

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Fund Universal Preschool Support Program Article

#### How do I know if my child is eligible for the town funded preschool money?

- You are an Orleans resident and can provide proof of your residency.
- Your child is either aged 3 or aged 4 by August 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year and lives with you.
- You can provide a copy of your child's original birth certificate.
- The licensed preschool has agreed to be a vendor.

#### How much funding is my child eligible to receive?

- Three-year-olds are eligible for four hours a day up to a maximum of \$5,000 per year.
- Four-year-olds are eligible for seven hours a day up to a maximum of \$10,000 per year.
- Age is determined by the child's age as of August 31<sup>st</sup> of the school year.

#### How do I apply for this money?

- Complete an application from the Town of Orleans, and attach all necessary documentation.  
(If your child is not yet enrolled in a program, select a licensed preschool provider and apply for your child to attend.)

#### What licensed preschools are eligible?

- Orleans: The Learning Garden, Meetinghouse Preschool
- Brewster: The Family School, The Laurel School
- Eastham: Cape Cod Children's Place
- Chatham: The Rocking Unicorn
- South Dennis: Scargo School
- Wellfleet: Wellfleet Montessori Preschool
- Truro: Nola Glatzel
- Harwichport: The Children's Center
- Nauset Integrated Preschools

(This is not an exhaustive list of all licensed preschools in our area. These are suggested options that may be considered by parents and not specific endorsements.)

#### If my child is already in a licensed preschool, am I still eligible to apply?

- Yes, as long as you meet the eligibility criteria and the vendor is licensed and agrees to be a vendor.

#### Is funding based on our finances?

- No, it is based on residency, age and vendor selection.

### **How will the licensed preschool be paid?**

- The Town of Orleans can be billed for the service directly by the provider on a monthly basis, after each month where service was delivered.

### **Will this money paid by the town and sent to the licensed preschools be taxable for the parents?**

- No, the payments go to the provider to pay for the service, just like other services the town provides, so it is neither taxable, nor deductible by parents. (Parents can still deduct any additional payments they make for childcare from their taxes).

### **What is the Nauset Integrated Preschool?**

Currently the District provides preschool services to children through the Integrated Preschool Program. The program provides 2.5 hours per day (Monday-Thursday) to special needs students and makes seats available through a lottery system to all other district children. Unfortunately, the capacity is limited. As an Integrated Preschool, the primary goal is to serve special education children. Of tremendous benefit to them is the inclusion of typically developing peers as role models, which is the reason peer preschoolers are integrated into the program structure. The peer rate for tuition for the 2021-2022 school year is \$1,600.

### **Why is this important?**

The goal for our town is to maintain a balance of interests for all ages in a vibrant, year round community. Neighboring Cape towns have already implemented similar programs, and have experienced immediate success. As we look to the future for our year-round residents, we need to be ever cognizant of the lack of affordable/obtainable housing, high priced groceries, rising gas costs and the need to support our young families. Orleans residents have always been supportive of our children and education. This dedication and commitment to our families with young children will be further supported by the implementation of this program. It will allow young, working families a greater degree of stability knowing that their children are safe and well cared for while they work, via funding and support from their community.

### **Why this age and push for our youngest residents?**

Research indicates that children who attend preschool begin Kindergarten better prepared for their educational journey in terms of language, math and general social skills. Funding for this program allows available, affordable and safe preschool service opportunities for Orleans youngest learners.

### **Why was the article based on 66 eligible children?**

Kindergarten data for the past 15 years strongly suggests this number. In addition, 49 preschool children associated with a licensed preschool have already been identified. We do not know how many preschool aged children are in daycare or at home with parents.

### **How do we ensure passage of this article?**

Town voters would need to pass the article at the Town Meeting on October 25, 2021. It would also need to pass, thereafter, at the polls on November 2, 2021.