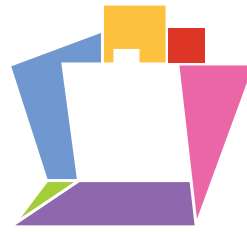


WEINLAND PARK
COLLABORATIVE



The Role of Early Education in Neighborhood Revitalization

The Story of Weinland Park



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Annie E. Casey Foundation
Cardinal Health
The Center for Family Safety and Healing
City of Columbus
Columbus City Schools
The Columbus Foundation
Columbus Works, Inc.
Community Properties of Ohio Management Services
Community Properties Impact Corporation
Directions for Youth and Families
Godman Guild Association
Habitat for Humanity MidOhio
JPMorgan Chase Foundation
Local Matters
NNEMAP Food Pantry
Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing
The Ohio State University
Campus Partners
College of Education and Human Ecology
Knowlton School of Architecture
Ohio State University Extension
Office of Outreach and Engagement
Schoenbaum Family Center
Wexner Center for the Arts
Wexner Medical Center
7th Avenue Community Missionary Baptist Church
United Way of Central Ohio
Wagenbrenner Development
Weinland Park Community Civic Association

The Role of Early Education in Neighborhood Revitalization

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COLLABORATIVE

Columbus, Ohio
February 2018

Table of contents

Report summary.....	1
The revitalization of Weinland Park.....	2
Continuum of services	5
Moms2Be.....	6
SPARK and Family University.....	8
A Good Start.....	10
Schoenbaum Family Center.....	11
Weinland Park Elementary School.....	13
Recommendations.....	15

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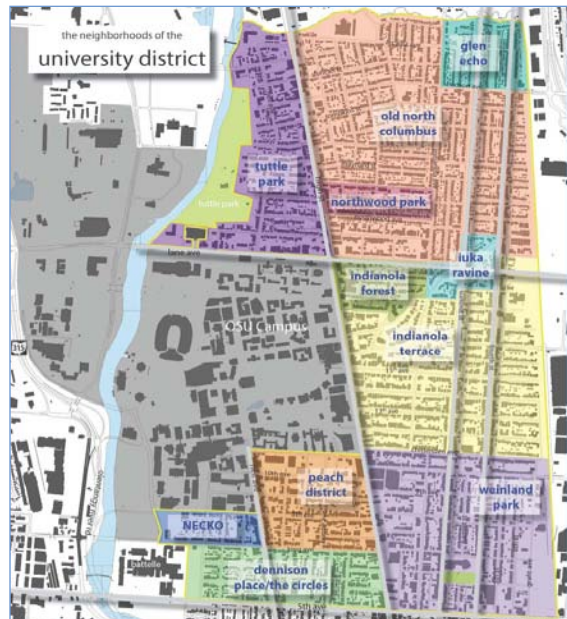
Report Summary

Weinland Park, an urban neighborhood of about 4,800 residents, in the early 2000s had the highest rates of infant mortality and violent crime in Columbus and was a low-opportunity, distressed community. The neighborhood is adjacent to the Columbus campus of The Ohio State University and about 1.5 miles north of downtown. Over the past 15 years, as the result of collaborative investments by numerous partners, Weinland Park is no longer a “hot spot” for infant mortality. The Pre-K program for four-year-olds in Weinland Park Elementary School and kindergarten readiness programs in the Weinland Park neighborhood have significantly improved the preparation of children for kindergarten. The neighborhood is evolving into a true mixed-income community with a supply of well-managed, low-income housing preserved for years to come.

This report summarizes the vital role that programs in early childhood education, quality child care and kindergarten readiness are playing in preparing young children for educational success within the context of a revitalized neighborhood. The report also recommends important public policy changes needed to sustain this progress for young children in Weinland Park and other neighborhoods with high levels of poverty.

The Revitalization of Weinland Park

Weinland Park was originally built in the early 20th century as a working-class neighborhood for employees of nearby factories. A decades-long decline began in the 1960s and 1970s as residents moved to the suburbs and as the factories closed and jobs were lost. Homes fell into disrepair and rental units often were neglected. The poverty rate soared and poorly managed, privately owned government-subsidized housing replaced market-rate apartments. In the 1980s and 1990s, the neighborhood became a hotbed of drug- and gang-fueled criminal activity that continued into the mid-2000s.



Located southeast of OSU and just north of downtown Columbus, Weinland Park is one of 11 neighborhoods in the University District.

The initial seeds of revitalization came in 1995 when The Ohio State University in cooperation with the City of Columbus created Campus Partners, a nonprofit community redevelopment corporation. Campus Partners focused on revitalizing the urban neighborhoods, including Weinland Park, which surround the university campus and are known collectively as the University District. Campus Partners worked closely with the university, city, neighborhood leaders, business owners and other stakeholders on neighborhood planning, economic development, and improved public safety and other public services. With planning and support from Campus Partners, Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH) in 2003 transferred the large portfolio of government-subsidized apartments in Weinland Park to new nonprofit ownership and management known as Community Properties of Ohio (CPO). Over the next six years, OCCH invested \$30 million in the complete renovation of the apartments. CPO's management of the housing improved significantly as did public safety in and around the units.

Recognizing Weinland Park's potential, the city's Planning Division in 2004 began preparation of the "Weinland Park Neighborhood Plan" in close consultation with neighborhood residents and stakeholders. Adopted by Columbus City Council in 2006, the plan projected a vision of Weinland Park evolving into a true mixed-income neighborhood.

The topic of education was an essential part of early conversations about revitalization. In the mid-2000s, Columbus City Schools committed to rebuilding Weinland Park Elementary School on its existing site in the heart of the neighborhood. Ohio State's College of Education and Human Ecology agreed to relocate its laboratory school, the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning, from the university campus to the Schoenbaum Family Center, a new building adjacent to the elementary school.

The elementary school and the family center, which are physically attached, opened in the fall of 2007. The Schoenbaum Family Center houses both the A. Sophie Rogers School, which offers a high-quality, full-day, full-year early learning experience in a mixed-income neighborhood setting, and the Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy. The family center also provides other services to neighborhood families and a gathering place for neighborhood groups. The intent was to create a continuum of learning, beginning at birth to age 10, at the family center and to increase the number of neighborhood children who would successfully transition to Weinland Park Elementary School at kindergarten.

The neighborhood plan and the investments in the government-subsidized housing, the construction of the Schoenbaum Family Center and the new Weinland Park Elementary School all laid the groundwork for a new cooperative effort. The Weinland Park Collaborative (WPC), a partnership of public, nonprofit, philanthropic, civic and educational organizations, and businesses, was launched in 2010. The collaborative focused on public safety, housing, employment, healthy living, resident engagement, youth development and education.

At that time, Weinland Park had the highest infant mortality rate in the city. Dr. Pat Gabbe, a pediatrician, founded the Moms2B Program in 2010 in Weinland Park to address the problem and increase the number of full-term, healthy-weight births. That was the beginning of efforts by many community partners to create a continuum of services based on the needs of families with young children, including an innovative Early Head Start program, drop-in care while parents attend training courses, an in-home early literacy program, and summer intervention to prepare children for kindergarten.

Families & Children in Weinland Park

STATISTIC	2010	2017
Households with children under 18	181	194
Households with children under 6	159	138
Number of children age 0-3	144	117
Number of children age 4-5	68	73

The Weinland Park Collaborative's work caught the attention of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which in late 2012 selected Weinland Park as one of three communities in the country to be a part of the Family-Centered Community Change (FCCC) initiative. FCCC employs a two-generation approach to help families move beyond poverty. In Weinland Park, parents set goals for themselves, their children and their families, while the FCCC staff members coach them to achieve those goals. Most often the goals involve children's success in school and parents' focus on employment and financial stability.

The collective impact of all of the early childhood efforts in Weinland Park is responsible for the positive improvements in school readiness. What follows is a summary of the continuum of services for families in Weinland Park and a set of recommendations to sustain and expand the progress made for young children in Weinland Park and other neighborhoods.



Before: Corner of North 6th Street and East 7th Avenue in Weinland Park in 2007.



After: The same corner in 2014 where new lease-to-purchase homes offer big porches and broad sidewalks.

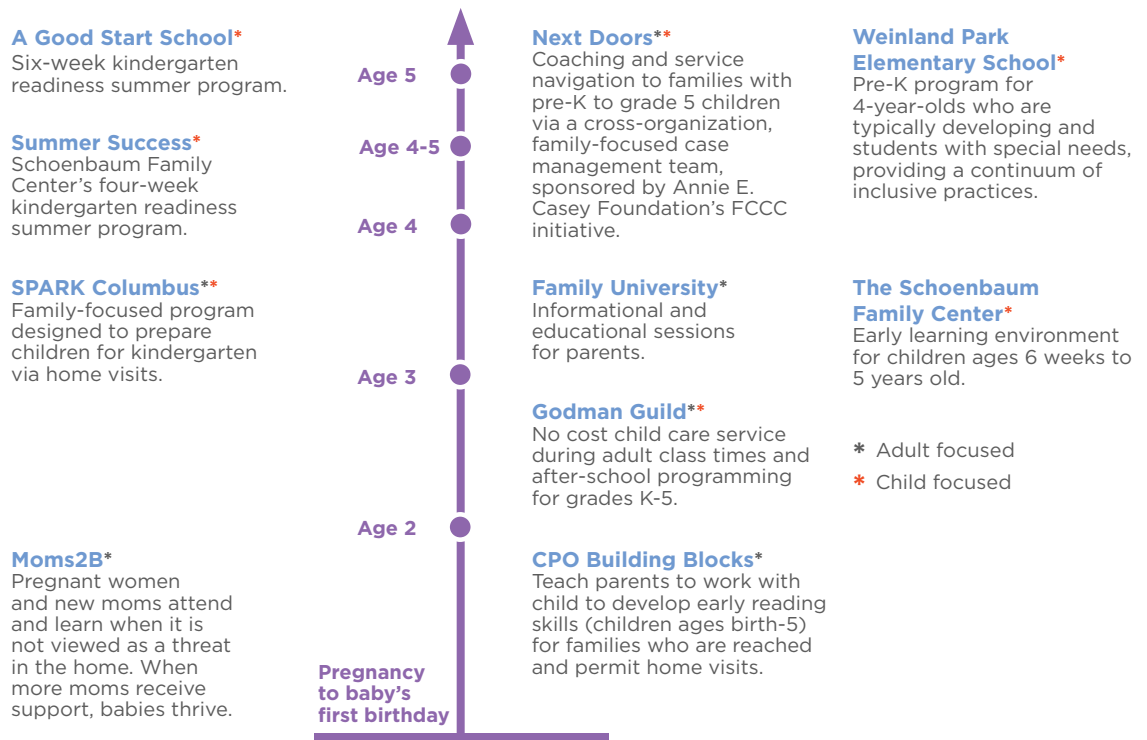
Continuum of Services

The Weinland Park Collaborative is committed to infants and young children getting a healthy start in life, growing and learning in their critical first three years and being prepared for kindergarten and success in elementary school. Over the past eight years, the collaborative has developed partnerships with a variety of agencies and institutions to provide a continuum of services to young families that help parents develop the confidence and skills to direct their children’s learning.

The continuum of services recognizes families have different interests and needs. Women and some men seek the prenatal care, nutrition information, and relationships of Moms2B. Many families welcome the in-home visits and support for literacy-centered learning offered by SPARK Columbus. Others have taken advantage of the daylong out-of-home early education and care provided by the Schoenbaum Family Center.

The chart below illustrates the continuum of services from pregnancy through the child’s first five years. The specific services on the continuum are described in more detail in the following chapters of this report.

The Continuum of Services for Families and Children of Weinland Park



Moms2Be

“ Infant mortality is not a health problem. Infant mortality is a social problem with health consequences.¹ ”



Dr. Pat Gabbe started Moms2B in Weinland Park to reduce infant mortality, increase healthy birth weights and safe spacing of pregnancies. After five years those goals have been achieved, and now the program is being replicated in other neighborhoods.

Dr. Pat Gabbe and Twinkle Schottke started Moms2B in 2010 with one goal: “Every baby stays alive and thrives.” They began their work in Weinland Park because, as Schottke says, “That’s where infant mortality was highest in the city.”

Moms2B is primarily a grant- and donation-funded program that focuses on reducing infant mortality. When infants die prior to their first birthday, it is usually due to prematurity or low birth weight, birth defects and sleep-related issues. Babies also die as a result of neglect, injuries, disease, poor physical or mental health and pregnancies that are too close together. Approximately 150 babies die before their first birthdays every year in Franklin County. While national infant mortality rates are decreasing, in 2014, Ohio ranked 12th worst state in the nation for overall infant mortality. Black babies in Ohio are dying at over twice the rate of white babies.

Moms2B tackles the issue of infant mortality by offering a sanctuary for pregnant women to connect and learn. Targeting central Ohio zip codes with the highest infant mortality rates, all pregnant women – along with their family and friends – are welcomed warmly. Moms2B provides weekly support sessions to educate high-risk women about making healthier choices. Health care professionals, social workers and other volunteers cover topics including nutrition, prenatal care, labor and delivery, infant development, safety and breast-feeding. Every mother is also offered delicious home-cooked meals to supplement their diets. Volunteers provide child care, which makes attendance easier for those with older children.

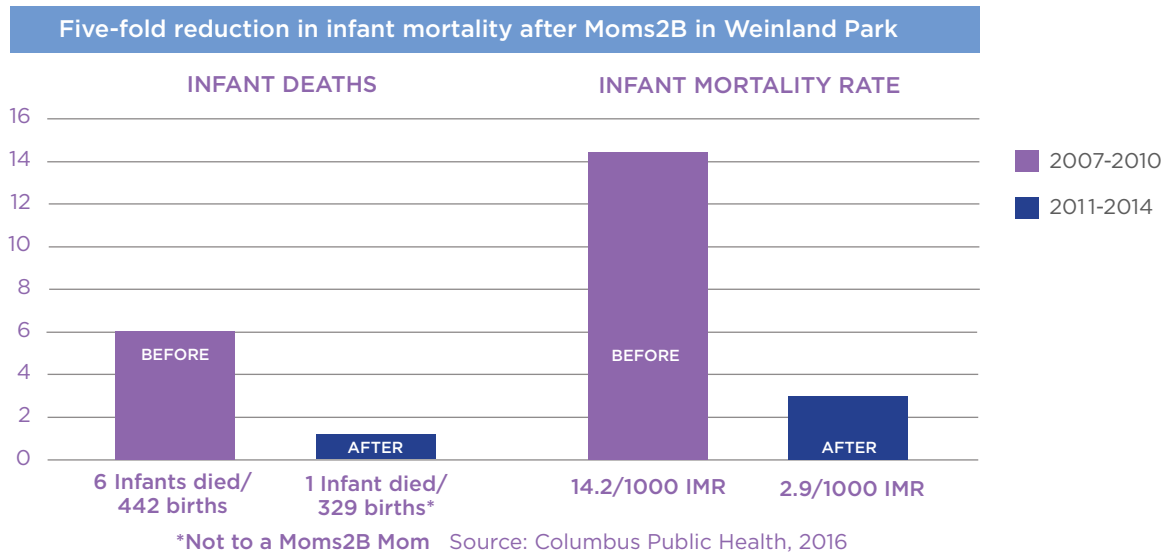
¹ Franklin County Fetal-Infant Mortality Review (FIMR), Case Review Team Findings: Year One (October 2014-December 2015).

Only two women came to their first session, but participation in Moms2B has steadily grown ever since. The 15 employees and volunteers currently see about 115 moms – ranging in age from 12 to 49 years of age – a week at eight locations across Columbus. Moms2B has made a difference in Weinland Park. Only one infant has died in the past four years – and not to a mother in the Moms2B program. Breast-feeding rates have increased, and early preterm births have decreased. “We do it one baby at a time,” Schottke says. “We don’t care about the backgrounds or circumstances of the moms who join us each week. We are steadfastly focused on ensuring that these women receive social, medical and legal support – whatever is needed to have a healthy pregnancy and get to the celebration of that first birthday for the baby.”

Outcomes from Moms2B Ohio

Improving Maternal and Infant Child Health Outcomes with Community – Based Pregnancy Support Groups: Outcomes from Moms2B Ohio

Gabbbe PT, Reno R, Clutter C et al. *Matern Child Health J.* 2017



In more than six years:

- About 1,000 women attended Moms2B sessions
- 353 new moms welcomed in 2016
- About 20 moms served at each location weekly
- Only 10 percent of babies of Moms2B participants born were of low birth weight – 20 percent less than expected

Community health outcomes:

- Reducing prematurity results is a significant cost avoidance for the Medicaid program
- The medical costs for a premature or low-birth weight infant is approximately \$38,000 in the first year of life alone, whereas the medical costs for an infant born full term is less than \$4,000 annually
- By decreasing the number of babies born of low-birth weight, estimated cost savings of \$125,000 per year were achieved

Source: Moms2B, The Ohio State University, Wexner Medical Center.

“The Casey Foundation strongly believes that children do well when their families do well, and that families thrive when they live in supportive communities.”²

Since 2012, the community of Weinland Park has worked with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to implement a two-generation approach to simultaneously improve opportunities for children and outcomes for low-income families. The approach, called Family-Centered Community Change (FCCC), involves integrating services for both children and their parents, fostering children’s success at school while families are guided to gain economic self-sufficiency. The Schoenbaum Family Center and Weinland Park Elementary School, along with Community Properties of Ohio and the Godman Guild are the anchor institutions that collaborate to implement FCCC.³

Creating Partnerships to Build Two-Generation Approaches

HOME VISITING

Home visiting programs can help families move toward financial stability by building relationships with organizations focused on employment and financial coaching.

SCHOOLS AND EARLY EDUCATION

An elementary school or early-education program can collaborate with parents to expand their involvement in their child’s development and create programs for their own educational advancement.



JOB TRAINING


Job-training programs and community colleges can help parents access employment, high-quality child-care for school and work and financial coaching to plan now and for the future.

This two-generation approach is designed to serve children with school-readiness support and their parents and caregivers with parenting, job skills and financial security services. Shalisa Carter, a single-working mom living in Weinland Park, admitted she didn’t know that she should talk or read to her daughter. She didn’t count with her or sound out letters, Carter says. “To be honest, I was barely working with her on any of it.” As it turned out, her daughter had none of the critical skills needed for kindergarten readiness.⁴

² Ryan Chao, Vice President for Civic Sites and Community Change, Annie E. Casey Foundation (as quoted on <http://www.aecf.org/blog/new-partnerships-to-strengthen-communities-in-buffalo-columbusand-san-anto/>).

³ Weinland Park Collaborative Progress Report, 2013-2015.

⁴ The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology, “Schoenbaum Family Center Community Programs: SPARK,” <https://earlychildhood.ehe.osu.edu/community/spark/> (October 11, 2017).



Eventually Carter found the neighborhood Schoenbaum Family Center and SPARK – Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids – a home-visit learning program that teaches parents and caregivers how to be better teachers. Carter began equipping herself and her child for success in school – and life. “That SPARK program showed me a lot,” Carter says. She applied for financial assistance to enroll her daughter in the Schoenbaum Center’s A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning, and her daughter was more than ready for kindergarten when the time came.

Free to the families it serves, SPARK provides families with a monthly home visit from a parent partner, free books and lessons, school supplies and learning tools, developmental assessments and individualized learning plans for the children. In the beginning, the SPARK team recruited families by going door-to-door and showing up at school events and community festivals. “It’s all about relationships,” says Holly Lawrence, a SPARK Parent Partner. “The programs that succeed, thrive and are sustained are those with staff who interact with the community, who earn the trust of community members.”

More than 120 families in Weinland Park have been served since 2013. Seventy-six percent of the community’s children are now enrolled in Weinland Park pre-kindergarten or in a Schoenbaum Family Center program, compared to just half in previous years. Children in the SPARK program consistently outperform non-SPARK children in kindergarten readiness and third-grade assessments.

Support for Weinland Park families is furthered on Saturday mornings at the Schoenbaum Family Center through Weinland Park Family University. Parents are the first and primary teachers of their children. Family University provides parents with the knowledge and resources to help their children succeed. For two hours each week, attendees participate in interactive lessons focused on providing parents with the skills and tools they need to strengthen the stability of their family and support the academic success of their children. Community Properties of Ohio (CPO), in partnership with Weinland Park Elementary School, Schoenbaum Family Center and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, brings in volunteers in the fields of education, nutrition, psychology and early childhood development to facilitate the sessions.

“We have an intimate understanding of the lifestyles of our families and residents in Weinland Park, so we can design the learning opportunities to meet them where they are and offer practical strategies to help move the needle where their child’s academic success is concerned,” says Chasity Edwards, school and community liaison for CPO.

A Good Start

“This is about teaching. This is about literacy. This is about being present and relationships.”⁵

The Maynard Avenue United Methodist Church came through with a grant to launch A Good Start. The Columbus Foundation funded Weinland Park families who wanted to participate. After that, Charity Romero Rose, founder and director, and her team began – and never stopped – asking the question, “Is your child starting kindergarten?”

A Good Start is a six-week, literacy-rich program designed to help children learn the skills and concepts they need and adapt to a school environment in the summer before they enter kindergarten. Today the program exists because of a partnership between the Maynard Avenue United Methodist Church, Ohio Wesleyan University and Neighborhood Services, Inc. Often, A Good Start is a child’s first experience in a school setting. With one adult teacher for every five children, the school welcomes 5-year-olds into a caring and safe learning community.

Using data from the KRA-L test for kindergarten readiness, 95% of all children enrolled in A Good Start improved their scores each year. Most who failed to improve did not regress.

For A Good Start, the program’s biggest challenge is the same one it encountered when it began 10 years ago – finding and enrolling the kids who will be entering kindergarten in the fall. The team at A Good Start addresses this challenge by initiating and nurturing community relationships, eventually creating a network of service organizations that support the program, such as Weinland Park Elementary School and the Godman Guild.

A Good Start is offered free of charge to eligible families in Weinland Park. The mission is to serve those who may not be able to afford other pre-K programs. Since 2008, A Good Start has served over 240 children. The program mimics a typical day in kindergarten for the children, exposing them to the structure and expectations of a school experience. All of this takes place under the watchful eyes of the staff, who monitor the children’s development to evaluate how it is progressing and if and when additional supports are needed.

⁵ Charity Romero-Rose, Director, A Good Start School.

Schoenbaum Family Center

*“ ... Children’s health and well-being improve when families access community resources that support their young children and their families. However, health may be negatively affected when families do not access or use community resources. This is especially true for families in need of these resources, but with little or no access to or use of community resources. It is also especially true during a child’s critical or sensitive period in his or her development.”*⁶




The Ohio State University Schoenbaum Family Center provides research-based education to infants, toddlers and preschoolers in the neighborhood; offers programs on early childhood development and family engagement to neighborhood residents; and conducts research to improve children’s learning and development.

Dr. Laura Justice, executive director of The Ohio State University’s Schoenbaum Family Center, says the brain of a 3- or 4-year-old child is better equipped to learn than those of teenagers and adults. Research studies conducted since 1960 find participation in early education and care leads to statistically significant reductions in special education placement and grade retention while increasing high school graduation rates. A 2012 report by the Brookings Institute’s Center on Children and Families found that low-income children who attend some form of preschool are 9 percent more likely to be ready for kindergarten. Those in center-based preschool programs saw a 23 percent increase in cognitive skills and a 15 percent increase in social-emotional skills, the Brookings report says.

The Ohio State University Schoenbaum Family Center (SFC) and Weinland Park Elementary School sit next to each other in Weinland Park. Together they play a critical role in engaging parents, caregivers and residents and providing the foundation for social integration and upward mobility. These schools are critical physical assets – community centers with technology resources that operate beyond the traditional school day. The JPMorgan Chase Library, housed in the SFC, and its vast selection of books for kids and adults is open to anyone in the community. Early education programs like the Early Head Start Partnership Program, provide services to infants, toddlers and their families.

⁶ Pamela Salsberry, Ph.D., RN, FAAN, Mihaiela Gugiu, Ph.D., Jaclyn M. Dynia, Ph.D., Laura M. Justice, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, Jessica A.R. Logan, Ph.D., Kelly Purtell, Ph.D., Stephen Snyder-Hill, MS, RDN, LD, “The Kids in Columbus Study (KICS),” The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology, The Schoenbaum Family Center (SFC) and Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy (CCEC).



The Schoenbaum Family Center is part of The Ohio State University's College of Education and Human Ecology. Together with its partners, the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning and the Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy, it sits in the heart of Weinland Park and is dedicated to the community.

The A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning offers a full-day, full-year immersive early learning environment for children ages six weeks to 5 years old. The highly qualified teachers of the school provide an effective, research-based curriculum that focuses on language and literacy, building essential social skills and a love of learning and discovery. The school also serves as the training ground for undergraduate students of The Ohio State University in clinical and education fields.

Prior to its move in 2007 from the university campus to the new Schoenbaum Family Center in Weinland Park, the A. Sophie Rogers School served only 30 children — all drawn from upper socio-economic levels. The College of Education and Human Ecology constructed the family center in partnership with Columbus City Schools to provide high-quality, evidenced-based early childhood education and care for children in the Weinland Park attendance area with a priority on serving low-income families. Since 2007, the A. Sophie Rogers School has evolved and now serves almost 100 children in the diverse, mixed-income community of Weinland Park and surrounding areas. “We have a high-quality, five-star program here,” says Annaliese Johnson, principal of the A. Sophie Rogers School. “We want kids here learning what they need to succeed. The state should want kids here.” Five stars represents the highest level in the state’s rating system of child care facilities.

Enrollment is contingent on funding, and the process to obtain funding is arduous. For instance, funding from different federal and state programs focus on auditing and preventing fraud, not on education itself. A family can lose funding if a parent loses a job or gains a job and falls out of specified salary ranges. A parent may need to visit the school in the middle of the day to swipe out for one program and in for another because the state prohibits preschools from using multiple state child care and education dollars during the same hours. The school administers multiple assessments to students and reports to each funder. Preschool administrators spend huge amounts of time navigating these complexities to adhere to the rules and standards. Missteps mean budgets are cut and kids are turned away.

Education experts and pre-K advocates argue that the best way to save money — at both state and federal levels — is to build healthy communities. Their arguments are supported by evidence. Data shows that students of color, English language learners and students with disabilities face serious educational inequities, starting with access to high-quality preschool. In 2016, the Secretary of Education John King referenced this data, stating, “Our failure to educate some groups of children as well as others tears at the moral fabric of the nation.⁷”

⁷ Civil Rights Data Collection, <https://ocrdata.ed.gov>. Quinlan, Casey, “New Data Shows the School-to-Prison Pipeline Starts as Early as Preschool,” ThinkProgress, June 7, 2016.

Weinland Park Elementary School

Weinland Park Elementary School, 211 E. Seventh Ave., enrolled 381 students from pre-k through fifth grade in the 2017-18 school year. The student body is predominantly African-American and nearly all of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. The school began its pre-kindergarten program for four-year-olds in the fall of 2004.

The school has made progress in improving the academic performance of its students in the last five years, but the school still lags behind on the state proficiency tests. The success of multiple neighborhood efforts to prepare young children for kindergarten, however, indicates the school's performance on the proficiency tests may improve significantly in the next few years.

In 2013, Weinland Park received a new principal who brought a data-driven approach to student achievement coupled with a commitment to innovation and best practices. The next year the principal recruited highly effective elementary school teachers from among the existing staff and across the district and implemented other school reform strategies. Over the next two years, the school had success in "value-added" instruction, meaning that the children were achieving more than one year of learning from one year of instruction. The proficiency scores remained below grade level, however, because so many children began kindergarten far behind their peers.

This challenge of children not ready for kindergarten is being met in Weinland Park by the programs described in this policy paper. These programs, combined with stable housing for low-income families, improved public safety and a more attractive neighborhood, are having a positive effect. See the chart on the next page which reports the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) scores for students living in the Weinland Park neighborhood who entered kindergarten in the fall of 2017 at Weinland Park Elementary School (WPES). Fifteen of 16 students were designated as "on track" for reading. All 12 of the children who had been enrolled in the Pre-K at WPES or the A. Sophia Rogers School were identified as "demonstrating readiness." Of the four children not enrolled in a Pre-K program, three were "on track" for reading. Two of the three children participated in SPARK and one also participated in Summer Success.



Weinland Park Elementary School opened in 2008 and is at full enrollment.

2017-2018 KRA Scores for the kindergarten students living in the Weinland Park neighborhood attending Weinland Park Elementary School

		On-track (for Reading)		Emerging Readiness		Approaching Readiness		Demonstrating Readiness	
Pre-K Attendance	Students	Students On-track	Percent On-track	Students	Percent	Students	Percent	Students	Percent
Pre-K	12	12	100%	0	0%	0	0%	12	100%
No-Pre-K	4	3	75%	0	0%	3	60%	1	25%
Total	16	15	93%	0	0%	3	19%	13	81%

At the beginning of each school year, public and community-based kindergarten programs use Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) to determine how well prepared their children are for kindergarten. The KRA is used to assess four areas of early learning: 1) social foundations, including social and emotional development and approaches toward learning; 2) mathematics; 3) language and literacy; and 4) physical well-being and motor development. The designations of "Emerging Readiness," "Approaching Readiness" and "Demonstrating Readiness" reflect a combined assessment from all four areas of early learning.

On-track (for Reading): This score focuses on the child's preparation in the area of language and literacy.

Emerging Readiness: The child demonstrates minimal foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

Approaching Readiness: The child demonstrates some foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

Demonstrating Readiness: The child demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him or her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

While the KRA scores are one predictor of a successful transition to kindergarten, they aren't the whole story. Dr. Porsha Robinson-Ervin, principal of WPES since the fall of 2017, explains the school is diligently preparing students to not only learn the foundational skills that are the focus of the KRA, but to also master the Kindergarten Common Core Learning Standards. The KRA measures student knowledge of skills such as letter identification and phonics, while the Kindergarten Common Core Learning Standards require students to learn at an even deeper level. For example, they require kindergarten students to ask and answer questions about key details in a text and to compare and contrast the information in two different texts. The acquisition of these higher-level skills is imperative because they are the focus on the American Institutes for Research assessments when the students matriculate into the intermediate grades.


Recommendations



The goal is to build Weinland Park as a national example for building a vibrant mixed-income community where all people can meet their full potential.

The earliest years of life are a period of incredible growth. Good health, secure and stable families, and positive early learning environments are necessary to promote children's physical, intellectual and social-emotional development during this significant period. Based on our experiences in Weinland Park over the past decade, we have learned what works, what doesn't and where the gaps are. Supporting, sustaining and improving existing effective core programs are of the utmost importance for our community's social and economic well-being. When young children and parents have the supports they need to succeed, families are stronger and more stable. This not only creates a safer and more productive community, but it also helps build the economy by empowering our future workforce.

- A campaign is needed to help all families understand that learning begins at birth and that a child's brain grows faster during the first three years than any other time. The campaign needs to build community awareness of the importance and need for early childhood education and care and to help provide parents with the tools and information on how to choose a high-quality early childhood center or family child care home.
- To complement the awareness campaign, we need an expansion of the family university concept. Trusted community resources should be leveraged to provide parents and caregivers with a series of learning opportunities that equip parents with the skills and information to support their child's growth, development and learning to meet the school readiness goal at kindergarten and beyond.
- Funding is needed to build a new center for early care and learning in the neighborhood that can provide additional spaces and services needed for families with children age four and under. The Weinland Park Elementary School pre-K program and the A. Sophie Rogers School have limited spaces and cannot meet the needs of families in the neighborhood. New space could be designed to offer a crisis nursery, drop-in care, a one-stop shop for social services and a parent resource room.
- Child care home businesses could be created in existing duplexes in the neighborhood. With support from Campus Partners, two duplexes could be renovated for this purpose. The homeowner could live in one side of the duplex and operate a family child care home business on the other side. This would provide increased access for early care and learning and an employment opportunity for residents interested in early childhood education.

- 
- The State of Ohio requires that early care and learning centers must be star-rated in its Step-Up-to-Quality program by 2020 in order to enroll children who are receiving Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC) subsidies. This challenge will require streamlined accountability, dedicated funding and elevation of the early childhood education profession. Without these investments, we are likely to see a significant reduction in the number of centers who can enroll children with PFCC subsidies.
 - The development of a centralized data system is necessary for centers to maintain and report data to multiple funders and establish an automated system for budgeting and billing. This would also provide uniform data to the city and county, and other funders regarding enrollment, attendance and impact on child outcomes.
 - A dedicated funding stream is needed to support sustainable, affordable high-quality early education and care for children from birth to age five. The average cost of care can range from \$12,000 to \$17,000 per year depending on the ages of the children. While investments from the state, city and county are helpful, they are not enough and the processes for obtaining the funding is burdensome to the provider and the family. Entities that provide subsidies should use the same enrollment criteria, enrollment packages and processes. The PFCC's point of service swipe card process should be eliminated, and the child care subsidies should be provided based on enrollment.
 - State policy must simplify the process of leveraging early childhood education funding sources. The current policy requires providers to designate specific hours of service for each source of state and federal funds. The policy also requires families receiving public assistance for child care to remove and readmit their children midday using the swipe card system in order to access different funding streams. The policy is burdensome and counterproductive for both the family and the provider.
 - With the expectation that centers must be star-rated to enroll children with PFCC subsidies, the per-child funding must reflect the true cost of doing business to achieve and maintain the star rating. These quality components include a living wage for administrators and teaching staff, professional development, increased requirements for credentialing, practice-based coaching to improve classroom instruction, and support for the paperwork and administrative time.
 - As more public and private money goes to early childhood care and learning, early educators must elevate the profession to ensure that these resources deliver the best outcomes for children. Elevating the profession includes developing a shared framework of career pathways, knowledge and competencies, qualifications, standards, and compensation that unifies the entire profession. This framework can lead to a comprehensive policy and financing strategy for its systemic adoption and implementation.