



AN INITIATIVE OF

the de Beaumont Foundation + Kaiser Permanente

# High-Quality, Accessible Pre-K

## POLICY BREAKDOWN

“Increasing access to high-quality Pre-K is not only the smart thing to do, it’s the right thing to do. Raising lifetime wages (and thereby tax revenues) and reducing the likelihood that children will drop out of school, get involved in crime and become a burden on the justice system more than make up for the costs of early education.”

— John E. Pepper, Jr, former Chairman and CEO, Proctor and Gamble, and chairman of the Walt Disney Company, and James Zimmerman, former chairman and chief executive of Macy’s



### CityHealth helps cities thrive through policies that improve people’s day-to-day quality of life, well-being and health.

CityHealth, an initiative of the de Beaumont Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, works to advance a package of evidence-based policy solutions that will help millions of people live longer, better lives in vibrant, prosperous communities.

Our assessment of how the nation’s 40 largest cities fare in nine policies is based in research, backed by qualified experts

and shown to have bipartisan support. With these policies in place, cities will attract families who want the best for themselves and their children, young people looking for interesting places to work and businesses that need high-quality talent. The bottom line: Policies that increase access to high-quality Pre-K will improve lives and help cities thrive.

### FOCUS ON POLICY: HIGH-QUALITY, ACCESSIBLE PRE-K

Pre-Kindergarten provides early educational experiences to all children within a jurisdiction regardless of their families’ ability to pay. CityHealth’s assessment of Pre-K quality is based on the National Institute of Early Education Research’s (NIEER) 10 research-based quality standards benchmarks, along with an assessment of the level of enrollment in the city’s local and state-funded Pre-K programs. These quality standards include components like student-teacher ratios, class size limits, and a continuous improvement system that ensures strong teaching practices. In addition to these criteria, Pre-K programs must also be adequately funded and supported by educational leadership. These are just some of the benefits of a quality Pre-K policy:

■ **Improves school readiness and academic achievement.** Children who participate in high-quality Pre-K programs enter school better prepared

and are less likely to repeat a grade or be referred to special education.

- **Leads to better societal outcomes.** Long-term effects of high-quality, Pre-K include increased high-school graduation rates, increased years of education completed, higher earnings, and reductions in crime and teen pregnancy.
- **Provides health benefits.** Preschool participants are more likely to go to a doctor, receive appropriate immunizations and screenings, and get dental care. In the long-term, the cognitive and social emotional gains children get from quality Pre-K are associated with improved health in adulthood.
- **Provides a significant financial return.** High-quality Pre-K programs are a wise financial investment. Nobel Prize winning economist James Heckman estimates a \$7-\$10 return on investment for every dollar spent on Pre-K.

## MEDALS BY CITY

|                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| Albuquerque      | Gold     |
| Atlanta          | Gold     |
| Austin           | Bronze   |
| Baltimore        | Bronze   |
| Boston           | Gold     |
| Charlotte        | Gold     |
| Chicago          | Gold     |
| Columbus         | No Medal |
| Dallas           | Gold     |
| Denver           | Bronze   |
| Detroit          | Gold     |
| El Paso          | Bronze   |
| Fort Worth       | Bronze   |
| Fresno           | Bronze   |
| Houston          | Bronze   |
| Indianapolis     | No Medal |
| Jacksonville     | Bronze   |
| Kansas City      | Silver   |
| Las Vegas        | No Medal |
| Long Beach       | Bronze   |
| Los Angeles      | Bronze   |
| Louisville       | Bronze   |
| Memphis          | Bronze   |
| Mesa             | No Medal |
| Milwaukee        | Bronze   |
| Nashville        | Gold     |
| New York         | Gold     |
| Oklahoma City    | Gold     |
| Philadelphia     | Bronze   |
| Phoenix          | No Medal |
| Portland         | Silver   |
| Sacramento       | Bronze   |
| San Antonio      | Gold     |
| San Diego        | Bronze   |
| San Francisco    | Gold     |
| San Jose         | Bronze   |
| Seattle          | Silver   |
| Tucson           | No Medal |
| Virginia Beach   | Silver   |
| Washington, D.C. | Bronze   |

## HOW CITIES STACK UP



### The Gold Standard for High-Quality, Accessible Pre-K

CityHealth's 40-city assessment combined innovative legal analysis with the input of national experts to determine the "gold standard" for each policy. We identified which elements are necessary for the best quality policy (gold), a good

quality policy (silver), and a passable quality policy (bronze). Cities with no policy received no medal. The level of enrollment in the city's largest Pre-K program as of September 30, 2019.

### How did we award high-quality Pre-K medals?

|  | Bronze | Silver | Gold |
|--|--------|--------|------|
| Meets 8 out of 10 quality benchmarks for a Pre-K program | ✗      | ✓      | ✓    |
| Over 30% of children enrolled in Pre-K programs          | ✓      | ✗      | ✓    |