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Seattle Preschool Program

voluntary, high-quality, affordable



Thank you voters of Seattle for strongly supporting the Seattle Preschool Program (Proposition 1B) at the ballot this November. The City is now beginning implementation planning for the first year of class beginning September, 2015.

Preschool Implementation Plan Review

After voters overwhelmingly supported the Seattle Preschool Program in November 2014, City staff engaged in an extensive community outreach process and developed the detailed elements of the program. The Action Plan approved in June 2014 and affirmed by voters contained the structure of the program; now a more detailed Implementation Plan (subject to City Council approval) and even more detailed Program Plan (not subject to City Council approval) have been developed.

In March and early April, the City Council reviewed and approved the [Implementation Plan](#). The City's Department of Education and Early Learning also released a [draft Program Plan](#), which is not subject to City Council approval. The Council also made modifications to the tuition table from the Action Plan and adopted a [revised table](#).

Background Information

Despite our best efforts, too many of our city's children are not thriving in school. Nearly a quarter of all schoolchildren in Seattle Public Schools can't read at grade level in the third grade - an early warning they might not graduate from high school. This statistic is significantly worse for our African-American, Hispanic, Native American and immigrant youth.

If we invest in our kids early, well before kindergarten, we can change this gloomy reality. Several long-term evaluations show that children who attend high-quality preschools are better prepared to enter kindergarten and learn. They have better high-school and college graduation rates. They have much lower levels of criminal behavior. They are healthier. And, they do better economically as adults.



This [extensive and persuasive evidence](#) from prominent experts, including the presentation to City Council in June 2013 by Dr. Steven Barnett of the National Institute of Early Education Research, leads to one conclusion: **It is time for Seattle to make voluntary, high-quality preschool available and affordable to our 3- and 4-year-old children.** It's the right thing to do for today's children and for future generations.

On September 23, 2013, the City Council unanimously adopted [Resolution 31478](#), which establishes the City Council's goal of making voluntary high-quality preschool available and affordable to Seattle's children and outlining an initial plan toward achieving this goal.

[The Seattle Times](#) said, "Preschool for all of Seattle's 3-and 4-year-olds is one of most promising ideas to emerge from the Seattle City Council." [Download and read one of the letters sent to City Council from a Seattle kindergarten teacher.](#)

When adopting our city budget on November 25, 2013, the Council added over \$650,000 to [jumpstart the development](#) of the Seattle Preschool action plan and [expand professional development](#) for preschool providers. In addition, the Council unanimously agreed to foster the [creation of a new Department of Education & Early Learning](#) to elevate and integrate the city's early learning efforts so that more children are better prepared for school.

On February 3, 2014, the Council heard [new research](#) confirming the benefits of preschool and the importance of "high

quality," which includes evidence-based and play-based curricula as well as continuous coaching and support for teachers. On February 5, 2014, the Council received the [Gap Analysis](#) it commissioned which shows that Seattle has over 12,000 three and four year olds. Over 25% of the children are not in preschool or child care and little information is available on the quality of programs for the children attending preschool.

In transmitting the Gap Analysis to the Council, Mayor Ed Murray wrote, "I want to emphasize my commitment to Seattle being a place that is affordable for working families and where excellence in education of our children is a cornerstone of building a vibrant city for the future. This report reinforces my concern, a concern I know you share, that there is much work to do to make affordable quality preschool available for all . . . This data should motivate us to do better . . . I look forward to working with the Council on this exciting initiative and am pleased to present this key report."

[Click here for City Office for Education website on Seattle Preschool](#)

During the first week of March 2014, Mayor Murray, three City Councilmembers, and King County Executive Dow Constantine joined nearly 40 Seattle educators, business leaders, and other diverse stakeholders on a [study mission](#) to see firsthand the benefits of high-quality preschool across the cities of Boston and Jersey City. At the conclusion of the trip, the entire group met with high-level Obama Administration officials and Seattle's entire congressional delegation in our nation's capital to communicate our shared commitment to getting it done in Seattle.

The Mayor submitted a proposed "Action Plan" to the City Council on May 15, 2014. The Action Plan includes detailed recommendations for the program design and the associated costs of high-quality Preschool for Seattle. On Monday, June 23, 2014, approximately one year after Dr. Barnett's initial presentation, the Council unanimously passed [Council Bill 118114](#) (including an [updated Action Plan](#)), sending the Seattle Preschool Program to the November 2014 ballot for voters to consider. The voters passed this measure with nearly 70% support and the first classes will begin in September 2015.

The good news is that what's best for our children is good for everyone in the city. With universal, high-quality preschool, all of Seattle's children will have the opportunity to flourish and we will have a safer city, a smarter workforce and a brighter future.

Background Materials Reviewed by the Council

- [Research on Benefits](#)
- [Final Implementation Plan](#), April 6, 2015
- [Revised Preschool Program Action Plan \(with revised tuition table\)](#), April 6, 2015
- [Draft Program Plan](#), April 1, 2015
- [Council Central Staff Analysis of Implementation Plan](#), March 18, 2015
- [Lessons from Research and the Classroom](#), March 18, 2015
- [Mayor's Proposed Implementation Plan](#), March 4, 2015
- [Lessons Learned from Boston's Implementation](#), March 4, 2015
- [Preschool Program Action Plan](#), June 23, 2014
- [Council Bill 118114](#), June 23, 2014
- [Council Central Staff Analysis](#), May 22, 2014
- [Mayor's Proposed Action Plan](#), May 15, 2014
- [Consultant Report](#), May 2, 2014
- [Memo Establishing Preschool Committee](#), April 21, 2014
- [Survey of Parents](#), March 2014
- [East Coast Fact-finding Mission Report](#), March 2014
- [Preschool Gap Analysis](#), February 5, 2014
- [New Research on Benefits of Preschool](#), February 3, 2014
- [Video: High-quality Universal Preschool in Boston](#), February 3, 2014
- [Seattle Preschool Resolution](#), September 2013
- [Preschool Research Presentation](#), June 17, 2013
- [State Early Learning Recommendations](#), November 2011

Video of Council Discussions

- [Partner Panel and Committee Vote on Implementation Plan](#), April 1, 2015
- [Evidence on Quality Universal Preschool](#), March 30, 2015
- [Introduction of Mayor's Proposed Implementation Plan and Presentation from Boston's Preschool Program Director](#), March 18, 2015
- [Discussion of Implementation Plan, Presentation of Research, Provider Panel and Public Hearing](#), March 4, 2015
- [Full Council adoption of the Seattle Preschool Program](#), June 23, 2014
- [Votes on Action Plan in Preschool Committee](#), June 6, 2014
- [Discussion of Legislation](#), May 30, 2014
- [Public Hearing](#), May 29, 2014
- [Discussion of Mayor's Proposed Action Plan](#), May 23, 2014
- [Introduction of Mayor's Proposed Action Plan](#), May 16, 2014
- [Teacher Testimonies of Support](#), April 16, 2014
- [Seattle Channel City Inside/Out: Universal Preschools](#), February 7, 2014
- [Discussion of Gap Analysis and Outreach Plan](#), February 5, 2014
- [New Research on Benefits of Universal Preschool](#), February 3, 2014
- [Vote on Seattle Preschool Resolution](#), September 18, 2013
- [Discussion of Seattle Preschool Resolution](#), September 4, 2013
- [Presentation on Early Childhood Development and Learning](#), June 17, 2013

Media Coverage on Preschool

CityStream: Universal Preschool for All

[Editorial: Proposition 1B is a smart investment for Seattle's children](#)

[Seattle voters OK preschool measure](#)

[Seattle Chinese Times: Survey of Seattle parents finds wide support for affordable preschool](#)

[Seattle Times: Editorial: Explore what works — preschool for all](#)

[The Stranger: Mayor and Tim Burgess Announce the Beginning of Seattle's Universal Pre-K Plan](#)

[KUOW: Preschool For All, A Sliding Scale For Most: The Plan For Pre-K In Seattle](#)

[Seattle Times: Seattle's preschool plan: Start small, focus on quality](#)

[NPR: What Exactly is "High Quality" Preschool?](#)

[King 5: Mayor Murray speaks at community meeting about quality preschool for all](#)

[PBS: States looking to expand preschool confront debate over results, funding](#)

[SLOG - Pay Now Or Pay Later - What City Council Learned On Their Universal Pre-K Trip](#)

[Seattle Times - Mayor, councilmembers visit East Coast preschools](#)

[Seattle Times - Make child care transparent for parents](#)

[The Pew Charitable Trust: Elected Officials Embrace Preschool, But Funding Is the Catch](#)

[The Washington Post: Why preschool critics are wrong](#)

[The Center for High Impact Philanthropy: Investing in High Quality Preschool: Q&A with Dr. Robert C. Pianta](#)

[Will Seattle open the door to preschool-for-all plan?](#)

[The Stanger: Legalize Preschool! How the City Could Make Early Education - the Best Thing We Can Do for Kids - Available to All Seattle Families](#)

[ParentMap Idea Lab: How to Build a Large-Scale Universal Preschool Program](#)

[Twitter: U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan Praises Seattle City Council's effort to fund preschool](#)

[Seattle Times: How Boston's preschools went from mediocre to outstanding](#)

[Education Week: Cities Seize Momentum on Pre-K Expansion](#)

[Parent Map: Education Matters: Is 2014 the Year of Universal Preschool?](#)

[King 5: Early childhood education and choosing a preschool](#)

[Science Daily: Roadmap for Implementing Quality Preschool](#)

[Early Childhood News Update Blog: The Evidence Base on Preschool](#)

[Seattle's Child: It's Time for High-Quality Universal Preschool in Seattle](#)

[Preschool for All - Excerpt from *The Voter*, A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County](#)

[New York Times: Do We Invest in Preschools or Prisons?](#)

[KIRO TV: Poll Shows Nearly 70% of Seattle's Registered Voters Support Universal Preschool](#)

[New York Times Parenting Blog: Quality Preschool is the 'Most Cost-Effective' Educational Intervention](#)

[Press Release: Preschool for All Seattle plan passes Council Committee](#)

[Seattle Times Blog Editorial: Seattle closer to high-quality universal preschool](#)

[Seattle Times: Guest: Want great preschools for all? Look to Boston](#)

[SLOG: Council Holds Early Learning Lovefest in Support of Seattle-Wide Universal Preschool](#)

[KING TV: Seattle considering universal preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds](#)

[Q13 TV: Should Seattle provide preschool to all? City leaders push idea](#)

[KPLU Radio: Seattle Considers Proposed Universal Preschool Program](#)

[Crosscut: It's time for universal preschool in Seattle](#)

Comcast Newsmakers: Providing high quality, universal pre-school to Seattle area children

Seattle Times Editorial: Preschool investment

KUOW Radio: Seattle City Council To Consider Universal Preschool Proposal

Seattle Times: Seattle City Council considers preschool for all 3- and 4-year-olds

Seattle Times OpEd - Guest: Preschool for all Seattle students



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