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2018 State of Preschool Report Finds Maryland a State on the Move *State Increases Pre-K Funding, but Flat Enrollment Follows National Trend*

New Brunswick, NJ—Maryland increased state preschool funding 11% along with spending per-child, but enrollment remained stagnant compared to last year, according to new research from 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.

Maryland increased state pre-K funding, yet investment remains below spending totals in previous years. Pre-K access exceeds national averages. Maryland has high standards for teachers but does not ensure parity with K-3 teachers when in a community-based setting.

“Nationally, we are disappointed by the lack of progress,” said NIEER Founder and Senior Co-Director Steven Barnett, Ph.D. “Maryland is poised to move forward. The Kirwan Commission laid out a roadmap for pre-K success that the state should follow.”

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

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

Maryland 2017-18 Fast Facts

Met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks

Enrolled 31,474 children, an increase of 92 from 2016-17

Total state funding = \$124,726,542 an increase of \$12,481,963 from 2016-17

State spending-per-child = \$3,963, compared to \$3,577 in 2016-17

Teachers required to have a BA, but no requirements for salary or benefit parity with K-3

National rankings:

- 13 in access for 4-year-olds
- 15 in access for 3-year-olds
- 31 in state spending per child