

Early Learning Tour – December 2018
How did Boston, New Jersey, and NYC Implement High-Quality Pre-K?

Access to Free, Full-Day Pre-K through a Mixed Delivery Model

- **Boston**—Boston Public Schools’ Pre-K program serves almost **3,000** 4-year-olds across the district. The majority of Boston’s Pre-K classrooms are in district schools; however, Boston is currently expanding its Pre-K program in community-based centers.
- **New Jersey (targeted universal)**—New Jersey’s “Abbott” Pre-K program, which resulted from the 1999 *Abbott v. Burke* court decision requiring the state to provide high-quality and comprehensive Pre-K for all 3- and 4-year-olds residing in New Jersey’s 31 lowest-income school districts, serves **43,000** 3- and 4-year-olds in district schools (33%) and community-based organizations (67%). The state is currently expanding its Pre-K program to 100 districts, with the goal of reaching universal Abbott Pre-K by 2022.
- **New York City (universal)**—Pre-K for All, launched by the de Blasio administration in 2014, provides every 4-year-old in the city with access to Pre-K. As a result of this initiative, Pre-K enrollment has increased from 19,000 to almost **70,000** children served in district schools (44%) and community-based organizations (56%). An estimated 70% of the city’s 4-year-olds currently participate in the program. In addition, NYC offers 60 Pre-K dual language immersion programs and will expand to 110 in school year 2019-20.

In 2017, NYC launched 3-K for All with the intention of expanding its universal program to include 3-year-olds. By 2020, NYC aims to provide Pre-K to 20,000 3-year-olds in 12 school districts across the city through a mixed delivery model.

Annual Cost per Child

Boston	New Jersey	New York City
\$15,000	\$15,000	\$12,500

Quality

The 3 Pre-K programs toured share the same quality components that center on the ability of a teacher and child to meaningfully interact. These components include a well-qualified and appropriately compensated workforce, small class sizes, and professional development support for teachers, staff, and leadership. All 3 programs were developed through collaboration between state agencies, policymakers, program administrators, advocates, and researchers.

	Teacher Qualifications	Teacher Compensation*	Class Sizes	Professional Development
Boston	BA + Masters within 5 years	Paid at parity with K-12	11:1 Max. Class Size: 22	All programs have strong support from leadership at the program, district, and state level. All programs provide free onsite coaching and targeted professional development.
New Jersey	BA + ECE certification	Paid at parity with K-12	7.5:1 Max. Class Size: 15	
New York City	BA + ECE certification + Bilingual Extension Certification**	Paid at parity with K-12	9:1 Max. Class Size: 18	

*Compensation for Pre-K teachers in community-based settings varies by program

**Applicable only for Dual Language Immersion teachers

Outcomes

- **Boston**—Studies show significant positive effects of Boston’s Pre-K program on student achievement and social-emotional development that are sustained through Grade 5.
- **New Jersey**—National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) found that the effects of two years in the Abbott Pre-K Program are sustained and large enough to close about *half the achievement gap* between low-income children and their more advantaged peers.
- **New York City**—A Westat analysis found that children participating in the Pre-K for All program show significant gains in executive functioning and academic skills across all income levels, race, and home language status.

How did NYC roll out its Pre-K for All program in two years?

As a result of the Pre-K for All Initiative, New York City *tripled* the number of available Pre-K spaces in just two years and recruited and trained 2,000 new lead Pre-K teachers.

Key Drivers:

- Strong Mayoral support and leadership
- Well-staffed team in NYC’s Department of Education (DOE), Division of Early Childhood, dedicated to rolling out Pre-K for All (over 400 staff)
- Robust outreach efforts—NYC DOE created a 50-person outreach team (fluent in 13 languages) to provide information about the Pre-K for All initiative to families and providers across the city.
- Expanding the mixed delivery system
 - A permit team with representatives from NYC DOE and other city offices met weekly to review and approve permits for community-based Pre-K sites.
 - NYC DOE provides supports to community-based providers, including increased pay for Pre-K teachers, training, and business operations support.
- Facilities
 - NYC’s school construction authority built new ECE facilities in a short timeframe.
 - NYC DOE built strong relationships with school administrators across the city to gain access to classroom space.
 - NYC DOE was creative in finding classroom space—using city offices, libraries, museums, other public institutions, as well as temporary spaces.
- Dedicated team for Pre-K teacher recruitment—partnered with local universities, attended teacher job fairs, and created a Pre-K specific online job board to recruit new teachers.

How did New Jersey professionalize its Pre-K workforce within the 4 years required by the court order, while maintaining diversity and equity across all settings?

Because the Court ruled that well-qualified and certified teachers are a critical component of high-quality programs, all lead Pre-K teachers in Abbott districts were required to obtain a BA and early childhood certification within 4 years. At the time, the state did not have an early childhood certification, and much of the ECE workforce had a two-year associate's degree or less.

- The state created a specialized P-3 certification, which could be satisfied via multiple paths, depending upon prior education and experience.
- Institutes of higher education (IHEs) expanded course offerings to meet the certification requirements, and courses were offered on-site, weekends/nights, and online.
- A statewide professional development center was established to provide technical assistance and guidance to teachers seeking a BA and P-3 certification.
- The state funded scholarships of up to \$5,000 for teachers working towards the increased qualification requirements. These funds went *directly* to the IHEs so the workforce was not responsible for any upfront costs.
- *Salary parity* was instituted for lead teachers working in Abbott classrooms across in all settings.
- By the four-year deadline, approximately 90% of the Abbott teaching workforce held a BA and was at least provisionally certified.

How did Boston make significant progress in reducing racial and income achievement gaps?

- Boston implemented a comprehensive *Focus on Early Learning* model for Pre-K through Grade 2, which includes high-quality and aligned curricula, embedded professional development, and on-site coaching.
 - Boston's curriculum incorporates developmentally-appropriate practices and child-centered instruction that is evidence-based and fully aligned from Pre-K through Grade 2.
- Boston made an intentional decision to go through the rigorous process of attaining accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
 - Today, 2/3 of Boston's elementary schools have received NAEYC accreditation.
 - Boston's goal is for all Pre-K classrooms to obtain NAEYC accreditation by 2020.
- Boston collects robust, ongoing data which continually informs its program improvement.