

# Roadmap to the State Profile Pages

## How to interpret data on the individual state profiles

For each state with a preschool education initiative, we present one page with a description of the state's program followed by a page with data on the program's key features.

On the top of the first page for each state are two sets of bar graphs. The first set shows percentages of the state's 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds enrolled in the state program. The second set shows the state's spending per child enrolled in the state preschool initiative. Both sets of bar graphs depict changes in state preschool over time, from fiscal year 2002 (which corresponds to the 2001-2002 school year) through fiscal year 2009 (which corresponds to the 2008-2009 school year).

Most of the data used for comparison purposes come from NIEER's previous *Yearbooks*, although spending figures are adjusted for inflation and represent 2009 dollars. There are also some exceptions in cases where states revised data or reported data differently. In such cases, we adjusted data to ensure comparability across program years.

A brief narrative follows the bar graphs. The narrative provides information on the main features of the state's initiative(s), including details such as the initiative's history, the types of settings in which state-funded preschool can be offered, and enrollment eligibility criteria. The narrative also describes unique or particularly interesting aspects of the state initiatives that may not be highlighted elsewhere in the report, along with relevant new developments. Some descriptive information in the narratives was originally included in the reports *Seeds of Success* from the Children's Defense Fund and *Quality Counts 2002* from *Education Week*.

At the bottom of the first page of each state profile for the 38 states with preschool programs are four numbers showing the state's ranking on the following measures:

- The percentage of the state's 4-year-old population enrolled in the state's preschool program (Access Rankings – 4-Year-Olds);
- The percentage of the state's 3-year-old population enrolled in the state's preschool program (Access Rankings – 3-Year-Olds);
- State expenditures per child enrolled in the program (Resources Rankings – State Spending);
- And, all reported expenditures per child enrolled in the program, including local and federal spending as well as state spending (Resources Rankings – All Reported Spending).

The All Reported Spending ranking provides a more complete picture of spending in states employing local and federal funding sources than the State Spending ranking alone. However, because states vary in their ability to report spending from these other sources, this ranking is imperfect and sometimes underestimates total spending.

Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, and Wisconsin each have more than one distinct preschool education initiative. For these states, information is presented slightly differently, as is explained on the individual profiles for these states.

State profile pages are also given for the 12 states that did not fund preschool education initiatives in the 2008-2009 school year. For most of these states, the space usually filled with a narrative of the state's initiative is usually left blank, and the table of quality standards is omitted for all 12 states. However, these profiles provide information on enrollment for special education and federally funded Head Start. Data on per-child spending for K-12 education and federal Head Start are also included. In addition, state-funded Head Start spending and enrollment are reported when applicable.

The following sections provide an overview of information contained in the data tables on the state profile pages and explain why these elements are important. Data in the tables are for the 2008-2009 program year except where noted.



## ACCESS

The first item in the Access data table is total state program enrollment, which is the number of children enrolled at a specific point in time. Following that is the percentage of school districts (or in some cases counties, communities, or parishes) offering state preschool programs. This information shows the extent of the initiative's geographic coverage. Next, the table shows what, if any, income requirement is used in determining eligibility for the program.

Data on the hours of operation (hours per day and days per week) and operating schedule (academic or calendar year) are shown as additional measures of access because working parents may find it difficult to get their children to and from a program that operates only a few hours a day. The numbers of hours children participate in a preschool program also matters for other reasons, such as influencing the program's effects on children's development and learning.

The Access data table also shows enrollment of 3- and 4-year-old children in two federally funded programs besides the state preschool initiative: prekindergarten special education and Head Start. The Head Start enrollment total includes children in the American Indian/Alaskan Native and migrant regions. The final item in the table reports how many children are participating in state-funded Head Start.

Two Access pie charts illustrate the percentages of 3- and 4-year-olds in the state enrolled in the state-funded preschool initiative(s), special education, and Head Start. The remaining children are categorized as enrolled in "Other/None." These children may be enrolled in another type of private or publicly funded program (e.g., state-subsidized child care) or may not be attending a center-based program at all. For the 2009 *Yearbook*, we calculated an unduplicated count for special education enrollment in order to more accurately represent the number of children served in the state. The special education percentage in the pie chart represents children who are in special education but not enrolled in Head Start or state pre-K. The Head Start percentage also includes any children supported by state contributions to Head Start.



## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

State policies in 10 critical areas related to quality are shown in the Quality Standards Checklist table. For each area, states receive a checkmark when their policy meets or exceeds the related benchmark standard. On the right side of the page, a box displays the total number of benchmarks met by the state.

The Quality Standards Checklist represents a set of minimum criteria needed to ensure effective preschool education programs, especially when serving children at risk for school failure. However, the checklist is not intended as an exhaustive catalog of all features of a high-quality program and meeting all 10 standards does not necessarily guarantee high quality. On the other hand, each of these standards is essential, and no state's preschool education policies should be considered satisfactory unless all 10 benchmarks are met.

The limitations of research are such that judgment inevitably plays a role in setting specific benchmarks based on evidence. Studies find that the potential benefits from strong preschool education programs exceed costs by seven to 17 times.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, we gave more weight to the risk of losing substantial benefits by setting benefits too low than to the risk of raising costs by setting benchmarks too high. Costs of many preschool programs are currently quite low; thus, benchmarks steer closer to the characteristics of programs demonstrated to produce reasonably large educational benefits for children in randomized trials and the strongest quasi-experimental studies (e.g., High/Scope Perry Preschool and Chicago Child-Parent Centers) and farther from the characteristics of programs found in rigorous studies to have weak effects.<sup>2</sup>

Four of the items we use to gauge the quality of state-funded preschool programs involve teacher credentials and training. State preschool policies are evaluated based on whether programs require teachers to have a bachelor's degree;<sup>3</sup> whether they require teachers to have specialization in preschool education;<sup>3</sup> whether they require assistant teachers to have at least a Child Development Associate (CDA) or equivalent credential;<sup>4</sup> and whether they require teachers to have at least 15 hours of annual in-service training.<sup>5</sup> Teacher qualifications receive this emphasis in our checklist because research shows this area to be crucial in determining program quality. Better education and training for teachers can improve the interaction between children and teachers, which in turn affects children's learning.

Class size and staff-child ratios are also emphasized in the Quality Standards Checklist, with the expectation that states will limit class sizes to 20 children at the most<sup>6</sup> and have no more than 10 children per teacher.<sup>7</sup> With smaller classes and fewer children per teacher, children have greater opportunities for interaction with adults and can receive more individualized attention, resulting in a higher quality program.

<sup>1</sup> Reynolds, A., Temple, J., Robertson, D., & Mann, E. (2002). Age 21 cost-benefit analysis of the Title I Chicago Child-Parent Centers. *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 24, 267-303. Belfield, C., Nores, M., Barnett, S., & Schweinhart, L. (2006). The High/Scope Perry Preschool Program: Cost-benefit analysis using data from the age-40 follow-up. *Journal of Human Resources*, 41(1), 162-190.

<sup>2</sup> Temple, J., & Reynolds, A. (2007). Benefits and costs of investments in preschool education: Evidence from the Child-Parent Centers and related programs. *Economics of Education Review*, 26, 126-144. Barnett, W.S., & Belfield, C. (2006). Early childhood development and social mobility. *Future of Children*, 16(2), 73-98.

<sup>3</sup> Based on a review of the evidence, a committee of the National Research Council recommended that preschool teachers have a BA with specialization in early childhood education. Bowman, B.T., Donovan, M.S., & Burns, M.S. (Eds.). (2001). *Eager to learn: Educating our preschoolers*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Burchinal, M.R., Cryer, D., Clifford, R.M., & Howes, C. (2002). Caregiver training and classroom quality in child care centers. *Applied Developmental Science*, 6, 2-11. Barnett, W.S. (2003). Better teachers, better preschools: Student achievement linked to teacher qualifications. *Preschool Policy Matters*, 2. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research. Whitebook, M., Howes, C., & Phillips, D. (1989). *Who cares? Child care teachers and the quality of care in America* (Final report on the National Child Care Staffing Study). Oakland, CA: Child Care Employee Project.

<sup>4</sup> Preschool classrooms typically are taught by a team of a teacher and an assistant. Research focusing specifically on the qualifications of assistant teachers is rare, but the available evidence points to a relationship between assistant teacher qualifications and teaching quality. There is much evidence on the educational importance of the qualifications of teaching staff generally. Bowman, Donovan, & Burns (2001). Burchinal, Cryer, Clifford, & Howes (2002). Barnett (2003). Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips (1989). The CDA has been recommended to prepare assistant teachers who are beginning a career path to become teachers rather than permanent assistants. Kagan, S.L., & Cohen, N.E. (1997). *Not by chance: Creating an early care and education system for America's children* [Abridged report]. New Haven, CT: Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy, Yale University.

<sup>5</sup> Good teachers are actively engaged in their continuing professional development. Bowman, Donovan, & Burns (2001). Frede, E.C. (1998). Preschool program quality in programs for children in poverty. In W.S. Barnett & S.S. Boocock (Eds.). (1998). *Early care and education for children in poverty: Promises, programs, and long-term results* (pp. 77-98). Albany, NY: SUNY Press. Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips (1989) found that teachers receiving more than 15 hours of training were more appropriate, positive, and engaged with children in their teaching practices.

<sup>6</sup> The importance of class size has been demonstrated for both preschool and kindergarten. A class size of 20 children is larger than the class size shown in many programs to produce large gains for disadvantaged children. Barnett, W.S. (1998). Long-term effects on cognitive development and school success. In W.S. Barnett & S.S. Boocock (Eds.). (1998). *Early care and education for children in poverty: Promises, programs, and long-term results* (pp. 11-44). Albany, NY: SUNY Press. Bowman, Donovan, & Burns (2001). Finn, J.D. (2002). Class-size reduction in grades K-3. In A. Molnar (Ed.). (2002). *School reform proposals: The research evidence* (pp. 27-48). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing. Frede (1998). NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (1999). Child outcomes when child care center classes meet recommended standards for quality. *American Journal of Public Health*, 89, 1072-1077. National Association for the Education of Young Children (2005). *NAEYC early childhood program standards and accreditation criteria*. Washington, DC: Author.

<sup>7</sup> A large literature establishes linkages between staff-child ratio, program quality, and child outcomes. A ratio of 1:10 is smaller than in programs that have demonstrated large gains for disadvantaged children and is the lowest (fewest number of teachers per child) generally accepted by professional opinion. Barnett (1998). Bowman, Donovan, & Burns (2001). Frede (1998). NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (1999). National Association for the Education of Young Children (2005).



Early learning standards are also critical to quality<sup>8</sup> as they offer programs guidance and ensure that they cover the full range of areas essential to children’s learning and development. States should have comprehensive early learning standards covering all areas identified as fundamental by the National Education Goals Panel<sup>9</sup>— children’s physical well-being and motor development, social/emotional development, approaches toward learning, language development, and cognition and general knowledge. These standards should be state requirements or actively promoted for use in state-funded preschool education classrooms and should be specifically tailored to the learning of preschool-age children so that it is appropriate for their level of development.

The Quality Standards Checklist also addresses the comprehensive services that preschool education programs should be expected to offer. Programs should provide at least one meal;<sup>10</sup> vision, hearing, and health screenings and referrals;<sup>11</sup> and additional parent involvement opportunities, such as parent conferences, or support services,

such as parent education.<sup>12</sup> These items are included because children’s overall well-being and success in school involves not only their cognitive development but also their physical and social/emotional health.

It is important to note that the Quality Standards Checklist focuses on state preschool policy requirements rather than actual practice. A state with good policies may have some programs that fail to comply with these policies; conversely, a state with weak policies may have many programs that exceed state standards. While evaluating implementation of standards is outside the scope of this report, the checklist does include an indicator of whether states are taking steps to monitor programs’ implementation of the quality standards. Policies requiring strong state quality standards are essential, but it is also necessary to have a means of ascertaining that programs meet those standards.<sup>13</sup> Through the examination of program practices, monitoring helps to enforce the standards and ensure high-quality education in state-funded preschool programs.

<sup>8</sup> Current practice too frequently underestimates children’s capabilities to learn during the preschool years. Clear and appropriate expectations for learning and development across all domains are essential to an educationally effective preschool program. Bowman, Donovan, & Burns (2001). Frede (1998). Kendall, J.S. (2003). Setting standards in early childhood education. *Educational Leadership*, 60(7), 64-68.

<sup>9</sup> National Education Goals Panel (1991). *The Goal 1 Technical Planning Subgroup report on school readiness*. Washington, DC: Author.

<sup>10</sup> Good nutrition contributes to healthy brain development and children’s learning. Shonkoff, J.P., & Phillips, D.A. (Eds.). (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

<sup>11</sup> For some children, preschool provides the first opportunity to detect vision, hearing, and health problems that may impair a child’s learning and development. This opportunity should not be missed. Meisels, S.J., & Atkins-Burnett, S. (2000). The elements of early childhood assessment. In J.P. Shonkoff & S.J. Meisels (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of early childhood intervention* (pp. 231-257). New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>12</sup> Families are the primary source of support for child development, and the most effective programs have partnered with parents. Bowman, Donovan, & Burns (2001). Frede (1998).

<sup>13</sup> Monitoring of program quality and external accountability for pre-K are essential components of program standards. Bowman, Donovan, & Burns (2001).



### RESOURCES

The table in the Resources section provides the following information: total state spending for the state preschool initiative; whether a local match is required; amount of state Head Start spending (if applicable); state spending per child enrolled in the program; and all reported (local, state, and federal) spending per child enrolled in the program. These measures show various views of the resources allocated to preschool education, which allows for a more complete picture of a state’s commitment to prekindergarten. For example, total spending by a state may appear low, but may prove to be high relative to the number of children enrolled. On the other hand, a state with a high total funding level may have a low per-pupil spending level if it enrolls a large number of children. In some states, local communities contribute substantial additional funds to state preschool. In such cases, the figure that includes all reported spending is the best gauge of the level of available resources, to the extent that information about local spending is available.

The bar chart in the Resources section compares preschool per-child spending to federal Head Start and K–12 per-child spending. Different colors indicate the different funding sources (local, state, and federal). A separate color is used to indicate any TANF funds that a state directs toward its preschool education initiative. While TANF funds are federal dollars, it is the state’s decision to devote these funds to preschool as opposed to other purposes. Data on the amounts of local and federal prekindergarten funds are included in the bar chart when available.

# Guide to State Profiles

## ACCESS

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Total state program enrollment .....	Number of children in state pre-K program
School districts that offer state program .....	Percentage of school districts in state where program is offered (may include programs not provided by district itself)
Income requirement .....	Maximum family income for participants
Hours of operation .....	Hours per day and days per week programs operate
Operating schedule .....	Annual schedule of operation (academic year or calendar year)
Special education enrollment .....	Number of 3- and 4-year-olds served by the Preschool Grants Program of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
Federally funded Head Start enrollment .....	Number of slots for 3- and 4-year-olds in Head Start funded with federal money
State-funded Head Start enrollment .....	Number of slots for 3- and 4-year-olds in Head Start funded with state money

## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

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POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT
Early learning standards.....	National Education Goals Panel content areas covered by state learning standards for preschool-age children must be comprehensive
Teacher degree .....	Lead teacher must have a BA, at minimum
Teacher specialized training .....	Lead teacher must have specialized training in a pre-K area
Assistant teacher degree .....	Assistant teacher must have a CDA or equivalent, at minimum
Teacher in-service .....	Teacher must receive at least 15 hours/year of in-service professional development and training
Maximum class size .....	Maximum number of children per classroom must be 20 or fewer
3-year-olds	
4-year-olds	
Staff-child ratio .....	Lowest acceptable ratio of staff to children in classroom (e.g., maximum number of students per teacher) must be 1:10 or better
3-year-olds	
4-year-olds	
Screening/referral and support services.....	Screenings and referrals for vision, hearing, and health must be required; at least one additional support service must be provided to families
Meals.....	At least one meal must be required daily
Monitoring .....	Site visits must be used to demonstrate ongoing adherence to state program standards

## RESOURCES

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Total state pre-K spending .....	Total state funds spent on state pre-K program
Local match required? .....	Whether state requires local providers to match state monetary contributions to program and amount of any required match
State Head Start spending (when applicable).....	Total state funds spent to supplement federal Head Start program
State spending per child enrolled .....	Amount of state funds spent per child participating in pre-K program
All reported spending per child enrolled .....	Amount of all reported funds spent per child participating in pre-K program

## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AA</b>	Associate of Arts	<b>HdSt</b>	Head Start
<b>ACF</b>	Administration for Children and Families	<b>HSD</b>	High School Diploma
<b>AYP</b>	Adequate Yearly Progress (No Child Left Behind)	<b>IDEA</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
<b>B–</b>	Denotes that the age range covered by a teaching license begins at birth (e.g., B–4 = birth–grade 4)	<b>IEP</b>	Individualized Education Plan
<b>BA</b>	Bachelor of Arts	<b>IFSP</b>	Individualized Family Service Plan
<b>BRI</b>	Basic Reading Inventory	<b>K</b>	Kindergarten
<b>BS</b>	Bachelor of Science	<b>LEA</b>	Local Education Agency
<b>CACFP</b>	Child and Adult Care Food Program	<b>MA</b>	Master of Arts
<b>CC</b>	Child Care	<b>MOE</b>	Maintenance of Effort
<b>CCDF</b>	Child Care and Development Fund	<b>N–</b>	Denotes that the age range covered by a teaching license begins at nursery (e.g., N–4 = nursery–grade 4)
<b>CD</b>	Child Development	<b>NA</b>	Not Applicable
<b>CDA</b>	Child Development Associate credential	<b>NAEYC</b>	National Association for the Education of Young Children
<b>CEU</b>	Continuing Education Unit	<b>NCLB</b>	No Child Left Behind
<b>COR</b>	Child Observation Record	<b>NECPA</b>	National Early Childhood Program Accreditation
<b>DIAL</b>	Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning	<b>NEGP</b>	National Education Goals Panel
<b>DIBELS</b>	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills	<b>NSLP</b>	National School Lunch Program
<b>DOE</b>	Department of Education	<b>PALS</b>	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening
<b>DRA</b>	Developmental Reading Assessment	<b>PAT</b>	Phonological Awareness Test
<b>DSC</b>	Developing Skills Checklist	<b>P–</b>	Denotes that the age range covered by a teaching license begins at preschool (e.g., P–4 = preschool–grade 4)
<b>EC</b>	Early Childhood	<b>PIR</b>	Program Information Report (Head Start)
<b>ECE</b>	Early Childhood Education	<b>PPVT</b>	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
<b>ECERS(-R)</b>	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (-Revised)	<b>Pre-K</b>	Prekindergarten
<b>ECSE</b>	Early Childhood Special Education	<b>QRS</b>	Quality Rating System
<b>EE</b>	Elementary Education	<b>SBP</b>	School Breakfast Program
<b>ELL</b>	English Language Learner	<b>SMI</b>	State Median Income
<b>ELLCO</b>	Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation	<b>SpEd</b>	Special Education
<b>ELS</b>	Early Learning Standards	<b>TANF</b>	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language	<b>T.E.A.C.H.</b>	Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project)
<b>FPL</b>	Federal Poverty Level	<b>USDA</b>	United States Department of Agriculture
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time Equivalent		
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year		
<b>GED</b>	General Equivalency Diploma		