

Advance



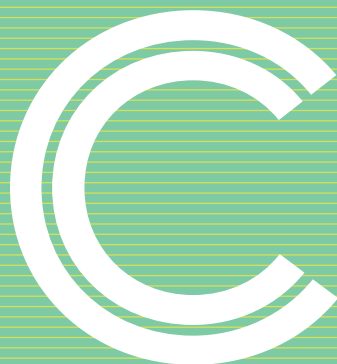
kindergarten readiness

Build a strong



system

Champion



Cleveland's future



Dear friends



and partners,

This was another challenging year for the preschool system in Cleveland—in some ways, 2021 was even more challenging than last year. While much of the world has returned to “normal,” early childhood providers spent the year dealing with new COVID variants and surges that shut down classrooms and led to teachers and students missing time in school when they were ill. The Great Resignation also hit early childhood providers hard, with many still struggling to hire teachers and staff to operate centers and keep all their classrooms open.

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And yet, 2021 brought exciting opportunities and changes to our community and to PRE4CLE. In May, Nancy Mendez was hired as Starting Point’s new President & CEO. We’re thrilled to continue our strong partnership with Starting Point and to have the opportunity to work with such a thoughtful leader as we look to the future.

We also launched our first cohort of Cleveland Early Learning Spaces, an initiative focused on ensuring that every child can attend a high-quality early learning program in a high-quality facility. We are excited to begin this work and to ramp it up over the next few years to reach an estimated 150 early learning centers and homes city-wide.

We continued to advocate for Cleveland’s young children and their families through a challenging state budget. This resulted in removing language that would have eliminated the requirement that state-funded early learning programs participate in Ohio’s quality rating system for early learning, Step Up To Quality. Additionally, PRE4CLE’s advocacy helped to secure an increase in eligibility for Ohio’s subsidized child care

system, allowing more families to access child care as they return to work.

As we look to our future, we are working to finalize the latest version of the PRE4CLE Plan in a way that ensures our community is meeting the moment to recover from COVID-19, be more focused on racial equity, and create a structure that best suits our goals and continues to build momentum for and collaboration around preschool.

Thank you for your continued support of Cleveland’s youngest citizens.

Sincerely,

- **Eric Gordon**

Co-Chair, Cleveland Early Childhood Compact  
and CEO, Cleveland Metropolitan School District

- **Marcia Egbert**

Co-Chair, Cleveland Early Childhood Compact  
and Program Director for Thriving Families and  
Social Justice, The George Gund Foundation

- **Katie Kelly**

Executive Director, PRE4CLE

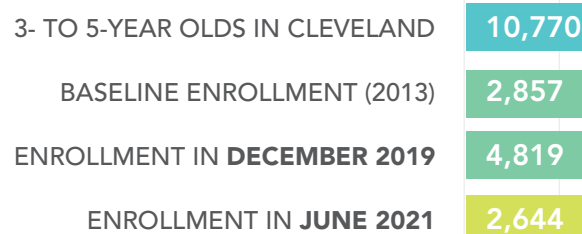
# State of



# Preschool

Over the past two years, the ongoing COVID-19 crisis has pushed the fragile early childhood education system to the limit. While much of the world has returned to “normal,” early childhood providers are still struggling, and the system has not yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels of operation.

## HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT



As the graph above demonstrates, enrollment in high-quality preschool has been set back significantly and is 45 percent lower than it was before the shut-down in March of 2020.

While preschool enrollment has dropped, so too has the number of available preschool seats. More than 1,000 high-quality preschool seats that were available in December 2019 have not come back –an 18 percent

decrease. While only eight programs permanently closed, much of this capacity loss is due to a shortage of early childhood teachers and staff, with many providers reporting that they have classrooms sitting empty because they cannot find teachers to operate them. Early care and education teachers make an average of \$11– \$13 per hour in Ohio.<sup>1</sup> Since the pandemic began, many early care and education

## HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL CAPACITY AND ENROLLMENT PRE- AND POST-COVID

DECEMBER 2019

83%

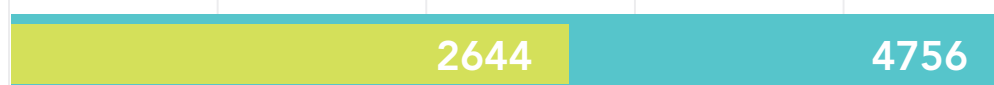
OF AVAILABLE  
HIGH-QUALITY  
SEATS FILLED



JUNE 2021

56%

OF AVAILABLE  
HIGH-QUALITY  
SEATS FILLED



■ HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL CAPACITY ■ CHILDREN ENROLLED IN HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL



professionals have left the system for better-paying and less stressful jobs.

Despite these challenges, there is still good news in Cleveland's early childhood system. There are currently 233 high-quality rated preschool providers in the city with 65 percent of all center-based and 35 percent of all home-based preschool providers in Cleveland rated high-quality. More than two thirds of children enrolled in preschool are in high-quality programs and nearly half are in five-star rated programs.

These incredible results would not be possible without

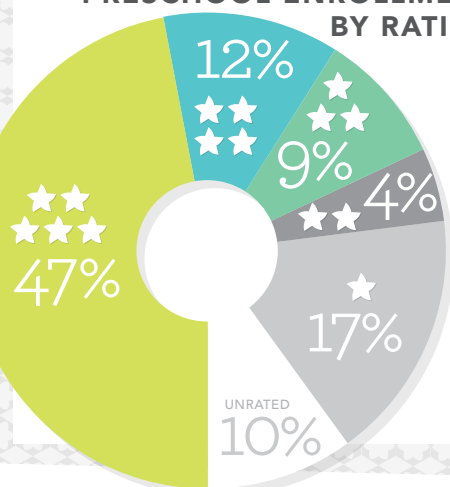
our partners at Starting Point, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, and Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood – Invest Children who have

supported preschool providers across the city to earn their Step Up To Quality ratings and continue to increase their quality. We are so grateful for their continued partnership and dedication to Cleveland's young children.

In the following pages of this report, you will

begin to see the ways we are planning to grow and sustain these partnerships with the goal of helping our early childhood system recover from the impacts of COVID-19 and build a more resilient system that offers high-quality care and education to children, reliable and affordable care to families, and fair compensation for child care and early education professionals.

### PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY RATING



**CAPACITY, ENROLLMENT,  
AND PRESCHOOL PROVIDER  
RATING DATA PROVIDED BY  
STARTING POINT.**

<sup>1</sup> McLean, C., Austin, L.J.E., Whitebook, M., & Olson, K.L. (2021). Early Childhood Workforce Index - 2020. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from <https://cscce.berkeley.edu/workforce-index-2020/report-pdf/>  
NOTE: High-quality preschools include those rated 3, 4, or 5 stars in Ohio's Step Up To Quality Rating system. Lower quality preschools are those that have received 1- and 2-star ratings. Population data based on the US Census Bureau, Census 2010 and 2016-2020 ACS 5-year estimates.

Renovate early



learning spaces

In 2021 PRE4CLE launched the first cohort of Cleveland Early Learning Spaces, an initiative focused on ensuring that every child can attend a high-quality early learning program in a high-quality facility. The program offers community-based early learning providers grants and other financial supports, professional development, and technical assistance to complete facility renovations using best practices that support the health, safety, learning, and development of young children.

PRE4CLE is partnering with Starting Point and IFF, a leader in nonprofit development in the Midwest, to take Early Learning Spaces to scale across the city of Cleveland. PRE4CLE is working with public and private partners to identify funding and strategies to **expand Early Learning Spaces to an estimated 150 early learning centers and homes city-wide.**



**Cleveland Early  
Learning Spaces**

A PRE **4** CLE INITIATIVE





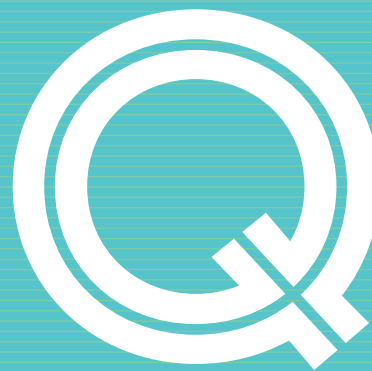
In 2021, PRE4CLE continued to focus our advocacy on support for children, families, and early learning providers as they experienced the ongoing impact of COVID-19, while also working to ensure that state-level resources for early learning access and quality were maintained and increased.

During the state budget process, PRE4CLE worked with statewide partners to successfully advocate for the removal of language that would have eliminated the requirement that state-funded early learning programs participate in Ohio's quality rating system for early learning, Step Up To Quality. Additionally, PRE4CLE's advocacy helped to secure an increase in eligibility for Ohio's subsidized child care system — from 130% of the

federal poverty level to 142%— allowing more families to access child care as they return to work.

At the federal level, PRE4CLE worked with Northeast Ohio's federal delegation to advocate for critical COVID-relief resources for early learning providers. In March of 2021, **Ohio received \$1.3 billion in ARPA funding for child care programs**, providing a critical lifeline for many preschool programs struggling to operate during the pandemic.

Expand access



to quality



Over the past seven years of PRE4CLE's history, we have been reporting our results against a series of system-level and child-level benchmarks, which we regularly revisited and updated to ensure we had challenging, yet achievable, goals that would push our work forward.

Update our

B

benchmarks

Historically, PRE4CLE consistently met and exceeded many of our benchmarks, but that all changed when COVID-19 started. The already-fragile early childhood system was pushed even closer to the brink of collapse, and while some sectors have recovered and many people have returned to a more normal existence, **early childhood providers, young children, and their families are still struggling.**

The past two years have pushed PRE4CLE to think about how we measure success and how we might report about the early childhood system in the future. We do not have Kindergarten Readiness Assessment data from the fall of

2020 because the assessment was not administered to enough students to provide reliable data. Our enrollment data show that while preschools and child care programs are open, an ongoing early childhood workforce crisis and families' concerns over their children's health and safety have kept preschool enrollment low, even as K-12 enrollment has rebounded.

As we look to 2022 and beyond, PRE4CLE is **relying on the expertise of our partners to help us shape realistic benchmarks** that will push the early childhood system toward recovery, support families' needs, drive Cleveland's economy, and create opportunities for innovation.



Plan for



our future

Created and refined with input from hundreds of community stakeholders, early learning providers, and families, the PRE4CLE Plan is a detailed, strategic roadmap that guides the collective work of the Cleveland community as we strive together to increase access to high-quality preschool.

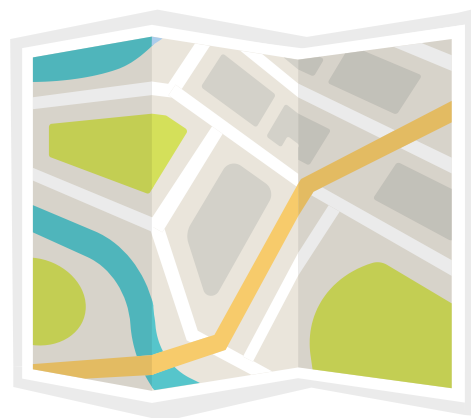
In 2022, the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact, led by the staff of PRE4CLE and Starting Point, will again engage early learning providers and partners to update the PRE4CLE Plan based on the new challenges and opportunities for children, families, and early learning providers as our community emerges from the COVID-19 crisis.

In addition to rebuilding from COVID-19, PRE4CLE and our partners will examine the PRE4CLE Plan to incorporate new strategies to **deepen our equity work** within our structure and within preschool classrooms, address ways to better

**support the early learning workforce, and strengthen partnerships with new leadership** within the Cleveland community.

Finally, PRE4CLE will look to update how we report on Cleveland's progress as a community toward the goal of increasing kindergarten readiness and preschool access.

We are excited to share these updated plans in the second half of 2022, and we look forward to starting a new phase of our work supported by the collective expertise and commitment of the Cleveland community.



# Thank you to those who

## Cleveland Early Childhood Compact Members

### Executive Committee

- **Eric Gordon**  
CEO, Cleveland Metropolitan School District (Co-Chair)
- **Marcia Egbert**  
Program Director for Thriving Families and Social Justice, The George Gund Foundation (Co-Chair)
- **Rebekah Dorman**  
Director, Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood
- **Monyka Price**  
Chief of Education, City of Cleveland Office of Mayor Frank Jackson
- **Mark Sniderman**  
Executive in Residence, Case Western Reserve University

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This year, three of our longtime Early Childhood Compact Members have moved on to other opportunities. Monyka Price, Elizabeth Anthony, and Ann Bowdish, thank you for your commitment to Cleveland's young children and the goals of PRE4CLE. Your leadership and knowledge have been invaluable to our work.

### Members

- **Kristen Baird Adams**  
Chief of Staff, PNC Office of the Regional Presidents
- **Elizabeth Anthony**  
Senior Research Associate, Case Western Reserve University
- **Meghan Salas Atwell**  
Associate Director, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, Case Western Reserve University
- **Ann Bowdish**  
Greater Cleveland Congregations, Early Childhood Expert
- **Jacklyn A. Chisholm, Ph.D.**  
President and CEO, Step Forward
- **Erin Deimling**  
Client and Community Relations Director, PNC Bank
- **Jennifer Dodd**  
Assistant Superintendent, Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio
- **Rob Fischer**  
Co-Director, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, Case Western Reserve University
- **Magda Gomez**  
Executive Director, Diversity & Inclusion, Cuyahoga Community College, Cleveland Hispanic Roundtable Representative
- **Denise Hallman**  
Early Childhood Education Manager, Ideastream Public Media
- **Kathleen Hallissey**  
Program Director for Leadership Development and Director of Community-Responsive Grantmaking, Cleveland Foundation
- **Meghann Marnecheck**  
Executive Director, Cleveland Transformation Alliance
- **Bob Mengerink**  
Superintendent, Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio
- **Karen Mintzer**  
Director, Bright Beginnings
- **Eric Morse**  
President and CEO, Circle Health and Centers for Families and Children
- **Ann Mullin**  
Associate Director and Program Director for Public Education, The George Gund Foundation
- **Kara Porter**  
Vice President of Strategy, Starting Point
- **Michelle Rzcudlo**  
Early Childhood Teacher, Cleveland Metropolitan School District and Secretary, Cleveland Teachers Union
- **Linda Schettler**  
Director, Early Learning Programs, Catholic Charities, Diocese of Cleveland
- **Felton Thomas**  
Executive Director & CEO, Cleveland Public Library
- **Nicole Vitale**  
Executive Director of Early Childhood and Literacy, Cleveland Metropolitan School District
- **Marianne Wolf**  
Director of Special Education Preschool, Cleveland Metropolitan School District
- **Sajit Zachariah, Ph.D.**  
Dean, College of Education & Human Services, Cleveland State University

## Partner Organizations

The work of PRE4CLE is supported by many organizations in the Cleveland community that are not represented on the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact. Without these additional partners, we would not be able to meet our goals. We are extremely grateful to these organizations and the Cleveland community for championing high-quality early childhood education.

PRE4CLE is deeply grateful to our 2021 philanthropic partners for their generosity and support:

- **The Abington Foundation**
- **Eva L. and Joseph M. Bruening Foundation**
- **The Cleveland Foundation**
- **The George Gund Foundation**
- **The Hershey Foundation**
- **Higley Fund**
- **PNC Foundation**
- **The Thomas White Foundation**
- **Treu-Mart Fund**

**NOTE ABOUT DATA:** All data from this report reflect progress as of June 2021. Data were gathered from several sources, to whom we owe a debt of gratitude for providing their time and expertise. In particular, we thank Starting Point and Case Western Reserve University, through the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, which worked with PRE4CLE to analyze data on high-quality preschool sites and child enrollment. We also thank our high-quality providers for willingly sharing their data with Starting Point.

Thank you to  
the Educational Service  
Center of Northeast  
Ohio and Starting Point  
for their significant  
leadership as PRE4CLE  
lead agencies.

make our work possible!

## PRE4CLE Providers by Neighborhood

### Bellaire-Puritas

- Artemus Ward
- Little Critters Early Learning Center
- Puritas Head Start

### Broadway-Slavic Village

- A.B. Hart
- Brightside Academy
- Mound
- Villa Head Start
- Warner Girls' Leadership Academy

### Brooklyn Centre

- Corinna Bryant
- Denison
- Maribel Guerra

### Buckeye-Shaker Square

- Fundamentals Early Childhood Development Academy
- Sunbeam

### Buckeye-Woodhill

- Harvey Rice
- Little Village Home Child Care

### Central

- Bingham Early Learning Center
- Day Care for Future Scholars
- Dike School of the Arts
- The Early Childhood Center at Arbor Park
- Friendly Inn Settlement
- George Washington Carver
- King Kennedy Head Start
- Marion Sterling
- Outhwaite Head Start
- William Patrick Day Head Start
- YWCA

### Clark-Fulton

- Market Square Horizon Education Center
- Walton

### Collinwood-Nottingham

- East Clark
- Hanna Gibbons
- Intergenerational Day Care
- Kenneth W. Clement Boys' Leadership Academy

### Cudell

- Marion Seltzer
- Willard Child Development Center

### Detroit Shoreway

- Gordon Square Early Learning Center
- Halle
- Jireh Learning Center
- Joseph Gallagher
- St. Augustine Manor Child Enrichment Center
- Waverly

### Downtown

- Cleveland Fed Kids
- Developing Character
- Smarty Pants Learning Center

### Euclid-Green

- Carl B. Stokes Head Start
- Euclid Park

### Fairfax

- Bolton
- Quincy Place Early Learning Program
- St. Adalbert

### Glenville

- Apples of Gold Child Care II
- Brightside Academy-Glenville
- Everchanging Educational Center
- Franklin D. Roosevelt
- Glenville Early Learning Center
- Iowa-Maple
- Mary M. Bethune
- Murtis Taylor at Kathryn R. Tyler Center
- Patrick Henry
- Wade Early Learning Center

### Hough

- Daniel E. Morgan
- Lexington Bell Early Childhood Center
- Mary B. Martin
- Wade Park

### Jefferson

- Garfield
- Wilson's Home Daycare

### Kamm's

- Care-A-Lot Daycare & Achievement Center
- Clara E. Westropp
- Douglas MacArthur Girls' Leadership Academy
- Newton D. Baker
- Riverside
- Triskett Station Horizon Education Center

- Valley View Boys' Leadership Academy
- West Park Discovery World

### Kinsman

- Anton Grdina
- Rainbow Terrace Head Start

### Lee-Harvard

- Adlai Stevenson
- Charles W. Eliot
- Louis Stokes Head Start

### Mount Pleasant

- Andrew J. Rickoff
- Murtis Taylor Child Enrichment Program

### North Shore Collinwood

- Apples of Gold 3
- A Jubilee Academy
- Memorial
- Oliver Perry
- Salvation Army Grovewood

### Ohio City

- Lakeview Terrace Head Start
- The Music Settlement
- Orchard Hale STEM
- Paul Dunbar
- Urban Community School

### Old Brooklyn

- Benjamin Franklin
- Loving Cup Kids Academy of Old Brooklyn
- Old Brooklyn Horizon Education Center
- William Cullen Bryant
- William Rainey Harper

## PRE4CLE Staff

- **Katie Kelly**  
Executive Director

- **Nancy Mendez**  
President & CEO, Starting Point

- **Michelle Bledsoe**  
Director of Evaluation and Outreach

- **Michelle Connavino**  
Director of Communication and Special Initiatives

### St.Clair-Superior

- Brown's Children's Paradise Family Child Care Service
- St. Phillip Neri Head Start
- Willson

### Stockyard

- Brightside Academy
- Clark
- Salvation Army Ohio City
- Thomas Jefferson

### Tremont

- Buhrer
- Horizon Learning Center
- Luis Munoz Marin
- Merrick House
- Scranton
- Tremont Montessori

### Union-Miles

- Blissfully Blessed Beginners
- Chapelside Academy
- Charles Dickens
- Miles
- Nathan Hale
- Robert Jamison
- Union Miles Head Start

### University

- The Music Settlement

### West Boulevard

- Almira
- Louis Agassiz
- Milagros Cruz
- St. Ignatius Head Start
- Wilbur Wright

- **Britton Hill**  
Community Outreach and Engagement Specialist

- **Alyse Mitcham**  
Community Outreach and Engagement Specialist



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