

## Youth Services Transformational Project Proposal

The city of Toledo is currently in the process of formalizing an opportunity for students in our region to receive universal access to pre-kindergarten education. The profound need for such an action is based on the data below:

- 65% of kindergarteners enter Toledo Public Schools testing developmentally behind on the Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
- Many never catch up, and the K-12 system must invest expensive resources in intervention, rather than education.
- High quality early childhood education programs have been shown to impact kindergarten readiness, elementary school reading levels and overall life outcomes.
  - Deborah Phillips, William Gormley, and Sara Anderson. (2017) "The Effects of Tulsa's Pre-K Program on Middle School Student Performance." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 63-87. "<https://mccourt.georgetown.edu/news/Pre-K>
  - Lawrence J. Schweinhart (2000) *The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study: A Case Study in Random Assignment, Evaluation & Research in Education*, 14:3-4, 136-147
  - Lifetime Effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 40 by L. J. Schweinhart et al. (2005) [http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/specialsummary\\_rev2011\\_02\\_2.pdf](http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/specialsummary_rev2011_02_2.pdf)
- In recent years, efforts have been undertaken around the country to dramatically expand access to quality early childhood education (for example, Dayton, Denver, Washington, D.C., Cincinnati, Oklahoma).
- In Toledo, access to high quality early childhood education does not meet the existing need. There are 8,884 children ages 0-5 under the federal poverty line in the City of Toledo and 13,992 in Lucas County. Only a small percentage of these children are able to access high quality early childhood education (defined as, programs ranking three to five stars in the Ohio Step Up to Quality system). (2016 Lucas County Head Start Community Needs Assessment).

The City of Toledo has undertaken an initiative to explore implementation of Universal PreK in Toledo along with major community partners, including United Way of Greater Toledo, Toledo Public Schools, ProMedica, and Toledo Community Foundation, among many others. To facilitate a thorough planning process, several partners sought a scope of work from a qualified consulting team with experience in Universal Pre-K planning and implementation.

Linda Dunphy and Dr. Andrew Brodsky presented a scope of work that includes several elements:

- (1) Local needs assessment to refine understanding of the service delivery gap
- (2) Research on successful Universal Pre-K models from other communities, with a focus on evidence-based approaches only;
- (3) Scenario modeling, including structure & program design elements for 3 to 5 potential models for Toledo;
- (4) Cost modeling; and
- (5) Refinement and selection of local model.

In order to engage in the above steps, Linda Dunphy and Dr. Andrew Brodsky were selected to research, facilitate meetings of local stakeholders in such a way as to lead the community to consensus, and publish a report of their findings and recommendations. Their work began in January and will conclude July 31, 2019.

Once implemented, Universal Pre-K has the potential to provide the critical foundation of educational success for thousands of children in the Toledo area. The exact number will be determined through this planning process.

Toledo Rotary was asked by Toledo Community Foundation to support the research phase of the project. After much discussion, the Youth Services Committee agrees that we would like to support the community in its effort to launch this opportunity.

- Toledo Rotary, through its members, can assist in the local and regional advocacy of the work being done and how helpful it can be to our community. This can be done with or without funding.
- Youth services would like to recommend that Universal Pre-K be adopted as our transformational project in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. However, for the initial research phase that will be completed on July 31, 2019, we would like to invest \$10,000 to validate our commitment as a valued community partner.
- We will then assess, based on the research findings, the best way to implement ourselves in the forward momentum of Universal Pre-K in our community.