

Housing Authority of the City of Pasco and Franklin County to Host Tuition-Free Bezos Academy Preschool in 2022

New full-day, year-round, Montessori-inspired preschool program in Pasco aims to develop creative leaders, original thinkers, and lifelong learners at no cost to families.

June 16, 2021

With more than half of families with preschool-aged children in Pasco without access to affordable early education, the Housing Authority of the City of Pasco and Franklin County is excited to welcome a Bezos Academy school into our community. Their full-day, year-round, tuition-free preschool model for children ages 3-5 will address an important, unmet need for low-income families in the area.

“Even before the pandemic, too many families weren’t able to find an affordable, high quality preschool for their kids,” said Matt Truman, Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the City of Pasco and Franklin County. “With so many programs having closed over the last year, there couldn’t be a better time to bring a program like Bezos Academy into our community.”

“Anyone who has spent time in a great preschool understands the difference it makes not just for the kids, but also for their families,” said Mike George, President of Bezos Academy. “We’re excited to join the community of preschools helping to nurture a love of learning in the children of Pasco in partnership with their parents and caregivers.”

Bezos Academy’s interest in Pasco originated with their understanding of the need for preschool options within the community. State data suggests that around two-thirds of all children under six in Pasco don’t have access to preschool or childcare. The opportunity to be situated next door to public housing, easily accessible to low-income families, aligns perfectly with the Bezos Academy mission.

The Bezos Academy Pasco preschool will be located at the Housing Authority of the City of Pasco and Franklin County’s Sprucewood Recreation Center in East Pasco. It is slated to open in 2022 following renovations to the building—a currently unoccupied facility previously used by Boys and Girls Club. More information and an application to the lottery-based selection process will be posted at www.bezosacademy.org once the school opening date is set. Bezos Academy and the Housing Authority of the City of Pasco and Franklin County will collaborate to ensure local families are alerted when applications are available. Families earning up to 400% of the federal poverty limit with children aged 3-4 are eligible to apply.

Bezos Academy prefers to hire teachers from the local community and posts open full-and-part-time jobs on their website: <https://www.bezosacademy.org/open-roles>.

About the Montessori Approach to Early Learning.

Montessori education is student-led and self-paced but guided, assessed, and enriched by knowledgeable and caring teachers, the leadership of student peers, and a nurturing environment.

Within the community of a multi-age classroom—designed to create natural opportunities for independence, citizenship, and accountability—children embrace multi-sensory learning and passionate inquiry. Individual students follow their own curiosity at their own pace, taking the time they need to fully understand each concept and meet individualized learning goals.

Given the freedom and support to question, probe deeply, and make connections, Montessori students grow up to be confident, enthusiastic, and self-directed learners and citizens, accountable to both themselves and their community. They think critically, work collaboratively, and act boldly and with integrity.

Millions of people across all sectors of life have benefited from their Montessori educations, including Jeff Bezos, the founder and CEO of Amazon.

About Bezos Academy

Bezos Academy is a non-profit organization that is building a network of high-quality, tuition-free preschools. Our preschools offer year-round, full-day programming, five days a week, for children ages 3-5 years old from low-income families. Bezos Academy also provides students with all necessary educational supplies and services to set each student up for success, including Montessori materials, books, arts and crafts, field trips, and meals. For more information, visit: www.bezosacademy.org.

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