



FAQ for Mayor Greenberg’s Plan to Create a Pathway to Universal Pre-K

1. Q: What is Mayor Greenberg’s plan to make quality early learning available to every four- and three-year-old child in Louisville?

A: Investing in and strengthening early learning facilities which includes new and existing private and non-profit preschools, child care centers, and family child care homes operating in our city.

2. Q: What is *Thrive by 5 Louisville*?

A: *Thrive by 5 Louisville* is the name of the nonprofit organization independent of Louisville Metro Government that will implement universal PreK in Jefferson County. *Thrive by 5 Louisville* will be funded by public dollars as well as by philanthropy (see Figure 1). These funds will be used strategically to address the following issues identified as the most critical and impactful:

1. Recruit and retain the early learning workforce
2. Elevate early learning facilities and programs
3. Offer financial assistance to cover the cost of preschool

Thrive by 5 Louisville will NOT provide preschool services, but rather it will invest in and strengthen existing preschools, child care centers, and family child care homes with solutions to address workforce and facilities needs. *Thrive by 5 Louisville* will also support centers by providing financial assistance so all children can attend quality preschool.

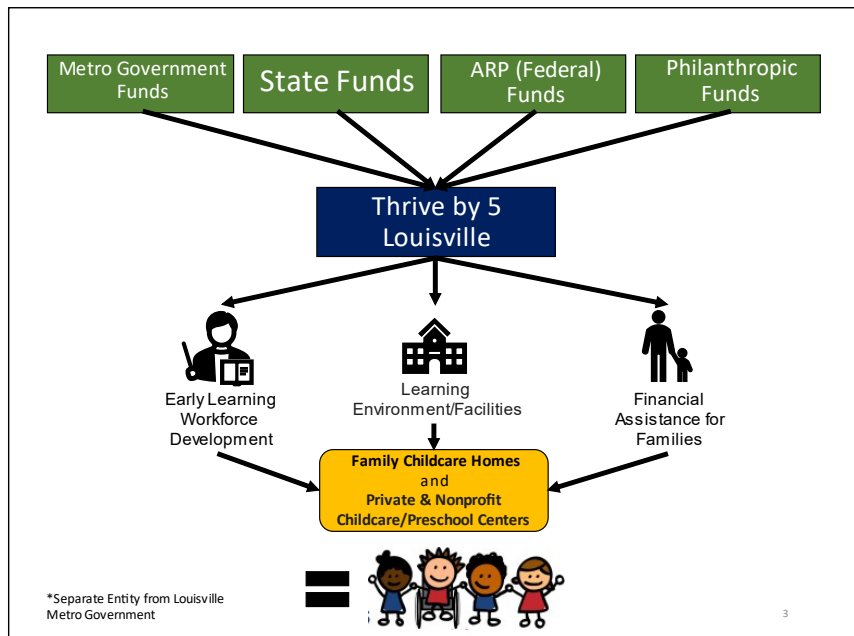


Figure 1: Funding and Administration Model of Thrive by 5 Louisville

Thrive by 5 Louisville will develop and host an on-line hub to ensure easy access to the many resources—education and professional development, coaching, business guidance—already available to directors and teachers at Louisville preschools, child care centers, and family child care homes.

3. Q: Why is PreK important?

A: Children, their caregivers, the community, and the economy benefit:

- PreK prepares children to thrive in kindergarten, equipping them with skills to:
 - Compromise and communicate
 - Be respectful to others
 - Solve problems
- Caregivers of children in preschool can participate in the workforce
- Children who attend preschool are more likely to graduate from high school, earn more over their lifetime, and stay healthy longer
- Children who attend quality preschool are less likely to be arrested for violent crimes when they are teenagers ([source](#))

4. Q: How many 4-year-olds live in Jefferson County?

A: About 9,600, based on 2022 census data

5. Q: What's the current state of preschool attendance in Louisville? How do we know?

A: Data supplied by families of the roughly 7,800 children who enter kindergarten at JCPS indicate that nearly half of children have not participated in preschool. City- and state-level data on preschool attendance are not collected.

6. Q: How many of the 9600 4-year-olds in Jefferson County already attend free, quality preschools? How do they qualify?

A: About 2,800. The JCPS Early Childhood program offers free high-quality preschool for children who will be 4 years old on or before August 1st and qualify based on household income at or below 160% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and/or special needs, and children who turn 3 years old on or before August 1st and have an Individual Educational Program (IEP). Head Start programs offered by Greater Louisville Head Start and OVEC Head Start provide quality preschool for children whose families qualify based on income below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level.

7. Q: How many of the 9,600 4-year-olds in Jefferson County do not attend free, quality preschool?

A: Children whose family's income is 160% of FPL and above—about 6,800.

8. Q: Why aren't more children participating in preschool?

A: A number of factors can limit preschool participation including cost ([source](#)), access to transportation, hours of operation, availability ([source](#)), and language access.

9. Q: What Louisville neighborhoods have no or few childcare/preschools available?

A: [Several Louisville neighborhoods](#) have childcare/preschool so scarce that they qualify as childcare deserts.

21 Louisville Metro Neighborhoods have no regulated¹ child care within their neighborhood boundaries: Audubon Park-Prestonia, Bonnycastle, Chamberlain-Ford, Clifton-Irish Hill, Deer Park, Flat Rock-Long Run, Germantown-Paristown Pointe, Jefferson Forest, McNeely Lake East-Heritage Creek, Meriwether-Saint Joseph, Minor Lane, Old Louisville-Limerick, Original Highlands, Shelby Park, Six Mile-Houston Acres, Southside, Southwest Dixie-Valley Village, St. Matthews North-Beechwood Village, St. Matthews Northwest-Chenoweth, Valley Station South-Orell, Wilder Park-Fairgrounds

Another 21 neighborhoods have fewer than 1 childcare space for every 2 children who want one ([Impact - Ready for K \(readyforkalliance.com\)](#)).

10. Q: Who participated in the Mayor' Early Learning Action Group?

A: 23 early learning experts and advocates:

- **Senator Julie Raque Adams**, KY State Senate, District 36
- **Jason Adkins**, CEO, Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative
- **Alma Aldana**, Backside Learning Center, Adult Programs Manager
- **Brett Bachmann**, CEO, Heuser Hearing Institute and Heuser Hearing & Language Academy
- **Senator Cassie Chambers Armstrong**, KY State Senate, District 19
- **Ashley Brandt**, Director, Early Care and Education, Metro United Way
- **Ashley Novak Butler**, Executive Director, Lift a Life Novak Family Foundation
- **Marland Cole**, Executive Director, Evolve502
- **Pam Darnall**, President/CEO Family & Children's Place
- **Terri Davenport**, Compliance and Comprehensive Services Specialist, Early Childhood, Jefferson County Public Schools
- **Cori Gadansky**, Executive Director, Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C)
- **Benjamin M. Gies**, Director of Government Affairs, The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence
- **Rina Gratz**, Executive Director of Early Childhood Programs, Jefferson County Public Schools
- **Mary Jolly**, Strategic Partnership Administrator, Center for Health Equity, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness
- **Jon Lee**, Director, UofL Early Childhood Research Center
- **Hans Petersen**, Regional Child Care Administrator, Child Care Aware of Kentucky
- **Tony Peyton**, Executive Vice President & Chief of Staff, National Center for Families Learning
- **Representative Josie Raymond**, House District 41, KY General Assembly

¹ Meets regulatory standards for quality and safety as enforced by the [Division of Child Care](#) within the Kentucky Department of Community-Based Services

- **Matt Sawyers**, Policy Advisor, Office of Governor Andy Beshear
- **Jean Scott**, Vice President and Assistant Director of Client and Community Relations, PNC Bank
- **Terry S. Tolan**, Consultant, Center for Nonprofit Excellence
- **Sarah Taylor Vanover**, Policy and Research Director, Kentucky Youth Advocates
- **Kristen Williams**, Executive Director, Play Cousins Collective

11. Q: Why did the Mayor’s Early Learning Group Implementation Plan recommend the creation of a new nonprofit organization?

A: The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) identified this as an effective option based on their review of city led PreK programs across the U.S. In particular, nonprofits can be more successful at securing funding from private and philanthropic entities, which will be key to the success of *Thrive by 5 Louisville Louisville*.

12. Q: What are the sources of funding for *Thrive by 5 Louisville* PreK?

A: Initially, funding will include local funds from Louisville Metro Government, Mayor Greenberg’s FY25 budget; State funds from the KY General Assembly for Early Learning Pilot- requested by Mayor Greenberg from FY25 State budget; Federal Early Learning American Rescue Plan (ARP) remaining funds; and philanthropic Investments

13. Q: How will *Thrive by 5 Louisville* board members be recruited?

A: The mayor will name the first Board Chair, who will recruit Board. Going forward, Board members will be responsible for recruiting and appointing new members, including the Board Chair.

14. Q: Who will participate in the Advisory Council for the *Thrive by 5 Louisville* board?

A: Participants of the Mayor’s Early Learning Action Group and community members including educators, directors, parents, and others with a passion for increasing access to quality early learning.

14. Q: Who will hire the staff of *Thrive by 5 Louisville*, and what is the hiring timeframe?

A: *Thrive by 5 Louisville* Board of Directors will decide the timeframe for hiring staff and will determine the process for hiring. Under leadership by the Chair, the Board of Directors will seek community input regarding the job description for the *Thrive by 5 Louisville* CEO.

15. Q: What issues must *Thrive by 5 Louisville* address to ensure the availability of free, quality preschool to the 6,800 children who don’t currently qualify for these programs?

A: Grow and develop the early childhood educator workforce; invest in quality improvements for existing community preschools; and provide financial assistance for preschoolers.

16. Q: What do you mean by “existing” preschools?

A: For-profit and non-profit childcare and education centers and family childcare homes regulated by Kentucky’s Division of Child Care.

17. Q: Who will be eligible for financial assistance from *Thrive by 5 Louisville PreK*?

A: After focusing on building the workforce and filling existing classrooms with teachers, year three will include the provision of financial assistance for 4-year-olds whose families make less than \$93,600/year 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (2024).

18. Q: Where do JCPS and Head Start fit in with *Thrive by 5 Louisville PreK* plans?

A: The **JCPS** Early Childhood program offers free high-quality preschool for children who will be 4 years old on or before August 1st and qualify based on household income (160% or below) and/or special needs, and children who turn 3 years old on or before August 1st and have an Individual Educational Program (IEP). **Head Start** programs offered by Greater Louisville Head Start and OVEC Head Start provide quality preschool for children whose family income is below 100% of the federal poverty level.

19. Q: What will be the annual cost of tuition-free, high quality PreK for 4-year-old children?

A: The roughly 5,500 Jefferson County children whose family income is below \$93,600 for a family of four—or 300% of the Federal Poverty Level--will be the first to qualify for tuition-free preschool. About 3,100 of these children are not enrolled in JCPS early childhood education or Head Start programs. The annual cost of high quality, tuition free preschool for these 3,100 children will range from \$7,740/year to \$14,500/year, depending on whether the family qualifies for and accesses Kentucky’s childcare subsidy program, CCAP (Child Care Assistance Program). Estimates of the number of children whose family income would qualify them for CCAP (n = 1,563) were multiplied by the reduced cost to *Thrive by 5 Louisville* of \$7,740/per child per year² for a total of \$12,097,620. We then identified the number of children (n = 1,494) whose family income would be too high to qualify for CCAP and multiplied that by the full cost of \$14,500/per child per year to get \$21,663,000. Finally, we added the costs for both groups, which totaled \$33,760,620, which was rounded to \$35,000,000 total cost per year.

² Through the [Child Care Assistance Program for Families \(CCAP\)](#) the state covers a portion of the cost of preschool at Licensed Preschool Centers for a family of four at 160% and 200% of the poverty level. \$7,740 includes expected parent co-pay after CCAP, plus an additional amount to increase the cost per year per child to \$14,500 to improve quality.

20. Q: How did you determine that the cost of quality is \$14,500 per child per year?

A: It's pulled from the *Kentucky Child Care Narrow Cost Analysis 2022*. Using Kentucky-specific daily costs for care identified in the Center for American Progress' [Cost of Child Care calculator](#), "high quality" care and education means that it meets Kentucky's regulatory standards for quality and safety, and adds additional costs for higher teacher compensation and benefits, additional planning time for instruction, more physical space for children, lower child to teacher ratios, and more materials for classrooms. According to this model, the daily cost of high quality preschool in Kentucky is: \$55.14/day x 22 days/month x 12 months/year = \$14,557 rounded to \$14,500.

21. Q: How will *Thrive by 5 Louisville* ensure that participating childcare/preschools are high quality?

A: All regulated childcare centers/preschools will be invited to participate in *Thrive by 5 Louisville*. Participating centers must be enrolled in the in the [KY All STARS quality rating system](#), the state's five-star quality rating and improvement system.

22. Q: Will preschools with ALL Stars ratings below 3 be able to participate in *Thrive by 5 Louisville* preschool?

A: Yes. Childcare/preschool providers with an ALL Stars rating of 3 or below will be invited to participate in *Thrive by 5 Louisville* if they implement quality improvement plans within a timeline yet to be determined.

23. Q: What are some examples of investing public funds into private for-profit companies?

A: Local and state governments regularly provide financial incentives and tax credits to private businesses to support economic development, workforce development, talent attraction, and job creation and retention. In Kentucky, a variety of financial support and tax credit programs are available to businesses so they can grow and scale – in turn driving the Commonwealth's economy and providing opportunities for residents.

24. Q: Is Bezos Academy connected with *Thrive by 5 Louisville*?

A: Bezos Academy is not connected to *Thrive by 5 Louisville* but is a part of our city's efforts to make Universal PreK a reality. Bezos Academy offers tuition-free, full day, year-round, Montessori-inspired preschools for 3- to 5-year-old children whose families earn less than 400% of the Federal Poverty Level – about \$124,800 per year for a family of four. Admissions for Bezos Academy preschools is lottery based.

25. Q: What are the [2024 income guidelines for the Federal Poverty Level](#)?

A:

200%	\$62,400 for family of 4
300%	\$93,600 for family of 4
400%	\$124,800 for family of 4