



Implementation Update

Spring 2023

In our first year...

PFA contracted with **36** preschool providers at **47** sites in **16** zip codes across the county.

These include **14** child care centers, **24** home-based locations, and **10** schools.

700+ children have access to inclusive, free, joyful, and culturally responsive preschool in settings that fit their families' needs!



Why does Multnomah County need universal preschool?

Oregon consistently ranks as one of the most expensive states in the nation for preschool, and before Preschool for All, public funds only provided preschool for the families in deepest poverty, reaching under 20% of Multnomah County's 3- and 4-year-olds. Quality preschool has been out of reach for many families, and far too many children in our community have been denied the crucial and well-known benefits preschool provides, including significant intergenerational effects on education, employment, and health¹. Universal preschool is a fundamental way Multnomah County can intervene early in the life of a child to increase opportunities for success later on.

Across the country, there is persistent racial disparity in access to preschool. In the 2019-2020 school year, 59% of white 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in preschool, compared to 43% of Black children and 46% of Latinx children in the same age group². These disparities have widened even further as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our community recognized the limitations of the existing system, and in November 2020, passed Preschool for All with 64% of the vote. PFA leverages existing investments in publicly funded preschool and is designed to strategically fill gaps in preschool access, building toward universal access in 2030.

¹ Heckman and Karapakula, Intergenerational and Intragenerational Externalities of the Perry Preschool Project, NBER, 2019

² The State of Preschool Annual Report, NIEER, 2020

PFA's Role in Strengthening the Early Childhood System

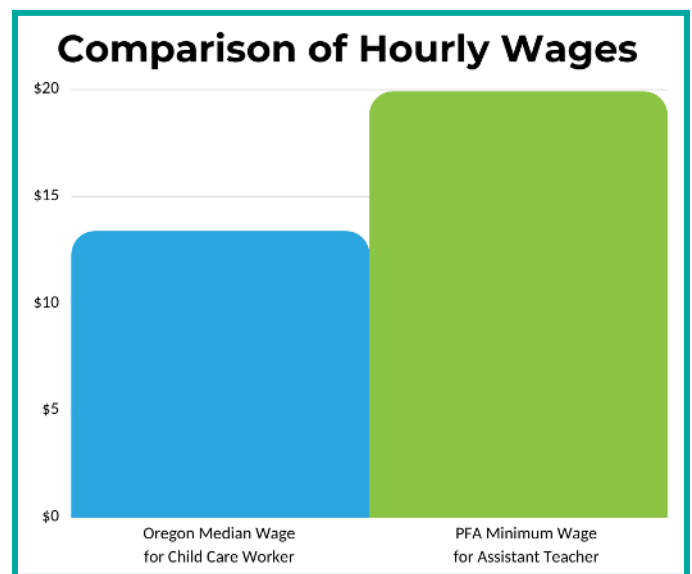
To achieve quality and avoid unintentional consequences, the Preschool for All Plan always included measured and intentional implementation over 10 years. This means increasing the number of slots over time, while also making investments that will provide the foundation for future growth. We are on track, and our ability to reach universal access depends upon workforce development strategies and investments in child care infrastructure to respond to an early childhood sector hit hard by COVID-19. There are currently 23% fewer child care³ providers open in Multnomah County than there were prior to the pandemic.

The policymakers behind Preschool for All knew it wasn't enough to just fund slots – system supports would be necessary to achieve their vision. These supports include higher wages for early educators, coaching and professional development, funding to stabilize infant and toddler care, investments in recruitment and retention of a skilled and diverse workforce, and support for the expansion of child care facilities across Multnomah County. As we build toward universal preschool access, we're maintaining focus on each of these areas of necessary infrastructure.

Wages

Preschool for All wage requirements are significantly higher than the state average, and the target salary for lead teachers is comparable to the average wage of kindergarten teachers. The median hourly wage for a child care worker in Oregon is \$13.39,⁴ which is less than \$28,000 per year. The minimum wage for a preschool teacher assistant at a PFA site is \$19.91, and the target salary for a lead teacher with a BA or Step 10⁵ is \$37.48.

PFA also provides stabilization funds to sites offering infant and toddler care, increasing wages and benefits for educators who work with 0-3 year-olds and keeping these slots available and these educators in the field.



Recruitment

PFA is funding two navigator positions at community colleges to recruit and retain students, and has established the Hadiyah Miller Memorial Scholarship Fund with awards for students interested in joining or advancing their career in the field of early childhood education.

Our Pathways Program, designed to help providers get ready to apply for Preschool for All slots, has partnered with more than 100 preschool providers this year to support quality improvement and professional growth including training and educational opportunities, business development, peer networks, and individualized coaching.

³ Child Care Resource & Referral of Multnomah County

⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2020 State Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates

⁵ Oregon Registry Online, the career lattice for early educators, awards a sequence of 12 steps based on training and education.

Additional efforts include a substitute pool so that educators can participate in professional development, funding for innovative new workforce recruitment strategies led by community based organizations, and a partnership with Worksystems on their new effort to support job seekers interested in early education as a viable career option.

Facilities

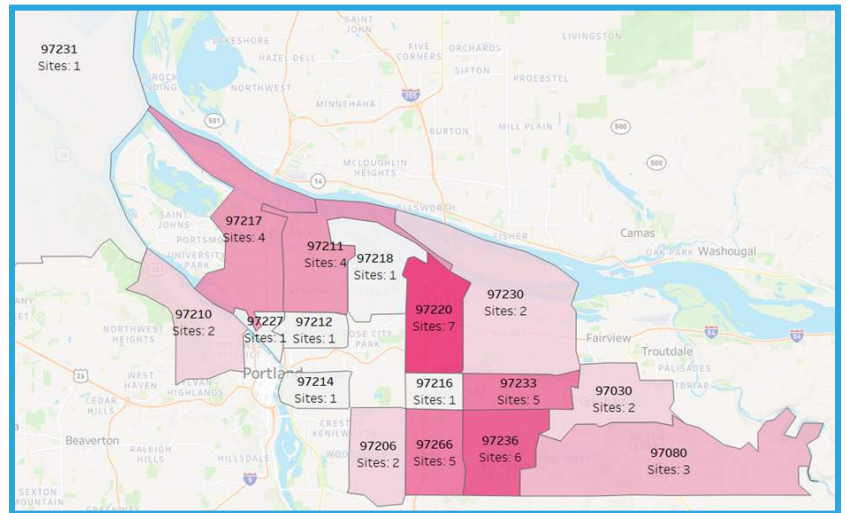
PFA's start-up funds have enabled small business owners to make necessary upgrades to their spaces in order to meet licensing requirements and create engaging environments for young learners. The Preschool for All Facilities Fund will begin late in 2023.

Kids on Carpets

Multnomah County Preschool for All has funded more than 700 slots in 47 preschool programs around the county. This outcome exceeded our Year 1 goal by 44%.

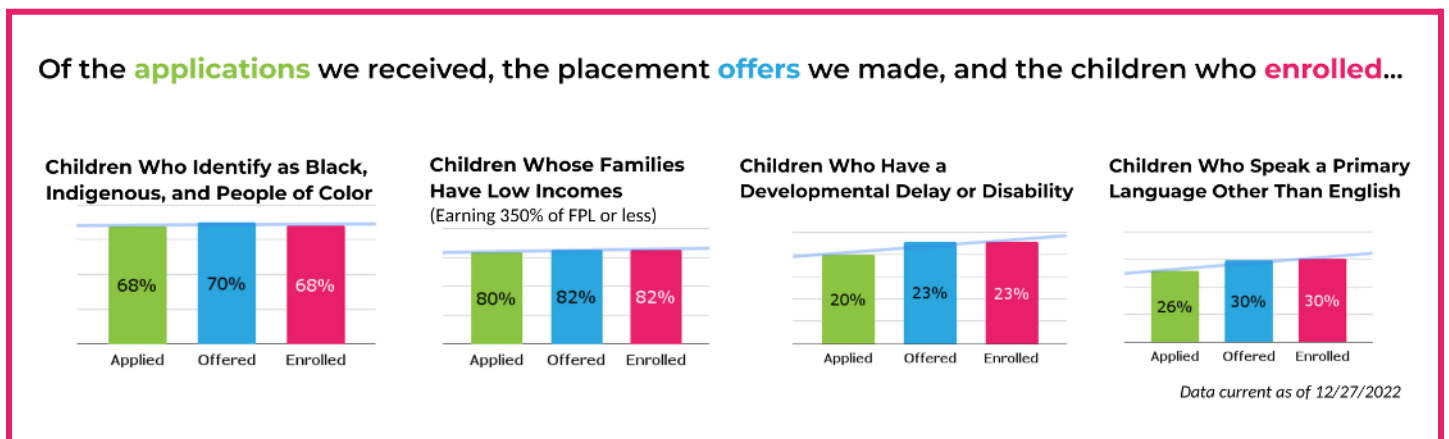
Providers are reimbursed \$15,000-21,000 per slot depending on their calendar (year-round or school-year) and schedule (full day or school day).

The map to the right shows the number of Year 1 sites by zip code. PFA will grow over time, increasing the number of children and families that it serves each year, as well as the regional site diversity it provides.



Serving Families

Our priority populations are well-represented throughout the application and enrollment process. The figure below shows the percentages of our 2022-23 preschool students who come from the populations we want to make sure we reach.



We've made strides toward simplifying the process families go through to find and apply for the preschool programs that are best for them, as part of a more seamless system across programs and provider types. We've established a new online application portal, and are working with culturally specific agencies that utilize their experience, community trust, and cultural and linguistic expertise to outreach to Preschool for All priority populations.

Almost **1,100** families completed a Preschool for All application.

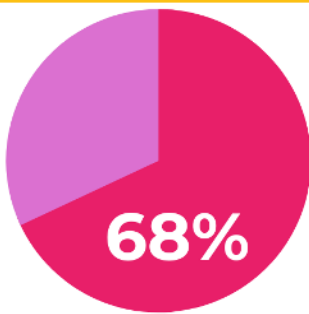
Over **800** families completed a survey after submitting their application.

92% of families expressed satisfaction with the application process.



This has been the smoothest and most transparent government resource or process I've ever experienced. Thank you so much for all your work.
– PFA Family Applicant

Supporting Small, Culturally Diverse Businesses



68 percent of the owners and directors of PFA's Year 1 home-based and small center Pilot Sites identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color

We've focused much of our planning on how to ensure that home-based child care providers are able to authentically participate in Preschool for All. These small businesses are the most culturally and linguistically diverse group of preschool providers in Multnomah County. They also experience the most barriers when it comes to building and strengthening their businesses. For this reason, we've partnered with Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon (MESO) to support in-home and small centers as they navigate their new Preschool for All contracts and strengthen their businesses.

Children's Institute wrote about the impact of this work in their profile, ["Preschool for All is Changing Lives and Transforming Early Learning in Multnomah County."](#)



Honestly, I'm not used to large systems being attuned to a small school's needs or being flexible enough to shift in this way, and I feel humbled and grateful to be a partner with you. Your commitment to our teachers, at this time, means so much.

– Year 1 Provider



Paying for Preschool for All

Preschool improves life-long health, educational, economic, and social outcomes for individual children and their families, but it also provides a high rate of return on the public's investment: for every dollar spent on high-quality preschool, the community sees a return of between \$7 and \$10⁶. Investments in early childhood education programs reach far beyond individuals and families, saving money on costly interventions later in life and opening pathways to economic prosperity for generations to come.

There is growing income inequality in our county and nationally, and Multnomah County is an expensive place to live. Early care and education are often out of reach for the families who bring in the lowest incomes. Tuition-free preschool is one way our community has chosen to make sure that every child is able to access high-quality, joyful early learning. The program is designed to be funded by a personal income tax of 1.5% to 3% for the people in the community who bring home the highest incomes. This tax went into effect on January 1, 2021, and the rate is scheduled to increase by 0.8% in 2026. [You can read more about our budget and revenue on our website.](#)

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An Accountable Process

The PFA Ballot Measure and Ordinance called for an advisory group to review program expenditures, advise evaluation efforts, review data, and make policy recommendations to the Department of County Human Services. This group meets quarterly to provide guidance and feedback. Their primary focus is ensuring that initiative implementation aligns with the values and intent of the community-developed Preschool for All Plan, and PFA's explicit commitment to building an early learning system focused on racial justice and equity.

Members of the PFA Advisory Committee hold key roles in early childhood development and education, and include current and former preschool providers, members of culturally specific organizations, pediatric healthcare providers, school district representatives, and leaders of advocacy organizations. Forty percent of our inaugural group self-reported as parents, and 73% as Black, Latinx, or Asian.

Boston University's Center on the Ecology of Early Development has received a two-year grant from the Kellogg Foundation to provide external evaluation of Multnomah County Preschool for All. Emphasis will be placed on the teacher and family experience, especially those from our priority populations. As part of this project, we will be utilizing the Assessing Classroom Sociocultural Equity Scale (ACSES) developed by Dr. Stephanie Curenton. ACSES uses a culturally relevant, anti-bias framework designed to improve teacher-child interactions. This research partnership is helping us plan for future evaluation needs, including child outcome indicators.

Stay Up to Date

To stay in the know throughout Preschool for All's implementation, you can [sign up for our newsletter](#) and visit us on the web at multco.us/preschool.

⁶ Heckman, Schools Skills and Synapses, 2008