

**Early Learning and Care Survey Results:
School districts find innovative ways to expand programs**

**By Jen Brown
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About the Author

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Contents

Introduction	3
School district interest in early childhood education	3
Survey methodology	4
I. Pre-kindergarten	5
Models of school district on-site pre-kindergarten programs	6
Funding pre-kindergarten programs	8
II. Kindergarten	9
Models of full-day kindergarten	10
Funding full-day and extended-day kindergarten	11
Conclusions	12
Appendices	
A. Table 1. Washington school district pre-kindergarten programs, services, or support, 2001-02	14
Table 2. Washington school district kindergarten programs, 2001-02	15
B. Survey form	16

Introduction

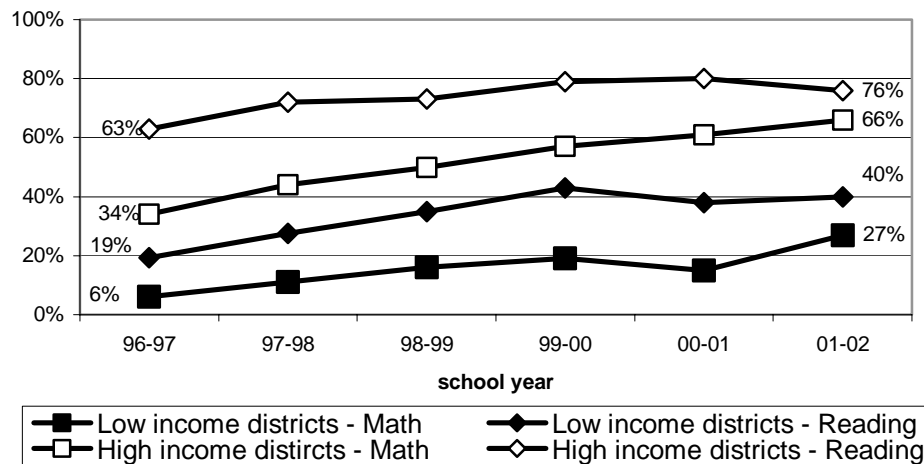
Early childhood education is increasingly being accepted as a public responsibility, rather than viewed as solely the responsibility of families. Changes in the workforce and demands from parents for high-quality child care, federal and state education reform efforts, and local initiatives are focusing attention on high-quality early childhood education as a critical component of school readiness and educational equity.

School districts in Washington state understand the importance of early education as a key strategy for closing the student achievement gap. In the absence of strong leadership from the state, the districts themselves are finding ways to provide pre-kindergarten programs and full-day kindergarten classes to a growing number of students. The Economic Opportunity Institute (EOI) undertook the first survey of the state's 296 districts in order to document the extent of school district involvement in early education, identify promising models, and help shape policy decisions about moving toward universal preschool and full-day kindergarten.¹ This report presents an overview of the survey's findings.

School district interest in early childhood education

School districts in Washington, as in other states, are facing mounting pressure to increase academic achievement for all students. The Washington State Education Reform Act of 1993 established new, higher academic standards for students and greater accountability for teachers and schools. Since 1997, students in the 4th, 7th, and 10th grades have taken the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) exam. Starting in 2008, students will be required to pass all sections of the 10th grade test in order to graduate from high school.² While student achievement in Washington as measured by the WASL has been gradually improving across the state, most districts have a long way to go in preparing students to meet this standard. In 2001-02, only 30% of the state's 10th graders passed all sections of the exam. Districts with high concentrations of low-income students have seen improvements in the percentage of students meeting standards, but these districts started out far behind, and the gap in achievement is persisting.³

Figure 1. Percentage of students meeting Washington state standards in 4th grade



Source: Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Note: "Low income districts" include the top 25% of districts in percentage of students qualifying for free and reduced price lunch. "High income districts" are in the bottom 25%.

To add to the pressure on school districts, on January 8, 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act. The act requires every state to create assessments in reading and math and to test annually every student in grades 3 through 8. Public schools will be held accountable for student test scores, and parents with children in schools with gaps in achievement will be allowed to transfer their children immediately.⁴

Research has shown that the achievement gap starts as a “readiness gap” that is evident when children first arrive in kindergarten. High-quality early childhood education improves a student’s readiness for school and subsequent academic success throughout elementary and secondary school. The gains from quality early learning programs are most dramatic for those most impacted by the achievement gap: low-income, minority, and English as a second language (ESL) children.⁵

Despite the pressures on the K-12 educational system, the state of Washington has yet to develop systematic policies and support for early learning for all the state’s children. The state provides all school districts with funding for basic education as defined by the state Legislature, including funding for half-day kindergarten. Districts that offer full-day kindergarten must do so with other resources, such as local levies or parent tuition. The state has supported a preschool program for some lower income children since 1985, the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP). ECEAP is operated through local contractors, including some school districts. It serves three and four-year-olds whose family incomes are at or below 110% of the federal poverty level. However, the Legislature has never appropriated sufficient funding to allow ECEAP to serve all eligible children, and recent state budget deficits have resulted in reductions to the program.

With increased pressure to improve academic achievement, a number of school districts have taken the lead by making further investments in early childhood education. The extent of these efforts remained undocumented until the Economic Opportunity Institute undertook a systematic survey of the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten offerings of the state’s 296 school districts. The results of this survey demonstrate that school districts in Washington already understand that investments in pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten are key strategies for enhancing school readiness and closing the student achievement gap. Districts across the state have acted on this understanding and are providing educational services to three, four, and five-year-olds considerably beyond what the state and federal governments require and fund. New funding targeted at student achievement became available to districts in 2001 after Washington voters approved Initiative 728. Many districts chose to devote a substantial portion of the new money to pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten programs.⁶ These programs reflect the diversity of the state’s school districts and a common recognition that devoting resources to early education is one of the best possible investments of public funds.

Survey methodology

In the spring and summer of 2002, EOI conducted a telephone survey of the state’s school districts.⁷ Every effort was made to talk to the district staff most knowledgeable about the district’s pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs. Depending upon the size of the district, respondents included superintendents, directors of district early childhood education programs, elementary school principals, kindergarten teachers, and other staff. The Seattle-King County Department of Public Health surveyed the King County school districts, as part of its work on early childhood development, using the EOI survey

instrument. Additional information was obtained from school district websites, newspaper articles, and reports.

For the purposes of this research, the following definitions of school district pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs were used:

Pre-kindergarten: Programs serving children of pre-kindergarten age, usually three to five-year-olds. Pre-kindergarten programs in a variety of settings have a focus on school readiness.

Full-day kindergarten or extended program: Any school district program offering kindergarten instructional hours in excess of the state requirement of 180 half-days or the equivalent of instruction for at least some portion of eligible kindergarten students.⁸

The following information was collected from each school district:

- A description of the kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programs
- The number of children served and the eligibility requirements for participating children
- Program funding information
- Program evaluation information
- Indication of unmet demand and plans for program expansion

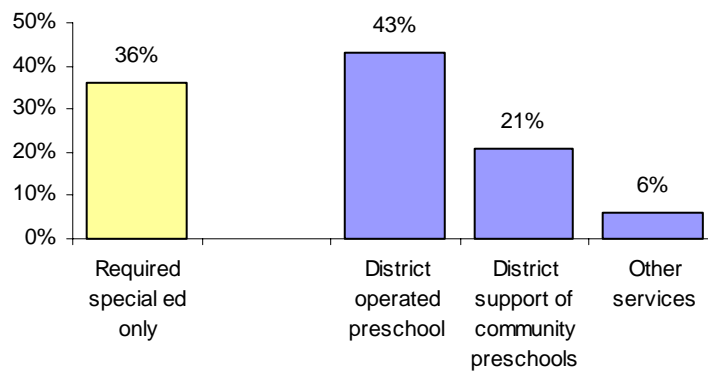
The majority of the information collected represents the districts' programs during the 2001-02 school year.⁹

I. Pre-kindergarten

Federal and state laws require school districts to provide some services to children with disabilities starting at age three.¹⁰ Nearly two-thirds of Washington state school districts are going beyond their legal requirements and providing pre-kindergarten programs for additional children. These services are diverse, ranging from operating on-site preschools to providing parents with information on their role as first teachers. Districts in every part of the state, of all sizes, and serving diverse populations are engaged in pre-kindergarten services.

In the 2001-2002 school year, 64% of districts provided preschool programs for more children than the special education-eligible children they were required to serve.¹¹ Of these, 115 operated on-site pre-kindergarten classes, including Head Start and ECEAP. Fifty-six districts provided support to non-district pre-kindergarten programs, including the provision of facilities, student meals, student transportation, staffing, and money. Sixteen districts offered some other kind of services to the preschool population. For example, some provide information directly to parents about creating a literacy-rich environment at home. Several districts are working to align the curricula of community preschool programs with those that are used in the district's early elementary grades.

Figure 2. Percentage of Washington school districts providing pre-kindergarten services



Note: Adds up to more than 100% because some districts provide more than one kind of pre-kindergarten service.

Models of school district on-site pre-kindergarten programs

The 115 districts that provide on-site pre-kindergarten operate a variety of programs. Forty-three percent of these districts target pre-kindergarten classes to specific groups of children, usually low-income or other at-risk children. In many cases, these targeted programs are linked to Head Start or ECEAP programs for which the district is the contractor. Forty percent of districts offer preschool classes that are open to any child in the community, although in most cases, funding limits the number who may attend. An additional 17% of districts offer a mixed program, with some slots open only to low-income or special education-eligible students and some slots open to other children.¹²

Aberdeen, Lind, and Omak are among the very few districts that have found ways to provide nearly universal preschool for all their communities' children. While quite different in other respects, all three of these communities have limited local economic resources. In all three cases, strong leadership by school officials and support from the community were key in the decision to devote a substantial portion of those resources to early learning.

Aberdeen is a coastal city that has been hit hard in recent decades by declines in the timber and fishing industries. The Aberdeen School District had 4,172 students enrolled in the 2001-2002 school year, including 291 in kindergarten and 53% from low-income families. Almost twenty years ago, the Aberdeen School District made a commitment to provide quality preschool for all four-year-olds in the community. The district now provides a half-day program open to all four-year-olds, integrating special education, ECEAP, and typically developing non-ECEAP-eligible children. Special education and ECEAP children attend 4 half-days per week. Other children attend 2 half-days per week at no cost, and parents have the option of paying for an additional 2 half-days per week. Approximately 80% of the district's four-year-olds attend the program. The Aberdeen preschool program operates out of the district's elementary schools and is staffed by teachers with three-tier endorsement: elementary education, early childhood education, and special education certification.

The **Omak** School District has taken a similar approach of integrating four different programs to create effectively universal preschool for three to five-year-olds in its

community. The town of Omak is in the productive fruit-growing region of central Washington, adjacent to the Colville Indian Reservation. The district enrolls 2,158 students and 122 kindergarteners. Forty-four percent of students are low-income and 45% are students of color. The district's preschool program combines ECEAP, special education, private-pay cooperative, and I-728-funding for children who do not qualify for ECEAP or special education but cannot afford tuition. The program operates 4 half-days per week. The decision to use I-728 money to fund preschool students who were falling through the gaps was the result of significant support from the district's two elementary school principals, the superintendent, and the school board.

Lind is a small rural school district in eastern Washington, with a total of 250 students in all grades and 17 kindergarteners. Fully 70% of the students qualify for free or reduced price lunch and one-fourth are from migrant families. Despite these indicators of academic risk, Lind students perform better than the state average on the WASL exam. Based on community, parent, and staff input, Lind chose to use the largest portion of its Initiative 728 student achievement funds to create universally available preschool and full-day kindergarten programs. Half-day preschool serves most of community's three and four-year-olds. The program is offered 2 days per week, and the district provides transportation, breakfast, and lunch. Staffing includes a certified teacher. Greater than expected demand led to the decision to offer two classes 2 days per week rather than one class 4 days per week as originally planned.

The majority of preschool programs operated by school districts, including those in the larger cities of Longview and Bellevue, serve more limited numbers of children. The vision of the **Longview** School District is for every child to have a high-quality early learning experience, but in 2001-2002 the district was able to provide preschool for four-year-olds in only one elementary school zone. Longview is an industrial city on the Columbia River with 7,648 enrolled students, including 527 kindergarteners, and 39% of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Children who are not eligible for ECEAP or Head Start but are not able to afford private preschool have priority in the district's preschool program. The district also used I-728 funding to operate a six-week summer program for at-risk entering kindergarteners and supports families of children aged birth to 3 in these ways:

- Hospital visits to families with newborns to provide literacy information;
- A program to educate family home childcare providers about literacy-rich environments;
- A community tracking program to identify at-risk children and provide interventions at 20 to 24 months, a critical age for language development;
- An Even Start family literacy program targeted to young parents and Spanish-speaking families.

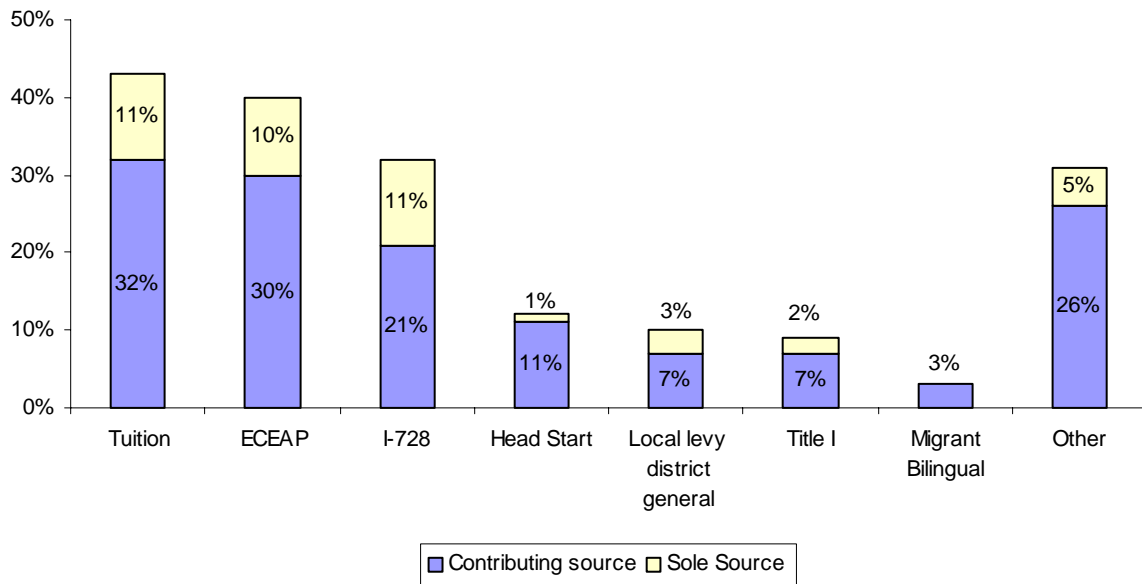
The **Bellevue** School District operates tuition-funded preschool for three to five-year-olds in half of the district's elementary school campuses. Bellevue, the fifth largest city in the state, is in the highly urbanized Puget Sound region. Enrollment totals 15,510 students, including 967 kindergarteners. It is among the wealthiest districts in the state, with only 13% of students from low-income families, and test scores are well above the state average. The Bellevue preschools operate 2-1/2 hours per day for the 180-day school year. Each preschool class has a lead teacher and an assistant teacher and a maximum of 20 children. All lead teachers have at least a BA or an AA degree in Early Childhood Education, and all

program staff are employees of the Bellevue School District. Children may attend the preschool program two, three, or five days per week, with the option of also receiving child care before and after preschool. The district also operates five traditional half-day Head Start classrooms and two blended tuition-based preschool/Head Start classrooms that are full-day, full-year programs. The district's preschool offerings are part of a broad set of services for children aged 0 to 5, including infant care for children of high school students, toddler child care, child care before and after preschool, and a new childcare program for medically fragile children.

Funding pre-kindergarten programs

Among all pre-kindergarten programs operated by school districts, 43% rely on a single source of funding. Many districts creatively mix federal, state, and local funding in order to reach more of their communities' preschool population. Parent tuition was the most frequently identified source of pre-kindergarten funding (used by 43% of districts), followed by funding from ECEAP (40%) and Initiative 728 (32%). Insufficient funding is a major factor limiting the provision of preschool programs. The funding crunch compromises the ability of many districts, especially those also struggling with overcrowded classrooms, to expand educational offerings to younger children.

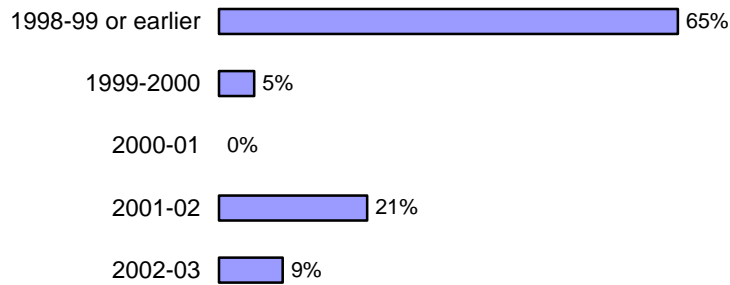
Figure 3. Percentage of district-operated pre-kindergarten programs by funding sources, 2001-2002



"Other" includes Even Start, Department of Social and Health Services childcare subsidies, grants, and special education monies.

The majority of district-operated pre-kindergarten programs have been operating for five or more years, many of them with ties to Head Start and ECEAP. A surge of new programs began in 2001-02 when districts gained access to new funds after passage of Initiative 728.

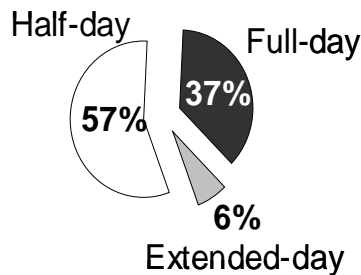
Figure 4. Implementation Year of District Operated Preschool Programs



II. Kindergarten

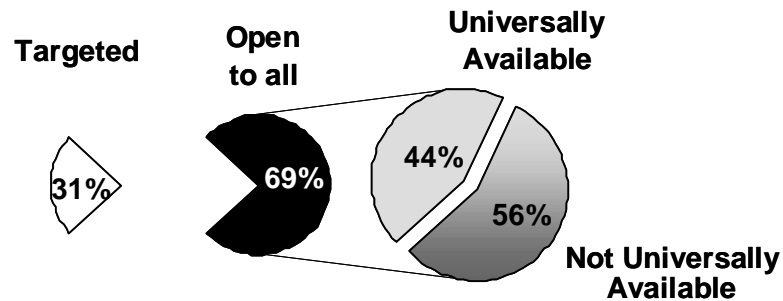
During the 2001-02 school year, 43% of school districts provided more extensive services to kindergarteners than the half-day that the state requires and funds. At least 27 Washington school districts make full-day kindergarten available to all children in the district. An additional 78 districts offer full-day kindergarten classes for some portion of students; 20 districts offer extended-day kindergarten classes, and 3 districts offer both a full-day kindergarten program and an extended-day program. As with school district pre-kindergarten programs, the full-day and extended-day programs offered across the state vary widely.

Figure 5. Kindergarten programs offered by school districts



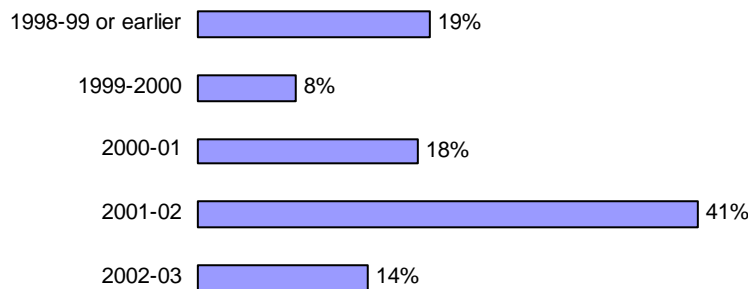
Of the school districts that operate a kindergarten program beyond the state requirements, 30% of those that provided eligibility information in the survey offer full-day kindergarten to all students. A similar number, 31%, target programs to particular groups of students, usually low-income and academically at-risk children. For example, the **Lynden** School District targets its extended-day kindergarten program to migrant and bilingual children needing help with language and to other students needing assistance with reading readiness. The other 38% of districts with full-day or extended-day programs provide a limited number of spaces that are open to any child, allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, by lottery, or by some other method.

Figure 6. Eligibility for full-day and extended-day kindergarten programs



While a significant number of districts have long established expanded kindergarten offerings, 81% of districts with full-day or extended-day kindergarten started these programs in the last 4 school years. The majority of districts implemented programs after the passage of I-728.

Figure 7. Year districts started full-day or extended-day kindergarten programs



Models of full-day kindergarten

In 1998, **Aberdeen** began providing a full-day kindergarten pilot program at three schools. These schools used a combination of federal money and miscellaneous grants to fund the program. When the first cohort of children to attend full-day kindergarten reached 3rd grade, they scored better on achievement tests than students who had been in the traditional half-day class. English-language learners showed particularly good results. Based on this success, the district decided to use the bulk of I-728 funds to expand the full-day kindergarten program to all six of its elementary schools, believing that early intervention would pay the biggest dividends in student achievement. In 2001-02, the district held a two-day Kindergarten Institute for all teachers and early childhood educators, including para-educators, to support the implementation of full-day kindergarten. In 2002-03, the expansion was put into operation.

The **Edmonds** School District began its “Early Success” full-day kindergarten program in the fall of 1999. Edmonds lies between the cities of Seattle and Everett. Over 22,000 students attend its public schools, including 1,537 kindergarteners, and 21% of students are

from low-income families. Edmond's full-day kindergarten was implemented in the six schools with the greatest number of at-risk students, based on eligibility for the free/reduced price lunch program, number of ESL students, student mobility, and percentage of students scoring below standard on state assessments. Full-day kindergarten was provided in these schools at no cost to the parents. Longitudinal studies following the progress of these children have shown consistently positive results.¹³ The district is therefore planning to expand the full-day program to all 24 district elementary schools in 2003-04. In order to finance that expansion, the number of schools offering the classes free of charge will be reduced from 6 schools to 2, and tuition of \$2,300 per year will be charged at the other schools, with some scholarships available.

The state's largest school district, **Seattle**, began offering full-day kindergarten classes during the late 1980s in schools geographically distributed throughout the city. With parent demand high, the district expanded the full-day program rapidly, drawing on a number of funding sources. In 2001-2002, the district provided 148 full-day classes, serving 83% of the district's 3,623 kindergarteners. Every elementary school provides at least one, free, full-day class. Most schools in the city's lower income neighborhoods offer full-day classes to all children free of charge. Many schools in higher income neighborhoods, in contrast, offer both full-day and half-day classes and frequently charge tuition for some portion of full-day students. The district's student assignment process involves several factors including parental choice, neighborhood, and lottery.¹⁴

While Aberdeen, Edmonds, and Seattle are among the districts that provide full-day kindergarten to a significant portion of their communities' children, Yakima and Lind are two of the 27 school districts that make full-day kindergarten available to all students. **Yakima** is a school district in which nearly two-thirds of the students are low-income and 29% are bilingual. It began with a pilot full-day kindergarten program in 8 schools. Community discussions about the district's Initiative 728 money concluded that expenditures should center on birth-to-five educational assistance and augmenting the full-day kindergarten program. That money allowed the district to create 27 new full-day classes. In 2002-03, the district expanded the program to all kindergarten-eligible students.

Lind also relies on I-728 money to fund full-day kindergarten. In order to keep costs affordable and still serve all students, the program begins with a half-day and goes to full-day in the second semester.

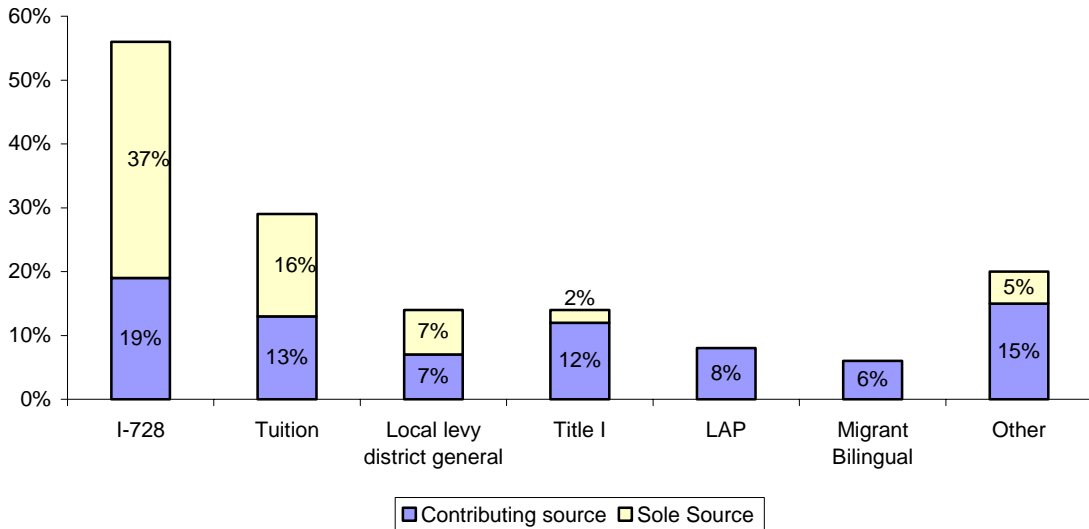
Funding full-day and extended-day kindergarten

School districts use a variety of funding sources to support their full-day or extended-day kindergarten classes. Initiative 728 was the source of funding most frequently identified by districts during the 2001–2002 school year, with 56% relying on it in whole or in part. According to a recent University of Washington evaluation, districts with a high percentage of low-income students were more likely to use I-728 student achievement funds for early education.¹⁵ Parent tuition was the second most commonly cited funding source at 30%, indicating the popularity of these programs. Several small districts were able to save enough money from not running school buses in the middle of the day for half-day kindergarten that they could afford to implement a full-day program.

More funding alone would not lead all districts to further expand full-day offerings, however. Availability of classroom space is an issue for some – two half-day classes can share the same room, but if one or both of those classes becomes full-day, a second classroom is

needed. Another issue is continuing community ambivalence about the proper balance between parental and public responsibility for early education. While many parents enthusiastically embrace full-day kindergarten, some parents still prefer half-day, and districts are sensitive to their wishes.

Figure 8. Percentage of extended-day kindergarten programs by funding sources, 2001-02



"Other" includes grants, foundation funding, and school bus savings. LAP is the Learning Assistance Program, a state program that provides districts with extra funding to improve achievement for low-performing students. Title I, Migrant, and Bilingual funds are provided by the federal government, based on numbers of low income, migrant and bilingual children.

Conclusions

Washington state school districts are embracing early childhood education as a strategy for helping all children succeed in school. Many of these efforts go well beyond what the state requires and funds under the legislature's definition of basic education. Sixty-four percent of school districts are offering pre-kindergarten programs and 43% are providing kindergarten classes beyond state requirements. The investment in early learning is motivated by parent demand and by the commitment of school officials and community leaders to close the achievement gap in upper grades by making sure that all children begin school ready to learn.

School district involvement in early education is a statewide phenomenon. Districts on both sides of the Cascade mountains, in all corners of the state, of large and small enrollment, and in rural and urban environments are investing in early education. There is tremendous variety in early education programs. This variation reflects both the patchwork of funding and other available resources and the efforts of districts to be responsive to the needs of their communities.

Funding makes a difference. Districts use a creative mix and match of funding sources in order to provide pre-kindergarten and expanded kindergarten programs. Many districts rely on ECEAP and Head Start funding for the low-income children served by their preschool

programs. The availability of new money for student achievement from Initiative 728 accelerated school district investment in early education in 2001 through 2003. When the Economic Opportunity Institute conducted its initial survey in the spring and summer of 2002, many districts were hoping to further expand early learning programs. Unfortunately, two years of tight state and federal budgets have resulted in dwindling funds.¹⁶ The full effects of declining budgets on school district early learning programs at this point is not known.

APPENDIX A

Table 1. Washington school districts pre-kindergarten programs, services, or support, 2001-02

School District Characteristics	Districts		Districts w/ Special Ed Pre-K Only		Districts w/ more pre-k than required		Districts operating pre-k program		Districts offering services to pre-k population		Districts offering support to non-district programs	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
All Districts	296	100	97	36	173	64	115	43	16	6	56	21
District size												
Less than 1,000	145	49	54	56	79	46	41	36	2	513	37	66
1,000-4,999	93	31	33	34	54	31	40	35	5	31	14	25
5,000-9,999	28	10	7	7	17	10	13	11	4	25	4	7
10,000-19,999	19	6	1	1	15	9	14	12	2	12	1	2
20,000 or more	11	4	2	2	5	5	7	6	3	19	0	0
Region												
Central Puget Sound	35	12	20	21	15	9	15	13	2	12	0	0
Western WA (w/o Puget Sound)	125	42	42	43	77	44	52	45	6	38	23	41
Eastern WA	136	46	35	36	81	47	48	42	8	50	33	59
% of eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch												
0-25%	76	26	23	24	42	24	33	29	3	19	9	16
26-50%	141	48	46	47	85	49	49	43	11	69	34	61
51-75%	58	20	23	24	31	18	23	20	2	12	7	12
76-100%	21	7	5	5	15	9	10	9	0	0	6	11
% minority enrollment												
0-25%	211	71	72	74	120	69	77	67	10	63	41	73
26-50%	50	17	10	10	35	20	24	21	5	31	10	18
51-75%	19	6	8	8	10	6	9	8	1	6	2	4
76-100%	16	5	7	7	8	5	5	4	0	0	3	5
% migrant enrollment												
0-25%	275	93	87	90	164	95	107	94	15	100	54	96
26-50%	16	5	8	8	6	4	5	4	0	0	1	2
51-75%	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	0	0	1	2
76-100%	1	0.3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
% bilingual enrollment												
0-25%	276	93	88	91	164	95	107	94	15	94	54	96
26-50%	14	5	6	6	7	4	7	6	1	6	1	2
51-75%	4	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
76-100%	1	0.3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Percentages represent the percentage of districts in that column. For example, 64% of all districts provide more pre-kindergarten services than required, and 46% of those districts have fewer than 1,000 students.

Note: Some school districts did not answer all questions on the survey.

Table 2. Washington school district kindergarten programs, 2001-02

School District Characteristics	Districts		Districts w/ half-day kindergarten Only		Districts w/ more kindergarten than required		Districts w/ full-day kindergarten		Districts w/extended-day kindergarten	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
All Districts	296	100	159	57	122	43	105	37	20	7
District size										
Less than 1,000	145	49	95	60	43	34	31	30	12	60
1,000-4,999	93	31	49	31	40	33	37	35	3	15
5,000-9,999	28	10	9	6	18	15	17	16	3	15
10,000-19,999	19	6	2	1	15	12	13	12	2	10
20,000 or more	11	4	4	3	7	6	7	7	0	0
Region										
Central Puget Sound	35	12	3	2	32	26	27	26	6	30
Western WA (w/o Puget Sound)	125	42	86	54	33	27	28	27	6	30
Eastern WA	136	46	70	44	57	47	50	48	8	40
% of eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch										
0-25%	76	26	34	21	36	30	35	33	1	5
26-50%	141	48	87	55	46	38	39	37	9	45
51-75%	58	20	29	18	28	23	24	23	5	25
76-100%	21	7	9	6	12	10	7	7	5	25
% minority enrollment										
0-25%	211	71	129	81	71	58	63	60	9	45
26-50%	50	17	21	13	26	21	24	23	3	15
51-75%	19	6	5	3	13	11	9	9	5	25
76-100%	16	5	4	3	12	10	9	9	3	15
% migrant enrollment										
0-25%	275	93	154	97	106	87	94	90	15	75
26-50%	16	5	4	3	12	10	9	9	3	15
51-75%	3	1	0	0	3	3	1	1	3	15
76-100%	1	0.3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
% bilingual enrollment										
0-25%	276	93	155	98	107	88	95	91	15	75
26-50%	14	5	3	2	10	8	6	6	4	20
51-75%	4	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	0	0
76-100%	1	0.3	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	5

Percentages represent the percentage of districts in that column. For example, 43% of all districts provide more kindergarten than required, and 34% of those districts have fewer than 1,000 students.

Note: Some school districts did not answer all questions on the survey.

APPENDIX B

Full-Day Kindergarten and Preschool Survey

District: _____ **Contact Person:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Full-Day Kindergarten

1. Do you currently offer full-day kindergarten (FDK), 5 days per week? Yes ____ No ____
IF YES:
2. Approximately what percent of your kindergarten students are enrolled in FDK? _____
 - a. Is it: open to all ____ -OR- targeted to certain children? ____ Target group: _____
3. When did you begin offering FDK? _____
4. How is your FDK program funded (beyond state funded kindergarten time)?
I-728 funds ____ Other state or federal funds* _____ Parent tuition ____
Local levy ____ Other _____
 - a. If tuition, how much? _____
 - b. If tuition, scholarships/subsidies for low-income? Yes ____ No ____ Full/partial? _____
5. Is there unmet demand for FDK (waiting list)? Yes ____ No ____
6. If yes, are there plans to expand the FDK program? Yes ____ No ____
7. If yes, what is the expected source of funding?
Same as now ____ Other _____
8. Is the district tracking progress of children who attend FDK? Yes ____ No ____
IF NO:
9. Are there plans to offer FDK? Yes ____ No ____
10. If yes, what is the expected source of funding?
I-728 funds ____ Other state or federal funds* _____ Parent tuition ____
Local levy ____ Other _____

Non-Special Education Preschool

11. Do you currently offer preschool for non-special education children? Yes ____ No ____
IF YES:
12. What age group does your program serve? 3-yr olds ____ 4-yr olds ____ 5-yr olds ____
13. Is the program open to all children or is it limited to certain children?
All children ____ Low-income/at-risk children ____ Other _____
14. Approximately how many children are enrolled in preschool? _____
15. a. Is the program full-day or half-day? Full-day ____ Half-day ____
b. How many days per week? _____
16. How long has the district offered the program? _____
17. How is the program funded?
Head Start/ECEAP ____ I-728 funds ____ Other state/federal funds* _____
Parent tuition ____ Other _____
 - a. If tuition, how much? _____
 - b. If tuition, scholarships/subsidies for low-income? Yes ____ No ____ Full/partial? _____
18. Is there unmet demand for preschool? Yes ____ No ____
19. Are there plans to expand the preschool program? Yes ____ No ____
20. If yes, what is the expected source of funding?

Same as now ____ Other _____

21. Is the district tracking the progress of children enrolled in preschool? Yes ____ No ____

IF NO:

22. Are there plans to offer preschool? Yes ____ No ____

23. If yes, what is the expected source of funding?

Head Start/ECEAP ____ I-728 funds ____ Other state/federal funds* _____

Parent tuition ____ Other _____

* Title I, LAP, magnet schools, block grants

Endnotes

¹ Complete survey results are available on the Economic Opportunity Institute's website at: www.eoionline.org/ELC/Survey/about.htm

² More information about Washington State's Education Reform Act can be found at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/curriculum/instruct/background/Education%20Reform/re99/edlaw99.asp>; <http://www.partnership4learning.org/edreform.htm>.

³ WASL exams are given in 4th, 7th, and 10th grade. Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, "Education Profile, WASL Scores by District," 2002; OSPI, "Public School Districts Free and Reduced-Price Meal Eligibility Status by District," October 2001.

⁴ More information about the No Child Left Behind Act can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/esea/>.

⁵ See Kauffman Early Education Exchange (2002), *Set for Success: Building a Strong Foundation for School Readiness Based on the Social-Emotional Development of Young Children*. Vol. 1, Num. 1, The Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation; ML Abbot, J Joireman. (2001) "The Relationships among Achievement, Low Income, and Ethnicity Across Six Groups of Washington State Students," Washington School Research Center; and Jen Brown, "The Link Between Early Learning and Care and School Readiness," Economic Opportunity Institute, October 2002, <http://www.eoionline.org/ELC/EarlyLearning/SchoolReadiness0-8b.pdf>.

⁶ Initiative 728, passed overwhelmingly by Washington voters in November 2000, provides school districts with flexible funds to improve student achievement, reduce class size, and provide extended day and early learning services. Because of a deficit in the state's general fund budget, the 2003 legislature reduced but did not eliminate I-728 funding for the 2003-2005 school years.

⁷ The survey form is included in the Appendix.

⁸ Some districts meet the 180 half-days requirement by providing 90 full-days or some other variation that is the equivalent of 180 half-days.

⁹ The information collected to date in this survey is by no means complete or static. Additions and corrections from local school districts can be sent to survey@eoionline.org.

¹⁰ More information about the state and federal requirements to provide pre-kindergarten services to children with disabilities can be found at http://www.k12.wa.us/specialed/wac/wac_main.asp.

¹¹ These numbers may include a small number of districts with programs beginning in the 2002-03 school year. In addition, there is one district which only offers grades 6-8. Percentages reported represent the proportion of districts out of the number responding to that specific survey question. Some districts offered more than one type of pre-kindergarten program.

¹² Percentages reported represent the proportion of districts out of the number responding to that survey question.

¹³ Hopkins P, Katim N (2002), "A Longitudinal Study of Full-Time Kindergarten." Leadership Information, Publication of School Information and Research Service, vol. 1, no. 3.

¹⁴ Based on survey and EOI, "Seattle School District: Overview of Kindergarten Offerings," April 2001.

¹⁵ Plecki, M, Boatright, B, Elfers, A, and Perkins, P (February 2003), "Washington's Initiative 728: Examining the First Year of Implementation," Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, University of Washington. I-728 funds are allocated to school districts on a per-student basis and may be used for a number of purposes, including class size reduction, early assistance for children who need pre-kindergarten support in order to be successful in school, and extended learning programs for K-12 students, including full-day kindergarten.

¹⁶ *Seattle Times*, "After 33 Years, Head Start in Carnation Is Closing Its Doors," June 12, 2003, <http://archives.seattletimes.nwsource.com/cgi-bin/texis.cgi/web/vortex/display?slug=head12m0&date=20030612&query=head+start+low+income>; "Low Funds Force Cuts in Learning Program," July 7, 2001, <http://archives.seattletimes.nwsource.com/cgi-bin/texis.cgi/web/vortex/display?slug=preschoolcuts07m&date=20010707&query=eceap>; *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, "Administrators Relieved, Teachers Angry Over School Funding Cuts," June 18, 2003, http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/127149_schoolbuds18.html; "A Step Back for Head Start," May 14, 2003, http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/121923_headstart14.html.