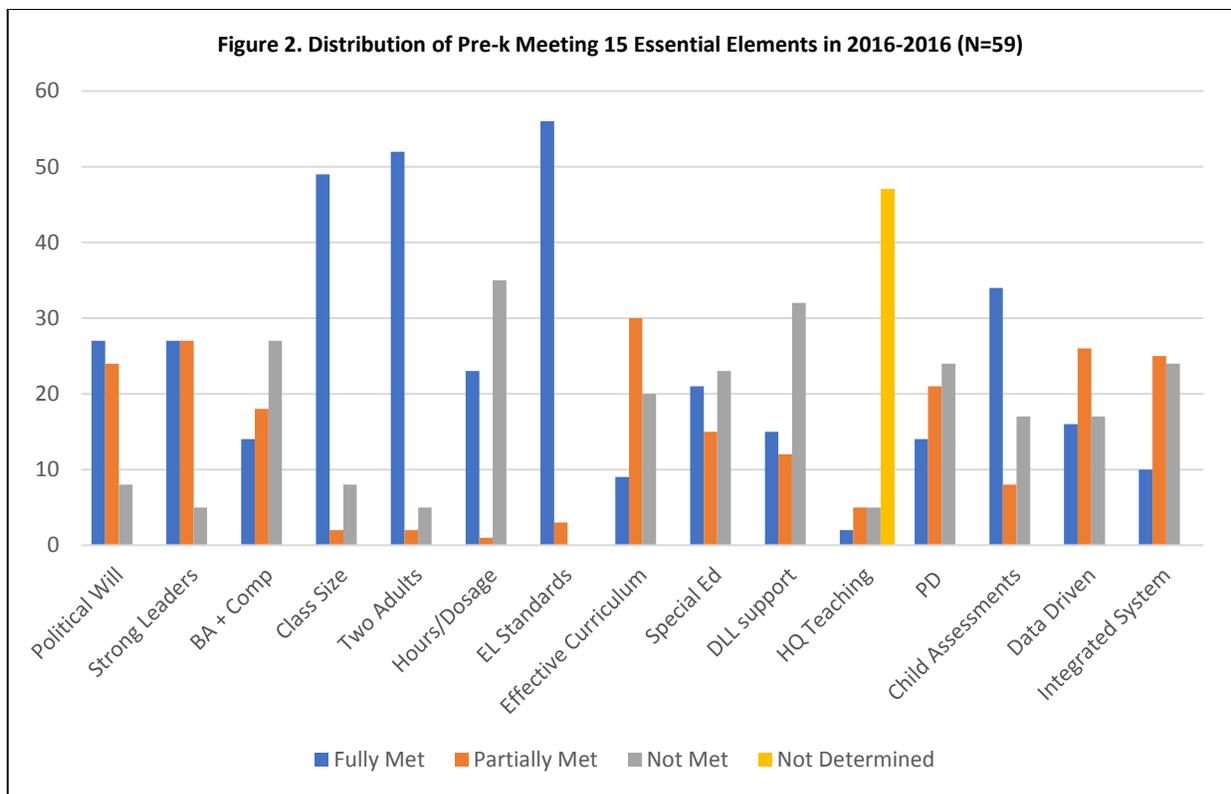


## Overview of Findings

Our summary judgments regarding the 15 essential elements for each state are displayed in Table 1. For the distribution of findings, see Figure 2. Highlights include:

- Eight state programs (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey's Abbott program, Rhode Island, Washington, and West Virginia) fully met at least 10 of the 15 essential elements. Alabama's First Class program is indeed first-in-class outscoring all other states by fully meeting 14 elements and partially meeting Supports for DLLs. However, just counting the elements that are fully met masks some important differences. Washington state fully meets 10 of the elements but does not meet four of the most costly and foundational elements: teacher qualifications and pay, dosage, support for DLLs and support of special education. Additionally, Washington could not provide information on instructional quality.
- Fourteen states had at least one program that fully met both elements within the Enabling Environment section.
- Only New Jersey's Abbott Program fully met all eight of the Rigorous Articulated Early Learning Policies; Alabama fully met seven of these policies.
- The most challenging element for programs to meet was dosage. Almost 60% of pre-k programs offer only a part-day program.
- Another challenge for programs was supporting DLLs. Fewer than half of the programs offered some support, and only 25% had a well-developed strategy for educating DLLs.
- Only Alabama fully met all five of the Strong Program Practices elements. However, Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, Rhode Island, and Washington fully met four out of the five practices.
- Most states (80% of programs) were not able to report average classroom quality scores; either the state did not collect observation data or the information was not available publicly. For some programs information on an average could be inferred from the reported threshold score required to receive funding.
- All programs have comprehensive and aligned early learning and development standards, and most programs (97%) have state support to implement them.



When we compare this scan to the 2016 report, we find some changes in policies and practice that both support and hinder the quality of preschool programs. Some changes reflect additional data or clarification on criteria for meeting the element. For example, if state policy only required a part-day program, but in practice most children attended for a full-day, the program now receives full credit for that element.

Some of the changes we found in the 2018 scan compared to the 2016 scan include:

- **Political Will** has strengthened in six states: Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. This may be due to change in governor, increase in pre-k spending and enrollment, or increase in policies that support quality.
- More programs offering salary parity. Some of these changes were due to our closer look at sectors and identifying those programs that now partially meet the element. For example, pre-k teachers in Chicago and New York City have salary parity, while the rest of Illinois or New York do not. Georgia's 2016-2017 budget included a funding allocation for teacher salary increases and a new salary scale for preschool lead teachers based on years of experience to continue supporting salary parity between preschool teachers and K-12 teachers.
- Last scan we reviewed both Florida's summer and school-year program; however, this scan only includes the school-year program, resulting in some positive changes in scoring.

- In D.C., policies and practices do not include charter schools and thus many of the strong DC school policies are not required in the charter programs. This scan includes charter schools as well as the other program settings for D.C., therefore lowering many of the essential elements ratings.
- The **Effective Curriculum** element experienced a lot of change. Some states have strengthened their curriculum selection process and requirements as well as support necessary to implement them. However, overall, only nine programs fully met this element. One of the challenges appears to be developing a system to ensure that the curriculum will be implemented with fidelity.
- We clarified the strong supports necessary to fully meet the **Special Education** and **Support for DLLs** elements, resulting in changes to more than half of the programs' ratings for these elements. We do not believe that most of this movement was due to policy changes.
- Louisiana and Mississippi are now able to report results of structured classroom observations, therefore better informing the **High Quality Teaching** element.
- Some states have made progress on the use of child assessments; however, not all focus on using the data to inform instruction or for formative purposes or offer the support necessary to ensure that the assessments are being conducted with fidelity.
- Mississippi and Missouri are now collecting classroom observation data and using it at state and program levels to drive decisions. Unfortunately, we have seen that some states have reduced the data collected by the state and therefore fewer data-driven decisions are made.
- The change in programs meeting articulated policies and strong practices has resulted in a fewer programs fully meeting the **Integrated System** element.

## Conclusion

If a major goal is to enhance children's learning and development in ways that increase later success in school and life, particularly for children from lower-income families, then substantial change is required. For preschool to have the desired impacts, public policy must achieve two goals: The first is to provide more widespread and equitable access. The second is to ensure that access is to high-quality programs. To identify what needs to change, we must understand the degree to which programs are implementing high-quality programs. This report identifies states' current status, as well as barriers states need to be address to improve both preschool quality and access.