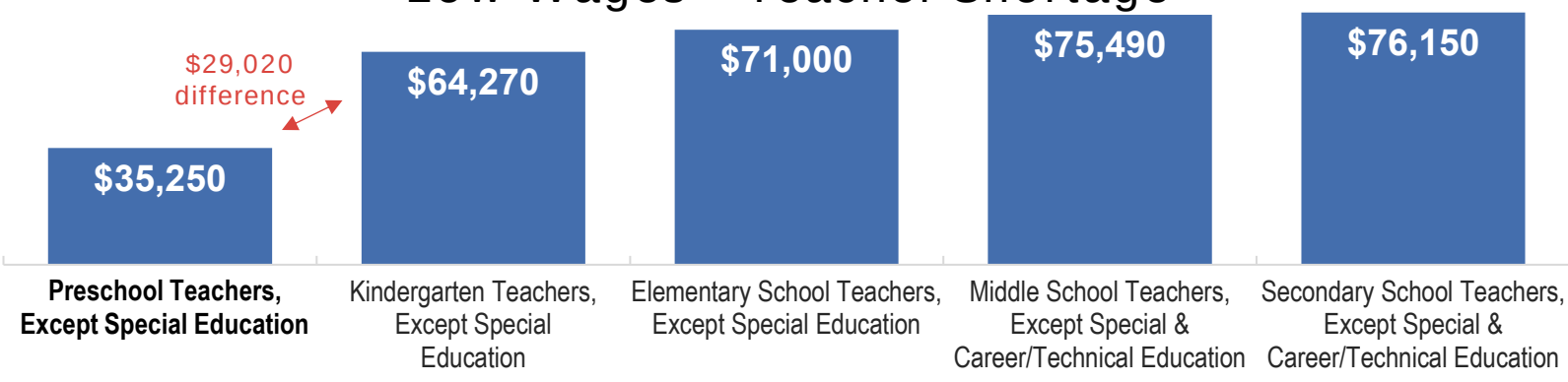
HIGH-QUALITY, PUBLICLY FUNDED PRE-K

Lancaster County

Low Wages = Teacher Shortage



2024 PA Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, Mean Annual Salary

County		Pennsylvania
13,710	Population age 3-4	272,365
7,370 (54%)	Eligible children age 3-4*	138,613 (51%)
1,648	Eligible children with access	67,096
5,622	**Eligible children without access**	**71,517**
76%	**Percent unserved**	**52%**
562	Additional educators needed for eligible, unserved children	**7,152**
118	Eligible pre-k providers**	3,277
84 (71%)	Locations receiving public pre-k funds	2,485 (76%)
16	Head Start providers	631
37	Pre-K Counts (PKC) providers	1,024
9 (24%)	PKC in high-quality child care	468 (46%)
6 (16%)	PKC in Head Start locations	259 (25%)

*Eligible children live in families earning up to 300% of FPIG ($99,000 for a family of four). Children with access includes those enrolled in high-quality providers using public funds to support their pre-k education.

**High-quality, publicly funded pre-k programs are offered through Head Start, Pre-K Counts, Philadelphia pre-k (PHLpreK), school district pre-k programs, and through child care provided in Keystone STAR 3-4 centers and group child care homes participating in the Child Care Works program for preschool-age children. Eligible providers include Head Start, Keystone STARS 3 and 4 center and group child care, PDE-licensed nursery schools and school districts.

PRE-K FOR PA
READY TO SUCCEED
AN INITIATIVE OF EARLY LEARNING PA

The Pre-K for PA vision is to ensure that all children can enter school ready to succeed by making high-quality pre-kindergarten accessible to every three- and four-year-old in Pennsylvania.

VISIT PAPARTNERSHIPS.ORG/MAPPING-TOOLS FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HIGH-QUALITY, PUBLICLY FUNDED PRE-K AND PROVIDERS IN THIS REGION

HIGH-QUALITY, PUBLICLY FUNDED PRE-K

BENEFITS OF HIGH-QUALITY PRE-K


reduced grade repetition


increased graduation rates


reduced special ed placements


taxpayer dollars preserved


decreased crime and incarceration


stronger economy

High-quality early childhood programs like Head Start are a vital, cost-effective part of Pennsylvania's education system. In both rural and urban communities, Head Start expands access to preschool—often providing transportation to ensure children can attend consistently and families can rely on care. Beyond the classroom, the program supports child health, nutrition, and early intervention while helping parents stay engaged in the workforce. By strengthening school readiness and family stability, Head Start delivers lasting benefits for children, families, and the communities they call home.

- Jen Neely,
Executive Director, Child Advocates of Blair County,
Pre-K for PA and Start Strong PA Provider Advisory Board member

The average annual cost of care for a 4-year-old in Pennsylvania is

$11,798

or $983 per month.

Economic Policy Institute: The cost of child care in Pennsylvania

To make meaningful progress toward families finding and affording high-quality child care and pre-k, Pennsylvania policymakers must:

- Support the proposed investments in the early care and education workforce (at a minimum):
  - $10M increase for the Child Care Staff Recruitment and Retention Program.
  - $2M increase for the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program.
  - $7.5M increase for Pre-K Counts.
- Strengthen the child care sector:
  - Raise the child care subsidy income limit so more working families can get help paying for a child care program they trust.
  - Dedicate funds so child care and pre-k programs can better service children with special needs.
  - Advance targeted reforms that reduce unnecessary burdens on child care providers while preserving strong, enforceable health and safety standards that keep children safe.

PRE-K FOR PA
READY TO SUCCEED
AN INITIATIVE OF EARLY LEARNING PA

Campaign led by Children First, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, First Up, Mission: Readiness, Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children, Pennsylvania Head Start Association, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, ReadyNation, The United Way of Pennsylvania and Trying Together

prekforpa.org
facebook.com/prekforpa
twitter.com/prek4pa

4/2026

Data is provided by KIDS COUNT®: Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children