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Building a System to Support Effective PreK

Learning from other states with a focus on New Jersey's Universal Urban Pre-K Program

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No Single Ingredient*: Pre-k Programs Producing Large Gains

- Well-educated (BA with ECE license) & fairly compensated teachers and expert leaders
- Adequate dosage (full day, two years)
- Small classes and reasonable teacher:child ratios
- Integrated learning standards, curriculum, assessment and professional development
- Coherent support, monitoring, and review
- Continuous data-driven improvement

* "No Single Ingredient" is a concept borrowed from Dr. Marcy Whitebook, UC Berkley, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/denver-whitebook-speech.pdf

California State Pre-K & TK 4 yr-old Enrollment and Resource 2017 Ratings

Enrollment

State	Ranking	Percent
District of Columbia	1	87.5%
Florida	2	78.6%
Oklahoma	3	73.3%
Wisconsin	4	71.8%
Vermont	5	75.1%
West Virginia	6	64.7%
Iowa	7	64.6%
Georgia	8	61.6%
New York	9	55.3%
Texas	10	50.5%
California (SPP + TK)	**13**	**37%**
California SPP Alone	**30**	**16.5%**

Resources

State	Ranking	Per Pupil
District of Columbia	1	$16,996
New Jersey	2	$12,242
Oregon	3	$9,533
Washington	4	$8,239
Connecticut	5	$7,817
Delaware	6	$7,400
Pennsylvania	7	$7,254
Vermont	8	$6,878
Hawaii	9	$6,649
West Virginia	10	$6,524
California (SPP + TK)	**13**	**$6,325**
California SPP Alone	**14**	**$6,067***

* CA K-12 spending is over $14,000

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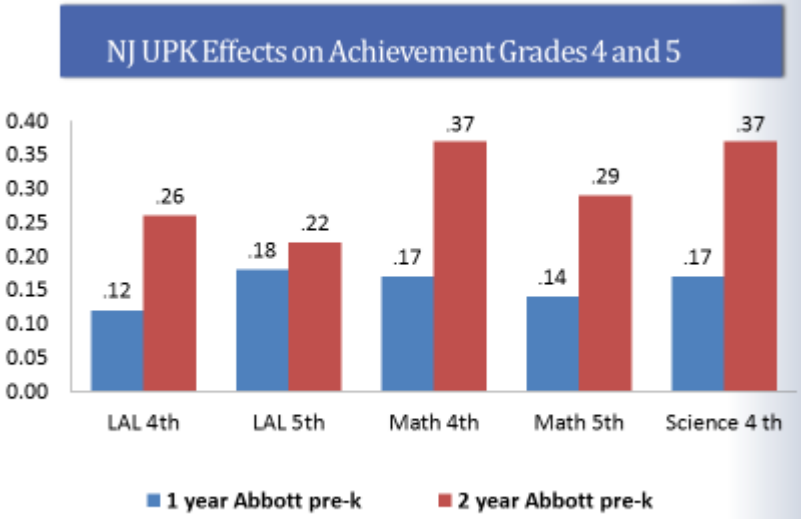
CSPP Meets 6 of 10 Quality Benchmarks

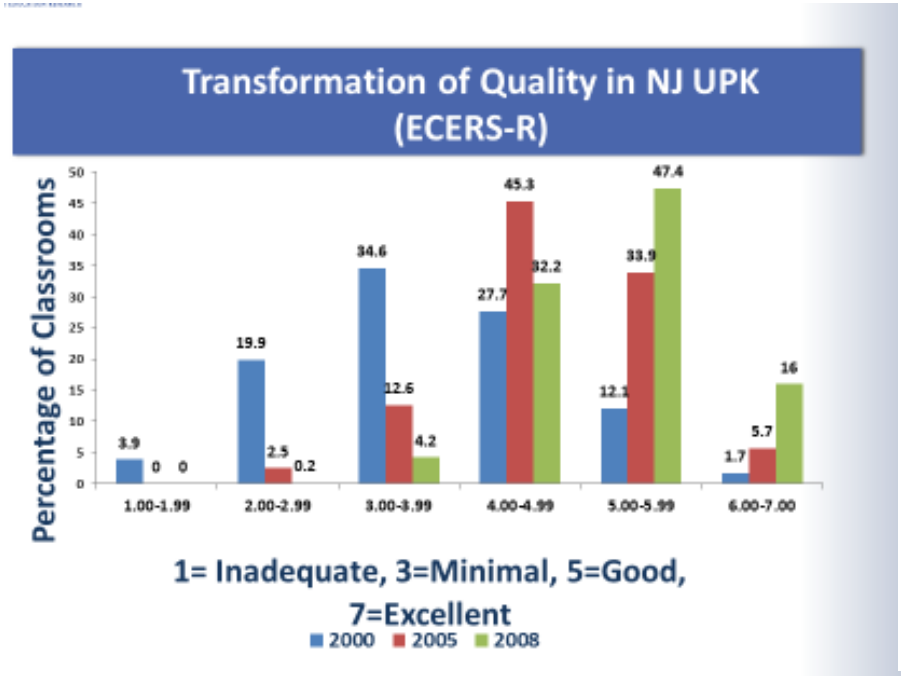
Policy Benchmark	CA SPP Policies	Benchmark
Early Learning Standards	CA Preschool Learning Foundations	√
Strong Curriculum & Implementation Supports	Curriculum approval process with fidelity support	√
Teacher BA		
Specialized ECE Knowledge	CA Child Development Associate	√
Assistant Teacher ECE Credential	(High school graduate)	
On-going Professional Development		
Class size < 20	(No limit)	
Adult/child Ratio 1:10	1:8	√
Screening & Referral	Health & development/ other supports	√
Continuous improvement system	Observation data used for improvement	√

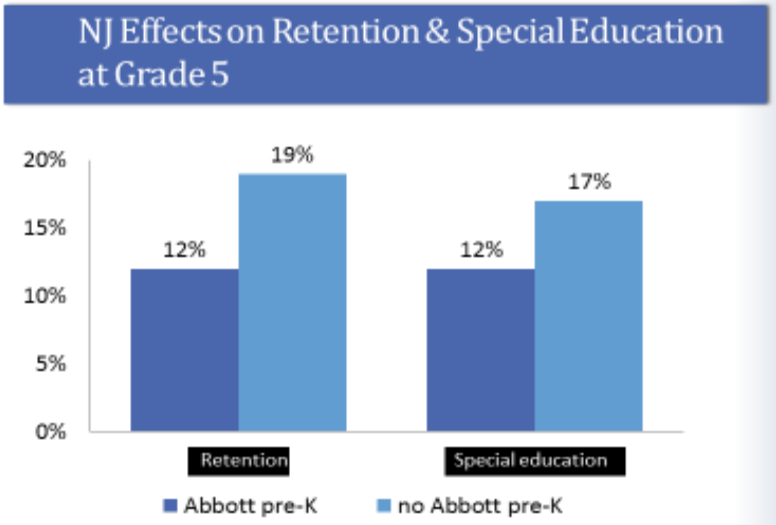
31 states meet more quality benchmarks than CA

NJ Successful Preschool Program

Funding improved program standards. This led to increased quality which resulted in greater achievement and reduction in special education and grade retention.







Cost ingredients: Building the workforce

Conditions	Strategies
Limited qualified teacher pool	Scholarships with 4 yrs to BA, Alternate Route credential, Signing bonus, Comparable salary
No ECE cert.	Reinstate ECE teacher license (P-3)
Scarcity of ECE faculty	Grants to colleges for ECE faculty Early Learning Improvement Consortium MOUs w/ IHEs
Center directors w/out ECE or admin expertise	Directors Academies Center director salary scale: Size of center + ECE degree + admin credits = ↑ $$$
All other positions needed PD	State and ELIC provide various PD modules (e.g. Coaching seminar with certificate; the fiscal specialist as TA provider not budget cop; ECE leaders network)
State agency capacity	DOE ECE administrator in senior staff role ECE specialists in DOE as district partners 2% of budget set aside for state-level administration, oversight and program improvement

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Serendipitous Financing of the NJ System

- When universal pre-k is fully implemented, cost per year approximates annual K-12 cost (w/out spec. ed.)
- In start-up years, initial per pupil costs were closer to $11K (e.g., new teachers have lower salaries) and enrollment was not full
- Remaining budget went to scholarships, grants, classroom improvements and other PD - spread across multiple state agency budgets
- 2% set aside for state infrastructure was crucial

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Other Critical Decisions

- Governance
- Administration
- Program eligibility
- Distribution of funds
- Infrastructure costs and standards (facilities, integrated data systems)
- Program components (length of day, curriculum expectations and supports, supports for inclusion, supports for Emergent Bilinguals, etc)
- Program evaluation for improvement
- Scaling and sustainability

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Two Examples from Other States

Alabama's First Class Pre-K Program

- Strong enabling environment – politicians, business community, grant-makers, advocacy coalition, grass-roots
- Exceeds NIEER 10 Benchmarks – pay parity, multiple supports to programs
- Stand-alone ECE department - competitive grants, mixed delivery system
- Rapid expansion from 6% to 24% of 4s in <5 yrs with stand-out quality
- Effects found into school grades

North Carolina's More at 4 Pre-K Program

- Administered by DOE in strong collaboration with other agencies and oversight by Governor Jim Hunt's Children's Cabinet (department heads)
- Exceeded NIEER 10 Benchmarks
- TEACH scholarship program to support BA attainment, pay enhancement but parity only in public schools
- Effects found into school grades

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Conclusions

- Many preschool programs are not delivering the desired results –inadequately prepared and under-paid teachers are one likely cause
- Only programs with highly educated, well-paid teachers have produced large and lasting gains on broad measures
- Well-educated teachers are one ingredient of effective programs and this alone is insufficient
- Teacher pay and working conditions must be adequate
- Also essential: the quality of the other personnel, standards, curriculum, supports, and policies including a continuous improvement system that focuses on performance

"Men's courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead. But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change."

~ Ebenezer Scrooge

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