



*Advocates for Children and Youth is a statewide non-profit focused on improving the lives and experiences of Maryland's children through policy change and program improvement. We champion solutions to child welfare, education, health, and juvenile justice issues, positioning us to influence the full spectrum of youth experiences. This multi-issue platform helps us to improve the entirety of children's worlds—the systems they touch, the people they interact with, and the environment where they live.*

## **Testimony before the Ways and Means Committee**

### **In SUPPORT of House Bill 1476 –Education – Supplemental Prekindergarten Grant – Eligibility**

**March 8, 2018**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 1476 –Education – Supplemental Prekindergarten Grant – Eligibility. Advocates for Children and Youth (ACY) supports this bill.

Studies have shown that especially for low income children, high quality pre-kindergarten helps ensure that these young children have the foundational skills they need to be successful in school. As the Consensus Statement on the impact of pre-kindergarten explains "At their most effective, pre-k programs can provide young children with the kinds of enriching and supportive early environments that protect and nurture the developing brain and thus foster all facets of healthy development."<sup>1</sup> That consensus statement includes the map of the United States included in this testimony that indicates how much pre-kindergarten is available in each state and whether it has been studied.<sup>2</sup> I have also included the infographic created by the Maryland State Department of Education and Ready at Five which highlights some of the racial and socio-economic disparities in kindergarten readiness. While 57% of white children demonstrate kindergarten readiness, that number is only 39% for African American children.<sup>3</sup> There is also a 25 point gap in readiness between middle and high income families when compared to low income families.

HB 1476 provides supplemental grants for 2018-2020 to counties providing pre-kindergarten to more children. It is critical that counties receive this additional funding to ensure that they can provide high quality early childhood education. **We urge this Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1476 to increase access to high quality prekindergarten for more children across Maryland.**

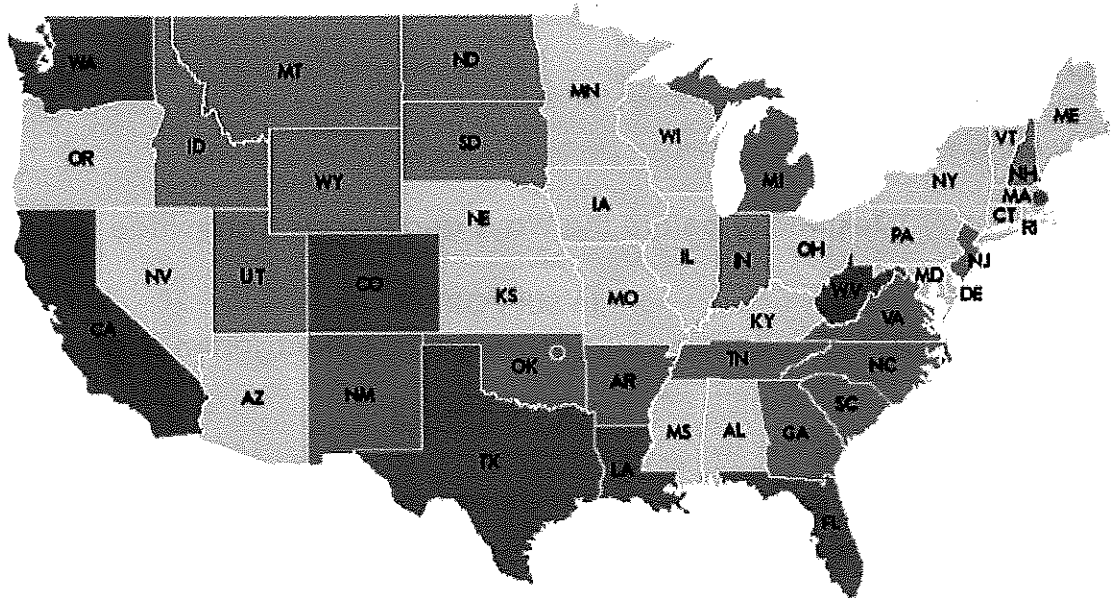
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<sup>1</sup> Phillips, Deborah A., Lipsey, Mark W., Dodge, Kenneth A., Haskins, Ron, Bassok, Daphna, Burchinal, Margaret R., Duncan, Greg J., Dynarski, Mark, Magnuson, Katherine A., and Weiland, Christina, "Puzzling it Out: The Current State of Scientific Knowledge on Pre-Kindergarten Effects; A Consensus Statement," p. 5 (2017) Can be found at: [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/consensus-statement\\_final.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/consensus-statement_final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Id. at 4.

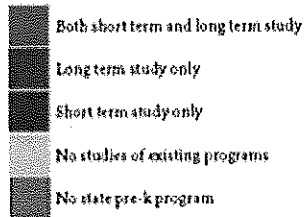
<sup>3</sup> Maryland State Department of Education and Ready at Five, "Readiness Matters. Equity Matters. Maryland's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, (January 2018).

## National Landscape of Pre-Kindergarten Evaluation Studies



Source for information about percentage of four-year-olds served by state pre-k programs: Steven W. Barnett, Alison H. Friedman-Krauss, Rebecca Gomez, Michelle Horowitz, G.G. Weisenfeld, Kristy Clarke Brown, and James H. Squitres, *The State of Preschool 2015: State Preschool Yearbook* (New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research, 2016).

### State Pre-K Programs That Have Been Studied (Includes Boston, Massachusetts, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, district-level programs.)



### Percentage of Four-Year-Olds Served by State Pre-K Programs in 2015

**Less than 5%:** Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, and Rhode Island

**Between 5% and 25%:** Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Kansas, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington

**Between 25% and 50%:** Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, South Carolina, and Texas

**Greater than or equal to 50%:** Georgia, Florida, Iowa, Oklahoma, Vermont, West Virginia and Wisconsin

# READINESS MATTERS. EQUITY MATTERS.

MARYLAND'S KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT

January 2018

## 45%

DEMONSTRATE READINESS

## 63,151

KINDERGARTENERS

## 35%

KINDERGARTENERS ASSESSED

### Maryland Kindergarten Readiness

Demonstrating

45%

Approaching

37%

Emerging

18%

### Domains recognized as essential for school success



54%  
SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS



40%  
LANGUAGE & LITERACY



37%  
MATHEMATICS



56%  
PHYSICAL WELL-BEING & MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

### Readiness gaps exist for Maryland's minority children\*

Kindergarten Enrollment

32%

African American

7%

Asian

39%

Hispanic/Latino

5%

Two or More

37%

White

Demonstrate Kindergarten Readiness

39%

55%

24%

51%

57%

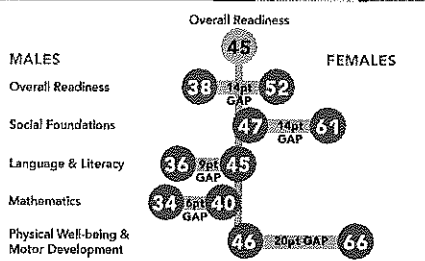
### High poverty jurisdictions show lower readiness

5 of the 8 jurisdictions with lower than average readiness levels have a higher percentage of kindergarteners living in poverty.

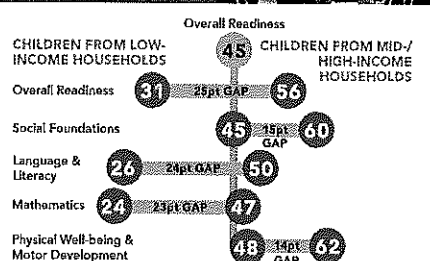


Exceed Statewide Average (>45%)  
On Par with Statewide Average (45%)  
Below Statewide Average (<45%)

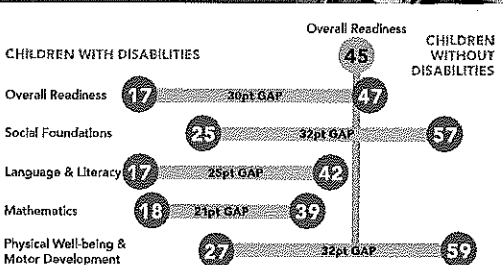
### Gender gap favors females



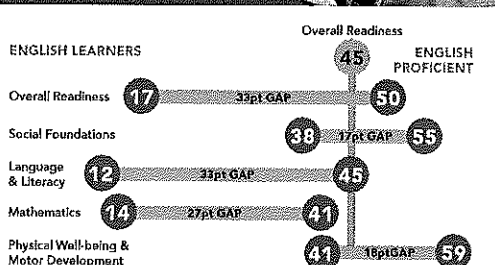
### Children from low-income households start school at a disadvantage



### Fewer kindergarteners with identified disabilities demonstrate readiness



### English proficiency impacts school readiness



43% OF KINDERGARTENERS LIVE IN LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS

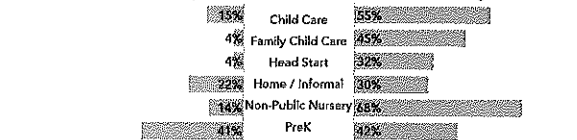
16% OF KINDERGARTENERS ARE ENGLISH LEARNERS

8% OF KINDERGARTENERS HAVE IDENTIFIED DISABILITIES

### Benefits of early education are clear

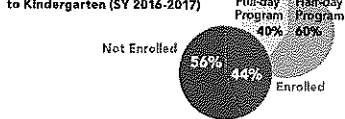
#### PRIOR CARE EXPERIENCE & READINESS

Parent-Reported Prior Care Experience



#### PUBLICLY FUNDED PREK ENROLLMENT

Percent of Children Enrolled the Year Prior to Kindergarten (SY 2016-2017)



Developed in partnership with and support from the Maryland State Department of Education.



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\* Readiness and demographic information for students of American Indian (0.3% of Maryland's kindergarten enrollment) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.2%) ethnic backgrounds are not reported due to limited sample size.

