

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS RESOLUTION ON UNIVERSAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Resolution Summary

Many serious education challenges continue to confront the United States. The United States spends more money on education than just about any other country. American students score above the international average in some subject areas, but overall they still lag behind many countries—including countries that spend less on education than the U.S. As there is a significant relationship between the economic competitiveness of a country and the strength of its educational system, encouraging quality education in the United States is paramount to its success in the global economy.

Research across several decades has shown that the earlier children start their educational journeys, the better they will perform in school and will thus become more productive members of society. There is a strong consensus among researchers that high-quality early childhood education programs are an excellent investment for states. Research has found significant benefits to high-quality pre-Kindergarten programs, including a positive impact over time on federal and state budgets, crime, and the achievement and earnings of children and adults.

While targeted programs focus on high-risk, generally low-income children, universal early childhood education programs provide all children with the opportunity to succeed in school. Many children who are not in targeted groups can still benefit from a high quality preschool education – including middle income students who may or may not have access to high quality preschool programs. The problems ameliorated by early childhood education – such as dropout rates and low achievement – are not limited to the poor. The costs of failing to reach these children are greater than the cost-efficiency and savings associated with targeting.

Additional Resource Information

National Institute for Early Childhood Research: www.nieer.org

Pre-K Now: www.preknow.org

Education Commission of the States: www.ecs.org

Management Directives

- **Management Directive #1:** Create a sense of urgency by encouraging states to implement strategies to increase enrollment in high-quality early childhood education for all 3 and 4 year-old children.
- **Management Directive #2:** Support efforts to increase the number of high-quality early childhood education programs in the states for all 3 and 4 year-old children.
- **Management Directive #3:** Support efforts to study the effectiveness of universal early childhood education programs in order to inform those states implementing new programs or renovating existing programs.

- **Management Directive #4:** CSG staff will post approved resolution on CSG's website and make available through its regular communication venues at the state and local level to ensure its distribution to the state government and policy community.

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WHEREAS, the United States has an interest in increasing the quality of education available to all children; and

WHEREAS, encouraging quality education in the United States is paramount to its success in the global economy; and

WHEREAS, there exists significant disparities in educational achievement and attainment between socioeconomic groups; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that high-quality early childhood education can have a direct impact on the success of students later in school; and

WHEREAS, high-quality early childhood education can provide significant economic benefits to states; and

WHEREAS, high-quality early childhood education is important to all children, not just those in targeted groups.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that The Council of State Governments encourages all states to implement strategies to increase enrollment in high-quality early childhood education programs, as well as create new programs so that all 3 and 4 year old children are served.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The Council of State Governments encourages research efforts to study the effectiveness of high-quality universal early childhood education programs.

Adopted this 31st Day of May, 2008 at the
CSG 75th Anniversary Celebration
in Lexington, Kentucky



Governor M. Jodi Rell
2008 CSG President



Representative Kim Koppelman
2008 CSG Chair

