

High-Quality Preschool Helps Build a Highly-Skilled Workforce

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)

ECEAP helps children be prepared for success in school

Only 44 percent of students are entering kindergarten ready to learn.¹ ECEAP helps improve school readiness among low-income three- and four-year-olds: More than 90 percent of students who participate in two years of ECEAP were ready for kindergarten in five of six developmental domains.² ECEAP students also scored significantly higher in math and reading in third to fifth grade compared to their peers who did not participate in ECEAP.³

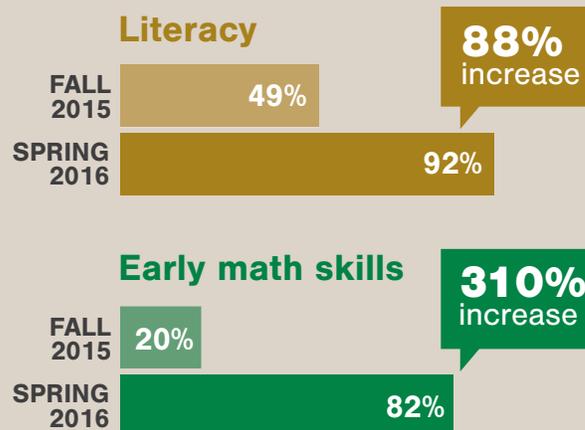
When kids do better in K-12, taxpayers save money. For instance, in 2013, approximately 2,000 kindergarteners were held back, at an average cost of about \$5,700 per student—a total cost of over \$11 million.⁴

Workforce preparation starts early

Today's economy requires proficiency in reading, writing and math, as well as "executive function" skills like communication and problem solving. The foundation for these skills are developed in preschool when children learn how to form positive relationships with peers, stay on task and organize project materials.

ECEAP Improves School Readiness in Math and Reading

Percentage of ECEAP students who score at or above age level increases dramatically over the course of the school year



Source: WA Department of Early Learning

2017-2019 Budget Request for ECEAP

1. **Invest in quality** by increasing reimbursement rate
2. **Serve more children** by expanding slots
3. **Create more learning spaces** by making a capital investment

Quality matters and greater access to ECEAP helps our most vulnerable children

In order to obtain the short- and long-term benefits in improved student outcomes, preschool must be high-quality, including an evidence-based curriculum and an adequately prepared and compensated workforce.⁵ ECEAP requires providers to use a curriculum that emphasizes purposeful play and quality teacher-child interactions.⁶

To deliver an evidence-based curriculum, teachers should have relevant preparation and accreditation in early childhood development, ongoing professional development opportunities, and adequate compensation.

An increase in the per child reimbursement would provide flexibility for ECEAP programs to pay higher teacher wages and/or afford more classroom space. Without action, programs may reduce slots or experience high rates of teacher turnover or other consequences that reduce quality.

The current reimbursement rates for ECEAP do not reflect the true cost, leaving many programs to find additional sources of funding.

For additional information contact
ReadyNation Washington Director
Kristin Wiggins, kwiggins@readynation.org,
(206) 375-6081

¹ <http://www.k12.wa.us/WaKIDS/Data/WaKIDS-2015-data-summary.pdf>

² https://del-public-files.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ECEAP_Outcomes_2015-16.pdf

³ http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1576/Wsipp_Outcome-Evaluation-of-Washington-States-Early-Childhood-Education-and-Assistance-Program_Report.pdf

⁴ <https://www.strongnation.org/articles/181-the-pre-k-to-workforce-pipeline-in-washington-state>

⁵ https://docs.gatesfoundation.org/documents/Lessons%20from%20Research%20and%20the%20Classroom_September%202014.pdf

⁶ <http://teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/Research-FoundationCreative-Curriculum.pdf>

ReadyNation: Business, Kids, Workforce

Business executives building a skilled workforce by promoting solutions that prepare children to succeed in education, work, and life

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1212 New York Avenue NW / Suite 300 / Washington, DC 20005 / 202.464.7005



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