



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

May 6, 2016

The Honorable Darrell Clarke
City Council President
City Hall, Room 490
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Council President Clarke:

This letter is in response to questions raised at the April 5, 2016 hearing before the Committee of the Whole on the Fiscal Year 2017 proposed Operating budget for the Mayor's Office of Community Schools and Pre-K. At this hearing, the following questions called for follow-up:

From Councilman Green:

For callback, would like Office of Community Schools and Pre-K to provide a breakdown of resources provided by City and other partners for workforce development of Pre-K providers to enable them to grow.

We will of course return for a callback hearing; prior to that, however, we are submitting information here that may address this question. On the following two pages are a chart showing existing supports for early childhood education providers, broken down by type of support, provider of the support service, and then the specific supports offered. Also included is the anticipated City supports to be offered that correlate to the existing infrastructure. Existing supports represent roughly \$9 million in investments, and the proposed FY17 City Budget includes an additional \$7 million in supports, with \$5.2 million specifically dedicated to workforce development. Further, the additional \$8,500 per child in the FY17 Budget, combined with existing state Child Care Subsidy amounts, will allow providers to increase their revenue per child. With this additional support, local providers will have the resources available to begin increasing wages for teachers and workers in childcare centers. Increased wages will incentivize childcare workers to pursue new and existing supports to move up the pay-scale and receive higher credentialing.

Finally, the City is actively pursuing additional funding from philanthropy for classroom curriculum supports, health and safety upgrades, a unified, on-line enrollment system, and workforce training, not represented in the following chart.

EXISTING SUPPORTS

Early Childhood Quality Improvement Resources - Philadelphia	Non-STARS Providers	STAR 1-2	STAR 3-4
Training			
<i>Southeast Regional Key (SERK)</i>			
Provides training in-kind	x	x	X
Subcontracts with community-based agencies/individuals to deliver training geared to meeting STARS standards	x	x	X
Technical Assistance (TA)			
<i>Southeast Regional Key</i>			
Provides technical assistance in-kind	x	x	X
Subcontracts with community-based agencies to provide technical assistance geared to reaching STARS standards	x	x	X
Outreach and engagement of providers in Keystone STARS (English and Spanish)	x		
<i>United Way Success by Six</i>		x	X
On-site TA - variety of topics geared to STAR 2 reaching STAR 3		x	
Peer mentoring groups		x	X
<i>City of Philadelphia – Dept. of Commerce Small Business Development</i>	x	x	
Degrees and Credentials			
<i>Southeast Regional Key</i>			
Provides and funds credit-bearing coursework		x	X
Career advising		x	X
Higher education tuition vouchers		x	x
Teacher education and retention bonuses		x	x
<i>Early Childhood Workforce Transformation Initiative</i> leverages relationships w higher education to improve teacher preparation	x	x	x
1199-C, Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children (DVAEYC), SERK – Child Development Associates (CDA) Apprenticeship Opportunities	x	x	
School District of Philadelphia Career and Technical Education (CTE) - CDA prep	x	x	x
Facilities			
<i>Fund for Quality</i>			x
<i>City of Philadelphia Facilities Fund</i>		x	x
Grants			
<i>Southeast Regional Key</i>			
Merit awards based on STAR level and size -to help meet STARS standards and for general support)		x	x
Education and Retention Bonus – to programs to reward staff members for degree completion and stability		x	x
<i>Success by Six</i> to help participants meet STARS standards and for general support		x	x

CITY SUPPORTS PROPOSED TO AUGMENT EXISTING SYSTEM

Early Childhood Quality Improvement Resources - Philadelphia	Non-STARS Providers	STAR 1-2	STAR 3-4
Training			
In-classroom coaching to improve instructional practice in participating Pre-k programs		x	x
Technical Assistance			
Additional support for select non-STAR, STAR 1 and 2 programs geared towards reaching higher STAR standards	X	x	
Degrees and Credentials			
Academic advising by specialists to support current workforce to obtain degrees and credentials	x	x	x
Small grants to help cover ancillary costs associated with higher education		x	x
Praxis preparation course(s) for teachers to become certified		x	x
Support for bilingual teachers to obtain degrees and credentials		x	x
Infrastructure			
Streamline enrollment for families	X	x	x
Back office fiscal management support for providers		x	x
Other			
Classroom supplies and materials		x	x

From Council President Clarke:

For our major Pre-K providers (School District, etc.), provide the demographic and financial breakdown of those children/families who would like to be enrolled in quality Pre-K but are not.

The District manages 175 partners for Head Start and Pre-K Counts programs. Their monthly waitlist is usually between 1,400-2,000 children. The families have incomes at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty level (\$47,790 a year for a family of 2, 1 parent and 1 child). More than 32,000 (76%) of all 3- and 4-year olds in Philadelphia are eligible for state or federally funded quality programs based on their family income of 300% of the federal poverty level or lower (based on current census data).

The four Child Care Works waitlists in various areas of the City are usually measured in time, and are typically 4-6 months long. The four CCIS waitlists typically number 500 or more which results in the state releasing funds to alleviate the waitlists. When the state releases funds, the waitlists temporarily diminish until more funds are released. However, with new eligibility regulations, CCIS leaders anticipate waitlists to hit the five figure mark early next year.

From Councilwoman Quiñones-Sánchez:

What is the plan to build back-office capacity for [our neighborhood pre-k] providers? Paperwork is a big hurdle for these providers.

The Mayor's proposal includes \$350,000 in FY17 for a needs assessment and start-up costs to establish a shared services hub for providers to help strengthen back-office capacity related to billing and other administrative paper work. In FY18, we anticipate expanding supports to \$400,000 as more providers come online to access this shared services hub. The cost and time savings for providers will help family and neighborhood providers ensure more quality time is dedicated to our city's children.

We are in the process of engaging the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) to develop the workforce pipeline needed for the quality pre-k initiative. Currently, CCP has capacity for a cohort of over 500 students to pursue their Early Education Associates program, and can provide up to 30 academic advisors for "comebackers", childcare workers who may want to pursue further degrees and credentialing as these programs expand. These conversations will be on-going as the pre-k initiative expands to ensure up-to-date workforce need are addressed. Our plans include streamlining programs and coursework required to receive an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education and solidifying matriculation agreements that will ease students' ability to move from CCP into a four-year college or university to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education.

From Councilwoman Gym:

Can your office put forward an opinion on whether the turnaround model that the School District is proposing, which involves a 50% layoff/removal of teachers in targeted schools, results in improved academic outcomes for children?

The ultimate authority to improve and maintain strong educational outcomes lies with the School District. No one can predict with certainty whether the turnaround model will succeed, but given the high stakes, we believe the District must emphasize inclusivity and transparency in selecting schools for turnaround and implementing the program. Accordingly, we will be monitoring the process.

From Councilman Taubenberger:

Would like to take you up on that tour of a Pre-k (other Council members may also be interested).

Councilman Taubenberger attended the CORA Early Learning Center at LaSalle University with the Mayor on Monday, April 18th, 2016. The invitation for other members of Council to take tours of pre-k centers in all neighborhoods of Philadelphia will always be available.

Sincerely,



Otis Hackney
Chief Education Officer