



The Changing Landscape of Pre-K: Examining the changes and impacts of quality standards in prekindergarten at the national, state, district and program levels

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Overview of Presentation

- National overview of quality standards and monitoring in pre-K
- State level overview of quality standards, implementation and monitoring
- District level overview of quality standards and implementation using a mixed delivery system
- Program level overview of quality standards, implementation and monitoring



The Changing Landscape: National Trends in Quality Standards in State-Funded Prekindergarten Initiatives

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History of Preschool

- Enrollment has increased dramatically over the years
 - 1976: approximately 21% 3-year-olds and 41% 4-year-olds enrolled in some type of program
 - 2008: 52% 3-year-olds and 82% 4-year-olds enrolled
- State preschool initiatives use state funding to offer group learning experiences to 3- and 4-year-olds
- There have been few large-scale efforts to document state policies for the initiatives and they have not been done on an annual basis



The State of Preschool Yearbook

- Annual Report of State Preschool Policy across the U.S
- 6 reports with data from 2001-2002 to 2007-2008
- Based on a detailed web-based survey completed by state-level administrators of each state preschool initiative
- Focus on Access to State Pre-K, Pre-K Program Quality, & State Spending on Pre-K



What qualifies as state preschool?

- Funded, directed, and controlled by the state
- Primarily serve 3- and 4-year-olds
- Focus is on Early Childhood Education, not tied to parent work eligibility status
- Group learning experience at least 2 days a week
- Distinct from state's child care system
- Not primarily designed for children with disabilities
- Include Head Start supplements that substantially expand services in a state



NIEER Yearbook

- Purpose of the Yearbook is to provide an annual overview of state pre-K policies across the U.S.
- Focus of this presentation is to examine longitudinal findings from report related to quality standards and monitoring policies
- For the 2007-2008 school year, there were 50 state-funded initiatives in 38 states. 12 states still did not offer a state-funded pre-K program

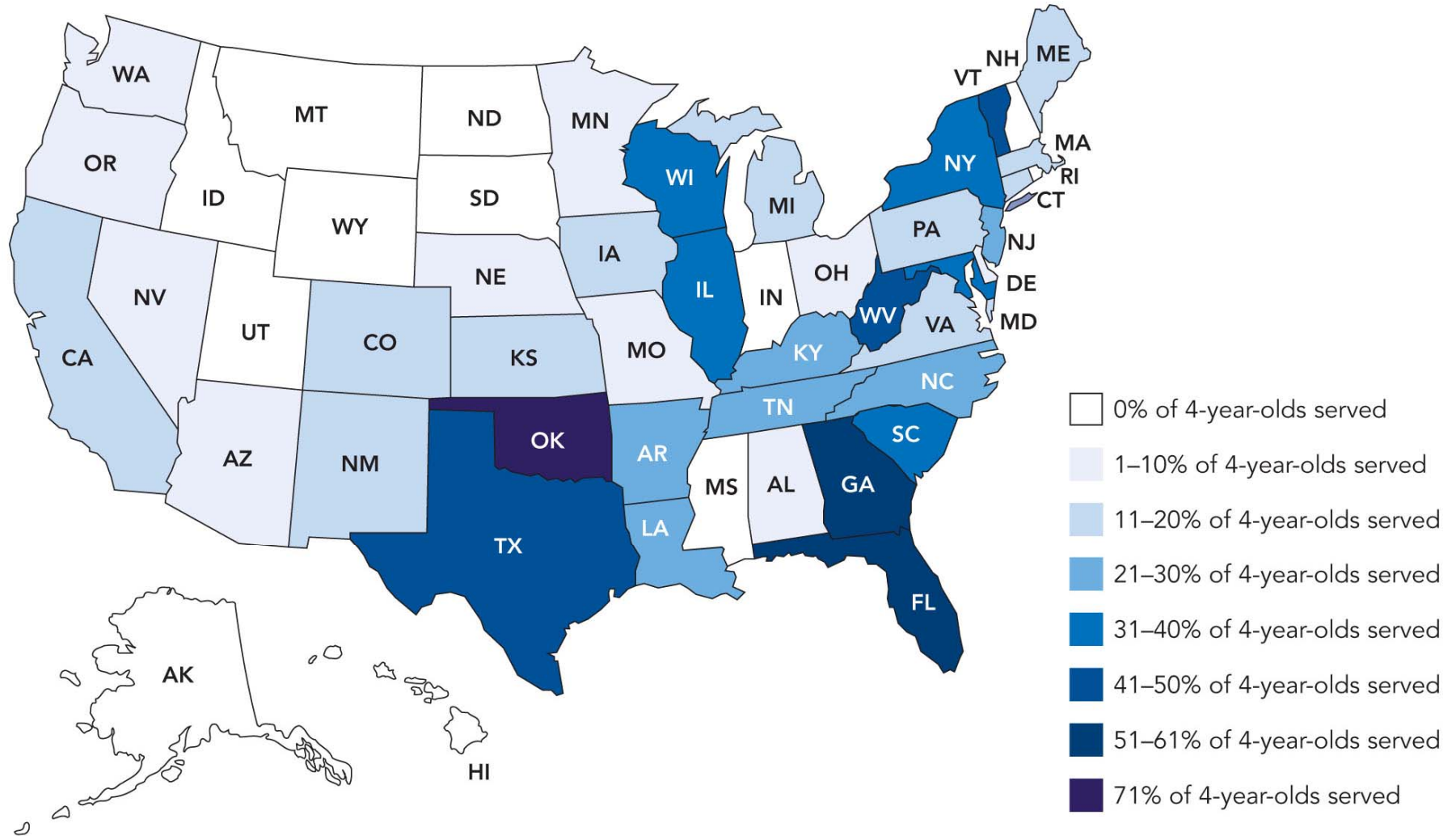


National and Longitudinal Trends in Access

- During the 2007-2008 school year, state pre-K initiatives served over 1.1 million children, an increase of over 100,000 children served the previous year.
- Since the 2001-2002 school year, total enrollment for 4-year-olds has increased by 73% (and increased by 45% for 3-year-olds)
 - 2007-2008: 24% 4-year-olds; 4% 3-year-olds
- OK, FL, GA, and VT served half or more of their 4-year-olds in the 2007-2008 school year.



FIGURE 1: PERCENT OF 4-YEAR-OLDS SERVED IN STATE PRE-K





National and Longitudinal Trends on Spending

- During the 2007-2008 school year, states spent a total of \$4.6 billion on state pre-K, up by 23.4% from previous year.
- On average states spent \$4,061 per child although spending per state varied greatly
 - New Jersey spent the most per child at almost \$11,000, while other states such as South Carolina and Maine spent less than \$2,000.



State spending and quality

- At least 17 of the 38 states spend enough money per child to meet all 10 of NIEER's quality benchmarks
- However...
 - Only 2 states meet all 10 quality benchmarks, both of which do not report sufficient funding
 - Of the 17 states that spend enough money, quality ranges from 4.3 to 9 benchmarks met



Quality Standards

State Pre-K Policy	Benchmarks
Early learning standards	Comprehensive
Teacher degree	At least a BA
Teacher specialized training	Specializing in pre-K
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or equivalent
Teacher in-service	At least 15 hours/year
Maximum class size	20 or lower
Staff-child ratio	1:10 or better
Screening/referral and support services	Vision, hearing, health; at least one support service
Meals	At least 1/day
Monitoring	Site visits

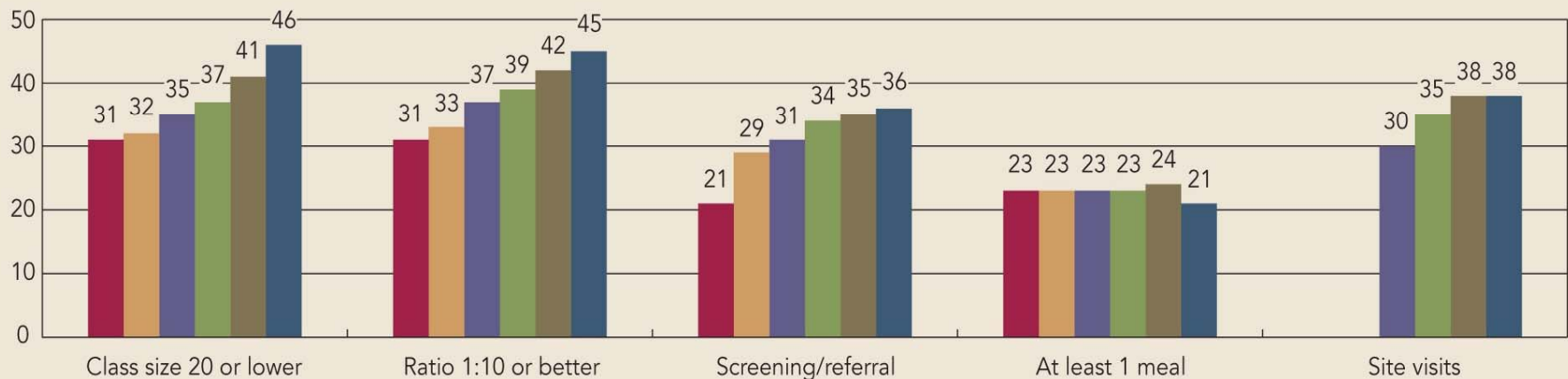
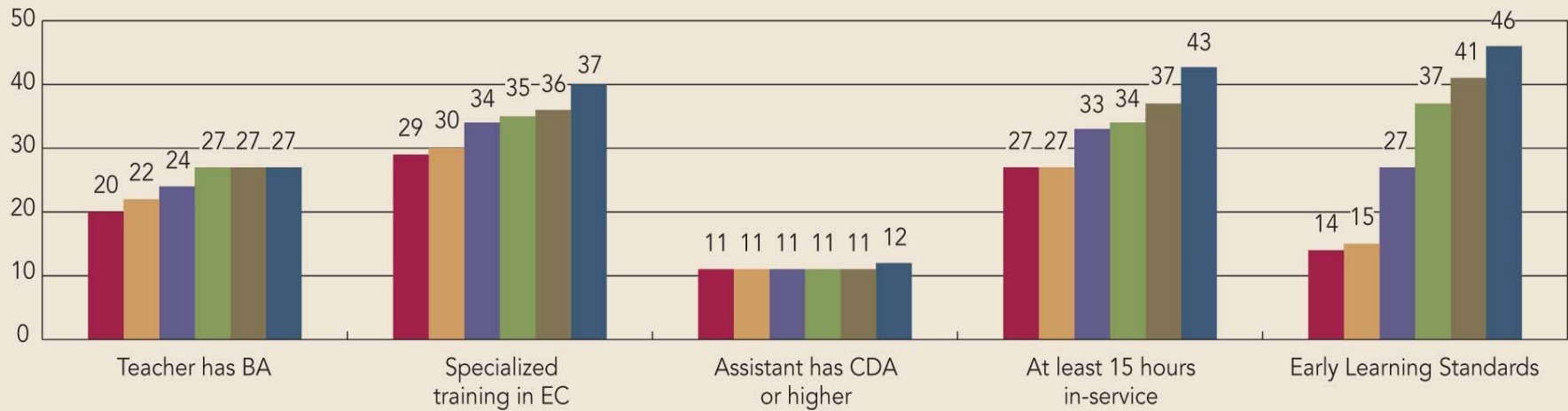


Quality Standards cont.

- Alabama and North Carolina continued to be the only states to meet all 10 benchmarks
- 2007-2008 school year:
 - 10 state initiatives met 9 out of 10 benchmarks
 - the mean number of benchmarks met for all 38 states with programs rose to 7.2 out of 10 compared to 6.8 the previous year
 - Only five state pre-K initiatives met five or fewer total benchmarks



Number of State Pre-K Programs Meeting Benchmarks 2002–2008

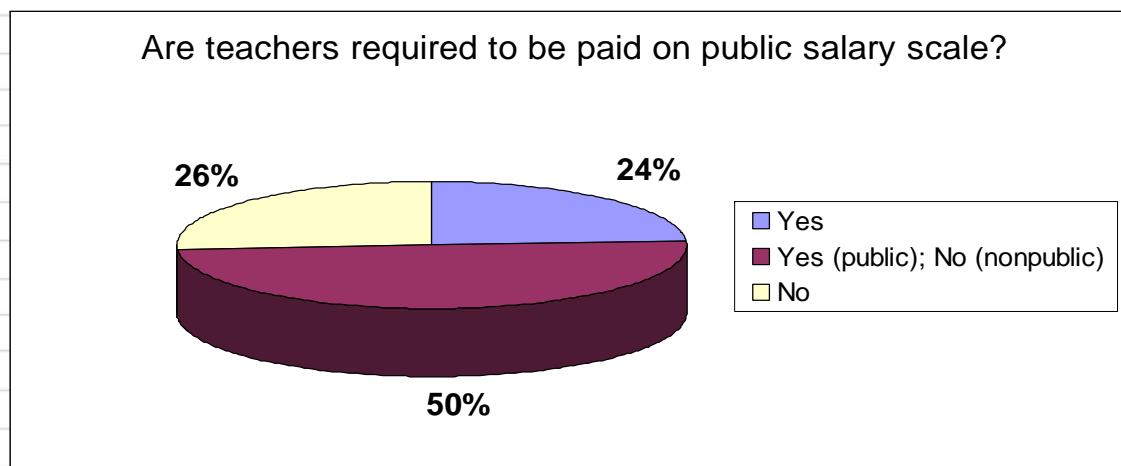


■ 2001-2002
 ■ 2002-2003
 ■ 2004-2005
 ■ 2005-2006
 ■ 2006-2007
 ■ 2007-2008



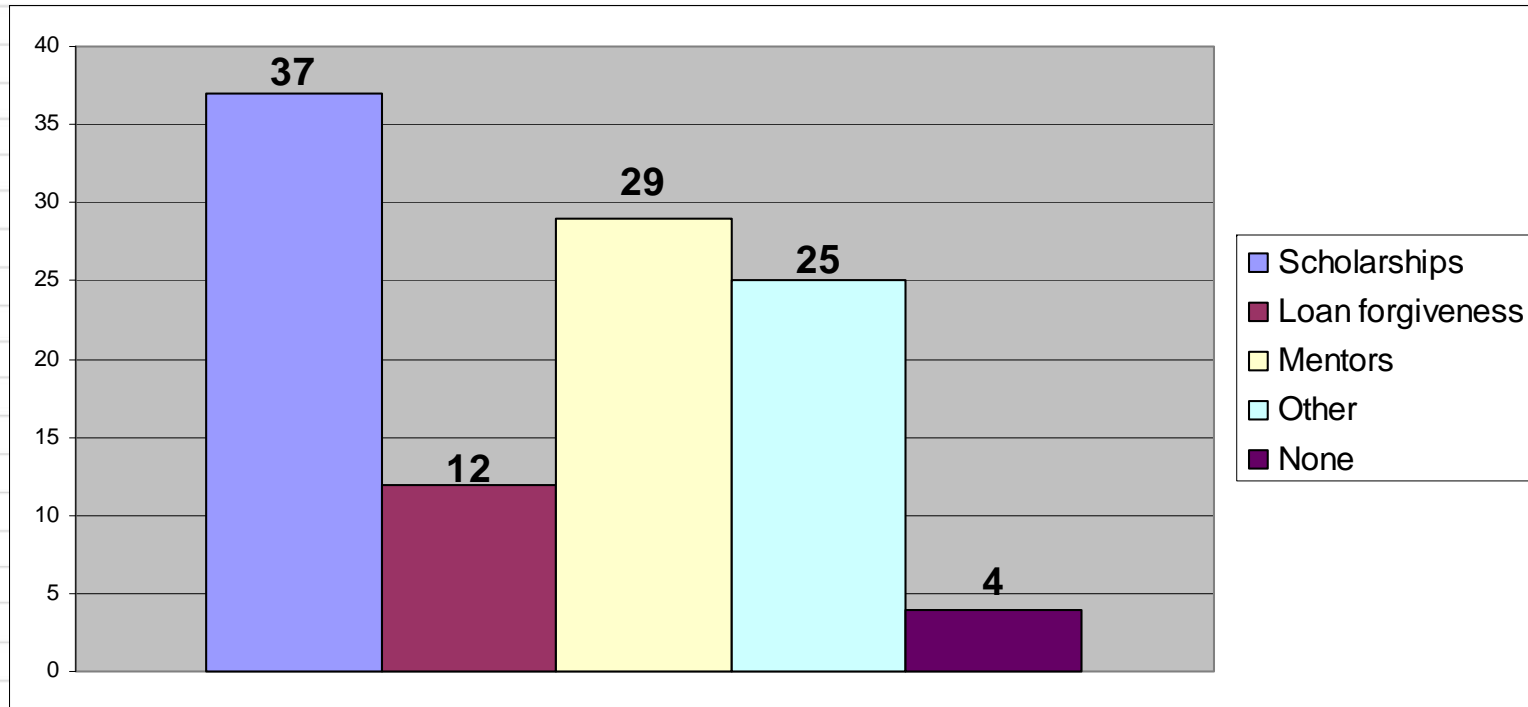
Teacher Quality

- In the 50 state pre-K initiatives:
 - 12 required all teachers to be paid on public salary scale
 - 25 programs required teachers to be paid on public salary scale if they are in public settings, but not nonpublic settings
 - 13 did not require teachers to be paid on public salary scale in both public and nonpublic settings





State supports for teacher education



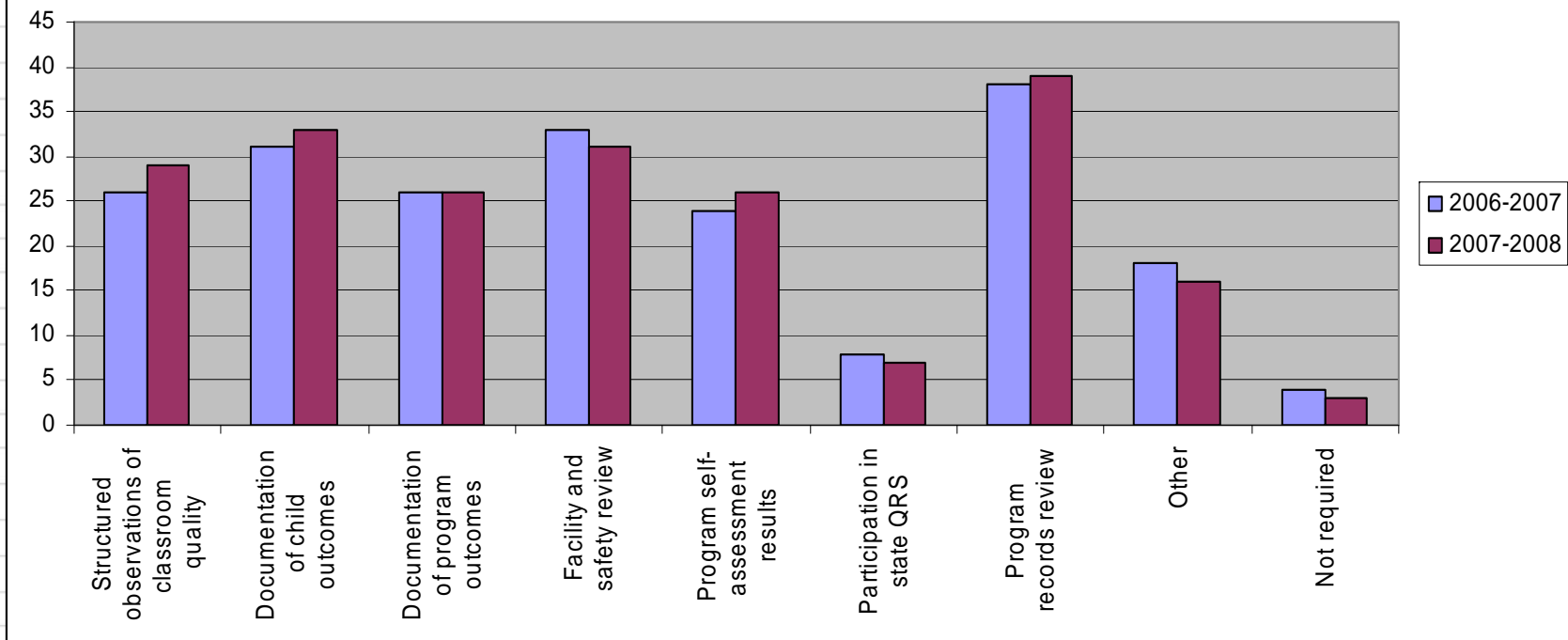


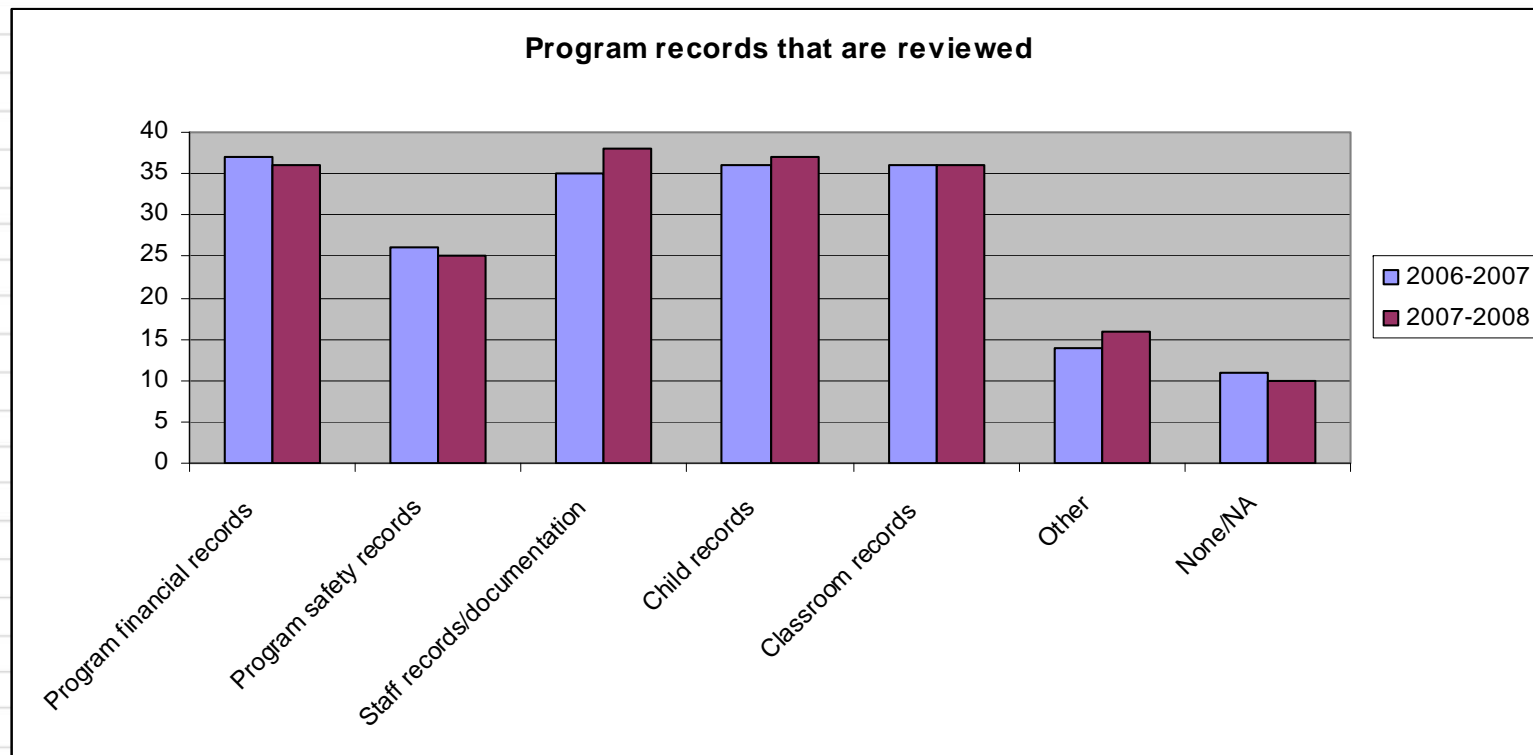
Monitoring

- 2004-2005 school year, monitoring questions added to survey
- Questions include: what information is collected and how; how the information is used for program improvement, and questions about formal evaluations and requirements to assess children's learning and development



Information the state collects for monitoring purposes







Conclusions

- The NIEER Yearbook seeks to provide a national overview of the programs and their policies and examine trends that emerge over time
- Overall quality standards continue to increase on a national level
 - However, there is still wide variability across programs in terms of access, spending and quality
- Importance of assessing and reporting trends
- In the context of the current economic situation, document states' progress



NAEYC Professional Development Conference

Charlotte, NC

June 16, 2009

John Pruetto, Executive Director
NC Office of School Readiness

Mission



- Provide high-quality academic pre-kindergarten for at-risk children.
 - Academic pre-k is a research proven strategy to prepare children for school success.
 - Pre-K is critical to the State Board of Education priority that every student graduate.
 - Return on investment associated with early education is extraordinary.
 - Pre-K is increasingly viewed as an economic development strategy.
-

Strategies



- Coordinate and leverage state and federal funding for pre-kindergarten services
 - More at Four, Head Start, Title I, Exceptional Children Preschool, Even Start
 - Standards for pre-kindergarten that align with and support K-12 standards
 - Focused professional development
-

More at Four

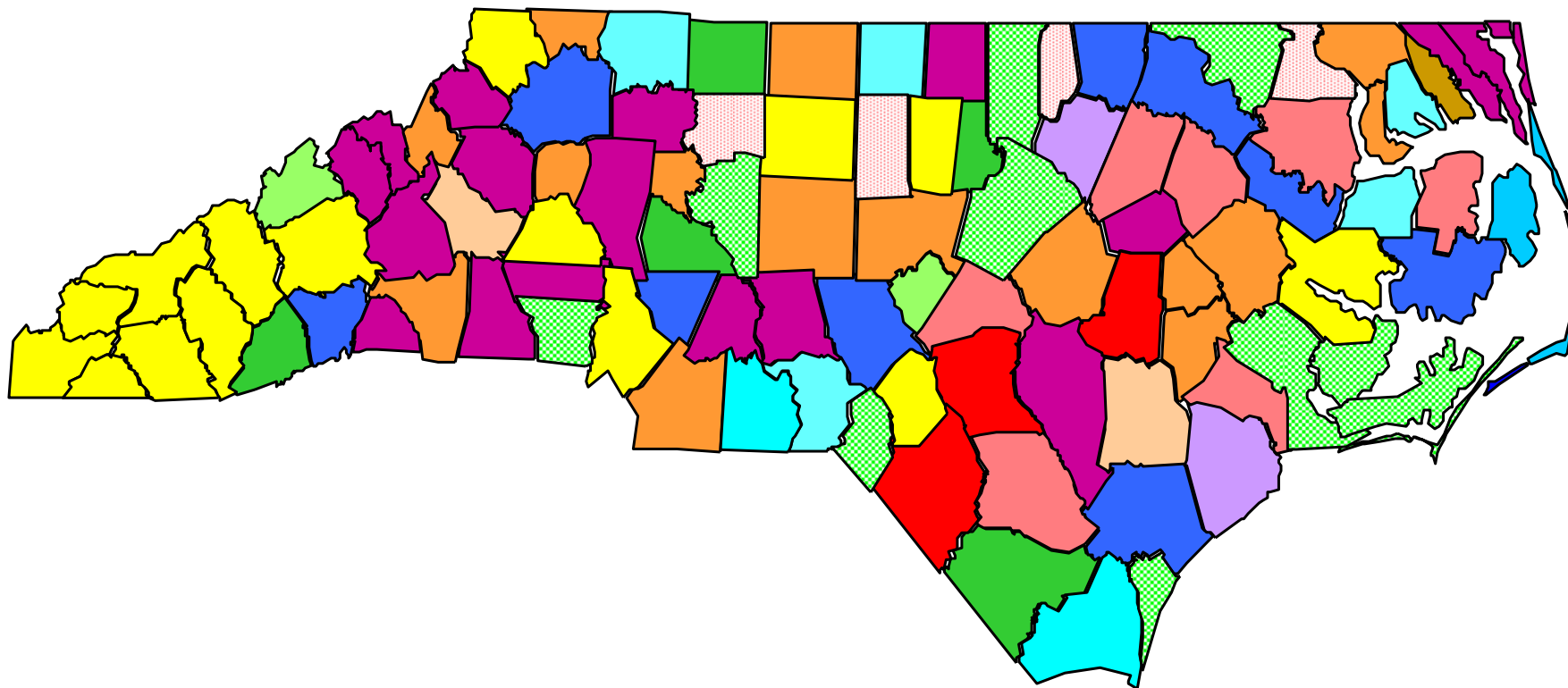
■ Populations Served

Targeted “at-risk” population

- ❑ Below 75% of State Median Income
- ❑ 20% of slots may serve children above 75% SMI threshold if designated risk factor exists
- ❑ Active duty military
- ❑ Unserved children receive service priority



MAF Counties by Start Date



2001-2002

Jan 02, n=15
Feb 02, n=3
Mar 02, n=10
Apr 02, n=4

2002-2003

Aug 02, n=7	Dec 02, n=5
Sept 02, n=2	Jan 03, n=9
Oct 02, n=15	Feb 03, n=2
Nov 02, n=17	

2003-2004

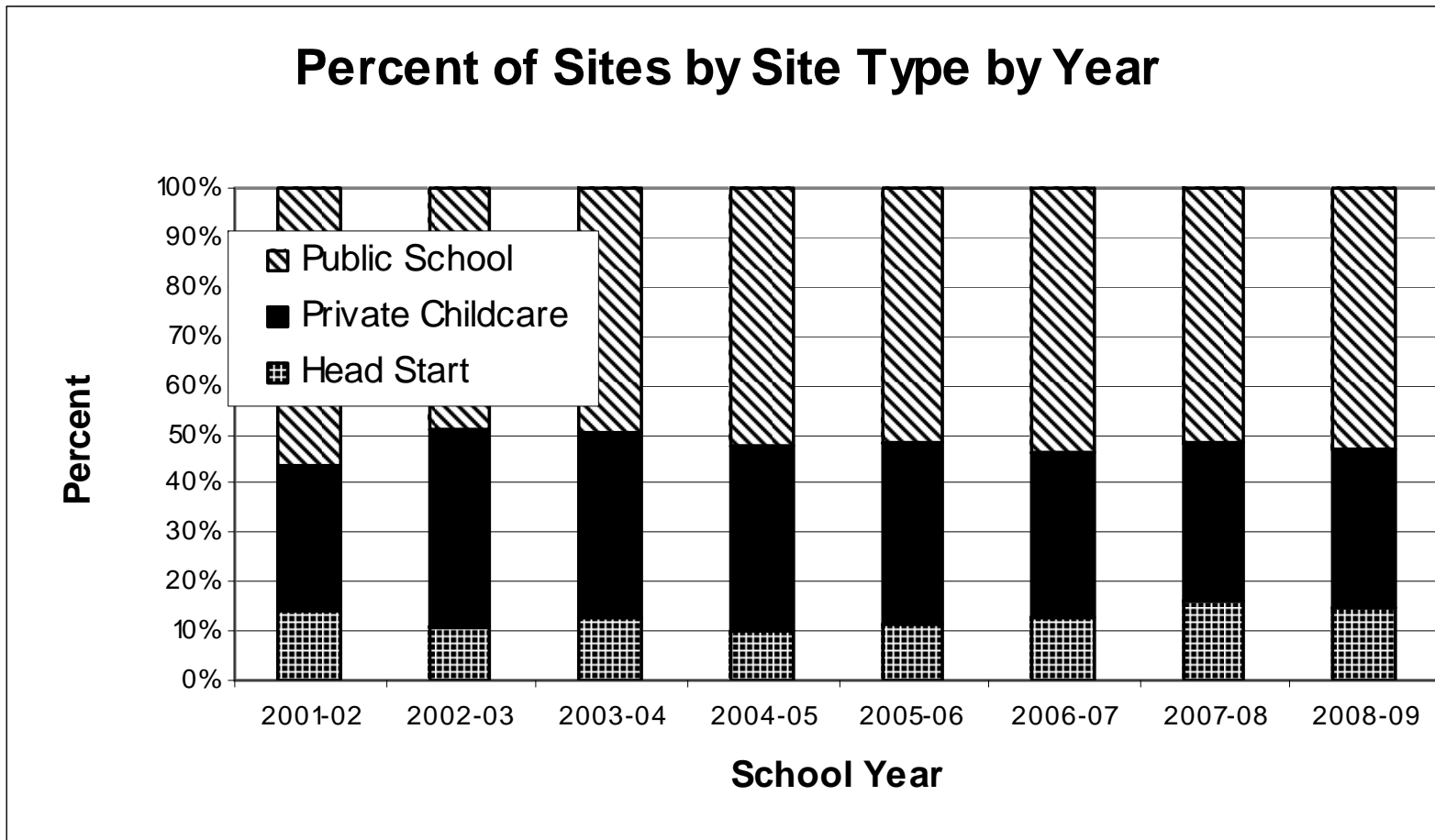
Aug 03, n=7
Oct 03, n=1
Nov 03, n=2
Feb 04, n=1

More at Four



- ❑ Local Level Implementation
 - Local MAF Committees
 - Local Plan for MAF Implementation
 - ❑ Need
 - ❑ Capacity
 - ❑ Other resources
 - ❑ Local Contractors
 - LEAs
 - Local Partnerships for Children
-

More at Four



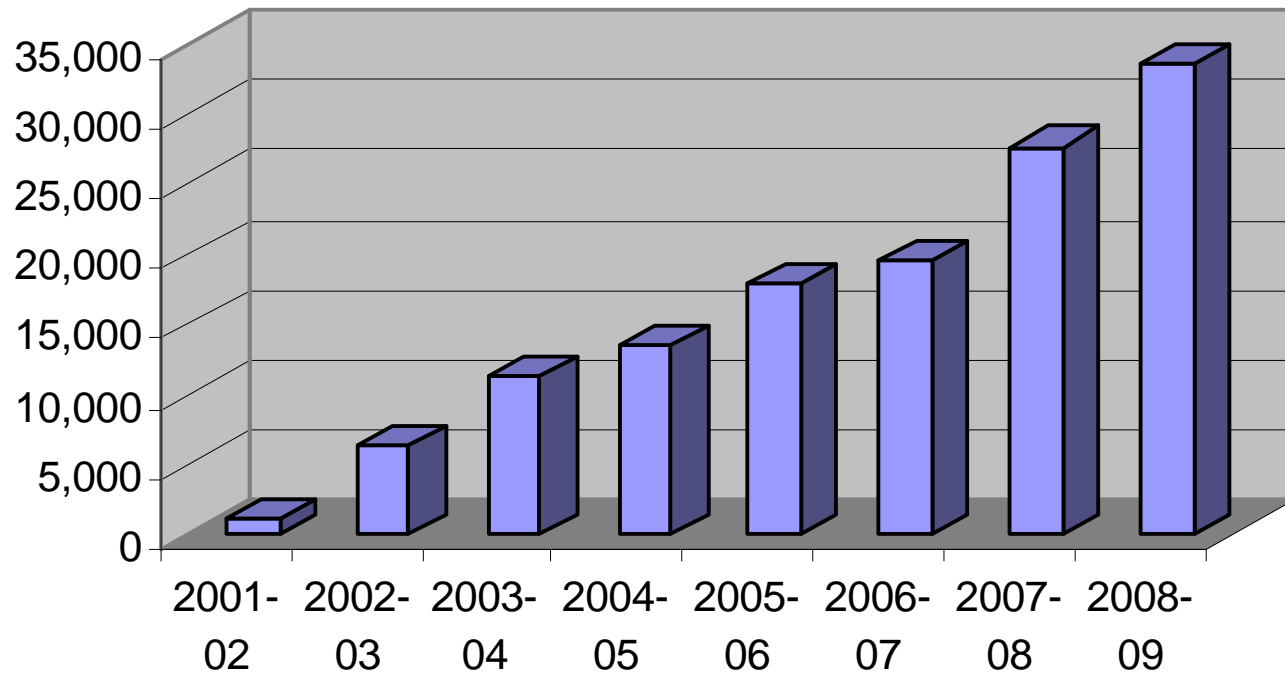
More at Four



- More at Four is recognized as one of the two highest quality state pre-k programs nationally by the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER).
 - Evaluation results:
 - children have exhibited significant growth from pre-k through kindergarten in multiple skill areas.
 - consistent with other large-scale studies on pre-k.
 - More at Four offers “an important and ameliorative experience for children who otherwise may not have such opportunities in the pre-k year” (Peisner-Feinberg and Schaaf, 2008).
-

More at Four

Number of Children Served by Year



*as of 2/4/09

MAF – Return on Investment

- The program is proving successful.
 - More children served
 - Target population reached
 - Educational services delivered in accordance with program standards
 - Significant child outcomes
 - National recognition





The Changing Landscape Part 3, Impact at the district level

Kathleen D. Priestley



NJ State Funded Preschool

- **High-quality** preschool provides a giant step toward school success and is an important advance in closing the achievement gap
- NJ Supreme Court mandated high-quality preschool and adequate funding for the state's poorest school districts (Abbott v. Burke)



NJ Program Standards

- District collaboration with private community programs and Head Start
- Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines
- Preschool Teaching and Learning: Expectations: Standards of Quality (CCCS)



NJ Program Standards

- 15 children per class-3s and 4s eligible
- Certified teacher and teacher assistant in each class (specialized training in ECE)
- Implementation of a research-based comprehensive curriculum
- Facilities guidelines
- Budget and Contract guidelines
 - Zero-based budget (now per pupil-new school funding formula)



Quality Preschool Example:

Orange, NJ

- **Goal when I arrived:**

to shift the emphasis from setting up basic program components such as staffing, finding space, choosing providers, recruiting families etc.

- To building a strong program that offers high-quality learning experiences for all 3s and 4s



Quick Snapshot

- 765 spaces
- Multi-Age Inclusive Classrooms
- 53 classrooms in 10 sites
 - 51 Abbott-funded multi-age inclusive classrooms
 - 2 classrooms for self-contained PSD classes
- Mixed-delivery system
 - In-District classes
 - Head Start
 - Private Providers
- 6 Hour Educational Day (DOE)
- 4 Hours of Wrap-Around Care (DFD)



Organization of EC Staff

- Preschool Fiscal Specialist
- Administrative Assistants
- Community Parent Involvement Specialist
- Master Teachers
- Nurses
- Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialists
- Preschool Inclusion Teachers **SpEd*
- Preschool Child Study Team **SpEd*
- Therapists **SpEd*



- Center Directors
- Preschool Teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Family Workers
- Lunch Assistants
- Head Start additional professional staff



Steps Taken to Meet Goal

- How did we raise expectations, set standards, improve quality and accountability?

and

- how did we continue to support quality?



Establish a New View

- District System: preschool to grade 12
 - Preschool is important
 - Preschool is a part of the school system
 - Preschool Providers are important
 - All Preschool children and families are important (Head Start, Provider Programs, and district rooms)
 - All Preschool Staff is important
 - (Head Start, Provider Programs, and In-District Schools)



Strengthen the Preschool Team

- Communicate mission, vision and goals
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Build relationships and team
- Set up subsets of teams
- Define expectations
- Train individuals and teams when necessary



Provide Opportunities

- Opportunities for Teachers
- Opportunities for Administrators, Center Directors
- Include Parents
- Include Other Staff



- Regular Provider Meetings
 - Business/fiscal
 - Professional Development
 - Feedback and Input
- Provider Support
 - On-site for business/fiscal
 - On-site staff coaching



Professional Development Plan

- Focus on comprehensive curriculum implementation (High/Scope) and achievement
 - intensive and on-going training for all staff
 - appropriate training for other stakeholders

- NJ Early Learning Standards/Key Developmental Indicators (KDIs) /Child Observation Record(COR)

- Early Screening Measures-Hearing, Vision and ESI-R (language, motor and cognitive)



- Program and Classroom Assessment
(ECERS-R, PQA, SELA, PCMI etc.)
- Using the data to plan and revise practices
- Specialized training for Inclusion and Positive Behavior Supports aligned to the Curriculum
- Specialized training for supporting English Language Learners
- Accountability for all



Transition Team, Advisory Committee and Revision of Transition Plan

Accept a Broader Definition of Transition

- Formed Sub-Committees
 - Curriculum and Assessment (alignment to Early Literacy Initiative, CCCS)
 - Working with English Language Learners
 - Inclusion/PIRS
 - Recruitment and Registration,
 - Health and Wellness, and Family Support
- Family Advocacy, Strengthening Families



1. Develop Standards

2. Continuous Improvement Cycle

Measure and
Assess Progress

Analyze and Plan

Implement -
Professional
Development and
Technical
Assistance



Preschool Program
Implementation
Guidelines



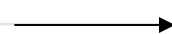
Self Assessment &
Validation
System(SAVS)

Preschool Teaching &
Learning
Expectations/CCCS



Performance Based
Assessment

NJ Supreme Court
Objectives



Early Learning
Improvement
Consortium & the
NIEER Multi-state
Study



More to do...

- Kindergarten findings Statewide Report
- Professional Development Plan for Kindergarten-
 - Focus on standards, curriculum and assessment
 - Build on effective practices aligned to preschool, intentional teaching
 - Use observations and data to improve learning outcomes
 - focus on social-emotional development
 - expand inclusion



Other essentials-Respect and Relationships

- Partnerships and connections between all administrators (in-district, center directors, Head Start Directors)
- Superintendent leadership and support!



Implementing Quality Standards at the National, State, District, and Program Levels

Aaron Lieberman

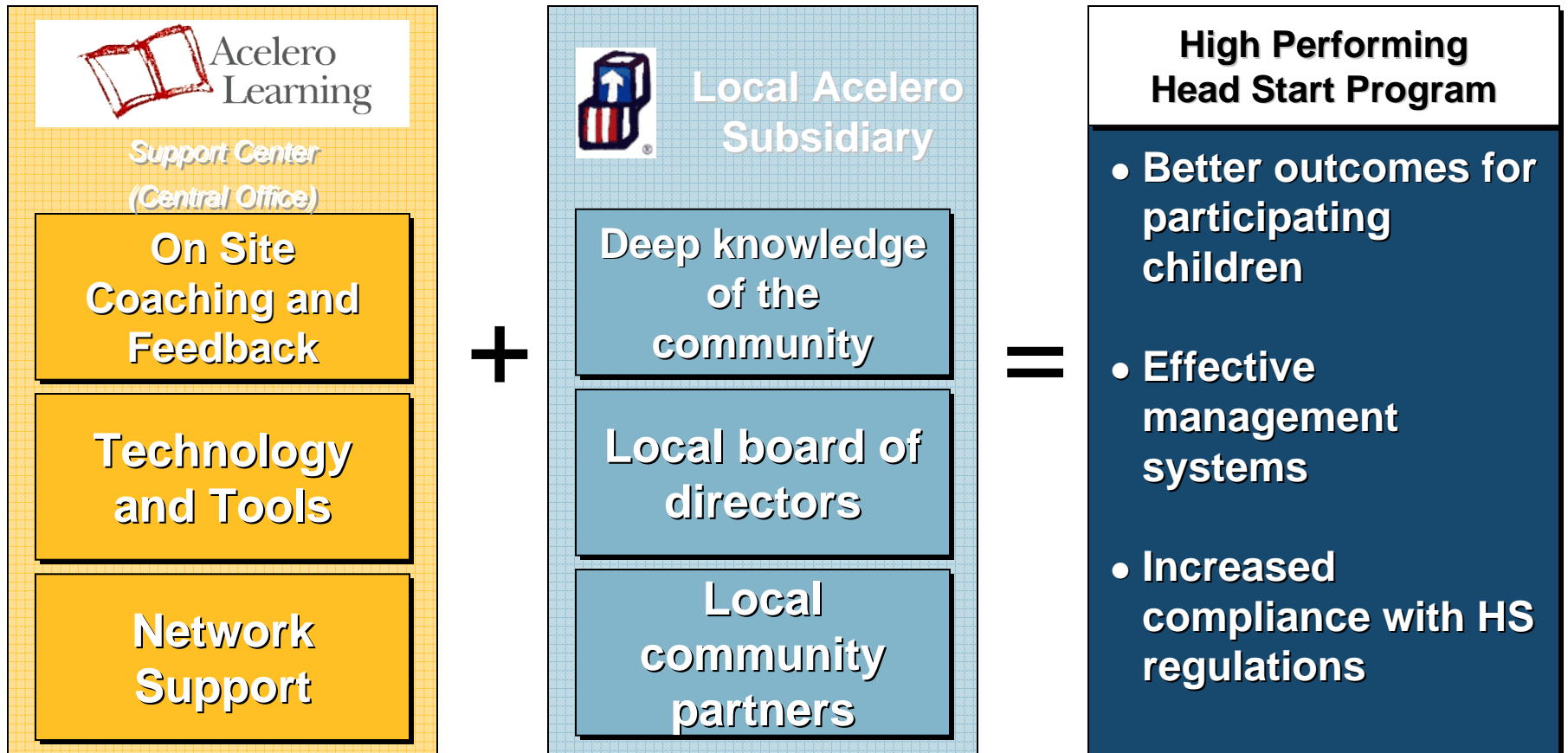
Acelero Learning

NAEYC Professional Development Institute

June 2009

Overview of Acelero Learning

Since 2002, Acelero Learning has developed a successful track record of supporting high quality Head Start programs.





Our approach:

Our network approach, local leadership, partnership development, and increased use of technology allow us to:

- ✓ Minimize out of classroom expenses;
- ✓ Increase teacher salaries;
- ✓ Expand the hours and number of days of service provided;

at each of our local affiliates.

Ultimately, we believe these differences will lead to better outcomes for participating children and families.

Success to Date with Our Local Affiliates

Through partnering with local leaders and community partners, we have helped three local Acelero affiliates successfully complete the RFP process and dramatically improve services to children and families with the same amount of Head Start funds.



Acelero Direct Administration Programs

Acelero Learning Camden, NJ
90 children Early Head Start
Submitted: Jan 15, 05 Funded: Jul 20, 05

Acelero Learning Monmouth County, NJ
506 children Head Start
Submitted: Mar 30, 05 Funded: Aug, 05

Acelero Learning Clark County, NV
1723 children Head Start
Submitted: Jan 1, 07 Funded: Mar, 08

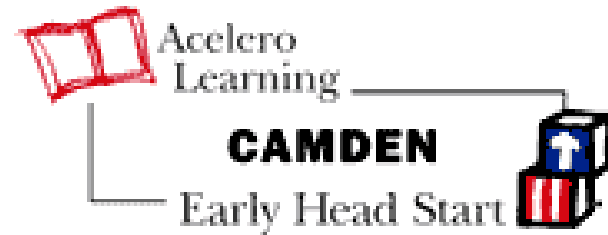
Currently, we:

- Serve over 2200 children in direct admin programs
- Each program features local options responsive to local needs
- Local board and leadership in place

Acelero Learning Local Affiliate Program Accomplishments



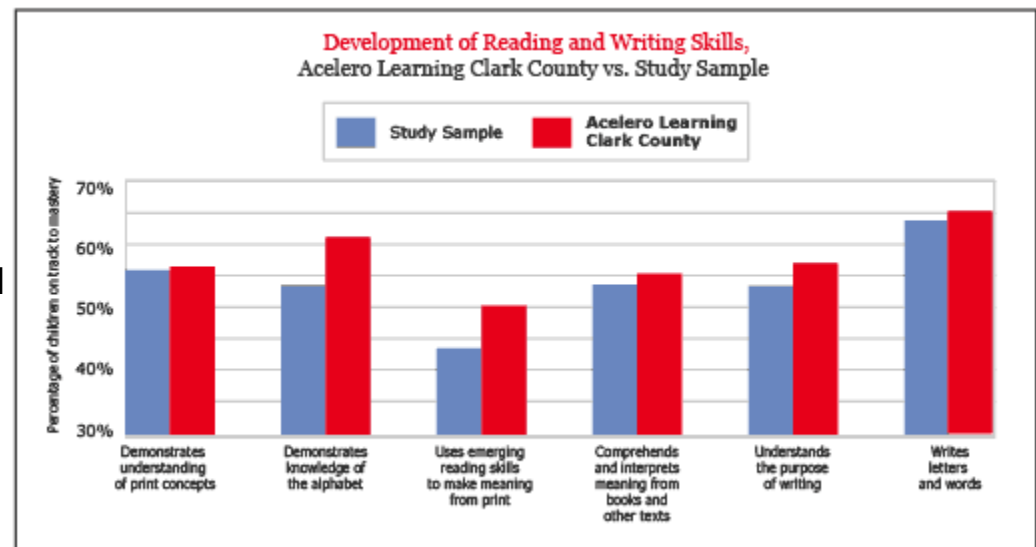
- ✓ Increased enrollment from less than 330 at start of our grant year to 506 children – using the same amount of federal funds
- ✓ Expanded annual days of service offered to all families by 21%, from 190 days per year to 220, by operating all centers on a year-round basis
- ✓ Increased average teacher salary 75%, from \$22,000 to over \$38,000



- ✓ Renovated entirely new facility and launched program operations without a break in service
- ✓ Increased enrollment from 18 when Acelero Learning Camden began program operations to full-funded enrollment of 90
- ✓ Increased average teacher salary 60%, from \$16,016 to \$25,731

Acelero Learning Clark County Program Accomplishments

- ✓ Doubled the number of full-day, full-year slots from less than 200 in April 2008 (we we be began operations) to more than 410 by December 2009
 - ✓ Increased teacher salaries by 20 %
- ✓ Increased number of teachers who have an Associate's degree (or better) from 45% when we began operations to 74% by Fall 2009. An additional 26% are on track to receive an AA within one year's time
- ✓ Hired an additional 11 family advocates -- a 38% increase -- to reduce program case-loads
- ✓ Extremely positive first year review with no programmatic findings
- ✓ Had a positive, demonstrated impact on child outcomes at the classroom level:



While quality standards are undoubtedly a good thing....

....there is the “challenge of many masters”

A typical Head Start program must:

*Follow all 1600+ of the Head Start Performance Standards,
some of which are extremely detailed*

*Follow all state licensing guidelines, which provide another set of
guidelines and directions in key areas*

Attempt to align with state early learning standards (if they exist)

*Follow any standards promulgated by state and even district
funding streams, if applicable*

These problems become more of an issue with...

... blended funding between Head Start and other programs

When state-funded programs can provide additional resources to improve quality, Head Start programs try to “blend” or “braid” this additional funding with their Head Start dollars.

In NJ’s Abbott Districts, for example, this allows our programs to receive state dollars to pay teachers at district rate, support lower class sizes, receive support from a district master teacher, etc.

In Clark County, Nevada, this allows our programs to provide extended day services on site to over 400 children and families.

But each funding stream often has its own requirements (and even quality standards), some of which are challenging in the Head Start context.

Lessons Learned from Attempts to “Serve Many Masters”

DOs

- Figure out how to make it work. Children are counting on us!
- Explore the areas of flexibility with state or district program standards that could be set up specifically for Head Start programs
- Educate state/district leaders about how inflexible the Head Start performance standards are in some areas (i.e. serving low-income children)
- Operate both programs together – and be clear about differences between those joint funded sites and others

DON'Ts

- Attempt to direct children based on funding stream (ie Head Start serves three year olds, school district serves four year olds)
- Make blending funds so difficult you end up with competing programs with different quality standards
- Insist one curriculum choice or approach be used without data on success of all options
- Set up systems to be able to identify which children came from which programs in school district data management systems