

SEATTLEU

CENTER FOR
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Early Learning Planning Committee

Funded by: Bainum Family Foundation

Environmental Scan Report

Our goal was to decide if the data we could get from previously published reports that included the SUYI area, plus our own experiences, including the two day immersion visits would be enough for us to propose directions for early childhood for the Youth Initiative.

The reports that were most useful were:

- Seattle Preschool for All Initiative: Analysis of Preschool Enrollment from 2014
- Head Start, ECAP, and Step Ahead Preschool Programs Community Needs Assessment from 2011

The reports cover areas beyond the SUYI boundaries, and so some work is needed to tailor the various maps and tables to narrow the focus.

The following sections seem to be the most relevant:

SEATTLE PRESCHOOL FOR ALL INITIATIVE ANALYSIS OF PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Exhibit ES- 1

Estimated Enrollment Status of Three and Four Year Olds in Seattle, 2012

Strategy 1: Number of children enrolled in nursery or preschool, based on American Community Survey					
	Total Number of Children	Enrolled Children	Enrolled as % of Total	Unenrolled	Unenrolled as % of Total
Three year olds	6,450	3,450	53%	3,000	47%
Four year olds	5,830	4,340	74%	1,490	26%
Total 3 & 4 yr olds	12,280	7,790	63%	4,490	37%

Strategy 2: Number of children enrolled in center-based and non-relative care, based on Early Childhood Program Participation (ECP) Survey					
	Total Number of Children	Enrolled Children	Enrolled as % of Total	Unenrolled	Unenrolled as % of Total
Three year olds	6,450	<i>Separate data is not available for three and four year olds; see below for totals</i>			
Four year olds	5,830				
Total 3 & 4 yr olds	12,280	8,960	73%	3,320	27%

Source: City of Seattle, 2013; BERK, 2013.

By using these percentages on the number of children in the SUYI, we should get a fairly accurate number of children to be served.

Also from the Seattle Preschool for All Initiative, and based on a small sample of 504 three to four year old children:

- 71% of children in families with income of 400% or more of federal poverty level (FPL) were enrolled compared to 54% of those in low-income families (ACS data)
- Children living north of the Ship Canal were significantly more likely than those in Southwest Seattle to be enrolled (72% vs. 48%, respectively). Other neighborhoods were not significantly different from each other in enrollment.
- Children with foreign-born parents were significantly less likely to be enrolled than those with U.S. born parents (43% vs. 66%, respectively).
- Differences by race/ethnicity were too small to be statistically significant.
- 32% of unenrolled three and four year olds in the sample come from families with incomes below 200% of federal poverty level. Because of variation due to sampling, the actual percentage among all unenrolled three and four year olds could range from 24% to 41% (the 95% confidence interval).

In other data presented in this report, a survey of 2,713 families with kindergarteners were surveyed, which is approximately half of the families with kindergarteners in the district. Approximately 86% reported that the kindergartener had attended some form of preschool at age three or four. The report does not discuss the either volunteer bias or social desirability bias. The reasons given for the children who had not attended were (more than one response could be chosen):

- o Most children, 68%, stayed home with a parent
- o 26% were in family, friend, or neighbor (FFN) care
- o 18% attended a child care center and 6% were cared for in a family child care home
- o The most common reasons for the child not attending preschool were:
 - wanting to care for the child at home (29%);
 - cost of preschool (25%),
 - desire for FFN care (11%)
 - Transportation barriers (5%)
 - hours of care (5%)
 - location of providers (4%)
 - lack of culturally appropriate care (2%)

In the Head Start, ECAP, and Step Ahead Preschool Programs Community Needs Assessment, the 2014 enrollments by Seattle area neighborhoods are shown:

Exhibit 54 lists the number of child care programs in Seattle and their total capacity:

**Exhibit 54
Estimated Number of Preschool Child Care Centers and Slots in Seattle, 2010**

Neighborhood Area	Child Care Centers			Family Child Care Homes*			Total	
	Total	Capacity	Preschool Capacity	Total	Capacity	Preschool Capacity**	Number	Capacity
Beacon Hill/Georgetown/ South Park/Rainier Valley	59	3,022	1,105	189	1,471	736	248	1,841
U-District/Laurelhurst/Wedgewood	40	2,016	795	14	132	66	54	861
Ballard/Fremont/Wallingford/Greenwood	37	1,594	571	38	298	149	75	720
Delridge/West Seattle	31	1,320	333	86	614	307	117	640
Downtown/Eastlake	20	865	483	16	95	48	36	531
Northgate/Lake City	19	816	317	46	363	182	65	499
Queen Anne/Magnolia	20	1,130	427	10	95	48	30	475
Central Area	22	604	235	27	209	105	49	340
Capitol Hill/Madison Park	13	425	139	11	92	46	24	185
SEATTLE TOTAL	261	11,792	4,405	437	3,369	1,685	698	6,090

Source: Child Care Resources, 2011; BERK, 2011.

NOTE: This table does not include data or estimates for number of children in family, friend, and neighbor (FFN) care.

* Family Child Care homes may care for up to six children.

**Estimated that half of children at FCCs are 3-5 years old.

In the overall committee report, we think these are some important areas to mention:

- The report presents childcare as important for the employment of parents; we feel that it very important to stress the long term positive effects of high quality preschool, including but not limited to academic effects.
- The vast majority of services offered are for four year olds and to a lesser extent, to three year olds; birth to 3 is very underserved.
- CCR is a strong partner, reaching many communities with its Kaleidoscope Play and Learn programs. We should try to help them offer more of these programs, since these reach out to informal caregivers AND caregivers for children younger than 3. They have some evaluation data, but more would be better.
- Cost is a real barrier for access to high quality programs, and this is particularly true for birth to 3 programs
- Principal Greg Imel feels very positive about the success in transitioning to kindergarten from the preschool program actually at Bailey-Gatzert. He would like one or two more of these programs. The within school location helps both students and families to feel connected to the school. SPS ECE director Cashel Toner has said that this even one more classroom in the school is impossible.
- There does not seem to be much offered for self care for caregivers. The home child care women in the new Yesler development had very few options even for time off. Mindfulness training might be a good help.
- The possibility of a model preschool program should be discussed

Draft action items:

The research supporting the effectiveness of early childhood education as a part of improving the academic, social, and economic success of children has been clear since the 1970's. Money spent on high quality early childhood education is returned manifold through fewer grades repeated, lower rates of special education, higher rates of high school graduation, and many other factors. See Campbell et al. (2014), Lynch (2004) and Rolnick and Grunewald (2003)

The SUYI area is not well served by high quality early childhood education programs. The pattern of existing programs is heavily weighted towards four-year-old programs, with very little for birth to three year olds. Family childcare makes up a large portion of the services offered. In all of the existing programs, additional support in the form of greater ongoing caregiver education is needed.

The very strongest effort to increase the overall quality and availability of birth to five year old programs would include a new high quality demonstration program. Ideally, this would include services for infants, toddlers, and preschooler, and space for ongoing educational programs for staff and other providers in the catchment area. Of the preschool programs that the committee visited, the program that could be used as a model was the Hoa Mai Vietnamese Bilingual Preschool. There are several benefits that a demonstration program would provide. It would serve as a model of what high quality programs look like. It would serve the need voiced by outgoing Bailey Gatzert principal Greg Iman for additional preschool seats to feed into the schools' kindergarten classrooms. It would be a very visible and concrete example of the support of the SUYI to the community. It could provide employment, training, and experience for the residents of the area.

Another very clear area of need is greater availability of high quality programs for children from birth to age four. This could come about through increased capacities of existing programs along with training and coaching of staff, through new programs, and through support of agencies such as Child Care Resources, which is the largest provider of ongoing training for providers, especially family childcare providers, serving this age range.

Economic support to help families to be able to afford preschool programs. Part of the problem in this area is the variety of programs that can provide support, and the different requirements, forms, record keeping, and so on, that these agencies require. The majority of children under age four that are believed to be in a program in some form of family childcare. This means that the administrative work for qualifying families under the various programs that can fund these services falls on provider-owners with limited or nonexistent support staff..

Lastly, opportunities exist for increased numbers of Seattle University students and faculty to be involved. Some of these opportunities seem to call for increased participation of graduate programs at SU. The help needed to negotiate funding for preschools described in the paragraph above could be an opportunity for students from some area in Business or Nonprofit Leadership to be engaged as helpers. The College of Education could provide certificate level programs, perhaps as a mixed online and face to face format, in leadership in early childhood education. The ECE committee was very impressed by the healthcare services provided in the Bailey-Gatzert school building—what opportunities for helping with this are there for Nursing and the Counseling and School Psychology programs/

Bibliography

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