

## Preschool Makes a Difference (PMD) at a Glance

**Vision:** All kindergartners in Contra Costa County are prepared to learn and have improved potential for success.

**Mission:** Preschool Makes a Difference in Contra Costa County will provide access for all preschool age children to comprehensive, high-quality, developmentally appropriate early learning programs that meet the diverse needs of children and families.

### The Basics of PMD

- PMD will provide quality, voluntary preschool for 3- to 5-year-olds throughout Contra Costa County for three consecutive hours a day.
- Funding is not currently available. As resources are identified, PMD will launch a pilot and then expand in phases.
- PMD will be administered by a collaborative of First 5 Contra Costa, the Contra Costa Child Care Council, the Contra Costa County Office of Education and the Employment and Human Services Department, and overseen by an Advisory Committee composed of providers, parents, schools, higher education, and early learning professionals.
- All preschool programs (schools, public and private centers, and family child care) will be PMD-eligible if they meet selection criteria. Participating programs will value full and proactive inclusion of all children. Faith-based programs may participate as long as religious instruction is not part of the PMD-funded portion of the day.
- PMD will draw on existing resources in the early childhood education and K-12 education systems.
- Initial priority will be given to families with the greatest need including children who do not have access to quality preschool due to lack of subsidy funding or because they are low-income but do not qualify for subsidies.

### Workforce Development

- Workforce requirements are aligned with the Child Development Permit Matrix with ample time for advancing. Eventually all PMD teachers will have a bachelor's degree and 24 ECE units, and assistant teachers will have 24 ECE units and an associate's degree.
- Highly experienced preschool teachers may be grandfathered into the program in its first two years by meeting alternative requirements.  
*Please see the Workforce Requirements chart for a breakdown.*
- Programs will receive a fixed amount per child and will be encouraged to use these funds to improve their quality (e.g. increasing teacher salaries).
- A broad range of educational opportunities will be made available to current and future teachers, including classes at different times/days and in community-based locations, financial aid, and career planning assistance.

### Program Excellence

- PMD will address children's developmental, cognitive, and social-emotional needs.
- PMD curricula will reflect research-based, high-quality standards focusing on each child's needs and the importance of play.
- Classes may serve a maximum of 24 students with a 1:8 ratio and a minimum of two PMD-qualified adults (with some exemptions for family child care providers).
- Annual ECERS/FDCRS evaluations will ensure quality.
- Programs will be culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- PMD programs will be selected based on their institutional stability, program quality, the experience and education of teachers, and family-provider relationships.
- PMD will make a wide range of supports available to programs, providers, and families.