

***A Path Forward for New Mexico's Children:***

**The Case for Funding Pre-K through  
the School Funding Formula**

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**with economic research provided by  
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## **Executive Summary**

In 1999, 54.7 percent of five-year-olds in the United States had access to full-day kindergarten, compared with only 14.7 percent of five-year-olds in New Mexico. Today, in 2018, all eighty-nine school districts in New Mexico have chosen to offer full-day kindergarten classes to their students, and approximately 99 percent of parents choose full-day, rather than half-day, kindergarten classes for their children.<sup>1</sup> How did this happen?

In 2000, New Mexico passed bipartisan, landmark legislation to phase in voluntary, full-day kindergarten classes for five-year-olds. The phase-in gave priority to elementary schools with the highest proportion of at-risk youth. The state allocated a \$5 million dollar appropriation for the phase-in and classroom expansion.

A growing consensus of policy makers, educators, researchers, and parents agree that New Mexico must invest more resources and funding during the formative years of a child's life, before kindergarten. Pre-K is an important component of the early childhood education continuum, particularly in conjunction with programs like K-3 Plus. Pre-K provides a host of positive benefits for children, families, the budget, and the economy, including:

- Increased kindergarten readiness.
- Lower rate of juvenile and violent arrests.
- Higher rates of high school graduation and college enrollment.
- Lower dropout rates.
- Stronger and more skilled workforce.

Additionally, state-funded early learning programs impact the local economy in several ways:

- Parents and caregivers can find employment or remain gainfully employed.
- Parents and caregivers pass on cost savings in childcare (NM average \$9,000) to the local economy.
- Parents and caregivers are able to return to school, contributing to a more educated and skilled workforce.

Finally, there are excellent examples from Tribal Head Start in New Mexico that show how customized early learning programs can create benefits specific to tribal communities, by conducting tribal language immersion programs that not only lead to higher academic performance but help redefine what a "high-quality education" means on tribal land.

Just as full-day kindergarten has become the norm in the eighteen years since its passage, New Mexico could emerge as a champion in expanding access to prekindergarten to all three- and four-year-olds in the state.

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Raden, *Achieving Full-Day Kindergarten in New Mexico: A Case Study*, (Foundation for Child Development, 2002).

In 2017, New Mexico enrolled 55 percent of its four-year-old children in some sort of early learning program, and just 22 percent of its three-year olds.<sup>2</sup> ***New Mexico Now (NMN) seeks to fund 80 percent of four-year-olds and 50 percent of three-year-olds in free, voluntary, full-day, high-quality pre-K over the next five years.***<sup>3</sup>

## Implementation Recommendations

### 1. Governance

- a) Create a new *Department of Early Learning* to consolidate all 0-3 year-old programming from the Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD) and Department of Health (DOH). Programs would include home visitation; child care licensing and services; Head Start Collaboration Office; the Program for Infants and Toddlers (FIT) early intervention program (Part C of IDEA); early pre-K for three-year-olds; early childhood mental health; and family nutrition.
- b) Create a new *division* within the Public Education Department (PED) for 4-8 year-olds, including the IDEA Part B Preschool Special Education Program (includes qualifying three-year-olds);<sup>4</sup> and K-3 Plus. The new department and division would work closely together to create a continuous pathway for 0-8 programming, align standards, and provide wage parity.
- c) Develop divisions of tribal early learning in the new department and within PED to provide guidance on customizations required for early learning programs with tribal children; funding mechanisms that support the principles of self-governance and self-determination; and ongoing dialogue and peer-learning with tribal early learning practitioners to codify early learning best practices on tribal lands.

### 2. Funding

- a) Fund voluntary, full-day, high-quality pre-K for up to 80 percent of New Mexico's *four-year-olds* through the *Public School Funding Formula* over the next five years, without diluting the unit value of K-12. Applying the funding formula through PED, local school districts could provide high-quality pre-K through public school facilities or by contracting with private providers. If and when pre-K for four-year-olds hits 90 percent saturation or above, lawmakers could decide to make four-year-old pre-K compulsory in the future.
- b) Fund voluntary, high-quality pre-K for up to 50 percent of New Mexico's *three-year-olds* over the next five years through the new *Department of Early*

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<sup>2</sup> Steve Barnett, *The State of Preschool 2017*, (National Institute for Early Learning Research, 2017) [http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/New-Mexico\\_YB2017.pdf](http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/New-Mexico_YB2017.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> As pre-K for three-year-olds becomes more accepted, this proposal can put New Mexico on a path toward 80 percent coverage for three-year-olds within eight years.

<sup>4</sup> Three-year-olds with developmental disabilities who qualify through school district screening are placed in an inclusive preschool setting.

*Learning*, contracting with private providers. The state may need to reassess reimbursement rates for 0-3 programs to begin to align wages and staffing requirements with PED and to assist private providers during the transition phase.

Within five years, this approach could:

- Fund 80 percent of all New Mexico's four-year-olds and 50 percent of three-year-olds in full-day, high-quality pre-K.
- Continue to utilize private and public providers.
- Create more stability in funding for pre-K.
- Begin to align systems, standards, and wages across state-funded pre-K programs as a first step toward increased alignment with tribal and non-tribal Head Start programs.
- Support all pre-K professionals with training, professional development, and wage parity.

Sixteen states -- Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin -- along with the District of Columbia fund pre-K programs through their public school funding formulas.

Of particular importance to New Mexico, funding for pre-K for children on tribal lands should follow the model of New Mexico's Tribal Infrastructure Fund, a funding mechanism that respects tribal sovereignty and self-governance and provides for customization of pre-K programs that build pathways to higher education, but also reinforces pathways back to tribal communities for young people.

This report describes the advantages of full-day, high-quality pre-K for three- and four-year olds; estimates costs for statewide pre-K in New Mexico; discusses pre-K funding options used by other states; provides recommendations on funding and governance; and lists a series of questions remaining to be answered.

The appendices contain summaries of studies of pre-K; a description of New Mexico's current NM PreK program; details on other states that use a funding formula for pre-K; a case study of the bipartisan effort in 2000 in New Mexico to include full-day kindergarten into the funding formula, which could serve as a useful roadmap for the expansion of high-quality pre-K in the state; and a list of individuals interviewed for feedback and advice.

## **About the Authors**

Danila Crespín Zidovsky served as the primary author for this report. She is an early child education advocate and policy analyst. She has taught children both in New Mexico and South Korea and received her MPA from the University of New Mexico.

Dr. Kelly O'Donnell provided the financial and economic analysis for this report. O'Donnell is an economist, senior research fellow, and research professor at the University of New Mexico School of Public Administration. For the State of New Mexico, she has served as Director of State Tax Policy, Deputy Cabinet Secretary for Economic Development, and Superintendent of the New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department.

New Mexico Now (NMN) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to build public will to address critical issues facing New Mexico. NMN's first campaign seeks to address funding for full-day, high-quality pre-K for three- and four-year-olds in New Mexico. New Mexico Now's Board of Directors includes:

- Jeannie Oakes, PhD, Presidential Professor in Educational Equity, Emeritus at the University of California (UCLA)
- Kara Bobroff, Executive Director, NACA Inspired Schools Network
- Melanie Aranda, Chief Operating Officer, Center for Civic Policy

## Introduction

A child's earliest experiences provide the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. In the first few years of life, more than one million new neural connections form every second.<sup>5</sup> The emotional and physical health, social skills, and cognitive capacities of young children affect their future success in school and the workplace and enable young children to develop into productive members of society.<sup>6</sup>

Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers benefit from environments that provide sensitive, responsive caregiving and a variety of language-rich learning opportunities. Research on the malleability of cognitive and language abilities shows these skills to be highly responsive to both positive and negative influences.<sup>7</sup> Environmental enrichment can promote cognitive development, whereas a variety of adverse experiences may shape cognitive development in ways that limit later learning.<sup>8</sup>

Providing young children with a healthy environment in which to learn and grow is beneficial to their development, and economists have shown these types of high-quality programs also offer substantial returns on investment to society. Several studies, including the Perry Preschool Program<sup>9</sup> and Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention Project,<sup>10</sup> have found a range of returns between \$2 and \$9 for every dollar invested in early learning programs. According to economist James Heckman, every dollar spent on high-quality, birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children delivers a 13 percent annual return on investment.

Children who participate in these types of high-quality programs are less likely to be unnecessarily enrolled in special education or retained in their grade, less likely to participate in social welfare programs, and save their states costs associated with crime and juvenile delinquency.<sup>11</sup> These studies also found increased tax revenues from pre-K alumni later in life. Moreover, parents and caregivers show increased household income from being able to join the workforce.

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<sup>5</sup> Center on the Developing Child at Harvard, "Brain Architecture," last modified 2018. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/brain-architecture/>.

<sup>6</sup> Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> S. E. Fox, P. Levitt and C. A. Nelson III, "How the Timing and Quality of Early Experiences Influence the Development of Brain Architecture," *Child Development* 81, no. 1 (2010): 28 – 40.

<sup>8</sup> J. P. Shonkoff, "Building a New Biodevelopmental Framework to Guide the Future of Early Childhood Policy.," *Child Development* 81, no. 1 (2010): 357-67

<sup>9</sup> J. Heckman, "The Effect of the Perry Preschool Program on the Cognitive and Non-Cognitive Skills of its Participants," (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago, 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Leonard N. Masse and W. Steven Barnett, *A Benefit Cost Analysis of the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention*, (New Brunswick: National Institute for Early Education Research, 2002).

<sup>11</sup> Jean Burr and Rob Grunewald, "Lessons Learned: A Review of Early Childhood Development Studies," (Minneapolis: Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, April 2006).

New Mexico can invest more funding and resources into pre-K programs that foster cognitive, social, and emotional development; support parents' impact on the local economy; prepare the state's future workforce; and offer a healthy and safe environment for children.

Of particular importance to New Mexico, funding for pre-K to children on tribal lands should follow the model of New Mexico's Tribal Infrastructure Fund: a funding mechanism that respects tribal sovereignty and self-governance and provides for customization of pre-K programs that build pathways to higher education, but also reinforces pathways back to tribal communities for young people.



## Why Pre-K is Important

Nearly half of children in the United States enter kindergarten without the skills they need to thrive. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 2016, the percentage of three- to five-year-olds enrolled in preschool programs was lower for Black (35 percent) and Hispanic (34 percent) children than for Asian (45 percent) and White (42 percent) children. The preschool enrollment rates of three- to five-year olds for American Indian/Alaska Native children was 41 percent.<sup>12</sup> While Latinos are the fastest growing and largest minority group in the United States – making up a quarter of three- and four-year-olds – Latinos demonstrate one of the lowest preschool participation rates of any major ethnicity or race.

The educational achievement gaps seen in primary-school children are present before they enter kindergarten and persist as children age.<sup>13</sup> In addition, children from low-income families are less likely to be enrolled in preschool than their more affluent peers: 41 percent compared to 61 percent.<sup>14</sup>

Fortunately, the nation's interest in prekindergarten has grown considerably since 1960, when only 10 percent of three- and four-year-olds were regularly enrolled in a classroom setting. In 2016, state-funded preschool program enrollment reached an all-time high, serving nearly 1.5 million children – 32 percent of four-year-olds and 5 percent of three-year-olds.<sup>15</sup>

However, state pre-K participation rates vary greatly. For example, Florida, Oklahoma, Vermont, and the District of Columbia served more than 70 percent of their four-year-olds in state-funded preschool, whereas 11 states served fewer than 10 percent of four-year-olds: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Delaware, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Washington. Local Head Start programs serve approximately a half-million four-year-olds from the lowest-income families.

Research, including the Perry Preschool Program, the Abecedarian Project, the Chicago Child Parent Centers (CPC), and Oklahoma's State Pre-K program, has shown that children who participate in high-quality pre-K programs enter kindergarten ahead of their peers in language, literacy, and social skills [See Appendix A]. The gains are particularly substantial for children from low-income families and those at risk for academic failure who, on average, start kindergarten twelve to fourteen months behind their peers in pre-literacy and language skills.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> United States Department of Commerce, *Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS)* (2017)

<sup>13</sup> Ajay Chaudry et al., *Cradle to Kindergarten: A New Plan to Combat Inequality* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2017).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> W Steven Barnett, et al., *The State of Preschool* The National Institute for Early Education Research, 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, ed., *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 2000).

A growing consensus of policy makers, educators, researchers and parents agree that New Mexico must invest more resources and funding during the formative years of a child's life. Pre-K is an important component of the early childhood education continuum, particularly in conjunction with programs like K-3 Plus. Pre-K provides a host of positive benefits for children, families, the budget, and the economy, including:

- Increased kindergarten readiness.
- Lower rates of juvenile and violent arrests.
- Higher rates of high school graduation and college enrollment.
- Lower dropout rates.
- Stronger and more skilled workforce.

Additionally, state-funded early learning programs impact the local economy in several ways:

- Parents and caregivers can find employment or remain gainfully employed.
- Parents and caregivers pass on cost savings in childcare (NM average \$9,000) to the local economy.
- Parents and caregivers are able to return to school, contributing to a more educated and skilled workforce.

Finally, there are excellent examples from Tribal Head Start in New Mexico that show how customized early learning programs can create benefits specific to tribal communities, by conducting tribal language immersion programs that lead to higher academic performance and help redefine what a high-quality education means on tribal land.

## Examples of Pre-K in Other States

### **Oklahoma**

Since 1998, Oklahoma has offered universal access to prekindergarten, funded through its school funding formula, and has one of the highest participation rates in the country, with 74 percent of all four-year-olds enrolled in a pre-K program. Oklahoma has poverty rates similar to that of New Mexico.

In Oklahoma, school districts can contract with private providers and Head Start programs. Pre-K teachers are required to have a bachelor's degree and certification in early childhood education and receive state salary and benefits equal to K-12 teachers. There are also standards stipulating class size, ratios, and curriculum.

A child can receive a full-day childcare subsidy if he/she receives four or more hours of childcare per day. If the pre-K program is part-day (2.5 hours per day), and the child is in care for four or more additional hours, the provider receives a full child care subsidy. If the pre-K program is full day (6 hours), then the subsidy is prorated for the remaining hours of the day. A part-day Head

Start program can collaborate with a part-day pre-K program to provide wraparound care. All funding must go through the local school district.<sup>17</sup>

William Gormley and researchers from Georgetown University's Center for Research on Children have conducted extensive research on Oklahoma's pre-K programs. The research consistently finds that pre-K participants outperform non-pre-K participants.

### **New Jersey**

In 1998, in response to the landmark New Jersey Supreme Court school-funding case, *Abbott v. Burke*, the New Jersey Supreme Court developed the Abbott Preschool Program. The New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) provides funding to eligible districts to provide the program to all three- and four-year-olds who live in those districts and choose to enroll. Private childcare centers or Head Start programs that meet state standards may contract with districts to deliver services.

The program specifies the following policies to support high-quality programming: a teacher with a four-year degree and a specialized teaching certificate in early childhood education, plus an assistant for each class of fifteen children; use of a developmentally appropriate curriculum; adequate facilities; and transportation, health, and other related services as needed. Teachers were given five years to acquire all the required qualifications during the phase-in period.

Abbott districts employ coaches to conduct annual structured observations of all preschool classrooms and to use this information to support program improvement through professional development.

In a 2013 study, the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University found that by fourth grade, pre-K participants in Abbott districts were, on average, three-quarters of an academic year ahead of their peers who did not participate in pre-K. The children who participated had been held back a grade less often, and fewer were in special-education programs.

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<sup>17</sup> Center for Law and Social Policy, "Oklahoma Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program," accessed July 30, 2018, <https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/public/resources-and-publications/states/0243.pdf>.

## Cost Estimates for Statewide Pre-K in New Mexico

### Total Cost: Five-year Phase-In

Eighty percent saturation of four-year-olds and 50 percent of three-year-olds would result in 18,969 new high-quality pre-K slots in the state program New Mexico PreK. Of these, 8,105 would be three-year-olds, and 10,845 would be four-year-olds, as shown in Table 1 below.

<b>Table 1: Estimating Unmet Need</b>			
	<b>3 &amp; 4 Year-Olds</b>	<b>3 Year-Olds</b>	<b>4 Year-Olds</b>
3 and-4-year olds (total)	52,436	26,178	26,258
80% of 3 and-4-year olds	41,949	20,942	21,006
LESS			
NM PreK full day	4,574	685	3,889
NM PreK part day <sup>18</sup>	2,402	132.5	2269
Head Start*	4,671	2,183	2,488
IDEA B	485	364	121
Title 1	441	221	221
City of Albuquerque	357	214	143
APS	978	522	456
CYFD CCA Full Day, 4 or 5 Star	1,352	676	676
<b>Total unmet need</b>	<b>26,689</b>	<b>15,945</b>	<b>10,744</b>
<b>NM Now Goal<sup>19</sup></b>	<b>18,969</b>	<b>8,105</b>	<b>10,845</b>

The average cost per full-time slot is \$9,183, on par with high quality programs in other states:

<b>Table 2: Estimating Per Student Cost (does not include capital)</b>				
Reimbursement	Transportation	Consultation	Administrative Cost @ 10%	<b>Total Cost</b>
\$8,000	\$148	\$200	\$835	<b>\$9,183</b>

<sup>18</sup> Part-day slots are expressed in full day equivalents (2 part-day slots = 1 full day equivalent slot) for ease of comparison.

<sup>19</sup> *New Mexico Now's goal is PreK for 50 percent of three-year-olds and 80 percent of four-year-olds. There is a small discrepancy in applying these percentage goals to the unmet need because of rounding and conversion of half-day slots to full-day slots.*

The total cost for this proposal is \$217 million, or approximately \$43 million per year for the proposed five-year phase-in:

<b>Table 3: Cost Estimate Summary (\$ millions)</b>						
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Total</b>
Operations <sup>20</sup>	\$34.84	\$34.84	\$34.84	\$34.84	\$34.84	<b>\$174.19</b>
Workforce	\$0.23	\$0.46	\$0.69	\$0.92	\$1.15	<b>\$3.44</b>
Capital	\$7.93	\$7.93	\$7.93	\$7.93	\$7.93	<b>\$39.65</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$43.00</b>	<b>\$43.23</b>	<b>\$43.46</b>	<b>\$43.69</b>	<b>\$43.92</b>	<b>\$217.29</b>

Key assumptions in this table include:

- 18,969 new NM PreK slots to reach 80 percent usage for four-year-olds and 50 percent usage for three-year-olds (at full implementation, 44,901 New Mexico children would receive free, publicly funded, full-day pre-K services: 7,405 through 100 percent federally funded programs and 37,496 through NM PreK through private and public centers).<sup>21</sup>
- Shifting 4,538 half-day slots into full-day slots and adding 24,420 new full-day slots, as required to transition to full-day pre-K.
- Compensation for teachers that is comparable to public school teachers, requiring an additional \$24,000 per teacher per year above current levels. See the *Recommendations* section for our proposal to require that every NM PreK lead teacher hold a bachelor’s degree and early childhood teaching license, no matter the program in which they teach. Teachers also would receive professional development supports, and this requirement would have a phase-in period to ensure existing teachers are not pushed out of the workforce.
- The estimate of annual cost per child includes these elements:
  - Improved technical assistance to child-care providers to help them respond to the NM PreK Request for Proposals (RFP) and meet program reporting requirements.
  - Annual provider payments of \$6,000 per four-year-old and \$7,000 per three-year-old.
  - T.E.A.C.H. scholarships for teachers, directors, and educational assistants, which support early childhood educators pursuing higher education; reduce

<sup>20</sup> Total Operational Expenditures are defined as Instruction, Support Services, Operation of Non-Instructional Services, and Capital Outlay.

<sup>21</sup> To adjust for children already receiving high-quality care through New Mexico child-care assistance, we subtracted the estimated number of subsidized three- and four-year-olds in FOCUS or Aim High level 4 or 5 care from the total estimate of unmet need. We counted each preschool age subsidized child receiving half day FOCUS 4 or 5 services as having half a day of unmet need. For Head Start, we subtracted all three- and four-year-olds receiving full day Head Start from the estimate of unmet need. We counted each child receiving half day Head Start services as having half a day of unmet need.

teacher turnover; enhance compensation; and increase educational attainment. Approximately 700 scholarships are offered in New Mexico annually.

- On-site professional development using the NM PreK coaching and consultation model.
  - Off-site NM PreK training.
  - Transportation.
  - External evaluation.
  - Data management.
  - Program administration.
- **Cost savings:**
    - **Special Education:** Nearly 13 percent of NM students in kindergarten through third grade receive special education services. Annual operating expenditures for special education students exceed those of typical students by \$6,894 for each child. New Mexico pays 83 percent of the additional cost of special education placement. Thus, every time a child avoids special education placement, New Mexico saves \$5,722 annually.
    - **Grade Retention:** By reducing the likelihood that a child will be required to repeat a grade, pre-K generates profound and measurable cost savings. If the cost of grade repetition is the present value of an additional year of school, \$5,407 per child, the first-year savings from reduced retention attributable to pre-K will be between \$672,000 and \$1.4M. The total savings during the primary grades will range from \$1.7 million and \$3.5 million.

## Other Funding Options for Pre-K

While consensus on the benefits of pre-K has grown, the challenge to provide enough reliable funding to ensure access to all three- and four-year-olds in New Mexico remains. Other states use a variety of available mechanisms to fund pre-K, many of them insufficient by themselves.

In most states, preschool has been funded through a complex “braiding” of both public and private sources; fee-based or sliding-scale centers; and federal, state, and local government sources. Pre-K programs in New Mexico are funded primarily through discretionary grants with expenditures largely determined by annual appropriations from general revenue through the state legislature’s regular budgetary process. Other states use a variety of funding mechanisms for pre-K, including general fund appropriations for programs, block grants, dedicated revenue streams, social impact bonds, sales taxes, and state public school funding formulas.<sup>22</sup> The primary mechanisms for funding pre-K are detailed below.

## Federal Funding

The federal government provides pre-K to low-income three- and four-year-olds through Head Start. However, support for pre-K from the federal government goes beyond Head Start. Eighteen states received competitive federal Preschool Development Grants that totaled more than \$237 million in FY15. In addition to Head Start and grants, the federal government provides funding through Title II-VI, tax subsidies, and other wraparound services. Head Start is unique in that it is a direct federal-to-local program that bypasses state government.<sup>23</sup> Overall, about 10 percent of all four-year-olds and 8 percent of all three-year-olds attend Head Start, representing approximately 40 percent of all eligible preschool-age children from families with incomes below the federal poverty level.

In New Mexico, thirty-six grantees across the state offer Head Start programming, including thirteen traditional Head Start programs, fifteen Early Head Start programs, and seventeen Native American and Alaskan Native Head Start programs. In FY17, Head Start sent \$85.6 million to New Mexico, including more than \$18.5 million to tribal pre-K programs.

Largely because of this federal funding, “In three-quarters (77 percent) of the state’s Native American communities, a high percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds are reported to be attending preschool (which includes the category ‘nursery school’). The rates of these children attending preschool range from 25 percent in Pojoaque to 100 percent in Nambé. The overall state enrollment rate for 3- and 4-year-olds is 39 percent, while the overall rate for all Native American

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<sup>22</sup> Maggie Wallen and Angela Hubbard, *The Ounce: Blending and Braiding Early Childhood Program Funding Streams Toolkit*, (Ounce of Prevention Fund, 2013).

<sup>23</sup> Emily Parker, Louisa Diffey, and Bruce Atchison, *How States Fund Pre-K: A Primer for Policymakers*, (Education Commission of the States, 2018).

preschoolers is 47 percent.”<sup>24</sup>

Several states tie their state-funded pre-K program standards to federal Head Start standards (i.e., Delaware, Minnesota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, Wisconsin). Federal Head Start spending per child in those states influences the determination of state funding per child for these programs. Although none of these states fund state Head Start at a level equal to federal funding per child, the funding per child is above the national average for all of these states.<sup>25</sup> In Washington D.C., for example, Head Start students are in blended classrooms with state pre-K funded children through federal waivers.

A key challenge is lack of alignment on standards and wages between NM PreK and Head Start, which presents obstacles to better coordination of funding and services.

## Local Funding

Increasingly, local governments are taking on pre-K policy and creating universal programs at the school district, city, or county level. City preschool measures are usually funded through a dedicated funding stream. For example, Denver and San Antonio have expanded access to pre-K through sales tax revenues. Seattle does so through a property tax, while Philadelphia taxes sugary sweetened beverages. Other programs, such as the Virginia Preschool Initiative and Iowa’s Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program, require local governments or providers to provide matching funding. This shared responsibility model can increase coordination and stakeholder investment and offers a strategic solution for local municipalities to fund early learning programming.<sup>26</sup> New York City funded its pre-K expansion through a combination of state and city tax dollars. The City of Albuquerque provides about \$5 million in pre-K funding each year out of its general fund.

## State General Fund Appropriations

Most state pre-K programs are funded from general fund appropriations and are subject to the legislative budgeting process. From 2012-17, this share of funding increased 47 percent nationally.

Nationally, the year-over-year percentage increase dropped from about 12 percent in 2015-16 to about 6 percent in 2016-17. Much of this decrease was driven by New York’s nearly \$375 million increase in pre-K funding in 2015-16, followed by its \$22.5 million increase in 2016-17. This drop demonstrates that although pre-K funding is still increasing overall, its reliability within each state’s budget remains inconsistent. Further, as states deal with deficits, pre-K is not guaranteed

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<sup>24</sup>Christine Hollis, *A New Mexico Kids Count 2012 Special Report*, (Albuquerque: New Mexico Voices for Children, 2012),

<http://www.nmvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Native-American-Kids-Count-report-2012.pdf>

<sup>25</sup>W. Steven Barnett and Richard Kasmin, *Funding Landscape for Preschool with a Highly Qualified Workforce*, (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2016).

<sup>26</sup> Emily Parker, Louisa Diffey, and Bruce Atchison, *How States Fund Pre-K: A Primer for Policymakers*



in general fund appropriations.<sup>27</sup>

When funding for a state pre-K program comes from a general fund appropriation and is subject to the legislative budgeting process, it is vulnerable to funding cuts during an economic downturn. Additionally, total funding is set through the state budget process and not through a determination of what constitutes adequate funding for pre-K education. Total funding is typically separated from enrollment numbers, meaning that if total enrollment rises, a decrease in per-pupil funding may occur if total funding levels remain consistent.

One exception to this generality is New Jersey's Abbott Preschool Program, which arose from litigation and a court order. The state calculates funding based on the cost of educating a pre-K enrollee, not based on budgetary strains. The Abbott Preschool Program provides universal pre-K to approximately 32,000 preschoolers in thirty-one low-income districts.<sup>28</sup> New Mexico may experience a similar increase in early education funding based on the recent ruling in *Yazzie v State of New Mexico* that New Mexico does not currently provide adequate funding for public education, as mandated in the state constitution.

## Block Grants

Commonly, block grants are issued as a lump sum to localities, with a high level of discretion over how funds are used. Block grants in education are generally used to give additional funding to schools that serve students who have high needs. New Mexico receives a federal block grant for childcare that is used to help fund existing pre-K facilities.

The Kansas Early Childhood Block Grant is distributed to school districts, child care centers, Head Start centers, and community programs that serve at-risk children and underserved areas. In Nebraska, the Early Childhood Education Grant Program supports the development of children up to kindergarten through comprehensive, center-based programs.<sup>29</sup>

## Dedicated Revenue

Several states use dedicated revenue for pre-K. Sources include:

- State lottery program: Georgia, Nebraska, North Carolina, Virginia, Washington.
- Tobacco taxes: California.
- Tobacco settlement funds: Arizona, Kansas and Connecticut.
- Gaming revenue: Arkansas.
- Non-gambling gaming revenue: Missouri.
- State sales tax: South Carolina.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> W. Steven Barnett and Richard Kasmin, *Funding Landscape for Preschool with a Highly Qualified Workforce*

<sup>29</sup> Emily Parker, Louisa Diffey, and Bruce Atchison, *How States Fund Pre-K: A Primer for Policymakers*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

## Social Impact Bonds

Social impact bonds, also called *Pay for Success*, use private capital to fund public programs on the front end, and pay investors with interest out of public funds on the back end. In Chicago, bonds have been used to increase pre-K access among low-income children. Private lenders provided capital to create the program, and once the program improves educational outcomes, the government repays lenders with a guaranteed 7 percent interest rate that is funded by cutting investments in other government programs.

In Utah, the *Pay for Success* pre-K program is a partnership between Goldman Sachs and the State of Utah. Once agreed upon outcomes are achieved, Goldman Sachs will be paid back, plus 5 percent interest; if outcomes are not achieved, the investment will not be recovered.

## The Path Forward: Fund Pre-K Through the Funding Formula

### Background on Funding Formulas

In contrast to the way the majority of states fund pre-K, a different approach to funding has evolved for K-12 public education. For K-12, states fund their education systems based on a funding formula. In most states, a funding formula is based on a per-student funding level, with additional money allocated to needy areas and students (for example, English-language learners, at-risk students, students with disabilities, etc.). According to a 2018 report from the Education Commission of the States, while K-12 funding formulas do not guarantee adequate levels of funding, money distributed through a formula is more insulated from the economic ebbs and flows of the state budget process and anticipated revenues.<sup>31</sup>

Ideally, school funding formulas do the following:

1. Provide a basic level of assured funding for every child enrolled based on a determination of what is required to provide each child with a constitutionally adequate education.
2. Adjust state funding amounts provided to local districts for differences in the needs of children, local capacity to raise revenue, and geographic differences in costs.
3. Automatically adjust funding for changes in overall cost (e.g., inflation) as well as the number of students served.

Sixteen states – Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin – along with the District of Columbia fund pre-K programs through their K-12 funding formulas. In three of these states (Maine, Oklahoma and West Virginia) pre-K students receive at least the same base per-pupil amount as other K-12 students. In Maine, for example, funding for students in pre-K through second grade is allocated at 1.10 times the per-pupil foundational base rate.

In New Mexico, nearly all state-level school district operational funds for K-12 are distributed through the Public School Fund, the state's school funding formula. Revenues are derived from the General Fund, the Current School Fund, and Federal Mineral Leasing Revenue. Ninety percent of the funding formula is distributed through the State Equalization Guarantee Distribution (SEG) for operational revenue of school districts.

Like most funding sources, public school funding formulas are not without criticism. They often do not guarantee adequate or equitable funding. States have faced numerous lawsuits regarding the extent to which they meet their constitutional obligations, including recently in New Mexico. Some

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<sup>31</sup> W. Steven Barnett and Richard Kasmin, *Funding Landscape for Preschool with a Highly Qualified Workforce*

scholars have pointed to both perceived shortcomings in the K-12 approach and avenues to address shortcomings in that approach.<sup>32</sup>

## The Benefits of Using a Funding Formula for Pre-K

The most significant benefit of funding pre-K through a school funding formula is that this method is likely to increase the stability and growth in funding for pre-K over time. Therefore, more children will reap the benefits of pre-K, and state budgets and economies will realize a greater return on this investment.

NIEER compiled a list of the ten pre-K programs funded through state K-12 funding systems. These programs tend to have higher levels of funding adequacy and effort.

A 2010 Pre-K Now study from The Pew Center on the States concluded, “Embedding pre-K within the state’s school funding formula can help protect our youngest students from shifting political and economic climates by providing equitable, sufficient, and sustainable pre-K funding that supports quality, grows with enrollment to meet demand, and has the capability to serve all children.”<sup>33</sup>

In New Mexico, funding pre-K through the funding formula also could streamline access and participation in K-3 Plus. A key recommendation from a 2017 Legislative Finance Committee report was for school districts to align NM PreK and K-3 Plus.

## Implementation

### **Governance**

Currently, early childhood education services in New Mexico are scattered in three state agencies: the Public Education Department (PED); the Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD); and the Department of Health (DOH). State services are not well-coordinated across these multiple agencies. Administration, communication and program alignment are fractured.

An umbrella agency to oversee all 0-3 programs, and a new division within the education department to align standards for children ages 4-8, could better align state pre-K standards and wages, toward the goal of eventual alignment with tribal and non-tribal Head Start and ultimately, more efficient delivery of pre-K services to all New Mexico children.

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<sup>32</sup> Bruce Baker et al., *Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card*, (Education Law Center, 2017).

<sup>33</sup> Ellen Boylan and Shad White, *Formula for Success: Adding High Quality Pre-K to State School Funding Formulas*, (The Pew Center on the States, 2010),

[http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pes\\_assets/2010/pewpknschoolfundingformulamay2010pdf.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pes_assets/2010/pewpknschoolfundingformulamay2010pdf.pdf)

According to a Fiscal Impact Report completed by the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee in 2017 for Senate Bill 106 to create a new early childhood services department, a new department is estimated to cost \$477,908 after transfer of monies from agencies.<sup>34</sup>

Three states – Georgia, Washington and Massachusetts – have stand-alone early learning departments, and states with early childhood programs within Departments of Education include Michigan, Maryland, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania.

Stronger, more centralized governance may result in improvements in tracking children’s progress in each program; minimization or elimination of duplication of services; increased coordination and alignment among early childhood programs; better coherence among policies and services; and streamlined administrative functions with greater efficiency.

### **Private and Public Pre-K Centers**

Currently, pre-K in New Mexico is delivered through public facilities via PED and private pre-K facilities via CYFD. To meet the demand for pre-K, New Mexico must continue to provide pre-K through a combination of private and public centers. Just as CYFD currently contracts with private providers, the new division could do the same under the proposed new governance structure. [See *Discussion Questions*, page 24].

For private pre-K centers, funding four-year-old pre-K through the funding formula may help to stabilize overall funding and professional development for 0-3 services as well, in addition to helping bring thousands more three-year-olds into pre-K.

### **Workforce**

A multi-year phase-in, such as the Abbott model in New Jersey, would support skilled professionals and increase workforce capacity. Aligning standards with required credentialing and state-funded training, professional development, and expanded coaching would support early childhood educators and create the pathway for alignment of standards and wages.

Thirty-five state pre-K programs require all teachers to hold a bachelor’s degree and specialized training in early childhood education. Currently, only PED requires pre-K teachers to hold a bachelor’s degree. CYFD requires that a teacher is working toward their degree.

### **Tribal Programs**

Funding programs on tribal lands may require different methods to support the principles of self-governance and self-determination and create pathways back to the community for participants and teachers alike. Tribes also may have different definitions of “high-quality education” as well. For example, incorporating immersion in tribal languages may be desired, and in these instances, elders in the community may be best equipped to teach children in their native languages. These elders also may need a flexible approach to teacher credentialing.

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<sup>34</sup> Anna Maier, Julia Daniel, Jeannie Oakes and Livia Lam, *Community Schools as an Effective School Improvement Strategy: A Review of the Evidence*, (Palo Alto: Learning Policy Institute, 2017).

## Recommendations

***New Mexico Now seeks to fund 80 percent of four-year-olds and 50 percent of three-year-olds in free, voluntary, full-day, high-quality pre-K over the next five years.***<sup>35</sup> Our research suggests the following high-level strategies to achieve this goal, for consideration and discussion:

## Implementation Recommendations

### 1. Governance

- a. Create a new *Department of Early Learning* to consolidate all 0-3 year-old programming from the Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD) and Department of Health (DOH). Programs would include home visitation; child care licensing and services; Head Start Collaboration Office; the Program for Infants and Toddlers (FIT) early intervention program (Part C of IDEA); early pre-K for three year-olds; early childhood mental health; and family nutrition.
- b. Create a new *division* within the Public Education Department (PED) for 4-8 year-olds, including the IDEA Part B Preschool Special Education Program (includes qualifying three-year-olds)<sup>36</sup>; and K-3 Plus. The new department and division would work closely to create a continuous pathway for 0-8 programming, align standards, and provide wage parity.
- c) Develop divisions of tribal early learning in the new department and within PED to provide guidance on customizations required for early learning programs with tribal children; funding mechanisms that support the principles of self-governance and self-determination; and ongoing dialogue and peer-learning with tribal early learning practitioners to codify early learning best practices on tribal lands.

### 2. Funding

- a. Fund voluntary, full-day, high-quality pre-K for up to 80 percent of New Mexico's *four-year-olds* through the *Public School Funding Formula* over the next five years, without diluting the unit value of K-12. Applying the funding formula through PED, local school districts could provide high-quality pre-K through public school facilities or by contracting with private providers. If and when pre-K for four-year-olds hits 90 percent saturation or above, lawmakers could decide to make four-year-old pre-K compulsory in the future.

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<sup>35</sup> As pre-K for three-year-olds becomes more accepted, this proposal can put New Mexico on a path toward 80 percent coverage for three-year-olds within eight years.

<sup>36</sup> Three-year-olds with developmental disabilities who qualify through school district screening are placed in an inclusive preschool setting.

- b. Fund voluntary, high-quality pre-K for up to 50 percent of New Mexico's *three-year-olds* over the next five years through the new *Department of Early Learning*, contracting with private providers. The state may need to reassess reimbursement rates for 0-3 programs to begin to align wages and staffing requirements with PED and to assist private providers during the transition phase.

Certainly other potential sources of revenue in New Mexico exist that would allow the state to reap the benefits of pre-K: dedicated property tax or gross receipts tax increases; special taxes on gas, tobacco, sugary beverages, or other products; the severance tax fund; and other measures. These sources are not mutually exclusive and can co-exist with the funding formula recommendation. But distributing funds for four-year-old pre-K through the public school funding formula provides more predictable and steady revenue for this valuable service for New Mexico's children.

Expanding the current funding formula and consolidating programs and funding would allow New Mexico to address wage parity issues and employee benefits between pre-K teachers in different departments; align program standards and licensing; create and support workforce pathways; align leadership qualifications and background checks and fingerprinting; and ensure high-quality pre-K by elevating teacher qualifications and professionalizing the early childhood education career track.

## **Discussion Questions**

The following discussion questions surfaced repeatedly throughout the interviews conducted, and are deserving of continued discussion by early childhood stakeholders and legislators.

### **How can we maintain the public/private delivery system?**

Currently, pre-K in New Mexico is delivered through public and private centers, with CYFD funding used to contract with private providers. To meet the gap in high-quality pre-K for up to 80 percent of New Mexico's four-year-olds and 50 percent of three-year-olds, high-quality, private pre-K centers must continue to be part of the solution. Several funding formula states make extensive use of private providers.

Currently, the New Mexico Public School Funding Formula funds the program costs of eighty-nine school districts and charter schools through the School Equalization Guarantee (SEG). The school finance act requires that once generated, funds from the formula are discretionary to local school districts. These local school districts could contract with private pre-K providers.

Many private centers that house one or more NM PreK classrooms also serve younger children. In a mixed delivery model such as New Mexico's, publicly funded pre-K can stabilize access to care for infants and toddlers and serve as a catalyst for quality throughout a center.

New Mexico PreK can also help stabilize private center finances, improving access to care for all children. Infants and toddlers are particularly costly to serve because the required ratio of teachers to children is higher than it is for preschoolers. Centers that serve very young children may therefore cross-subsidize their infant rooms with revenue from their preschool classrooms. Expanded New Mexico PreK could provide steady and reliable income for participating providers, stabilizing center finances and helping to ensure their ongoing ability to serve younger children. New Mexico PreK is especially valuable to centers that serve very low-income children because it can be braided with state and Child Care and Development Fund monies for before and after-care to adequately fund full-day, high-quality services.

### **How would children living in tribal communities be impacted by NM PreK expansion?**

Native American three- and four-year-olds are enrolled in preschool at a somewhat higher rate than the overall New Mexico population, 47 percent to 39 percent. If New Mexico PreK is expanded, a key question remains: How would children living in tribal communities be impacted?

A lesson from the advent of Head Start several decades ago is instructive. Head Start was lauded, and for good reasons: the benefits to the child, the strong inclusion of parents and caregivers, and providing parents the opportunity to work. But an unintended consequence of



Head Start on tribal lands was the near-eradication of native language for children in the drive to prepare children for kindergarten.

With a proposed expansion of New Mexico PreK, the state has an opportunity to learn from tribal leadership on how to customize the delivery of New Mexico PreK in a way that supports the principles of self-governance and self-determination; addresses the language and cultural needs of tribal children; begins to create wage parity between tribal Head Start and state-funded programs; and provides funding for an ongoing dialogue among tribal early childhood practitioners to learn from one another and begin to codify best practices in tribal early learning.

## Is there a role for community schools in NM PreK?

For public providers, one option to consider is to better utilize public community schools. Community schools represent a place-based strategy in which schools partner with community agencies and allocate resources to provide an “integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement.”<sup>37</sup>

Community schools often develop formal partnerships with a variety of organizations, including hospitals, local colleges and universities, churches, and community-based organizations that provide services, pre-K and after-school programs, and housing subsidies. These partnerships vary among community schools as they are based on the particular needs and priorities of a school and its surrounding communities.<sup>38</sup>

Community-based partner organizations with deep local roots serve as regional leads to develop and implement full-service community school models in up to five schools. While Elev8 community schools in New Mexico offer services in response to local needs, all schools employ a team of out-of-school-time staff, family advocates, medical professionals, and a site director.<sup>39</sup> Community schools, paired with pre-K expansion funded through changes to the formula, would be an effective strategy to meet the needs of the whole child.

## How can we ensure high-quality pre-K as the system expands?

The quality of pre-K is determined, in large part, by the quality of interactions between child and teacher. Multiple studies indicate that quality can be measured by the education level of the teacher and student-teacher ratios in the classroom. In Tulsa, for example, each teacher is required to hold a bachelor's degree and earn an early childhood certification. Tulsa preschool

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<sup>37</sup> Coalition for Community Schools, “What is a community school?,” accessed April 8, 2017, [http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what\\_is\\_a\\_community\\_school.aspx](http://www.communityschools.org/aboutschools/what_is_a_community_school.aspx).

<sup>38</sup> Martin J. Blank, Atelia Melaville, and Bela P. Shah, *Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools*, (Coalition for Community Schools, 2003).

<sup>39</sup> Anna Maier, Julia Daniel, Jeannie Oakes and Livia Lam, *Community Schools as an Effective School Improvement Strategy: A Review of the Evidence*

teachers also earn the same salary as a K-12 teacher and Oklahoma meets all 10 NIEER benchmarks.<sup>40</sup>

While model programs such as Perry Preschool [Appendix A] have demonstrated the value of BA-credentialed teachers, more recent state pre-K studies also document the effectiveness of this strategy. In Tulsa, children made impressive gains in a school-based program led by teachers with bachelor's degrees.<sup>41</sup> In addition, a five-state NIEER study of Michigan, New Jersey, South Carolina, West Virginia, and Oklahoma found significant benefits for programs where virtually all teachers possessed a BA. Overall, children in these programs experienced 31 percent more growth in vocabulary and 85 percent greater progress in print awareness than non-participants.<sup>42</sup>

New Mexico has one of the country's best articulated pathways from early childhood certification to associate's degrees to bachelor's/ licensure across its institutions of higher education. New Mexico also has funding mechanisms (i.e. TEACH scholarships) to assist aspiring educators as they move up this career ladder.

Further, the NM PreK consultation model is key to pre-K quality. NM PreK teachers are paired with specially trained, experienced early childhood professionals who visit classrooms regularly and provide ongoing technical assistance and coaching to support developmentally appropriate practice through effective implementation of NM PreK Standards, New Mexico's Authentic Observation Documentation Curriculum Planning process, and Essential Elements of Quality in early education. In addition, every teacher and administrator who participates in NM PreK attends at least one NM PreK training each year. In 2016, 765 teachers and administrators from private centers participated in NM PreK training events.

To help implement its BA requirement for teachers, New Jersey-created early childhood certification programs in higher education and a scholarship program to help existing teachers upgrade their skills. The state also phased in a BA requirement and funded a master teacher for one of every ten to twenty classrooms to provide mentoring services to other instructors.

Other states have established similar efforts. Massachusetts implemented stronger teacher requirements in community pre-K settings, requiring new teachers to possess an associate's degree by 2010, and a bachelor's degree by 2017. One state-funded, locally controlled, pre-K partnership also created articulation agreements<sup>43</sup> between two- and four-year colleges to help

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<sup>40</sup> W. Steven Barnett et al., *Implementing 15 Essential Elements for High Quality: A State and Local Policy Scan*, (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2016).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> "Virginia, and Oklahoma found significant benefits for programs where virtually all teachers possessed a BA. Overall, children in these programs experienced 31 percent more growth in vocabulary and 85 percent greater progress." Cynthia Lamy, W. Steven Barnett, and Kwanghee Jung, *The Effects of Michigan School Readiness Program on Young Children's Abilities at Kindergarten Entry*, (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2005).

<sup>43</sup> An articulation agreement is a legal document produced when two or more academic institutions follow a process leading to a partnership to provide a formalized pathway for student transfer. Articulation agreements are designed to build strong partnerships and coordination among schools to aid in a smooth transition for students.

teachers move toward the BA requirement. Overall, twenty-three states provide some scholarship or loan forgiveness for teachers seeking a BA degree.<sup>44</sup>

According to a NIEER report, while many states have set high requirements for teachers, a smaller number have imposed rules and requirements for assistant teachers. Only twelve states require assistant pre-K teachers to possess at least a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, which certifies an individual's competency to work in a childcare setting.

An evaluation of South Carolina's First Steps program also linked pre-K teacher skills to program quality. Teachers with more education provided more developmentally appropriate learning experiences and higher-quality activities in language, communication, fine motor skill development, and art.

Additional opportunities to recruit and train teachers include:

- Recruit high school students, recent college graduates, and nontraditional students.
- Offer dual-credit programs in high school.
- Provide an early childhood education pathway where students can begin as an assistant teacher, move on to a journeyman position, and then to lead teacher.
- Increase funding for current training facilities (e.g. at community colleges and universities).
- Improve opportunities for early learning expansion and reopen closed training facilities throughout the state.
- Offer additional online certification options that meet quality standards.
- Increase funding for scholarships (e.g. T.E.A.C.H. and INCENTIVE\$ programs).
- Develop student loan forgiveness and incentive programs for students entering into pre-K teaching programs and offer sign-on bonuses.
- Offer the INCENTIVE\$ wage subsidy program, which assists early childhood educators with stipends ranging from \$300 to \$2,500 from state and private funds. In 2016, approximately 239 teachers received a stipend in New Mexico.

## Should pre-K be a half-day or full-day program?

Currently, NM PreK offers either a half-day program (2.5 hours) or a full-day program (6 hours), with strong benefits for single-parent families, dual employment households, and grandparents raising grandchildren.

A 2006 study by NIEER, *"Is More Better? The Effects of Full-Day vs. Half-Day Preschool on Early School Achievement,"* found that the benefits of full-day preschool over half-day programs are significant. NIEER conducted a randomized trial that compared children from low-income families in half-day and full-day public preschool programs.

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<sup>44</sup> Joan Lombardi, Katherine Hart, Danielle Ewen, and Rachel Schumacher, *All Together Now: State Experiences in Using Community-Based Child Care to Provide Pre-Kindergarten*, (Center for Law and Social Policy, 2005).

Results showed that children attending full-day programs did better on mathematics and literacy tests than children in a 2.5- to 3-hour public preschool program and the achievement gains continued at least until the end of first grade. These results indicate that duration is an important consideration for the effectiveness of preschool education.<sup>45</sup>

It is worth noting that the Public Schools Facilities Authority in New Mexico has data about excess space available in nearly every school district in the state.

## Should three-year-olds attend pre-K?

There is likely less agreement among New Mexican parents, caregivers, and lawmakers on placing three-year-olds into pre-K. But the science speaks in favor of pre-K for three-year-olds. According to NIEER, “The Abbott Pre-K program in New Jersey, which provides two years of high-quality preschool programs to all children in priority communities, found much greater benefits for the children who attended from age three.”<sup>46</sup> The Department of Health and Human Services reported that “while all children benefit, it (two years of preschool) provides a major boost to children from low-income households.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> National Institute for Early Education Research, “New Study Finds New Jersey’s Abbott Pre-K Program Improves Language and Math Abilities of Children of All Backgrounds,” last modified December 6, 2005, <http://nieer.org/press-release/new-study-finds-new-jerseys-abbott-pre-k-program-improves-language-and-math-abilities-of-children-of-all-backgrounds>

<sup>47</sup> Martha Zaslow, et al., *Quality Dosage, Thresholds, and Features in Early Childhood Settings: A Review of the Literature*, (Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010), [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/quality\\_review\\_0.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/quality_review_0.pdf).

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Studies of Pre-K Benefits

#### **High/Scope Perry Preschool Project**

The 1960s study included 123 low-income African-American children from Ypsilanti, Michigan. Children were randomly divided into two groups. One group received a high-quality pre-K program with well-trained and compensated teachers and low child-to-staff ratios. The second group received no early childhood program. Researchers then compared the progress of these children over the next 40 years, assessing issues such as educational progress, delinquency, earnings, and other economic factors.

Approximately 65 percent of children receiving high-quality pre-K graduated from high school, compared with 45 percent from the control group.<sup>48</sup> This trend was particularly true among females, as 84 percent of pre-K girls and only 32 percent of control group females completed high school. Preschool participants had higher scores on achievement tests between ages nine and fourteen and on literacy tests at ages nineteen and twenty-seven.

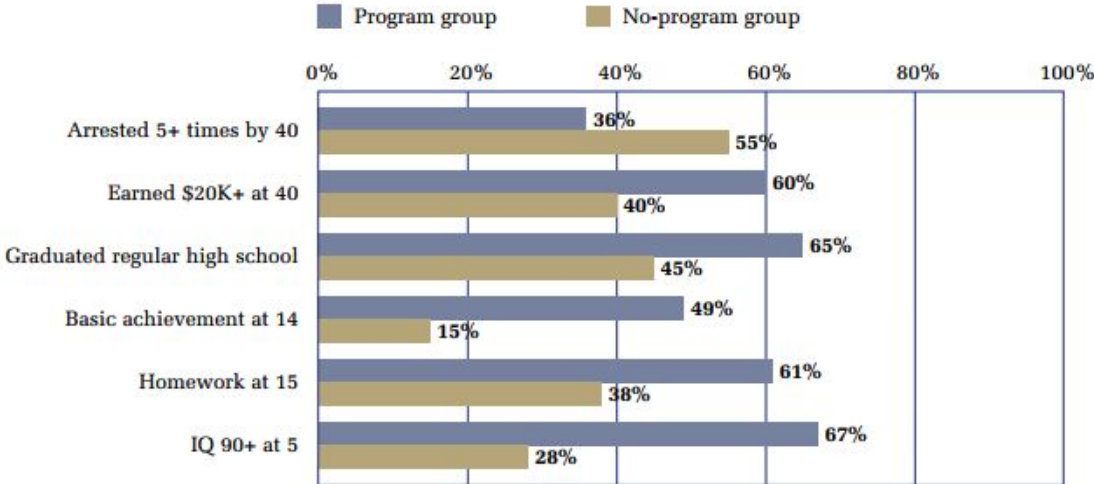
In adulthood, Perry pre-K participants were less likely to be arrested for violent or drug crimes and had significantly fewer arrests than the comparison group. At age twenty-seven, participants were less likely to drink and smoke than those in the comparison group. In addition, 76 percent were employed at age forty—compared with 62 percent of non-participants—and averaged \$5,000 a year more in income.

Pre-K participants also were more likely to own their own homes and much more likely to have a savings account. While researchers conducted extensive follow-up with children, there were no additional services provided to pre-K participants in later grades. Those in the pre-K program generally received two years of early childhood services.

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<sup>48</sup> Lawrence J. Schweinhart et al., *Lifetime Effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 40*, (Ypsilanti: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2005).

**Figure 1**  
Major Findings: High/Scope Perry Preschool Study at 40



Source: Major Findings: High/Scope Perry Preschool Study at Age 40 (2005). Ypsilanti, MI: Highscope Education Research Foundation.

**The Chicago Child Parent Centers**

In May 1967, the Chicago Child Parent Education Centers (CPC) were established in four sites serving the most disadvantaged areas of Chicago, Illinois.

By approving the establishment of CPCs in 1967, the Chicago Public School District was the first in the nation to allocate Title I funds (from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) to preschool. CPC is the second oldest federally funded early childhood program (after Head Start) and the first federally funded comprehensive pre-K through third grade program.

Parents commit to volunteering time at the preschool center on a regular basis. For its long-term evaluation involving 1,539 children, researchers followed children who participated from 1983 to 1986 and compared them to children who did not participate in the program but who did attend full-day kindergarten.

Researchers then followed program children and a comparison group for fifteen years following the intervention. The evaluation showed positive impacts for pre-K children on school achievement at age fourteen and in high school completion by age twenty-one (Reynolds, Temple, Robertson, and Mann 2001). Overall, program children had 41 percent fewer special education placements and 40 percent fewer grade retentions than non-participants. Children at age 20 were less likely to have an arrest record than children in the comparison group.

### **Abecedarian Project**

From 1972 to 1985, 111 children and their families participated in an early childhood study at the University of North Carolina that randomly assigned young children to a treatment group and a control group that did not receive these services.

According to the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute in North Carolina, those with the pre-K intervention had a higher IQ at ages twelve and fifteen and stronger achievement scores at age fifteen. By comparison, non-program children were more likely to require special education or be retained in their grade, two major costs for schools and taxpayers. Overall, 67 percent of Abecedarian children graduated from high school, compared with 51 percent of the control group. Of those receiving pre-K, 36 percent attended a four-year college, more than double the rate of non-program children. Unlike students in other pre-K programs, Abecedarian children received services that began when they were infants and continued through age five. Children who received pre-K services also were eligible to obtain other social services via referral, as needed, through age eight.

### **Tulsa Pre-K Study**

A 2017 study from Georgetown University, *The Effects of Tulsa's Pre-K Program on Middle School Student Performance*, began tracking children attending the Tulsa pre-K program in 2006 and followed them through the eighth grade.

The researchers found that the children who had participated in the Tulsa preschool program outperformed their non-pre-K counterparts by a “statistically significant” margin. The study found that program participants:

- Were less likely to be held back than classmates who did not attend preschool.
- Received higher scores on the state’s math achievement test and were more likely to take algebra in the eighth grade, a consistent predictor of college readiness.
- Maintained an academic advantage in middle school.

In addition:

- Schools saw a 26 percent reduction in students being held back by seventh grade.
- Only 15 percent of pre-K attendees had been held back a grade, compared to 23 percent of their peers who did not attend pre-K.

Given the high cost of special education placement and grade retention to school districts, cost savings provide a strong argument for pre-K intervention. One of the strongest indicators of high quality pre-K is the reduced use of special education among pre-K participants:

- Only 15 percent of the Perry Preschool participants required special education services, compared with 34 percent of children from the control group.
- In the Abecedarian study, 24 percent of pre-K children received special education services, versus 48 percent of the control group.
- In the Child-Parent Centers project, only 14 percent of pre-K participants later required special education placement, compared with 25 percent of non-participants.

## Appendix B: The New Mexico PreK Program

### Background

New Mexico PreK is a voluntary, state preschool program created by the Pre-Kindergarten Act of 2005. The purpose of NM PreK is to increase access to voluntary, high-quality pre-kindergarten programs and provide developmentally appropriate activities for New Mexico children. NM PreK supports linguistically, culturally, and developmentally appropriate curriculum and focuses on school readiness through the use of the Early Learning Guidelines (ELGs).

The program is jointly administered by the State Public Education Department (PED) and the State Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD). Each administer one-half of NM PreK programs. Current state investment is \$55 million, an increase from an initial investment of \$5 million when the program began in 2005.<sup>49</sup>

PED is responsible for funding and monitoring programs provided through public school districts, and CYFD is responsible for the programs operating in private centers and other eligible providers. In the 2015-16 school year, 70 percent of school districts, 54 of 89, offered NM PreK. The 2015-16 school year was the fourth consecutive year of additional school districts offering the program.

The *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines* and the *Authentic Observation Documentation and Curriculum Planning Process* create a system of observation, documentation, and analysis that helps track a child's progress toward meeting early learning expectations.

A competitive process awards program 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. In New Mexico, 81 percent of the state's 170,700 public elementary school students attend Title I schools.

Hours and days per week vary by program with the minimum number of hours being 450 per year. In 2014-15, the legislature provided limited funding for an extended-day pre-K pilot to double the instructional hours to 900 per school year. Some private or nonprofit facilities use Child Care Subsidies for wrap-around care to assist parents who qualify, or offer reduced rates for private pay. Pre-K programs in public schools can extend the day using operational dollars or Title I funds. In 2016-17, CYFD received \$3.3 million from the legislature to fund early pre-K for three-year-olds.

### NM PreK Outcomes

According to a joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State

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<sup>49</sup> New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee, *2017 Accountability Report: Early Childhood*, (Santa Fe: 2017).



Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE), there are four essential features in the design of standards:

1. Significant, developmentally appropriate content and outcomes.
2. Informed and inclusive processes are used in development and review.
3. Ethical and appropriate implementation and assessment strategies.
4. Strong supports for early childhood programs, professionals, and families.

The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) evaluates each state on its prekindergarten programs, using a set of ten regulatory benchmarks. These benchmarks include accessibility, free meals, staff professional development, and early learning and development standards. In 2017, New Mexico met eight of the ten benchmarks. Current NM PreK provider reimbursement rates, in conjunction with state funding for technical assistance, professional development, capital improvements, and transportation, are sufficient to fully compensate providers for implementing the high-quality NM PreK model.

The NM PreK model closely parallels the requirements for both the top tier of New Mexico's TQRIS and NAEYC certification standards for programs serving three- and four-year-olds. Program quality is enhanced and sustained through monthly on-site training, technical assistance and consultation, monitoring of program standards and compliance indicators, and through continual investments in workforce development including state-sponsored trainings and TEACH scholarships.

The two benchmarks that New Mexico currently fails to meet are:

1. Requiring all pre-K lead teachers to hold a bachelor's degree.
2. Requiring all assistant pre-K teachers to hold a child development license, at minimum.

According to the 2016 NIEER State of Preschool Yearbook:

- 90 percent of children who participated in NM PreK during the 2015-16 school year made measurable strides in school readiness.
- New Mexico PreK produced meaningful impacts on young children's language, literacy, and math development.
- Overall classroom quality is good, but some improvements are needed, particularly in classroom support for early mathematics.
- Impacts of pre-K and classroom quality are similar for pre-K program sites administered by PED and CYFD.
- An estimated \$5 in benefits is generated in New Mexico for every dollar invested in New Mexico PreK.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Jason T. Hustedt et al., *The New Mexico PreK Evaluation: Results from the Initial Four Years of a New State Preschool Initiative*, (National Institute for Early Education Research, 2009).

**New Mexico PreK by the Numbers**

Access	Amount
Total state pre-K enrollment	9,757
School districts that offer state pre-K	70%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,713
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,300
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

Resources	Amount
Total state pre-K spending	\$51,060,000
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,233
All reported spending per child enrolled	\$5,233

*Source: 2016 NIEER State of Pre-K Yearbook*

**NM PreK: Summary Benefits and Costs**

Outcome	Per-pupil benefits and costs	2015-2016 cohort benefits and costs
NM PreK spending for basic half-day services	-\$3,942	-\$51,001,596
Education Outcomes	\$1,084	\$14,020,730
Child Welfare Outcomes	\$139	\$1,797,934
Juvenile Crime Outcomes	\$2,232	\$28,877,341
Value of Child Care	\$2,770	\$35,832,507
College Attendance	-\$138	-\$1,782,163
Adult Crime	\$1,136	\$14,698,898
Labor Market	\$9,473	\$122,559,159
Health	\$1,359	\$17,585,462
Total Benefit	\$18,055	\$232,589,462
Net Benefit	\$14,113	\$182,587,866
Benefit Cost Ratio	4.6	4.6

The estimates presented here only demonstrate the benefits of NM PreK in the state of New Mexico. But the NIEER analysis also calculated benefits of NM PreK to the entire U.S. in the form of additional federal income taxes paid and lower healthcare costs. Including positive outcomes nationwide results in increases to net benefits of NM PreK by 29 percent.

### **Assessment**

Beginning in 2015, all NM PreK programs were required to participate in the state's new Quality Rate & Improvement Standards (QRIS) FOCUS, as part of the Race to the Top Grant awarded to the state in 2012. These standards provide all public school early childhood program personnel with the criteria, tools, and resources they need to improve and sustain the quality of their programs.

The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines (NMELGs) is the standardized criteria for a common and authentic process for observation, documentation, and curriculum planning. NMELGs serve as a framework for the process of children's growth, development, and learning in the early years. They are designed to provide reasonable expectations for children at different ages so educators have criteria to refer to as they observe children.

FOCUS is a standardized process for continuous quality improvement using standardized criteria for a common quality rating and improvement system. All public education preschool programs (Pre-K, IDEA Part B, and Title I) are required to participate in FOCUS to provide children in New Mexico the opportunity to attend a high-quality early childhood education program before going to kindergarten.

FOCUS programs include the following developmental learning areas: numeracy and literacy, social skills, sorting and measuring, coordination, hygiene, health and well-being, and problem-solving. Children enrolled in NM PreK learn the routine of a typical school day, including sensory and fine motor play, art, gross motor play, and circle time. Preschoolers also learn age-appropriate social-emotional skills that are important for success in school such as cooperation and nonverbal and verbal communication.<sup>51</sup>

### **K-3 Plus**

The New Mexico K-3 Plus is an extended school year program for students in kindergarten through third grade who attend high-poverty schools with a large number of at-risk students.

A 2016 report conducted by NIEER found that students who attended the state's K-3 Plus program made significant learning gains over their peers who did not participate. The report found that when this program is combined with pre-K, students are able to close the achievement gap by the time they enter kindergarten.

Like pre-K, K-3 Plus is an example of a program with a proven track record of impact.

### **Special Education Preschool**

Congress created the Part C Infant/Toddler Program and the Preschool Special Education Program in 1986 when it reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

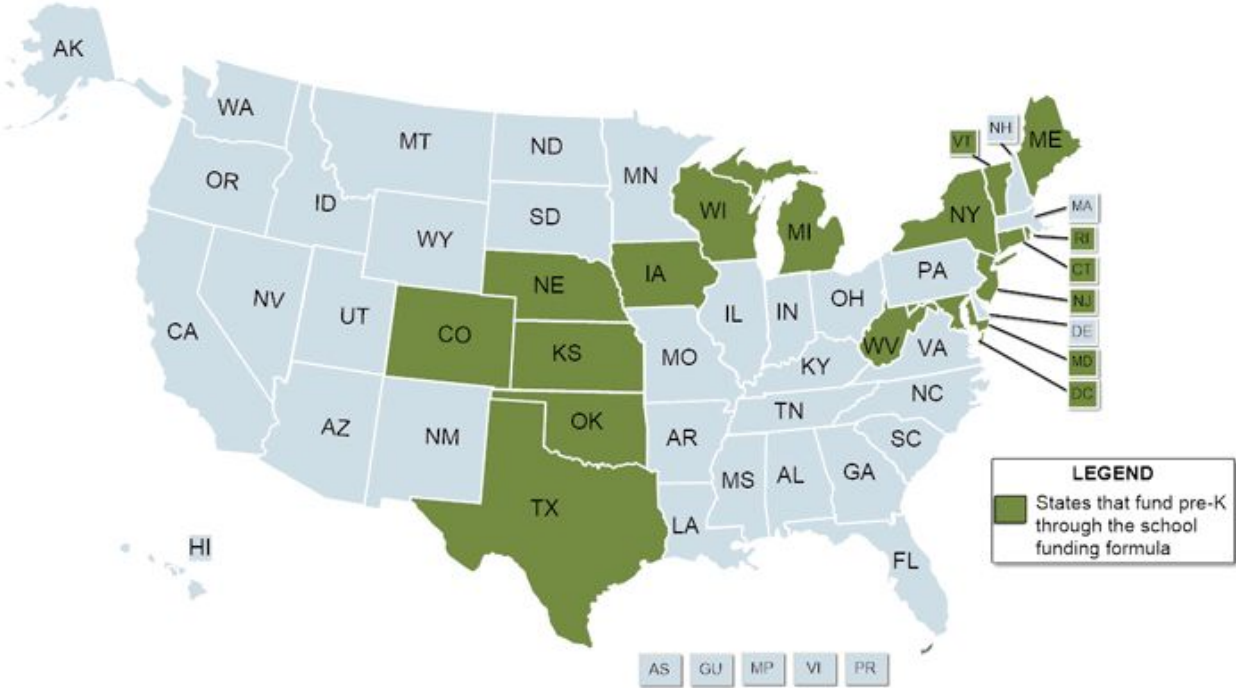
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<sup>51</sup> New Mexico PreK, "The State of New Mexico PreK Initiative," Accessed January 9, 2018, <https://prek.ped.state.nm.us/>.

Section 619 of Part B of IDEA defines the preschool program, which guarantees a free, appropriate public education to children with disabilities age three through five. “Developmental delay” means that a young child has a delay or disorder in sensory, physical, mental, or social/emotional development or has multiple delays in comparison to peers, as documented by diagnostic testing.

### Appendix C: Examples of States using a Funding Formula

Sixteen states and the District of Columbia fund pre-K programs through their K-12 funding formulas.



#### New York

In 1998, New York State began its Universal Prekindergarten Program (UPK) with the goal of making prekindergarten education available to all four-year-olds in the state, regardless of family income or other risk factors. The Targeted Prekindergarten Program merged with UPK during the 2007-2008 school year.

In 2014, through a competitive grant process, the state began the New York State Priority Prekindergarten (NYSPPK) program, which creates new full- and half-day slots for high-need children in low-income districts and provides funding to convert half-day slots to full-day.

In 2014-2015, the state issued another competitive grant called Statewide Universal Full-Day Prekindergarten Program (SUFDPK) to provide full-day prekindergarten, resulting in a dramatic increase in access to full-day slots in New York City (\$300 million) and some expansion of full-day programs elsewhere in the state (\$40 million). In the 2015-2016 school year, 49,219 SUFDPK slots were available to 4-year-olds in full-day programs in 53 school districts and 18 community-based organizations.

During 2015, New York also received a \$25 million Federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) to support enrollment of 2,401 low-income four-year-olds in five school districts. PDG funds were used to create new slots and enhance existing slots. Yet, another competitive grant, Expanded Prekindergarten for 3- and 4-Year-Old Students (\$30 million), began in 2015-2016, creating an additional 1,046 slots for four-year-olds and 1,509 slots for three-year-olds.

Overall, in 2015-2016, a total of 120,069 three- and four-year-old children were served in state-administered prekindergarten programs, with an operating budget exceeding \$806 million. Approximately 75 percent of children served were in full-day programs.

Access	Amount
Total state pre-K enrollment	120,069
School districts that offer state pre-K	68%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	45,200
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	42,355
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

Resources	Amount
Total state pre-K spending	\$781,337,734
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,507
All reported spending per child enrolled	\$6,716

**Oklahoma**

Oklahoma started its Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program in 1980 with the intent of serving all four-year-olds in the state. In 1990, the program received statewide funding for four-year-olds eligible for the federal Head Start program, but local areas could choose to serve additional four-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 percent of school districts providing the program. Approximately 74 percent of the state’s 4-year-olds are enrolled in the program. Most of these children (84 percent of enrollment) are in full-day programs. Schools can collaborate with other agencies and programs to provide extended-day services.

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. The Oklahoma legislature has increased the

share of total tax funding revenue going to education, enabling spending per pupil to remain fairly steady in recent years.

Districts can support centers other than public schools by placing public school teachers in child-care centers, Head Start settings, and community-based programs. Children in these sites receive the same services as children in public school locations and are considered public school enrollees.

Access	Amount
Total state pre-K enrollment	41,241
School districts that offer state pre-K	99%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,438
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	14,353
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

Resources	Amount
Total state pre-K spending	\$143,368,061
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$1,818,051
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,476
All reported spending per child enrolled	\$7,479

**Rhode Island**

Rhode Island started investing in pre-K in 2009, when a new demonstration project began in four school districts, funded by a \$700,000 state appropriation and Title I funds. One year later, Rhode Island adopted a new school funding formula that integrated pre-K funding statewide and into the state public education system, raising to the visibility of pre-K.

The Rhode Island Education Aid Foundation Formula, approved in 2010, provided a phased-in approach to expand access to high-quality pre-K for communities with a high portion of children eligible for free and reduced lunch. The phased-in approach allowed the state’s expansion to create high-quality programs, prioritize access to children who needed it most, and support transition between the early childhood system and K-12.

## DISCUSSION DRAFT

Access	Amount
Total state pre-K enrollment	594
School districts that offer state pre-K	23 percent (towns/communities)
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	6 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,794
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,022
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	122

Resources	Amount
Total state pre-K spending	\$3,950,000
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$800,000
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,650
All reported spending per child enrolled	\$10,506

### West Virginia

West Virginia began offering preschool programs to three- and four-year-olds through the Public School Early Childhood Education program in 1983, when the state changed school policies to allow local school boards to serve children before kindergarten. Legislation passed in 2002 required that by 2012, pre-K would be available to all of the state's four-year-olds.

In 2015-2016, approximately 66 percent of the state's four-year-olds were enrolled in West Virginia's Universal Pre-K program. In addition to four-year-olds, some kindergarten age-eligible children with documented needs and three-year-olds with special needs may attend the program.

During the 2015-2016 school year, approximately 11 percent of three-year-olds in the state were enrolled. The West Virginia Universal Pre-K System provides prekindergarten programs in all fifty-five counties in the state. Public schools receive West Virginia Universal Pre-K funding directly, but half of all programs are required to partner with child-care centers, private prekindergarten, or Head Start agencies to meet demand. 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. Beginning on July 1, 2013, all new lead teachers in nonpublic settings were required to have at least a BA degree in Early Childhood or a related field. Beginning July 1, 2014, all assistant teachers were required to apply for the Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher Authorization, which requires a CDA or equivalent, as determined by the West Virginia Board of Education. West Virginia has also 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, all programs will operate for a full day (25 hours per week minimum).



## DISCUSSION DRAFT

The West Virginia Universal Pre-K program has been assessed for both process quality (in 2009 and 2012) and program impact/child outcomes (in 2005). All classrooms receive structured quality observations once every three years using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale. Programs also develop monitoring systems to offer ongoing continuous quality improvement, using monitoring tools recognized by a local collaborative team. Children are assessed three times per year using the Early Learning Scale, and this 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. The Universal Pre-K program is also currently conducting a multiyear study to assess the effects of participation in the program.

Access	Amount
Total state pre-K enrollment	16,387
School districts that offer state pre-K	100% (counties/parishes)
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	14 hours/week; 4 or 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,611
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,050
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

Resources	Amount
Total state pre-K spending	\$97,807,662
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,472
All reported spending per child enrolled	\$9,898

## Appendix D: A History of Full-Day Kindergarten in New Mexico

The path forward for pre-K in New Mexico can incorporate lessons learned from the passage of full-day kindergarten in New Mexico eighteen years ago.

### Legislative History

In 1999, 54.7 percent of five-year-olds in the United States had access to full-day kindergarten classes, compared with only 14.7 percent of five-year-olds in New Mexico (public schools that provided full-day kindergarten in New Mexico did so with discretionary federal dollars, for which most schools were not eligible). But in 2000, the New Mexico state legislature passed a landmark, bipartisan bill phasing in full-day, voluntary kindergarten over a five-year period (passed during a thirty-day budget session). The phase-in gave priority to elementary schools with the highest proportion of at-risk youth. A \$5 million appropriation was allocated to facilitate with the phase-in and classroom expansion.

Current New Mexico state statute states:

*22-13-3.2. Full-day kindergarten programs.*

*A. The state board [department] shall adopt rules for the development and implementation of child-centered and developmentally appropriate full-day kindergarten programs. Establishment of full-day kindergarten programs shall be voluntary on the part of school districts and student participation shall be voluntary on the part of parents.*

*B. The department of education [public education department] shall require schools with full-day kindergarten programs to conduct age-appropriate assessments to determine the placement of students at instructional level and the effectiveness of child-centered, developmentally appropriate kindergarten.*

*C. The department of education [public education department] shall monitor full-day kindergarten programs and ensure that they serve the children most in need based upon indicators in the at-risk index. If the department of education [public education department] determines that a program is not meeting the benchmarks necessary to ensure the progress of students in the program, the department of education [public education department] shall notify the school district that failure to meet the benchmarks shall result in the cessation of funding for the following school year. The department of education [public education department] shall compile the program results submitted by the school districts and make an annual report to the legislative education study committee and the legislature.*

*D. Full-day kindergarten programs shall be phased in over a five-year period as follows with priority given to those school districts that serve children in schools with the highest*

*proportion of students most in need based upon indicators in the at-risk index or that serve children by means of grade-level schools that serve an entire school district:*

- 1. effective with the 2000-2001 school year, one-fifth of New Mexico's kindergarten classes may be full day;*
- 2. effective with the 2001-2002 school year, two-fifths of New Mexico's kindergarten classes may be full day;*
- 3. effective with the 2002-2003 school year, three-fifths of New Mexico's kindergarten classes may be full day;*
- 4. effective with the 2003-2004 school year, four-fifths of New Mexico's kindergarten classes may be full day; and*
- 5. effective with the 2004-2005 school year, all of New Mexico's kindergarten classes may be full day.*

*E. School districts shall apply to the department of education [public education department] to receive funding for full-day kindergarten programs. In granting approval for funding of full-day kindergarten programs, the department of education [public education department] shall ensure that full-day kindergarten programs are first implemented in schools that have the highest proportion of students most in need based upon the at-risk index and in schools with available classroom space.*

**Arguments for Full-Day Kindergarten included:**

- The expansion would eliminate 651 midday bus trips to transport half-day kindergarten students.
- Early diagnosis of social-emotional and cognitive delays.
- Fewer dropouts and a more educated workforce.
- Most five-year-olds are ready for a full school day.
- Full-day kindergarten students consistently outperform half-day kindergarten students on learning achievement measures.
- Full-day kindergarten results in a powerful return on investment. Think NM used the cost-benefit analysis from the Perry Preschool program.
- All children benefit. Full-day kindergarten especially benefits children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The full-day kindergarten schedule permits a broader curriculum. Think NM emphasized the inadequacy of the two-and-a-half-hour school, which provided less time for teacher to observe and interact with students.
- Full-day kindergarten facilitates the transition to and readiness for first grade.
- Full-day kindergarten meets the child-care needs of working and single parents.
- Teachers support full-day kindergarten.
- New Mexico can afford full-day kindergarten.

**Arguments against Full Day Kindergarten included:**

- Cost remained the issue, so many were reluctant to support the proposal.
- There were more effective and equitable ways to enhance early childhood education, such as prekindergarten.

- Some were skeptical about the appropriateness of a full-day schedule for five-year-olds asking, “Are we going to pay for kids to sleep?”
- The legislature was reluctant to support a costly initiative.

### **Building Consensus**

Bringing together a diverse and bipartisan set of stakeholders bolstered broad support. Key stakeholders included former Attorney General Paul Bardacke, David Buchholtz, former Governor Garrey Carruthers, LaDonna Harris, Ambassador Frank Ortiz, Stewart Udall, Roberta Cooper Ramo, Rebecca Koch, and Elizabeth Gutierrez. Think NM, which led the campaign, included Executive Director Fred Nathan and staff members Tom Udall, Carol Romero-Wirth, and Susan Fleischmann.

Think NM also garnered support from the Association of Commerce and Industry (ACI), the Hispano Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, and the government-affairs committee of the Economic Forum, NM Chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons, the NM Indian Affairs Commission, the Catholic Conference, and the NM Association for the Education of Young Children.

They chose fiscally conservative members of the Senate Finance Committee to serve as the bill’s sponsors: John Arthur Smith, a Democrat from a rural district, and Sue Wilson, a Republican businesswoman who was aligned with Governor Johnson.

Today, eighty-nine school districts in New Mexico offer full-day kindergarten classes and 99 percent of parents choose full-day classes for their children.

## Appendix E: Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following for providing feedback and advice. Names and organizations are for information purposes only and do not imply endorsement of this proposal. As we continue to meet with stakeholders, their names will be added to this document.

- David Abbey, Director, Legislative Finance Committee
- Melanie Aranda, Chief Operating Officer, Center for Civic Policy and Board Member, New Mexico Now
- Maria Artiaga, Head Start Executive Director, Las Cruces Public Schools
- Debra Baca, Vice President, Early Childhood Education & Family Development, Youth Development Inc.
- W. Steven Barnett, Senior Co-Director, National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University
- Dana Bell, Associate Director, Sr. Research Scientist, Cradle to Career Policy Institute, University of New Mexico
- Daniel Benavidez, Superintendent, Zuni Public School District
- Dr. George Bickert, Superintendent, Ruidoso Municipal Schools
- Carlotta Penny Bird, Program Manager, American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center
- Kara Bobroff, Executive Director, NACA Inspired Schools Network and Board President, New Mexico Now
- Kay Bounkeua, Executive Director, New Mexico Asian Family Center
- Charles Bowyer, Executive Director, National Education Association
- Simon Brackley, President and Chief Executive Officer, Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce
- Maria Brock, Education for Parents of Indian Children with Special Needs
- David Buchholtz, Attorney, Rodey Law Firm
- Ernie C'DeBaca, President and Chief Executive Officer, Albuquerque Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Carnell Chosa, Co-Director, Santa Fe Indian School Leadership Institute
- Terri Cole, President and Chief Executive Officer, Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce
- Lori Connors-Tadros, Senior Project Director, Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University
- Jon Courtney, Program Evaluation Manager, Legislative Finance Committee
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- Tim Davis, Policy & Communications Analyst, United Way of Santa Fe County and New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership
- Rebecca Dow, New Mexico House of Representatives
- Katie Dry, Director, Santa Fe Baby Fund, Santa Fe Community Foundation
- Claire Dudley Chavez, Senior Education Advisor, Department of Family and Community Services, City of Albuquerque
- Brian Egolf, Speaker of the House, New Mexico House of Representatives

## DISCUSSION DRAFT

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- Katherine Freeman, Executive Director, United Way of Santa Fe County and New Mexico Early Childhood Development Partnership
- Erica Gallegos, Organizer, Organizers in the Land of Enchantment (OLÉ)
- Anna Maria Garcia, Early Childhood Director, LANL Foundation
- Veronica Garcia, Superintendent, Santa Fe Public Schools
- Cesia Gillard, Education Coordinator, La Clinica de Familia (Doña Ana County)
- Janet Gladu, Superintendent, San Jon Schools
- Rachel Gudgel, Director, Legislative Education Study Committee
- Linda Hale, Superintendent, Hatch Valley Public Schools
- Tim Hand, Deputy Director, Legislative Education Study Committee
- Tricia Heffelfinger, Early Head Start Director, La Clinica de Familia (Doña Ana County)
- Hailey Heinz, Senior Policy Analyst, Center for Education Policy Research, University of New Mexico
- Matthew Henderson, Executive Director, Organizers in the Land of Enchantment Education Fund (OLÉ Education Fund)
- Elizabeth Hill, Legislative Assistant, Office of United State Senator Martin Heinrich
- Debra Holton Sena, Elementary Principal Pre-K Coordinator, Pecos Public Schools
- Ray Jaramillo, Member, Board of Education, Las Cruces Public Schools, and Center Director, Alpha School
- James Jimenez, Executive Director, New Mexico Voices for Children
- Bill Jordan, Senior Policy Advisor & Government Relations Officer, New Mexico Voices for Children
- Michelle Kavanaugh, Field Representative, Office of United States Senator Tom Udall
- Tim Keller, Mayor, City of Albuquerque
- Gay Kernan, New Mexico State Senate
- Kelly Klundt, Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Finance Committee
- Brenda Kofahl, Pre-K Program Manager, Public Education Department, State of New Mexico
- Larry Langley, Executive Director, New Mexico Business Roundtable
- Larry Larrañaga, New Mexico House of Representatives
- Wendy Lewis, Executive Director, McCune Charitable Foundation
- Carl Luff, Co-founder, White & Luff Financial Inc., and Committee Member, Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce
- Stephanie Ly, President, American Federation of Teachers New Mexico
- Antonio “Moe” Maestas, New Mexico House of Representatives
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- Shirley Marlow, Manager, Tamaya Learning Center, Santa Ana Pueblo
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- Howie Morales, New Mexico State Senate
- Sharon Morgan, Director of Early Childhood, Department of Education, State of Oklahoma
- Jeannie Oakes, Ph.D., Presidential Professor in Educational Equity, Emeritus, at the University of California-Los Angeles, and Board Member, New Mexico Now
- Allan Oliver, Executive Director, Thornburg Foundation
- T.J. Parks, Superintendent, Hobbs Municipal Schools
- Regis Pecos, Co-Director, Santa Fe Indian School Leadership Institute
- Adrian Pedroza, Early Childhood Education Advocate
- Bajji Rankin, Executive Director, New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children
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- Oriana Sandoval, Chief Executive Officer, Center for Civic Policy
- Ray Sandoval, President, Santa Fe Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Glenn Schiffbauer, Executive Director, Santa Fe Green Chamber
- Dr. Madelyn Serna-Marmol, Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Instruction, and Support, Albuquerque Public Schools
- Andrea Serrano, Executive Director, Organizers in the Land of Enchantment (OLÉ)
- Linda Siegle, Principal, Resources for Change
- John Arthur Smith, Chair, Senate Finance Committee, New Mexico State Senate
- Bill Soules, Chair, Senate Education Committee, New Mexico State Senate
- Mimi Stewart, Majority Whip and Chair, Legislative Education Study Committee, New Mexico State Senate
- Joel Strickland, Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, Clovis Municipal Schools
- Erica Surova, Program Manager, Center for Community Analysis, New Mexico State University
- Candie Sweetser, New Mexico House of Representatives
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- Christine Trujillo, New Mexico House of Representatives
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## DISCUSSION DRAFT

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- Michael Weinberg, Early Childhood Education Policy Advisor, Thornburg Foundation
- Jamie Widner, Superintendent, Melrose Municipal Schools
- Tish Wilson, Early Childhood/Child Development Specialist & Vice President Emeritus, Community Development Institute, Cerrillos
- Peter Wirth, Majority Leader, New Mexico State Senate
- Monica Youngblood, New Mexico House of Representatives