Considerations in Conducting Child Care and Early Education Facilities Needs Assessments

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Overview and Purpose

In 2019, approximately 121,000 center-based child care and early education (CCEE) facilities served over 7 million children under 5 (Datta, Gebhardt, et al., 2021), and 91,200 listed home-based providers served 785,000 children under age 13 in the U.S. (Datta, Milesi, et al., 2021). With millions of young children served in so many settings, it is important to ensure that the facilities support young children's health, safety, development, and learning.

This report addresses the Congressional request to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for information related to HR 116-450: Child Care Facilities Needs Assessment. The request states:

> *The Congressional Committee is concerned with the learning environment and deterioration of many early child care facilities across the nation, and believes that additional investments may be necessary to address suboptimal health and early learning conditions. The Committee directs ACF to dedicate a portion of Federal CCDBG research funding (42 U.S.C. 9858m) towards a feasibility study to determine how a needs assessment of child care facilities could best be conducted by States and compiled by ACF to produce a national estimate of facility remediation needs and costs. The Committee requests that the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification include an explanation for how such a facilities needs assessment could be conducted, and the estimated costs for such an assessment.* (p. 189).

This report describes the "feasibility study to determine how a needs assessment of child care facilities could be best conducted by States and compiled by ACF to produce a national estimate of facility remediation needs and costs." The team for the project, *The Role of Licensing in Early Care and Education* (TRLECE), conducted the feasibility study.

This report provides:

- A synopsis of findings and key considerations about how states/territories could conduct CCEE facilities needs assessments that could be compiled into a national estimate of facility remediation needs and costs. This includes a cost estimate for a state/territory to conduct a CCEE facilities needs assessment.

- Additional information about key considerations, including findings from a review of the limited, relevant research available.

- An appendix with detailed information about assumptions, previous research related to facilities needs assessments, possible content for facilities needs assessments, considerations for states/territories in conducting a facilities needs assessment, and possible methods for conducting a CCEE facilities needs assessment.

- An appendix detailing the estimated cost of a state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessment.

Throughout the report, we include hyperlinks to appendix sections that provide additional information.

TRLECE Project Overview

Child Trends and ICF are partnering with the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) on a project titled The Role of Licensing in Early Care and Education (TRLECE). This 5-year project (2019-2024) is intended to strengthen the field's understanding of the role of the child care and early education (CCEE) licensing system in supporting outcomes for children, families, and other key constituents. This report was developed as part of the TRLECE project.

Key Findings and Considerations

Based on our review and analysis, we synthesize findings and offer considerations for states/territories to conduct CCEE facilities needs assessments that a facilitating entity[1] can compile into a national picture. We provide more details about each finding in the next section of the report, *Additional Information about Key Considerations*.

1. **Settings.** To ensure that states/territories collect information from the same type of CCEE facilities, it would be helpful if a facilitating entity specified the settings (e.g., center-based programs, family child care homes) to include in a CCEE facilities needs assessment. This would improve the facilitating entity's ability to combine information into a national picture.

2. **Content, criteria, and tools.** Based on our review of existing reports, there is not an existing tool that will allow states/territories to gather detailed information to estimate facility remediation needs. For that reason, a new tool will need to be created or existing tools will need to be adapted.

   a. Identifying similar content and specific criteria for all states/territories to include in their facilities needs assessment would be helpful in developing a national picture of CCEE facility needs and renovation costs. If a facilitating entity were to do this, at least some similar information across states/territories could be compiled into a national summary. These common criteria would also ensure that the state/territory data are detailed enough to produce an estimate of renovation costs. Because facilities are different across setting types (center-based vs. home-based), there may need to be separate criteria for each setting type.

   b. A facilitating entity could convene a group (including representatives from states/territories as well as facilities experts) to recommend core content and specific criteria as well as possibly develop the draft tool(s) for the CCEE facilities needs assessment. This would be more efficient than having every state/territory develop its own tool(s). If it is not possible to provide a tool, states/territories will need time and resources to develop the tool(s) before conducting their facilities needs assessment.

3. **Methods.** Our review indicates that in order to gather the most accurate and detailed data to inform renovation cost estimates, states/territories would need to conduct on-site observations at a representative sample of CCEE facilities as part of their needs assessment. Other types of data collection (e.g., surveys, focus groups) could supplement observations, but may yield less accurate data and may not produce the detailed information required to estimate remediation costs.

4. **Remediation cost estimates.** Findings suggest that at least 40% of CCEE facilities in the 50 states and District of Columbia may need renovations (Borton et al., 2021). To estimate costs for remediating CCEE facilities, states/territories will need to gather information about facility needs that is detailed enough to help them develop an estimate of remediation costs.

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Approach

The TRLECE team used three methods to gather information for this report:

1. Reviewed facilities needs assessment reports, tools, and other related research.

2. Analyzed facilities-related data from the 2017 Child Care Licensing Study (CCLS).

3. Incorporated preliminary findings from the 2021 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) COVID-19 Follow-up study.

See Methods for this Review for more information.

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[1] The term *facilitating entity* is used in this report to refer to an organization that would provide some level of coordination and guidance for the state/territory facilities needs assessment and then compile the information from states/territories into a national picture.

5. **Initial steps and resources.** To conduct a CCEE facilities needs assessment, states/territories will need multiple resources to build a team to conduct the work and determine the parameters of the needs assessment (e.g., type of facilities to include). This includes identifying a lead agency to coordinate the effort, collaborating with other state/territory or local entities, engaging various experts, and likely contracting with external organizations to do the work. As described in Appendix B, we estimate that each state/territory's CCEE facilities needs assessment would cost between $735,000—$1,100,000. If all 56 states, territories, and the District of Columbia conducted a needs assessment, the total cost would be $41,160,000—$61,600,000. This does not include costs of the facilitating entity.

6. **Reporting.** To ensure that states/territories provide data that are consistent and can be summarized easily into a national picture, it could be helpful for a facilitating entity to provide a report template for states/territories.

7. **Timeline.** It will likely take 2-3 years for a state/territory to conduct a CCEE facilities needs assessment. The existing information about CCEE facilities needs assessments indicates that states/territories may take close to 2 years to conduct a CCEE facilities needs assessment, after facilities criteria have been established and a tool has been designed. If states/territories must develop their own content, criteria, and tool(s), then the estimate for states/territories to complete the needs assessment could be closer to 3 years. The facilitating entity would then need additional time to compile the information into a national picture.

8. **Compiling information into a national picture.** To compile information across state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessments, it would be helpful if a facilitating entity offered guidance to states/territories including a) specifying the CCEE setting types to include; b) specifying criteria to include in each state/territory facilities needs assessment; c) supporting the development of tool(s) that could be used/adapted across states/territories, which would increase the likelihood of having consistent data that could be compiled; and d) providing states/territories a template for reporting the findings. A facilitating entity would also need to summarize the information from states/territories in a report to describe facility needs and remediation costs by setting type.

Additional Information About Key Considerations

This section offers additional information about key considerations to support state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessments that can be compiled by a facilitating entity into a national picture of CCEE facilities needs and renovation costs. The information is based on our review of existing data on licensing systems, analyses of data recently collected with a nationally representative sample of center-based CCEE programs, and a review of findings from facilities needs assessments conducted by a few states/territories. (see Highlights of Research Related to Facilities Needs Assessments for more information).

Settings

Specifying the settings (e.g., center-based programs, family child care homes) to include in a CCEE facilities needs assessment would ensure that states/territories gathered information from similar types of facilities. This would make it easier for a facilitating entity to combine the information into a national picture.

Content, criteria, and tools

In order to compile information across state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessments, all states/territories will need to include common content areas in their needs assessment. There are currently no common facility requirements that all states/territories use to evaluate CCEE facilities for health, safety, and learning or a consistent set of information that all licensing agencies currently collect. State/territory

CCEE licensing regulations do address some facility issues, but the regulations vary across states/territories and the information collected during licensing visits may not be detailed enough to develop estimates of renovation costs (see CCEE licensing regulations and inspections data related to facilities and environmental health, for more information). According to the 2017 Child Care Licensing Study (CCLS), for example, although 100% of states[2] included some fire safety requirements, the percentage that included each specific requirement varied (e.g., 76% of states required fire evacuation plans for licensed centers and 45% required fire extinguishers in licensed centers; see Table 3A, for more information.)

The challenge of using licensing data is also evident in our review of Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Needs Assessment reports published in 2019 and 2020. Although states/territories were required to address CCEE facility issues, none of the seven PDG B-5 Needs Assessment reports reviewed for this report described licensing regulation violation data (see Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Needs Assessment for more information).

Based on a review of the tool used in Rhode Island's 2019 CCEE facilities needs assessment as well as 2021 reports on best practices for facilities in center-based and family child care programs, content for a facilities needs assessment could cover eight broad areas listed below (see Possible Content for a CCEE Facilities Needs Assessment for more information). It is important to determine whether these eight areas meet the current needs of the field or areas of interest in the request from Congress and then, if so, specify what aspects of each broad area are of interest.

1. **Accessibility**—items related to meeting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
2. **Building exterior**—items related to the outside of the facility and grounds area (excluding the playground).
3. **Building interior**—items related to the general or overall inside of the building that are not classroom-specific.
4. **Both building exterior and interior**—items that are related to both the outside and inside of the building (e.g., welcoming entry area).
5. **Characteristics of classrooms or caregiving areas**—items about furniture, equipment, and materials that are specific to a classroom (for centers) or caregiving area (for family child care homes).
6. **Environmental health and safety**—items related to health and safety like fire, emergency preparedness, toxins, etc.
7. **General maintenance/building systems**—items related to overall building maintenance and systems like heating, air conditioning, water, electricity, and ventilation.
8. **Playground quality**—items related to outdoor areas where children play and the equipment available there.

To enable states/territories—and the federal government—to develop a picture of the costs to renovate CCEE facilities, the content of the needs assessment must be detailed enough to develop estimates of renovation costs. For example, if an item on the tool says, "windows in each classroom can be opened to provide fresh air," knowing that the answer was "no" will not provide enough information to estimate the cost of repair (e.g., Do they simply need screens added or do they need to be replaced entirely?). The items on a facilities needs assessment tool need to be specific and provide details to support renovation estimates. Using the example above, the tool would need to gather information about the total number of windows, how many require a screen, and how many need to be replaced entirely. Thus, specific criteria must be developed for each broad content area (e.g., building exterior) included in the needs assessment. Because the facilities of center-based programs and family child care programs are different (i.e., family child care is typically in the provider's home), states/territories likely need to develop specific criteria for each setting

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[2] These 2017 CCLS findings are for states only.

type (i.e., centers and family child care). Then, the tool(s) will need to be developed to collect information about the specific criteria and include details to help develop renovation cost estimates.

Based on our review of existing tools, a new tool will need to be created or an existing tool will need to be adapted to ensure that each state/territory's facilities needs assessment gathers detailed information to support estimates of renovation costs. To ensure that a facilitating entity can compile information to create a national picture of facility needs and costs, at least some items would need to be the same across all states/territories; additional items could be included based on the interests of individual states/territories. (See Highlights of Research Related to Facilities Needs Assessments for more information.)

To improve efficiency (i.e., each state/territory not having to create its own tool) and consistency, convening a group to recommend core content and specific criteria, as well as develop the draft tool(s) for the facilities needs assessment, would facilitate the process. The group could include representatives from states/territories as well as representatives from the building industry or experts in assessing facilities. Developing core content, criteria, and draft tool(s) would reduce the amount of time an individual state/territory would need to determine what to include in the facilities needs assessment and ensure that there is some consistent information that could be meaningfully combined across states/territories.

Methods

To gather the most accurate, detailed data needed to develop facilities' remediation cost estimates, states/territories will need to conduct on-site observations in a representative sample of programs as part of the CCEE facilities needs assessments. Appendix A describes a range of data collection options; some could be combined to gather a variety of information for the needs assessment (see Possible Methods for a CCEE Facilities Needs Assessment for more information). Appendix A also offers considerations for sampling, with the guidance of a research partner (see Sampling Considerations for more information). On-site observations will yield the most accurate information and should be prioritized for two reasons:

1. Existing administrative data are limited and inconsistent across states/territories, so these data could not be easily compiled into a national picture of CCEE facility needs and renovation costs. As noted previously, CCEE licensing regulations vary across states/territories and are not typically detailed enough to support renovation cost estimates. Although facilities-related information may be gathered by licensing staff—as well as by state/territory or local fire marshals, health department staff, or building inspectors—the information may not be included in a database and may vary across communities and states/territories. Thus, it is unlikely that the CCEE facilities needs assessment can rely on existing data to help a state/territory or the federal government develop a picture of facility needs and renovation estimates. As evidence of this, none of the seven PDG B-5 needs assessment reports reviewed for this project included licensing administrative data. Two of the reports (Florida and New Hampshire) specifically noted that there were no systems in place to collect observational data about facilities needs and include them as part of the licensing administrative data. (See Table 2A for more information.)

2. Some methods, such as surveys or focus groups, will produce less accurate and detailed information than observations. Of the seven PDG B-5 Needs Assessment reports we reviewed, only one (Kansas) gathered on-site observational data. As noted in the Kansas PDG B-5 2020 needs assessment described in Appendix A, there were discrepancies between provider self-reported facility needs and findings from on-site observations. Thus, relying on CCEE providers to describe facility needs in a survey will likely not produce as accurate information—or provide information that is detailed enough—to compile into a national estimate of facility remediation needs and costs. Having trained data collectors conducting on-site observations in a representative sample of CCEE programs should produce information that is consistent and detailed enough to compile into a national picture of facility needs and estimate of renovation costs. A state/territory may use other methods to supplement the observational information, but we recommend that most data be collected via on-site observations. (See Possible Methods for a CCEE Facilities Needs Assessment for more information.)

Remediation cost estimates

We expect that a large proportion of CCEE facilities will need renovations. In a 2021 national survey of center-based providers, 44% of center directors indicated that their facilities had acquisition, construction, or renovation needs. (See Preliminary findings from the National Survey of Early Care and Education for more information.) In the 2015 national Head Start facilities needs assessment, 40% of the facilities observed needed some type of facility improvement. In a 2019 Rhode Island facilities needs assessment of a sample of center-based programs, 87% of center directors who completed a survey reported needing facility improvements. (See Rhode Island 2014 and 2019 Facilities Needs Assessment for more information.)

To develop a national estimate of CCEE facilities renovation costs, states/territories will need to gather detailed information to inform the cost estimate which may require using proprietary cost data[3]. The costs of renovating individual facilities likely varies widely within and across states/territories. For example, a 2019 facilities needs assessment of center-based programs in Rhode Island estimated that costs per square footage for facility improvements ranged from $26 to $171. A 2015 national Head Start facilities needs assessment estimated about $198 per square footage to renovate a 10,000 square foot facility. (See Head Start 2015 Facilities Needs Assessment for more information.)

This report does not include information about how a state/territory would determine remediation costs. The reports that the team reviewed did not provide detailed descriptions of how remediation costs were estimated. Specific expertise (e.g., building contractors, architects) would be needed to analyze the facilities data and develop cost estimates for remediation. (The cost estimate in Appendix B assumes that individuals with this specific expertise will be involved in the state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessment.)

Initial steps and resources

To launch a CCEE facilities needs assessment, states/territories likely will need multiple resources to a) build a team to conduct the work, and b) determine the parameters of the needs assessment (e.g., type of facilities to include). Findings from the review indicate that the following resources may be necessary to support state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessments (See Initial Considerations in Conducting a Facilities Needs Assessment for more information):

- **Lead agency coordinator.** The lead agency responsible for conducting the CCEE facilities needs assessment will need to identify someone to coordinate or lead the effort.

- **Collaboration with other state/territory or local entities.** The lead agency responsible for conducting the CCEE facilities needs assessment may need to work with other state/territory or local entities, such as the fire marshal, building inspector, health departments, to gather some information or provide input in the process. These other entities may help the lead agency develop the content and specific criteria to include in a tool and provide some training of data collectors, if needed.

- **Expertise.** States/territories may need experts on various topics, including facility needs assessments, sampling and statistical analysis experts, or renovation cost estimation.

- **Contract(s) with external organizations.** Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, its pressures on the CCEE system, and the influx of federal COVID-19 relief/stabilization funds that state/territory CCEE agencies need to distribute/expend, state/territory agency staff are likely stretched thin and may have difficulty executing a facility needs assessment that would produce the level of detail needed to estimate facility remediation costs. Additionally, this type of project requires specialized knowledge. For these reasons, it may be more feasible and easier for states/territories to contract with an outside organization to conduct this work, with state/territory oversight.

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[3] For example, to estimate cost per square foot to renovate or repair a Head Start facility, the Head Start 2015 Facilities Needs Assessment team used proprietary cost data from a database called *RSMeans*.

- **Funding.** Although costs will vary across states/territories, we estimate that each state/territory would need $735,000—$1,100,000 to conduct their own CCEE facilities needs assessment. If all 56 states, territories, and the District of Columbia conducted a facilities needs assessment, the total estimated cost would be $41,160,000—$61,600,000. (See Appendix B for more information, including key assumptions used to generate these estimates.) This estimate does not include costs of the facilitating entity.

Reporting

To ensure that states/territories provide data that are consistent and can be summarized easily into a national picture, it could be helpful for a facilitating entity to provide states/territories a report template with detailed instructions. This may mean, for example, asking states/territories to provide cost estimates per square foot as well as specifying reporting metrics by setting type (e.g., number and percentage of center-based vs. home-based providers with environmental health and safety needs). Providing a reporting structure for at least some information will increase the likelihood that a facilitating entity can compile state-/territory-level information into a national picture. A review of state/territory CCEE data reported to the federal government suggests that states/territories vary in how they report data, which makes it more difficult to interpret and analyze the information (Lin & Maxwell, 2021). States/territories may need support in providing information at the level of detail needed for a facilitating entity to compile the information into a national picture.

Timeline

If each state/territory conducts its own facilities needs assessment, it will likely take 8-12 months to determine the content to cover, methodology to use, and to develop the tools. It may take another 6-8 months to collect the data and an additional 6-8 months to analyze and report the findings. If states/territories choose to contract the work, then it could take another 6 months or so for a procurement process. Thus, we estimate that it will take about 1 year to determine the content and develop a tool plus another 2 years for states/territories to complete a CCEE facilities needs assessment. These estimates are based on information about state facilities needs assessments and other research activities with states. States/territories will vary in their capacity to conduct these facilities needs assessments, including the time needed to complete them. Some states/territories may need more time.

Compiling information into a national picture

This section summarizes key considerations in compiling information across state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessments to develop a national picture of facility remediation needs and costs. It may be helpful for a facilitating entity to:

- Specify the types of facilities to include in each state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessment. For instance, a facilitating entity could specify that center-based programs and family child care homes should be included; while public school-based programs, Head Start, legally license-exempt providers who care only for their relatives, and providers who care for a child in the child's own home should be excluded.

- Identify similar content and specific criteria by setting type (i.e., center based; home-based) to include in each state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessment.

- Convene a group to develop core content, specific criteria, and draft tool(s) for each state/territory to use in its CCEE facilities needs assessment.

- Provide states/territories a template for reporting the information.

- Compile the information from states/territories into a national picture of facility remediation needs and costs).

Appendix A: Supporting Information Regarding Child Care and Early Education Facilities Needs Assessments

This appendix provides background information regarding CCEE facilities needs assessments. We include information about assumptions, previous research, possible content, considerations for states/territories in conducting a facilities needs assessment, and possible methods. Most of the information in this appendix is based on the assumption that states/territories will conduct individual needs assessments; however, the information is generally applicable to a single national study if that approach is selected.

Assumptions about the needs assessment

In developing this report, the TRLECE team made the following assumptions:

- The needs assessment will include CCEE providers specified in the "Qualified and Eligible Child Care Providers" section of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Child Care Stabilization Grants information memo (CCDF-ACF-IM-2021-02). We assume that the following unlicensed providers will be excluded from the facilities needs assessment: public school-based programs, Head Start,[4] legally license-exempt providers who care only for their relatives, and providers who care for a child in the child's own home. If non-licensed Head Start or public school-based pre-K programs are included in the facilities needs assessment, then the cost estimate will be greater and the timeline longer.[5]

- The needs assessment will focus on existing CCEE providers and current facilities; it will not include information about the construction of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities to serve more children. We acknowledge the importance of identifying areas that need high-quality CCEE programs (and might require renovating facilities, constructing new facilities, or retrofitting existing buildings to open a new CCEE program) and note that identifying those needs would require a separate effort.

- The facilities needs assessment will include facility-related items to support children's health and safety, as well children's learning and development. This report provides information to guide the selection of items but does not recommend a particular tool or content to be included.

- The facilities needs assessment will provide detailed information that would allow states or territories to estimate the cost for repairing or renovating existing CCEE facilities to meet the criteria included in the needs assessment. The report does not, however, include information about how a state/territory would determine renovation costs. Additional expertise (e.g., building contractors) would be needed to analyze the data and develop cost estimates.

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Methods for this review

The TRLECE team used three methods to gather information for this report: 1) a review of facilities needs assessments and other related research, 2) preliminary findings from the 2021 National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE) COVID-19 Follow-up, and 3) secondary data analysis of 2017 CCLS data.

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[4] Not all Head Start programs are licensed. If a Head Start program is licensed, we assume they would be included in the facilities needs assessment. Likewise, if a pre-K program is housed in a licensed center, we assume that the facility would be included.
[5] Costs would be greater and timeline would be longer for many reasons, such as the tool may need to be adjusted to cover those different setting types and the team may need to work with Head Start programs and public school leaders to obtain permission to include the non-licensed sites in the assessment.

Review of facilities needs assessments and other related research

Few states have conducted comprehensive CCEE facilities needs assessments. We are only aware of two states that have released public reports: Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Massachusetts conducted a facilities needs assessment in 2011, and Rhode Island conducted needs assessments in 2014 and 2019. All three of these needs assessments included on-site observations in center-based CCEE programs; Rhode Island also conducted interviews with key constituents and surveys of center directors.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) in the Administration for Children and Families conducted a facilities needs assessment in Head Start programs in 2015. Because Head Start programs must meet the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards, the facilities needs assessment focused on Head Start-specific expectations for facilities. Though we describe the 2015 report, the findings cannot be generalized to the broader set of facilities (centers and homes) serving young children in the U.S.

The federal PDG B-5 required states and territories to conduct comprehensive needs assessments, and their guidance suggested that states and territories include information about CCEE facilities in their assessment. We reviewed needs assessment reports, published in 2019-2020, from seven states:[6] California, Colorado, Florida, Kansas, Nebraska, New Hampshire, and Oklahoma. All seven included some information about facility needs, but the information was typically quite limited. Five of these states gathered information about facility needs from provider surveys or focus groups (which typically covered multiple topics, not just facilities); only Kansas conducted on-site visits with a sample of providers.

We also reviewed recent key reports regarding facilities, such as the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) 2018 facilities policy framework and 2021 model improvement standards for center-based facilities.

Preliminary findings from 2021 National Survey of Early Care and Education COVID-19 Follow-up

We include preliminary information based on a few facilities items on the NSECE COVID-19 Follow-up. The NSECE team from the Nonpartisan and Objective Research Organization (NORC) at the University of Chicago analyzed the data and provided preliminary estimates for center-based programs.

The survey items are:

1. *Does your program currently have any facility acquisition, construction or renovation needs?*

2. If Yes to Q1… *Are any of these needs related to improving the health and safety conditions for children in your care, for example, dealing with lead paint or mold, making electrical upgrades, improving ventilation, or expanding access to water for sanitation?*

3. If Yes to Q1… *Are any of your program's facilities needs related to improving the quality of children's experience, such as improving existing space, renovating playgrounds, or adding space for designated activities?*

Secondary data analysis of 2017 Child Care Licensing Study data

A part of a TRLECE activity, the team analyzed 2017 CCLS data about fire safety, environmental health, as well as the condition and safety of buildings, space, and equipment. We summarize in this appendix key findings from that activity that are relevant to conducting a facilities needs assessment.

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[6] Reviewing all state and territory needs assessment reports was outside the scope of this project. We selected a few PDG B-5 needs assessment reports to review based, in part, on ACF suggestions.

There are two components of the 2017 CCLS: a survey and a review of state licensing regulations. The National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA) and the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance (ECQA Center) staff partnered to develop the survey, and NARA administered the online survey to all state CCEE licensing agencies from March 2018 through January 2019. Data were collected from all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia. For the second component of the study, ECQA Center staff reviewed and coded regulations posted in the National Database of Child Care Licensing Regulations that were in effect as of December 31, 2017. The findings from the survey and review of regulations are reported separately for three CCEE facility types: centers, family child care homes (FCCHs), and group child care homes (GCCHs).[7]

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Highlights of research related to facilities needs assessments

This section describes key findings from the various sources of information related to CCEE facilities needs assessments, including lessons learned.

Key findings and considerations from previous facilities needs assessments and literature

Below we discuss highlights from facilities needs assessments and related reports that informed the TRLECE team's considerations for conducting a facilities needs assessment.

Rhode Island 2014 and 2019 facilities needs assessment

In 2014, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation's (LISC) Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund (RICCELFF) conducted a facilities needs assessment for center-based CCEE programs using multiple methods: survey, on-site assessments, and interviews with key constituents. The 2014 assessment focused primarily on facility issues related to CCEE licensing, as well as issues related to the physical environment that may make it challenging for centers to participate in the state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). The team developed and sent a 50-item survey to all 361 licensed centers and pre-K sites in RI; 297 (83%) completed the survey. They randomly selected 68 of those centers for on-site assessments; 58 (85%) agreed to participate.

The LISC RICCELFF developed an on-site assessment tool for the RI project. Trained observers completed this 255-item checklist during the site visits. The items were organized into six content areas:

1. Building exterior and entry

2. Common areas

3. Classroom characteristics

4. Playground

5. Safety and environmental

6. Building systems and supports

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[7] Not all states license all three facility types. All 51 states license centers. Forty-four states license FCCHs, defined as one adult caring for a group of children in the provider's residence. Thirty-eight states license GCCHs, defined as two or more adults caring for a group of children in the provider's residence. Three states do not have mandatory licensing requirements for any home-based facilities (FCCHs or GCCHs).

The LISC RICCELFF team then created publicly available self-assessment tools for CCEE centers and FCCHs. These tools help programs identify and prioritize facility improvements that might lead to higher quality. They are not intended to gather detailed information to inform national estimates of needs or renovation costs.

Highlights of 2014 findings include:

- About 40 percent of the 297 center directors that completed the survey reported that their building was built before 1975.

- Only about a third of the facilities were built to serve as a CCEE facility, according to survey responses.

- Of the 58 observed centers, 54 percent had structural issue that would make it difficult to meet licensing regulations. Examples included bathrooms on different floors from children, classrooms lacking windows, and insecure entry doors.

In 2019, LISC RICCELFF conducted a second facilities needs assessment in Rhode Island to gather information from 275 center-based programs, with a focus on expanding the availability of high-quality CCEE (e.g., facilities interested in expanding or with space available). They received surveys from 162 licensed centers and school-based pre-K programs (36% response rate). They conducted on-site assessments in 53 facilities that indicated that they had space to expand and were interested in serving more children. The 2019 version of the site visit tool is publicly available on their website.

Highlights of 2019 findings include:

- A large majority (87%) of the 275 directors who completed the survey reported needing facility improvements to provide higher quality CCEE.

- Over 90 percent of facilities had safety hazards in their outdoor playgrounds.

- None of the 53 facilities visited had evidence of environmental hazards.

- The LISC RICCELFF team estimated costs per square footage for facility improvements to range from $26-$171. (The report does not describe the methods for determining these cost estimates.)

Massachusetts 2011 facilities needs assessment

In 2011, the Children's Investment Fund partnered with Wellesley College and On-Site Insight, a company that conducts capital needs assessments, to conduct on-site facilities needs assessments in 73 center-based CCEE and 57 out-of-school time (OST) programs in low-income communities. They used a measure developed by the team that covers 11 standards:

1. Inspections

2. Site location, orientation, and layout

3. Vehicular access and parking areas

4. Building entry/lobby

5. Envelope (e.g., roof, walls) and systems

6. Child activity space

7. Adult activity space

8. Support space

9. Environmental health

10. Outdoor space and activities

11. Accessibility

Each standard has one or more criteria, and each criterion is identified as a Regulatory Standard (i.e., meets Massachusetts state licensing regulations), Professional Standard (i.e., meets professional association standards or guidelines such as the Massachusetts QRIS), or Best Practice Standard (i.e., meets best practice guidelines from various sources such as the Massachusetts High Performing Green Schools Guidelines). There are 76 Regulatory Standards, 60 Professional Standards, and 132 Best Practice Standards in the tool.

Highlights of 2011 findings include:

- Half (50%) of programs met 90 percent or more of the 76 Regulatory Standards items.
- All of the programs met at least half of the 60 Professional Standards items; 21 percent met 90 percent or more of them.
- Almost all (96%) of programs met at least half of the 132 Best Practice Standards items.
- Almost one-third (30%) of CCEE programs did not have adequate carbon dioxide ventilation. Twenty-one percent did not meet the regulatory standard of having windows with screens and in good repair.

As part of the project, the team reported estimated costs for bringing a facility into compliance as of 2011. (The report does not provide details about how cost estimates were developed.) Highlights of estimates are provided below:

- The average cost to bring a facility into full compliance with the 76 Regulatory Standards was about $18,000. The team noted that several programs would require over $60,000 to be in compliance with all Regulatory Standards.
- The average cost to bring a facility into full compliance with the 60 Professional Standards was about $90,000, with some facilities requiring over $200,000. Examples of common upgrades included HVAC, creating an indoor gross motor area, and having certified playground safety inspections, and improving playground fencing.
- The average cost of bringing a facility into full compliance with the 132 Best Practice Standards was about $154,000, with costs over $360,000 needed for some. These involved extensive construction, such as installing restrooms with two toilets and two sinks into each classroom and repositioning windows.

Head Start 2015 facilities needs assessment

In fiscal year (FY) 2015, the OHS analyzed multiple sources of data to describe facilities used by Head Start programs: observations from the 5,513 Head Start centers across the U.S. that received an Environmental Health and Safety (EnvHS) review in FY2015, self-report data from 3,603 Head Start and Early Head Start centers, and administrative data in the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES; OHS, 2015). A two-person team with expertise in building facility codes and fire safety typically completed the EnvHS review during a 4-day site visit. Grantees self-reported information about the building, such as year of construction and major renovations. HSES data included center characteristics like location and ownership of the centers included in the assessment. Key findings include:

- About one-third (36%) of Head Start centers were built before 1970, and fewer than half of those had ever been renovated.
- More than one-quarter (28%) of the Head Start centers were deficient or not compliant with the Head Start Program Performance Standards Key Performance Area of Safe and Clean Environments, which is comprised of three items.
- Of the 5,513 centers observed, 2,201 (40%) needed some type of facility improvement.
- The cost to rebuild, renovate, or repair the 2,201 centers was estimated at $1,075,636,203, with an average cost of $488,703 per center. (See the OHS Head Start Facilities Report for more details about cost calculations.) They used proprietary cost data from RSMeans to estimate a cost of $197.57 per square foot to renovate or repair a 10,000 square foot facility.

Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Needs Assessment

The federally funded PDG B-5 initial grant required awarded states and territories to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment. Forty-six states and territories received these initial PDG B-5 grants. The ACF's Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System (ECTTAS) provided grantees guidance on conducting these needs assessments, which included describing "key concerns or issues related to ECCE *[early childhood care and education]* facilities" (ECTTAS, 2019, p. 1). As noted previously, the team reviewed PDG B-5 reports from seven states. Each of these seven states partnered with at least one outside organization to help conduct the needs assessment (see Table 1A). [Note: RI conducted its 2019 facilities needs assessment as part of their PDG B-5 grant; it is described in an earlier section of this appendix.] Table 2A highlights facilities-related findings from these reports. It is not surprising that states and territories gathered limited information about facilities, given the comprehensive scope of the PDG B-5 assessments (e.g., CCEE quality and availability, data gaps, supports for children transitioning to school, and facility needs) and the complexity of conducting facilities needs assessments.

Table 1A. Key research partners for PDG B-5 needs assessments

State	Key partner(s) in collecting/analyzing data for the needs assessment	Needs assessment report reference
California	American Institutes for Research (AIR)	AIR, 2019
Colorado	Colorado Health Institute	Colorado Health Institute, 2019
Florida	University of Florida, College of Education and College of Medicine	Anita Zucker Center for Excellence in Early Childhood Studies & Family Data Center, 2019
Kansas	Child Care Aware of Kansas	Kansas Department for Children and Families et al., 2020
Nebraska	University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bureau of Sociological Research; Buffet Early Childhood Institute	Buffet Early Childhood Institute, 2019
New Hampshire	RAND; University of New Hampshire	Karoly et al., 2020
Oklahoma	Urban Institute	Greenberg et al., 2020

Table 2A. Facilities-related information from PDG B-5 needs assessments

State	Highlights of findings	Methods for assessing facility needs
California	The report did not provide information about current facility needs. It focused on expansion of current facilities or opening new facilities and described funding opportunities and challenges.	AIR conducted a survey of Local Child Care Planning Councils, a review of literature and state reports, and a review of 6 local county facilities studies focused on expansion.
Colorado	The report did not provide information about current facility needs. Authors recommended connecting providers to funding sources that would support renovations related to ADA accessibility issues.	N/A

State	Highlights of findings	Methods for assessing facility needs
Florida	The report briefly describes licensing inspections and violations as information about ECCE facilities. It notes that there is "limited information about the status of early childhood care and education facilities" (p. 33) because there is not a process for collecting data "drawn from direct observation of the physical facilities" (p. 33).	N/A
Kansas	Providers (mainly FCCH providers) reported: they either never made repairs or made repairs more than 5 years ago; there's enough outdoor and indoor space for children to move; learning materials are adequate but need more math and science materials; and materials need to be more representative (e.g., different cultures, languages, gender roles). The report noted that there were discrepancies between provider self-reported facility issues and findings from on-site observations, suggesting that "providers could use additional support with learning environments," but didn't specify details (p. 67).	Child Care Aware of Kansas conducted an Environmental Needs Survey (survey items on p. 119) with providers. The survey was completed by 400 providers (86% FCCH; 14% centers); they offered a $100 incentive for completion of the 30-minute survey. They conducted on-site observations with a subset of 87 providers. The survey and observation covered learning environment materials, program practices, and physical repairs and renovations.
Nebraska	Nebraska did not gather specific information about the condition of facilities. About 12 percent of providers who completed the survey reported facilities as a barrier for participating in QRIS, with 19 percent of center-based providers reporting this compared to 11 percent of FCCH providers. Providers in rural areas were less likely to report facilities as a barrier than more urban areas. In focus groups, some Black and Latino families noted that facilities owned by white individuals were in better condition than facilities owned by individuals of color. When asking key informants to rank order the importance of various barriers to improving quality, the median rank for facilities was 8.5 (facilities was ranked 9th out of 12 barriers).	Surveys and focus groups were conducted in partnership with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bureau of Sociological Research. The Buffet Early Childhood Institute conducted focus groups with 37 families who identified as African American, Latino, or Native American. The survey was completed by 1,337 providers (mailed to 4,002 leaders from centers, FCCH, Head Start/Early Head Start, license-exempt providers, and pre-K programs). About 62 percent of respondents were FCCH providers, which is similar to the percentage of FCCH providers in their overall system. They also gathered survey data from 61 key informants (e.g., state agency leaders, state organizations) and conducted interviews with 9 key informants. Finally, they conducted a survey of 3,541 families with young children and hosted focus groups with 87 families.

State	Highlights of findings	Methods for assessing facility needs
New Hampshire	This report notes that facilities issues in New Hampshire have received little attention and there are no routinely collected data about CCEE facilities. Key informants mentioned several issues: lack of adequate space, not keeping facilities well-maintained, cost to retrofit space that wasn't designed for CCEE, cost to upgrade or renovate space to improve quality, and challenges in meeting frequently changing local fire or health codes.	RAND conducted interviews regarding a broad array of topics related CCEE with 91 key informants, including state and community experts, CCEE providers, other service providers (e.g., health), and community-based organizations. About three-fourths of the participants mentioned facilities. Most participants who mentioned facilities focused on CCEE facilities (rather than facilities for other service providers like health).
Oklahoma	Parents most frequently mentioned safety and cleanliness as indicators of high-quality. Parents expressed concern about older facilities and facilities that did not have tornado shelters.	The Urban Institute conducted 9 focus groups (2-15 parents each) and 18 interviews with parents, some of whom were using CCEE and some of whom were not. The focus groups and interviews asked parents using care to define quality but did not specifically ask questions regarding facilities.

Other CCEE facilities reports

The BPC has released multiple reports about CCEE facilities, including a framework that delineates principles for policies, standards, and strategies for improving CCEE facilities as well as roles for government (federal, state/territory, and local) and philanthropy (BPC, 2018). They also described the evidence base for a proposed set of facilities-related standards for center-based care (Tracey et al., 2021), and developed an accompanying Facilities Assessment Checklist (FAC; BPC, 2021) that includes 71 items organized into seven categories:

1. Environmental health and safety

2. Prevention of fire hazards

3. Emergency preparedness

4. General facility maintenance-ventilation, plumbing, and electrical systems

5. Building exterior and interior

6. Playground quality

7. Compliance with ADA

The BPC released a companion report for FCCH facilities (Morris et al., 2021) that describes best practices for safe, healthy, and engaging environments in FCCH settings. These best practices cover the same categories included in the center-based facilities checklist except for compliance with ADA.

Preliminary findings from the National Survey of Early Care and Education

NORC at the University of Chicago developed preliminary estimates of center-based provider facility investment needs from the NSECE COVID-19 Wave 2 Spring Follow-up (Borton et al., 2021).[8] Data from the follow-up survey indicate that 95,500 centers that had been serving children 5 years and under in 2019 were serving children under age 13 either on-site or off-site during the last full week of March 2021. Almost half (44%) of center directors indicated that their facilities had acquisition, construction, or renovation needs. Of this group, 43% reported needs related to improving health and safety for the children in their care, and 87% reported facilities investment needs related to improving the quality of children's experiences.

In interpreting this information, it may be useful to remember the findings from the Kansas PDG B-5 needs assessment, which highlight the challenges in providers self-reporting information about facility needs. Thus, the NSECE estimates provided above likely *underestimate* the actual percentage of center-based programs that have facility needs. It is also important to note that the estimates are for center-based programs and cannot be generalized to FCCH/GCCH.

CCEE licensing data about facilities and environmental health

In this section, we summarize findings from TRLECE analyses of 2017 CCLS data about how CCEE licensing units address facilities and environmental health issues within their own units and through partnerships with other entities with specific expertise (e.g., fire safety, building inspection, sanitation, or health). The regulations inform what licensing units inspect and therefore what data states/territories might have regarding facility needs. The percentages in the tables below represent the proportion of states that have a requirement for each facility type (i.e., centers, FCCHs, GCCHs) out of the total number of states that license that facility type (this total number of states is noted by n=X for the facility type at the top of each table column).

Findings are organized into the following three topics:

1. Licensing regulations and external inspections about fire safety

2. Licensing regulations and external inspections about environmental health

3. Licensing regulations about condition and safety of space and equipment and external building code inspections

Fire safety

Table 3A summarizes the extent to which states included state fire safety licensing regulations at the time of the 2017 CCLS, based on a review of regulations by ECQA staff. Fire safety licensing regulations may include requirements for fire evacuation plans, fire drills, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and other fire safety measures. The number of states that have any fire safety licensing regulations do not sum to the total number of states conducting each specific type of fire safety measure tracked by the ECQA center because the four subcategories are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive of all types of fire safety measures.

Findings indicate that nearly all states had some fire safety regulations. Fire evacuation plans and fire drills were common among all facility types. Fire extinguisher and smoke detector requirements were more commonly required in FCCHs and GCCHs, compared to centers.

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[8] Please note that these estimates are based on a preliminary version of the sampling weights, which is not fully adjusted for final Wave 2 Spring non-response. Final published estimates from the NSECE COVID-19 Follow-up may differ.

Table 3A. State fire safety licensing regulations

Licensing regulations	Centers (n=51)		Family Child Care Homes (n=44)		Group Child Care Homes (n=38)	
	n	percent	n	percent	n	percent
Any fire safety requirement[9]	51	100%	44	100%	38	100%
Fire evacuation plans	39	76%	38	86%	33	87%
Fire drills conducted	41	80%	37	84%	31	82%
Fire extinguishers required in facility	23	45%	33	75%	26	68%
Smoke detectors required in facility	20	39%	37	84%	28	74%

Source: Fischer & Orlowski, 2020.

The 2017 CCLS survey asked state licensing agencies to report whether their state requires external fire inspections for centers, FCCH, and GCCHs (Table 4A). A fire inspection was defined as an inspection of CCEE facilities conducted by the state fire marshal, or other fire safety entity, for compliance with the state's fire safety codes and laws. All states required external fire inspections for centers, though fewer required these inspections for FCCHs and GCCHs. Of the states that required external fire code inspections, most states required these inspections before a license is issued and then annually.

Table 4A. State requirements for external fire inspections

State requirements	Centers (n=51)		Family Child Care Homes (n=44)		Group Child Care Homes (n=38)	
	n	percent	n	percent	n	percent
External fire inspection conducted	51	100%	27	61%	29	76%
Before licensing	8	16%	7	16%	6	16%
Before licensing and then annually	27	53%	11	25%	15	39%
Before licensing and then every 2 years	8	16%	2	5%	3	8%
Before licensing and then every 3 years	1	2%	1	2%	2	5%
Annually	2	4%	2	5%	1	3%
Every 2 years	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Every 3 years	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Other frequency[10]	3	6%	2	5%	1	3%
Missing (did not report a frequency)	-	-	1	2%	1	3%

Source: Fischer & Orlowski, 2020.

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[9] Fire safety requirements may include fire evacuation plans, fire drills, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and other fire safety measures. The number of states with fire safety licensing regulations may not sum to the total number of states conducting each specific type of fire safety measure tracked by the ECQA center because the four subcategories are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive of all types of fire safety measures.

[10] For example, frequency depends on a local ordinance, the floor of the house that the program is in (e.g., only if CCEE is provided in the basement or second floor), or structural changes made to the facility.

Environmental health

As part of the 2017 CCLS, ECQA staff scanned state licensing regulations to determine which state licensing agencies required at least one environmental test, and which states included tests to detect levels of lead, radon, asbestos, or other environmental pollutants (see Table 5A). The total number of states with licensing requirements for environmental tests does not equal the sum of states that required lead, radon, and asbestos tests because these three subcategories are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive of all types of environmental tests. For each facility type, approximately one-third of states included one or more environmental tests in their licensing regulations. For instance, 34 percent of the states that license GCCHs required at least one environmental test.

Table 5A. State environmental health licensing regulations

Licensing regulations	Centers (n=51)		Family Child Care Homes (n=44)		Group Child Care Homes (n=38)	
	n	percent	n	percent	n	percent
Any environmental test[11]	19	37%	16	36%	13	34%
Lead test	15	29%	10	23%	8	21%
Radon test	6	12%	4	9%	5	13%
Asbestos test[12]	6	12%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: Fischer & Orlowski, 2020.

In the 2017 CCLS survey, state licensing agencies were asked to report whether their state requires external environmental health inspections for centers, FCCHs, and GCCHs (see Table 6A). An environmental health inspection was defined as an inspection of CCEE facilities conducted by the health department, or other entity external to the state licensing agency, for compliance with the state's environmental health codes and laws. Over 70 percent of states reported that centers were required to have an external environmental health inspection, but only about one third of states required FCCHs or GCCHs to have these inspections.

Table 6A. State requirements for external environmental health inspections

State regulations	Centers (n=51)		Family Child Care Homes (n=44)		Group Child Care Homes (n=38)	
	n	percent	n	percent	n	percent
External environmental health inspection conducted	36	71%	14	32%	14	37%
Before licensing only	6	12%	2	5%	1	3%
Before licensing and then annually	17	33%	6	14%	7	18%

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[11] The total number of states with licensing requirements for environmental tests may not equal the sum of states that require lead, radon, and asbestos tests because these three subcategories are not mutually exclusive or exhaustive of all types of environmental tests.
[12] n/a indicates that the ECQA center did not track the requirement for the specified facility type. For instance, asbestos test data were not available for FCCH and GCCH.

State regulations	Centers (n=51)		Family Child Care Homes (n=44)		Group Child Care Homes (n=38)	
	n	percent	n	percent	n	percent
Before licensing and then once every 1 or 3 Years	1	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Before licensing and then once every 2 years	8	16%	3	7%	4	11%
Before licensing and then once every 3 Years	2	4%	1	2%	1	3%
Annually	2	4%	1	2%	1	3%

Source: Fischer & Orlowski, 2020.

Condition and safety of buildings and equipment

ECQA staff scanned state licensing regulations to determine which states had regulations about condition and safety of space and equipment. Highlights of the findings include:

- Most states regulated the condition of indoor and outdoor space and equipment and the safety of indoor and outdoor equipment, though these regulations are more common for centers compared to FCCHs and GCCHs.
    - More than 90 percent of states had indoor square footage per child requirements for centers and GCCHs, and 86 percent had outdoor square footage requirements for centers. For FCCHs, 66 percent of states included indoor square footage requirements and 41 percent of states included outdoor square footage requirements.
- Few states regulated the surfaces under indoor equipment and alternatives to outdoor space.
- Although most states regulated the safety of sleep equipment, fewer states required facilities to meet federal crib requirements.
- Nearly all states had regulations related to hazardous supplies and materials for all facility types.

The 2017 CCLS survey asked state licensing agencies to report on whether their state required external building code inspections for centers, FCCHs, and GCCHs (see Table 7A). A building code inspection was defined as an inspection of CCEE facilities for compliance with the state's building construction codes and laws that assure buildings are safe for occupants. External building code inspections were more common for centers compared to FCCHs and GCCHs. Of the states that required external building code inspections for CCEE facilities, most required that a building code inspection be conducted before a license was issued. Fewer states required periodic follow-up external inspections.

Table 7A. State requirements for external building code inspections

State requirements	Centers (n=51)		Family Child Care Home (n=44)		Group Child Care Home (n=38)	
	n	percent	n	percent	n	percent
Building code inspection conducted	38	75%	12	27%	15	39%
Before licensing	29	57%	11	25%	12	32%
Before licensing and then annually	3	6%	1	2%	1	3%
Before licensing and then every 2 years	2	4%	0	0%	1	3%
Before licensing then every 3 years	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Once every 2 years	1	2%	0	0%	1	3%
Other frequency[13]	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Missing (did not report a frequency)	1	2%	-	-	-	-

Source: Fischer & Orlowski, 2020.

The findings from the 2017 CCLS suggest that many states/territories have some administrative data on facilities because they have facility-related licensing regulations and collect information on violations during various types of inspections. However, the information likely varies considerably by state/territory and may not be complete or easily accessed. Depending on the timing of inspections, the data may be more or less recent. They also likely rely on other entities to conduct inspections related to fire, building codes, and environmental health issues and may not have consistent data from these other inspection entities. If states/territories needed to gather information from fire, health, or building inspectors, they would likely need to coordinate with multiple organizations at the state/territory or local level.

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Possible content for a CCEE facilities needs assessment

There is no existing facilities-related tool that would meet the needs of this project. Existing tools are quite broad and do not gather information at the level that would be needed to estimate improvement costs. The Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Head Start facilities needs assessments were conducted in center-based programs only. Most likely, tools would need to be developed for each setting type (center-based programs and FCCH). Thus, entities interested in conducting a facilities needs assessment will need to determine the content to cover and how best to measure it. We recommend that an expert panel work together to create a tool that can be used across all entities conducting needs assessments, to ensure that the information gathered can be meaningfully combined. As a first step, the TRLECE team compared the content of items in the LISC Rhode Island Early Learning Facility Needs Assessment Site Visit Tool, the BPC Facilities Assessment Checklist for center-based programs, and the BPC report on best practices for family child care facilities. From this review, we created eight common content areas based on the categories used in the tools:

1. **Accessibility**—items related to meeting ADA requirements.

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[13] For example, some states require a "Certificate of Occupancy" which would require a building inspection.

2. **Building exterior**—items related to the outside of the facility and grounds area (excluding the playground).

3. **Building interior**—items related to the general or overall inside of the building that are not classroom-specific.

4. **Both building exterior and interior**—items that are related to both the outside and inside of the building (e.g., welcoming entry area).

5. **Characteristics of classrooms or caregiving areas**—items about furniture, equipment, and materials that are specific to a classroom (for centers) or caregiving area (for family child care homes).

6. **Environmental health and safety**—items related to health and safety like fire, emergency preparedness, toxins, etc.

7. **General maintenance/building systems**—items related to overall building maintenance and systems like heating, air conditioning, water, electricity, and ventilation.

8. **Playground quality**—items related to outdoor areas where children play and the equipment available there.

States and territories may also want to gather basic information about facilities, such as whether the facility was built specifically to provide CCEE services and the year the building was constructed. The LISC on-site assessment tool includes some additional basic information that may be useful to consider including in a facilities needs assessment.

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Initial considerations in conducting a facilities needs assessment

This section highlights initial steps or considerations for states and territories as they plan and conduct a facilities needs assessment.

Build the team

- Designate a lead organization or agency to conduct the facilities needs assessment.

- Identify constituents to advise the project throughout the process. Constituents may include providers of all types who are included in the facilities needs assessment, representatives from the Governor's office and legislature, provider organizations, and others expected to be affected by or to use the facilities needs assessment. (For additional information about engaging constituents, see Engaging Stakeholders in Research: Tips for CCDF Lead Agencies.)

- Determine the expertise needed on the team that is conducting the facilities needs assessment (e.g., knowledge of needs assessment content, CCEE settings, licensing administrative data, statistical analysis, sampling, survey development and administration, focus group facilitation). This may help inform the next step, determining whether the work can be conducted in-house or needs to be contracted.

- Identify experts to advise the project who have the expertise identified in the previous step.

- Determine whether the needs assessment will be conducted in-house or contracted (in part or all). If the state/territory decides to contract to complete the work, it may be useful to review this Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) resource, Research and Evaluation Capacity Building: A Resource Guide for CCDF Lead Agencies.

Define the parameters of the needs assessment

- Clarify the purpose of the facilities needs assessment, which can guide later decisions and help providers understand how the information will (and will not) be used. Will the needs assessment, for example, simply describe the status of facilities or be used to estimate costs needed for facility improvements?

- Determine the facility types to include in the needs assessment (e.g., licensed facilities, license-exempt providers receiving CCDF subsidies).

- Determine the content to cover in the needs assessment, considering importance and feasibility. It may help to review the items from the BPC Facilities Assessment Checklist and LISC tool.

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Possible methods for a CCEE facilities needs assessment

This section describes various methodological options states and territories could choose to use for their facilities needs assessment and outlines the strengths, challenges, and considerations for each. It is unlikely that any single method outlined below will be sufficient for assessing CCEE facilities' needs. Instead, states or territories may need to combine two or more of these methods to gain a complete picture. We discuss this idea in more detail in the section titled "Combining methods."

State and territory leaders will need to review possible methodologies for conducting the needs assessment and identify the ones best suited for the state/territory. Additionally, as noted elsewhere, state and territory leaders will need to determine the content to cover in their facilities needs assessment unless that decision is made at the national level. We use the term "facilities assessment tool" generically to refer to the set of items a state or territory chooses to address in its facilities needs assessment.

Table 8A presents a for a high-level summary of possible methods. This table is followed by additional details regarding each method.

Table 8A. Summary of Strengths, Challenges, and Considerations for Possible Facility Needs Assessment Methods

Method and description	Strengths	Challenges	Considerations
Analysis of licensing administrative data	• No new data collection required • Includes all licensed facilities • Lower cost • Rigorous if data are complete	• Matching licensing regulations to tool • Some items in tool may not be included in licensing regulations and therefore not available for analysis • May require significant data entry if some information is not in a dataset • May not include all types of care (e.g., license-exempt) • Requires high level of expertise • Data may not be up-to-date • May not be sufficiently detailed to estimate repair costs	• Separate by setting type • Which dates to include • Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on data

Method and description	Strengths	Challenges	Considerations
Information from other entities that inspect CCEE facilities	• May not require new data collection • Information gathered by experts with specialized knowledge	• Time consuming for other entities • Data may not be up-to-date • May not include all types of care • Unlikely to cover all content of interest or be sufficiently detailed	• Which dates to include • Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on data
Observations of facilities	• Relatively high level of accuracy • Up-to-date information • Can cover all important issues identified in tool • Can include all types of providers • Information can be generalized to entire state/territory • Could provide detailed data needed to estimate repair costs	• Requires high level of observer training/monitoring • Providers may be reluctant to allow visitors, leading to less accurate findings • Time consuming • Observers will need a high level of knowledge • May require multiple observers	• Establishing inter-observer agreement is critical • Costs will depend on the extent to which new staff must be hired and trained • Could work with local health and fire inspectors to complete observations or train observers • Will require a data entry and management system • Estimating repair costs will require detailed follow-up questions
Surveys	• No data entry needed • Quicker and less costly than observations • Can include all types of providers • Can include a wide variety of constituents	• Likely less accurate than observations or administrative data • Requires a high response rate • Some groups may be under-represented	• Consider hiring a research partner • Think carefully about who to include and how to sample • Consider coordinating with CCEE facilities to invite families • Consider offering incentives • Avoid systematic non-response • Translate surveys into all languages commonly spoken in state/territory • Estimating repair costs will require detailed follow-up questions

Method and description	Strengths	Challenges	Considerations
Focus groups	• Useful for determining the focus of later data collection • Can include a wide variety of constituents • Can be held at varied locations to maximize representation • Can include clarifying questions	• Motivating participants to attend could be challenging • Focus will likely be narrow • Unlikely to yield information that can be translated into cost	• Requires skilled facilitator • Consider scheduling different groups for different types of constituents • Consider offering incentives • Consider coordinating with CCEE facilities to invite families
Public forums	• Lower cost than other methods • Relatively easy to convene • Can get input from a large number of people at once • Provides a means for public input	• Converting input into a useful needs assessment will be challenging • Those with the strongest feelings may attend making findings hard to generalize • Unlikely to yield information that can be translated into cost	• Requires skilled facilitator • Consider scheduling multiple forums to get a wide variety of participants • Identify how the information will be used in advance

The next sections provide additional details about each of the data collection methods summarized in the table above.

Analysis of licensing administrative data

Overview

For states/territories with strong licensing administrative data systems, it may be possible to obtain some of the needed information from existing data. This would involve first comparing the state/territory licensing regulations to the facilities assessment tool to determine which items are covered in regulations and where data regarding inspections and violations of those regulations are housed.

For the items on the facilities assessment tool that are covered in licensing regulations, the state/territory could then use administrative data to quantify the number and percent of licensed facilities with violations for each item during a set period (e.g., the past year for states/territories who inspect annually).

Strengths

• No new data collection required.

• Can include all licensed facilities, so no sampling is required, providing a more complete picture.

• Likely lower in cost than other methods.

• If licensing regulations map well onto the facilities assessment tool and the data are complete and up-to-date, this would be a rigorous method.

Challenges

- Matching licensing regulations to the items on the facilities assessment tool may be difficult because they may not always closely align.

- Some items from the facilities assessment tool may not be covered in licensing regulations, so only a pared down set of items can be included.

- If the inspection and violation data are not entered into a data system (e.g., they are attached as a PDF and not actually entered into an electronic data system), this strategy would require significant time and resources for data entry.

- If the licensing unit does not monitor license-exempt programs, data on those programs may not be readily available. The state/territory might work with the agency that does monitor license-exempt programs that accept CCDF subsidies to obtain some information from those inspections, but that information may be less complete.

- Will require someone familiar with the data and licensing to oversee the analysis as well as someone with strong data analytic skills to conduct the analysis.

- Data may not be up-to-date.

- For some items, the data may not be detailed enough to create estimates for repair costs.

Considerations

- Ideally, the analysis of licensing administrative data would be done separately for different setting types (e.g., center-based care, FCCH/GCCHs, school-aged care, licensed-exempt) as the prevalence and cost for remediation may be different depending on setting type.

- Each state and territory will need to select the appropriate dates to include. States/territories should consider including a date range that will include an inspection for each facility, if possible. So, states that conduct annual inspections might choose a single calendar year. Those that inspect more frequently, may want to select a shorter window.

- Depending on how inspections were handled during the COVID-19 pandemic, states/territories might want to choose time periods that either ended before the pandemic (e.g., 2019) or started after most pandemic restrictions were lifted (e.g., 2022).

Collect information from other entities that inspect CCEE facilities

Overview

In many states/territories, other entities – such as fire marshals, health departments, and building inspectors – inspect CCEE facilities. In those states/territories, the licensing unit could request the detailed inspection reports from all inspections that took place during a certain time frame or a sample of providers if obtaining all reports is not feasible (see section on Sampling Considerations). Alternatively, the state/territory could conduct surveys with those other entities to learn what violations are the most serious or they see most often.

Strengths

- Capitalizes on information that another entity is already collecting.

- Other entities have specialized knowledge regarding facilities that might make the data more accurate than self-report by providers or licensing inspectors' reports.

Challenges

- Obtaining information from the other entities may be challenging due to time and staffing constraints. This will be especially true if the inspection information is not typically entered into any type of database.

- In some states/territories, inspections are only done prior to initial licensure so information may become out-of-date quickly.

- In some states/territories, other entities only inspect certain types of providers (e.g., center-based), so this method would not cover all types of providers.

- Collecting information from other entities is unlikely to cover all the content that a state or territory identifies as important and will probably have to be combined with other methods. This is likely true for most of the methods described in this section but poses a special challenge for this method because each entity has a limited purview (e.g., fire, health).

Considerations

- As with administrative data collection, each state/territory would need to select a date range to include in this request and the appropriate date range would depend on how often inspections by other entities are conducted.

- States/territories might decide to exclude the period when inspections were cancelled or altered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, because they are unlikely to provide an accurate or detailed picture of the facilities.

Observations

Overview

States/territories could conduct on-site observations to gather information from a sample of providers (see section on Sampling Considerations). The observers could be contractors, hired specifically for this purpose. Alternatively, the observers could be licensing staff and/or staff from other entities who inspect CCEE facilities (e.g., fire marshal, health department, QRIS). Observations for the facilities needs assessment (using a specific tool) could be added to regularly scheduled visits by licensing staff or other entities, especially if the content covered in the needs assessment is short. If the facilities needs assessment covers more topics/includes more items, a separate visit may be necessary.

Strengths

- For states/territories whose data systems are difficult to navigate or do not include complete data, observations would likely provide the most accurate information.

- Data would be based on current conditions.

- Could ensure that all items on the facilities assessment tool are covered.

- Could include all types of providers, including license-exempt providers that accept CCDF subsidies.

- With proper sampling and weighting, these observations could be used to make generalized conclusions about CCEE facilities throughout the state/territory.

- If the tool is detailed enough, it could provide information to inform cost estimates for addressing the facility issues.

Challenges

- Would require training and monitoring a team of observers to use the tool to produce reliable data (i.e., ensure that all observers are using the tool in the same way).

- Providers may be reluctant to have outsiders visit. If a high proportion of providers do not permit the observation, the data will be less accurate.

- Would take a long time to complete compared to other methodological options.

- Requires observers to be very knowledgeable of facilities and the content covered on the facilities assessment tool.

- Each observation might require multiple observers to ensure that the team has the correct expertise (e.g., building inspector, fire marshal).

Considerations

- To ensure that all individuals conducting observations are using the same standards, it is important to test inter-observer agreement (e.g., the extent to which two observers agree on how to code a single observation) both prior to the start of the observations and on an on-going basis throughout the observation period.

- The cost of this method will depend on state/territory-specific factors. If new staff are hired and trained to conduct observations that are separate from regularly scheduled observations, this will be an expensive method of conducting a facilities needs assessment. If, on the other hand, these observations are added to existing observations and are conducted by individuals who are already very familiar with this type of observation, the costs will be considerably lower.

- States/territories would need to consider who is best suited to collect the data. They could rely on individuals with specialized expertise, such as architects, building inspectors, or fire marshals, to collect data. Alternatively, they could hire observers who may have expertise in using observational measures in CCEE settings and rely on a team of experts (e.g., building inspectors, fire marshals) to provide training and consultation throughout the data collection.

- States/territories that elect to do observations would need to create a data entry and management system to assign observations to teams, monitor that they are completed, and house the data as they are collected.

- If the state/territory is interested in using the needs assessment to inform repair or renovation costs, then the observational tool would need to be carefully constructed to provide detailed information. When observers note problems, they will likely need to collect additional details about the extent of the issue and characteristics of the facility. For example, if all windows need to be replaced to improve ventilation, it may be necessary to note the number and size of windows. Likewise, if the playground surface needs to be replaced to improve safety, noting the size and current surface material may be critical to estimating costs.

Surveys

Overview

States/territories could conduct online surveys of providers, licensing inspectors, other entities, and/or families to understand perceptions of their facilities or the facilities with which they work. The surveys could be short and sent to the respondents via email to facilitate quick data collection and analysis. States/territories could select to survey just one group or multiple groups.

Provider surveys. States/territories could distribute a short survey asking providers of all types (center-based, FCCH/GCCHs, license-exempt, school-aged) for their perceptions of significant facility issues. The survey could ask providers to complete an adapted version of the facilities assessment tool or to simply rate their perceptions of the most significant facility issues.

Survey of licensing inspectors. The state/territory could ask licensing staff who inspect CCEE centers and FCCH/GCCHs (and license-exempt providers, if applicable) to share their general perceptions of significant facility issues by setting type.

Survey of inspectors from other entities. The state/territory could use a short survey to request that fire marshals, health department inspectors, and building inspectors rate their general perceptions of how prevalent violations are in these areas.

Survey of families. The licensing agency could send families a short survey of key items in the needs assessment, asking them to note their perception of the presence of each issue in their child's current facility.

Strengths

- Survey data would likely yield primarily quantitative data, which tend to be easier to analyze than qualitative data.
- Data could be collected electronically, using emailed invitations, making data entry unnecessary; this would make this method faster and less costly than observations.
- Surveys could gather information regarding all types of providers, including license-exempt providers who accept CCDF subsidies.
- Can include a wide array of constituents, leading to a broad perspective.

Challenges

- Survey data would produce perceptions of facility issues and needs, which may not be as accurate as on-site observations or administrative data: they may overestimate or underestimate facility issues.
- Staff would need to work to ensure a high (or high enough) response rate.
- If the surveys are primarily online, response rates may be lower among providers or families who have limited internet access or whose comfort with technology is low. This may systematically reduce the representation of providers or families with less formal education or lower English language skills or those in rural areas.

Considerations

- Creating strong survey questions, obtaining high response rates, and conducting appropriate analyses require specialized skills. States/territories electing to do surveys might consider hiring a research partner with survey expertise to manage the data collection and sample design (see section on Sampling Considerations).
- States/territories should think carefully about who to include in their survey samples. In some cases, it might be easiest to send the survey to everyone, using the provider distribution emails that most states/territories have; however, this would not necessarily mean that they would receive data from priority subgroups of interest. Stratified sampling should be considered to ensure sufficient responses from all priority subgroups. If states/territories are interested in learning specifically about certain subgroups (e.g., providers accepting CCDF subsidies), they could consider more targeted sampling and

outreach. Again, working with a partner with expertise in sampling and survey design would help ensure that the responses reflect the population and subgroups of interest.

- If conducting surveys with families, consider coordinating with CCEE facilities to invite families.

- Offering incentives for participation could help increase the response rate. For a short survey of 20 minutes or less, a $25-$50 gift card will likely increase the response rate.

- States/territories may find it helpful to work with a research firm or university during and after data collection to minimize and account for systematic non-response (i.e., lower response rates among certain groups than others). Before data collection begins, the team could target outreach to groups that may respond at lower rates (e.g., FCCHs/GCCHs, providers of color, rural providers) to increase awareness of the study and the importance of participation. During data collection, they could monitor response rates by group and follow up with groups where response is lagging. After data are collected, a statistician can use statistical weighting procedures to account for systematic non-response. The results will be more accurate if the team can work to avoid systematic non-response.

- It is important to offer surveys in all languages commonly spoken within a state/territory to ensure responses from diverse respondents. Professional translation is necessary to ensure that the surveys are well understood.

- As with observations, states and territories could add follow-up question to collect additional details about problem areas to aid in estimating repair costs (e.g., number of windows, playground size). If the surveys are conducted on-line, skip patterns can be programmed so that providers are only asked relevant follow-up questions.

Focus groups

Overview

States/territories could conduct focus groups with key constituents to learn about facility issues. This information could be valuable in determining the focus of later surveys or observations but **will not** yield the type of quantitative information that would be necessary for estimating the cost of improving facilities. Constituents could include providers, licensing staff, inspectors from other entities (e.g., fire marshal), and/or families. Participants could describe their perceptions of significant facility issues and problems they have had with CCEE facilities. The facilities assessment tool could serve as the guide in developing focus group questions to ensure that participants address the areas of interest to the state/territory.

Strengths

- Focus groups may be an especially useful approach at the start of the needs assessment process for determining the most critical facilities needs to address in the needs assessment.

- States/territories could invite groups of key constituents (e.g., providers from different sectors, families using different types of care, licensing inspectors) to ensure that the needs assessment includes information from multiple perspectives.

- Holding multiple focus groups in various locations (including online) and targeting different types of respondents would increase the types of perspectives included.

- Small groups would allow for guided discussion and clarifying questions, making the data richer.

Challenges

- Motivating participants to attend could be challenging.

- It would be difficult to gather information about all facilities issues; focus groups will likely be limited to addressing only the most salient issues.

- Focus groups are unlikely to result in detailed estimates of facilities' needs that could be used to estimate the cost to remediate them.

Considerations

- Focus groups require skilled facilitators to manage the discussion and help participants feel comfortable enough to talk. States/territories may need to hire a focus group facilitator or partner with an organization with experience conducting focus groups, analyzing the information, and writing a report.

- Scheduling multiple focus groups for different types of constituents and in various locations, as well as online, would be important to ensure broad representation. The timing and location of each focus group should be adjusted, as needed, to make it as easy as possible for people to participate.

- States/territories could consider providing child care and a meal to make attending more convenient and increase participation. Offering incentives, like $50-$100, for one-hour focus groups might help increase participation.

- If states/territories elect to conduct focus groups with families, they might coordinate with CCEE facilities to identify and invite families.

Public forums

Overview

States/territories could host public forums to allow providers, families, and other constituents to share ideas about facility needs across various facility types (e.g., centers, FCCHs, license-exempt providers). However, similar to focus groups, information gathered during public forms will not yield the type of quantitative information necessary for estimating the cost of improving facilities.

Strengths

- Lower cost than other methods.

- Relatively easy to convene.

- Would allow state/territory staff to hear comments from a large number of individuals at once.

- Would provide the public a means of weighing in on facility needs that might be different from those included in a formal facilities assessment tool. Such information could be incorporated into later surveys and observations.

Challenges

- Converting public comments made during the public forum into data that can be meaningfully summarized for the needs assessment may be time consuming and challenging.

- Forums may attract individuals with the strongest feelings/motivation to participate, which could bias the findings.

- Forums are unlikely to result in detailed estimates of facilities' needs that could be used to estimate the cost to remediate them.

Considerations

- This type of public forum would require skilled facilitation to ensure that all voices are heard and useful information is gathered. States/territories may need to hire a facilitator or partner with an organization with experience conducting public forum, analyzing the information, and writing a report.

- It would be important to offer multiple forums at different locations and times, as well as online opportunities, to accommodate a wide range of public input.

- The forums are most likely to result in useful information if states/territories identify in advance how information will be summarized; such planning will help guide the process used in the forums themselves.

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Sampling considerations

Several of the methods described in the previous section would require the state/territory to select a sample prior to data collection. For instance, it is probably not feasible to conduct on-site observations in all licensed and license-exempt facilities. Likewise, although sending an email survey to all providers or licensing inspectors might be feasible, selecting a representative sample and investing in ensuring a high response rate would lead to stronger results. These complex considerations require the engagement of a research partner with expertise in research design, sampling statistics, and weighting before data collection.

In preparing to talk with the research partner, some questions to consider include:

- What group are you trying to represent? It is important that the final sample of respondents be representative of your entire group (e.g., the universe of providers, inspectors, or families). Because some subgroups may be easier or harder to reach than others, you may need to oversample some subgroups. Additionally, states/territories should consider whether the outreach method (e.g., email surveys) creates systematic bias in non-response and if different outreach strategies are needed for different groups.

- How accurate does the estimate need to be? A larger sample will make the estimate more accurate, but is also time consuming and costly, so balancing the budget with accuracy will be critical.

- Do you have or can you develop an accurate list of all members of the group you would like to represent? Is the contact information in the lists up-to-date and complete? States/territories may have easily accessible lists of all licensed providers. However, lists of license-exempt providers may be more difficult to obtain. Likewise, lists of licensed providers may not always have up-to-date email addresses. Knowing what lists are available and the quality of the information on the lists will help the research partner devise a reasonable data collection plan. These lists are often called sampling frames.

- How can the sampling plan take equity into consideration? Structural racism exists across multiple U.S. systems including housing, zoning, banking, and public education (Agénor et al., 2021). Because of this, conditions are likely worse in facilities owned by individuals of color or those located in communities of color. The sampling plan may need to oversample some areas of the state/territory and some subgroups of providers to account for such inequalities.

- For observations, how many visits are feasible within your timeframe and budget? For surveys, how many respondents can you reasonably follow-up with to ensure that a high proportion respond? Are there options (such as alternative data collection methods, incentives, or other follow-up options) that you can pursue if response rate is lower than expected?

- For observations, will you need the program's permission to conduct the observation? If so, you might consider increasing the sample size because some may decline to participate. You might also consider financial or other incentives to encourage participation,

- For surveys or observations, can you provide a financial incentive to encourage participation? Are there other strategies you could use to ensure most of the people you invite complete the survey (e.g., send reminders through widely read newsletters)? Getting a high response rate is important to ensure representativeness, so thinking in advance about strategies for encouraging participation is important.

- Which subgroups of programs are important to represent accurately? If you think that some types of programs are likely to have greater facility needs than others, it is important to ensure that your sample represents those groups. Further, it may be necessary to oversample some groups and employ strategic outreach to some groups to ensure their participation is high enough and that the researchers can create and apply sampling weights to correctly represent important groups. This is often called stratified sampling. However, accurately representing a large number of subgroups will substantially increase the size of the sample and the cost of the data collection, so it is important to be cautious when selecting subgroups. Some subgroups states/territories might want to consider representing include:
    - Provider type: center-based, licensed family home, after school care, license-exempt
    - Location: various regions of the state/territory or possibly urban, suburban, and rural
    - Funding: accepts subsidy, includes Head Start, includes state/territory pre-K

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Combining methods

As noted in the previous section, it is unlikely that any single method will provide a complete picture of CCEE facility needs in an entire state or territory, so leaders may want to combine two or more methods. For example, a state or territory might learn that their administrative data is fairly complete with regard to playground safety but is lacking information on ventilation or the age and condition of roofs. For that reason, they might choose to combine administrative data analysis with observations focused on specific aspects of the facilities where administrative data are less robust. Combining different types of surveys could also yield more comprehensive information. For example, a survey of providers might give insight into the prevalence of some types of issues; whereas having licensing inspectors complete a survey after each inspection for a three-month period regarding the details of problems they observed could help in estimating repair costs. Likewise, a state or territory might decide that observations are the most complete way to gather the data they seek but also want to gather input from providers. To meet both goals, they might combine systematic observations with focus groups or surveys.

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Summary

Data from the 2021 NSECE COVID-19 Follow-up survey of CCEE directors suggests that nearly half had facility acquisition, construction, or renovation needs. Yet there is little available data about the specific facility needs of CCEE programs across the U.S. Before states or territories can conduct a CCEE facility needs assessment, they (or a facilitating entity) need to determine the content to cover, develop/revise tools, and determine the best data collection methods. The facilities needs assessment must gather specific information if it will be used to develop renovation cost estimates. We hope the considerations raised in this report will strengthen the quality of data gathered as part of CCEE facilities needs assessments.

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Appendix B: Cost Estimate for a State/Territory Child Care and Early Education Facilities Needs Assessment

The Office of Child Care has asked OPRE to conduct a feasibility study to determine how needs assessments of CCEE facilities could best be conducted by states and territories. This appendix outlines the assumptions that TRLECE used to estimate the cost of such a needs assessment. The first section outlines the assumptions for the needs assessment itself, and the second section summarizes the assumptions that went into the cost estimate. This estimate does not include costs of a facilitating entity to compile the information into a national picture.

Assumptions about the parameters of the CCEE facilities needs assessment

To develop the cost estimate, the TRLECE team made the following assumptions about the CCEE facilities needs assessment. If the facilitating entity or states/territories make different assumptions when implementing a CCEE facilities needs assessment, then the cost estimates in this report may not be accurate.)

1. Each state/territory will conduct its own CCEE facilities needs assessment.

2. Each state/territory will include in the facilities needs assessment providers as specified in the "Qualified and Eligible Child Care Providers" section of the Child Care Stabilization Funds information memo (CCDF-ACF-IM-2021-02). We assume that the following unlicensed providers will be excluded from the facilities needs assessment: public school-based programs, Head Start, legally license-exempt providers who care only for their relatives, and providers who care for a child in the child's own home.

3. For purposes of this project, we assumed each needs assessment will focus on existing providers and current facilities. A state/territory could elect to combine this facilities needs assessment with a broader assessment of supply (e.g., construction of new facilities), but that would result in additional costs and assumptions outside the scope of this project.

4. Each facilities needs assessment will include facility-related items to support children's health and safety (e.g., building does not have asbestos, roof in good condition), as well as items about features of the facilities that support children's learning and development (e.g., age-appropriate playground equipment, classrooms divided into separate areas).

5. The state/territory facilities needs assessment will include detailed information about facility needs as well as estimates of the cost for repairing or renovating existing CCEE programs to meet the criteria included in the needs assessment.

6. States/territories will collect information regarding some pre-identified facilities criteria (data elements); however, states/territories may elect to add elements beyond what is required. The pre-identified criteria will be observable in a single day of on-site observation by a trained observer with a background in building inspection or a related field. These costs estimates assume that each

state/territory (or their contractors) will need to develop a data collection platform to capture the required data elements and any additional elements they elect to measure.

7. States/territories (or their contractors) will gather the bulk of facilities needs assessment data via on-site observations in a sample of providers; other methods of data collection, such as provider surveys, may supplement the on-site observations.

8. States/territories will hire a contractor to: 1) develop/refine an observational tool and data collection platform that can be used to assess the condition of specific aspects of CCEE facilities, 2) conduct observations at a representative sample of CCEE facilities, and 3) use the observation data to estimate the cost of bringing all facilities in the state/territory to a specified level (e.g., meet the criteria included in the tool). We assume the contractor will need to develop a team with specialized knowledge regarding CCEE settings and content areas included in the facilities needs assessment, such as licensing regulations related to facilities and environmental health, building construction, facility maintenance, playground safety, and environments that support children's development and learning. We assume members of the contractor team will also need to know how to use the results from the facilities needs assessment to develop cost estimates for remediation.

Assumptions used to estimate the cost of a CCEE facilities needs assessment

This section outlines the assumptions we used to estimate the cost of a state/territory CCEE facilities needs assessment. The estimated costs are described in the next section. See Table 3B at the end of this document for a summary of all types of costs considered in the estimates.

1. **Time to complete.** As described in the *Considerations in Conducting Child Care and Early Education Facilities Needs Assessments* report, we have assumed that a facilities needs assessment will take three years.

2. **State/territory employees.** State/territory employee(s) will devote the equivalent of .50 full-time equivalent (FTE) for three years to manage this effort, including procuring the contract, working with the contractor to plan the data collection, engaging CCEE providers and other experts as advisors, and leading dissemination and action planning. They will also likely coordinate with other entities (e.g., fire marshals) about the project and, in particular, training of data collectors. Their effort will likely be higher than .50 at the start and end of project, and lower during the data collection phase, but we assume it will average .50 FTE across the three years. The estimated annual compensation for the state employee is $136,718, including benefits.[14]

3. **Senior staff at contracted firm.** The state/territory will hire a contractor to do the bulk of the work. The contracted firm will develop a team of senior staff with a variety of technical skills and content expertise, which includes: project management and oversight of data collection; data analysis; building standards and inspection and other content included in the facilities needs assessment; aspects of CCEE quality related to physical space and materials; repair cost estimation; and report writing. Although different individuals will likely fill these various senior staff roles, we have estimated that, on average,

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[14] According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the total hourly compensation (including benefits) for state and local government workers in the management, professional, and related occupational group is $65.73 (www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.t03.htm#ect_table3.f.1). To obtain the total annual salary, we multiplied the hourly cost by 2,080 hours.

the contractor's fully loaded[15] rate for senior staff will be $183/hour. The state/territory will need to determine the period of performance for the contracted firm, but the period of performance should not affect the hours required. We have assumed that the senior staff will hire field staff with specialized knowledge and skills of building inspections and will train them to reliability on the observational tool developed for the facilities needs assessment. (See below for more information about field staff skills and knowledge.) We have also assumed that senior staff will accompany field staff on 5% of the observations in order to maintain reliability. Table 1B specifies the tasks that we have assumed contracted senior staff will complete and the number of hours that we assumed for each task.

Table 1B. Contracted Senior Staff Hours

Tasks to be completed by contracted senior staff at a contracted firm	Hours assumed for contracted senior staff at contracted firm
Refine and finalize data collection tool	240
Create a data collection platform	80
Develop fielding strategy, including sampling design	60
Hire and train data collectors to reliability	65
Reliability checks (senior staff with expertise in the content included in the facilities needs assessment will join 5% of observations)	100
Analyze administrative data	250
Estimate repair costs using field data and pricing database (6 hours/site)	1,200
Data analysis and preparation of final report	250
TOTAL HOURS FOR SENIOR STAFF	**2,245**

4. **Number of observations.** One of the key tasks of the contracted firm will be to determine the sample size, sample design (e.g., stratification), and recruitment strategy (see the section on "Sampling Considerations" in the *Considerations in Conducting Child Care and Early Education Facilities Needs Assessments* report). For purposes of this estimate, we have assumed a sample size of 200 CCEE facilities (see Assumption 2 in the section above for a description of the types of facilities to be included and excluded). A sample size of 200 will likely produce a margin of error of 7.1%.[16] However, the actual sample size will depend on a number of factors (e.g., number of programs in the state/territory, subgroups of interest), and 200 may not be appropriate in all states/territories. A larger sample would decrease the margin of error but increase the costs.

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[15] Fully loaded labor rate is an employee's hourly rate, plus benefits, capital expenses, and other overhead costs. Overhead is any expense incurred that supports a business which is not directly related to a specific product or service (e.g., rent, utilities, office supplies). This estimate of $183/hour comes from the Bureau of Labor Statistic's national estimate of the mean annual wage for Architectural and Engineering Managers ($158,970), divided by 2,080 work hours in a year, plus 50% for benefits, plus 60% on top of salary and benefits for overhead and fees. [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes119041.htm#(1)]
[16] https://online.stat.psu.edu/stat100/lesson/2/2.3

5. **Field staff.** To collect on-site observational data, the contractor will hire five field staff to visit 200 CCEE facilities over a six-month period. We assume that field staff will have specialized knowledge of CCEE facilities (e.g., building construction and maintenance, environmental health, CCEE quality) and be trained to a level of reliability on the facilities needs assessment tool before collecting data. We also assume that inter-rater reliability visits will be conducted for 5% of the sites during data collection and have included hours for senior staff with content expertise to make those visits. Three field staff would be sufficient if they each made 12 visits per month; however, we recommend hiring and training five field staff as a buffer in case there is turnover, or some cannot complete 12 visits per month. We believe six months is the shortest feasible data collection window; if possible, it would be best to avoid a longer period to ensure that the data collectors can maintain reliability and to minimize turnover. On average, we assume that each visit will take ten hours. This assumption is based on conversations with others who have done similar work. We have assumed the observation itself will require the field staff member to be on site for five hours, plus one hour of preparation, one hour of data entry, and three hours for travel (roundtrip). We have also assumed that field staff (or office staff who earn roughly the same amount as the field staff) will complete some administrative tasks to support the fielding effort, such as scheduling meetings and preparing materials. The contractor's fully loaded rate for field staff will be $79/hour.[17] Although this value is higher than other data collection efforts,[18] these field staff members will need to have specialized skills and knowledge regarding the content of the state/territory facilities needs assessment, such as building construction and environmental health, as well as enough background in CCEE quality to accurately rate that portion of the observation. Field staff will complete the following tasks outlined in Table 2B at this rate.

Table 2B. Field staff hours

Tasks to be completed by field staff	Hours assumed for field staff
Participate in training and initial reliability testing (5 data collectors, 24 hours of training/testing each)	120
Secure sites' participation & scheduling (.75 hours/site)	150
Conducting observations (10 hours/site, including travel and data entry)	2,000
Other administrative task supporting fielding effort	160
TOTAL	2,430

6. **Travel.** Travel expenses for field staff (e.g., mileage, hotels, flights) and other direct costs (e.g., shipping) will cost an average of $250/site visit. This number is based on a high-level review of US General Services Administration (GSA)[19] per diem rates for seven cities around the country.

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[17] This estimate of $79/hour comes from the Bureau of Labor Statistics national estimate of the mean wage for Construction and Building Inspectors ($68,480), divided by 2,080 work hours in a year, plus 50% for benefits, plus 60% on top of salary and benefits for overhead and fees. [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes474011.htm]

[18] The Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that the mean salary for a Social Science Research Assistant is $56,430 [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes194061.htm], which is lower than the $68,480 Construction and Building Inspector salary we are assuming here.

[19] Source: https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates.

7. **Incentives.** To ensure that programs are willing to permit observations and to compensate programs for their time, we suggest that the contractor provide a $200 incentive (i.e., gift card or cash) to each participating program.

8. **Other direct costs.** In addition to labor, travel, and incentives, we have assumed that the contractor will incur some general expenses associated with managing this effort such as laptop computers and cell phones for field staff, software, office supplies, and mailing. We have included $20,000 for such expenses.

Cost estimate

Based on the assumptions outlined above, we estimate that the cost to a state/territory for a facilities needs assessment would be between $735,000 and $1,100,000. Assuming all 56 states, territories and the District of Columbia conduct a facilities needs assessment, the total cost would be between $41,160,000 and $61,600,000. Below we show how the assumptions were used to calculate this range. The column labeled "Estimate" assumes the values we list above. The range ($735,000 to $1,100,000) assumes 20% more or less than the estimate. We have included this range because the actual cost to a state/territory will depend on many factors, including the number of CCEE facilities in the state/territory, the sample size determined in conjunction with a sampling expert, desired accuracy, labor costs, travel costs, and amount of work to be conducted by state employees versus a contractor. Additionally, it is important to note that although the sample size (200 observations assumed here) is a large factor in determining the cost, these other factors such as labor rates and travel will also affect the eventual budget significantly.

Table 3B. Summary of total cost estimate

Role	Assumption	-20%	Estimate	+20%
State employee(s)	0.5 FTE for 3 years @ $136,718 including benefits	$164,062	$205,077	$246,092
Senior staff at contracted firm	2,245 hours @ $183/hour	$328,668	$410,835	$493,002
Field staff at contracted firm	2,430 hours @ $79/hour	$153,576	$191,970	$230,364
Travel	200 trips @ $250 each	$40,000	$50,000	$60,000
Incentives	200 programs @ $200 each	$32,000	$40,000	$48,000
Other direct costs	Laptops, cell phones, software, mailing, etc.	$16,000	$20,000	$24,000
TOTAL		**$734,306**	**$917,882**	**$1,101,458**

Considerations in Conducting Child Care and Early Education Facilities Needs Assessments

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