

Executive  
Summary

# Title I Pre-K in Mississippi: Preliminary Report



**MISSISSIPPI**  
**FIRST**

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## Introduction

After Mississippi First published [Leaving Last in Line](#), our issue brief advocating for a collaborative method of providing pre-K services to four-year-olds using state dollars, we still had a lot of unanswered questions about current pre-K provision in our state's communities. For example, which providers offer full-day pre-K for four-year-olds? What qualifications do pre-K teachers hold? What type of curricula or assessments are providers using? What is the average cost-per-child of pre-K in Mississippi? What collaboration do providers engage in, if any?

In the absence of a state program for pre-K, no single agency, person, or group has compiled detailed information about provider practices. This report and its planned follow-up seek to clarify the practices of school districts using federal Title I dollars<sup>1</sup> to pay for pre-K. Our findings rely solely on school districts' FY2012 [Consolidated Federal Programs Applications \(CFPAs\)](#)<sup>2</sup> and FY2012 CFPA Budgets on file with the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Federal Programs.

## Results

**34% (51 of 152) of Mississippi school districts budgeted a combined \$12,419,196.40 in Title I dollars for pre-K services in the 2011-2012 school year.**<sup>3</sup> The table below contains descriptive statistics summarizing our findings for all school districts. For more detailed information, see the preliminary report as well as the spreadsheet of district-level information provided as an addendum to the report.

	Districts Using Title I for Pre-K	Districts Not Using Title I for Pre-K	TOTAL
Number of districts	51	101	152
Program Characteristics*			
Classroom-based Title I programs	48	--	48
School year	45	--	45
Summer	8	--	8
Combination	5	--	5
Blended Head Start	10	--	10
Classroom-based programs not paid for by Title I	6	19	25
School year	6	10	16
Summer	0	9	9
District-level pre-K staff	4	1	5
Transition Services	41	90	131
Extended School Year for entering Kindergarteners	2	2	4
Shared Professional Development	32	67	99
Curriculum Alignment	10	17	27
Head Start Onsite	4	18	22

\*Numbers reflect the number of districts with the given program characteristic.

<sup>1</sup> "Title I" refers to federal grant dollars allocated to schools and districts as part of Title I, Part A of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. For more about Title I, see <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> The CFPAs are the applications that each school district must complete to receive federal Title I and Title II dollars.

<sup>3</sup> Although both schools and districts receive Title I dollars, only district-level money can be used for pre-K.

## Preliminary Analysis

### 1. Widespread Provision of Classroom-based Pre-K

A total of 44% (67 of 152) of school districts provide classroom-based pre-K, whether during the school year or in the summer. 72% (48 of 67) of these districts do so with Title I dollars, while the remaining 28% (19 of 67) do so without Title I.

### 2. Existing Collaborative Efforts

Blended Head Start classrooms (10 districts) are a great example of public school-Head Start collaboration that meets the framework of Mississippi First's collaborative delivery model. We were also surprised by the number of districts (22) that host independent Head Start classrooms onsite at their elementary schools. Finally, a majority of districts engage in shared professional development and curriculum alignment with Head Start and childcare centers.

### 3. Cost-Per-Child and Cost-Per-Classroom

Cost-per-child and cost-per-classroom figures could be calculated only for districts that provided either their number of classes or their number of available spaces in their CFPAs. These calculations should be interpreted with extreme caution, as explained in the pages of the preliminary report. This information can be found on pages 18-19 of the report.

## Next Steps

In the next few months, Mississippi First intends to survey districts to give them an opportunity to confirm or clarify the results of this review as well as to provide more information about their programs. This work will commence in Fall 2012, with a tentative deadline of December 31, 2012. Once the survey data are finalized, we will write a new report to analyze our findings and offer recommendations.