

**IMPLEMENTING 15 ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS  
FOR HIGH-QUALITY PRE-K:  
AN UPDATED SCAN OF STATE POLICIES**  
July 29, 2018



**GG Weisenfeld, Ellen Frede & Steven Barnett**

This report was supported with funding provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions in this report are solely those of the authors.

## Introduction

Over the past 50 years, a growing body of research suggests participation in a high-quality preschool program can enhance children’s development, reduce achievement gaps at kindergarten entry, and support a child’s later success in school and life. However, pre-k can only provide these benefits if a child’s classroom experience is high-quality<sup>i</sup>. This report examines the extent to which states are positioned to provide high-quality preschool education on a large scale.

Since 2002, public spending on preschool programs for children ages 3 and 4 has increased substantially, particularly funding by state and local government<sup>ii</sup>. In 2016-2017, state spending for pre-k exceeded \$7.6 billion, serving more than 1.5 million 3- and 4-year-old children. When NIEER began tracking state preschool enrollment in 2002, 14% of the nation’s 4-year-olds attended a program. In 2017, that number jumped to 33%; however that means only one-third of 4-year-olds have access to state-funded pre-k. We have seen a slight increase in the number of 3-year-olds enrolled in state-funded preschool programs; 3% of all 3-year-olds in the nation were served in 2002 as compared to 5% in 2017. Considering all types of publicly funded programs (including Head Start, for example), an estimated 44% of all 4-year-olds and 16% of 3-year-olds participate in preschool general or special education programs funded through state or federal dollars.

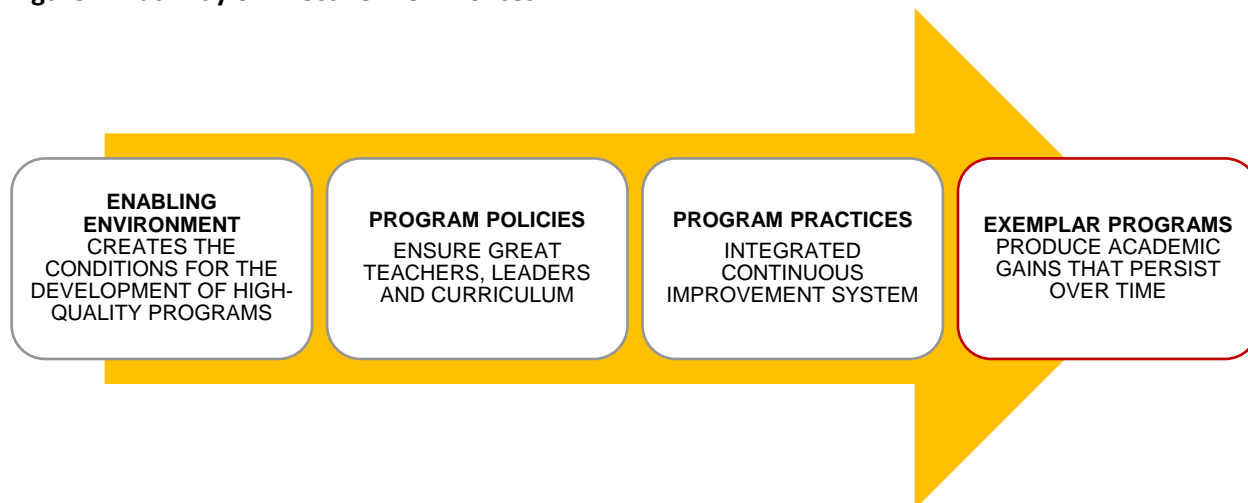
In 2016, we used Jim Minervino’s “15 essential elements” framework<sup>iii</sup> to review policies and practices in the 43 states and D.C. that operated state-funded preschool programs and produced *Implementing 15 Essential Elements for High Quality: A State and Local Policy Scan*<sup>iv</sup>. Minervino concluded that each of 15 elements must be present to a considerable extent for high-quality pre-k to be implemented at scale. From this perspective, each element should not be expected to contribute independently to pre-k effectiveness. We agree; however, we believe assessments of the extent to which each element is present in each state are useful to those concerned with improving the quality of these programs.

## State-funded Preschool Programs and Quality

Minervino’s Essential Elements provide a lens for investigating the quality of state or local preschool program policies and practices. They differ from those used in the NIEER *State of Preschool*<sup>v</sup> yearbooks because those benchmarks gauge whether a set of minimum policies are in place to support meaningful, persistent gains in learning and development, the Essential Elements considers not only policies but also implementation of these policies and the enabling environment in which preschool operates, specifically political leadership and compelling vision. The Essential Elements are based on research into four publicly funded pre-k programs operating at a large scale that each showed evidence of positive outcomes. Figure 1 below illustrates how the 15 elements cluster into three components: the enabling environment which provides the foundation and context for the program to operate; rigorous, articulated, early learning policies which are necessary, but not sufficient, structural features of effective programs; and, strong program practices that support high quality teaching. Similar to NIEER’s quality standards benchmarks, the Essential Elements for effective pre-k include teacher credentials and support; class size and ratio requirements; and support of early learning standards and curriculum. The Essential Elements add to that criteria on the length of time children attend preschool programs and policies supporting children with special needs and Dual Language Learners (DLLs). Strong program practices include evidence of high-quality teaching; the use of child assessments to inform instructions; a system to support teachers, including coaching; and use of data to make informed decisions. Finally, the degree to which the state’s early childhood system integrates early learning standards, curricula,

child assessments, professional development opportunities in a continuous improvement system is included in the criteria.

**Figure 1. Pathway of Effective Pre-K Policies**



## Methodology

This review includes programs meeting NIEER’s definition of state-funded preschool programs: Programs must be funded, controlled and directed by the state and serve at least 1% of the state’s 3- and/or 4-year-old population. The focus of the program must be primarily educational and offer group learning experiences at least two days per week.<sup>vi</sup> In 2016-2017, 59 programs operating in 43 states and D.C. met this definition. Since our 2016 Essential Elements scan, more programs were added, including California’s Transitional Kindergarten, Connecticut’s Smart Start, Minnesota’s Voluntary Pre-kindergarten program, and Oregon’s Preschool Promise.

This analysis evaluated the extent to which each state-funded preschool program satisfied 15 “essential elements” found to characterize high-quality public preschool programs. For each element, we determined whether criteria were fully met, partially met, or not met. Some elements were easily judged based on simple, clear evidence that was readily available—for example, whether at least two adults must be present in a classroom. Others required difficult inferences based on complex evidence with considerable unknowns. In a few instances, we could not determine with any confidence whether the criteria were met. In addition to rating the status of each element, we explain the basis for our findings in individual reports for each state. These detailed descriptions offer additional insights into the extent to which each element is present in a state and, by inference, what may be necessary for that to improve.

For each state (or program within a state) the report presents an overview of the preschool landscape, a table listing conclusions regarding each element, and evidence for our judgment on each element. The 15 elements listed below are organized into three sections. The first is the “enabling environment,” including two elements among the most difficult to assess: political will and the capacity of preschool’s administering agency to provide vision and strong leadership. The second section, “rigorous, articulated early learning policies,” has eight elements, most of which were relatively straightforward to judge. The third is “strong program practices,” containing five elements. These elements proved the most difficult

to assess, as ratings are based on actual implementation, and this requires information that is not always available. For states with multiple programs supporting public pre-k, each program was rated separately on the essential elements in the latter two sections which may vary across programs while the enabling environment elements obtain to all programs within a state.

#### Enabling environment

- Political will including support from political leadership and, more rarely, judicial mandates
- A compelling vision and strong leadership from early learning leaders

#### Rigorous, articulated, early learning policies

- Well-educated (BA & ECE expertise) and well-compensated teachers (K-12 pay parity)
- Class size maximum of 22 children
- Two (or more) adult teaching staff in each classroom; maximum teacher to student ratio of 1:11
- At least a full school day is provided to ensure adequate dosage
- Appropriate early learning standards for preschoolers
- Effective curriculum that has systemic support
- Strong supports for education of special needs children in inclusive settings
- Strong supports for dual language learners

#### Strong Program Practices

- High-quality teaching
- Professional development (PD) to improve individual teacher performance
- Child assessments that are appropriate and used to inform instruction
- Data-driven decision-making and independent evaluation
- Integrated systems of standards, curriculum, assessment, PD, and evaluation

To evaluate the extent to which each state program reflected the 15 essential elements, we reviewed public documents including, but not limited to, official information posted on the websites of state and local government. In addition, we interviewed key informants in each state. In many of the states, leaders in state agencies provided extensive assistance and clarification of our interpretations. Ultimately, the authors alone are responsible for all judgments in this report.

Readers are advised to keep in mind that our assessments refer to 2018, and circumstances and policies change. We will update the report periodically, but change in the enabling environment or policies can occur quickly-- for better or worse. Practices and the quality of their implementation tend to change more slowly, but ultimately are influenced by the enabling environment and policy context.

#### **Criteria for Rating the 15 Essential Elements**

For each of the essential elements we provide a brief description of the element and how it was assessed, followed by key criteria used to categorize each element as Fully Met (FM), Partially Met (PM), or Not Met (NM). For a more complete description of each element and the rationale behind it readers are referred to the Minervino's original study.<sup>vii</sup>

**Political will.** Political leadership and, more rarely, judicial mandates can provide the necessary political will to create, scale up, sustain, and adequately fund high-quality early education. To the extent possible, judgments are based on actions of the Governor and legislature--not just their statements. Increases in funding, quality standards and enrollment, and legislation passed are the strongest

indicators. Other strong indicators of political include ballot initiatives and court orders. Also important, but carrying less weight, are actions and statements of business leaders, philanthropic institutions and advocates.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Recent history of substantial increases in funding for expanding quality programs and strong initiatives by the governor or legislature. A ballot initiative or court order that is implemented as intended also would meet the criteria.	Some of the FM elements, but not all, possibly because there is strong opposition or there are other problems. Some evidence of willingness to fund and to legislate high quality.	No progress or decline in funding or enrollment with very inadequate support for quality. Governor and/or legislature strongly opposed.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Senior early learning leaders, particularly those in the state agency administering the program, articulate a strong vision and exert effective leadership to make that vision a reality. Components include a well-designed early learning system with high expectations and the ability to communicate and successfully advocate for this with internal and external audiences. In addition to qualitatively meeting these criteria, the size of the office of early learning staff and any regional and district level support was taken into consideration. Additional supports for leadership could come from outside the agency, for example, from higher education, or influencers such as business, foundations, and advocacy groups.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Highly competent and active state office of early learning (or similar agency) that has articulated a vision of quality through regulation, guidance, technical assistance, materials, and other support, including from higher education.	Either the number of staff is far too limited to provide adequate direction and support to the system, or the ability of state administrators to lead is limited, perhaps by agency policy, authority of ECE specialist (i.e. hierarchy in the system), or politics.	There is a weak early childhood office that is unable to lead or regular turn-over in leadership or positions. Limited and fragmented authority would be one reason this could occur. Some may have only one or two staff.

**Education and compensation.** All lead teachers have at least a BA degree plus suitable credentials in early learning and are paid at same level as K-12 teachers.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
All or nearly all teachers have a BA with early childhood teacher license that is the same as or equivalent to that required for public school teachers and the same compensation (or at least salary) as K-12 teachers. Both must apply.	Both salary parity and qualifications (teacher early childhood license and BA) hold in some sector (e.g. public schools or one of several programs) but not others.	Teachers are not required to have a BA or are not paid on par with K-12 in any sector.

**Class Size.** All classrooms have a maximum of 22 children in each classroom. This is not just required by policy but is also maintained in practice. We report each specific policy and acknowledge that small upward departures might make no discernible difference. However, reducing the number of children in the classroom may improve impacts significantly.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
No more than 22 children in a classroom.	The maximum class size of 22 children is met in one sector but not another.	Maximum class size exceeds 22 children in all sectors.

**Two adults in the classroom.** All classrooms have a maximum of 11 children per teaching staff person. This is not just required by policy but is also maintained in practice. We report each specific policy and acknowledge that small upward departures might make no discernible difference. However, reducing the number of children per staff substantially below 11 might improve impacts significantly. All classrooms are required to have at least two teaching staff, typically a lead teacher and an assistant.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Required of all programs, but an exception is allowed if policies permit one adult when a classroom contains 11 or fewer children and this is not commonplace.	Two adults are required in the classroom in some sectors, but not others.	One adult is allowed for classes of more than 11 children.

**Learning time.** Most children are served or offered a full school day preschool program.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Meets the definition of a full school day in that state (or is within a half-hour). Some states count only “instructional” time and others count hours children are on the premises, so hours may not be strictly comparable across states or cities. Even if state policy does not require a full-day program, but most children attend for a full-day, this meets the learning time requirement.	One sector (e.g., public schools or a major city) fully meets the criterion, but another did not.	Minimum number of hours is less than a full school day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The state has comprehensive learning standards that are age and developmentally appropriate and the state strongly supports (e.g., materials, guidance, and professional development) their influence on practice.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Comprehensive standards that are well articulated and mandated or strongly supported with an emphasis on appropriate practice.	Some sector fully meets the criterion of age-appropriate learning standards.	No comprehensive standards or they are clearly inappropriate and not evidence based.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The state guides and supports the adoption and use of research-based curriculum aligned with the early learning standards, connected to a system of professional development, and implemented with high fidelity.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
The state mandates one or a choice of several evidence-based models. The state strongly promotes and supports the use of evidence-based curriculum through guidance, training, and professional development. Approval processes and requirements for written documentation carry weight.	The state does much of what is required for FM, but not all.	The state offers a multitude of choices including curricula that are proven ineffective or leaves the selection of curricula entirely to local discretion without strong guidance and support.

**Support for students with special needs.** Programs provide strong supports for children with special needs including an emphasis on inclusion. Preschool special education is integrated into the continuous improvement process and other key components of the early learning system.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Strong programs as demonstrated by regulations and guidance, support staff at the state and other levels, and an emphasis on inclusion. Preschool special education participates in a statewide continuous improvement or accountability system. One office administers both preschool special education and regular preschool; or the two offices have formal methods to work closely together.	Meets some of the criteria for FM, but not all.	Limited guidance and support for programs that support children with special needs.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Programs have a well-developed strategy for educating young DLL children that recognizes their unique needs and the importance of home language and culture. The state strongly supports the implementation of this strategy with guidance, materials, and professional development. Ideally, bilingual teachers lead classrooms where there is dominant language other than English. Bilingual paraprofessionals also may be part of strong system of supports.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Strong programs as evidenced by regulations and guidance, support staff at the state and other levels. The state has requirements for bilingual staff in local programs. state offers bilingual, dual immersion, and other approaches that support home language as well as English acquisition; and monitors the quality of these programs. State policies	This holds in some sector but not others, or the state has some provisions and support but no requirements.	Limited guidance and support or requirements for English only.

support DLL children, for example, by requiring that outreach and materials be provided in the home language, requiring that children are assessed in their home language, or providing programs with additional funding to help serve DLL children. Some mix of this is required.		
--	--	--

**High-quality teaching.** Teachers have high expectations in a system with high expectations and teaching practice is good to excellent. This requires teachers who focus on intentional teaching that strongly supports achievement and socio-emotional development, as well as approaches to learning including curiosity, a love of learning, persistence and strong sense of self-efficacy. The strongest evidence of high-quality teaching comes from representative samples directly observed using standardized measures (e.g., CLASS, ECERS-R).<sup>viii</sup> Strong structural features of programs are not by themselves enough to conclude that teaching is high quality. However, weak structural features are enough to conclude that high-quality teaching is not taking place.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
ECERS-R, CLASS, or other scores show that teaching in the vast majority of classrooms is strong: specifically ECERS >5, CLASS scores > 5 on Emotional Support and Organization and > 4 on Instructional Support. This is not rigid. A program that scored above 3 on Instructional Support but with other evidence of good teaching and effectiveness would fully meet the criteria. If state regulations, guidance, technical assistance and other activities provide systemic support that seems strong enough to produce high quality teaching, this may be scored FM in the absence of representative (e.g., statewide) observation. Evidence of strong child gains in learning and development can contribute to the scoring, but it is not conclusive, as learning is influenced by factors outside the classroom.	This is fully met in some sector (e.g., public schools only). Representative data show an ECERS-R average near 5 or a CLASS Instructional Support >3 (again this is not rigid if other evidence indicates high quality). The state’s efforts may be strong enough to support high quality teaching, but are not strong in every respect.	Direct observation indicates that most programs are not good or better. Rated NM if there are no recent statewide observation data and the state’s capacity to systemically support high-quality teaching is not strong.

**Note:** This element is rated not determined (ND) if no recent data are available and a clear judgment of support for high quality teaching cannot be made from other information.

**Child assessments.** Child assessments are aligned with standards and are used to inform teaching with a focus on improving outcomes for children. Assessments inform administrators, teachers, and others who support teacher improvement. The state provides training and other supports provided to ensure teachers and program leaders can use assessments well.



Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Regulations and guidance specify the use of assessments to inform teaching. These are part of a continuous improvement system with coaching or other professional development of staff around use of assessment that is strong evidence. Training is provided in the use of assessments.	The above holds in some sector (e.g., public schools only), or the state has some of these provisions and support but use of assessments is not required or state capacity to support is limited.	No, or very limited, guidance and support.

**Data-driven decision-making and independent evaluation.** Data are collected and regularly used at all levels from the teacher on up to inform decisions regarding practice and improvement. Independent evaluation has been conducted, preferably within the past 10 years. The state supports the use of data for decision-making by others and uses data to drive its decisions. Ideally, there is a state-supported continuous improvement system operating at all levels.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Regulations and guidance specify and the state supports the use of data for decisions. If these are part of a continuous improvement system that is strong evidence. Some evidence that data is used at the state level as well as the local level.	This holds in some sector (e.g., public schools only), or the state has some provisions and support for data-driven decision-making, but state assessments, data systems and capacity to support are limited.	No, or very limited, guidance and support or little quality data is available.

**Professional development.** Professional development is most effective when sustained as part of a continuous improvement cycle with high expectations for teachers. Professional development is both formal and informal (e.g., peer mentoring). The state and other organizations within the system have adequate capacity to provide sufficient quality and quantity of professional development.

Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Regulations and guidance specify personalized professional development, which typically requires coaching, and there is adequate capacity to deliver it at the local and/or state levels Ideally, there is policy that supports this systemically. Evidence could include requirements for an adequate number of trained staff to provide in-depth, regular coaching to teachers.	This holds in some sector (e.g., public schools only), or the state has some provisions and support but it is too limited with respect to reach or hours to support high quality.	The state requires and offers no, or very limited, guidance and support for professional development.

**Integrated system.** Law, regulation, and (or) the state’s activities align standards, curriculum, professional development, and assessment. The state has adequate capacity to support this through the office administering the program and interagency groups.

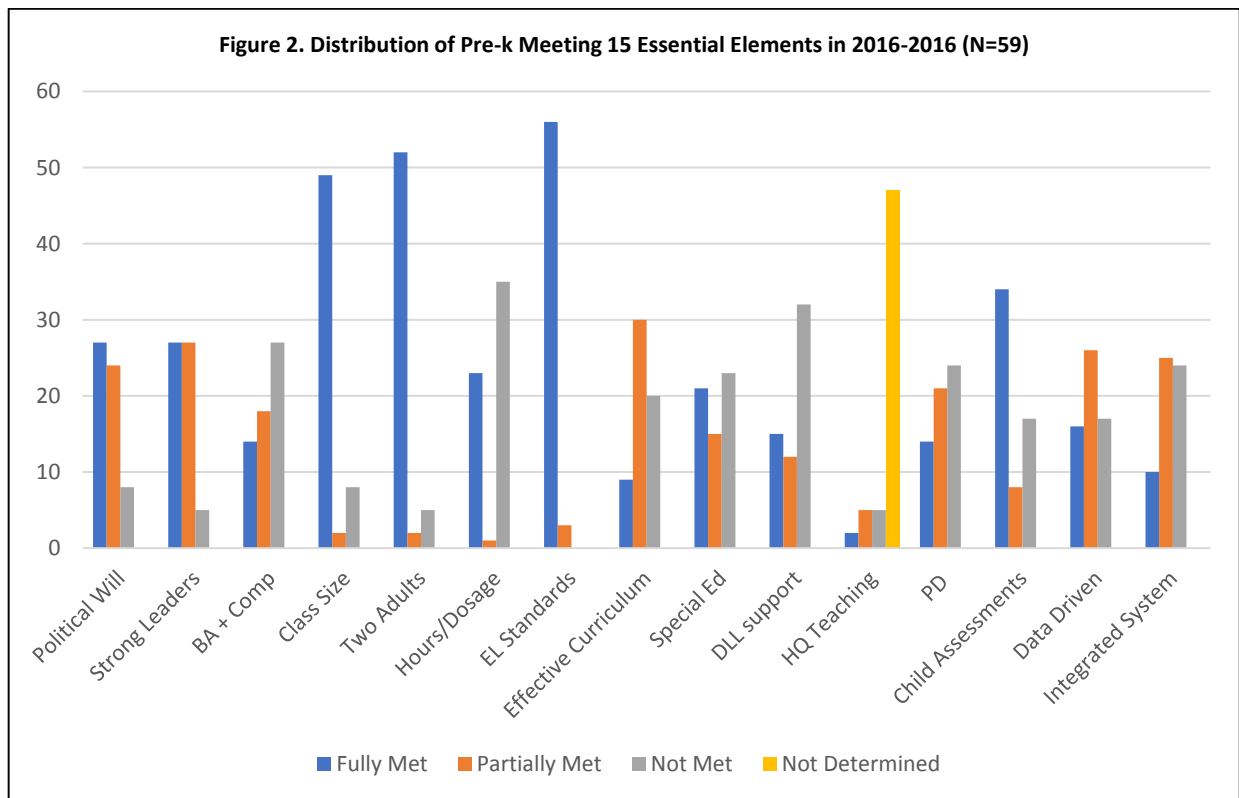
Fully Met (FM)	Partially Met (PM)	Not Met (NM)
Regulations and guidance specify well-designed comprehensive standards, approach to curriculum, assessments, and professional development or an improvement process that are all aligned with adequate supports to implement these as a system.	This holds in some sector (e.g., public schools only), or the state has provisions and the elements but support to actually make it an operational system is too limited.	Little meaningful or systemic alignment.

**Overview of Findings**

Our summary judgments regarding the 15 essential elements for each state are displayed in Table 1. For the distribution of findings, see Figure 2. Highlights include:

- Eight state programs (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey’s Abbott program, Rhode Island, Washington, and West Virginia) fully met at least 10 of the 15 essential elements. Alabama’s First Class program is indeed first-in-class outscoring all other states by fully meeting 14 elements and partially meeting Supports for DLLs. However, just counting the elements that are fully met masks some important differences. Washington state fully meets 10 of the elements but does not meet four of the most costly and foundational elements: teacher qualifications and pay, dosage, support for DLLs and support of special education. Additionally, Washington could not provide information on instructional quality.
- Fourteen states had at least one program that fully met both elements within the Enabling Environment section.
- Only New Jersey’s Abbott Program fully met all eight of the Rigorous Articulated Early Learning Policies; Alabama fully met seven of these policies.
- The most challenging element for programs to meet was dosage. Almost 60% of pre-k programs offer only a part-day program.
- Another challenge for programs was supporting DLLs. Fewer than half of the programs offered some support, and only 25% had a well-developed strategy for educating DLLs.
- Only Alabama fully met all five of the Strong Program Practices elements. However, Georgia, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, Rhode Island, and Washington fully met four out of the five practices.
- Most states (80% of programs) were not able to report average classroom quality scores; either the state did not collect observation data or the information was not available publicly. For some programs information on an average could be inferred from the reported threshold score required to receive funding.

- All programs have comprehensive and aligned early learning and development standards, and most programs (97%) have state support to implement them.



When we compare this scan to the 2016 report, we find some changes in policies and practice that both support and hinder the quality of preschool programs. Some changes reflect additional data or clarification on criteria for meeting the element. For example, if state policy only required a part-day program, but in practice most children attended for a full-day, the program now receives full credit for that element.

Some of the changes we found in the 2018 scan compared to the 2016 scan include:

- **Political Will** has strengthened in six states: Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. This may be due to change in governor, increase in pre-k spending and enrollment, or increase in policies that support quality.
- More programs offering salary parity. Some of these changes were due to our closer look at sectors and identifying those programs that now partially meet the element. For example, pre-k teachers in Chicago and New York City have salary parity, while the rest of Illinois or New York do not. Georgia’s 2016-2017 budget included a funding allocation for teacher salary increases and a new salary scale for preschool lead teachers based on years of experience to continue supporting salary parity between preschool teachers and K-12 teachers.

- Last scan we reviewed both Florida’s summer and school-year program; however, this scan only includes the school-year program, resulting in some positive changes in scoring.
- In D.C., policies and practices do not include charter schools and thus many of the strong DC school policies are not required in the charter programs. This scan includes charter schools as well as the other program settings for D.C., therefore lowering many of the essential elements ratings.
- The **Effective Curriculum** element experienced a lot of change. Some states have strengthened their curriculum selection process and requirements as well as support necessary to implement them. However, overall, only nine programs fully met this element. One of the challenges appears to be developing a system to ensure that the curriculum will be implemented with fidelity.
- We clarified the strong supports necessary to fully meet the **Special Education** and **Support for DLLs** elements, resulting in changes to more than half of the programs’ ratings for these elements. We do not believe that most of this movement was due to policy changes.
- Louisiana and Mississippi are now able to report results of structured classroom observations, therefore better informing the **High Quality Teaching** element.
- Some states have made progress on the use of child assessments; however, not all focus on using the data to inform instruction or for formative purposes or offer the support necessary to ensure that the assessments are being conducted with fidelity.
- Mississippi and Missouri are now collecting classroom observation data and using it at state and program levels to drive decisions. Unfortunately, we have seen that some states have reduced the data collected by the state and therefore fewer data-driven decisions are made.
- The change in programs meeting articulated policies and strong practices has resulted in a fewer programs fully meeting the **Integrated System** element.

## Conclusion

If a major goal is to enhance children’s learning and development in ways that increase later success in school and life, particularly for children from lower-income families, then substantial change is required. For preschool to have the desired impacts, public policy must achieve two goals: The first is to provide more widespread and equitable access. The second is to ensure that access is to high-quality programs. To identify what needs to change, we must understand the degree to which programs are implementing high-quality programs. This report identifies states’ current status, as well as barriers states need to be address to improve both preschool quality and access.

**Table 1. State and City Ratings on 15 Essential Elements of High Quality Preschool Programs**

State	Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
	Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
AL	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●
AK	—	—	—	●	●	—	●	○	—	—	ND	○	●	—	—
AZ	—	○	—	—	●	—	●	○	○	—	—	●	○	○	○
AR	●	●	—	●	●	●	●	○	○	—	ND	—	●	○	○
CA	○	○	—	—	●	—	●	○	●	○	ND	●	●	○	○
CA CSPP															
CA TK	○	○	○	—	—	—	●	○	●	●	ND	—	—	○	○
CO	○	●	—	●	●	—	●	○	●	—	ND	○	●	●	○
CT CDC	○	●	—	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	—	—	—	○
CT SRP	○	●	—	●	●	○	●	○	—	—	ND	—	—	—	○
CT Smart	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	—	—	—	○
DE	○	●	○	●	●	—	●	○	●	○	ND	○	●	○	○
DC	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	—	●	—	○	○	●	○
FL	—	—	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	—	ND	—	○	○	—
GA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	—	—	●	●	●	●
HI	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	○	—	ND	●	●	○	—
IL	○	○	○	●	●	—	●	○	●	●	ND	○	●	●	●
IN	○	○	—	—	—	—	●	—	—	—	ND	○	●	○	—
IA SV	—	—	—	●	●	—	●	○	●	○	ND	○	●	—	○
IA SWVPP															
KS KPP	—	○	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	●	ND	—	●	—	—
KS KSPP	—	○	—	—	●	—	●	—	—	●	ND	—	—	—	—
KY	○	●	○	●	●	—	●	○	●	—	ND	○	●	○	○
LA	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	○	○	●	●	●
ME	●	○	○	●	●	—	●	○	—	●	ND	—	—	○	—
MD	●	●	○	●	●	—	●	○	●	—	ND	—	○	○	—
MA UPK	○	○	—	●	●	●	●	○	○	—	ND	—	●	●	○
MA IPLE	○	○	—	●	●	—	●	○	●	—	ND	—	—	○	—
MI	●	●	—	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	ND	●	●	●	●
MN HS	●	●	—	●	●	—	●	●	●	●	ND	○	○	—	—
MN VPK	●	●	—	●	●	—	●	—	●	●	ND	○	○	—	—
MS	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	○	—	—	●	○
MO	—	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	●	●	●	●

State	Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
	Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
NE	○	●	○	●	●	—	●	—	●	—	○	○	●	○	○
NV	○	●	●	●	●	—	●	—	—	●	—	—	—	—	—
NJ ABBOTT	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○
NJ ECPA	●	●	○	●	●	—	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	○
NJ ELLI	●	●	●	●	●	—	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	○
NM	●	●	○	●	●	—	●	○	○	○	ND	●	●	●	●
NY	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	—	○	○	ND	—	—	—	—
NC	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○
OH	○	—	—	—	—	—	●	—	●	—	ND	—	●	○	○
OK	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	ND	○	—	○	—
OR OHSP	●	●	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	○	ND	○	○	○	○
OR PP	●	●	—	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	○	●	○	○
PA HSSAP	●	●	—	●	●	—	●	—	○	—	ND	—	●	○	—
PA K4/SBPK	●	○	—	○	○	—	○	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—
PA PKC	●	●	—	●	●	●	●	—	○	—	ND	—	●	○	—
PA RTL	●	○	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	—	ND	—	●	—	—
RI	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	ND	●	●	●	●
SC CERDEP	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	ND	○	●	○	○
SC EIA 4K	○	○	●	●	●	—	●	○	○	○	ND	○	●	○	○
TN	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	—	—	○	—	○	—
TX	○	○	●	—	—	—	●	—	○	●	ND	○	—	○	—
VT	●	○	○	●	●	—	●	—	●	—	○	—	○	—	—
VA	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—
WA	●	●	—	●	●	—	●	●	—	—	ND	●	●	●	●
WV	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	ND	○	●	●	●
WI 4K	○	○	—	—	—	—	●	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—
WI HS	○	○	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—

## Alabama

First Class Pre-K: the Alabama Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (FCVPK) program began in 2000 serving 750 children and has grown steadily to serve more than 14,000 children in 2016-2017 in a full-day education program through its mixed-delivery system. In 2014, Alabama met its goal of having at least one pre-K classroom in each of its 67 counties.

Funds for First Class Pre-K are distributed by the Alabama Education Trust Fund Budget on a competitive basis to programs running full-day, school-year programs. Grantees must locally match the award, and sliding-scale fees can be included in the matching funds.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note: practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met – Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Alabama benefits from a particularly strong enabling environment formed by the collaborative work of elected officials, state agencies, business leaders, advocates, and philanthropy, all of which are focused on delivering high-quality pre-K for every 4-year-old--and proud of their success. Gov. Kay Ivey’s (R) education initiative, " Strong Start, Strong Finish," focuses on three stages of education, beginning with early childhood education.

Enrollment in First Class Pre-K has been steadily increasing since 2012. In 2016-2017, the program served more than 14,000 4-year-olds in a full-day education program, which is approximately 24% of the state’s 4-year-old population. Enrollment increased by approximately 2,700 children from the prior school year. This increase is partially supported by a \$17.5 million federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) awarded to Alabama in 2014 to expand pre-K access across the state in high-risk areas. In spring 2018, the legislature moved forward on the FY 2019 Alabama Education Trust Fund Budget (HB 175) which appropriates a total of \$96 million to First Class Pre-K; \$18.5 million more than the program’s current funding level.

Alabama’s business community has extended significant support to preschool since 2009-2010, when business leaders recommended the state legislature increase funding for preschool education. The Business Council of Alabama collaborated with the Alabama School Readiness Alliance to create a pre-K task force that developed policy recommendations in 2012 for increasing access to high-quality prekindergarten throughout the state. Leadership also extends to advocates, business, and philanthropy, most notably the Alabama Power Foundation and PNC, which have a history of effectively working together to advance high-quality early education; including a commitment to funding.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Effective August 1, 2015, First Class Pre-K's administering agency, the Department of Children's Affairs, was renamed the Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE). Appointed by former Gov. Bentley, Jeana Ross remains DECE head but her status as Commissioner changed to Secretary, now serving on the Governor's Cabinet.

DECE is responsible for administering First Class Pre-K (11.25 FTEs are assigned to pre-K) through its Office of School Readiness (OSR). Other early learning efforts the office supervises include the regional Alabama Children's Policy Councils, the Head Start State Collaboration Office, the Children First Trust Fund, the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council, and the Office of Early Learning and Family Support with its First Teacher home visiting program. Alabama remains one of the few states consolidating authority for pre-K, child care, and related functions within a single department, with a goal of facilitating efficiency and consistency throughout all regions of the state.

**Education and compensation.** Alabama requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus a minimum of 18 hours of coursework in early childhood or child development. In 2015, policies were introduced to support salary parity. First Class Pre-K teachers are now compensated for having a master's degree (up to \$5,000) and pay parity is in alignment with public school teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** All classrooms have a 1:9 staff to child ratio and a maximum enrollment of 18 students with the exception of Head Start, which is allowed to have a 1:10 staff to child ratio and maximum of 20 students.

**Learning time.** Children attend First Class Pre-K five days per week during the school year and services are provided for a minimum of 6.5 hours per day. Wrap-around services extending the length of the school day are common in most nonpublic school settings.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Alabama Developmental Standards for Preschool Children (Standards) were last revised in 2012. Each First Class Pre-K classroom is assigned a coach who works directly with teachers on best practices and self-reflection, including incorporation of the Standards into daily planning and child assessment practices. The Standards are vertically aligned with Alabama's College and Career Readiness Standards as well as horizontally aligned with Teaching Strategies GOLD.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The state does not endorse any particular curriculum, but rather, requires that the one selected by a program must promote appropriate instructional practice and enhance learning and development while being consistent with the intent of the Office of School Readiness First Class Pre-K Framework (Framework). The selected curriculum is also expected to be aligned with the state required assessment tool, Teaching Strategies GOLD. Implementation of the curriculum is embedded into the Alabama Reflective Coaching Model that includes effective teaching practices, curriculum content based on the Standards, and professional development. Monitors work with program administrators to ensure that First Class Pre-K grants are properly administered, including implementing the Framework with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** OSR supports diversity and encourages that children with special needs be integrated into the pre-K classrooms. It is strongly recommended by the state that First Class Pre-K classrooms carefully consider and plan for children with disabilities to ensure that resources are in place, including consultation with their local education agency special education staff for



resources available through the federal Office of Special Education Programs. In addition, coaching of preschool teachers about children with special needs is required. In 2016-2017, First Class Pre-K enrolled 492 children who had existing IEP/IFSP prior to entering pre-K and an additional 601 who were referred during pre-K, resulting in an IEP; thus, 7% of the First Class Pre-K students had an identified special education need.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Alabama reported that in 2016, 713 of the 14,032 First Class Pre-K students (5%) were English Language Learners (ELLs). State policy that supports ELLs include having an approved written plan for supporting these children. In addition, Alabama has partnered with the University of Alabama Birmingham to participate in a Dual Language Learner (DLL) Professional Development grant that will offer DLL language and literacy supports to teachers who choose to participate. First Class staff members are required to do a book study as part of their professional development plan on DLLs in order to better support teachers who have DLL children in their classrooms.

**High quality teaching.** In 2016-2017, average CLASS scores for First Class Pre-K classrooms were 6.05 on Emotional Support, 5.79 on Classroom Organization; and 3.32 on Instructional Support.

**Professional development.** Alabama's Pre-K program uses a tiered model of coaching, the teacher is regularly setting goals and self-reflecting throughout the year. A full-time coach may work with up to 20 classrooms and a part-time coach, up to 12 classrooms. This number varies due to the distances a coach travels or where the teachers fall on the tiered coaching model (emerging, progressing, or refined). Individual PD plans are required of lead and assistant teachers as specified in the Alabama Reflective Coaching model. Both lead and auxiliary teachers must be compensated and are expected to work for at least 187 days per year; 180 days are for classroom instruction, 7 days are for professional development to improve classroom practice.

**Child Assessments.** All pre-K programs use Teaching Strategies GOLD as a formative assessment, continually throughout the year. It has been aligned with the Standards. Data from the assessment are used to guide teacher training and professional development and to make adjustments to the curricula. As previously noted, the First Class Pre-K classroom's assigned coach works with the teachers on child assessment practices.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All First Class Pre-K classrooms are observed, more than one time per year using CLASS. The data collected from observations are used for a variety of purposes, including professional development, monitoring and evaluation, and research. DECE staff conduct the observations and reliability is ensured through double coding and CLASS developed calibration.

The first 30 days the DECA-P Reflective Checklist is completed by a coach for each classroom. Information collected during monitoring processes and activities are used at both the state and at the local level for program improvement. Data described in the high-quality teaching section of this scan is available for public review on the DECE website.

In addition to Teaching Strategies GOLD data being used locally and at the state level, the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA) in collaboration with the University of Alabama-Birmingham is currently collecting PPVT data as part of a longitudinal study. PARCA released (2017) results of a First Class Pre-K report finding that participation in First Class Pre-K narrows the gap in reading and math

proficiency, especially for those children in poverty and for Black and Hispanic children. The First Class Pre-K evaluation with PARCA is ongoing.

**Integrated System.** The aligned standards, curriculum, assessment, and instruction are key components of Alabama's integrated system emphasizing data-driven decisions on state, local, and program levels. The decision to focus professional development on teacher-child interaction using CLASS was based on child assessment data and feedback from coaches, monitors, and teachers. The state has the capacity to support this integrated system through regulation and guidance.

## Alaska

The Alaska Pre-Elementary program is available to 4-year-olds in 11 of 54 school districts and has been operating since the 2009-2010 school year. In the 2015-2016 school year, Alaska changed the way the competitive grants are offered to include two types of grantees: three-year renewal grants allow grantees that were previously receiving funding to design programs based on community needs; and districts that have never received grants are eligible to apply for a one-year pre-elementary development grant. Development grants are geared toward strategic planning to begin implementing or support existing Pre-Elementary goals until they can be switched to renewal grants.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
–	–	–	●	●	–	●	○	–	–	ND	○	●	–	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Alaska’s state pre-K program had a total budget of \$2.5 million and served children in eight districts for the 2012-2013 school year. There was an \$800,000 drop in funding in 2013-2014 and the program was slated for closure in 2014-2015. Gov. Bill Walker (R) proposed a budget in 2015 calling for elimination of the pre-kindergarten program as well as additional reductions of \$820,000 in grants for other early childhood programs. Supporters of pre-K were successful in ensuring that \$2 million was put back into the FY 2017 budget. Despite these efforts, budget reductions have continued to be a challenge within the state. The switch to renewal grants and pre-elementary development grants has resulted in inconsistent funding for prekindergarten over the past few years which also affected program implementation and quality. In 2016-2017, pre-K enrollment increased by 12%, however, that amounted to a total of 358 children being served, less than 4% of the state’s 4-year-old population.

Alaska has offered a supplement to federally recognized Head Start programs since the 1980s. During the 2016-2017 program year, the state provided \$6.8 million to support Head Start programs in Alaska. The financial support is part of an effort to develop program quality through school readiness activities and professional improvement. The funds also offer admission to additional children and families whenever possible.

The Alaska Early Childhood Advocacy Group is a coalition of early childhood organizations including: Alaska Head Start Association, Alaska Infant Learning Program Association, Best Beginnings, State Office, and threadAlaska, the state Child Care Program Office, and Department of Health and Human Services.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) is responsible for state public education, including pre-K. DEED’s vision of supporting all students

to succeed in their education and work does not specify pre-K children; nor does Alaska's Education Challenge, which outlines the state's priorities for addressing student achievement gaps and graduation rates. DEED's early learning lead is the sole person responsible for the state's pre-K program.

**Education and compensation.** All teachers are required to have a minimum of a BA as well as training in early childhood education. Teacher shortages in Alaska are significant, and districts that cannot find certificated staff can utilize staff with higher degrees in early childhood education who do not meet the certification requirements. State policies do not require pre-K teachers, in either a public school or non-public school setting, to have salary parity with K-3 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Alaska allows a maximum class size of 20 children, with a staff-child ratio of 1:10 or lower.

**Learning time.** The number of hours per day and operating schedule of pre-K classrooms are locally designed to fit district needs. Programs may partner with child care or other services to provide wraparound care, but, by state definition, state-funded pre-K cannot operate more than five hours a day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Alaska Early Learning Guidelines (ELGs) were written in 2007 and include infant/toddler standards. The ELGs have been aligned with the Alaska Developmental Profile, the Head Start Child Outcome Framework, and TS GOLD. The state provides additional resources and professional development opportunities to support the use of the ELGs.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** While Alaska does not provide a list of state approved or recommended curricula, it does provide additional funding support for Head Start and pre-elementary grantees looking for curriculum resources materials. The state also has materials and offers training to district leaders both in group and individual settings to support curriculum alignment. The state does not have a system to ensure that curricula are implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** If parents and members of the IEP team determine that pre-K is the least restrictive environment for the child, the child could receive services through pre-K even if he or she did not meet the age requirements. Separate from this, the state does not have any policies related to providing supports for programs serving preschool children who have special needs enrolled in inclusion classrooms in this state-funded preschool program. In 2016-2017, 30 children (8% of the total number enrolled) received special education services.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Alaska is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in pre-K nor does the state have any specific policies to regulate services for these children. The state's ELDS include content related to serving DLLs.

**High quality teaching.** Even though the state does not collect structured classroom observations, a two-year evaluation of the program occurred in 2011 and 2012. The *2012 Alaska Pilot Pre-Kindergarten Project (AP3) Year Two Report* found that the ECERS-R average scores ranged from a 3.15 to a 6.68; with an aggregate score of 5.44 in spring 2011. While the overall average score falls within those of high quality classrooms (great than 5), the range of classrooms is not reported, only 11 classrooms were observed, and these assessments were conducted more than seven years ago.

**Professional development.** Teachers are required to complete six credit hours every five years and have written individualized annual professional development plans. Bi-weekly coaching and mentoring services are being piloted to some lead and assistant teachers on a voluntary basis. Alaska uses the My Teaching Partner Coaching System and in 2017 had 27 teachers enrolled.

**Child Assessments.** The state incorporates Teaching Strategies GOLD into all preschool programs. This assessment has been aligned with the state ELGs. Data are used to track child and program level outcomes over time and to make adjustments to curricula. DEED works with districts to provide online training opportunities.

**Data-driven decision-making.** The state collects the following information throughout the year: pre-K enrollment, budgets (including receipts and purchases), licensing status, accreditations, student demographics, home language surveys, teacher credentials and background checks, status of children's health screening, family engagement hours, hours of professional development completed, Teaching Strategies GOLD data, IEP data, family information forms, and family engagement hours. However, the data collected are not used at the state and/or at the local level for program improvement.

The last formal evaluation of the program was completed in 2012, a two-year evaluation that assessed process quality as well as program impact and child outcomes based on pre-and post-assessments using the DIAL II, PPVT, and ECERS instruments.

**Integrated System.** There are some components of the early learning system that are aligned, including the Alaska Early Learning Guidelines and the Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED), the state's early childhood professional development system for Head Start, the Tribal Childcare Association, State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the Department of Labor. SEED is the state's registry and maintains the career lattice and teacher competencies. However, state officials report the state does not have adequate capacity to align more components of the Pre-Elementary program.

## Arizona

In 2006, Arizona created the Early Childhood Development and Health Board, known as First Things First (FTF), to oversee funds for early childhood development and health programs. The FTF Board allocates public funds to communities based on their birth to five population and the percentage of young children in poverty. Informed by local data, volunteer regional councils prioritize and recommend early childhood programs to fund. These public funds can be used for various early childhood programs, including increasing access to early learning. This is accomplished through Quality First (QF) Scholarships serving young children living at or below 200% FPL. This scan describes the policies for the 5,285 preschool children in center-based care in 2016-2017. There were an additional 161 preschool children who were served in regulated family child care homes; a total of 2,379 children under 3 served in center-based care; and an additional 167 children under 3 were served in regulated family child care homes.

Private child care, public schools, Head Start settings, tribally regulated programs, family child care homes, and faith-based programs are eligible to receive QF Scholarships as long as they participate in Quality First, the state’s Quality Improvement and Rating System (QIRS) and have met at least a three-star rating on the QIRS quality standards. QF Scholarship reimbursement rates vary by program type.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size/ Ratio	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
–	○	–	–	●	–	●	○	○	–	–	●	○	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey (R) was sworn in January 5, 2015, succeeding Gov. Jan Brewer, a fellow Republican who was barred by term limits from seeking re-election in 2014. Gov. Ducey has supported some legislation that affects young children, recently signing HB 2449 (2018) which requires the state to provide higher payments to child care programs that meet quality standards.

Arizona began funding preschool programs in 1991; however, the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG), a funding source from 1996 to 2010 was frozen in fiscal year 2010, due to budget constraints, and then revoked. In 2006, Arizona voters established a new dedicated funding source, using tobacco taxes and established the FTF Board to oversee those dollars. Over the years there have been elected officials who have tried to reallocate FTF funds for other programs.

Funding for FTF remained steady in 2016-2017 after allocations of early childhood funds to regional councils decreased in 2015-2016 due to a 24% drop in tobacco tax revenue between 2007 to 2015 (about \$40 million less per year) and a projection that tobacco revenues would continue to decrease. In

response, the FTF Board determined that a budget reset was necessary to ensure consistent funding levels over the next nine to 15 years. As a result, regional spending on QF Scholarships decreased by 38% between 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, holding steady in 2016-2017. Despite this decrease, the scholarships remain the highest funded program at FTF (34% of total program spending). In 2014, Arizona was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant award, providing funding for access to preschool for 2,307 children in 15 high-needs communities statewide in 2016-2017.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Early Childhood Education unit within the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) administers the Head Start State Collaboration grant and special education preschool, but not the QF Scholarships. FTF has the funding and administrative authority over them, and the state contracts with the local United Way affiliate for the implementation of the QF Scholarships. United Way provides administrative oversight and services related to scholarship reporting, monitoring, and payment through an agreement with FTF.

FTF has a nine-member board that sets the vision, determines priorities, and approves local funding plans and contracts for FTF. The FTF board, as defined in statute, includes both Democrats and Republicans, and rural and urban representatives. FTF is administered through Regional Partnership Councils, including 18 county-based Councils and 10 tribal Councils that span the entire state. The 18 geographically defined Councils are largely constructed along county lines, except for the major metropolitan areas of Phoenix and Tucson. Local Regional Partnership Councils determine the level of funding for QF Scholarships based on data and information specific to each region.

**Education and compensation.** Twenty-five percent of lead teachers in both public and nonpublic participants in QF Scholarships programs must have at least 12 college credit hours in early childhood or related fields, a certificate of completion in ECE or child development from a community college, or a CDA. For QF Scholarships, there is no salary parity or benefit parity requirement. However, there is a requirement in some Local Education Agencies for salary and benefit parity for pre-K teachers and assistant teachers. Salary and benefit parity between pre-K and K-3 is a requirement of the PDG grant.

**Adult-child ratio and 2 adults in the classroom.** Arizona has a maximum ratio of 1:13 for 3-year-olds with a maximum class size of 26; for 4-year-olds the maximums are a ratio of 1:15 and class size of 30.

**Learning time.** QF Scholarship classrooms are required to operate a minimum of three hours per day; three days per week. The state preschool program can be blended with other funding (i.e. Head Start, CCDF Subsidy) to support a full-day or extended-day, or to increase the number of slots within a program to serve children who are on a wait list and unable to be served with the program's current funding.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Arizona Early Learning Standards (Standards) were revised in 2013, are comprehensive, and align with the Head Start Outcomes and Arizona Kindergarten Standards. All programs participating in the state preschool program receive on-site coaching that can support the implementation of the Standards. In addition, ADE offers both an introduction and in-depth training on each of the sections of the Standards. All teachers and administrators at QF Scholarship sites must complete the introduction to the Standards training.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Programs that receive QF Scholarships are assessed every 24 - 27 months on their curriculum alignment with the Standards. Arizona does not have an approved or

recommended curriculum list; but does offer TA on curriculum implementation. Programs are required to establish a written policy that defines a process for sharing the curriculum with the families.

**Support for students with special needs.** In some of the regions, Inclusion of Children with Special Needs Coaching is available to support teachers in implementing inclusive practices. Additionally, all programs participating in QF Scholarships are assessed every 24 - 27 months on their lesson plans. Classrooms who have children enrolled with special needs are required to include modifications and/or individualization for children with special needs within their lesson plans. In 2016-2017, 123 children with identified special needs participated in QF Scholarships (2% of the program's population).

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Arizona is not able to report the number of DLLs who access QF Scholarships. Prop 203 (passed in 2000) requires that all public school classes be taught in English with the exception of students who are classified as "English Learners" who are educated through temporary sheltered English Immersion programs (some exceptions apply). The preschool programs participating in QF Scholarships encompass the entire mixed service delivery system of child care; therefore, those operating in public schools must comply with the law, other programs outside the public school system are not required to adhere. The Family Application for QF Scholarships is available in English and Spanish.

**High quality teaching.** ECERS and CLASS assessments are used to assess the QF Scholarship programs, yet scores were not available for review. However, all programs must achieve a minimum aggregate score on both assessments to participate in QF Scholarships. A three-star rating (the minimum QIRS level allowed to receive a QF Scholarship) required an average ECERS score of 3.99 and a CLASS instruction score of 2.0 in 2017.

**Professional development.** All programs eligible to accept QF Scholarships are assigned a QF coach based on the program's initial assessment. The coach reviews the assessments and develops an improvement plan. Coaches visit each program on a regular basis, from four to six hours per month. The coaching can be used to support teachers, assistant teachers, and administrators. While the coaching is required, the audience receiving the coaching is not dictated by the state. In addition, FTF funds scholarships and training opportunities. Both lead and assistant teachers are required to annually complete 18 clock hours of professional development.

**Child Assessments.** No specific child assessment tools are required nor are they required to be aligned with the ELDS. However, the tools used by a program must be used continually throughout the year and include the domains of social development, emotional development, cognitive development, and physical development. In addition, the evidence required for the assessment must include a variety of methods such as anecdotal record, photograph, family input, and work samples. The state expects that child assessments are used by the teaching staff to understand the developmental progress of children, identify modifications to curriculum implementation to support children, and identify where children might need additional support.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All programs participating in QF Scholarships must participate in Quality First, Arizona's Quality Improvement and Rating System. Each program receives a program assessment every 24 to 27 months using the ERS (ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS) and the CLASS (Toddler, Pre-K) in one-third of the total number of classrooms at the site; and the Quality First Points Scale that includes reviewing curriculum, child assessment, ratios and group sizes, staff qualifications, staff turnover, and policies for kindergarten transition and screening/referral. The assessments are used to determine if the program is



eligible to participate in the state-funded preschool program and to support the program in improving or maintaining quality.

Phase I of the Quality First Validation study conducted by ChildTrends (2017) reviewed the theoretical framework, the data system, and the validity of the QIRS rating scale. Phase II, starting in January 2018 will include review of the components (coaching, assessment, quality improvement plan, financial incentives, etc.). Phase III will include evaluating child outcomes.

**Integrated System.** Programs that receive QF Scholarships are required to participate in the state's QRIS which evaluates the degree to which the ELDS have been integrated in the curriculum and align with child assessments. PD opportunities are aligned with assessment data collected during the QRIS monitoring. The Arizona School Readiness Framework establishes common language around school readiness; develops a clear outline of the readiness framework; determines the roles of standards, effective instruction, and curriculum; and identifies meaningful, well-aligned assessment of readiness to facilitate individualization of instruction. The Assessment Continuum Guide for Pre-K through Third Grade in Arizona (2016) aligns screening measures, environmental assessments, teacher-child interaction assessments, formative assessments, and Kindergarten entry assessments.

## Arkansas

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program began in 1991 as a part of a statewide education reform initiative. Act 49 (2003) created the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS), which includes priorities for funding for 3- and 4-year-olds up to 200% of the federal poverty level. Districts that have 75% of their children scoring below proficient in literacy and math on the State Benchmark exams and those children in schools designated as in "school improvement status" received funding priority. ABC/ABCSS classrooms operate within Head Start, education service cooperatives, public schools, private business, family care homes, and nonprofit organizations.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size/ Ratio	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	–	●	●	●	●	○	○	–	ND	–	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Asa Hutchinson (R), is the state’s third governor to embrace early childhood in the state, and the first Republican. After his election, Gov. Hutchinson made public comments about supporting pre-K and noted his support for the state’s bid for a federal preschool expansion grant. In 2017, he promoted adding \$3 million to the preschool program to assist with teacher support for training, and offering some incentives for teachers meeting requirements and for unique ideas such as exploring transportation, mental health, etc.

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families is active and was a driving force in gaining strong support for quality pre-K in Arkansas; resulting in an increase from \$10 million to \$111 million for ABC. The Rockefeller Foundation and the Walton Family Foundation are involved in the ForwARd Campaign, to improve educational opportunities in Arkansas with pre-K as a priority, and that will continue to be a strategic initiative.

In December 2014, Arkansas was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant for \$14.9 million. This grant afforded the state an opportunity to expand quality services to an additional 1,364 four-year-old children and enhance preschool services for 1,506 children enrolled in the ABC/ABCSS programs. In 2016-2017, ABC/ABCSS served 19,120 children, 31% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 18.5% of 3-year-olds. In 2002, Arkansas served only 6% of 4-year-olds and 3% of 3-year-olds.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Act 1132 (1997) established the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE) within the Arkansas Department of Human Services to enhance the coordination of child care and early childhood education programs within the state. DCCECE includes 11 staff focused on pre-K. ABC programs are funded through an appropriation in the Arkansas Department

of Education (ADE) Public School Fund budget. ADE contracts with DCCECE to administer the programs. DCCECE is responsible for all operational duties associated with pre-K and providing reports to the Joint Legislative Committee on Education and the State Board of Education who has the final authority for approval of rules and grants. DCCECE works closely with ADE, and partners with universities (University of Arkansas and Arkansas State) for evaluation and monitoring.

**Education and compensation.** In Arkansas, teacher requirements are for the pre-K site, not the classroom. At least one teacher in a public school site, not classroom, must hold a standard Arkansas teacher license with P-4 certification. In a non-public school, at least one lead teacher must have a minimum of a BA in early childhood education or child development. For all programs with multiple classrooms at a single location, the teacher of the second classroom shall hold, at a minimum, an associate degree in early childhood education or early childhood development. More than 90% of teachers are reported to have a BA or higher degree, despite the fact that this is not required in every classroom.

From 2004 to 2007, Arkansas began developing a salary parity initiative; however, the state has not had an increase in funding since then to support maintaining the parity and the salary schedule for pre-K teachers is based on 2007 data.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Arkansas has a maximum class size of 20 for both 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** All state-funded preschool services are expected to operate for a minimum of seven hours per day, 178 days per year. This is considered the regular school day and not an extended day in Arkansas.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months was approved in 2016 replacing the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework for Three- and Four-Year-Old Children. The new standards encompass birth through five years of age and are aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards for K-4/Language Arts and Math. The state supports the use of the ELDS and funding is provided to contractors to disseminate ELDS training statewide.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Arkansas has a requirement that programs can only use curricula on an approved list. The review committee categorizes these as either comprehensive, covering all domains of child development or supplemental. Currently there are seven curricula on the approved list.

During the grant application process, potential ABC programs are required to identify a selected curriculum and describe the plans for implementation of responsive instruction and learning environments that are aligned with the state's early learning standards. It is up to the programs to ensure teachers have adequate training on curriculum and implement the curriculum with fidelity. ABC funds may be utilized for professional development in curriculum instruction.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 1,478 children, 7.2% of the total enrolled in ABC were identified as having special needs. The Special Education Program for children ages 3 to 5 years, is administered through Early Childhood Special Education at the ADE and viewed as "active partners with ABC to assist children with special needs." ABC teachers are expected to work closely with the Early

Education Special Education teachers assigned to the ABC classrooms, thus ensuring that the IEPs are implemented in the natural and least restrictive environments.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Arkansas is able to report the number of DLLs who were enrolled in ABC in 2016-2017 (2,301), 11% of the preschool population. This percentage is greater than the 9% of DLLs in the state. State policy to support DLLs is limited to requiring translated materials for parents, such as enrollment applications, learning standards, etc. Local programs make decisions which languages according to the local population.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS scores are not available for review.

**Professional development.** The professional development requirements were changed in 2015 to require no less than six days of professional development per year. Beginning with the 2015-2016 school year, educators are required to obtain a minimum of 30 hours per year of professional development for licensure renewal and contractual agreement. Classroom-embedded support, such as coaching, is not required by state policy but is encouraged at the local level.

**Child Assessments.** Arkansas uses Work Sampling System (WSS) in pre-K with data collection required three times a year. There is robust training around WSS conducted by a contracted university. PD starts with introducing the tool, focusing on some areas of the tools, implementing all domains, and then helping programs examine what the data are telling them. Initial Work Sampling training is required for all new classroom staff (one-time); Work Sampling Refresher is required annually (accessible via webinar, etc.) and the Work Sampling Curriculum Connections is highly recommended for existing classroom staff but not required. There are coaches available to work individually with programs.

**Data-driven decision-making.** ECERS/ECERS-3 are conducted in some classrooms, more than once a year by an independent contractor with trained personnel to do the assessment and to provide technical assistance and professional development. Classrooms are selected for an observation randomly and if they are new, low-performing, or have areas of noncompliance. The state also receives the ERS results. ABC programs are required to participate in QRIS, but only need to be at the first level.

In a 2013 report on outcomes in the Arkansas program starting from the 2005-2006 school year, NIEER researchers found: "the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program had modest but meaningful long-term effects for children who participated, including significant positive effects on children's receptive vocabulary and math through grade 2 and on literacy through grade 3.. The authors also found that children who attended ABC pre-K were less likely to have been retained by the end of third grade than those who did not attend any pre-K, which can be seen as an early indicator of program's effect on school success."

**Integrated System.** Some of the ABC elements are aligned with one another as well as the K-3 and child care system. The ELDS align with the State K-3 Standards and also link to the kindergarten entry assessment; the required pre-K child assessment; and the selected curriculum. However, the PD system does not fully support the implementation of the essential elements components.

## California

In 2008, the California State Preschool Program Act consolidated several early childhood initiatives into one funding stream, resulting in the California State Preschool Program (CSPP). CSPP encompasses: (1) the CSPP that began in 1965 and provided preschool services to children at risk for neglect, abuse, family violence, or who were receiving protective services; (2) the Prekindergarten and Family Literacy Program (PKFLP), which began in 2007 and added a literacy component to CSPP; and (3) General Child Care programs.

In addition to CSPP, California Transitional Kindergarten (TK) began during the 2012-2013 school year as a result of California’s Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 which moved the kindergarten eligibility age from December 2 to September 1 so that all children would be 5 years old when entering kindergarten. TK was also authorized as part of California’s Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 and is the first year of a two-year kindergarten program for children born between September 2 and December 2.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size/ Ratio	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	–	–	●	–	●	○	●	○	ND	●	●	○	○

#### California Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size/ Ratio	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	○	–	–	–	●	○	●	●	ND	–	–	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Jerry Brown (D) currently in his fourth and last term as governor has not been supportive of pre-K, including a veto (CA AB 47 State Preschool Program Act of 2015) that would have granted children not enrolled in TK access to CSPP. Gov. Brown’s approach has been to allow local counties and districts to take the lead at the local level rather than the state. Nevertheless, the CA education budget for 2015-2016 included an increase of \$34.3 million (\$30.9 million Proposition 98, \$3.5 million General Fund) to provide access to full-day State Preschool for an additional 7,030 children from low-income working families. In addition, \$145 million shifted from General Child Care to State Preschool to allow full-day State Preschool providers that are LEAs to access a single funding stream (Proposition 98) in their full-day State Preschool contracts. Proposition 98 is a voter-approved

constitutional amendment that guarantees minimum funding levels for K-12 schools and community colleges. TK operates like a kindergarten program and follows kindergarten regulations, including universal enrollment and funding; students enrolled in TK are not regarded as being in pre-K by the state, but rather as in the first year of a two-year kindergarten program. As of fall 2016, 20% of the state's 4-year-olds were enrolled in TK.

Senate Bill 858 (Chapter 32, Statutes of 2014) authorized an annual allocation of \$50 million of Proposition 98 funds to be used for a QRIS Block Grant which supports CSPP participation in the QRIS system; building up the work started by the now complete Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge federal grant. Participation is voluntary, but strongly encouraged. Strong legislative champions who have been advocating for universal pre-K include Assemblyman Kevin McCarty (D-Sacramento); Laura Friedman (D–Glendale); and Eduardo Garcia (D–Coachella).

The advocates have very strong voices in California, including First 5 California created by voters under Proposition 10 (1998), which added a tax on tobacco products to fund education, health, child care, and other services for children birth to 5 and their families. Other groups include Children Now, the Advancement Project, Early Edge California (formerly Preschool California); and local business leaders.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The California Department of Education (CDE)'s Early Education and Support Division (EESD) oversees CSPP and TK. EESD is one of seven divisions within the Teaching and Learning Support Branch. EESD has more than 100 staff members, 40% of whom are Education Program Consultants involved in offering training and technical assistance to CSPP. Consultants typically work within a program unit and may have statewide or regional program responsibility. EESD oversees programming for children birth through age 13; including serving as the administrator for the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Both TK and CSPP have one FTE assigned at the state level who is responsible for program administration.

#### **Education and compensation.**

**CSPP:** The Child Development Associate Teacher permit is the minimum requirement for the lead teacher in the CSPP classroom, though California does not use the term "lead teacher," thus exceeding the requirement of a CDA, but not the BA. The permit requires 12 units in ECE or child development and 50 days of work experience in an instructional capacity.

There are no salary compensation parity requirements between the CSPP teachers and K-3 teachers. However, some school districts have been able to put their CSPP teachers on the same scale as the K-12 teachers.

**TK:** TK only operates in the public schools. Lead teachers are required to have a BA, early childhood education/child development specialization and/or credentials are encouraged, but elementary education specialization and K-8 credentials are permissible.

TK teachers and assistant teachers are on the same pay scale as public K-12 teachers and assistant teachers, respectively, which is locally determined. TK teachers work the same number of hours as K-3 teachers.

#### **Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**CSPP:** Although there is no limit to class size in CSPP, programs typically enroll 24 children in a class. CSPP requires a staff-child ratio of 1:8 for 3- and 4-year-old classrooms.

**TK:** TK's maximum class size is 33 with a ratio of 1:33.

**Learning time.**

**CSPP:** The CSPP operates two different program options. The part-day program is funded to operate at least three hours and less than 4 hours per day for a minimum of 175 days per year; and the full-day program is funded to operate for the number of hours needed to meet the needs of the community for a minimum of 246 days per year. In 2016-2017, about 30% of children were in a full-day program.

**TK:** TK programs are operated by school districts and must be of equal length to any kindergarten programs operated by the same school site and/or district; unless there is an approved State Board of Education waiver on file. Kindergarten is only required to be a part-day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Used by both CSPP and TK, the California Preschool Learning Foundations (volumes 1, 2, 3) (Foundations) developed in 2008, focused on social emotional development, language and literacy, mathematics and English language development. A second volume, released in December 2011, also focused on visual and performing arts as well as health and physical development. In September 2013, science and history/social science were addressed in a third and final volume. The Foundations were last updated in 2015.

CDE provides many statewide, in-person trainings, certifications, online modules, and engaging professional web sites for early childhood professionals. CDE professional resources are aligned to the Foundations.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The CDE does not approve texts, materials, or any particular curriculum for either CSPP or TK. These are all local decisions. Instead, the state has developed the California Preschool Curriculum Frameworks (Frameworks) which provide guidance for using the foundations in program planning, instructional strategies and professional development. In addition, the California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN) provides in-depth training on all nine domains of the Foundations and the Frameworks as well as on-site technical assistance. There is not a statewide system to ensure that curriculum is implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.**

**CSPP:** In 2016-2017, 1.4% of CSPP children received special education services. Inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children and professional development is required for preschool teachers who serve children with special needs.

The child assessment required in CSPP, The Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) was developed with the goal of ensuring that all children, including those with special needs, have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. In addition, the California Preschool Program Guidelines address the inclusion of children with disabilities or other special needs and the Frameworks provide guidance on ensuring that activities support the learning needs and abilities of all children.

**TK:** In 2016-2017, 8.8% of TK children received special education services. Inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children. The proportion of children with an IEP in each TK classroom is limited to 25% of total enrollment. The California Preschool Program Guidelines address the inclusion of children with disabilities or other special needs and the

Frameworks provide guidance on ensuring that activities support the learning needs and abilities of all children.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The California English Language Development Standards describe what children typically demonstrate at three different levels of English-language development from Kindergarten through grade 12. CDE's Preschool Learning Foundations and Preschool Curriculum Framework feature the domain of English Language Development and the California Preschool Program Guidelines includes two chapters on supporting DLLs. Other policies to support DLLs differ between the two programs.

**CSPP:** Bilingual instruction is permitted and children are screened and assessed in their home language. In 2016-2017, 47% of CSPP students were DLLs, a higher percentage than the state's DLLs (44%). To support families, recruitment, enrollment, outreach information, and communication about the program or child is provided in the home language.

**TK:** LEAs are required to provide ELLs a Structured English Immersion language acquisition program, led by teachers who have a bilingual credential in the target language and an English learner authorization. In addition, LEAs may provide other language acquisition programs, including, but not limited to, dual language, transitional, and developmental programs. Parents of TK English learners may choose a language acquisition program that best suits their child's needs. The number of ELLs enrolled in 2016-2017 in TK is not able to be reported. To support families, recruitment, enrollment, outreach information, and communication about the program or child is provided in the home language.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS assessments were not able to be reviewed for either program.

**CSPP:** CLASS and ECERS observations are components required within QRIS and conducted at the local level. The state does not collect the scores for programs that voluntarily participate in QRIS. Some local districts report scores, but it is not done systematically.

**TK:** The use of a structured classroom observation is determined locally in TK.

**Professional development.**

**CSPP:** CSPP classrooms have contractors who serve as coaches that develop and implement a staff development program that includes: identification of training needs; written job descriptions; an orientation plan for new employees; an annual written performance evaluation procedure unless a different frequency is specified in a collective bargaining unit agreement; staff development opportunities that include topics related to each employee's job; and an internal communication system that provides the information necessary to carry out assigned duties. In addition, CSPP teachers are required to complete 105 clock hours per 5 years for their Child Development Permit.

**TK:** PD requirements for TK teachers are determined locally as well as ongoing classroom-embedded support. The General Education Induction Consortium is an approved induction program to assist TK-12 beginning teachers, experienced teachers, and school site administrators to ensure beginning teacher success and retention through at least one hour per week of support and/or mentoring.



### **Child Assessments.**

**CSPP:** As previously noted, CSPP requires DRDP, a formative assessment instrument developed by the CDE for young children and their families to be used to inform instruction and program development in CSPP. The DRDP aligns with the Foundations and is administered in natural settings through teacher observations, family observations, and examples of children's work. Ongoing documentation of children's knowledge and skills in everyday environments is a recommended practice for early childhood assessment. The Desired Results Training and Technical Assistance Project, administered by WestEd's Center for Child and Family Studies, provides training and technical assistance to CSPP. CDE's website provides information on DRDP.

**TK:** TK does not require the use of any child assessments.

### **Data-driven decision-making.**

**CSPP:** Each CSPP contractor (coach) is required to develop and implement an annual plan for its program self-evaluation process. The ERS are used to measure the quality of the program environment in yearly program self-evaluation and used for the reviews conducted by CDE/EESD program staff. In addition, CSPP programs are required to conduct an annual parent survey. The results are included in the annual Program Self Evaluation. As previously mentioned, funding is available to support CSPP programs participation in QRIS at the local level, but participation is voluntary. There has not been a formal, third-party evaluation of CSPP.

**TK:** TK participates in the California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS), an annual data collection of schools and districts, as well as some aggregate data on students and staff. LEAs may be selected for an on-site or online monitoring every two years. Several factors, including compliance history, academic achievement, program size, and fiscal analysis are considered in identifying LEAs for reviews. Using these established selection criteria, approximately 120 LEAs are selected each school year for on-site or online monitoring. Any structured classroom observations used in TK classrooms are determined locally.

AIR conducted an evaluation of TK's implementation in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Findings suggest that students who attended TK have stronger mathematics and literacy skills at kindergarten entry and are more engaged in their learning than students who did not attend TK. TK provides advantages for all students, with particular benefits for ELLs and families with lower incomes. An additional evaluation of TK has been legislatively mandated and will be conducted by UCLA.

**Integrated System.** Components of California's early learning system are integrated. The Quality Continuum Framework, the basis for the QRIS, connects child development and school readiness (Foundations, Framework, DRDP), teachers and teachings (CDE competencies, professional growth plans, CLASS/ERS), and program environment (ERS, child care licensing, data). Strategies for using the ERS are included in Guidelines for Operating Preschool Programs. Each Preschool Learning Foundations (PLF) publication (volumes 1, 2, & 3) has a companion Preschool Curriculum Framework (PCF) publication (volumes 1, 2, & 3). The Foundations have been aligned to the Common Core State Standards, California Content Standards, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. However, the degree to which these elements are implemented varies due to decisions being made at the local level, including participation in QRIS.

## Colorado

The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) was launched in 1988 in an effort to target 3- and 4-year-olds in need of language development support, with the goal of lowering school dropout rates and reducing dependence on public assistance. In 1992, CPP became a permanent program and expanded its target population to all children who lack overall school readiness due to family risk factors.

In the 2016-2017 school year, 98% of the 179 school districts in Colorado offered CPP. Two types of slots can be allocated to districts: CPP slots, which can be used to serve eligible pre-K students, and Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE) slots, which can be used to serve pre-K students or to provide full-day opportunities for eligible kindergartners. Two half-day slots can be combined to create full-day opportunities for pre-K children with very high needs.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	—	●	●	—	●	○	●	—	ND	○	●	●	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Hickenlooper (D), currently in his last term due to term limits, has been seen as a strong supporter of pre-K. Prior to being Governor, he was mayor of Denver, which has created a pre-K program in addition to CPP. Beginning in 2010-2012, the state enacted consecutive budget cuts, including a reduction in funding available for K–12 students. During those years, funding for CPP dropped by \$6 million to \$67 million. Funding for CPP has since recovered, with total state and local funding (through a required local match) at \$88.5 million in 2016-2017. CPP/ECARE enrollment increased slightly from the previous year with 21,622 (23% of the state’s 4-year-olds; and 8% of 3-year-olds) being served in 2016-2017.

CPP funding is determined through the Colorado school finance formula, with preschoolers receiving half the amount for students in grades 1 through 12 given they receive half-day programming. These funds are distributed directly to public schools, which are given a predetermined number of half-day slots to serve eligible children. The state’s budget limitations and the potential impact of TABOR (the 1992 Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights) seemingly limit any major progress and raise questions about the political will broadly in the state for change.

The Colorado Children’s Campaign has been advocating for pre-K issues, specifically focusing on system building efforts, increasing access to full-day pre-K and K, and promoting quality across the early childhood sector.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** CPP is administered through the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness (OELSR) which is housed in the Teaching and Learning Unit under the Achievement and Strategy Division, one of six divisions within the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). CPP has 8 FTEs assigned to its administration. OELSR is also responsible for Results Matter, the state's QRIS; preschool special education; early learning standards resources; and the kindergarten entrance assessment.

CPP funds flow from the state directly to school districts. Local district advisory councils provide oversight, with final approval required by the school district superintendent. Any child who receives CPP funding is considered a school district student, even if they are served through a non-public school, community provider.

**Education and compensation.** CPP lead teachers are not required to have a BA, but instead be Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) qualified by Child Care Licensing under the Colorado Department of Human Services. This equates to having a Child Care Professional Credential (CCP), CDA, or an associate degree in Early Childhood Education/Child Development. Colorado does not require salary parity between k-3 teachers and CPP lead teachers in public or non-public school settings.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Legislation mandates that preschool classrooms with children who are receiving CPP funds are allowed to have a maximum group size of 16 children with two teachers or one teacher per 8 children. There are no waivers to override group size or ratio limits for CPP.

**Learning time.** CPP is funded for a minimum of 10 hours per week, five days per week, although the state statute requires that children attend four days per week, with the fifth day being funded for home visits, teacher planning time, completion of child assessments, or staff training. Schedules are determined locally and based on the needs of children and families. District advisory councils are encouraged to blend CPP funding with other sources such as Head Start, child care subsidy, and parent tuition so that children can participate in full-day programs. However, enrollment by schedule is not collected by the state.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Originally established in 2007, the Colorado Building Blocks for Early Development and Learning was revised in 2011 to align with the Colorado P-12 Academic Standards. Building Blocks was replaced by the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines (ELDG) in January 2013. The ELDG address all developmental and academic fields, are inclusive of all children ages birth to 8 years; and align with the Colorado P-12 Academic Standards, which include preschool and have incorporated the Common Core State Standards. There is a training course on the Early Learning and Development Guidelines in the Professional Development Information System, a statewide web-based system supporting professional development for Colorado's early childhood workforce.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The Colorado Quality Standards provide guidance for curriculum selection and a matrix to evaluate the degree to which the children are actively involved in the learning process and the variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials are available. The state does not provide a list of state recommended or approved curricula. Curriculum selection and implementation is conducted at the local level. The state CPP Regional Support Specialists work at the district, program, or classroom level on curriculum selection, training, and coaching. There is not a system to ensure that curricula are implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** Children who receive special education services may attend CPP classrooms; but are not counted in the state preschool enrollment. CPP teachers are required to possess specific qualifications regarding working with children with special needs and participate in professional development. In addition, inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Colorado is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in CPP. Bilingual instruction is permitted and there are some minimal policies to support families of preschool DLLs, including that contact with the family about the child and preschool program are required to be presented in the family's home language, including recruitment, enrollment and outreach as well as information on the child's progress.

**High quality teaching.** The state does not collect ECERS or CLASS scores, but is able to report that in 2016-2017, 37% of early childhood care and education programs funded by CPP who have participated in the QRIS have achieved a "high-quality" rating (Levels 3-5) in Colorado Shines. Level 5 requires an average ECERS total score of 5.75 or higher, with no classrooms below 5.0.

**Professional development.** While the CPP classrooms must offer teacher-pupil contact time at a minimum of 360 hours per year, they are funded to operate a minimum of 450 hours per year. The 90 hour difference in the program requirements is to enable preschool teachers to have additional time to attend staff training, provide home visits, assess children, and do child planning based on those assessments.

As previously reported, CPP Regional Support Specialists offer support, including coaching, to CPP. However, this is optional. Teachers are required to participate in 15 clock hours of professional development annually.

**Child Assessments.** All programs serving children funded through CPP use formative assessment to monitor progress and illustrate growth between fall and spring in key areas of learning and development. The Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K) legislation (2008) mandates that every child in CPP have an Individual School Readiness (ISR) plan. The ISR is informed by ongoing assessment of a child's progress in developmental and academic domains. In 2015-2016, all programs chose to use Teaching Strategies GOLD. Tools are reviewed periodically and must meet certain requirements including online infrastructure, assessment of whole-child domains of learning and development, automated federal reporting, and well-defined objective progressions of development. High Scope COR was approved for use during 2018-2019. The state offers a variety of trainings and meetings, including webinars, to support the use of child assessments.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Each year, participating CPP programs submit an annual report to the state which is then reviewed using a rubric to provide feedback. Programs also submit audited revenue and expenditures for district-level programs, documentation of family outcomes, longitudinal data on child performance in statewide assessment in grades K-12, graduation rates, retention rates, and placement in special education in grades K-12. In addition, twice a year, district advisory councils visit all settings operating CPP classrooms using the Colorado Quality Standards to identify strengths and areas for growth. Although not required, many districts serving CPP use ERS/ECERS and CLASS for classroom observations and participate in the state's QRIS.

Status and growth data are reported to the Colorado Legislature through an annual report provided at the commencement of the legislative session. Under Results Matter, the process for evaluating program effectiveness is ongoing and based on performance-based assessments, parent surveys, K-12 assessment data and retention rates, and program quality ratings. State policy requires the use of an approved assessment system to measure child outcomes.

There has not been a third-party external evaluation of CPP.

**Integrated System.** Many of the components of Colorado's early childhood system have been intentionally aligned and managed by CDE. All early learning programs, including CPP, participate in the Results Matter reporting system. The Results Matter program includes child assessment data which is entered into a web-based platform that is available to educators, principals, families, and in aggregate to state leaders and policy makers. Colorado's Early Childhood Credential 2.0 is aligned with the Colorado Shines workforce qualifications quality indicator. The Early Childhood Competencies Framework is aligned with Colorado's Quality Standards for Teachers and Principals that has been adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education. However, programs are not required to utilize the Regional Support Specialists for coaching and curriculum selection is a locally determined decision with limited state support.

## Connecticut

Connecticut serves prekindergarten children in three state-funded programs: Child Day Care Contracts (CDCC), School Readiness Program (SRP), and Smart Start. As of July 2013, the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) provides oversight for these programs and has been working to better align them.

Connecticut has provided funding for CDCC for 40 years through a purchase-of-service contracting system, which has been administered by OEC since 2013. All CDCC enrollment is in nonpublic schools, which may be Head Start, publicly operated programs, or private programs. SRP was founded in 1997 to increase access to early childhood programs for 3- and 4-year-olds. Financial support is available to 21 Priority School Readiness districts, as defined by legislation, and 46 Competitive School Readiness municipalities that have one or more schools in which 40% or more of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch or are one of the communities identified within the 50 lowest wealth-ranked towns in the state, as defined by legislation. Smart Start was created during the 2014 legislative session with the intent of expanding publicly funded pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds in public school settings. Enrollment increased to 483 children in 2016-2017.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Child Day Care Contracts (CDCC)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size/ Ratio	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	—	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	—	—	—	○

#### School Readiness Program (SRP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size/ Ratio	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	—	●	●	○	●	○	—	—	ND	—	—	—	○

#### Smart Start

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size/ Ratio	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	—	—	—	○

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met — Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Dan Malloy (D) is seen as supportive of pre-K efforts. His commitment has been seen in the Smart Start program that was signed into law in 2014 (Act 14-41), which is a 10-year initiative designed to expand access to pre-K in public schools and improve and upgrade early childhood classrooms. Funds for the initiative come through a combination of state bonding for capital improvements and resources from the Tobacco Settlement Fund for operations. Despite the support articulated by elected officials, Connecticut has repeatedly postponed planned expansions of enrollment and requirements for higher program standards, mainly due to state budget shortfalls. State funding for all pre-K efforts totaled \$115.5 million in 2016-2017, a 3% reduction from the previous year, when adjusted for inflation.

In 2016-2017, SRP enrolled 12,043 children, a small decrease from the previous year; CDCC served 2,252 preschool-aged children; and Smart Start 483 children. In total, 30% of the state's 4-year-olds, and 19% of 3-year-olds were served in state funded pre-K programs.

In 2014, Connecticut was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant-Expansion. In 2016-2017, there were a total of 730 PDG-funded preschool spaces in the state, 439 were new preschool slots that operated separately from the three state-funded preschool programs, 256 spaces were dually funded in combination with SRP, and 35 spaces were dually funded with CDCC. These dually funded spaces are included in the programs' total enrollment counts. In addition to the \$2.4 million in state funds (Tobacco Settlement dollars) for Smart Start operations, \$1.1 million in state bonds were used for capital improvements.

There are several advocacy groups working on childhood issues, including the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance, and foundations including the Grossman Family Foundation which has supported pre-K issues, particularly in workforce development; and the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Act 14-39 (2014) established the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and transferred duties, roles, and responsibilities of early care and education from various state departments to the OEC, including administration of the CCDF and administrative authority over SRP, rather than the State Department of Education. OEC operates under the direction of the Commissioner of Early Childhood. OEC is made up of four divisions: Early Care and Education; Licensing; Early Intervention; and Family Support Services. The Division of Early Care and Education (DECE) **is made up of four** units: Workforce Development, Program Improvement and Support, Standards and Assessment, and Grants and Subsidies. The Division of Early Care and Education has a staff of 16, plus 104 contractors. CDCC has 1.2 FTE assigned to its administration; SSRP 1.45 FTE and Smart Start .6 FTE.

#### **Education and compensation.**

**CDCC:** Lead teachers are required to have at minimum a CDA plus 12 Early Childhood credits. There are no salary parity requirements.

**SRP:** Lead teachers are required to have at minimum a CDA plus 12 Early Childhood credits. Only salary schedule is prorated for differences in length of work day or year for SRP teachers, there are no other salary parity requirements.

**Smart Start:** Lead teachers are required to have a BA and the State Department of Education certification, which must include pre-K or early childhood specialization. Smart Start teachers have the same starting salary and schedule for all years of service as K-3 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**CDCC:** CDCC has a maximum class size of 20 for 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**SRP:** SRP has a maximum class size of 20 for 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Smart Start:** Smart Start has a maximum class size of 18 for 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:9.

**Learning time.**

**CDCC:** CDCCs are jointly funded through state funding and the Social Service Block Grant (SSBG) and must operate for at least 10 hours per day.

**SRP:** SRP's operating schedules are locally determined. Extended-day programs operate 10 hours per day, 50 weeks per year, while school-day programs operate 6 hours per day, 180 days per year. Part-day programs operate 2.5 hours per day, 180 days per year. Funding from another source can be used to extend programs. In 2016-2017, 68% of children attended an extended-day program.

**Smart Start:** In 2016-2017, 17 school districts received Smart Start funding to offer, at minimum, a six-hour, five-day-a-week program that operated for at least 1,080 hours per year.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) were revised in 2013, are comprehensive, and aligned to the state's K-3 standards and the Next Generation Science Standards and CT's new Social Studies Framework. A crosswalk to document alignment with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework has been completed and will be available in 2018. Connecticut has developed a series of videos and resources for both families and educators that are connected to the CT ELDS, including research-based strategies related to the environment, materials, scheduling and adult interactions. The state is currently field testing a new assessment based on the CT ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Connecticut does not provide a list of approved curricula but instead provides guidance that helps programs make decisions about curriculum based on available research, program philosophy, adult supports, and the children and families served. The state has developed a curriculum self-assessment tool that guides programs to adopt and implement curriculum practices based on research about how young children learn and ensure the curriculum is implemented in an intentional, responsive and reflective manner. The guide also shares the available implementation supports. The state is piloting a QRIS that includes criteria related to curriculum.

**CDCC:** Currently CDCC programs are required to meet NAEYC Accreditation or Head Start standards related to curricular practices.

**Support for students with special needs.** The state has policies to support children with special needs in inclusion classrooms of state-funded preschool.

**CDCC:** The number of CDCC children who received special education services is unknown.

**SRP:** In 2016-2017, 7.3% of the children enrolled in SSRP had special needs.



**Smart Start:** In 2016-2017, 99 children, or 20.5% of the total Smart Start enrollment, received special education services.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The legislative requirements regarding DLLs begin at kindergarten.

**CDCC:** The number of CDCC children who were DLLs is unknown.

**SRP:** The number of SSRPP children who were DLLs is unknown.

**Smart Start:** In 2016-2017, 16.8% of enrollment DLLs.

**High quality teaching.** All three programs must achieve NAEYC accreditation by the third anniversary of the first day children attend the program. In order to help prepare programs that are not accredited, annual ECERS self-assessments are required. The scores themselves are not turned into OEC, but the name of the consultant who conducted the assessment and the date completed. Because ECERS scores are not available for review, and CLASS use is not required by OEC, we could not determine the extent to which high quality teaching takes place in the programs.

**Professional development.**

**CDCC:** CDCC programs are required to be licensed, which requires PD for staff that totals 1% of the total annual hours worked, approximately 20 clock hours per year. Content may include, but is not limited to, early childhood education and child development, licensing and regulations, health issues, nutrition, first aid, social services, child abuse laws, and programming for children with disabilities or special health care needs. Programs are required to develop, implement, and maintain a written PD plan and to document and maintain the PD plan for each program staff member and make it available for review. If teachers seek scholarship funds from the state, they must also have a formal plan of study from an institution of higher education. State policy does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers.

**SRP:** Teachers are required to complete nine clock hours of PD per year. State policy does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers.

**Smart Start:** PD is locally determined. Lead Teachers are certified by the State Department of Education and must meet SDE professional learning requirements and professional learning plans. State policy does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers.

**Child Assessments.** The State is in the process of field-testing the CT Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (CT DOTS), a framework for documenting children's progress on the skills abilities and behaviors in the CT ELDS. Child-level assessment information is not collected or used by the state; assessment information may be used in these ways at the local level.

**CDCC:** State policy does not require CDCC to assess children's learning and development during preschool nor are child assessments required to be aligned with the CT ELDS.

**SRP:** State policy requires SRP to assess children's learning and development during preschool. Child assessments are required to be aligned with the CT ELDS, but programs can choose the assessment. There is no state policy regarding how the pre-K assessment data are used. Communities have been known to use this data to guide teacher training and professional

development, make decisions about kindergarten enrollment, to adjust curricula and track child and program outcomes over time.

**Smart Start:** State policy does not require Smart Start to assess children's learning and development during preschool nor are child assessments required to be aligned with the CT ELDS.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All three programs must be NAEYC accredited or Head Start approved. If they are not, they are required to have an ECERS by a state approved, reliable ECERS rater. State approved evaluators are trained by ERSI staff.

**CDCC:** Programs that are not yet accredited by NAEYC or Head Start approved are required to have an ECERS rating by a reliable evaluator. The state also conducts monitoring visits and provides written feedback and referrals for technical assistance. There has not been a formal evaluation of CDCC.

**SRP:** Structured observations are required for programs that are not NAEYC Accredited or Head Start approved. In addition, Local School Readiness Liaisons are required to observe programs/classrooms at least annually and provide feedback to the programs. The state also conducts monitoring visits and provides written feedback and referrals for technical assistance. In 2016, there was a regression discontinuity study that found on average that children who participated in SRP did better in in early literacy and early numeracy.

**Smart Start:** Programs that are not yet accredited by NAEYC or Head Start approved are required to have an ECERS rating by a reliable evaluator. There has not been a formal evaluation of Smart Start.

**Integrated System.** Through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, programs that were originally housed in other agencies, were moved to OEC. Including those in departments of Social Services; State Department of Education, Board of Regents; and Department of Public Health. All three programs need to be NAEYC accredited; however, variations within levels of quality are not collected by the state. Essential element components are determined locally including curriculum and child assessment selection, coaching, and use of data collected during ECERS observations; making it difficult to create an integrated system.

## Delaware

Delaware’s Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP) started in 1994, providing early childhood services for Head-Start eligible 3- and 4-year-olds. The program was modeled after the Head Start program and requires that participating programs follow Head Start Performance Standards.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	○	●	●	–	●	○	●	○	ND	○	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Although Delaware has not recently passed or proposed much new legislation with regard to early childhood services and systems, recently elected Gov. John Carney (D) is seen as supportive of early learning and proposed additional funding for the state’s QRIS program STARS in his 2018 State of the State Address, an additional \$8.8 million was added to support QRIS efforts for FY 2019. In 2017-2018, 3-year-olds became eligible for participating in ECAP.

Not much additional funding has been added since the state agreed to a \$22 million investment in 2011 to increase the budget for the Delaware Stars QRIS program. Enrollment in the state pre-K program has actually declined as a percentage of the population over the past decade; in 2016-2017, Delaware served less than 10% of 4-year-olds in the state.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Office of Early Learning (OEL) is housed within the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE). In addition to overseeing ECAP, OEL is responsible for administering the state’s QRIS, Delaware Stars; the state’s KEA (Delaware Early Learning Survey); the professional development system for all early childhood programs; early childhood special education (IDEA part B); the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership initiative; and Parents as Teachers.

At the start of the 2016-2017 program year, new Office of Early Learning staff became the ECAP Program Manager and ECAP Monitor, respectively. After a series of meetings and individual visits to assess program needs at the beginning of the year, the Program Manager and Monitor put in place new communication protocols and reporting procedures. ECAP Directors and Coordinators were given the opportunity to participate in monthly community of practice calls and professional development days. With strong commitment from the Secretary, the DDOE is participating in a CCSSO network for state teams striving to implement the Essential Elements.

**Education and compensation.** ECAP teachers located in public schools are required to have a BA and specialization training in early childhood; however, those located in nonpublic schools need an AA in

early childhood education or a related field in addition to coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education and experience teaching preschool-age children. ECAP teachers working in public schools have the same starting salary and salary schedule for all years of service as K-3; those teachers not working in public schools do not have parity.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** ECAP has a maximum class size of 20 and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** ECAP programs are required to provide a minimum of 3.5 hours of services per day. Programs that operate longer than 3.5 hours per day have blended funding from multiple sources to support the additional portion including state subsidy dollars to extend the program day for children.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Delaware Early Learning Foundations (2010) are comprehensive and aligned with infant/toddler standards, K-3 standards, and college and career standards. The state provides an approved list of child assessments aligned with the Foundations and offers additional resources to programs to implement them.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Delaware has a list of state approved curriculum; 18 choices are currently on the list. Curriculum selection and implementation is guided by Delaware Stars. All ECAPs are a Star 4 or 5, and thus follow curricula guidelines and receive technical assistance as a Stars Level 4 or 5 center. The state QRIS has technical assistants that work with programs to ensure curriculum is implemented with fidelity. However, having so many curriculum choices makes it difficult for the state to ensure that all are able to be implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 7% of ECAP children received special education services. To support these students, the state requires that ECAP teachers possess specific qualifications regarding working with children with special needs and participate in professional development. DDOE has created materials and through its Expanding Inclusive Opportunities committee has created publications regarding best practices in inclusion classrooms and will be completing the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center self-assessment on inclusionary practices. Inclusion specialists are also available to support preschool teachers and/or children.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** To support DLLs, Delaware has transitional bilingual programs; dual language immersion classes; and summer language programs. ECAPs follow the federal Head Start Program Performance Standards for serving DLL children, including if a majority of children in a class or home-based program speak the same language, at least one class staff member or home visitor must speak such language. The Delaware Early Learning Foundations requires planned differentiation for English Learners. However, no system for PD or classroom support has been established, and approved written plans for supporting DLLs are not required of the programs.

**High quality teaching.** ECERS observations are required for ECAP programs as part of Delaware Stars. Level 4 programs must have a minimum 4.40 on the ECERS and Level 5 needs a 5.4. Actual average scores are not available for review.

**Professional development.** All lead teachers working in early childhood must meet the state requirement of 18 hours of in-service professional development per year. Ongoing classroom-embedded support is only provided to some teachers, such as new teachers employed by public schools and teachers working in nonpublic schools that must adhere to the 2016 Head Start Program Performance

Standards revisions that require coaching in the 2017-2018 program year. The Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) housed in the University of Delaware works in conjunction with DDOE and Delaware Stars to provide workshops and trainings for all early childhood teachers. Programs may also request one onsite training session per year that can be tailored to meet the needs of the teaching staff.

**Child Assessments.** Delaware requires all ECAP programs to use Teaching Strategies GOLD continually throughout the year. Data are used to guide teacher training, adjust curriculum, revise state policies regarding ECAP, and track child and program level outcomes over time. DIEEC offers a series of assessment trainings, including introduction to assessments and Teaching Strategies GOLD specific sessions, for both administrators and teachers.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All ECAP programs participate in the state QRIS and must achieve a 4 or 5-star rating. Structured observations of classroom quality are conducted in accordance with the QRIS; some classrooms are observed less than one time per year. State policy requires that programs receive on-going feedback based on data collected from these structured observations of classroom quality using the ECERS. Delaware Stars assessors are required to maintain their reliability through the QRIS contract with DDOE.

The most recent formal evaluation of ECAP occurred in 2007.

**Integrated system.** The Delaware Stars program provides the framework to align the early learning standards, curriculum, and child and program assessments. Delaware Stars is jointly administered by the University of Delaware and DDOE and requires participation of ECAP programs. Some of the websites are not as up-to-date and the overall capacity of the state to support this system is limited.

## District of Columbia

The District of Columbia has offered funding for prekindergarten programs since the 1960s. In its current form, the Public Pre-Kindergarten program serves students in schools run by both public schools, including charter schools, and nonpublic schools, community-based organizations (CBO). The program strives to provide high-quality, universally accessible prekindergarten education services, as stated in the Pre-Kindergarten Enhancement and Expansion Amendment Act of 2008 (Pre-K Act).

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	–	●	–	○	○	●	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) provides publicly funded pre-K and is open to all D.C. residents. The move to universal pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds has been possible through D.C.’s long history of strong political will favoring pre-K. The Pre-K for All D.C. Campaign was launched in 2006 with funding from Pre-K Now and the CityBridge Foundation, and built on prior investments by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation working through the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI). The Campaign raised additional funding from the D.C. Early Childhood Collaborative, PNC Bank and other private sources. Pre-K for All D.C. was housed at NBCDI, which also served as fiscal agent. The Campaign succeeded with the strong support of former Mayor Gray and D.C. Council’s unanimous passage of the 2008 Act that has now fulfilled its enrollment goal.

In 2016-2017, D.C. enrolled the largest percentage of 4-year-olds (88%) and 3-year-olds (66%) in the District. In addition to an increase in state spending in D.C., per child spending increased 10% to \$16,996 per child, ranking highest in the nation. DCPS receives funding at the Uniform Per Student Formula Funding (UPSFF) level for students participating in pre-K classrooms. DCPS additionally receives Head Start funding which allows them to provide comprehensive child and family support services to all students enrolled in Title I schools through implementation of the Head Start School-Wide Model.

**Compelling visions and strong leadership.** The Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE), the agency with authority over the majority of programs and services for young children and their families in the District, also administers D.C.’s Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion program in CBOs with 1.5 FTE. Additionally, both the DCPS and the D.C. Public Charter School Board (PCSB) have authority to oversee implementation of programs offered within these school-based settings. While public charter schools receive funding at the UPSFF level from the D.C. government, they operate independently of the traditional public school system. Charter schools are authorized and monitored by the PCBS. Due to this governance structure, there are different requirements; pre-K programs that operate in the non-charter

schools are required to adhere to policies that support high-quality pre-K, including teacher requirements and class size and teacher-to-student ratio limitations.

**Education and compensation.** As previously described, D.C. provides pre-K programming through three sectors: D.C. Public Schools (DCPS), Public Charter Schools (PCS), and in nonpublic schools, referred to as community-based organizations (CBO). Each sector has different teacher requirements and salary parity policies:

**DCPS:** Lead teachers must have a bachelor's degree; pass a core Praxis test in reading, writing and math; and pass a Principles of Learning & Teaching - Early Childhood test that verifies their content knowledge. DCPS lead teachers are not required to have a specialized degree in ECE. DCPS pre-K teachers have the same starting salary and salary schedule as K-3 for all years of service.

**PCS:** The District gives public charter schools the authority to establish their own requirements for teacher education and credentials and salary parity.

**CBO:** Lead teachers must have a bachelor's degree in child development, early childhood education, or child and family studies. CBO pre-K teachers with a BA have the same starting salary and salary schedule as K-3 for all years of service and the salary schedule is prorated for differences in length of work day or year.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**DCPS:** Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 16 with a teacher to student ratio of 1:8. For 4-year-olds, the maximum class size is 20, with a ratio of 1:10. Ratios and group size requirements are based on the age of the youngest child in the classroom.

**PCS:** PCS determined.

**CBO:** Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 16 with a teacher to student ratio of 1:8. For 4-year-olds, the maximum class size is 20, with a ratio of 1:10. Ratios and group size requirements are based on the age of the youngest child in the classroom.

**Learning time.** All of D.C.'s pre-K programs operate five days per week during the school year for a minimum of 6.5 hours per day. Wrap-around services extending beyond the school day are common.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The District of Columbia Early Learning Standards (DC ELS) were last revised in 2013. They are comprehensive and aligned with D.C.'s Common Core Early Learning Standards from birth-Kindergarten; K-3 standards; and D.C.'s college and career ready standards for the early grades. D.C. provides professional development opportunities to support use of the DC ELS. In addition, CBOs receive additional funds totaling \$1,500 per child for technical assistance which may include implementing the DC ELS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** D.C. has a list of state-approved curricula. Programs do not have to select one of the nine different curricula on the list in 2016-2017, but must align the chosen curriculum with the DC ELS. OSSE offers sponsored training and on-going technical assistance and funding for curriculum implementation. OSSE requires DCPS and CBO programs to establish a system to ensure that curricula are being implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 9.4% of pre-K students received special education services. There are no state policies related to providing supports for preschool children who have special needs enrolled in inclusion classrooms in this preschool program.

**DCPS** initiatives at the preschool level include: inclusion classrooms, using the Tools of the Mind curriculum, staffed with a teacher certified in both early childhood education and special education, and two trained classroom instructional paraprofessionals. The Early Learning Support Program (P-2) is staffed with special education teachers and classroom instructional paraprofessionals. Teachers are trained to meet the educational needs of students with developmental delays and classroom instructional paraprofessionals also receive training and support in the area of data collection and meeting individual student needs. Specially trained and certified related service providers provide supports to students and classroom staff.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** D.C. is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in preschool. However, there are supports, including additional funding, allocated to preschool programs to serve DLLs. Children are screened and assessed in their home language if available in the home language. To support families, recruitment, enrollment, outreach information, and communication with the family about the program or child is in family's home language. DCPS requires preschool programs have an approved written plan for supporting children who are DLLs.

**High quality teaching.** 2015-2016 CLASS scores were reported for 334 DCPS pre-K classrooms, 325 PCS classrooms, and 143 CBO classrooms (43 serving pre-K students). Mean scores were 5.83 for Emotional Support, 5.62 for Classroom Organization, and 2.62 for Instructional Support.

#### **Professional development.**

**DCPS:** DCPS requires pre-K teachers to participate in six days of professional development annually as well as ongoing classroom-embedded support such as coaching and mentoring. Coaching is only required for lead teachers; however, many schools require teaching teams to be coached together.

**PCS:** Public Charter Schools do not mandate a specific number of training hours and the schools determine the type of training teachers receive.

**CBO:** Since 2008, D.C. has awarded Pre-K Incentive Program Grants to private providers to help them meet the quality requirements of the Pre-K Act. These requirements include providing technical assistance and coaching support for educators. Lead teachers are expected to complete 30 clock hours of professional development per year.

**Child Assessments.** Child assessments are required to be aligned with the ELDS, but other policies vary by setting. Professional development opportunities on assessing children are available to all teachers through the District's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) system.

**DCPS:** DCPS classrooms are required to use Teaching Strategies GOLD.

**PCS:** Public Charter Schools have the authority to select their own child assessment.

**CBO:** The District requires that children enrolled in a CBO pre-K program be assessed using a curriculum-aligned tool at least three times during the program year and the assessment results for each child be submitted to OSSE.



**Data-driven decision-making.** Pre-K programs from all three sectors (DCPS, PCS and CBOs) are assessed on an annual basis using CLASS by an external evaluator. Each CBO and school receives individualized classroom and program level reports identifying areas of strength and areas needing improvement. Additionally, D.C. convenes program administrators and education leaders for data engagement meetings annually to review and use their own CLASS data to inform decisions such as professional development training, classroom instruction, and other program improvements.

There have been two data system integration efforts. The District's Statewide Longitudinal Education Data Warehouse (SLED) is a single repository of student and education-related data needed to improve education planning, management, reporting, instruction and evaluation. The District has invested greatly into this system and it provides a robust, centralized platform of information from early childhood through K-12, post-secondary and into adult education and employment. In addition to the SLED, the District began implementing in 2014 the Early Development Inventory (EDI) tool, a population-based measure that provides a snapshot of children's health, development, and school readiness. OSSE contracted with UCLA's Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities to assist with administration of the EDI. Data are reported every two years.

**Integrated System.** The QRIS system aligns quality standards including the DC ELS across D.C.'s three-sector system. However, only CBOs participating in subsidized child care or providing public pre-K are required to be part of the QRIS system. DCPS and PCS have to be part of an accountability system that is aligned with the state's QRIS. Having three settings with different programmatic requirements makes it challenging to integrate the pre-K system.

## Florida

Florida’s Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program was created as a result of the 2002 state constitutional amendment requiring prekindergarten access for all of Florida’s 4-year-olds. Age-eligible children are enrolled in either a 300-hour summer program, which every school district is mandated to offer, or a school-year program totaling 540 instructional hours. Information about the summer program is included in the narrative, however, this scan only rates the school-year program.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
–	–	–	●	●	–	●	–	–	–	ND	–	○	○	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Rick Scott (R) is currently in his second and final term. In 2016-2017, state spending on pre-K decreased slightly, to \$397 million. Per child state spending was \$2,282, ranking 42<sup>nd</sup> out of 43 states, D.C. and Guam that operate pre-K programs. Governor Scott’s 2017-2018 Fighting for Florida’s Future budget recommended a \$406.5 million budget for VPK which would increase the base student allocation of \$50 per child.

The Children's Movement of Florida evolved from the 2008 reauthorization campaign for The Children’s Trust in Miami-Dade County. The reauthorization campaign was led by David Lawrence Jr., a journalist and former publisher of The Miami Herald. In 2015, Early Learning Florida, a public-private partnership led by Donald Pemberton, director of the University of Florida’s Lastinger Center for Learning, was rolled out. It’s funded with \$3 million from philanthropic foundations and \$2 million from the Legislature. The online learning system aims to help early childhood professionals gain the knowledge and skills needed to provide quality care and education to children newborn to age 5.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Florida’s Office of Early Learning (OEL) was established as an independent agency administratively linked to the DOE. OEL governs three programs, VPK, Child Care Resource and Referral, and the School Readiness Program. The School Readiness Program started in 1999, expanded in 2001 by incorporating two other state programs—the Prekindergarten Early Intervention Program, which focused on young children’s health, and the State Migrant Prekindergarten Program, which served 3- and 4-year-olds whose parents are migratory agricultural or fishing industry laborers. The program offers financial assistance for child care to qualified parents and is not reviewed in this scan.

While the state provides overall governance of VPK, its administration and delivery of services is done

through 30 regional early learning coalitions (coalitions) located throughout the state. The coalitions are nonprofit organizations with governing boards comprised of members of the local community and are monitored annually by OEL.

**Education and compensation.** Teachers in the school-year VPK program are required to have, at minimum, a Child Development Associate (CDA) degree or equivalent credential. Teachers in the summer program are required to have a bachelor's degree. There are no salary parity policies for VPK teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** During the school year, the maximum class size is 20 children with an adult-to-child ratio of 1:10. During the summer, the maximum class size is 12, with a ratio of 1:12.

**Learning time.** The minimum operating hours for the school year program are 540 hours (most programs operate 3 hours per day, 5 days per week) and 300 hours for the summer program (most programs operate 8 hours per day, 5 days per week). Providers are allowed to determine their individual calendars in order to meet those requirements.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Florida adopted the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards (FL ELDS) in fall 2017. The standards and benchmarks reflect the knowledge and skills that a child on a developmental progression should know and be able to do at the end of an age-related timeframe and are aligned. OEL will begin providing online, instructor-led, train-the-trainer professional development opportunities for using the FL ELDS in summer 2018. Once the trainings are available, new VPK teachers, providers on probation, and new directors will be required to attend one of the training courses.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Florida only requires programs to select from an approved list of 16 curricula if the program is on probation due to its kindergarten readiness rates falling below the minimal acceptable rate. For those not on probation, VPK programs are expected to select any curriculum that is developmentally appropriate, designed to prepare a student for early literacy, enhance age-appropriate student progress in attaining state-adopted performance standards, and prepare students to be ready for kindergarten based on the statewide kindergarten screening.

**Support for students with special needs.** VPK Specialized Instructional Services allows parents of VPK-age children to choose additional therapies in line with the child's IEP in lieu of attending a traditional VPK classroom. The number of children who are enrolled in VPK who received special education services is not reported.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The Florida Department of Education has the authority to grant Good Cause Exemptions (waivers) from performance requirements for specific populations, which may include children with disabilities and English language learners. To be eligible for a Good Cause Exemption, the provider must demonstrate learning gains, adherence to an improvement plan, and high health and safety standards.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS observations were not able to be reviewed, nor are they required by OEL.

**Professional development.** In 2017-2018, the PD requirements increased to 24 clock hours per year for Directors, Teachers, and Assistants; and 30 hours in 2018-2019. VPK teachers are not required to have written, annual, individualized PD plans. There is no state-level system for coaching and mentoring, so it is difficult to determine to what extent, if any, this occurs in local programs.

**Child Assessments.** Each VPK program is required to use the VPK Assessment that looks at specific early literacy and math skills which are predictive of children’s future educational success. VPK providers are required to administer the VPK Assessment for pre- and post- assessment and submit the results on the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System. Though not required, providers are encouraged to administer the assessment mid-year to inform both individual and group instruction. Assessors must complete instructor-led training or online training; or view the VPK Assessment Instructional DVD included in each VPK Assessment kit and document the date completed.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Florida’s VPK program is reviewed annually as part of the legislative appropriation process using the results of the FVP Assessment, which includes the previously described pre-K assessment. In addition, the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) is administered annually to all kindergarteners in public schools and all available to kindergarteners attending nonpublic schools. DOE is required by statute to calculate a kindergarten readiness rate every year for each private or public school VPK Provider for either the school-year or summer program. A readiness rate is set by the State Board of Education (Board). A provider is placed on probation if its readiness rate is at or below the minimum set by the Board. While on probation, the program cannot begin instruction for a new VPK class or program and will not receive funding for VPK until an improvement plan has been submitted and approved.

There is no requirement that each provider receive a site visit at least once during a specified period. Rather, site visits are determined by random sample except where follow-up is needed due to technical assistance or corrective action plan follow-up. Each early learning coalition is responsible for the onsite monitoring of VPK providers and for monthly attendance records reviews. The coalitions are required to maintain a single point of entry database of the students enrolled in VPK.

Florida’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability has conducted several studies on VPK. The most recent one in 2012 reviewed elements of the program and found that children taught by teachers with a BA or higher performed slightly better on kindergarten readiness assessments than children taught by teachers with a CDA. VPK School-Year Program participants performed better on kindergarten readiness assessments than those in the VPK Summer Program. Children in three-hour or six-hour VPK programs performed about the same on these assessments. Kindergarten readiness rates were about the same for public and private providers, while children from faith-based VPK settings performed better on readiness assessments than children from other types of VPK providers.

**Integrated System.** There are some elements of the system that are aligned, including the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards and the use of a common child assessment. However, most of the essential elements are determined at the local level, including curriculum selection, incorporating coaching into the PD system, and the frequency and structure of classroom assessments.

## Georgia

Georgia’s Preschool Program started in 1992 as a small pilot program and expanded in 1995 to become the nation’s first state-funded universal preschool program for 4-year-olds. State lottery revenues generate funding for the program in a variety of settings such as public schools, private child-care centers, faith-based organizations, Head Start agencies, state colleges and universities, and military facilities.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	—	—	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** GPK’s established history and presence in every county has created a culture where GPK is considered a “fact of Georgia life,” and as a result has significant political support even though new, visible champions do not necessarily stand out within the legislature. Over its 25-year history, GPK has been supported by each governor beginning with Zell Miller (D) providing the political impetus behind GPK. Governor Deal (R) recently pledged an additional \$50 million to support the quality of the program, which is still recovering from the adverse effects of the Great Recession and decreased lottery revenues.

Budgetary constraints in the preschool program during the 2011-2012 school year resulted in several changes. The program was cut by 20 days, though this reduction was eliminated by the 2013-2014 year, returning the program to its 180-day schedule. Other changes, still in place, included an increased teacher-student ratio of 1:11, and the maximum class size grew from 20 to 22 students. Total state spending for the 2016-2017 school year was almost \$349 million, an increase of approximately \$34 million over the 2015-2016 school year. This increase in funding supported retention of lead and assistant teachers, including salary increases. The program also received funding to serve 2,320 high-need children in Summer Transition programs during the 2016-2017 school year.

Support for GPK extends to business, philanthropy, and advocates, which have a history of effectively working together to advance high-quality early education. [Voices for Georgia’s Children](#) is an effective advocacy group and particularly strong proponent of GPK and children’s issues in general. [Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students](#) (GEEARS) is another strong organization that has played an important role publicly and privately. GEEARS is part of a [leadership team](#) that includes Georgia Public Broadcasting, United Way of Metro Atlanta, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, and others. GEEARS has been instrumental in coalescing the philanthropic community to support early education.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Georgia has a separate state agency governing services for children birth to five and their families. Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and

Learning (DECAL) which oversees programs serving children from birth through five years, including GPK, child care subsidy (CAPS), the Quality Rated tiered quality rating and improvement system, professional development, the Head Start State Collaboration Office and child care licensing. Despite early shifts in DECAL leadership, with new governors typically appointing the Commissioner, there has been remarkable stability within the agency for some time. The Georgia Department of Education (GDE) largely retains authority on K–3 early education programs along with early childhood special education (Title B Section 619), Title I, and literacy initiatives.

**Education and compensation.** Georgia requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus an early learning credential. Funding to programs is based on a formula calculating lead teachers being paid on par with a statewide entry-level kindergarten teacher, regardless of the number of years of experience or advanced credentials teachers may possess. The 2016-2017 budget includes a funding allocation for a two percent increase in salary for both lead and assistant teachers. A new salary scale was also developed for preschool lead teachers based on years of experience to continue supporting salary parity between preschool teachers and K-12 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Budgetary constraints in the preschool program during the 2011-2012 school year resulted in several changes, including a teacher-student ratio of 1:11 being allowed, and the maximum class size became 22 students. Georgia does not meet NIEER's maximum class size and ratio benchmark, however it does meet Essential Elements.

**Learning time.** Children attend Georgia's pre-K program five days per week during the school year and services are provided a minimum of 6.5 hours per day. Wrap-around services extending the length of the school day are common in most nonpublic settings, typically funded with child care subsidy or parent fees.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) were last reviewed for the 2013-2014 school year. The GELDS have been aligned with the state's K-3 standards and the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and the Work Sampling System indicators for four-year-olds. DECAL provides a website which includes resources for families, teachers, and providers on the GELDS. All Pre-K teachers are provided with a GELDS manual and toolbox. PEACH is a newly developed interactive website that provides GELDS aligned activities for teachers to use in instructional planning including the ability for teachers to develop, save online, and print lesson plans.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** DECAL completes a full curriculum review approximately every 5 years to identify curriculum models that best support Georgia's Pre-K Program (e.g. aligned with the GELDS and WSS). DECAL's approved curriculum list is posted on the DECAL website with guidance regarding selection of a curriculum. Pre-K programs must select a curriculum on the approved list, however, there is not a system to ensure that it is being implemented with fidelity. Individual programs can request an approval to implement a subject-specific curriculum. Last year, programs were eligible to apply for funding to implement the social emotional curricula, Second Step.

**Support for students with special needs.** Having made inclusion a priority for more than a decade, DECAL believes it has made significant progress for including children with special needs in state pre-K. Programs must indicate in their annual application if they will be full-inclusion classrooms where a full- or part-time certified special educator (co-teacher) is present, all specialized services are "pushed-in" rather than "pulled-out," and children attend the program full-time with typically developing peer models. The maximum number of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to six

children. Preschool teachers are required to possess specific qualifications regarding working with children with special needs and participate in PD targeting this population. During the 2016-2017 school year, there were 158 fully inclusive pre-K classrooms with an approved model and full day special education teacher. In addition, there were a total of 2,863 children (3.5% of the total pre-K enrollment) who had an IEP.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Georgia reported that 7,245 pre-K students, or 9% of those enrolled in pre-K, were English Language Learners in 2016-2017. Pre-K programs are required to provide recruitment, enrollment, and outreach information to families in their home languages.

Recognizing the increasing population of young DLLs in communities throughout the state and the challenges this presents for families and schools when children enter kindergarten, DECAL has taken special steps to address the needs of these students. In 2013, DECAL began piloting the Rising Pre-K (RPK) Summer Transition Program to support children registered to enter Georgia's Pre-K or Head Start in the fall whose home language is Spanish. RPK is targeted to low-income families whose children must be age eligible for Georgia's Pre-K Program in the upcoming school year. The RPK's enrollment priority is children whose home language is Spanish. The instruction in these classrooms is taught in both English and Spanish with bilingual staff. During the 2016-2017 summer, DECAL served 770 children in 55 classrooms with a staff to child ratio of 1:7.

**High quality teaching.** In 2011-2012, CLASS observations were conducted in 199 randomly selected pre-K classrooms. The average CLASS score (on a 7.0 scale) was in the middle to high quality range on Emotional Support (5.5), in the upper end of the middle range on Classroom Organization (5.2), and in the low to middle range on Instructional Support (2.8). Another study reviewed 199 randomly selected GPK classrooms in 2013-2014 and found similar results: ECERS-R average score (3.7) and CLASS average on Emotional Support (5.7), Classroom Organization (5.5), and Instructional Support (2.5).

**Professional development.** All Pre-K programs have an assigned Education Specialist, with an ECE credential and appropriate experience, who provides classroom-embedded technical assistance and coaching in all classrooms and onsite monitoring for programs. In addition, individual teachers are selected to participate in an intensive professional development project (MMCI PD) focused on improving teacher/child interactions. These teachers are provided on-going in-class coaching, regular observations and attend monthly professional learning community sessions incorporating CLASS. The amount of supports and visits is differentiated based on teacher and program needs. New teachers receive additional visits while veteran teachers may only be visited 2 or 3 times a year. Teachers participating in the MMCI PD receive monthly coaching sessions.

Teachers in programs who are in the Quality Support Program (Funding Probation) receive, at a minimum, quarterly classroom observations and goal setting and targeted technical assistance. In addition, teachers who are identified as struggling with classroom management or dealing with challenging behaviors receive Intensive Professional Development from a regional Inclusion Specialist.

DECAL provides a minimum of 12 clock hours of training each year to all Georgia's Pre-K lead and assistant teachers. Training is customized for the participants based on their lead or assistant teacher role. Programs are required to document the additional 3 hours of appropriate training; all teachers are required to complete 15 clock hours of PD per school year.

**Child Assessments.** All Georgia's pre-K classrooms are required to use Work Sampling System Online (WSO). A correlation between the GELDS and WSO has been developed. All teachers receive professional development and onsite technical assistance on curriculum, lesson planning and child assessment.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Georgia conducts yearly CLASS observations to gather a state baseline. These observations are provided to programs for program improvement and to support the development of Professional Development Plans. All classroom observers are DECAL staff who must demonstrate annual reliability for all of the instruments for which they conduct observations. All observation data is collected and reviewed by internal research staff to ensure observations are conducted in a manner supporting the reliability and validity measures established for each tool. Annual professional development is provided for observers, and an internal protocol has established for each observation tool to ensure consistency. For programs participating in the state's QRIS, Quality Rated, classrooms receive ECERS observations.

In 2011, the Georgia General Assembly funded a multi-year evaluation of the program which is being conducted by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, UNC-Chapel Hill. Data on the first two phases of the study have been released and demonstrate significant gains for children participating in the program across all domains of learning. In addition, DECAL has commissioned studies related to professional development for Georgia's Preschool Program teachers and summer transition program.

**Integrated System.** Standards, curriculum, assessment, instruction, and evaluation are woven together in Georgia's integrated system, emphasizing data-driven decisions on the state, local, and program level. The system encompasses not only pre-K, but also other programs such as child care and Head Start, in part woven together by Quality Rated, Georgia's QRIS.



## Hawaii

The Executive Office of Early Learning (EOEL) launched Hawaii’s first publicly funded pre-K program in 2014-2015 with an initial \$3 million investment. EOEL’s Public Pre-Kindergarten Program operates solely in public schools, as mandated by a provision in the Hawaii state constitution barring distribution of public funds to privately run programs.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	○	—	ND	●	●	○	—

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met – Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Former Gov. Neil Abercrombie (D) campaigned on early learning and was successful in establishing EOEL and housing it temporarily in the governor’s office, creating a state-funded pre-K program, and successfully applying for the federal PDG. His re-election loss in 2014 brought Gov. David Ige (D) into office who is seen as less supportive of early learning. Gov. Ige declined to appoint a Director of EOEL until the office moved, as defined in statute, out of the governor’s office and into an office administratively attached to DOE. Gov. Ige is supportive of public education and has been vocal on wanting preschool state investments to occur in the public schools. His position was one of the factors attributed to the failure of the Constitutional Amendment in November 2014, which asked voters to decide if state funds could be used to fund programs housed in the private sector. As a result of this vote, the state-funded pre-K program is limited to public and public charter schools within the HIDOE. The pre-K program has not expanded since its inception, serving 376 children in 2016-2017, 2% of the state’s 4-year-old population. Five new classrooms are planned to open in 2018-2019. Funding has declined to \$2.5 million in 2016-2017, but state per-child spending (\$6,649) ranks 9<sup>th</sup> out of the 44 states, including D.C. that fund pre-K.

There are several local foundations that support early learning, including Kamehameha Schools, Harold K.L. Castle Foundation, and the Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has supported the Hawaii P-3 Initiative and several smaller projects, but the large P-3 grants (over \$11 million) are almost complete.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Hawaii’s Department of Education (HIDOE) is the only statewide public education system in the country comprising only one school district. In July of 2015, the EOEL became attached to HIDOE for administrative purposes only; at this time the EOEL is not considered a part of the HIDOE, despite all of the pre-K classrooms being located within public schools, as mandated by a provision in the Hawaii state constitution that bars distribution of public funds to privately run programs. While EOEL is charged with coordinating the early learning system, it is only responsible for pre-K. Hawaii received a federal PDG grant in 2014 for \$14.5 million, however, it was

awarded to the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission. EOEL has seven FTEs that support pre-K including one Educational Specialist responsible for administration of the program and six Resource Teacher positions that provide mentoring/coaching support to each of the schools.

**Education and compensation.** Teachers in the EOEL Public Pre-K Program are part of the teacher's union, the Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA), and, as such, are granted parity with teachers in K-12 grades. Lead teachers in the Public Pre-K Program are required to have a BA. EOEL has worked with the Hawaii Teacher Standards Board to change licensure requirements relating to early childhood education. Starting January 1, 2019, any individual adding the fields of Early Childhood Education (ECE) PK-3 and ECE PK-K to an existing Hawaii teaching license must complete 30-36 credit hours from a state-approved teacher preparation program in ECE.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Hawaii has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** Although there is no minimum requirement specifically stated in statute, the understanding is that the publicly funded pre-K program will run on the same calendar and schedule as the DOE public elementary school in which the classrooms are housed. This is the equivalent of 30.5 hours per week.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, which include college- and career-readiness standards. Although it's not currently mandated, the Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the assessments used in pre-K. The state supports their implementation through the coaching program in which all teachers are required to participate.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The EOEL does not endorse any one preschool curriculum. Curriculum decisions are currently made by the principal and teachers at most sites, and by principals alone in a few sites. Some programs use Creative Curriculum and supplement with literacy and math curriculum used in the kindergarten. While there is not a specified requirement for implementing the curricula with fidelity, teachers receive on-going training and feedback on implementing an emergent curriculum and inquiry/project-work approach through the required coaching program.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 19 children (5%) of EOEL's pre-K program received special education services. To support the pre-K teachers in meeting these children, professional development is offered to the teachers.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Statute specifies that English language learners are among EOEL Public Pre-Kindergarten Program's enrollment priorities. Teachers are not required to possess certification of training to support working with DLLs. In 2016-2017, 11% of the pre-K children were classified as DLLs.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS scores were not able to be reviewed.

**Professional development.** Although there is no state requirement, the HSTA union contract requires 21 hours of teacher in-service professional development. For EOEL Prekindergarten teachers, at least 60 hours of professional development in Early Childhood Education are offered to teachers per year in addition to the required 21 hours. Coaching and mentoring support is provided to teachers and assistant

teachers. The frequency of coaching and mentoring is dependent upon the skill of the individual teacher and assistant teacher based on self-reporting as well as the CLASS assessment. Experienced teachers may receive coaching and/or mentoring once or twice a month while those needing more support may receive coaching/mentoring once or twice per week. On the average, each coach is assigned to work with four to six lead teachers.

**Child Assessments.** Although it's not currently mandated, the HELDS are aligned with the assessments used in the EOEL Pre-Kindergarten Program. All classrooms must use Teaching Strategies GOLD multiple times during the year to adjust curricula, track child and program level outcomes over time, and provide a measure of kindergarten readiness. To support the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD, the state offers training and provides technical assistance through workshops and the coaches.

**Data-driven decision-making.** CLASS observations are conducted twice a year in all EOEL classrooms and although HODOE does not require it, EOEL has established a system for providing teachers with feedback. CLASS observers must be certified and maintain certification on an annual basis. Data that are collected during monitoring are used at the state level to identify needs that will guide teacher training, professional development, or technical assistance support; create program improvement plans; make funding decisions; make changes to state policies regarding the preschool program; and target funding for quality improvement efforts. There has not been an evaluation of the pre-K program.

**Integrated System.** The HELDS are loosely integrated in the other components of the pre-K program. In addition, EOEL is not able to align or fully integrate its program with other departments, such as HODOE and the Hawaii State Charter School Commission, or the private providers through the constitutional barrier, thus inhibiting the ability to create a more integrated system.

## Illinois

Illinois has offered state-sponsored pre-K since 1985 under the auspices of Illinois Prekindergarten for At-Risk Children. In 2006, the Illinois legislature passed the Illinois Preschool for All (PFA) initiative, which expanded the original program and aimed to provide access to high-quality pre-k to all 3- and 4-year-olds by 2012, the first and only state to aim to offer voluntary, high-quality pre-k to both 3- and 4-year-olds. PFA is available in every county, though funding limitations do not allow every child to enroll.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	○	●	●	—	●	○	●	●	ND	○	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** There is a Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development that has continued to grow under the current Governor, Bruce Rauner (R) who is actively campaigning for a second term. His Democratic opponent is J.B. Pritzker who has included expanding early childhood education, including universal pre-K, as one of his campaign promises. The Illinois Preschool for All initiative began in 2006 with the goal of providing preschool education to all 3- and 4-year-olds in Illinois by 2012, but due to budget constraints the program serves only one in four children at age 4 and one in five at age 3. Even though Illinois did not have a full state budget for two years, the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) received annual increases, including a \$50 million increase for the 2017-2018 school year.

In 2014, Illinois was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant/Expansion Grant for \$20 million. During the 2016-2017 school year, there were 3,934 children served in the state using this funding, including 2,577 new slots and 1,357 enhanced Preschool for All slots. Enhancement slots were used to move part-day slots to full-day classrooms.

Philanthropy, both local and nation, is supportive of Illinois’ early childhood initiatives including the Irving Harris Foundation and the McCormick Foundation. Illinois Action for Children (ILAC) and the Voices for Illinois Children have been advocates for expanding pre-K.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Early Childhood Division at ISBE administers ECBG, IDEA Preschool Discretionary funds, the RTT-ELC grant, Preschool Development Grant/Expansion Grant, Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS, which is Illinois’ KEA) and all of the grants and contracts associated with those funding sources. There are nine professional staff, two support staff, and the newly renamed Director of Early Learning in an agency of approximately 400 staff. In the last few years there has been some turnover in leadership positions, in part due to the roles being Governor appointed positions.

**Education and compensation.** A BA and teacher specialized training in pre-K is required for PFA teachers. Under the federally funded PDG program teachers are required to have salary parity with their local kindergarten/primary teachers. The teachers in school-based PFA are generally in the union and on the same pay scale as the kindergarten/primary teachers but there is no requirement.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** PFA has a maximum class size of 20 children and ratios are 1:10 for classrooms serving 3- and 4-year-olds.

**Learning time.** PFA programs are required to operate 2.5 hours per day. There is no formal partnership, but child care centers are one of the eligible recipients of PFA funding and provide wraparound services for the children in PFA who are also in their centers. In 2016-2017, 14% of programs operated school-day sessions.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS) last revised in 2013 are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, the state's college and career ready standards, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Domains. Programs must use a child assessment tool that is research-based and aligned with the IELDS. Other state supports include PD opportunities and guidance on selecting curriculum aligned with the IELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** PFA requires the use of a comprehensive research-based curriculum that is aligned with the IELDS. Programs are required to indicate which curriculum they are using in their application and the use of the specified curriculum is checked during on-site monitoring as part of the QRIS system. Coaching is available to support curriculum implementation, but is not required. In 2016-2017, it was reported that 96% of the PFA programs were using Creative Curriculum.

**Support for students with special needs.** The State of Illinois strongly encourages and promotes inclusion of all children in preschool programs; 18.5% of children enrolled in PFA received special education services. The proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to no more than 30%, not including children with speech IEPs. As part of their monitoring process, the Early Childhood Block Grant Preschool for All (PFA) 3-5 Compliance Checklist has an indicator to check whether special education supports and services are provided in the PFA classroom and embedded into the activities and routines of the day. PFA teachers are required to possess specific qualifications regarding working with children with special needs and PD is required for preschool teachers who serve children with special needs. Inclusion specialists are also available to support preschool teachers and/or children.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** PFA enrolled 22,559 children who were DLLs in 2016-2017. The percentage of DLLs in PFA (31%) was greater than the 25% of DLLs in the state. Bilingual instruction is permitted and the quality of that instruction is monitored. PFA teachers are required to have training or qualifications related to working with DLLs.

In addition, PFA programs that are administered by public school districts are required to offer a language instruction program to all children identified through a language proficiency screening process to be English Language Learners (ELLs). In attendance centers with 20 or more preschool ELLs of any single language classification other than English, a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program is provided, which includes instruction in the home language, English, and English as a second language (ESL) for each language classification represented by 20 or more students. In attendance centers with 19 or fewer preschool ELLs of any single language classification other than English, a Transitional Program

of Instruction (TPI) is provided which includes ESL instruction and may include home language instruction or support.

**High quality teaching.** A 2009 observational evaluation of PFA by Erikson and SRI found CLASS scores were 5.6 for emotional support, 5.2 for classroom organization, and 3.2 for instructional support. The average ECERS-R scores were 4.4 with only 25 percent scoring 5 or better. Chicago was not included in the study, however. Given the omission of Chicago, the discrepancy between ECERS-R and CLASS scores, and that the data are somewhat old, the quality of the current program cannot be determined.

**Professional development.** Each PFA program must have staff development assessment procedures and ongoing professional development activities that demonstrate how the results of the assessment (e.g. ECERS, CLASS, and the PFA compliance checklist) were used to inform the program's staff development. Teachers are required to complete 120 clock hours per five years. Coaching is offered to teachers in PFA classrooms based on the monitoring report for that PFA program. However, coaching is not required by state policy.

**Child Assessments.** PFA requires the use of a research-based authentic child assessment system that aligns with the curriculum and documents child progress over time. The state provides a list of aligned assessments. In 2016-2017, 65% of PFA programs reported using Teaching Strategies GOLD; 25% Work Sampling System; and the remainder another assessment that was aligned with the IELDS. ExceleRate Illinois provides regional training opportunities, coaching support, and online resources for teachers on assessing children.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All PFA programs are required to participate in ExceleRate Illinois, the state's Quality Recognition and Improvement System. All programs have a rating that is renewed after each monitoring visit. In addition to the ECERS or CLASS, assessors use a PFA compliance checklist. Compliance reviews examine teacher certification, use of a research-based screening tool, research-based curriculum, kindergarten transition planning, community collaboration plan, and meeting requirements for serving homeless children and ELL students.

Based upon the reports, a program is required to develop a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQIP) that identifies action steps, resources to be utilized, targeted professional development, and a timeline for improvements. In each subsequent year until the program is monitored again, they are required to submit an annual update of progress on their CQIP.

The last external evaluation of PFA was conducted by the Erikson Institute (2012) and is described in the high-quality teaching section of this scan.

**Integrated System.** All PFA programs are required to participate in ExceleRate Illinois, the state's QRIS. ExceleRate Illinois identifies programs standards in four domains: Teaching and Learning, Family and Community Engagement, Leadership and Management and Qualifications and Continuing Education. These four domains are aligned with the state's IELDS, PFA selected curricula, and child formative assessments.

## Indiana

Indiana successfully launched two state-funded preschool pilot programs with the goal of expanding enrollment of low-income 4-year-old children in high-quality early childhood education. The On My Way Pre-K program was signed into law in 2014 to provide grants to eligible low-income 4-year-old children for qualified early education services. The pilot operated across four counties in 2014-2015. The 2015-2016 school year marked the first full year of the On My Way Pre-K program, and in 2016-2017, the program operated in five counties. During the 2013 legislative session, the Indiana General Assembly enacted the Early Education Matching Grant (EEMG) through 2018. EEMG has now been consolidated with On My Way Pre-K.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	—	—	—	—	●	—	—	—	ND	○	●	○	—

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Former Gov. Pence supported the successful creation of the state’s first pre-K program. Once Gov. Pence became Vice-President, current Gov. Eric Holcomb (R) stepped in and has continued support of the program and its expansion. In 2017, the Indiana General Assembly passed new legislation to expand access to preschool to an additional 15 counties by the 2018-2019 school year. The new legislation also makes previously approved EEMG sites eligible to accept On My Way Pre-K grants, adding another eight individual sites in additional counties to the 2018-2019 expansion. Under the new legislation, all pre-K providers must be eligible to accept CCDF funding, providing families with a guaranteed 53-week subsidy period and continuity of care for their child if needed before and after kindergarten if the family remains eligible at reauthorization. In 2016-2017, Indiana pre-K programs served 1,792 children, a 13% increase from the previous year. Even with this expansion, Indiana served 2% of its 4-year-old population in 2016-2017.

Private philanthropy has been directly supporting On May Way Pre-K grants with the required matching funds including Early Learning Indiana and United Way of Central Indiana (UWCI). The Lilly Endowment has partnered with other advocates on such issues as increased accessibility and affordability of high-quality early childhood education for Indiana residents.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** On My Way Pre-K is administered through the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL) which is a division of the Office of the Secretary of Family Social Services Administration (FSSA). OECOSL runs PTQ, CCDF, and child care licensing. Statute requires Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) involvement in the administration of On My Way Pre-

K. Additionally, prior to implementation, the State Board of Education must review and comment on the provision of the program.

OECOSL employs more than 65 people, five work on PTQ, and another two on pre-K. There are also financial analysts and other staff who indirectly support Pre-K efforts. In addition, two IDOE staff are assigned to pre-K. IDOE has conducted training and TA sessions for pre-K providers, including public schools, on understanding the ways to access Title 1 and On My Way Pre-K funds to support more children or to extend program hours. IDOE updated its preschool guidance which includes possible scenarios of blending funds, such as braiding funds within the same schools, providing professional development or facility updates, increasing the quality of the program, etc.

**Education and compensation.** Educational requirements are based on requirements of the QRIS Levels 3 and 4. Requirements for Level 3 are that 50 percent of staff has a CDA, equivalent, or higher. Level 4 requires accreditation and programs must meet the education or degree requirements of an approved accrediting body. There are no salary parity policies for pre-K teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Pre-K classrooms have a maximum class size of 24 and a staff-child ratio of 1:12.

**Learning time.** Families have a choice of full-day or part-day (4 hours), as well as calendar-year or school-year. Programs can set their schedules individually and may choose to operate on either a school- or calendar-year schedule, as long as the total operating hours and days reaches the minimum required amount of program hours per year (450) and days per year (114). For a program to meet the minimum requirements for both hours and days per year, the program would need to run at least four hours per day. In 2016-2017, 19% of children attended a part-day program.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Indiana's Early Learning Foundations (Indiana Foundations) were last revised in 2015. The state infant and toddler standards are included in the Indiana Foundations which are aligned with K-12 standards. Programs receive technical support and coaching from the QRIS coaches to support the Indiana Foundations.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Indiana offers guidance on selecting curricula aligned with Indiana Foundations but there is not a list of approved or recommended pre-K curricula and there is not a system to ensure curricula are being implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** There are children enrolled with On My Way Pre-K funding that receive services with an IEP/IFSP but this data is not collected. Inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** In 2016-2017, 14.7% of preschool students were DLLs. Indiana does not have specific policies to regulate services for preschool DLLs. In order to meet the language needs of DLLs, Indiana has adopted the WIDA Early English Language Development Standards (E-ELD).

**High quality teaching.** CLASS observations were not available for review.

**Professional development.** Pre-K teachers are required to complete 20 clock hours of professional development per year. To support the content of the trainings, the Indiana Core Knowledge and



Competencies (CKC) (2016) identifies what professionals need to know and be able to do when working with infants, children, youth, and their families. It includes a professional development planning tool to help assess knowledge and skills and includes a planning tool for individualized professional development plans to be created. PTQ coaches are available to all pre-K programs on an as-needed basis. State Licensing Consultants are also available to programs to provide assistance. Programs, not individual teachers, are assigned to coaches, and there are not state requirements as to the number of programs assigned each coach. Coaches are employees of entities under contract with the state and caseloads are addressed within that scope of work.

**Child Assessments.** The required assessment for On My Way Pre-K, Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting of Kindergarten Readiness (ISTAR-KR), is aligned with the Indiana Foundations. ISTAR-KR measures skills in children from infancy to kindergarten. This web-based instrument is rated by teachers based on their ongoing observations of children engaged in typical daily routines and activities. It is available to all public schools in Indiana and to private early childhood education programs at no cost. Assessment results from ISTAR-KR can be used to determine which skills a child has mastered and to identify the skills a student needs to learn next. This assessment is required to be administered within 6 weeks of beginning and ending programs; but encouraged as needed throughout the year to inform practice. IDOE in collaboration with OECOSL has sponsored trainings on using ISTAR-KR as well as workshops on child assessments and individual lesson planning.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Purdue University annually conducts classroom observations using CLASS in classrooms that students who are part of the longitudinal study. Programs, teachers, and/or classrooms do not receive on-going feedback based on these structured observations of classroom quality; however, the state does receive these results. In addition to CLASS, Paths to QUALITY data are also collected. Purdue University is responsible for the reliability of their staff's CLASS observations; TCC Software Solutions is responsible for the reliability of Paths to QUALITY raters.

Purdue University has been contracted by OECOSL to conduct an evaluation of Indiana's On My Way Pre-K. This evaluation is designed to inform stakeholders on program quality and growth of children's skills, as well as address the effectiveness of the pre-K program in improving children's school readiness, children's early school performance, and parents' school engagement. Evaluators will also examine the impact of part-day vs. full-day and part-year vs. full-year programming on children's learning outcomes.

**Integrated System.** There are elements of Indiana's system that are aligned. The Indiana Foundations are aligned with the ISTAR-KR assessment tool, which are integrated into the PTQ. Even though participating in PTQ is required, private schools can meet eligibility by being accredited by one of IDOE's regionally or nationally approved accredited bodies. However, some of the essential elements are determined at the program level, including curriculum and participation in the coaching program.

## Iowa

Iowa has two state-funded pre-K programs: Shared Visions and the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP). The Shared Visions program has provided services to 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds since 1989 through competitive grants to public schools, licensed non-profit child care centers, other public non-profit agencies, and Head Start. In 2007, Iowa began the SWVPP to increase 4-year-olds' access to pre-K. Funding for SWVPP is based on a school funding formula in which 4-year-olds are funded at 50% of the K–12 student aid amount.

An important difference between the two state-funded pre-K programs concerns child eligibility. Shared Visions is a targeted program where at least 80% of children are required to meet income eligibility guidelines (family income at or below 130% FPL). Children can also qualify for the program based on other risk factors but may be required to pay a fee based on a sliding scale. Services within this program are provided in 31 locations (through 32 grants); less than 7% of school districts. In addition, services are provided in 34 other community-based locations, representing 16 organizations (through 35 grants). In contrast, SWVPP is available in 97% of school districts and all children in the state who turn four by September 15 are eligible to attend.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Shared Visions

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
–	–	–	●	●	–	●	○	●	○	ND	○	●	–	○

#### Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
–	–	○	●	●	–	●	○	●	○	ND	○	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met – Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** At the beginning of former Gov. Terry E. Branstad (R)'s tenure in 1998, there was a move to change UPK to be more needs-based or targeted. Current Gov. Kim Reynolds (R) is campaigning for a second term, and pre-K has not been included in her platform. In 2018-2019, the pre-K budget was cut by an estimated \$5 million.

In 2016-2017 Iowa enrolled 26,310 children, serving almost 63% of the state's 4-year-old population and 3% of 3-year-olds. Iowa's pre-K programs saw a 2.5% increase in state funding and an increase of \$57

per child adjusted for inflation in 2016-2017. For Shared Visions, the 2016-2017 school year was the second year of a five-year competitive grant cycle and due to budget constraints in the fourth quarter services were reduced. The state's pre-K spending for both programs ranks 36<sup>th</sup> out of 43 states (plus D.C. and Guam) that offer pre-K.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Iowa State Department of Education (DOE) oversees Shared Visions and SVPP within the Bureau of Educator Quality under the Division of Learning and Results. There are 2 FTEs responsible for Shared Visions and 1.6 FTEs for SWVPP in the DOE. In addition, other staff members support pre-K, but have other responsibilities, such as IDEA staff. A few years ago, there was a division reorganization and people within early childhood were dispersed into other bureaus or divisions within DOE, but they continue to do some pre-K work. Recently, a longstanding ECE state-leader retired; it is too early to evaluate current state leadership.

Area Education Agency 267 (AEA 267) is one of nine AEAs created in 1974 by the Iowa legislature to ensure equal educational opportunities for all children from birth through age 21. AEA 267 provides supports to educators and parents of children aged birth to 21 in the areas of quality instructional materials, curriculum planning, best practices in teaching and learning, safe and caring learning environment, appropriate educational opportunities for all learners, technology planning, professional learning, assessment, special education, and leadership development. Each of the Shared Vision grantees has a designated AEA contact person based on the program's location.

#### **Education and compensation.**

**Shared Visions:** Shared Visions lead teachers are required to have at least a BA degree if they are employed by public schools. Lead teachers employed by nonpublic settings follow NAEYC standards that require at least 75% to have a BA in ECE or a related field. The other teachers are required to have at least an AA degree in ECE or CD. There are no salary parity policies for Shared Vision teachers.

**SWVPP:** All SWVPP lead teachers must have at least a BA and an Iowa teaching license with an early childhood endorsement. SWVPP teachers who work in public schools have the same starting salary and for all years of service as K-3 teachers and the schedule is prorated for differences in length of work day or year. For those in nonpublic schools, only salary is prorated for differences in length of work day or year, there are no other salary parity policies.

#### **Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**Shared Visions:** The maximum class size for 4-year-olds is 20 and 3-year-olds is 18. The maximum staff to child ratio is 1:8 for all classrooms.

**SWVPP:** The maximum class size for 4-year-olds is 20, with a teacher to student ratio of 1:10. For 3-year-olds the class size maximum is 18 with a ratio of 1:9. Mixed-age classrooms with 3- and 4-year-olds must not exceed a maximum group size of 20; but may be lower if the majority of class has 3-year-olds.

**Learning time.** Children may attend both Shared Visions and SWVPP for different portions of the day or different days of the week, allowing for a full- or extended-day; however, participation in a program may not be funded by both sources at the same time as supplanting of funds is not allowed.

**Shared Visions:** The operating schedules for Shared Visions is determined locally and is expected to be based on community need as reflected in the application process. There is no minimum number of hours per day or days per week required.

**SWVPP:** SWVPP classrooms are required to operate a minimum of 10 hours per week; with the average being about 14 hours per week. Programs may collaborate with Head Start, other preschool programs, or child care programs to offer full-day services.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Iowa Early Learning Standards (IA ELS) are currently under revision. The last version (2012) was comprehensive, aligned with the state's K-3 standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. The state provides professional development opportunities to support use of IA ELS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The state offers guidance on criteria for selecting evidence-based curriculum models for both Shared Visions and SWVPP. Curriculum is locally determined but must be research- or evidence-based and must align with the IA ELS. Programs may use grant funds to support curriculum implementation or training. During 2016-2017, materials were made available and state-sponsored training sessions were offered on curriculum. Other curricula trainings are determined locally, but may be provided by the local program, intermediary agencies (e.g., Area Education Agencies (AEAs)), and/or vendors. AEAs provide additional support for curriculum adoption, implementation, and guidance for implementing with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** For both programs, the proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to 50%. In addition, preschool teachers are required to possess specific qualifications for working with children with special needs or there needs to be a teacher who is properly licensed and endorsed who is responsible for special education services in collaboration with the general education teacher.

**Shared Visions:** In 2016-2017, a total of 205 children enrolled in the Shared Visions Program (15% of all children enrolled) received Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services through an IEP. Of these, 127 already had an IEP when they enrolled in Shared Visions and 78 began receiving services through an IEP after enrollment.

**SWVPP:** In 2016-2017, 1,242 SWVPP children had an IEP; almost 5% of the total enrollment.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** For both of Iowa's programs, a home language survey is required to be administered at the beginning of the school year. Information about enrolled children's program and performance must be presented to families in their home languages. Programs are required to screen and assess all children in their home languages. The state allows the following program options to support DLLs: monolingual non-English classes; transitional bilingual programs; DLL immersion classes; summer language programs; and DLLs can be pulled out for ESL.

**Shared Visions:** The number of DLLs is not able to be reported.

**SWVPP:** In 2016-2017, less than 5% of SWVPP students were identified as DLLs.

**High quality teaching.** Statewide data on CLASS or ECERS are not available.

## **Professional development.**

**Shared Visions:** Shared Vision program standards require staff receive PD in curriculum, assessment, working with diverse families, child development, and working with children with special needs, in addition to health, safety and emergency procedures. Staff members with a teaching license must renew their license every five years, including six credit hours of PD. Nonpublic settings which must be licensed by DHS require six clock hours of PD annually. Program standards require that teaching staff receive ongoing reflection and feedback from their supervisors.

For Shared Vision programs that operate in public schools, mentoring, coaching, and professional development must be included in a program's PD plan, but it is locally developed.

**SWVPP:** State policy requires PD but does not specify hours. Districts are required to make PD available to non-district SWVPP teachers in the same manner it is offered to district personnel. Guidance recommends that SWVPP teachers have 15 clock hours of PD each year. Each staff member is expected to have an individualized PD plan that is used to inform continuous PD. The content of the PD is mandated and must include: curriculum, assessment, working with diverse families, child development, and working with children with special needs per requirements of program standards.

Program standards state that mentoring, coaching, and professional development must be included in a program's professional development plan when SWVPP operates in public schools, but it is locally developed.

**Child Assessments.** The Child Development Coordinating Council (state advisory board) policy and Iowa Code 279.60 require Shared Visions and SWVPP grantees to record Teaching Strategies GOLD data during three checkpoints in the fall, winter and spring. However, the assessment is administered on an ongoing basis over the course of the year. The assessment has been aligned with IA ELDS. Conducting child assessments is one of the required content areas of PD.

**Data-driven decision-making.** As part of the state longitudinal data system, all children enrolled in both Shared Visions and SWVPP receive a unique state identification number. Beginning in 2016-2017, the Differentiated Accountability Model was scaled statewide to offer universal, supplemental, or intensive student supports as needed.

**Shared Visions:** Program standards, which are mandated by state law, require teaching staff to receive ongoing reflection and feedback from their supervisors. Additionally, programs receive visits at least annually, but as needed, by AEA staff. Classroom assessment instruments are selected, and the reliability and validity of assessors is supported and monitored at the local level, with many programs reporting use of ECERS and CLASS. The state does not receive the results of the observations/visits. The state does, however, review and approve the annual renewal application submitted by state consultants to verify Iowa law and program requirements are being met through implementation of the submitted service plan.

Shared Visions has undergone formal evaluations; the most recent ones reviewed teachers' PD and implementation of Teaching Strategies GOLD.

**SWVPP:** All SWVPP classrooms are required to implement a set of program standards approved by the Iowa Department of Education: Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, NAEYC

Accreditation Standards and Criteria, or the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Onsite monitoring by trained assessors and AEA visits include review of program records and classroom observations using a tool that reviews the degree to which the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards and Criteria are implemented. Following visits, the DOE cross checks data with student reporting and teacher licensure. Data collected are used by the state to provide program staff with technical assistance and/or mentoring; identify programs for corrective action or sanctions; and to identify needs that will guide teacher training or professional development.

SWVPP is included in the Annual Condition of Education Report that provides statewide data for pre-K through grade 12. For SWVPP the information reported is student demographic data.

**Integrated System.** Components of Iowa's system that are integrated include the IA ELDS and the use of a common child assessment that has adequate PD support for its use; however, there is no clear coordination with curriculum implementation. Even though coaching is expected to occur in both programs, the state does not have a system to ensure its adequacy and quality. There are different policies between the two pre-K programs, specifically around the collection and use of structured classroom observation data.

## Kansas

Kansas has two state-funded preschool programs, the Kansas State Prekindergarten Program (KSPP) established in 1998, and the Kansas Preschool Program (KPP), which started in the 2006-2007 school year. KSPP is available to 4-year-olds who meet one of eight state-determined risk factors: eligibility for free lunch (130% FPL), academic or developmental delay based upon validated assessments, English Language Learner status, migrant status, a parent lacking a high school diploma or GED, having a single parent, having a teen parent, or having a referral from the Department for Children and Families agency. KPP requires that at least 50% of children enrolled must meet either one of the program risk factors listed above or one of the alternate risk factors; alternate factors include being referred by an early childhood organization, qualifying for reduced price lunch (185% percent FPL), or having a parent on active military duty. The other half must be eligible according to standards set by local programs. KSPP is the larger preschool program, enrolling 6,984 students in 2016-2017, while the KPP enrolled 1,027 children.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Kansas Preschool Program (KPP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
–	○	–	●	●	–	●	–	–	●	ND	–	●	–	–

#### Kansas State Pre-Kindergarten Program (KSPP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
–	○	–	–	●	–	●	–	–	●	ND	–	–	–	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Sam Brownback (R) who assumed office in 2011 and is in his final term, has supported full-day kindergarten but has been less supportive of pre-K efforts. Kansas has experienced some budget challenges brought on by eliminating business taxes and cutting taxes across the board, resulting in funding cuts (\$13 million) to the Children’s Initiative Fund (CIF). CIF is funded by money from the tobacco settlement. In 2016, Gov. Brownback proposed using the entire CIF to backfill budget shortfalls, but was stopped by the legislature with advocacy efforts led by the Kansas Action for Children.

In 2016-2017, state pre-K spending was \$17.5 million, a five percent decrease (almost \$1 million) from the previous year. Per-child spending in Kansas was \$2,195, ranking it 43<sup>rd</sup> out of the 43 states plus DC and Guam offering state-funded pre-K. Kansas pre-K enrollment peaked in 2009-2010 (23% of the population) and then fell and has remained relatively flat, enrolling more than 8,000 children in the two programs, 20% of the state's 4-year-old population.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Division of Learning Services housed in Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), has four "teams," including the Early Childhood, Special Education and Title Services (ECEST). ECEST is charged with providing effective, evidence-based technical assistance to districts and schools across the state, serving students from early childhood through secondary school. Members of the Early Childhood team have responsibilities including coordinating the many early childhood programs, including pre-K, located in KSDE, providing Technical Assistance to early childhood personnel in programs across the state, and participating in meetings, coordinating councils, and conferences that occur across Kansas. Early childhood is defined as the continuum of birth to age eight (3<sup>rd</sup> grade). One FTE is assigned to KPP and one FTE to KSPP.

**Education and compensation.** For both programs, Kansas requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA and ECE specialization, however Kansas pre-K teachers are not guaranteed salary parity with K-3 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**KPP:** Maximum class size is 20 with a teacher to student ratio of 1:10.

**KSPP:** Maximum class size is 25. For classes with 21 to 25 students, a third teacher must be added; the teacher to student ratio maximum allowed is 1:10.

**Learning time.** Both pre-K programs must provide 465 hours per year of education. The actual schedule is determined at the local level, with most programs operating approximately three hours per day, five days per week, but some programs operate four days per week.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Kansas Early Learning Standards (ELS) were last revised in 2013, are comprehensive and aligned with the state's K-12 College and Career Ready Standards. The state provides professional development opportunities and additional resources to support use of the ELS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.**

**KPP:** Selection of curriculum is a local decision in KS Preschool, but the KSDE provides supporting materials and TA for aligning curriculum according to the standards. The state requires programs to establish a system to ensure that curricula are being implemented with fidelity.

**KSPP:** The Early Childhood Special Education program has a state approved/recommended curriculum list for use in KSPP and provides curriculum TA support and additional funding to support implementation. There is not a system to ensure that curricula are implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** Children who receive special education services may attend state preschool, but are not counted in state preschool enrollment. The state does not have policies to support children with special needed in inclusion classrooms in either program.



**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The number of DLLs enrolled in pre-K programs is unknown. Kansas requires that there is an approved plan for supporting DLLs and extra funding is allocated. Bilingual instruction; monolingual non-English classes; transitional bilingual programs; DLL immersion classes; summer language programs; and having DLLs pulled out for ESL are program options to support DLLs. The quality of bilingual instruction is monitored. Children are required to be screened and assessed in their home languages. To support families, recruitment, enrollment, outreach, and communication with the family about the program or child is done in home languages.

**High-quality teaching.** CLASS and ECERS observations of pre-K classrooms were not available for review.

**Professional development.** All pre-K teachers are required to complete 15 clock hours of PD per year.

*KPP:* The state does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to KPP teachers.

*KSPP:* New teachers are required to participate in ongoing classroom-embedded support.

**Child Assessments.**

*KPP:* In KS Preschool, the Kansas Early Learning Inventory for Fours (KELI-4) is administered two times per year; MyIGDI (Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs)) is administered three times per year. Data are used to adjust curricula, to track child and program level outcomes over time, and to provide a measure of kindergarten readiness. KSDE has created an online SANDBOX training website with lessons about how to use the Foundations for School Success which includes training on KELI-4 and MyIGDI.

*KSPP:* Policy provides an approved list of child assessments aligned with the Kansas ELS on the Foundations for School Success, a website that provides resources to use assessments. It is not clear if there are any requirements to conduct specific child assignments.

**Data-driven decision-making.**

*KPP:* Low performing and randomly selected classroom are observed using the Classroom Practices Survey, one time per year. The state does not receive the results of the observations. A 2016 external evaluation was conducted to measure impact/child outcomes.

*KSPP:* All classrooms are observed using the Classroom Practices Survey. It is unclear if the state receives the results of the observations and the frequency in which they are collected. The state does not collect information for monitoring purposes. An external evaluation of KSPP is currently being planned.

**Integrated System.** The state establishes a broad framework for programmatic requirements, but specific policies related to implementation (curriculum selection, PD content, coaching, analysis of structured classroom observations) are set at the local level, thus making it difficult to ensure an integrated system.

## Kentucky

In 1990, the Kentucky state legislature passed the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) to address unconstitutional inequities in schools, as identified by the Kentucky Supreme Court. As part of KERA, the Kentucky legislature created the Kentucky Preschool Program (KPP) – a preschool program targeted to 4-year-olds from families with incomes at or below 160% of the federal poverty level (FPL), as well as 3- and 4-year-olds with developmental delays and disabilities, regardless of income.

Each of Kentucky’s 173 school districts offered KPP services in 2016-2017. School districts may subcontract with private child care centers, Head Start programs, and special education providers to offer preschool services.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	○	●	●	–	●	○	●	—	ND	○	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Beshear’s term expired in January 2016 and he was replaced by Matt Bevin (R). During his campaign for governor, Gov. Bevin questioned the state’s participation in federal preschool programs, citing a federal study showing the benefits were inconsequential once a child got beyond third grade, yet he is also quoted as saying “early childhood education is critical.”

Pre-K support from the legislature has been solid over time. In 2016, an additional \$19M was allocated to the pre-K program and the income eligibility for KPP was raised from 150% to 160% of poverty with one estimate that 5,000 more children will be served. Others in the legislature have called for raising the limit to 175% FPL. HB303 (2016) created a grant program to incentivize cooperative public/private partnerships between public school districts and child care providers to develop full-day, high-quality programs for at-risk children. In 2016-2017, 23 planning grants were awarded for a total of \$531,962 and 46 implementation grants for a total of \$5,980,861.

In 2016-2017, Kentucky enrolled 19,435 children, almost 26% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 9.5% of 3-year-olds. State spending decreased by 2% in 2016-2017, reducing state per-child spending to \$4,715. However, when combined with all reported pre-K spending, that amount increases to \$8,083 per child, ranking the state 9<sup>th</sup> out of 43 states including DC and Guam.

There are many supporters throughout the state, notably the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence. Prichard’s Strong Start KY advocates for high-quality pre-K available for every Kentucky child.

The Kentucky Education Action Team (KEAT), a coalition of seven of Kentucky's education advocacy organizations also provides an active pre-K presence.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), Office of Teaching and Learning, Division of Program Standards, School Readiness Branch provides leadership for early education. The School Readiness Branch Manager leads KDE's early learning strategy work, including designing a strategy to increase the number of children entering public school kindergarten ready and progress to proficiency in math and reading by end of third grade. There have been some recent leadership changes within the School Readiness Branch. Six FTEs are assigned to the administration of KPP. In addition to KDE, there is a Governor's Office of Early Childhood. The office oversees The KIDS NOW initiative which is funded with 25% of Kentucky's Tobacco Settlement Funds. The University of Kentucky provides leadership to P-20 educators, especially in its Educational Leadership Studies program.

**Education and compensation.** Kentucky requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus an interdisciplinary early childhood education certification. There is an exception for lead teachers hired prior to 2004-2005, who can hold a CDA or an AA in child development. These teachers are allowed to remain in their current positions but may not transfer to other districts. Lead teachers in public schools are paid on par with district salary schedules, but there is no such requirement for lead teachers in nonpublic schools.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Kentucky has a maximum class size of 20 for 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** KPP is required to serve children for at least 2.5 hours per day. In 2016-2017, there were 74 full-day programs, 79 half-day programs, 18 programs offering a full-day and half-day schedule, and two programs delegating services to Head Start. Statewide, through these programs, there were 973 half-day sessions and 624 full-day sessions offered.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Kentucky Early Childhood Standards (KYECS) were first developed in 2003. The comprehensive KYECS for Birth-3 and 3-4 were revised in 2009 and 2013 by a team of interdisciplinary early childhood educators. The KYECS are aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, the K-3 state standards, and the state's college and career ready standards for the early grades. State policy provides an approved list of child assessments aligned with the KYECS. In 2011, efforts began to reinforce district capacity to understand and implement KYECS and support school readiness. Funding for these efforts were supported by the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant. In addition to resources, the Early Learning Leadership Networks (ELLNs) provide leadership, service and support to school districts with implementation of assessments and standards, focusing on math, English Language Arts, and science standards.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Decisions about curricula are made locally by school districts. Curricula must be developmentally appropriate, relevant to and reflective of students' needs, and integrate a variety of skills into activities that are targeted toward the interests of children; but are not required to be aligned with the KYECS. Support for making decisions about curriculum is provided to districts by KDE and Regional Training Centers (RTCs). KDE and the RTCs provide leadership, service and support to school districts to ensure curricula and assessments are implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2107, KPP enrolled 10,566 children with disabilities, 54% of all children enrolled in KPP. To support these children, KPP teachers are required to participate in professional development opportunities and coaching, and possess specific qualifications for working with children with special needs. In addition, inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children, and professional development is required for preschool teachers who serve children with special needs.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The preschool program does not have direct access to Title III funds and English Language services begin in kindergarten. However, schools may have access to the Title III coordinator or staff in the district for support and resources. According to preschool regulations, there must be staff and program resources reflecting the racial and ethnic population of the children in the program and child assessments used are expected to consider the cultural background of the children.

**High quality teaching.** ECERS-R observations conducted as part of the Preschool Program Review (P2R) process were not available for review. In addition, all KPP programs are required to participate in Kentucky All STARS, the state's QRIS, and maintain a level 3 or higher rating. However, only levels 4 and 5 requires a structured observation score of 4.0 and 5.0 respectively.

A formal, third-party longitudinal evaluation was completed by the University of Kentucky and University of Louisville in 2014 as part of a state-wide evaluation of the star rating system. The sample of KPP classrooms was quite small: 20 classrooms. Nevertheless, CLASS scores were in the low to mid-range for Instructional Support (M=2.55) and in the mid-range for Emotional Support (M=5.5) and Classroom Organization (M=4.94). A NIEER study of 47 classrooms several years ago found similar CLASS scores: for Instructional Support (M=3.1), Emotional Support (M=5.4), and Classroom Organization (M=4.7). Average ECERS-R in the NIEER study was 4.26. This essential element was not able to be determined due to the small sample size of both studies.

**Professional development.** Beyond the 24 clock hours of professional development teachers are required to receive annually, educators are offered training, on-site consultation, and other services through RTCs and ELLNs. Only teachers located in public schools are required to participate in coaching and have individualized professional development plans utilizing the Danielson Framework.

**Child Assessments.** Based on a list of recommendations in the Kentucky Continuous Assessment Guide for classroom/instructional assessments, KDE has approved five assessments for preschool programs: (1) Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System (AEPS); (2) Carolina Curriculum for Infants/Toddlers/Preschoolers with Special Needs; (3) Teaching Strategies GOLD; (4) COR Advantage; and, (5) Work Sampling System. Most programs have selected and implemented Teaching Strategies GOLD. Assessments are required to be completed, at minimum, twice a year, once in the fall (August 1 to October 1) and once in the spring (March 1 to May 1). Data from the observations are used to adjust curriculum and track child and program levels over time. As previously noted, KDE and RTCs provide leadership, service and support to school districts to ensure child assessments are implemented with fidelity.

**Data-driven decision-making.** The state evaluates local program quality through the Preschool Program Review (P2R) process. Every district receives a visit from a KDE site visit team once every five years, or a visit from the Regional Training Center (contractor with KDE) to conduct an ECERS-R observation. Additionally, seven to ten school districts are randomly selected to participate in a Consolidated

Monitoring (CM) site visit. During this CM process each district receives a site visit from a KDE team that includes one or more preschool team members. After the CM visit, the district receives individual program reports (preschool, Title I, etc.), a consolidated monitoring report, and follow up technical assistance. The CM report includes collective strengths and concerns noted by individual program reviewers across the entire school district. In addition, all KPP programs are required to participate in Kentucky All STARS, the state's QRIS, and maintain a level 3 or higher rating. KPP teachers located in public schools participate in Kentucky's Teacher Professional Growth and Effectiveness System.

In November 2016, the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee approved OEA to study the state's preschool and kindergarten programs. The study was intended to analyze funding, enrollment, characteristics and outcomes of preschool and kindergarten programs at the state and district levels, including the number of districts that are implementing full day kindergarten. The study offered 15 recommendations for improvement, including further study to better meet the needs of Limited English Proficiency students and steps to comprehensively evaluate the preschool program once every five years beginning in 2020. Also, the study stated that free and reduced priced lunch (FRPL) students and students with an individualized education program (IEP) who enroll in preschool are more likely to test ready for kindergarten than their FRPL and IEP peers who do not enroll in preschool.

**Integrated System.** The state's ELDS are aligned with the required child assessments, however the curriculum that is implemented is not required to be aligned. ECERS observations are integrated into the P2P monitoring process, but this is only an option, not required by Kentucky All STARS. There are also differences in what is expected of teachers and programs that operate in public schools versus nonpublic settings.

On a positive note, the Kentucky Early Childhood Data System assists early childhood programs in reporting children's progress towards meeting the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards and the Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) Child Outcomes, while using recommended practices for the authentic assessment of young children. Given the high percentage of children with special needs in KPP, the integrated system is designed as a "universal design" model with application for all students across different programs.

## Louisiana

Louisiana operates three state-funded preschool programs as well as the federally funded Preschool Expansion Grant. Louisiana’s largest pre-K program, The Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program (LA 4) was established in 2001 and serves children in public schools, charter schools, child care centers, and one tribal school. Also established in 2001, the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development program (NSECD) supports high-quality pre-K for 4-year-olds in nonpublic schools or in child care. NSECD has the same eligibility and reimbursement as the LA 4 program. Programs operate in 14 parishes throughout the state, though all parishes have the opportunity to participate.

The 8(g) Student Enhancement Block Grant Program (LA 8(g)) was created to compensate for the loss of the Model Early Childhood Program when matching annual appropriations for that program ended. At that time, local school districts began using the 8(g) Block Grant Program to offer preschool programs to at-risk 4-year-olds. Enrollment priority is given to children from low-income families, but children also qualify for the program if they are screened and deemed “developmentally unprepared.”

In 2012, the Louisiana legislature passed the Early Childhood Education Act (Act 3) that mandated by 2015, all publicly funded early care and education programs be aligned and have higher quality standards. Therefore, in this scan, the three programs are ranked once. Any programmatic differences are noted.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	○	○	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. John Edwards (D) was elected in 2016 and seen as supportive of early learning. He was preceded by Gov. Bobby Jindal (R) who in his tenure implemented early childhood education reforms stating his plans to streamline the governance of early childhood programs and align the standards and regulations governing the pre-K programs were needed to better utilize resources and improve quality. Funding for pre-K had been relatively flat since 2010, spending was \$89.6 million in 2016-2017; a decrease of 1.3% (\$1.2 million, inflation adjusted) from the previous year.

The Legislature is supportive of early education reform efforts in general, including school choice and reforming pre-K specifically. There is significant political support for Louisiana’s Act 3 to improve both quality of and access to early childhood education. Bulletin 140: Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Network (2015) defines the implementation of Act 3, including how to move toward a unified early childhood care and education system. Questions have been raised about adequacy of funding to support many of the elements that Act 3 is expected to put in place.

Leadership also extends to business, philanthropy, and advocates. Foundations are actively involved in communities, including W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Stranahan Foundation, the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, and Bayou District Foundation.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Louisiana’s Department of Education (LDE)’s Office of Early Childhood (OEC) administers multiple early childhood programs in a restructured agency better designed to address cross-sector services, including the three state-funded pre-K programs, child care, and Head Start. Until recently, OEC was led by Jenna Conway (Asst. Supt.) who brought a strong business/systems background to the position. The office has restructured in recent years to address accountability and coordinated enrollment as required in Act 3. There are two FTEs across the LA 4 and NSECD programs; and five FTEs for LA 8(g).

Staffing capacity at OEC has been strengthened by the Child Care Development Fund administration becoming a part of the department’s work, and receipt of a federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) to increase OEC capacity.

On a local level, LEAs have stepped into leadership roles, serving as “lead agencies” for their local early childhood community networks. More than 90% of local networks are led by LEAs. Superintendents have become community leaders of early childhood (not just pre-K) and are dedicating district resources to partnering with Head Start and child care to improve teaching, coordinate enrollment, increase access and ultimately, improve child outcomes.

**Education and compensation.** Louisiana’s 3 pre-K programs require each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus an early learning credential. Teachers that work in public schools (LA 8 (g) and LA 4) have the same starting salary and are on the same salary schedule as K-3 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Louisiana has a maximum class size of 20; and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** The minimum number of operation hours using state funds is six per day. Many programs offer before- and after-school programs, but the state does not track or subsidize this activity.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved the new Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards in April 2013. Some schools chose to implement immediately; full implementation occurred in the 2013-2014 school year. The ELDS are comprehensive and aligned with the state’s K-3 standards. To support the use of the ELDS, the state provides professional development opportunities; additional resources; and collaborative sessions are conducted several times a year to support programs in implementation of assessment, observations, and ELDS utilization.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** In Louisiana, all districts are able to purchase instructional materials that are best for their local communities. LDE provides guidance by reviewing instructional materials online and determining the degree of alignment with state content standards, resulting in assigning curricula to one of three tiers ranging from meeting all “non-negotiable criteria” as well as scoring the highest on all indicators of quality to “not representing quality.” On the Louisiana Believes website, LDE provides detailed guidance and materials. In order to ensure curricula are implemented

with fidelity, direct training or technical assistance is conducted by state and regional staff; a system of regular coaching which includes curriculum implementation is provided to programs; and funding is provided to conduct training and offer/identify other professional development opportunities at the local level.

**Support for students with special needs.** The state does not have specific policies to support children with special needs in inclusion classrooms in any of the three programs.

**LA 8(g):** The number of children with special needs in this program is not able to be reported.

**LA 4:** In 2016-2017, 4.4% of children in LA 4 had an identified special need.

**NSECD:** Children who receive special education services may attend state preschool classrooms, but are not counted in state preschool enrollment.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Louisiana is not able to report the number of DLLs in any of its pre-K programs nor does it have state policies to support DLLs in pre-K. School programs with large DLL populations perform screenings and assessments on a local level and address each child's needs individually.

**High quality teaching.** As a requirement of Act 3, all classrooms are observed annually using CLASS. Total average CLASS scores for 2016-2017 by domain were Instructional Support (3.68); Emotional Support (5.74); and Classroom Organization (5.53).

**Professional development.** Louisiana's pre-K teachers are required to receive a minimum of 18 hours of professional development annually. All teachers are required to participate in required ongoing classroom-embedded support. How often teachers receive coaching visits and the size of the coaches' case loads are determined locally.

**Child Assessments.** Providers are required to assess children using Teaching Strategies GOLD or they may submit a request to use an alternative assessment, which must be approved by the state. Children receive completed assessments in October, February, and May. The state provides TA and PD to support the implementation of Teaching Strategies GOLD.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Coordinated observation is the local process by which each community network ensures that each pre-K classroom receives two CLASS observations each school year. All observers must be reliable, and maintain inter-rater reliability and fidelity. The community network must conduct inter-rater reliability observation checks for 10% of all classrooms observed. Teachers, programs, and the state receive the results of the observations.

Information collected during monitoring processes/activities is used at the state and/or at the local level for program improvement.

Evaluations are conducted annually for districts by independent evaluators to measure the impact on student outcomes. In June 2013, the Cecil J. Picard Center for Child Development and Lifelong Learning conducted a longitudinal report entitled, Longitudinal Study: Longitudinal Impacts on Academic Achievement for Participants in Louisiana LA 4, NSECD, and 8(g) Early Childhood Programs.

**Integrated System.** The implementation of Act 3 created an integrated early system in Louisiana. There is a coordinated system to align the ELDS, curricula, child assessments and structured classroom



observations. The PD system supports this alignment, but could be enhanced by the coordination of the coaching system.

## Maine

Maine established its Two-Year Kindergarten initiative in 1983 by allocating resources to local districts through the school funding formula. State-funded programs for 4-year-olds have been separately defined as the Public Preschool Program (PPP) since 2007, and remain funded through the school funding formula, with distributions going directly to school districts. School administrative units (SAUs) have not been required to offer a public preschool program. However, legislation enacted in 2014 encouraged voluntary preschool throughout the state, increasing the number of public preschool programs to serve children at risk.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	○	●	●	–	●	○	–	●	ND	–	–	○	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** The last three Education Commissioners have been highly supportive of preschool in Maine, as shown by putting preschool program quality standards into regulations (Chapter 124), and expanding access. Several years ago, legislation was passed encouraging all districts to open a preschool classroom by 2017. PPP is funded through Maine’s school funding formula, with distributions of funds to 139 of the 258 school administrative units (SAUs); only 186 SAUs have kindergarten. Though not required, PPP funds are available to any SAU choosing to offer the program. The state allocated just over \$18.7 million for pre-K in 2016-2017, an increase of 6.7%. This does not include federal funds, such as the Preschool Development Grant (PDG), and local funds that were blended by school districts. Enrollment held steady in 2016-2017, as PPP served 5,440 children, approximately 39% of the state’s 4-year-old population.

Gov. Paul LePage (R) is in his second and final term. It is too early to determine if preschool will be on the agenda for the next Governor.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Maine Department of Education (Maine DOE) oversees PPP with 1.5 FTEs assigned to the program. PPP has experienced stable leadership from the state. Maine DOE and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) have worked hard in establishing relationships to create a mixed delivery system in which public schools can partner with local early childhood programs in order to maximize funding and meet community needs to serve any 4-year-old who would like to attend. Decisions to implement public preschool programs are made by SAUs, dependent upon local school board approval. Although the number of staff dedicated to the pre-k program is small, PPP is strongly supported by the DOE as shown by their participation in a CCSSO High Quality Preschool Network.

**Education and compensation.** Regardless of setting, all lead teachers are required to have a BA and an 081 Certification: Early Childhood Birth-5 from the Department of Education. PPP teachers who work in public schools have the same starting salary and salary schedule as K-3 for all years of service. Salary schedule is prorated for differences in length of work day or year for these teachers as well. Teachers in nonpublic schools do not have salary parity.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** PPP has a maximum class size of 16 and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:8.

**Learning time.** The number of hours and days per week a program operates is a local decision, however programs must operate a minimum of 10 hours per week to receive a per-pupil subsidy through the school funding formula.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Maine's Early Learning & Development Standards (MELDS) were last revised in 2014. They are comprehensive and aligned with the state's K-12 Guiding Principles. Maine DOE partnered with Maine Roads to Quality (Maine's Professional Development Network) to create and deliver training on the MELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Maine DOE offers guidance on selecting curriculum aligned with the MELDS. The state requires programs to establish a system to ensure that curricula are being implemented with fidelity. Other curriculum supports the state offers include training; supporting materials (such as manuals, videos, or websites); a list of state recommended (not required) curricula; and on-going technical assistance on curriculum implementation.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 9.3% of PPP students received special education services. The proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to 50%.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Almost 10% of PPP students are DLLs. Maine has policies to regulate services for preschool DLLs including requiring program administrators have specific training or qualifications related to working with preschool DLLs and their families. The state monitors the quality of bilingual instruction, programs must have an approved written plan for supporting DLLs, and additional funding is available to support DLLs. Recruitment, enrollment, and outreach efforts; communication with the family about the program or child; and screening and assessment is in the child's or family's home language. Additional DLL supports include permitting monolingual non-English classes; transitional bilingual programs; dual language immersion classes; and summer language programs.

**High quality teaching.** There are not any CLASS or ECERS observations of PPP that were able to be reviewed.

**Professional development.** All lead teachers must complete six credit hours of professional development every five years. State policy does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers. The use of coaches is a local decision.

**Child Assessments.** The use of formative assessments in PPP is part of Chapter 124 regulations. Child assessments are required to be research-based and aligned with the MELDS, but programs can choose the assessment. The assessments are expected to be used throughout the school year.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Per Chapter 124, Maine DOE is in the process of conducting CLASS observations in every public preschool classroom. These observations started in 2015-2016 and will continue until 2018-2019 at which point all schools will be on a 3-year observation cycle. CLASS data will be shared with the teacher and principal/director and a plan for training and technical assistance will be developed.

No external evaluation of the program has been done, although a case study of four high-quality programs was completed in 2015. The Maine Education Policy Research Institute is involved in an ongoing evaluation of Maine's programs.

**Integrated System.** As noted above, many elements of the system are now integrated with the Maine ELDS, as outlined in Chapter 124. However, most decisions are made at the local level including the choice of formative assessment, curriculum, and use of coaches, thus making it difficult to coordinate the system from the state level.

## Maryland

In 1980, Maryland created the Extended Elementary Education Program (EEEP), a pilot preschool program in Baltimore City and Prince George’s County. The program eventually expanded throughout the state and by 2002, served 25% of the state’s 4-year-olds. In 2002, finance reform legislation passed, requiring all local boards of education to offer pre-K in public schools to all economically underprivileged 4-year-olds by the 2007-2008 school year and the program became known as the Prekindergarten Program. Maryland has 25 early learning centers of distinction, known as Judy Centers (established in legislation in 2000). The Judy Centers work collaboratively with selected elementary schools to offer comprehensive year-round services for children from birth to age six. Judy Center Partnerships during the 2014-2015 school year provided enhanced, continuous learning opportunities to 15,205 young children and their families, including 6,070 children younger than 3 years old.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	○	●	●	—	●	○	●	—	ND	—	○	○	—

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Governor Larry Hogan (R) began his “Governor’s Young Readers” program in 2015 with every child from infancy to age five in Baltimore City eligible to enroll in a book-delivery program. Every month, each enrolled child will receive a new book, supported by the Family League of Baltimore. Other than this project, the Governor’s education priorities are focused on K-12 students. In 2017, the Maryland legislature passed HB 516 which required a workgroup formed to study and make recommendations to the Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence on expanding access for 4-year-olds. In February 2018, the Kirwan Commission, named after the former University of Maryland System Chancellor William E. “Brit” Kirwan, unveiled school funding legislation to provide more money for high-poverty schools and establish a mandate for universal pre-kindergarten. In April, five workgroups were formed, one addressing how to expand high-quality pre-K to all 4-year-olds and all 3-year-olds in low-income households.

In 2016-2017, Maryland enrolled 31,382 children. Even though all state school districts offer pre-K, only 37% of the state’s 4-year-old population was enrolled in 2016-2017. Funding for the Prekindergarten Program is based on the K-12 per pupil amount, prorated for the percent of children attending half- and full-day programs. In an effort to expand pre-K to children above 185% FPL, the state enacted the Prekindergarten Expansion Act (2014), adding an additional \$4.3 million per year to increase access to half-day and full-day public pre-K for 4-year-olds from families with household incomes at or below 300% FPL.

Maryland has been able to use several sources for pre-k funding including State Pre-K Expansion Grants (currently approximately \$4.3 million per year), and the federal Preschool Expansion Grants (approximately \$14.3 million per year). Along with these funding streams, other state funds, including state Head Start supplemental funding, put total pre-k spending at more than \$250 million in 2016-2017.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Division of Early Childhood Development (DECD) housed in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is responsible for early care and education in the state. The Division is comprised of the Office of Child Care, the Early Learning Branch and the Collaboration and Program Improvement Branch. The Early Learning Branch is responsible for pre-K and kindergarten policy and programs as well as the child assessment system, early childhood curriculum, and the early childhood alternative pathway preparation. Three FTEs are assigned to oversee the program at the state level. The Collaborative and Program Improvement Branch manages the Judy Centers and the Head Start State Collaborative project. Three FTEs are responsible for overseeing pre-K efforts. In the past few years there have been some leadership changes within DECD.

Maryland has 25 early learning centers of distinction, known as Judy Centers (established in legislation in 2000). The Judy Centers work collaboratively with selected elementary schools to offer comprehensive year-round services for children from birth to age six. Judy Center Partnerships during the 2014-2015 school year provided enhanced, continuous learning opportunities to 15,205 young children and their families, including 6,070 children younger than 3.

**Education and compensation.** Each pre-K classroom has a lead teacher with a BA plus an early learning credential. Maryland also requires salary parity for pre-K teachers in public schools. Teachers in private programs funded through the expansion legislation or Judy Centers are not required to have the same salary as public school pre-K programs.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** State policy stipulates an average of 20 students per classroom. Exceptions may occur where individual classrooms exceed this number, provided an overall program average of 20 is maintained. In rare cases, if a classroom goes over 20, additional staff are added, thus maintaining the ratio requirement of 1:10.

**Learning time.** Children attend the Prekindergarten Program for a minimum of 2.5 hours per day. Programs operate five days per week as a full school-day program or four days per week as a part-day program with the fifth day used for home visits and teacher planning. In 2016-2017, 43% of preschool children were enrolled in full-day programs.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Supporting Every Young Learner: Maryland's Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy (2015) are Maryland's ELDS. They are comprehensive and aligned with the state's K-3 and college- and career-ready standards. The state provides professional development opportunities and additional resources to programs to support the use of the ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Maryland recommends curricula for all pre-K programs; but only requires adoption of specific curricula for programs at levels 4 or 5 in the QRIS system, including those with PDG funding. Currently there are eight options on the approved list. The state provides sponsored training, supporting materials (manuals, videos, websites, etc.), on-going technical assistance, and funding to support curriculum implementation. DECD is currently working with University of

Maryland on developing a curriculum aligned with the state's ELDS. Training for implementation of the curriculum and other supports will be available to all pre-K programs.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 16.5% of pre-K students received special education services. Professional development is required for preschool teachers who serve children with special needs and programs are required to follow the Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) best practices for working with young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays or disabilities.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Maryland is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in pre-K programs nor does it have specific policies to regulate services to support this population. Services for Dual or English Language Learners are locally determined.

**High quality teaching.** ECERS and CLASS assessments were not available for review.

**Professional development.** Pre-K teachers are expected to complete six credit hours of professional development every five years. State policy does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers. For the programs that participate in QRIS, PD and targeted technical assistance, both online and face-to-face, is available.

**Child Assessments.** Pre-K child assessments are required to be aligned with the state's ELDS, but programs can choose the assessment. The state developed the Early Learning Assessment, a formative observation tool, which is aligned with the kindergarten readiness assessment. The state provides training on the tool and encourages its use.

**Data-driven decision-making.** PDG funded classrooms are observed annually using a monitoring tool that combines components of ECERS and CLASS. Non-PDG-funded classes are also monitored annually; but use either the CLASS or a locally developed observation tool. In order to ensure the validity of the assessments, qualified non-classroom staff conducts periodic observational assessments to verify the reliability of the assessors. Both the programs and state receive the results of the observations. All prekindergarten programs that receive PDG funds are required to participate in EXCEL, the state's QRIS. Although not required, other pre-K programs are encouraged to participate in EXCEL.

The University of Maryland is currently conducting an external evaluation on pre-K expansion for the state PDG grant.

**Integrated System.** There are components that are aligned within Maryland's prekindergarten system including the new child assessment, curriculum and training that is being created, and the state's ELDS. However, there is not a policy that requires the implementation of these elements, therefore making it difficult for the state to integrate the system.

## Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) was established in 2005 to improve quality, affordability, and access to preschool education services. The same year EEC was created, the state started its Universal Pre-kindergarten (UPK) initiative, which serves children beginning at age 2 years, 9 months, until they arrive at the locally determined kindergarten eligibility age. Public schools, private child care centers, Head Start programs, family child care, and faith-based centers are eligible for UPK grants if they offer full-day, full-year services. UPK is usually a competitive grant program, though renewal grants had been used in recent years during funding constraints.

Massachusetts also offers the Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments (IPLE) Grant, referred to as the Grant 391 program. The IPLE Grant is designed to support inclusive preschool learning environments serving preschool-age children with and without disabilities in high-quality, inclusive early education and care settings. This program has funded typically developing preschool-age children, since 1985. There is no income qualification for enrollment in this program.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

### Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	—	●	●	●	●	○	○	—	ND	—	●	●	○

### Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments (IPLE)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	—	●	●	—	●	○	●	—	ND	—	—	○	—

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** State funding and enrollment for pre-K has been relatively low and without notable increases for many years including an enrollment decrease in 2016-2017. In 2016-2017, Massachusetts served 12,657 children, 8% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 5% of 3-year-olds in its two state-funded pre-K programs. In 2014, Massachusetts was awarded a federal Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG) which has allowed the state to work with five communities, Boston, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, and Springfield, to build partnerships and create 753 new state-funded prekindergarten openings in 2016-2017. The state has also funded and awarded preschool planning and expansion grants that supported 13 communities in the development of a strategic plan for expanded preschool based on the PEG model. LEAs and local



community partners jointly developed plans to address the communities' capacity to expand access to high-quality preschool, including identifying potential funding models.

In 2015, early childhood education advocates were disappointed when Gov. Charlie Baker (R) did not support attempts to serve the estimated 17,000 children on the pre-K waiting list. Later that year, he vetoed a \$5 million reduction in funds for early childhood programs, as well as a \$17.6 million reduction for full-day kindergarten grants. Gov. Baker's FY 2017 budget includes a new Quality Improvement line item in the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) budget which would draw on funds transferred from existing line items including UPK, Early Childhood Mental Health, Services for Infants and Parents, Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative, and EEC administration.

Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh (D) is seen as very supportive of pre-K efforts. During his 2013 campaign for mayor, he called for universal pre-K and has since written opinion pieces and spoken nationally about Boston's pre-K program. Strategies for Children and other local advocacy groups and business/community leaders have been very vocal and instrumental in getting state budget line items added.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** EEC is one of three agencies within the Executive Office of Education; the other two are the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Higher Education. The Executive Office of Education is one of eight Executive Offices under Gov. Baker. EEC is the lead agency for all early education and care services in Massachusetts including UPK, IPLE, and QRIS efforts. Local universities have been active in early childhood issues, influencing state policies and standards. One FTE is assigned to IPLE and one to UPK.

#### **Education and compensation.**

*UPK:* Only teachers in public schools are required to have a BA and early childhood certification/licensure. Lead teachers in nonpublic schools are required to have certification that requires three credits in Child Development plus nine credits in three different categories of study within Early Childhood Education. Teachers are also required to have prior experience, the amount of which varies based on their other qualifications. All UPK programs are required to be, at a minimum, Level 3 in QRIS. For Level 3 programs, 75% of classrooms must have an educator with a BA. For Level 4 programs, 100% of classrooms must have an educator with a BA. There are no salary parity policies for UPK teachers in public or nonpublic schools.

*IPLE:* Starting in 2016-2017, all lead teachers are required to have a BA and early childhood certification/licensure. Teachers are also required to have prior experience, the amount of which varies based on other qualifications and type of degree. There are no salary parity policies for IPLE teachers in public or nonpublic schools.

#### **Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

*UPK:* UPK requires a 1:7 to 1:10 ratio for 3- and 4-year-olds; with a maximum class size of 20.

*IPLE:* IPLE requires a 1:6 to 1:10 ratio and a maximum class size is 20. When the IPLE-funded session/classroom has six or seven children with disabilities, the total class size may not exceed 15 children.

**Learning time.**

*UPK:* The hours per day and operating schedule for UPK vary by type of program and setting. Programs can operate either a school-year or full-year schedule. UPK programs are required to offer or provide access to full-day, full-year services; however not all the hours are paid for with UPK dollars. The UPK Grant prorates the grant award amounts based on a UPK program providing less than full-day, full-year services. In 2016-2017, only 2% of programs operated a part-day schedule.

*IPLE:* Multiple operating schedules are available through IPLE preschool programs. Schedules are designed and determined locally to address local need, support parent choice, and provide educational services as outlined in a child's IEP. The majority of the IPLE preschool programs follow the public school calendar year. On average, programs operate 39 weeks of a calendar year (range 32 to 52 weeks); for a required minimum of two hours per day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Guidelines of Preschool Learning Experiences; Early English Language Learner Standards: Massachusetts Guidelines; Pre-K Science and Technology/Engineering Standards; and Pre-School and Kindergarten Standards in the Domains of Social-Emotional Development and Approaches to Play and Learning make up Massachusetts' early learning and development standards. They were revised in 2015 and are aligned with the state's infant/toddler standards and K-3 standards.

Both programs have access to additional support to use the ELDS, including detailed guidance and materials developed by the state made available to local providers; direct training or technical assistance by state or regional staff and vendors paid by the state; and a system of regular coaching for teachers. There are also state grants to local agencies or providers for training and other professional development: the Educator Provider Support (EPS) Grantees, the Assessment Grantee and the QRIS Measurement Tools Grantee.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** EEC's EPS Grantees provide statewide professional development and coaching to both UPK and IPLE programs on how to implement the curriculum in the classrooms. A priority of this state-funded grant program is to provide professional development opportunities that align with EEC's Core Competencies, QRIS, and the early learning standards and guidelines. EEC provides these supports to non-public school programs in the state. The majority of public school supports for preschool curriculum decision-making and implementation are determined at the local level. There is no system to ensure that curricula in either IPLE or UPK are implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.**

*UPK:* In 2016-2017, almost 15% of UPK children were identified as having special needs. EEC Licensing Regulations require that 10% of educator's annual professional development time is focused on children who have special needs.

*IPLE:* The IPLE Grant is designed to support preschool learning environments serving preschool-aged children with and without disabilities in high-quality, inclusive early education, and care settings. In 2016-2017, 35% of children had an IEP; IPLE requires that at least 15% of the children enrolled in each IPLE-funded session must have IEP for the session to be considered an inclusive

preschool learning environment. The number of children with an IEP in each classroom is limited to seven; and the ratio of students (and class size) is reduced when there are more than five children with IEPs in a class. IPLE teachers are required to possess specific qualifications for working with children with special needs in addition to the EEC Licensing Regulations requirement that 10% of educator's annual professional development time is focused on children who have special needs.

#### **Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).**

*UPK:* Bilingual instruction is permitted in UPK and recruitment, enrollment, outreach information, and communication with the family is provided in the home language. The state is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in UPK.

*IPLE:* The state does not regulate policies for DLLs in IPLE. In 2016-2017, almost 15% of IPLE students were designated as DLLs.

#### **High quality teaching.**

*UPK:* CLASS, ECERS, and/or Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale assessments are collected as part of the QRIS system, however the average program scores are not reported publicly. But in order to be at the required level 3 in the QRIS system, a program must have a CLASS score of 3 or higher on Positive Climate and Teacher Sensitivity, and a score of 3 or lower on Negative Climate; or an ECERS score of 4.5 or higher (subscales of 3.0 or 4.0, dependent on the subscale).

In 2009, Abt Associates evaluated the UPK implementation and collected CLASS scores during 2008-2009. Average CLASS scores for the UPK classrooms observed were 5.63 in Emotional Support, 5.00 in Classroom Organization, and 2.54 in Instructional Support.

*IPLE:* ECERS or CLASS scores were not able to be reviewed.

#### **Professional development.**

*UPK:* Teachers in public schools are required to complete 150 clock hours of PD every five years; those in nonpublic schools must complete 20 clock hours per year. All UPK programs are required to be at Level 3 in the QRIS, which requires Individualized PD plans. The state does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers.

*IPLE:* Teachers in public schools are required to complete 150 clock hours of PD every five years; those in nonpublic schools must complete 20 clock hours per year. Written individualized annual professional development plans are required for public school lead teachers and educators working in programs that are participating in QRIS at Level 2 or higher. Coaching or mentoring opportunities are available for public special education preschool through professional development opportunities that are provided by ESE in collaboration with EEC. Nonpublic employees' opportunities for coaching and mentoring are available through the EEC's Educator Provider Support Grant, but not required.

#### **Child Assessments.**

*UPK:* State policy provides an approved list of child assessments aligned with the ELDS. PD must address the components of the child assessment process, including screening, observation, use of assessment tools and IDEA processes.

**IPLE:** Child assessments are not required in IPLE. However, IPLE-funded programs must have a system in place that provides multiple opportunities throughout the year to: measure developmental growth and progress of all children enrolled in the IPLE-funded sessions; gather input from families and other caregivers; and ensure that all educators and family members are aware of the strategies necessary for supporting children across home and learning environments.

***Data-driven decision-making.***

**UPK:** The UPK Grant does not require structured observations of classroom quality, however all UPK grantees must be enrolled in the state's QRIS and be at a level 3. Level 3 requires a site visit to conduct an ECERS observation. When a program has multiple preschool classrooms, the classrooms observed are randomly selected. QRIS requires all programs, regardless of QRIS level, to observe their classrooms using the required measurement tools (Environment Rating Scales, CLASS, Strengthening Families, BAS, PAS) each year to develop/update their Continuous Quality Improvement Plans (CQIPs). The state receives copies of the ECERS scores and QRIS rating.

A validation study conducted by researchers from Wellesley College and UMass Donahue Institute of the QRIS program from 2012-2016 included UPK programs. The study found the state's QRIS has distinguished levels of quality among the different levels and the children in the upper tiers of QRIS (levels 3 and 4) showed better outcomes.

**IPLE:** The IPLE Grant does not require structured observations of classroom quality as a grant requirement. IPLE grant-funded program monitoring is conducted three times a year. Information is collected as part of the grant application process to determine eligibility for grant renewal. The information collected includes enrollment information and QRIS ratings, programs only need to be at a level 1.

In 2016-2017, the state reviewed self-reported observation results for programs participating in QRIS at levels 2 and 3. A site visit using ECERS is required as part of the QRIS verification process at Level 3. The state's Program Quality Specialists receive the results. In addition, the following other instruments are used as part of the current MA QRIS Program Administration Scale (PAS); Strengthening Families Program Self-Assessment; and Arnett-Caregiver Interaction Scale (Arnett/CIS) or CLASS.

Monitoring data collected are used by the state to make funding decisions and to make changes in grant requirements. At the local level, the information is intended to be used to identify PD/TA/mentoring needs; create program improvement plans including any corrective actions; adjust curricula; and provide feedback to parents.

There has not been a formal evaluation of IPLE.

**Integrated System.** UPK is more integrated into the early learning system than IPLE. However, even within UPK there are differences between programs operating in public school settings versus nonpublic schools. The QRIS is more of a rating system with no coaching component, making it difficult to support the improvement efforts necessary to implement curriculum effectively.

## Michigan

Michigan’s state-funded preschool program, the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), was established in 1985. Since its inception, the program’s goal has been the same, to provide preschool to at-risk four-year-olds. Prior to 2013-2014, 75% of families in the program had to be at or below 300% of the FPL. Starting in the 2013-2014 school year, 90% of families had to be at or below 250% FPL. The remaining 10% of families with income over 250% of the poverty threshold are required to pay a fee based on a locally determined sliding scale.

GSRP is not required to be offered by all the school districts; however, all districts that choose to offer the program will receive funding. Approximately two-thirds of districts do offer the program. Over two-thirds of the children are enrolled in public schools, and the rest are in Head Start and other community-based organizations. GSRP legislation mandates at least 30% of funds must go to private organizations.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	–	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	ND	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Rick Snyder (R), in his second and final term, is seen as an advocate for quality early childhood education. With Gov. Snyder coming from the business world, and the business community taking note, key players worked with the Governor and Legislature to continue to invest and expand access. Michigan is rich in philanthropic foundations. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the Frey Foundation, the Skillman Foundation, the Colina Foundation, and the Kresge Foundation, among others, have invested in early childhood policy and programs over the years. A foundation liaison position was implemented in the Governor's office, under Gov. Granholm, and has been kept in place under Gov. Snyder. The liaison, along with a couple staffers detailed from foundations, help coordinate foundation supports across the early childhood system, as well as other investments that are priorities for the Governor. In addition, there are highly engaged advocacy groups, including Michigan’s Children and Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. They work together to leverage foundation contributions.

For 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, Michigan invested an additional \$65 million each year in GSRP, increasing the number of slots available, yet per-slot funding was only increased in the first year by \$225. In both budget increases, 2% of funding was specifically earmarked for recruiting and increasing public awareness of GSRP. Funding for the 2016-2017 remained flat from the previous year after a \$4.3 million increase in 2015-2016, including \$300,000 allocated for ongoing statewide evaluation activities. In 2016-2017, 38,371 children were enrolled in GSRP; 33.4% of the state’s 4-year-olds.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Office of Great Start (OGS), Preschool and Out-of-School Time Learning is responsible for GSRP. OGS was developed by Gov. Snyder in 2011 as a division within the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) that could coordinate across state government and across early childhood up to age 8. OGS is led by a Deputy Superintendent, a position that elevates OGS' relevance within the department and education system. As part of a recent expansion, three GSRP staff positions were added, reflecting a need for administrative support. There are now four content experts, a dedicated fiscal monitor, and two analysts, one working with allocations and the other data collection/dissemination and grant systems management. Beyond the core team, there is management and some administrative support. In total, there are 8.325 FTEs responsible for GSRP.

**Education and compensation.** Lead teachers in both public school and nonpublic must have a BA and either certification with an Early Childhood endorsement or a degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development with specialization in preschool teaching. There is no salary parity for GSRP teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** GSRP has a maximum class size of 18 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:8.

**Learning time.** Children attend GSRP for a minimum of three hours per day, four days a week for 30 weeks per year. It is allowable for new grantees or newly licensed sites to operate for 20 weeks during the first year, however, subsequent years must be 30 weeks per year. It is a locally determined decision to convert part-day slots to full-day. For school-day and GSRP/Head Start Blend classrooms, the formal partnership requires 6.5 hours per day, four days per week for 30 weeks. In Michigan, 6.5 hours per day is considered a school-day and extended-day (wrap-around) would constitute a minimum of 10 hours. In 2016-2017, 14% of children attended a part-day program.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Michigan's Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten, last revised in 2013, are comprehensive and aligned with the Head Start Outcomes Framework as well as Michigan's infant/toddler standards, K-3 standards, and the college and career ready standards for the early grades. Michigan provides professional development opportunities to support use of ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The state offers guidance on selecting curricula aligned with ELDS and has developed an approved curriculum list that includes Creative Curriculum; Connect4Learning, HighScope; Montessori; Reggio Emilia; Tools of the Mind; and Project Approach. GSRP providers are required to be trained directly by a certified trainer of their chosen curriculum. SEA monitors ISDs that are required to provide oversight and monitoring of sub-recipient practices, such as local policies/procedures related to all aspects of fidelity of implementation of the curriculum. Each classroom also has a classroom coach (Early Childhood Specialist) to provide observation and feedback directly to teachers.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 16% of GSRP students received special education services. However, there are no state policies related to providing supports for preschool children who have special needs enrolled in inclusion classrooms in GSRP.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The number of DLLs enrolled in GSRP is unknown; however, DLL is a program eligibility factor. Transitional bilingual programs and dual language immersion classes are permitted.

**High quality teaching.** Michigan uses the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) to measure quality annually in each classroom. HighScope developed the PQA around the Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Pre-K, and has since published and used it nationally and internationally. PQA scores are not available for review.

**Professional development.** Teachers must complete 16 clock hours of professional development per year. Lead teachers who are certificated in public school settings must also complete six credit hours or an equivalent of continuing education units (CEUs) every five years to keep their teaching certification current. Newly certified lead teachers must complete even more training to renew the certificate for the first time.

All classrooms are assigned an Early Childhood Specialist (ECS), a master's level coach. Each ECS is in regular contact with the teaching teams and conducts regular visits that vary based on differentiated needs of teachers. ECSs are typically in the classroom anywhere from weekly to monthly depending on the needs of each teaching team. Classrooms with new lead teachers and lower Program Quality Assessment (PQA) scores or other concerns receive more frequent visits.

**Child Assessments.** GSRP programs may choose tools that comprehensively assess children according to the Early Learning Expectations in the Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten. Approved assessments that are used throughout the year include Teaching Strategies GOLD, Work Sampling System, and HighScope COR. Teachers are required to have formal training in using the assessment and using results to inform daily practice and for reports for conferences with parents. The state allows supplemental tools to be used by grantees following a specified process for selection.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All programs are assessed using the PQA more than one time per year and receive the results of their observations. To ensure the reliability of the assessments, annual inter-rater reliability certification by the tool publisher, HighScope, is required for all Early Childhood Specialists. ECS certification is reported to SEA in order for PQA data to be accepted for the observed classroom. Starting in 2018-2019, the SEA is legislatively required to conduct a process for determining at least two classroom assessments.

Beginning in the 2013-2014 grant year, MDE created a new monitoring tool and cycle for the ISDs as GSRP grantees. MDE monitoring includes a sampling of data from the ISD's sub-recipient program, and administrative and fiscal documentation. An MDE auditor, consultant, or combined team conduct on-site monitoring visits to the ISD to ensure compliance with state policies and program requirements as they relate to fiscal and programmatic management of the grant.

**Integrated System.** The state promotes a cohesive approach and has aligned the early learning standards; GSRP program standards including staffing and professional development requirements; licensing regulations; and the QRIS system. In addition, the early learning standards are aligned with the approved GSRP curricula and formative child assessment. To support the implementation of these components, there is a differentiated coaching system.

## Minnesota

As part of Minnesota’s efforts to increase access to early childhood education for children birth to five years old, the state provides financial supplements to Early Head Start and Head Start. A second state-funded preschool program, Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK), was established for the 2016-2017 school year. The program serves children who are 4-years-old by September 1 and is designed to prepare children for success as they enter kindergarten through high-quality early learning programs.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Minnesota Head Start (MN HS)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	–	●	●	–	●	●	●	●	ND	○	○	–	–

#### Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	–	●	●	–	●	–	●	●	ND	○	○	–	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton (D), in his second and final term, is viewed as being supportive of early childhood education. In 2015, Dayton proposed a prekindergarten for all 4-year-old children; there was pushback from child care providers concerned about being put out of business, and schools felt unprepared and were worried about space. This time, the agency worked with the Governor’s office to host listening sessions in communities and identify needs and concerns. As a result of these efforts and support from both the Governor and Legislature, VPK was established for the 2016-17 school year. This \$27 million investment is funded through general education monies as a new grade level. Approximately 3,160 seats were allocated to 65 school districts and nine charter schools. The legislature approved an expansion of VPK that will nearly double the number of children served in 2017-2018.

In addition, Minnesota spent \$25.1 million to supplement federally funded Head Start in the state during the 2016-2017 school year. The state served an additional 1,443 3- and 4-year-olds in Head Start and 937 children under age three. The \$25.1 million allocation reflects a \$5 million increase from 2015-2016.

Minnesota has other state-supported early childhood initiatives that are not included in this scan including the Early Learning Scholarships Programs which provides scholarships to eligible families with



children between the ages of 3- and 4-years-old. During 2016-2017, approximately 15,079 scholarships of up to \$7,500 were awarded using an appropriation of \$59.88 million.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Minnesota Department of Education's (MDE) Early Learning Services Division administers pre-K. Early Learning is also responsible for a number of birth through third grade strategies and programming including, the KEA, infant/toddler screenings, school readiness definition and programs, competencies for educators, family education, and the pre-K to Grade 3 Initiative. The agency division doubled staffing as a result of RTT-ELC, and is well positioned to cope with scaling up access and quality. In 2016-2017, two FTEs were responsible for overseeing the state-funded efforts.

#### **Education and compensation.**

**MN HS:** Under the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, all lead teachers were required to have at least an AA in Early Childhood Development by October 2011; by September 30, 2013, 50% must have at least a BA in ECE or a related field. In a public school, teacher union rules require that teachers have at least a BA. No salary parity requirements for MN HS teachers.

**VPK:** VPK Statute requires that teachers are knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language development programs, and instruction. Implementation guidelines suggest that someone who is appropriately licensed (B-3<sup>rd</sup> grade/3-Pre-K/Pre-K) be hired. If a program cannot find a licensed teacher meeting the requirements, they may request a variance for another fully licensed teacher to teach outside of their licensure area. Statute also requires that VPK instructional staff receive salaries comparable to the salaries of local kindergarten through grade 12 instructional staff. VPK teachers are not required to have a BA.

#### **Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**MN HS:** Class sizes and staff-child ratio are defined in the Head Start performance standards; the maximum class size for 4-year-olds is 20 and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 15; and staff-child ratio of 2:15. In mixed-age classrooms, if the majority of children are 3, then the maximum class size is 15.

**VPK:** VPK has a maximum class size of 20 and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

#### **Learning time.**

**MN HS:** Programs comply with the federal Head Start requirement of at least 3.5 hours per day, four days per week, for 32 weeks per year, which is the most common schedule. A formal process that approves the use of Child Care Assistance funding for Head Start Integrated full-day programming has been established. Extended-day services are also provided through collaborations with the Early Learning Scholarships program.

**VPK:** Schools have the opportunity to design the schedule including the number of days and instructional hours for the year. This leads to a variety of schedules including full- and part-day options. The program must offer at least 350 instructional hours per year.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards (ECIPs) cover birth to kindergarten entrance. The ECIPs, which were revised in 2017, are aligned with the English Language Arts Common Core standards for the early grades, and the state's

college and career ready standards. The ECIPs are comprehensive and in process of being aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. To support the use of the ECIPs, the state provides professional development opportunities to support use of ELDS.

**VPK:** Additional resources are provided to programs to implement the ECIPs.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** For both pre-k programs, Minnesota offers guidance on criteria for selecting evidence-based curriculum models and has a list of state approved curricula and provides Office of Early Learning sponsored training, technical assistance, and supporting materials. There are several additional policies that vary by program.

**MN HS:** Programs are required to implement one of the ECIPs aligned curricula on the state approved list. The state also has a system to ensure that curricula are being implemented with fidelity in the HS program.

**VPK:** Funding is available to support curriculum implementation/training. Curricula selected must be aligned with the ECIPs.

**Support for students with special needs.**

**MN HS:** Approximately 17% of total enrollment are children identified with special needs. The programs work closely with IDEA Part B and C staff. Often there is co-teaching but it is not a requirement. Coaching of MN HS teachers about children with special needs is required.

**VPK:** Programs are encouraged to design classroom membership (capped at 20 students) to be inclusive of children with IEPs. Children who receive special education services may attend state preschool classrooms, but are not counted in state preschool enrollment. Co-teaching models are required in preschool inclusion classrooms; the maximum number of children with IEPs in an inclusion classroom is capped at 50%. VPK teachers are required to possess specific qualifications and participate in PD that addresses working with children with special needs. In addition, coaching of preschool teachers about children with special needs is required.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Minnesota is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in pre-K.

**MN HS:** To support DLLs, the following program options are available: monolingual non-English classes; transitional bilingual programs; DLL immersion classes; and summer language programs. MN HS staff have training/qualifications related to working with DLLs. Monitoring that is focused on the quality of bilingual instruction is required. Children are screened and assessed in their home languages. Communication with the family about the preschool program and child are required to be presented in the family's home language, including recruitment, enrollment and outreach as well as child progress and other regular communications.

**VPK:** Extra funding is allocated for serving DLLs and staff have training/qualifications related to working with DLLs. Recruitment, enrollment, and outreach information is provided in the family's home language.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS scores for either program were not available for review for either program.

### **Professional development.**

**MN HS:** The requirement for in-service professional development is 2% of total work hours (this is greater than the HS requirement of 15 clock hours/year). Per Head Start performance standards, programs are required to implement a research-based, coordinated coaching strategy for education staff. Many programs utilize CLASS to support teacher professional development and Practice Based Coaching.

**VPK:** By statute, VPK sites are required to provide high-quality coordinated professional development, training, and coaching for both school district and community-based early learning providers. The PD content is informed by a measure of adult-child interactions (e.g. Danielson, Marzano, CLASS, TPOT) but should address early childhood curriculum, assessment, native and English language development programs, and instruction. The frequency of coaching visits varies by district/charter school established practices.

**Child Assessments.** Minnesota state policy provides an approved list of child assessments aligned with the ECIPs and the Kindergarten Entry Profile. The approved assessments include: Teaching Strategies GOLD, WSS, DRDP, HighScope COR, and Developmental Milestones.

**MN HS:** Assessments are determined locally and must comply with federal Head Start requirements. Programs are not required to submit data to the state. Assessments are expected to be used throughout the year to adjust curricula, track child and program level outcomes over time, and make changes to state policies regarding MN HS.

**VPS:** Districts and charter schools are encouraged to use the selected assessment tool according to publisher recommendations; however, they are only required to report the data to MDE when the child enters and again before the child leaves the program. Child assessment data are used to adjust the curricula, track child and program level outcomes over time, and may also be used by school districts for their annual reports to the Commissioner of Education. As previously noted, PD should address assessments.

### **Data-driven decision-making.**

**MN HS:** State policy does not require the use of structured observations of classroom quality, however many programs use CLASS to support PD. The results of observations are not collected by or reported to the state. As part of the federal monitoring system, ACF conducts observations of multiple classes operated by the grantee based on a random sample of all classes using CLASS. Monitoring is based on federal Head Start regulations. Programs submit an annual Head Start program plan when applying for state funding. This program plan also serves as the application for the state's QRIS (Parent Aware). MN HS programs are expected to participate in Parent Aware, with the exception of American Indian and Alaska Native programs.

The University of Tulsa (2015) evaluated MN HS and found benefits for children who participated. Child Trends evaluated Child Aware that included MN HS programs. However, how any particular sector in Minnesota, such as Head Start, performs could not be determined.

**VPK:** VPK programs are expected to use a measure of adult-child interaction as a tool to provide formative feedback. As previously mentioned, the four tools that are encouraged to be used are: CLASS, Danielson, Marzano, and TPOT (only for schools that have completed Pyramid Model training). The state does not receive the results of the observations. The state has offered

training opportunities on becoming a reliable CLASS observer. Districts can use PD funds to seek training and other supports to assure accurate use of the tools. Although not required, a high percentage of schools are participating in Parent Aware.

An evaluation of the newly created VPK program is being planned by MDE.

**Integrated System.** There are elements of the system that are integrated, led by the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards. However, the role of the state in coordinating or overseeing the implementation of the coaching program; the use of the structured classroom observations; or the selection and use of child assessments is limited.

## Mississippi

The Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013 established Mississippi’s first state-funded, pre-K program which provides funding to local communities to establish, expand, support, and facilitate the successful implementation of quality early childhood education and development services. Implementation began in January 2014, with capacity to serve 1,774 children. Pre-K programs in Head Start centers, licensed child-care facilities, and public, parochial, or private schools formed and maintained a stakeholder council called an Early Learning Collaborative (ELC), involving a minimum of two of those program auspices. The Early Learning Collaborative designated a Lead Partner of either a public school or other nonprofit entity with the instructional expertise and operational capacity to manage a Collaborative’s Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) program.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	○	—	—	●	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Phil Bryant (R) who is in his second and final term, is seen as supportive of early childhood issues. He is currently serving as the Chairman of the Education Commission of the States, and has been vocal on early childhood, including the benefits of participating in pre-K.

In 2013, the Early Learning Collaborative Act established Mississippi’s first state pre-K program, funded through a 1-to-1 state tax credit for individuals and businesses who donate to the Pre-K program, resulting in up to a \$3 million state match per fiscal year. The bill was co-authored by Sen. Brice Wiggins(R) and former Rep. Toby Barker(R) who currently serves as mayor for Hattiesburg. For 2013-2014, \$630,918 came from philanthropic matches some from those that had not supported early learning initiatives in the past, including the Gilmore Foundation, Tallahatchie River Foundation, and the Petal Education Foundation. In 2016-2017, state funding increased by almost 25% to \$4 million. The W. H. Kellogg foundation has actively supported Mississippi’s early education reform efforts with a particular emphasis on developing an expanded, highly effective workforce.

Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent, is very supportive of Pre-K and the Board of Education includes the goal of every child having access to a high-quality early childhood program in its vision. Currently serving as President of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), Dr. Wright promotes the value of early learning on a national level.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** In 2013, Mississippi passed the Early Learning Collaboratives Act that created 11 pre-K ELCs throughout the state (subsequently reduced to 10). In January 2017, an additional four ELCs were funded by an additional \$989,000 to serve 460 more children. ELCs encourage school districts, nonprofit groups, Head Start centers and private child care providers partner to deliver high-quality early childhood education to 4-year-olds in their communities. Each ELC is responsible for designating a Lead Partner, which can be a public school or other nonprofit entity with the instructional expertise and operational capacity to manage an ELC's Pre-K program. In response to increased demands for early education administration and accountability, the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) was established within the Office of Elementary Education and Reading in the MDE in 2015. At the state level, 1.25 FTEs are responsible for overseeing Pre-K. New foundation funding will increase the number of FTEs at the state who can support Pre-K quality efforts.

Dr. Cathy Grace, Co-Director of the Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning, University of Mississippi was a former ELC Director, and has been active in supporting MS's pre-K efforts.

**Education and compensation.** Mississippi requires each Pre-K classroom in all settings to have a lead teacher with a BA plus early childhood specialization. Only pre-K teachers working in public schools have the same starting salary and schedule for all years of service as K-3 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Pre-K has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 14 and staff-child ratio of 1:7. In mixed-age groups, the maximum class size is 14, with a ratio of 1:7.

**Learning time.** The state funds Pre-K programs to operate six hours a day (1080 hours per year). ELCs may provide extended day options, 54% of children attended an extended day program in 2016-2017, but the state allocation does not increase.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Four-Year-Old Children (ELDS) were revised in 2013, are comprehensive, aligned with the state's infant/toddler standards; K-3 standards; career and college readiness standards; and the Head Start framework. The state provides PD and additional resources to support the implementation of the ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** As a result of a curriculum review process, Opening the World of Learning (OWL) was identified as the sole approved Pre-K curriculum, effective January 1, 2017. Any ELCs in existence prior to that date were allowed to continue to use one of the four curricula previously approved by the MDE until they purchased and updated their curriculum. ELCs can use state Pre-K funding to pay for training offered by the curriculum developers to support its implementation. The fidelity is monitored annually through onsite visits, including classroom observations.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 8.9% of Pre-K students were identified as having special needs. The proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to less than 50%.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Mississippi is not able to report the number of DLLs; nor are there state policies to support DLLs enrolled in Pre-K.

**High quality teaching.** All classrooms are observed using CLASS. In 2016-2017, CLASS scores improved dramatically over the previous year. During 2016- 2017, 73% of the sites met or exceeded the Instructional Support domain 2.80 minimum score (as identified by MDE).

**Professional development.** Mississippi requires at least 15 hours of annual professional development of all teachers. State policy does not require job-embedded support of the teachers, however each ELC designs its PD system, which may include varying combinations of providing master teachers who mentor, coaching, supporting the attendance at conferences, and providing technical assistance. There are plans to coordinate the coaching system using foundation funds.

**Child Assessments.** The Learning Accomplishment Profile, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (LAP-3) was used by all Pre-K sites in both January and May 2017 to measure child growth. ELCs received training and LAP-3 kits in the fall of 2016. The ELCs use the Mississippi Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Support System (MKAS<sup>2</sup>) to assess cognition and kindergarten readiness; it is aligned to the ELDS. These required assessments are used primarily to measure student growth and kindergarten readiness.

In addition to assessments, all programs are provided with developmental checklists, which are aligned with the ELDS.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All Pre-K classrooms are observed at least once annually using CLASS. MDE provides annual observer reliability training on CLASS to ELC staff members and the MDE team who conduct the annual quality observation visits. Reliability for each member of the observation team is renewed annually to ensure consistent scoring. Additional observations may occur with teachers in classrooms that are on probation, newly hired teachers, teachers who are new to CLASS, or upon request by the ELC administrator. ELC administrators receive the results of the observations to create staff PD plans. Teachers have access to myTeachstone, which provides on-demand PD resources for teachers based on their most recent CLASS observation.

State monitoring processes are used to support programs that are on probation. Effectiveness Evaluation Plans are used to support programs in having the resources needed in order to make appropriate progress on corrective deficiencies identified in prior year monitoring reports.

MDE annually assigns each Pre-K site a “rate of readiness” based on CLASS scores; the MKAS<sup>2</sup> child assessment scores at kindergarten entry; and positive child growth on the Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment during Pre-K. Based on the readiness scores for 2016-2017, 48 sites (94%) were successful; two sites (4%) were placed on probation; and one site (2%) is no longer eligible to receive funding. For the two sites placed on probation, PD plans were developed with the ELCs, the site administrators, and teachers.

MDE annually assigns each Pre-K site a “rate of readiness” based on CLASS scores; the MKAS<sup>2</sup> child assessment scores at kindergarten entry; and positive child growth on the Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment during Pre-K. Based on the readiness scores for 2016-2017, 48 sites (94%) were successful; two sites (4%) were placed on probation; and one site (2%) is no longer eligible to receive funding. For the two sites placed on probation, PD plans were developed with the ELCs, the site administrators, and teachers.

**Integrated System.** There are components of the system that are integrated, including using child assessment and class observation data to make funding and PD decisions. Specifically, CLASS

observations have been used to support quality in the system with targeted PD. Having a coordinated coaching system will strengthen this process. Assessments are used primarily as a measure of student outcomes, not as a formative tool to support instructional or curriculum differentiation.



## Missouri

The Missouri Preschool Program (MPP) began serving 3- and 4-year-olds in early childhood settings in 1998 with the goal of providing access to all families throughout the state, regardless of income. MPP is operated in public schools, private child care centers, and nonprofit agencies. A competitive grant process determines where MPP funds are awarded, with programs serving children with special needs and those from low-income families are given priority. Programs use sliding payment scales, based on criteria including eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch or Department of Social Services income guidelines.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
—	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Funding for MPP declined in the aftermath of the recession, hitting an all-time per-child low in 2013-2014 in real dollars. Enrollment as a percentage of the population, never more than 5%, is lower than in 2002. In 2014-2015 pre-K spending was \$13.6 million, an increase of more than 73% (inflation-adjusted) from the previous year. However, funding declined the following two years, \$1.9 million in 2015-2016, and another \$2.1 million in 2016-2017. MPP is funded through the state’s Tobacco Settlement Fund. In the 2016-2017 school year, there were 2,646 children attending MPP, a 6% increase from the previous year.

Former Gov. Eric Greitens (R) recently resigned from office. It is too early to determine the degree of support MPP will have with Gov. Mike Parson (R).

In 2018, MPP’s budget was cut by \$5.8 million, half of the current funding due to a provision in the K-12 school funding formula for incorporates Pre-K funding for children age 3 and 4 at an amount up to 4% of the school district’s total number of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Early Learning Section, within the Office of Quality Schools, is responsible for overseeing state efforts to expand and improve early learning opportunities through MPP and two other state programs: Parents as Teachers (PAT), and a small CCDF program. The Office of Quality Schools is one of six offices within the Division of Learning Services within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The Early Learning Section has seven FTEs; however, all early childhood personnel within the section have multiple roles and therefore the state cannot quantify the number of full time equivalencies who oversee MPP.

**Education and compensation.** For a program to receive state funding, regardless of setting, teachers are required to have a BA with specialization in early childhood. MPP teachers in a public school setting must receive a teaching contract that places them on the same salary schedule as the districts' K-12 teachers. MPP teachers' salaries in nonpublic school settings must be "commensurate with other professionals in similar positions." DESE interprets this as requiring that teachers in private as well as public programs must receive salaries comparable to those of K-12 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Missouri has a maximum class size of 20, with a teacher to student ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** The program must provide 6.5 hours of educational activities appropriate to the developmental level of the child per day between the hours of 7:30 am and 5:00 pm. Only governmental entities or public school districts (awarded funding prior to FY16) can provide a part-day program (minimum of 3 hours) to better serve those children participating in other district programs, such as Title 1 and/or early childhood special education (in 2016-2017, 8% of MPP programs were part-day). Preschool programs are required to operate five days per week. However, public schools that implement a four-day school week for their K-12 grade levels can also implement a four-day schedule for the preschool program. The length of the preschool day is expected to mirror the length of the K-12 day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Missouri Early Learning Goals, the state's ELDS, are inclusive of children from infants to kindergarten entry. Last revised in 2013, they are comprehensive and are currently being aligned with the newly revised K-12 standards. The state provides resources and PD to support the use of the ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Currently, four early childhood curricula are approved for use in MPP. In order to be selected, DESE reviews the curriculum using a rubric that evaluates the areas of: valid research, evaluation results, professional development, and developmental appropriateness. Teachers receive training that must be approved and delivered by the curriculum source. Additional support for implementation of curriculum is provided by onsite consultation. There is not a system to measure whether curricula are being implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 11% of MPP students were identified as having special needs. MPP programs must collaborate with the local school district(s) to offer PAT services to MPP families. These services should include, at a minimum, family home visits, group connections, developmental screenings, and access to the Resource Network.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** In 2016-2017, 6% of MPP students were DLLs. State policy does not regulate services for DLLs. The ELS parent guides have been translated into Spanish and Bosnian.

**High quality teaching.** The only direct observation data on teaching quality available for review are from the 2003 study in which 138 MPP classrooms were observed using the ECERS. Average scores for the classrooms during the 2<sup>nd</sup> observation cycle were 5.39, clearly above "good" on the 7.0 rating scale. It is unfortunate this data is more than a decade old, as they indicate relatively high quality.

**Professional development.** All MPP teachers participate in the Learning Communities Project that includes on-site consultation/coaching and regional professional development opportunities. Teachers

are also required to participate in continuous professional development (22 clock hours per year) on such topics as the selected curriculum model and the DRDP. Site-based consultations are provided to all classrooms to support program improvement, the number of coaching contact hours vary depending upon the teacher's needs and experience.

**Child Assessments.** Following a year of piloting, Missouri adopted the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) as a uniform child assessment instrument for formative and summative purposes. For screening children, there is a list of approved instruments. Lead teachers and assistants in MPP classrooms are required to be trained in DESE-sponsored DRDP trainings. Following this training, teachers and assistants are expected to implement the DRDP as a formative assessment to look at each child's growth and development to guide learning activities in the classroom.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All MPP classrooms are observed annually by reliable assessors using the ECERS. Trends in the ECERS information are used to target professional development delivered regionally and by the program consultants/coaches to work with programs on setting goals for improvement. The state also receives the results of the structured observations of classroom quality to target funding for quality improvement efforts; make changes to state policy; provide program staff with technical assistance, mentoring, PD; identify programs for corrective action or sanctions; and make funding decisions about grantees.

**Integrated System.** The Early Learning Goals provide the foundation that aligns the required child assessment (DRDP) and four curricula choices. Professional development opportunities include a required coaching component that supports the implementation of these elements. Data are collected regularly and used at the program level to enhance quality using the PD system.

## Nebraska

The Nebraska Early Childhood Education Grant Program began as a pilot in 1992 and expanded in 2001. The program provides preschool education for children ages three to five. Direct financial support is available on a competitive basis for public schools and education service units that partner with child-care centers, as well as Head Start agencies and/or human services agencies to initiate or expand their early childhood programs. Grantees are obligated to match 100% of the funding using local and/or federal sources.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	○	●	●	—	●	—	●	—	○	○	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Governor Pete Ricketts (R) took office in January 2015 and is currently running for re-election. One of the state’s urgent needs he identified in his campaign include “providing opportunities” for young people. The state budget is altered annually during the legislative session. Changes in the total budget mean increases or decreases in available funds for serving 4-year-olds. In the 2016-2017 school year, Nebraska reduced state pre-K spending by \$4.3 million (almost 15%) from the previous year, resulting in Nebraska ranking lowest for per-child spending (\$1,948 per child) out of 43 states, D.C. and Guam. When including all funding (IDEA, Title 1, required local match) Nebraska spends \$5,178 per child. Nebraska had a big jump in enrollment in 2009-2010; and in 2016-2017 served 32% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 15% of 3-year-olds.

Nebraska has strong voices from philanthropy and advocacy including the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, First Five Nebraska, Nebraska Voices for Children, and Nebraska AEYC.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The State Board of Education is highly supportive of pre-K and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has had a strong and stable staff and support from other organizations in the state. The Office of Early Childhood has 22 full-time staff, 2.8 FTE are assigned to the pre-K program.

The Buffett Institute at the University of Nebraska is taking a leadership role; working with 11 Omaha-area school districts to develop and implement a Superintendents’ Early Childhood Plan (mandated by the Legislature) to serve young children birth through third grade.

**Education and compensation.** All teachers in the Nebraska Early Childhood Education Grant Program are required to have at least a bachelor's degree and training in early childhood education. Those teachers housed in public schools have the same starting salary and salary schedule as K-3 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Nebraska requires a maximum class size of 20 children for both 3- and 4-year-olds; with a staff to child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** Most programs operate 3.5 to 4 hours per day for a minimum of 12 hours per week. Programs are encouraged to partner with Head Start and community providers to extend the pre-K day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines (Guidelines) for ages 3 to 5 are currently under revision. The previous version was aligned with K-3 and infant/toddler standards; and the Head Start Outcomes Framework. The state provides professional development opportunities and state sponsored training to support the use of the Guidelines.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Nebraska does not offer guidance on selecting curricula or have an approved list; but does require the locally selected curriculum to be aligned with the Guidelines. The state does not have a system to ensure that curricula are implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 28.9% of children enrolled in the pre-K were identified as having special needs. To support these children, a teacher with special education certification must be available and active in the classroom. Inclusion specialists are also available to support preschool teachers and/or children. The proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The number of DLLs enrolled in preschool is unknown, however a home language survey is conducted with families.

**High quality teaching.** In 2016-2017, ECERS-3 observations were completed in 82 classrooms; with an average on 4.19 across all subscales. CLASS observations were conducted in 84 classrooms; the average on Instructional Support was 3.08; Classroom Organization was 5.42; and Emotional Support was 5.96. It is important to note that all new classrooms have ECERS observations completed in the first two years of observations, and then other classrooms that have been in operation longer are selected for observations. Thus, the ECERS averages likely underestimate the quality of the program.

**Professional development.** Pre-K rules are currently being revised to increase the number of annual training hours. Currently, teachers are required to complete at least 12 clock hours annually of staff development related to early childhood education or child development. The Early Learning Connection (the state's ECE PD system) is facilitated through the NDE Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC) in coordination with the regional system of state and local partners. Classroom-embedded support is not required; but coaching is available for school district classrooms that participate in the state's QRIS. Teachers in schools that are implementing the Pyramid Model program-wide must receive coaching.

**Child Assessments.** State policy requires preschool programs to assess children's learning and development during the preschool years with Teaching Strategies GOLD which has been aligned to the state's Guidelines. Observations of child progress are made continually throughout the year; however, data is finalized at standard checkpoints. Data are used to adjust curricula and monitor children's progress. The state provides TA for using Teaching Strategies GOLD and district administrators are

responsible for assuring that all staff and contracted providers are adequately trained and mentored in ongoing data collection and entering and scoring child observations. Inter-rater reliability certification is required by the state to be completed every three years, however, districts may require more frequent certification.

**Data-driven decision-making.** New prekindergarten programs have two years of ECERS-3 observations done by staff who are reliable with the state anchor. After the second year of operation, schools can choose to be observed and rated using either the ECERS-3 or CLASS. Once all of the new classrooms are observed; a percentage of the remaining classrooms are selected for an assessment based on the history of past observations, length of time between observations, etc. The state receives the results of the assessments, however, NDE no longer requires districts to complete an Action Plan for Program Improvement based on the results of the ERS or CLASS observation.

All districts and Education Service Units (ESUs) are required to annually disseminate information about program quality and child outcomes beginning in the first year of operation. In addition, *Results Matter in Nebraska*, the child, program, and family outcomes measurement system, collects, analyzes, and publishes an annual report disseminated to the State Board of Education, Nebraska Legislature, Early Childhood Education Endowment Board of Trustees, and NDE.

There has not been a formal evaluation measuring program quality and/or effectiveness.

**Integrated System.** There are some components that are integrated in Nebraska's early learning system, most notably the Results Matter in Nebraska which incorporates structured classroom observations and child assessments. The Guidelines have been aligned with the child assessments, self-selected curricula, and used for teacher PD. However, the system does not support a more thorough integration of curriculum, professional development, and ECERS-3/CLASS observations.

## Nevada

Nevada’s state-funded Pre-K program, initially called the Early Childhood Education Comprehensive Plan when it began in 2001, is now referred to as the Nevada State Pre-Kindergarten Program (State PreK). Although State PreK programs operate in both community-based organizations and school districts, nearly 98% of State PreK children were served in classrooms operated by their local school districts. During the 2016-2017 school year, 65% of school districts (11 out of 17) provided State PreK. Funding is competitive, and awards are determined based on community needs as stated in individual grant applications with preference given to children eligible to attend kindergarten the following year.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	●	●	●	●	–	●	–	–	●	–	–	–	–	–

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met – Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Brian Sandoval (R,) in his second and final term, is viewed as being very supportive of pre-K. During his term, DLL legislation passed (2013), known as “Zoom Schools.” The state allocated \$4.6 million to support additional pre-K programs for ELL Students in six school districts that began implementation in the middle of the 2013-2014 school year. Not all of these programs are aligned with state pre-K requirements due to some of the agreements being made without input from the Office of Early Learning and Development (ELD). The rationale for Zoom Schools and other recent legislation, including SB 486 (2013) that allocated \$1.5 million to pilot Nevada’s KEA, Silver State KIDS, SB 405 (2015) Zoom expansion, and SB 508 (2015), expansion of full-day kindergarten, is linked to ensuring that students can be reading on grade level by 3rd grade. The Read by 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (SB 391, 2015) bill mandates retention of all students who do not meet 3rd grade reading proficiency, starting in 2019.

Recent pre-K budget increases are sufficient to support only a few hundred children; in 2016-2017, enrollment increased to 1,870 children, less than 5% of the state’s 4-year-old population. State PreK funding increased by almost 44%; however, the state ranks 39<sup>th</sup> in per-child spending among 43 states, D.C. and Guam operating pre-K programs. The funding increase was due to the required state match for the federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG). In 2014, Nevada was awarded a PDG which created 550 new State PreK slots and expanded pre-K to a full-day for 200 of the 1,870 children enrolled in State PreK in 2016-2017. An additional 1,665 children were served with PDG funds, but not enrolled in State PreK.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** In 2013, Gov. Sandoval created the Office of Early Learning and Development (ELD) within the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) through an Executive Order. The Office of ELD’s funding was approved by the interim finance committee in June 2014 and is

responsible for administering multiple early childhood state and federal funding sources including State PreK and PDG. This reorganization is responsive to input from Nevada's early childhood system stakeholders, providers, educators, intermediaries, private sector partners, and families of Nevada's young children, who collectively called for a more coordinated and aligned system of early learning and development.

ELD is led by the Education Programs Director and encompasses all of the agencies responsible for overseeing program quality, interagency coordination, early childhood workforce development, and early learning and development standards for publicly funded early learning programs. The office expanded to twelve people with one FTE responsible for State PreK.

**Education and compensation.** Nevada requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus ECE specialization or endorsement. Lead teachers in public schools have the same starting salary, same salary schedule for all years of service as K-3. Salary schedules are also prorated for differences in length of work day or year. Nonpublic school State PreK teachers do not have salary parity; however, most children (98%) are served in public schools.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** State PreK has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 16 and staff-child ratio of 1:8.

**Learning time.** The majority of state-funded pre-K programs are half-day (minimum of 10 hours/week) unless braided with PDG funds which results in a full-day program (minimum of 25 hours/week).

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Nevada Pre-Kindergarten Standards (2010) are comprehensive and currently being aligned with infant/toddler standards and K-3 standards in an inclusive and comprehensive set of birth-3rd grade standards. The state provides professional development opportunities and provides additional resources to support use of the ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The state does not have an approved or recommended curriculum list; but does require alignment of the locally selected curricula with the ELDS. The state provides TA on curricula implementation and it is reviewed during the competitive application process and site visits.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 19.5% of State PreK students were identified as having special needs. The state does not have policies to support children with special needs in inclusion classrooms in State PreK.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Nevada's policies that support families of DLLs include having recruitment, enrollment, outreach materials, and communication with the family about the program or child in the home language. The state collects and uses information on languages inputs in the home. In 2016-2017, 30% of State PreK students were identified as being DLLs, similarly to the percentage of DLLs in the state (31%). Extra funding is allocated for serving DLLs through Zoom Funding. In addition, the state monitors the quality of bilingual instruction, children are screened and assessed in their home language, and teachers are required to have training/qualifications related to working with DLLs.



**High quality teaching.** The last set of ECERS and ELLCO observations reported by districts as a part of the legislatively required report occurred in Spring 2015. The spring 2015 results show the 13 project sites had an average ECERS score of 4.22. Average ELLCO scores were 3.41 (out of a 7.0 scale) for the 13 State PreK sites.

**Professional development.** The State PreK teachers are required to have six PD credit hours every five years, but that is the only uniform policy. Each of the 11 districts that operate State Pre-K classrooms develops an individual PD approach for the PreK teachers. This includes deciding the content and format of the PD and coaching supports, if any.

**Child Assessments.** In 2016-2017, programs were required to use the Brigance screener that measures all child development domains, which is aligned with the ELDS. Many programs also use Teaching Strategies GOLD, but assessment data are not collected at the state level.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Funding for program evaluation and ECERS observations was originally available annually, and then reduced to every other year. This funding has since been cut and is no longer available. Programs receiving PDG funds are required to participate in the state's QRIS. Currently, there are not enough funds to support QRIS participation for State PreK programs that do not receive PDG dollars.

**Integrated System.** The state requires the ELDS to be aligned with curriculum and child assessments. However, other critical elements of an integrated system are missing, including professional development. With the cuts in funding, data that would support an integrated system are no longer being collected.

## New Jersey

The state of New Jersey funds three preschool programs. The largest and most intensive of the preschool programs, formerly known as the Abbott Preschool Program (Abbott), served 45,355 children in 35 of the state’s poorest school districts during the 2016-2017 school year. Abbott was created to comply with the New Jersey Supreme Court’s decisions in the landmark Abbott v. Burke school funding case. The Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) and the Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI) are programs that typically offer part-day programs in districts serving predominantly low-income families but are part of the Abbott funding.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Abbott Preschool Program (Abbott)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	○

#### Non-Abbott Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	○	●	●	—	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	○

#### Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	●	●	●	—	●	○	○	●	ND	●	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Even though New Jersey is ranked second nationally for state pre-K spending, progress in the expansion of expenditures and enrollment stalled beginning with the recession, and in 2014-2015, inflation-adjusted spending decreased by \$19.2 million, or 3.1 percent. In 2016-2017, state funding for all three programs combined decreased another \$8.7 million. Current dollar funding for the ELLI program has been unchanged since the 2008-2009 school year, resulting in a substantial decline after inflation is taken into account. In 2017-2018 ECPA and ELLI districts were offered the opportunity to apply for additional money, referred to as Preschool Education Expansion Aid (PEEA). The grant awarded 26 districts additional money.

Newly elected Gov. Phil Murphy (D) is seen as a potential advocate for preschool. His first budget proposal had an \$83 million increase in state preschool spending; \$38 million to continue the expansion funded in the 2017-2018 budget and provide cost of living increases for the Abbott, ECPA and ELLI districts, and an additional \$50 million to expand preschool to 3- and 4-year-old children in more low-income communities. This is expected to be a first step in a four-year phase-in to fully fund preschool expansion per the 2008 school funding formula that requires high-quality preschool programs for all at-risk preschoolers. There is broad bipartisan support in the legislature for expansion to universal access to high-quality pre-k.

When comparing enrollment in 2016-2017 to the previous school year; Abbott increased enrollment by 1758 children (4%); ECPA's enrollment decreased by 1280 children (15%); and ELLI's increased by 122 children (19%).

Pre-K Our Way, a nonprofit organization, advocates for the expansion of high-quality preschool in New Jersey. The leadership of this group includes former New Jersey governors and business leaders. It has partnered with both local and national foundations. The Advocates for Children of New Jersey has also been active in advocating for preschool quality and expansion, often partnering with the Education Law Center which was instrumental in bringing the Abbott v Burke case to the NJ Supreme Court.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** All three of New Jersey's preschool education programs operate under the auspices of the state DOE, Division of Early Childhood Education and Family Engagement (DECEFE) which has 16 senior professional staff. The Department of Children and Families oversees licensing of private preschool providers. DHS, Division of Family Development oversees the before- and after-school portion of the preschool program for eligible children. Coordination occurs with the Head Start State Collaboration Office, which is housed in DOE. The Departments of Education, Children and Families, and Human Services meet regularly to work together on state and federally funded initiatives and they work with others in the state through the New Jersey Council for Young Children.

In New Jersey, each school district's superintendent, along with any required and/or designated school district personnel, is assigned the ultimate responsibility for implementation of the state-funded preschool program in his or her district. School districts with greater than 750 enrolled preschool children must have at least one dedicated in-district early childhood supervisor who has an appropriate New Jersey Supervisor's Certificate or New Jersey Principal's Certificate, as well preschool education experience.

**Education and compensation.** Lead teachers in all three programs are required to have a BA and early childhood credential. Salary parity with K-3 teachers varies by program.

**Abbott:** In both public schools and nonpublic school settings teachers have salary parity with K-3 teachers.

**ECPA:** In ONLY public school settings are teachers required to have salary parity with K-3 teachers. To date, fewer than 5% of ECPA districts have children in nonpublic settings.

**ELLI:** In both public schools and nonpublic school settings teachers are required to have salary parity with K-3 teachers, however none of the ELLI districts now serve children in nonpublic settings.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**Abbott:** The maximum class size is 15 for both 3- and 4-year-olds with a staff to child ratio of 2:15.

**ECPA:** The maximum class size is 18 for both 3- and 4-year-olds with a staff to child ratio of 1:9.

**ELLI:** The maximum class size is 20 for 4-year-olds with a staff to child ratio of 1:10. ELLI funding does not support 3-year-olds, though many districts enroll 3-year-olds in ELLI classrooms with special education, tuition or district general funding.

**Learning time.**

**Abbott:** All Abbott programs must operate for at least six hours. Some programs offer extended-day programs with an additional four hours of wraparound care for income-eligible children, but the number of students is unknown. The wraparound program is funded through the Department of Human Services (DHS). Some districts have also used surplus or Title 1 funds to provide summer programs.

**ECPA:** Districts may operate either a part- (2.5 hours per day) or school-day (six hours per day) program. DHS funding may be used to extend beyond a full-day for income-eligible children, but the number of students is unknown.

**ELLI:** Some programs are part-day, some programs are school-day, and some programs offer a combination of both. Some programs participate in DHS wraparound programs for before- and after-care, but the number of students is unknown.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** All three programs use the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards which were revised in 2014. They are comprehensive and aligned with K-3 standards. The state provides professional development for the use of the standards. Additional policies that support the use of the standards vary by program.

**Abbott:** State policy requires specific child assessment(s) that are aligned with the standards.

**ECPA:** Child assessments are required to be aligned with the standards, but programs can choose the assessment. Technical assistance is provided through both trainings offered to early childhood supervisors and the DECEFE review of districts' annual preschool program plans. Additional resources are also provided to programs to implement the standards.

**ELLI:** Child assessments are required to be aligned with the standards, but programs can choose the assessment. Technical assistance is provided through both trainings offered to early childhood supervisors and the DECEFE review of districts' annual preschool program plans. Additional resources are also provided to programs to implement the standards.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** All three programs have similar state supports for curriculum decision-making and implementation including having guidance on selecting evidence-based curriculum models, DECEFE training, access to support materials, additional funding for curriculum implementation or training, and technical assistance on implementation. Programs and sites must use one of the curricula which are aligned with the ELDS and on the approved list: Creative Curriculum; Curiosity Corner; HighScope; or Tools of the Mind.

Only Abbott requires there to be a system to ensure that curricula are being implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** Children who receive special education services may attend state preschool classrooms, but are not counted in state preschool enrollment. Funding and enrollment for special needs preschoolers are counted separately. State policies related to providing supports for preschool children who have special needs vary by program.

**Abbott:** Inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children. Preschool intervention and referral teams (PIRT) use a consultation model to help maximize the teacher's ability to support all students who exhibit challenging behaviors, learning difficulties or other social difficulties and to decrease the number of referrals to special education.

**ECPA:** School districts must ensure coordination between preschool and all other relevant school district programs, i.e. special education. Specific plans for inclusion are required in the annual planning process.

**ELLI:** School districts must ensure coordination between preschool and all other relevant school district programs, i.e. special education. Specific plans for inclusion are required in the annual planning process. ELLI was originally designed as an inclusion program with the requirement that children with disabilities be included in every classroom.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** All three New Jersey preschool programs have policies that support DLLs. This includes having an approved written plan for supporting DLLs; monitoring of the quality of the bilingual instruction; screening children in their home languages; and policies that support families. In addition, districts with large percentages of DLL children are required to have bilingual specialist master teachers available to provide support to teachers and other master teachers on the education of DLLs.

Only Abbott was able to report the number of DLLs (19,956; 44% of the total enrollment) enrolled in 2016-2017 and the percentage of teachers who were fluent in a language other than English (23% lead teachers; 38% assistants).

#### **High quality teaching.**

**Abbott:** In 2000, the average ECERS-R score was 3.9 and by 2008 it had risen to 5.2. Other assessments used to measure the quality of practice specific to literacy and mathematics revealed a similar pattern of a low starting point and considerable progress. The state contracts for annual ECERS observations in a representative number of classrooms across the state. The statewide average has been regularly above 5. The state switched to the ECERS-3 in 2015- 2016 and 2016-2017. The average score dropped well below 5 in those two years.

**ECPA:** In 2017-2018, ECERS-3 observations were conducted in a representative sample of ECPA district classrooms that had not received additional funds from the federal Preschool Expansion Grant. The average score in those classrooms was 4.4.

**ELLI:** CLASS or ECERS scores were not available for review.

**Professional development.** All three preschool programs require 100 clock hours/five years whether teachers are located in a public or nonpublic school setting. In addition, all lead and assistant teachers in

the Abbott program receive coaching at least twice a month with a maximum of twenty teachers assigned to each coach.

**Child Assessments.** State policy all three state-funded preschool programs to assess children's learning and development multiple times during the preschool year. Programs may select from Teaching Strategies GOLD, Work Sampling System, Early Learning Scale (ELS), or HighScope COR. Child assessment data are used to guide teacher training, adjust curriculum, track child and program level outcomes over time, and to provide a measure of kindergarten readiness. The state supports the use of the assessments through targeted technical assistance and professional development opportunities, including coaching for early childhood supervisors and master teachers.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Data collected during monitoring of all three programs is used by both the state and at the local level to create program improvement plans and to provide program staff with technical assistance. The state uses this information to make changes to state policy; to make funding decisions; and identify programs for corrective actions. At the local level, data are used to adjust curriculum. Other data-driven decision-making varies by program.

**Abbott:** The Self Assessment and Validation System (SAVS) is administered locally and submitted to the state. Annually a subset of district assessments is directly validated by the state. The results of the SAVS are used as the basis for program planning and incorporated into each district's Preschool Program Plan.

Structured observations of classroom quality using the ECERS also occur annually in all classrooms. Observations are done both locally and by an independent third-party. State policy also requires that programs receive on-going feedback based on data collected from structured observations of classroom quality.

Only Abbott has had an external, independent evaluation (most recent one was in 2016) as well as publicly available classroom assessments.

**ECPA and ELLI:** Each program submits an annual plan based on a self-assessment. Participation in a state quality rating system is encouraged but not required. Only PDG-funded classrooms have structured observations of classroom quality using the ECERS conducted annually. The state receives the results of these observations.

New Jersey's State Longitudinal Data System (called NJ SMART) was created in 2012, through a grant from the USDOE, and includes all public school children, preschool through grade 12. Through various other grants, NJDOE is working with partner state agencies to build upon the state's current data system and make it a more comprehensive statewide system that tracks student information from pre-K through entry into higher education and the workforce. A parallel effort (NJ EASEL) is also underway to integrate early care and education data from various other state agencies with NJ SMART data to better understand child outcomes. This effort is funded by NJ's federal RTT-ELC grant.

**Integrated System.** All three preschool programs in New Jersey operate within NJ DOE under the auspices of the DECEFE. DECEFE is responsible for the development, implementation, and alignment of program components with a focus on standards, curricula, and assessment. All three preschool programs use the same set of program and child standards and have the same curricula and child assessment choices. DECEFE has programmatic responsibility for preschool through 3rd grade programs.

## New Mexico

State-funded New Mexico PreK (NM PreK) began in the 2005-2006 school year with enactment of the PreK Act of 2005. NM PreK is jointly administered by two state agencies and operates in programs provided through school districts, and programs operating in community-based organizations and other eligible providers. In the 2016-2017 school year, nearly 70% of school districts offered NM PreK.

A competitive process awards programs funds, though preference is given to programs in communities with public elementary schools designated as Title I. Two-thirds of enrolled children at each program site must live in the attendance zone of a Title I elementary school, though eligibility is not determined by a specific family income requirement.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	○	●	●	–	●	○	○	○	ND	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met – Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Susana Martinez (R), currently in her second and final term, has been consistent in her support of NM PreK. There are several active advocacy groups in New Mexico including, New Mexico Voices for Children and the New Mexico Business Roundtable. There has been a steady increase in funding of the NM PreK since 2011. In prior years, NM PreK was solely funded through state funds; however, for the past three years, federal TANF funds were added to the state dollars. In 2016-2017, total NM PreK spending increased by \$1.25 million, bringing the total operating budget to \$52.3 million.

In 2014-2015, the legislature provided limited funding for an Extended-day PreK pilot to double the instructional hours to 900 per school year. Some private or nonprofit facilities use Child Care Subsidy dollars for wrap-around care to assist parents who qualify, or to offer reduced rates for private pay. PreK programs in public schools can extend the day using operational dollars or Title I funds.

Despite a significant decrease in enrollment during the 2010-2011 school year, participation and funding for NM PreK has steadily increased. In the 2016-2017 school year, there were 10,379 children (89% were 4-year-olds) participating in NM PreK; more than one-third of the state’s 4-year-old population.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** NM PreK is jointly administered by two large state agencies, PED and CYFD. The University of New Mexico (UNM) also supports PD efforts. There is no one person or department identified to oversee the coordination and adherence to NM PreK standards. Expectations for collaboration are described in both PED and CYFD’s administrative rules. Both departments have pre-K advocates and early childhood expertise and have leaders who are viewed as supportive of NM PreK. Eight FTEs are assigned to NM PreK at the state level.

**Education and compensation.** Teachers in nonpublic settings who do not yet possess a state-issued Early Childhood teaching license or BA degree must complete a minimum of six credit hours annually toward the degree or license. Teachers in public schools must hold at least a BA/BS and a teaching license in Early Childhood. If a public school teacher is hired who holds either a special education PreK-12 license or an Elementary K-8 license, that person must complete all requirements for an early childhood B-3rd grade or PreK-3rd grade teaching license within two years of hire. Only Lead teachers in public schools have the same starting salary, same salary schedule for all years of service as K-3, and salary schedules are also prorated for differences in length of work day or year.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** NM PreK has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. For 3-year-olds the maximum class size is 16, with a ratio of 1:8. Class sizes and staff to child ratios may be smaller in classrooms with children with IEPs, for example, one adult to four children.

**Learning time.** Hours and days per week vary by program, with a minimum of 450 hours per year (2.5 hours per day). In 2014-2015, the legislature provided limited funding for an Extended-day PreK pilot to double the instructional hours to 900 per school year. Some private or nonprofit facilities use Child Care Subsidy dollars for wrap-around care to assist parents who qualify, or to offer reduced rates for private pay. PreK programs in public schools can extend the day using operational dollars or Title I funds.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Birth to Kindergarten (NMELGs) preschool section was updated in 2017; the Infant-Toddler section is currently under revision. The NMELGs are comprehensive and aligned with the state's K-3 standards. To support the use of the NMELGs, the state provides professional development opportunities, additional resources, and coaching.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Curricula are locally determined but must be aligned with the NMELGs. There is no state-approved or recommended curricula list, but additional funding is used to support curriculum implementation/training. A curriculum implementation tool developed by the state includes the Authentic Observation, Documentation, and Curriculum Planning Cycle (AODCPC) which requires each teacher to use the cycle of planning, observation, reflection, assessment, and individualization in curriculum implementation. The required coaching program includes support for AODCPC and review of the curriculum to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In public school programs, up 40% of children may have IEPs if a percentage of those IEPs are for speech articulation only. If not, one-third of the children may have IEPs. In addition, pre-K teachers are required to possess specific qualifications and receive PD and coaching for working with children with special needs and inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children. In 2016-2017, 5.7% of the NM Pre-K students were identified as having special needs.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** In 2016-2017, 25% of children enrolled in pre-K were DLLs. Recruitment, enrollment, outreach, and communication with family about the program or the child is in the family's home language. The PreK child assessment is observational, making it is easy to adapt to a home language. PreK Program Standards require that every effort to provide an adult who speaks the child's language is made. Guidance for serving DLLs is included in the state's QRIS and in the NMELGs. One of the essential elements of the QRIS is Culture and Language, Including the *Support of Dual Language Learners*.



**High quality teaching.** The ERS are used as part of the QRIS system, however the average scores received by programs are not available for review.

**Professional development.** All classrooms are required to receive coaching through the PreK Consultation Model which provides monthly three-hour classroom visits, including a 30- minute debriefing period with the teacher and educational assistant. New teachers may receive additional coaching as needed. Coaches have an average caseload of 15 classrooms. In addition to receiving coaching, public school teachers are required to complete 40 clock hours of PD annually; nonpublic school teachers must complete 28 clock hours of PD annually and six credit hours/year if BA/BS degree is not completed.

**Child Assessments.** The New Mexico Preschool Observational Assessment is required to be used by all pre-K programs, no other assessment may be used. The tool is based on the NMELGs and frequency of observations is dependent upon program setting and number of hours the program operated per year for non-public schools: annually for programs funded for 450 hours; three times a year for programs funded for 900 hours; for public schools: three times a year. To support the implementation of the tool, the state has online resources, sponsored training, and coaching.

**Data-driven decision-making.** State statute requires an annual report of the pre-K program. The NM PreK Annual Report provides information on student enrollment, including targeted school districts and demographic data; teacher qualifications and PD participation; child outcomes, including growth between fall and spring of the pre-K year; and funding levels over time. All NM PreK classrooms are observed annually using the ERS and data are sent to the state and used at the program level by coaches. All programs are required to participate in the state's QRIS. In addition, when children enter NM PreK they are assigned a unique identifier that is in line with the K-12 identifiers assigned to older students.

The most recent completed third-party evaluation, which was mandated by the state, was the 2010 NIEER report, *The New Mexico PreK Evaluation: Results from the Initial Four Years of a New State Preschool Initiative*, concluded that the NM PreK produced consistent benefits in language, literacy and math.

**Integrated System.** The NMELGs provide the foundation for the alignment of all of early childhood system components (child assessment, curriculum selection, PD, QRIS) utilized by NM PreK. The required participation in the coaching system ensures that all of the components are implemented to the degree in which they were designed.

## New York

New York’s preschool program began in 1966 as the Experimental Prekindergarten Program (EPK) with the goal of offering preschool education to all 4-year-olds in the state. In 1998, it was merged with a 50% increase in funding to become New York’s Universal Preschool Program (UPK). Although intended to be universally available to all 4-year-olds, only a small number of children were being served. In 1997, the New York legislature voted to make universal preschool available to all by the 2002-2003 school year which resulted in increased enrollment. Spurred on by NYC Mayor Bill DiBlasio’s pre-k initiative funding, enrollment has increased again but insufficient funds continue to impede universal enrollment.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	○	●	●	●	●	–	○	○	ND	–	–	–	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Governor Cuomo (D) is a proponent of preschool, advocating quality early education as critical for long-term success. Under the Governor’s administration, the state committed to investing \$1.5 billion over five years to build the Statewide Universal Full-Day Preschool Program. In his 2018 State of the State address he included the expansion of pre-K, including 3-year-olds, in a mixed delivery system. The Blue Ribbon Commission on ECE was created by the NY Board of Regents in 2017 to provide advice in the areas of budget investments, educational policy and legislative initiatives.

NYS has several separate pre-K funding streams, five of which are competitive awards. UPK is administered by school districts via an allocation grant award that is non-competitive. However, the funds and awardees for this program have been frozen for nearly a decade. For the last four years, school districts have been able to compete for additional funding for five-year grant awards. In 2016-2017, state pre-K spending served 122,871 children, 51.6% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 1.5% of 3-year-olds. New York was also awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG). In 2016-2017, \$25 million was used to support the enrollment of 2,350 low-income 4-year-olds in five school districts in both new slots and in enhancing existing slots.

In New York City, Mayor DeBlasio (D) demonstrates strong political will to provide universal access to high-quality preschool to all 3- and 4-year-olds in its Pre-K for All (PK4A) program. NYC enrolled 53,000 4-year-old children in PK4A in 2014, approximately 51% of the city’s 4-year-old population. Enrollment in PK4A grew steadily over the next two years to 68,647 children in 2015-2016 (66.6%); and 70,430 children (68.3%) in 2016-2017.

There are numerous advocates at both the state and local level who are vocal on the importance of pre-K, including K-12 advocacy groups. Many of the advocates are working together to spearhead a campaign to acknowledge access to high-quality preschool for all children as a basic constitutional right.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** UPK is administered by the Office of Early Learning (OEL), within the New York State Department of Education (NYSED). OEL's staff of 13 is tasked with implementing over \$800 million per year in state and federal grants for prekindergarten programs including UPK and the Voluntary Registered Nursery Schools and Kindergartens.

At the New York City Department of Education (NYCED), the Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE) is charged with implementing the universal preschool program and integrate preschool into a P-12<sup>th</sup> grade system. The Center for Children's Initiatives provides specialized training and technical assistance to programs serving birth-through-school-aged children.

**Education and compensation.** New York requires teachers to hold a BA as well as a teacher specialization certificate in early childhood. Pre-K teachers do not have salary parity with K-3 teachers, except for those teaching in public school preschool.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** New York has a maximum class size of 20 for both 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio requirement of 1:9. For classes of 19 or 20 students, there must be one teacher and two paraprofessionals assigned to each class.

**Learning time.** Funding is for a minimum of 2.5 hours per day, but many programs opt to run a school-day or extended-day program using local funds or other funding sources. Programs must operate five days per week for a minimum of 180 days per year. All school districts can elect to provide prekindergarten programming in the summer if they wish, using the same prekindergarten funds. Approximately 75% of children served in 2016-2017 were in in full-day programs.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** In 2011, the New York Board of Regents adopted the revised early learning standards, the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. These comprehensive, multi-domain ELDS are aligned with state K-3 standards, state college and career ready standards, and the New York State Common Core Learning Standards. The New York State P-12 Learning Standards for the Arts will be fully implemented in the 2018-2019 school year. To support the use of the ELDS, the state provides professional development opportunities and additional resources.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** New York does not have a list of approved or recommended curricula for the state funded pre-K programs, but programs must select and adopt a curriculum that is aligned with the ELDS. Supports for curriculum implementation include the updated Planning for High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs; Summer Institute for Programs serving 3-year-olds (held in July 2017); guidance for school districts operating Prekindergarten programs for 3-year-olds; website resources, including tip sheets for setting up the environment and checklists to ensure curriculum addresses opportunities across all domains. The state also offers ongoing TA and OEL sponsored training on curriculum. Curricula is reviewed and discussed through periodic monitoring of programs.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 12.7% of UPK students were identified as having special needs. To support these children, co-teaching models are required in preschool inclusion classrooms. Preschool teachers are required to possess specific qualifications and receive PD on working with children with special needs. Some regions/programs provide coaching of preschool teachers about

children with special needs, however, this is not required or defined by the state. The proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to no more than 50%.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** NYS policy permits monolingual non-English classes, transitional bilingual programs, dual language immersion classes, summer language programs to support DLLs, pull-out instruction for English language instruction and dual language Pre-K programs. NYS policy requires monitoring at either the program or state level that is specifically focused on the quality of bilingual instruction. NYS policy requires preschool programs to screen and assess children in their home language if valid screening and assessment methods are available in the home language. Programs are required to collect and use information on language inputs in the home. Guidance, including the New York State Blueprint for English Language Learners, has been released conveying that home language support is best practice and programs are required to ensure that children with limited English proficiency are provided equal access to the prekindergarten program and opportunities to achieve the same program goals and standards as other children. Preschool programs are required to provide recruitment, enrollment, outreach information, and communication to the families in their home language. The number of DLLs in pre-K is unknown.

**High quality teaching.** ECERS and CLASS are used by UPK programs, but scores are not available for review.

**Professional development.** Pre-K teachers are required to complete 175 clock hours of PD every five years. State policy does not specifically require ongoing classroom-embedded support, but local districts can decide to provide it.

**Child Assessments.** Child assessments are determined locally; but must be aligned with the state's ELDS. School districts are required to establish a process for assessing the developmental baseline and ongoing progress of all children participating in the program in at least language, cognitive, and social skill development. Data from preschool child assessments are not used by the state agency.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Two prekindergarten grant funding streams require annual visits; other structured observations are determined locally. The state does not receive the results of the observations; but does require that assessments used are research-based, valid, reliable, and include environmental quality and teacher/child interactions. Specific instruments are chosen at the local level. There has not been a formal evaluation of UPK.

**Integrated System.** There is some alignment in the system, mostly around the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. However, curriculum, child assessments, program assessments, and PD requirements are decided at the local level. Data collected may be used at the local level, but the state does not collect this information.

## North Carolina

Since 2001, North Carolina has provided state-funded pre-kindergarten education, originally via the More at Four PreKindergarten Program, now through the NC Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) Program. Eligible children are identified based on a number of factors: having a developmental delay or identified disability, coming from a family with an income at or below 75% of the state median income, having a chronic health condition, or limited English proficiency. Similarly, children whose parents are active duty military personnel are automatically eligible for the program.

NC Pre-K classrooms are available statewide in privately licensed Head Start programs, child care centers, and public schools. All programs must earn high-quality ratings under the state child-care licensing system to qualify for participation in NC Pre-K and the state’s subsidy system. Program standards set for NC Pre-K must be met in both public and nonpublic settings.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** North Carolina’s Gov. Roy Cooper is in his first term and it is too early to determine his support of pre-K. Former Gov. McCrory (R) asked for, and the legislature delivered on, a \$5M expansion, which is now permanent. This was clearly a bipartisan effort, recognizing quality. However, the legislature is very clear members only want to serve those who have no opportunity anywhere else at this point. The eligibility goal is to address greatest need at the moment: those who have not had an early learning experience, who are not enrolled in any classrooms, or cannot get access another way. In 2016-2017, NC Pre-K served 27,019 4-year-olds, approximately 22% of the 4-year-old population in North Carolina.

Approximately \$18.8 M in one-time funds that were available in 2011-2012 were not available in 2012-2013. However, in 2013-2014, \$12.4M in recurring funds were added to the program, making it possible to serve more children than originally anticipated for the year. In 2014-2015, \$123.5 million in state spending was used to support NC Pre-K, which was a reduction of more than \$16 million, the third largest decrease across all state pre-K programs. In 2016-2017, there was a slight reduction in state spending from the previous year. In 2016-2017, approximately \$209 million of federal, state, and local funds supported the program. The majority of funding for NC Pre-K comes from the state, including \$78 million generated by the North Carolina Education Lottery.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Office of Early Learning (OEL) housed within the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) is a new office that focuses on Pre-K–Grade 3, however it does not oversee NC Pre-K. OEL Executive Director John Pruette recently served as President of the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. OEL partners with the FirstSchool initiative of the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. FirstSchool is a Pre-K–Grade 3 initiative to promote public school efforts to become more responsive to the needs of an increasingly younger, more diverse population. The North Carolina State Board of Education Policy dictates teacher education and educator licensure.

The NC Pre-K Program is administered by the NC Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), Early Education Unit. When the pre-K program was transferred from DPI to HHS in 2011, it lost about \$32M in the budget, and many key staff. There is enough staff for direct services, but the agency must cover administrative issues such as contracts, management of staff, and professional development. The transition has also weakened the state’s P-3 alignment efforts.

**Education and compensation.** All lead teachers in NC Pre-K classrooms are required to hold a BA/BS in CD/ECE or a related field as well as a NC Birth - K or PK/K add-on license. Only NC Pre-K teachers in public schools have the same starting salary and salary schedule as K-3 for all years of service.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** NC Pre-K has a maximum class size of 18 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:9. Classrooms that provide for inclusive settings for children with disabilities may require an adult-to-child ratio lower than 1:9 as outlined in the North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities.

**Learning time.** NC Pre-K programs receiving funding are mandated to operate 6.5 hours per day for 36 weeks each year.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development (NC ELDS) were adopted in 2013, and cover all essential domains. The NC ELDS are aligned with the state Standard Course of Study (Common Core State Standards and North Carolina's Essential Standards). The state Provides professional development opportunities to support use of NC ELDS and additional resources are provided to programs to implement them.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** NC Pre-K teachers are assigned mentors to support the implementation of curricula and formative assessments that is informed by and aligned with the NC ELDS to support children's development and learning needs. As part of the mentor/evaluation process to support the Birth-K licensure process, teachers are trained in the implementation of curriculum and monitored for effective practices as aligned to the NC ELDS. This system is designed to ensure curricula is implemented with fidelity. North Carolina has an approved, but not required, curriculum list which includes: Bank Street; Creative Curriculum; HighScope; Opening the World of Learning (OWL); Tools of the Mind; Passports: Experiences for Pre-K Success (2007); and Investigator Club PreK Learning System, NC Edition.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 5% of NC Pre-K students received special education services. To support these students, pre-K teachers are required to possess specific qualifications for working with children with special needs and must follow the Division for Early

Childhood's (DEC) best practices. Coaching of preschool teachers about children with special needs is also required. OEL administers the state's exceptional children program (619 program).

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** DCDEE has developed a plan to better serve ELLs with additional efforts made at the local level and to comply with Title VI laws. North Carolina birth through kindergarten licensed teachers receive formal, needs-based mentoring/coaching support linked to child assessment and teacher evaluation to improve instructional practices for children served, including the requirement that children are screened in their home languages. Program standards require that sites serving children and families who do not speak English or have limited English proficiency are encouraged to hire staff fluent in the child's native language and provide recruitment, enrollment, and outreach information to families in their home languages. North Carolina was unable to report the number of DLL students served in NC Pre-K.

**High quality teaching.** NC Pre-K classrooms must meet at least a 5.0 on an ECERS-R assessment as part of the QRIS/Star-rated licensure system every three years. In the most recent NC Pre-K evaluation, a sample of 374 NC Pre-K classrooms were observed in 2013-2014 using the ECERS-R and the average total scores was 5.7 (on a 7.0 scale). Almost all (97 percent) of the sample classrooms scored in the high-quality range (5.0 and above), with the remainder (3 percent) scoring in the medium-quality range (3.0–4.9), and none scoring in the low-quality range (1.0–2.9.) On the ECERS-R Interaction Subscale, the average score was 6.4 (on a 7.0 scale). The ECERS tools have been used in North Carolina for many years as part of the licensing system, and these findings are consistent with evaluations that have been occurring since 2002.

**Professional development.** As previously described, all NC Pre-K teachers participate in a coaching program. The amount of mentoring/coaching that a NC Birth - K licensed teacher receives is based on formally assessed needs; resulting in different types of professional development plans, including specific strategies designed in collaboration with the teacher, evaluator, and site administrator (private sites). Teachers typically receive approximately 50 contact hours with coaches having caseloads of 15-25 teachers. In addition, all teachers are required to complete 18 clock hours per year of professional development.

**Child Assessments.** Staff are required to conduct ongoing (regular) formative assessments to gather information about each child's growth and skill development, as well as to inform instruction. All formative assessments used by NC Pre-K must be approved by the NC Child Care Commission based on the assessment tool's ability to collect information on children's behaviors, development, skills, knowledge, strengths, needs and interests across all domains of development and be aligned with the NC ELDS. As previously described, coaches support the implementation of formative assessments.

**Data-driven decision-making.** NC Pre-K classrooms must meet at least a 5.0 on an ECERS-R assessment as part of the QRIS/Star-rated licensure system every three years. If a classroom rates less than 5.0 on the ECERS-R, staff are given one year to make improvements per the improvement plan that is developed jointly with the site administrator and the state agency's regulatory consultant.

The state regulatory consultants and local NC Pre-K contract administrative agency staff annually observe classrooms for appropriate implementation of curriculum, formative assessments, early learning standards, staff/child ratios, group size, learning environments and health and safety requirements and then provide feedback. Assigned mentors and evaluators work directly with teachers

on supporting their effectiveness to ensure classroom environments are responsive to teaching and children's learning.

NC Pre-K teachers are required to be formally observed and assessed using the NC Professional Teaching Standards, as measured Rubric for Evaluating NC Teachers, based on a formal observation schedule determined by the NC DPI. Teachers develop and follow an individual professional development plan, which may address classroom quality needs. Documentation of children's learning (formative) data collected by each local NC Pre-K program and DCDEE child care consultants monitor for classroom and site compliance with collection of data. Mentors and Evaluators (for Birth - K licensed teachers) check to ensure use of formative assessment data to inform child learning (includes families), teacher planning and professional development. Results of classroom quality ECERS-R assessments are collected and reported by an independent assessor to DCDEE.

The last formal evaluation of NC Pre-K (2017) included a total sample of 512 kindergarten children (NC Pre-K=255, non-NC Pre-K=257) who attended 135 kindergarten classrooms in 2015-2016. The results suggest that the NC Pre-K had positive effects on children's math and executive functioning at the end of kindergarten.

**Integrated System.** Because NC Pre-K is no longer housed in the NC DPI, opportunities to align pre-K with K-12 more intentionally have slowed. There is some opportunity to continue to build on that system, with OEL. The North Carolina Star Rated License Project (QRIS), established in 1999, has allowed the system to integrate some of the system's components, most notably teacher qualifications, professional development, and licensing.



## Ohio

The Ohio Public Preschool Program was officially established in 1990, after four years as a pilot program. In 2013-2014, the eligible providers for this program expanded from school districts to include highly rated child care providers and chartered nonpublic schools. The state has worked to remove barriers to funding, so all types of programs have access to both public preschool and child care funds. This scan focuses on the Ohio Department of Education (ODE)'s publicly funded preschool program, the Ohio Early Childhood Education (ECE) program, which does not include the publicly funded preschool programs in child care or Head Start (where more than 38,000 preschool-aged children are served in highly rated programs).

Since 2006-2007, grants have been awarded based upon a poverty index. With new funds added in 2016-2017, grants were awarded to high-quality preschool programs located within district boundaries that have high needs (i.e., high poverty and low achievement). Ohio expanded its eligible providers to also include public districts, chartered nonpublic districts, charter schools, and child care programs. Ohio has a total of 390 grantees.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	–	–	–	–	–	●	–	●	—	ND	–	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** There is broad support for preschool in Ohio, but funding and enrollment remain quite limited for a state of Ohio's size. In 2012, Governor John Kasich (R) said in his 2015 State of the State Address that the state is aiming for funding 17,000 preschool slots for kids who “will be better prepared for school.” In 2014-2015, the state added \$11.2 million on top of the \$10 million added in 2013-2014, for a total of \$21.2 million in the 2014-2015 state biennium. This increases the number of ECE funded children from 8,150 in 2013-2014 to a total of 11,090 funded children in 2014-2015. In 2016-2017, this number increased by 8% to 15,942 children. Despite the increase, this leaves enrollment of 4-year-olds at roughly 11% of the population.

The Ohio Business Roundtable (BRT) has been a leader on early childhood policy. It supported the creation of the early childhood position in the Governor's office, the development of the new kindergarten readiness assessment, and the successful RTT-ELC grant application. A number of foundations have also supported pre-K efforts including Cleveland PRE4CLE, Success by 6 in Cincinnati, The Raymond John Wean Foundation, and Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. A number of city-led efforts have sprouted up in recent years, including programs in Cleveland and Columbus.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Pre-K is administered through the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness housed within ODE. Child care and the state's QRIS is in the Department of Job and Family Services. However, the teams work together progressing towards alignment between the programs. Three FTEs are responsible for administering the pre-K programs.

**Education and compensation.** Ohio does not require lead teachers to have a BA although they do require early childhood specialization. In the QRIS, programs earn more points for meeting a higher education requirement. There are no salary parity policies for pre-K teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 24 and for 4-year-olds it is 28, ratios are 1:12 and 1:14 respectively. All programs are required to participate in Ohio's QRIS, Step Up To Quality (SUTQ), and are given additional points for meeting a 1:10 staff-to-child ratio or maximum class size of 20.

**Learning time.** The Early Childhood Education Grants (ECE) program funds a half-day program, 12.5 hours per week. House Bill 64 (2015) allows preschools to extend the day using publicly funded child care dollars for children who are eligible at or below 130% FPL.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Ohio's two sets of standards, the Early Learning and Development Standards (OELDS), revised in 2011; and the Ohio's Early Learning Program Standards (OELPS) revised in 2009; are comprehensive and aligned with the Ohio Learning Standards (K–12 Standards), including English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. The state provides professional development opportunities to support the use of OELDS and the Birth Through Kindergarten Entry Implementation Guides provides implementation support for them.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Programs are required to adopt a curriculum but the decision on which curriculum to use is determined locally. The state requires the curriculum be research-based and aligned to the OELDS. Review of the curricula in use is part of the monitoring process. There is not a system to ensure that curriculum is implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 14.4% of the pre-K students were identified as having special needs. Preschool teachers are required to possess specific qualifications and participate in PD on working with children with special needs. State Support Teams are available regionally to support programs.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Ohio is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in its pre-K programs, nor does the state have policies to regulate services for preschool DLLs.

**High quality teaching.** Currently ECERS or ELLCO data were not able to be reviewed.

**Professional development.** Teachers are required to complete 20 hours of PD every two years. Programs are now required to participate in the state's QRIS, Step Up to Quality (SUTQ); and are given extra points for attaining 30 hours of PD every two years at the star four and five levels. State policy does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers.

**Child Assessments.** ODE and the Department of Job and Family Services are jointly implementing the state developed Early Learning Assessment, a pre-K-through kindergarten formative assessment, covering ages 36 to 72 months, which is aligned with the OELDS. Implementation began in 2015. Data

are used to track child and program level outcomes over time; adjust curricula; guide teacher training; and make changes to state policies regarding the preschool program. The state provide provides resources and PD opportunities for both administrators and teachers to understand how to use the assessment.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All pre-K programs are observed annually using the Ohio Classroom Observation Tool, however the state does not receive the results of the observations. Pre-K programs are now required to be in the SUTQ and be at a level 3. Through SUTQ, programs are observed periodically, and the teachers receive feedback as part of the process. The teachers, the classrooms and the program also complete an annual self-assessment. These observations are collected and used to create goals and are identify professional development training needs.

The ECE program has been evaluated for process quality using ELLCO, with various stages completed in 2009, 2011, and 2012.

**Integrated System.** Child assessments and the state's OELDS are integrated into not only pre-K, but also the early childhood system. However, professional development and curriculum are not as strongly supported by the state's system. With the requirement of all programs participating in SUTQ, more data may be available at the state level, but without that information, the state has minimal program quality information.

## Oklahoma

Oklahoma started its Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program in 1980 with the intent of serving all 4-year-olds in the state. In 1990, the program received statewide funding for 4-year-olds eligible for the federal Head Start program, but local areas could choose to serve additional 4-year-olds through local funds or tuition. In 1998, Oklahoma became the second state in the nation to provide free preschool for all 4-year-olds, with 99% of school districts providing the program. Through the state’s school finance formula, public school districts receive funding for the Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program. A per-pupil rate, calculated using the age of the child and the length of the program day, is used to repay districts.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	ND	○	–	○	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Despite having one of the most notable universal preschool programs in the country, enrolling more than 73% of all 4-year-olds in the state, political will in the state is largely quiet. Gov. Mary Fallin (R) has publicly supported improving third-grade literacy in the state. In 2015, the legislature passed S285, ensuring that the learning standards for early childhood are aligned with any new subject matter standards adopted. State funding for preschool education is more than a \$1,000 per pupil below its level in 2010 and has been stagnant or declining for the past five years. This is part of a more general problem faced by the state attributed to both recent tax cuts/breaks and the energy market downturn. In 2016-2017, state pre-K spending decreased slightly, totaling \$3,501 per child.

The Oklahoma Champions for Early Opportunities is a statewide network of businesses and community leaders dedicated to advocating to businesses, legislative, and community leaders on the link between early childhood development and economic growth. Most recently, the group has convened a business summit to focus on early childhood development in several cities throughout the state where business leaders and state agency heads discussed Oklahoma’s workforce challenges. Early childhood is fully supported by the local business community which has taken on the role of educating the lawmakers on the importance of early learning.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** In recent years, there have been some leadership changes in the office, Early Childhood and Family Education, that oversees the pre-K program. Moreover, this department has just one person. However, the state has a tradition of strong leadership at the Department of Education (DOE) and there are strong leaders in other institutions within the state as well as the Early Childhood Education Institute at the University of Oklahoma, Tulsa. Leaders in the early

childhood community are joined by leaders in business and philanthropy in promoting a vision of strong early childhood programs throughout the state.

**Education and compensation.** Oklahoma requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus an early learning credential. Teachers are paid on par with other public school teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Oklahoma has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** Programs have the option of operating a part-day (2.5 hours per day) or school-day program (six hours per day) or a combination of both within each district. However, most of the children (87% of enrollment) who attend the pre-K program are in full-day programs. Schools can collaborate with other agencies and programs to provide extended-day services.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** In 2016, Oklahoma adopted the Oklahoma Academic Standards, which created vertically aligned pre-K to 12th grade standards. They are comprehensive; and the DOE is providing continuous professional development and support to help districts successfully implement these standards to strengthen pre-K programs and provide effective instruction and learning beyond the early years.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** To support curriculum implementation, the Oklahoma Curriculum Frameworks provide supports for aligning and integrating the state standards. In addition, there is a state approved comprehensive curricula list (Big Day for Pre-K and Frog Street) and one subject specific (Pre-K Alpha Friends (HMH) - Literacy Curriculum). Even though curricula selection is a locally determined decision and monitored by the local districts and administrators, the state requires the chosen curriculum be aligned with the state standards.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 13.7% of pre-K students were identified as having special needs. Preschool teachers are required to possess specific qualifications and PD is required for those who serve children with special needs. The proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to less than 50% of children.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** In 2016-2017, 8% of pre-K students were identified as being DLLs. To support these students, extra funding is provided. Professional development requirements include training for certified teachers and support staff who work with English Language Learners.

**High quality teaching.** According to a study by Georgetown University, the Tulsa public schools preschool program had reasonably high quality as assessed by the CLASS and other indicators in 2006. However, there is a lack of recent statewide data that could be used to draw conclusions about high-quality teaching.

**Professional development.** Teachers are required to complete 75 clock hours of PD every five years. The content of the PD is required to include: autism, blood borne pathogens, bullying prevention, child abuse, FERPA, hazardous communications, English Learners, and racial and ethnic education. In the 2016-2017 school year, DOE developed policies for individualized professional development plans which were piloted in 2017-2018; with full participation required by all districts and teachers in 2018-2019. Oklahoma does not require on-going classroom-embedded support to be provided to pre-K teachers; however, teachers do receive on-going feedback based on their teacher evaluations.

**Child Assessments.** Oklahoma does not specify assessment expectations for state-funded prekindergarten programs; but does provide some resources for educators and parents.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All pre-K teachers are observed using the Tulsa TLE Observation Evaluation System, Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model, or the Marzano Focus Framework. The state receives results of these structured observations as well as the teachers who receive on-going feedback. New administrators attend an initial multi-day training with a final exam; and a one-day re-certification training every two years. Other monitoring information or data are not collected by the state.

**Integrated System.** There are some components that are aligned, such as the Oklahoma Academic Standards with K-12 standards. However, the system does not collect data nor support the professional development of teachers to effectively integrate child assessments and curriculum.

## Oregon

Established in 1987, the Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten (OHSP) program provides comprehensive child and family development services for 3- and 4-year-old children from low-income families. In 1992, a state-federal partnership was formalized between the Region X Office of Head Start and the Oregon Department of Education to support a collaborative Head Start and state prekindergarten system, which later expanded to serve additional Head Start-eligible children. To provide state funding for the program, general fund dollars are allocated on a biennial basis by the state legislature. OHSP program funding is available to nonsectarian private and public organizations not receiving federal Head Start funding, including public schools, private agencies, community action agencies, government agencies, and colleges and universities.

Beginning in fall 2016, Oregon began an additional state-funded preschool program called Preschool Promise which is overseen by the Early Learning Division. This program was created via new legislation and funding to develop and implement a mixed-delivery preschool program for children from families with incomes up to 200% of federal poverty level. The mixed-delivery model is based on the assumption that high-quality learning experiences can take place in a wide variety of settings, and families should be able to choose the setting that works best for them and their children. In the first year of implementation, the program was funded to serve 1,300 3- and 4-year-old children. Funding for Preschool Promise goes directly to Early Learning Hubs which can then subcontract with public schools, child care, Head Start, Relief Nurseries, Education Service Districts, and other community-based organizations.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Oregon Head Start Prekindergarten (OHSP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	○	ND	○	○	○	○

#### Preschool Promise

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	—	●	●	●	●	○	—	—	ND	○	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met — Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Kate Brown (D) has been a supporter of early learning initiatives and was vocal in her support of House Bill 3380 (2015) which provided a blueprint to make quality early learning

opportunities available to more children from low-income families. The bill provides funding for children from families with incomes at or below 200% FPL, allows a mix of programs to apply for state funding, and created Preschool Promise. There is legislative movement to increase education level requirements for lead and assistant teachers and improve quality improvement efforts through coaching, job embedded professional opportunities, and CLASS observations.

In 2016-2017, Oregon enrolled 9,456 children in its two pre-K programs, an increase of 1,616 students (21%) from the previous year. In addition to a substantial increase in enrollment, state pre-K spending increased by more than 27%. Per-child state spending was \$9,533 per child, ranking third out of 43 states, D.C. and Guam operating pre-K programs.

The Children's Institute in Oregon has convened a bipartisan coalition of business and community leaders, including former elected officials to champion for early learning.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Early Learning Division administers both pre-K programs and is housed within the Department of Education (DOE), but the DOE does not have authority over the Early Learning Division. The director of the Early Learning Division is appointed by and reports to the governor. There have been some recent leadership changes within the Early Learning Division, but the staff has expanded to 3 FTEs who are responsible for the two pre-K programs.

The Early Learning Division works closely with its Early Learning Council (ELC) that has the authority to set minimum and target salary requirements for teachers. HB 3380 directs the ELC to identify resources to develop, support and sustain the preschool program, including evaluation, professional development opportunities, technical assistance, monitoring and guidance to ensure pathways and supports to increase culturally and linguistically diverse preschool staff. The ELC also makes the final decision on the selection of the Early Learning Hubs (Hubs), the applicants and recipients of Preschool Promise funds. Hubs are intermediaries between the state and providers, created to ensure fiscal and specified performance metric accountability of providers. Hubs are responsible for developing a community plan and identifying providers within their community that fit within that plan. The Early Learning Division is expected to provide technical assistance to Hubs and preschool providers to ensure continuous quality improvement, as well as collecting, aggregating, and reporting on data from the preschool programs.

#### **Education and compensation.**

***OHSP:*** Under the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, all lead teachers were required to have at least an AA by October 2011; by September 30, 2013, 50% must have earned at least a BA. Some programs have participated in local partnerships (e.g., school districts) where BA-level degrees and early childhood licensure with or without special education are required as locally determined. Teacher licensure options for public schools include Birth-3rd grade and Pre-K-K (Birth-K). There are no salary parity policies for OHSP teachers.

***Preschool Promise:*** Lead teachers are required to have a BA in ECE or a related field but waivers for this requirement are permitted as long as the teacher has submitted a plan to attain a BA and is demonstrating progress towards the BA degree. Approximately 50% of lead teachers have requested a waiver for the BA requirement (minimum requirement is a CDA).

#### **Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

***OHSP:*** OHSP has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 17 and staff-child ratio of 2:17.



**Preschool Promise:** The staff-child ratio is based on the Oregon Child Care Licensing regulations. Preschool Promise providers must obtain a rating in the top two-tiers in the Oregon Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). The top two tiers require a class size of less than 20 and/or a staff-child ratio greater than 1:10.

#### **Learning time.**

**OHSP:** Most programs operate 3.5 to four hours per day for a school year using state funding. Minimum required contact time is determined by the classroom hours combined with home-visit hours offered. School- and extended-day programs (more than six hours) are generally supported with other funding.

**Preschool Promise:** Providers must offer at minimum 900 hours of service in a program year (July 1-June 30). Programs operate on the same schedule as kindergarten programs and most operate on a school-day, school-year schedule.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Oregon Early Learning and Kindergarten Guidelines (2016), coupled with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, guide both of Oregon's pre-K programs. Together they are comprehensive and aligned with the state's K-3 standards. The state provides professional development opportunities to support use of both of the ELDS. For OHSP, additional resources are provided to programs.

#### **System that ensures effective curriculum.**

**OHSP:** The state provides training, TA, funding, and additional materials to support curriculum implementation. There is not a state approved or recommended list of curricula, nor is there a system to ensure that curricula are implemented with fidelity.

**Preschool Promise:** For this program, there is a state approved/recommended list of curricula (Creative Curriculum; HighScope; Opening the World of Learning (OWL)). Curricula must also be aligned with the ELDS. The state provides additional funding to support curriculum implementation.

#### **Support for students with special needs.**

**OHSP:** In 2016-2017, 17.6% of OHSP students were identified as having special needs. Inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children.

**Preschool Promise:** The number of children who had special needs in 2016-2017 was not able to be reported. Early Education/Early Childhood Special Education providers utilize a consultation model of support for teachers who are serving children with identified special needs in their classroom.

#### **Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).**

**OHSP:** In 2016-2017, 24% of the OHSP children were identified as DLLs. OHSP follows the Head Start Performance Standards (HSPS), which include the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Programs are required to develop procedures for identifying children who are limited English proficient, ensure that children make progress toward acquiring English through culturally and linguistically appropriate instructional services, and inform parents of such children about instructional services used. If 50% or more of children speak a language

other than English, programs must ensure that non-English speaking children are provided language support as needed. Otherwise, DLL/ELL policies related to immersion, instruction, summer language programs, translators/bilingual staff, professional development or coaching provided to teachers of ELL/DLLs are locally determined.

***Preschool Promise:*** The program offers monolingual and bilingual Spanish classes as well as a Burmese and a Somali language program.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS data are not available for review for either program.

**Professional development.**

***OHSP:*** Teachers are required to complete 15 clock hours of PD per year. The updated HSPS require all teachers to have annual professional development plans and ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers.

***Preschool Promise:*** Teachers are required to receive 20 to 24 hours of training and/or equivalent college course credits annually to maintain the providers top two-tier rating in the QRIS. If teachers and/or assistant teachers do not meet the minimum education requirements, then a professional development plan is required. Preschool Promise providers are connected to a Quality Improvement Specialist to support continuous quality improvement related to QRIS standards. Some of the support does include job-embedded professional development opportunities. Coaching is not yet provided systematically but the program is working toward this goal.

**Child Assessments.**

***OHSP:*** State policy requires all OHSP programs use Teaching Strategies GOLD throughout the year. Data are used to guide teacher training, professional development, or technical assistance; adjust curricula; to track child and program level outcomes over time; to make changes to state policies regarding the preschool program; and to provide a measure of kindergarten readiness.

***Preschool Promise:*** The state QRIS has an approved list of child assessments that includes both Teaching Strategies GOLD and the Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS). If a provider chooses to use a different assessment tool, it has to be aligned with the ELDS and approved by QRIS evaluators. Child assessments are required, at minimum, to be used at least three times in the program year. Data are used to adjust curricula; to track child and program level outcomes over time; to make changes to state policies regarding the preschool program; to provide a measure of kindergarten readiness; and to provide formative information so that teachers can individualize instruction to meet their students' needs.

**Data-driven decision-making.**

***OHSP:*** No formal evaluation has been conducted of the OHSP to date. Program quality is monitored by the Early Learning Division through ongoing communication with grantees and the Regional Office of Head Start. Evaluations are conducted on site for every grantee every three years, either through ODE and/or the Office of Head Start, though additional site visits are conducted as needed. Regardless of funding source, all children enrolled in the OHSP programs receive unique identifier numbers so that children's developmental progress can be followed as they enter the K-12 system.

Per the HSPS, programs are required to use CLASS for program improvement, but the policy does not specify frequency of the assessments. The state does not receive the results of the observations. All OHSP programs are required to participate in QRIS, but they are not required to achieve a certain quality rating level.

***Preschool Promise:*** The use of structured classroom observations was determined locally in 2016-2017, the first year of implementation. During the 2017-2018 program year, all sites will be assessed using CLASS. The data will be used by various stakeholder groups to support continuous quality improvement efforts. For subsequent years of implementation, requirements are being established.

All Preschool Promise programs are required to participate in QRIS and be at the top two-tiers (Level 4 or 5). However, programs may request a limited duration waiver for this requirement while they build capacity.

**Integrated System.** Currently, integration of the pre-K system is being developed, in part due to the newness of the Preschool Promise program. Selection and implementation of curriculum and child assessments are not fully supported by, nor used to inform, the professional development system. Structured classroom observation data are not consistently being collected and shared with the state.

## Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania funds four pre-K programs: Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP); Kindergarten for Four-Year-Olds and School Based Pre-K (K4/SBPK); Pre-K counts (PAPKC); and the Ready to Learn Block Grant (RTL).

PAPKC and HSSAP are the larger and more conventional early childhood education programs. PAPKC is designed for children from families with income up to 300% FPL. Approximately 83% of Pennsylvania school districts offer PAPKC programs, with half- and full-day programs operated by school districts, child care centers, or Head Start programs. HSSAP provides additional funding to the federal Head Start program to create additional Head Start slots as well as provide extended-day services for part-day programs. K4/SBPK and RTL are smaller and more flexible programs, to the extent local education agencies have much more discretion as to how funds for these programs are spent and who is eligible to receive funding.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (HSSAP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	—	●	●	—	●	—	○	—	ND	—	●	○	—

#### Kindergarten for Four-Year-Olds and School Based Pre-K (K4/SBPK)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	—	○	○	—	○	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—

#### Pre-K counts (PAPKC)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	—	●	●	●	●	—	○	—	ND	—	●	○	—

## Ready to Learn Block Grant (RTL)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	—	ND	—	●	—	—

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met — Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Support for state pre-K has been relatively strong since Ed Rendell’s session as Governor; and looks to continue under Governor Tom Wolf (D), who has expressed support for increasing funding for preschool. In 2016-2017, state pre-K spending for all programs increased by more than \$31 million from the previous year. Pennsylvania ranked seventh in state spending out of 43 states, D.C. and Guam operating pre-K programs. There is strong business community and foundation support for early childhood programs in Pennsylvania.

In 2016-2017, Pennsylvania’s four pre-K programs enrolled more than 28,000 children (5598 in HSSAP; 2868 in K4/SBPK; 18,315 in PAPKC; 2052 in RTL), more than 13% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 6.5% of 3-year-olds. This 8% increase in enrollment from the previous year was accompanied by a 17% increase in state spending; which had followed a 2016 budget impasse. In addition to the state programs, there is strong political support for the newly created Philadelphia pre-K program funded with a soda tax.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The PA Department of Education provides oversight for state pre-K programs. Policy for the PAPKC and PAHSSAP is developed by the Department of Education, but the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), an office jointly accountable to the Departments of Education and Human Services, administers and monitors these programs with 12 FTEs for PAPKC and 8 FTEs for HSSAP.

The K4/SBPK programs, which are funded through the state’s general fund, are available to districts wishing to offer these programs, and in the 2016-2017 school year, 19% of school districts offered pre-K through the K4/SBPK program. Many of the policy decisions for this program are decentralized to individual school districts at the local level, .5 FTE is assigned from the state level. RTL is funded through a state aid formula, with 75% of funds targeted to serving children who have not achieved proficiency on the PA System for School Assessment test. School districts can opt to offer this pre-K program or choose from a list of other approved services. Similar to K4/SBPK, most decisions are made at the local level. One FTE from the state is assigned to RTL. Fiscal monitoring is required of each grantee in all four programs and is conducted by the state.

### Education and compensation.

**HSSAP:** Under the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, all lead teachers were required to have at least an AA by October 2011; by September 30, 2013, 50% must have had at least a BA. By September 30, 2013, all assistant teachers must have had at least a CDA or be enrolled in a program to receive a CDA, AA, or BA within two years. If teachers are employed by a school district, ECE certification is required. There are no salary parity policies for HSSAP teachers.

**K4/SBPK:** SBPK/K4 requires lead teachers to have a BA, however Elementary (K-6) certification without ECE specialization or endorsement is allowed for teachers in public school settings. There are no salary parity policies for K4 or SBPK teachers.

**PAPKC:** Lead teachers in all settings were required to have a BA and ECE certification by December 2011. The N-3 certification will no longer be issued, though teachers who currently have it will still be able to work in the program. Teachers who do not meet this requirement are considered not in compliance, which can lower the program score on the Program Review Instrument and affect future funding. There are no salary parity policies for PAPKC teachers.

**RTL:** Lead teachers are required to have a BA when located in public school RTL programs; but an AA when in nonpublic school settings. However, lead teachers have to have ECE specialization. There are no salary parity policies for RTL teachers

#### **Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**HSSAP:** Maximum class size is 20 with a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**K4/SBPK:** K4 programs follow kindergarten requirements so there are no class size limits, but most programs have 20 children and a 1:10 staff-child ratio. School-Based Pre-K (SBPK) follows the school board regulations for pre-K that require a maximum class size of 20 and staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**PAPKC:** For PAPKC, maximum class size is 20, and staff-child ratio is 1:10, and a class size of 17 students is recommended. The recommended staff-child ratio is 2:17; if the 1:10 ratio is used, other qualified staff must be present on site in case of emergency.

**RTL:** Maximum class size is 20 with a staff-child ratio of 1:10

#### **Learning time.**

**HSSAP:** Programs must operate according to federal Head Start Performance Standards, which require a minimum of 3.5 hours per day, four days per week. Collaboration with other agencies and programs is required per program regulation, but implementation is locally determined.

**K4/SBPK:** K4/SBPK classrooms operate a minimum of 2.5 hours per day.

**PAPKC:** School-day programs operate for at least five instructional hours per day; part-day programs operate at least 2.5 instructional hours per day. In 2016-2017, 85% of PAPKC children attended a full-day program.

**RTL:** RTL classrooms operate a minimum of 2.5 hours per day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood (PA ELS) were revised in 2014, are comprehensive, and aligned with K-3 and in the process of being aligned with the newly developed English Language Development Standards and the state's Career Education and Work Standards. The state provides professional development opportunities to support the use of the ELDS.

**HSSAP:** The PA ELS must be aligned to the curriculum and child assessments. Face-to-face and asynchronous trainings on the PA ELS are also available to HSSAP programs.

**K4/SBPK:** Child assessments are not required to be aligned with the PA ELS.

**PAPKC:** The PA ELS must be aligned to the curriculum and child assessments.

**RTL:** All of the identified supports for using the PA ELS are available to districts, but districts need to request the services. Curricula are not required to be aligned with the PA ELS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The state provides a list of curricula (13 comprehensive curricula are currently on the list) that has been aligned with the PA ELS. Curriculum companies may choose to submit an alignment at any time. The state aligned list reflects those who have voluntarily undergone the alignment process. There is not a system in the state to ensure that curricula are implemented with fidelity.

**HSSAP:** HSSAP programs are encouraged to use curricula on the state-approved list.

**K4/SBPK:** School code requires that pre-K curriculum and instruction be standards-based but decisions about curricula are locally determined. The state curricula list is not required to be used by K4 or SBPK.

**PAPKC:** PAPKC programs are encouraged to use curricula on the state approved list.

**RTL:** The curriculum must be standards-based, but it is decided upon locally.

**Support for students with special needs.** OCDEL released an inclusion policy in 2017, yet not all programs are required to follow it.

**HSSAP:** In 2016-2017, 5.4% of the children in HSSAP were identified as having special needs. HSSAP classrooms must follow the new inclusion policy.

**K4/SBPK:** Although K4 and school-based PK programs are not required to follow the newly released inclusion policy; the information and supports are available if requested. The number of children with special needs enrolled in K4/SBPK is unknown.

**PAPKC:** PAPKC providers must follow the 2017 inclusion policy. Classrooms are expected to reflect the naturally occurring ratio of students with and without developmental delays and disabilities; and should not contain more than 20% of students who have been identified by the start of the program as having a developmental delay or disability. However, in attempting to promote inclusion, approved providers may not deny a student's admission to a classroom based on a disability or delay. In 2016-2017, 9.6% of PAPKC students were identified as having special needs.

**RTL:** Children who receive special education services may attend state preschool classrooms, but are not counted in state preschool enrollment. Although, RTL programs are not monitored by OCDEL like other state-funded programs, the supports for the policy are accessible by RTL classrooms (e.g. CONNECT hotline, site visits, coaching).

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The PA State Board of Education passed English Development Standards in 2017. OCDEL has partnered with WIDA Early Years to provide support, resources, and PD for English language instruction for young children. New DLL policies go into effect in 2017-2018. In 2016-2017, the state provided guidance but not regulation on ELL/DLL supports and services; which are primarily locally determined, with the exception for PAPKC; described below. The number of DLLs enrolled in all the state funded pre-K programs is unknown.

**PAPKC:** Preschool programs are required to provide recruitment, enrollment, and outreach information to families in their home languages. Other program options to support DLLs include: monolingual non-English classes; transitional bilingual programs; DLL immersion classes; summer language programs; and DLLs pulled out for ESL.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS scores are not available for review for any of the programs.

#### **Professional development.**

**HSSAP:** Teachers are required to complete 15 clock hours of PD per year. State policy does not require ongoing classroom-embedded support to be provided to teachers.

**K4/SBPK:** The 180 hours of PD are required of teachers with Instructional Certification in public school classrooms (SBPK) but not nonpublic schools (K4). An induction plan is required for teachers with Instructional Certification. New teachers are required to participate in coaching.

**PAPKC:** Lead teachers are expected to complete 180 clock hours of PD every five years. First-year teachers are required to have induction plans and participate in coaching; teachers in child care centers are required to have PD plans as part of the QRIS requirement.

**RTL:** Lead teachers are expected to complete 180 clock hours of PD every five years. First-year instructionally certified teachers located in public schools are required to participate in induction that includes coaching.

#### **Child Assessments.**

**HSSAP:** Programs choose an assessment system from among a list of state-approved tools which are required to be aligned with the PA ELS. Child assessments are considered formative with reporting twice a year. Data from the assessments are also used to guide teacher training, professional development, or technical assistance; and to make changes to state policies regarding the program. To support the use of the assessments, OCDEL's website has information on child assessment and links to training and materials for each of the approved tools.

**K4/SBPK:** State policy does not require K4/SBPK to assess children's learning and development during the preschool year. If programs do select an assessment; it is not required to be aligned with the PA ELS.

**PAPKC:** Programs choose an assessment system from among a list of state-approved tools which are required to be aligned with the PA ELS. Child assessments are considered formative with reporting twice a year. Data from the assessments are also used to guide teacher training, professional development, or technical assistance; and to make changes to state policies regarding the program. To support the use of the assessments, OCDEL's website has information on child assessment and links to training and materials for each of the approved tools.

**RTL:** Child assessments are required to be aligned with the PA ELS, but programs can choose the tool.



**Data-driven decision-making.**

**HSSAP:** Low-performing, new, and randomly selected classroom are observed, one time per year using ERS, CLASS, or a locally developed tool. The state has established a cohort of reliable ERS and CLASS observers who must demonstrate reliability on the tools. Participation in the state's QRIS is required for state funded HSSAP programs that are located within child care centers. The state receives the results of the observations and other information collected during monitoring processes/activities; all of which is used at both the state and local level for program improvement. In addition, the state uses results from approved child assessments systems to inform decision making.

**K4/SBPK:** The use of structured observations of classroom quality is determined locally. Information collected during monitoring processes/activities is not used at the state and/or at the local level for program improvement.

**PAPKC:** The state conducts reliable observations annually for PAPKC public school sites, and on the QRIS schedule when PAPKC is housed in child care locations. Specialists conduct assessments of classroom quality on an on-going basis and programs are required to conduct a self-assessment at least once a year. In addition, teacher evaluations using Danielson are conducted annually. Reports are generated from external assessments and used at both the state and local level for program improvement. In addition, the state uses results from approved child assessments systems to inform decision making. The state has developed a cadre of reliable ERS assessors. An external evaluation of PAPKC is currently being planned by an outside funder.

**RTL:** The use of structured observations of classroom quality is determined locally. Information collected during monitoring processes/activities is not used at the state and/or at the local level for program improvement.

**Integrated System.** The programs under the auspices of OCDEL, HSSAP and PAPKC, are more integrated within the state than K4/SBPK and RTL that have more locally decided policies in terms of child assessments and curricula. PD is integrated for new teachers in some of the programs; but again, it is not consistent across the state for all state funded pre-K programs

## Rhode Island

The Rhode Island State Pre-Kindergarten Program began in the fall of 2009 and is offered through public schools, Head Start programs, and private child care. These agencies can apply for competitive grants to provide the pre-K program. All children who turn four years old on or before September 1st and are living in participating communities are eligible for the program, but enrollment is determined through a lottery.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	ND	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Historically, leadership and support for the Rhode Island program has primarily come from Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). The push to invest in preschool was originally driven by the Chair of the Board of Regents, who had read economic studies on pre-K. The Commissioner of RIDE established a demonstration project, followed by redesigning the state funding formula with a built-in mechanism to increase state investment. Using a phased-in approach, \$10 million will be invested over 10 years to expand access to high-quality pre-K, beginning with communities with a high proportion of children eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. The goal is that pre-K expansion will create high-quality learning programs, improve access for the students who need it the most, and assure a smooth transition between early childhood and K–12.

Newly-elected Gov. Raimondo (D) has publicly, and within the budget, expressed support for preschool including following through on the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) commitment of adding state dollars to the federal grant. In 2014, Rhode Island was awarded a PDG for a total of \$19 million which has been used to expand access in high-need communities and to improve program monitoring, evaluation, and technical assistance. As a result of PDG, enrollment in Rhode Island’s pre-K program nearly doubled between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, the largest expansion in the program’s history.

RIDE added 17 classrooms (306 children) in 2014-2015 and 60 classrooms (1,080 children) in 2017-2018. The program is set to remain at 1,080 children moving forward. The Rhode Island General Assembly increased the investment in the Rhode Island State Pre-Kindergarten Program by \$1 million for the 2016-2017 school year and the legislature committed another \$1.1 million increase for 2017-2018.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** There is an early childhood section within the RIDE Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum Division staffed with two FTEs responsible for the

implementation of the state pre-K program. RIDE uses vendors, including Rhode Island's AEYC affiliate, to deliver professional development and conduct assessments.

**Education and compensation.** Teachers in the program must have a bachelor's degree with a pre-K–2 state teaching certification. Pre-K teachers have the same starting salary and fringe benefits as K-3 teachers.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** The pre-K classrooms have a maximum class size of 18 and a staff-child ratio of 1:9.

**Learning time.** All of the State Pre-K classrooms operate for 6 hours a day, 5 days per week.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS) are comprehensive and aligned to the state's K-3 standards and the Family visiting models (Watch Me Grow and PAT), Common Core, Next Generation Science Standards for kindergarten, and Head Start Standards. State pre-K teachers are required to participate in comprehensive PD focused on understanding and using the RIELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Rhode Island does not approve curricula, but does provide a list of reviewed curricula where an alignment has been done based on a variety of indicators. The state has sponsored training, provides ongoing teaching assistance, and additional funding to support curriculum implementation. The state does not monitor fidelity of implementation of a specific curriculum, but does monitor implementation of curricula through written frameworks as well as observations and interviews.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 11.9% of children enrolled in pre-K were identified as having special needs. To support these children, teacher professional development and teaching assistance are offered. Written policies to support children with disabilities are required in program documentation, and data are collected on the role of state pre-K during the referral/IEP process.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** In 2016-2017, 24% of the state preschool enrollment are DLLs, much greater than the estimated 17% of DLLs in the state. To support DLLs the state allocates extra funding and the following program options are permissible: monolingual non-English classes, transitional bilingual programs, DLL immersion classes, and DLLs pulled out for ESL. Materials are provided in English and Spanish, and communities can hire translators in a multitude of languages to meet local needs. Programs are encouraged to find ways to communicate with families in their home language; however, this is not required. Two percent of preschool lead teachers and 20% of assistants are fluent in a language other than English.

**High-quality teaching.** In 2009, when the pre-K program was piloted, NIEER was contracted to conduct a randomized control research study to evaluate the effects of Rhode Island's Pre-K pilot program on participating children's early learning outcomes. Children who participated showed significant gains in print knowledge and early math skills compared to a control group. No recent data on instructional quality is available.

**Professional development.** Beyond the required 20 hours of PD per year, teachers may choose from numerous optional PD offerings based on their needs. RIDE provides training and technical assistance to

each program through a vendor who provides in-program/classroom support as well as large group support. At a minimum, monthly onsite coaching visits are required, as is attendance at a portion of the group communities of practice.

**Child Assessments.** All programs are required to use Teaching Strategies GOLD, which is aligned with the RIELDS. The state sponsors opportunities for programs to implement the tool through TA and PD opportunities, including coaching.

**Data-driven decision-making.** All classrooms are observed using a structured classroom observation tool (CLASS or ECERS), one time per year. If a lead teacher leaves mid-year, then another assessment occurs. Rhode Island uses a vendor, the state's AEYC and QRIS assessment team to conduct the observations. The assessors are reliable and are required to attend drift and inter-rater reliability training. After the observations, the assessors compile the final scores and reports and share with RIDE. Reports are reviewed by the state and then sent to the program and the program's coach. Programs are required to write an improvement plan for any scores below a 5 on ECERS or CLASS.

In 2011, NIEER conducted a randomized control research study to evaluate the effects of Rhode Island's Pre-K pilot program on participating children's early learning outcomes. Children who participated showed significant gains in print knowledge and early math skills compared to a control group. Rhode Island is contracting with Child Trends for another evaluation, beginning in 2017 continuing through when the children are in kindergarten. Classroom quality data obtained through QRIS assessors, as well as child level measures taken at three points in time (the start of pre-K, end of pre-K, and 1st grade), will be used for the evaluation to gauge child outcomes, overarching classroom quality and an analysis of long-term costs.

**Integrated System.** RIELDS has developed an integrated system that ensures alignment of curriculum and assessment with implementation improvement informed by classroom observation and other data.

## South Carolina

South Carolina’s two state-funded preschool programs: the public-private Child Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP) and the Education Improvement Act Child Development Program (EIA 4K). A total of 61 school districts participate in CERDEP, and there are an additional three school districts that are eligible based on the 70% or higher poverty level but elect not to participate. The remaining districts do not meet the poverty level to participate in CERDEP, but they must offer, at a minimum, one half-day EIA 4K class.

State funding for EIA 4K is allocated to districts based on the number of Kindergartener’s qualified for free or reduced-price lunch in each district. Most children are served in public schools, but districts may also partner with Head Start programs. CERDEP was established in 2006, as a result of Abbeville County School District v. South Carolina court ruling. Funding for CERDEP was codified with the approval of the Read to Succeed legislation in June 2014 with passage of Act 284.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Child Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○	ND	○	●	○	○

#### Education Improvement Act Child Development Program (EIA 4K)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	●	●	●	—	●	○	○	○	ND	○	●	○	○

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met — Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Former Gov. Nikki Haley (R) was viewed as a supporter of quality preschool programs by advocated. Her successor, Gov. Henry McMaster (R), is in his first year and it is too early to determine his pre-K interest. The Institute for Child Success (ICS) in Greenville is a research and policy organization that fosters public and private partnerships to align and improve resources for the success of young children in South Carolina (and beyond). Philanthropies engaged in supporting early education in South Carolina include: the Mary Black Foundation, BCBS foundation and corporation, the Duke Endowment, and United Way. The Greenville and Charleston United Ways jointly engage a contract lobbying firm, which is same one used by ICS. Three statewide organizations—Children’s Trust of South Carolina, the Institute for Child Success, and United Way Association of South Carolina—and a long list of statewide partners have agreed to one 2015 Early Childhood Common Agenda for South Carolina that offers

specific recommendations to build a comprehensive early childhood system for children, birth-5 years old.

EIA 4K was initiated in 1984 as part of a one-cent sales tax created to support public education projects. CERDEP, the state's second early education initiative, was created in 2006 in response to Abbeville County School District, et. al. v. South Carolina school equity funding lawsuit brought by rural school districts. EIA was originally delivered in all SC school districts prior to the creation of CERDEP, now it is only offered in 25% of districts. In 2016-2017, 24,079 children were served in pre-K programs; enrolling 41% of the state's 4-year-old population. South Carolina spent over \$71 million on pre-K in this same year. Funding per child was \$2,970 per child, ranking 38<sup>th</sup> out of the 43 states, Guam, and D.C. operating pre-K programs.

**Compelling visions and strong leadership.** South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) recently created the Office of Early Learning and Literacy (OELL). OELL oversees both EIA 4K and CERDEP. In addition to OELL, CERDEP is co-administered in private preschool settings by South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness (First Steps), the state's school readiness initiative. SCDE has five FTEs in OELL for CERDEP and three FTEs for Early Learning and Literacy. In addition, there are 19 literacy specialists from the Read to Succeed Office in the OELL that support EIA 4K. First Steps has 10 FTEs. In the past few years there has been some leadership changes within OELL.

First Steps was legislatively created as a nonprofit organization, with a State Board of Trustees that govern the First Steps initiative and created the Office of First Steps to administer and monitor funding for local programs including CERDEP (not operating in public schools), ensure programmatic success, provide technical assistance, receive and analyze data from approved and funded programs, provide oversight for the approval of programs, and provide a standardized fiscal accountability system. Each county in South Carolina is served by a First Steps Partnership.

#### **Education and compensation.**

**CERDEP:** CERDEP teachers located in public schools are required to have a BA and early childhood specialization; nonpublic school teachers need to be working toward an AA. Only teachers in public schools have the same starting salary and schedule as K-3 for all years of service.

**EIA 4K:** The EIA 4K program only operates in public schools; teachers are required to have a BA plus an early learning credential. They EIA 4K teachers have the same starting salary and schedule as K-3 for all years of service. Their salary schedule is prorated for differences in length of workday or year.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Both programs have a maximum class size of 20 and require a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

#### **Learning time.**

**CERDEP:** CERDEP programs operate a minimum of 6.5 hours per day, five days a week, for at least 180 instructional days. Eligible students may not be charged an enrollment fee, tuition, or any other fees for any portion of the required instructional day. A state budget proviso for the 2017-2018 school year will permit both the SCDE and First Steps to extend the school day up to 8.5 hours per day.

**EIA 4K:** EIA 4K operates a minimum of 4 hours per day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Good Start Grow Smart Early Learning Standards, South Carolina's Early Learning Standards (SC-ELS) were revised and approved by the SC State Board of Education in August 2017. SC-ELS are comprehensive and provide strategies for how teachers and caregivers can support children's development and learning. They have been aligned with the state's K-3 standards and alignment is in progress with Head Start standards. OELL along with the Office of Standards and Learning offer PD opportunities and provide materials to support the implementation the SC-ELS. In addition, the state supported districts in creating a leadership team to coordinate the district roll out plan, including intensive PD for the SC-ELS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Act 284 (Read to Succeed) mandated that SCDE, the Read to Succeed Office, and First Steps, develop a list of approved (not mandated) research-based preschool curricula that address all domains of the whole child for use in the pre-K programs based upon the SC-ELS, and provide training and TA to support its effective use in classrooms. In order to meet the requirements of Act 284, the OELL conducted a review process to approve curricula that meet the criteria outlined in legislation. The approved, research-based preschool curricula list was the result of a comprehensive and rigorous review, including review of What Works Clearinghouse website, other states preschool approved curriculum lists. The following curricula were approved: Big Day by Scholastic; Creative Curriculum, HighScope, InvestiGators, Montessori, and Worlds of Wonder. To ensure that curricula are being implemented with the fidelity, SCDE conducts monitoring visits using the ELLCO.

**Support for students with special needs.** For both programs, inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children. Implementation of DEC policies is not required as a compliance monitoring effort, but the Office of Special Education Services encourages districts to follow developmentally appropriate and DEC best practices. The number of children with identified special needs in each program is unknown.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Both CERDEP and EIA 4K are required to collect and use information on language inputs in the home. Children are screened and assessed in their home language. The SC-ELS supporting materials provide strategies that can be used to promote the learning and development of all children including strategies to provide ideas for teachers who are working with English Language Learners (ELLs).

**High-quality teaching.** Recent ECERS or CLASS scores were not available for review for either program.

**Professional development.** In addition to the 15 clock hours of PD annually for CERDEP and EIA 4K, lead teachers in public schools are required to take six credit hours every five years. The 15 clock hours per year must be approved by the Center for Child Care Career Development, and must include at least five hours in curriculum, five hours in child development, and five hours in health and safety, guidance, or other related topics. Act 284 puts in place a comprehensive system of support, including 19 literacy specialists and over 600 reading coaches across the state that provide job-embedded, ongoing professional learning for teachers and administrators, including at the preschool level.

**Child Assessments.** Districts must select a preschool child assessment on the approved list of tools aligned with the SC-ELS. Pre-K teachers are required to conduct ongoing assessments to gather information about each child's growth and skill development across domains, as well as to inform

instruction. To support the use of the assessments, SCDE's website provides information on the three assessments including implementation support and contacts for teaching assistance.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Data collected during monitoring visits are analyzed for teaching patterns and professional learning needs across the state. Data are also analyzed for compliance trends and supports needs from state level literacy specialists. There are several evaluations being funded by the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee using various classroom observation tools, including ECERS, CLASS, and ELLCO.

**CERDEP:** The SCSDE conducts monitoring visits to all CERDEP school districts using ELLCO. In 2016-2017, the team generated a monitoring visit monthly calendar giving priority to the thirty-three plaintiff trial districts and to the twenty new CERDEP classrooms. A formal evaluation (2015) measured the impact/child outcomes of CERDEP.

**EIA 4K:** Low performing EIA 4K classrooms are also observed by the Regional Literacy Specialists using a portion of the ELLCO assessment. There has not been a formal evaluation of EIA 4K.

**Integrated system.** The state's early care and education system is partially integrated, led by the Good Start Grow Smart Early Learning Standards which are aligned to the approved curricula and required child assessments. Full coordination of this system is challenging due to multiple programs administered by multiple agencies. EIA 4K is administered by the Office of Early Learning and Literacy, SCDE. CERDEP currently is administered in partnership by the SCDE, which oversees participating public school district programs, and First Steps for School Readiness (a non-profit organization), which oversees private and other non-district providers. There has been movement to integrate the system, led by the implementation of Act 284, however the emphasis is on literacy an improving the state's reading scores.



## Tennessee

Building upon the 1998 Early Childhood Education Pilot Project, Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) was launched in 2005 following enactment of the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act (2005). Since 2012, almost every district has offered at least one full-day VPK classroom where low-income, homeless, or children in foster care receive priority enrollment. Only public schools are eligible to apply for state-funded VPK grants through a competitive process. Districts may, however, contract with private child care agencies, Head Start agencies, institutions of higher education, public housing authorities, and any three-star QRIS rated program in a community-based or private child-serving agency.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	—	—	○	—	○	—

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Political will has been historically evident from the Governor’s Office through the legislature. Strong bipartisan support was evident with the passage of the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005 and support continues although state funding for the program has not increased in recent years. Gov. Haslam is intent on maintaining support for VPK, though publicly most attention has been placed on early literacy in third grade. The Pre-K Quality Act (2016) enhanced quality requirements, including the use of child formative assessments.

Since its inception, VPK has relied on numerous funding sources, including general education revenue and, in the past, lottery revenue and federal TANF funds. State funds for the VPK program have been mostly level since the 2014 school year. Federal Head Start, IDEA, Title I, and other funds are used to provide the required 25% local match. Districts have used the same funding, \$117,490 per classroom, to operate VPK for the past three years. VPK enrollment leveled off between 2008 and 2015 but in 2016 increased by almost 2,000 students, where it remained level in 2016-2017, when 18,640 at-risk children were served. Some of this increase in enrollment can be attributed to Tennessee being awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) for \$17.5 million to expand pre-K enrollment in Nashville and Shelby County. PDG funds supported 1,320 children in new slots and 3,380 in improved slots in VPK classrooms in 2016-2017.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Tennessee State Department of Education (TDOE), Division of Early Learning and Literacy has administrative author of VPK. In the past few years there have been several leadership changes. Funds are distributed to LEAs with limited support from the state due to the size of the state staff. The current state education Commissioner has been supportive of

protecting VPK and making public statements about pre-K's importance for student outcomes. Early learning leadership in TDOE was weakened under the previous Commissioner.

**Education and compensation.** Tennessee requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus an early learning credential. Lead teachers in both public and nonpublic schools are paid on par with district salary schedules. In 2016-2017, all lead teachers had at least a BA and 53% of assistant teachers had at least a CDA.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Tennessee has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 16 and staff-child ratio of 1:8. In mixed-age groups, a maximum of eight 3-year-olds can be in the class with twelve 4-year-olds. If there are nine or more 3-year-olds, the classroom capacity is 16. Two adults are required in each VPK classroom.

**Learning time.** Children attend VPK five days per week during the school year and services are provided for a minimum of 5.5 instructional hours per day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards for 4-Year-Olds (TN ELDS) are currently being revised. The current version is aligned to the state's K-3 standards and includes content that support dual language learners. State policy does not require child assessments to be aligned with TN ELDS. Guidance documents and professional development opportunities to support the use of the TN ELDS have been provided by the state and will continue once they are revised.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Tennessee maintains a list of approved curricula for the state-funded pre-K Programs to choose from. In 2016-2017, there were 37 curricula (22 were identified as comprehensive curricula) on their approved list. This year, the state engaged in a thorough curriculum review process with a rubric to guide decision-making and settled on three curriculum choices that met the identified criteria including alignment with the TN ELDS. The state is currently in the process of developing curriculum-sponsored trainings and providing ongoing technical assistance to the districts.

**Support for students with special needs.** Children with IEPs are considered as Tier 2 priority for enrollment in the VPK program after ensuring all income-eligible students are enrolled. In 2016-2017, 3.9% of VPK children received special education services. VPK teachers are required to possess specific qualifications regarding working with children with special needs. In addition, if the ratio of students with IEP exceeds 50%, teachers are required to have a specialized license.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Tennessee is not able to report the number of DLLs enrolled in VPK. Bilingual instruction is permitted in VPK. To support VPK families, recruitment, enrollment and outreach information and other communication with the family about the program or child is in the family's home language. TN ELDS include standards on cultural awareness.

**High-quality teaching.** During the 2014-2015 school year, the Peabody Research Institute (PRI) at Vanderbilt University was involved in the fifth year of an ongoing external evaluation on the effectiveness of the VPK program. PRI reports that the quality of pre-K programs across the state is inconsistent, and in some cases below expectations, based on ECERS classroom observations. ECERS

data collected by PRI on a statewide sample find that the average ECERS score is about 4 with the Activities subscale at 3 (on a 7.0 scale). Only a very small fraction of classrooms scored 5 or higher overall.

**Professional development.** All lead teachers working in public schools must meet the state requirement of 30 hours of in-service PD per year. The 18 hours required in early childhood for preschool teachers may count toward this total. In 2017-2018, the requirements will increase to 24 clock hours per year for Directors, Teachers, and Assistants; and 30 hours in 2018-2019. The PDG grant has provided more intensive and ongoing training and coaching supports in Metro and Nashville districts. VPK teachers are required to participate in teacher evaluations which guide teacher support, but the extent of the coaching and mentoring is unknown and not coordinated by the state.

**Child Assessments.** The 2016 Pre-K Quality Act required all VPK and kindergarten classrooms to utilize a state board-approved pre-K and kindergarten student growth portfolio system for evaluating pre-K and kindergarten teachers. In 2017-2018, the student growth portfolio was implemented. Teachers and districts are required to choose an assessment from a state-approved list to demonstrate student achievement. Student achievement scores count as 15% of a teacher's evaluation. Fifty percent of the evaluation is based on classroom observation and the remaining 35% is based on student growth, which comes from a student growth portfolio model. It does not appear that the portfolio is aligned with the TN ELDS.

**Data-driven decision-making.** State law requires two site visits per year to monitor for compliance with rules and regulations. In addition, new teachers are evaluated four times per year. ECERS and ELLCO are used by district leaders when new classes are opened, when new teachers are hired, and at least once every 5 years thereafter. Program evaluators attend regular trainings and reliability testing, submitting all documentation. Data collected during monitoring are used to create program improvement plans at both the state and local level.

As previously described, an external longitudinal evaluation is currently being conducted by PRI.

**Integrated System.** In 2017-2018, Tennessee implemented a child assessment system that is aligned with pre-K and K. However, the TN ELDS do not appear to have been incorporated into the development of these assessments. CLASS and ECERS data are collected and used at the program level, but not at the state level.

## Texas

In 1985, Texas began funding half-day prekindergarten for eligible 4-year-olds through the Texas Public School Prekindergarten program. Currently, districts that have 15 or more eligible 4-year-olds are required to offer prekindergarten. Districts that have 15 or more eligible 3-year-olds can also offer prekindergarten, but are not required to do so. Students are eligible to participate if they meet at least one of the following conditions: qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (185% of FPL), homelessness, foster care, parent on active military duty or who was injured or killed on active duty, unable to speak or comprehend English, and/or parent eligible for the Star of Texas Award.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	●	–	–	–	●	–	○	●	ND	○	–	○	–

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** In 2015, Gov. Greg Abbott (R) championed for increased pre-K quality, and largely succeeded in having his proposals to incentivize quality enhancement partially supported by the legislature with House Bill 4. Highlights of the passed bill include new data reporting requirements for school districts about pre-K class size, student to staff ratios, and assessments used. The legislation was also attached to a \$118 appropriation over two years, partially restoring the more than \$200 million cut from pre-K as part of \$5.4 billion in education budget cuts in 2011 that touched off the latest school finance lawsuit in Texas. In 2016-2017, state funding for preschool was about \$862 million, a five percent decrease from the previous year. Texas has never had adequate spending per child, and that spending was reduced further in the aftermath of the recession.

In 2017, the Texas Legislature did not appropriate funding to continue the \$118 million High-Quality Prekindergarten Grant program or the \$15 million in supplemental funding for prekindergarten. The legislature included Rider 78 in the General Appropriations Act that requires the Commissioner to ensure districts and charter schools with eligible 4-year-olds use at least 15% of their Foundation School Program funds on high-quality efforts. It also passed HB 2039, a new prekindergarten-to-third-grade teacher certification. In 2016-2017, enrollment as a percentage of the population remained at about 49% of 4-year-olds.

There are private sector supporters of increased quality in pre-K. Raise Your Hand Texas is an education advocacy group supportive of high-quality pre-K. The Texas Education Grantmakers' Advocacy Consortium has pooled funding for prekindergarten research and advocacy. Current membership includes almost 35 Texas foundations. The state's largest two chambers of commerce (Dallas Chamber of Commerce and Greater Houston Partnership) have been strong supporters of efforts to improve pre-

K quality and access. There have also been cities that have created new programs, such as San Antonio, or established higher quality standards than what is required by the state.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Texas Education Agency (TEA) Early Childhood Education Division oversees the free public prekindergarten program in school districts and open enrollment charter schools. TEA has two FTEs responsible for supporting its pre-K program. Additional support is provided by Texas Education Service Centers. House Bill 4 allowed for TEA to increase staffing as necessary to implement the bill. However, the Agency as a whole remains crippled by budget cuts and under-staffing. TEA will find it challenging to acquire the staff necessary to adequately administer and monitor pre-k quality.

**Education and compensation.** Texas requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus an early learning credential. Lead teachers in both public and nonpublic schools are paid on par with district salary schedules.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** There is no rule regarding prekindergarten class size or staff-to-child ratio, though school districts are encouraged to follow the requirements for kindergarten. If a school district contracts with a private entity to operate the district's prekindergarten program, the program must comply with child care licensing standards. A child to staff ratio of 11:1 with a limit of 22 children per classroom is recommended but not required.

**Learning time.** Children attend pre-K for a minimum of 3 hours per day, five days per week (540 hours per year).

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (Guidelines) were revised in 2015. They are comprehensive and aligned with K-3 standards. Training on the guidelines is provided by 20 Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs), which also offer professional development and technical assistance to early childhood education providers within that area. In addition, TEA provides online professional development regarding the Guidelines through the Children's Learning Institute.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** TEA has a list of six state-approved and recommended curricula for the pre-K classrooms. However, programs are not required to select one of these curricula, nor are they required to be aligned with the Guidelines.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, four percent of Texas pre-K children had identified special needs. State administrative code states that in mainstream classrooms, qualified special education personnel must be involved in the implementation of the student's IEP through the provision of direct, indirect and/or support services to the student, and/or the student's regular classroom teacher(s) necessary to enrich the regular classroom and enable student success.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** In 2016-2017, 88,567 (39.5%) pre-K children were identified as being Limited English Proficient. To support these students, the state requires staff to have training/qualifications related to working with DLLs and monitoring that is focused on the quality of bilingual instruction occurs. Pre-K programming options include: transitional bilingual programs, DLL immersion classes, summer language programs, and having DLLs pulled out for ESL. Each school district with an enrollment of 20 or more students of limited English proficiency in any language classification in the same grade level must offer bilingual education. If fewer than 20 students of limited English proficiency in any language classification are enrolled in the same grade level, the school district must

offer a special language program (content-based ESL). To support families, translators are used during Language Proficiency Assessment Committees for parents who do not speak English and during parent/teacher meetings and recruitment, enrollment, communication with the family, and outreach information is provided in the home language.

**High-quality teaching.** There are not any statewide CLASS or ECERS observations available for review.

**Professional development.** In the fall of 2015, the Children’s Learning Institute at the University of Texas-Health Science Center, in partnership with TEA and the Texas Workforce Commission, developed a comprehensive professional development platform for early childhood educators. The Engage platform provides targeted PD on topics in early childhood education, as well as the CIRCLE student progress monitoring tool, coaching resources including an assessment of teacher interactions, a classroom observation tool and parent resources. The Engage platform is free to all pre-K programs as well as all public school teachers, Head Start programs, and licensed child care centers participating in Texas’ QRIS.

Teachers must complete 150 clock hours of PD every 5 years. In the High-Quality Prekindergarten Grant program that covers approximately 85% of preschool children, the teachers are required to also have 15 hours of mentoring or instructional coaching per year.

**Child Assessments.** Child assessments are required to be aligned with the Guidelines, but pre-K programs can choose the assessment. TEA has developed a list of state approved assessments and provides information about administering the tools.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Currently, TEA does not require the use of structured observations of classroom quality. Currently, TEA monitors the pre-K grantees through the submission of periodic activity/progress reports, a final evaluation report, and other activities related to the evaluation of the program. Formal evaluations have been largely district-driven.

HB 4’s intent was to require districts that receive quality funds to conduct evaluations (and to make the results available to parents). It also required the state agency to evaluate the effectiveness of HB 4 funding in improving student learning and to identify effective instructional strategies implemented by school districts with a report of results. However, this is not currently being implemented.

TEA’s Early Childhood Data Systems (ECDS) is a state data reporting platform that is part of the Texas Student Data System. Starting in the 2016-2017 school year, school districts and charter schools report demographic information on prekindergarten students enrolled, number of half-day and full-day classes, source of funding, class size/ratio, type of curriculum and the type of progress monitoring tool (if administered). The information collected in ECDS is now being reported at the state, district and campus-level and is available on the Texas Public Education Information Reports (TPEIR) web page.

**Integrated System.** There are components of the system that are integrated, but with the ability for decisions to be made at the local level, it is difficult for the state to coordinate PD, curriculum implementation, and child assessments. If funding is available to implement HB4, the likelihood of the system being more integrated from the state level is greater.

## Vermont

Vermont has a 30-year history of providing state-funded preschool. In 1987, the Vermont Early Education Initiative (EEI) was created as an annual competitive grant program to finance early education opportunities for at-risk 3- to 5-year-olds. Act 62 was signed into law in 2007, which significantly expanded publicly funded prekindergarten education for 4-year-old children in public schools and private programs. With Act 62, pre-K programs were supported through the state’s Education Fund similarly to K–12, pro-rated based on the 10 hours per week model. In the 2014 Legislative Session, legislators passed Act 166, which built on Act 62 by requiring all Vermont school districts to provide prekindergarten funding for each and every 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old child not enrolled in kindergarten, for a minimum of 10 hours per week for 35 weeks annually. The 2016-2017 school year was the first year of full implementation of Act 166.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	○	●	●	—	●	—	●	—	○	—	○	—	—

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Philip Scott (R), who follows Gov. Peter Shumlin (D) who had been seen as a strong supporter of pre-K and other early childhood issues, has publicly supported expansion of the pre-K program. Act 166 (2014) establishes universal access to publicly funded pre-K for all 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds who are not enrolled in Kindergarten. All Vermont school districts must provide universal publicly funded prekindergarten education for a minimum of ten hours per week for 35 weeks annually. Act 166 was to come into effect on July 1, 2015. However, as a consequence of the Transition Relief Bulletin, school districts were able to delay fully implementing the requirement until July 1, 2016. Act 166 was a result of some school districts opting out of pre-K in Act 62. With Act 166, if a pre-K program is on a list of qualified providers, then the school must reimburse that pre-K provider for pre-K services when they occur. Funding for Act 166 is provided by a mix of federal, state, and local dollars. Federal funding in 2016-2017 came from various sources, including a \$33 million, four-year federal Preschool Expansion Grant. In 2016-2017, 75% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 60% of 3-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded pre-K.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Act 166, is co-administered by the Agency of Human Services (AHS) and the Agency of Education (AOE), administrative rules were promulgated by AOE in conjunction with AHS. Prior approval from AOE and AHS must be received before a school district may establish or expand a school operated pre-K program. If a program has three STARS or fewer in the state’s QRIS, then an improvement plan must be approved by both secretaries. School districts can establish a pre-K

region that has implications for payment to community-based organizations that are serving Act 166 children. After the hearings and public comment period, both secretaries need to approve or deny the regions.

There have been several leadership changes of the Integrated Support and Learning, PreK–Middle School Division, AOE (ISL/AOE) which administers pre-K. ISL/AOE currently has a staff of six assigned to pre-K. AHS is the umbrella agency for six health and human services related departments including Department of Children and Families (DCF) that administers the QRIS system, STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS).

**Education and compensation.** Pre-K teachers located in public schools must have a BA and teacher specialization. These teachers have the same starting salary and schedule as K-3 teachers, prorated for differences in length of workday or year.

For teachers located in nonpublic schools, there must only be one certified teacher in the center with a BA, regardless of the number of classrooms. Salary schedule is prorated for differences in length of workday or year, there are no other salary parity policies.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Vermont has a maximum class size of 20 for 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** Vermont funds pre-K programs to operate 10 hours per week, 350 hours per year. The number of days per week programs operate are locally determined.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) for birth through grade 3 were approved by the State Board of Education in August 2015. The VELS are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Common Core State Standards in English language arts and Mathematics, as well as Next Generation Science Standards. The VELS are comprehensive and much more extensive, covering children birth to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, than the previous standards that only covered pre-K. The state provides professional development opportunities and additional resources to support the use of VELS, along with regional trainings. VELS family engagement training materials have also been developed and are being implemented.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** There is not an approved list of curriculum models, but the curricula must be aligned with the VELS. Act 166 also specifies that the curriculum must be secular. During the application process programs need to identify how they are going to meet VELS domains. Currently curricula programs chose or describe are tracked by ISL/AOE, but not monitored or evaluated.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 12.5% of pre-K students were identified as having special needs. Co-teaching models are required in preschool inclusion classrooms. In addition, pre-K teachers are required to possess specific qualifications and attend PD for working with children with special needs. Inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children. Pre-K programs are required to follow the Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) best practices.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The exact number of DLLs enrolled in pre-K is unknown. The state anticipates developing a state guidance document to support serving children who are DLLs during the 2018-2019 school year. Currently, the state provides training and technical assistance for working with DLL students.



**High-quality teaching.** All pre-K programs are required to participate in STARS and be higher than a level 3 or be NAEYC accredited. In order to be at a level 5, a program needs to have 15-17 points. In order to get 15 points, a program needs to have a 5.0 or higher on the ECERS/CLASS. In 2017, 51% of the pre-K programs had five STARS.

**Professional development.** Pre-K teachers in public school classrooms are required to have 9 credit hours per 7 years; teachers in nonpublic setting are required to have 12 clock hours per year. Vermont does not currently require coaching as a PD component. There are multiple PD offerings that include coaching to support and increase implementation of evidence-based practices in the early childhood setting. Early Multi-Tiered System of Supports is a prime example of training on content that includes practice based coaching elements to ensure implementation in the state.

**Child Assessments.** The VELs are aligned with Teaching Strategies GOLD, the required child assessment tool that must be used in all pre-K classrooms. ISL/AOE offers several different TS GOLD trainings. Funding for Act 166 classrooms has been increased with the goal of giving teachers more time to complete the components of TS GOLD. Data are used to guide teacher training, professional development, or technical assistance and to track child and program level outcomes over time.

**Data-driven decision-making.** Vermont is in the process of designing a pre-K monitoring and improvement system. Currently, a CLASS observation is required once every three years. Programs can request more frequent observations. A write-up is provided to both the program and the Vermont QRIS system, but it is unclear how the state uses this data. There is one state level technical support FTE devoted to this ensuring reliability and validity. All pre-K programs are required to participate in STARS and have at least 3 stars with a plan to be at least 4 stars within three years. There has not been a formal evaluation of the pre-K program.

**Integrated System.** All of the state funded pre-K programs are required to participate in STARS which connects all of the pre-K system components: VELs, the use of TS GOLD, ECERS and CLASS, and teacher licensing. However, supports to implement these various components are not fully developed. Previous federal funding through the Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge grant helped start get the integration of the professional development system, program and child assessment, and data collection. However, these efforts have slowed down as the federal funding has ended. Curricula that are chosen by pre-K classrooms are expected to be aligned with the VELs, but currently there is not a verification process to ensure this occurs.

## Virginia

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) began in 1995, serving at-risk 4-year-olds who were not enrolled in existing preschool programs. In 2016-2017, 89% of eligible school divisions operated VPI classrooms, and the majority of children participated in public school settings. Funding allocations to local school divisions are based on the number of students eligible for free lunch, but criteria for student eligibility are based on risk factors including, but not limited to: poverty, family unemployment, limited English proficiency, homelessness, parent with limited education, and parent incarceration.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	○	●	●	●	●	●	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    — Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** Gov. Ralph Northam (D) in his first term, replaced Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D) who has been a proponent of preschool and early education. In 2015-2016, new eligibility criteria were mandated by the General Assembly to include children living in households with incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty level. Previously, there was no state mandated income requirement for program eligibility. In the 2016-2017 school year, new income requirements allowed 15% of slots to filled using locally determined eligibility criteria. Lottery revenues continued to account for all state funding for VPI. The VPI program served 18,023 four-year-old children in 2016-2017, a slight decrease from the previous year.

Virginia’s federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) program, VPI+, expands services to 4-year-olds in high needs communities. The state serves an additional 1,406 students in 11 school divisions within this program. PDG funding was also used to enhance the quality of 1,891 VPI slots in 2016-2017.

State businesses and advocates are also actively involved in improving early childhood services, most notably with the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) which has been working on system building efforts, articulating the direct link between quality early education experiences and a productive future workforce. The Virginia Association for Early Childhood Education (VAECE) works with the Commonwealth Council on Childhood Success to improve professional development of those working with young children and to advocate for children’s issues in public policy. The VAECE also works with Elevate Early Education, an organization created by Virginia business, civil, and philanthropic leaders to challenge policymakers to include early childhood in their agendas. Voices for Virginia’s Children focuses on advocating for children’s policies.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** Lottery funds are disbursed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to schools and community-based organizations to run VPI. The Office of Humanities and Early Childhood within the Division of Instruction of VDOE provides leadership, coordination, technical assistance support to VPI as well as English, history, social science, fine arts, foreign language elementary and secondary programs. The office is staffed with 17 employees; however, only two of those directly support preschool efforts.

The University of Virginia has supported VDOE in the past, but has not conducted an evaluation of the preschool program since 2011.

**Education and compensation.** In Virginia, all teachers have at least a CDA and 97% of teachers have a BA or higher. The BA requirement is only required in public school settings, however, 96% of children attended a VPI program housed in a public school in 2016-2017. Preschool teachers in public schools are required to be paid on the same salary schedule as K-3 teachers as mandated by state policy.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** Virginia has a maximum class size of 18 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:9.

**Learning time.** VPI operates five days per week and localities may choose to offer part-day programs for three hours per day or school-day programs for 5.5 hours per day, though nearly all programs (97% in 2016-2017) operate on a full school-day schedule.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds were first developed in 2004, revised in 2013, and currently under revision to include college and career ready standards for preschoolers. The 2013 version are comprehensive and aligned with the state's K-3 standards and the required assessment, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Preschool (PALS-PreK). The state provides PD on using the ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** Curriculum choice is a local decision, but curricula should align with Virginia's ELDS. The Virginia Preschool Curriculum Review Rubric and Planning Tool was designed to assist localities in identifying and choosing curricula that are based on scientific research and align with the ELDS. While the state offers training to support curriculum implementation, there is not a system to ensure that curricula are implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** Some children included in the VPI program receive special education services, but data on the number of children are not available. The state does not have specific policies to support children with special needs in inclusion classrooms in VPI.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** State policy in Virginia does not address preschool services for English language learners. Virginia has made some efforts to address the K-12 ELL population. The VDOE's Early Childhood website provides links to resources to support teachers of young English language learners. Virginia is updating their early learning standards to include information related to supporting DLLs.

**High-quality teaching.** ECERS or CLASS scores were not available for review.

**Professional development.** All lead teachers must meet the state requirement of 15 clock hours of in-service professional development per year. The monitoring policies in Virginia allow results of child-level

assessments to help identify needs that will guide teacher training or professional development. Over 20 state agencies and organizations collaborate through the Virginia Cross-Sector Professional Development Team to create a unified PD system to promote planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of early childhood PD. There is not a requirement or coordination of coaching for VPI teachers.

**Child Assessments.** Only PALS-PreK is required to be used to assess VPI children, twice a year. Other domains are assessed through locally determined curriculum assessments. Data from the assessments are intended to be used to guide teacher training or professional development, make adjustments to curricula, track child- and program-level outcomes over time, and provide a measure of kindergarten readiness. However, this is an extraordinarily narrow measure of learning and development that leaves out almost all of what is covered by the state's standards. A website that includes technical information and resources has been created to support the use of the PALS in Virginia.

**Data-driven decision-making.** State site visits were eliminated due to budget constraints in 2011-2012. Desk monitoring of local plans and results of child assessments continue as methods to conduct an annual review of program-level outcomes by the state. The state does not require the use of structured observations of classroom quality.

VPI was last evaluated in 2011 by the Curry School of Education at the University of Virginia. The study, the first peer reviewed analysis of the effectiveness of the program, showed improved performances in kindergarten and first grade comparing students who did not attend any form of preschool. The last state-mandated evaluation in 2007 from the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission found that VPI students gained in literacy skills during the pre-K year and outperformed other kindergarteners.

**Integrated System.** The Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds provides a foundation to the early learning system. However, the required child assessment, PALS-PreK is not aligned with all domains; curriculum is required to be aligned, but there is not much support or review by the state to ensure this occurs; and professional development opportunities are not able to reinforce an integrated system.

## Washington

The Washington State Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) was created in 1985 to prepare 3- and 4-year-olds from low-income families for success in school and in life. ECEAP focuses on the well-being of the whole child by providing comprehensive nutrition, health, education and family support services to Washington’s most at-risk young children. Funding for ECEAP is awarded through a competitive process. ECEAP is operated by a variety of agencies including school districts, educational service districts, colleges/universities, nonprofit organizations, and local governments. The program is offered in 35 of the state’s 39 counties. Head Start serves 3- and 4-year-olds in three of the counties not served by ECEAP, and the other county is sparsely populated.

Three- and 4-year-olds from families with incomes at or below 110% of the federal poverty level are eligible to attend ECEAP. Children with IEPs are also eligible to enroll in ECEAP, regardless of income. Up to 10% of enrollment can be children who do not meet the income requirement but experience other risks that could jeopardize learning, development, or school success. Enrollment is prioritized based on a combination of income and other risk factors.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	–	●	●	–	●	●	–	—	ND	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met – Not Met — ND Not determined

**Political will.** Legislation passed in the Washington State Legislature in 2010 (House Bill 2731) outlined the legislative intent to establish state Pre-K as a statutory entitlement for all eligible children by 2018-2019. This deadline has since been extended to 2022-2023. The Early Start Act showed continued clear bipartisan legislative support for early learning in Washington. Governor Jay Inslee (D) proposed the largest early learning funding increase in state history, including a substantial increase in ECEAP, though the final 2015-2017 budget contained only a minor expansion of the program. Early learning has also enjoyed legislative and cabinet-level support, particularly from Ruth Kagi and Bette Hyde; both have since retired, but their leadership can still be felt in the institutions that they led.

In 2016-2017, Washington State invested \$96 million in ECEAP. State funding comes from both the state general fund and the “opportunity pathways account,” which consists of lottery funds. In 2015-2016, the state increased overall funding and enrollment as well as spending per child. In the 2017 legislative session, the State Legislature invested an additional \$7,710,000 to create spaces for 800 more children for 2017-2018; funded 1,000 more slots for children beginning in 2018-2019. In addition, the Legislature invested \$12,670,000 to increase the vendor rate for ECEAP providers for 2017-2019. Washington’s

largest city, Seattle, created the Seattle Preschool Program, supported by the Seattle City Council, Mayor, and voters who passed a property tax funding stream in 2014.

Across Washington, the Early Learning Action Alliance (ELAA) is a coordinated and organized statewide coalition focused on advocating for state policies and investments in early learning. Founded in 2008 and led by Children's Alliance, ELAA has been instrumental in defending early learning programs during the recession, and in the recent advancements, as Washington's economy has recovered. The coalition comprises over 50 organizations, sets an annual legislative agenda, and establishes legislative, communication, and mobilization strategies for early learning to be widely organized and used across the state.

Washington's early learning ecosystem has benefited significantly from investments by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has funded an early learning program and advocacy portfolio in Washington for the past 10 years. Other foundation leaders in Washington include the Boeing Company and the Bezos Family Foundation.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** ECEAP had been overseen by the Department of Early Learning (DEL) and early learning initiatives have fared relatively well. In 2018, DEL joined the much larger Department of Children, Youth, and Families. While there are some opportunities for early learning to be more coordinated and aligned with other units, like child welfare, there are also concerns that early learning's profile in the state may not be as prominent. Ross Hunter, the previous head of DEL, is now the secretary of the new department, so that may be helpful in maintaining a focus on ECE. In 2016-2017, 19 FTEs were assigned to work on ECEAP at the state level.

Washington also benefits from the University of Washington's multiple approaches to building early learning leaders and disseminating high quality programs and practices, including the College of Education at UW which has been home to one of the Head Start Centers—the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL) and the National P-3 Center. The UW is also the home to the Institute for Learning and Brain Science (I-LABS), a leader in early childhood brain research.

**Education and compensation.** ECEAP requires lead teachers to have an AA or higher with the equivalent of 30 credits in early childhood education or have a valid state teaching certificate with an endorsement in ECE or EC Special Education. ECEAP teachers do not earn compensation at the same level as K-3 teachers. ECEAP lead teacher salaries vary based on degree, geographic location, and organization.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** ECEAP has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10.

**Learning time.** Washington has four operating schedule options: (1) old part-day model at 2.5 hours per day minimum and 320 hours per year, (2) new part-day model (beginning with slots awarded in 2015) at 3 hours per day minimum and 360 hours per year, (3) full school-day model at 5.5 to 6.5 hours per day and 1,000 hours per year, and (4) extended day at 10 or more hours per day and 2,370 hours per year. In 2016-2017, most children (83.4%) attended a part-day program.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines were last revised in 2012, are comprehensive, and aligned with the state's K-3 standards and the ECEAP Performance Standards. The state provides professional development opportunities, online training modules, and coaching to support use of the ELDS.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** ECEAP programs must use a DEL-approved, comprehensive, research-based curriculum, which includes Creative Curriculum or HighScope. DEL purchases full sets of either curriculum for each classroom. If an ECEAP contractor wishes to use an alternative research-based curriculum they must complete DEL's Alternative Curriculum Approval Form. In order to ensure the curricula are implemented with fidelity, staff who support teachers that are implementing Creative Curriculum (92% of ECEAP sites) must attend a *Coaching to Fidelity* training provided by the QRIS staff. For the ECEAP sites using HighScope, fidelity is built into training and teacher/trainer feedback. The ECEAP contractor must also ensure that the ECEAP lead teachers participate in the DEL sponsored, in-person curriculum training. Beginning in 2016-2017, a process was put in place for ECEAP contractors to submit additional curricula for approval, based on the Head Start National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning's Preschool Curriculum Consumer Report.

**Support for students with special needs.** Children with developmental delays or disabilities are eligible for ECEAP and are not counted in the over-income limits; they receive priority points during the enrollment process. In 2016-2017, 10% of ECEAP children were identified as having special needs. If a child is identified as having special needs, ECEAP providers must work with the Local Education Agency (LEA) to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that identifies and plans for needed services.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** In 2016-2017, 34% of ECEAP students were classified as being DLLs; a much greater percentage of DLLs than estimated for the state (23%) population as a whole. To support DLLs, the following program options are permitted: monolingual non-English classes, transitional bilingual programs, DLL immersion classes, and summer language programs. Of the 817 classes that operated during the 2016-2017 program year, instruction was provided in: English in 641 classrooms; Spanish in 4 classrooms; other languages in 3 classrooms; English and Spanish in 160 classrooms; English and another language in 8 classrooms; and English, Spanish, and another language in 1 classroom. In 2016-2017, 11% of preschool lead teachers and 34% of assistant teachers were fluent in a language other than English. ECEAP providers are required to complete a home language survey on all children, and, as appropriate, assess the child's language acquisition as part of the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. Screening tools must be responsive and sensitive to the cultural and linguistic needs of each child and family, and administered only with parent consent.

**High-quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS scores were not able to be reviewed.

**Professional development.** ECEAP requires 15 professional development hours per year for lead teachers and family support staff. ECEAP contractors must have a training plan for staff. The state requires individualized annual professional development plans for any lead or assistant teacher who does not yet fully meet the required qualifications for their position.

Since 2012, Washington has been implementing practice-based coaching as the framework for providing early childhood teachers with support as they implement quality improvement plans as part of Early Achievers (QRIS). Early Achievers coaches are employed by regional organizations and trained and supported by the University of Washington's Childcare Quality and Early Learning Center for Research and Professional Development (CQEL). CQEL is the state's QRIS evaluation partner and also leads work to ensure that Washington's professional development system is based on practices that promote quality and school readiness outcomes. The average caseload for each coach is 2.9 sites and 5.2 classrooms/lead teachers per coach. Coaches may also be assigned to Head Start and/or child care classes in addition to their ECEAP classes.

**Child Assessments.** ECEAP children are assessed three times/year in part- and full-day classes, and four/times per year in extended day classes, using Teaching Strategies GOLD. Though ECEAP has had an assessment process throughout its history, and voluntary use of Teaching Strategies GOLD was widespread for many years, it did not become mandatory until fall 2013. Teaching Strategies GOLD is also used as part of the WaKIDS process as children enter kindergarten. ECEAP performance standards also require that contractors complete developmental screenings on children within 90 days of enrollment (Head Start requirement is within 45 days of enrollment). Teachers receive PD and coaching support to use child assessment as a formative process to make adjustments to the curriculum, to individualize instruction and support for each child at the local level, to track child and program outcomes overtime, and to guide teacher training, professional development, or technical assistance.

**Data-driven decision-making.** As of 2015-2016, all ECEAP sites were required to participate in the state's QRIS, Early Achievers, and receive a rating of level four or five by March 2016. Structured observations of classroom quality are conducted every three years using the ECERS and CLASS as part of the QRIS. ECEAP contracts with the University of Washington to conduct the ERS & CLASS observations, using observers who are certified reliable. Every ECEAP classroom has a coach who has access to the QRIS data, including ERS and CLASS score details. They use these in discussions and planning with teachers. The ECEAP Contract requires contractors to use the CLASS and ERS assessments to improve curriculum, learning environments and adult-child interactions.

Review of program records occurs through data entered in ELMS, ECEAP's database, or MERIT, ECEAP's professional registry, and reviewed on a weekly/monthly/quarterly/or annual schedule depending on the factor reviewed. Additional records are reviewed by the state onsite during the periodic site visits. Other monitoring includes a list of deliverables prepared by each contractor and sent to the state including program self-assessment, service area agreements, operating budget, and staff compensation review.

The legislature commissioned a study of ECEAP's outcomes in 2013. The retrospective evaluation conducted by Washington State Institute for Public Policy, released in December 2014, found that "ECEAP has a positive impact on third, fourth, and fifth grade test scores. ECEAP's impact on test scores is twice as large as the average effect we found when we reviewed research on early childhood programs in other states."

**Integrated System.** ECEAP has a fully integrated system. Professional development, which includes coaching, integrates the child assessments and curriculum that is aligned with the Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines. The state has access to structured classroom observations that are also used at the program level to improve the quality of the ECEAP classrooms.



## West Virginia

West Virginia’s preschool program was first established in 1983 for 3- and 4-year-olds. West Virginia passed legislation in 2002 requiring the state to expand access to preschool education programs available to all 4-year-olds in the state by the 2012-2013 school year. WV Universal Pre-K is available in all 55 counties. West Virginia requires that a minimum of half of the programs operate in collaborative settings with private prekindergarten, child care centers, or Head Start programs in order to facilitate expansion of the program.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	ND	○	●	●	●

Key: ● Fully Met    ○ Partially Met    – Not Met    ND Not determined

**Political will.** West Virginia began offering preschool programs in 1983, but the will to make it universal became possible with legislation that passed in 2002, requiring universal pre-K by 2012. In 2016-2017, approximately 65% of the state’s 4-year-olds and 11% of 3-year-olds were enrolled in WV Universal Pre-K. Programs are permitted to use additional funding from IDEA and federal Head Start. The state has implemented many changes in recent years to improve program quality.

West Virginia benefits from a reasonably strong enabling environment formed by the collaborative work of elected officials, including Gov. Jim Justice(R), who is in his first term; state agencies; and the early childhood community with some interest from philanthropy. The declining school-age population provides a pathway forward on funding that is unavailable to most other states and creates pressure within the public-school community to expand pre-K within the school finance system rather than to view pre-K as competing for funds.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) is responsible for the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2525 overseeing WV Universal Pre-K. The WVDE Office of Early Learning works collaboratively with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) and the West Virginia Head Start State Collaboration Office to implement WVBE Policy 2525. The Office of Early Learning is housed within the Division of Teaching and Learning and has 5.5 FTEs assigned to pre-K.

**Education and compensation.** Teachers are required to have a BA degree in Early Childhood or a related field. A small percentage of teachers hired before 2003 have an AA and the remainder of teachers have a BA. Teachers in public schools have the same salary schedule as K-3 for all years of service, while those employed by nonpublic schools do not have salary parity.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.** West Virginia has a maximum class size of 20 for 3- and 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Even though the maximum staff to child ratio is 1-10, two adults must be present with children regardless of class size.

**Learning time.** West Virginia has increased the duration of its preschool program, increasing instructional days per year and hours per week since 2012. Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, each pre-K classroom must provide at least 1,500 minutes of instruction per week and 48,000 minutes of instruction annually, and programs must operate no fewer than four days per week to meet annual and weekly operational requirements of 25 hours per week. However, in 2016-2017, 90% of programs operated a school-day program, exceeding the minimal requirement.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The Early Learning Standards Framework: Content Standards and Learning Criteria for West Virginia Pre-Kindergarten (WV ELSF) are the state's ELDS. They were revised in 2015, are comprehensive, and aligned with the state's K-3 standards, infant/toddler standards, and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. The West Virginia Pre-K Early Learning Standards Framework Professional Development System supports the implementation of the WV ELSF.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** WV Universal Pre-K programs are required to use an approved comprehensive curriculum. The curriculum adoption cycle for approved pre-K curricular frameworks was last completed in 2011 and is slated for completion again in 2019. As a result of this adoption, three frameworks are approved from which county collaborative early childhood teams choose: The Creative Curriculum, HighScope, and High Reach. Additional funding, TA support, and supporting materials are available to assist with curriculum implementation. The state requires programs to establish a system to ensure that curricula are being implemented with fidelity.

**Support for students with special needs.** In 2016-2017, 16.7% of pre-K children were identified as having special needs. To support these children, inclusion specialists are available to support teachers and/or students and the proportion of children with an IEP in each preschool classroom is limited to no more than 50%.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** Only 1% of WV Universal Pre-K students were identified as DLLs while the state has a DLL population of 3%. The state provides extra funding for serving DLLs. Bilingual instruction is permitted and there is monitoring focused on the quality of bilingual instruction. Children are assessed in their home language and recruitment, enrollment, outreach, and communication with the family about the program or child is in the family's home language.

**High-quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS scores were not able to be reviewed.

**Professional development.** State policy requires all county WV Pre-K staff, including teachers and teacher assistants/aides/paraprofessionals to participate in 15 hours of staff development annually, based on the needs determined in the county continuous quality improvement process. The WV Educator Evaluation System was developed using The Framework for Teaching (Danielson Group). All public school principals must complete the ongoing annual process with teachers. All classroom staff employed by collaborating child care centers must have a professional development plan that includes staff evaluation. The state does not require teachers to participate in coaching or ongoing classroom-embedded support.

The West Virginia Pre-K Early Learning Standards Framework Professional Development System is a statewide professional development system designed for all early childhood educators, administrators and families as part of WV Universal Pre-K. The system provides content that is research-based, aligned with the WV ELSF and the WV Pre-K Child Assessment System.

**Child Assessments.** Children are assessed three times per year using the Early Learning Scale, part of the WV Pre-K Child Assessment System. The information is applied to track child and program outcomes over time, guide teacher professional development and coaching, make adjustments to curricula, and measure kindergarten readiness. As previously described, there is PD to support the implementation of the assessment.

**Data-driven decision-making.** The West Virginia Universal Pre-K Health and Safety Checklist must be conducted in all pre-K classrooms within 45 calendar days of the first day of school annually. Additionally, state policy requires each county to develop and maintain a continuous quality improvement process that utilizes annual classroom observations such as ECERS or CLASS, and aggregated child assessment data in programmatic decision-making. Some use their curriculum implementation checklists (High/Scope PQA or the Creative Curriculum Fidelity Tool Administrator Checklist) and alternate years with CLASS or ECERS. Classroom observation tools are locally determined.

Results from classroom quality self-assessments are collected through each county's continuous quality improvement process and reviewed by the state pre-K steering team during WV Universal Pre-K Program Reviews. WV Universal Pre-K Program Reviews are conducted once every three years in every county.

NIEER and Marshall University are conducting a multi-year study designed to assess the effects of participation in the state pre-K program from 2015 to 2020, called the WV Universal Pre-K Longitudinal Study.

**Integrated System.** West Virginia's system is integrated in all components, including the alignment of the ELDS with the required curricula and child assessment tool. Structured classroom observation data are collected and used at the program and state level. The PD system provides support for the implementation of all of these items (curriculum, child and program assessment, and ELDS), but would be strengthened with a coaching system.

## Wisconsin

Wisconsin’s Constitution has included a promise to provide free, voluntary education for 4-year-olds since it became a state in 1848. Districts are not required to offer the Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program (4K), but if they do, it must be open to all age-eligible children. Funds for 4K are paid to public schools, which then may subcontract with private child-care centers or Head Start agencies.

The Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement program is a separate, state-funded program offering supplemental state finances to federal Head Start grantees to provide comprehensive early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities or from low-income families. Participating programs follow the federal Head Start Performance Standards, and children meet Head Start enrollment eligibility guidelines.

### Essential Elements

Fifteen Essential Elements clustered in three categories—Enabling Environment, Support for Educators and Young Learners, and High-Quality Instruction—have been identified among exemplary pre-K programs (Minervino, 2014). Note that practice in the field may vary so as to be either better or worse than might be expected based on specific policy or guidance. Consistency or quality of practice across large-scale programs is more difficult to assess than policy.

#### Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program (4K)

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	—	—	—	—	●	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met — Not Met ND Not determined

#### Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement

Enabling Environment		Rigorous, Articulated Early Learning Policies								Strong Program Practices				
Political Will	Strong Leaders	BA + comp	Class size	Two Adults	Hours/ Dosage	EL Standards	Effective Curriculum	Special Ed	DLL support	HQ Teaching	PD	Child Assessments	Data Driven	Integrated System
○	○	—	●	●	—	●	—	—	—	ND	—	—	—	—

Key: ● Fully Met ○ Partially Met — Not Met ND Not determined

**Political will.** Wisconsin 4K has been around many years, and now 96% of the districts offer programs. In the last two budget cycles, there has been nobody, including Governor Scott Walker (R), who has opposed 4K. There is strong support for the concept of quality rating as it applies to child care, but no discussion for scaling up quality beyond the QRIS. Currently, there is a growing interest in voucher and charter school efforts.

In the Head Start State Supplement program, the focus is not on increasing the total allocation, but on getting programs closer to parity with Head Start costs per child. Therefore, the amount of money stayed the same, but the number of children participating was reduced. In 2016-2017, enrollment in the Head Start State Supplement was 681 children (a reduction of 23% since 2014-2015), but enrollment in

4K was 51,292 (an increase of 7% since 2014-2015). Between the two programs, Wisconsin served 72% of the state's 4-year-olds and 1% of 3-year-olds in 2016-2017.

Wisconsin has a fairly interested and involved business sector, with probably a dozen or more people who, if called upon to do advocacy, would do it. The Partnership for Wisconsin's Economic Success was more engaged when there was intensive national effort. At the local level, there are a significant number of philanthropic and business groups, including United Way, working with local agencies around early childhood.

**Compelling vision and strong leadership.** The Office of Early Learning (OEL), housed within the Content and Learning Team on the Division for Academic Excellence in Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction (DPI), is charged with coordinating the statewide early childhood system. The OEL works collaboratively across DPI divisions and other state departments to bring continuity and cohesiveness to the programs associated with early learning. The OEL provides leadership, partnership, policy development, incentives, and technical assistance to the early childhood community for children birth to age eight throughout Wisconsin. OEL has 2.5 FTEs assigned to pre-K who collaborate with counterparts in the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and with universities, to move policy forward.

**Education and compensation.**

**4K:** A BA with early childhood teacher license is required for teachers. Salary parity is decided at the local level, but not required by state policy.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** Teachers must have an AA and ECE specialization, as per Head Start requirements. There are no state parity policies, salary and benefit packages are determined locally.

**Adult-child ratio and two adults in the classroom.**

**4K:** There are no state requirements for class size or staff-child ratio.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** This program has a maximum class size of 20 for 4-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Maximum class size for 3-year-olds is 17 and staff-child ratio of 2:17. In mixed-age groups, the maximum number of children is 16, with a ratio of 1:8.

**Learning time.**

**4K:** The state funds a total of 437 hours per year; districts determine how many days per week the program operates, and if hours will be used for parent outreach. Most programs are part-day, four to five days per week, but an increasing number of rural districts may offer school-day programs two or three days per week. State policies support partnerships with child care and Head Start to extend the number of hours per day or weeks per year.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** Programs follow the federal Head Start performance standards and the grant-approved program design, which is a minimum of 3.5 hours per day.

**Age-appropriate learning standards.** The comprehensive Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (MELS) include infant toddler standards and are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. The state does not have stand-alone K-3 or college- and career-ready early grades standards. The state provides professional development opportunities to support use of the MELS

through its training and technical assistance system that includes cross-sector trainers, a 15-hour training, and a variety of resources.

**System that ensures effective curriculum.** The state does not have a list of approved or recommended curricula. The state provides PD and TA opportunities to support curriculum implementation at conferences, through some technical assistance providers, and through web-based resources. Decisions regarding curriculum selection and implementation fidelity are made at the local level.

**Support for students with special needs.** Most of the policies to support preschoolers with special needs occur at the local level. Each school district in Wisconsin is responsible for providing a continuum of services to support children who need special education.

**4K:** In 2016-2017, 13.6% of 4K children received special education services. Programs are required to follow each child's Individual Education Plan providing supports as defined with in the programs and inclusion specialists are available to support teachers and/or children.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** The number of children with special needs is not able to be reported. Inclusion specialists are available to support preschool teachers and/or children.

**Support for dual (English) language learners (DLL).** The number DLLs enrolled in pre-K programs is unknown.

**4K:** Federal Title III requirements are followed to support DLLs. Implementation of the policies is locally determined.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** Programs follow the HS Performance Standards regulations. Implementation of the policies is locally determined.

**High quality teaching.** CLASS or ECERS scores were not able to be reviewed.

**Professional development.**

**4K:** Teachers are required to complete 6 credit hours of PD every 5 years. Licensed teachers in public schools have the option of either having a credit-based license renewal or doing a performance-based system that includes writing professional development plans, working with a mentor, and having a team review and approval. For those in nonpublic schools, coaching is locally determined.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** All lead teachers must complete 15 clock hours of PD per year. Participation in coaching is locally determined, not a state required policy.

**Child Assessments.**

**4K:** The state requires a literacy screening in 4K through 2nd grade. The state Response to Intervention and the Comprehensive Screening and Assessment Blueprint both promote ongoing assessment. Tools do not need to align with the MELS and are locally determined. Child assessment data are used at the local level.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** An assessment tool is required, but selected by the program, following Head Start Performance regulations.

**Data-driven decision-making.** In 2011, Wisconsin committed to developing an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (WI ECIDS) to support regular data exchanges as well as ad hoc research requests. Early childhood data linkages have been established between DPI, DHS, and Department of Children and Families (DCF). The WI ECIDS was implemented in December of 2017 and is now available for use by DPI, DCF and DHS personnel.

**4K:** The state does not collect structured observations of classroom quality. DPI only conducts onsite monitoring of programs if they are part of Title 1 or IDEA. 4K is monitored by the school district. When 4K is housed in a child care center, child care licensing visits occurs annually. When 4K is in a Head Start program, Head Start monitoring occurs as per the federal monitoring schedule.

4K was last evaluated for both process quality and program impact/child outcomes during the 2003-2004 year.

**Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement:** The state does not collect structured observations of classroom quality or monitor programs. The state is informed if a Head Start grantee is found out of compliance with federal Head Start Performance Standards following a federal HS review.

**Integrated System.** Because so many of the decisions are made at the local level, it is challenges to create an integrated system. The state does not establish policies for curricula and assessment choices, PD content and coaching, and structured classroom observations and use of data.

---

<sup>i</sup> Selected resources include: Weiland, C. (2016). Launching preschool 2.0: A roadmap to high-quality public programs at scale. *Behavioral Sciences & Policy*, 2(1). 37-46. Phillips, D. A., Lipsey, M. W., Dodge, K. A., Haskins, R., Bassok, D., Burchinal, M. R., Duncan, G. J., Dynarski, M., Magnuson, K. A., & Weiland, C. (2017). Puzzling it out: The current state of scientific knowledge on pre-kindergarten effects: A consensus statement. Brookings and Duke Center for Child and Family Policy. Yoshikawa, H., Weiland, C., Brooks-Gunn, J., Burchinal, M., Espinosa, L. M., Gormley, W. T., Ludwig, J., Magnuson, K. A., Phillips, D., & Zaslow, M. (2013). Investing in our future: The evidence base on preschool education. Ann Arbor, MI: Society for Research in Child Development.

<sup>ii</sup> Friedman-Krauss, A.H., Barnett, W.S., Weisenfeld, G.G., Kasmin, R., DiCrecchio, N. & Horowitz, M. (2018). The state of preschool 2017: state preschool yearbook. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

<sup>iii</sup> Minervino, J. (2014) Lessons from research and the classroom: Implementing high-quality pre-k that makes a difference for young children. Seattle, WA: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

<sup>iv</sup> Barnett, W.S., Weisenfeld, G.G., Brown, K.C., Squires, J. & Horowitz, M. (2016). Implementing 15 essential elements for high quality: a state and local policy scan. New Brunswick, NJ: New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

<sup>v</sup> Friedman-Krauss, A.H., Barnett, W.S., Weisenfeld, G.G., Kasmin, R., DiCrecchio, N. & Horowitz, M. (2018). The state of preschool 2017: state preschool yearbook. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

---

<sup>vi</sup> Other criteria include: the state-funded preschool program must be distinct from the state’s system for child care subsidies; the program is not primarily designed to serve children with disabilities; and state supplements to Head Start programs are considered to constitute de facto state-funded preschool programs if they substantially expand the number of children served.

<sup>vii</sup> Minervino, J. (2014) *Lessons from research and the classroom: Implementing high-quality pre-k that makes a difference for young children*. Seattle, WA: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

<sup>viii</sup> CLASS is the [Classroom Assessment Scoring System](#), which is an observational tool that allows assessing quality in early childhood environments. ECERS is the [Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale](#), which assesses environmental supports and the quality of the process in the early childhood setting.