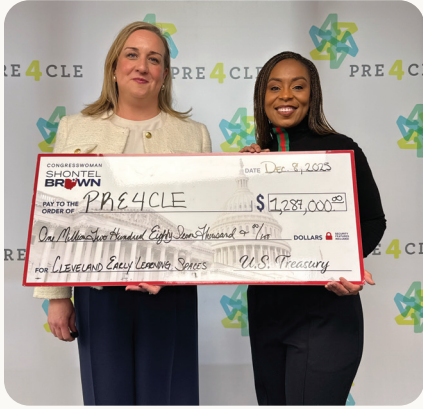


A Letter from the Executive Director



With enough high-quality seats to serve more than 70% of preschool-aged children, our community continues to demonstrate a deep commitment to its youngest learners.

Yet even as progress continues, challenges are becoming more pronounced. Enrollment remains uneven across the city, and recent federal and state policy changes, combined with rising costs, are creating new barriers for families while increasing financial strain and uncertainty for providers.

Together, these pressures are testing the stability of the early childhood system. In this context, PRE4CLE remains focused on what matters most: advocating for our community's needs, partnering to shape and inform policy, and advancing innovative, community-driven solutions.

In the pages that follow, we are proud to highlight the collective efforts of our team and partners to strengthen and uplift Cleveland's preschool system. From expanding family outreach to advancing quality

improvement and fostering new collaborations, 2025 reflects meaningful progress and a shared commitment to young learners.

I am especially grateful to our preschool providers, administrators, and teachers. Their expertise, resilience, and unwavering dedication continue to anchor this work and will be essential as we navigate the road ahead.

As we look forward, I invite all community members to continue supporting and uplifting one another in our shared mission: ensuring every child in Cleveland enters kindergarten ready to succeed—and in doing so, building a stronger future for our city.

With gratitude,

Katie Kelly
Executive Director, PRE4CLE

Preschool by the Numbers

>75%

of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool attended **high-quality programs**

100%

of Cleveland Metropolitan School District preschools were **rated high-quality**

3,286

more high-quality preschool seats than when PRE4CLE began

4,771

children were **enrolled in high-quality preschool**

3x

more high-quality preschool programs than when PRE4CLE began

“

Dear friends, community members, and supporters,

This year's annual report reflects the resilience and strength that define Cleveland's early learning landscape.

As our eleventh year came to a close, 50% of Cleveland's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in high-quality preschool.

**2025:
A Year in Review**



PRE4CLE partnered with Ideastream Public Media to host Be My Neighbor Day at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. Families get free admission to the exhibits and can connect with community partners for resources for their preschooler.



Swagelok employees visited East End Neighborhood House to help complete renovations to the site. The volunteers spent their day refreshing the staff room and setting up outdoor spaces.



Cleveland Families joined PRE4CLE at the Children's Museum of Cleveland for the 6th annual Preschool Palooza. This event hosts PRE4CLE Preschool providers to help families find and enroll in high-quality preschool.



PRE4CLE welcomed eight new preschools to our network of high-quality programs, hosted at Adcom headquarters in Cleveland.



PRE4CLE proudly celebrated the achievements of our PRE4CLE Preschools at our annual recognition ceremony. The event honors outstanding preschool programs, staff, and teachers.



Congresswoman Shontel Brown, who advocated for and secured federal Congressionally Directed Funding for Early Learning Spaces, visited East End Neighborhood House to celebrate the project's completion and see the impact of investment in early education spaces.



CMUSD announced that district-wide preschool would be preserved as schools are consolidated in fall of 2026, demonstrating their ongoing strong commitment to supporting Cleveland's youngest learners.

The State of Preschool

Through the hard work of our partners and preschool providers, more programs are earning their Step Up To Quality ratings and being recognized as high-quality.

In June 2025, Cleveland had 228 high-quality preschool programs—three times as many as when this work began.

More than half of those programs exceed the baseline Step Up To Quality standards and qualify for the PRE4CLE network, including all of CMSD's preschool classrooms.

High-Quality Preschool Seats 2013 - 2025

3,530
3,286 more seats!
6,816

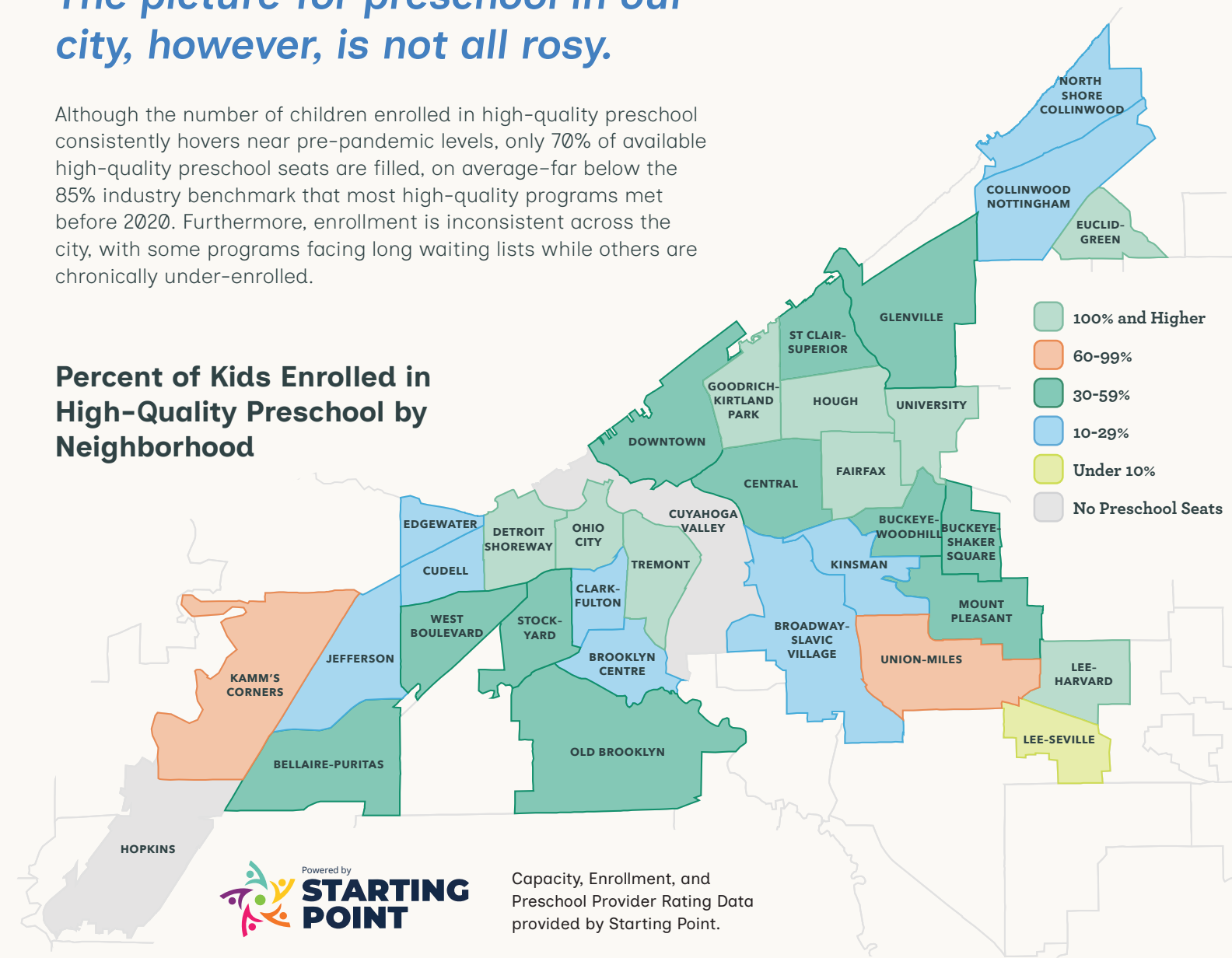
In 2025, there were enough high-quality preschool seats to serve 71% of the city's preschool-aged children!

This result demonstrates that, even in the face of monumental challenges to the early learning system over the last five years, Cleveland has remained committed to making high-quality preschool seats available to our youngest learners.

The picture for preschool in our city, however, is not all rosy.

Although the number of children enrolled in high-quality preschool consistently hovers near pre-pandemic levels, only 70% of available high-quality preschool seats are filled, on average—far below the 85% industry benchmark that most high-quality programs met before 2020. Furthermore, enrollment is inconsistent across the city, with some programs facing long waiting lists while others are chronically under-enrolled.

Percent of Kids Enrolled in High-Quality Preschool by Neighborhood



High-quality preschools include those that were rated silver or gold in Ohio's Step Up To Quality Rating system as of June 30, 2025. Lower quality preschools are those that are not rated or have received a bronze rating. Population data based on the U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 ACS 5-year estimates; 2020 Census. "Percent of Kids Enrolled by Neighborhood" is a ratio of neighborhood population to available seats in the same neighborhood. Community-based capacity and enrollment data are reported as of May 2025. CMSD capacity and enrollment data are reported as of January 2025.

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 staff to analyze data on high-quality preschool sites and child enrollment. We also thank Cleveland's preschool providers for willingly sharing their data with Starting Point.

High-Quality Preschool Enrollment

3- to 5-year-olds 9,600
Baseline (2013) 2,857
Pre-Pandemic (2019) 4,819
June 2025 4,771

Despite these challenges, 50% of Cleveland's 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in high quality-rated programs, and enrollment rates in high quality-rated programs exceed those in lower quality and unrated programs.

In fact, families who choose to enroll their children in preschool overwhelmingly select high-quality programs.



3- to 5-year-olds Enrolled in Preschool

77% enrolled in high-quality preschool
23% enrolled in lower quality preschool

Our Community's Commitment

The changes in Cleveland's preschool system would not be possible without the collective effort of organizations that have committed to our community's goals. These highlights represent some of that work.

Starting Point is supporting Cleveland businesses to offer child care benefits through a dollar-for-dollar match from the Ohio Department of Children and Youth. They are piloting the Ohio Business Partnership in Cleveland's MidTown neighborhood in partnership with the Cleveland Foundation, helping to expand access to early childhood programs and bring new partners to this work.

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District announced that 98% of schools will offer PreK following fall 2026 consolidations, up from 93% today. After careful space planning, the district's plan ensures continued access across the city for both general education and special education students.

Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood/ Invest in Children's UPK Program served 1,750 kids in Cleveland classrooms during the 2024-25 school year. UPK programs receive resources that make them the gold standard for preschool in our community.

Cleveland Public Library partnered with PRE4CLE to plan the Science of Reading Conference, a professional learning opportunity to equip preschool teachers with tools and strategies to put the science into practice and strengthen literacy outcomes for children and families across Cleveland.

Collaborating for Greater Impact

This year has been an exciting one for the PRE4CLE team. We welcomed two new team members, Jazmyne Lewis and Bea Traum, and strengthened coordination across the team, allowing us to work in more aligned and impactful ways.

A key effort has been the Cleveland Preschool Coordinating Committee, focused on helping providers better support students' social and emotional needs and strengthening the preschool workforce. Over the past 18 months, the committee has conducted a county-wide survey of providers, partnered with a consulting team to research promising practices, and identified priorities. In the coming year, these priorities will be implemented through projects focused on continuity of services for students with challenging behaviors and special needs, supporting teacher well-being, and collaborating to identify and expand social-emotional training and resources for preschool providers.

We also anticipate that the work of the Cleveland Preschool Coordinating Committee will integrate into our evaluation strategies as we build out metrics to better understand the landscape, set goals, and develop collaborative strategies to support the system.

— **Michelle Connavino**, Deputy Director and Chief of Staff

Centering Preschool Provider Voices & Experiences

Since joining PRE4CLE in late 2024, I have been working to identify ways to be more responsive to the voices and experiences of those working in the preschool field every day. I knew that truly supporting preschool providers meant starting with one essential step: listening.

What we've heard is that preschools across Cleveland continue to face challenges, including funding, staff shortages, and adequate support for children with behavioral challenges and special needs. From those early listening efforts, we began shaping a system of supports, feedback opportunities, and celebrations designed around what providers actually need.

In 2025, we focused on supporting and strengthening the preschool community in meaningful ways. We celebrated the work of outstanding teachers and programs, created more space for providers to share their experiences and help shape solutions, and partnered with others to offer relevant professional learning opportunities. As we look ahead, we are building on this momentum—keeping provider voices at the center of our work and staying responsive to the needs of the field.

— **Jazmyne Lewis**, Outreach & Provider Engagement Director

Literally Building a Strong Foundation

This year, our third cohort of Cleveland Early Learning Spaces launched with support from a federal Housing and Urban Development grant secured through Congressionally Directed Funding. Five center-based programs—spanning neighborhoods from Detroit Shoreway to Collinwood-Nottingham—are participating. For the first time, three sites also combined these investments with Lead Safe Child Care funding, allowing renovation dollars to go further while addressing critical lead hazards.

Scheduled for completion in early spring 2026, these projects have created opportunities to pilot new approaches, including dedicated staff spaces, enhanced outdoor play areas, and thoughtfully designed classroom environments that support children's social and emotional needs. We look forward to applying these lessons to future efforts.

— **Dani Elliott**, Cleveland Early Learning Spaces Director



Reimagining Community Partnerships

This past year has been defined by learning, growth, and building meaningful connections through my work with PRE4CLE. Since joining the team as a Cleveland Foundation Public Service Fellow, a major focus has been building community partnerships and identifying resources that can better support families and preschool providers. Cleveland has a wide range of services available, but many families and providers are not always aware of them.

Through outreach and collaboration, I have been working to identify and highlight resources that can benefit PRE4CLE Preschools, families, and the broader community. In the second half of my fellowship year, I'm excited to launch this work through a reimagined community partnership structure. If you are interested in a more formal partnership with us, visit pre4cle.org/get-involved, and I'll be in touch soon!

— **Bea Traum**, Cleveland Foundation Public Service Fellow

Dinos and Tigers and (Resource) Fairs, Oh My!

Two flagship events continue to anchor PRE4CLE's outreach to families. In 2025, our annual winter event evolved into Be My Neighbor Day through a new partnership with Ideastream Public Media and PNC Grow Up Great, expanding activities, entertainment—including Daniel Tiger—and access to preschool enrollment support and community resources. The event welcomed nearly 200 guests and more than 20 partners.

Our 6th annual Preschool Pooza at the Children's Museum of Cleveland drew a record crowd of nearly 300 attendees, connecting families with high-quality preschool options and resources in a fun, accessible setting.

These events represent just one part of our efforts this year. PRE4CLE's revamped website, enhanced preschool finder tools, and community partnerships with organizations like CMSD and Starting Point reflect our commitment to helping Cleveland families navigate enrollment and access high-quality early learning experiences.

— **Mary Carter**, Communication Director



Scan to explore preschool options and enrollment tools for Cleveland families through PRE4CLE

More High-Quality Preschools Join PRE4CLE

Every year, PRE4CLE welcomes new high-quality preschool programs, called PRE4CLE Preschools, into our provider network, each offering something unique to the children and families they serve.

One of the centers that became a PRE4CLE Preschool this year was **Angels On Earth**, located in the West Boulevard neighborhood. Angels on Earth's director and co-owner, Marilyn Gonzalez, has been running the center for 23 years. Prior to her time at Angels On Earth, she ran a home-based child care program for 15 years. Today, she reflects on how her nearly 40 years of experience in the community has led her to where she is today.

"[I am] blessed to have a good group," she says. "We're very diverse. We're multicultural and we are bilingual." Preschool students at Angels on Earth learn both English and Spanish alongside peers who also speak Arabic, Yugoslavian, and Romanian.



Angels on Earth brings a strong commitment to quality preschool demonstrated through their programming and family engagement. (Pictured: Teacher Sharon Rodas with a student)



The PRE4CLE team welcomed the new PRE4CLE Preschools in-person and with a celebratory treat, including **Royal Beginnings** (Jamilya Doss pictured with Dani Elliott from PRE4CLE).

This diversity creates a tight-knit family of educators. Gonzalez says,

"I have to give my teachers and my directors credit. I couldn't do this without them."

Not only are her staff members dedicated to this work, but many of them have a great deal of experience teaching young children. All of the staff have been at the center for more than five years, with most averaging at least 10 years of working with Gonzalez.

Another new PRE4CLE Preschool is **Royal Beginnings**. Founded just this past year, Royal Beginnings has already been making an impact in the community and quickly earned a Gold rating. The director of Royal Beginnings, Jamilya Doss, is another seasoned early childhood professional, having grown up working at her family's child care center. Now, 15 years later, Doss is making her own name in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood and leading with her passion for learning and community-building.

"It's been the only job I've ever had. I really loved kids. I started in a preschool room, and now I am an administrator of my own center," Doss said.

"You really should love what you do when you come into a field like this. The kids deserve that."

Thank You!

We are immensely grateful to our community for continuing to champion and support high-quality preschool education in Cleveland.

To partner with us on this work, visit our website or get in touch!

PRE4CLE Crossword Puzzle



Across

- This county program is the gold standard for preschool in our community.
- Lead Safe Child _____ is a program run by Starting Point to address lead hazards in facilities.
- Starting Point is piloting the Ohio Business Partnership in the _____Town neighborhood.
- There were one hundred _____-two PRE4CLE Preschools in 2025
- Cleveland Early Learning _____ provides grants and support for preschool programs to complete facility renovations.
- _____Quality preschools are rated silver or gold.
- Daniel _____ was a guest at the 2025 Be My Neighbor Day event.
- PRE4CLE's vision is for every child in _____ to enter kindergarten ready to succeed
- PRE4CLE's events aim to help families _____ in high-quality preschool
- An important element of high-quality preschool is _____ engagement.
- This person delivers curriculum and supports kids through positive interactions in high-quality preschool classrooms.

Down

- PRE4CLE is working on creating a new structure to connect with community _____.
- Steering or Cleveland Preschool Coordinating
- The Cleveland Preschool Coordinating Committee is exploring strategies to strengthen the preschool _____force.
- PRE4CLE's mission is to expand access to high-quality _____ to every child in the City of Cleveland.
- High-quality preschool programs have a silver or _____ Step Up To Quality rating.
- Preschool _____ is held every August at the Children's Museum of Cleveland.

* Answer Key on inside left cover *

Staff

- Katie Kelly** - Executive Director
- Michelle Connavino** - Deputy Director and Chief of Staff
- Mary Carter** - Communication Director
- Dani Elliott** - Cleveland Early Learning Spaces Director
- Jazmyne Lewis** - Outreach and Provider Engagement Director
- Barb Pritschau** - Administrative Coordinator
- Aileen Niu** - Build4good Summer Intern
- Bea Traum** - Cleveland Foundation Public Service Fellow

Steering Committee Members

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Lisa Arraj | Kara Porter |
| Carole Beaty | Dr. Meagan Ray-Novak |
| Erin Deimling | Zulayka Ruiz |
| Dr. Rob Fischer | Michelle Rzucidlo |
| Jose Gonzalez | Linda Schettler |
| Kathleen Hallissey | Dr. Anna Turner |
| Denise Hallman | Felton Thomas, Jr. |
| Jaqueline Lamb | Jeff Verespaj |
| Karen Mintzer | Joy Welch-Bey |
| Mary Rose Molnar | Dr. Tatiana Wells |
| Eric Morse | Samantha Whatley |
| Ann Mullin | Lesley Wilkins-Valentine |
| Dr. LaQuetha Nelson | Dr. Thea Wilson |

PRE4CLE Preschool Providers

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. A Jubilee Academy | 46. George Washington Carver | 90. Newton D. Baker School |
| 2. AB Hart | 47. Goldenrod Montessori | 91. Nottingham Childcare Academy |
| 3. Adlai Stevenson School | 48. Gordon Square Early Learning Center | 92. Orchard School |
| 4. Almira | 49. Greater Works Shall We Do Childcare | 93. Paul L. Dunbar Elementary School |
| 5. Andrew J. Rickoff | 50. Guardian Angels Learning Center | 94. Quincy Place Early Learning Center |
| 6. Angels on Earth Childcare Company | 51. Halle | 95. Rainbow Terrace Head Start |
| 7. Anton Grdina | 52. Hannah Gibbons-Nottingham Elementary School | 96. Riverside School |
| 8. Apples of Gold Child Care #2 | 53. Harvey Rice Elementary School | 97. Robert H. Jamison School |
| 9. Artemus Ward | 54. Heavenly Children Childcare Center | 98. Robinson G. Jones Elementary School |
| 10. Benjamin Franklin | 55. Heavenly Children Childcare & Enrichment Center | 99. Royal Beginnings Childcare Center LLC |
| 11. Bingham Early Learning Center | 56. Heavenly Kids @ Zion | 100. Scranton School |
| 12. Bolton | 57. Horizon Education Center Market Square | 101. Shoreway Horizon Education Center |
| 13. Brown's Children's Paradise Family Child Care Service | 58. Horizon Education Center Old Brooklyn | 102. St. Augustine Manor Child Enrichment Center |
| 14. Browns Town Childcare Center | 59. Horizon Education Center Triskett Station | 103. St. Ignatius Head Start |
| 15. Buhner Dual Language Academy | 60. Horizon Learning Center | 104. St. Philip Neri Head Start |
| 16. Care-A-Lot Day Care & Achievement Center LLC | 61. Intergenerational Day Care | 105. Stair Steps Enrichment Center |
| 17. Carl B. Stokes Early Learning Center | 62. Jireh Learning Center | 106. Stephanie Tubbs Jones |
| 18. Chapelside Academy | 63. Joseph M. Gallagher School | 107. Stonebrook Montessori at Michael R. White |
| 19. Charles A. Mooney School | 64. Kiddie Kastle on the Lake | 108. Stonebrook-White Montessori |
| 20. Charles Dickens School | 65. Kiddie Kastle Child Care Center LLC | 109. Sunbeam |
| 21. Clara E. Westropp School | 66. Lexington-Bell Early Childhood Services | 110. Taylor Act Of Learning (Yeladim) Academy |
| 22. Clark School | 67. Lily Diaz Child Care | 111. Tee's Tender Lovin Daycare |
| 23. Clever Bee Academy - Broadway | 68. Little Critters Early Learning Center | 112. Terita Johnson |
| 24. Clever Bee Academy - Kinsman | 69. Liz's Loving Hands Childcare | 113. The Meeting Place Preschool |
| 25. Clever Bee Academy - Ridge | 70. Louis Stokes Early Learning Center | 114. The Music Settlement - University Circle |
| 26. Clever Bee Academy - St. Clair | 71. Luis Munoz Marin School | 115. The Music Settlement - Ohio City |
| 27. Corinna Bryant | 72. Marion C. Seltzer Elementary School | 116. Thinking Cap Child Care 2 |
| 28. Daniel E. Morgan School | 73. Marion-Sterling Elementary School | 117. Thinking Cap Child Care |
| 29. Day Care for Future Scholars | 74. Mary B Martin School | 118. Tiny Footprints Child Enrichment Center |
| 30. Denison | 75. Mary Church Terrell School | 119. Tomorrow's Leader Childcare & Enrichment Center |
| 31. Develop & Enhance the Mind Enrichment Center | 76. Mary M. Bethune | 120. Tremont Montessori School |
| 32. Developing Character LLC | 77. Memorial School | 121. Urban Community School |
| 33. Dike School of the Arts | 78. Merrick House Settlement and Day Nursery | 122. Villa Early Learning Center |
| 34. Douglas MacArthur | 79. Milagros Cruz | 123. Wade Early Learning Center |
| 35. DreamCatchers Early Learning Center LLC | 80. Miles School | 124. Wade Park |
| 36. Dreamers Believers Achievers | 81. Mini Miracles Mega Center | 125. Walton School |
| 37. East Clark | 82. Mommy Monti Cares Childcare | 126. Warner Girls Leadership Academy |
| 38. East End Individual Learning Center | 83. Mound Elementary School | 127. Waverly Elementary School |
| 39. East End Neighborhood House Ubuntu Learning Center | 84. Ms. Jackson's Learning Palace | 128. West Park Discovery World Inc |
| 40. Euclid Park Elementary School | 85. Murtis Taylor @ Kathryn R. Tyler Center | 129. Whitney M. Young School |
| 41. Ever Changing Educational Center | 86. Murtis Taylor Child Enrichment Center Kinsman | 130. Wilbur Wright School |
| 42. Franklin D. Roosevelt | 87. Nathan Hale School | 131. William C. Bryant Elementary School |
| 43. Friendly Inn Early Learning Center | 88. Natividad Pagan International Newcomers Academy | 132. William Patrick Day Early Learning Center |
| 44. Fundamentals Early Childhood Development Academy | 89. New Beginnings Infant & Toddler Center 3 | 133. William Rainey Harper |
| 45. Garfield Elementary School | | 134. Willson School |
| | | 135. Wilson's Home Daycare |
| | | 136. YWCA Metro Early Learning Center |

Executive Committee

- Marcia Egbert** - Co-Chair
- Dr. Warren Morgan** - Co-Chair
- Dr. Jennifer Dodd**
- Dr. Selena Florence**
- Nancy Mendez**
- Dr. Bob Mengerink**
- Sonya Pryor-Jones**
- Dr. Shawna Rohrman**
- Dr. Mark Sniderman**

Funders

- The Abington Foundation
- The Eva L. and Joseph M. Bruening Foundation
- The Cleveland Foundation
- The George Gund Foundation
- PNC Foundation
- The Thomas H. White Foundation
- Treu-Mart Fund
- The Educational Service Center of Northeast Ohio
- United Black Fund
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



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