

## Question:

What metrics do states and/or districts use to measure the success of their pre-K programs, in addition to third grade reading proficiency?

## Our Response:

There are several studies that point to the positive effects of pre-k on long-term student success. Some states have conducted in-depth, longitudinal studies in an effort to ensure they are delivering high quality, effective, pre-k programs. In addition to third-grade reading proficiency, states have used the following metrics to evaluate pre-k programs:

- The results of individual assessments in language, literacy, mathematics at the end of pre-k and each early grade.
- The results of school readiness or kindergarten entrance assessments.
- Reduced grade retention rates in elementary grades.
- Reduction in special education placement.

In addition to the short-term benefits of pre-k, there are also several long-term outcomes that have been identified by longitudinal studies, such as the [High/Scope Perry Preschool Study](#) and the [Abecedarian Project](#). While these long-term outcomes are likely more difficult to track, they show added benefits to investing in high quality pre-k. Some of these outcomes include:

- School success, including increased high school graduation rates.
- Economic performance, including increased employment rates and higher median annual income.
- Reduced commission of crime in adulthood.

Below, please see a collection of research on pre-k effectiveness as well as some specific state examples. We hope that this information is helpful to you. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

### **State Examples of Pre-K Evaluation**

New Jersey: The Abbott Preschool Program Longitudinal Effects Study, conducted by NIEER, assesses the impact of this New Jersey pre-k program on children's learning and development based on a cohort of children who completed their 4-year old year in 2004-2005. The [Interim Report](#) was published in 2007, the [Preliminary Results through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Report](#) in 2009, and the [Fifth-Grade Follow-Up Report](#) in 2013. These reports provide details on student progress and program quality for those students and programs measured in the study. Throughout the study, several indicators are used to measure student progress, including: individual assessments in language, literacy, and mathematics administered at kindergarten entry, and at the end of grades 3, 4 and 5, grade retention in the early grades, and special education placement.

Georgia: In 2011, the Georgia General Assembly authorized an [evaluation of Georgia's pre-k program](#). The evaluation was conducted by the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The study included classroom observations in a random sample of classrooms as well as assessments of the language, literacy, math, general knowledge and behavioral skills for a sample of children over the pre-k year.

North Carolina: Duke University released a study, entitled [Impact of North Carolina’s Early Childhood Initiatives on Special Education Placements in Third Grade](#). The study found that attending state-funded pre-k programs substantially reduces the likelihood that students will be placed in special education programs.

### Research on Pre-K Effectiveness

- The National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) publishes an annual yearbook that provides state pre-K profiles, including an outline of benchmarks which constitute a high-quality pre-k program. [The State of Preschool 2014](#) is the most recent report. Some of those quality benchmarks include: teacher and assistant professional development and preparation, class ratios and maximum size, monitoring/site visits and health/developmental screening and referral.
- The Foundation for Child Development and the Society for Research in Child Development released a report in October 2013, entitled [Investing in our Future: The Evidence Base on Preschool Education](#). This report provides an overview of the evidence behind, and the details of, quality preschool programs.
- The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, summarized [here](#) is a scientific experiment that has identified both the short and long term effects of a high-quality preschool program for children living in poverty. The study concluded that “high-quality preschool programs for children living in poverty contribute to their intellectual and social development in childhood and their school success, economic performance and reduced commission of crime in adulthood.”
- [The Carolina Abecedarian Project](#) is a longitudinal study that has found positive, long-term effects of high-quality early care and education.
- The Chicago Child-Parent Center study was a longitudinal study that followed the progress of 989 children enrolled in 24 preschools in low-income areas. For an overview of the study, link [here](#).