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# Investing in Children *and* Parents: Opportunities and Challenges Facing Dual-Generation Strategies in the US

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# 2020 VISION

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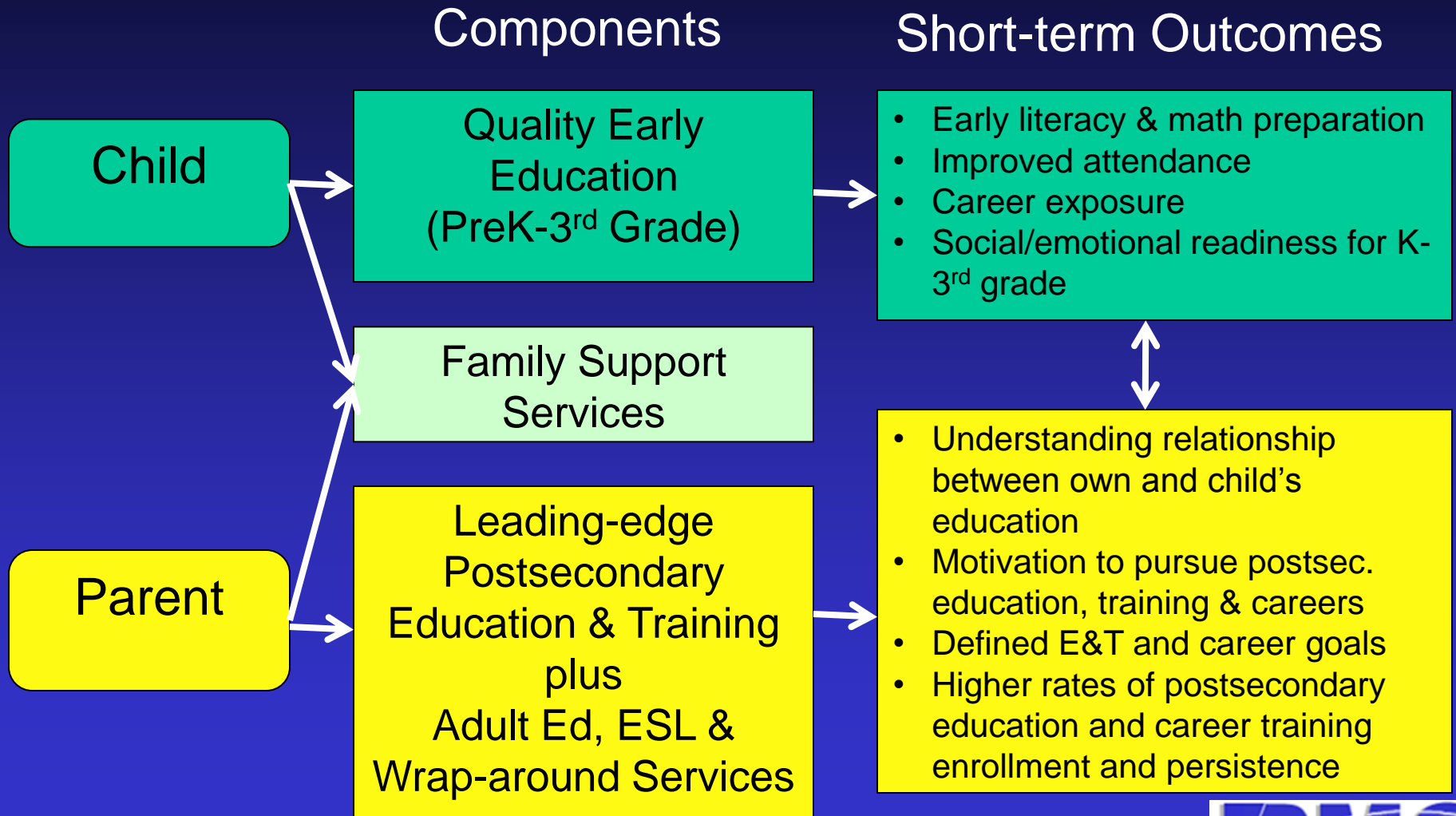
- Policymakers at all levels will routinely think and plan beyond their traditional silos so as to implement quality early learning (PK-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and leading-edge workforce and education strategies thoughtfully and systemically.
- Practitioners at the state and local level will routinely implement dual-generation strategies in which children and their parents simultaneously learn and acquire workforce skills leading to family economic success.
- Researchers will more fully understand the synergistic impacts of dual-generation strategies and the mechanisms through which they occur.

# PROJECT GOALS

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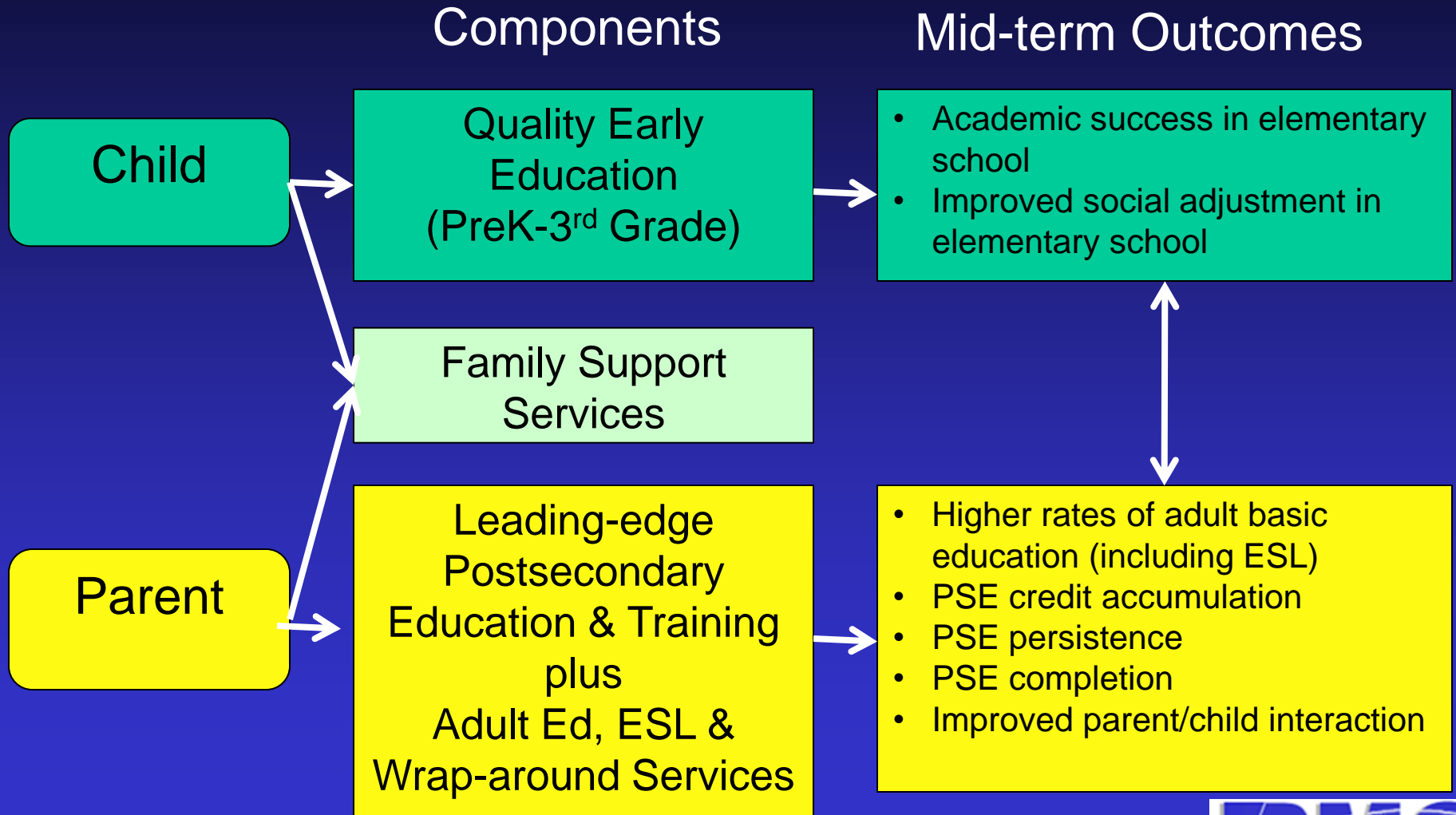
1. To deepen our understanding of dual-generation strategies involving high-quality early childhood education (PK-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and their parents' workforce development and education.
2. To foster dual-generation strategies through policy and program development.
3. To create a policy framework for diffusing and enhancing the use of dual-generation strategies.
4. To identify and suggest legislative changes at the federal and state level to facilitate the implementation of dual-generation strategies.

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK\*



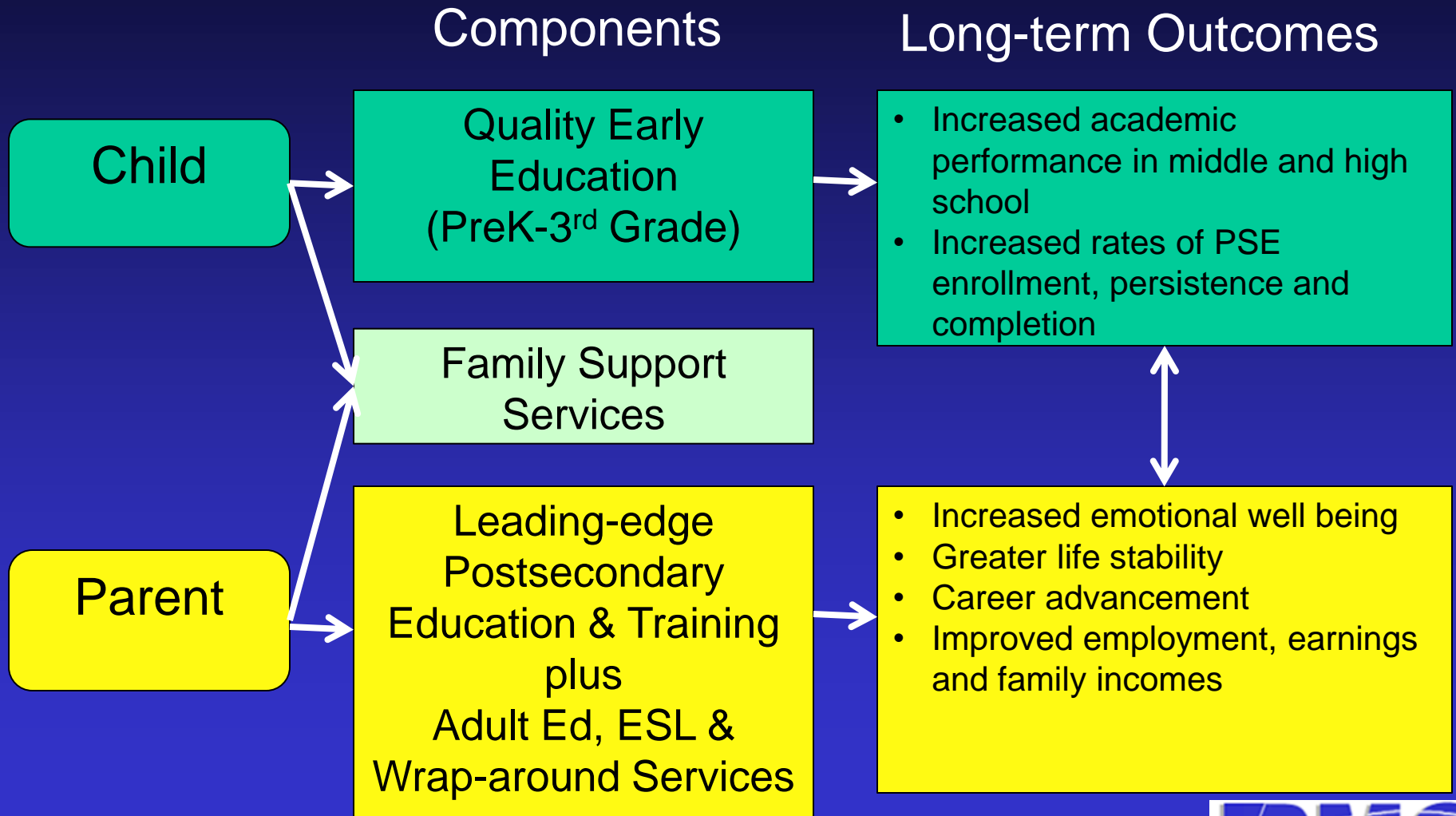
\*Building on Chase-Lansdale et al. (April 2011).

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# THEORY OF ACTION

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Dual-generation strategies can be initiated either ...

- 1) From workforce development, building in quality early learning (PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) programs for the children of parents pursuing or seeking to pursue high-performance sectoral training;
- 2) From quality early childhood learning (PreK-3<sup>rd</sup> grade), building in sectoral workforce training and other needed services (e.g., Adult Ed, ESL) for the parents of children enrolled or enrolling in them; or
- 3) From excellent workforce and early childhood programs, building explicit connections between them where few or none existed before.

# Dual-Gen Program Components

- Quality early learning (PreK-3<sup>rd</sup>)
- Sectoral job skills training
  - Postsecondary education
  - Workforce intermediaries
- Wrap-around & family support services
  - ABE, developmental ed, ESL
  - Career coaching
  - Peer community-building
  - Conditional cash transfers
  - Asset development & financial ed
  - Transportation assistance





# Major Challenges

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- Policy and program inertia
- Differing provider cultures and ‘baggage’
- Absence of high-level policy coordination
- Conflicting goals and performance expectations
- Differing structures and loci of decision-making
- Varying funding mechanisms
- Resource limitations
- Conflicting timelines and schedules

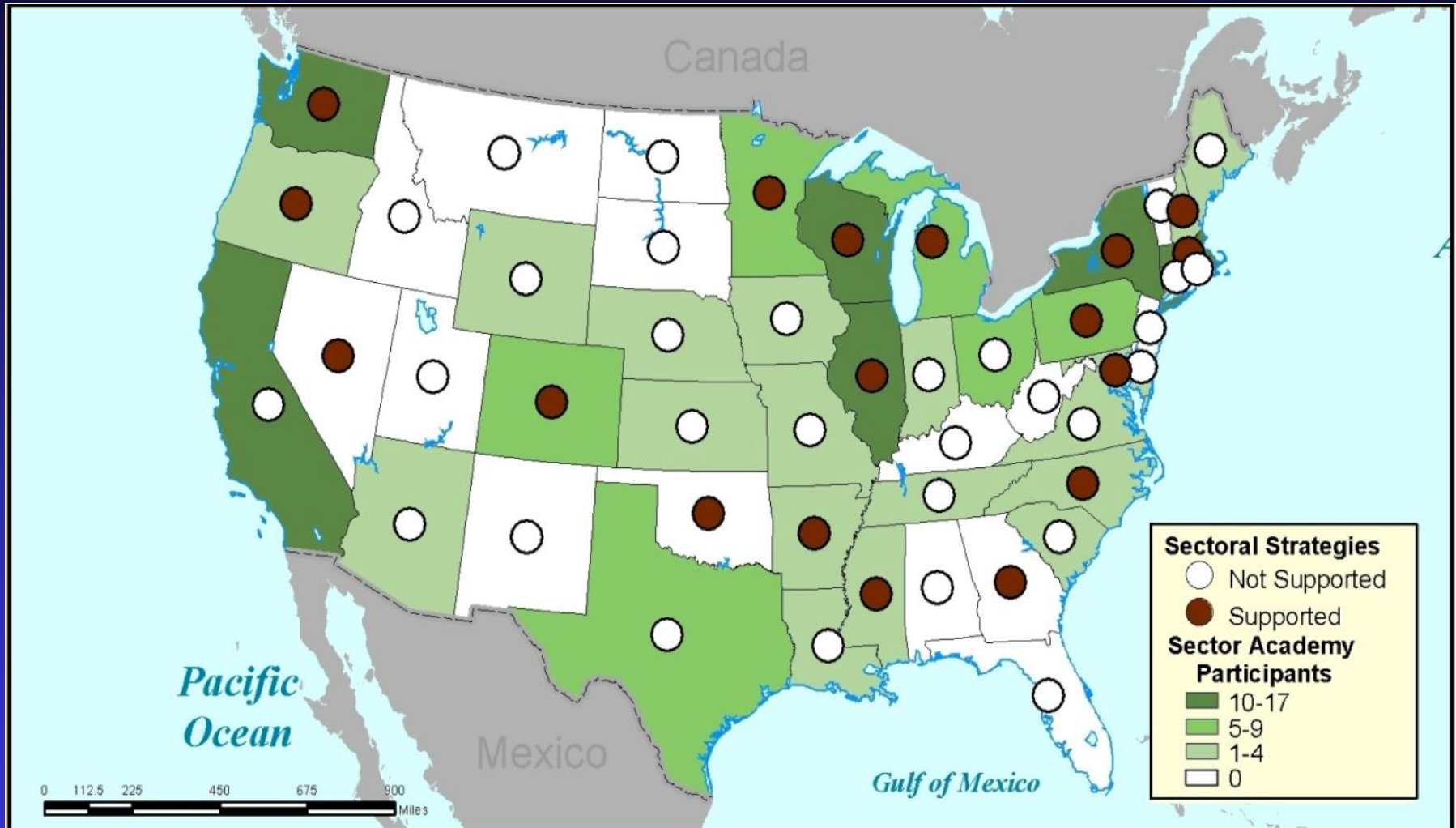
# Major Opportunities

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Challenges notwithstanding, there are some very real opportunities.

- Commitment to evidence-based policymaking and program design
- Federal legislative reauthorizations
- Sources of flexible funding
- Supportive state policy structures
- Innovative local dual-generation initiatives
- Federal and philanthropic interest

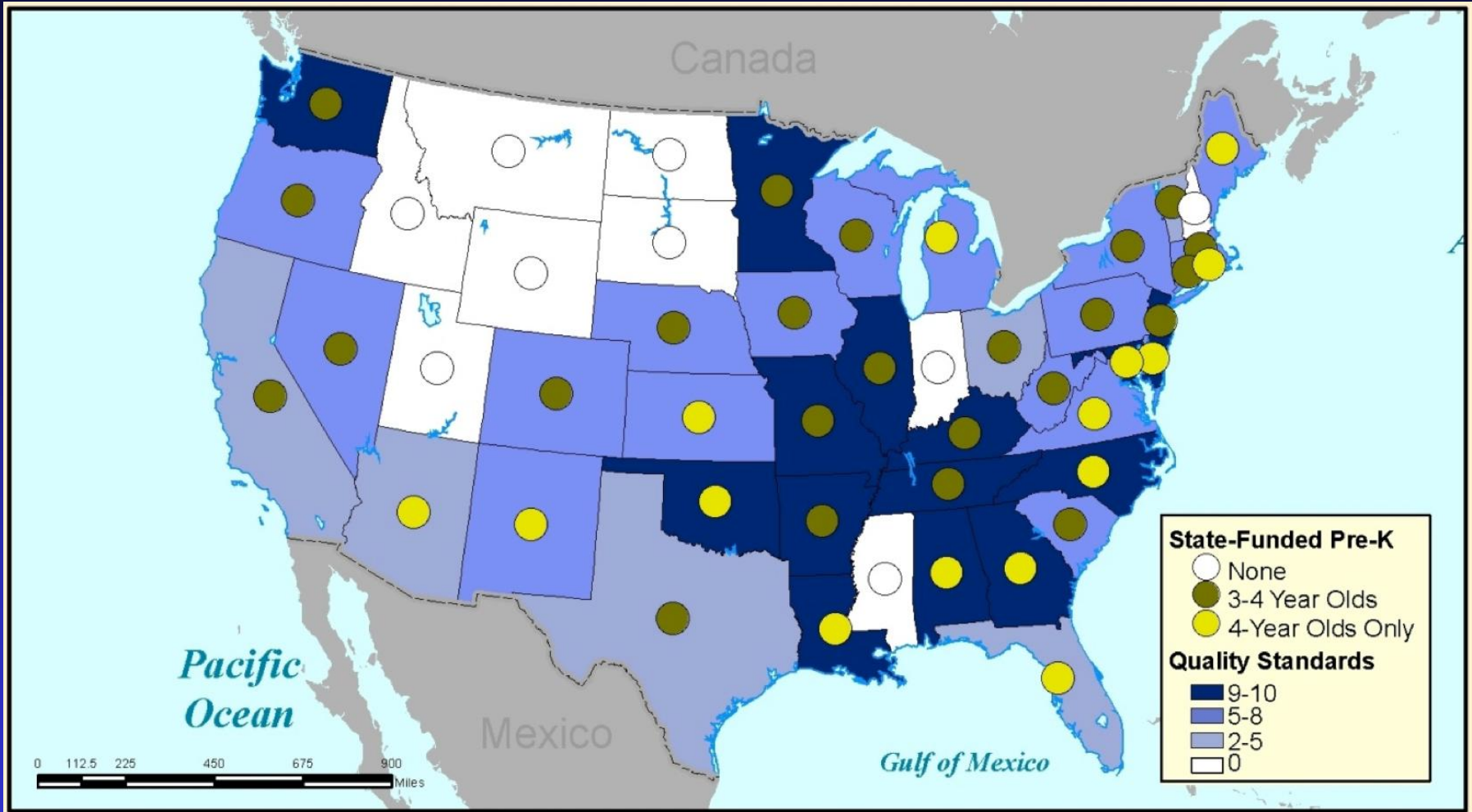
# Sectoral Workforce Program Interest, by State



Sources: Sector Skills Academy; Insight Center for Community Economic Development.



# State-Funded Pre-K Availability and Quality, by State



Source: Barnett et al. (2010). *The State of Preschool 2010*.



# Innovative Local Initiatives

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Annie E. Casey Foundation Civic Sites in Atlanta, Baltimore & New Haven feature varying dual-gen strategies supported by AECF's Family Economic Success Initiative.

Jeremiah Project, a place-based PSE effort operating in Minneapolis and St. Paul (MN), Austin (TX) and Fargo (ND) for single mothers and their children.

Tulsa's CareerAdvance® Initiative, providing sectoral job training (nursing, healthcare IT), career coaching, peer supports, conditional cash transfers and other supports for the parents of Head Start/Early Head Start kids.

Can build out from quality adult PSE/skills training or from quality early childhood education.



# Federal & Philanthropic Interest

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Strong, growing interest from:

- Federal agencies (esp. HHS, Education), and
- Foundations (e.g., GKFF, Gates, AECF, Kellogg), including those supporting the Aspen Institute's Ascend Initiative.

Emerging evidence on the effectiveness of dual-generation strategies, whether from focus groups, outcomes analysis or impacts, may be driving this.

Translating interest into resource and policy commitments will be key.



# Outlining a Dual-Generation Agenda

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*Dual-generation strategies are all about intentionally, systematically connecting adult/child investments for larger, longer-term impacts on family economic success.*

## *Policy Elements*

- Supportive Federal Policies & Leadership
- Policy coordination supporting dual-gen strategies at the highest levels
- Supportive State Policies & Leadership

*Policy Elements (discussed earlier)*





# Dual-Generation Agenda...

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## *Research Elements*

- Ongoing implementation studies in varying contexts to identify added challenges and necessary and sufficient conditions for operations
- Longitudinal qualitative and quantitative studies to better understand the mechanisms supporting dual-gen strategies and to document their joint outcomes and impacts
- Long-term analysis of the benefits and costs of dual-gen strategies in varying operating environments



# Next Steps

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Additional “conversations” with Federal and state policymakers and practitioners to flesh out dual-generation understanding and commitment, followed by:

- NGA State Academy-type process with considerable “faculty” support where state and local area participation recruited, or
- Direct demonstrations of dual-generation strategy alternatives.

Either should be coupled with investment in an expanded network of dual-generation researchers. Many aspects need more research.



# For More Information

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