

EARLY EDGE LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

Mixed Delivery Universal PreK

Boston, New Jersey, and California

High Quality UPK: Boston



The Long-Term Effects of Universal Preschool in Boston

Guthrie Gray-Lobe
Parag Pathak
Christopher Walters

Policy Brief | May 2021

Summary

High-quality early childhood education is increasingly viewed as an important and cost-effective intervention to address early-life deficits. New research from economists **Guthrie Gray-Lobe** (UChicago), **Parag Pathak** (MIT), and **Christopher Walters** (UC Berkeley) studies the short and long-run impacts of Boston Public Schools' universal public preschool program. It is the first study that uses a randomized research design to examine the long-term outcomes of children attending a large-scale program.

The researchers find that attending a Boston public preschool led to positive long-term impacts on educational attainment as attendees were more likely to graduate from high school and enroll in college. The short-term effect

of preschool on test scores was minimal, but there was a substantial impact on student behavior. Effects were larger for boys but did not differ by race or income. As policymakers consider increased public investment in universal preschool, the research findings suggest that preschool can lead to long-term educational attainment gains through improvements in behavior. Furthermore, the observed effects across demographic groups suggest that all students are likely to benefit from universal preschool.

Source

Gray-Lobe, G., Pathak, P. A., and C. R. Walters (2021). "The Long-Term Effects of Universal Preschool in Boston," *SEI Discussion Paper #2021.05*.



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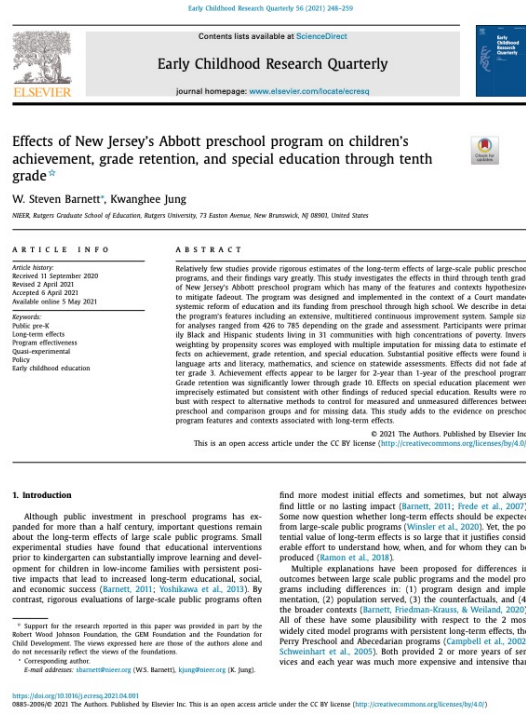
PreK participants were less likely than non-participants to be

- Suspended
- Incarcerated

And were more likely to

- Graduate from high school
- Enroll in college

High Quality UPK: New Jersey



PreK participants had higher scores on statewide exams in

- Literacy
- Math
- Science

And had lower rates of

- Grade retention
- Special education placement

Why is mixed delivery important?

Mixed delivery systems include:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs)
- Head Start agencies
- Child care centers
- Private schools
- Family child care homes

Benefits:

- Adds workforce and facilities capacity
- Provides family choice
- Supports small business

Programs by Enrollment and Setting

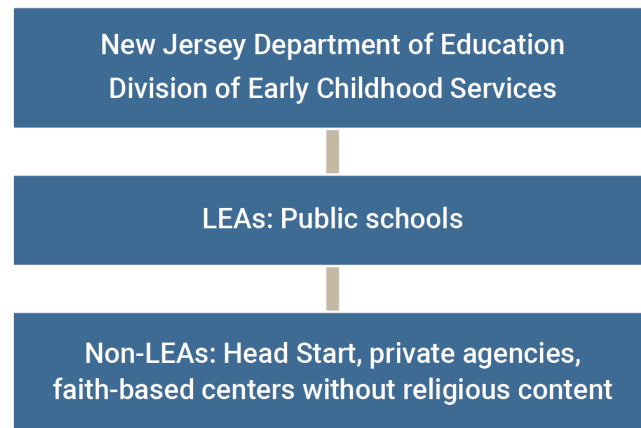
Program	Enrollment, 3- and 4-year-olds
Boston	4,500
New Jersey	47,000

Programs by Enrollment and Setting

Program	Enrollment, 3- and 4-year-olds
Boston	4,500
New Jersey	47,000
California State Preschool Program	92,000
California Transitional Kindergarten	89,000
California Subsidized Child Care	107,000

New Jersey's PreK: Program Overview

- 1998 established by court, 31 districts. Abbott districts worked with Head Start and child care to expand access.
- 2018 expanded to new districts
- Funding from the state General Fund
 - \$16,500/child
 - \$12,000/child Head Start supplement
- 41% children served in non-LEAs



Source: State of Preschool 2022, National Institute for Early Education Research

New Jersey's PreK: Quality Requirements

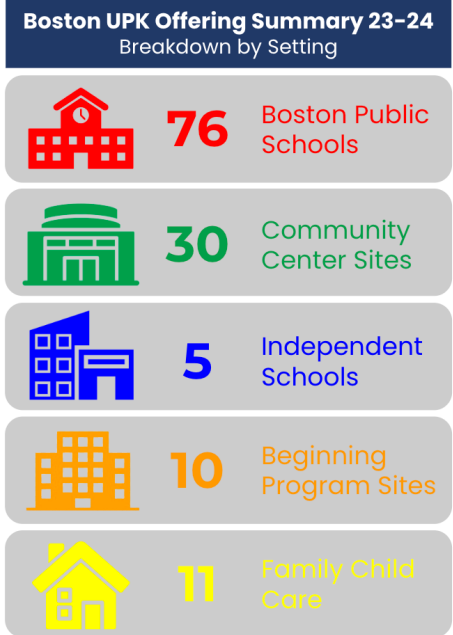
Class Size Max	15
Adults/Class	2
Length of Day	6 hours
Lead Teacher Qualifications	B.A. and P-3 Certification
Compensation	Compensation parity with k-12 in all settings
Coaching	Required regularly
Curriculum	Selected by LEAs from state list
Quality Metric	Environmental Rating Scale, annual

New Jersey PreK



Boston UPK: Program Overview

- 2005 full day preK begins in district schools
- 2013 expands to community-based programs
- 2019 Boston UPK begins
- 2021 expands to 3-year-olds
- 2024 expands to family child care
- Funding from the district and the city, allocated by classroom
- 22% children served in non-LEAs



Source: [Boston Public Schools](#), January 2024

Boston UPK: Quality Requirements

Class Size Max	20
Adults/Class	2
Length of Day	6.5 hours
Lead Teacher Qualifications	Bachelor's degree
Compensation	Pay parity with school district
Coaching	Required regularly
Curriculum	Focus on PreK, Building Blocks (math)
Quality metric	NAEYC accreditation

Boston UPK



California UPK: Program Overview

	TK	CSPP	Subsidized Child Care
Age eligibility	4-year-olds (by 2025-26)	2.9 years to age 5	Birth to age 12

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Income eligibility	Universal	Below 100% SMI	Below 85% SMI, work requirement

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Income eligibility	Universal	Below 100% SMI	Below 85% SMI, work requirement
Administration	LEAs only. May partner with CSPP, CBOs for afterschool	CDE contracts directly with LEAs and CBOs (31% in non-LEAs)	CBOs, FCCs, or FFN chosen by family, reimbursed by state

California PreK: Quality Requirements

	TK	CSPP	Child Care Centers	Family Child Care
Group Size Max	24	None	None	8 (small) or 14 (large)
Max Children/Adult	12	8	12	8

California PreK: Quality Requirements

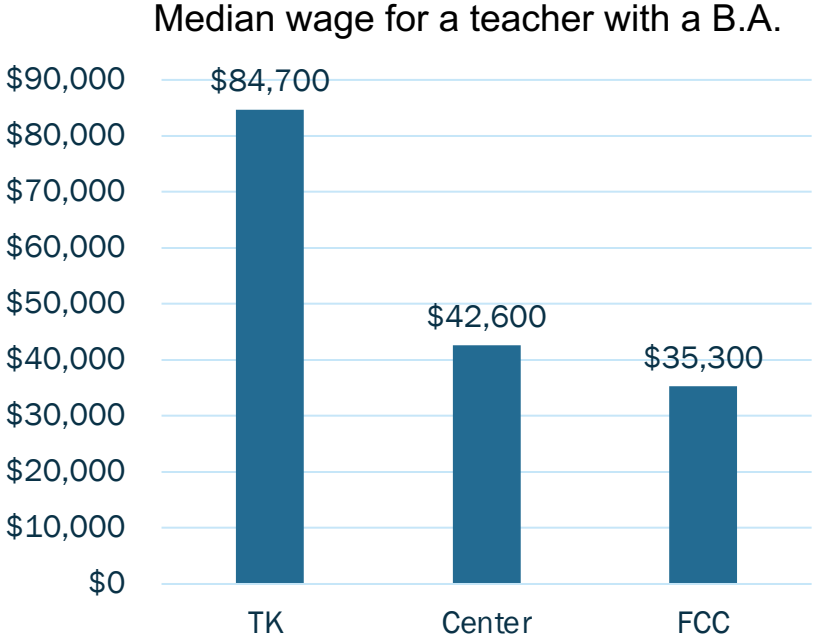
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Group Size Max	24	None	None	8 (small) or 14 (large)
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Length of Day	At least 3 hours	3 hours (part day) 10 hours (full day)	Varies, often full day	Varies, often full day

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Lead Teacher Qualifications	BA + teaching credential	CD Teacher Permit: 24 units ECE, some general education	CD Associate Permit: 12 units ECE	High school degree

No program is required to offer coaching or a specific curriculum.
Only CSPP is required to use a specified tool to measure quality (CLASS).

California PreK Wage Disparities




Source: Powell et. al. (2022)

Takeaways

Boston and New Jersey both have

- A system that includes community providers
- High quality standards across settings
- Small class size and ratios
- High teacher qualifications
- Pay parity
- Robust PD and coaching
- High-quality curriculum
- Continuous quality improvement
- Adequate per-pupil funding



State Preschool in a Mixed Delivery System

Lessons From Five States

Karin Garver, G. G. Weisenfeld, Lori Connors-Tadros,
Katherine Hodges, Hanna Melnick, and Sara Plasencia

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