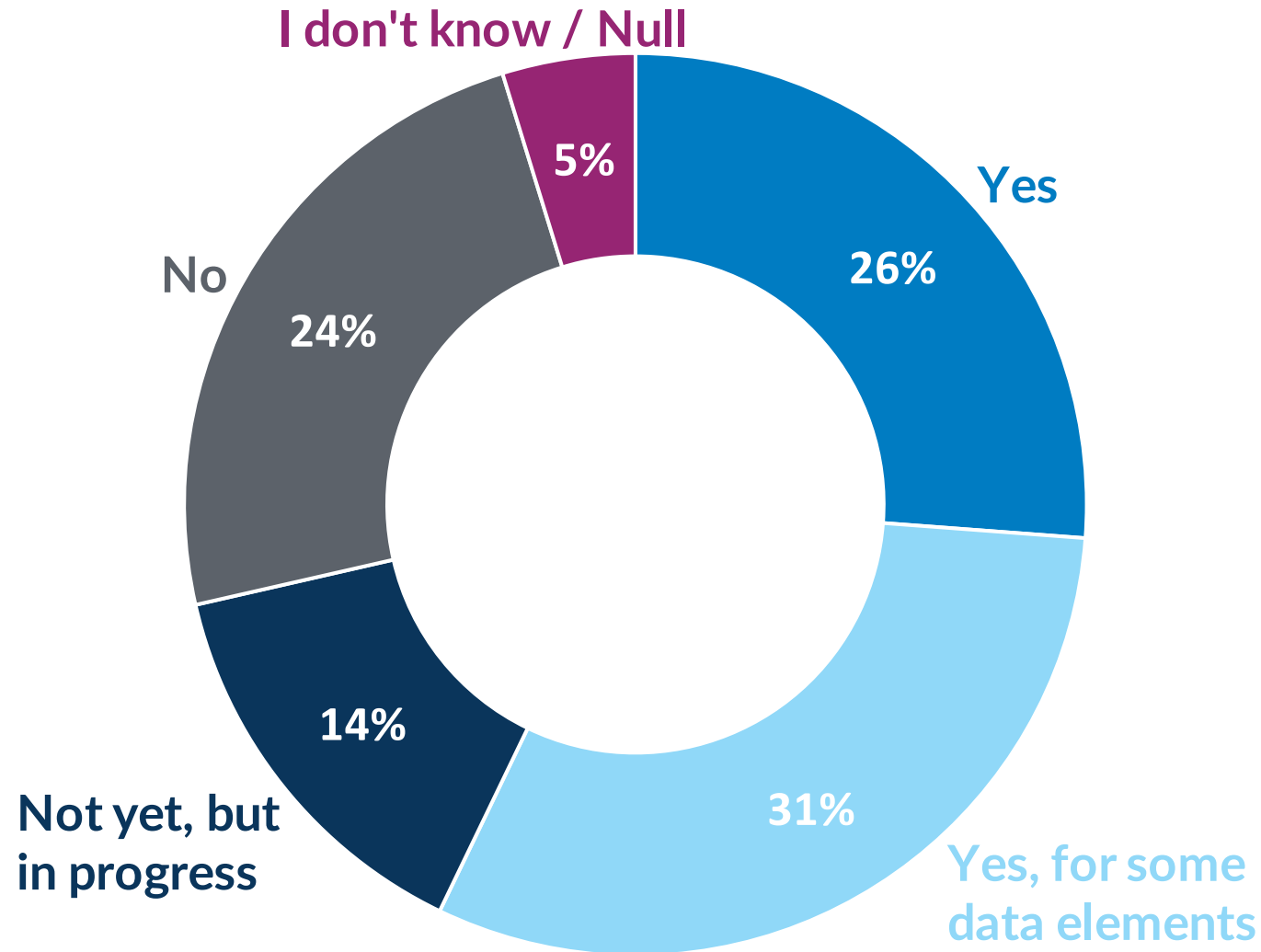**Unique identifiers were frequently identified as facilitators to access, link, and use data**
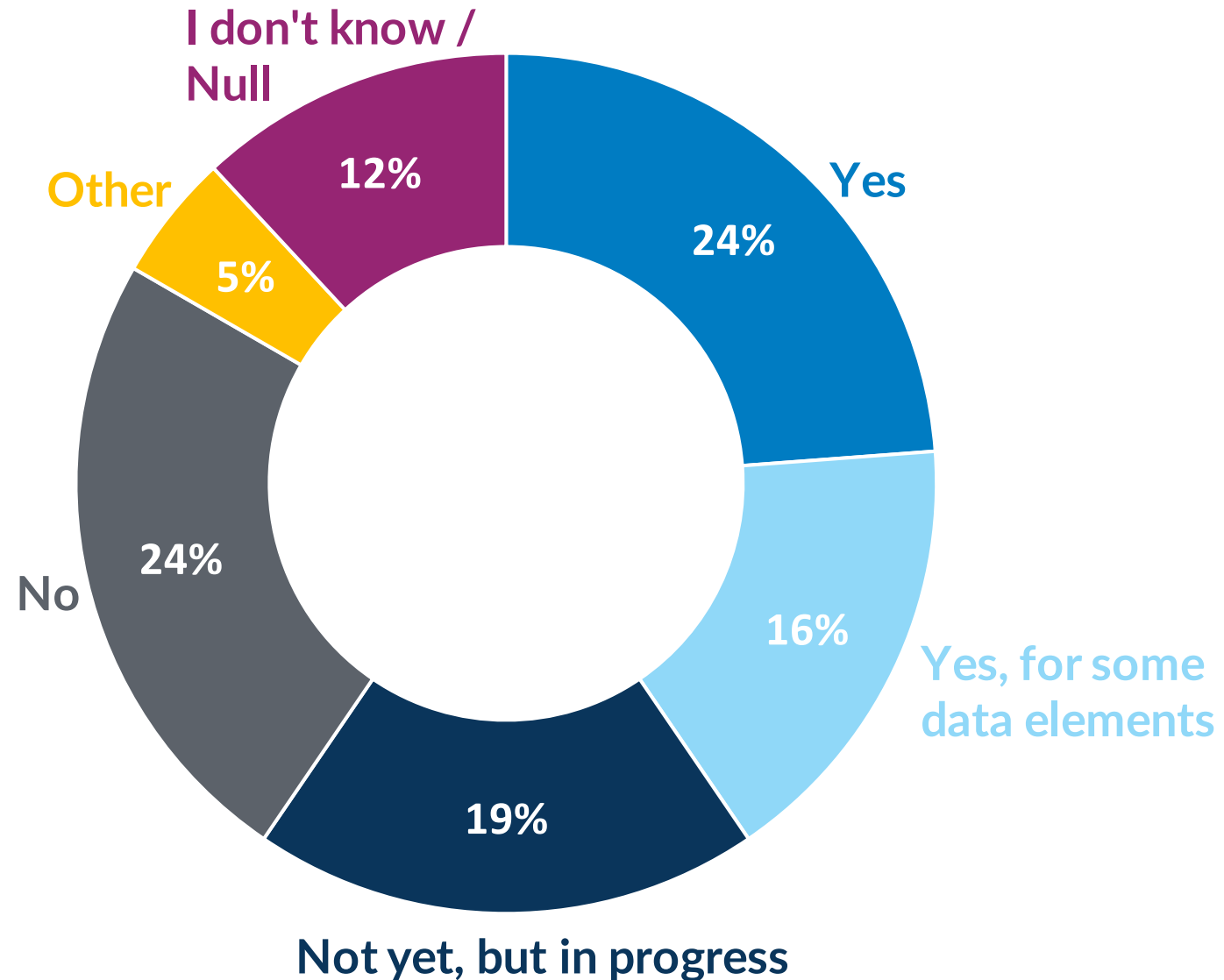
Most states reported data being siloed across database systems

Do state agencies link state-funded pre-K program data to K-12 data? (n=42)

I don't know/Null **10%**

No **7%**

Not yet, but in progress **14%**

Yes **69%**

Can child, program, workforce, or system-level data be linked together? (n=42)

I don't know / Null — 5%

Yes — 26%

Yes, for some data elements — 31%

Not yet, but in progress — 14%

No — 24%

Can pre-K data be linked across other pre-K programs, such as Head Start? (n=42)

I don't know / Null **12%**

Other **5%**

Yes **24%**

Yes, for some data elements **16%**

Not yet, but in progress **19%**

No **24%**

What facilitates the state agency's ability to coordinate or link data across programs?

Currently facilitates
(n=10)

Child, family, program, or workforce unique identifier	**6** states
Data sharing agreement	**5**
Early Childhood Integrated Data System, or ECIDS	**3**
Increased staff capacity	**2**
Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement	**5**
Shared services between agencies	**1**
Single central database	**2**

What does or would facilitate the state agency's ability to coordinate or link data across programs?

Currently facilitates (n=10)

Would facilitate (n=21)

	Currently facilitates	Would facilitate
Child, family, program, or workforce unique identifier	6	9 states
Data sharing agreement	5	13
Early Childhood Integrated Data System, or ECIDS	3	14
Increased staff capacity	2	11
Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement	5	11
Shared services between agencies	1	7
Single central database	2	11
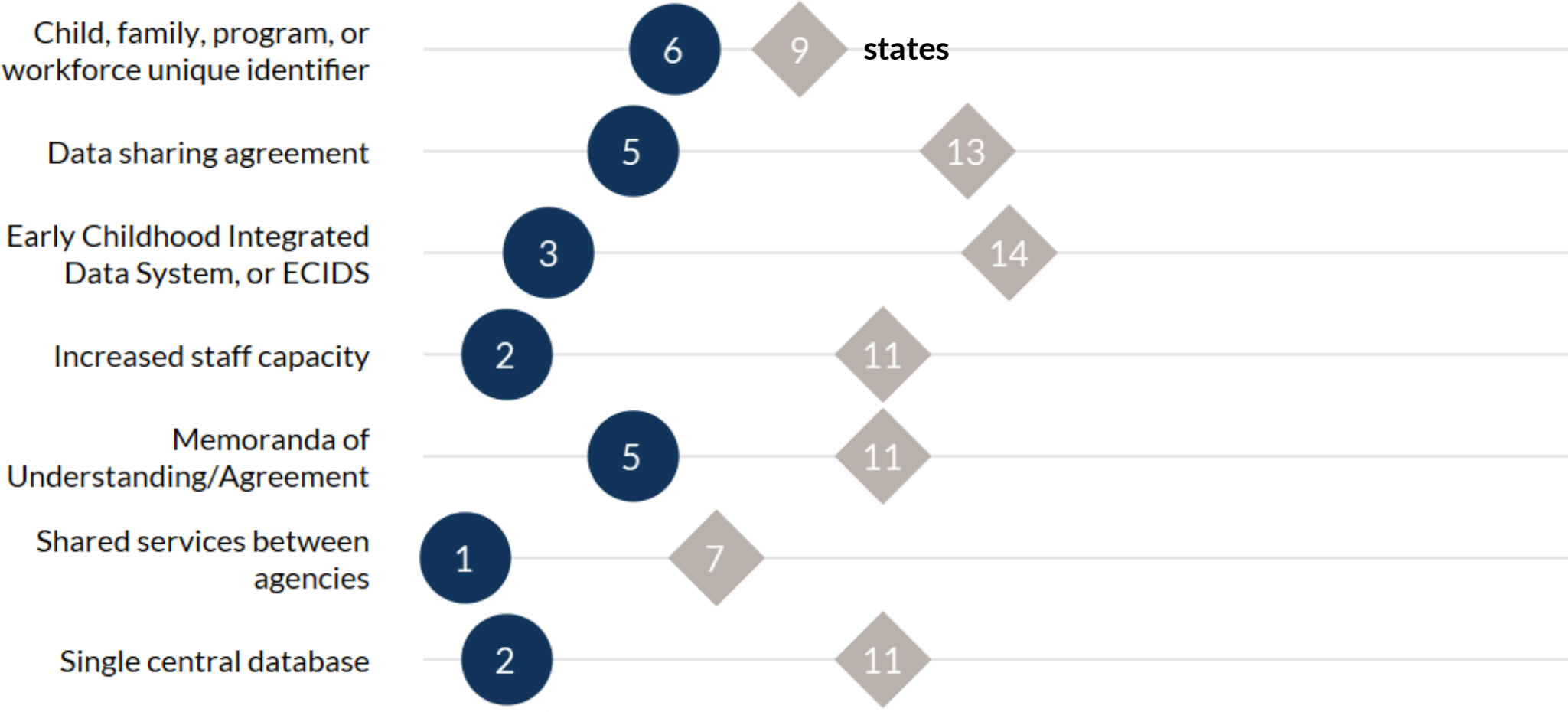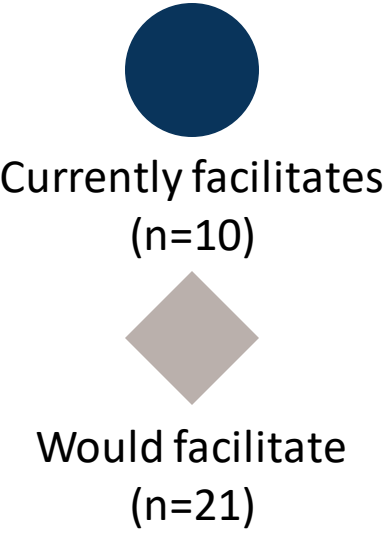
Minnesota Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System

Source: https://eclds.mn.gov/#/ch3
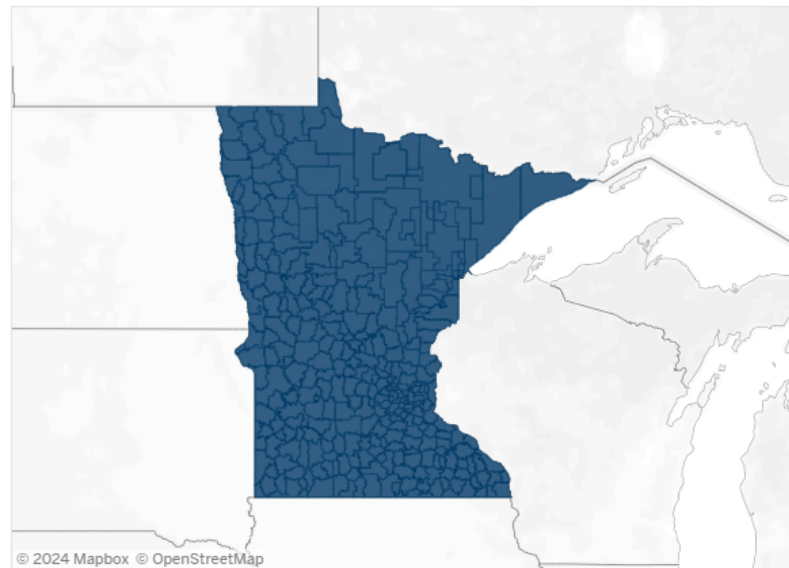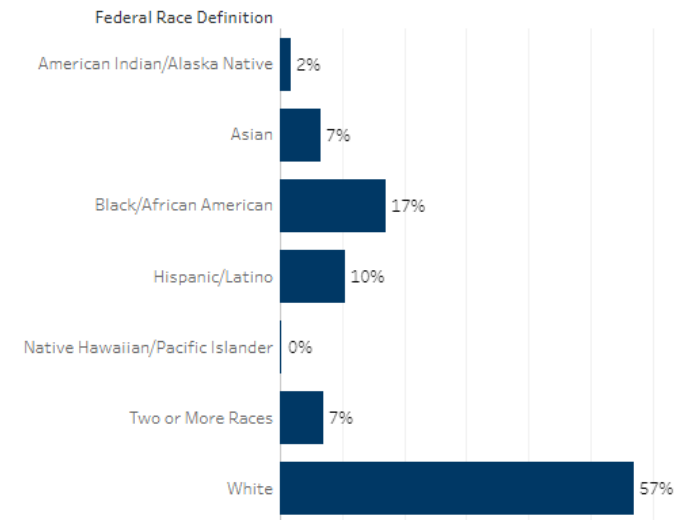
Data Storage and Usage

Supports that strengthen respondents' ability to access, analyze, or use pre-K data (n=35)

Unique identifiers for the children, worker, or program — 30 **states**

Centralized data or reporting system — 23

Team to monitor data collection and analysis activities — 23

Systematic approach to data collection — 22

Policies facilitating access, analysis, or use — 19

Research partnerships — 19
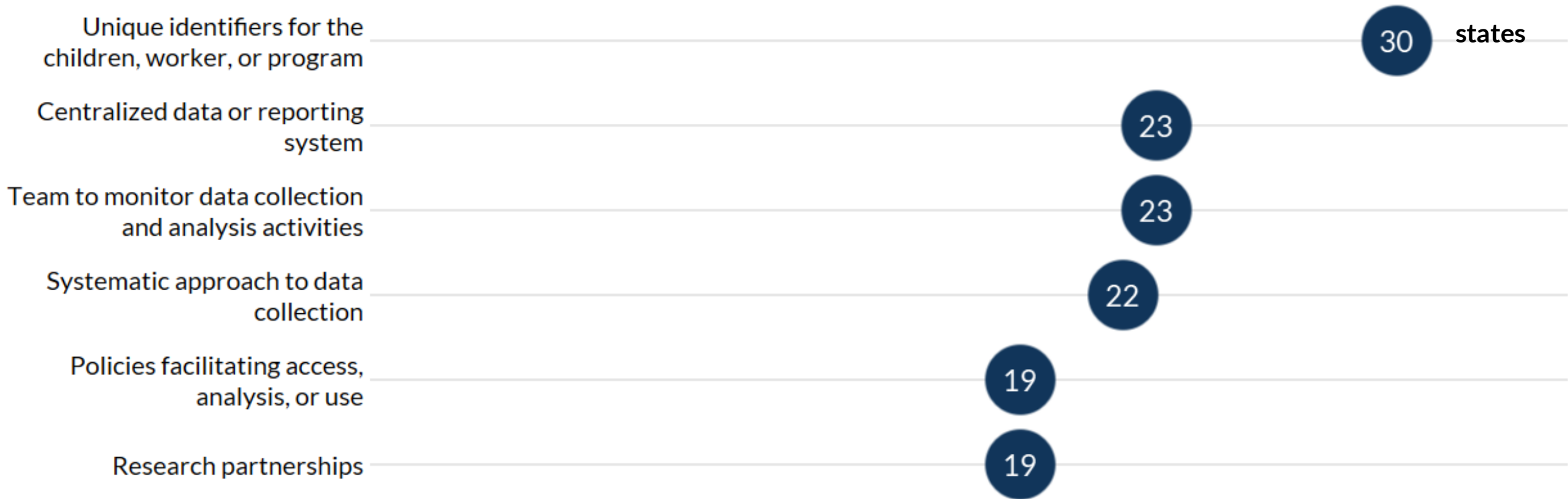
Barriers that respondents face in their ability to access, analyze, or use pre-K data (n=35)

Data quality issues — 24 **states**

Data management issues — 18

Challenges with data sharing or limited access to data — 14

Lack of data systems or infrastructure — 13

Lack of funding for data systems development and maintenance — 12
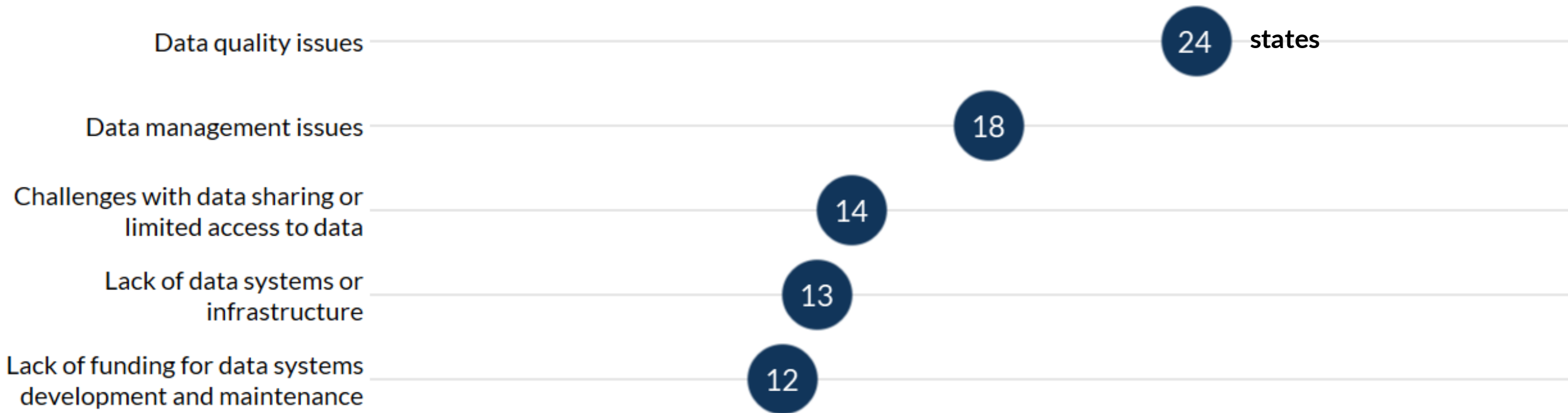
Additional Resources

Interactive Maps and State Profiles

Map 1: Accessibility Status of State Pre-K Child, Program, and Workforce Data

Access to Data About Children, Programs, Workforce, and Preschool Systems

State-Level Accessibility of Head Start Data

State-Level Accessibility of Head Start Data Across the United States

Jing Tang, Kara Ulmen, Sara Amadon, Katie Richards, Gabriella Guerra, Ja'Chelle Ball, Carlise King, and Dale Richards

*This research was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The findings and conclusions within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

January 2024

The Early Childhood DATA Collaborative

Child Trends.

Key Findings

Responses from the 32 HSCOs, representing 32 states, reveal strong data-related capabilities and areas for growth.

HSCOs reported greater access to program- and system-level data than to child- and workforce-level data.
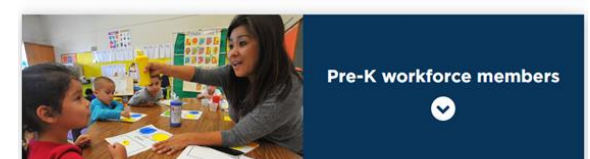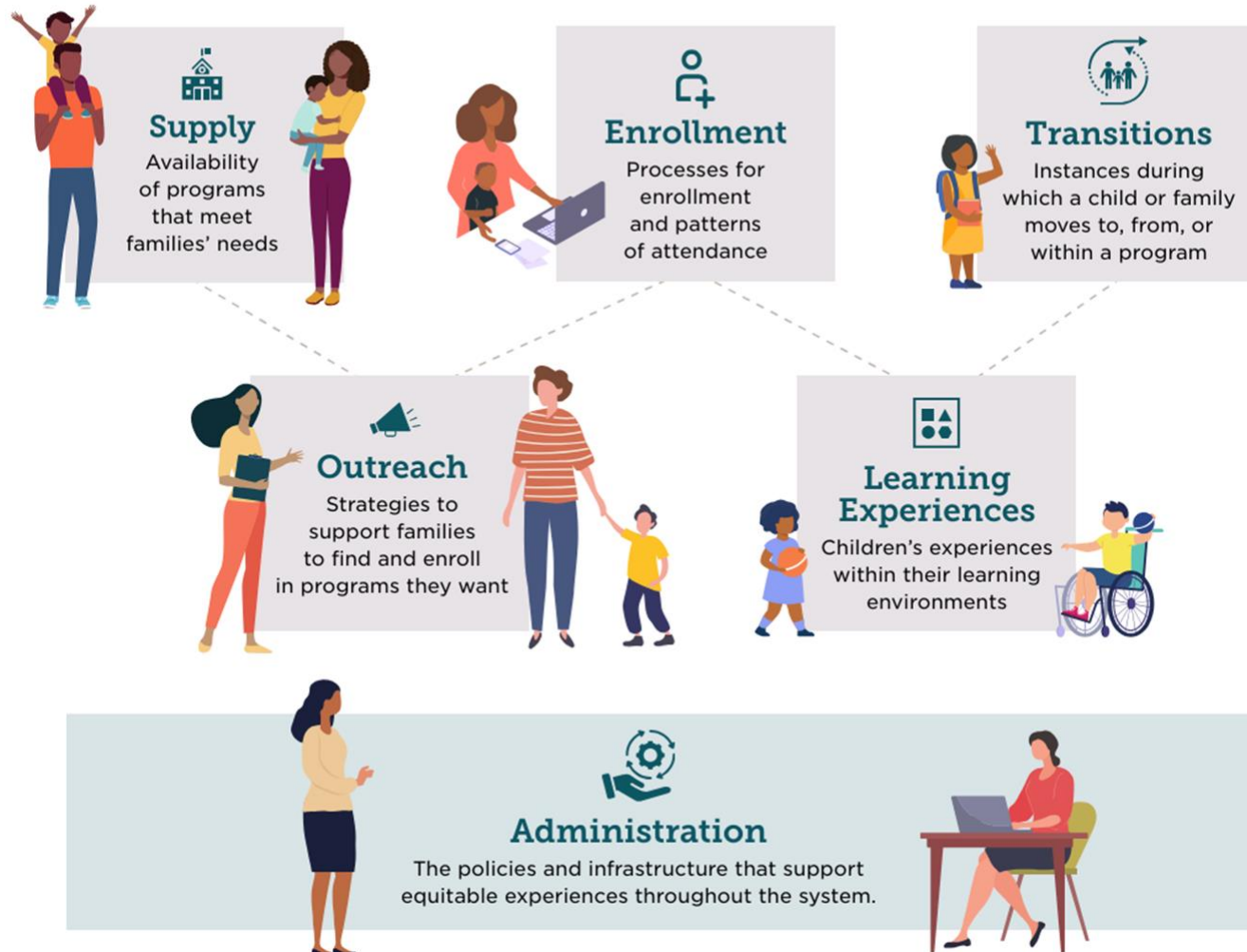
- **Most HSCOs had access to program-level data beyond what is collected in the Program Information Report.** The most frequently reported data element that HSCOs had access to was programs' participation in quality initiatives (e.g., accreditation or QRIS, [n = 22]). Program-level data elements that HSCOs were less likely to have access to included professional development provided to staff (n = 14), classroom observations of instructional practice (n = 12), participation in cultural competency or multicultural trainings for staff at that site (n = 10), and provision of services in specific languages or languages other than English (n = 9).

- **Over two thirds of respondents could report on system-level data.** Among them, most respondents had the ability to report on the number of Head Start slots in each program (n = 22), sources of funding (n = 17), and the demographic characteristics of communities where Head Start programs are located (n = 15). System-level data elements that HSCOs were less likely to have the ability to report on were staff benefits (e.g., staff health care policies, paid vacation policies, and retirement benefit policies, [n = 5]) and funding to support equity-focused activities (n=5).

- **Almost one third of HSCOs indicated access to child-level data elements at the state level.** Among them, HSCOs' most frequently accessible data elements were children's demographics (i.e., age [n = 10], gender [n = 10], disability status [n = 10], ethnicity and race [n = 9]), and name and address of site where child is enrolled (n = 9). Data elements less likely to be accessible by respondents were attendance of child (n = 6), family migrant status (i.e., whether the family moves to follow seasonal work, [n = 6]), family reason for attending the program (n = 6), and family reason for exiting program (n = 6).

- **One half of HSCOs had access to workforce-level data elements.** Among them, the most frequently reported data elements they could access included information about workforce members' roles (n = 16), work sites (n = 15), credentials received (n = 15), and the demographic characteristics of workforce members (i.e., ethnicity [n = 15], race [n = 15], language(s) spoken [n = 15], and age [n = 10]). Data elements that were less accessible to HSCOs included presence of a professional development plan for the workforce member (n = 6), whether the workforce member has health insurance (n = 6), and enrollment in financial assistance programs (n = 5).

The capacity to disaggregate data by child, family, and community characteristics varied across respondents.

- **Almost half of HSCOs were able to disaggregate data by child and family characteristics.** Respondents reported that data could be disaggregated by some child and family characteristics including child race/ethnicity (n = 11), child disability status (n = 9), and family languages spoken (n = 8).

- **In addition, almost half of HSCOs were able to disaggregate data by community demographic characteristics.** Commonly reported community characteristics included community race/ethnicity (n = 11), community rates of child disability status (n = 11), and median family income in the community (n = 11).

STEP Forward with Data Framework

Preschool System Steps

Supply
Availability of programs that meet families' needs

Enrollment
Processes for enrollment and patterns of attendance

Transitions
Instances during which a child or family moves to, from, or within a program

Outreach
Strategies to support families to find and enroll in programs they want

Learning Experiences
Children's experiences within their learning environments

Administration
The policies and infrastructure that support equitable experiences throughout the system.

Families experiencing poverty

Black, Hispanic/Latino, and Indigenous families

Families of children with disabilities or developmental delays

Children in immigrant families

Families with multilingual learners

Pre-K workforce members
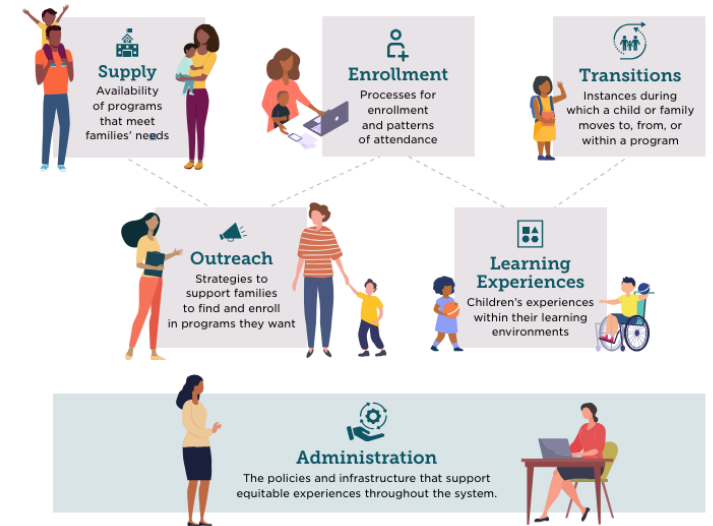
Action Steps

Action Steps

- **Identify data collection gaps**
- **Explore support avenues for data system development**

- **Consider using federal, state, or foundation funding to strengthen data infrastructure and data capacity**

Preschool System Steps

- **Use STEP Forward with Data Framework to build and enhance an equitable preschool system**

Questions?

Ways to stay connected

Join our listserv to get updates
to upcoming webinars, products
and guides:

Access resources at www.ecedata.org

Contact us at: prekdata@childtrends.org

Thank you!

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