

Using Data to Unlock Business Coaching Potential and Priorities

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Meaningful change requires more than ideas or assumptions—it demands hard work, relationship-building, and data. Lots of data! At [Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network \(WEESSN\)](#), part of [Wisconsin Early Childhood Association \(WECA\)](#), we believe our evaluation culture empowers us to continuously adapt and improve our services. WEESSN ensures the success and sustainability of Wisconsin's essential child care businesses by building data collection and analysis into our philosophy and operations.

In 2023, when we partnered with [Luminary Evaluation](#) for comprehensive evaluations, our approach wasn't simply to validate our efforts—we actively sought to identify gaps in our understanding of our impact. By gathering feedback from providers, coaches, and staff, we recognized that enhancing our services meant learning more about what we didn't yet know. This approach highlighted our existing strengths and revealed new opportunities for growth and innovation.

This [first evaluation](#) revealed many programmatic strengths. WEESSN-enrolled program demonstrated evidence of practices such as financial management, maximizing tax deductions, automation, collecting fees, and retaining employees. It also identified areas of opportunity for coaches to explore further with their providers. The [second evaluation](#), in 2024, also revealed strengths and areas for growth. The figure below summarizes the progress identified from the 2023 to the 2024 evaluation.

This summary not only helped us understand the progress providers made from the first evaluation to the next, but it also aided us in shaping our coaching priorities for the coming year.

For example, in 2023, most Family Child Care (FCC) providers reported that they were unsure about the accuracy of their time-space calculation and whether or not they were using one in the preparation of their taxes. Evidence also indicated that most providers had not yet reviewed their time-space

calculation for accuracy with their coach. This signaled to the WEESSN team that attention to the time-space calculation was needed with FCC providers across the network.



Summary of Progress

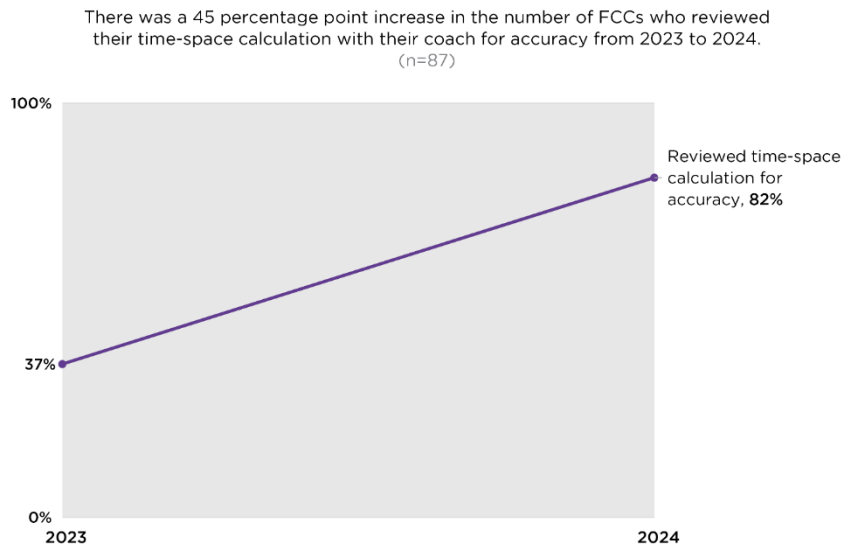
- Recordkeeping (FCCs)
- Budgeting (FCCs & GCCs)
- Time-Space Calculations (FCCs)
- Proper Classification of Contractors (GCCs and FCCs)
- Retirement Investments (FCCs)
- Policies to Protect Cashflow (FCCs and GCCs)

Waitlist	Payroll System (FCCs and GCCs)
Revenue vs. Expenses	Time Keeping System (FCCs and GCCs)
Bad Debt	Dedicated Planning Time
Tax Deductions	Avg Employee Turnover Rate
Retirement Offerings (GCCs)	PTO Offerings (FCCs and GCCs)
Bookkeeping System	
CCMS Usage	

Cashflow Projections (FCCs and GCCs)

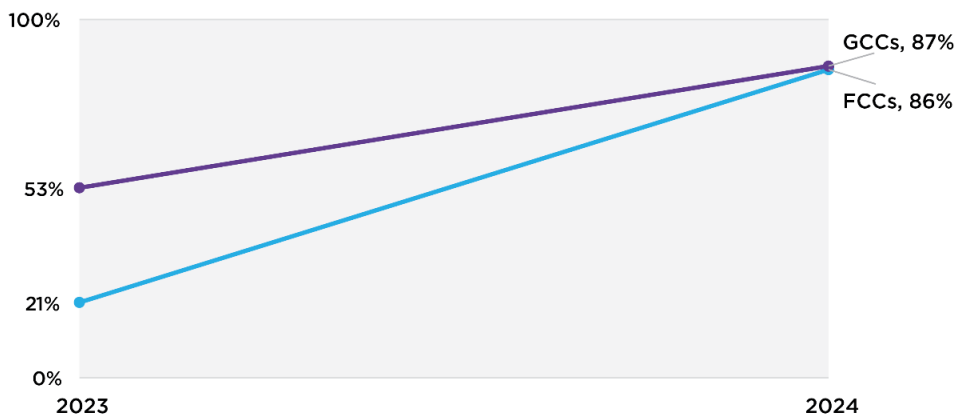
Updated Measures for 2024: Enrollment, Health Benefits, CACFP, Weekly Rates

The 2024 evaluation illustrated the results of this effort. Data analysis showed a **45 percentage point increase** in the number of FCC providers who reviewed their time-space calculations with their coach. According to survey data entered by WEESN coaches who had reviewed time-space calculations with their providers, 75% of FCC providers surveyed were making accurate calculations.



The 2023 evaluation also identified an opportunity for coaches to ensure providers understand federal regulations for engaging 1099 contractors. We collaborated with Civitas Strategies to deliver resources, information, training, and one-on-one coaching to help providers navigate the complexities of employment law and avoid costly mistakes. By providing this focused and comprehensive coaching, we saw a **34 percentage point improvement** in accurate staff classification for Group Child Care providers (GCCs) or Centers and a **65 percentage point improvement** for FCC providers.

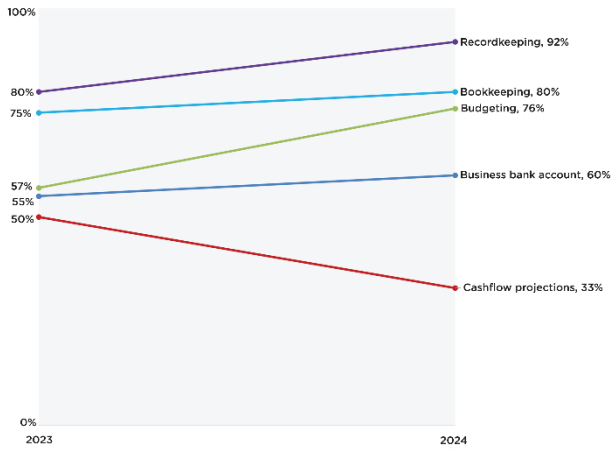
The number of GCCs and FCCs with 1099 contractors that report correctly categorizing them according to federal requirements increased from 2023 to 2024 by 34 and 65 percentage points. (n=45)



The 2024 evaluation also revealed new areas to prioritize. One such area was using a budget to make cash flow projections for the coming year. While more GCCs and FCCs reported having a budgeting system in place, the percentages of providers across both groups reporting that they make cash flow projections decreased. This warrants additional focus given that pandemic relief era payments have tapered off, resulting in lower levels of revenue and creating the need for providers to be even more vigilant about making accurate cash flow projections.

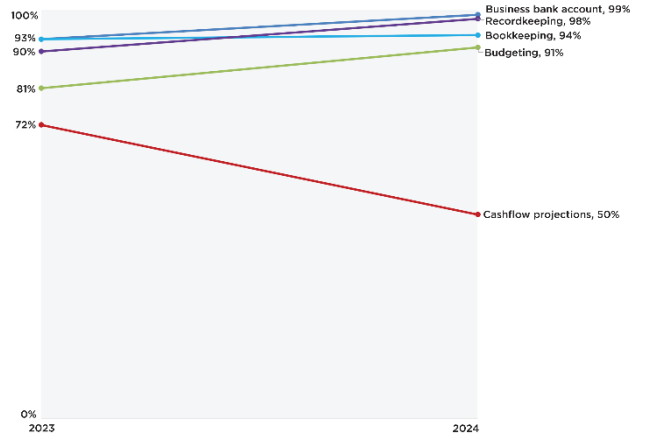
In 2024, an increasing number of FCC providers demonstrated evidence of recordkeeping, bookkeeping, budgeting, and business bank accounts. The number of FCCs reporting that they make regular cashflow projections decreased from 2023 to 2024.

(n=88)



Over 90% of GCCs demonstrate evidence of business bank accounts, recordkeeping, bookkeeping, and budgeting systems. The number of providers reporting that they make regular cashflow projections decreased from 2023 to 2024.

(n=114)



WEESSN’s commitment to evaluation isn’t just about finding and showing impact - it’s about growing impact. We create a pathway for real, sustainable change in Wisconsin’s early childhood education landscape by continually using data to find where we are challenged by the work. Together with the programs WEESSN serves, we’re honing our approach, which paves the way for business coaching to have a significant impact on the long-term viability and success of child care businesses and play a critical role in advancing sustainable change.