



## Advisory Committee Meeting Notes May 20, 2025, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

---

**Attendees:** Alice Schmidt, Ayni Amir, Jasmin Haro, Emily Glasgow, Alice Schmidt, Candice Vickers, Kendra Hughes, Amelia Vang, Jaime Peterson, Janet Li, Lavert Robertson, Lydia Gray-Holifield, Mariana Rocha, Patrick Earnest, Kathryn Torres, Brooke Chilton Timmons, Janice Cole, Virginia Garcia, Jillian Hughes (notes)



**Ms. Lydia Grey-Holifield, PFA Advisory Committee Co-Chair**

- Good evening, everyone, and welcome to our meeting today.
- And our opening question for tonight is: If you had to pick a color to describe yourself, what color would that be?

**Brooke Chilton Timmons, Strategy & Communications Manager, Preschool & Early Learning Division (PEL)**

- The structure of today's meeting is a little different. A couple of group members shared that they wanted more space to talk and think, and for the group to review less information in one meeting. Please know that that feedback is very helpful.
- Tonight we have about 20 slides fewer than our last two meetings to give more time for discussion. We are still going to cover a lot, but we'll have shorter sections of multiple different topics and I'm going to create some pauses, maybe even some awkward silences. This is especially for those folks who might need a few more minutes just to think about the information before they share a question, or an idea with the group.

## **Today's Agenda**

- Welcome & Opening
- PFA Technical Advisory Group
- 2025-26 Family Application Update
- Audit Recommendations
- Evaluation Project Updates
- Thank You & Closing



**Brooke Chilton Timmons, Strategy & Communications Manager, Preschool & Early Learning Division (PEL)**

- We are going to start with the Technical Advisory Group. Hayden Miller came to our meeting in November to share the early planning for that group. I want to share an update with you all about where we are at with the pre-work for that group, which will start in earnest later this summer.
- After that, we will have an update on our family application that closed on April 30th. We will share about the applications that we received for the upcoming preschool year.
- We will also go through about half of our audit recommendations tonight, so you all can learn a little bit more about the next steps that we're planning in each of those areas. We want to give you an opportunity to ask questions around how we're moving forward based on the feedback we received in the audit.
- And then Janice is gonna have some evaluation project updates. This will include some of the projects that you've heard about already and some of the new projects that are on the horizon as we wrap up this fiscal year and start Fiscal Year 2026.

# PFA Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

- In Tax Code - Advise MultCo Board on Potential Changes
  - Stakeholder Outreach - Lara Media
    - Findings/Transparency
    - “What We Heard” Report
    - Parameters for TAG Work
  - TAG Technical Work - RFP Out Now
    - Likely creation of scenarios
  - Report Out to Board and Public
    - Recommendations delivered Early 2026 (target)
- Board Approval of any changes by end of August 2026

3

## Brooke Chilton Timmons

- Written into the Preschool for All ballot measure was a technical committee that would advise the Multnomah County Board on the planned tax rate increase. The tax rate was scheduled to increase by .08% in January of 2026. Last fall, the Board of County Commissioners delayed that tax increase by a year. In our modeling, we could show that the program could still be fully funded if the increase was delayed. The board chose to delay that tax increase, which allowed us to gather an additional year of tax data.
- The scope of this technical group has been broadened by the chair. The TAG will have the ability to look at the tax rate, including the planned increase of 0.8%, as well as the tax mechanism itself.
- This group will have the opportunity to consider scenarios about how to fund PFA, while also considering how the tax is both benefiting and impacting Multnomah County as a region.
- The process will start with community outreach. We have already completed procurement for community engagement work. Lara Media was the organization that had the highest scoring proposal. Their role is to engage with community members to complete focus groups, interviews, and a survey to help the TAG understand what key elements of PFA are important to folks and to gather feedback around the tax mechanism itself.
- One of the groups that Lara Media will be connecting with is the Advisory Committee. You all will be invited to an optional focus group.
- We will be incentivizing participation in both interviews and in focus groups, because we want diverse representation across those groups. We're also going to be asking Ms. Lydia and Ayni and the Parent Accountability Council to be one of those focus groups to honor the role that Early Learning Multnomah's Parent accountability Council had in developing PFA.
- Some of the other focus groups will include preschool providers, both those participating in PFA and those that are not yet participating. Focus groups will also include families, business groups, school districts, and culturally specific organizations. We will have a separate focus group just for educators.

- The focus groups, interviews and surveys will happen over the summer. Lara Media will turn the data into a report that will be shared with the TAG. We want TAG to be grounded in values and community voice as they get started.
- The TAG itself is meant to be very technical, and it's made up of folks who are economists, a demographer, an early childhood education leader, and a business leader. On the next slide we'll show you the group members.
- The Chair's Office is convening the TAG. In addition to community engagement, we are also procuring economic research. The TAG will look at tax scenarios and use tax data and information to help them develop recommendations.
- We're in the middle of evaluating the economic research proposals right now. The highest scoring proposal will lead the economic research.
- The TAG process will be a public process. The meetings will be public, so they'll be open to community members to watch and all of the economic research will be available on our website.
- The work of the TAG is going to start late summer, early fall. They'll have a short timeline. They will likely be meeting a couple times a month in order to develop recommendations for the Board in early 2026. The board will have the opportunity to discuss and make decisions. Those decisions have to be made by August of 2026 in order for them to be instituted in time for tax year 2027. If there are any changes made to the tax rate or the tax mechanism, the City of Portland, which collects the Preschool For All tax, needs time to ensure those changes are in place before the upcoming tax year in 2027.

## **PFA Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Members**

- |                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| • Dana Hepper           | • Leslee Barnes |
| • Mary King             | • Eric Arellano |
| • Mark McMullen         | • Jeff Renfro   |
| • Charles Rynerson      |                 |
| • John Tapogna          |                 |
| • Chris Tebben          |                 |
| • Graciela Gomez Cowger |                 |



- These are the people on the TAG. So far, there has been an informal welcome meeting to say you are officially invited to be part of this group, and lay out the scope of the group.
- What questions do you all have about next steps, your role in this process, the TAG, or the kinds of decisions that they will be making?

### **Candice Vickers, Executive Director at Family Forward**

- First, I want to just thank you, Brooke, for the reflection on creating more space for processing. That was a really great moment to pause.
- I just wonder what guardrails might be in place for the TAG? .



**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- I appreciate the question. We have continued to work with the Chair's Office to define the box that the TAG is working in. Their job is to really look at the tax rate and tax mechanism. They could make recommendations that change our revenue expectations.
- We anticipate that there would be a different group of folks to advise on program changes if there are decreases to anticipated revenue. That would include folks on the advisory committee and people who helped to build the framework for Preschool for All

**Candice Vickers**

- How do we make sure the decision is not made from a solely economic viewpoint?

**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- The board is hearing very strongly from the business community right now, and also from taxpayers about what they are portraying as the negative impacts of this tax. Those are the loudest voices right now in the room.
- I do not think there is going to be one clear recommendation from the TAG. I think they're likely to offer a couple of scenarios to the board. The board has broad taxing authority. The board didn't have to bring the PFA tax to voters- they could have instituted it themselves.
- One thing to consider is how do we ensure that a broad set of community voices are reaching our county leaders?

**Kathryn Torres, Operations & Policy Analyst, Oregon Department of Education**

- Brooke, do we have a sense of what the dominant messaging has been to the board about changes to the tax structure?
- Is it, like, get rid of it entirely? Or that the tax is too much? I mean, I'm trying to get a sense of the dominant narrative that they're hearing from constituents.

**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- The dominant narrative from people frustrated with the tax is that PFA is causing negative impacts to the Multnomah County economy, to businesses, and to downtown. That high-income earners are leaving the county in large numbers. In terms of proposed changes, it really ranges. Some folks would like to repeal the tax and others have more moderate ideas, like indexing the tax to inflation.
- We're also hearing or there are concerns that businesses are having a difficult time recruiting people to come and live in Multnomah County, because they're looking at the tax burden and saying it's too high. Many of the stories we're hearing are anecdotal and that's what the TAG is here for. To review the economic data and make recommendations.

**Ms. Lydia Grey-Holifield, Preschool for All Advisory Committee Co-Chair**

- I have one question real quick, Brooke. When we talk about how people are having, like, a moment, because of the taxes, and they're blaming preschool for All. Preschool for All isn't the only tax that rich earners are being taxed for, and I think that that's not fair, but I also feel like we, as an organization, what, as the advisory board, what can we do to have a conversation with the individuals that are feeling this way, is there something... is there a meet and greet that we could do, or something that would give them an opportunity to ask the right questions to the right people?
- Number two, have we looked at, when it comes to the families that are higher-income families that are also benefiting from Preschool for All, are we looking at how we can get the copayment from them that are exceeding the amount that we have set up for Preschool for All? Are we going to start having them pay their co-pay for being a part of Preschool for All? Are we looking into that as well?

**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- Ms. Lydia's referring to the idea of families above the self-sufficiency standard paying for additional 4 hours of care beyond a 6-hour school day.
- There are the significant barriers that families in our priority population would face by adding income eligibility requirements and because of the additional costs that it takes to collect those funds and to change our contracts if they are based on the income of the family.
- Right now, we pay by the services offered for that seat. So, for a school day, school year seat, we pay a certain amount of money, and for a full-day, full-year seat, we pay a higher amount of money regardless of who is in that seat.
- If the amount we paid providers was dependent on the income of the family, the contracted amount could change each time a family changed seats or a new family was placed at a site. That would require a contract amendment for each of those changes and for our sites contracted through MESO, which would require two contract changes- one for MESO and one for the provider.
- So as we think about the future and what that could mean, and the potential for families to pay for before and after care for seats, those are some of the things that we're thinking about. Both the impact on families in our priority populations and the administrative challenges that would come with that change.

**Candice Vickers**

- I mean, I hear the possibility of it being cost-prohibitive, but I just wonder about being able to see the numbers on that. It would be interesting to see the actual numbers and data related to Ms. Lydia's question, if that makes sense?

**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- It does. We'd be happy to share the data that we have about the income level of families who are accessing care, and we could also do that breakdown by school day, school year, and full day full year, so you can see what those numbers look like now.
- Primarily the families who are over the self-sufficiency standard accessing a longer day are families who have received a continuity of care seat. Those are families who are currently enrolled at a site and they are continuing in their placement. They are not losing their seats because their provider becomes part of PFA.
- That's a good follow-up item. Amelia, if you could help me document that and follow up with the group. We'd be happy to do that.

**Jaime Peterson, Pediatrician and Assistant Professor at OHSU**

- At some point, there will be some families who are paying the tax who also have children enrolled. And those are important voices that potentially have some power to share their stories, so those may want to be included, too. They're paying, and they're getting care. It's important to make sure when you're getting some interviews from across the economic spectrum of kids enrolled.
- Maybe a TAG recommendation is that if your family is higher income but not paying the tax, you may pay a copay. But if you're already paying the tax, then you don't have a copay in addition to the tax.

**Ms. Lydia Grey-Holifield**

- And if they get into PFA. And their bill goes down, maybe they would only have to pay a thousand. I mean, you know, \$500 a month versus, you know, \$1,500, so that's a big benefit for them.

**Jaime Peterson**

- Well, I think it's great, and it's been done in other places, right? Like a sliding scale and it is way more affordable than the standard ticket price of a center care
- We should listen to the numbers, and we're supposed to increase the tax, it should get increased. Unless we are going to have way more money than we need to serve kids.
- I think those are also the guardrails that Candace is talking about- this is what we voted on, this is what we're doing. We will look at our numbers, we hear you. We don't want to hurt the city, we don't want to hurt kids, we don't want to hurt families.
- But I also think you could recruit families to work in Multnomah if they knew their childcare was free, or the cost reduced.

**Candice Vickers**

- That, Jamie, that. At the end of the day, I wonder, like, how we're counteracting that narrative. As much as they're saying, like, it's hard to recruit employees, how do we counteract this narrative? Everywhere in Oregon is a childcare desert for one age group or another. If anything, this is a boon for downtown businesses and businesses trying to recruit families to work in their spaces, because this is the place where they can get access to preschool. How can we capitalize on that messaging?

**Jaime Peterson**

- And just to go back to Ms. Lydia's thought- where's a place for people to hear that, and is there a place for us on the advisory board to help with that?

**Mariana Rocha, Program Administrator at the Multnomah Early Childhood Program,**

- I just wanted to highlight, though, that this is new information that I just found out from the audit, that there is a higher weight value for families that are below the federal poverty limit. I do want to acknowledge that some families that might have a moderate income might not get a slot. They'll have more opportunities for slots as slots grow, but the priority is focusing on lower-income families, so I just want to acknowledge that piece of it.

**Jaime Peterson**

- You don't want to promise things that are wrong, right? Like, we're not there yet, but in 2030, that is a different story.

**Candice Vickers**

- And the longer we wait, the longer we wait to continue adding slots and adding to the program, the longer those families who are making more are going to have to wait.

**Kathryn Torres**

- I think that's the tension- there's this narrative around the perceived negative impact of the tax burden on a certain subset of folks alongside the sort of slow and deliberate system building that y'all are doing. And so, there's a narrative of, I need to see a return on investment right now.
- Part of it is trying to explain that we're building systems, we're building capacity, and these things can't just materialize overnight. At the same time, I feel like they're craving feel-good stories- impactful narratives about how this is helping families today, now. That's a counter-narrative to the story that PFA is negatively impacting our economy.

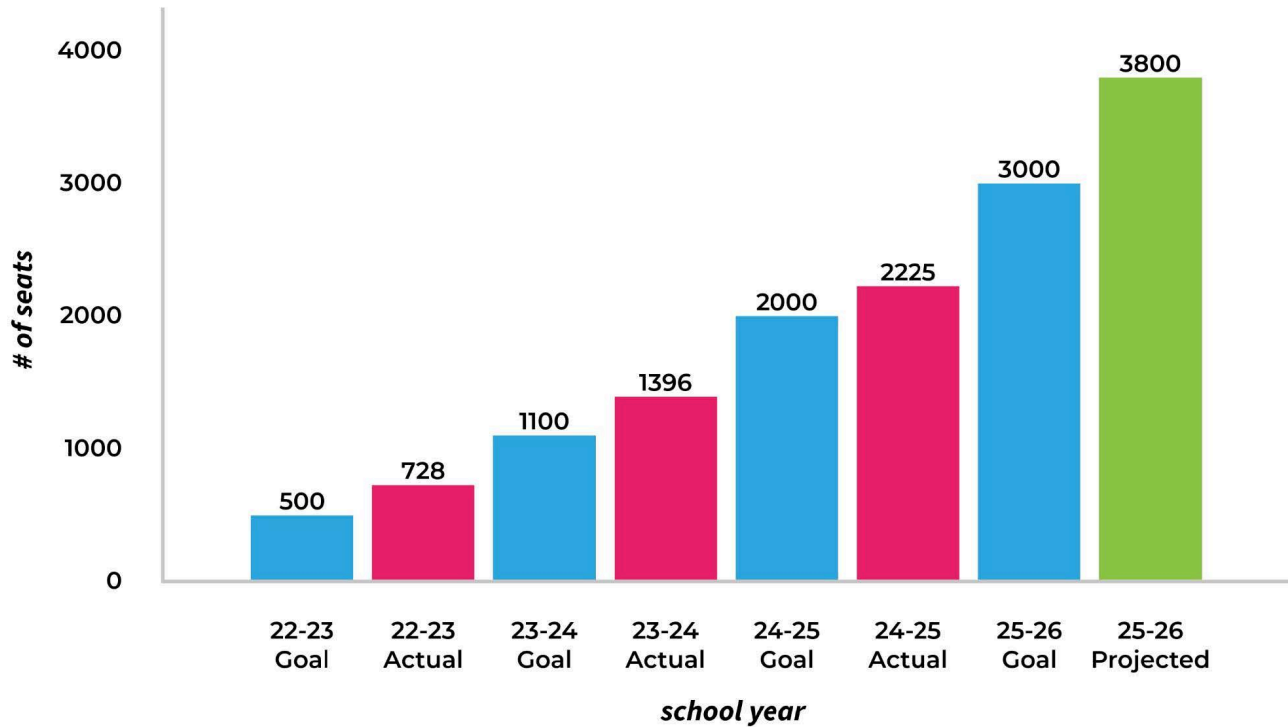
**Candice Vickers**

- When we talk about priority populations, we're not just talking about low-income families and families of color. We are also talking about families with kids who have disabilities and that spans income groups.

- I know that there are families currently who are simultaneously paying the tax, but are benefiting from PFA because their kid is part of that priority group. I want us to find ways that really honor the experience of parents of kids with disabilities.

### Brooke Chilton

- That might be a nice transition to our next section on the family applications. We will tell you about who's applied for this coming year.



### Brooke Chilton Timmons

- A reminder that we will have 3,800 seats for the 25-26 school year. We're starting with 3,600 for the fall, and then we'll be adding more seats in January.

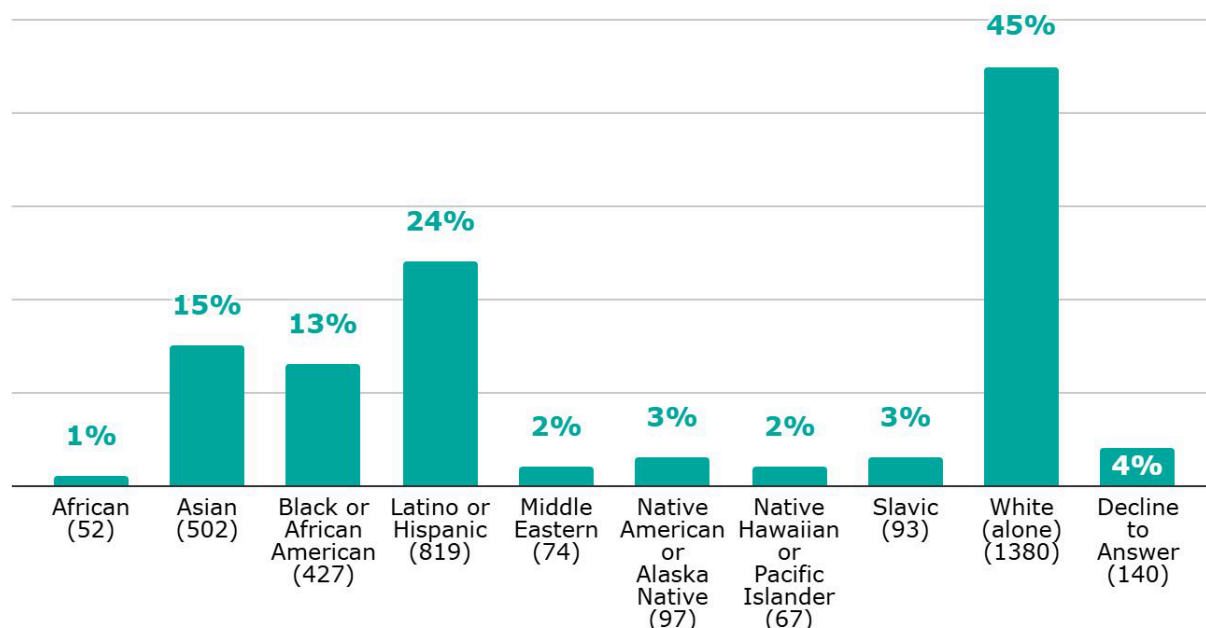
## Update on 2025-26 Family Application



### Brooke Chilton Timmons

- During the application period in April, we received over 3,300 applications.
- 56% percent of the applications are from families who are below our proxy for the self-sufficiency standard which is currently 350% of the federal poverty level.
- 13% of the applications were for children who have developmental delay or disability.
- 55% of the applications are for children of color. And 20% of children speak a language at home, other than English.

## 2025-26 Family Application - Inclusive Identity





### Brooke Chilton Timmons

- This slide shows the inclusive identity of children who applied for PFA this year.
- Every year, we bring you all data about who applied, who was offered a placement, and who was enrolled. We start with the entire applicant pool, and then we look at the data of who was offered a seat from the application pool, and then who actually enrolled at a PFA site.
- What we're hoping to see over that time, and what we have seen in our previous 3 years, is that the percentage of families in our priority populations increases with each step.
- One of the additional data points from this application process was that 91% of families said they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the application process. One of the things that was included in the recommendations from the audit and that we had already planned to add, was more information about how many seats were available at each site. This allowed families to make more informed decisions about where they wanted to apply.

### Kathryn Torres

- Brooke, just a quick question. The graph for white alone, who does that include? Does that include children who are multi-racial?

### Janice Cole, Research & Evaluation Analyst Sr., Preschool & Early Learning Division

- White alone does not include children who are multi-racial. The reason we have white alone in this percentage is because a very significant proportion of our families identify as white and another race. When we only include it in combination, it masks some of the data.

### Brooke Chilton Timmons

- One of our early takeaways with this data is we are continuing to reach our priority populations. And we're always gonna work harder at continuing to find ways to do outreach differently, to think about how to improve our processes.
- One of the audit recommendations was around creating specific outreach plans for each of our priority populations. Really thinking about each of those priority populations- how can we do even more specific strategies, what are the organizations that we're coordinating with? Are they all on our list? Are they coming to information sessions? Are they confident referrers when they talk to families about PFA application?

## Audit Recommendations

Recommendation	Next Steps	Status
Develop and implement a process to verify the accuracy of families' application answers used for priority weighting	Income Data Quality Checks	In progress
Adjust budgets and the forecast to better reflect actual spending	Q3 Spending Review FY26 Budget	In progress
Provide information about the availability of seats at each preschool on the website, to provide more information for families that are applying	This was added to provider profiles for 2025-26	Completed
Add the provider program guide to the website	This is on the new provider resource page	Completed

**Brooke Chilton Timmons.**

- We are going to talk through about half of the audit recommendations tonight and then half of them in our next meeting. That way you can hear where we're at in terms of progress and ask questions about each of the recommendations.
- The first one on this list is to develop and implement a process to verify the accuracy of families' application answers that's used for priority weighting. Mariana, you mentioned families with low incomes as one of our priority populations. In the ballot measure, the Self-Sufficiency Standard was identified as the low-income threshold. That measurement is different from the federal poverty level. It's also a more complex tool. There are over 700 different family combinations within the Self-Sufficiency Standard. Right now, we use 350% as a proxy for the Self-Sufficiency Standard. A new version of the standard for Oregon was just published. We'll be looking at that data to determine if we need to change our proxy for the Self-Sufficiency Standard.
- In order to align with this recommendation, we are doing income data quality checks. We've chosen a subset of our PFA sites, and the providers at those sites will complete an income documentation check during enrollment. We're doing our best to make the process as simple as possible, both for families and for providers.
- The ultimate goal is to determine if the information that families have included on their application is accurate, based on the documentation that providers review. The first step in that income data quality check is understanding if families are receiving public benefits that already have an income threshold.
- If families aren't already accessing benefits, they will provide additional documentation like a W-2 or pay stubs.
- The provider will enter that information into a form, and then our team will analyze the data and confirm if it matches with the application data. That process will happen across a sampling of sites. We are focused right now on centers, because typically they have more administrative capacity, then family child care sites.

**Jaime Peterson,**

- Brooke, you said there's, like, a self-attestation from families that's part of the application?

**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- There is an attestation form included in the application.
- The second recommendation on this list is to adjust budgets in the forecast to better reflect actual spending. So that's work that's been in progress already. The data that was included in the audit was from fiscal year 2024. We continue to make really good progress in terms of spending. In period 9 this year, our year-to-date spending is at 80% and in Fiscal Year 24 at the same time spending was at 50% of our year-to-date budget. We've already made significant growth in just right-sizing those budget amounts, and that work will continue.
- As a reminder, any PFA dollars that aren't spent, don't go to other places in the county or disappear. They are dedicated PFA dollars and are not able to be spent in other places.
- And you'll see in the budget presentation, that next year's budget is even stronger in terms of reducing underspending. There are fewer and fewer new contracts and new procurements, which helps us right-size those amounts from the very beginning of the fiscal year as we're planning.
- I mentioned the third thing on this list already, we do now have availability information on provider profile, so when families apply they could see that there was low availability on certain sites, and they can use that data to inform their seat choices.
- And then one of the recommendations was around increasing the information that providers could have from the website, including the provider guide, that has already been completed. We've also added all of

the key policies to that new provider resources web page.

Recommendations Cont.	Next Steps	Status
Create and implement a process for engaging with preschools that have applied but did not participate	Add a new team member	In progress
Create and implement a formalized mechanism for preschools of various sizes (both participating and not participating) to provide input on the Preschool for All program	Provider Advisory Group application review	In progress
Specify and communicate facility fund guidelines to include requirements for creating Preschool for All seats specifically	Will be included in the updated BuildUp Oregon guidelines	In progress

### Brooke Chilton Timmons

- The other recommendations I wanted to highlight for you tonight were creating and implementing a process for engaging with preschools that have applied but did not participate. In our fiscal year 2026 budget, we're going to be adding a position on the Preschool Partnerships team that's specific to outreaching and guiding providers through that application process.
- That person will also be going back through all of our applications to determine who are the providers that applied in previous years, but didn't reengage. How do we reconnect with those folks? What's holding you back from re-applying? We're super excited to have additional capacity to do that work to bring interested providers on board.
- The next recommendation is around creating and implementing a formalized mechanism for preschools to provide input on PFA. I will share a little bit more about the Provider Advisory Group in the next slide.
- The final piece that I will share about the audit recommendations tonight is about the facility fund guidelines to include requirements for creating PFA seats specifically.
- BuildUp Oregon funds up to \$25,000 per new seat, and that could include infant and toddler seats. In practice, we were also looking at those grants internally to determine how many new PFA seats were created with each project. We're formalizing that process and including it in the updated BuildUp Oregon guidelines that will be available later this summer. We also recognize that there may be some exceptions, based on the size of the space, high-priority geographic areas, and culturally specific or linguistically specific programs that meet a need for our priority populations. Those are places where we want to have some flexibility
- Many of the things that were in the audit recommendations were things that were already in motion, or things that we also identified as issues or opportunities. That's how we are thinking- we're constantly trying to get better, and so the audit was a formalized way for us to do that, and for us to also be able to continue to communicate out to the community about progress we've made. One of the things that we want to do is have this information available for other people to see, too, so they can see how we're implementing changes included in the audit.

## Provider Advisory Group

### Group Goals

- Strengthen Support for Providers
- Focus on Equity and Accessibility
- Improve Communication
- Support Continuous Improvement
- Reflect and Collaborate

### Timeline

- April 14: Application Opens
- May 16: Application Closes
- Mid-June: Group Members Confirmed
- July: Onboarding
- August: First Meeting

10

### Brooke Chilton Timmons, Strategy & Communications Manager, PEL

- I mentioned the Provider Advisory Group as one of those things that's been in process, and that was highlighted in the audit. We had over 40 providers apply to the group. The purpose of this group is to have an opportunity for providers to gather together and identify areas where PFA could be improved, and to work together to build to make those changes.
- There will be between 10 to 15 members of the group. And we're thinking about geographic diversity, different kinds of setting types, and cultural-linguistic diversity in the group. All the applications will be scored, and group members will be finding out in June. This group is going to start formally meeting in August to set the group norms and to develop their plan for the year.
- Mariana has a great question about mentoring... have we thought about a mentoring program for new sites?
- We have a couple things happening. And Patrick, you might know more than I do at this point. We did this two years ago- identify sites who were open and interested in being mentors and connected them. I'm not sure if this happened for this current program year. That's something I'm happy to follow up on and find out.

### Patrick Earnest

- Yeah, it was kind of informal. I had a friend who is an Instructional Coach, and she just informally asked me if I would be comfortable meeting with some providers that she felt needed a little guidance.
- So, I did end up meeting with two people, but it was super informal.

### Mariana Rocha

- I had a site that I partner with, and they wish they could help new sites coming on board. I think that could help with some of the growing pains that happen when a new site comes on board, especially with students experiencing disabilities. I think that's one area that's been a big lift for some sites that historically maybe didn't support students with the extent of disabilities that they're accepting now.

## Brooke Chilton Timmons

- Amelia, will you please add that as another follow-up item so we can check in with Shelly and Kimberly about if that's continuing to happen and what the plans are for mentoring in the future? That would be a great update to bring to the group.

## PFA: How the Budget Delivers



**For Children** - **3,800 children** will receive free preschool. **100% will have free meals** at their preschool.



**For Families** - Families can choose the preschool that is right for them and their child. Next year, **65% of PFA sites offer a full day, full year calendar**



**For Educators** - Over **790 PFA educators** receive higher wages, paid time off, and benefits.



**For Providers** - The Facilities Fund is helping to create 500 preschool seats. **More than 80 new sites** are joining Preschool for All in FY 2026, for a total of **218 locations**.

## Brooke Chilton Timmons

- On Thursday, Leslee and I will be presenting to the Board of County Commissioners about our FY26 budget. PFA is part of the larger Department of County Human Services budget presentation, but because we have our own dedicated revenue source, we have a separate presentation. It will be a recorded presentation, so if anyone is interested in watching, we can share the board clerk's website, and you can check that out. Amelia is going to follow up with you all either later this week or early next week to share some additional opportunities for you to learn about the budget. So if you would like to go deeper into the weeds after this high-level kind of presentation tonight, I'm very happy to do that.
- In our presentation we will start out by reminding the Board about what they are receiving when they invest in Preschool For All. That includes 3,800 seats for preschoolers and support for almost 800 educators at Preschool for All sites.
- 65% of our sites will have a full day, full year calendar, so 10 hours a day for families, really supporting families who may be working or going to school.
- Our facilities fund investments next year will create over 500 PFA seats.
- We'll be partnering with 218 different locations next year..



# FY 2026 Budget Goals

- Maintain a clear focus on racial equity, linguistic diversity, and intentional supports for children with disabilities
- Thoughtfully support seat growth
- Continue successful efforts to reduce underspending
- Prepare for the next phase of implementation



## Brooke Chilton Timmons

- As we built this budget, we had these four goals in mind. The first is maintaining a clear focus on racial equity, linguistic diversity, and intentional support for children with disabilities.
- One of the programs that I wanted to highlight for you all today is our Community Preschool Expansion Program. Applications for that program will open this month- it's designed for culturally specific and culturally responsive organizations who are in the community, who have strong relationships with their communities, and who don't yet do preschool, but are interested in doing early education. This is essentially a fast track to help them create a preschool program, learn about licensing, and all of the things that they're going to need in order to begin preschool services. It's a partnership with Child Care Resource and Referral and we are hopeful that it will result in some new organizations becoming preschool providers.
- Our next goal is to continue to thoughtfully support seat growth and growth overall. We're increasing our seats next year by 71%. We've now quadrupled the number of seats that we've had since the first year. That's a lot of growth and it's really important to think about how we provide the needed level of support for providers, for families, for children, as we continue to grow?
- We're going to be adding almost 50 new providers in the fall, which means we will grow substantially to just over 125 providers.
- The next, already mentioned, is a continuation of successful efforts to reduce underspending.
- And then the final goal is that we are moving out of the pilot stage of our work. Fiscal Year 2026 is our last year of Pilot Sites. This doesn't mean we're going to stop learning or stop listening. Provider Advisory Group is going to be one opportunity for us to continue to have ways to do that.
- We're moving from the initial implementation stage where everything was new, to having some of those foundational pieces solidly in place now.

# Total PFA Budget vs. Operating Budget

<b>\$172.4 M</b>	<b>Operating Budget*</b>
<b>+</b>	
<b>\$17.5 M</b>	<b>Contingency - 10% of PFA tax revenue</b>
<b>+</b>	
<b>\$0 M</b>	<b>Internal Cash Transfers</b>
<b>+</b>	
<b>\$524.8 M</b>	<b>Reserves - 15% of PFA tax revenue (\$26.25M) and Dedicated Savings (\$498.5M) (Unappropriated Cash Balance)</b>
<b>=</b>	
<b>\$714.7 M</b>	<b>Total Budget Countywide</b>

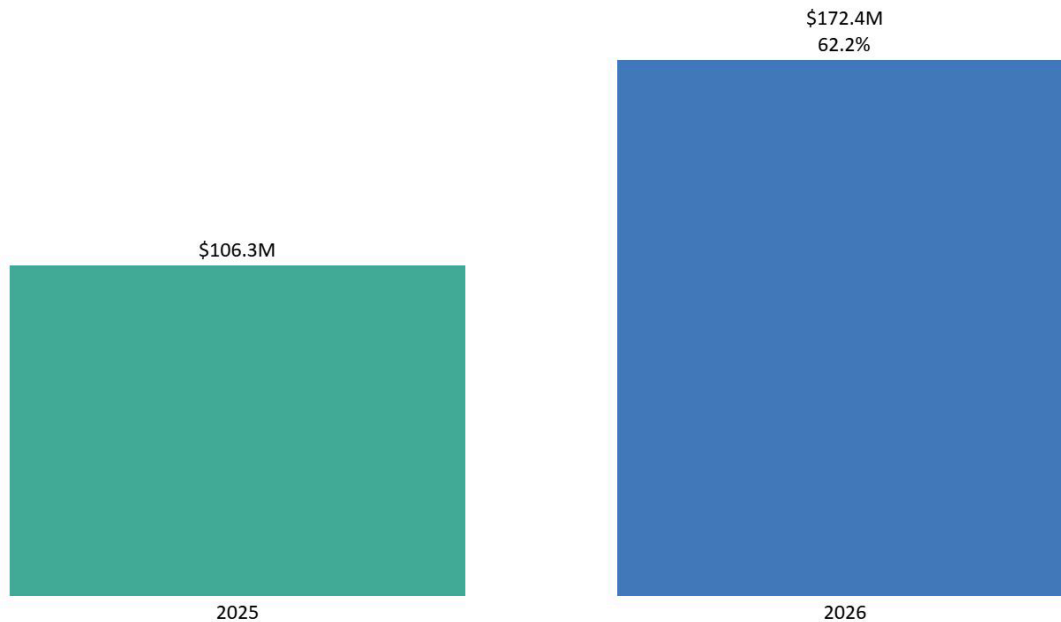
*\*Avoids some double-counting; provides a clearer picture of what departments expect to spend in a year.*

## Brooke Chilton Timmons

- Our PFA operating budget for next year is \$172 million. That is the money that is going to pay for preschool seats, workforce development, facilities funds, as well as tax collection, and county staff, all of those pieces are included within the operating budget.
- Our contingency fund is designed to support unexpected costs within that fiscal year. The fund was established in 2022, it is 10% of our expected revenue for that year. For this coming year, our expected revenue for fiscal year 2026 is \$175 million. Each year we top off our contingency fund to bring it to that 10%, so we're adding \$1.2 million to the contingency fund as the "top-off" amount.
- We also spent some of our contingency fund last year. Last year we came to the board and we asked for \$3.9 million to pay for mid-year seats. We'll be repaying those dollars this year when we reinvest in the contingency fund.
- There are two different parts of our reserves. Our general reserve fund is designed to protect PFA from the volatility of personal income tax as a revenue measure. It's designed to help us ensure that we can provide consistent services over time. The reserve fund is set to 15% of the expected revenue for this year. And so we're going to be adding \$1.8 million of "top-off" dollars to the reserve fund.
- Dedicated savings is our last fiscal stability strategy. Dedicated savings is designed to fill the gap in revenue between revenue and expenses that we anticipate between fiscal years 2027 and 2037. That gap is over \$500 million.
- The money that we save in the early years, when we have fewer seats, will be used to ensure that we can keep our commitment to the community and again, provide consistent services for children and families.

# PFA Operating Budget: \$172,406,686

Preschool for All

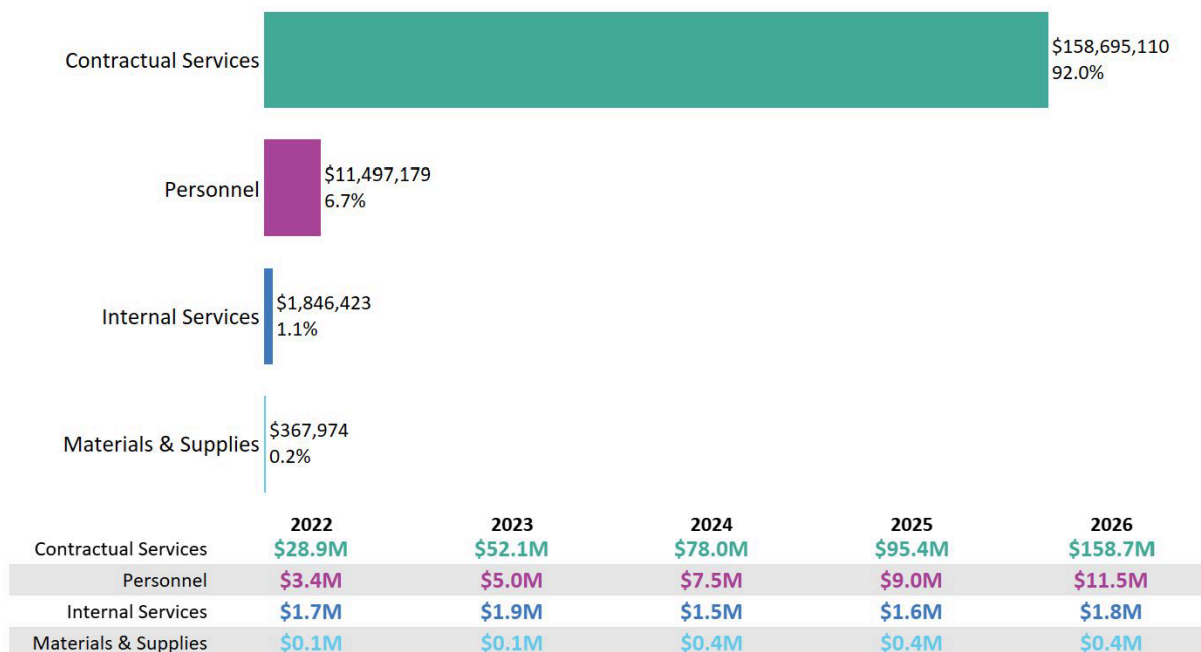


14

## Brooke Chilton Timmons

- Our budget for next fiscal year is increasing 62% to \$172.4 million.

## PFA Operating Budget by Category (\$172.4M & 67.73 FTE)



15

**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- The vast majority or 92% of PFA dollars are going back out into the community.
- About 7% is used for county personnel. These positions are within the Department of County Human Services and also the PFA Early Childhood Mental Health Team in the health department, and a position in the Department of County Management that focuses on tax collection.
- We'll be adding a new position in our Central Communications Office to support the many media requests that we receive, so we'll have a dedicated Preschool for All staff member supporting that work as well.
- Any questions, comments, thoughts about fiscal year 2026 budget planning?

**Candice Vickers**

- Just want to say, like, I sit on so many boards, Brooke, where I get fiscal updates. You can either see a level of foresight or not, and I continue to celebrate the Preschool for All staff for really understanding the longevity of the program.

**Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- Thank you, Candace. We are thinking deeply about the entire life of the program. I would love to spend about another 40 minutes talking about the budget, but tonight we're just doing a high-level overview. We'll offer some additional times for a budget deep dive.
- I'm going to pass it over to Janice to give you all some updates and share some information about continued evaluation projects.

# Evaluation

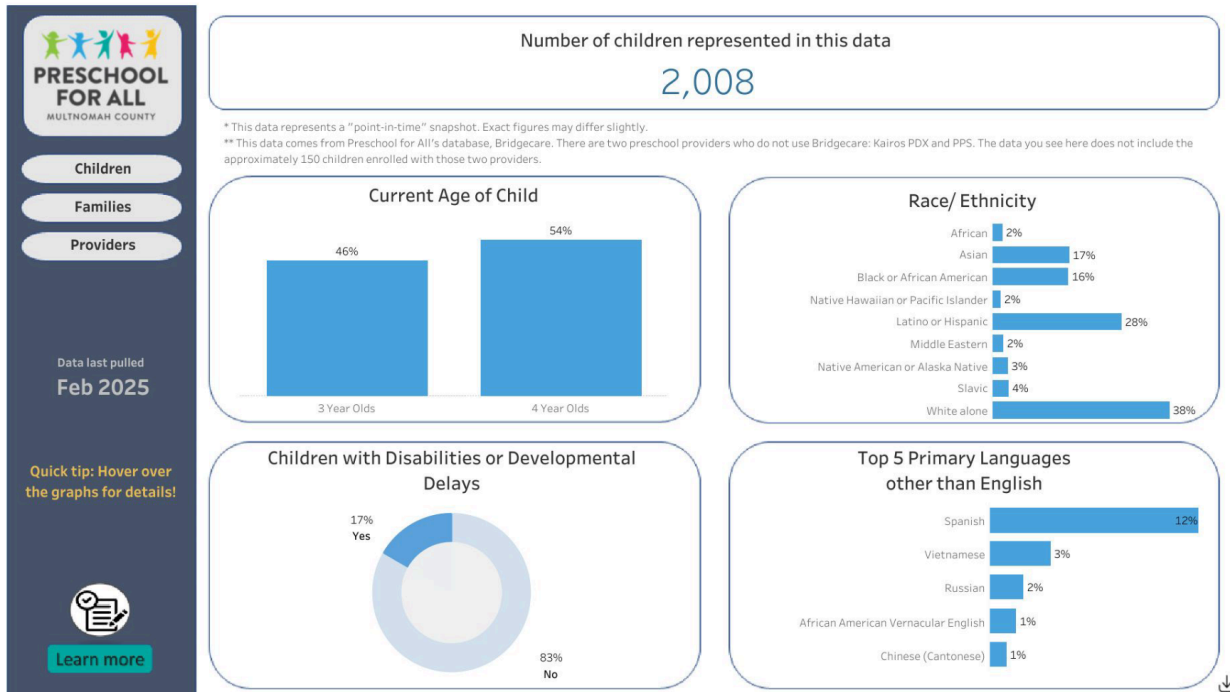
## Project Updates

**Janice Cole**

- Thanks, Brooke. Hi, everybody.
- We're really busy right now as a team, as most of our data collection is actually happening as we speak or is about to start, and so I'm going to give you updates on some of our key projects.

- Please know that this is not even close to all of the work that we do related to evaluation, and I think that these projects are responsive to things that I've heard the Advisory Committee raise, or that we're really proud of.

## Introducing: Our PFA Public Dashboard!



### Janice Cole

- The first thing that I would like to share is that we have our first ever public-facing dashboard in PFA.
- The goal of this dashboard is just to make some of our key implementation data more available to anybody who might want to learn more.
- It's on our [website](#). The plan is to update this a few times each year.
- In addition to English, we have it available in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Russian. So we're very excited about that as well.

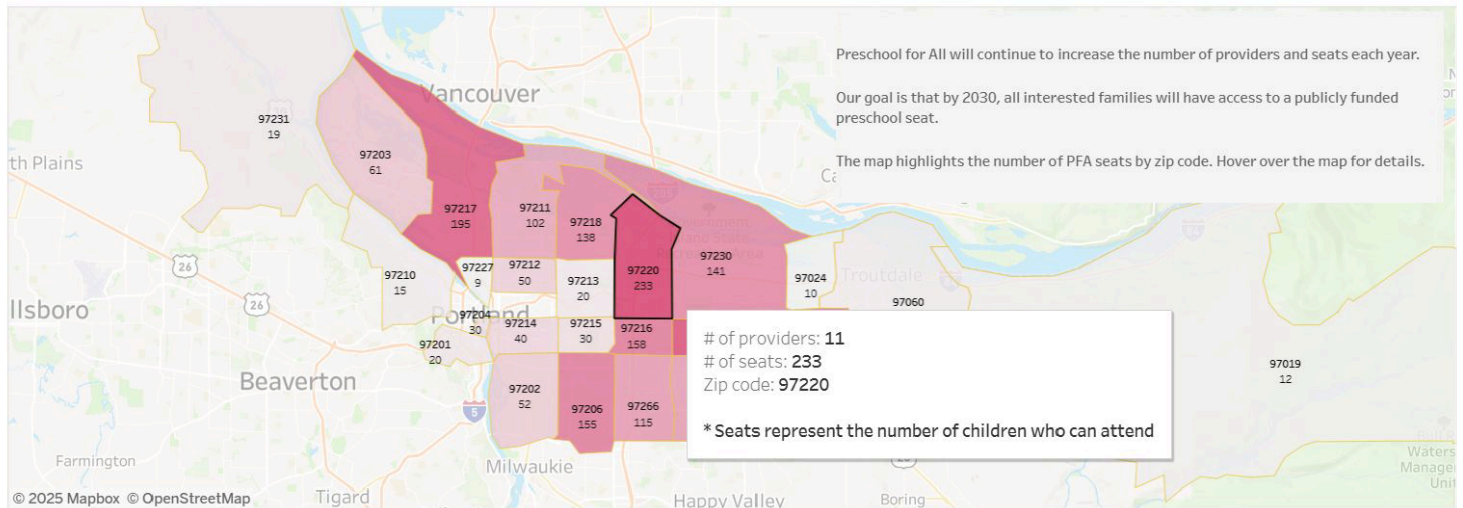


## 2024-25 Preschool for All Seats

Preschool Setting Type

(All)

2,225



### Setting Type

**Child Care Center:** State-licensed facility that provides care to children in a commercial setting.

Child Care Center

42

### Janice Cole

- I included this because we use this map in a lot of our presentations, it's just a screenshot of the dashboard. You can hover over all the zip codes and see how many providers there are, how many seats there are. You can also filter it by setting type.
- We have a tab that talks about some key family demographics, and then one that's about children.
- The goal with this was to keep the data really simple, so if you're like, wow, I want to see so much more, you should email me that because we're definitely talking about ways to grow this, but we wanted to start from a place that was easy and simple for folks to understand.
- So I have to give a big shout out to our senior data analyst, Frank, who built this for us. This is the first public dashboard our department has ever had, so not just our division, but the whole Department of County Human Services. We are very proud that we got to be a leader in making data more available to the public.

# Family Experience Case Study

## About This Project

Goal: Learn about the **experiences of families whose children are enrolled in PFA.**

Approach:

- **Long form interviews**
- Each participant will be interviewed twice.
- Prioritized families with **intersectional identities** across all of our priority population demographics.

## Participants

**15 families** interviewed for round 1.

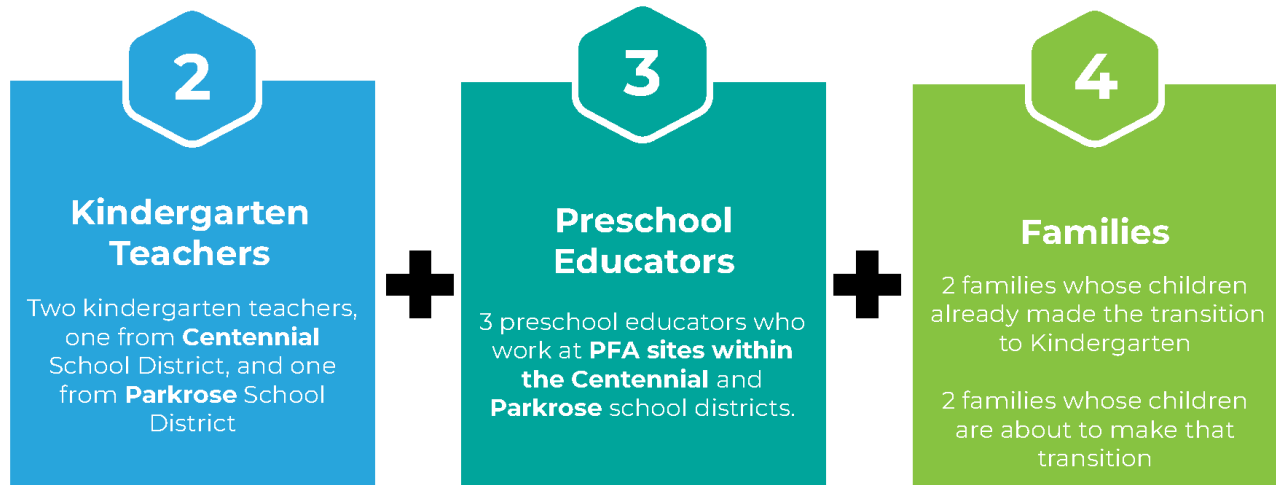
*Demographics:*

- 80% have children with developmental delays or disabilities
- 8 different languages spoken
- 2 foster families
- 93% have incomes below 350% FPL
- 2 participants are non-binary
- 93% participants of color

## Janice Cole

- The next project I'll share is some updates about is the Family Experience Case Study Project. This is one that you may have heard me mention. I've been dreaming about it for almost two years.
- We get quite a bit of data about families who decline, who unenroll, and we get some survey data from our external evaluation partners about their experiences, but what we really wanted was really deep, qualitative information.
- So, a few things to know about this particular project, it is not generalizable. We're doing long-form interviews with families, so every family gets interviewed twice to capture different phases of their PFA experience. We just completed the first round of interviews in April, and then we will interview that same group of families in July and August to learn about their experience.
- We intentionally prioritized families with intersectional identities across all of our priority populations. We know that families who have multiple intersecting identities are going to face the most barriers in accessing and navigating preschool.
- I also want to note, similar to your point earlier, I think Candace raised this, we're not just talking about race, ethnicity, income, and language, so we also prioritized families who are foster families. Folks with a variety of gender identities beyond male and female, and families whose children have developmental delays and disabilities.
- You can see a breakdown of how those family participant demographics. The first round of interviews is completed. Xia and Laura are doing the analysis right now. I can't give you preliminary findings yet, because they are going to vet them with participants first to make sure that they got it right, and give families an opportunity to fill in anything they might have missed.
- Once we have those learnings, I will make sure that they're available to you all. We will use the learnings from our first interviews to shape the questions that we ask in our second round.

# The Kindergarten Transition Workgroup



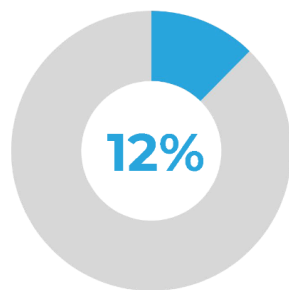
## Janice Cole

- We collect data around kindergarten experiences in two different ways. The first way is that all of our PFA sites are required to do an end-of-year report. In that end-of-year report, we ask them to share how they've supported children and families in the transition to kindergarten. What we've really learned is that sites support them in lots of different ways, and there's a huge range in what folks do. So, some folks really focus on making sure families are aware that kindergarten is coming up, when registration dates are, and making sure that IFSP gets transferred to the school. Other sites are doing things like inviting previous preschoolers to come to their classrooms to talk about kindergarten with their older preschool students, which I think is just super cool.
- In addition to that, our external evaluation partners at CEED, have a kindergarten module for families to complete in the family survey. This goes out not only to families whose children are about to transition into kindergarten, but also after they've transitioned into the kindergarten.
- One of the things we've talked about in this space, and I'm sad that Lavert had to leave early because he was one that really shaped my thinking really strongly in this. We don't want to prioritize academic indicators for kindergarten transition, even though we do collect data on skills.
- We really want to focus on school-family partnerships and family engagement and support, because we know that that makes a really positive kindergarten transition. And also supports families in that successful experience in K-12, too. When you have a positive experience advocating for your child when they are young, it makes you more likely to feel confident in your ability to do that as they age.
- So, we thought, what better way to understand that school-family partnership than to try to model it ourselves. As a research team, we're forming a work group that includes kindergarten teachers, preschool educators, and families, all in one space, collaborating together and sharing their insights with the team. So, this workgroup is fully recruited, and the first meeting happened an hour before this one started. So, I don't know how it went yet, but I'm very excited about that.
- We ended up with two kindergarten teachers, one from Centennial School District, one from Parkrose and we have 3 preschool educators who work at PFA sites within those same districts. All of those sites

are family child care. One is a language immersion program. We have two families whose children have already made that transition to kindergarten last year and two families whose children are just beginning that kindergarten transition process right now.

- All four of the participating families have a child with a developmental delay or disability. All four have incomes less than 350% of the federal poverty level, and 3 out of the 4 children are children of color.
- Our plan with this is that this is just one phase in a longer project, thinking about how we measure Kindergarten transitions and push back against expected ways of just what people think of when they think of kindergarten readiness.
- We made sure that we didn't recruit any families who went to the preschools that have teachers in the group, because we didn't want families to feel like they couldn't share their full experience based on the preschool teacher there.
- We wanted to keep this workgroup really small and over-represent families as opposed to preschool teachers or kindergarten educators, and so that's why we only have two districts, but our plan is to keep growing this and learn from more sites and more districts as we go.

## CEED Data Collection Updates

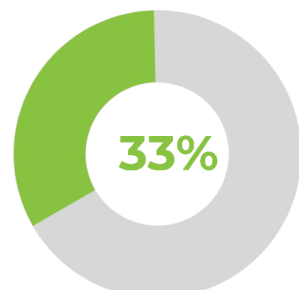
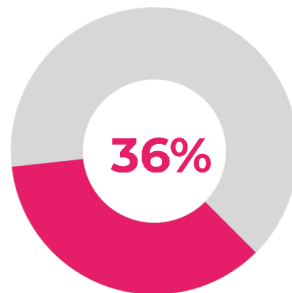


### Family Survey

The family survey opened May 9th. As of 5/14, **248 surveys** have already been submitted (response rate so far: 12%)

### Educator Survey

So far, the educator survey has **229 responses**. (response rate: 36%)



### Site Leader Survey

So far, the site leader survey has a 33% response rate. **28 responses** have been received to date.

### Janice Cole

- As you all know, we have our external evaluators at Boston University Center on the Ecology of Early Development, or CEED. As part of their work, they administer 3 annual surveys for us.
- One is to families, one is to PFA educators, one is to PFA site leaders.
- Right now, all of those surveys are currently open, and responses are flowing in, so you can see the current response rates. The family survey only opened a couple of weeks ago, so it's a little bit lower. Within one week, we had almost 250 surveys, so I'm very happy about that.
- In the past, we've had pretty low response rates for this data collection and so we worked really closely with CEED to improve that. We revised the surveys, we made them shorter, more clear, and focused. We increased the incentives, adjusted outreach strategies, and made sure everything was translated. We're

hoping those numbers keep growing. And really appreciative of all of the extra partnership and collaboration that CEED has done.

## PFA Site Wage and Benefit Form

**What:** An annual form required for all sites to complete

**Why:**

- *To ensure:* Sites are meeting minimum requirements regarding wages, benefits, and staffing.
- *To learn:* # of PFA educators and their wages, tenure, education, and ORO steps.
- *For Analysis:* Starting to look at changes over time (including staff retention).



**Janice Cole**

- Now we're going to talk about some reporting that the evaluation team helps with, one, because they're technically complicated, and two, because we use a lot of the data in the evaluation.
- The first is Preschool for All wage and benefit form. It's an annual form that's required for all sites. It tells us information about the benefits that are offered at every site, along with information about all of their educators. So that includes wages, tenure, education levels, and ORO steps.
- We do this first because on the program side, it helps to make sure that sites are meeting those minimum requirements regarding wages, benefits, and staffing. And if they're not, then the Preschool Partnerships team can work with that site and provide additional support.
- On the evaluation side, these are some of the key indicators that we track for workforce. One of the analyses that we're going to start doing, now that we've done this form for two years, is looking at changes over time. We'll be able to start looking at staff retention and turnover, which is something that I know all of us have had lots of questions about.
- And then the other thing we learned, as Brooke mentioned, there were 790 educators reported across all our sites for this year, which was a piece of information we didn't know. It is super helpful as we think about planning for the future. I expect that that number will increase greatly next year.

# PFA Site End of Year Report

## Who and Why?

All PFA sites complete this report annually. We use this data for:

- Monitoring
- Supporting several of our evaluation domains

## Timing

The report is administered in June and July. Analysis will begin at the end of July.

## About The Report:

**This report has two parts -**

1. Part One (Required):  
**Site information, staffing, child & family experiences**
2. Part Two (Optional):  
**Anonymous feedback** about experiences in PFA, including the biggest benefits and challenges.

### Janice Cole

- Okay, one more project. This is our PFA end-of-year report.
- Again, this is something that is required of all of our sites, and again, serves that dual purpose for the program side, ensuring that contract expectations are met. And on the evaluation side, we use a massive amount of this data. This report is going to go out very soon. I just sent everything off to translation today.
- The report has two different parts. The first is a required part. We ask sites to tell us about their site, their classrooms, staffing reasons that employees leave, curriculum. We ask them about child and family experiences, including the kindergarten activities that they do, and also how they engage families around the importance of attendance.
- The second part of the survey is optional, and it's completely anonymous. This is the space where we have sites to talk about their Preschool for All experiences, so this year we're asking about communication. How we can make it easier for folks to provide feedback, and then we always ask what the biggest benefit and the biggest challenges are of partnering with PFA.
- In the last two years, those two questions alone have yielded very rich data to improve our implementation. We will open that report in June, and then I will start analyzing the data in July.





Last but not least -  
**Help us celebrate!**

Xia Zhang, Laura Rodriguez, and Mario Olivares received the County's **Employee Recognition Award for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** for their work on the Decline Project!

#### Janice Cole

- I am ending on a very celebratory note. You all may remember that at the last advisory committee meeting, my colleague Xia came to share about the decline study, which she did alongside our other two evaluation staff, Laura and Mario.
- We're very excited because the project and the team were nominated for a Multnomah County Employee Recognition Award and actually won for diversity, equity, and inclusion. There were over 900 unique employees nominated for awards, and so we're really excited that theirs was chosen. I think it is a testament to how intentional they were in their research and in advocating for families through that and sharing that work, so I was really proud and wanted to share that.

#### Candice Vickers

- One thing that we've consistently seen with Preschool for All is that whenever we gather data and ask questions the data often comes out really frickin' positive around what we're doing.
- So I just wonder, like, Janice do you feel like you have the resources and the ability and the audiences to be able to share what you're going to find, especially with that year-over-year data. I mean, like, we know in Oregon, like, the biggest workforce shortage is in child care providers, and something tells me that our data is gonna come out that the retention rates for PFA are gonna be amazing, especially with regard to adding additional staff. In what ways can either this group or the County advocate to the Board that this is a shining light in the state, with regard to early childhood supports.

#### Janice Cole

- That's a really good question, and I agree, almost alarmingly so a lot of our evaluation work shows very positive things, which is wonderful, but I'm always like, did we miss a group? Even with our family case study, where, you know, we were very intentional to interview folks that we assumed would probably have the most barriers and challenges, and then we knew were kind of pain points in our implementation.



- And even those groups were overwhelmingly positive in the feedback that they shared after hour-long conversations with them. I think the thing that's really important, and I know that my team has been trying to really emphasize, is to make sure that we're talking about our data in context with the state and in context with what we see nationally. If you're not in early childhood, you don't necessarily know how unique and special some of these data points and findings are, and so we've really been trying to make sure that we're nesting it in the context of a broader system so folks can really start to understand how does our work look in comparison to similar systems, or to the state at large. So, if there are folks that can point me to good data at the state level that would be really helpful.

#### **Brooke Chilton Timmons**

- And I'll just add that, we hope you are sharing data and information with others.
- Please let us know if there are tools that you all, if there are rooms that you're in, people you're talking to, legislators, Candace, that you were connecting with, that we can make sure you have the right data and information, because sometimes you'll also be in spaces we are not, so we'd love to support you all in those in that work.

#### **Candice Vickers**

- As much as you can share, you know, data points, one-pagers, white pages, any of that with me and the team. I think if we can begin to make the Multnomah County PFA, like a proof of concept, for other counties, that's going to help continue to protect its amazingness and guard against those who might come for it.

#### **Ms. Lydia Grey-Holifield**

- Thanks, everyone. Please continue to show up and take care of yourselves. Whatever that looks like for you. So, always remember to keep a smile on your face, because it looks the most amazing on you, and yeah, we got this. Remember to go for a walk, it's gonna be nice the rest of this week. Just remember to breathe through this weirdness, and as always, it's good to see everybody, and you guys have the most amazing rest of your week.