



# **Early Learner Initiatives**

## **Update to the Board**

### **February 24, 2020**

Dr. Joshua Carpenter, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning  
Peggy Ondera, Director of Early Learner Initiatives

# Presentation Outcomes

- Share the current status of Early Learner programs
- Present the proposal to evaluate Early Learner programming in 2020-2021

# Essential Question

Given that research documents the importance of early learning education to future student success, what organizational structures and policies would best prepare U-46 early learners to be successful in school and in life?

# State Vision for Early Childhood

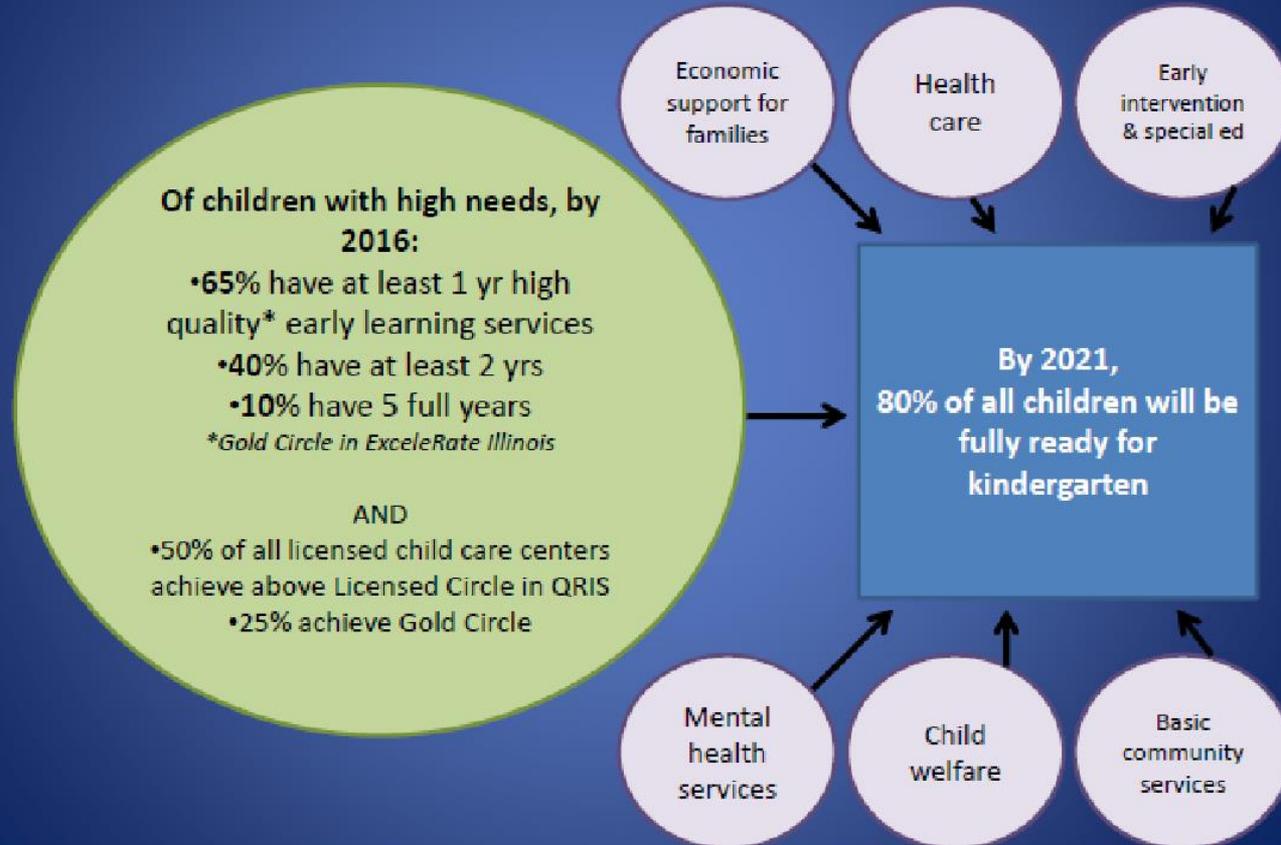
Every child healthy, safe, ready to succeed, and eager to learn, with a focus on closing the gap for vulnerable families.



**Illinois**  
State Board of  
Education



# Illinois Early Learning Priorities



# U-46 Goal

Preparing every child to be successful in Kindergarten



Help Me Get Ready For Kindergarten!  
It starts at birth.



¡Prepárame para el kinder!  
¡Empieza al nacer!



# U-46 Programs



## Parents As Teachers (PAT)

- Birth - 3 Home Visiting program funded by state Prevention Initiative Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG)
- Grant award of \$855,000 per year
- Funded to serve 150 children
- Located at the Early Education Station

# U-46 Programs

## Parents As Teachers (PAT)

- Staff:
  - 8 full time parent educators
  - 1 part time parent educator
  - 1 secretary
  - 1 supervisor
- Weekly or bi-monthly visits emphasizing child development, parent-child interactions, and parenting support
- Blue Ribbon Affiliate awarded 2020



# U-46 Programs

## Half Day Preschool

- Funded by state Preschool For All (PFA) Early Childhood Block Grant, federal IDEA grant and district funds
- State grant award of \$4,288,000 per year
- Classroom continuum of services for eligible 3 and 4 year olds

# U-46 Programs

## Half Day Preschool

Site locations

Hilltop (1)

Huff (2)

Illinois Park (20)

Independence (14)

Liberty (1)

Lincoln (2)

Ontarioville (2)

Sycamore Trails (3)



# U-46 Programs

## Preschool Expansion Grant



- Full day program for eligible 4 year olds
- 2 way transportation provided
- 10 classrooms, 2 sites
- Family engagement emphasis, 4 parent community liaisons
- State grant award of \$2,396,000 per year

# U-46 Programs

## Screening and Assessment

- 1,000 developmental screenings conducted per year to determine eligibility for programming or the need for further evaluation
- 600-700 Multi-Disciplinary Conferences to determine eligibility for Specialized Student Services
- 30 three-year-old children transitioning from Early Intervention services per month

# U-46 Programs

## Full Day Kindergarten

- Offered at all elementary schools
- Play-based learning model
- U46Engage
- Parent Promise



# U-46 Programs

## Give Me Five! Community Liaison

- Provide community outreach

Share the Give Me Five! message with area childcare and community organizations

Provide staff development to childcare workers

# Help me get ready for kindergarten!

It starts at birth.

**How can you help?**

## Talk

Tell me your stories; listen to mine.  
Sing songs and nursery rhymes.  
Talk about things we are doing.  
Teach me new words.  
Ask me 'how' and 'why' questions.

## Play

Build with me.  
Pretend with me.  
Make time for me to play with other kids.  
Be silly with me.  
Teach me the rules.

## Read

Read to me; listen to me "read" to you.  
Point out meaningful letters in my world:  
J is for Jack, D is for Donut.  
Point out the first letter in words and the sound it makes.

## Do

Take me to the library.  
Explore our community with me.  
Let me touch, taste and smell new things.  
Play games with me.

## Write

Use playdough with me.  
Draw pictures with me.  
Show me how to make letters.  
Write down what I say.  
Make lists with me.

## Benchmarks for Kindergarten

*Talks in complete sentences to describe an experience with details*

*Follows rules and routines in a group setting with some adult reminders*

*Names 40 upper or lower-case letters*

*Counts up to 10 objects*

*Draws pictures and/or makes letter-like shapes to convey a message*



For a free developmental screening call:  
(847) 888-5000  
x6094

[www.u-46.org/givemefive](http://www.u-46.org/givemefive)  
[Facebook.com/u46givemefive](https://www.facebook.com/u46givemefive)  
[Twitter.com/u46givemefive](https://twitter.com/u46givemefive)

# Community Collaborations



ACE – Alignment Collaborative for Education

EPEL – Elgin Partnership for Early Learning

GBPL – Gail Borden Public Library



# Outreach Projects with Collaboration Partners



- Getting Ready for Kindergarten calendar
- Language in the Laundromat
- While You Wait Book Baskets
- While You Wait Flip Books
- Summer Reading in the Parks
- Fit for Kids in Festival Park



# Proposal to Evaluate U-46 Early Learner Program

Aligns to the Chief Executive Officer's goals

To be conducted by the Kristie Kauerz and the National P-3 Center at the University of Colorado Denver

Timeline: March 2020 through May 2021

# Purpose of the Project

- Create an audit tool to understand the current status of district-level supports for early learning
- Conduct an inventory of district-managed early learning efforts
- Produce findings and recommendations that can strengthen early learning efforts

# Project Deliverables

## Phase 1

- Design a district-level audit tool using the *Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating P-3 Approaches*
- Revise tool based on feedback from superintendents, district leadership, and UIC

# Project Deliverables

## Phase 2

- Utilize the audit tool during at least one site visit with district cabinet members, administrators, and other stakeholders
- Review relevant district documents
- Produce an 8-10 summary report of strengths, inconsistencies, and potential edges of growth for the early learners program

# Cost

The total cost, not to exceed \$50,000, will be shared equally between U-46 and the National P-3 Center.

U-46 cost not to exceed \$24,999