

# SEATTLE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM ACTION PLAN

A blueprint for narrowing the  
opportunity and achievement gap



City of Seattle

PROPOSED BY MAYOR ED MURRAY



**Presented By:**

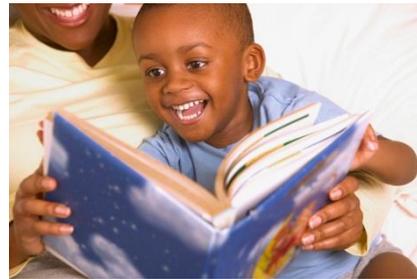
**Office of Policy and Innovation**  
Michael Fong & Regina Jones

**Office for Education**

Holly Miller, Sonja Griffin, Erica Johnson, Rachel Schulkin, and Donnie Grabowski

**May 16, 2014**

This proposal is built on the high-quality recommendations of BERK Consulting, in partnership with Columbia City Consulting, Dr. Ellen Frede and Dr. W. Steven Barnett, and City Council Resolution 31478.



Research shows that attending a high-quality preschool program can make a positive difference in a child's life, irrespective of the child's socioeconomic background, race, or gender. For this reason and others, the City of Seattle is dedicated to ensuring all children have high-quality early learning opportunities.

~ Mayor Murray's Seattle Preschool Program Action Plan

# Seattle Context

There are *approximately* 12,280 3- and 4-year-old children in Seattle.

- Approximately 63% to 73% of 3- and 4-year-olds are in care.
- Higher income families are more likely to have their children enrolled.
- Children with foreign-born parents were significantly less likely to be enrolled than those with U.S. born parents.

Over 38,000 Washington Kindergarteners were assessed on WaKIDS in the 2013-14 school year.

Almost 60% of children were below expected levels in one or more of these domains.\*

Almost 29% were below expected levels in three or more domains.

These deficits were more pronounced for children from low-income families than peers from higher-income families.

Federal, state, and city-subsidized programs in Seattle provide care for **about 17% of that age group.**

Rates for care range between **\$11,300 - \$14,700.**

Because there is **no comprehensive preschool system in Seattle**, there is no single source of data about preschool enrollment and only estimates can be provided.

\*Observations for the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS) are completed in six domains: social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and math.

# Types of Preschool

## Publicly Funded Preschool

## Private Preschool

### Head Start

Federally funded  
Most children from families at 100% FPL or below (some 130% FPL)  
Serves about 830 kids in Seattle (mostly part time)

### ECEAP

State funded  
Most children from families at 110% FPL or below  
Serves 330 kids in Seattle (mostly part time)

### Step Ahead

City funded (Families & Education Levy)  
All children from families at 300% FPL or below  
Serves 459 kids in Seattle (mostly part time)

### Preschool Centers

### Family Child Care Homes

# Seattle Preschool Program Development

September 2013: Resolution 31478 adopted by Seattle City Council

January 2014: BERK Consulting Team selected to develop recommendations for Seattle's Action Plan

Jan-April 2014: Community Outreach

April 2014: BERK's Recommendations Received

May 2014: Mayor's Action Plan Finalized

Implementation Planning

# Community Outreach

## Office for Education Workgroups

- Over 100 people from Seattle's early learning community.

## Community Meetings and Family Outreach

- Four large community outreach meetings across Seattle.

## Stakeholder and Provider Briefings

- Community Outreach Manager met with over 80 organizations to hear of community needs and concerns.

## Virtual Presence

- Preschool Program webpage.
- Twitter to provide updates and information.
- UPK listserv has over 100 subscribers and provides updates via e-mail.

## Parent/Guardian Survey:

- 1300 parent and guardian perspectives on their preschool options and choices.

# Guiding Principle #1

The plan is evidence-based. If implemented with fidelity, it will *narrow, even eliminate, the opportunity and preparedness gaps* and deliver significant academic gains for the children of Seattle.

# Guiding Principle #2

The plan will demonstrate *meaningful collaboration and key partnerships* with Seattle Public Schools, the State Department of Early Learning, community-based preschool providers, and early childhood development providers, and other stakeholders to deliver an effective and coordinated program that leverages existing resources.

## Guiding Principle #3

The plan includes a *realistic and practical timeline* to achieve and sustain high-quality preschool.

## Guiding Principle #4

The program will be *affordable for low- and middle-income families*, ensuring that cost will not be a barrier to participation in high-quality preschool.

## Guiding Principle #5

The plan calls for *ongoing monitoring and evaluation* to ensure we meet our school readiness, quality, and achievement goals.

## Guiding Principle #6

The plan provides for the *support and resources* to meet the high-quality standards and expectations of the program.

# Guiding Principle #7

Beyond classroom instruction, the initial phase will *include an additional set of policies, services, and program elements* that may be modified or enhanced in future phases of the program.

## Guiding Principle #8

The Seattle Preschool Program is *voluntary*. It is voluntary for families and it is voluntary for providers.

# Mayor Murray's Seattle Preschool Program Proposal

1. A four-year, \$58 million levy (annual cost of \$14.5 million) to fund a demonstration phase of the Seattle Preschool Program that will build toward **servicing 2,000 children in 100 classrooms by 2018**.
2. The cost will be **\$43.36 a year or \$3.61 a month** to the average homeowner in Seattle.
3. The plan is anchored in **evidence-based practice**, acknowledging that program quality is vital to success.
4. The program will be provided through a **mixed-delivery** system, with classrooms offered by Seattle Public Schools and community providers.

# Mayor Murray's Seattle Preschool Program Proposal

5. The program will be **voluntary** for providers and participants.
6. The program will have the **ultimate goal of serving all** eligible and interested 4-year olds and all 3-year olds from families making less than 300% of the Federal Poverty Level in Seattle.
7. Tuition will be **free for children from families earning less than 200%** of the federal poverty level.
8. Tuition will be on a sliding scale for families earning more than 200% of the federal poverty level with **at least some level of subsidy for all families.**

# Mayor Murray's Seattle Preschool Program Proposal

9. The program establishes **high standards** for teacher education and training and fully supports teachers in attaining these standards through tuition assistance and embedded professional development.
10. Staff compensation levels are designed to **attract and retain well-prepared teachers** and to provide fair compensation for a traditionally poorly compensated sector of our economy.
11. The program creates a feedback loop to inform programmatic improvement through **ongoing, independent evaluation**.

## Organizational Model: Mixed-Delivery Approach

The City will contract with preschool providers that meet program standards and expectations.

Seattle Public  
Schools

Community-based  
preschool providers

Hub organizations that  
provide administrative  
support to a variety of  
cooperating providers

Family Child Care  
(FCC) feasibility  
study after initial  
program start-up

# Organizational Eligibility

To be eligible to provide preschool through this Seattle Preschool Program:

Must be licensed by the Department of Early Learning to provide preschool services (or exempt from licensing requirements)

Must participate in the Early Achievers Program, hold a rating of Level 3 or above

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) scores

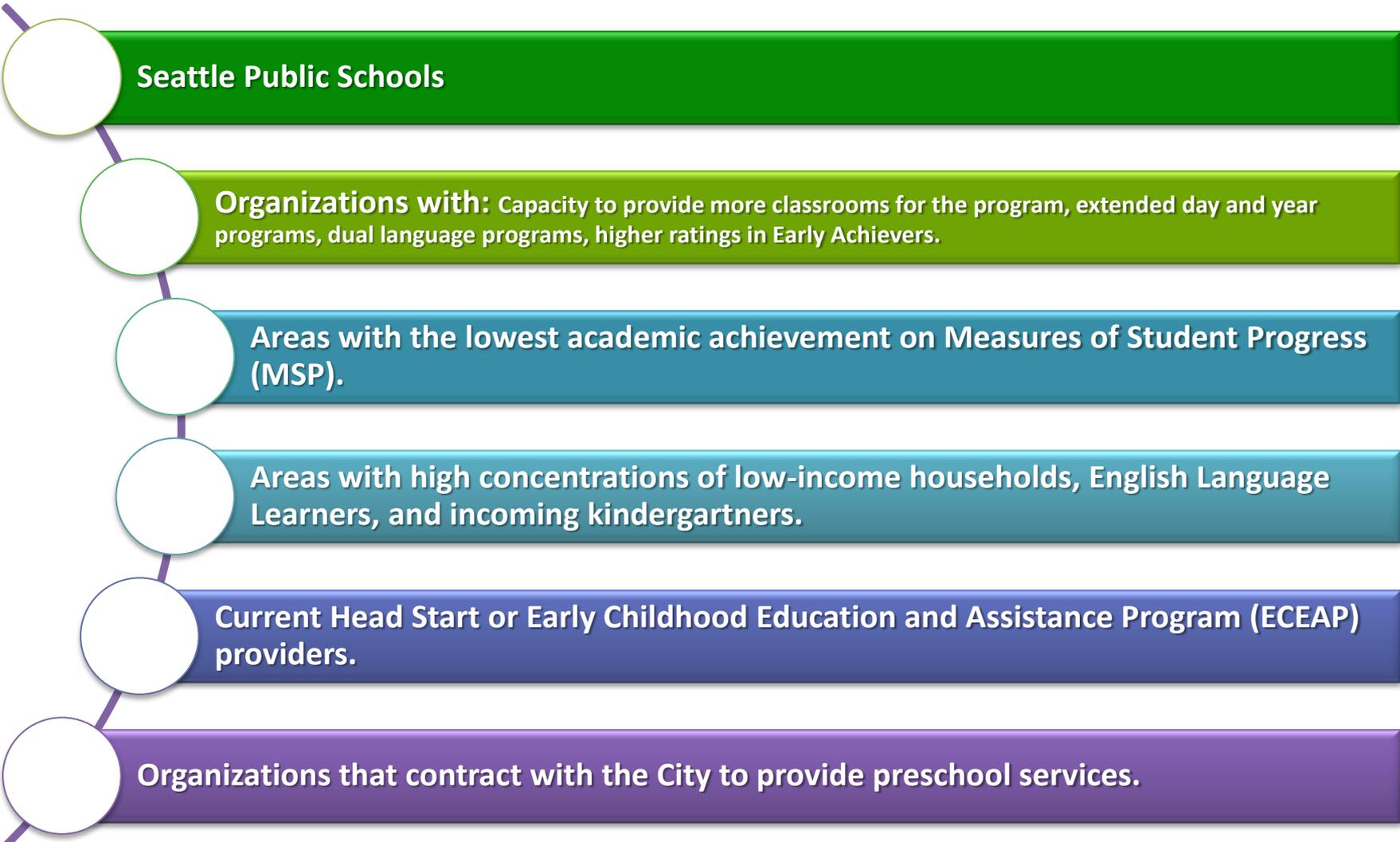
In order to participate in the program, organizations must commit to:

Providing two or more preschool classrooms

Ensuring that all children in contracted classrooms are Seattle residents

Adhering to the program standards

# Contracting Priorities



Seattle Public Schools

**Organizations with:** Capacity to provide more classrooms for the program, extended day and year programs, dual language programs, higher ratings in Early Achievers.

Areas with the lowest academic achievement on Measures of Student Progress (MSP).

Areas with high concentrations of low-income households, English Language Learners, and incoming kindergartners.

Current Head Start or Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) providers.

Organizations that contract with the City to provide preschool services.

# *Seattle Preschool Program*

## Ramp-Up

### Demonstration Phase

- Quality before Quantity Approach – 2,000 Kids Enrolled by 2018
- 4-Year Levy Demonstration Phase
- Goal of Serving All Eligible and Interested Children Within 20 Years

	SY 2015-16	SY 2016-17	SY 2017-18	SY 2018-19
<b>3-Year-Olds</b>	90	259	461	660
<b>4-Year-Olds</b>	190	521	939	1,340
<b>Total</b>	280	780	1,400	2,000
<b>Classrooms</b>	14	39	70	100

# Student Eligibility

Seattle residents who are:

**Four years old on August 31 prior to the school year of enrollment.**

**Three years old on August 31 from families with income equal to 300% of Federal Poverty Level or below.**

# Student Eligibility (cont.)

As the program is ramping up, priority will be given to:

- Children who are currently enrolled in preschool with a contracted organization.
- Children whose sibling is currently enrolled in the Seattle Preschool Program and would be concurrently enrolled with the sibling in the year of enrollment.
- Children living in close proximity to available program classrooms.

# Sliding Scale for Tuition

Families 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) and below will be invited to participate free of charge. Families between 200% and 600% of FPL will never pay more than 40% of the cost.

Minimum FPL	Maximum FPL	Percent of Average Cost	Annual Copay Amount (2014)	Household Income for a Family of Four (Max FPL)
0%	110%	0%	0	\$23,850
110%	130%	0%	0	\$31,005
130%	185%	0%	0	\$44,123
185%	200%	0%	0	\$47,700
200%	250%	5%	\$535	\$59,625
250%	300%	10%	\$1,071	\$71,550
300%	400%	20%	\$2,142	\$95,400
400%	500%	30%	\$3,212	\$119,250
500%	600%	40%	\$4,283	\$143,100
600%	700%	50%	\$5,354	\$166,950
700%	800%	60%	\$6,425	\$190,800
800%	900%	70%	\$7,495	\$214,650
900%	1000%	80%	\$8,566	\$238,500
1000%		90%	\$9,637	n/a
		100%	*\$10,708	

Low income families will be fully subsidized

Middle income families will pay 40% or less of the cost

\*estimated slot cost to providers

# Teacher-Student Ratio and Class Size

Maximum  
Class Size of 20

1 adult for every  
10 children  
(2 adults per class)

1 Lead Teacher  
1 Instructional  
Assistant

6+ children from  
special populations\* →  
more instructional staff

\*For example, children in foster/kinship care or other areas of child welfare system, English Language Learners, children who receive special education services.

# Preschool Schedule



We will prioritize contracting with preschools that offer:

- ✓ Before & after school care
- ✓ Summer programs
- ✓ Programs on holidays

\*In a typical week/day.

# Staff Education Requirements\*

All newly hired staff will be required to meet the following standards:

## Lead Teachers

- Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, or
- BA and a State Teaching Credential with a P-3 Endorsement.

## Assistant Teachers

- Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education, or
- Two years of coursework in ECE meeting Washington State Core Competencies for Early Care and Educational Professionals.

## Director or Program Supervisor

- Expertise or coursework in ed leadership and business management, and
- Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, or
- BA with college-level coursework in Early Childhood Education.

## Coaches

- "Endorsements" in selected curricula, and
- Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education, or
- BA and a State Teaching Credential with a P-3 Endorsement.

\*Current staff will be given 4 years to meet these requirements.

# Staff Education Requirements (cont.)

- The City will:
  - Work with local colleges and universities to develop an alternate route program for teachers with BAs in fields other than ECE.
  - Develop an process through which experienced, high-quality lead teachers (as defined in the Implementation Plan) may be granted waivers.
- Compensation based on:
  - Degree attainment
  - State certification status
  - Experience
- Lead teachers who meet the education/certification requirements will be paid on par with public school teachers.

# Curricula

Approved curricula will be developmentally appropriate and evidence-based

Providers will be required to adopt the approved curricula

After 2018, a curriculum waiver process will be considered

# Language Support

**Dual language preschool programs**

Will receive funding priority  
Should be representative of Seattle's linguistic diversity

**Bilingual lead teachers and instructional assistants**

Will be fairly compensated for their expertise

**Students will be assessed in languages of instruction when feasible**

# Staff Professional Development

## Coaching

- Coaches will be “certified” or “endorsed” in the selected curricula
- On-site curriculum support (reflective coaching) to teachers, center directors, and program supervisors
- Off-site training

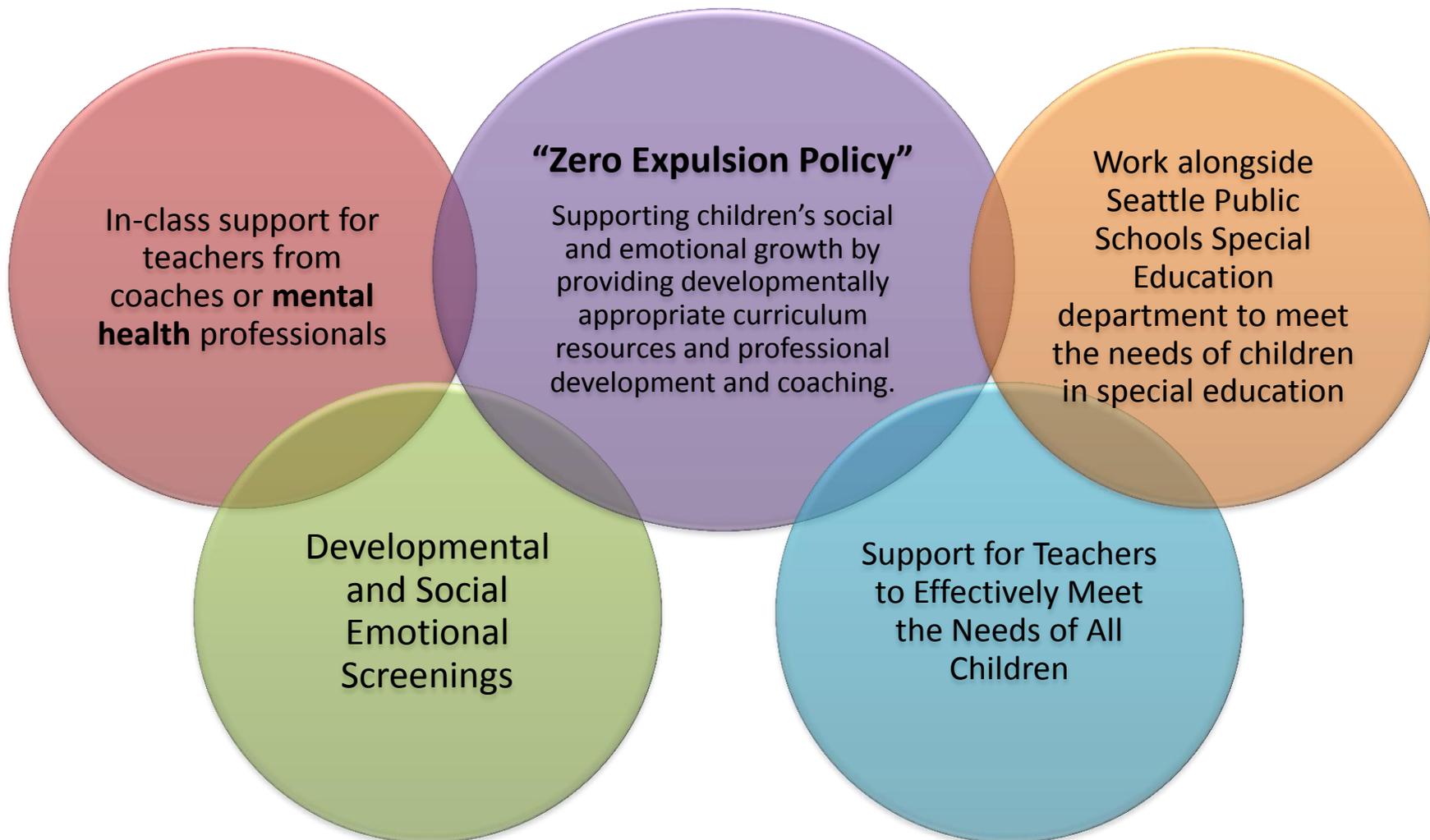
## Training in areas of need

- Best practices in inclusion, bilingual education, cultural relevancy, and classroom management for Lead Teachers and Instructional Assistants
- Best practices in reflective coaching, educational leadership, and business management for Directors and Program Supervisors

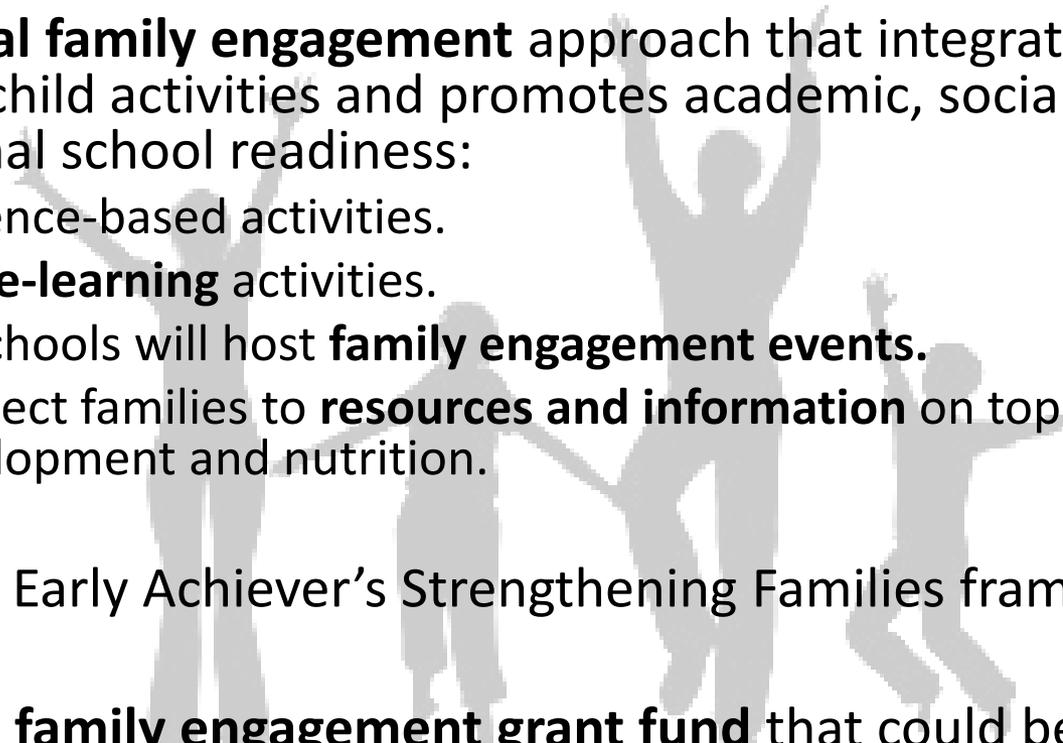
## Coordinate with the WA Dept. of Early Learning

- Leverage and align with professional development resources currently available to providers through the Early Achievers Program

# Developmentally Appropriate, Inclusive Support



# Family Engagement

- **Universal family engagement** approach that integrates intentional parent/child activities and promotes academic, social, and emotional school readiness:
    - ▶ Evidence-based activities.
    - ▶ **Home-learning** activities.
    - ▶ Preschools will host **family engagement events**.
    - ▶ Connect families to **resources and information** on topics such as child development and nutrition.
  - Build on Early Achiever's Strengthening Families framework.
  - Create a **family engagement grant fund** that could be used by providers to design, develop, and provide family engagement activities.
- 

# Kindergarten Transitions



# Capacity Building

The City of Seattle is committed to developing the Seattle Preschool Program workforce and helping existing preschool providers meet the quality standards.

Provide funding for  
tuition assistance

Fund facilities  
renovations,  
improvements, and  
start-up

Use Seattle's **Race and Social Justice Initiative** toolkit and provide funding (\$150,000 in 2015) for consultant to:

Review workforce capacity

Identify the needs of refugee and immigrant communities

Offer strategies to create pathways to high-quality early learning opportunities

Continue current efforts

Early Learning Academy Family Child Care Program

Building a pipeline of high quality providers

Outreach to immigrant and refugee communities

Work with families to address concerns/meet needs

### Impact on Existing Providers

A study\* funded by the Institute of Education Sciences found that there was, in fact, an increase in the amount of formal childcare in Oklahoma and Georgia following the expansion of publicly funded preschool. One theory is that universal preschool in Oklahoma and Georgia may have shifted more 4-year-olds into public preschool, which then created room for younger children in other programs.

\*Bassok, D., Fitzpatrick, M., Loeb, S. (2012) Does State Preschool Crowd-Out Private Provisions? The Impact of Universal Preschool on the Childcare Sector in Oklahoma, National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series, [www.nber.org/papers/w18605](http://www.nber.org/papers/w18605).

# Timeline & Cost

Aims to enroll 2,000 children by the 2018-19 school year.

4-year demonstration phase of SSP

The net cost to the City is projected to be approximately \$58 million.

The annual cost of the program will be approximately \$14.5 million

The average per child reimbursement to providers is projected to be approximately \$10,700.

Special election will be held on November 4, 2014 to approve a four-year property tax levy.

# Comprehensive Evaluation Strategy

**Partner** with independent experts in early learning and evaluation.



**Outline** an approach to and timeline for conducting and reporting both process and efficacy evaluations.



**Assess** the City's oversight of SPP, the quality of SPP providers, and the fidelity of the implementation and program efficacy.



**Report** results to the Mayor, City Council, the Levy Oversight Committee, and the public.

# Governance and Organizational Structure

The City of Seattle's Office for Education (OFE) will administer the program.

The City will establish a Preschool Levy Oversight Body, which will be an expansion of the current Families and Education Levy Oversight Committee.

# Next Steps

