

Published on *Philadelphia Public School Notebook* (<http://thenotebook.org>)

[Home](#) > [Blogs](#) > [thenotebook's blog](#) > Early childhood ed will be major focus of city's anti-poverty plan

Early childhood ed will be major focus of city's anti-poverty plan

by on Jul 18 2013

by **Sonia Giebel**

The report on the mayor's new plan to address poverty noted one especially sobering fact: 39 percent of Philadelphia's children live in poverty.

As a result, a major part of the [Shared Prosperity Philadelphia](#) plan is to beef up early childhood education by identifying areas where the need isn't being met and tracking the readiness of young children to enter kindergarten. The plan defines this initiative as a focus on "learning preparedness."

"We fully understand the vital role that public education plays in fighting poverty and breaking the intergenerational transfer of poverty," said Eva Gladstein, the executive director of the Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity. "Our plan calls for us to help reduce the impact of poverty on citizens, especially children, by becoming a hub and coordinating services."

Her office hopes to establish greater points of contact with Philadelphia parents in an effort to increase access to quality pre-K options, afterschool and summer enrichment programs, as well as adult and child literacy.

Shared Prosperity Philadelphia is set up to be collaborative, with various organizations working together to address the issue. As part of the announcement, Gladstein said that the goal is to "maximize the impact of every anti-poverty dollar we now have" as well as "inspire more investment and commitment from government and other sources."

But there is no budget or detailed plan of execution for the initiative yet, Gladstein said in an interview. Her office manages a federally funded annual community services block grant of \$4.8 million, which will be used to help fund the effort.

On June 25, the city unveiled a \$500,000 grant to Philadelphia for Early Childhood Education, an early-childhood-learning advocacy group, in an effort to revamp and expand the city's early-childhood resources and facilities.

Janet Filante, executive director of PECE, is hopeful about Shared Prosperity's ambitions.

"We're very happy to see this as part of the package and vision and we certainly have a lot of ideas as to how to make the vision reality," she said. "Our goals certainly fit with this [plan]."

PECE did not officially work with the mayor's office in the development of Shared Prosperity Philadelphia.

Philadelphia's overall poverty rate -- 28 percent -- is the highest among the nation's 10 largest cities. More than 430,000 of the city's 1.5 million residents live below the federal poverty line. A disproportionate number of those are Black or Latino citizens.

In addition to early childhood education, Shared Prosperity addresses jobs and training, access to benefits, housing security, and economic security.

Sonia Giebel is an intern at the Notebook.

Source URL: <http://thenotebook.org/blog/136211/city-emphasizes-early-childhood-education-new-poverty-plan>

Links:

[1] <http://thenotebook.org/users/thenotebook>

[2] <http://thenotebook.org/taxonomy/term/255>

[3] <http://thenotebook.org/print/6211?page=show>

[4] <http://sharedprosperityphila.org/>

[5] <http://thenotebook.org/ad/redirect/6215/t261?url=http://thenotebook.org/blog/136211/city-emphasizes-early-childhood-education-new-poverty-plan>