The Judith P. Hoyer
Early Care and Education Enhancement Program Report

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Report authorized in 5-217 of the State Government Article, the
General Assembly MSAR #10071

MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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The information contained in this annual report reflects the fiscal year period spanning July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

INTRODUCTION

As the early education coordinator for Prince George's County Public Schools, Judith P. Hoyer lamented the gaps in available services for low-income families. In the 1990s, she created a central location in Adelphi, Maryland for important early childhood services, thus fostering cooperation of governmental and private agencies around the needs of local families. After her untimely death in 1997, her husband, Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD), in partnership with then Governor Parris N. Glendening, led a successful movement to bring her model of collaboration to other areas of Maryland. As a result, the Maryland State Legislature enacted the Judith P. Hoyer Early Child Care and Education Enhancement Program in May of 2000.

That legislation addressed three important principles in Maryland's early childhood care and education programs:

1. Judy Centers - The need for greater coordination among the providers of early childhood education and support services was essential in focusing the services and resources of the various programs and providers on families with high needs in designated Title I school zones. This type of collaboration provides a greater opportunity for positive outcomes for children and greater school readiness.

2. Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) - The need for a uniform assessment of success in early childhood education. This allows the State to better measure progress with some definition of success, and a means to assess that success.

3. Program Accreditation and Preschool for All - The need to ensure that all preschool age children receive quality care and education by promoting professional development for the early education workforce and accreditation for childcare providers.

The preamble of the legislation remains today a concise and relevant statement of the new understanding of early childhood care and education:

- "WHEREAS, recent brain research confirms that the most rapid brain growth occurs in the first three years of life; and

- WHEREAS, a stimulating environment is essential to brain development and has a major impact on a child's language and cognitive and emotional development; and

- WHEREAS, the overwhelming evidence suggests that it is best to capitalize on the brain's elasticity before age five, the age at which public education is guaranteed; and

- WHEREAS, high-quality early care and education programs make a significant contribution to the development of skills required by young children to succeed in school; and

- WHEREAS, not all Maryland children have access to quality early care and education programs..."

It has been nineteen years since that landmark legislation was passed, but these three principles continue to be all-important in early childhood education.

In fact, in 2011, the grant funding awarded to Maryland under the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge supported the expansion of Judy Center Early Learning Hubs and a new system for assessing school readiness. Maryland developed and implemented Ready for Kindergarten (R4K) – Maryland's Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System. R4K aligns with the Maryland College and Career Readiness standards for PreK-12 and provides a single coordinated system for recognizing the needs and measuring the learning progress of all children from thirty-six to seventy-two months.

This report provides a current review of accomplishments and challenges that took place during State Fiscal Year (FY) 2019.

PRINCLIPLE NUMBER ONE
JUDY CENTER EARLY LEARNING HUBS

HISTORY

The first Judith P. Hoyer Family Learning Center, which began operations in Prince George's County, served as the model for the rest of the state to follow. Dedicated to the needs of low income families in the local elementary school catchment area, this first Judy Center (although not named as such until after her death) quickly demonstrated the true value of such coordination.

Maryland's legislation took Judy Hoyer's model and financed expansion across the state, offering comprehensive, integrated, full-day and full-year early care and education services. The year 2001, the first year of operation, saw the establishment of thirteen Judy Centers in Allegany, Calvert, Caroline, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's and Washington counties, and Baltimore City. The following year, eleven more centers were funded in Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Garrett, Howard, Montgomery, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester counties, and Baltimore City. The number of locations remained unchanged until 2011 when the Judy Center in Anne Arundel County and a third one in Baltimore City opened. In FY13, the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant also provided funding for a second Judy Center in Prince George's County and a fourth site in Baltimore City. FY14 resulted in the growth of more Judy Centers through a diversity of funding streams. First, a Judy Center in Harford County opened with state funding. Secondly, through a collaboration of the Baltimore Community Foundation, Baltimore City Public Schools and the MSDE, the first Judy Center funded by a public-private partnership in Baltimore City was established. Also of note, in FY 14, the passage of the Maryland Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014 (Senate Bill 332) ensured the addition of three more Judy Centers in FY 15 – an additional one in both Garrett and Caroline counties and a first-time Judy Center in Somerset County. This expansion completed the State's mission to have at least one Judy Center in all twenty-four jurisdictions. In FY 15, the public-private partnership with the Baltimore Community Foundation resulted in two more Judy Centers in Baltimore City. Since then, the Baltimore Community Foundation has helped to fund six additional Judy Centers in Baltimore.
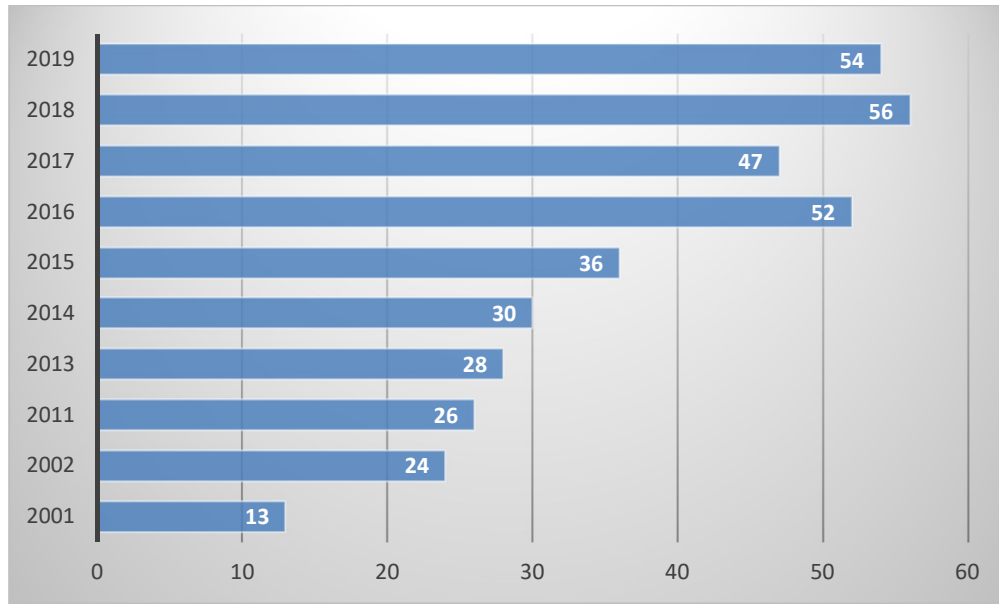
Chart 1: Establishment of Judy Centers from 2001-2019.

JUDY CENTER STANDARDS

All Judy Centers are required to meet the following twelve (12) Component Standards deemed essential to the positive impact on children's school readiness.

I. Full Day/Full Year: Judy Centers collaborate with child care and other high quality early education care agencies to ensure families receive care and services year round.

II. Meals: Children and families are provided meals not only during the school day but during school breaks, weekends, and after school hours.

III. Case Management: Case management is a process at the Judy Center that includes referrals to agencies, intakes with families, needs assessments, developmental screenings, home visiting, follow up and active case review.

IV. Integration of Early Education Services: There are curriculum enhancement activities including transition strategies and activities for children and families across all programs, including pre-k, kindergarten, Head Start and child care, as well as children entering formal programs for the first time.

V. Family Engagement: The Judy Center models a two generation approach in regards to family engagement centering on the family's ability to participate in and support their child's learning. This approach follows Maryland's Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework.

VI. Early Identification: All children ages birth through five years, regardless of abilities, have access to all programs and services in least restrictive environments. There is an

outreach plan in place to identify all children ages birth through five years of age who live in the designated Judy Center school zones. Once identified the Judy Center implements many different levels of engagement to work with the family to meet their needs and ensure the child will enter school ready to learn.

VII. <u>Children with Disabilities:</u> Children with disabilities and their families are fully included in all of the services as part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), including family support and involvement, service coordination, full-day/full-year services, and prekindergarten.

VIII. <u>Health Related Services</u>: Judy Centers ensure that children are referred for dental, vision and hearing screenings when appropriate; mental health assessments and referrals when appropriate; physical growth and nutritional assessments, including referrals to the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and local health departments if warranted. Additionally, Judy Centers work to ensure that all families have access to health care insurance.

IX. <u>Professional Development</u>: Professional Development to address various program needs and community trends is offered to all members of the Judy Center Partnership, including programs such as kindergarten, prekindergarten, Head Start, and early education and care providers.

X. <u>Adult Education and Career Services</u>: Parents are encouraged to pursue their own education to allow them to enter the workforce and better support their children. Judy Centers partner with local colleges and universities for a continuum of higher education opportunities for parents, including career planning, coursework, enrollment in trade programs, or transition plans for those entering or returning to college.

XI. <u>Accreditation</u>: All early care and education programs for children in the Judy Center Partnerships must be accredited or pursuing accreditation. This helps to ensure that children and families have access to high quality education programs.

XII. <u>Partnerships</u>: The Judy Center Partnership is actively engaged and is consistently and frequently involved in the school readiness mission of the Judy Center. As a recognizable member of the communities they serve as well as a leader in early childhood development, Judy Centers are represented on the State and Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils and support the missions of its partners by participating in their work in the community.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Judy Centers are primarily located in Title I schools and support children birth through kindergarten in the catchment area. Most of the work of the Judy Centers is accomplished through its partnerships. The partnerships reflect Judy Hoyer's vision of how professionals collaborate to deliver a wide spectrum of early childhood education programs and family support services for children and families. Judy Centers are required to include the following in their partnership:

- Public kindergarten and prekindergarten
- Early Intervention and preschool special education programs in the school catchment area,
- Head Start/Early Head Start programs in the school catchment area, and
- licensed/registered and accredited child care providers, including faith-based child care, family child care, and center-based child care programs

Judy Centers enter into Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with community agencies and organizations that are critical to meeting the needs of families. Judy Centers have a variety of partners that allow them to meet the needs of families in unique and creative ways, including,

- partnering with local barbers and stylists to offer free back to school haircuts;
- partnering with local libraries and various community agencies to provide books and school supplies;
- partnering with health departments and medical clinics to offer free vaccinations and health care services at a lower cost. or on a sliding scale; and
- providing essential nutritional information and activities for children and adults through a partnership with the University of Maryland Extension.

The number of partners varies across Judy Centers depending upon population density and the number of agencies, organizations and businesses available in the area. Partnerships may include thirty or more agencies and organizations and with no set limit for participation per organization, it is not unusual to see large numbers of participants representing different departments within an organization, involved with Judy Centers. Partnership meetings occur frequently to accomplish the work as quickly and as effectively as possible. Each partner plays a key role in decision-making and goal setting. Figure 1 below illustrates how the Judy Centers are an integral piece to Maryland's early childhood system and helps to connect all major early childhood stakeholders at the state and local levels.
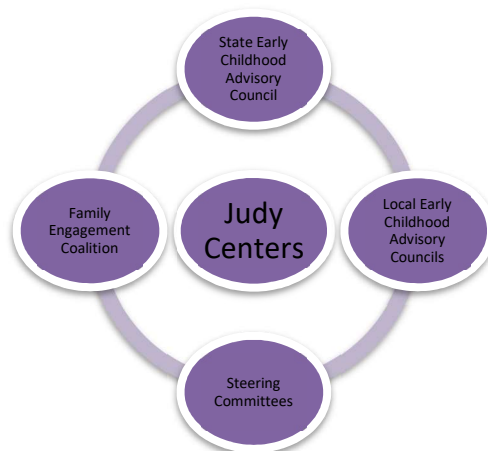

Figure 1: Judy Center Early Learning Hubs collaborate at all levels of the community and government.

POPULATION SERVED

In FY 19, there were 54 Judy Center Early Learning Hubs that served 16,847 children (ranging in age from birth through kindergarten) across Maryland. The chart below describes the demographic data of the families served by the Judy Centers.
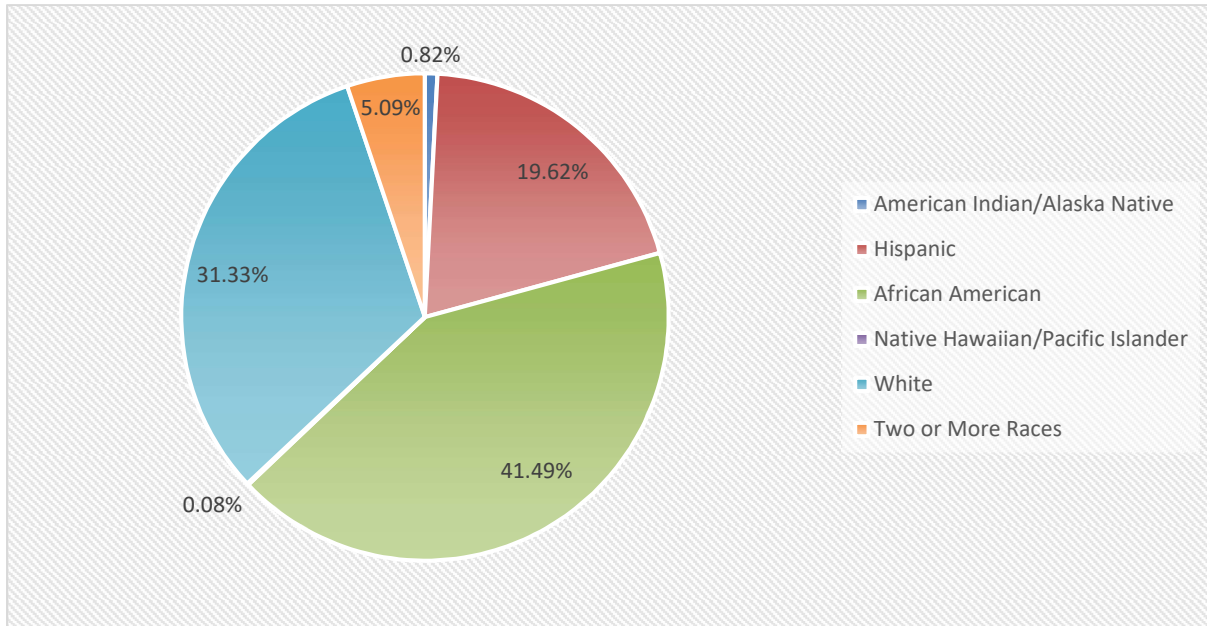

Legend:
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Hispanic
- African American
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- White
- Two or More Races

Pie chart values: 0.82%, 19.62%, 41.49%, 0.08%, 31.33%, 5.09%

Chart 2: Demographic data of the families and children served by the Judy Center.

MEASURING SUCCESS

In Fall 2014, Maryland introduced Ready for Kindergarten (R4K), Maryland's Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System to align with the State's more rigorous PreK-12 College and Career-Ready Standards. R4K is a developmentally appropriate assessment system for young children that builds upon the success of the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) which was the statewide assessment tool in use from 2001 to 2013. Fall 2017 was the fourth year the new assessment was used and is referred to as the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). An overview of all Judy Centers is compiled each year.

Fall 2014 KRA data demonstrated impressive results when comparing the school readiness results of entering kindergartners who had at least one year of Judy Center experience with their kindergarten peers who did not have the advantage of the Judy Center experience. Fall 2014 data showed that 41% of children with Judy Center experience prior to entering kindergarten were Demonstrating Readiness for school compared to 36% of the children who entered kindergarten at Judy Center schools without prior experience. Forty-seven percent of the state's kindergartners were Demonstrating Readiness. Interestingly, in Fall 2015 the percentage of children demonstrating readiness for kindergarten who had prior Judy Center experience slightly decreased as did the percentage of Maryland's kindergartners at large while the

percentage of children demonstrating readiness who did not have Judy Center experience increased. Forty percent of both Judy Center groups were Demonstrating Readiness while 45% of the state's kindergartners were Demonstrating Readiness. However, fall 2016 and 2017 showed impressive results again as the data illustrates that children with Judy Center experience made small yet significant gains in school readiness scores, increasing from 42% demonstrating readiness to 45% demonstrating readiness. Maryland kindergartners overall also made gains moving from 41% in 2016 to 45% in 2017, while children without Judy Center experience demonstrated 33% in 2016 and 34% in 2017. Gains were demonstrated again in the fall of 2018 when 49% of children with Judy Center experience were ready for kindergarten compared to only 34% of children without Judy Center experience. Statewide, 47% of kids were ready for kindergarten.

Table I is a comparison of the children with prior Judy Center experience (JC-1) before entering kindergarten and those who had no prior Judy Center experience (JC-0) with Maryland's kindergartners at large for Fall 2014 to Fall 2018.

Percentage of Kindergartners Demonstrating Readiness Fall 2014 to Fall 2018

Category	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Maryland State	47%	45%	41%	45%	47%
JC-0	36%	40%	33%	34%	34%
JC-1	41%	40%	42%	45%	49%

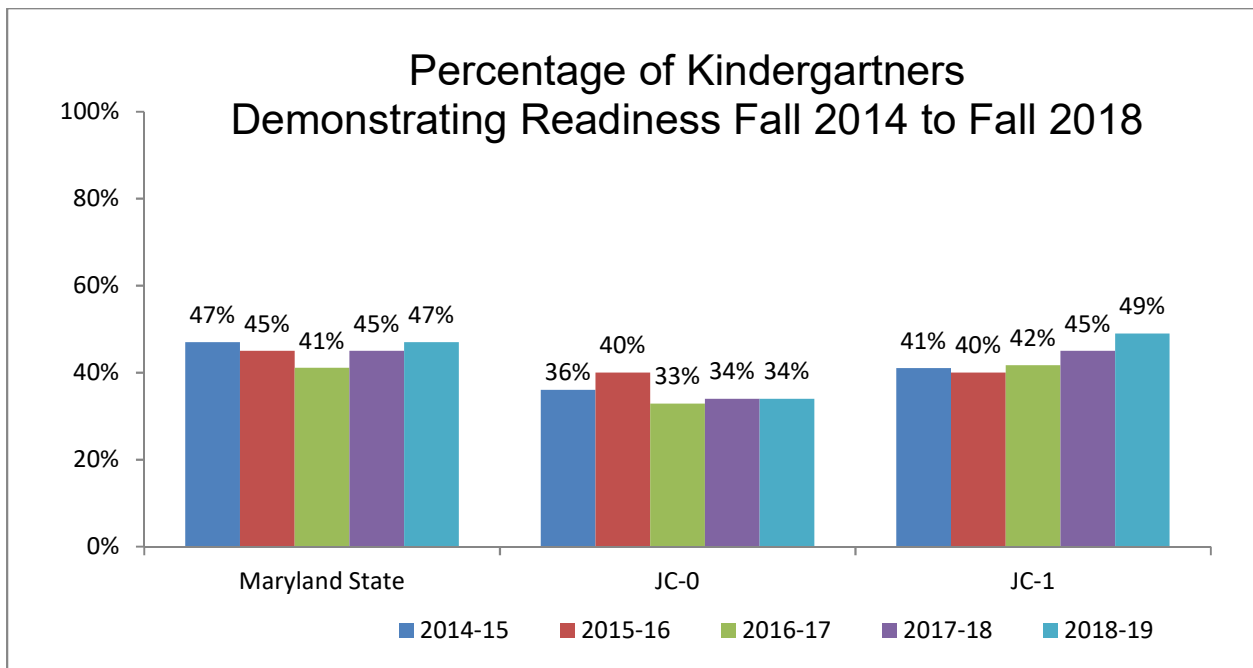Chart 3: Percentage of kindergartens demonstrating readiness on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment from Fiscal Year 2014 to 2018. Data is weighted due to administering of KRA sampling at schools. **Note:** JC-0 refers to entering kindergartners without Judy Center experiences prior to kindergarten. JC-1 refers to entering kindergartners who received Judy Center services prior to kindergarten.
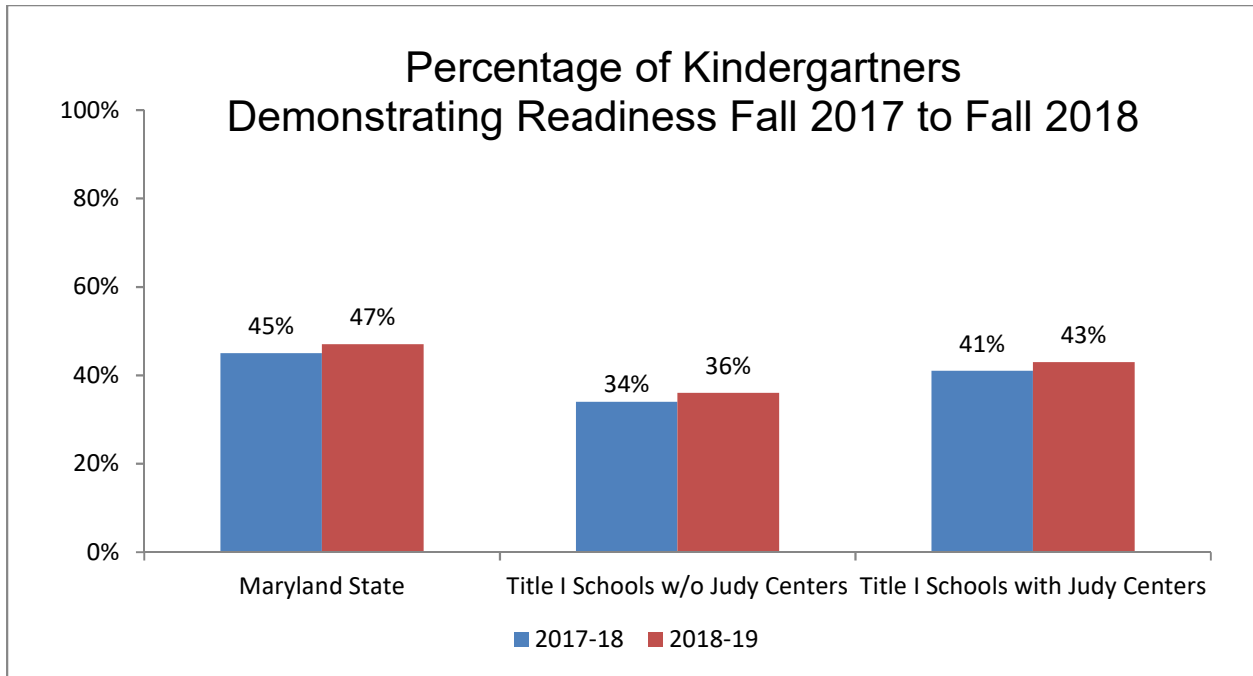
Percentage of Kindergartners Demonstrating Readiness Fall 2017 to Fall 2018

Chart 4: Kindergarteners demonstrating readiness in school year 2017-19 comparing Maryland State kindergartners, kindergartners Title I schools without a Judy Center, and kindergartners at Title 1 schools with a Judy Center.

As Judy Centers are located primarily in Title I schools, it is very important to note that children with Judy Center experience are close or slightly above the percentage of the readiness level of the state's kindergartners even though there is a much larger proportion of Judy Center children who are at-risk and may receive special services. These services include but, are not limited to free and reduced-price meals, special education or early interventions services, and/or language support for children who are English Learners.

JUDY CENTER IMPACT

Statistics are not the only way to measure outcomes. Family engagement is at the heart of the Judy Center mission. To effectively engage families, Judy Center staff must establish relationships with their families. When programs and families work in partnership together, the impact of the Judy Centers is immeasurable.

Baltimore City Curtis Bay Judy Center

The Curtis Bay Judy Center has been in operation since FY 16. From its inception, the Curtis Bay Judy Center has struggled to build trusting relationships with families; which in-turn has made it hard for the Judy Center to whole-heartedly meet all of their needs. As a result, the program has faced many adversities within the early childhood classrooms to prepare students to be "Kindergarten Ready" in all domains of learning. Many of the students face trauma, social-emotional/behavioral issues, and developmental delays. In the spring of school year 2016-2017, the Curtis Bay Judy

Center discovered a potential solution to this problem when staff attended a Title I training that was offered through the Flamboyan Foundation.

The Curtis Bay Judy Center set a goal to have incoming prekindergarten families and teachers come together in the family's natural environment as equal partners to build trust and form relationships to help prepare students for school. After attending Flamboyan's Parent/Teacher Home Visiting training, the "Curtis Bay Judy Center Home Visiting Project" was created. The Curtis Bay Judy Center first tested the Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project during the summer of 2017 for incoming prekindergarten students. The Judy Center team consisted of the classroom teacher, Judy Center staff, and a mental health provider. Judy Center staff conducted home visits with the students twice a year in their natural environment. During the initial visit, teachers worked with the incoming students to complete developmental assessments. This helped staff to better prepare the classroom and their lesson plans to better meet the needs of students. While the teachers worked with the students, the Judy Center staff and mental health partners worked with the parents to complete the Judy Center's family intake, which includes a comprehensive look at the family's needs. Based on the needs identified during the initial visit, families and children were linked to needed resources and services. The essential theme of the initial visit was to develop a common goal for both the school and the family to work on throughout the course of the school year.

During the second home visit, students, teachers, and Judy Center staff met to discuss their child's strengths, weaknesses, and strategies and activities to better support their child's learning at home.

The following year the Curtis Bay Judy Center continued the project with an increased effort to build positive relationships, a home-school connection, and the ultimate goal of school readiness. We partnered with Bedtime in a Box to provide families with healthy and educational bedtime materials. During our initial home visit, families were gifted with Bedtime in a Box for their young learners. Bedtime routine goals were set with each family that included the bath, pajamas, teeth brushing, and reading a book. During the second home visit, families received items to replenish their Bedtime in a Boxes, as well as Teach My Preschooler Learning Kits to support strategies and activities to better support their child's learning at home.

Over the course of the Curtis Bay Judy Center Home Visiting Project, the Curtis Bay Judy Center has completed over 100 home visits. This project has allowed the Curtis Bay Judy Center to create a bond prior to the school year, offer programs and services, understand young learners' backgrounds to better connect with them, and provide families with materials to support transition and routines in the homes of our young learners.

Reflecting on the Curtis Bay Judy Center Home Visiting Project, improvement was noted in the following areas:

- Parents formed meaningful relationships with teachers
- Increase in communication between parents/teachers
- Parent engagement/participation significantly increased
- Parents are more aware of students strengths/needs
- Home/school connection has been created
- Increase in student performance
- Increase in positive parent/child interactions
- Improvement in identifying family needs
- Increase in programming to address family's needs

The Curtis Bay Judy Center prides itself on meeting students and families where they are and providing them with direct services, referrals, and community resources to meet their needs. The Curtis Bay Judy Center has found a way to truly cultivate sound and trusting relationships with students and families. By reaching out and giving parents and caregivers the tools they need to nurture their children, the Judy Center is supporting families in developing habits that will last a lifetime.

Frederick County Judy Center

Bubbles are floating in the air as you enter the Lincoln Elementary Judy Center classroom on Friday mornings! Though a wonderful collaborative effort with the Frederick County Judy Center and Frederick County Health Department's Infants and Toddlers Program, families have been able to participate in a weekly playgroup at Lincoln Elementary.   "Tots Time", led by an Infants and Toddlers special educator, has allowed caregivers and children from all over Frederick County to enjoy a parent and child learning opportunity.   During the playgroup, the Judy Center staff is available to provide additional supports and links to other resources in the community. Families in the Infants and Toddlers Program are often seeking community groups that will meet their child's needs. Through play, songs, and movement, "Tots Time" provides a fun and inclusive environment in which children with diverse needs can thrive and learn. The location in Lincoln Elementary provides Judy Center families another educational opportunity for their youngest learners.   The collaboration continued into summer programming and families from Infants and Toddlers participated in playgroups at Waverley Elementary. Both the Infants and Toddlers and Judy Center families have expressed how thankful they were to be able to participate in these playgroups.

The Frederick County Judy Center Early Learning Hub and Infants and Toddlers Program are excited to continue the collaboration and provide family engagement to help support the children and families of Frederick County throughout FY 20.

CHALLENGES

The community needs across Maryland are increasing exponentially with the rise in poverty and the immigration of vulnerable families. Elementary school populations of

English Learners are expanding in many areas of the state and the challenges facing the Judy Centers are increasing in complexity, such as addressing mental health concerns, suspension and expulsion rates, and early identification for special needs. These factors make outreach efforts even more important so that vulnerable children and families are identified earlier and receive an intense level of services over a longer period of time to increase school readiness.

In FY 18, State Pre-k funds and Federal Preschool Development Grant funds were available to sustain the substantial growth of Judy Centers that occurred between FY 15 and FY 16. For FY 19, Child Care Development Funds (CCDF) were also used to help sustain all 54 sites. However, after FY 19, Federal Preschool Development funds will no longer be available and to continue to maintain all 54 sites with the quality of exemplary programming characteristic of Judy Centers, additional funding streams must be identified.

During FY 16, the Maryland State Legislature passed legislation for the KRA to be administered as a random sample rather than census administration (all kindergartners assessed) with the provision for local school systems to maintain census administration if desired. In the 2017-2018 school year, Judy Centers in 17 school districts assessed all entering Kindergartners. In the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school year, Judy Centers in 22 districts are assessing all entering Kindergartners. The value of the data provided by the KRA at the district level and the ability of the Judy Centers to utilize the data to drive programming is evident through this increase from the 2016-2017 school year, in which Judy Centers in only 14 districts were assessing all entering Kindergarteners.

Judy Center partnerships have become an important and effective support to Title I schools that receive supplemental federal funds to provide additional services in a school district's highest poverty communities. However, while children make early gains and progress during their preschool years, such positive early results are hard to sustain unless the support structure for the family and the individual child's needs are maintained throughout their education.

NEXT STEPS

The two generational approach of high-quality early education coupled with the comprehensive family support services approach has proven successful. Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) authored a provision to encourage the wider adoption of the full-service community schools model that was authorized in Title IV of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was signed into law December 2015 to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The program is authorized at a minimum of 10 grants per year. This is approximately how many grants the demonstration program has been funding since its creation in 2007. Full Service Community Schools are modeled after Judy Centers and serve students K-12.

While children and families make gains with Judy Center services and early childhood education and care programs, it is imperative that supports are in place to help children

and families maintain these gains. Supporting families in transition is a core component to school readiness and the transition into Kindergarten and elementary school is a milestone for families. Although the goal of improving child and family outcomes are the same for both early childhood education programs and elementary school, the structure can look very different. This often results with families becoming unsure of their role in their child's education and therefore, becoming less engaged with the school.

In January 2018, the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, also known as the Kirwan Commission, released its final report. Among the many recommendations for early childhood education, the Commission discussed in detail the critical need to increase supports for families and children under the age of four, specifically those families that are at risk. The Commission stated, "It has an inescapable obligation to make a recommendation designed to strengthen not only the early childhood education system but also the systems that provide other vital services in communities, especially those that serve mainly low-income residents because, in the Commission's view, the health, education, and social service systems, at the least, are inextricably and directly related to the function of the schools and to their capacity to do their job, both in early childhood and throughout students' schooling." This had led to the Commission strongly recommending the State significantly expand its network of Judy Centers.

The expansion of the Judy Centers and its services is necessary to ensure that all children enter school ready to succeed, however, a high level of training and technical assistance is provided by MSDE and is required to ensure that all sites operate in an effective manner. To maintain the quality of exemplary programming characteristic of Judy Centers, any increase in the number of sites must be carefully considered should additional funding streams be identified. This will ensure that the number of Judy Centers is kept at a manageable level to ensure MSDE continues to monitor progress closely throughout the expansion period and is able to continue to provide necessary technical assistance, ensuring high quality programming.

PRINCIPLE NUMBER TWO
KINDERGARTEN ASSESSEMENT

With the recognition of the importance in providing quality early care and education to our nation's children, the issue of how to assess the quality of that care and instruction in educational terms is now being addressed by many states. To promote the development and use of such assessments, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services provided federal support through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTTT-ELC) grant. Maryland was one of the beneficiaries of this grant and has used these funds to provide a variety of projects and initiatives that will continue to improve the quality of early childhood care and education.

Thanks to the Judith P. Hoyer legislation, Maryland has implemented a kindergarten assessment for the last fifteen years, putting Maryland ahead of most states in the nation in terms of measuring child outcomes at the start of their school careers. Maryland used the Race to the Top funds to develop Ready for Kindergarten (R4K): Maryland's Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment allowing all kindergarten teachers to begin administering at the start of the school year and a formative Early Learning Assessment (ELA) that is available at no cost. The ELA has been developed for children age thirty-six to seventy-two months. It is available for early educators who work in child care, Head Start or nursery school settings as well as prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers who can use it throughout the school year. In contrast to the KRA, the use of the ELA is optional for schools and early childhood programs. R4K was developed through a multi-state consortium.

MSDE engaged local school system leaders and teachers throughout the process of developing R4K and informed them about the necessary steps for implementation. The assessment system is supported by a statewide technology infrastructure and a professional development program with the intent to prepare teachers and administrators in the effective use of R4K data. Since the spring of 2014, State approved trainers provide yearly KRA professional development to all kindergarten teachers.

Kindergarten teachers can use the student level data to help plan instruction and to address achievement gaps for individual students. Programs, public schools, Judy Centers, school systems, and local Early Childhood Advisory Councils can also use the disaggregated data to plan programmatic or policy changes that can address the achievement gaps and promote positive outcomes for Maryland children.

Although the legislative change to the KRA in 2016 now allows school systems to administer the assessment to a representative sample of kindergarten students, school

systems, schools, and individual teachers have the option of continuing to administer the assessment to all of their kindergarten students. For school year 2018-19, eighteen of the twenty-four school systems choose to assess all of their kindergartners. Parents of any assessed student will continue to receive an Individual Student Report on their child's performance.

READY FOR KINDERGARTEN (R4K) SYSTEM

The Ready for Kindergarten (R4K) System is composed of the KRA and the Early Learning Assessment (ELA). The ELA is an assessment system for children, 36 to 72 months (three to six years of age). It examines the learning progressions (knowledge, skills, and abilities) of children over time. The ELA also defines specific learning progressions at various intervals for each developmental domain. These learning progressions describe the pathway that children typically follow as they learn, or the sequence in which knowledge and skills develop.

The ELA uses observations and evidence of children's work, while the KRA incorporates both direct and performance-based assessments, as well as observations. The KRA also includes child-friendly technologies, such as touch screen technology, to make the activities as appealing as possible to young children. Teachers have flexibility in the administration of the KRA assessment, between the first day of school and October 10th. The key areas of learning in the ELA measure a child's learning progressions in seven domains. They are:

- Social Foundations
- Physical Well-Being and Motor Development
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- The Arts

While all seven domains are available in the ELA, the KRA reports student information across four domains: Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Well-Being and Motor Development. The reporting format of the KRA assessment information each year includes individual student reports for parents of assessed students. In census districts, data reports and online data displays are available at the classroom, school, district, and state level. In sample districts, reports are available for the district and state levels only.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Annual reports summarizing the statewide results of the KRA are released each year in January. The results provide data on the level of readiness of incoming kindergartners to engage in the kindergarten curriculum. Since the assessment measures the essential skills, knowledge, and behaviors against the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards for prekindergarten students, the data is a starting point in tracking the annual school readiness results in terms of outcomes for all kindergarten students, as well as subgroups of kindergartners. The outcomes are reported as a composite and by the four domains. The composite score data is reported by performance levels: demonstrating readiness, approaching readiness, and emerging readiness. The domain score data is reported as scale scores. This assessment information should be used to assist kindergarten teachers with their instructional program, determine the strengths and needs of all kindergarten students, and provide appropriate interventions and resources to close any achievement gaps that exist.

PRINCIPLE NUMBER THREE
PROGRAM ACCREDITATION, PRESCHOOL FOR ALL AND PREKINDERGARTEN EXPANSION

Voluntary accreditation of early care and education programs provides consumers of service and the general community assurances about program quality. This information is useful to parents who must evaluate various programs and make decisions about what is best for their child. Voluntary accreditation is also a marketing tool to promote standards of high quality for public schools and non-public school programs alike.

In Maryland's current early care and education system, the elements of quality are manifested differently among the various types of providers. Early childhood programs located in public schools are governed by state regulations and operated by local boards of education. Head Start programs for children birth to five are governed by the federal government and operated by local organizations, generally non-profit agencies. Child care and nursery programs are operated privately and either licensed by the MSDE and/or approved by the MSDE in accordance with the non-public school regulations.

The MSDE Standards for Implementing Quality Early Childhood Learning Programs reflect research and advancements in the field and were revised in FY 15, reflecting the changes in national and state standards and policies over the past thirteen years. Incorporated within the program standards are indicators and descriptions of best practices for prekindergarten, kindergarten, center-based child care, and Head Start programs. Additionally, the standards focus on the administration, operation, and family/community partnership of classroom-based programs. MSDE did not develop standards for family child care but recognizes the National Association of Family Child Care as the sole accrediting organization for Maryland's registered family child care providers.

By pursuing and successfully completing these programs, early learning programs in public schools and non-public schools will receive program accreditation. Any program that uses the revised standards and participates in the accreditation process has made a commitment to improve the performance of its early childhood services.

Professional development of the child care workforce was one of the major tenets of the original legislation, and thus through the years, Hoyer grant funds have been used to train those directly caring for young children.

PRESCHOOL FOR ALL

In December of 2007, Maryland's Task Force on Universal Preschool Education submitted a report to the Governor recommending the expansion of prekindergarten to all four-year-olds. The delivery of educational services could be both public and private, provided that the same standards, which currently define the program in public prekindergarten, are maintained. The Task Force called the program Preschool for All. The initiative intends to broaden the scope of access to high-quality prekindergarten beyond the currently mandated group of families whose income qualifies them to access a prekindergarten program operated by local school systems.

The subsequent Preschool for All business plan, submitted to the Governor in December 2009, recommended the establishment of a separate funding stream for Preschool for All sites at accredited child care, Head Start, or nursery school programs. The constraints of the state budget during the three years following denied MSDE the opportunity to establish such a fund. However, Hoyer funds were realigned to create eleven Preschool for All pilot sites across the state. The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant awarded to Maryland in 2010 provided additional funding for five additional sites.

The Preschool for All sites were eventually renamed Preschool Services Grant and the pilot sites were required to meet ten standard quality benchmarks adopted by the Task Force on Universal Preschool Education and recommended by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University. These benchmarks include:

1. Curriculum standards. All programs must implement a state-recommended comprehensive curriculum; an MSDE approved individually developed curriculum or a local school system curriculum that aligns with the Maryland Early Learning Standards, created from the alignment of the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and Healthy Beginnings (birth to forty-eight months).

2. Teacher certification requirement. Lead teachers in both public school and private settings must meet state teacher certification standards for early childhood education.

3. Specialized training requirements for teachers. Pre-service requirements for lead teachers must include specialized training in early childhood education. Elementary teaching certificates alone will not qualify.

4. Assistant teacher degree requirement. Assistant teachers must hold a minimum of a high school diploma, but preferably a Child Development Associate's degree or equivalent training (corresponding to Level 4 in MSDE's Child Care Credentialing Program).

5. Teacher recertification requirement. Teachers must attend the specified number of hours of approved professional development per year to keep certification requirements current.

6. Maximum class size. Classroom sizes must be limited to no more than twenty children for four-year-olds and no more than sixteen children for three-year-olds.

7. Staff-child ratio. At least one staff member must be present per ten children in a classroom for four-year-olds and per eight children for three-year-olds.

8. Screening/referral requirements. Programs must provide screening and referral services for vision, hearing, general health, immunizations, and lead screening, as well as provide support services, such as parent training, parent involvement activities, and transition to kindergarten activities.

9. Meal requirements. All participants in full-day sessions must be offered at least one full meal per day, in accordance with the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

10. Monitoring. Each year, programs that receive grant funding from MSDE must conduct a self-evaluation to assess program quality—using the aforementioned quality indicators—and must report performance data to MSDE. Additionally, MSDE will conduct one on-site visit each year. Programs not meeting standards and in need of improvement must create a program improvement plan identifying the steps they will take to fulfill each standard. Additional site visits will be conducted to assess improvement and adherence to quality standards.

Programs were also asked to describe the nature of their partnership, how prekindergarten services will be provided as required by the Code of Maryland regulations (COMAR 13A.06.02), and how student progress and performance will be monitored and assessed.

Prekindergarten services include either a half-day (2½ hour) or full-day (6½ hour) session that meets five days a week in accordance with the official schedule of the school system's academic year. The funded partnerships with private providers demonstrated various program models and mechanisms through which services are implemented at a reduced cost to families. Those models include:

- An "integrated approach", eligible grant-funded children are placed in child care classrooms with tuition-paying children from the community;
- A "targeted approach" in which income-eligible and high needs children are placed in a single classroom and provided full-day services with a prekindergarten curriculum;

- A "Head Start add-on approach", a half-day prekindergarten session is added to a half-day Head Start session to create a full-day;
- A program for eligible Head Start children and a half-day program for some additional children who are eligible only for prekindergarten;
- A "Head Start/Prekindergarten blended approach" in which Head Start and prekindergarten funding are blended to provide a seamless full-day program for Head Start eligible children, including some three- year-olds; and
- A "Multi-age Montessori Charter approach" in which eligible three and four-year old children are placed in a carefully prepared Montessori environment that promotes learning in both the cognitive and social domains.

PREKINDERGARTEN EXPANSION

The Prekindergarten Expansion Grant was made possible by the Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014 (Senate Bill 332). This is a statewide initiative to expand access to half-day and full-day public prekindergarten for four-year-olds from families with household incomes at or below 300 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) for the school year 2014-2015. The grant also provided funding for the establishment of Judy Centers throughout Maryland serving children from birth through five years of age.

FEDERAL PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

In 2014, Maryland was awarded the Preschool Development Grant – Expansion Grant (PDG) from the United States Department of Education. Preschool Development Grants for expansion enabled states that already had robust state preschool programs or that had been awarded a Race to the Top — Early Learning Challenge Grant to expand the length of the day or serve more children. Maryland was awarded $15 million per year for a four-year period to expand high-quality prekindergarten. The grant also provided funding for 3,000 additional 4-year-olds that were enrolled in Pre-K programs beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. FY 2019 was the completion of the final year of the Preschool Development Grant.

The PDG provides the foundation for a collaborative approach across a mixed delivery system to serve 4-year-olds throughout the State. This grant has been awarded to public schools, Head Start, high quality child care, Montessori programs, and public charter schools.

The scope of Maryland's plan is statewide, thereby including many high-need communities in all regions of the state, but with a special emphasis on high-need communities in Baltimore City, especially by expanding the highly effective Judy Center comprehensive services model.

The plan uses communities with schools that have a 65 percent free and reduced meals (FARM) rate as the cut-off for determining prioritized needs, but it also intends to recruit income eligible four-year-olds into high-quality prekindergarten by using four additional needs assessment criteria:
·

- Elementary schools in school improvement (e.g., Focus or Priority schools); ·
- Subgrantees in jurisdictions with the highest number of income eligible four-year olds who are not enrolled in prekindergarten;
- Subgrantees in jurisdictions with high numbers of low-income and Hispanic four year-olds enrolled in informal care arrangements; and
- Subgrantees that provide specialized services for income-eligible four-year-olds who are medically fragile or need therapeutic nursery services.

Eligible programs must serve four-year-old children in a full-day setting at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines and meet the definition of a "High-Quality Preschool Program." The Preschool Development Grant also supports an expansion of the Judy Center comprehensive services model in Baltimore City and other counties around the State.

APPENDIX A

The following tables show expenditures in Fiscal Year 2019, pertaining to Early Education Grants.

VENDOR NAME	SCHOOL	STATE FUNDS	STATE PRE-K FUNDS	CCDF	FEDERAL PRE-K FUNDS	GRANT TOTALS
Allegany	Beall	330,000				330,000
	South Penn			330,000		330,000
Anne Arundel	Hilltop	330,000				330,000
	Belle Grove				175,000	175,000
Baltimore City	Dorothy Heights	330,000				330,000
	Moravia	330,000				330,000
	Lakeland	165,000			165,000	330,000
	Commodore John Rodgers				330,000	330,000
	Liberty				330,000	330,000
	Arundel				330,000	330,000
	Arlington				330,000	330,000
	Harford Heights				330,000	330,000
	John Ruhrah				330,000	330,000
	Curtis Bay				330,000	330,000
	Eutaw Marshburn				330,000	330,000
Baltimore County	Campfield			330,000		330,000
	Hawthorne				330,000	330,000
Calvert	Patuxent Appeal Campus	330,000				330,000

County	Site					Total
Caroline	Federalsburg		330,000			330,000
	Greensboro				330,000	330,000
Carroll	Taneytown	330,000				330,000
	Robert Moton	330,000				330,000
	Cranberry			330,000		330,000
	Elmer Wolfe			330,000		330,000
Cecil	Thomson Estates			330,000		330,000
Charles	Barnhart	188,040		80,000	61960	330,000
	Turner	330,000				330,000
	Mudd	330,000				330,000
Dorchester	Sandy Hill	322,000				322,000
Frederick	Lincoln & Waverly			330,000		330,000
Garrett	Friendsville Grantsville	330,000				330,000
	Crellin Yough Glades Broadford		330,000			330,000
Harford	Magnolia	322,000				322,000
Howard	Cradlerock	330,000				330,000
Kent	H.H. Garnet	330,000				330,000
Montgomery	Summit Hall Washington Grove	330,000				330,000
	Rolling Terrace	330,000				330,000
Prince George's	Adelphi	330,000				330,000
Queen Anne's	Suldersville	330,000				330,000
Somerset	Princess Anne		330,000			330,000

	Woodson				330,000	330,000
St. Mary's	Green Holly	330,000				330,000
	George Washington Carver			330,000		330,000
Talbot	Easton	330,000				330,000
Washington	Ruth Anne Monroe	322,360				322,360
Wicomico	Beaver Run	330,000				330,000
	Pemberton	330,000				330,000
Worcester	Snow Hill Pocomoke	330,000				330,000
		8,249,400	990,000	2,390,000	4,031,960	15,661,360
Grand Total All Funding Sources		8,249,400	990,000	2,390,000	4,031,960	15,661,360
					1,356	1,356
Adjusted Grant Total All Funding Sources		8,249,400	990,000	2,390,000	4,033,316	15,662,716

***NOGA SG171112-01 inadvertently closed before these expenditures were report. FY19 NOGA
 issued to cover costs of $1,356.**

COUNTY/ CITY	SUBGRANTEE NAME	FEDERAL PRE-K FUNDS	STATE PRE-K FUNDS	GRAND TOTALS
Community-Based Child Care				
Allegany	Allegany County HRDC Head Start	-	95,472	**95,472**
Anne Arundel	Wee Lad and Lassie Early Learning Center	-	101,471	**101,471**
Baltimore City	A World of Friends School, Inc	110,160	185,927	**296,087**
	Baltimore Montessori, Inc.	-	174,911	**174,911**
	Hearing and Speech Agency	-	183,600	**183,600**
	Kennedy Krieger Institute	-	181,221	**181,221**
	Little Flowers Early Childhood and Development Center	-	204,287	**204,287**
	St. Vincent de Paul Head Start	143,208	57,407	**200,615**
	Union Baptist Harvey Johnson Head Start	91,800	91,800	**183,600**
Baltimore	Catholic Charities Head Start	-	143,208	**143,208**
	Excellent Start Learning Center	-	220,320	**220,320**
	PACT Helping Children with Special Needs	-	235,710	**235,710**
	White Marsh Child Care Center	-	299,612	**299,612**
	Y of Central Maryland	854,720	-	**854,720**
Carroll	New Beginnings Christian Learning Center	-	226,319	**226,319**
Frederick	Children's Center of Walkersville	-	101,471	**101,471**
	Monocacy Montessori School	-	91,800	**91,800**
Howard	Community Action Council of Howard County MD, Inc.	984,096	-	**984,096**
Montgomery	Academy Child Development Center, Inc	-	367,200	**367,200**
	Alef Bet Montessori School	-	88,128	**88,128**

COUNTY/ CITY	SUBGRANTEE NAME			GRAND TOTALS
	Centronia, Inc	146,880	293,760	**440,640**
	Crossway Community Montessori School	-	73,440	**73,440**
	Gifted Child Resources, Inc.	-	233,663	**233,663**
	The Reginald Lourie Center for Social and Emotional Wellness	63,866	321,731	**385,597**
	Peppertree Children's Center	-	127,175	**127,175**
	Saint Francis International School	29,376	163,895	**193,271**
	The Arc of Montgomery County	-	152,931	**152,931**
Prince George's	Kiddie Academy of Oxon Hill	-	110,160	**110,160**
	Themba Creative Learning Center	-	204,287	**204,287**
Washington	Corporate Family Solutions	-	52,911	**52,911**
Wicomico	God's Little Angels Learning Ctr	-	146,880	**146,880**
Worcester	Berlin Education Station/Twisters	-	204,287	**204,287**
Community-Based Child Care Totals		**2,424,106**	**5,134,984**	**7,559,090**

COUNTY/ CITY	SUBGRANTEE NAME	FEDERAL PRE-K FUNDS	STATE PRE-K FUNDS	GRAND TOTALS
Local Boards of Education				
Allegany	Allegany County Public Schools	-	73,440	**73,440**
Baltimore City	Baltimore City Public Schools	1,101,600	73,440	**1,175,040**
Baltimore County	Baltimore County Public Schools	624,240	36,720	**660,960**
Caroline	Caroline County Public Schools	973,080	359,856	**1,332,936**
Carroll	Carroll County Public Schools	-	146,880	**146,880**
Charles	Charles County Public Schools	97,848	22,032	**119,880**
Dorchester	Dorchester County Public Schools	716,040	128,520	**844,560**

Frederick	Frederick County Public Schools	146,880	146,880	**293,760**
Garrett	Garrett County Public Schools	-	146,880	**146,880**
Harford	Harford County Public Schools	418,608	440,640	**859,248**
Howard	Howard County Public Schools	-	514,080	**514,080**
Montgomery	Montgomery County Public Schools	367,200	807,840	**1,175,040**
Prince George's	Prince George's County Public Schools	1,369,656	705,024	**2,074,680**
Queen Anne's	Queen Anne's County Public Schools	146,880	293,760	**440,640**
St. Mary's	St. Mary's County Public Schools	-	293,760	**293,760**
Somerset	Somerset County Public Schools	220,320	-	**220,320**
Talbot	Talbot County Public Schools	220,320	279,072	**499,392**
Washington	Washington County Public Schools	954,720	293,760	**1,248,480**
Wicomico	Wicomico County Board of Education	918,315	756,432	**1,674,747**
Local Boards of Education Totals		**8,275,707**	**5,519,016**	**13,794,723**
GRAND TOTALS		**10,699,813**	**10,654,000**	**21,353,813**

EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSESSMENT SUBGRANTEES	STATE FUNDS		
ALLEGANY CO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	15,300		
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	49,833		
BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	136,395		
BALTIMORE CO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	72,474		
CALVERT CO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	10,600		
CAROLINE CO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	15,085		
CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	18,051		
BOARD OF EDUCATION OF CECIL COUNTY	19,645		
CHARLES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	30,525		
DORCHESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	12,879		
FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	23,901		
GARRETT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION	5,886		
HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	25,280		
HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	31,341		
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY	1,262,982		
KENT CO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	7,730		
MONTGOMERY CO PUBLIC SCHOOLS	96,231		
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	106,425		
QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	14,679		
SOMERSET COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	8,889		
ST MARY'S COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	21,123		

TALBOT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	9,795		
WASHINGTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION	29,295		
WICOMICO COUNTY MARYLAND	21,384		
WORCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION	13,595		
GRAND TOTAL	**2,059,323**		
Professional Development Activity that benefited all counties in Maryland	**STATE FUNDS**	**FEDERAL PRE-K FUNDS**	**GRAND TOTALS**
Professional learning activities on practices to support principals and teachers with developmentally appropriate instruction and data analysis using assessment tools.	266,277	7,050	**273,327**
	266,277	**7,050**	**273,327**

APPENDIX B

Acronym Key

The following acronyms appear throughout this report.

COMAR – Code of Maryland Regulations

ECAC- Early Childhood Advisory Council

IEP – Individualized Education Program

IFSP – Individualized Family Service Plan

KRA – Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

LEA- Local Education Agency

MSDE – Maryland State Department of Education

MOU – Memoranda of Understanding

NAEYC – National Association for the Education of Young Children

NECPA – National Early Childhood Program Accreditation

NAFCC – National Association for Family Child Care

PDG – Preschool Development Grant