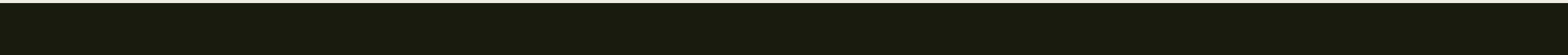




ENROLLING WITH EQUITY IN MIND



Sarah Heller





Introduction

- One school's story – an idea + a lot of questions!
- My inspiration, my process, my findings
- My questions
 - *What are we trying to accomplish in our enrollment process?*
 - *What does this conversation not address?*
 - *Where does my bias show up?*
 - *How can this process can continue to evolve?*
 - *What other voices should I be listening to?*
- Acknowledging privilege and power

Building a Weighted Lottery

- Oversubscribed
 - 250+ *applications*
 - 28 *open spots*
- What's beyond a lottery?
 - A weighted lottery
- Establish the 'weights'
 - *Financial need*
 - *Referral from a PT/OT/Pediatrician (would have added teachers)*
 - *Neighborhood*
- Google Forms -> Google Sheets



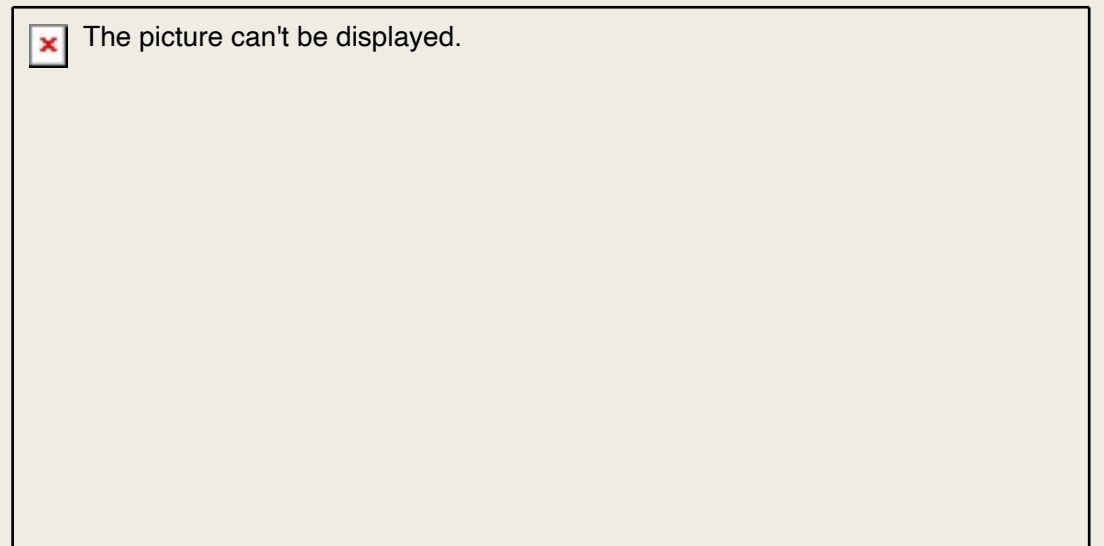
Lottery "Weights"

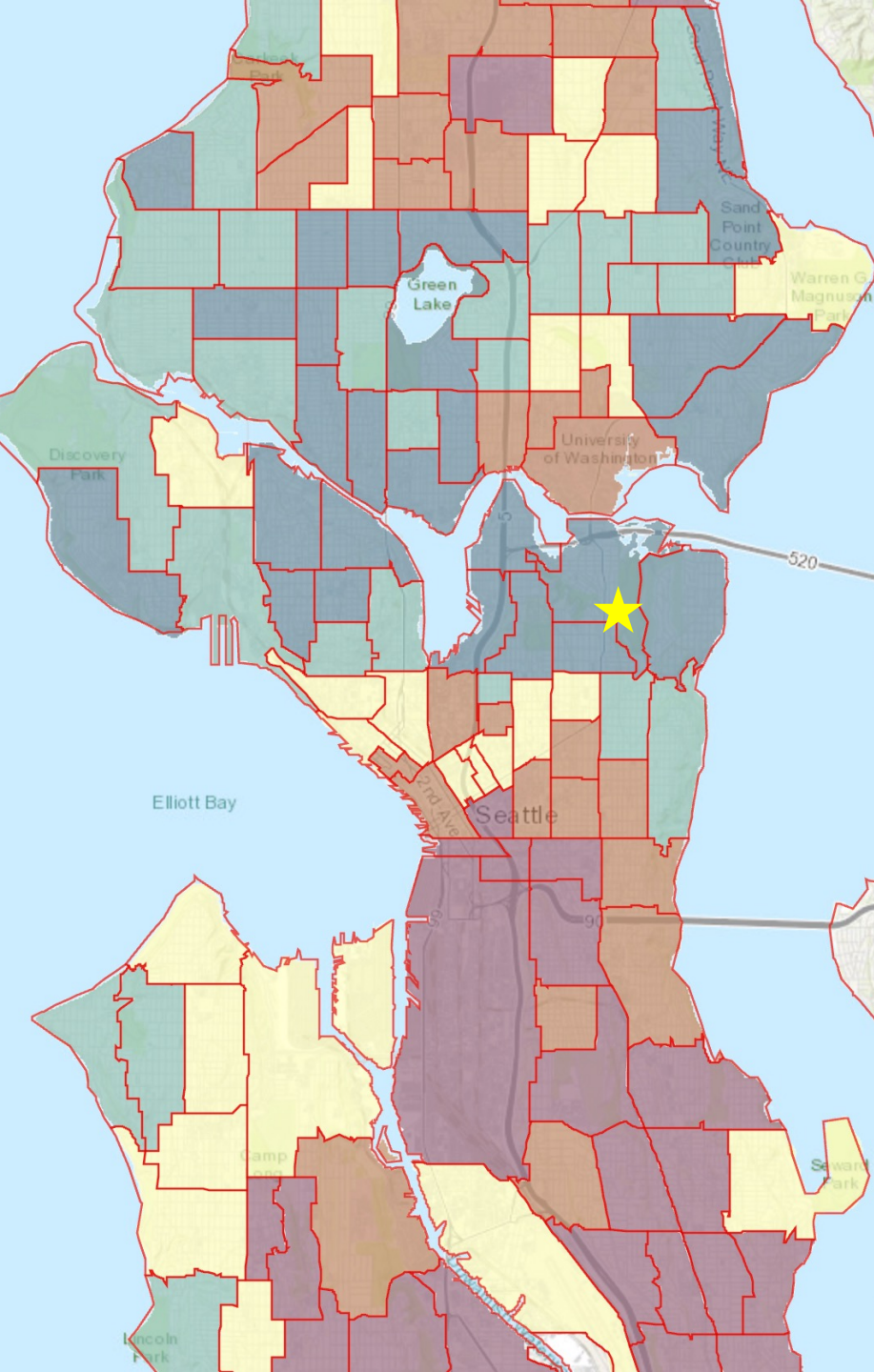
1) Financial Need

- FA application re-design inspiration came from Olympic Nature Experience
 - *Transparency!*
 - *Honor system*
- Fundraising
 - *Holiday "ask"*
 - *Walk-a-thon (spring event)*
 - *T-shirts*

2) Referral from PT/OT/pediatrician

- Honor system, self-reporting





3) Racial and Social Equity Index - Seattle

The Racial and Social Equity Index combines information on race, ethnicity, and related demographics with data on socioeconomic and health disadvantages to identify where priority populations make up relatively large proportions of neighborhood residents.

”Running” the Lottery

250+ applications. Anyone with 1 or more of the following factors was pulled into the weighted lottery:

- Qualify for financial aid
- Referral for outdoor school by an OT/PT/pediatrician
- Living in the second highest or highest disadvantaged areas

There were 82 applications in the 2021-22 weighted lottery (included duplicates or triplicates due to families who met more than one of the above criteria).

I filled ~20% of the open spots from the weighted lottery and ~80% from the general lottery (which also included the weighted applications)

What Worked?

Languages spoken in the homes of Fiddleheads families:

Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Chinese, French, Albanian, Hebrew and Choctaw Indigenous Language

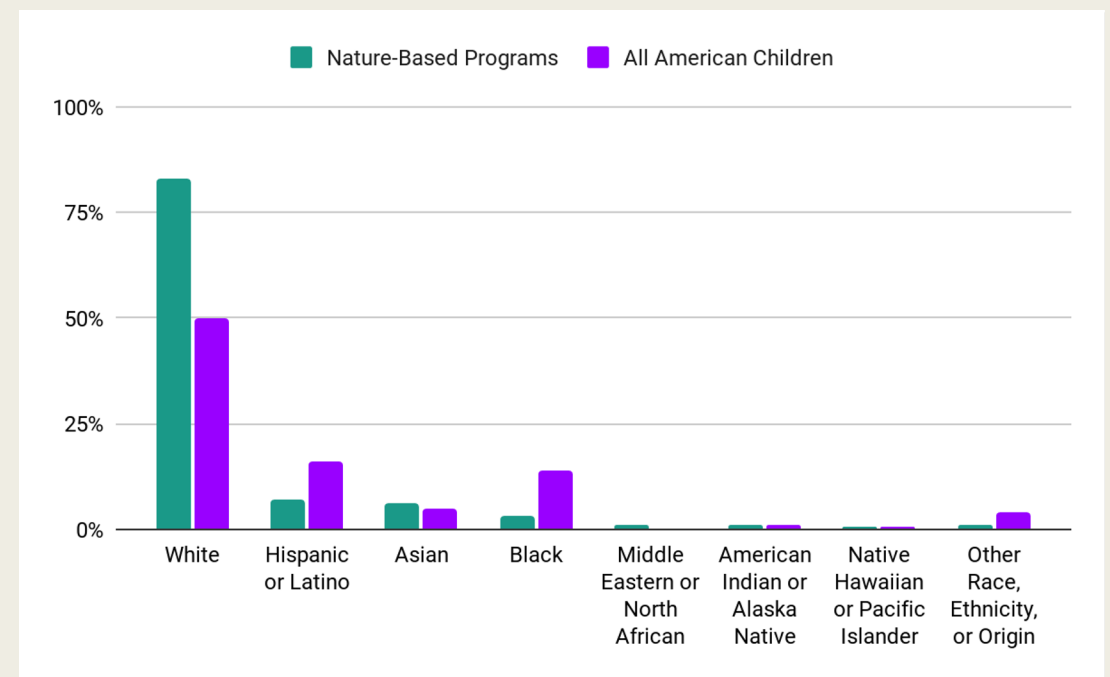
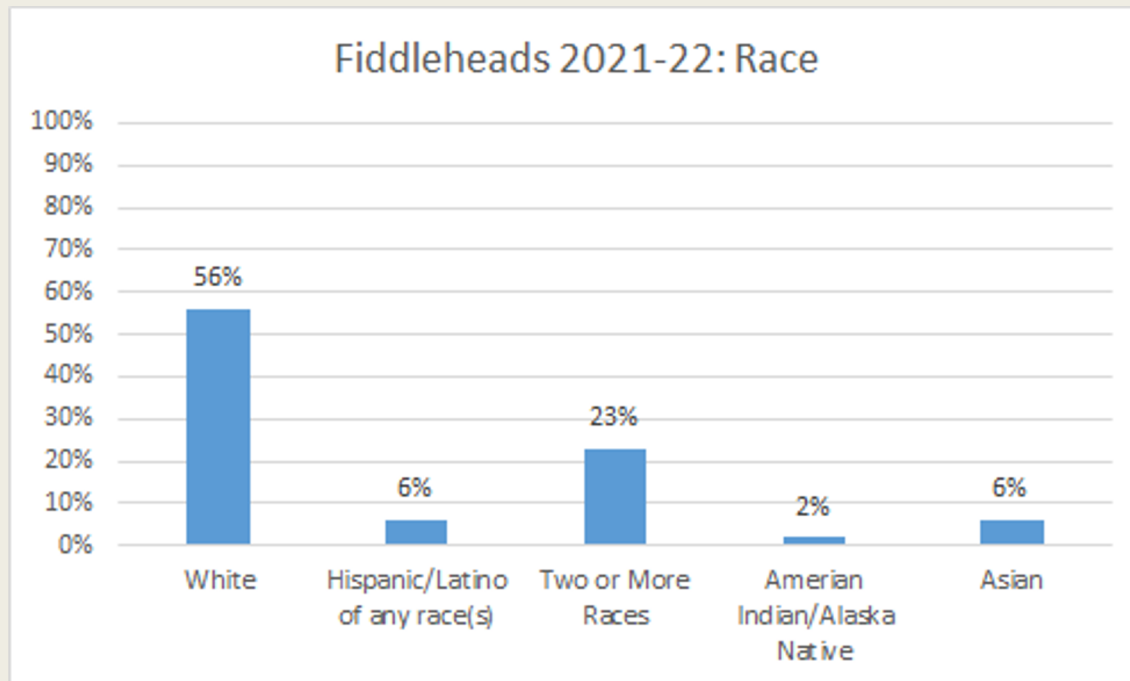
Financial Aid: 15% of all families

We awarded **\$17,235** in financial support for the 2021-22 school year (as of May 2021).

32% of all new families were referred to outdoor school by an OT/PT/pediatrician and have a minor physical disability or developmental delay or are neurodiverse.

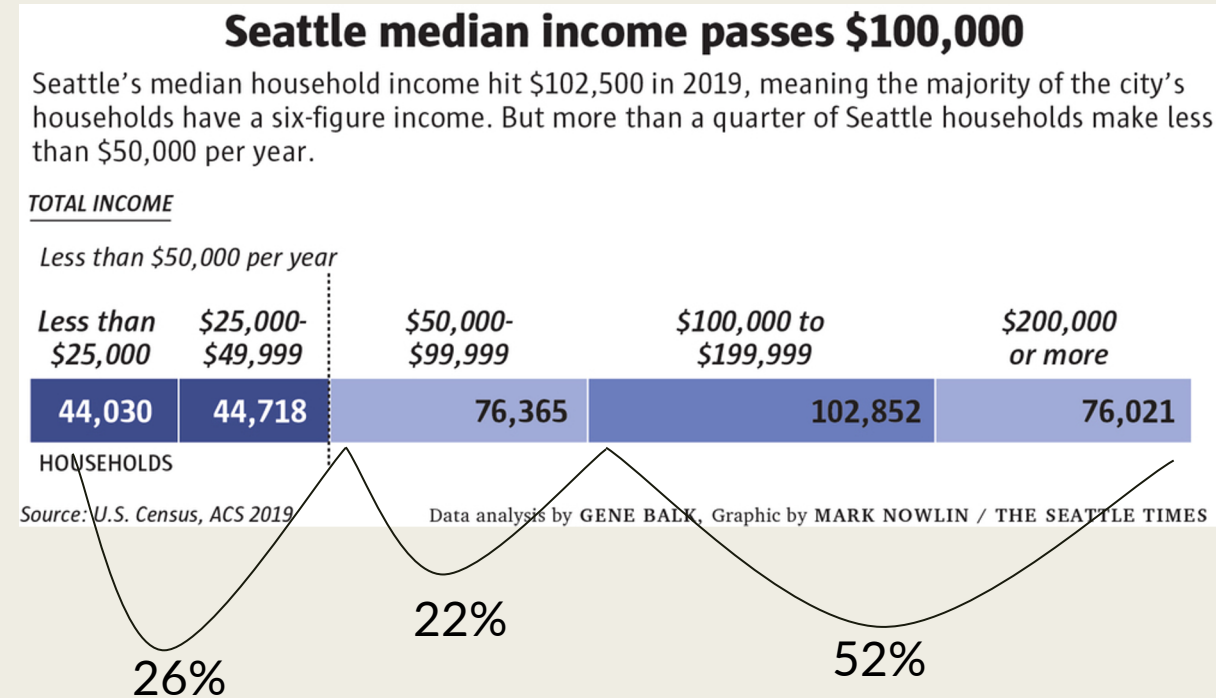
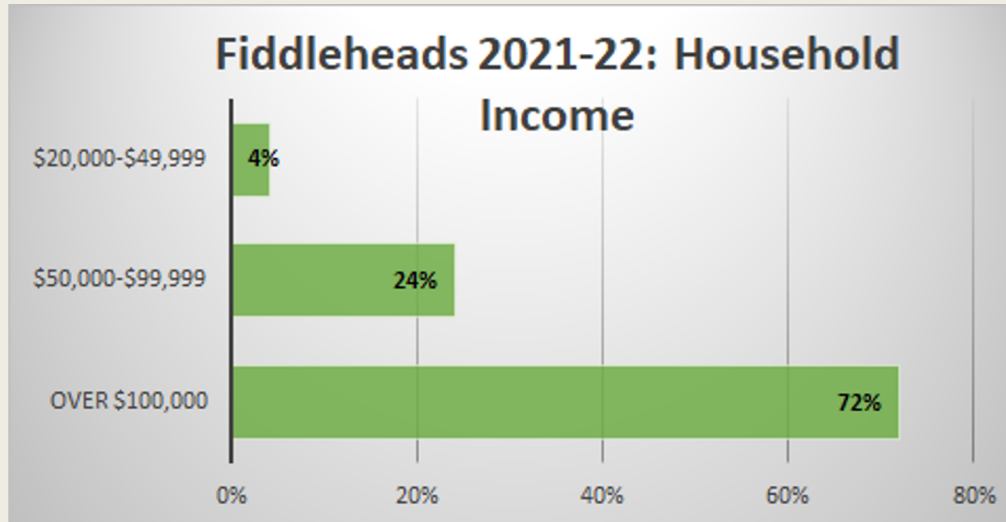
These children were identified to uniquely benefit from outdoor preschool.

Fiddleheads Demographic Data: 2021-22

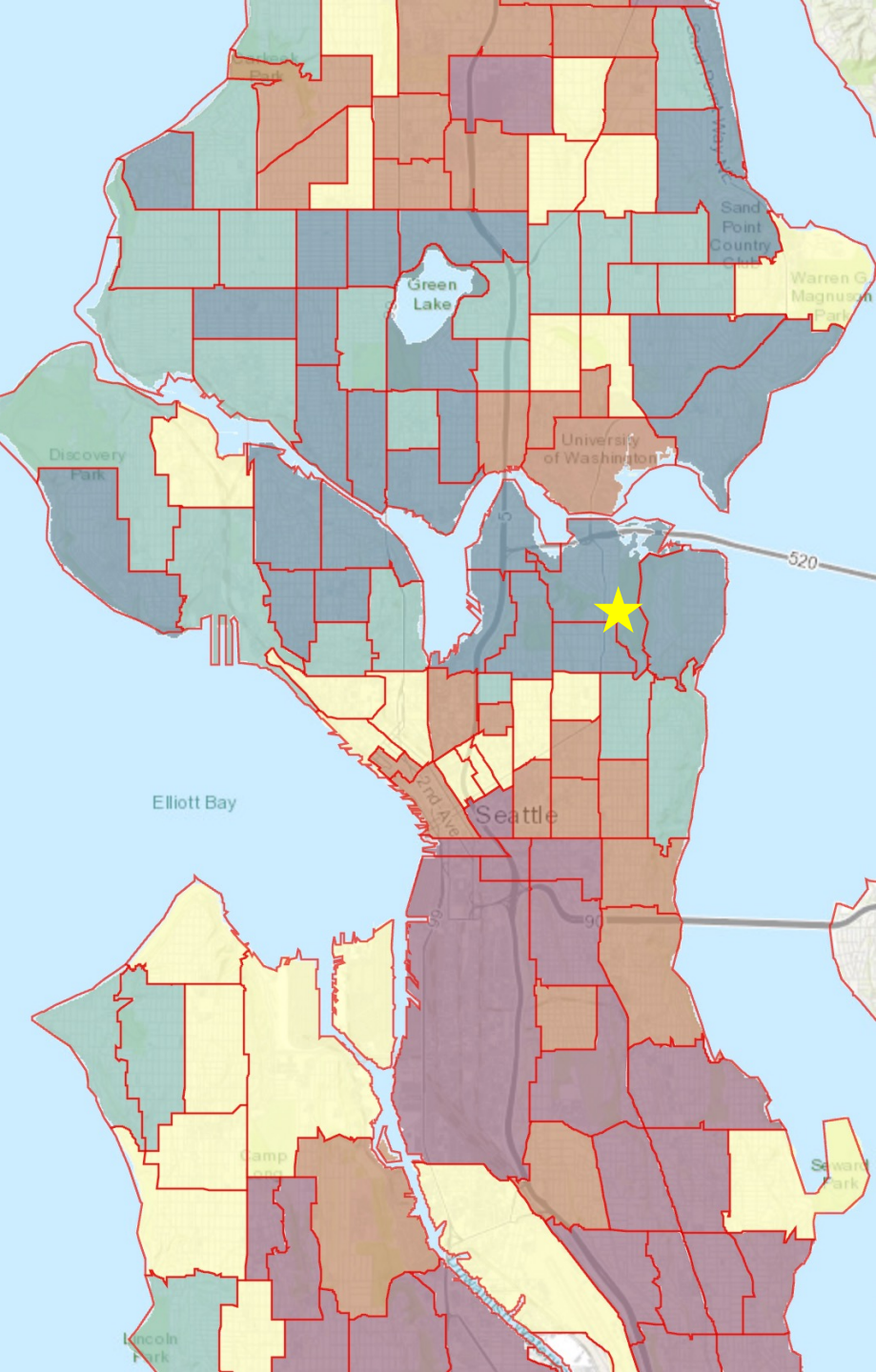


Source: [2017 Nature Preschools National Survey](#), Natural Start Alliance

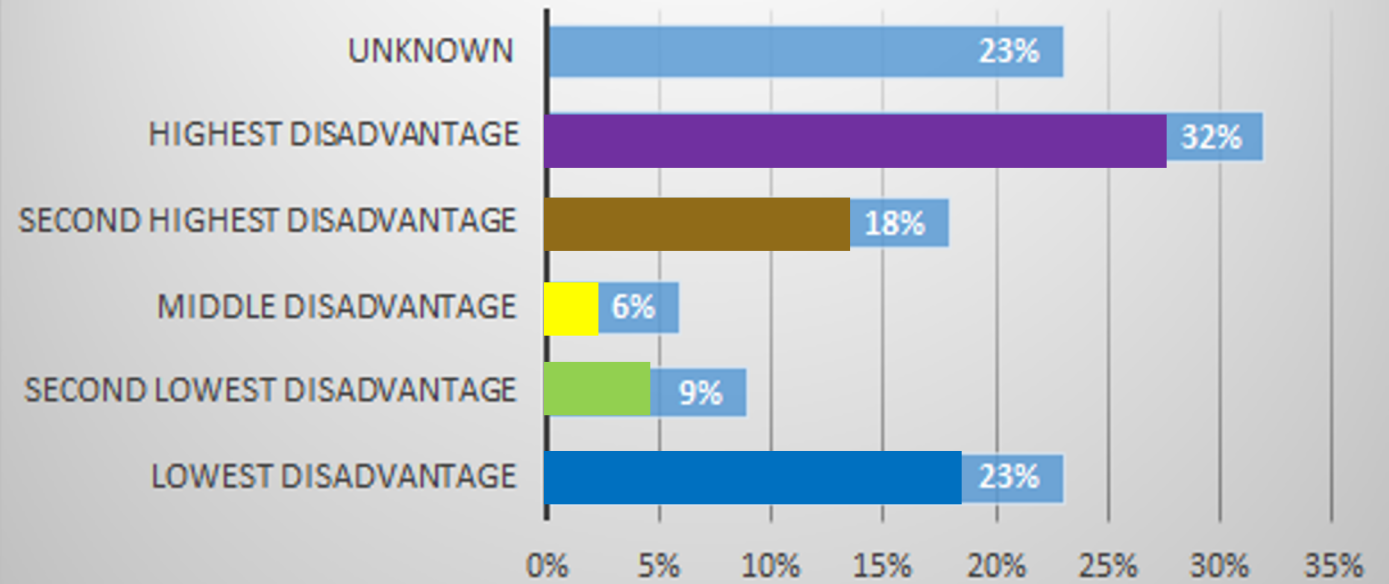
Fiddleheads Demographic Data: 2021-22



Seattle data: September 2020 *Seattle Times* article, "Seattle's median household income soars past \$100,000 — but wealth doesn't reach all"



Fiddleheads 2021-22: Racial and Social Equity Composite

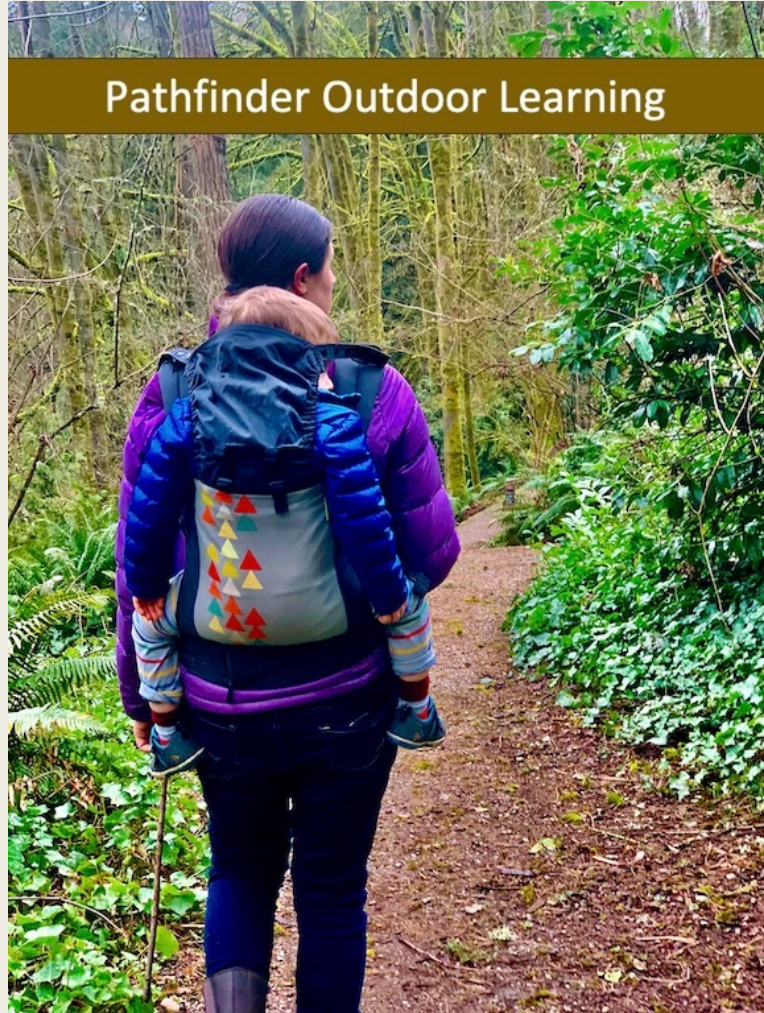


Enrollment Barriers

- Enrollment “season” → Reserve spots for late/summer or move to rolling enrollment
- Application
 - *Fee* → Remove fee
 - *Length of application* → Reduce length
 - *Digital only (paper and phone option)* → Include a paper version and the option to apply over the phone
 - *Showing “proof” for financial aid application* → Move to honor system, remove requirement for “proof”
- Paying a deposit → Payment plan and/or waive for families receiving aid
- Multi-year waitlists → Start with a blank slate each year
- Outreach strategies → Create low-barrier avenues for families to get to know you
 - Free events
 - Bring your program TO communities

Beyond the Lottery

- An enrollment committee
 - *Consult with others*
- Gear
- Transportation
- Partnering with other organizations to create pathways for enrollment
 - *Indigenous groups*
 - *PT/OT*
 - *Inclusion schools and programs*
- Full-time care, year-round
 - *Optional summer*
- Move towards becoming an inclusive program
 - *Training for teachers on inclusion*
 - *Seattle Children's Playgarden Inclusion Toolkit*
 - *Looking for trainings on partnering with families, supporting challenging behaviors, trauma informed practices*
 - *Look for local resources*
 - *Northwest Center IMPACT (King County, WA)*



Let's Connect

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