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NIEER Contact:

[Michelle Ruess](#)

609-658-6873 Cell

848-932-4350 Office

2018 State of Preschool Report Shows Progress in Nevada State Funding Increases, but Pre-K Access Remains Below National Average

New Brunswick, NJ— Nevada increased state preschool funding and expanded enrollment compared to last year, yet access remains below national averages at just 5% of 4-year-olds and 1% of 3-year-olds, according to new research by the National Institute for Early Education Research.

The State of Preschool 2018 annual report, based on 2017-18 academic year data, finds just a third of 4-year-olds and 5.5 percent of 3-year-olds enrolled in public preschool programs nationwide—virtually no change in years. State funding is failing to keep pace with even the slow increases in enrollment and state spending per child has *decreased*, when adjusted for inflation. Inadequate funding undermines classroom quality, and most states fail to pay pre-K teachers comparably to K-3 teachers. Nevada requires state pre-K teachers to have a BA as well as starting salary parity with K-3 teachers.

“Nationally, we are disappointed by the lack of progress,” said NIEER Founder and Senior Co-Director Steven Barnett, Ph.D. “Nevada is moving in the right direction with increased investment compensation parity for teachers. But the state needs to focus more on implementing quality standards and will need to sustain progress made using federal Preschool Development Grant funding.”

This year’s report includes a special section on policies affecting the preschool teacher workforce, focusing on salary and benefit parity. (*see box for Nevada specifics*)

Enrollment has more than doubled since 2002—with almost 1.6 million children enrolled nationwide—but expansion has slowed in recent years. In some states, like Nevada, slow growth is due to a shift from part-day to full-day programs, which can better support child development as well as family work schedules, but nevertheless leaves many children unserved.

The *State of Preschool 2018 yearbook* was supported with funding provided by the Heising-Simons Foundation. For more information and detailed state-by-state profiles on quality, access, and funding, please visit www.nieer.org.

Nevada 2017-18 Fast Facts

Met 6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks

Enrolled 2,171 children, an increase of 301 from 2016-17

Total state funding = \$8,738,875 an increase of \$3,733,788 from 2016-17

State spending-per-child = \$4,025, compared to \$2,677 in 2016-17

Requires a BA, and starting salary parity with K-3 for all lead teachers

National rankings:

- 39 in access for 4-year-olds
- 27 in access for 3-year-olds
- 29 in state spending per child

The National Institute for Early Education Research (www.nieer.org) at the Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, supports early childhood education policy and practice through independent, objective research. For more information, contact: Michelle Ruess mruess@nieer.org 848-932-4350