Children's Cabinet Meeting

July 18th, 2023 - Notes

#### **Budget Updates by Department:**

Update from Commissioner Fortman:

- The budget includes some funding for career exploration
  - It also includes the passage of paid family and medical leave
    - This will not go into effect for a couple years
    - First step starting in the fall: Rulemaking
    - Next Step (starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025): Start Collecting premiums
    - Final Step (starting May 2026): funding will begin to go out to cover up to 12 weeks of leave for all eligible employees
    - All state employees will be covered
      - Maximum time of 12 weeks
    - A website was just launched yesterday: <u>https://www.maine.gov/labor/pfml/</u>
    - $\circ$  Maine is the 13<sup>th</sup> state with a program like this

#### Update from the DOE:

The focus of the DOE tends to be on the idea of cradle to career, several items in the budget fall under that umbrella

- Systemically \$101 million is included over the biennium for paying for the cost of public education
- Maine is one of five states providing free meals for students attending public schools and certain approved private schools
  - More than \$58 million was allocated to this
- Youngest learners increasing number of slots for pre-k programming in Maine
  - Priority is placed on working towards a least restrictive environment
  - \$10.5 million was allocated for the CDS system to work with SAUs
    - Special purpose private preschools
      - Have the ability to accept more students
      - SPPS are very important with the recent increase in referrals
      - Providing more slots means both opening more programs and providing resources to existing programs
- Investment in career exploration
  - The budget includes investment in career and technical experiences for middle schoolers
  - CTEs are very popular currently
  - Money is also set aside for apprenticeships
- Adult education

- Helps current high school students access credit recovery
- o Also helps students' parents further their education

Updates from Commissioner Sauschuck:

- Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)
  - In Maine, the task force for this is the Maine State Police
- Over the last 6 years there has been a 344% increase in cyber tips related to children
- 44 investigators in 23 agencies with the computer crimes unit as the hub
- 2 additional supervisory positions opened due to the budget in the cyber-crimes units Vassalboro
- Drug enforcement commander position opened
  - Directly related to children's safety
  - Connecting people to long term recovery

#### Updates from the Department of Corrections:

- Nothing new this year, however some programs from last year were continued
- The Department can request a financial order to move money from unspent personal services at Long Creek Youth Development Center to expand community based programs to support youth who are in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system
- LD 155 (recently passed)
  - Creates a working group through the Children's Cabinet to coordinate work with youth in the juvenile justice system

#### Updates from Commissioner Lambrew:

- There will be a blog post that will discuss all the DHHS initiatives in greater detail
- Child care \$59 million for child care investments in the biennium
- Over \$1 million to jumpstart the Child Safety and Family Wellbeing plan
  - Grounded in communities and education
- Nearly \$20 million in federal and state funds was allocated for children's behavioral health with a focus on the Child Welfare System
- Parents can now be MaineCare providers for their children in certain cases
- Several new positions were also included

#### Maine Jobs and Recovery Program investments:

With a focus on childcare and public pre-k

#### Child Care Infrastructure Grant

- Part of MJRP
- Total of \$15 million allocated
- Opening up new slots to serve more families
- So far made 80 awards totaling \$5.7 million
  - Nearly 2,000 new slots for childcare services across all 16 counties
  - o 1100 already up and running

- Applications are still coming in
- On track to meet/exceed goals
- Website: <u>https://www.ceimaine.org/maine-grants/child-care-infrastructure-grant-program/</u>

#### Pre-k Expansion Grants

- This is a total of \$10 million, of which \$7 million has been committed to projects already
- The focus is on expanding pre-k, both by starting new programs and by supporting the opening of new classrooms in existing programs
  - Another way to do this is increasing dosage by transitioning part-day/part-week programs to full day/full week programs
- Regional programming between multiple SAUs and programing between schools and communities
- Effort to support communities with high levels of economically disadvantaged students
- What has happened to date:
  - $\circ$  3 rounds so far includes 30 (soon to be 31) SAUs
    - 28 of the 30 SAUs offer full day/full week programming
  - Nearly 1,000 new pre-k students through this
  - Another major aspect of this grant is collecting data using the class observation tool (data collected includes: quality, screenings, family engagement, transitions, enrollment, class size, etc.)
  - o 39% of students are economically disadvantaged
  - o 24% of students were identified for special education

#### Partnerships between communities and schools

Two examples: First 4 ME and First 10 Community Schools

#### First 4 ME

- What is First 4 ME?
  - Two-generation (child and caregiver) community focused framework for a coordinated birth age 5
  - Included in LD 1712 in 2021 (along with Help Me Grow)
  - Community contractors convene efforts between SAUs, families, child care providers and others
    - Community coach role
- Purpose:
  - Consider children's background
  - Intentionally coordinate and link families, communities, and school
- Focus:
  - Mixed delivery system
  - Two-gen engagement and family stabilization
    - Wrap around services
  - Kindergarten success (transitions)

- Within the school and with family transitions
- Goals and strategies:
  - o Increase successful early learning transitions
  - Increase quality
  - Develop coordinated system
  - o Strengthen the consistent continuity of care
- Where we are at:
  - Just about to start
  - Pilot sites open August 2023
  - $\circ$  Three awarded sites at the moment York, Portland, Aroostook County
    - In the future, more will hopefully be considered
  - Anticipated benefits:
    - For children positive adult relationships, improved health and development outcomes, strengthened skill development
    - For family stabilization support for personal growth, barrier identification, increased opportunity to strengthen workforce
    - Early Care and Education improved quality score, community coaches, recruitment and retention of staff, transition teams
- Evaluation:
  - There will be a 3<sup>rd</sup> party evaluating partner: Evaluation Strategies, LLC
  - o ASQ-3
  - Teaching Strategies Child Observation Tool
  - Teachstone Assessment Scoring System
- Attention to subsystems:
  - Workforce
  - School and community partnerships
  - Efficiency between systems and agencies
- First 4 team includes
  - 0 OCFS, DHHs Cross Office support, DOE, KVCAP, Evaluation Strategies, LLC

#### First 10 Community Schools:

- Collaborative model which partners schools and communities, aligns resources and supports for children prenatal to age 10, and partners with families
  - Recognizing the role of parents as students "forever teachers"
- The schools will use Preschool Development Renewal Grant funding to provide subgrants to restart and more fully implement First 10 Community Schools
  - Priority is on rural sites and vulnerable children
  - Each site will have a leadership team
    - The leadership team will make a plan focused around the three main strategies of collaboration to align and strengthen teaching and learning, coordination of comprehensive services, and family engagement
  - EDC will provide coaching at each pilot site
  - First 10 specialist position at DOE will provide ongoing technical assistance

- Current Schools (Three more grants will be available in the fall of 2023.)
  - Limestone/Caswell Limestone Community School and Dawn F. Barnes Elementary
  - o RSU 17 East Belfast Elementary and Kermit Nickerson Elementary
  - Sanford Pride Elementary school
- Further collaboration will happen with the Whole Student and Community Collaboration Team
  - Cross agency team that meets every 6 weeks to explore strategies for facilitating expansion and sustainability of schools
  - Eventually, there will also be collaboration between the First 10 Community Schools and First 4 ME

#### Wrap-up:

September 19<sup>th</sup> – next meeting

Introducing Mariette Aborn – She works under commissioner Lambrew as the Special Projects Manager for Child & Family Well-Being

# Child Care Infrastructure Grant (CCIG)

- The Child Care Infrastructure Grant (CCIG) is part of Governor Mills' Maine Jobs & Recovery Plan to increase access to quality child care within the State.
- These grants, totaling \$15 million, specifically focus on increasing child care slots within the State by providing funding to new child care programs or child care programs desiring to increase their licensed capacity.
- Any individual that increased licensed capacity or opened a new child care on or after March 28, 2022, are eligible to apply.
- The State opened applications to family child care programs in July 2022 and child care facilities in August 2022.
- As of July 2023, the State has made 80 awards, totaling \$5,742,900.



# Child Care Infrastructure Grant (CCIG)

Those 80 awards totaling over \$5.7 million are estimated to create 1971 child care slots in 16 counties, with 1110 of those slots already completed/implemented.

County	Awards	Anticipated Slots	Total Grants
Androscoggin	7	108	\$363,300
Aroostook	4	138	\$347,000
Cumberland	18	628	\$1,032,800
Franklin	1	15	\$250,000
Hancock	4	114	\$502,700
Kennebec	11	232	\$798,600
Кпох	3	44	\$71,300
Lincoln	1	8	\$112,700
Oxford	5	113	\$338,300
Penobscot	8	235	\$435,400
Piscataquis	1	20	\$200,000
Sagadahoc	3	68	\$288,500
Somerset	3	50	\$425,800
Waldo	1	12	\$8,500
Washington	3	54	\$267,000
York	7	132	\$301,000

# **Pre-K Expansion Grants**

Lee Anne Larsen Director of Early Learning Maine Department of Education

July 18, 2022



# Overview of Grant Opportunity

Competitive opportunity through the Maine Jobs and Recovery Plan (MJRP) for School Administrative Units (SAUs) to increase the number of eligible 4-year-olds attending highquality public pre-k through:

- Program start-ups
- Program expansions (additional classrooms)
- Increased programming from part day/part week to full day/full week

SAUs encouraged to partner with licensed community providers and/or other SAUs to provide public pre-k

Competitive priority for serving populations with large percentages of economically disadvantaged students

Total of \$10 million in grant funding

# **Summary of Grant Rounds to Date**

Round	# of SAUs	# of Students	# in Partnership	Amount of Funding
1	10	319	2	\$2,422,743.89
2	*15	509	9	\$3,468,997.60
3	5	103	1	\$835,580.45
Totals	30	931	12	\$6,727,321.94

### 28 out of 30 SAUs offering full day/full week programming through expansions.

\*One SAU is still finalizing contract—may result in 16 SAUs in Round 2





# **Round 1 Pre-K Expansion Grant** Program Data

CLASS Interactions Domian	National Head Start Average	Fall Grantee Average	Spring Grantee Average	Chapter 124 Quality Indicators	Max. Points	Fall Grantee Average	Spring Grantee Average
Emotional Support	6.03	6.03 6.06 6.44	Curriculum, Screening & Assessment	20	18.7	18.8	
				Family engagement	6	5.5	6
Classroom Organization	6.02	5.24	6.02	Community Engagement & Coordinated Programming	7	5.3	5.7
Instructional 2.94 3.62 4.06 Support	4.06	Transition & Enrollment	10	7.6	8.8		
300001				Educator Quality & Professional	10	8.8	9.5
CLASS	<b>CLASS</b> N/A 70.9 76.71	76.71	Development				
Environment Tool	SAU Organization & Class Size	10	6	6.6			
CLASS Interrelation							

CLASS Interaction Domains are scored on a 7-point scale. The CLASS Environment tool is based on 87 possible points

**Quality Indicators Total:** 60 51.8 55.2

### **Round 1 Demographics**

- 39% of enrolled students economically disadvantaged
- 24% of enrolled students identified for special education



## **Round 1 Pre-K Expansion Grants**

SAU	Model	Enrollment	Partner(s)	Funding FY 1	Funding FY 2
Greenville	New program, 1 full day/full week classroom	8		\$114,321.76	\$33,000.00
St. George	New program, 1 full day/full week classoom	17		\$187,307.83	\$33,000.00
Vassalboro	Existing program, added 1 full day/full week classroom	12		\$61,368.33	\$33,000.00
Appleton	New program, 1 full day/full week classroom	13		\$200,750.00	\$33,000.00
Bangor	Existing program, added 1 classroom and expanded 2 classrooms to full day/full week	58		\$80,851.00	\$99,000.00
Yarmouth	New program, 4 part- day/full week classrooms	57		\$356,550.00	\$66,000.00
Sanford	Existing program, added 3 full day/full week classrooms	66		\$261,665.31	\$99,000.00
RSU 24	New program, added 4 full day/full week classrooms	34	DCP Head Start	\$269,902.00	No cost extension of CT FY 23-24
RSU 22	Existing program, expanded 3 classrooms to full day/full week	38		\$329,081.30	\$99,000.00
Limestone	Existing program, expanded 1 classroom to full day/full week	16	ACAP Head Start	\$32,946.36	\$33,000.00

# **Round 2 Pre-K Expansion Grants**

SAU	Model	Projected Enrollment	Partner(s)	Funding
Tremont Consolidated School	Existing program, expanding 1 classroom to full day/full week	16		\$119,207.43
Bangor	Existing program, expanding 2 classrooms from part to full day and adding 2 full day/full week classrooms	80		\$249,273.37
Cape Elizabeth	New program, opening 2 full day/full week classrooms	30	Cape Care	\$339,798.28
Falmouth	New program, opening 3 full day/full week classrooms	48		\$597,757.12
Gorham	Existing program, adding 6 part- day/part week classrooms, 2 in partnership with a private childcare and four in collaboration with CDS	96	Seedlings to Sunflowers	\$609,877.86
Lincolnville	New program, 1 full day/full week classroom	16		\$72,107.00
Madawaska	Existing program, expanding 1 classroom from part day/full week to full day/full week	16	ACAP Head Start	\$114,429.13
MSAD 27	Adding 1 new full day/full week classroom and 1 part day/full week classroom (2 sessions)	16	ACAP Head Start	\$218,021.00

# Round 2 Pre-K Expansion Grants- Cont.

SAU	Model	Projected Enrollment	Partner(s)	Funding
MSAD 33	Existing program, adding 1 full day/full week classroom	14	Aroostook County Action Program	\$101,230.00
MSAD 54	Existing program, adding 1 full day/full week classroom	16	Kennebec Valley Community Action Program	\$90,201.94
RSU 14	Existing program, expanding full day/full week seats across 3 community partners	11	A Child's World, Tu Casa Childcare, Southern Maine Children's Academy	\$95,113.00
<b>RSU 34 *</b> (holding until 2024-25)	Existing program, adding 1 full day/ full week classroom	16	Penquis HS	\$67,812.73
RSU 40	Existing program, expanding to full day/full week and adding 1 classroom	96		\$572.514.00
RSU 67	Existing program, adding 1 full day/full week classroom	16		\$55,205.44
RSU 68	Existing program, adding 4 full day/full week classrooms in collaboration with CDS	22	SAD4, SAD46, RSU41 (SAU Consortium)	\$166,439.30

# **Round 3 Pre-K Expansion Grants**

SAU	Model	Projected Enrollment	Partner(s)	Funding
Brunswick	Existing program, adding 1full day/full week classroom and expanding 8 seats in existing classrooms	24	Midcoast Maine Community Action Head Start	\$225,380.00
Community Regional Charter School	Existing program, adding 1 full day/full week classroom	16		\$127,600.00
MSAD 6	Existing program, adding 2 full day/full week classrooms and expanding existing classrooms from part week to full week	32		\$183,600.45
MSAD 46	Existing program, expanding 1 classroom to full day/full week	15		\$155,000.00
South Portland School Department	Existing program, adding 1 full day/full week classroom in collaboration with CDS	16		\$144,000.00

### **Questions and Wonderings**





# First4ME Early Care and Education Program

Children's Cabinet July 18, 2023





### ✓ Overview and Purpose of First4ME

✓ Current status and timeline

✓ Anticipated Impact, Outcomes and Learnings

### What is First4ME?

- A two-generation, community focused framework for a coordinated birth to kindergartenentry program by providing quality early care and education to promote a healthy, positive transition to kindergarten for children and families.
- First4ME was included in <u>LD 1712 (2021)</u> "<u>An Act to Support Children's Healthy</u> <u>Development and School Success</u>." to improve a child's social, emotional, educational, and health outcomes by providing comprehensive support and education for families.
- The program will fund community contractors to convene efforts to provide intensive support through the community coach role to the Child Care Providers (CCP), School Districts (SAU's), the family and the child with a focus on families that have or are experiencing hardship.
- Highlight the benefits of an efficient system of coordinated resources for all stakeholders and how high-quality child care can support a strong workforce in the short and long term.

### Overview and Purpose



Source: Center of the Developing Child, Harvard University

- What surrounds us, shapes us
- Success does not happen in a vacuum
- Intentional partnership of families, care and education providers and communities is vital to support children
- Building space for the communities we serve to address their unique needs aids in sustainability

# Focus Areas

### **Mixed Delivery System of Early Care and Education:**

- ✓ Support to develop and sustain high quality of care, educational experiences and alignment to promote smooth transitions to the school setting from the mixed delivery system.
- Support child care providers through the community coach role and early elementary educators through SAUs partnerships.
- ✓ Early screening and on-going assessment to inform goal setting and identifying targeted supports and/or services that may be necessary.

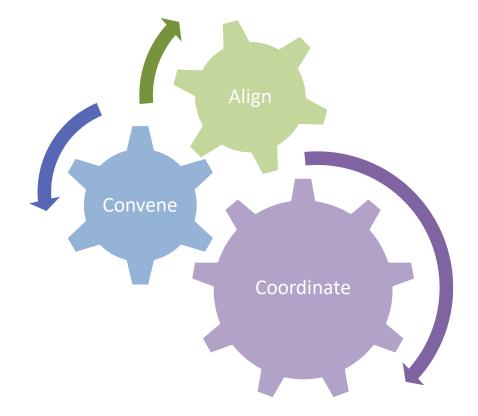
### **Two Gen Engagement & Family Stabilization:**

- ✓ Including parent or caregivers in communication, decision making and transitions to build trust and strengthen relationships from one setting to the next
- ✓ Provide support for family goal setting to strengthen families with special focus on those experiencing hardship

### **Kindergarten Success (Transition):**

- ✓ Intentional collaborative efforts between early care and education settings, early elementary school settings and communities
- Programming and alignment for increased school success and increased communication between the mixed delivery system through kindergarten entry. Transition points may be at PreK or K depending on the community

## First4ME



### **Goals, Objectives and Strategies**

- 1. Increase successful early learning transitions for children regardless of risk factors leading into kindergarten entry
- 2. Increase sustained, high-quality child care and early childhood education across the mixed delivery system
- 3. Develop a coordinated system of support both statewide and local for families, providers, schools, and communities.
- 4. Strengthen the consistent continuity of care for families birth to school aged with community support to all participants

### Pilot Timeframe

Pilot Sites to begin 8/2023



# Status and Projected Impact



Aroostook County Action Program



- Three pilot sites awarded: Aroostook County Action Program, Starting Strong/Portland ConnectED, and York County Community Action Corporation
- In the process of a second RFA to attempt to award an additional, more central location

	Beginning of Pilot	Conclusion of Pilot
Total Children	383	680
Child Care Providers Total	7	14
Center Based	7	9
Family Child Care	0	5
Child Care Staff	141	164
School District Partners	3	5
PreK Classrooms	5	12
K Classrooms	12	25

## **Anticipated Benefits**

CHILD C

Increased health and developmental outcomes through routine screening and early targeted supports. <sup>11</sup>

- Strengthened skill development across all domains through child care settings through kindergarten entry
- Reinforcement of positive adult relationships and safe, consistent environment for increased capacity for learning through strong home / childcare connection



FAMILY

- Barrier identification and solution focused problem solving <sup>8</sup>
- Education and support for personal growth,
- stabilization and sustained satisfaction
- Engagement and transition support for family and child to promote positive school experience
- Increase opportunity to strengthen workforce with caregivers obtaining high quality, consistent care



**EDUCATION** 

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EARLY CARE

- Improved quality rating
  scores for providers <u>12</u>
- Support efforts towards accreditation
- Transition teams to support a positive transition to a Pre-K / K setting from the mixed delivery system
- Intensive supports delivered through a community coach
- Recruit, prepare and retain high quality staff for early childhood care and education <u>1</u>

## Evaluation, Screening and Assessment

### Third Party Evaluation Partner: Evaluation Strategies, LLC

- Support strong implementation, clean data collection and disaggregation of outcomes
- Inform DHHS report to Legislature in January of 2025 on progress and recommendations
- Formal Evaluation of First4ME implementation and impact
- Shared Evaluation services with First10 initiative to support studying impact of both initiatives
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3)
  - Early screening and intervention efforts through Help Me Grow system
- Teaching Strategies Child Observation Tool
  - Provider and SAUs partnership
  - Fall, Winter and Spring Data points through Kindergarten Entry
- Teachstone Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) for Provider & Early Educator Quality Assessment
- In addition...
  - QRIS Rating system (provider), self assessments, participant surveys, focus groups and interviews

### Attention to subsystems

### Workforce

Early Childhood Field

Parent / Caregivers (especially families that experience hardship)

### **School and Community Partnerships**

Child care providers, home visiting, Pre-K and Kindergarten transition points

Honoring family voice and parents as the child's first teacher

Communication and expectation leveraging to build healthy, positive relationships

### Efficiency between systems and agencies

Support understanding of all that is available to schools, communities, providers and families both local and statewide

### True "pilot" mindset

Communicate wins, challenges and barriers to help inform decisions Be open to learning from communities to better respond their unique features

### First4ME Team



Family and Community Engagement Program Manager First4ME Program Specialist

Evaluation Strategies, LLC

**Evaluation Partner** 

DHHS Cross Office Support OCFS, OFI, CDC, OBH

Maine Department of Education

(DOE)

Collaborative Agency

Kennebec Valley Community Action Partners (KVCAP) Consultation Partners

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### Closing Remarks / Questions / Comments

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# First 10 Community Schools (F10CS)

Lee Anne Larsen Director of Early Learning Maine Department of Education

# First 10 Community Schools – the What & Why

### What they are:

A collaborative model which:

- Partners elementary schools, early childhood programs, and community providers to improve learning and care
- Aligns resources and supports for children and their families from before they are born to age 10
- Emphasizes the role of families and caregivers in children's learning and care

### Why they are valuable:

- **Brain development** during the first 10 years of life provides the foundation for future learning, health, and behavior
- Collaboration and clearer communication among stakeholders who share a goal of fostering equitable and integrated supports for children and families leads to more efficient and effective systems, stronger relationships, smoother transitions, and maximized use of resources

### Effective Schools



(Education Development Center, 2020)

# Maine's F10CS Pilot Goals

- Use PDG renewal funding to provide subgrants to fully implement six First 10 Community Schools
  - Priority given to rural sites with limited services or sites with high rates of vulnerable children and families
  - Each site will form a leadership team (including parents and a Family Outreach Coordinator) to assess community assets/needs and develop and implement First 10 plans that focus on 3 key strategies:
    - Collaboration to align and strengthen teaching and learning
    - Coordination of comprehensive services
    - Family engagement and partnerships
  - Education Development Center will provide coaching support to each pilot site every 3 weeks
  - Department of Education awarded grants to 3 SAUs in Spring of 2023, 2<sup>nd</sup> round available for 3 more SAUs Fall 2023
- First 10 School and Community Specialist position at DOE will provide ongoing technical assistance
  - Position posted through August 29th

Maine First 10 Community Schools

# Round 1 Pilot Sites



### **Round 1 First 10 Community School Pilots**

SAU	Schools	Community Partners	Identified Needs/Activities	Year 1 Funding
Limestone/ Caswell	Limestone Community School: Pre-k through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade (135 students, 81% Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch) Dawn F. Barnes Elementary School: Pre-k through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade (44 students, 100% Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch)	<ul> <li>ACAP's Head Start and Early Head Start WIC</li> <li>St. Apollonia Virtual Dental Homes</li> <li>Maine Resiliency Building Network</li> <li>Maine Prevention Network</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Promote access to physical and mental health resources</li> <li>Reduce siloed supports through stronger integration</li> <li>Provide families with opportunity to use a Whole Family Assessment to set goals</li> <li>Establish a system for family engagement especially during moments of transition</li> <li>Open a new childcare classroom in partnership with ACAP</li> <li>Assess on-going curriculum and assessment alignment to inform professional development</li> </ul>	\$124,592
RSU 71	East Belfast Elementary: Pre-k through 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade (100 students, 81% Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch) Kermit Nickerson Elementary: 3 <sup>rd</sup> through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade (54 students, 81% Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch)	• Waldo CAP	<ul> <li>Enhance communication between school and families</li> <li>Home visits</li> <li>Parenting classes</li> <li>"Growth Kits" to support caregivers</li> </ul>	\$125,000
Sanford	Sanford Pride Elementary School: Pre-K through 4 <sup>th</sup> grade (359 students, 56% Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch)	<ul> <li>York County Head Start</li> <li>CDS</li> <li>ECCP</li> <li>YMCA</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Improve ease of transition from pre-k to kindergarten</li> <li>Build connections between childcare providers, the school, and CDS</li> <li>Work to improve the curriculum in pre-k and early elementary school classrooms</li> </ul>	\$125,000

Creating Collaboration through Community and School Connections

- Whole Student and Community Collaboration Team
  - Cross agency team focused on building understanding of school/community collaboration models such as First4ME, First 10, and Community Schools
  - Exploring strategies for facilitating expansion and sustainability of models

• Coordinating the First 10 evaluation with First4ME

# Questions and Discussion