

Annual Report on the

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION GRANT

FISCAL YEAR 2018

## Strategy 8

*Promote the importance of early learning and expand access to quality early learning experiences.*



Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs are an important investment in Ohio's youngest learners. Ohio has worked to increase the availability of high-quality early learning programs for preschool children by providing the Early Childhood Education grants. Funded programs deliver high-quality, comprehensive learning environments focused on healthy development and intellectual, social and emotional success. Research is clear: children who participate in high-quality early learning programs begin school better prepared for educational success.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

### FY2018 Programs

Number of state-funded grantees: 384

Number of site locations: 787

Total state funding: \$71,654,454

State-funded per-child amount: \$4,000

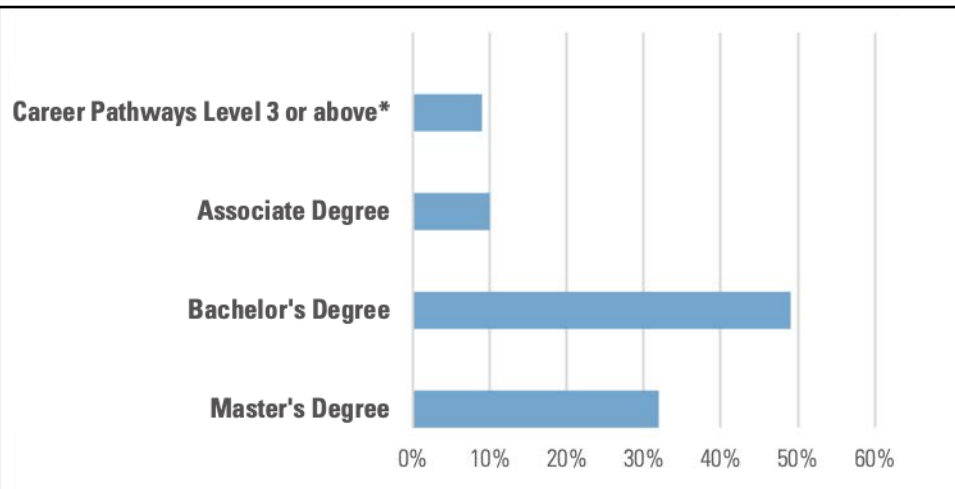
Total number of children funded: 17,913

In Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018), the number of Early Childhood Education grant-funded programs increased as a result of the \$71,654,454 investment in state funding. These funds allowed for a total of 384 state-funded grantees that serve 17,913 children. Eligible grantees included public school districts, educational service centers, joint vocational schools, community schools, chartered nonpublic schools and community-based child care providers receiving 3-, 4- or 5-star ratings in Ohio's quality rating system, Step Up To Quality. High-quality preschool programs were identified within each targeted high-needs community, invited to apply for new funding and selected based on a competitive process.

## TEACHER CREDENTIALS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Education programs must meet the teacher credential requirements in early childhood education or a field approved by the Ohio Department of Education. Teachers in Early Childhood Education programs are required to complete 20 hours of professional development every two years to increase their knowledge of current best practices to support children's learning.

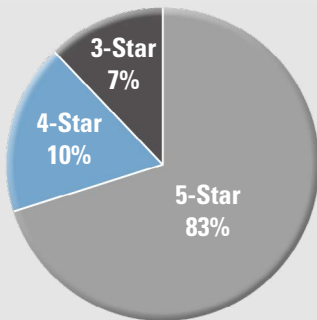
The chart illustrates the highest degree achieved by lead teachers in all Early Childhood Education programs.



\*Programs participating in Step Up To Quality can meet teacher credential requirements by using Ohio's Career Pathways in lieu of having associate or bachelor's degrees. The Career Pathways model recognizes a professional's years of experience, ongoing professional development and credentials in assigning a Career Pathways Level. Level 3 and above are recognized in highly-rated programs.

## STEP UP TO QUALITY

Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) is Ohio's tiered quality rating and improvement system for early learning and development programs. The purpose of the five-star system is to improve the quality of early learning and development programs by serving as a roadmap for continuous improvement efforts. All Early Childhood Education programs must participate in Step Up To Quality and meet high-quality program standards. The chart below illustrates the percentage of high-quality ratings for those programs currently participating in Step Up To Quality.



To view the program standards and learn more about Step Up To Quality, please visit [earlychildhoodohio.org](http://earlychildhoodohio.org).

## CHILD ASSESSMENTS

The experiences and opportunities afforded to children in the early years affect the knowledge, skills and dispositions they acquire before entering kindergarten. Children enter preschool at varying levels of development and with different early learning experiences. The Department requires Early Childhood Education programs to assess children to determine where they are in terms of growth and development toward kindergarten readiness. Children are assessed twice per year using Ohio's Early Learning Assessment.

The Early Learning Assessment is a comprehensive formative assessment used to assess children 36-72 months of age and aligns to Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards. The assessment includes 32 Learning Progressions in the areas of social foundations, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and physical well-being and motor development. Programs are required to report on 10 of these Learning Progressions.

Ohio's Early Learning Assessment aligns to Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, allowing the relationship between scores assigned in the Early Learning Assessment during preschool and kindergarten to be known across time.

## Sharing Success Stories

"One of our preschool students came to us not only with a lack of social skills and difficult behaviors but also a lack of daily life skills, including dressing and bathroom training. The first few weeks of school were difficult for the student, parent and staff. The staff, including the school psychologist and therapist, came together to support the mom by creating a plan to build social skills and consistency. As the year progressed, this student became more confident in dealing with social situations and big feelings. She became adept at controlling her behavior and found the confidence to begin to have positive interactions. Her mother wrote each staff member a letter at the end of the year thanking us for not giving up on her child. Due to the cost of preschool programs, this mother would not have had access to quality preschool. Without the ECE grant, this student would have likely entered kindergarten with significant social-emotional delays that would have affected her ability to learn."

**-Pam Roberts, Administrator  
Mad River Local School District**

"During our yearly vision, hearing and speech screening, we discovered a child who was having difficulty seeing clearly. We informed the child's mother, who immediately took him to the eye doctor for a vision test and ended up getting him glasses. Due to his vision, he was exhibiting some challenging behaviors, was unable to sit still for very long and had difficulty learning numbers, letters, colors and shapes.

Once he got his glasses, his teacher spent a lot of one-on-one time with him, working on skills that were previously difficult for him to master. He caught on very fast, and we got him to where he needed to be. His mother called us recently to give us an update on how he is doing. She said he is doing very well and is where he needs to be so that he can be successful in kindergarten."

**-Liz Ellis, Administrator  
Advanced Solutions for Education**

## PROGRAM MONITORING AND SUPPORT

In FY18, the Department provided support to Early Childhood Education programs to assure program requirements were met. A statewide technical assistance meeting, held in conjunction with Preschool Special Education programs, provided training to more than 400 participants. The meeting featured workshops on fiscal and program requirements, participation in Step Up To Quality, strategies to further local collaborations from a panel of successful grantees, and the use of multiple funding sources to provide both extended-day services and comprehensive services. A grantee webinar provided information on program updates and clarification on policy implementation. Using a risk-assessment matrix, Department staff identified grantees to participate in program monitoring, resulting in 38 on-site visits and 59 desk reviews. Staff also provided individualized technical assistance via conference calls and intensive technical assistance visits to programs in order to assure understanding of requirements and share suggestions and best practice around system and program policy development to support compliance.

### FY18 Children\*

Total Children Served: 18,150

Children served by age:

3-year-olds: 1,761

4-year-olds: 12,445

5-year-olds: 3,944

English language learners served: 523

Children with disabilities served: 1,708

*\*Programs are permitted to fill vacated spots with additional children throughout the year, thus accounting for a total number of children served that exceeds the total slots available statewide.*

## 3-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN SERVED

In FY18, Early Childhood Education programs that were unable to fill their allocated slots with 4-year-old children by Oct. 1, 2017, could submit applications to serve 3-year-old children. The Department approved a total of 170 programs to serve a total of 2,666 3-year-old children, with a total of 1,761 receiving service. To receive approval, programs had to explain their recruitment efforts, including working with other local early learning programs, and describe strategies used to locate hard-to-reach families with eligible 4-year-old children.



*This annual report meets the requirements of Section 263.20 of House Bill 49 (C), which says:*

*“The Department shall provide an annual report to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate and post the report to the Department’s web site, regarding early childhood education programs operated under this section and the early learning program standards.”*