



First Five Years Fund

Several governors made early childhood education a priority last year through substantial increased statewide investments in proven early childhood programs. As we look ahead to 2014, governors from across the country have already expressed their commitment to early learning, as shown through their state of the state addresses and budget announcements. However, the reality is that states can't do it alone. This is a clear sign that increasing federal investments in early childhood education must be a national priority.

National Snapshot

Despite continued fiscal constraint nationwide, state funding for pre-K increased by \$363.6 million to a total of \$5.6 billion. This represents a 6.9% increase in state investment in pre-K programs over fiscal year 2012-13, with most states having now surpassed 2008-09 levels. The total investment is \$400 million greater than pre-recession. Of the 40 states funding pre-K programs serving primarily 4-year-olds, 30 states and the District of Columbia increased funding for these programs. Ten states increased funding by more than 20%. Three states decreased funding by no more than 7.3%. Funding in only seven states remained the same.

(Source: Education Commission of the States <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/10/34/11034.pdf>)

Alabama – Gov. Robert Bentley

"There is no greater opportunity we can give an Alabama child in poverty than a chance to excel in school. So many of our children need this opportunity – but too few have access to it. The earlier they begin receiving a quality education, the better chance they have at success."

– State of the State Address, January 14, 2014

Gov. Bentley is collaborating with business and early childhood advocates to develop a plan that would allow up to 2,000 children to participate in the state's voluntary program for 4-year-olds (an increase by more than one-third over current levels).

(Source: <http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/viewart/20140103/NEWS02/301030007>)

Kentucky – Gov. Steven Beshear

"I will seek legislation needed to implement the goals of the All-STARS plan which will provide for more accountability and better transparency throughout our state's early childcare system. Getting our children off to a better start in life – all of our children, not just those in wealthy, two-parent households – will dictate our success as a state."

– State of the State Address, January 7, 2014

Gov. Beshear presented a fiscal budget for 2014-16 that would restore cuts made to Kentucky's child-care assistance program last year. The plan proposes \$53 million be allotted for the program in 2014 and \$58 million for 2015-16. Preschool funding will also see a boost of \$18 million per year. (Source: <http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2014301210091&template=artiphone>)

Michigan – Gov. Rick Snyder

"We shouldn't have a wait for preschool. We couldn't solve the problem in one year, in order to be fiscally responsible, so what I said is, 'Let's do a \$65 million investment in this last year's budget.' And it got tremendous support, because people do believe in this cause. We created 18,000 openings this last year for those preschool kids. That's fabulous."

– State of the State Address, January 16, 2014

With a \$65 million investment, Gov. Snyder expanded the Great Start Readiness Program in Michigan and added 10,000 seats to the state low-income preschool program. This was the largest state-wide spending increase for early childhood education in the country, and if approved, another \$65 million increase in funding is expected for 2014.

(Source: http://www.mlive.com/education/index.ssf/2014/01/michigans_preschool_funding_in.html)

New Mexico – Gov. Susana Martinez

"It begins with making sure that every child is able to learn to read. We doubled funding for pre-K, went from serving 4,600 students to almost 8,000. I am proposing another expansion this year."

– State of the State Address, January 21, 2014

Gov. Martinez's budget proposal for fiscal year 2015 includes \$36 million in funding for pre-K and K-3 Plus, an extended school year program for children in kindergarten through third grade. This is a \$5 million increase from last year. Preschool participation in New Mexico has more than doubled under the Martinez administration.

(Source: http://www.demingheadlight.com/deming-news/ci_24863373/gov-introduces-2015-fiscal-budget)

Indiana – Gov. Mike Pence

"Because every child deserves to start school ready to learn, I believe the time has come for a voluntary pre-K program to help Indiana's low-income kids."

– State of the State Address, January 14, 2014

As governor of one of the 10 states that does not currently fund an early childhood education program, Gov. Pence has pushed for pre-K vouchers for low-income 4-year-olds in the state through a preschool pilot program. The Indiana House has approved the legislation and it is awaiting a vote from the Senate. The proposal would provide preschool vouchers to students from families making up to 185 percent of the poverty level and has an estimated cost of \$25 million.

(Source: <http://indianapublicmedia.org/stateimpact/2014/01/16/house-approval-prek-pilot-proposal-heads-cautious-senate/>)

Pennsylvania – Gov. Tom Corbett

“At every level, from early childhood to high school and beyond, every dollar we spend is an investment in the future of our commonwealth.”

– Budget Address, February 4, 2014

In his budget address, Gov. Corbett called for a \$10 million increase in funding for Pre-K Counts to expand early childhood education in Pennsylvania. This funding combined with the \$51 million Race to the Top grant, is expected to expand access to high-quality programs to more 3- and 4-year-olds. The \$100 million Ready to Learn Grant that Corbett proposed will also allow school districts to build on and strengthen existing preschool programs and full-day kindergarten.

(Source: <http://www.mcall.com/news/nationworld/pennsylvania/mc-pa-corbett-budget-proposal-0204-20140204,0,6894453.story?page=1>)