

#STATESLEADING

A child's first years form the foundation for future learning and development. States have a critical role in providing children with access to high-quality early learning opportunities during the early years that can increase educational equity and have long-term benefits for children. This week, we look at how states are making progress in offering high-quality early childhood education.

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State Spotlights



Michigan's Great Start Readiness pre-k program serves 38,213 students, reaching 51% of the eligible 4-year-old population. The Learning Policy Institute's report, *The Road to High-Quality Early Learning: Lessons from the States*, analyzes how Michigan and three other states have built high-quality early education systems

Highlighted States: WV, MI, WA, NC

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The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) recognizes **Mississippi** for its trailblazing efforts addressing early childhood education with various initiatives including the Early Learning Collaboratives (ELC).

ELC is being celebrated for meeting all 10 quality standards for early childhood education, making Mississippi one of only five states in the nation that meet all 10 benchmarks for the second year in a row.

Highlighted States: MS

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Must Read

The State of Early Learning in ESSA: Plans and Opportunities for Implementation, produced by the Council for Chief State School Officers and the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes, focuses on three key topics for early learning in ESSA: setting clear goals and policy priorities for early learning, integrating early learning into school improvement, and supporting early childhood educator development. Several states, such as Mississippi, Michigan, and Pennsylvania, have responded with policies that address these important areas.

CCSSO also created a "Promoting High-Quality Prekindergarten Network," under the leadership of new board president, Carey Wright, State Superintendent of Education in Mississippi.

Highlighted States: All 50 states and DC

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Tools & Resources



In this episode of “Our American States” podcast — produced by the National Conference of State Legislatures — economist Art Rolnick and Senator Howard Stephenson discuss how investing in early childhood education can pay off in big ways for states, by closing opportunity gaps before they become achievement gaps.

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The Education Commission of States' report *Initiatives From Preschool to Third Grade: A Policymaker's Guide*, details how the period between preschool and third grade is a tipping point in a child's journey from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." In 2016-17, 30 states increased funding for pre-K, demonstrating overall support for expanding access to learning for children at this critical point.

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Recognizing the importance of early childhood education, federal and state governments have been investing billions of dollars to serve the nation's youngest children. In *The Role of State Boards in Improving Early Childhood Education*, the National Association of State Boards of Education discusses opportunities for state boards to use their authority to improve early childhood education policy in their states.

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We want to hear from you!

Send your state's stories or organization's resources to communications@ccsso.org



The States Leading campaign celebrates the progress states are making toward providing equitable education for all students through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and innovative policies in other key areas of education, such as early childhood education, teacher preparation, and career readiness, among others.

Thank you to our proud partners:

The Council of Chief State School Officers
Education Commission of the States

The National Association of State Boards of Education
National Conference of State Legislatures

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