



EARLY LEARNING UPDATE

December 19, 2024



Early Learning Expansion

Early learning expansion is tied to our goals, improvement actions, and facility plans.

Comprehensive Strategic Improvement Plan 2024-25

“Develop and enhance programs for student success including **early learning**, long-term academic support, alternative, and 18-21 year old programs.”

Superintendent Goals 2024-25

“Investigation and planning for expansion to our **early learning** program with the planned improvements to begin in the 2025-26 school year (facilities, curriculum, staffing, funding).”

Early Learning Expansion

Early learning expansion is tied to our goals, improvement actions, and facility plans.

1-5 YEARS - FACILITY MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS	
Funding Source	Project Recommendations
Annual Capital Improvement Budget	<p>Barry Elementary: Continue PreK-5th grade building interior renovations</p> <p>Pathfinder Elementary: Begin site improvements to playgrounds</p> <p>Early Childhood: Expand access in existing facilities per recommendations of Early Childhood Committee</p> <p>District-Wide Improvements/Maintenance: Continue improvements/upgrades to safety, technology, infrastructure, parking lots, roofs, furniture/learning spaces</p>
Potential Bond Issue* (~Spring 2025)	<p>Platte County High School: Complete next phase of PCHS Rebuild (classroom wing/media center/fine arts/main entry)</p> <p>Platte Purchase Middle School: Complete site amenities (activities complex bleachers, restrooms, concessions, press box)</p> <p>Compass and Pathfinder Elementaries: Expand parking lot and improve traffic flow</p>
Private & State Grant Funding	<p>Northland Workforce Development Center: Construct Phase 1 New Career/Technical Education Facility</p>

Outcomes

1. Identify a suitable space for the North Great Beginnings staff and students until 2027-28
2. Explore expansion opportunities for PCR-3 Early Childhood Program in a high quality learning environment
3. Collaborate with the Long Range Facility Community Advisory on long-term locations for our Early Childhood Programs

Staff Concerns

- **Staffing Challenges**
 - Substitutes
 - Nurse
 - Administrator
- **Custodial Support**
- **Opportunities to Support Meals**
- **Facility Space**
 - Classroom Size
 - Spaces for Physical Movement - Indoor
 - Spaces for Physical Movement -
Playground
- **Kindergarten Kickoff Participation**

Thoughts from the Community

1. Early childhood sets up the foundation for the educational journey. Establishing a more appropriate set up would help our elementary schools. Early intervention is KEY!
2. Kindergarten expectations are increasing and kids are not ready. Surrounding districts all have well-developed pre-k programs to prepare students for kindergarten. Platte county does not.
3. We need a strong Pre-K. Our early childhood program is severely lacking. We need a more robust program that has an actual playground, more classrooms, and a full day program.
4. No early childhood offered to at-risk students. Students are not receiving any instruction until kindergarten. Parents can't afford it and/or not qualify choices.
5. Students are spending more and more time on electronics. We need to get them engaged before kindergarten. Children learn more during their first 5 years of life, we must develop a strong early childhood program that focuses on vital skills needed for kindergarten.
6. I would love if the school district could build a playground for Great Beginnings. My son has autism & has a hard time transitioning from grade school playground when it's short amount of time there 1 or 2 times a week.

Committee Work

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM ESSENTIALS - NEED TO HAVE

Categories	Classroom and Facility Considerations									
Criteria	Spacious Classrooms: Large classrooms to accommodate activities and play.	Developmentally Appropriate Play Materials: Toys and equipment suited to the children's developmental stages.	Indoor Playground: An area for physical play inside the building.	All-Inclusive Playground: A playground designed to be accessible to all children, including those with disabilities.	ADA Compliant: Ensures that the facility meets the standards for accessibility.	Non-Porous Flooring: Flooring that is easy to clean and maintain.	Appropriate Bathrooms: Bathrooms that are accessible and suitable for young children.	Changing Area/Diaper Changing Station: Space designated for changing diapers.	Sensory Room: A room equipped with sensory activities to support children with sensory processing needs.	Storage: Space for storing materials and supplies.
Leaving North Early Childhood As Is - DEC	X	X	✓	X	?	✓	X	X	X	X
Classrooms in Elementary Buildings	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓
Classrooms in a purchased store front	Criteria Contingent on Financial Feasibility									
Build from scratch Early Childhood Center	Criteria Contingent on Financial Feasibility									

Need to Have	Nice to Have
Facilities Programs Staffing Curriculum Resources	Facilities Programs Staffing Curriculum Resources



Preschool Program Guidance

Options for 2025-26 School Year

Goal: Identify a suitable space for Great Beginnings staff and students until 2027-28.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
<p>2025-26 and 2026-27 school years moving north attendance Great Beginnings to Pathfinder Elementary (All Full Day Programs)</p> <p>Keeping two classrooms at Barry Elementary, with a potential of adding one classroom (All Full Day Programs)</p>	<p>2025-26 and 2026-27 school years keep tuition based classroom and ECSE classrooms at DEC. (½ Day Programs)</p> <p>Move remaining north attendance Early Childhood to Pathfinder, keep classrooms at Barry, with a potential of adding one classroom (Full Day Programs)</p>	<p>Construct Early Childhood center (Approximate Cost = \$29M to \$32M)</p> <p>Not Financially Feasible</p>	<p>Renovate existing commercial space to accommodate 200 to 250 students (Estimate Cost = \$14M)</p> <p>Not Financially Feasible</p>

Current Early Childhood Program

Program	Day Length	Certified Staff	Classified Staff	Students
Great Beginnings at District Education Center				
<i>ECSE</i>	½ Day	3	6 (Para 2)	36
<i>Tuition</i>	½ Day	1	1 (Para 1)	25
Great Beginnings at Barry Elementary				
<i>ECSE</i>	½ Day	2	2 (Para 2)	19

Potential Early Childhood Expansion

Program	Day Length	Certified Staff	Classified Staff	Students
Great Beginnings at District Education Center				
<i>ECSE</i>	½ Day	2	6 (Para 2)	32
<i>Integrated</i>	½ Day	2	2 (Para 1)	60
Great Beginnings at Barry Elementary				
<i>ECSE</i>	½ or Full Day	1	2 (Para 2)	8
<i>Integrated</i>	Full Day	1	1 (Para 1)	15
Great Beginnings at Pathfinder Elementary				
<i>ECSE</i>	½ or Full Day	1	2 (Para 2)	8
<i>Integrated</i>	Full Day	2	2 (Para 1)	30

Comparison

	2024-25	2025-26	Difference
ECSE			
<i>Teachers</i>	5	4	-1
<i>Paraprofessional 2</i>	8	8	0
<i>Students</i>	55	48	-7
Tuition/Integrated			
<i>Teachers</i>	1	5	+4
<i>Paraprofessional 1</i>	1	5	+4
<i>Students</i>	25	108	+83

Average Daily Attendance (ADA)

LEAs receive this funding through the Foundation Formula provided by the state to provide free public education to students in Missouri. These slots are limited to 8% of the LEAs K-12 free and reduced lunch population and students must meet certain criteria.

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

State & federal funds are available for LEAs ECSE services and are reimbursed 100% based on State ECSE guidelines. These funds are specifically for the special education services for preschool students to ensure their IEP requirements can be implemented.

MOQPK-LEA

The MOQPK-LEA grant started in FY 2024. LEAs are able to apply for grant monies for students in the year prior to kindergarten. Students must be a combination of those who do and do not meet the free and reduced lunch requirements.

Local Funding

LEAs utilize funds from within their district. This funding can be part of the district's general funding, and/or from a scholarship that may be set up within the district.

MISSOURI

PRESCHOOL

FUNDING

Title I

Title I is a funding stream available to LEAs who meet certain guidelines. Preschool students have to meet certain criteria to be admitted into the program.

Parent Pay

LEAs collect tuition to pay for the child to attend the district's preschool. This could be a sliding scale based on income or one standard rate.

Considerations

- **Early Childhood Impact**
 - Physical movement of classrooms
 - Shift in programming for north attendance area
- **Pathfinder Elementary Impact**
 - Currently 4 classrooms available
 - Forecasted to have 4 classrooms available for 2025-26 based on enrollment projections
 - Physical placement of Early Childhood classrooms would involve movement of approximately 8 classrooms

Other Considerations

- Tuition Cost
- Full Day Options
- Expansion to 5 Days a Week
- Before and After School Care
- Potential Benefit for Employees (Grant Funded)
- Transportation (between North and South Attendance Areas)
- Additional Staff to support increased number of Early Childhood Students

Next Steps

- Recommendation shared with Early Learning Committee
- Recommendation presented to Executive Leadership Team
- Information shared with the Board of Education
- Interest Survey sent to PCR-3 Families
- **Begin Transition Planning**
 - ◆ Meeting with Great Beginnings and Elementary Staff
 - ◆ FAQ to address specific questions
 - ◆ Early Learning Expansion Questions Form
- **Communicate to Families and Community**
- **Open House Night (Spring 2025)**
- **Continue working with Long Range Facility Plan Committee for future Early Childhood expansion**