



Preschool Makes a Difference

Strategic Plan Highlights
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PREPARED FOR:

First 5 Contra Costa Children and Families Commission
Contra Costa County Office of Education
Contra Costa Child Care Council
Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services Department

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First 5 Contra Costa Children and Families Commission



Contra Costa County
Employment & Human Services

A Snapshot of Contra Costa County

FAMILIES IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

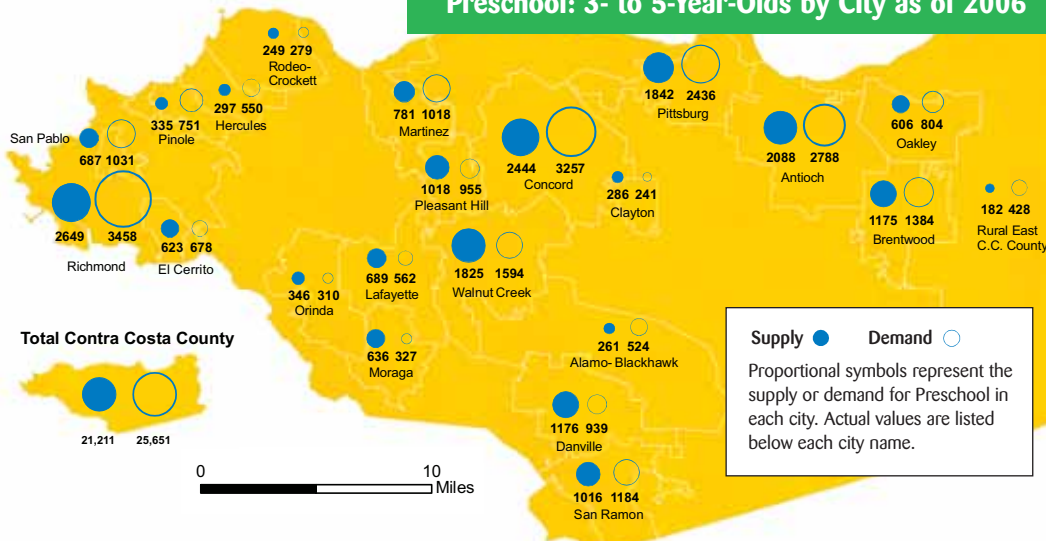
- In 2006, the county had just over a million residents, 7.7 percent of them children 0 to 5.
- The number of children 0 to 5 years old is expected to increase by 1.6 percent from 2006 to 2015.
- 10 percent of Contra Costa residents (and 11 percent of the county's children aged 0 to 18) live in poverty.
- The county is expected to see an increase in the ethnic diversity of its residents.
- Unsubsidized full-time licensed care for a preschooler in a child-care center costs well over \$8,000 a year.
- Nearly 1,000 3- to 5-year-olds eligible for preschool subsidies are on a waiting list because there is not enough state subsidy funding.
- Sixty-four out of 150 elementary schools are considered low performing based on state test scores.
- At the 64 low-performing schools, the percentage of kindergartners who are English Language Learners ranges from 2 percent to 31 percent, comprising 2,436 children. Of these, 88 percent speak Spanish.

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

- Contra Costa County currently has 1,647 child care facilities that provide 37,811 spaces for children 0 to 12.
- Of these, 21,211 spaces exist for 2- to 5-year-olds.
- Approximately 25,650 3- to 5-year olds need care, translating to a minimum projected gap of 4,400 spaces.



Child Care Supply and Estimated Demand for Preschool: 3- to 5-Year-Olds by City as of 2006




Existing Child Care Facilities and Spaces

Child Care Facilities	Spaces	
889 small family child care homes	7,112 spaces	(19%)
384 large family child care homes	5,376 spaces	(14%)
284 child care centers	18,520 spaces	(49%)
90 school age centers/programs	6,803 spaces	(18%)
1,647 total facilities	37,811 spaces	(21,211 for preschool)

Projected Preschool Demand

Children 3- to 5-years-old needing licensed care*			
Age	2006	2010	2015
3-year-olds	7,711	7,597	7,806
4-year-olds	10,075	10,129	10,408
5-year-olds	7,864	7,245	6,902
Total	25,650	24,971	25,116

*Demand is estimated as 60% of all 3- to 5-year-olds since not all parents will choose to place their children in preschool and some 5-year-olds will be in kindergarten.



Preschool Makes a Difference (PMD) is a strategic plan to provide high quality, voluntary preschool for all 3- to 5-year-olds in Contra Costa County.

Vision

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

Mission

To 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 Value of Universal Preschool

Numerous studies have shown that children benefit from preschool. Some of the benefits include

- improved reading and math scores.
- reduced need for special education.
- fewer grade retentions.
- higher high school graduation rates.
- a reduction of the number of documented crimes committed by juveniles.

Basic Facts About Preschool Makes a Difference

- PMD will provide quality, voluntary preschool for all 3- to 5-year-olds in Contra Costa County for a minimum of three consecutive hours a day.
- PMD will screen potential preschool programs to ensure high quality, and all preschool programs will be eligible to apply.
- PMD aims to serve all children; however, the initial priority will be to serve families with the greatest need, including communities with low-performing public schools and insufficient capacity in existing preschool programs, as well as families eligible for subsidies but unable to obtain them due to lack of funding.
- Programs will receive a fixed amount per child in addition to what they receive through subsidies or sliding scale-based parent fees and will be encouraged to use PMD funds to improve quality.
- 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 Contra Costa County Employment & Human Services Department, and overseen by an Advisory Committee composed of providers, parents, schools, higher education, and early learning professionals.
- PMD will draw on existing resources in the early childhood and K-12 education systems.

Funding is not currently available, but as new resources become available, PMD will launch a pilot program and expand in phases.

Preschool Makes a Difference Strategic Plan



PROGRAM EXCELLENCE

- PMD will address the developmental, cognitive, and social-emotional needs of preschool-aged children.
- PMD curricula will reflect research-based, high-quality standards focusing on each child's needs and the importance of play for early learning.
- PMD classes will serve a maximum of 24 students with a minimum of two PMD-qualified adults in each class and one adult for every eight children.
- Preschool programs that apply to offer PMD will be selected based on their institutional stability, program quality, responsiveness to family needs, and quality and experience of their teachers.
- Annual ECERS/FDCRS and Desired Results evaluations will ensure quality.
- Programs will be culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- PMD will make a wide range of supports available to programs, providers, and families.



ACCESSIBILITY AND AVAILABILITY

- Preschool provided by PMD will be available and accessible to any child in Contra Costa County in the two years before entering kindergarten (with occasional exceptions).
- Programs will be spread across all geographic areas, giving parents the opportunity to choose the best preschool for their child and family, based on space availability.
- PMD will be developed to serve the needs of working parents.
- Participating programs will be those that value full and proactive inclusion of all children, including children with special needs, and ensure continuity of integrated services.



PMD AND FAMILIES

- Programs will teach concepts in ways that are consistent with children's family practices and—whenever possible—by teachers with a similar cultural background, but the emphasis will be on preparing children to enter kindergarten.
- Program standards and learning goals will be accessible to all parents.
- Preschool standards/foundations will be translated into languages representing the diversity of families in the program.
- Preschools will actively solicit parents' input and involvement and will invite them to work in the classroom on a regular basis.
- PMD will provide educational opportunities for parents to learn about child development.

Program Elements

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 degree.
- Highly experienced preschool teachers may be grandfathered into the program in its first two years by meeting alternative requirements and completing three academic units annually.
- Programs will be encouraged to provide ongoing training opportunities for teachers, raise salaries, and provide benefits to ensure a well-trained and adequately compensated workforce.
- 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.



Preschool Makes a Difference Workforce Requirements Linked with the Child Development Permit Matrix

Contra Costa's Preschool Makes a Difference Requirements		Child Development (CD) Levels on the Permit Matrix
PMD Assistant Teacher LEVEL 1: Assistant Level Permit or higher PLUS 3 years experience in ECE (maximum 1 year at this stage)		CD Assistant Permit: 6 ECE/CD units OR HERO OR ROP
PMD Assistant Teacher LEVEL 2: Associate Teacher Level Permit or higher PLUS 3 years experience in ECE (maximum 7 years at this stage)		CD Associate Teacher Permit: 12 ECE/CD units OR Child Development Associate Credential in California
PMD Assistant Teacher LEVEL 3: Teacher Level Permit or higher (maximum 5 years at this stage)	PMD Teacher LEVEL 1: Teacher Level Permit or higher plus 5 years experience in ECE (maximum 5 years at this stage)	CD Teacher Permit: 24 ECE/CD + 16 GE units OR AA in ECE/CD +3 units supervised field experience
*PMD Assistant Teacher LEVEL 4 (goal): Teacher Level Permit or higher plus AA/AS degree	PMD Teacher LEVEL 2: Teacher Level Permit or higher PLUS AA or AS (maximum 5 years at this stage)	
PMD Director LEVEL 1: Master Teacher Level Permit or higher PLUS 5 years experience in ECE (maximum 5 years at this stage)	*PMD Teacher LEVEL 3 (goal): Master Teacher Level Permit or higher PLUS BA	CD Master Teacher Permit: 24 ECE/CD + 16 GE units + 6 specialization units + 2 adult supervision units OR BA with 12 ECE/CD units + 3 units supervised field experience
PMD Director LEVEL 2: Site Supervisor Level Permit or higher (maximum 5 years at this stage)	*PMD Director LEVEL 3 (goal): Site Supervisor Level Permit or higher PLUS BA degree	CD Site Supervisor Permit: AA + 24 ECE/CD + 16 GE units + 6 admin. units + 2 adult supervision units; various other options
*PMD Director LEVEL 3 (goal): Site Supervisor Level Permit or higher PLUS BA degree		CD Program Director Permit: BA + 24 ECE/CD units including 6 admin. units + 2 adult supervision units; various other options

*PMD will allow highly experienced teachers to be "grandfathered" into the highest level for each position if they meet alternative requirements based on experience and education. Individuals who become PMD teachers through these alternative requirements may stay in that position without having to pursue additional educational degrees. The alternative requirements are: Assistant PMD Teacher = Teacher Level via Option 1 on the Permit Matrix PLUS 5 years of experience PLUS earning an additional 3 academic units per year. PMD Teacher = Master Level via Option 1 on the Permit Matrix PLUS 10 years of experience PLUS earning an additional 3 academic units per year. PMD Director = Program Director Level via Option 1 on the Permit Matrix PLUS 10 years of experience PLUS earning an additional 3 academic units per year.

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- * Members of the Planning Team
- ◆ Members of the Refinement Committee
- ★ Individuals who served on both

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