



## Pima Early Education Program Scholarships

Fiscal Year 2024 Mid-Year Report  
July 1 - December 31, 2023

### Overview

Year 2 implementation of the Pima Early Education Program scholarships (PEEPs) was one of tremendous growth almost doubling the number of children served from Year 1, raising provider reimbursement rates to match cost of quality rates being offered by State programs and increasing the number of school district expansion classes to serve more children.

Year 3 of the program is off to a great start. School districts added an additional 6 free preschool classes this year. **As of December 31, 2023, 1,698 children from income eligible families are receiving assistance from PEEPs to attend high quality preschools across Pima County.**

Funding for Year 3 of PEEPs is provided by Pima County's share of Federal American Rescue Plan Act funding, the City of Tucson, Towns of Marana and Oro Valley, and participating school districts. Donations to the United Way of Tucson & Southern Arizona from individuals, businesses, and non-profits support Accelerate Quality, which complements PEEPs.

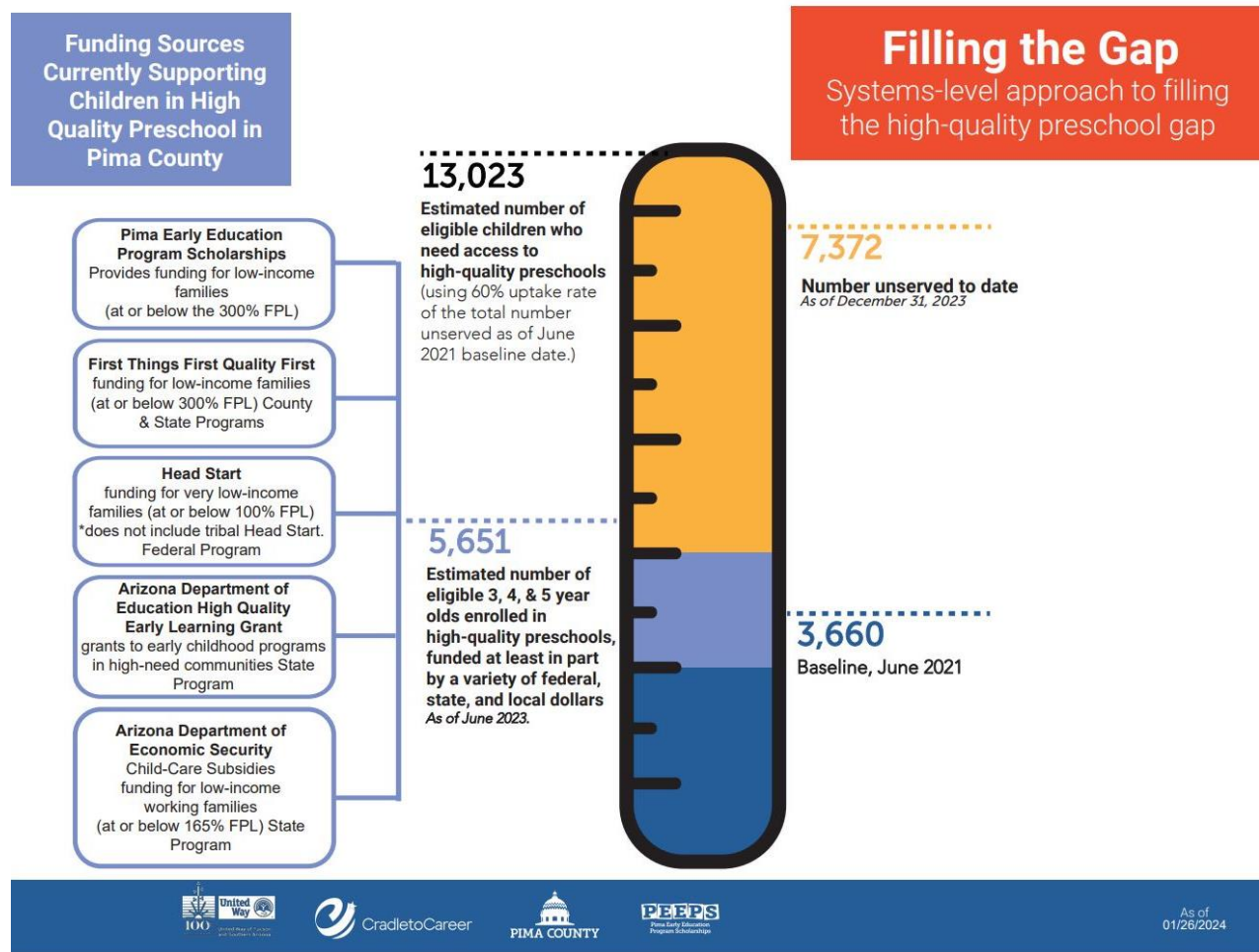


### By the Numbers: Mid-Year Program Performance

**The Pima Early Education Program is focused on increasing equitable access to high quality preschool for families most in need.**

**Program Goal 1:** To increase the number of 3-5 year old children from families with incomes at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level attending high quality preschools in Pima County.

Progress for this goal is tracked at both the system and program level. At this mid-year point, **system level data** from the five programs that financially support children to attend high quality preschool across Pima County (PEEPs, Head Start, First Things First, Arizona Department of Economic Security and Arizona Department of Education) report **servicing 5,651 preschool-aged children**. Our target remains to fill the gap so that all income eligible families who want to send their children to high quality preschool in Pima County can do so. PEEPs and our partners are serving about 43% of the need (5,651 out of 13,023).



At the **program level**, **1,698** children are receiving assistance from PEEPs, up from 1,356 children at the end of Year 2.

**PEEPs Preschool Students**

PEEPs Contract Type	December 31, 2023 # Students Served	Year 2 Contracted Scholarships / Seats	% of Contracted Scholarships/ Seats
PEEPs funded Quality First Scholarships**	951	600	158%
PEEPs funded School District Expansion Classes*	586	680	86%
PEEPs funded Head Start Extended Day Classes	161	205	78%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,698</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>114%</b>

\*Includes Pima Community College Desert Vista Class

\*\*Use of half-time scholarships result in more students served than scholarships contracted.

*This project is being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRP0180 awarded to Pima County by the U.S. Department of the Treasury*

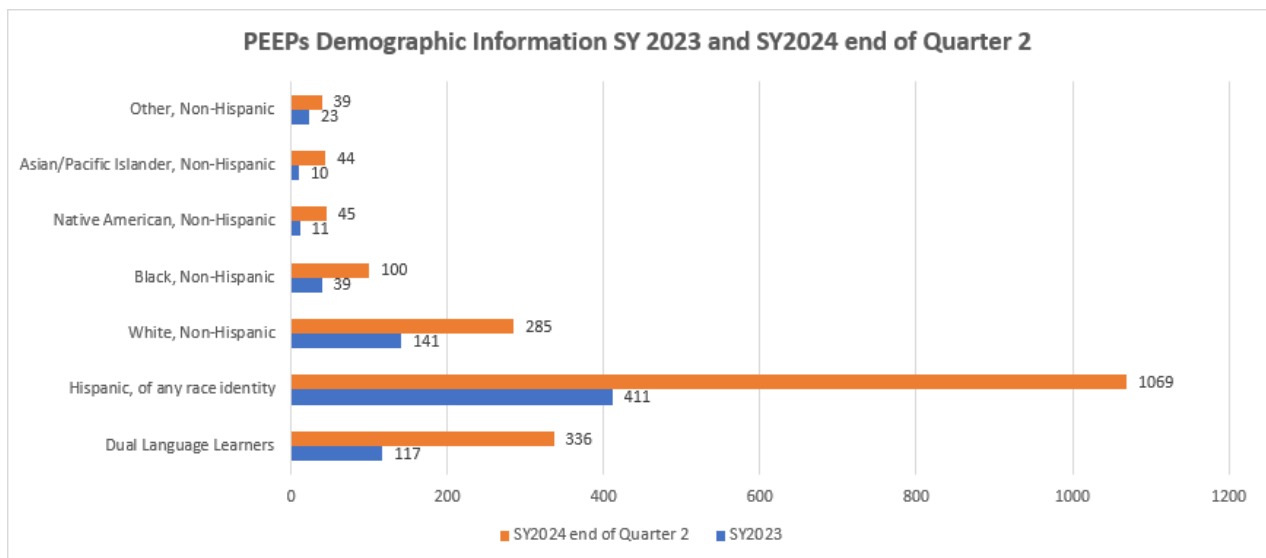
**PEEPs Funded School District Expansion Classes and Enrollment**

School District	December 31, 2023 Classes Operational	December 31, 2023 # of Students Served
Amphitheater Unified School District	11	176
Flowing Wells Unified School District	3	56
Marana Unified School District	4	72
Sahuarita Unified School District	1	20
Sunnyside Unified School District	4	72
Tucson Unified School District	10	172
Pima Community College Desert Vista	1	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>586</b>

Research continues to show those who benefit the most from high-quality preschool are children from economically disadvantaged families, children of color and dual-language learners. Though all PEEPs children are from economically disadvantaged families with incomes at or below 300% of the federal poverty level, last year data on race, ethnicity and dual language learners was unavailable for students with Quality First scholarships. This year demographic data has been collected for all PEEPs programming including school district expansion classes, extended day Head Start classes and PEEPs Quality First scholarships.

At the end of December demographic data was collected on 1,582 children (93%), up from 635 children (47%) in year 2. **The data shows that children identified as belonging to a racial or ethnic minority accounted for 82% of the total group, with 68% identified as Hispanic of any race.** Additionally, 336 of 1,582 (21%) children were recognized as dual-language learners, up from 117 in year 2 and 68 in year 1.

The graph below presents the demographic information of children enrolled in PEEPs school district expansion classes, extended day Head Start classes and PEEPs Quality First scholarships.



**Program Goal 2:** To increase the number of preschools recognized as high quality, as well as the number of high quality preschools participating in financial assistance programs for their students.

This is based on providers the State of Arizona’s Department of Economic Security (DES) recognizes as high quality, which includes:

- Quality First 3-5 star providers
- Head Start providers
- Nationally Accredited providers that accept children with DES childcare subsidies

**June 2021 Baseline – 199 high quality preschool providers**

Through the diligent efforts of the Department of Economic Security (DES) and First Things First (FTF) to move more providers into Quality First and to increase the capacity of high-quality providers both in Pima County and statewide, the number of high quality providers has continued to increase. Last year, the total number of high-quality providers in Pima County was 256. At the end of December 2023, **the total number of high quality providers in Pima County has increased by 58 providers to 314.** In addition to the statewide efforts, the United Way of Tucson’s program Accelerate Quality works to increase the number of high quality early care and education slots in Pima County, through quality improvement, accreditation support, and more. At the end of Quarter 2, Accelerate Quality has provided supportive services to 144 providers, reaching over 2500 children enrolled in these programs. Pima County’s agreements with the six school districts are also intended to expand the number of high-quality classes for preschoolers.

Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) recognized high-quality providers	June 2021 Baseline #'s	Total # HQ Providers December 2023
Quality First 3-5 star preschools (some also Nationally Accredited)	142	258
Head Start centers and family childcare homes	50	50
Nationally Accredited preschools (Not in QF) contracted with DES	7	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>314</b>

**Program Expenses**

The Pima Early Education Program’s expenses are shown below. Based on expense projections for this fiscal year the program is on track to expend \$10 million this year.

**PEEPS Expenses as of December 31,2023**

PEEPs Spending Categories	Mid-Year/FY24
Quality First Scholarships	\$1,833,808.00
School District Expansion Classes	\$2,326,155.60
Child Parent Centers	\$600,384.07
Administration	\$160,820.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,921,167.88</b>

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**PEEPS Total Expenses & Projections thru FY25**

PEEPs Total Expenses and Projections Years 1-4					
PEEPs Spending Categories	Year 1/FY22	Year 2/FY23	Year 3/FY24	Year 4/FY25	Total Expenses
Quality First Scholarships	\$1,708,298.00	\$2,338,092.00	\$3,800,000.00	\$5,600,000.00	\$13,446,390.00
School District Expansion Classes	\$1,155,634.00	\$4,037,464.00	\$4,856,972.32	\$5,519,166.20	\$15,569,236.52
Child Parent Centers	\$904,620.00	\$1,214,163.00	\$1,271,211.00	\$1,271,211.00	\$4,661,205.00
Administration	\$53,837.00	\$311,302.00	\$209,250.00	\$210,000.00	\$784,389.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,822,389.00</b>	<b>\$7,901,021.00</b>	<b>\$10,137,433.32</b>	<b>\$12,600,377.20</b>	<b>\$34,461,220.52</b>
Children Served	856	1,356	1,700	1,700	

**Highlights**

Spring check-ins with our PEEPs classes are just around the corner. If you are interested in attending one of these site visits to witness the extraordinary things that are happening for our young learners, please reach out to Program Manager, Nicole Scott to schedule your visit.

“Ms. Kathy & Ms. Kristi (PEEPs Teachers) have been so engaging and made a positive impact on my child. They inform me of my child’s updates and learning progression. It made me feel more comfortable with leaving my child.”  
--Parent, Sunnyside’s Ocotillo Early Learning Center

“EMELC is a fun center where teachers care about the children. There is always learning happening in a fun way.”  
--UA Student [on-site], FW Emily Meschter Early Learning Center

“Ms. Jessica brings magic into everyday learning and is helping my child build memories for a lifetime.”  
--Parent, FW Emily Meschter Early Learning Center



For questions about PEEPs, contact [PEEPS@pima.gov](mailto:PEEPS@pima.gov). For families looking for preschool financial assistance, or help finding a high quality preschool, please call the Child Care Resource and Referral Information Line at 1-800-308-9000, or conduct a search at CCR&Rs website at [www.azccr.com](http://www.azccr.com).

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*“This program has made my child love going to school and being more curious. It’s made a huge positive impact on my child.”*

-PEEPs Parent

*“My child has surprised me, how educated he has become in the year. He has learned a lot!”*

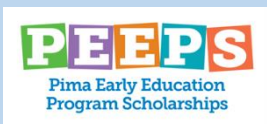
-PEEPs Parent



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# PEEPS

## Pima Early Education Program Scholarships

### Fiscal Year 2024 Quarter 2 PEEPs Report for City of Tucson IGA CTN-CR-21-126

At the end of Quarter 2, the Pima Early Education Program (PEEPs) has provided scholarships and free preschool opportunities to 1,698 children from income eligible families to attend high quality preschools across Pima County so far this year. The majority of children enrolled in PEEPs participating programs are attending locations within the City of Tucson.

Funding for PEEPs continues to be provided by Pima County’s share of Federal American Rescue Plan Act funding, the City of Tucson, Town of Marana, Town of Oro Valley, and other local partners. After Federal Funding is expended, the County intends to continue funding PEEPs with Pima County Library District property tax revenue, supplemented by city and town funding.

**Program Description** - The purpose of PEEPs is to increase the number of 3-5 year old children from low-income families attending high quality preschools and to increase the number of high quality preschool classrooms in Pima County via local funding partnerships and statewide coordination. **In year three of PEEPs, the City of Tucson has contributed an additional \$750,000 to Pima County to reimburse school districts for the ongoing cost of operating new high quality preschool classes.** With the \$750,000 additional contribution and Year 2 savings of \$27,726, Year 3 is budgeted at \$777,726 for 5 classes. The City of Tucson contribution is funding five classes within Amphitheater and Sunnyside benefitting up to 90 preschool age children. This is the third year the City had funded PEEPs school district classes. To be eligible for the PEEPs preschool classes families must have incomes at or below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. For a family of four this is \$93,600 this year.

**Status** – Amphitheater and Sunnyside Unified School Districts are contracted with Pima County to operate 5 high quality preschool classes funded by the City. At the end of Quarter 2, all 5 classes are operational and fully enrolled with 90 children benefiting from the program this year, and expenses totaling \$359,704.70. Included below are four tables representing the participating providers within the City of Tucson and the number of children they have served to date this year. The first table shows data from the City funded school district expansion classes within Amphitheater and Sunnyside Unified School Districts. The remaining



tables represent Pima County federally funded PEEPS school district expansion classes, Quality First participating providers, and Head Start extended day classes that are serving children within the City limits.

<b>PEEPs School District Preschool Expansion funded by City of Tucson</b>			
School District	Number of Classes	Total # of Children Served	City of Tucson Expenses thru Q2
Amphitheater Unified School District	3	54	\$204,159.50
Sunnyside Unified School District	2	36	\$155,545.20
<b>Total:</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>\$359,704.70</b>

<b>Additional PEEPs School District Preschool Expansion within City of Tucson</b>			
School District	Number of Classes	Total # of Children Served	Pima County Federally Funded Expenses thru Q2
Amphitheater Unified School District	2	30	\$126,964.00
Pima Community College Desert Vista	1	18	\$163,631.99
Sunnyside Unified School District	2	36	\$172,828.00
Tucson Unified School District	7	120	\$294,191.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>\$757,614.99</b>

<b>PEEPS Quality First Scholarships Used at Preschools within City of Tucson</b>		
Number of Preschools	Total # of Unique Children Served	Pima County Federally Funded Expenses thru Q2
<b>87</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>\$1,415,754.00</b>

<b>PEEPs Extended Day Head Start Classes within City of Tucson</b>		
Number of Classes	Total # of Children Served	Pima County Federally Funded Expenses thru Q2
<b>7</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>\$187,152.19</b>

**Highlights** – Our PEEPs students at the Ocotillo Early Learning Center in Sunnyside School District have been exploring the community this school year. The classes visited the Valencia library where each child was able to sign up for a library card and check out their first books. They also ventured over to the Tucson Village Farm where they learned about growing vegetables, taking care of animals and so much more.

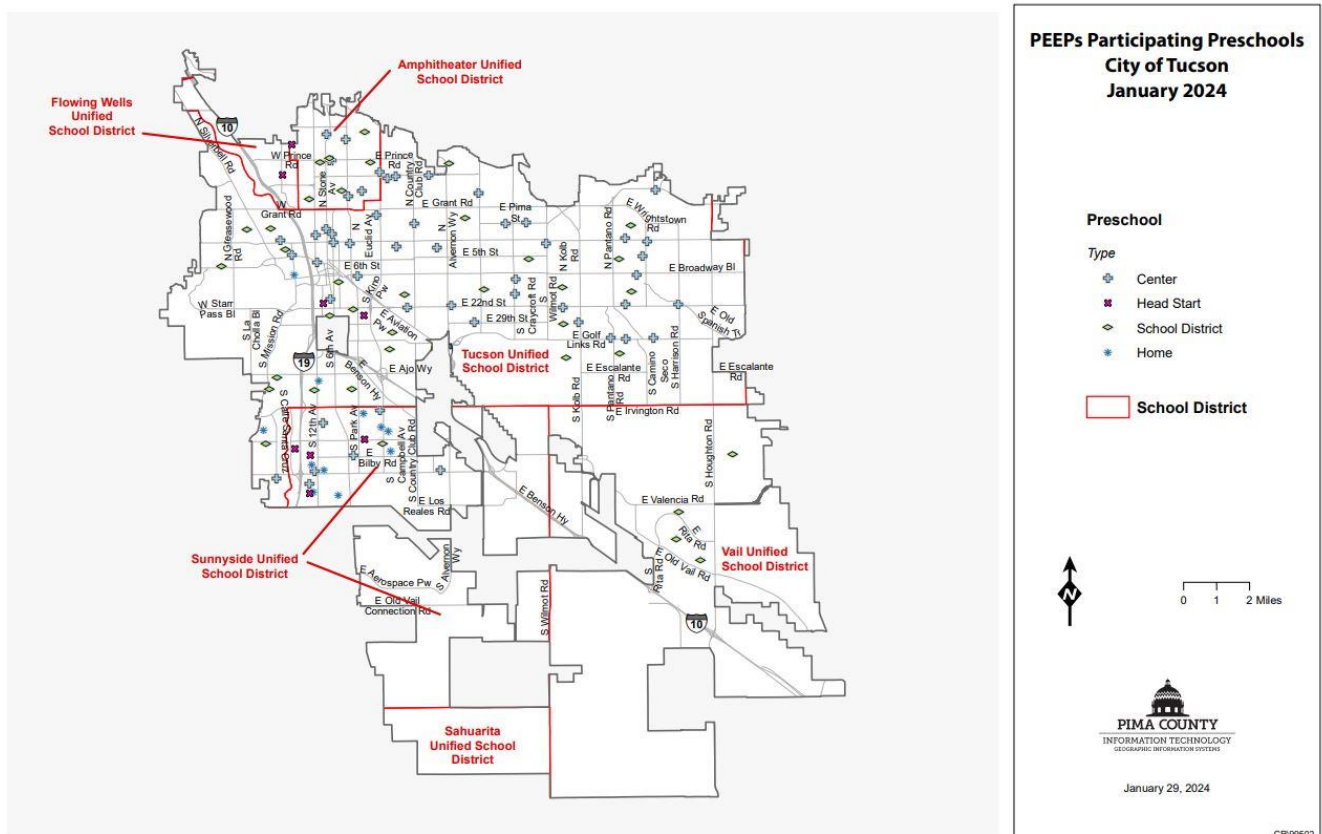


Our PEEPs students at Keeling Elementary School took 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the 2023 Fall SARSEF regional fair with their project, “Huffing and Puffing: Can We Save the Piggies with Our Toys?” and are looking to defend their 1<sup>st</sup> Place title in the Spring.

**Looking Forward** – The Pima County PEEPs team has requested multi-year funding to sustain the City funded classes starting next fiscal year. A multi-year agreement between the County and City will provide more certainty to the school district partners that are operating these classes and the parents and families utilizing them.

PEEPs would also like to invite Mayor Romero, Councilmembers, and key personnel to join us for our upcoming Spring site visits. Visitors will get a chance to tour the preschool space, talk with district representatives and engage with students in the preschool environment. Please reach out to Nicole Scott, PEEPs Program Manager if you would like to attend one or more of the Spring site visits.

### **Map of PEEPs Participating Providers in the City of Tucson**



For questions about PEEPs, contact [PEEPs@pima.gov](mailto:PEEPs@pima.gov). For families looking for preschool financial assistance, or help finding a high quality preschool, please call the Child Care Resource and Referral Information Line at 1-800-308-9000, or conduct a search at CCR&Rs website at [www.azcrr.com](http://www.azcrr.com).

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*“My son’s behavior has improved at school and at home.”*

- PEEPs Parent



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# PEEPS

## Pima Early Education Program Scholarships

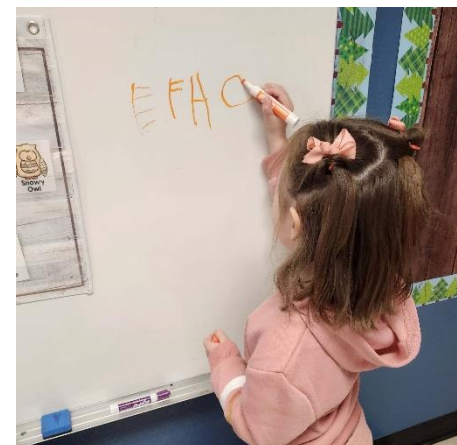
### Fiscal Year 2024 Quarter 2 PEEPs Report for Town of Marana IGA CTN-CR-21-128

At the end of Quarter 2, the Pima Early Education Program (PEEPs) has provided scholarships and free preschool opportunities to **1,698 children from income eligible families** to attend high quality preschools across Pima County so far this year. Forty-eight of these children are participating in PEEPs programs within the Town of Marana.

Funding for PEEPs continues to be provided by Pima County’s share of Federal American Rescue Plan Act funding, the Town of Oro Valley, Town of Marana, City of Tucson and other local partners. After Federal Funding is expended, the County intends to continue funding PEEPs with Pima County Library District property tax revenue.

**Program Description and the Town of Marana** - The purpose of the program is to increase the number of 3-5 year old children from low-income families attending high quality preschools and to increase the number of high quality preschool classrooms in Pima County via local funding partnerships and statewide coordination. **For year three of PEEPs, the Town of Marana has contributed an additional \$147,704 for the continued cost of operating the PEEPs class at Estes Elementary School for up to 18 preschool age children.** This is the third year that the Town is sponsoring this class. To be eligible for the PEEPs preschool class at Estes Elementary families must have incomes at or below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. For a family of four this is \$93,600 this year.

**Status** – The Town funded PEEPs class at Estes Elementary School has maintained full enrollment this year of 18 students. Pima County also funds preschool scholarships and extended day opportunities at four other locations within the Town of Marana. The three scholarship programs are 4-star quality rated programs or nationally accredited and report serving 10 children this year. PEEPs is also funding extended day preschool for 33 students, in two classes at the Marana Head Start. Both classes at the site are open and operational



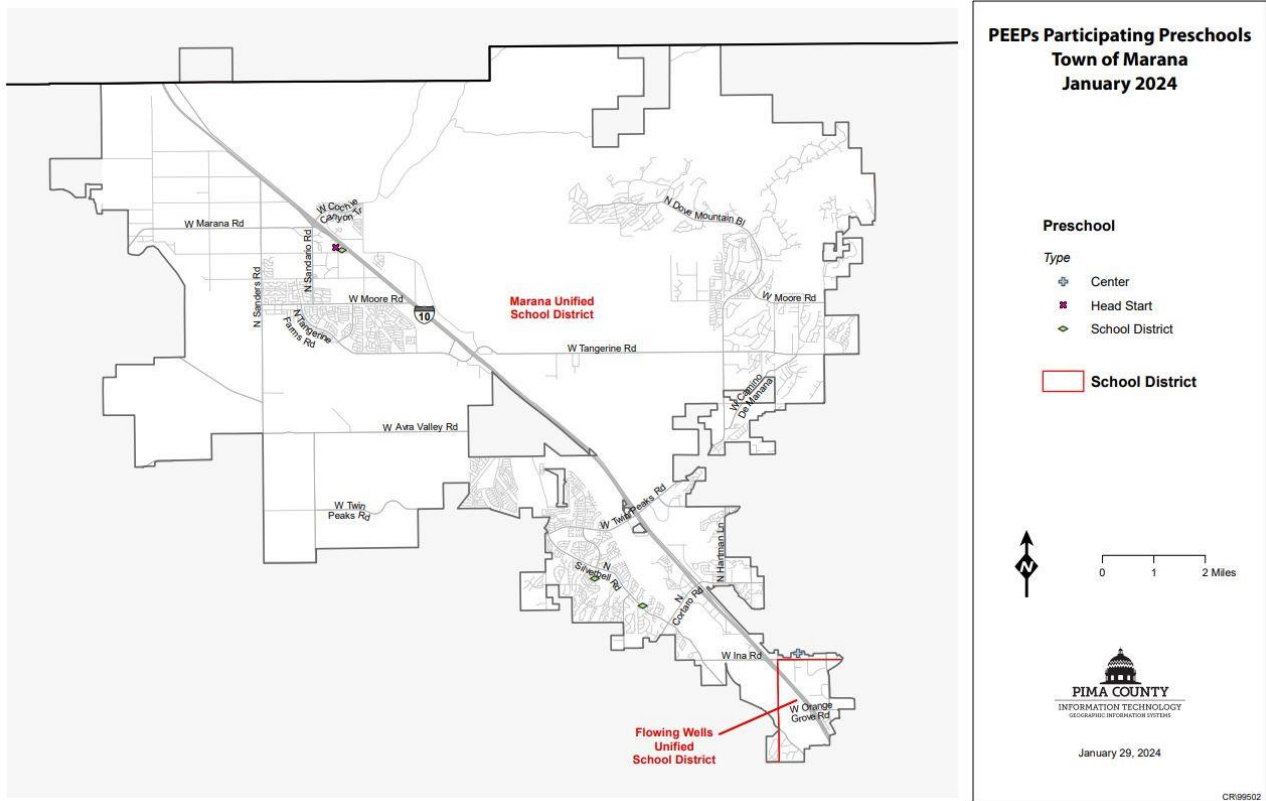
but, due to severe weather damage to the Desert Winds Head Start, the second class at the Marana campus is currently operating as the Desert Winds class.

PEEPs School District Preschool Expansion Class in Town of Marana					
Name	Address	Total # children enrolled	Ages	Quality First Star Rating	Town of Marana Expenses Thru Q2
Estes Elementary School, MUSD	11280 W Grier Rd	18	3-5	4	\$69,183.00

PEEPS Extended Day Head Start Classes within Town of Marana		
Number of classes	Total # children served thru Q2	Pima County Federal Fund Expenses thru Q2
1	20	\$30,164.54

PEEPS Quality First Preschool Scholarships Used within Town of Marana		
Number of Preschools	Total # of Unique children served thru Q2	Pima County Federal Fund Expenses thru Q2
3	10	\$21,457.00

**Map of Participating Providers in Town of Marana**



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**Highlights** – This school year we welcome Sherri Settles, the new Director of Extended Learning Opportunities for Marana Unified School District. Sherri oversees the preschool opportunities within Marana Unified School District, including our PEEPs classes.

The Estes preschool classes recently went through their Quality Rating assessment and should have their results in early February. In conversations with families at Estes, parents notice significant growth in children’s overall development and skill levels.

**Looking Forward** – The Pima County PEEPs team has requested multi-year funding to sustain the Town funded class at Estes Elementary School starting next fiscal year. A multi-year agreement between the County and Town of Marana will provide more certainty to Marana Unified School District, who operates the class, and the families enrolled in the program.

PEEPs would also like to invite Mayor Honea, Councilmembers, and key personnel to join us for our upcoming Spring site visit. Visitors will get a chance to tour the preschool space, talk with district representatives and engage with students in the preschool environment. Please reach out to Nicole Scott, PEEPs Program Manager if you would like to attend the Spring site visit.



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