

Research to support preschool policy and practice

How NIEER works to improve ECE



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Our Mission

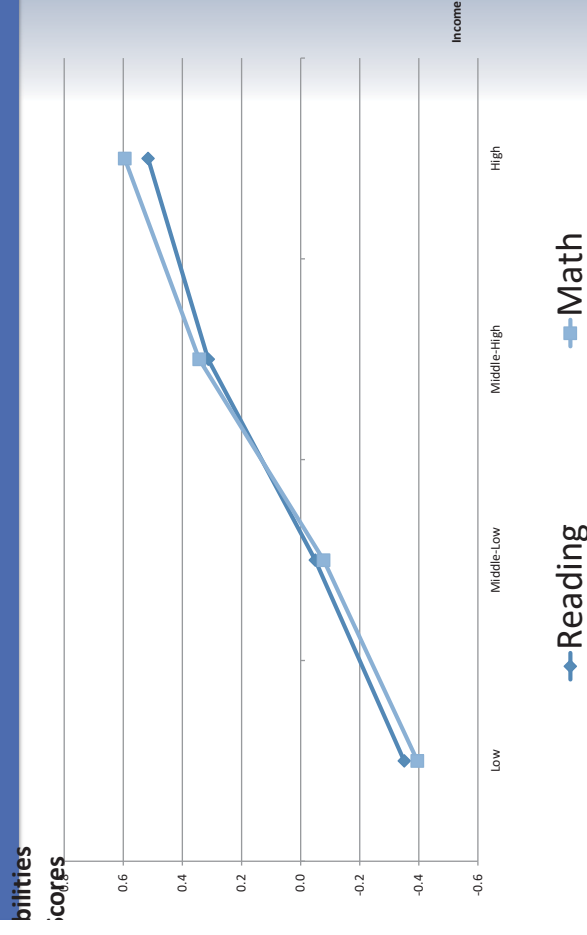
The National Institute for Early Education Research improves outcomes for children by:

- *publishing* reliable research informing effective, evidence-based policy and practice
- *encouraging* better policy and practice through evaluation and partnerships
- *developing* the next generation of early education professionals, and
- *collaborating* with a network of local, state, federal and international partners.

Topics

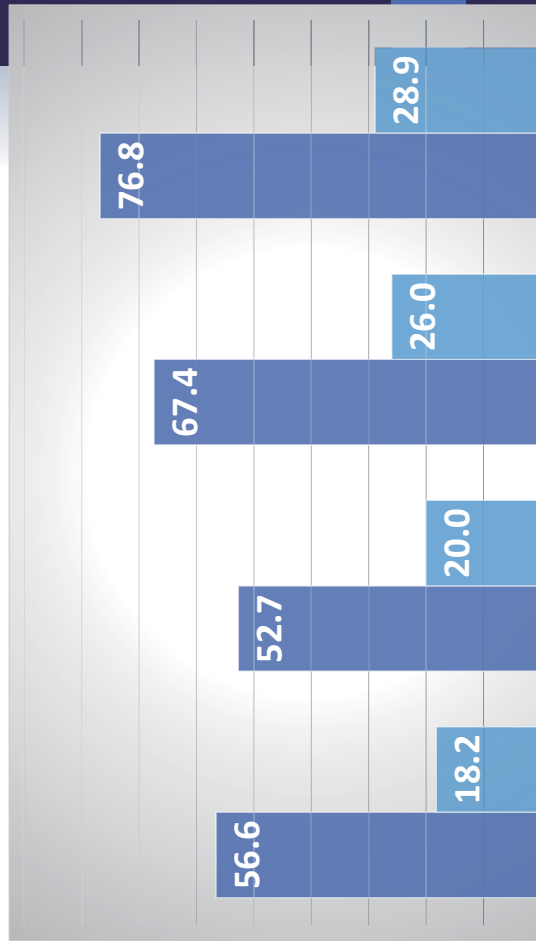
- Mission of NIEER
- Key Issues Motivating NIEER's Work
- NIEER Activities
 - State of Preschool Yearbook and US Policy
 - CEELO
 - Program Evaluation
 - Other Research
 - Communications
- Review of Strategy, Lessons Learned

Achievement Gaps are Large and Start Early: Reading & Math at K-entry by Income 2010



ECE Access Unequal & Quality Low

Any  High-Quality 



Early Care and Education Policy Matters

Early experience has broad, persistent effects

- Learning, development, and health
- Educational, social, and economic success

ECE can improve child outcomes, decrease inequality

- Improve readiness & achievement, decrease failure
- Higher earnings, better health, longer life

Public policy is weak and highly variable

- Does not follow proven models
- Public funding and access varies widely by state
- Quality standards vary widely

Policy Research and Support

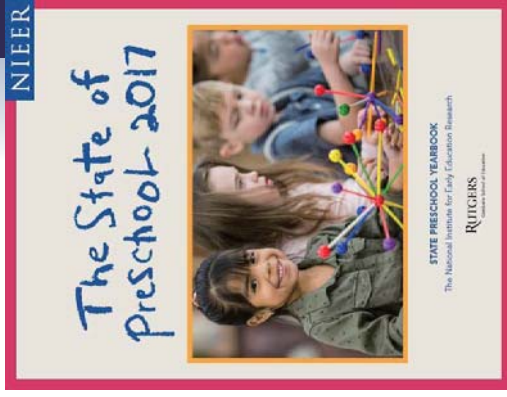
- The State Preschool Survey and Yearbook
- Center on Enhancing Early Education Outcomes
- State(s) of Head Start (federal policy)
- Policy Briefs—summarize research
- Meta-analysis (research synthesis) on impacts
- State and local program evaluations
- Research on design elements—curriculum, class size, duration, parent engagement
- Also study programs for children under age 3
- Fund, co-plan, and co-staff annual meeting of state preschool program administrators

State of Preschool Survey and Yearbook Publication

- Annual survey of state-funded preschool programs for 3- an 4-year-olds
- From 2002-03 to 2016-17 school year, topics:
 - Access (Enrollment)
 - Funding
 - Quality Standards Benchmarks
 - Other policies
- 61 programs in 43 states, D.C., and Guam
- 7 “no program” states
- Data on Head Start & Preschool Special Education

A Peek Inside the Yearbook

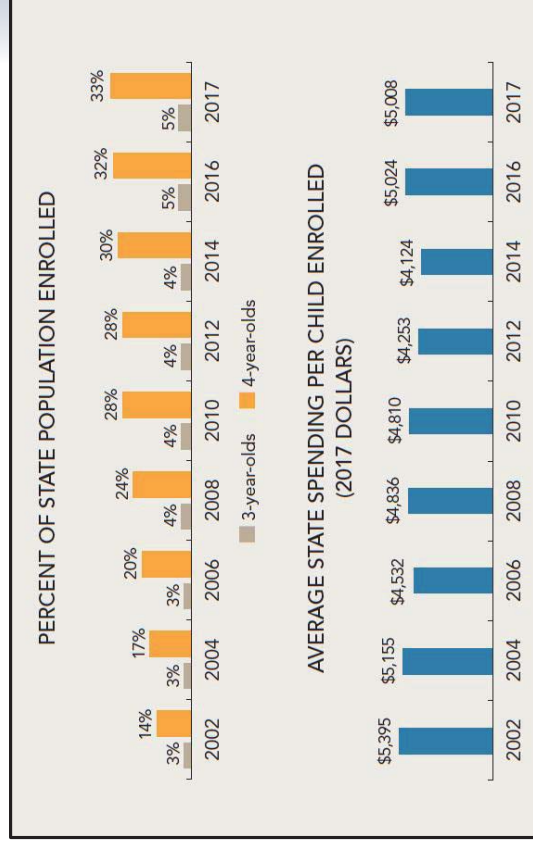
- Executive Summary
 - Access
 - Quality Standards Benchmarks
 - Funding
- Special Report: Supporting Dual Language Learners
- What Qualifies as State Pre-k?
- Roadmap to State Profile Pages
- State Profiles
- Methodology



Change 2002 to 2017

2002	2017
Only 3 states & DC served more than 1/3 of 4-year-olds	This is now the national average
2 states enrolled >50% of 4-year-olds	10 states enroll 50% or more of 4-year-olds
13 "No Program" states	7 "No Program" states
Nationally, 3% of 3-year-olds served	Only up to 5% of 3-year-olds
\$2.4 billion in state pre-K spending	\$7.6 billion in state pre-K spending
\$3,458/child or \$5,395 inflation-adjusted	\$5,008/child; substantial decrease in real \$
No programs met all 10 quality standards benchmarks; 3 programs met 9	5 programs met all 10 original quality standards benchmarks; 15 others met 9
10 programs met fewer than half of the benchmarks	9 programs meet fewer than half of the benchmarks

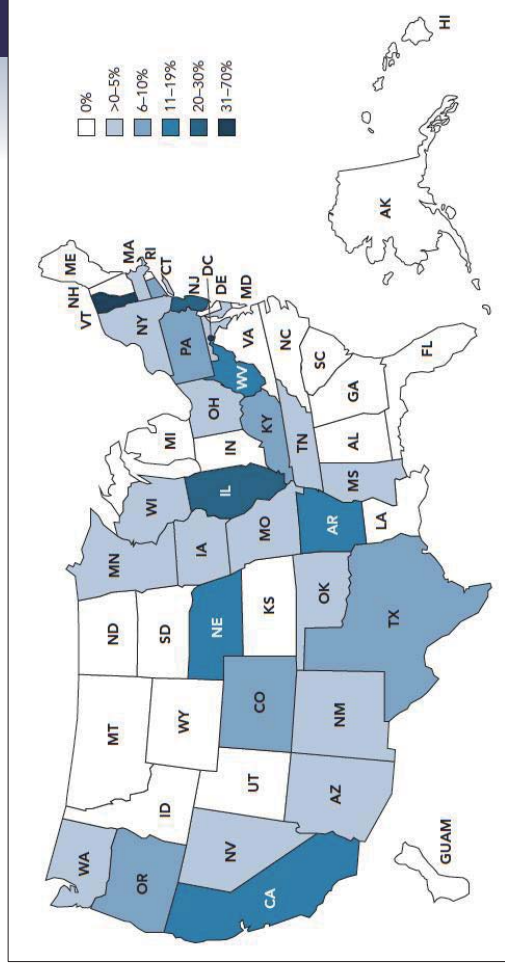
Change over time



2017 Enrollment Overview

- Enrollment topped 1.5 million children
 - 1.3 million 4-year-olds
- 1/3 of all 4-year-olds in the country
- 5% of 3-year-olds
- Enrollment increased but only very slightly
 - 40,861 3- and 4-year-olds
- 10 states serve 50% or more of 4-year-olds
- 5 states serve more than 70% of 4-year-olds
- Only D.C. and VT serve more than 50% of 3-year-olds

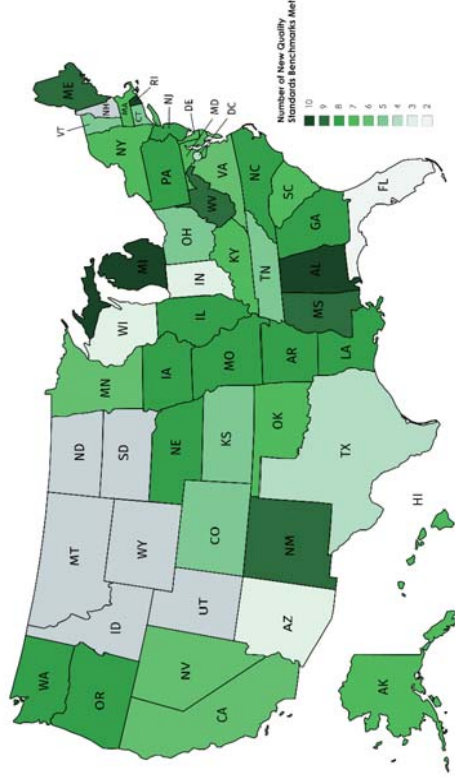
Percent of 3-year-olds enrolled



“New” Quality Standards Benchmarks

- | Standard | Change |
|--|-----------------|
| Comprehensive Early Learning Standards | Enhanced |
| Curriculum Implementation Support | New |
| Lead Teacher Degree (BA) | None |
| Lead Teacher Specialized Training | None |
| Assistant Teacher Degree (CDA) | None |
| Staff Professional Development | Enhanced |
| Maximum Class Size (20) | None |
| Staff:Child Ratio (1:10) | None |
| Screenings and Referrals & 1 support service | Slight change |
| At least one meal | DELETED |
| Monitoring → Continuous Improvement | Enhanced |

Number of New Benchmarks Met

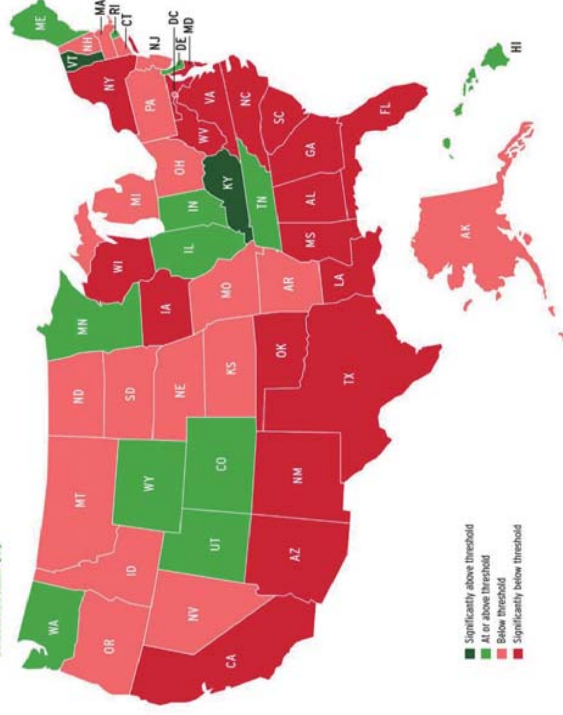


Created with mapbox.com

Note: For multi-program states, state is color coded by number of benchmarks met by the program serving the most children.

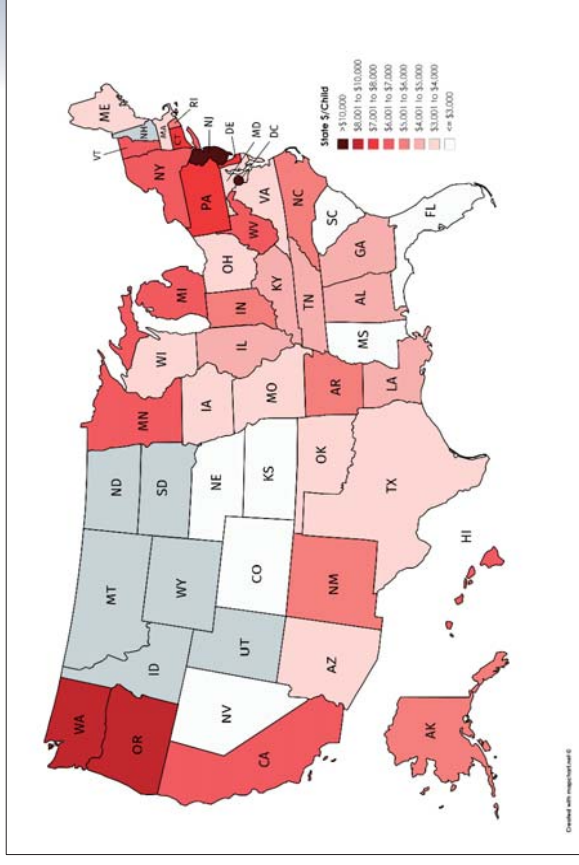
State of Head Start: Quality Also Too Low

MAP 3. CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SCORES IN RELATION TO RESEARCH-BASED THRESHOLD (3)



Note: Instructional Support scores can range from 1 to 7. This report uses a threshold of 3 or higher to indicate high quality, based on prior research.

Spending per child by state



Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO)

- **Who we are:** Partnership of NIEER, CCSO, EDC
- **Mission:** *Strengthen the capacity* of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to *lead sustained improvements* in early learning opportunities and outcomes for children *birth to third grade*.
- **Funded by:** U.S. Department of Education
- **How we work:** Direct technical assistance to state agencies, joint multi-state projects by topic, collaborative meetings

Program Evaluation

New Jersey (examples)

Conduct quality observations of a statewide sample yearly
 Evaluate effects of pre-K on learning and development
 Conduct RCT's of new approaches (duration & dual language) Provide technical assistance on implementing new K-3 standards.

West Virginia

A longitudinal evaluation of the impacts of universal Pre-K across seven counties in West Virginia. Student outcomes are examined in vocabulary, literacy, and math. Classroom quality is also examined and reported for continuous improvement.

Lessons

- Create a portfolio of projects to manage risk
 - A mix of short-term and long-term projects
 - Not every study will produce useful results
- Engage policy makers directly, ask their questions
- Support mid-level policy makers as well as top-level
- Develop a communications strategy
 - Relationships, regular meetings with policy makers
 - Media strategy—direct to the public
 - Web site, newsletter, social media
- Build capacity--Knowledge and skills to lead and inform, support implementation of policy/practice

Program Improvement Research

Understanding How Public Preschool Can Achieve and Maintain High Quality

New multi-year study with more than 1,000 children and their parents in 16 New Jersey school districts to generate knowledge on how to bring quality early education to scale.

What elements of policy and practice outside the classroom influence quality and effectiveness?

Comparing mature systems and new implementers

Particular focus on young children's activity and stress levels as key determinants of health.

Focused on school districts serving populations with high levels of economic and social disadvantage.