

Boston Universal Pre-K: 2022-2023 Year in Review

Pre K
Boston



BOSTON
Public Schools

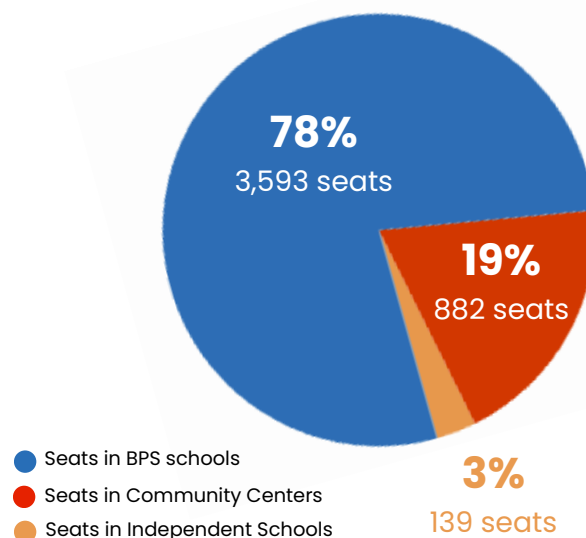
Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) is a program funded by the City of Boston that delivers high-quality pre-kindergarten, free of cost, to Boston's three- and four-year-old children. The Boston UPK model offers the same high-quality programming in a variety of settings: Boston Public Schools (BPS), Independent Schools, Family Child Care, and Community Centers.

This publication highlights the program's impact during the 2022-2023 school year.

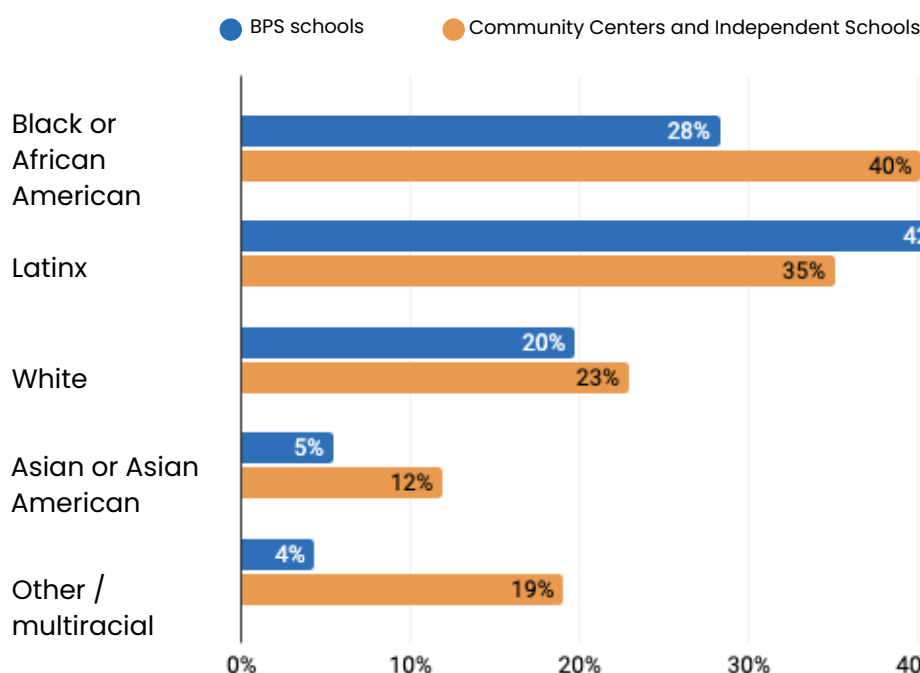
School Year 2022-2023 Offerings Summary

During the 2022-23 school year, the Boston UPK model offered **4,614 seats** across a **variety of settings**:

Breakdown of UPK Seats By Setting



Population Served during the School Year



43% of students are **multilingual learners**



70% of students belong to **economically disadvantaged families**

*BPS schools and Community Centers/Independent Schools employed different methods for categorizing racial and ethnic demographics, so these demographic data are not directly comparable.

Expansion of the Family Council

The Early Childhood Family Council (ECFC) is a space for families to participate in the decision-making process of curriculum, policies and procedures for the Universal Pre-K Program. For the first time, **the ECFC expanded to include caregivers (5 total) of children who graduated UPK programs and are now attending BPS Schools.** This inclusion of BPS parents aims to have representation of parents of all grade levels in the Early Childhood Department (from K0 to 2nd grade) to **foster aligned school experiences.**

Revision of the Focus On Pre-K Curriculum

The *Focus on Pre-K* curriculum has been identified as one of the strongest, most consistently proven interventions for closing the achievement gap in the nation*. Starting in SY22, the curriculum design team undertook a **full review of the curriculum's structures, texts, and learning experiences, prioritizing alignment to offer children and families a smooth learning trajectory from one grade to the next** and to create clear pathways for educators who support children over multiple years. Additionally, **texts and curriculum resources have been updated and expanded to recognize, affirm, and celebrate the diverse identities of Boston's children and to support differentiation for diverse learners.**

UPK Expansion to Family Child Care Providers

For the first time, UPK expanded to **fund seats at Family Child Care (FCC) programs.** To ensure their unique needs were being met, UPK and the City of Boston created The Family Childcare Working Group which included 20 Family Child Care leaders as well as other UPK partners. The working group came together to develop a **tailored UPK Family Child Care implementation guide and funding model that would take into account FCC's specific needs.**

"It has been a wonderful experience (...) Giving parents and families a voice and a platform to understand the complexity of the UPK model, to share feedback on every aspect of the program, and to celebrate our kids together makes for a powerful partnership. Now that my kids are in BPS, I feel equipped to be a strong advocate and energized to continue my involvement in their school, just as I was with UPK"

Sarah Olia

Parent of 2 UPK students and ECFC member for 3 years

"We worked together with the universal pre-k staff to accomplish the goals of having a pre-k classroom within our small businesses with the understanding of how we operate a classroom of multiple ages. Our concerns were addressed in every meeting and our understanding of the importance of early childhood education within the community and our homes were always validated (...) Universal Pre-K has provided learning opportunities and resources that we can use to improve our programs and allow us the opportunity to grow both educationally and financially having the opportunities and access to these trainings while in the working group defined my perspective and experience as an early childhood educator"

Emmy Romero

Member of the UPK FCC Design Working Group and current UPK Provider

*Impacts of a Prekindergarten Program on Children's Mathematics, Language, Literacy, Executive Function, and Emotional Skills", Weiland and Yoshikawa, Child Development, 2013.