



BLUEPRINT

FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE



PILLAR 1

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

GOAL

To significantly expand access to early childhood programming (for three and four year olds) to increase readiness for Kindergarten.

- Increase eligibility for free early childhood programs for three and four year olds. These additional publicly-funded programs will partner with private providers to increase access.
- Providing families with high-quality support for children in preparation for kindergarten. This includes services like the Judy Center and other birth-5 programs.
- Recruit and retain additional early childhood providers (both public and private) to support the needs of our community.

STATUS OF CURRENT WORK

Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs have been underway in Maryland—the Blueprint for Maryland's Future calls for the expansion of these programs to more children and families.

- Where are we now?
 - Full-Day Pre-K: For the 2024-2025 school year, Cecil County Public Schools will operate 31 Full-Day Pre-K programs across our 17 elementary schools. Last school year, new programs were opened at Calvert and Elk Neck Elementary using the PreK Expansion Grant. We are awaiting results from another round of grants to expand our PreK programs further.
 - Eligibility level: Families earning up to 300% of the Federal Poverty level are eligible for Pre-K, an increase from 185% last school year.
 - Why PreK?: Our Kindergarten Readiness Data demonstrates that students who engage in PreK are much better prepared for Kindergarten than their peers who do not.
 - Facilities: We have currently worked to identify spaces to accommodate additional PreK classrooms across our district. This involves creative thinking to consider the needs of our growing number of eligible students.
- Community effort
 - Private business providers: Maryland's Blueprint requires that we work to expand access to private provider programs. Currently, Cecil County has two private providers, Mount Aviat Academy and Trinity U.M.C. Preschool. This program has seats for 20 students.
 - Shared Professional Learning: All of our private providers have access to CCPS-sponsored professional learning activities.
- Judy Centers
 - Birth-5 Support: Cecil County has ten Judy Center locations that support families across their catchment areas. These services include school readiness programming, playgroups, parent education, and community support. We have applied for additional Judy Center locations to support our families further!
 - Classroom Supports: Through the Judy Center grants, our identified schools receive support from Early Education Specialists to support early childhood classrooms.

FOCUS OF FUTURE WORK

- During the 2024-2025 school year, we will work to expand enrollment in our PreK programs through Expansion Grant Funding.
- We continue to work to support students who are multilingual learners as well as students with disabilities.
- We will work to fund additional expansion seats through state and local funding sources.
- During the 2024-2025 school year, our Judy Centers will continue to serve ten locations and their catchment areas. We will apply for additional Judy Center grants to expand this programming.
- Support our Early Childhood Paraprofessionals in the Childhood Development Associate (CDA) certification program to support high-quality instruction for all students.
- We will continue to recruit Early Childhood Educators to support the growing number of early learners in our system.