



PRESS RELEASE

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PRE4CLE Reports Five-Year Outcomes *Increases in high-quality preschool enrollment, neighborhood availability, and kindergarten readiness*

CLEVELAND, OHIO – PRE4CLE, Cleveland’s plan to expand access to high-quality preschool with the goal of increasing kindergarten readiness, released a [report](#) today highlighting the significant gains that have been made for Cleveland preschoolers since PRE4CLE began in 2014 as an initiative of *Cleveland’s Plan for Transforming Schools*.

During the last five years, enrollment in high-quality preschool has increased by 72 percent in Cleveland. This accomplishment was made possible by PRE4CLE’s efforts to bring together the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, city and county leadership, preschool providers, and community partners to support expanding high-quality preschool opportunities for the city’s children, and to connect families to high-quality preschool programs.

In total, 19,000 children have attended a high-quality preschool in Cleveland since PRE4CLE began, and 24 of Cleveland’s 34 neighborhoods have seen an increase in high-quality preschool enrollment.

“The first five years of PRE4CLE focused on building a strong foundation, including increasing the number of high-quality preschool seats across the city and increasing the quality of our programs to ensure more children were entering kindergarten ready to succeed,” said Katie Kelly, PRE4CLE Executive Director. “We’ve reached a great point. We still have a long way to go, but we are building that strong foundation.”

Decades of research shows students who attend preschool programs that meet high-quality standards—such as degreed teachers, research-based curricula, and extensive outreach to families—are four times more likely to graduate from a four-year college and 50 percent more likely to have consistent employment in their late twenties.

Billie Osborne-Fears, Executive Director of Starting Point, the county’s childcare referral agency and a lead agency for PRE4CLE, said her organization has noticed a difference in what parents want in a preschool when they seek help from Starting Point. “The thing that I have noticed is that families in the city of Cleveland are selecting high-quality programs. They’ve been given information on what quality preschool is; they now know what they’re looking for and they’re making those selections,” she said.

Most importantly, nearly 70 percent of Cleveland children who spend a year in a PRE4CLE classroom are starting kindergarten with the skills they need to succeed, according to the state Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Officer of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and Co-Chair of the PRE4CLE's governing body, the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact, said his elementary classrooms have seen a positive difference in how prepared their students are for kindergarten because of PRE4CLE.

"Every parent wants their child to be successful, and one of the best ways to ensure success is being ready for kindergarten so that your child is not catching up for his or her whole career," he said. "Early childhood education is the single best way to make sure your child is ready."

LaToya Cater-Murray, a parent at Douglas MacArthur Girls' Leadership Academy said preschool is important because it prepares children academically, socially, and emotionally. "My daughter's excited about coming to preschool every day," she said. "I feel that preschool has helped my daughter in a social-emotional way because she can problem solve. She works well with a group of friends. It also provides her choices and opportunities where she can advance with her communication skills."

Marcia Egbert, Senior Program Officer for Health and Human Services for The George Gund Foundation and Co-Chair of the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact, said the foundation has been committed to PRE4CLE's work since the beginning because a solid education system is a fundamental pillar of Gund's community investments. "Every single child born in this community is a bundle of potential. And every single child in this community deserves an opportunity to explore the depth of that potential," she said. "We've made an incredible commitment in this community that says, 'Our youngest children are one of our very top priorities. We want to make Cleveland the very best place for families it can be.'"

PRE4CLE has also focused on advocating for new public resources for high-quality early learning, an effort that resulted in more than \$57 million in new state funding for early learning programs in Cuyahoga County.

Dr. Jaclyn Chisholm, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland, and a member of the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact, said PRE4CLE's impact on advocacy shouldn't be overlooked. "We didn't really have a voice for early childhood before PRE4CLE. It's become a focus, and I think that's because of PRE4CLE," she said. "You always need someone who is the champion and takes it to the next level. And I think that's what PRE4CLE has done."

About PRE4CLE: PRE4CLE is Cleveland's plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to all 3- and 4-year-olds in the city. PRE4CLE helps families find and enroll in high-quality preschool programs, connects preschool providers to tools and resources to increase their quality and serve more children, and provides strategic leadership and advocacy to accelerate the availability of high-quality preschool in Cleveland. PRE4CLE fulfills a core priority of *Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools* and is led by the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact. For a copy of the Annual Report and to view video interviews demonstrating PRE4CLE's impact, visit www.PRE4CLE.org.