State benchmarking

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Other states have made progress, but none have fully solved ECEC

Georgia

Launched universal 4 year old pre-K statewide in 1995 for any families that want to participate in the program, currently 100% of all low-income 4 year olds are served

Lottery revenue enables the program to bypass traditional annual state / federal appropriations

Michigan

Great Start Readiness Funding Formula allows shifting of resources

- Uses district level incomes, property wealth, & other risk factors to allocate funds

Funding formula methodology creates more stable funding source as funding is automatically disbursed vs. annual fluctuations in general state appropriations

Washington

Created Department of Children, Youth, & Families, following 2016 commission recommendation, which is the most comprehensive unified model covering a child from birth through adolescence

Focused on preventative vs. reactive methods of caring for at risk children

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California

Where they stand out:

Adequacy

Recently, California took stance on defining adequacy for pre-K and child care with high per child allocations, but have not translated into policy yet

State performs below average in low-income access, with only 3% of low-income 0-3 yr olds receiving child care support, and 82% low-income students served in state-funded pre-K

Limited funding to improve pre-K quality, with one program using QRIS and average 4/10 NIEERS quality benchmark

Potential for future tailwinds as Governor Newsom has pledged to make universal Pre-K for low-income all 4 yr olds a reality over the next three year

How is California early learning & care system structured?

- Complex governance due to mixed funding across federal and state fund and therefore oversight by multiple authorizing agencies
  - State funds typically carry oversight from 1+ state govt. body
  - Every program has a local administrator charged with planning, funding, and implementing at district or county level
- CA State Advisory Council coordinates system-level issues between stakeholders
- Each county has a local commission (through First 5 commission) that may administer ECEC programs funded with tobacco tax revenue

What is special about California?

- One of the first states to define adequacy, although estimates are high
  - Recent adequacy report estimates that it would cost $29.7B to $75.4B ($30K to $37K per student) to provide adequate care across 0-5 yr olds
  - Additional estimate of $3.0B to $9.7B investment costs to increase workforce capacity to support adequate care
  - High estimate driven mainly by CA labor cost economics
- State utilizes a funding formula for Transitional Kindergarten for 5 years olds

What can we learn for Illinois?

- Funding shortfalls are exacerbated by a complex governance structure
  - Mitigation becomes more complex as shortages appear across the system
  - Governance structure should plan for complex funding streams
- Local administration can react faster than government agencies and have better pulse on needs of families
- Avoid tying program support to declining revenue sources (e.g. tobacco)

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Georgia

Where they stand out:

In 1995, Georgia launched universal 4 yr. old pre-K statewide for any families that want to participate in the program, currently 100% of all low-income 4 yr. olds are served

Georgia is able to provide high quality pre-K evidenced by the 8/10 score on the NIEER quality benchmark…

…and do so even though funding per child at $4K is well below the nationwide avg of $6K

Though they are top of the pack for pre-K, the state has failed to provide high quality access in child care for 0-3 yr. olds, but recent budget increases are a promising sign of change

What is Georgia's Universal Pre-K?

- Georgia Department of Early Care & Learning oversees the program
- Universal pre-K has grown every year since inception (access increased by 8 percentage points for 4 yr. olds since 2002)
- Program supports salary parity with K-12 teachers
- State lottery revenues fund the program
- Conducted in a variety of settings: public school systems, private providers and blended Head Start/pre-k classrooms
- Program showed 12% score gains across language & literacy, mathematics, general knowledge & behavioral skills for enrolled 4 year olds

Why is it successful?

- Lottery revenue enables the program to bypass traditional annual state / federal appropriations which can be volatile, difficult to plan around, create confusion
  - e.g. planning for workforce requirements, number of slots, etc.
- Guidelines for instruction are standardized across the state with standard curriculum and assessment tools utilized
- States welcomes regular research on the program it can use to enhance the program

What can we learn for Illinois?

- Non-traditional funding streams can provide stability and boost the amount spent on a per child basis
  - By blending a lottery revenue (or similar) with state & federal dollars, quality can be improved while also providing reasonable salaries for teacher
- Including private non-profit and for-profit providers increases capacity

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Michigan

Where they stand out:

Equitable fund disbursement

Integrated systems & reporting

Quality

Michigan has focused on providing access to quality pre-K for 4 year olds

100% of low-income 4 year olds had access in 2018, with funding at $6.5K / child vs. the avg. of $6K nationally

Michigan pre-K received 10/10 on NIEER quality benchmark supported by a robust quality improvement system…

…but, few investments made in child care for 0-3 year olds and no program offered for 3 year old pre-K

Dedicated funding formula introduced for the 2017-2018 year

What is the Great Start to Quality (GSQ) system?

- GSQ is a 5-level tiered ranking measuring the quality of early childhood programs and providers using ~40 quality indicators across 5 categories rated 1-5
  - Staff Qualifications & Professional Development; Family & Community Partnerships; Administration & management; Environment; Curriculum & Instruction

What has made Michigan successful with 4 year olds?

- GSQ increases quality through aligning monetary incentives with quality, consistent ratings system, & directed investment on where it's needed
  - e.g. 5 star provider reimbursed higher amount than 1 star
  - Families can see which providers are available & what their quality rating is
  - The Office of Great Start can review ratings & and dispatch resources to help build up the quality in certain geographies that are lagging
- Great Start Readiness Funding Formula allows shifting of resources
  - Uses district level incomes, property wealth, & other risk factors to allocate funds

What can we learn for Illinois?

- Tying quality to reimbursement rates has helped boost the percentage of children receiving higher quality early learning & care as providers are incentivized to improve care
- A standardized, detailed view of quality across providers provides for the ability to implement data-driven quality improvement programming that best serves the children of the state
  - e.g. admins can review quality indicators to look for state-wide or regional trends impacting quality & pilot improvement programs to assist providers
- A funding formula methodology creates more stable funding source as funding is automatically disbursed vs. annual fluctuations in general state appropriations

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North Carolina

Where they stand out:

North Carolina had the first comprehensive early care & education system based on public / private partnerships in the U.S., bolstered by integrated IT across programming

State prides itself on quality, scoring 8 / 10 on the NIEER quality benchmark…

…but only provides state-funded pre-K to 76% of 3 & 4 year olds that at or below 185% of the FPL

Total pre-K funding per child in top quartile at $8.5K for 2018, with nationwide avg. of $6K

What is Smart Start?

- Smart Start is organized around 75 nonprofit partnerships across all 100 counties, administering public / private providers of child care & pre-k
- A nonprofit organization, North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) is the overseeing body, serving ~24K children (excluding pre-k assistance)
- 2017-2018 funding of ~$180M through the Department of Health & Human Services ($142M) & through charitable donations ($39M), allocated to the local partnerships based on a statewide formula

Results have been promising

- Areas served by Smart Start or similar programs saw increased reading & math scores across 3rd, 4th, & 5th grade
- Reduced special education placements by 10% in 3rd, 4th, & 5th grade for Smart Start counties; every $100 a county spent on Smart Start, special education placements dropped by ~1% across the county
- Counties served by Smart Start found children in 5th grade were 13% less likely to be held back

Why is it successful?

- Smart Start utilizes non-traditional funding & programming streams to build the capacity & improve quality of programming
  - Provides support to care providers to improve state quality rating which are tied to reimbursement rates
  - Seeks out new providers & helps them develop sustainable businesses

What can we learn for Illinois?

- Public / private partnerships can create non-traditional funding pools to expand access & drive quality improvement
- Community centered administration allows for local programming customization that may better serve that locality

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Pennsylvania

Where they stand out:

Integrated systems & reporting

Quality

Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning, launched 2007, dedicated to early learning & child care and grouped between the Dept. of Public Welfare & the Dept. of Ed.

Total pre-K funding per child in top quartile at $7.8K for 2018 vs. nationwide avg. of $6K. However, only serves 50% of 3 & 4 year olds in state-funded pre-K

In 2002, the state began building a system to aggregate all early childhood care & education data into what is now called the PELICAN data system

What is PELICAN ELN?

- **P**ennsylvania's **E**nterprise to **L**ink **I**nformation for **C**hildren **A**cross **N**etworks (PELICAN) Early Learning Network (ELN) is a single integrated information system that automates and supports all of Pennsylvania's early learning & education programs
- Joint initiative by the Departments of Public Welfare (DPW) and Education (DOE)
- Collects the following data: Family, Health, referrals, attendance / enrollment, unique child IDs, program information, workforce (e.g. teacher qualifications, benefits, turnover rates), provider, Keystone STARS quality ratings
- Enables administrators to identify trends in workforce characteristics, provider quality, & child attributes to adjust resources and focus to better serve children

Why is it successful?

- Increased access to care via the automated resource & referral system
  - Makes the process of finding & receiving care easier for families and providers
- Cost savings via the automated child care subsidy eligibility initiative & reductions in duplicate data storage
  - e.g. admin for eligibility application process reduced
- Comprehensive reporting capabilities across early learning & education programs

What can we learn for Illinois?

- Building a comprehensive system is costly & requires continued maintenance & updates so it is best to anticipate futures demands on the system so it can be built to adapt
- Centralized data can help drive more effective programming, reduce inefficiencies & overlap, & save on costs
- Collaborative efforts between DPW & DOE has been successful in maintaining & an integrating information system for early learning & educational programming

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Washington

Where they stand out:

In 2019, Washington consolidated all programming from birth to adolescence under unified Department of Children, Youth, & Families

State focuses heavily on quality, scoring 8 / 10 on the NIEER quality benchmark…

…but only provides State-funded pre-K program to 42% of 3 & 4 year olds at or below 185% the FPL

Total pre-K funding per child in top quartile across the U.S. with total spending per child of $8.8K for 2018, with nationwide avg. of $6K

What is Washington's Department of Children, Youth, & Families?

- In 2016, a commission recommended a cabinet level agency be created to oversee the delivery of services to children & families - now named the Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF), combining:
  - Children's Administration(CA), Juvenile Rehab (JRA), & Office of Juvenile Justice (formerly under the Department of Social & Health Services)
  - Early education including Pre-K & the licensing and monitoring of child care facilities, (formerly the Department of Early Learning)

Why is it special?

- The Department of Children, Youth, & Families is the most comprehensive unified model across states covering a child from birth through adolescence
- Focused on preventative vs. reactive methods of caring for at risk children

What can we learn for Illinois?

- Consolidation effort requires strong support & comprehensive efforts from the governor, state legislature, & state employees
- Success requires an organizational structure that is well defined with clear roles & responsibilities across functions
- A centralized data collection & reporting system is a necessary component of an integrated early care & education network
  - Supports providing care across multiple dimensions (e.g. tracking families across circumstances, age groups, etc.)
- Communicate changes tied to transition as any changes may be seen as directly related to the consolidation (e.g. childcare providers in Washington & updated certification regulations)

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