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**Portland Children's Levy invests in Head Start expansion and childcare subsidies for working low-income families**

The Portland Children's Levy will invest \$4.5 million over the next four years to add children to Early Head Start classrooms and assist low-income parents pay for quality childcare, helping hundreds of families throughout the city. About \$2.5 million of the \$4.5 million funding will go to add three Head Start classrooms at Albina Head Start; two Head Start classrooms at Mt. Hood Community College and convert two half-day Portland Public Schools Head Start classrooms to full-day.

"Head Start has been shown to be one of the wisest investments we can make, with positive effects lasting well into adulthood for children who participate," said City Commissioner and Levy Allocation Committee Chair Dan Saltzman.

The remaining \$2 million of the funding will help more of Portland's low-income working families have access to high quality childcare through scholarships for center-based and family-based quality childcare facilities. This initiative will also include helping childcare providers improve and enhance the care they provide children through additional training.

"Too many low-income working families are struggling to be able to pay for childcare and this support from the Children's Levy will enable more families to be able to provide for their children while knowing their kids are getting quality childcare," stated Saltzman.

The funding approved Tuesday by the Levy's Allocation Committee is in addition to \$10 million already committed to 14 early childhood programs through three-year grants that began in 2014. These investments ensure children are ready for kindergarten and lay the groundwork for success later in school. The most recent investments were made possible because of larger than expected Levy revenues and will help alleviate the long wait lists for Head Start that many families now face and allow more families to access quality childcare.

The Levy funds programs in early childhood, after school, mentoring, child abuse prevention/intervention, foster care and hunger relief. More than \$100 million of funding has gone toward making a positive impact on children throughout the city since the Levy's creation by Portland voters in 2002, and renewal in 2008 and 2013. Annual audits, citizen oversight and a 5-percent cap on administrative expenses means 95 cents of every dollar goes to proven programs making a difference for Portland youth.

More information can be found at the PCL website at [www.portlandchildrenslevy.org](http://www.portlandchildrenslevy.org) or by emailing Mary Gay Broderick at [marygay.broderick@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:marygay.broderick@portlandoregon.gov) or at 503-823-2947.