



Preschool Promise, Inc.
Provider Handbook

2021-22 School Year
Rev. 1/19/2021

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Section 1: About Preschool Promise, Inc.

Preschool Promise Vision

Thank you for joining Preschool Promise! Preschool Promise, Inc., was launched in 2016, thanks to dedicated public funding from the City of Dayton and Montgomery County. We thank the City of Dayton Mayor, City of Dayton Commissioners, and Montgomery County Commissioners for their leadership and commitment to early childhood education.

Our community, families and especially young learners are immensely appreciative of your taking part in this exciting initiative. Your commitment and professionalism are critical to ensuring our children's success — first in school and, ultimately, as adults.

The goal of Preschool Promise is to ensure that every child enters Kindergarten fully ready to learn. Because all children benefit from attending Preschool, we are on a path to promising every child in our community the opportunity to attend at least one year of affordable, high quality Preschool. To fulfill that promise, the City of Dayton and Montgomery County, as well as private funders, are investing in the Preschool Promise.

Preschool Promise's three strategic focus areas are:

1. Engaging families in Preschool and early learning
2. Improving the quality of Preschools and early learning
3. Ensuring racial equity

Preschool Promise Leadership

Preschool Promise, Inc., is led by a Board of Directors appointed by the City of Dayton and Montgomery County. The Board oversees the initiative and ensures public accountability. Information about board members, board meeting dates, and meeting minutes are at [PreschoolPromise.org](https://www.preschoolpromise.org). All meetings are open to the public.

Who Can Be a Preschool Promise Provider?

Though we are dedicated to expanding Preschool Promise as we secure additional funding, Preschool Promise currently is open to licensed child care and Preschool providers that have earned a **2-Star Rating or higher** located in:

- City of Dayton/Dayton Public Schools District boundaries
- Jefferson Twp. School District boundaries
- Kettering City School District boundaries (which includes a small portion of the City of Moraine)
- Mad River School District boundaries
- Northridge School District boundaries
- Trotwood -Madison School District boundaries

- West Carrollton School District boundaries

Families who reside in the City of Dayton may also receive Tuition Assistance at providers outside the boundaries listed above; please see the details described in the Tuition Assistance Section in this document.

Provider applications, which can be completed online at [PreschoolPromise.org](https://www.PreschoolPromise.org), must be submitted by **February 14, 2021**. Preschool Promise providers must serve a minimum number of children.

Center-Based Programs: Center-based providers must enroll at least three children in Preschool Promise by October 1, 2021, to be eligible for Preschool Promise benefits.

Family Child Care (Type A&B): Family child care programs must enroll at least one child in Preschool Promise by October 1, 2021, to be eligible for Preschool Promise benefits.

Our Commitment to Equity

We are committed to promoting equity in all facets of Preschool Promise, with the goal of ensuring that **all** children, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, abilities or socioeconomic status, are fully ready to learn when they start Kindergarten. Providers that join Preschool Promise also must be committed to ensuring all children are provided with the resources and education needed to reach their potential.

Our strategies to promote equity include:

- Ensuring our team and all Preschool Promise Coaches are trained on implicit bias and how those biases limit children's success and can create an unhealthy classroom culture.
- Providing culturally responsive teacher training to Preschool Promise program administrators and classroom teachers.
- Consulting experts to craft policies and procedures that do not, even inadvertently, put Preschool Promise children and their families at a disadvantage or negatively impact Preschool programs.
- Consistently reviewing data on student achievement and learning — broken down by race, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic status — to ensure that our decisions and practices are benefiting all children.

Preschool Promise's Non-Discrimination Policy

Preschool Promise, Inc., and its participating providers, vendors and subcontractors shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, national origin, military status, place of birth, age, marital status or disability. This policy applies to actions involving employees, applicants for employment, subcontractors and vendors, as well families and children receiving or hoping to receive Preschool Promise services. Preschool Promise is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all families, children and staff.

By participating in Preschool Promise, you agree to comply with this policy.

Section 2: Provider Benefits & Quality Improvement

How do providers benefit from Preschool Promise?

Preschool Promise's goal is to ensure that more children are fully ready for Kindergarten by dramatically increasing the percentage of children attending high quality Preschool.

Our goal can't be met if we don't support high quality Preschools and ensure that providers have sufficient resources to offer the education that young children need and deserve. Preschool Promise provides valuable training and resources to help Preschools continuously improve.

Programs that join Preschool Promise receive training and coaching and free professional development, as well as access to funding to purchase necessary resources like strong curriculum. As important, families at participating providers can receive Tuition Assistance, books-of-the-month, Play Boxes, and other free resources to help them prepare their children for Kindergarten.

To encourage families to choose a high quality Preschool, families must enroll their child in a program that is **Star-Rated under Ohio's Step Up to Quality initiative** to be eligible to receive Preschool Promise tuition assistance.

Joining Preschool Promise has other benefits:

- You will receive free marketing on the Preschool Promise website and social media channels, in promotional materials and at community events.
- In addition to opportunities for individualized training, you and your staff may participate in workshops and Professional Learning Communities on quality curriculum, Conscious Discipline and more.
- Your teachers may be eligible to participate in the Promise Stipend program if they remain employed in the same program for the full school year and meet other requirements, such as using our Books-of-the-Month in their classrooms.
- You'll get help to increase and maintain your Star Rating.
- You'll be able to tap funding to support a Continuous Improvement Plan.
- You will receive free Preschool Promise signage for your center along with Preschool Promise t-shirts for your staff.

Getting Star-Rated

In pursuit of the goal that all Montgomery County children are fully ready to learn when they begin Kindergarten, Preschool Promise is dedicated to ensuring that participating programs have the necessary resources and knowledge to provide quality programming. With that commitment in mind, Preschool Promise requires programs to join Ohio's *Step Up to Quality* rating system and to increase their Star Rating over time.

However, Preschool Promise's commitment to promoting quality goes beyond adhering to the Star-Rating system. Working side by-side with participating Preschools, we encourage adoption of early childhood education best practices. To that end, programs must pursue a continuous improvement mindset and meet essential standards of a high quality Preschool.

These standards include:

1. Implementing a comprehensive curriculum to fidelity
2. Engaging families in systematic and intentional ways
3. Implementing an effective social-emotional framework (such as Conscious Discipline)
4. Embracing policies and practices that reduce achievement gaps and ensure equity
5. Empowering children to develop the critical thinking, technological and self-regulation skills (executive function skills) that are essential to succeeding in the workplace

In recognition that fairness, accountability and transparency are critical to Preschool Promise's success, requirements have been developed with substantial input from program providers.

STAR-RATING REQUIREMENTS

Ohio has mandated that by 2025, Preschools must have at least a 3-Star distinction to receive state funding, including Publicly Funded Child Care assistance or ECE funding. In order to support Preschools' continuous improvement and to ensure programs will be eligible to serve high-need families, Preschool Promise programs must commit to earning at least a 3-Star Rating according to the timeline below. Preschools that do not meet the Star-Rating requirements may request coaching to earn Star-Rating distinctions through our "Starbound" program. This service is available to Preschool sites that are not eligible to join Preschool Promise because they have not earned the requisite Star Rating, and also to programs that are located in a geographic area outside of Preschool Promise's current service area. "Starbound" is facilitated by 4C for Children in partnership with Preschool Promise.

To Apply for the School Year	Participating Preschools will ...
2021-22	Hold a 2-Star or higher Rating by February 14, 2021
2022-23	Hold a 3-Star or higher Rating by February 14, 2022

Section 3: Becoming a Preschool Promise Provider

How do providers apply?

Providers interested in joining the 2021-22 Preschool Promise must submit their application to Preschool Promise, Inc., **by March 1, 2021**. Upon approval, providers will be required to sign a Provider Agreement outlining all requirements.

The following documents must be included with your application:

1. Copy of your current ODJFS or ODE license. If changes in licensing occur (new building, change in capacity, etc.), a copy of the new license must be provided to Preschool Promise within 30 days of receipt.
2. Copy of your current *Step Up to Quality* Rating Certificate.
3. Proof of General Liability Insurance with limits of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 annual aggregate.
 - This proof of insurance MUST name Preschool Promise, Inc., and any other parties reasonably designated in writing by Preschool Promise, Inc., as additional insured.
 - This insurance MUST include coverage for sexual abuse and molestation.
4. Proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance as required by the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation – or Waiver of Workers' Compensation Insurance if not required.
5. Proof of Automobile Insurance (if automobiles are used in the usual course of business) – or Automobile Insurance Waiver if your program DOES NOT transport children.
6. Tuition rates for the Preschool program in the center, including sliding fee scales, scholarships offered, etc.

All programs are required to carry the following types and limits of insurance throughout the course of their agreement with Preschool Promise, Inc.:

- Commercial general liability insurance with limits of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2,000,000 annual aggregate. The policy shall include coverage for claims of sexual abuse and molestation. Preschool Promise, Inc., (including its directors, officers, and employees) and other parties reasonably designated in writing by Preschool Promise, Inc., shall be listed as an additional insured for liabilities caused in whole or in part by the acts and omissions of a provider.
- Commercial automobile insurance if automobiles are used by a provider in its usual course of business, with a combined single limit of at least \$1,000,000 or an Automobile Insurance Waiver if your program DOES NOT transport children.
- Workers' Compensation Insurance as required by the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation.
- Certificates of insurance reflecting compliance must be provided to Preschool Promise, Inc., and shall be replaced within ten (10) business days PRIOR TO renewal of the required policies.

- To the extent permitted by law, providers agree to defend, indemnify and hold Preschool Promise, Inc., (including its directors, officers, and employees) harmless from and against all claims, damages, liabilities, injuries, losses, costs and expenses (including but not limited to attorneys' fees) arising out of or relating to their participation in the program.

What records do providers need to keep and report?

To ensure accountability and transparency, Preschool Promise is committed to evaluation of the initiative and its impact. With that goal in mind, providers must:

- Maintain for 3 years all records relating to their Preschool Promise services. Examples of such records include daily attendance records, payment records and all student records.
- Provide Preschool Promise partners information and data regarding their program and their students for purposes of evaluating the impact of quality improvements and the progress of students.
- Permit Preschool Promise and its partners to share with relevant parties (such as funders, governmental bodies, policy makers, etc.), information about their program and aggregate data about students, including evaluations, ratings and quality improvement metrics.
- Permit Preschool Promise (and its partners) to post your program's Star Rating and contact information on relevant websites.
- Provide Preschool Promise and its partners access to students' Preschool assessment scores, school attendance, K-3 reading intervention/special needs participation, and any other state standardized achievement assessment scores now and in the future, and to permit representatives of the Preschool Promise team to observe the program and students. (Preschool Promise will be responsible for getting appropriate consent from families.)

While it is important to demonstrate the value and impact of Preschool Promise to funders and the public, the confidentiality of families and children always will be protected, and appropriate protocols will be followed.

How will programs be monitored?

To ensure accountability and transparency, and to be good financial stewards of our public and private funding, Preschool Promise may conduct both scheduled and unannounced monitoring visits. Providers may be required to show records related to quality, attendance and funding (explaining how funds from Preschool Promise have been spent), and that they are abiding by the Preschool Promise agreement. If records are unavailable, providers will be expected to provide them within ten (10) days. Visits may be conducted by the Preschool Promise staff or a designated representative of Preschool Promise.

If a program is not meeting milestones to increase or maintain a Star Rating (based on its Continuous Improvement Plan and feedback from its Preschool Promise Coach), Preschool Promise will review the provider's progress and may decide to terminate the provider's assistance and contract.

If a provider is at risk of losing its Star Rating, receives a rating suspension or is found to be in serious risk of non-compliance, it must notify the Preschool Promise Director of Operations within 30 days. If a provider

has a serious risk of non-compliance or experiences a loss of, or decrease in, its Star Rating due to a situation where children are endangered, Preschool Promise may immediately cancel the provider agreement.

If a provider experiences a loss of, or decrease in, its Star Rating due to failure to report child abuse or neglect, the provider will not be awarded a Quality Stipend and other loss of benefits may occur based on the situation. If Quality Stipend funds have already been spent, the balance of the program's remaining stipend will be forfeited.

Other benefits that may be forfeited include, but are not limited to, the opportunity for staff to participate in Professional Learning Communities (including receiving stipends) and core trainings, and the loss of the program's Preschool Promise Coach.

In most cases, families at the program who have already been approved to receive Tuition Assistance will have that commitment honored.

How will Preschool Promise help programs improve?

Preschool Promise will provide extensive learning opportunities, in addition to professional development that meets the needs of participating programs. Below are descriptions of some of those opportunities.

In order to best support all Preschool Promise programs, all Preschool Promise teachers and administrators at a site will be required to attend a Kick-off Session during July or August 2021. (It is not sufficient to send one staff person per site or organization.) Please note and hold the dates listed at the back of this handbook in the "Important Dates to Remember" on your team's calendar. Miami Valley Child Development Centers and public school Preschools' Kick-off Sessions will be held at separate times during the workday.

COACHING

Preschool Promise will provide free personalized coaching to Preschool teachers and administrators who participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). To get the most from the PLC experience, administrators and teachers must be committed to making time for coaching. Participants in PLCs will receive up to two visits (which may be done virtually using the SWIVL robot) per month from a PLC Coach and must participate in one debriefing session per month. During this debriefing, the participant is not to supervise children. Additionally, administrators will meet with a Preschool Promise Coach for a minimum of once per month to receive updates on the Continuous Improvement Plans of their staff. All debriefing sessions may be held virtually using Zoom.

If a program does not meet the coaching criteria or fails to participate in administrator debriefings, Preschool Promise will review the circumstances and may discontinue coaching and terminate the program's participation in the PLC. After the first missed session, Coaches will document the cause, date, and time of the missed session. After the second missed session, Coaches will document the cause, date, and time of the missed session and also will notify the Preschool Promise Director of Quality. The Director of Quality will determine if any action should be taken.

ADMINISTRATIVE COACHING

Administrative coaching for 2-Star and 3-Star programs will be provided by the Preschool Promise *Step Up to Quality* Coach. The purpose of this coaching is to help administrators plan for maintaining and/or

increasing the program's Star Rating. Administrators must meet at least once per month with the program's administrative Coach. An initial introductory meeting will be set by the administrative coach. In this conversation, program administrators will learn about coaching opportunities and receive their *Step Up to Quality* binder. If a program fails or refuses to meet with their *Step Up to Quality* Coach, the program may lose its Quality Stipend and future coaching.

Administrators must contact their *Step Up to Quality* Coach about licensing visits via email. If a program accumulates 10 or more points in any area of licensing, an administrator may be required to attend Preschool Promise's administrative workshops or participate in additional Preschool Promise Administrative Coaching. If a program fails or refuses to attend the professional development or coaching sessions, the program may lose its Quality Stipend and future coaching.

4-STAR AND 5-STAR COACHING

4-Star and 5-Star programs may request help to improve their quality. This help could include guidance on implementing quality curriculum, improving family engagement, targeting students' social and emotional needs or coaching advice on improving classroom environments. If these programs believe their staff would benefit from Preschool Promise Coaches, they may use their Quality Dollars (at the rate of \$50 per hour) for this purpose. (Quality Dollars are provided to assist programs with their Continuous Improvement Plan. See the "Quality Dollars Table" in the Appendix.)

GENERAL CLASSROOM COACHING

Any program interested in having general classroom coaching may purchase coaching using their Quality Dollars at the rate of \$50 per hour. Depending on availability, a Preschool Promise Coach will be assigned to your program. General Classroom Coaching is designed to support your teachers who are not participating in PLCs.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Preschool Promise teachers and administrators participating in PLCs will have a Preschool Promise Coach who will collaborate with the participants to develop a Continuous Improvement Plan based on the goals stemming from their PLC. If teachers or administrators continuously fail to meet the goals set in their Continuous Improvement Plan, they may lose their Quality Stipend at the discretion of the Preschool Promise Director of Quality.

Each 2-Star and 3-Star Preschool Promise provider will have a Preschool Promise Administrative Coach, who will collaborate with the program administrator to develop an Action Plan. That plan will focus on improving Kindergarten readiness for all students in Preschool classrooms. Specific milestones will be created, and the Coach will assist with and monitor progress. If programs continuously fail to meet the goals set in their Continuous Improvement Plan, they may lose their Quality Stipend at the discretion of the Preschool Promise Director of Quality.

Ohio Department of Education Preschool sites, as well as 4-Star and 5-Star programs, will submit their Preschool Promise Continuous Improvement Plans to the Preschool Promise Training and Support Specialist at Barbara.elrod@preschoolpromise.org by August 1, 2021. This form should be submitted prior to making requests for Quality Stipend funds. Teachers working in 4-Star and 5-Star programs will create a classroom Continuous Improvement Plan with their Preschool Promise Coach if they are involved in a Professional Learning Community.

Coaching may be conducted virtually using recording devices and other technology. Preschool Promise will work with coaches and programs to determine the best method of coaching for each provider. The method of coaching may change throughout the 2021-2022 school year, given guidance and best practices from health professionals.

QUALITY DOLLARS

Preschool Promise is committed to supporting ongoing quality improvement at every participating site. Quality Dollars will be offered to each participating program per the Quality Dollars Table in the Appendix.

The Preschool Promise Director of Quality and/or Coaches will help programs prioritize the use of Quality Dollars. Funds will be awarded based on input from a program's Preschool Promise Coach with a focus on improving Kindergarten readiness. Preschool Promise is focused on closing achievement gaps, ensuring equitable practices, creating boy-friendly environments, implementing Conscious Discipline and actively interacting with families. Quality Dollars should be used to further these initiatives.

Acceptable uses for Quality Dollars include:

- Purchase of curriculum and assessment materials
- Coaching/training related to improving Kindergarten readiness
- Investments in teachers by assisting with benefits, salary increases
- Providing substitutes so teachers can attend training and receive coaching
- Purchase of technology needed to implement improved instruction
- Acquiring equity/culturally relevant materials and training
- Purchase of Conscious Discipline materials to implement rituals
- Professional development for staff
- Creating boy-friendly classrooms
- Other uses as discussed with the Director of Quality

Important Dates for Quality Dollars Calculations:

- Quality Dollars annual funding will be calculated based on the Star Rating the program holds as of **February 14, 2021**.
- Quality dollar per-child amounts will be calculated based on the number of children enrolled in Preschool Promise classrooms (with completed applications) as of October 1, 2021.

GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY DOLLARS

Quality Dollars must be used to improve programming only at Preschool Promise sites. Organizations that have multiple sites may not use Preschool Promise funds to cover teacher and classroom/facility costs at non-Preschool Promise sites. While we understand the importance of all sites benefiting from quality improvement efforts, our funders require their support be spent at Preschool Promise sites.

Quality Dollars should be used during the school year that they are awarded. Quality funds that are not spent by July 1 of each school year will be forfeited. Requests for Quality Dollars may be made any time between August 1 and July 1. Providers may spend down their base funding prior to October 1 and then spend their per-child allocation after that funding is finalized in October.

Here's how to request Quality Dollars:

- 2-Star and 3-Star site administrators must request funds through their Preschool Promise Administrative Coach. This ensures alignment with their Continuous Improvement Plan and the strategies that were adopted with support from their Coach. Please allow 3 weeks to receive payment. 4-Star and 5-Star sites must request funds by using the Request for Funds form on the Preschool Promise website. Please allow 3 weeks to receive payment. The form is available at PreschoolPromise.org/forproviders. Providers' Preschool Promise Continuous Improvement Plans must be turned in to barbara.elrod@preschoolpromise.org prior to a request being fulfilled.
- All participants in Professional Learning Communities must request funds through their Preschool Promise Coach. The request must be approved by the site's administrator.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Teachers and administrators are strongly encouraged to participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Preschool Promise teachers and administrators may select a Professional Development track for the upcoming year. The PLC schedule will be shared at the Preschool Promise Kick-off meetings. Most PLCs will be Ohio Approved and meet once a month.

PLCs will be focused around:

- Foundational Curriculum Planning and Comprehensive Implementation of Curriculum
- Conscious Discipline Implementation and Fostering Social and Emotional Development in the Classroom
- Equity and Implicit Bias Awareness
- Closing the Achievement Gap for African-American Boys

Participants are expected to attend each meeting of their PLC. If a participant is unable to attend two (2) or more monthly meetings, Preschool Promise will review the participant's progress and determine if the participant should continue in the PLC. Participants who successfully complete the PLCs will be eligible to receive a stipend. To receive a stipend, participants must submit a completed W-9 form. Preschool Promise will not withhold income taxes from the stipend and will send participants who receive more than \$600 a 1099-MISC at the end of the year for tax reporting purposes.

Each Preschool Promise teacher or administrator may participate in just one PLC at a time.

Professional Learning Communities may be conducted virtually. Preschool Promise will work with PLC facilitators to determine the best method of holding Professional Learning Communities for the 2021-2022 school year. The method of facilitation may change throughout the year, given guidance and best practices from health professionals.

ASSESSMENTS

All providers, regardless of their Star Rating, must agree to both a pre- and post-CLASS® assessment for their Preschool Promise classrooms. The pre-assessments will take place during the first 3 months of the service period for new teachers, with post-assessments completed in the last 3 months of the service period. If the CLASS® is already conducted by a reliable outside assessor, those scores may be submitted to Preschool Promise, with appropriate consents from the organizations.

With the consent of parents or guardians, independent assessors will collect data about participating programs' students. This data could include, but is not limited to, the Woodcock-Johnson, an Executive Function assessment such as the Minnesota Executive Function Scale, and Conscious Discipline Rubric (regardless of your participation in a Conscious Discipline PLC). Assessment results will be shared at the program level, with no individual child data being released. Program-level data can be shared with families, but families will not receive data on their child's assessments. The purpose of the data collection is to provide Preschool Promise initiative-wide data to inform strategies for improvement; therefore, Preschool Promise is not able to provide child-level data for each classroom or site.

All children/families enrolled in Preschool Promise classrooms that are receiving Quality Dollars will be asked to sign a consent for the Woodcock-Johnson and the Minnesota Executive Function Scale assessment, even if these children/families are not receiving Tuition Assistance.

CLASS® Assessments and Conscious Discipline Rubrics may be conducted virtually using recording devices and other technology. The method of these assessments may change throughout the 2021-2022 school year, given guidance and best practices from health professionals

How programs serve as ambassadors for Preschool Promise

Preschool Promise is dedicated to ensuring that families and the community know about opportunities to enroll children in quality Preschools. Preschool Promise providers are critical to our achieving this goal.

Partner Preschools commit to the following to assist in marketing and recruitment:

- Display appropriate signage on the program's grounds and in classrooms for the entire school year
- Attend events hosted by Preschool Promise
- Invite Preschool Promise to attend its family events
- Share Preschool Promise communications with all program staff and families
- Distribute marketing materials to families and staff
- Invite Preschool Promise to present program updates at an all-staff meeting
- Follow Preschool Promise on relevant social media platforms
- Encourage families to participate in Preschool Promise family engagement opportunities

Preschool Promise sites are required to display signage (provided by Preschool Promise) so that the community recognizes the site as a participating partner. If Preschool Promise learns that a site does not have appropriate signage, we will reach out to address the concern. The site is required to show evidence that a sign has been installed/mounted within seven (7) days of the inquiry. If no action is taken within seven (7) days, Preschool Promise will freeze the site's Quality Dollars until the issue has been addressed.

If signage becomes damaged or worn, please notify Preschool Promise immediately, so that we can replace your signage. If the signage options offered by Preschool Promise are not suitable at your location, please contact the Alma Long, Marketing and Events Specialist at alma.long@preschoolpromise.org and request a different type of sign.

All signage is Preschool Promise property. If for any reason a program is no longer a partner, Preschool Promise will remove all signage. If a program is not renewing their partnership for the following school year, signage will be removed by Preschool Promise. (Please do not remove or dispose of signage.) Any intentional damage done to Preschool Promise signs may result in the program being billed for the value of Preschool Promise property.

Section 4: Tuition Assistance

Who is eligible to receive Tuition Assistance?

The **2021-22 Preschool Promise** is open to all Montgomery County families with 4-year-olds, regardless of the family's income, provided they enroll their child in a participating Preschool Promise program. Tuition Assistance will be awarded based on 5 factors:

- Household size
- Family income
- The Star Rating of the Preschool the family chooses
- Full or part-time attendance
- Financial assistance already available from federal, state or local funds

To participate in Preschool Promise, a child must turn 4 by September 30, 2021 (which qualifies him/her to enter Kindergarten in the 2022-23 school year) and reside in Montgomery County.

Household size includes the parents (guardian) and/or the parent's (guardian's) spouse (stepmother or stepfather) and **children** under 18 living in the same home of the 4-year-old child on the application.

Preschool Promise will collect information related to income from the parent(s)/guardian(s) (and parent/guardian spouse if applicable) if needed for Tuition Assistance eligibility verification.

POLICIES REGARDING 5-YEAR-OLDS

Preschool Promise provides benefits and services for children the year before Kindergarten and for one year only. A 5-year-old may be eligible to join Preschool Promise under special circumstances.

For example:

- A 5-year-old who is on an IEP/504 plan will be approved. If the child has already benefited from Preschool Promise during the previous year, this child will be approved for a second year. A child on an IEP/504 plan for a second year will receive the same Preschool Promise benefits that he/she received in their first year. Benefits include STAR Attendance incentives, Books-of-the-Month, monthly postcards and a birthday card.
- A 5-year-old who is NOT Kindergarten eligible (based on the district of the child's residency's Kindergarten cut-off date) and who has NOT already benefited from Preschool Promise will be approved.
- A 5-year-old who is Kindergarten eligible (based on the district of the child's residency's Kindergarten cut-off date) and who has NOT already benefited from Preschool Promise will need a waiver submitted by a medical or education professional (the child's pediatrician, developmental psychologist or child's current Preschool teacher) indicating why the child would benefit from an additional year of Preschool. Determination will be made on a case by case basis.
- A 5-year-old who is Kindergarten eligible (based on the district of the child's residency's Kindergarten cut-off date) and who HAS benefited from Preschool Promise in the previous year will not be approved.

Families who are residents of the City of Dayton may apply for Tuition Assistance and use Preschool Promise Tuition Assistance at a program located outside of the City limits, provided the program has earned at least a 2-Star distinction. However, the chosen program must sign the Preschool Promise Payment Agreement and agree to submit monthly attendance records to Preschool Promise to ensure accurate payment. If the chosen provider is not willing to do these things, the family will not receive Preschool Promise Tuition Assistance at this particular program. Preschool Promise will provide the family a list of participating Preschool Promise providers where Tuition Assistance is available.

The deadline to apply for Tuition Assistance is September 1, 2021. This deadline may be extended if Tuition Assistance funds required for payments for the duration of the school year are not committed by this date.

Important Note: Tuition Assistance funds are limited. Awards will be made on a first-come-first-served basis. If a family applies for this help but Tuition Assistance funding has been exhausted, the family will be placed on a waiting list.

Tuition Assistance will begin August 1, 2021, or based upon the date of approval if that occurs after August 1, 2021. (***See the Tuition Assistance Section for prorated payment policies.***) Assistance will end on July 31, 2022, or on the child's last day of enrollment if that occurs before July 31, 2022.

How do families join Preschool Promise?

Parents/Guardians may apply to join **Preschool Promise** by:

- Applying online at PreschoolPromise.org/apply and uploading documents electronically.
- Submitting all supporting documentation by:
 - Text — (937) 414-8042
 - Email — applications@preschoolpromise.org
 - Mail — 2251 Timber Lane, Dayton, OH 45414
- Calling Preschool Promise at (937) 751-4390 and working with the Attendance and Enrollment Specialist to complete an application.

The following documents are needed for a family's application to be complete:

1. Copy of the child's birth certificate or other proof of date of birth (Passport, Visa). Preschool Promise can assist families in ordering birth certificates at no charge to the family.
2. Copy of proof of residency (utility bill, lease agreement, mortgage bill, residency affidavit.)
3. Copy of the family's most recent tax return (Form 1040) or 3 current and consecutive pay stubs (whichever most accurately reflects household income).
4. Copy of current custody status documents if the guardian is not the biological mother or father.

**The legal guardian/parent of the child must complete the application. Providers MAY NOT complete the application for families.*

Once a completed application is processed, the family will receive a letter stating the amount of Tuition Assistance they will receive and that will be paid directly to their Preschool. If a family already is enrolled in a program, this letter will be used to verify the amount of Tuition Assistance, in accordance with the program's Star Rating. If a family is not currently enrolled in a program, this letter will indicate the amount of Tuition Assistance the family will receive, depending on the Star Rating of the program the family chooses.

If a family does not choose a site and enroll within 30 days after the approval letter has been mailed, Preschool Promise will release their Tuition Assistance funds. If after 30 days a family chooses a site and enrolls and Tuition Assistance funding is still available, Preschool Promise will award the funds.

Families and the site chosen by the family will receive the Tuition Assistance notification within 30 days if all required documentation is included in the application. Missing documentation and completing multiple applications will delay processing.

If a parent is eligible for government-provided childcare assistance (such as Publicly Funded Child Care), the parent will be required to apply for that help *in conjunction with* Preschool Promise financial assistance. Families will be offered help in applying for any applicable public assistance.

Programs are required to inform Preschool Promise if a 4-year-old in their program is requesting

Preschool Promise Tuition Assistance and also is receiving Early Childhood Education Expansion funding or other site-based scholarships. If Preschool Promise reaches out to the program inquiring about the funding status for a particular child, the program must respond within 2 business days.

If a provider cannot accommodate a family who would like to be part of Preschool Promise, the provider will refer the family to the Preschool Promise Attendance and Enrollment Specialist for assistance. If Preschool Promise is unable to help the family find a Preschool, Preschool Promise will refer the family to 4C for Children, the state-designated resource and referral organization.

Families who receive public assistance for child care (Publicly Funded Child Care) will be asked to sign a "Release of Information" that will allow Preschool Promise to access that family's information in the Montgomery County Publicly Funded Child Care databases.

The information includes:

1. Child's date of birth
2. Household size
3. Household income
4. Residency
5. Child care Authorization stating weekly co-payment

This information will allow Preschool Promise to determine if the family is eligible for Tuition Assistance to offset the family's required co-pay.

In the rare situation when a family appears to qualify for public child care assistance but is not able to participate in those options, the parent may ask for special consideration as outlined below.

What about families with exceptional circumstances?

A family may ask for special consideration if they feel their child has exceptional circumstances and that he or she would benefit from participating in Preschool Promise.

VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Children and families who are deemed to be most vulnerable (emergency custody, kinship care, children with open Child and Protective Service cases, children in the care of Child and Protective Services and homeless families) may be considered for special Tuition Assistance.

KINSHIP CARE

Families who have children in kinship care may apply for Tuition Assistance and should also apply for the Kinship Care Credit through the Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services. The family will be placed on Tier B of the Tuition Assistance table, regardless of income. These cases may also be handled on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the needs of the family.

FOSTER CARE

Families who enroll foster children in Preschool Promise and who wish to apply for Tuition Assistance will automatically be placed on Tier B of the Tuition Assistance table with the proper custody documentation submitted, regardless of income.

Preschool Promise will make the final decision regarding any exceptional circumstances and Tuition Assistance.

What are Preschool Promise attendance requirements?

Preschool Promise intends to implement and require this attendance policy for the 2021-2022 school year. However, given the unforeseen circumstances due to COVID-19, policies may change.

Children receiving Tuition Assistance should be encouraged and expected to attend Preschool without fail. Children's school-attendance habits form early, and it's important that strong attendance start in Preschool.

The attendance goal for Preschool Promise young learners is 90% or better. Providers should share this goal with families and children, and work with them if they're falling short. There can be no misunderstanding about the need to attend school and the consequences for repeated absences.

(The Preschool Promise approval letter states: "As a parent of a child in Preschool Promise, I agree to bring my child to school every day. My child will arrive on time and attend Preschool each and every day unless he or she is ill. I understand that if my child attends less than 60% of his or her scheduled service for two months, not necessarily consecutively, I will no longer be eligible for Tuition Assistance.")

If a child attends fewer than 60% of his or her scheduled days per month, both the family and the provider will receive a letter stating that the child is on an "Attendance Inquiry" list. If a child misses more than 60% of his or her scheduled days a second month (not necessarily consecutively), the family will lose all future Tuition Assistance after the second month of 60% or less attendance.

Preschool Promise understands that families enjoy spending time together and that families may decide to take vacations or stay home during certain times of the year. Providers may document the reason for a child's absence in their monthly attendance spreadsheet so that Preschool Promise can take the reason for a child's absences into consideration before sending an "Attendance Inquiry" letter.

A provider may choose to continue to enroll a child whose family has lost their Tuition Assistance with the family paying the full cost.

Children receiving Publicly Funded Child Care must attend daily, based on their approved hours of care. Programs should continue to track the 10 days of allowed absences per six-month period.

Families who experience extreme hardships that cause their children to fall below the attendance requirement may request special consideration and, if their appeal is granted, they may continue to receive Tuition Assistance. Those exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The following documentation will be used to verify attendance:

- The classroom attendance report, which is submitted monthly and documents each participating child's attendance in a Preschool Promise classroom. Children must attend during the designated intentional instructional hours to receive Tuition Assistance.
- Providers may request Preschool Promise approve alternative attendance tracking software, but approval must be given *before* making requests for payment.

What is the Dayton STAR Attendance Program?

Dayton Preschool Promise families who attend a Star-Rated program are eligible to receive \$25/month when their child attends 90% or more of his or her scheduled days. This \$25 will be provided to families on a reloadable debit card.

Who is eligible for the STAR Attendance Award?

Because this program is funded by the City of Dayton and philanthropic dollars, only Preschool Promise families who are residents of the City of Dayton or who live in the Dayton Public Schools attendance zone are eligible for the award.

HOW DOES THE STAR ATTENDANCE AWARD WORK?

- Families will receive a reloadable debit card with \$25 already on the card when they sign up for the STAR Attendance Program.
- To receive \$25 in each of the following months, the child must attend 90% or more of his or her scheduled days for that month.
- Payments will be made upon meeting the attendance requirement. For example, if a child meets the 90% target in September, the family will receive payment by the third Friday in October.
- Attendance rates will be calculated based on the number of days the child is scheduled to be in the program.
- The scheduled days will be set at the start of the Preschool year (August) or at the time of enrollment.
- The \$25 monthly upload only will be awarded to families whose children meet the 90% mark, regardless of the reason for their child's absences.
- If at the end of the year, a child has been enrolled for at least 6 months and the child's attendance is 90% or better for the entire year, the family will receive an extra \$100 STAR Attendance Bonus.
- The funds loaded onto the card will be available until December 31, 2023. After that date, any unused funds will be returned to Preschool Promise.
- Funds will be awarded based upon the date a family signs up for STAR Attendance. Funds will not be back dated or paid retroactively.

HOW DO DAYTON FAMILIES ENROLL IN THE STAR ATTENDANCE AWARD PROGRAM?

- The STAR Attendance application can be found in the Preschool Promise application. If a family overlooks this section of the application, they can simply complete the STAR Attendance application at PreschoolPromise.org/StarAttendance, or by calling Preschool Promise.
- A debit card will be mailed to the family's home address. The family will need to activate the card by following the instructions on the card.

HOW CAN PROVIDERS HELP FAMILIES EARN THIS INCENTIVE?

- Educate families about STAR Attendance and the importance of being at school every day and on time.
- Scrupulously complete the attendance report that is required of participating providers. It will be used to calculate a child's monthly attendance rate and whether a child meets the 60% and 90% attendance goals.

Preschool Promise will manage all aspects of the STAR Attendance program, including issuing and loading the debit cards, communicating with families and determining if the child has reached his or her attendance goals.

More details about Tuition Assistance payments

As noted earlier, Preschool Promise provides Tuition Assistance only to families who choose to send their child to a participating Star-Rated Preschool Promise provider that is located in the eligible Preschool Promise geographic areas (Dayton, Kettering, Jefferson Twp., Mad River, Northridge, Trotwood-Madison, West Carrollton school district boundaries, and the City of Dayton boundaries). We offer this help because many families can't afford Preschool, even as their incomes are too great to receive state or federal Preschool assistance.

Preschool Promise is committed to using all available federal and state funding before accessing Preschool Promise dollars. If, during the application process, it is determined that a child may qualify for any type of publicly funded child care or Preschool (such as Head Start, Ohio's Publicly Funded Child Care, the State Early Childhood Expansion Preschool slots, etc.), the family will be directed to apply to these programs first.

To fulfill the intent of the Preschool Promise, Preschool Promise dollars must be used to enhance and supplement existing funds used to serve Preschoolers. These dollars may not be used to displace or supplant existing funds in the provider's current budget.

If families send their children to two programs — for example, because they want their child in a particular center's afterschool program — they may access Tuition Assistance for two participating sites. Each site will be paid a prorated rate based on the instructional hours of each program. Preschool Promise will not pay two sites a full-time rate for the same child.

If a program's Star Rating is decreased or lost during the course of the year, families will continue to receive their approved Tuition Assistance for the remainder of the Preschool Promise year (August 1- July 30). Program staff will be allowed to continue participating in Professional Learning Communities, Core Trainings

and Preschool Promise events. **Programs will not be eligible, however, to apply to join Preschool Promise in 2022-2023 if they become unrated or do not meet minimum Star-Rating guidelines.** Please see the chart on Page 6 to review the Star Rating requirements.

Tuition Assistance amounts for families will be determined based on the Star Rating of the program on February 14, 2021, and will remain the same during the course of the Preschool Promise year (August 1- July 30) regardless of any increase or decrease in Star Rating.

Preschool Promise will adjust the amount of Tuition Assistance paid to a program for families receiving Publicly Funded Child Care whose co-payment changes once confirmation of the new co-payment is confirmed by Job and Family Services.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS

Children receiving Preschool Promise Tuition Assistance must receive the same services as private-pay students enrolled in the same classroom.

If a provider, parent or guardian is disqualified from participating in this or any government Preschool funding program/s because of inappropriate conduct or misrepresentation, Preschool Promise Tuition Assistance that otherwise would be paid during the period of such disqualification may be forfeited. Preschool Promise will review any misconduct or misrepresentation and will determine eligibility to continue in the program.

PERMISSIBLE USE OF TUITION ASSISTANCE

Preschool Promise Tuition Assistance must be used to provide quality Preschool services to eligible children. Allowable expenditures include:

- A reduction in tuition for the participating family
- A co-payment reduction for families who qualify for Publicly Funded Child Care assistance

In the rare instance when a family's Preschool Promise Tuition Assistance, when combined with federal or state child care reimbursement, results in a program receiving more than its actual tuition cost, those funds may be used for:

- Compensation for staff in Preschool Promise classrooms
- Compensation for substitute teachers
- Training or professional development related to increasing quality
- Equipment, supplies and other materials
- Enrichment activities for students
- Expansion to serve additional children

TUITION ASSISTANCE PAYMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Tuition Assistance will be paid monthly, after services are received. Attendance should be reported using classroom attendance sheets, which are to be submitted to: attendance@preschoolpromise.org.

Based on these attendance records, Preschool Promise will send a payment report via email that reflects the amount of Tuition Assistance the provider will receive for each child and the program's monthly total of Tuition Assistance. **Providers have 2 business days to respond to this payment report regarding errors or concerns.** If a provider does not respond to this payment report, it is assumed the amount is correct, and payment will be made by the third Friday of the month by electronic funds transfer. If an error in attendance and payment occurs, providers have 30 days to report this information to the Preschool Promise Data and Payment Specialist. If a provider reports an error after 30 days, any additional payment will be forfeited.

Providers must submit attendance records for each child participating in Preschool Promise by the 5th of each month. If the 5th falls on a weekend or holiday, attendance information is due the previous Friday.

If attendance records are delayed, payment will be delayed. If attendance records are not received by the 10th of the month, payment is forfeited.

If a provider fails to turn in attendance data by the close of business (5 p.m.) on the 5th of the month or the day attendance is due, the provider will incur a \$100/day loss of their Quality Dollars. For example, if attendance reports are due on September 5 and the provider does not send them until September 7, the provider will lose \$200 of their Quality Dollars.

Providers must report on their attendance sheet if a child unenrolls from their program and indicate the last date of attendance. Providers also must indicate when they enroll a Preschool Promise child who has attended a different site in the past. The family of this child also must contact Preschool Promise to verify the change in provider before any changes can be made to Tuition Assistance payments.

If a provider makes an error in attendance record-keeping more than once, Preschool Promise will require re-payment of any Tuition Assistance the provider received while the child was no longer enrolled. The program's eligibility to remain a Preschool Promise participating provider also will be reviewed. If the provider is found to be intentionally and/or maliciously defrauding Preschool Promise, appropriate action will be taken, including permanent termination of the Preschool Promise contract and demand for re-payment of all ill-gotten funds received from Preschool Promise. Providers excluded from participation may not apply to join Preschool Promise under a new program name or license number.

Tuition Assistance is paid according to the Preschool Promise attendance policy.

Prorating and Special Payment Policies for Tuition Assistance:

1. Payment for a child's first month of enrollment will be as follows: If a child enrolls during the first half of the month (1st-15th), the child's reimbursement will be paid in full for the month. However, if the child enrolls during the second half of the month (on or after the 16th), the child's reimbursement will be half of the approved Tuition Assistance amount.
2. If a child's last day of enrollment is during the first half of the month (1st-15th), the child's reimbursement will be half of the approved Tuition Assistance amount. If the child's last day is during the last half of the month (on or after the 16th), the child's reimbursement will be paid in full for the month.
3. For children on Publicly Funded Child Care with weekly co-payments, the prorated formula is:

- If the child starts or leaves mid-month, Preschool Promise will pay for the number of weeks attended based on the weekly co-payment amount designated by Montgomery County.
 - If the child has a co-payment adjustment mid-month, Preschool Promise will pay the weekly co-payment amount based on authorization dates designated by Montgomery County.
 - If a child's co-payment changes and Preschool Promise is not notified, payment will not be retroactive.
 - If the child has been attending and enrolled for the full month, Preschool Promise will pay the monthly amount determined at the time of approval. The calculation is the weekly co-pay amount multiplied by 52 and divided by 12.
4. If a child switches from full-time to part-time enrollment, the full-time rate will be paid for the remainder of the month in question. The new part-time rate will begin on the 1st of the following month. If a child switches from part-time to full-time enrollment, the part-time rate will be paid for the remainder of the month. The new full-time rate will begin on the 1st of the following month.
 5. If a child has an adjusted daily schedule due to custody agreements, adjusted living situations, etc., Preschool Promise will determine the Tuition Assistance on a case-by-case basis.
 6. **If a child is no longer eligible to receive Publicly Funded Child Care based on Montgomery County Department of Job and Family Services records due to reasons including, but not limited to, incomplete paperwork, annual renewals for foster/guardianship cases, and income eligibility, Preschool Promise will pay the program the full rate of tuition for the Preschool Promise child for a designated period decided by Preschool Promise, the family and provider. All determinations will be made using information provided by Montgomery County Job and Family Services.**

During this period, the family/guardian will work with Preschool Promise to determine alternative Preschool options. These alternative options could include enrollment at Head Start or applying for Tuition Assistance through Preschool Promise without using eligibility for Publicly Funded Child Care as a determining factor.

After this period has ended, the provider will no longer receive Tuition Assistance from Preschool Promise at the full rate of tuition. It is up to the provider to decide whether to continue enrolling the child in their program without receiving Publicly Funded Child Care or Preschool Promise funds. Preschool Promise will review these situations on a case-by-case basis and work with families to assist them in finding quality and stable Preschool for their child.

If a family is denied Publicly Funded Childcare, Preschool Promise will work with Montgomery County to determine the reason for denial. The family and program will be notified of the reason for denial. If the denial is for missing paperwork/documentation, the program and family will be informed what documents are necessary to complete the application. If the family has not received approval due to missing documentation, Preschool Promise will no longer pay the full cost of tuition for the Preschool Promise child until Publicly Funded Childcare is reinstated.

If a family is denied Publicly Funded Childcare for being over-income, Preschool Promise will use the household size and income on the Publicly Funded Child Care authorization to award Tuition Assistance based on Preschool Promise's Tuition Assistance table.

If a provider charges less than the Tuition Assistance awarded by Preschool Promise, Preschool Promise may adjust the Tuition Assistance amount granted to families to match the full tuition charged.

What if my program does not charge tuition?

Programs that do not charge tuition (such as public school Preschool programs and Head Start) are eligible to receive assistance from Preschool Promise in the form of separate contracts and/or Quality Dollars, and teachers are eligible to participate in training and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). This support could include, but is not limited to, teacher coaching, curriculum coaching and assistance with improving family engagement, the classroom environment and students' social and emotional development.

PAYMENT CALENDAR:

September	3- Attendance due 17 – Payment due to Provider
October	5– Attendance due 15 – Payment due to Provider
November	5 – Attendance due 19 – Payment due to Provider
December	3 – Attendance due 17– Payment due to Provider
January	5 – Attendance due 21 – Payment due to Provider
February	4– Attendance due 18 – Payment due to Provider
March	4 – Attendance due 18 – Payment due to Provider
April	5 – Attendance due 15 – Payment due to Provider
May	5 – Attendance due 20 – Payment due to Provider
June	3 – Attendance due

	17 – Payment due to Provider
July	5 – Attendance due 15– Payment due to Provider
August	5 – Attendance due 19 – Payment due to Provider

Important Dates to Remember

February 14, 2021	Star-Rating determination deadline (will be used to set Tuition Assistance, Quality Dollars Stipend annual base rate) for the entire school year
March 1, 2021	Provider Applications Due
Spring 2021	Application process for families to Join Preschool Promise begins
July 29 or 31, 2021 Or August 3, 2021	Childcare Providers — Required Kick-off sessions — all Preschool teachers & directors must attend a virtual Kick-off session Thursday, July 29 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Saturday, July 31 from 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, August 3 from 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
August 1, 2021	Tuition Assistance payments begin Continuous Improvement Plans for 4-Star and 5-Star sites turned in to Barbara.elrod@preschoolpromise.org
August 2021	Required Kick-off events for staff at MVCDC and School District locations
September 1, 2021	Child applications due
October 1, 2021	“Count Day” for Quality Dollars Per Child Funding
July 1, 2022	Last day to submit a request for Quality Dollars
July 31, 2022:	Tuition Assistance payments end

Provider Agreement Page to be Submitted to Preschool Promise

A Preschool Promise Provider agrees not to adopt or implement any policy or procedure contradicting or conflicting with the policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook.

Authorizing Agreement

By signing this page, you acknowledge:

1. You have received a copy of the 2021-2022 Preschool Promise Provider Handbook.
2. You have read the Provider Handbook and agree to participate in Preschool Promise as outlined in the Provider Handbook.
3. Preschool Promise is permitted to post your Preschool program's information on websites, in its marketing materials and in any other source related to Preschool Promise.

Owner or Authorized Representative

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Preschool Program Representative

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Preschool Promise Teacher

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Preschool Promise Teacher

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Preschool Promise Teacher

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Preschool Promise Teacher

Name: _____

Teacher: _____