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Title: Resolution creating a task force to oversee the creation of an early childhood implementation plan to improve the quality of and expanding affordable access to Pre-Kindergarten in the City of Pittsburgh.

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3/14/2017	1	City Council	Passed Finally	Pass
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2/28/2017	1	City Council	Read and referred	

Resolution creating a task force to oversee the creation of an early childhood implementation plan to improve the quality of and expanding affordable access to Pre-Kindergarten in the City of Pittsburgh.

Whereas, a child's brain development is most significant from birth to age 3, and by age 5, a child's brain is already 90% developed; and

Whereas, the traditional school model, starting at Kindergarten, does not engage children until the age of 5, missing the opportunity to shape their capacity to learn over time; and

Whereas, high quality Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) and child care can help address this gap, but there is a shortage of high quality slots in Pittsburgh, and they are not affordable for many families; and

Whereas, at-risk children who do not receive high quality early childhood education are 25% more likely to drop out of school, 50% more likely to be placed in special education programs, 60% less likely to attend college, and 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime; and

Whereas, children with differing abilities who attend high quality early childhood education are provided early intervention services that have positive impacts on their social and cognitive development. Inclusion supports the right of all children, regardless of abilities, to participate actively in natural settings within their communities.

Whereas, investing in early childhood programs is more cost effective than addressing these issues later in life; and

Whereas, only 7.5% of the child care slots in Pennsylvania for children ages birth through 4 are considered high quality; and

Whereas, families of children in high quality care and education programs experience more stable employment and higher earnings; and

Whereas, in Pennsylvania, every \$1 invested in child care results in \$2.17 circulating in the economy as a result of increased employment, consumer spending, and tax revenue.

Whereas, in Pittsburgh, over the next ten years there will be an estimated shortage of 100,000 skilled workers. This workforce shortage will require public and private sector investment to grow the skills and talents of our local population as well as to attract and retain new residents by offering educational opportunities for all.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
PITTSBURGH HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Early Childhood Education Task Force

A. The Early Childhood Education Fund Task Force is hereby created to:

1. Provide oversight and input on the creation of the Early Childhood Education Implementation Plan [See Section 2] to expanding early childhood education for children ages 3-4 who are residents of the City of Pittsburgh.
2. Create and leverage partnerships to design the Plan and strengthen and expand the reach of early childhood programs in the City of Pittsburgh.
3. Work with partners to seek funds from non-City sources, such as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, philanthropic community, and corporate donors, to expand funds for early childhood programming and its reach in our communities.

B. The Early Childhood Education Task Force shall be comprised of up to 15 persons appointed by the Mayor and shall include the following:

1. The City of Pittsburgh Early Childhood Manager
2. One member from City Council
3. One member from the Pittsburgh Public Schools
4. One member who represents Pittsburgh parents
5. One member who represents the advocacy perspective for the best practices in early childhood education
6. One member who represents educators working in the Pittsburgh Public Schools.
7. One member who represents educators working in non-profit or privately owned child care facilities.

8. One member who represents the philanthropic community around issues of education
9. One member who represents the philanthropic community around issues of economic development
10. One member who represents Licensing or Certification of early childhood facilities
11. One member who represents Allegheny County Department of Human Services
12. One member who represents workforce development
13. One member who represents local economic and neighborhood redevelopment efforts

The Early Childhood Manager may appoint ad hoc members as necessary to collect valuable feedback from constituencies that are not otherwise represented on the advisory board.

Section 2. Early Childhood Education Implementation Plan

A. The Early Childhood Manager in the Office of Early Childhood shall work with the Early Childhood Education Task Force to develop an initial Pre-K Implementation Plan ("Plan"), based on the recommendations of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Early Childhood Education, to assess the administration, oversight, scale up, and implementation of an expanded Pre-K Program in the City of Pittsburgh.

The recommendations from the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Panel include:

1. **Increasing Quality Levels of Current Providers:** Currently only 13.4 percent of providers registered in the Pennsylvania Keystone STARS [Pennsylvania child care provider quality rating program] have achieved the high quality rating of 3 or 4 STARS. The Plan should focus on designing an approach to elevate providers in the City of Pittsburgh to a STAR 3 or 4 rating.
2. **Ensuring Continuity of Care to Maximize Impact of Public Funds:** The Plan should find ways to support child care providers to strengthen their ability to offer wrap-around services that allow for continued care when pre-K programs are not in session.
3. **Targeted Implementation of a Universal Program:** The strategy should focus not only on at-risk children, but instead incorporate all children, via Targeted Access, Income-Based Family Cost Share, and Fully Subsidized programs.
4. **Creating an Early Childhood Data System:** High quality programs are supported by high quality decision-making. The Plan should look at the formation of a data collecting, analyzing, and sharing system that will examine early childhood indicators across the city's neighborhoods.

B. The Plan shall first focus on how potential funds can support quality improvement of current providers to increase quality of care, and then examine how potential funds can be used to fund slots for 3 and 4 year-olds.

C. The Plan shall also include recommendations for the administration and management of recommendations focusing on ease of access and implementation.

E. The Task Force shall seek public input for the Plan via public meetings, social media, focus groups, and other methods of public engagement.

F. The Task Force shall evaluate potential co-operation agreements to execute recommendations of the Plan.

G. This Plan shall be submitted and filed with the City Clerk with approval from Council.

