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2017 State of Preschool Report Highlights Progress in Guam ***New policies to support pre-K quality in Guam***

New Brunswick, NJ—A new state-by-state report shows more young children enrolled in public pre-K programs nationwide, with Guam’s fledgling program making strides in quality standards.

The State of Preschool 2017 annual report finds states heeding the demand for pre-K and expanding access to publicly funded programs in a variety of settings, based on 2016-17 data. But instead of supporting quality early learning with adequate resources, most state programs invest too little to help children catch up with their more advantaged peers by kindergarten.

In its second year, Guam pre-k enrolled 71 children—more than 2% of the territory’s 4-year-old population. Guam implemented new policies supporting preschool quality, earning an additional quality standards benchmark for a total of 6 out of 10. Guam also tracks home languages for its young Dual Language Learners, and half of its lead teachers are fluent in a language other than English.

“Our report highlights which states invest best in their young children and which leave too many children behind,” said NIEER Senior Co-Director Steven Barnett. “Guam remains the only U.S. territory to fund pre-K. Maintaining a focus on quality standards will be key as Guam moves forward.”

This year’s report includes a special section on policies affecting Dual Language Learners, and also highlights changes since 2002, when NIEER began tracking state pre-K. (*see box for GUAM specifics*)

Enrollment in state-funded preschool programs has more than doubled since 2002, according to the report. Nationally, 43 states, D.C. and Guam now provide publicly funded preschool to more than 1.5 million children. However, funding has failed to keep pace, with spending-per-child *decreasing* when adjusted for inflation.

“Fifteen years ago, only three states and the District of Columbia enrolled more than one-third of their 4-year-olds in publicly funded pre-K,” said Dr. Allison Friedman-Krauss, report co-author. “Today, that is the national average. But progress is patchy – 19 states still enroll less than 10% of their 4-year-olds.”

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GUAM 2016-2017 Fast Facts

Met 6 of 10 new quality standards benchmarks

Guam enrolled 71 children

Total state funding = \$357,700

State spending-per-child = \$5,038

Guam collects data on preschoolers’ home language

50% of Guam’s lead teachers are fluent in a language other than English

Foundation. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions in this report are solely those of the authors. For more information and detailed state-by-state profiles on quality access, and funding, please visit www.nieer.org.

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