

Saint Paul Early Childhood Initiative Program Overview

Presentation to Councilmembers
September 11, 2024



Initiative Background

2016–2024

Prior to the Saint Paul Early Childhood Initiative Program Design:

- Saint Paul 3K Design Team report
- Legislative Advisory Committee and report
- Metrix IQ and Emmy Liss Strategies report

Community and stakeholder input over time:

- Early childhood and early learning professionals, organizations, and direct providers of service
- Public Schools; both charter and district
- Cultural community organizations
- Workforce partners
- Councilmembers
- Ramsey County programs
- City of Saint Paul programs
- Financial analysts
- Individuals

Summer 2024



Initiative Need

Our *WHY*

- Children's early years are critical for their on-target development and future success.
- Early care and education (ECE) in these critical years has been proven to have significant impacts on children's future success. When children lack access to quality early learning, they are more likely to struggle in school and life.
- Many Saint Paul families cannot access ECE. Approximately 27% of Saint Paul children are <100% FPL, while 52.5% are between 101 and 200% FPL. This 79.5% are at the lowest of economic disadvantage.
- The current state and federal investments still leave ECE out of reach for many families.
- The current City Programs are limited in their reach due to design and capacity.



Program Overview

Program Design Decisions

- Funding and Budget
- Governance, Administration, and Advisory Body
- Service Delivery
- Eligibility and Scale
- Outreach and Enrollment
- Program Standards and Features
- Workforce
- Data and Evaluation



Budget

(pg. 10)

- The Special Levy is projected to scale over 10 years, beginning at \$2 million in year 1.
- At this rate, the estimated tax for a median home of \$275k is \$15.91.
- Tax revenue would have a set of direct and indirect costs. In the initial year indirect costs would be higher due to start up costs hovering near 30%, but will drop beginning in year 2. The remaining would constitute the subsidies for children in the Program.
- Indirect cost assumptions include initiative staff and consultants, marketing and research, evaluation, resource library development, search tool and online application, as well as enrollment, eligibility, and payments.
- Over the initiative's lifetime, most indirect spending would go towards staffing and evaluation. Staffing costs are modeled in Table 3.



Administration, Governance, and Advisory Body

(pg. 17)

- The Program would be housed under the Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE).
- Having complete oversight OFE would contract with an independent organization(s) to administer the Program in the initial years. The contracted administrator(s) would contract to perform specific functions, not independently manage the program.
- Beginning in year 4, the governance and administrative model would shift as contracted administrator(s) begin to offset their functions to City staff, onboarding them to assume responsibility for formerly contracted tasks.
- The Program would have an advisory body. Consisting of 21 members, the goal of this group would be to monitor, advise, provide feedback and recommendation, review program effectiveness, and ensure implementation is aligned with the Program goals.



Service Delivery

(pg. 20)

- Financial subsidies would be provided for Saint Paul residents with children between birth and kindergarten entry.
- Program funds would be available to be used at participating licensed and legal non licensed providers having a Saint Paul business address. These include family and center providers, Head Start, and school based programs.
- Waivers would be granted under extenuating circumstances and for ongoing review.
- Program funds would both follow the child and can also fund seats at providers for any eligible child to use.
- FFN providers would not receive reimbursement for care, however would have access to a curated series of resources.



Eligibility and Scale

(pg. 24)

- At maturity all children in Saint Paul would be eligible to participate in the Program.
- Eligibility in the initial stages of the Program would be based on priority points. There are 10 recommended categories for prioritization, a possible 11 points, with income having the greatest weight.
- Initial years of the program would begin serving infants, followed by toddlers and preschool children in years 2 and 3, respectively.
- Based on projections, by year 10, the Program would have served a minimum of 4,042 children.



Outreach and Enrollment

(pg. 28)

- Outreach would include a three pronged approach: Targeted Communities, Relationships and Partnerships, and Paid Marketing.
- Initial stages would focus on Targeted Communities and Relationships and Partnerships.
- A centralized application system would support enrollment and would be the platform for identifying priority points, preferred care, and eligibility for funding streams or additional resources.
- In the initial stages the centralized application system would be provided in two formats: a virtual form and an over-the-phone application. Over time providers would be trained to support families with the application process.



Program Standards and Features

(pg. 32)

- Participating licensed and legal non licensed providers would sign a partnership agreement making them eligible for reimbursements and allowing them access to partnership resources.
- Partnership with Family, Friend, and Neighbor providers would be resource and access driven, rather than financially reimbursable and would also require a partnership agreement.
- All partner providers would have access to Saint Paul specific professional experiences, along with learning tools and resources.
- Program funding would be available for any scheduling option that meets families' needs, from part-time up to and including year-round, full- and extended day care.



Workforce

(pg. 35)

- Initiatives would focus on education and training opportunities. Program funds would be allocated to support professional learning or specific training opportunities relevant to Saint Paul providers.
- Licensed providers would receive support to apply for county, state, and federal financial resources.
- Family, Friend, and Neighbor, as well as Legal Non Licensed providers, would be supported to progress towards licensure when appropriate, while also having access to learning tools and resources.



Data and Evaluation

(pg. 37)

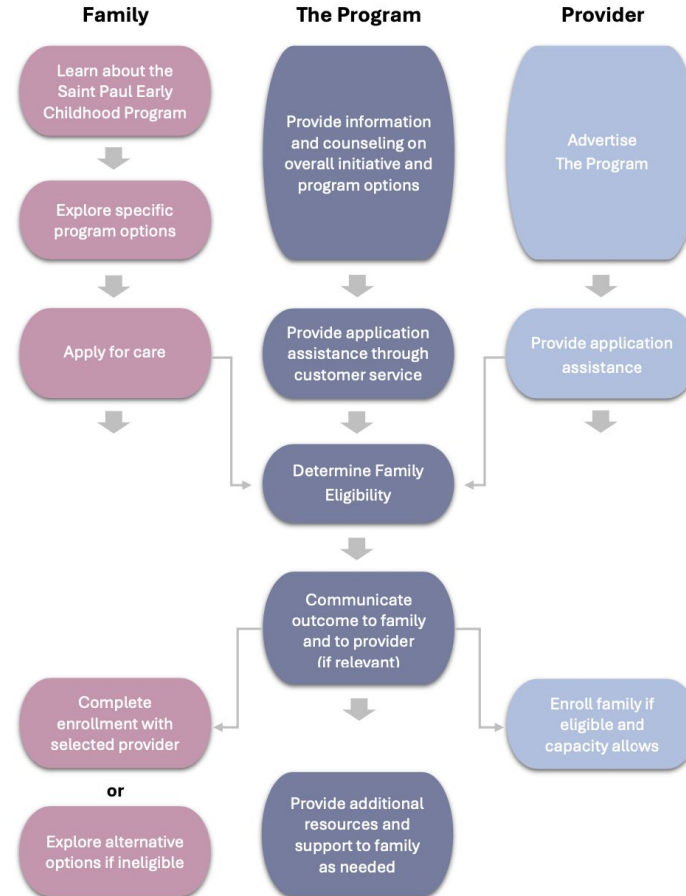
- Data collection for the Program would begin immediately and remain ongoing with short-, middle-, and long- term measurement outcomes.
- Data collection would be both quantitative and qualitative in nature, capturing
 - Program data
 - Family statistics
 - Child data
 - Workforce information
 - Partnerships and collaborations
 - Feedback
- Data evaluation would inform ongoing program implementation.
- Opportunities for ongoing conversation about Saint Paul specific quality indicators would inform data collection and evaluation.



Appendix

- The initial year (pg 40)
- Visual Map (42)

Visual Map of Family Enrollment Process



Program Design Questions