



QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS APRIL 2024



because the first 5 years matter



In March, Dayton voters resoundingly supported Issue 6 by a 70-30 margin! That’s an astounding vote of confidence in Dayton!

The renewal of the City’s 0.25% income tax supports police, fire and EMS services; road repairs, parks and recreation; housing AND Preschool Promise.

We are so grateful for voters’ support and Mayor Mims’ and the entire City Commission’s commitment to investing in our work on behalf of Dayton’s 3- and 4-year-olds, their families and our amazing early learning providers.

Thanks to their support, nearly 2,000 3- and 4-year-olds in Dayton are attending high-quality, affordable early learning, and teachers at 61 Preschool programs in the City are getting support to ensure every child starts Kindergarten ready to learn.

Dayton and our three Montgomery County Commissioners, who have been steadfast proponents of Preschool Promise, have put our community in the vanguard of supporting our youngest children! We can’t thank them enough.

Gratefully,
All of us at Preschool Promise

COACHING IMPROVES CLASSROOMS

74 teachers and 15 administrators are receiving intensive classroom coaching from Preschool Promise. Coaching is an important part of continuous improvement.

Our newest Professional Learning Community (PLC), Introduction to Dialogic Reading, has 20 participants who are receiving coaching based on dialogic reading practices. Teachers are learning so much. “I’ve never seen so many people who were able to grasp the concept of dialogic reading the way this group has,” the coach said.

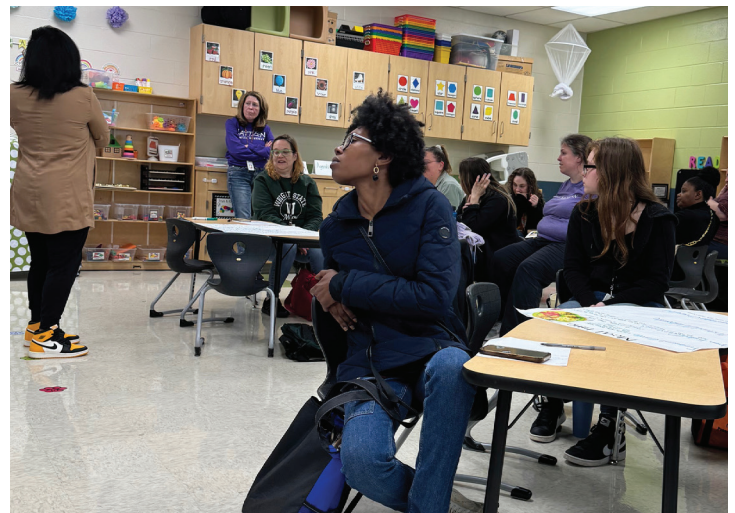
This year we have had

- 363 participants in a year-long PLC
- 21 participants in a 5-month “Science of Reading” PLC
- 14 participants in a 3-month “Power of Conversational Turns” PLC

ENCOURAGING ENGAGING INTERACTIONS

The Power of Conversational Turns is one of Preschool Promise’s Extreme Trainings, focusing on enhancing teachers’ language and literacy practices through serve-and-return interactions. We have seven teaching teams working in Dayton Public Schools. This training is made up of three sessions, along with pre- and post-observations to gauge teachers’ growth.

Serve-and-return works like a game of tennis between a child and caregiver. The child “serves” by reaching out for interaction; this includes making eye contact, using facial expressions or gestures or touching. A responsive caregiver “returns” the serve by speaking back, playing peekaboo or sharing a toy or laugh.



ANNUAL LUNCH

Preschool Promise held its annual meeting Wednesday, January 24, at Stepping Stones Early Learning Center. We took the attendees on a look-back at our accomplishments and released our latest annual report.

“We were excited to share that Preschool Promise children are **29% more likely to test ready for Kindergarten** than their peers who did not attend one of our more than 120 partner programs,” said Robyn Lightcap, Executive Director of Preschool Promise.

In addition,

- Almost 4,000 children attended Preschool Promise’s growing number of partner programs in the 2022-23 school year.
- Nearly 400 early childhood educators attended one of Preschool Promise’s free year-long, evidence-based Professional Learning Communities designed to improve their instruction.
- Over 100 Promise Scholars are earning or have earned early childhood education degrees and/or credentials. They’re graduating debt-free, thanks to Preschool Promise’s support.
- More than 150 teachers attended one of Preschool Promise’s immersive trainings designed to ensure classrooms are welcoming to all children, with a particular emphasis on supporting children of color and Black boys.
- Preschool Promise helped add 76 high-quality Preschool seats in the community.

Montgomery County Commission President Deborah Lieberman and Dayton Mayor Jeffrey J. Mims Jr. shared why they’re so passionate about supporting Preschool Promise and our community’s dedicated early educators. Attendees also heard from participants in our programs, including Promise Scholars, Black Boy Brilliance and Reaching For Readiness Home Visiting.



15TH ANNUAL READINESS SUMMIT

Wiring the BRAIN

THE SCIENCE OF READING EXPLAINED

2024

THE 15TH ANNUAL READINESS SUMMIT,

held March 1 at Sinclair College, was all about the Science of Reading – why we need to embrace the philosophy in our community and why the shift is so important for teachers, including early learning teachers in Preschool and child care programs. **More than 600 people attended** to learn from our keynote speaker, Dr. Susan B. Neuman, professor of Childhood and Literacy Education at New York University’s Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development.

The 12 breakout sessions that followed had a total of 700 attendees who were eager to go back into their classrooms and places of work and incorporate the information that they learned. We look forward to what the next year will bring! Here is a [gallery link](#) of photos from the event!



EXPLORING WORDS WITH HEGGERTY!

We are providing intensive coaching and training with Preschool teachers at our four designated early learning programs located within the Hope Zone. Teachers in the Ready to Read cohort have begun implementing Heggerty instruction consistently for the past 9 weeks. The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness curriculum provides students with consistent and repeated instruction that is transferred to developing a student's decoding and encoding skills. This program provides supplemental phonics instruction that is used alongside the main curriculum. Teachers are enjoying seeing their students grow and adapt to a new way of learning phonics.



We are also providing coaching and training for families of the four sites in the Hope Zone. Storytimes with local authors were a great success at Mini University and Fairview Elementary School. Adults learned how to use discussion prompts while reading to their children. We also distributed backpacks with books to be read at home, and more than 300 books were read in the Family Book Club to date.

Three Little Libraries have been installed at Hope Zone sites to help families grow their home libraries.

REACHING FOR READINESS IS GROWING!

We are thrilled to welcome our third Parent Educator, Ayn Swann. In her new role, Ayn leverages her experience as a Museum Educator at the Dayton Art Institute where she develops and delivers educational programming for young children and audiences needing accommodations.

In addition to helping Preschool Promise increase the number of families served in this home visiting program, Ayn is partnering with our Parent Family Voices Committee as it begins to create an action plan to improve Kindergarten readiness and access to services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.



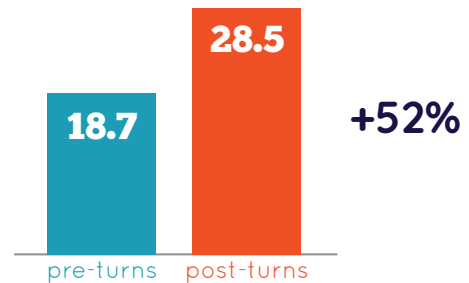
LEARNING BEGINS AT BIRTH

During the first three years of life, critical brain development occurs that sets the foundation for a child's future learning. That's why we are working with LENA to support our youngest children's early healthy development.

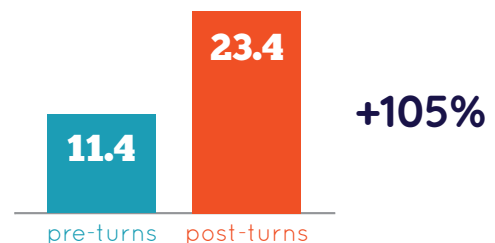
The goal for our Ohio Department of Education and Workforce grant involving LENA was simple to state but more difficult to achieve: To increase the quality and quantity of serve-and-return interactions in infant-toddler classrooms.

Using two evidence-based tools, CLASS and LENA, we and our partners began in Fall 2020 to support teachers to engage in reflective practice. Our infant/toddler professionals took up the challenge - they know these tools are brain-builders.

With LENA, teachers use data to work toward equitable talk environments for all children. Our most recent analysis from February once again shows these dedicated educators are hitting the mark. They are supporting children who began the sequence experiencing less talk than their peers and less talk than the national median of 15 turns/hour. Through weekly coaching sessions, early educators set goals to work on specific behaviors that would increase child vocalizations and adult words and, therefore, conversational turns.



Children who started out experiencing **less talk than their peers in the same classroom** (in the bottom third) had an average increase of **+9.8 turns per hour**.



Children who started out experiencing **less talk than the national median of 15 turns per hour** had an average increase of **+12.0 turns per hour**.

PROMISE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

We are helping 113 teachers earn degrees and have over 100 on our waiting list!