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2018 State of Preschool Report Shows Ongoing Progress in Ohio *State Boosts Pre-K Investment, Enrolls More Children but Meets Half Quality Standards*

New Brunswick, NJ— Ohio increased its preschool investment and enrolled more children compared to last year, but remains below national average for access and meets just half of the quality benchmarks met, 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. Nationally, state funding failed to keep pace, as spending per child *decreased*, when adjusted for inflation. Inadequate funding undermines classroom quality, and most states fail to pay pre-K teachers comparably to K-3 teachers.

Ohio recently restricted enrollment in state pre-K to 4-year-olds and now enrolls 11% of 4-year-olds and just 1% of 3-year-olds. Ohio does not require salary or benefit parity for pre-K teachers and K-3 teachers.

“Nationally, we are disappointed by the lack of progress,” said NIEER Founder and Senior Co-Director Steven Barnett, Ph.D. “Ohio is moving in the right direction by investing more, but more rapid progress is needed on improving quality standards.”

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

Ohio 2017-18 Fast Facts

Met 5 of 10 quality standards benchmarks

Enrolled 17,913 children, an increase of 1,971 from 2016-17

Total state funding = \$71,672,000, an inflation-adjusted increase of \$5.7 million from 2016-17

State spending-per-child = \$4,001, compared to \$4,137 (inflation-adjusted) in 2016-17

No requirements for salary or benefit parity with K-3

National rankings:

- 33 in access for 4-year-olds
- 23 in access for 3-year-olds
- 30 in state spending per child