

Early Learning Programming

April 9, 2025



COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED
SCHOOL DISTRICT 59

Agenda

- Introduction to programs
- EI to EC transition/PFA screenings
- State of the state at ELC
- State of the state at Ridge
- Considerations for the future



Introduction to programs



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Early Childhood: One Name, Many Components

- Special Education
 - Required for eligible children
 - Partially Funded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Preschool (federal)
- Preschool for All
 - Eligibility set by the state
 - Partially funded by Preschool for All Grant (PFA) (state)
- Special education classrooms serve only students with disabilities
- Blended classrooms serve children with and without disabilities
- Bilingual Spanish classrooms
- Tuition students



El to EC transition/PFA screenings



Early Intervention to Early Childhood: Transition

- School districts are required to determine whether children who are receiving Birth to 3 services (therapies) are eligible for services under Part B (school-based special education services)
- This must be completed prior to the child turning 3 years of age
- Eligibility is determined by completing a school evaluation (may include review of records, play-based evaluation, standardized testing, parent input, daycare provider input)
- July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025: 104 evaluations completed. 29 families either moved out of district or declined school services in that same time period.
- If eligible for the program, child may begin school on his/her 3rd birthday



Preschool for All Screenings & Child Find Screenings

- Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that requires states to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities, birth to 21, who are in need of early intervention or special education services.
- Preschool for All grant requires that screenings be conducted annually to assess developmental areas and determine eligibility for the program, which serves children at risk for academic failure.
- Two major screening days are held each year to fulfill these requirements: August & January
- During these screenings, all preschool staff participate in some manner:
 - Greet families, obtain consent for screening, take picture of child
 - Administer developmental screener to child
 - Interview the family
 - Provide results of screening prior to leaving
- 75 screenings took place this current school year
- If eligible for program, child may begin during the current school year



State of the State at the ELC



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ELC Updates

- Enrollment
 - 323 students across our blended and self-contained classrooms.
- A Day in the Life of a D59 Preschooler
 - Students engage in large and small group learning activities, choice/center time, gross motor/playground activities, and snack. SEL, language, and academic readiness are woven throughout each day.
- Family University
 - 25+ families participate with session participation of 100+ students, parents/caregivers, and siblings
- Play-n-Learn
 - 5-9 families participate each session
- Family Learning Days/Events
 - 3 opportunities (2 during the day, 1 in the evening) for families to participate together in learning activities led by ELC staff.
 - Boo Bash, WinterFest, Week of the Young Child



State of the State at Ridge



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Ridge Updates

- Enrollment-
 - 69 students across our Preschool For All classrooms.
- A Day in the Life of a D59 Preschooler & Family Supports/Events
 - Consistent across locations
 - Ridge Specific Experiences - Boo Bash, Bingo Night, Fuel Up Night, Pastries with Parents, etc.
- Opening Preschool Classes at Ridge
 - Accessibility - furniture, bathrooms, playground
 - Schedules & Space - gross motor time, program events & family experiences, specials
 - Student Population - drawing students from across the CCSD59
 - Connections - Day of Play, Garden Club, library, and more



Considerations for the Future



Preschool for All Expansion

- Highest priority are children who are homeless, have current or recent child welfare involvement, have an IEP, and/or income at or below 50% poverty level.
- Ensures comprehensive services to support the development of the whole child, including in the areas of medical, dental, and mental health.
- Full school day including breakfast, lunch, and snack.
- Implications:
 - Classroom and other space
 - Staffing, to include additional related services staff, instructional coaches/leaders, teachers, family coordinators
 - Need to consider as part of long-term facilities planning



Example: Scaling the existing program

- Space: 18 additional classroom spaces; additional spaces for related services providers, coaches, specials (will be needed to ensure that teachers have contractual time), gross motor space
- Staffing: 18 additional certified teachers, one additional instructional leaders/instructional coaches, 2-3 additional family educators, additional certified staff for specials
- Curriculum: additional social emotional learning curriculum
- Partnerships: contract or collaborate with a qualified mental health provider or consultant, connect families to medical and dental homes
- Transportation: students crossing the district on busses (current also)
- Other considerations: meals, MOUs and referral for medical/dental/mental health

