

WHAT IS MIXED DELIVERY PRE-K?

Recently, Montana policymakers have explored a great opportunity to expand access and affordability of child care by considering the option of building a mixed delivery preschool system for 4-year-olds. Legislators will soon be making the choice between a Pre-K system operated by the public schools of Montana, and a mixed delivery system. We want to break down what mixed delivery means and what opportunities lie ahead for Montana communities.

HOW IT WORKS

Mixed delivery systems offer child care and early education in a variety of settings and programs including:

- Public School-Based Programs
- Head Start
- Center-Based Child Care
- Family and Group-Based Child Care

Most state-funded preschool initiatives are designed to operate as mixed delivery systems, in which high-quality community child care programs participate along with school based programs. These programs are supported by a combination of public and private funding. With a mixed delivery system, communities can increase the number and diversity of programs offering high-quality care and learning, and providers have more opportunities to share resources and strengthen communication to improve their programs.

CHOOSING QUALITY CARE

What should parents consider when choosing an early education program for their child?

- Program Hours and Schedule Flexibility
- Learning Environment
- Staff-to-Child Ratios
- Access to Materials
- Health and Safety Standards
- Cost of Care
- Accommodation to Child's Special Needs

WHY WE SUPPORT MIXED DELIVERY

Opportunities for our Future

INCREASING CHILD CARE CAPACITY

Montana ranks 42 in child care capacity in the US. With a mixed delivery system, local communities will have a wider range of solutions for meeting childcare and preschool needs year-round.



MEETING FAMILY NEEDS

Mixed delivery presents an opportunity to meet community needs and preferences by offering flexible options for publicly funded preschool in both public schools and private program settings. This can address the needs of working families by including more flexible schedules and wrap-around care.

SUPPORTING BETTER TRANSITIONS

When children have consistent caregivers they experience fewer and easier transitions. Shared resources and strong communication between providers can help bridge the transition from early learning to K-12 and help children flourish in early development.



STRENGTHENING EXISTING PROGRAMS

Adding public Pre-K funding for private Pre-K would allow existing, community-based, early care and education providers to strengthen services, attract and retain qualified staff, and meet family needs for full day and full year early education.

Contact your local legislators and let them know where you stand on early childhood education. Go to leg.mt.gov/legislator-lookup/ to find who represents you in the Montana Legislature.