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Leadership Matters:
Governors' Pre-K Proposals
Fiscal Year 2008

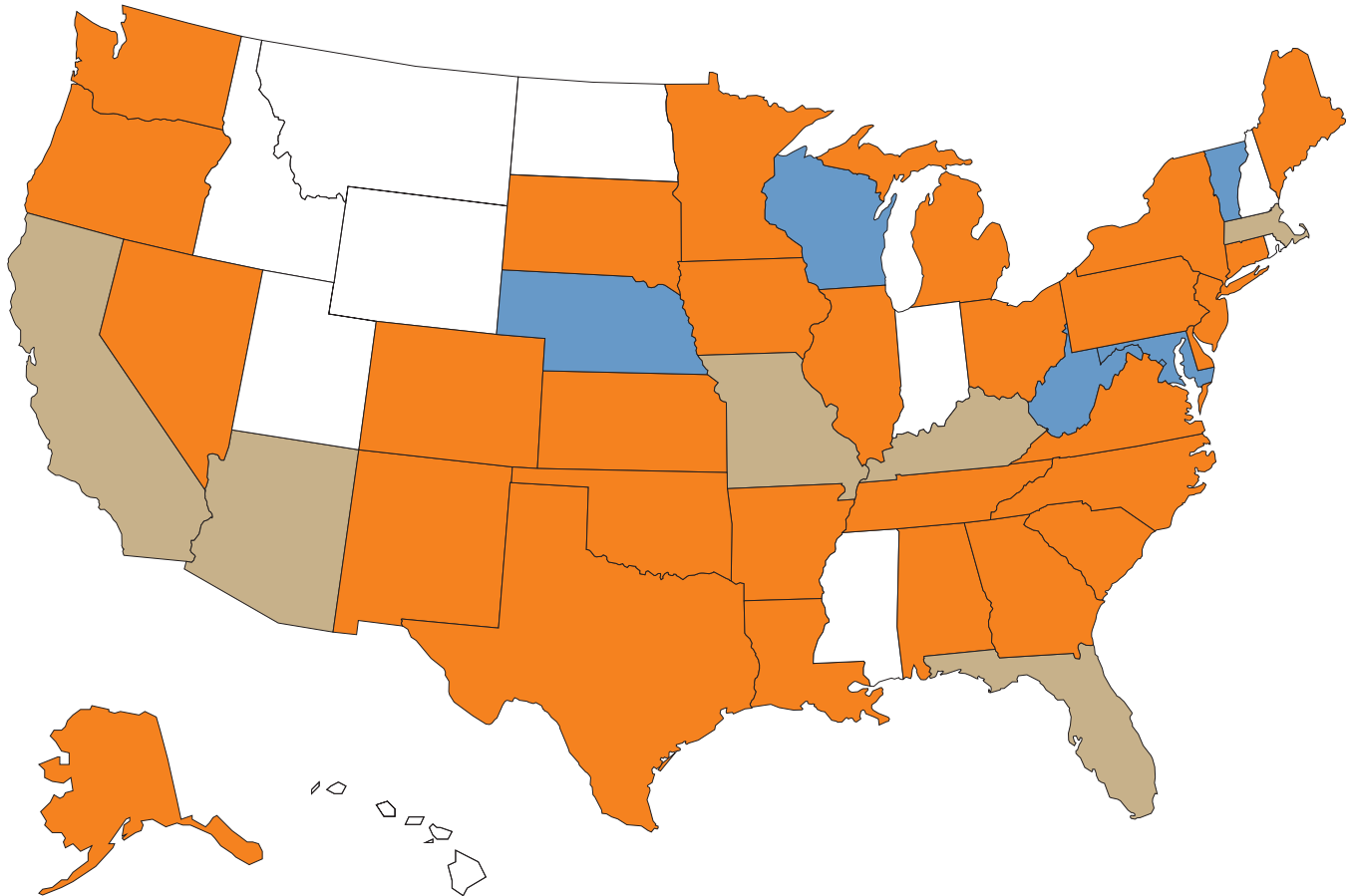


Every year, more governors prioritize high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten politically and fiscally and do so more assertively. For fiscal year 2008, 29 governors recommended more than \$800 million in new investments, better than three times the increases proposed just one year ago. These new dollars would provide more than 100,000 additional three and four year olds with the chance to enter kindergarten prepared to succeed.

Now, state legislatures must act to realize the potential of these record-breaking gubernatorial proposals by fully funding pre-k in their states.

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Governors' Proposed Investments in Pre-K



- Proposed Increased Investment in Pre-K
- Pre-K Funding through School Funding Formula
- Proposed Flat Investment in Pre-K
- No State Pre-K Program

This map illustrates the pre-k funding proposals of the 50 governors and the mayor of the District of Columbia. Notably, not a single chief executive proposed to decrease investment in pre-k. For FY08, a record number of governors, 29 – up from 23 last year – recommended funding increases for pre-k. Among them, for the first time, is the governor of South Dakota, whose proposal, if passed, will create the state's first state-funded pre-k program. Additionally, this year, Nebraska becomes the latest state to include pre-k in its school funding formula.

Building Historic Momentum

Every year, governors nationwide set the agenda in their states by announcing their priorities in state of the state addresses and by allocating money in their budget proposals. Gubernatorial leadership is essential to lay the fiscal and political groundwork for state-funded, high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten expansion, and to generate the legislative action needed to realize high-quality pre-k for all. Over the past three years, Pre-K Now has kept close watch on gubernatorial support for pre-k across the nation, and each year, we've reported growth in both the number of governors backing pre-k and in the dollars they recommend. Fiscal year 2008 is no exception. This year, a record 29 governors – six more than in FY07 and 11 more than in FY06 – recommended increased state investments in pre-k.

Collectively, these budget proposals, if fully funded by state legislatures, would infuse more than 800 million new dollars into state-funded pre-k programs, more than three times the proposed increases of just one year ago. Should these proposals win full passage from state legislatures, more than 100,000 additional three and four year olds would gain access to a pre-k education. Given the well-established links between quality pre-k and later achievement, this unprecedented increase could mean the difference between competitiveness and concession for our national economy and between struggle and success for an entire generation of young Americans.

The 29 governors who proposed increases for FY08 include new governors, former skeptics, and even one governor striving to lead his state out of the Pre-K Wilderness. Their proposals are just as diverse.

In “Leadership Matters: Governors’ Pre-K Proposals Fiscal Year 2008” we distinguish a Singular Visionary, the New Leaders, the Bold Movers, and governors Leaving a Legacy while also calling out those who missed critical opportunities or played politics with children’s futures.

Disappointingly, 12 executives flat funded their state’s pre-k program or proposed new investments of less than the federal Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) of 3.3 percent.¹ In so doing, they have effectively decreased the resources their state programs have available for educating children. These shortsighted proposals may compromise quality and provide fewer opportunities for children to enter kindergarten prepared to learn.

Among the governors proposing to increase pre-k investment for FY08, many are long-time champions, previously recognized by Pre-K Now. Notably, Governors Phil Bredesen of Tennessee, M. Jodi Rell of Connecticut, and Bill Richardson of New Mexico, sustained their long-standing commitments to high-quality pre-k by once again proposing significant funding increases, making strong public statements in support of pre-k, and encouraging quality initiatives while also expanding access. Unfortunately, one former champion failed to make the grade this year. Governor Linda Lingle of Hawaii made no remarks in support of pre-k during her major speeches this year, and this at a time when her attention was urgently needed. Hawaii was relocated to the Pre-K Wilderness when the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) ceased to qualify the state’s *Preschool Open Doors Project* as state-funded pre-k because each child’s eligibility is assessed every six months, and therefore enrollment may not be offered on a continuous per-year basis, disrupting the continuity that is an essential component of any education program.

New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer (D)

We know that effective pre-school education can help make all children ready to learn the day they start school, and, more importantly, can help close the enormous gap facing children in poverty. We know that Pre-K education that is aligned with the K-12 curriculum, taught by skilled teachers, and offered in safe environments, can make a real difference.

This year's review of gubernatorial pre-k leadership also features many new names from the 11 first-year governors elected in November 2006. For example, Ted Strickland of Ohio proposed an FY08 increase of nearly 53 percent for the state's *Early Childhood Education* program and publicly proclaimed his commitment to pre-k.

2007 has seen the momentum build toward the movement's ultimate goal: pre-k for all. Florida, Georgia, and Oklahoma currently offer pre-k to every four year old, and West Virginia is on track to phase in voluntary pre-k for all four year olds by 2012. Last year, Governor Rod Blagojevich of Illinois committed to serve all three and four year olds in the state by 2011. Now, two more governors, Eliot Spitzer of New York and Chet Culver of Iowa, are leading their states into this elite group, proposing to serve all four year olds within four years.

The bottom line is that gubernatorial support for pre-k is on the rise nationally. As programs promise impressive returns on investment and reap remarkable educational benefits for children, more and more governors are recognizing pre-k's political, fiscal, and educational value. Pre-K Now is pleased to once again share with the early education community, with policymakers, and with the public the positive outlook for pre-k. And as always, we offer our continued support to state leaders committed to giving their states' young children the opportunities for school and life success that they deserve.

A Singular Vision

Over the past two years, Pre-K Now has celebrated a remarkable group of governors as the “Pre-K Vanguard” for their bold leadership on high-quality, voluntary, state-funded early education. For FY08, however, we recognize a single state executive whose visionary leadership has won unparalleled gains for young children and who, once again, is proposing unprecedented new expansion of high-quality pre-k within a broader birth-to-five context. This year’s standout pre-k champion is **Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich**.

Last year, Governor Blagojevich proposed to make Illinois the first state in the nation to provide high-quality pre-k to every three and four year old by 2011. This year, the governor followed through on that groundbreaking announcement and began his second term by proposing to increase funding for early education by a total of \$79.4 million for FY08. Contained within this funding package are \$61.8 million for 12,000 new pre-k slots, which would bring the number of children served to 94,000,³ and for a cost-of-doing-business increase for existing pre-k programs; a continuation of the 11 percent set aside for infant and toddler services, equal to \$7.6 million; and the first of three annual \$10 million capital expenditures for facilities development. In addition, the governor has proposed new funding to address barriers to implementation of full-day kindergarten, to significantly expand child care availability, and to provide health coverage for all the state’s children.

Pre-K Now congratulates Governor Blagojevich on his re-election, his visionary leadership on early childhood policy, and his continuing efforts to provide every Illinois child with a high-quality pre-k experience and better opportunities throughout their lives.

Leaving a Legacy

In this post-election year, new governors across the nation are staking out their positions on pre-k. However, two established champions from the nation’s leading pre-k region, the South, are entering the later years of their governorships. In their final pre-k proposals, the governors of Louisiana and North Carolina are still working to provide better opportunities for children, recommending significant support for expanding and maintaining their states’ high-quality programs. These governors know that their efforts today can build a legacy of success for generations of young children.

Louisiana: Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco’s state is still reeling a year and a half after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Despite seemingly endless needs across the state, Governor Blanco, now in her final year in office, recognized that the future of her state is tied to the opportunity it provides for its young people. As she explained in her education budget unveiling, “Our families deserve to know that Louisiana’s children can stand shoulder to shoulder with any child in America and compete.”* To keep her state’s children on the right path through this difficult period, the governor has proposed increasing state funding for the high-quality *LA4* pre-k program by \$30 million, enough to serve every at-risk four-year-old child in Louisiana.

North Carolina: Governor Mike Easley had the good fortune to be elected in a state that already prioritized young children through its landmark *Smart Start* program. To further focus resources and attention on early learning, Governor Easley created the companion *More at Four* pre-k program and has presided over its growth into a national early education model in its own right. With this, his final biennial budget before leaving office in January 2009, Governor Easley sustains the momentum, proposing an FY08 increase of \$59.3 million. The new money would provide pre-k to 10,000 more four year olds and would raise per-child expenditures by \$400. This year, *More at Four* reached a vital milestone, becoming one of only two pre-k programs in the nation that meet all 10 NIEER quality benchmarks. This achievement is a tribute to Governor Easley’s leadership but, more importantly, is a promise of opportunity for North Carolina’s children.

* Office of the Governor, “Governor Blanco Unveils Education Budget; Makes K-12 and Higher Education a Priority,” <http://www.gov.state.la.us/index.cfm?md=newsroom&tmp=detail&articleID=2712>

Bold Moves

This year, three governors earn recognition for truly bold leadership on pre-k. The chief executives of Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Texas proposed dramatic budget increases for pre-k. If fully supported politically and fiscally by their state legislatures, the determination and commitments of these governors to offer programs that foster better futures for children will pay dividends far in excess of these investments for generations to come.

Michigan: Governor Jennifer Granholm, last year, earned accolades as one of Pre-K Now's New Leaders. Though the legislature approved just a fraction of her FY07 proposal, it was Michigan's first pre-k-funding increase since FY01. For FY08, she has increased her pre-k budget request 10 fold, recommending nearly 200 million new dollars to establish the *Great Start* full-day pre-k program, which plans to serve 26,000 four year olds in both public and private settings, and to enhance accountability measures. Governor Granholm articulated this grand agenda in her state of the state address. "For many students, this will mean a quadrupling of their learning experiences in these two critical years before they enter first grade."⁴



Pennsylvania: Governor Ed Rendell has worked tirelessly to create support for pre-k policy among skeptical legislators while pursuing steady funding increases. Last year, the state's significant new pre-k investments highlighted the success of those key political efforts. For FY08, Governor Rendell builds on his hard-won political gains, recommending \$100 million in new investments for the state's Accountability Block Grant, including \$75 million for *Pre-K Counts*, which will adhere to the state's newly adopted quality standards, and another \$25 million for full-day kindergarten programs. In his executive budget address, the governor clearly articulated the rationale for his state's commitment to pre-k, saying, "Study after study has proven what parents all over Pennsylvania already know: quality pre-kindergarten and full day kindergarten give young children the early skills they need to prepare them for a lifetime of achievement."⁵

Texas: Governor Rick Perry, in 2006, saw his state legislature employ bipartisanship and creativity to do the right thing and expand pre-k eligibility to the children of military personnel. In his 2007 state of the state address, the governor embraced the spirit of pre-k expansion, noting, "In education, we have done some groundbreaking work....But we still have achievement gaps, and the best place to rectify those gaps is during the earliest learning years."⁶ Following his remarks with real action, Governor Perry proposed to increase investment in the state's *Early Childhood and Pre-Kindergarten Initiative* by \$80 million over the two years of the biennium. The new funds will support schools that work with *Head Start* and child care providers using the *Texas Early Education Model (TEEM)*.

New Leaders

In 2006, 11 states elected new governors. State of the state addresses are the best opportunities for new governors to articulate the policy priorities that will define their administrations. Budget proposals allow them to act upon those stated priorities. Throughout this key political season, Pre-K Now has observed the recently installed executives with interest, excitement, and hope. With all the speeches given and dollars announced, we are pleased to present the nation's three newest pre-k leaders: the governors of Arkansas, Iowa, and New York.

Arkansas: Governor Mike Beebe used his state of the state address to reaffirm his commitment, as well as that of his state, to high-quality pre-k, asserting, "Just as we provide [insurance]...for children in need of health care so that they can lead healthy lives, we will provide pre-kindergarten...to help them begin school ready to learn."⁷ His proposed \$40 million increase for the *Arkansas Better Chance* program will bring total state pre-k funding to \$111 million and will expand access to all three- and four-year-old children from families earning up to 200 percent of the federal poverty threshold.⁸ The governor has also made clear that he intends to continue investing in the program until all Arkansas children have access to voluntary, high-quality pre-k.⁹

Iowa: Governor Chet Culver inherited a legacy of strong pre-k support from former governor Tom Vilsack. However, unlike his predecessor, Governor Culver is likely to enjoy a cooperative legislature. The governor introduced an ambitious plan to phase in pre-k for every four year old in the state over four years. He has recommended \$20 million in start-up funds for this initiative, called *Voluntary Preschool Access*, which will be funded through the state's school funding formula starting in FY09 and will include private centers as eligible providers. In his budget address, Governor Culver made an impassioned argument for pre-k, stating, "A strong start for every Iowa child must be a shared goal....We can't afford not to invest in our kids. We need them to arrive at kindergarten prepared, ready and able to learn."¹⁰

New York: Governor Eliot Spitzer promised during his campaign that he would champion a major shift in New York's pre-k funding. He has kept that promise in impressive fashion, proposing to fully implement the state's *Universal Prekindergarten (UPK)* program within four years. During his state of the state address, the governor unveiled his Four-Year Educational Investment Plan, declaring, "...we must focus on that period in a child's life that is developmentally the most critical – from birth to five years old."¹¹ To support the plan, Governor Spitzer then proposed an FY08 increase of \$98.8 million for *UPK*. In addition, he outlined future increases totaling \$349 million over four years to bring the state's pre-k-for-all budget to \$645 million by the FY11 deadline. With his powerful words of support and bold proposals, Governor Spitzer has galvanized New York's pre-k community and is positioning *UPK* to become once again a national model.

Pilots Take Off

Pilot programs are often an effective way to implement pre-k, foster political support, and gather evidence of program efficacy to justify expansion. For FY08, the governors of South Dakota and Virginia have embraced the pilot strategy for building pre-k in their states. Both men are employing this approach to offer the hope of a better future to still more of our nation's children.

South Dakota: Governor Mike Rounds's state had, until this year, provided no state-funded pre-k or support for *Head Start*. This year, in his state of the state address, the governor proposed a new direction to lead South Dakota out of the Pre-K Wilderness, saying, "Quality preschool makes a significant difference and increases school achievement and other quality of life factors."* As a first step toward providing pre-k, Governor Rounds proposed a new pilot program for three and four year olds in the Sioux Falls School District to serve as a model for future pre-k expansion in the state. The pilot, which will support pre-k programs in a variety of settings, would receive funding of \$1.4 million over three years, of which 50 percent would come from the state. As evidence of the benefits of pre-k accumulates in Sioux Falls, Pre-K Now encourages South Dakota's leaders to support expansion of pre-k availability to all of the state's children.

Virginia: Governor Tim Kaine was elected in 2005 on a platform that prominently featured high-quality pre-k, but for FY07, he operated under his predecessor's budget. So, this year presented the governor's first opportunity to deliver on his pre-k promise. In his state of commonwealth address, Governor Kaine declared, "We must...make smart educational investments in tested strategies to help our youngest learners succeed throughout life...."*** Then, following the recommendations of his Start Strong Council, the governor proposed \$4.6 million for the new, high-quality *Start Strong* pre-k pilots, which will be offered in diverse settings. This first-year allocation will allow the programs to serve roughly 1,250 children. He also recommended \$2.9 million to develop a quality rating system. During the campaign, the governor declared his intention to fund the new *Start Strong* programs at just under \$300 million over four years.† Pre-K Now hopes the governor will fulfill that promise and that the *Start Strong* pilots are only the first step in realizing the pre-k vision Governor Kaine articulated as a candidate.

* Mike Rounds, "State of the State Address," (Pierre, SD, Jan. 10, 2007).

** Tim Kaine, "State of the Commonwealth Address to the Joint Assembly," (Historic Jamestown, VA, Jan. 10, 2007).

† Maria Glod, "Hurdle Ahead for Va. Pre-K Plan: Transportation, Health Issues Will Compete for Funds, Legislators Predict," *The Washington Post*, Dec. 11, 2005.



Missed Opportunities

In the District of Columbia, Florida, Maryland, and Massachusetts, the election of new chief executives spurred hope of a renewed commitment to pre-k. However, that initial optimism has proven to be misplaced; these new executives chose not to provide strong political and fiscal support for pre-k. Though each executive could cite a budget deficit as justification, in truth, by failing to support pre-k, they missed an opportunity to embrace a superior cost-saving measure that benefits state economies in both the short and long terms. However, this was just the first of many opportunities for these new executives. Pre-K Now hopes that FY09 finds each of them better informed and recommitted to pre-k, so that they can join the elite list of new leaders.

District of Columbia: Mayor Adrian Fenty ran one of the most vocally pro-pre-k campaigns in the November 2006 elections and even signed a public pledge of pre-k support. After taking office, Mayor Fenty released an action plan for the city in which he states, “We must pledge not just to improve our K-12 system of education, but explore transforming our structure into a P-14 system – beginning with high-quality pre-kindergarten for all 3 and 4 year olds...”¹² However, the mayor failed to reaffirm his pre-k support during his state of the city address and, in his first budget, proposed no new funding for the *Pre-K Incentive Program*. Though the District has long offered pre-k through its school funding formula, the *Pre-K Incentive Program* is the city’s most promising quality initiative, embracing a research-based model provided in a variety of settings. By failing to earmark dedicated funds for the incentive program, the mayor has missed a critical opportunity. Pre-K Now encourages Mayor Fenty to follow through with the pre-k policies outlined during his campaign and in his action plan, so next year we can recognize him as a New Leader.

Florida: Governor Charlie Crist has the enviable opportunity to take the nation’s newest pre-k-for-all program, which has lagged in quality, and become its champion. In his state of the state address, Governor Crist declared a strong commitment to honoring the will of voters when they speak through a constitutional amendment. This should have translated into political and fiscal support for the state’s *Voluntary Prekindergarten Education (VPK)* program, which was created by a voter mandate. Yet, he did not name *VPK* or the public directive on pre-k in his address. Similarly, the critical role of qualified teachers in providing high-quality education was a centerpiece of his speech, but he did not acknowledge the acute need for degree-holding teachers in the state’s pre-k system. Then, in his FY08 budget, the governor proposed to flat fund *VPK*. If Governor Crist truly wants to improve Florida’s public education system and honor the will of the voters, he must champion and adequately fund *VPK*. We hope that next year, Governor Crist will strongly support pre-k and become the New Leader Florida’s children urgently need.

Maryland: Governor Martin O’Malley pledged during his recent campaign to bolster the state’s education system. Yet, when the opportunity came to back his words with action, the new governor failed to follow through with either dollars or discourse to support pre-k. In fact, Governor O’Malley ignored pre-k in his state of the state address and proposed to flat fund *Head Start* at \$3 million, making FY08 the fourth straight year without a *Head Start* increase. Thanks to the state legislature, FY08 marks the first year that the state’s pre-k system, the *Prekindergarten Program*, will be included in the school funding formula and available to all low-income children. Later this spring, the Maryland Task Force on Universal Preschool Education will release its recommendations on pre-k for all. Pre-K Now encourages Governor O’Malley to commit both his rhetoric and his state’s resources to high-quality pre-k for all Maryland children.

Short Shrift

Massachusetts: Governor Deval Patrick campaigned extensively on pre-k. His predecessor had vetoed a pre-k-for-all bill only months earlier, and then-candidate Patrick consistently declared his strong support for the legislation and for pre-k, saying, “It will cost real money to make early education opportunities available universally, but it doesn’t mean we shouldn’t be going in that direction. No successful manager believes you can save your way to prosperity. Growth comes from investment.”¹³ Advocates, parents, and the legislature were encouraged to have pre-k discussed on the campaign trail and represented on the governor-elect’s transition team. However, while he did fulfill the related promise of full-day kindergarten, the governor disappointed on pre-k, flat funding the state’s pre-k-for-all pilot program and offering no proposal for the program’s expansion. No new governor entered office with a more favorable environment for pre-k for all than did Governor Patrick, and, so, his failure to act decisively represents an opportunity sorely missed. Later this year, when the legislature sends the pre-k-for-all bill to the governor’s desk, Pre-K Now earnestly hopes that he signs it and then, for FY09, substantially funds the program, thereby earning recognition as one of next year’s New Leaders.



Last year, while facing reelection, the governors of California and South Carolina both heeded pressing demands for pre-k in their states. However, for FY08, these governors have forsaken the early educational needs of their states’ children, calling into question the depth of last year’s commitments.

California: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger acted quickly after the defeat of the 2006 pre-k-for-all ballot initiative and the accompanying exit poll data showing that 62 percent of voters support pre-k for all,¹⁴ by allocating 50 million new dollars for pre-k in his mid-year budget revision. At the same time, the governor outlined a three-year, \$145 million pre-k plan. Though large in dollars, the governor’s July 2006 appropriation was a modest first step in light of the state’s significant needs. For FY08, however, Governor Schwarzenegger offered nothing in either his state of the state address or his budget proposal, effectively abandoning his new three-year plan after less than one year. With one of the lowest quality pre-k programs in the country, California needs leadership, not stopgap measures, to improve the circumstances of its youngest learners.

South Carolina: Governor Mark Sanford reacted to a 2005 court ruling mandating pre-k expansion by declaring his support for pre-k during his 2006 state of the state address. Just one year later, the governor’s commitment to pre-k has evaporated. For FY08, he proposed to fold the *Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP)*, established after the court’s ruling, into the *First Steps* program, which offers minimal accountability or quality assurances. Further, the governor referred to *CDEPP* falsely as a “scholarship” system offering \$4,000 “vouchers”¹⁵ for families of at-risk four year olds. Though his budget allocates a meager \$300,000 increase for *CDEPP*, it flat funds the high-quality *4K* program. These recommendations reveal Governor Sanford’s previous support as mere political expediency. Ultimately, his proposals manipulate the court’s decision and divert resources away from quality public pre-k.

Pre-K Quality Counts

In 2007, pre-k programs received greater gubernatorial support than ever before, and as a result more than 100,000 additional children could be served. However, those new pre-k services can only be effective if they are of high quality. Research consistently shows that the fiscal and educational benefits of pre-k derive only from high-quality programs.* This year, nearly a dozen governors identified quality as a priority in their state of the state addresses or in specific budget allocations.

According to NIEER, in 2005-06, program quality standards generally improved over the previous year. Nineteen state-funded pre-k programs improved their quality, meeting at least one additional quality benchmark.** Among the most impressive quality gains are the *Alabama Pre-Kindergarten Program* and North Carolina's *More at Four*, which this year became the first two state programs to meet all 10 NIEER benchmarks.†

Improving program quality is a particular challenge for fast-growing pre-k programs where expansion can strain key resources such as classroom space and the qualified teacher pool. Of the top five FY08 governor-proposed increases, only one comes in a state, Alabama, with a program that meets at least eight NIEER benchmarks (see Table 1).‡ Pennsylvania's *Pre-K Counts* program, however, has not yet been rated by NIEER and is expected to be of higher quality than the current state program. As each of these governors works to expand access to pre-k in their states, they must be mindful of the importance of providing quality programs, particularly the requirement that all pre-k teachers hold a bachelor's degree with specialization in early childhood development. Alabama, with all 10 NIEER benchmarks met, has rightly prioritized quality and is now well positioned to grow its investment and expand access with confidence that the state and participating children will realize the maximum benefits that high-quality pre-k has to offer. These other four governors – and indeed all governors – owe it to the citizens of their states to similarly ensure that the significant new investments they are seeking go to high-quality programs that provide the greatest opportunity for children to succeed.

Table 1: Top Five Proposed Increases by Percentage and Program Quality

State & Governor	Percentage Increase	NIEER Benchmarks Met
Iowa/Chet Culver	290%	5.0
New Mexico/Bill Richardson	237%	4.8 ^a
Michigan/Jennifer Granholm	220%	6.0
Pennsylvania/Ed Rendell	135%	4.0 ^b
Alabama/Bob Riley	75%	10.0

Source: Percentage increases calculated from Pre-K Now. "Leadership Matters: Governors' Pre-K Proposals Fiscal Year 2007." Washington, DC: Pre-K Now, 2006. Quality figures from Barnett, W. Steven, Hustedt, Jason T., Hawkinson, Laura E., and Robin, Kenneth B. "Table 1: State Rankings and Quality Checklist Sums." In *The State of Preschool: 2006 State Preschool Yearbook*. New Brunswick: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2007.

- a This figure represents the combined quality of New Mexico's *Child Development Program* and the *New Mexico Pre-K* program. Governor Richardson proposed the increase for the latter program which meets 5 quality benchmarks.
- b This figure reflects the quality of Pennsylvania's former pre-k system and is not reflective of the *Pre-K Counts* program, which has not been rated by NIEER.

* See for example, J. Currie, "Early Childhood Programs," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 15 (2001); L.N. Masse and W. Steven Barnett, "A Benefit-Cost Analysis of the Abecedarian Early Childhood Intervention," in *Cost-Effectiveness and Educational Policy*, ed. H.M. Levin and P.J. McEwan (Larchmont, NJ: Eye on Education, 2002); and Arthur Reynolds, *Success in Early Intervention: The Chicago Child-Parent Centers* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).

** W. Steven Barnett, Hustedt, Jason T., Hawkinson, Laura E., and Robin, Kenneth B., "Table 1: State Rankings and Quality Checklist Sums," in *The State of Preschool: 2006 State Preschool Yearbook* (New Brunswick: National Institute for Early Education Research, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2007).

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

Conclusion

For fiscal year 2008, governors proposed increases totaling a single-year record of over \$800 million for state-funded voluntary pre-k programs, and more governors than ever before spoke out strongly in support of pre-k. New leadership in a number of states re-energized flagging pre-k support, and the pre-k message even reached into the Wilderness, sparking new action and giving rise to a small but promising pilot program. As support for pre-k grows, the momentum toward improved quality and toward voluntary programs for all children are also gaining strength.




However, governors are not the only state-level decision makers; it is incumbent upon legislatures also to show strong leadership on pre-k. Where governors are leading, legislators must join the effort and fully fund or exceed executive proposals. Where governors have failed to lead, legislatures must fill the void and act in the best interest of their states' young children. The question before policymakers is not, "Are we sure pre-k is the right policy?" Rather the question is, "Are we prepared to act boldly in support of pre-k?" The answer from policymakers must be "yes," because when high-quality pre-k is available to all three and four year olds, our children, our families, our communities, and, ultimately, our country will reap the benefits.







Endnotes







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- 3 Ray Long, Rick Pearson, and Diane Rado, "The 2008 State Budget \$32 Billion: Blagojevich Seeks Huge Increase in State Revenues," *Chicago Tribune*, Mar 7, 2007.
- 4 Jennifer Granholm, "Our Moment, Our Choice: Investing in Michigan's People," (State of the State Address, Lansing, MI, Feb. 6, 2007).
- 5 Edward G. Rendell, "Executive Budget Address," (Harrisburg, PA, Feb. 6, 2007).
- 6 Rick Perry, "State of the State Address," (Austin, TX, Jan. 26, 2007).
- 7 Mike Beebe, "State of the State Address," (Little Rock, AR, Jan. 10, 2007).
- 8 "The 2007 HHS Poverty Guidelines," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2007.
- 9 "Beebe Travels State for Early Vote Kick-Off, Calls on Hutchinson to Take Down Mudslinging Ad; Hutchinson Refuses Pre-K Education for Arkansas Children in Need," Mike Beebe for Governor, http://www.mikebeebe.com/newsroom_details.asp?id=894.
- 10 Chet Culver, "Budget Address," (Des Moines, IA, Jan. 30, 2007).
- 11 Eliot Spitzer, "State of the State Address," (Albany, NY, Jan. 3, 2007).
- 12 Office of the Mayor, "100 Days and Beyond: 2007 Action Plan for the District of Columbia," Adrian M. Fenty, 2007), 17.
- 13 Steve LeBlanc, "Next Governor Faces Stark Economic Choices," *The Standard-Times*, Sept. 25, 2006.
- 14 Exit polling commissioned by Preschool California and Children Now.
- 15 Mark Sanford, "State of the State Address," (Columbia, SC, Jan. 17, 2007).






Governors' State of the State Addresses and FY08 Budget Proposals for Pre-K






This chart details FY08 state pre-k investment as proposed in the budgets of all 50 governors and the mayor of the District of Columbia and compares them with the final appropriations for FY07. In total, 29 governors recommended more than 800 million new dollars for pre-k this year. The chart also identifies which governors took advantage of the policymaking power of their state of the state addresses to support pre-k.







State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
Alabama Gov. Bob Riley (R)  75%	No	Increases the <i>School Readiness Program</i> by \$3.3 million for a total of \$7.7 million.
Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin (R)  0.4%	No	Negligibly increases state investment in <i>Head Start</i> by \$26,000 to \$6.4 million, \$6.1 million of which is from the state general fund.
Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano (D)  0%	Yes	Flat funds the <i>Early Childhood Block Grant</i> at \$19.4 million.







State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe (D)	Yes	Increases the <i>Arkansas Better Chance</i> program by \$40 million to \$111 million to cover all children whose families earn up to 200 percent of the federal poverty threshold.
 56%		
California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R)	No	Flat funds the <i>State Preschool Program</i> at \$418.6 million.
 0%		
Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter (D)	Yes	Increases the <i>Colorado Preschool Program</i> by \$12.6 million for a total of \$51.2 million. The increase will provide an additional 4,000 slots over the next two years.
 33%		
Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R)	Yes	Increases FY08 funding for the <i>School Readiness Program</i> by \$16.2 million to \$77.4 million. The increase will serve an additional 4,100 three and four year olds who live at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty threshold.
 25%		Flat funds state investment in <i>Head Start</i> at \$4.5 million.
Delaware Gov. Ruth Ann Minner (D)	Yes	Negligibly increases funding for the <i>Early Childhood Assistance Program</i> by \$42,000 for a total of \$5.7 million.
 0.7%		
Florida Gov. Charlie Crist (R)	No	Flat funds the <i>Voluntary Prekindergarten Education</i> program at \$388.1 million.
 0%		






State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
<p>Georgia</p> <p>Gov. Sonny Perdue (R)</p>  <p>8%</p>	No	<p>Increases funding for the <i>Georgia Prekindergarten Program</i> by \$22.9 million for a total of \$324.9 million. This increase is estimated to boost enrollment by about 3,000 four year olds for a total of 78,000.</p>
<p>Hawaii</p> <p>Gov. Linda Lingle (R)</p>  <p>N/A</p>	No	No state-funded pre-k program.
<p>Idaho</p> <p>Gov. C.L. Butch Otter (R)</p>  <p>N/A</p>	No	No state-funded pre-k program.
<p>Illinois</p> <p>Gov. Rod Blagojevich (D)</p>  <p>25%</p>	Yes	<p>Increases funding for the <i>Preschool for All</i> portion of the Early Childhood Block Grant by \$61.8 million for a total of \$345 million. This increase would add 12,000 slots. An additional \$10 million was proposed as part of a matching grant program for school- and community-based pre-k facilities development. The 11 percent infant-toddler set aside increased by \$7.6 million.</p>
<p>Indiana</p> <p>Gov. Mitch Daniels (R)</p>  <p>N/A</p>	No	No state-funded pre-k program or state investment in <i>Head Start</i> .
<p>Iowa</p> <p>Gov. Chet Culver (D)</p>  <p>290%</p>	Yes	<p>Proposed \$20 million for a new initiative called <i>Voluntary Preschool Access</i>, part of a four-year plan to provide high-quality pre-k for all four year olds.</p> <p>Flat funds <i>Shared Visions</i> at \$6.9 million.</p>




State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
<p>Kansas</p> <p>Gov. Kathleen Sebelius (D)</p>  <p>21%</p>	Yes	<p>Increases funding for the <i>Pre-K Pilot Program</i> by \$3.5 million for a total of \$5.5 million. The increase would expand the program to 12 new counties and serve an additional 860 children.</p> <p>Flat funds the <i>Four-Year-Old At-Risk Program</i> at \$15.1 million, serving 6,000 children.</p>
<p>Kentucky</p> <p>Gov. Ernie Fletcher (R)</p>  <p>0%</p>	No	<p>No new pre-k proposals. Flat funds the <i>Kentucky Preschool Program</i> at \$75.1 million for the second year of the biennial budget.</p>
<p>Louisiana</p> <p>Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco (D)</p>  <p>38%</p>	<p>State of the state scheduled for April 30, 2007.</p>	<p>Increases funding for the <i>LA4</i> program by \$30 million for a total of \$86.5 million.</p> <p>Flat funds the <i>Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development Program</i> at \$8.5 million.</p> <p>Flat funds the <i>8(g)</i> block grant at \$14 million for public schools to provide pre-k for at-risk four year olds.</p>
<p>Maine</p> <p>Gov. John Baldacci (D)</p>  <p>4%</p>	No	<p>No new pre-k proposals. <i>Two-Year Kindergarten</i> pre-k program investments are included in the school funding formula and totaled \$4.2 million for FY07. FY08 figures are not yet available.</p> <p>Increases state investment in <i>Head Start</i> by \$198,500 to \$1.6 million.</p>
<p>Maryland</p> <p>Gov. Martin O'Malley (D)</p> <p>Funding based on enrollment</p>	No	<p>Funding for the <i>Prekindergarten Program</i> will be discontinued after the 2006-07 school year and state funds for pre-k will be folded into the school funding formula starting in FY08.</p> <p>Flat funds state investment in <i>Head Start</i> at \$3 million.</p>
<p>Massachusetts</p> <p>Gov. Deval Patrick (D)</p>  <p>0%</p>	Yes	<p>Flat funds <i>Universal Pre-Kindergarten</i> at \$4.6 million.</p> <p>Flat funds state investment in <i>Head Start</i> at \$8.5 million.</p>

State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
<p>Michigan</p> <p>Gov. Jennifer Granholm (D)</p>  <p>220%</p>	Yes	<p>Proposed a new initiative, the <i>Great Start Comprehensive Compensatory Programs</i>, with inaugural funding of \$194.6 million, which would provide full-day pre-k programs for 26,000 four year olds.</p> <p>Increases the <i>Michigan School Readiness Program</i> by \$5.3 million to \$96.2 million.</p>
<p>Minnesota</p> <p>Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R)</p>  <p>1%</p>	Yes	<p>Proposed \$392,000 in planning funds for FY08 for a new initiative, the <i>Early Childhood Scholarships Program</i>, which would give \$4,000 vouchers to families with four year olds living at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty threshold.</p> <p>Flat funds the <i>School Readiness Program</i> at \$9.1 million.</p>
<p>Mississippi</p> <p>Gov. Haley Barbour (R)</p>  <p>N/A</p>	Yes	<p>No state-funded pre-k program or state investment in <i>Head Start</i>.</p>
<p>Missouri</p> <p>Gov. Matt Blunt (R)</p>  <p>0%</p>	Yes	<p>Flat funds the <i>Missouri Preschool Project</i> at \$14.8 million.</p>
<p>Montana</p> <p>Gov. Brian Schweitzer (D)</p>  <p>N/A</p>	Yes	<p>No state-funded pre-k program or state investment in <i>Head Start</i>.</p>
<p>Nebraska</p> <p>Gov. Dave Heineman (R)</p> <p>Funding based on enrollment</p>	No	<p>No new pre-k proposals. Funding for the <i>Early Childhood Grant Program</i> will be integrated into the school funding formula starting in the 2007-08 school year. FY08 figures are not yet available.</p>

State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
<p>Nevada</p> <p>Gov. Jim Gibbons (R)</p> <p> 3%</p>	No	Slightly increases the <i>Early Childhood Education Program</i> by \$100,000 for a total of \$3.25 million.
<p>New Hampshire</p> <p>Gov. John Lynch (D)</p> <p> N/A</p>	Yes	No state-funded pre-k program.
<p>New Jersey</p> <p>Gov. Jon Corzine (D)</p> <p> 3%</p>	No	Proposed \$10 million for a new initiative , the <i>Preschool Quality Enhancement Grants</i> , to support expansion or creation of targeted pre-k programs in non-Abbott districts. Increases <i>Abbott Preschool</i> expansion funds by \$3.1 million to \$463.2 million. Flat funds the <i>Early Launch to Learning Initiative</i> at \$3 million. Flat funds <i>Early Childhood Program Aid</i> at \$30 million
<p>New Mexico</p> <p>Gov. Bill Richardson (D)</p> <p> 237%</p>	Yes	Increases the <i>New Mexico Pre-K Program</i> by \$10 million for a total of \$18 million. Also proposes a non-recurring fund of \$7.5 million for start up programs and \$5 million in capital funds. Flat funds state investment in <i>Head Start</i> at \$1.5 million.
<p>New York</p> <p>Gov. Eliot Spitzer (D)</p> <p> 33%</p>	Yes	Increases the <i>Universal Prekindergarten</i> program by \$98.8 million to \$395 million.
<p>North Carolina</p> <p>Gov. Mike Easley (D)</p> <p> 70%</p>	Yes	Increases funding for <i>More at Four</i> by \$59.3 million to \$143.9 million. This increase would provide 10,000 more slots for a total of 28,653 slots and would raise per-slot expenditures by \$400, or nearly 10 percent, to \$4,450. This increase includes a non-recurring \$3.4 million fund for start up programs and another \$3 million to address capacity issues at the local level.

State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
<p>North Dakota</p> <p>Gov. John Hoeven (R)</p>	No	No state-funded pre-k program or state investment in <i>Head Start</i> .
<p></p> <p>N/A</p>		
<p>Ohio</p> <p>Gov. Ted Strickland (D)</p>	Yes	<p>Increases <i>Early Childhood Education</i> funding by \$10 million to \$29 million. The proposal would increase the number of children served from 3,740 to 5,690 in FY08.</p>
<p></p> <p>53%</p>		
<p>Oklahoma</p> <p>Gov. Brad Henry (D)</p>	No	<p>Pre-k program investments are included in the school funding formula and totaled \$209.9 million for FY06. FY07 and FY08 figures are not yet available.</p>
<p></p> <p>7%</p>		<p>Proposed \$15 million for FY08 for a new initiative, a pilot pre-k program for three year olds.</p>
<p>Oregon</p> <p>Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D)</p>	Yes	<p>Increases the <i>Head Start Prekindergarten</i> program by \$13 million for a total of \$41.6 million. This increase is part of a two-year expansion that would fully fund <i>Head Start</i> in Oregon, serving 3,300 more children, or 80 percent of all eligible three and four year olds.</p>
<p></p> <p>46%</p>		
<p>Pennsylvania</p> <p>Gov. Edward G. Rendell (D)</p>	Yes	<p>Increases pre-k funding within the Accountability Block Grant by \$75 million for a total of \$90.7 million. The increase is for <i>Pre-K Counts</i>, which will serve 11,000 additional children.</p>
<p></p> <p>135%</p>		<p>Flat funds state investment in <i>Head Start</i> at \$40 million.</p>
<p>Rhode Island</p> <p>Gov. Don Carcieri (R)</p>	No	No state-funded pre-k program.
<p></p> <p>N/A</p>		

State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
<p>South Carolina</p> <p>Gov. Mark Sanford (R)</p>  <p>0.6%</p>	No	<p>Negligibly increases funding for the <i>Child Development Education Pilot Program</i> by \$300,000 to \$23.6 million.</p> <p>Flat funds the pre-k portion of <i>First Steps</i> at \$3.7 million.</p> <p>Flat funds the <i>Half-Day Child Development Program (4K)</i> at \$23 million.</p>
<p>South Dakota</p> <p>Gov. Mike Rounds (R)</p>  <p>First-time state investment</p>	Yes	<p>Proposed \$700,000 for a new initiative, a pilot pre-k program to serve at-risk three and four year olds through a public-private partnership. Including private contributions, total funding for the initiative is \$1.4 million over three years.</p>
<p>Tennessee</p> <p>Gov. Phil Bredesen (D)</p>  <p>46%</p>	Yes	<p>Increases the <i>Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program</i> by \$25 million to \$80 million. The increase would add more than 200 classrooms and serve 4,000 more children, raising total enrollment to 17,000 children.</p>
<p>Texas</p> <p>Gov. Rick Perry (R)</p>  <p>8%</p>	Yes	<p>Pre-k program investments are included in the school funding formula and totaled \$492.5 million for FY06. FY07 and FY08 figures are not yet available.</p> <p>Increases the <i>Early Childhood and Pre-Kindergarten Initiative</i> by \$40 million for FY08 for a total of \$58.3 million to expand implementation of the <i>Texas Early Education Model (TEEM)</i>.</p>
<p>Utah</p> <p>Gov. Jon Huntsman, Jr. (R)</p>  <p>N/A</p>	Yes	<p>No state-funded pre-k program or state investment in <i>Head Start</i>.</p>
<p>Vermont</p> <p>Gov. Jim Douglas (R)</p> <p>Funding based on enrollment</p>	No	<p>The <i>Public Preschool Partnerships</i> program, which is open to all children, is funded through the school funding formula. FY08 figures are not yet available.</p> <p>Flat funds the <i>Early Education Initiative</i>, an additional pre-k program for at-risk three and four year olds, at \$1.3 million.</p>

State, Governor, & Proposed Percent Change	State of the State Mentions Pre-K or Early Education	Proposal
<p>Virginia</p> <p>Gov. Tim Kaine (D)</p>  <p>9%</p>	Yes	<p>New funding of \$4.6 million for a pilot pre-k program, as part of the <i>Virginia Preschool Initiative</i>, for a total of \$55.2 million. The pilot would serve an additional 1,250 children and is an amendment to the second year of the biennial budget.</p>
<p>Washington</p> <p>Gov. Chris Gregoire (D)</p>  <p>25%</p>	Yes	<p>Increases the <i>Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)</i> by \$8.7 million for a total of \$44.2 million.</p>
<p>West Virginia</p> <p>Gov. Joe Manchin (D)</p> <p>Funding based on enrollment</p>	No	<p>The <i>West Virginia Pre-K System</i> is funded through the school funding formula. FY08 figures are not yet available.</p>
<p>Wisconsin</p> <p>Gov. Jim Doyle (D)</p> <p>Funding based on enrollment</p>	No	<p><i>4-Year-Old Kindergarten</i> is funded through the school funding formula. FY08 figures are not yet available.</p>
<p>Wyoming</p> <p>Gov. Dave Freudenthal (D)</p>  <p>N/A</p>	No	<p>No state-funded pre-k program or state investment in <i>Head Start</i>.</p>
<p>Washington, DC</p> <p>Mayor Adrian Fenty (D)</p> <p>Funding based on enrollment</p>	No	<p>In FY07, \$60.7 million was spent on pre-k through the school funding formula, including charter schools. FY08 figures are not yet available but per-pupil funding is proposed to increase by four percent.</p>

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Pre-K Now at a Glance

Mission

Pre-K Now collaborates with advocates and policymakers to lead a movement for high-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten for all three and four year olds.

Vision

Pre-K Now's vision is a nation in which every child enters kindergarten prepared to succeed.

Location

Washington, DC

Leadership

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Funders

The Pew Charitable Trusts
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
RGK Foundation
The Foundation for Child Development
CityBridge Foundation
PNC Financial Services Group
The Schumann Fund for New Jersey

Pre-K Now Key Differentiators

- Focuses exclusively on pre-k
- Provides the most up-to-date gauge of the pre-k pulse in any state
- Offers nationwide access to pre-k advocates
- Monitors and distributes daily pre-k newsclips
- Provides a national perspective on local pre-k issues
- Provides outreach, policy, and Spanish-language information targeted to the Latino community
- Leads a national movement which has gained significant momentum in the last five years

The Case for Pre-K

- Pre-k benefits all children academically, socially, and emotionally.
- High-quality pre-k for all nets a high return on investment in children and the community.
- The most important brain development occurs by age five.
- Pre-k is the first step to improving K-12 education.

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