

# Pre-kindergarten Programs

## An Overview and Comparison with Other States

### Introduction

Efforts to move forward with a state funded preschool program in Washington came to fruition in 1985 when the state Legislature created a pre-kindergarten (pre-K) program called the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). Washington was in the forefront as having one of the first state financed preschool programs in the country. Currently, the state contracts with 40 local organizations to provide ECEAP. Head Start, also a preschool program, is federally funded and grants are presently given to 30 organizations in Washington to provide services. Both ECEAP and Head Start provide free high-quality pre-school education, family support, health, and nutrition services to children from low-income families or children who face circumstances that make it difficult for them to be ready for school. The Department of Early Learning (DEL), in partnership with the state Office of Financial Management, estimates that in 2010-11, ECEAP and Head Start were able to serve 46 percent of the Head Start eligible three and four-year-olds. A total of 23,900 eligible three and four-year-olds are not served and of these, 18,600 are eligible for ECEAP. Private preschools and kindergartens also operate and some are certified by the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. In addition, there are licensed child care providers that offer kindergarten curriculum. Some institutions offer preschool that aligns with a particular approach, for example, Montessori or Waldorf schools.

During the 2012 legislative session, SB 6449 and HB 2448 were introduced but did not pass. Both bills would have created a comprehensive voluntary preschool program for Washington children ages three and four. The program would be accessible at no cost for children from families with incomes less than 110 percent of poverty, and open to all families on a sliding scale fee basis. The program was to be of higher quality than ECEAP in that lead teachers would be required to eventually hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field; class size would be limited to 18 children; the ratio of teachers to students would be lower than in an ECEAP preschool setting; and there would be more rigorous accountability. In addition to early childhood education, SB 6449 and HB 2448 envisioned a program that would provide family support, health screening, information, and referrals.

The Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills, (or WaKIDS), is a kindergarten process that allows families, kindergarten teachers and early learning professionals to share information about incoming kindergarteners. The initial pilot kindergarten assessment suggests that more than one-third of Washington children enter kindergarten below expected skill levels in four developmental domains. In the area of language, communication and literacy, nearly half of children enter kindergarten with skills below the expected level. For low income children, this gap is even more pronounced.

Quality early education is being embraced across the country by teachers, parents, scientists, communities, and government. According to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), 39 states provided pre-kindergarten in 2010-2011. The pre-

kindergarten programs that exist in the 39 states differ in multiple ways. They can be compared by looking at particular program characteristics, or benchmarks. NIEER recently produced a report titled *The State of Preschool 2011*. The report compares each state program’s standards against a checklist of ten quality standards benchmarks. The NIEER benchmarks correspond with what research has found to be highly effective. In order for a state to be deemed to have met a benchmark, or standard, *it must be established in state policy*. The report states:

The Quality Standards Checklist represents a set of minimum criteria established in state policy needed to ensure the effectiveness of preschool education programs, especially when serving children at risk for school failure. While meeting all 10 standards does not necessarily guarantee that a program is of high quality, no state’s prekindergarten policies should be considered satisfactory unless all 10 benchmarks are met.

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NIEER's Quality Standards Benchmarks:

Early learning standards.....	National Education Goals Panel content areas covered by comprehensive state learning standards for preschool-age children
Teacher degree .....	Lead teacher must have a BA, at minimum
Teacher specialized training .....	Lead teacher must have training in a pre-K
Assistant teacher degree .....	Assistant teacher must have a Child Development Associate credential or equivalent
Teacher in-service .....	Must receive at least 15 hrs/year of in-service professional development and training
Maximum class size .....	20 or fewer three-year-olds / four-year-olds
Staff-child ratio.....	For three-year-olds or four-year-olds, ratio must be 1:10 or better
Screening/referral and support services.....	Screenings /referrals for vision, hearing, and health must be required; at least one additional support service must be provided to families
Meals.....	At least one meal must be required daily
Monitoring .....	Site visits must be used to demonstrate ongoing adherence to state program standards

The NIEER report indicates that five states met all of NIEER’s criteria for state pre-K quality and another 15, including Washington, met at least 8 out of the 10 NIEER benchmarks.

This paper will compare the program components and funding mechanisms of pre-kindergarten programs in eight states. The program components reflect the quality of the

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<sup>1</sup> The State of Preschool 2011, p. 24, National Institute for Early Education Research.

program, the comprehensiveness of the services, the availability of the preschool program, and how it is funded. Some of the eight states that are compared have the highest number of four year olds enrolled in pre-K and some of the states were chosen to be compared because they employ novel ways to fund pre-K. Additionally, some important studies of preschool programs will be reviewed to determine factors that identify successful programs.

### **Comparison of the Prekindergarten Programs in Eight States**

#### **Florida:**

Access. Of all the 39 states that have pre-K programs, Florida has the highest percentage of 4 year old children enrolled in their program. However, Florida met only 3 out of the 10 NIEER quality benchmarks and it ranks 35th in terms of state pre-K spending per child. Florida's Voluntary Pre-K Program was created because of a 2002 state constitutional amendment requiring prekindergarten access for all of Florida's 4-year-olds. During the 2010--2011 school year, 76% of children were served. Pre-kindergarten is offered in public schools, accredited nonpublic schools, licensed child care centers and family child care homes, and accredited faith-based centers. More than 80 percent of children are served in private settings such as child care and faith-based programs. The private providers do not have significant additional sources of funds with which to enhance quality beyond state minimums.

Teacher qualifications. Age-eligible children can enroll in either a school-year pre-K program or a summer program. The minimum teacher degree in the school-year program is the Child Development Associate (CDA) or equivalent credential. A bachelor's degree is required in the summer program. More than 60 percent of lead teachers possess a CDA.

Class size and teacher/child ratio. The NIEER benchmark is a class size of 20 or lower. The Florida school year program maximum is 18 and the summer maximum class size is 12. The NIEER benchmark standard for teacher to child ratio is 1:10. Florida requires a 1:12 ratio in their summer pre-K programs and a 1:10 ratio in their school year pre-K programs.

Family support services/health screening. The NIEER quality benchmarks specify what comprehensive services should be provided by a preschool education program. All children in Florida participating in programs in licensed child care facilities or public schools must have evidence of vision, hearing, and immunization/general physical health screenings. Referrals for further follow-up are also required for public school programs.

Funding. Florida currently has the lowest reported level of per-child spending on its pre-K program from all sources and has the highest enrollment rate in the nation. Pre-K was funded in Florida with the use of at least \$127 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) which represents 18 percent of its pre-K funding. ARRA was part of a federal stimulus package passed in 2009. For the 2011-12 year, state spending per child in Florida for pre-K was \$2,422.

#### **Oklahoma:**

Access. Oklahoma began offering free preschool access for all four year olds in 1998. The program is now offered in 98 percent of school districts and 73.5 percent of four year old children in Oklahoma are served. Oklahoma is ranked second for access for four year old children. Three year old children are not served.

Teacher qualifications. Lead teachers are required to have a bachelor of arts degree or bachelor of science. Assistant teachers must meet the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards.

Class size and teacher/child ratio. Oklahoma meets the NIEER benchmark for having the pre-K class size be no more than 20. Oklahoma requires the ratio of staff to child to be no more than 1:10.

Family support services/health screening. School districts participating in Oklahoma's pre-k-for-all program are required to provide for individual student screening and referral for vision and hearing for all pre-K children, regardless of program setting.

Funding. Oklahoma supports its pre-K program by including it in its school funding formula. Oklahoma's pre-K program for four year olds is offered by school districts that are reimbursed with a per-pupil rate. In full day programs, the per-child allocation is 130 percent and in half day programs, the per-child allocation is 70 percent of the K-12 rate. Districts may subcontract with other classroom providers by placing public school teachers in Head Start program settings. Children in these settings are seen as public school enrollees. In the 2010-2011 year, almost 4,000 students received services through collaboration programs. Three year old children are not served in pre-K classrooms through specific state funding but some school districts offer programs for this age group by a combination of Title 1 funds, Head Start, special education, and general funds.

## **New Jersey**

Access. New Jersey has three state-funded preschool programs serving 27.9 percent of 4 year old children and 18.4 percent of three year olds. New Jersey ranks 16th in terms of access to pre-K for four year olds and it ranks second in the NIEER report for providing access to pre-K for three year olds. New Jersey's pre-K programs were established following a 1998 state Supreme Court case on equity in the schools. The ruling said that preschool is part of ensuring equity. Preschool then became mandated for low-income school districts that were part of the lawsuit.

Teacher qualifications. Lead teachers are required to have a bachelor's degree with specialized training or experience in preschool. Assistant teachers must have a high school diploma and those in public schools supported by Title 1 funding must meet the education and degree requirements in the NCLB legislation.

Class size and staff/child ratio. The maximum number of four year olds in a preschool class may not be more than 20 which is consistent with the NIEER benchmark. The ratio of four year olds to teachers is 1:10.

Family support services / health screening. Health services such as vision, hearing, dental, and developmental services are a state pre-K requirement. In addition, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, parent conferences or home visits, and transition to kindergarten activities are available.

Funding. New Jersey ranks number one in terms of its investment in early education. It spends about \$11,000 per child enrolled in a full-time pre-K program. Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, districts across all three programs received funding based on the School Funding Reform Act of 2008.

According to the Pew Center on the States, in 2009, New Jersey's governor proposed a unique \$25 million allocation for a new Preschool Incentive Aid initiative. The pre-K effort would have leveraged federal funds to support expansion of high-quality programs to low-income school districts that were not part of the state's court-ordered pre-K program. To receive incentive aid, eligible districts would have been asked to commit a portion of the new Title I funds provided in the federal recovery package to their pre-K programs. Unfortunately, the proposal was not enacted due to budget constraints, but it was an innovative approach that used federal dollars to encourage more districts to allocate local or existing federal dollars to high-quality pre-K.

## **Alaska**

Access. In terms of access to pre-K, Alaska ranks 37th out of the 39 states that offer state-funded preschool. It only serves 2.4 percent of its four year olds and none of the three year olds. To be eligible for the Alaska pre-K project, four year old children must be from families with incomes at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty levels. If there is sufficient space, programs may take a maximum of 35 percent of children from families between 100 and 130 percent of the federal poverty level. Children are served in half-day preschool programs but outreach is also given to families who choose to provide in-home care for preschoolers.

Teacher qualifications. Lead teachers are required to be state certified with a bachelor of arts degree in early childhood education or a related field or specialized training. Assistant teachers must have an associate of arts degree in early childhood education or a related field.

Class size and staff/child ratio. The maximum class size is 20 and the ratio of staff to children is 1:10. The NIEER standards in class size and staff to child ratio are both met.

Family support services / health screening. Vision, hearing, health, developmental, and support services are provided. Support services include parenting support or training and nutrition information.

Funding. Alaska spent \$6,855 per child enrolled in pre-K during the year 2010 to 2011. It is ranked fifth in terms of state spending out of the 39 states with state funded pre-K. School districts receive funding through competitive grants and six school districts provided pre-K during the 2010-2011 year.

## **California**

Access. The first preschool program in California started in 1965 and there have been several programs in operation since that time. The California State Preschool Program Act, which passed in 2008, consolidated the multiple programs and directed they receive streamlined funding. During the 2010-2011 school year, 18.8 percent of four year old children and 10.1 percent of three year olds were served. California ranks 23rd in terms of access to preschool by four year olds.

Teacher qualifications. Lead teachers in California pre-K programs must have a Child Development Associate Teacher permit and there is no minimum education requirement for an assistant teacher.

Class size and staff/child ratio. There is no limit to class size but programs usually enroll no more than 24 in a class. The ratio of staff to child is 1:8.

Family support services / health screening. Family support services include annual parent conferences or home visits, parent education or job training, parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, child health services, referral for social services, and transition to kindergarten activities. Vision and hearing screening decisions are made at the local level.

Funding. For the 2010-2011 year, California spent \$4,986 per child enrolled in state pre-kindergarten. State funding for the program is available through a competitive application process open to school districts, faith based and private child care centers, Head Start agencies, and other public agencies. Quality standards are left up to local control and California fell to fifth from the bottom in the quality of its programs as rated by NIEER.

## **Massachusetts**

Access. Massachusetts has at least three pre-K education programs that serve different categories of children, with some overlap. Programs must provide full-day, full-year services. The Massachusetts Universal Pre-kindergarten Initiative (UPK) began in 2005 and it serves children age two years, nine months until they reach the locally determined kindergarten eligibility age. In the 2010-2011 program year, UPK was available in 97 towns. There is no income cut-off as all children may enroll in participating UPK programs. In the NIEER report, Massachusetts ranks 27th in terms of access to pre-K for four year olds.

Teacher qualifications. Teachers are required to have a bachelor's degree if the pre-K that is offered at a public school. For non-public school settings, a teaching degree is not required.

Class size and staff/child ratio. The maximum number of children in a state funded Massachusetts pre-K class is 20 and the staff to child ratio may not exceed 1:10.

Family support services / health screening. Vision, hearing, health and support services are not required to be provided directly but local education agencies (LEAs) must provide screenings and referrals under the "child find" mandate of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Screenings and referrals are available to all children in non LEAs through services in the public schools. Required support services include parent conferences or home visits and additional support services are determined locally.

Funding. Massachusetts ranks 23rd in state spending on pre-K services. It spent \$3,691 per child in 2010-2011. Universal pre-K grants are conferred on a variety of entities that promote school readiness including public schools, Head Start programs, family child care, faith based programs, and private child care centers. Since the creation of the UPK grant program by the Legislature in the 2007 state budget, UPK has received \$45.67 million in cumulative funding and more than 6,000 children are served annually in cities and towns across the commonwealth. Massachusetts also provides supplemental funding to the federal Head Start program. In the 2010-2011 program year, the state supplied \$7.5 million to serve an additional 222 Head Start children, enhance staff salaries, and provide other quality improvements. With the use of ARRA funds, two preschool programs were offered in 2010-2011. One of the programs provides preschool to educationally at-risk children that are on the Massachusetts Department of Education's waiting list. The second program provides five to twelve weeks of pre-K for four- and five-year-olds in the summer immediately before kindergarten entry.

## **Rhode Island**

Access. Rhode Island is ranked last, at 39th, in terms of access to pre-K. This is at least partially due to the fact that it only recently began to provide pre-K services when it launched the Rhode Island Prekindergarten Demonstration Project in the fall of 2009. Through a combination of state funding and Title 1 dollars, a total of 126 pre-K slots were available to four year olds during the 2010-2011 school year.

Teacher qualifications. A bachelor's degree with an early childhood teaching certificate is required for pre-K teachers. This meets the NIEER benchmark for pre-K teacher education and specialized training.

Class size and staff/child ratio. The maximum class size is 18 with a 1:9 ratio, which meets the NIEER standard.

Family support services/health screening. The pre-K program provides vision, hearing, health, developmental, speech/language and support services. Support services include parent conferences, parent involvement activities, and transition to kindergarten activities.

Funding. The year after the Rhode Island Prekindergarten Demonstration Project was started in 2009, the Rhode Island Board of Regents endorsed a new school funding formula that integrates pre-K into the state's public education system. According to a report from the Pew Center On The States, the Board of Regents "agreed on a set of guiding principles, including commitments to provide an opportunity for a sound basic quality education for all children and to base its investment on the actual cost of delivery of an effective core PreK-12 education system."<sup>2</sup> This led to the inclusion of pre-k in the revised Basic Education Program, a set of regulations that defines state and district responsibilities with respect to providing high-quality education to all children. The Rhode Island Department of Education designated pre-K as a priority program that is eligible for categorical aid. Funding for the Rhode Island Prekindergarten Demonstration Project was not included in the school funding formula for the 2011-2012 school year during the state's transition to the new funding methodology. However, alternate bridge funding consisting of a combination of funds from the state, private foundations, and Title I was used. Rhode Island plans to fully implement the state funding formula, which will include funding for the state pre-K program, in the 2012-2013 school year. The funding formula includes an expansion plan for pre-K that will increase the state investment each year for ten years up to \$10 million per year. The formula's base per-pupil funding of \$8,295 for all grades served as the starting point for the cost of this expansion plan.

## **Washington**

Access. The pre-K program that is funded by Washington State is called the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program or ECEAP. Preschool services are also provided by Head Start which is funded by the federal government. ECEAP is administered by the Department of Early Learning and efforts are coordinated with Thrive by Five Washington, a nonprofit, and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. During the 2010-2011 school year, children and families in 37 of the state's 39 counties participated in ECEAP yet, in terms of access, Washington ranks 31st out of the 39 states that offer state funded preschool. 7.7

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<sup>2</sup> The Pew Center on the States, Formula for Success: Adding High Quality Pre-K to State School Funding Formulas, May 2010.

percent of four year olds and 1.5 percent of three year olds were enrolled in state funded pre-K during the 2010-2011 year. 90 percent of the four year old children enrolled were from families at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level. Up to 10 percent of the ECEAP slots may be filled by children whose families may be over the income level but they have environmental and developmental risk factors. Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, children who qualify for special education due to a disability were eligible for ECEAP regardless of family income and some three-year-old children with risk factors may also enroll.

Teacher qualifications. Lead teachers must have an associates degree or higher with the equivalent of 30 credits in early childhood education (ECE) or have valid state teaching certification with an endorsement in ECE (Pre-K–3) or EC Special Education.

Class size and staff/child ratio. The maximum class size is 20 and the staff to child ratio is 1:9. The NIEER standards for class size and staff/child ratio are met.

Family support services/health screening. Both ECEAP and Head Start provide child health coordination and nutrition. Family support and parent involvement activities are also a priority. Washington meets the NIEER benchmark for providing vision, hearing, health and at least one support service.

Funding. In the 2010-2011 school year, Washington spent \$6,780 per child enrolled in pre-K programs. Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure. Washington is ranked seventh out of the 39 states in terms of pre-K spending.

### **Prekindergarten Research Findings**

Early education programs have been the subject of many studies. Longitudinal studies have examined the outcomes of children who have experienced pre-K, such as academic performance later in life, frequency of criminal activity, economic success, mental health history, and other variables. One such study is the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study. It was commenced in 1962 and conducted over four decades by Dr. David P. Weikart, Dr. Larry Schweinhart, and their colleagues. 123 three and four year old low income African American children, assessed to be at high risk of school failure, were randomly assigned to one of two groups. Of the children, 58 received services in a high-quality early care and education setting while the remainder received no comparable preschool program. The children were tracked throughout their lives until age 40. In the earlier years, they were studied every year from age 3 to age 11, and again at ages 14, 15, 19, and 27. According to a High/Scope Press release, "Overall, the study documented a return to society of more than \$16 for every tax dollar invested in the early care and education program."<sup>3</sup> The results showed that 65 percent of the group who received high-quality early education graduated from high school compared to 45 percent of the non-program group and the effect was particularly true for females, 84 percent vs. 32 percent. The data showed that 21 percent in the early education group had to repeat a grade compared to 41 percent in the non-program group. The group who received high-quality early education on average outperformed the non-program group on various intellectual and

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<sup>3</sup> HighScope Perry Preschool Study, High/Scope Press Release, November, 2004



language tests during their early childhood years, on school achievement tests between ages nine and 14, and on literacy tests at ages 19 and 27. In terms of economic outcomes, 76 percent of the group who received early education was employed at age 40, compared to 62 percent of those in the non-program group. As far as criminal activity, the group who received high-quality early education had significantly fewer arrests than the non-program group (36 percent vs. 55 percent arrested five times or more.) Arrests for violent crimes were significantly lower for members of the early education group with 32 percent ever being arrested for a violent crime compared to 48 percent in the non-program group. The results of the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study demonstrate the savings to society and individual lives that are possible from a high quality preschool program.

An article by Rob Grunewald, associate economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, and Arthur J. Rolnick, Director of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, examines the costs and benefits of a quality preschool program. They claim, "Study after study has proved that such programs, coupled with training for parents, result not only in economic gains for the children as they grow up, but sizable savings on taxes."<sup>4</sup> The savings on taxes occurs because children who experience quality preschool "are less likely to need special education, end up being arrested fewer times and spend less time in prison (which means fewer crime victims), require fewer social services, are healthier, and wind up paying more in taxes."<sup>5</sup> As pointed out in a January 2011 article from the PEW Center on the States, students who have a high-quality pre-k experience are better prepared to achieve at higher levels. The alternative – helping children catch up in later grades – is both more costly and less effective."<sup>6</sup> Rigorous, independent research proves that high-quality pre-K can:

- Reduce grade repetition among first graders by 30 percent after one year of enrollment and 50 percent after two years.<sup>7</sup>
- Save school districts about \$3,700 per child over the course of the K-12 years.<sup>8</sup>
- Return more than \$7 for every dollar invested.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to looking at outcomes, studies have determined which pre-K program quality standards or effectiveness factors result in positive outcomes. As referenced earlier, the

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<sup>4,5</sup> *An Early Childhood Investment with a High Public Return*, Rob Grunewald and Arthur J. Rolnick, Minneapolis, MN Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, 2

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<sup>6</sup> *Creative State Pre-K Policies Offer Smart Federal Opportunities*, The Pew Center On The States, January, 2011.  
<sup>7</sup> Ellen Frede et al., "The APPLES Blossom: Abbott Preschool Program Longitudinal Effects Study (APPLES) Preliminary Results through 2nd Grade Interim Report," (New Brunswick: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Clive R. Belfield and Heather Schwartz, "The Economic Consequences of Early Childhood Education on the School System," (New Brunswick: National Institute for Early Education Research, 2006).

<sup>9</sup> A. J. Reynolds et al., "Age 21 Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Title I Chicago Child-Parent Centers," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 24 (2002): 267-303.

State of Preschool 2011 report from NIEER sets forth standards for a quality preschool program based on a large body of research. After a review of the evidence, a committee of the National Research Council recommended that preschool teachers have a bachelor degree with specialization in early childhood education. The Council also recommended that class size be no more than 20 and the ratio of staff to children should be no more than 1:10.

The State of Preschool 2011 report from NIEER declares that any state that has or strives to have a quality early learning program should have state early learning standards in place that cover all areas identified as fundamental by the National Education Goals Panel. Washington has adopted Early Learning Guidelines that cover, among other things, children's physical well-being and motor development, social/emotional development, approaches toward learning, language development, cognition, and family support services

### **Funding of Prekindergarten**

Pre-K is typically supported through one, or a combination, of the following funding sources: grants from state government subject to annual legislative appropriations, funds from local school districts including locally directed federal funds, the inclusion of pre-K into a state's school funding formula, Title 1 funds, the one-time resource of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds, local contributions, and state supplemental funding of Head Start.

As of May, 2010, 13 states and the District of Columbia financed pre-K through their school funding formula. This approach provides per-pupil funding as part of a state's overall public education budget and allocates state resources to school districts based on established calculations that account for district needs and children's risk factors. In some states, formula funding adjusts with growth or decline in enrollment and can support access for all three and four year olds. Other states limit the size of their pre-K programs by allowing policy makers to "cap" annual formula appropriations or enrollment. They can also restrict eligibility to certain categories of children.

Other state examples of funding approaches for pre-K include Maine, which requires school districts that want a pre-K program to fund the first year, after which the districts become eligible for enrollment based funding from the state. In 2010, Rhode Island approved a state school funding formula that includes categorical funding for prekindergarten. In 1995, Georgia became the first state in the country to have universal preschool for four year olds and it is funded by state lottery revenues.

In Washington, pre-K that is not privately paid for is provided through the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program and Head Start. The table below shows the current number of slots and the average payment per slot. This does not include the funding to manage the programs at the state or federal government levels. In 2010-11, ECEAP and Head Start were able to serve 46 percent of the Head Start eligible three and four-year-olds.

According to a 2013 DEL briefing paper, as of January 2012, there were 1,360 four-year-olds and 1,987 three-year-olds on the ECEAP waiting list. For 2012-13, there is funding for 8,391 children to be enrolled in ECEAP at any given time. “Approximately 32,422 of Washington children are eligible for ECEAP but are not served by ECEAP or the federal Head Start program. Washington is serving 37 percent of children who are eligible for ECEAP. More than 11,500 of these are 4-year-olds who will be in kindergarten next year.”<sup>10</sup>

<b>Program</b>	<b>Funded slots (Includes ARRA Slots)</b>	<b>Average funding per slot</b>
<b>ECEAP</b>	<b>8,024</b>	<b>\$6,662</b>
<b>Head Start</b>	<b>9,887 slots</b>	<b>\$9,404</b>
<b>Early Head Start</b>	<b>2,446 slots</b>	<b>\$13,281</b>
<b>Tribal Head Start</b>	<b>1,075 slots</b>	<b>\$8,423</b>
<b>Tribal Early Head Start</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>\$11,430</b>
<b>Migrant &amp; Seasonal Head Start</b>	<b>3570</b>	<b>\$8,409</b>

## **Conclusion**

This paper provides a sampling of pre-K programs in the United States, including how various states fund and structure their programs. Research is unequivocal on the benefits of quality pre-K programs, both in the long term and short term. Longitudinal studies have shown that children, who are prepared for kindergarten because they attended a high quality preschool, outperform their peers on language, literacy, and mathematics. Research has shown these positive effects to persist at least through elementary school.<sup>11</sup> Studies have verified that quality pre-K programs provide numerous other benefits to the children enrolled in the programs, their families, and to society. The information provided in this paper may help to guide the further development of a high quality pre-K program in Washington State.

<sup>10</sup> Washington State Department of Early Learning, *2013 Legislative Briefing Paper*

<sup>11</sup> Ellen Frede et al., “The APPLES Blossom: Abbott Preschool Program Longitudinal Effects Study (APPLES) Preliminary Results through 2nd Grade Interim Report,” (New Brunswick: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2009).