

Guide to Support Pre-K Expansion:

Advocating for High-Quality Preschool

GG Weisenfeld

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Summary

This brief is intended to provide information and guidance for advocates and other stakeholders, especially those new to this issue, as they seek to increase investments in high quality preschool in their states. The benefits of attending a high-quality preschool program are well known, unfortunately access to these programs differs greatly across the United States. To help support policy makers in understanding their states' needs, advocates and state leaders have distinct but complimentary roles to play. When these stakeholders work together to develop policy priorities they are often more successful at achieving wins in preschool quality and expansion. Strategies that have been most successful include identifying and gathering state-specific data to create compelling stories; using research to target and identify the “ask;” and then communicate the “ask.” The recommendations included in this brief are drawn from interviews with selected ECE advocates and resources previously developed by NIEER.

Introduction

Decades of research suggests high-quality early childhood education programs can enhance children's development, reduce achievement gaps at kindergarten entry, and benefit children later in school and beyond.¹ Access to pre-K differs greatly across the United States, some states offering universal access while others serve just a small proportion of four year olds.² Nationally, about 60% of 3- and 4-year-old children attend center-based programs (50% at age three; 70% at age four).³ In order to increase access to preschool, more work needs to be done in educating and advocating for state investments in high quality preschool programs.

Attending high-quality early childhood education has been repeatedly shown to improve children's cognitive skills and reduce school readiness gaps.

Hirokazu Yoshikawa, The Courtney Sale Ross Professor of Globalization and Education, New York University

This brief is intended to provide information and guidance for advocates and other stakeholder, especially those new to this issue, as they seek to increase investments in high quality preschool in their states. We begin by providing an overview of the state preschool system, including three critical components: state early care and education (ECE)⁴ leadership; ECE advocates; and the collaboration of these two groups. This is followed by four concrete steps advocates can take to support the creation, expansion, and/or quality enhancement of preschool programs: 1) identifying and gathering state-specific data; 2) understanding the “ask”; 3) developing and researching the “ask”; and 4) communicating the “ask.”

These recommendations draw from interviews with selected ECE advocates and resources developed by NIEER.⁵ The brief concludes with a list of annotated resources (see Appendix A) that may assist state leaders as they advocate for increase access to high-quality preschool and expanding services to meet family needs.

Understanding the State Preschool System

Preschool or pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) often refers to the year (or two years) prior to kindergarten and has an educational focus. State-funded preschool is part of the broader ECE system. The ECE system is made up of a complicated array of public and private arrangements that vary by age, state, and city, supported by funding at the local, state and federal level.⁶ Major publicly-funded programs include preschool, Head Start, and child care programs. Aside from Head Start, ECE programs are primarily regulated and administered at the state and local levels.

State ECE Leadership

Each state has designed its own ECE system, often with several offices or agencies that are responsible for various functions including the development of preschool standards, allocation of funds and accountability mechanisms, use of data for decision making, and supports for programs to achieve the highest level of quality.⁷ Typically, a state administers its preschool program by a department or office within its education agency.⁸

In 2018-2019, about one quarter of these programs had a state agency head (i.e., a state superintendent, commissioner, secretary, or other state agency head) who had oversight responsibility (see Figure 1).⁹ In this same year, 26 pre-K programs reported having programmatic oversight between state and local education agencies, 29 shared fiscal oversight and 20 reported sharing responsibility for the assessment of program quality (see Table 1). Knowing which department has oversight and develops implementation guidance is crucial for advocates. Advocates need to work with the individuals responsible for developing guidance so their efforts can be successful and aligned with the state’s other programs and policies.

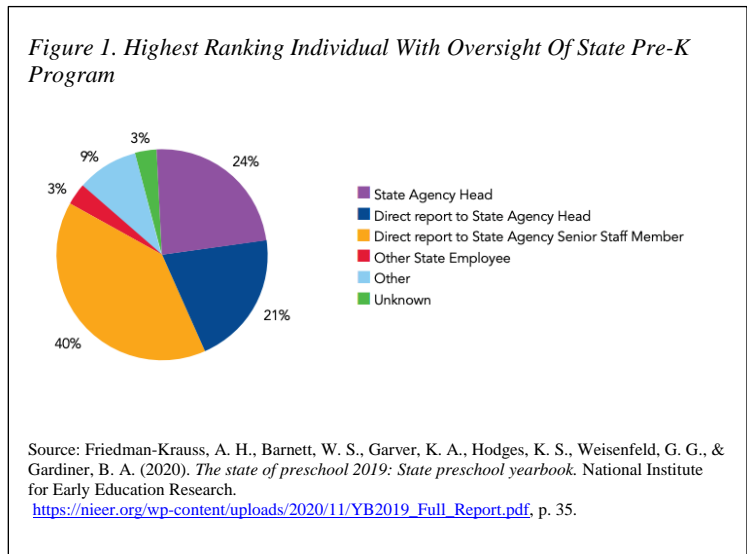


Table 1. Entities Responsibilities For Specific Oversight Of Publicly-Funded Pre-K Programs

FUNCTION	State agency with oversight of pre-K	Another state agency	State contractors	Local education agencies	Other	Not required
Child Assessments	20.9%	0.0%	7.5%	89.3%	11.8%	15.6%
Programmatic Oversight	87.3%	5.0%	15.4%	66.7%	6.1%	6.5%
Fiscal Oversight	94.5%	7.7%	7.7%	70.2%	6.3%	3.2%
Program Quality Assessments	67.3%	12.2%	40.0%	70.8%	23.5%	14.7%
Development of Learning Standards	90.9%	22.5%	13.2%	29.3%	3.1%	6.5%

Note: Many programs report multiple entities responsible for specific functions. Therefore, percentages add up to more than 100%.

Source: Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., Garver, K. A., Hodges, K. S., Weisenfeld, G. G., & Gardiner, B. A. (2020). *The state of preschool 2019: State preschool yearbook*. National Institute for Early Education Research. https://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/YB2019_Full_Report.pdf, p. 39

Inside-Outside Strategy

While state leaders are responsible for administering and ensuring the implementation of early learning programs, advocates have a role to support policies that can improve access and enhance quality. When advocates and state leaders work together to develop policy priorities they are often more successful at achieving wins in preschool quality and expansion.¹⁰ One strategy that has been effective in some states is by establishing time for the advocates and state leaders to meet and plan prior to the budget cycle.

Administration and implementation guidance of state pre-K programs occurs at the state level, however, there are opportunities for encouraging support for early learning programs through building coalitions, and/or convening stake holders. Advocacy organizations, on the other hand, are non-governmental organizations that influence and/or pressure elected officials and agency leaders to improve public policies and funding. Advocates use a variety of strategies including coalition building, grassroots organizing and mobilization, stakeholder engagement, communications strategies, and use of research and data. Many believe that securing policy and funding changes that improve early learning quality and access is more likely when there is strong coordination between stakeholders outside government and those who work in it.

A recent study of four states, Michigan, West Virginia, Washington, and North Carolina, found that one of the factors that led to their success was through cultivating champions and by bringing together advocates, politicians, philanthropists, practitioners, and business leaders to work closely with policymakers to promote access to high-quality early education.¹¹

In 2006, the **Alabama School Readiness Alliance (ASRA)** was formed as statewide coalition of nonprofits to support the expansion of high-quality, voluntary pre-K. One of the strategies of ASRA is to collaborate with community and civic leaders through close collaboration with state agencies. Since its founding, ASRA has driven the policy and funding changes and public awareness that have helped expand the reach of Alabama's state-funded First Class Pre-K program from just 2% of the state's four-year-olds in 2006 to 37% in 2020. Over the past decade alone, state funding for First Class Pre-K has increased with bipartisan support from \$19 million to \$126.8 million, thanks to persistent “outside” advocacy by ASRA and steady “inside” leadership from the state and the Governor’s office. ASRA's business-led *Pre-K Task Force* has a plan to fully fund the program over the next four years so that all 4-year-olds in the state can participate.

The **Maryland Family Network** helped support the development and passage of the *Blueprint for Maryland’s Future–Implementation*. The Maryland Family Network provided key support for a proposed \$45.6 million expansion of early childhood initiatives in the FY2021 budget, including pre-k, Family Support Centers, early interventions for children with special needs, and professional development for child care providers.

Four Tips for Success in Advocacy

There are four cumulative strategies advocates can and have implemented to increase access to high-quality preschool and/or enhance the quality of their existing programs: 1) gathering and/or messaging state data; 2) using research to form the message or “ask”; 3) forming the ask; and 4) communicating the “ask.”

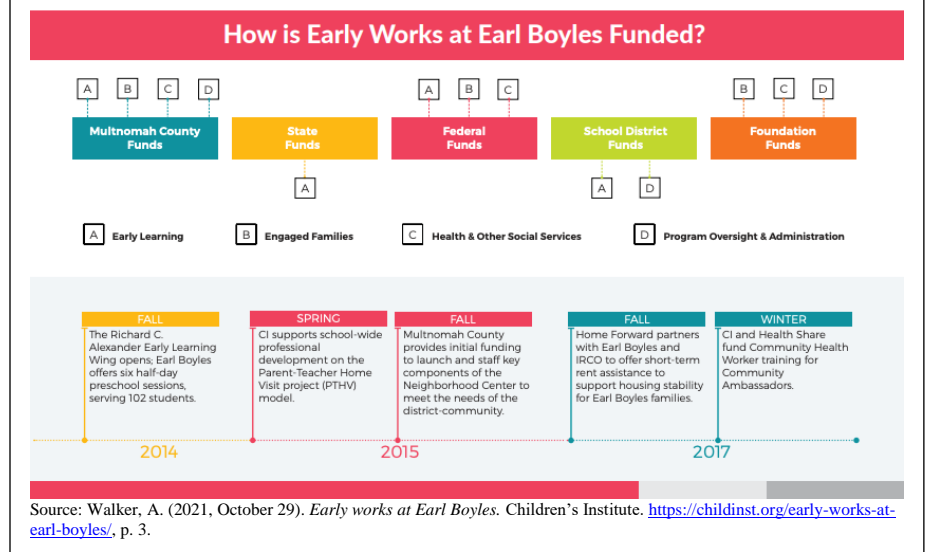
1: Pairing State Data with Compelling Stories

It is important to use data on the current status of early learning within the state and to share “real-time” stories about the benefits of high-quality preschool with your audience. Stories that emotionally engage an audience, coupled with clear data, enable you to make a compelling call to action. Add some discussion about disaggregating data to ensure equitable policies and proposals.

Legislators are most interested in how their constituents could benefit from the program. The **Advocates for Children of New Jersey** analyzed the number of eligible 3- and 4- year olds, by legislative district. They included all children who did not have access to the state’s high quality preschool program due to their district not applying for funds. Since “all politics are local,” this was a very persuasive strategy to use. Another strategy is to look at districts’ 3rd grade test scores by legislative district and share with legislators the percentage of their constituent children who are not reading on grade level to make the argument that another strategy (i.e. access to high quality pre-K) needs to be implemented. Other strategies advocates have used include:

- Present the program perspective.** One strategy is to talk to early childhood program directors for real-life stories of children who gained new vocabulary, social emotional skills, or academic skills needed for Kindergarten. Oregon's Children's Institute highlighted the Earl Boyles Elementary School which offers a high-quality preschool, an Early Kindergarten Transition program, summer literacy programs, infant-toddler play and learn groups, a food pantry, and connections to housing and health care supports in *Early Works at Earl Boyles* (October 2020). The report includes data from evaluations, funding information, community partnerships, and strategies that have been implemented (see Figure 2 for an illustration of how funding data are presented).

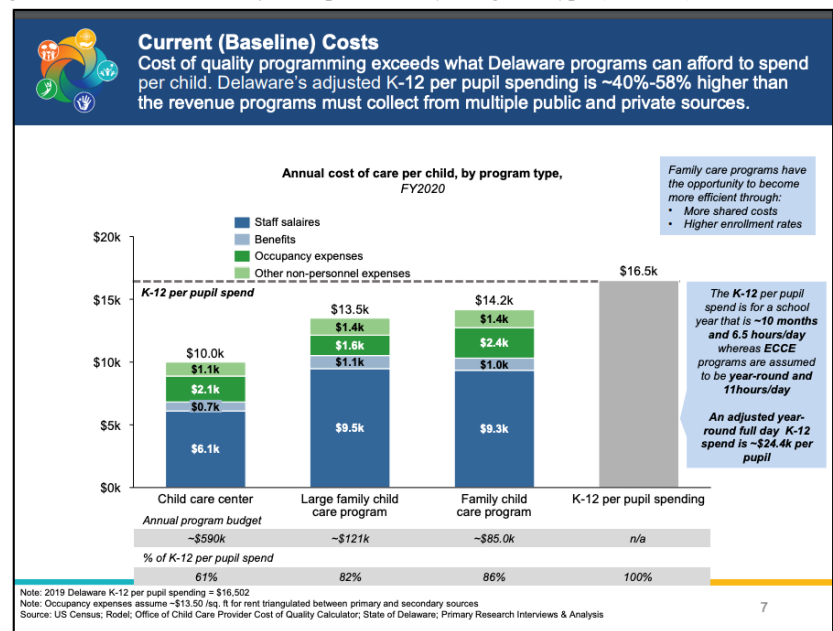
Figure 2. Funding for Oregon's Earl Boyles Elementary School (2014-2017)



- Collect data from Kindergarten teachers.** Do they notice a difference in the readiness level of children who have attended a high-quality preschool as compared to those that did not? For example, in **New Jersey**, state advocates conducted focus groups with Kindergarten teachers. Findings were written up in a short policy brief and shared with legislators. Similarly, **Pennsylvania** released its *2019 Ready to Succeed: Kindergarten Teachers Support Investments in High-Quality Pre-k*.

- Conduct a fiscal map or cost study.** States that have been recipients of the federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG B-5) may have conducted a needs assessment that would include demographic, spending, and program participation rates for the state. For example, **Delaware** conducted an early childhood funding landscape as part of its PDG B-5 grant (see Figure 3). Every two years **Pre-K for PA** releases a [report](#) comparing how Pennsylvania's pre-K investments compare to other states.

Figure 3. Delaware's Cost of Care per Child by Program Type (FY 2020)



Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2020, May). *Cost of quality care study: Final report* (PowerPoint presentation). https://education.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/oeL_PDG_2020_05_cost_of_quality_care_study.pdf, p. 13.

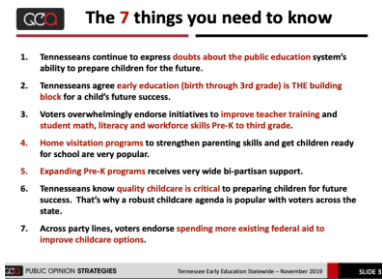
- Survey families and constituents.** Since 2017, **Tennesseans for Quality Early Education** has commissioned Public Opinion Strategies to conduct an annual poll to gauge voter support for policy proposals around ECE issues in Tennessee (see Figure 4). In **Montana, Zero to Five** contracted with a national research firm to design and conduct a public interest poll in October 2020. The survey reached 600 likely voters (400 via phone, 200 online). Outputs from this poll were used to create a handout for a legislative audience (see Figure 5) and a one-pager for a broader audience that was specific to preschool (see Figure 6).

- Support an independent evaluation of the pre-K program.** **Pre-K for PA** received lots of support for preschool from legislators and policy makers, but were often asked to show independent evaluations, particularly on the return of investments in Pennsylvania. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill was contracted to conduct an independent evaluation of PA's Pre-K Counts program. The advocates met regularly with state pre-K leaders to discuss the evaluation, including the timing of the release, and content of the findings. After the [report](#) was released in December 2020, lead researchers held a webinar, followed by a general public webinar and [brief](#) by the pre-K campaign.

- Access National Datasets.** There are a number of national data sets available, some which are broken down to state specific data, such as the average teacher salary or number of 4-year-olds in the state. Resources include:

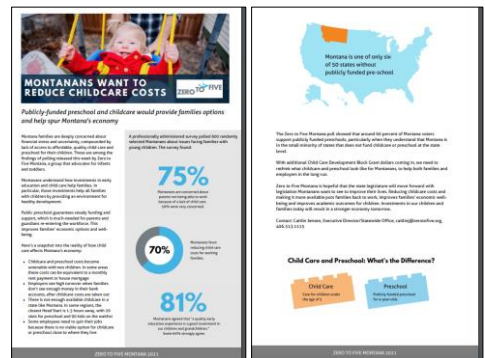
- Alliance for Early Success created a 50-state progress report, [Protecting Progress and Investing in Scale](#) (2020), on ECE policy which includes data points on the state's general fund expenditures and percentage of children in poverty (birth through age 8).
- [Center for the Study of Child Care Employment](#) (CSCCE)'s *Workforce Index*. This biennial report describes early childhood employment conditions and policies by state.
- [Education Commission of the States: Early Childhood Education](#). This website provides state scans that track a variety of policy issues including: kindergarten requirements and other policies; transition and alignment of preschool to kindergarten; and legislation to support ECE policies.
- NIEER's [State of Preschool Yearbooks](#). This annual report tracks state-funded preschool program funding, access, and policies since the 2001-2002 school year.

Figure 4. Tennessee Early Education Survey (2019)



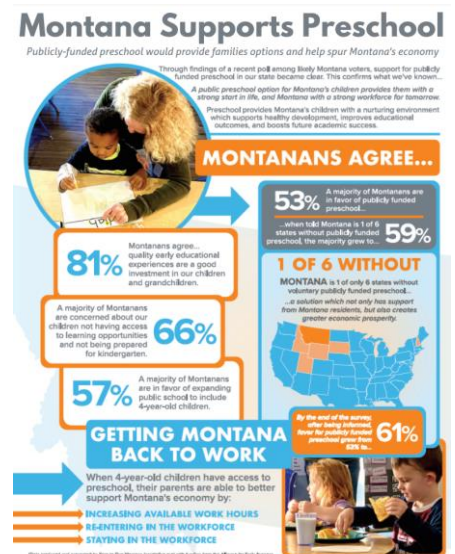
Source: Public Opinion Strategies. (2019, November). *Tennessee early education statewide survey* (PowerPoint presentation). Tennesseans for Quality Early Education. <https://www.tqee.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/TQEE-Early-Education-Poll-November-2019.pdf>, p. 3.

Figure 5. Findings from Montana's Public Interest Poll (Legislative Audience)



Source: Data produced and presented by Zero to Five Montana (zerotofive.org) with funding from the Alliance for Early Success. Date of findings: October 2020

Figure 6. Findings from Montana's Public Interest Poll (General Audience-Preschool Specific)



Source: Data produced and presented by Zero to Five Montana (zerotofive.org) with funding from the Alliance for Early Success. Date of findings: October 2020

2: Using Research to Target the “Ask”

As previously described, access to high-quality early childhood education programs can have long lasting and positive impacts on children. It is crucial to note that only high-quality pre-K classrooms deliver these benefits. Another factor to consider is who has access to preschool programs based on eligibility as well as the programs’ schedule (i.e. part-day/full day; school year/calendar year; etc.). Framing your advocacy message to focus on the benefits of high quality and the value for children and families is most effective in crafting your “ask.”

Planning for future, independent research is responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars, and can help ensure our youngest learners experience the most enriching programs possible.

Source: Pre-K for PA. (2021). [The results are in: Pennsylvania’s Pre-K Counts program makes a big difference](#), p. 5.

Pre-K Quality

Elements associated with better child outcomes present in high-quality pre-K programs include use and support of comprehensive early learning standards and curricula; credentialed teachers; ongoing teacher training and support; appropriate class size and teacher-student ratio; and a system of continuous quality improvement.¹²

- Better education, training, and on-going support for teachers can improve their interactions with children, which can enhance children’s learning.
- With smaller classes and fewer children per teacher, children have greater opportunities for interaction with adults and can receive more individualized attention.
- Early learning standards provide programs guidance and establishes the expectation programs will cover in areas essential to children’s learning and development.
- Policies requiring strong state quality standards are essential, but it is also necessary to have a means of gauging whether specific pre-K programs are meeting those standards.
- Emphasizing the need to put quality pre-K within the context of the P-3 alignment to address the common argument of the “fade-out” by third grade.
- Identifying ways programs can put equity issues, including support for the cultural and linguistic diversity of the children enrolled, into policy and practice.

Pre-K Funding

Unlike K-12 education, more than half of 4-year-olds attend a publicly-funded program paid for with dollars from the local, state, and/or federal government, including the federally funded Head Start program. In addition, the amount of funding for pre-K is typically not based on a systematic review of what it costs to produce a high-quality program. In K-12 there is an attempt to meet the constitutional obligation to meet some adequacy standard.

Total public and private spending on ECE (birth through kindergarten entry) was roughly \$75 billion in 2020.¹³ Parents spent about \$42 billion.

State investments in preschool continued to climb, this increase was small compared to high growth years. Average state funding per-child was \$5,374 in 2018-2019. However, the range of per-child spending ranged from a high of \$15,970 to a low of \$589, adjusted for state cost of living.

This state pre-K funding range exists for several reasons:

- Cost of living differences and geographic variations between the states;
- Programs vary greatly in their minimum number of hours and schedule (e.g. part-day/full-day; school-year/calendar-year); and

- Implementation of different quality elements such as student-teacher ratios, teacher degree requirements, provisions for professional development and coaching, and the extent of their systems to support administration, accountability, and continuous quality improvement all varies across programs.

There are several cost modeling tools that may help advocates and policymakers estimate a funding level that is more reflective of the true costs of operating a program. For example:

- Cost of Preschool Quality and Revenue (CPQ&R), an Excel based tool built on NIEER’s ten quality benchmarks.¹⁴
- Provider cost of quality calculator (PCQC) is a web-based tool that allows users to enter financial data to create child care centers or family child care home budgets and test how payment rates, tiered reimbursement rates, and expenses impact budget.¹⁵

In 2017, Kentucky wanted to develop and validate estimates reflecting the cost of providing preschool and child care across the state at various levels of quality. The **Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence** led the research in consultation with the **Kentucky Early Childhood Cost of Quality Advisory Group** (KY Cost Advisory Group), whose members included state agency leaders.

The group used two cost modeling tools (CPQ&R and PCQC) to inform policymakers responsible for determining budget allocations for preschool in school districts and reimbursement rates for child care.

For more information see: Weisenfeld, G. (2020). [Determining Costs of Preschool Quality in Kentucky](#). CEELCO.

One of the challenges for advocates when advocating for quality is that, while policymakers agree that it is important, they have a hard time translating that to funding (unlike slots or seats). This is where the use of one or multiple cost modeling tools may be helpful.

Pre-K Access & Eligibility

The final area to understand is who has access to preschool. This includes who is eligible to the various ECE options within the state, as well as how these options are able to be accessed by the families they are targeting.¹⁶ Similar to cost studies or fiscal mapping, many states have conducted enrollment and access mapping as part of their PDG B-5 needs assessments. For example, see **Virginia’s [Preschool Development Grant, Birth through Five: Needs Assessment](#)** (July 2019); **Minnesota’s** needs assessment can be found under the [Grant Work Summary Documents](#) tab; and **Nebraska’s [Needs Assessment](#)**.

3: Identifying the “Ask”

The first question always is, **“How much is this going to cost?”**

In order to determine the cost and thus identify the ask, advocates need to coordinate with agency partners, such as state and advocates did in **Alabama** as previously described. It is important that the state has the capacity and ability to implement the programs or policies that are being advocated. In addition, is the ask reflective of what communities need and want? Also, having a clear understanding of how the ask will impact the rest of the state’s ECE system and/or the K-12 system. The unintended consequences need to be identified (e.g., *Will child care programs lose 3-4 year olds to pre-k programs, creating less 0-3 child care supply?*). Another reason it is important to include multiple stakeholders to create an inside/outside strategy.

Based on state data collected, there are several questions that address access, quality, and services that will help form the “ask” when identifying the state’s preschool needs:

What is your time frame for expanding? It may be useful to look at several projections, such as a 4-year and 10-year projection. Often the costs are much higher than expected. One strategy to not jeopardize the quality of the program by cutting corners to fit into an assumed funding number, is to show long-term funding projections to meet the targeted enrollment number. For example, **West Virginia** had an explicit strategy to get to become a universal, full-day, preschool program operated in a mixed delivery system.¹⁷

Are you targeting enrollment or going for “universal” access? Trying to get a pre-K program to “universal” status is often discussed; however, this does not mean 100% of all children will enroll in the program. In states

that have state-funded universal pre-K, only a percentage of eligible 4-year-olds participate: D.C. (87.9%), Florida (77.3%), Georgia (60%), Oklahoma (73.3%), and Vermont (75.1%).

Are you advocating to improve the quality of the current pre-K program? Some states decide to cost out projections in an as-is program; others make slight modifications; while others try to ramp the quality to meet research-based standards associated with positive child outcomes. Adjustments made to program policies might include reducing the class size; changing degree requirements for lead teachers; requiring salary parity for pre-K teachers in all settings; implementing a coaching program; and integrating structured classroom observations into all classrooms on a regular basis.

How many hours per day? Days per week? Weeks per year?

Dosage not only includes the number of hours per day, but also how many days per year. *Will the program follow an academic calendar, such as what is offered in the public school; or a year-round program, more similar to what CCDF-funded programs provide? Will the dosage vary by program setting? With the pre-K program provide wrap-around services, or partner with providers who can supplement the program hours?*

Expansion of public pre-K is only a worthwhile public investment if children receive a high-quality education.
W. Steven Barnett, Ph.D., senior co-director National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers University Graduate School of Education

What services with the program provide? Will there be comprehensive services for children and/or families? Depending upon the length of the program day, will meals be provided? Transportation?

What is the distribution of where pre-K programs will be located? How can you promote a diverse delivery strategy? Typically, the costs of operating a program in public school versus a private center or Head Start program varies. For example, there are often a greater percentage of pre-K classrooms in private preschool programs as compared to public schools; thus, the percentage of site administrators' time and school utilities is spread out over more classrooms in public schools and tend to be higher overhead costs for private preschool programs. Higher teacher salaries are more likely to occur in public school based programs as compared to those located in private preschools. However, there have been states that have introduced successful compensation parity legislation or policies.¹⁸

4: Communicating the “Ask”

Once you have state-specific data and a clearly stated “ask,” a communication plan should be developed that may include the following components:

- Talking points addressing common questions about costs and funding for high-quality pre-K.
- Handouts, presentations and invited testimony at legislative hearings, and with state agencies.
- Outreach materials including press releases and social media posts.
- Graphics that engage stakeholders in understanding the “ask.”
- Identifying influential messengers and forming partnerships with them. Some partners may include other advocacy groups representing K-12 (i.e. principal associations and teacher unions), business leaders, other ECE advocates, parent-teacher organizations.
- Encouraging site visits for policymakers or showing ECE teachers in action through videos (e.g., New America produced a series of videos, [It’s Not Babysitting: See ECE Teachers in Action](#)).

The following are some tips on things to think about when communicating:

Talk about benefits and value, not costs.

- High-quality preschool enrollment creates education and social savings: Children arrive at kindergarten ready to learn, less need for special education, lower grade retention rates, higher reading scores, higher graduation rates, better-paying jobs, and lower crime rates.¹⁹

- Safe, reliable high-quality early childhood programs enable parents to find better jobs and boost family income, especially important for single-parent households.²⁰
- Early childhood education is a sound use of public investment with long-term returns.²¹
- Cost-benefit analyses have shown for every \$1 invested, more than \$10 is returned in cost savings—an inflation-adjusted annual return on investment of 18% over a child’s lifetime, cumulative return of 900%.²²

Pre-K pays off so well because we pay a high price for failure, particularly in a time when even children from middle-income families have much too high a chance of needing long-term special education or dropping out of school.

W. Steven Barnett Board of Governor’s Scholar and founder, National Institute of Early Education Research, Rutgers University

Use the phrase “high-quality preschool” or “high-quality early learning.”

- Explain how quality teaching nurtures cognitive and social-emotional development.²³
- Explain that positive and enriching experiences with adults support healthy brain development, but that the lack of positive early childhood experiences can have serious consequences in children’s learning and wellness.

Use science to explain why early learning is so important.

- Research studies have shown that early life experiences can influence brain development in children.²⁴
- Early experiences affect the development of **brain architecture**, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health.²⁵
- Children’s early experiences – the bonds they form with their parents and their first learning experiences – deeply affect their physical, cognitive, emotional and social development.²⁶

Conclusions

The benefits of attending a high-quality preschool program are well known, unfortunately, access to these programs differs greatly across the United States. To help support policy makers in understanding their states’ needs, advocates and state leaders have distinct but complimentary roles to play. When these stakeholders work together to develop policy priorities they are often more successful at achieving wins in preschool quality and expansion. Strategies that have been most successful include identifying and gathering state-specific data to create compelling stories. Data can be gathered at the program or classroom level, as well as aggregated at the state level. Some states have collected information internally and others have contracted with external researchers. Once data are collected, this research can be used to target, then identify and finally communicate the “ask.”

Acknowledgments

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About NIEER

The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at the Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, conducts and disseminates independent research and analysis to inform early childhood education policy.

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About the Author

GG Weisenfeld is an Assistant Research Professor at NIEER. Her current work includes conducting national scans of pre-K policies at the state and city level, researching state efforts that support the implementation of high-quality preschools and kindergarten entry assessments, contributing to the research and production of NIEER's annual State of Preschool Yearbook, and offering technical assistance for state and city leaders on designing and enhancing pre-K efforts. She earned a Master's degree from Bank Street College and Doctorate from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Appendix A: ECE Advocacy Resources

The following resources include tip sheets and toolkits that may provide additional resources for those advocating for early learning policies.

- Advocacy & Communication Solutions. (n.d.). [*Elevating Early Childhood Outreach in Arizona*](#). This brief describes how Arizona's First Things First (quasi-governmental agency) built awareness for its early childhood education programs.
- Advocacy & Communication Solutions. (n.d.). [*Start Slow for Sustained Success: Idaho AEYC took its Time to Seed Local Preschool*](#). Describes the steps Idaho advocates implemented to support preschool.
- Advocacy & Communication Solutions. (n.d.). [*Tools & Resources*](#). This toolkit provides templates and advice for creating a community engagement and public policy plan (not just focused on ECE).
- Alliance for Early Success. [n.d.]. [*Resource Centers*](#). The Alliance for Early Success supports advocates through access to resources including support with election campaigns; racial equity and advocacy; and State Investor Collaboratives.
- Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, University of California, Berkley. (2021, February 24). [*Taking action: Using the early childhood workforce index*](#). This advocacy toolkit is designed to support the early childhood workforce around five elements (qualifications and educational supports; work environment standards; compensation and financial relief; workforce data; and financial resources).
- Kadzielawski, T. (2015, February 8). [*Early Childhood Advocacy for Beginners: Part 1 and Part 2*](#). This two-part series provides some useful tips and links to resources to support advocates.
- NAEYC. (n.d.). [*Be a Proactive Early Learning Advocate*](#). Offers advice for connecting with elected officials and engaging within local NAEYC affiliates.
- NAEYC. (n.d.). [*Build Your Advocacy Skills*](#). Provides links to a variety of resources and tools to support federal and state advocacy; engaging candidates running for office; and communication guidelines.
- National Collaborative for Infants & Toddlers. (n.d.). [*Make the Case*](#). The website provides links to a variety of tools to support advocating for a prenatal to age three policy agenda.
- NIEER. (n.d.). [*CPQR: Messaging Toolkit*](#). This toolkit provides strategies to craft an effective response to why policymakers and funders should invest in high-quality preschool programs based on the Cost of Preschool Quality & Revenue (CPQ&R) calculator.
- Ounce of Prevention. (n.d.). [*Early Childhood Advocacy Toolkit*](#). This toolkit provides examples and strategies for different types of advocacy; supports for defining/framing a message; and defines the legislative process.
- Strong Start for Children. (2013). [*Toolikt for Early Learning Advocates*](#). This toolkit has resources advocates and community leaders can use to support a national policy agenda that supports pre-K.

Endnotes

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² See: Cui, J., & Natzke, L. (2020). *Early childhood program participation: 2019 (NCES 2020–075)*. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2020075>; Hustedt, J. T., & Barnett, W. S. (2011). Financing early childhood education programs: State, federal, and local issues. *Educational Policy* 25 (1): 167–192; Friedman-Krauss, A. H., Barnett, W. S., Garver, K. A., Hodges, K. S., Weisenfeld, G. G., & Gardiner, B. A. (2020). *The state of preschool 2019: State preschool yearbook*. National Institute for Early Education Research; U.S. Department of Education (2019, December). Table 3. Nursery and Primary School Enrollment of People 3 to 6 Years Old, by Control of School, Attendance Status, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Mother's Labor Force Status and Education, and Family Income: October 2018. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2018/demo/school-enrollment/2018-cps.html>.

³ Friedman-Krauss et al. (2020).

⁴ Early childhood education (ECE) commonly refers to the entire birth through 3rd grade system. Preschool/pre-K/pre-Kindergarten are typically seen as a subset of ECE, typically focusing on 3- and 4-year-old children with the primary focus of the program educating children.

⁵ One of the resources includes a messaging toolkit developed to accompany the Cost of Preschool & Revenue calculator, see: <https://nieer.org/research/research-instruments/cpqg>

⁶ See: Barnett, W. S., Grafwallner, R., & Weisenfeld, G. G. (2021): Corona pandemic in the United States shapes new normal for young children and their families. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, DOI: 10.1080/1350293X.2021.1872670

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⁸ Friedman-Krauss et al. (2020).

⁹ *Ibid*

¹⁰ Advocacy is an umbrella term that involves “identifying, embracing and promoting a cause.” Lobbying is a “specifically focused form of advocacy, with the purpose to influence legislation. Only some methods of advocacy are considered lobbying.” For more information, see Advocacy & Communication Solutions. (n.d.). *Advocacy: Glossary of terms*. https://www.advocacyandcommunication.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Advocacy_Glossary_of_Terms-1.pdf

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