

**The Iowa Preschool Coalition**  
Iowa Association of Christian Schools |  
Iowa Association of School Boards |  
Iowa Catholic Conference |  
School Administrators of Iowa

# PRESCHOOL: SUCCESS **STARTS** HERE

High-quality public preschool is one of the best investments the public can make in education. Iowa's public and private schools have dramatically expanded access to high-quality preschools, thanks to the commitment of Iowans to this effort. **We support providing full funding for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for students at or below 185% of the federal poverty level.**

## Why Preschool Matters

### Learning gaps begin before kindergarten

A great preschool program can benefit any child. But early learning efforts are especially important to ensure the success of low-income students, who often start behind their more affluent peers.



**90%**

Before age five, 90% of a child's brain develops



**30 million**

Low-income children hear up to 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers before entering school



**Nine vs. 22**

By age five, a typical middle-class child recognizes 22 letters compared to nine for a child in a low-income family



**76%**

In households with children under the age of 6, 76% have all available parents working. This puts Iowa in the top 3 states for most available parents working (*United Way*).

*Adapted from the Annie E. Casey Foundation*

### **\$1 Spent = up to \$17 in Benefit**

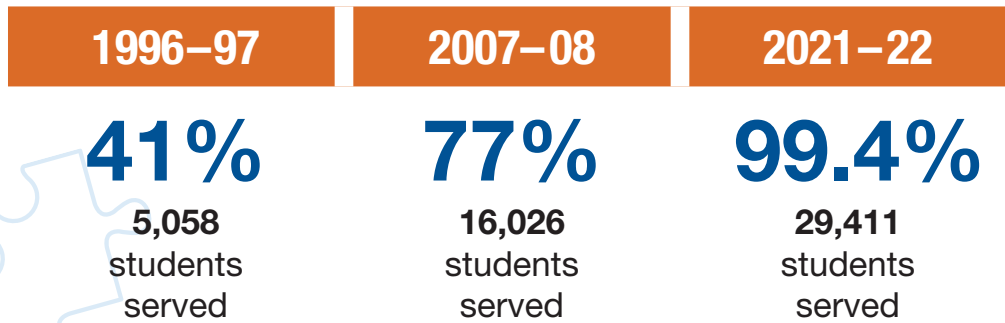
Children benefit from increased earnings in adulthood, while the public sees returns in the form of reduced special education, welfare, and crime costs, and increased tax revenues from participants later in life.

*Iowa Department of Education  
Statewide Voluntary Preschool  
Program for Four-Year-Old Children  
Fact Sheet—Fall 2021*



# Preschool in Iowa Schools: By the Numbers

## Percent of Iowa Districts Offering Preschool



*Annual Condition of Education Report, Iowa Department of Education, 2022*



## Community Support

# 293

community partners work with public school districts on Iowa's statewide voluntary preschool program

*Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children Fact Sheet—Fall 2021, Iowa Department of Education*

## How Iowa Ranks Nationally

**5<sup>th</sup>** in providing access to preschool for 4-year-olds

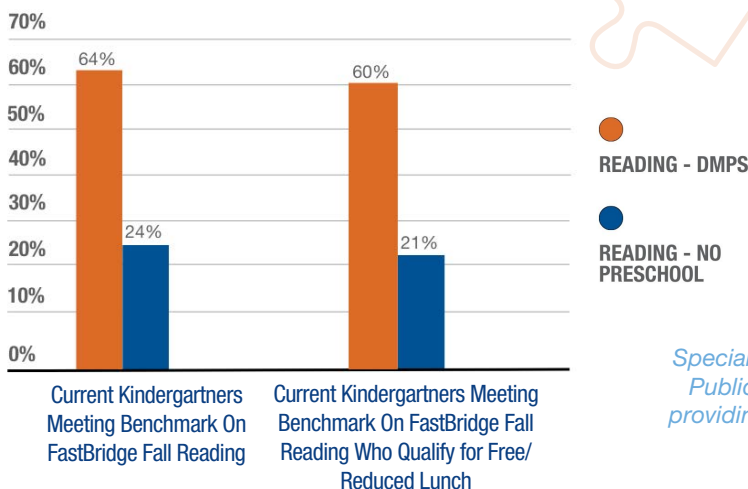
**39<sup>th</sup>** in state spending on preschool

More than **64%** of the state's 4-year-olds are served through two pre-K programs: Shared Visions and the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program

*"The State of Preschool 2022," National Institute of Early Childhood Research*

# Preschool Prepares Students for School and Success in the Future

## Reading Ready Kindergartners



*Special thanks to Des Moines Public Schools (DMPS) for providing their comprehensive student data*

## Fifth Graders Without Preschool Don't Catch Up

Reading: DMPS

39%

Reading: No Preschool

27%

Reading Ready Fifth Graders