



PRE4CLE

Testimony

Katie Kelly, Executive Director, PRE4CLE

Ohio House Finance Committee

April 19, 2023



PRE**4**CLE

When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

Summary of PRE4CLE

- Initiative to expand access to high-quality preschool to all 3- and 4-year-olds in Cleveland
- Launched in 2014
- Led by city, county, school district, early learning, and community partners
- Approximately \$25 million/year in local funding toward preschool in Cleveland



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

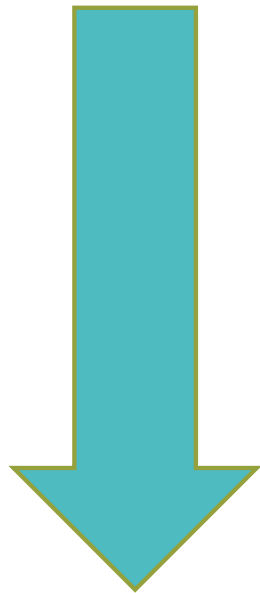
Urgent Challenges in Ohio's Child Care System

- **Staffing shortages** are severely reducing child care availability for working families.
- **Ohio's low child care eligibility** leaves many families without options.
- **Ohio's underfunded childcare system** is driving low wages and system instability.



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

Ohio's Child Care Workforce



- Overall, in Ohio, **62% of child care programs are reporting a staffing shortage** (NAEYC, 2022)
- Shortages are a result of **low wages** and a **lack of qualified applicants**.

Examples from regional surveys:

- **2,500 vacant child care positions in Northeast Ohio** (December 2022, Starting Point)
- **1,985 vacant child care positions in Central Ohio** (November 2022, Action for Children)



Child Care Wages in Ohio: Actual Wages in March 2022

Average Ohio Child Care Teacher: **\$11-\$13/Hour, few or no benefits**

Amazon starting wage: **\$16-18/hour, full benefits**

Target starting wage: **\$15/hour, health care, PTO, tuition reimbursement**

Car Wash Assistant: **\$15/hour, some benefits**



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

Budget Request: \$100 million to Support Ohio's Child Care Workforce

- **\$75 million-** continue child care stabilization grants to attract and retain teachers and staff
- **\$25 million-** funding for community colleges and child care resource and referral organizations to rapidly rebuild Ohio's child care workforce



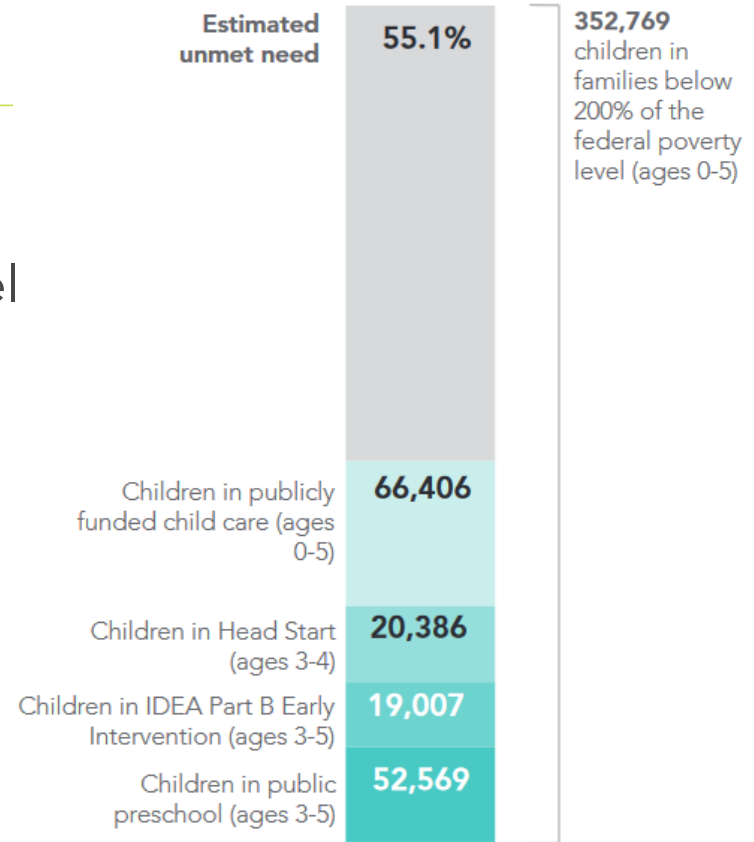
When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

Raising Ohio's Child Care Eligibility

- Ohio's low child care eligibility level leaves **tens of thousands of families** under 200% of the federal poverty level without affordable child care options
- Average cost of child care in Ohio is **\$9,700 for infants and \$7,900 for preschoolers**
- A family of four at **200% of poverty makes \$55,000/year**



Many Ohio children from families with low incomes **did not have access to early learning opportunities** in 2020-2022.



Source: Groundwork Ohio

When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

Budget Request: Raise Ohio's Child Care Eligibility Level to 200% FPL

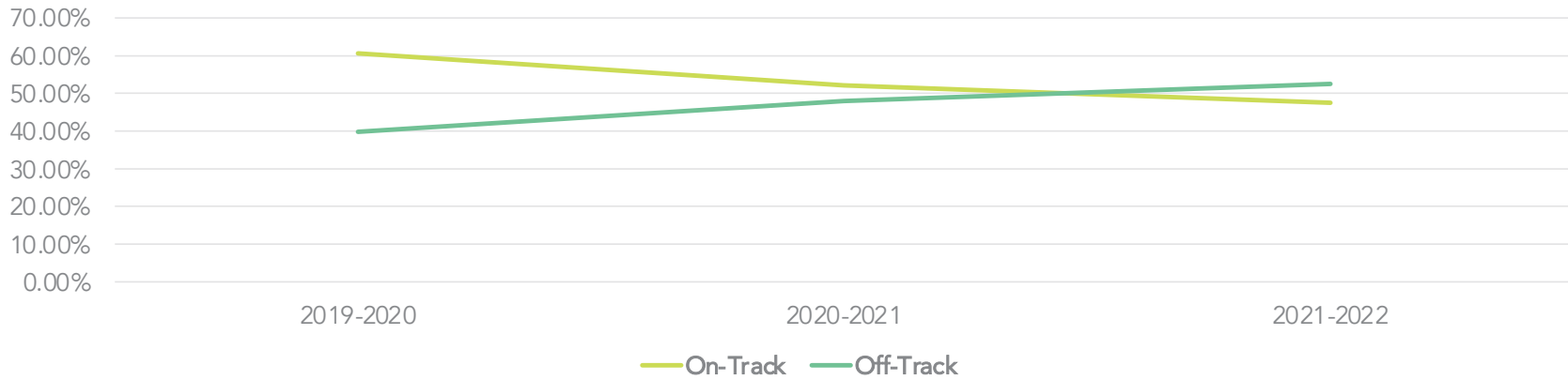
- **Invest \$75 million** to raise Ohio's child care eligibility level from proposed 160% to 200% of the federal poverty level
- Continue to support **lower co-payments** for working families



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

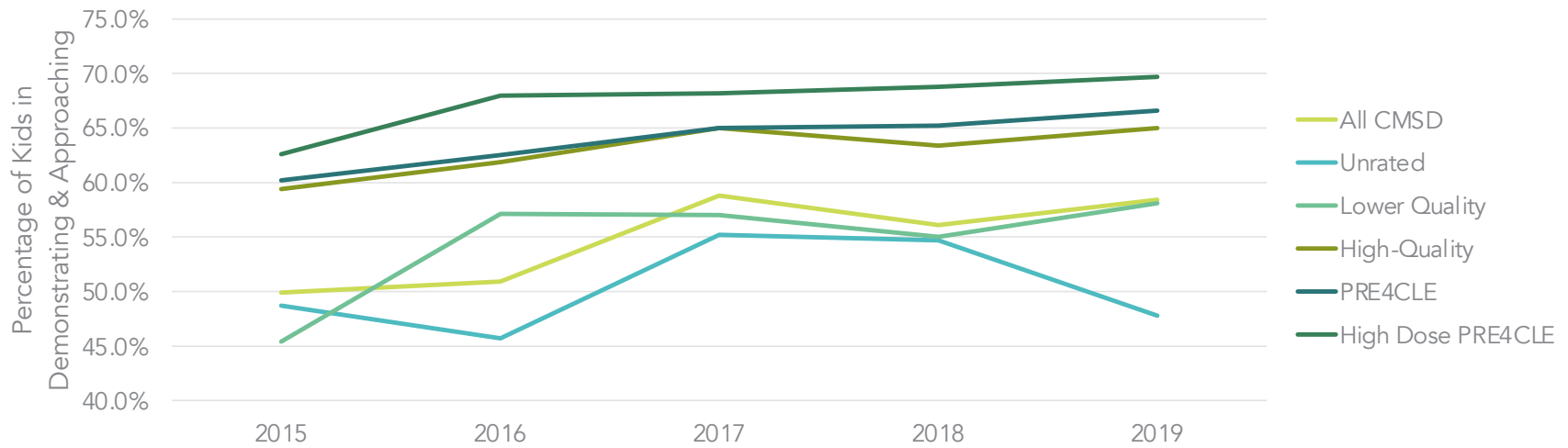
Building the Workforce of Tomorrow: Kindergarten Readiness

Percent of Kindergarteners On-Track for Literacy and Language



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

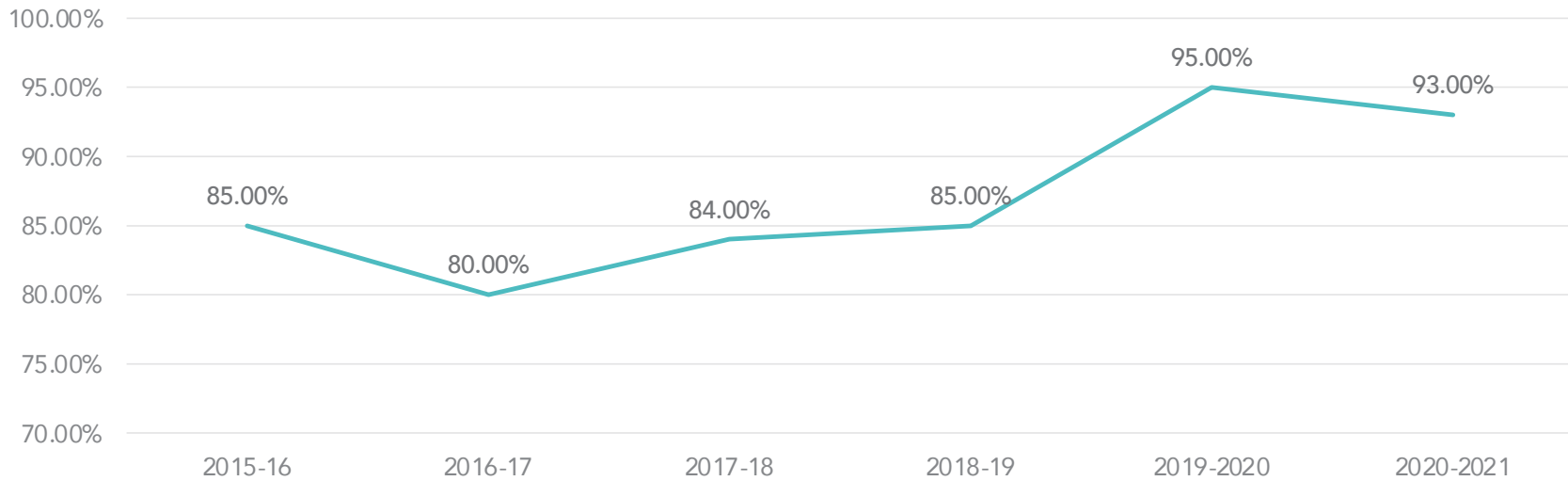
Percent of Kindergarteners in Approaching & Demonstrating Bands of KRA in Cleveland



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

K-3 Literacy Improvement in Cleveland Metropolitan School District

Percent of Third Graders Passing the Third Grade Reading Guarantee



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.

Contact

Katie Kelly

Executive Director, PRE4CLE

Katie.Kelly@escneo.org

(216) 224-9554



When our smallest students shine, Cleveland thrives.