



---

# Early Childhood Education

in Nebraska Public School Districts  
and Educational Service Units



**2013-2014 State Report**

---

Evaluation Report prepared by  
Barbara Jackson\*, Ph.D  
Interdisciplinary Center of Program Evaluation  
The University of Nebraska Medical Center's  
Munroe-Meyer Institute: A University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities

\*Supported (in part) by grant T73MC00023 from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and  
Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

\*Supported in part by grant 90DD0601 from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (ADD),  
Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services.

## SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S SUCCESS

The Nebraska Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program-Birth to Kindergarten (B to K) includes all children who are part of Nebraska public education programs that are supported through the blending of multiple funding sources. Operated by Nebraska public school districts (hereafter referred to as districts) or Educational Service Units (ESUs), comprehensive early childhood education programs support the learning and development of children B to K in home and center-based settings. Many full or half-day center-based programs are provided in partnership with community agencies.

Districts and ESUs serve children that represent a full range of abilities and disabilities and the social, linguistic, and economic diversity of families within the community. The purpose of the ECE Program is to provide high quality early childhood education experiences that assist children to reach their full potential and increase the likelihood of their later success in school.

The Early Childhood Education programs are responsive to Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) *Rule 11-Regulations for Early Childhood Programs*, *Rule 51-Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs*, *Rule 52-Regulations and Standards for the Provision of Early Intervention Services*, and the federal mandate of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C (birth to age three) and Part B-619 (ages three to five).

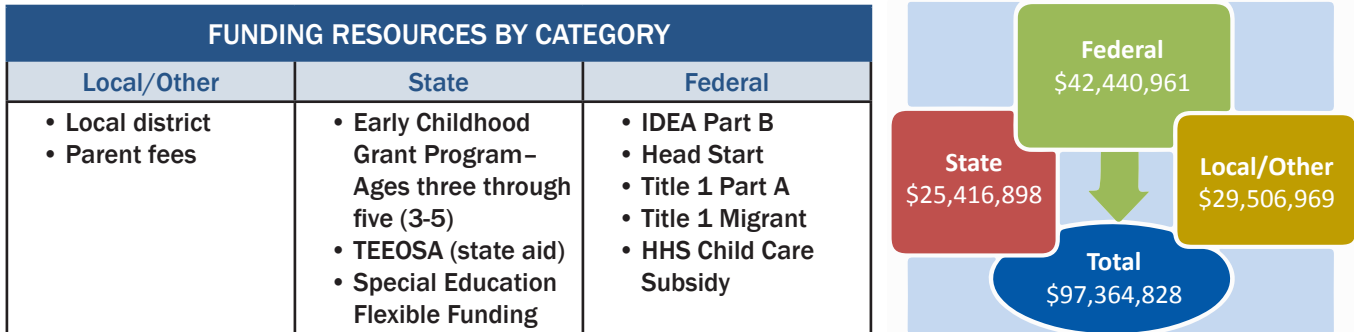
### PROGRAM FEATURES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO QUALITY

- ◆ Teachers must hold a Nebraska teaching certificate with an endorsement in early childhood education, early childhood special education, early childhood unified or early childhood along with any special education endorsement.
- ◆ Teachers in home-based early childhood Special Education programs under Rule 51 hold a Nebraska teaching certificate with an endorsement in early childhood education, early childhood special education, early childhood unified, or early childhood along with any special education endorsement.
- ◆ Districts and ESU's are required to use developmentally appropriate play-based curriculum and an observational assessment.
- ◆ Children with a range of abilities, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are to be served together.
- ◆ Programs must implement research based practices.
- ◆ Schools facilitate partnerships with families and among community entities.



## INTEGRATED FUNDS EXPAND EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Nebraska early childhood programs are funded through multiple sources. In 2013-2014 more than 97 million dollars supported programs for children age three to kindergarten entrance. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B federal funds accounted for the largest percentage (34%) of the total operating costs of the early childhood education programs. Local sources supported thirty percent (30%), and state Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Act (TEEOSA) accounted for 22 % of the total operating costs.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE

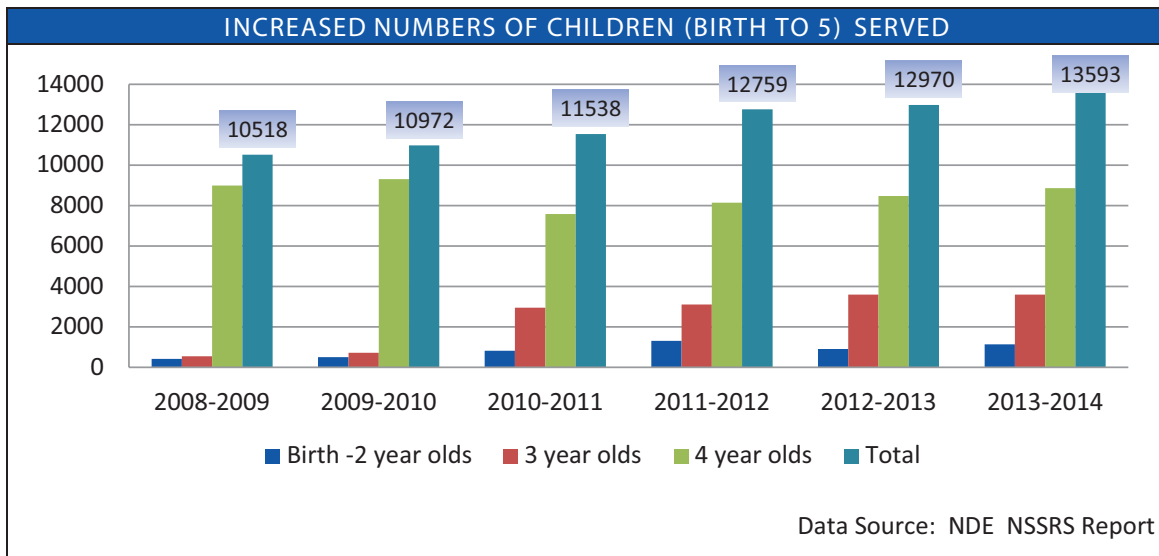
Districts and ESUs provided early childhood programs and services to 13,593 children, ages birth to five. A diverse population of children with respect to both ethnicity and race (42% of children served are members of a racial minority) and language (14% of children are English language learners) were served. Children who are Hispanic represented the largest minority group (24%). In addition, slightly over half of the children came from families with low incomes. This was indicated by eligibility for free or reduced lunch (FRL). Twenty-six percent (26%) had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). One hundred ninety-four (194) districts, alone or in conjunction with an ESU, offered one or more center-based classrooms for ages three to five.

Sixpence programs provided services in 25 school districts. Districts who implemented Sixpence used one of the three models: family engagement services (17), center-based infant/toddler care (6), or a combination of the two (2). Family engagement services included weekly individualized sessions in the family's home.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF CHILDREN SERVED					
	Minority %	FRL %	ELL %	IEPs or IFSPS %	Total Served
All Children Served (Birth – 5)	42%	52%	14%	26%	13,593

Data Source: NDE NSSRS Report

Overall there has been a 29% increase in the number of children served since 2008. In addition, there was a steady increase of infants, toddlers, and three year olds who have received services. There was a large increase (26%) of infants and toddlers served in 2013-2014 year, due to increased funding of Sixpence programs. There was a five percent (5%) increase in 4-year-olds served during the same time period.



## RESULTS MATTER IN NEBRASKA: A COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

*Results Matter in Nebraska* is a child, family, and program outcomes measurement system designed and implemented to improve programs and supports for all young children birth to age five, served through school districts, ESUs, the Early Development Network and community partners, which may include Head Start and other community early childhood programs. The system uses child, family, and program outcomes data to impact early childhood program practices and policy.



The purpose of *Results Matter* is to:

- ◆ Improve experiences, learning, development, and lives of young children and their families.
- ◆ Inform program practices.
  - ◆ Demonstrate program effectiveness.
  - ◆ Guide the development of local and state policies and procedures.
  - ◆ Provide data to demonstrate results.

The central outcomes of *Results Matter* indicate that:

- ◆ The use of ongoing child and program quality assessment is becoming a standard practice in programs.
- ◆ Decisions regarding instruction and intervention are better informed by data.

The benefits of *Results Matter* are:

- ◆ Increased depth of understanding of child development.
- ◆ Increased awareness of the link between curriculum, assessment and child outcomes.
- ◆ Improved communication with families.
- ◆ Increased use of technology.
- ◆ Improved program quality.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Quality early childhood education programs have been linked to immediate, positive developmental outcomes, as well as long-term positive academic outcomes (Campbell & Pungello, 2012). Nebraska promotes quality programs through ongoing training and technical assistance.

Nebraska measures program quality through onsite observations and a self-assessment process. All district operated programs completed a self-assessment in a percentage of classrooms as outlined by the Results Matter Nebraska Technical Assistance Document. Self-assessments were completed by program observers who have participated in training. Each year NDE determines a small subset of ECE classrooms for onsite observation. Only findings from assessments completed by an approved outside observer were included in this report. Both the self-assessments and the onsite observations completed by approved observers used standardized rating scales to determine program quality. The rating scales measured how the classroom environment supported children's physical, cognitive, social-emotional, language and literacy development.

For Sixpence programs only, the programs were initially evaluated with an environment rating scale. Once criteria are met, observations of specific instructional practices are assessed in the following year. A formal evaluation of the quality of Sixpence home-visiting was completed by an evaluator trained to reliability.

## QUALITY MEASURES FOR INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS

The *Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R)* was used to evaluate the overall quality of the Sixpence classrooms. The ITERS-R is an observational assessment of 39 items across seven subscales. The items are designed to assess the quality of center-based programs for children birth to 2½ years of age. The state standard of quality is a rating of five across all seven areas. The *ITERS* rates seven areas: space and furnishings, personal care routines, listening and talking, activities, interaction, program structure, and parents and staff.

Nine Sixpence classrooms were observed. The results were:

- ◆ 100% of the 7 classrooms had an overall program score above a 5.
- ◆ 66% met the state standard in all seven areas.
- ◆ The program strengths were in the areas of *Listening and Talking* (6.37), *Program Structure* (6.78) and *Interaction* (6.72).
- ◆ The most challenging area was in *Personal Care Routines* (4.50).
- ◆ The overall average rating was 6.03 (ranging from 4.5-6.78).

The *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)-Toddler* and *CLASS-Infant* were used to evaluate the overall quality of the Sixpence classrooms that had met the set criteria for quality on the *ITERS-R* in previous years. The *CLASS-Toddler* is an observational assessment with seven dimensions across two domains, Emotional Support and Instructional Support. The *CLASS-Infant* has four dimensions and in one domain, Supportive Caregiving. The *CLASS* is based on a 7 point scale. No state standard has been set at this time. The results of observations from 11 classrooms found:

- ◆ The overall average for Toddler classrooms for Emotional Support was 6.43 (6.10-6.90) and for Instructional Support was 4.01 (3.58-4.58).
- ◆ 100% of the classrooms had a score of 6 or higher on Emotional Support.
- ◆ The overall average for the Infant classrooms for Supportive Care was 5.92 (5.44-6.56).
- ◆ 60% of the classrooms had a score of 4 or higher on Instructional Support.

### ASSESSMENTS FOR INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS:

#### ITERS-R Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale- Revised

*Authors: Harms, Cryer &  
Clifford, 2006*

#### CLASS - Toddler Classroom Assessment Scoring System

*Authors: Pianta, Paro &  
Hamre, 2012*

#### HoVRS-A Home Visit Rating Scale

*Authors: Roggman, Cook, et  
al, 2008*

The *Home Visit Rating Scales-A (HoVRS-A)* is designed to assess the quality of family engagement sessions from a video of a direct observation. The measure includes seven items that are collapsed into two scales for the purposes of analysis. The scales are based on a 7 point scale. Twenty-four Sixpence home visitors were rated.

- ◆ The family educators were effective in their practice as evidenced by the engagement of the parent and child (5.96) in the session, with their instruction to parents rated slightly lower (5.33). Scores reflect high quality practices.
- ◆ The greatest strengths of the family educators were their skills in establishing positive relationships with the family, and the use of collaborative and non-intrusive strategies.

## QUALITY MEASURES FOR PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

The *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R)* was used to evaluate the overall quality of the classrooms. The *ECERS-R* is an observational assessment of 43 items across seven subscales designed to assess group programs for children 2½ - 5 years of age. The state standard of quality is an overall program score of at least a five and a score of at least a five on each of the seven subsections. The *ECERS-R* subscales are: space and furnishings, personal care routines, language and reasoning, activities, interaction, program structure, and parents and staff. A total of 355 classroom observations and self-reports were completed. A total of 32 (9%) were completed by approved observers.

- ◆ 53% of the 32 classrooms had an overall program score of 5 or higher.
- ◆ 13% met the state standard in all seven areas.
- ◆ 19% met the state standard in six of the seven areas.
- ◆ Program strengths were in the areas of Interactions (6.13), Parents and Staff (6.37), and Program Structure (5.84).
- ◆ The area that was most challenging for programs was Personal Care Routines (3.80).
- ◆ The overall average rating was 5.00 (ranging from 3.54-6.31).

### PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS ASSESSMENT

#### ECERS-R Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- Revised

*Authors: Harms, Cryer &  
Clifford, 2005*

The percentage of classrooms that met the standards of quality are lower than in previous years. For the 2013-14 program year, classrooms that had low ECERS-R self-assessment scores during the previous year were chosen for an outside observation and technical assistance as part of the quality improvement effort. In previous years, classrooms were chosen randomly. This change in selection procedures may have influenced the aggregated program quality results.



## CHILD OUTCOMES

Early Childhood programs are informed by ongoing systematic, formal, and informal assessment approaches that provide teachers with information about children's learning and development. Teaching Strategies (TS) GOLD®, a research-based, observational assessment system was selected by NDE for use in district and ESU early childhood programs. This selection was based on the recommendation of the state level Results Matter Task Force.

### ONLINE ASSESSMENT FOR CHILD OUTCOMES:

**TS GOLD®**  
**Teaching Strategies GOLD®**

*Publisher: Teaching  
Strategies, Inc.*

## ASSESSMENT PROCESS

TS GOLD® data can be analyzed in multiple ways. This report will summarize data by six areas of development and learning or functional outcomes.

The three functional outcomes are:

- ◆ **Outcome A:** Children have positive social skills including positive social relationships.  
Positive social relationships involve relating with adults and other children, and for older children, following rules related to groups or interacting with others. This outcome includes attachment, expressing emotions and feelings, learning rules and expectations, and social interactions and play.
- ◆ **Outcome B:** Children acquire and use knowledge and skills including language/communication.  
Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills involves thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving, using symbols and language, and understanding physical and social worlds. This outcome includes early concepts such as symbols, pictures, numbers, classification, spatial relationships, imitation, object permanence, and language skills.
- ◆ **Outcome C:** Children take appropriate action to meet needs (e.g., self-help and initiative).  
Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs involves taking care of basic needs, getting from place to place, using tools, and for older children contributing to their own health and safety. This outcome includes integrating motor skills to complete tasks and self-help skills (dressing, feeding, grooming, toileting, and household responsibility).

The functional outcome areas cross developmental domains, reflecting the integration and progression of child development and learning. Child outcomes reflect the child's ability to be successful in the context of everyday living.

The areas of development and learning are:

- ◆ **Social-Emotional:** Regulating emotions and building relationships with others.
- ◆ **Cognitive:** Demonstrates positive approaches to learning, classification skills, and uses representational skills.
- ◆ **Language:** Learns to understand and use words/gestures to effectively communicate.
- ◆ **Physical:** Demonstrates traveling, balancing, and coordinated physical manipulation skills.
- ◆ **Literacy:** Engages in emergent reading and writing behaviors.
- ◆ **Mathematics:** Explores spatial relationships and demonstrates knowledge of patterns and number concepts.

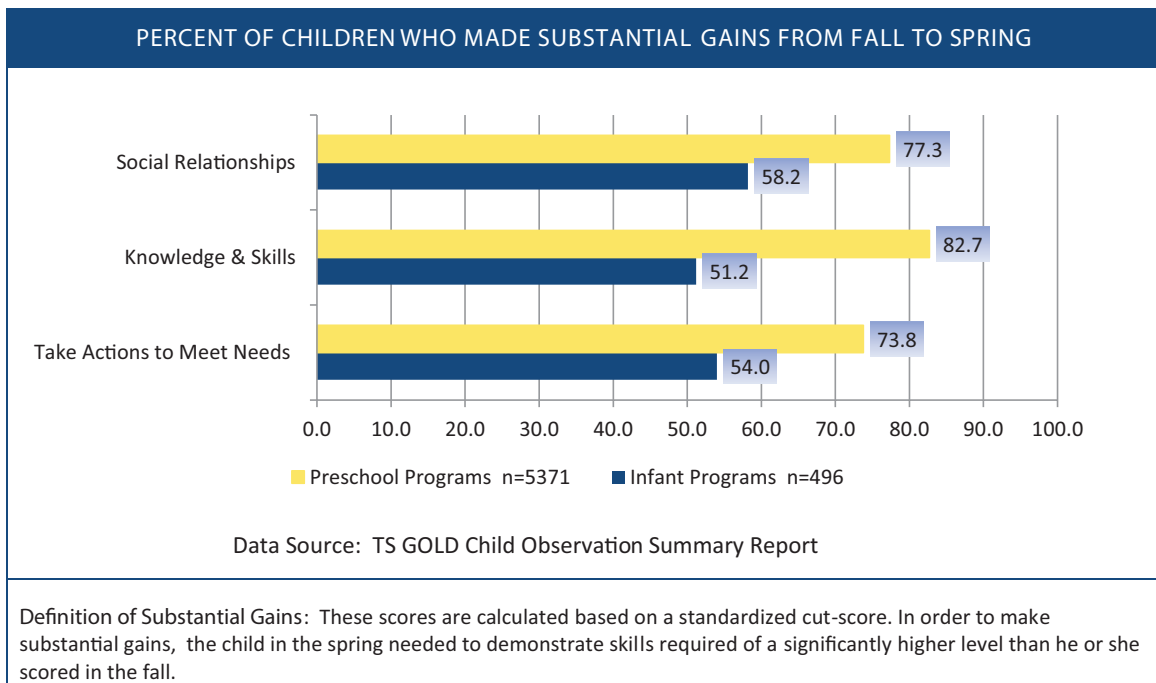
TS GOLD® data is collected on an ongoing basis for all children B-5 served by school districts or ESUs. TS GOLD® is an observation-based child assessment system, which means that children are observed as they engage in everyday routines and activities, with people they know, across a variety of settings. The skills, abilities and knowledge are documented from multiple sources using a variety of methods, including photos, recordings, anecdotes, and/or samples of the children's work. Child documentation is gathered throughout the year, and the data is finalized at three checkpoints: Fall, Winter and Spring. The ongoing progress data is used by teachers and programs to inform and improve instruction – to tailor and adjust curriculum and activities to scaffold learning to meet the needs of individual children and groups of children.



NDE uses TS GOLD® data for state and federal reporting purposes. Fall and Spring checkpoint data is analyzed and used to monitor district progress toward achieving widely-held expectations across the three outcomes. To meet annual reporting requirements of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), child program entry and exit checkpoint data is analyzed to determine if NDE’s annual targets are being met for the three outcomes. Data for NDE’s Part B and Part C Annual Performance Reports (APRs) is reported for children with IEPs or IFSPs. In order to be included in the APR, the child must have exited during that year; have complete entry and exit data; and have been in the program for at least six months.

## PERCENT OF CHILDREN WHO MADE SUBSTANTIAL GAINS

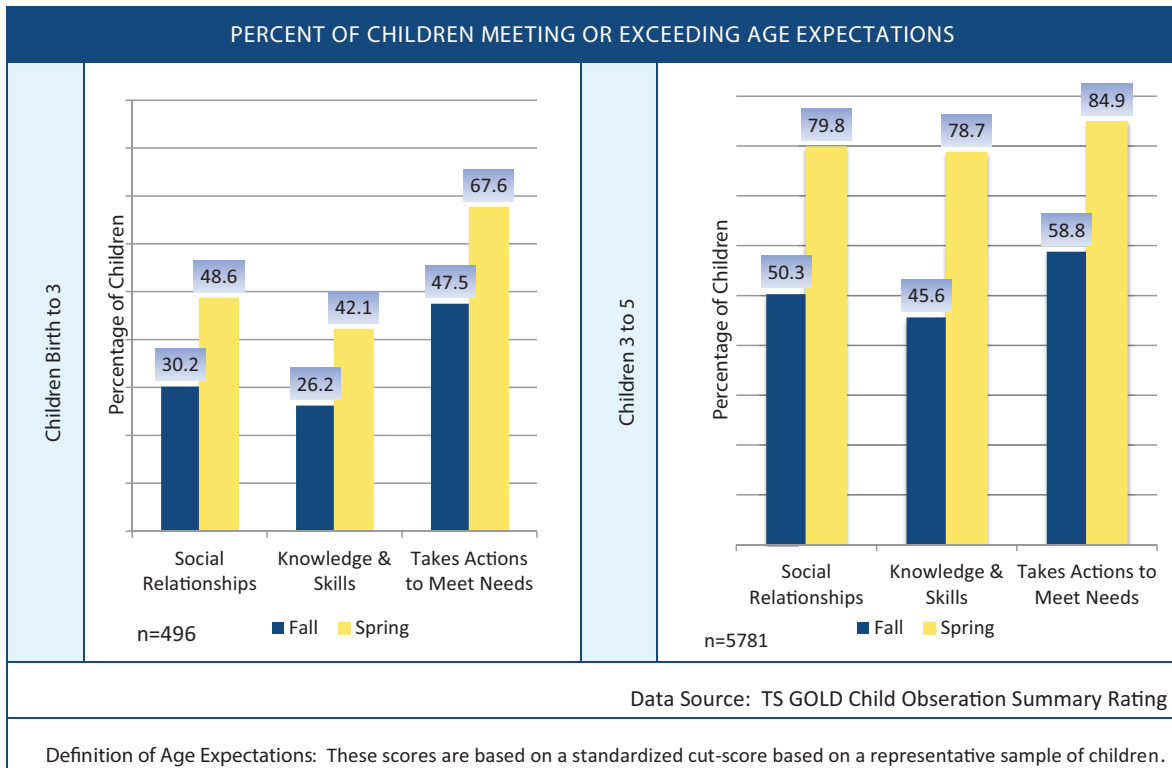
A total of 13,471 children had assessments completed in the TS GOLD® online system during 2013-2014. In order to determine the degree children made substantial gains, both fall and spring checkpoints must have been completed for the child. Substantial gains are calculated based on a standardized cut-score. In order to make substantial gains, in the spring the child must have demonstrated skills required of a significantly higher level than he or she scored in the fall. Fewer (6,277) children had assessments in both time periods. For preschool children, high percentages across programs demonstrated substantial gains in each of the functional outcomes. Fewer infants and toddlers demonstrated substantial gains. It is anticipated that this growth represented by making substantial gains will help to narrow the gap between children at risk<sup>1</sup> or children with an IFSP or IEP and their typically developing peers. The greatest growth for preschool children was in the area of knowledge and skills, for infants and toddlers it was in social relationships. The infant and toddlers primarily represent children at-risk in the Sixpence program.



<sup>1</sup> - Throughout this report, “children at risk” is defined as children whose family income qualifies them for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) program and/or children who reside in a home where English is not the primary language.

## PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN WITHIN AGE EXPECTATIONS

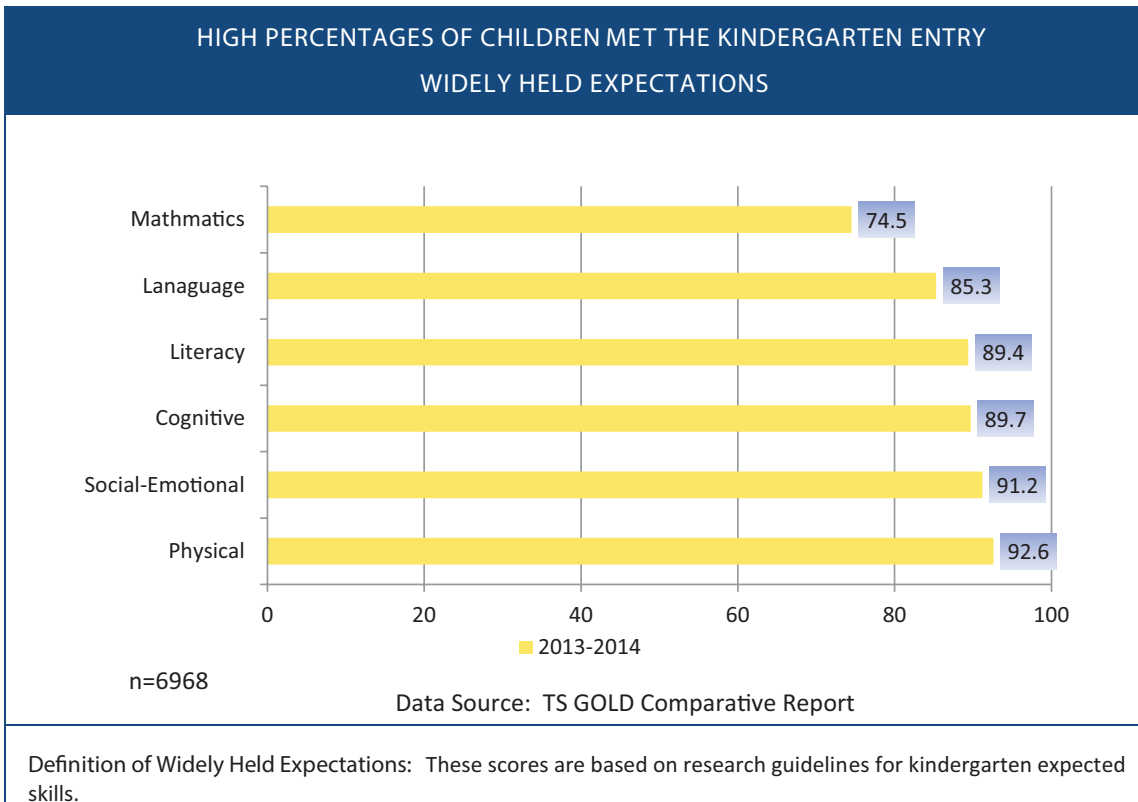
TS GOLD® Child Summary Observation Rating identifies those children that demonstrate skills that are within age expectations. Age expectations are based on a standardized cut-score based on a representative sample of children. The percent of children that were within age expectations was compared both during the fall and spring assessments. For preschool children, fewer children met expectations in the area of knowledge and skills in the fall, yet in the spring this area had the largest increase in the percentage of children meeting expectations. For infants and toddlers, the greatest gains were made in the area of takes actions to meet needs. Of the 6,277 children assessed, 37% had an IEP or IFSP.



## PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN WHO WERE ELIGIBLE FOR KINDERGARTEN IN 2014-2015

In order to evaluate the performance of children who were eligible for kindergarten in the fall 2014, data was analyzed based on six developmental domains. These domains parallel those found in the assessment metric for school age children.

A total of 6,968 children were assessed using TS GOLD® in the spring prior to their entrance into kindergarten. The results found that the highest percentage of children met widely held expectations in the areas of *physical development* and *literacy* with fewer children meeting these widely held expectations in *mathematics*.



## REPORTING CHILD OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH AN IFSP OR IEP

In addition to the NDE annual Early Childhood Education State report, OSEP requires NDE to annually report child outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities (IDEA Part C, ages Birth to 3) and preschoolers with disabilities (IDEA Part B, ages 3-5). The NDE Annual Performance Reports to OSEP include the number and percentage of children who: 1) showed greater than expected growth and 2) who function within age expectations.

Each year the results are compared to state targets. The chart below shows the status of children who completed the program between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014.

MEASURABLE AND RIGOROUS TARGETS/ACTUAL DATA FOR CHILDREN COMPLETING THE PROGRAM IN 2013-14				
	Part C n=707		Part B n=1638	
	Targets (% of children)	Actual (% of children)	Targets (% of children)	Actual (% of children)
<b>Outcome A: Positive social relationships</b>				
Summary Statement 1: Showed greater than expected growth	71.9%	59.5%	64.6%	80.1%
Summary Statement 2: Exited the program within age expectations	75.1 %	33.0%	74.4%	73.1%
<b>Outcome B: Knowledge and skills</b>				
Summary Statement 1: Showed greater than expected growth	62.2%	50.7%	62.4%	81.2%
Summary Statement 2: Exited the program within age expectations	71.8%	29.3%	62.8%	73.0%
<b>Outcome C: Take appropriate actions to meet needs</b>				
Summary Statement 1: Showed greater than expected growth	75.3%	79.7%	65.2%	81.6%
Summary Statement 2: Exited the program within age expectations	70.4%	54.0%	76.0%	77.4%

The results of the child OSEP outcomes data for the preschool children (ages 3-5) showed that Nebraska met all of its targets, with the exception of children meeting age expectations in the area of positive social relationships. Nebraska results were slightly under the proposed target.

During the last two years, Part C data showed results quite discrepant from previous years. Summary Statement 1 and Summary Statement 2 results were significantly lower than in previous years. Nebraska only met its target in Summary Statement 1 in the area of taking appropriate actions to meet needs. The hypothesis for this decrease is that 2012-13 was the first year child outcomes were based only on TS GOLD® entry and exit data. Prior to that, outcomes data were based on data from the three assessment systems previously used. Since Nebraska is now using GOLD® as its single statewide assessment system, new targets will need to be established for the 2014-2015. By 2014-15, Nebraska will have child outcomes data from two full years of statewide GOLD® implementation from which to base its new targets.

## LONGITUDINAL STUDENT OUTCOMES

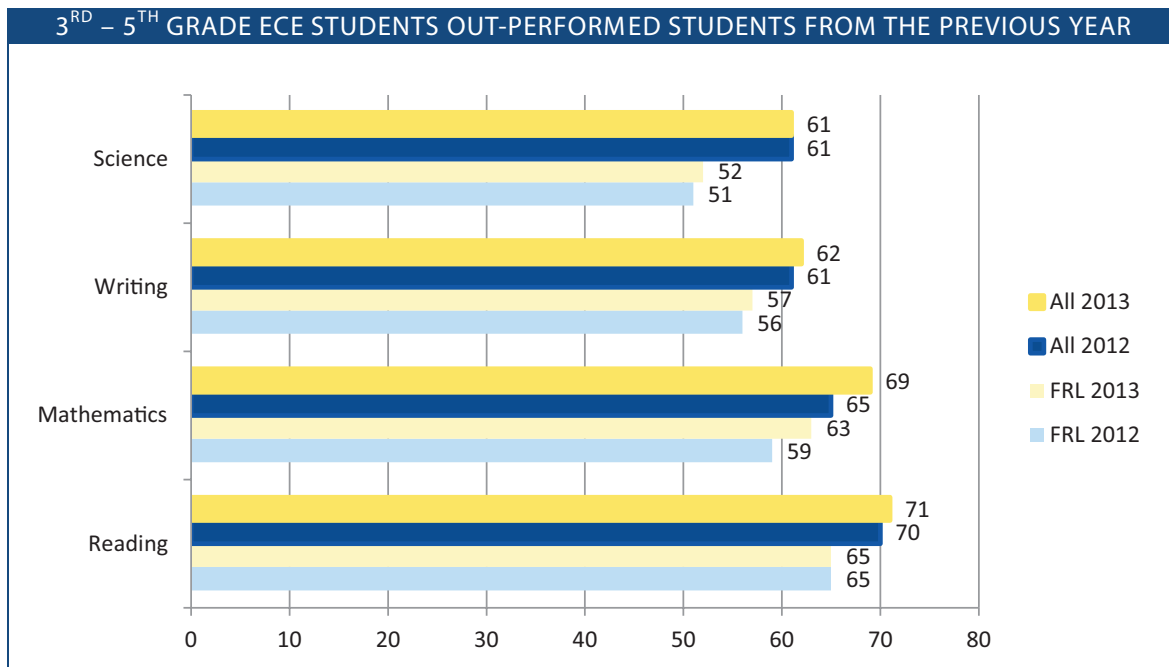
The Nebraska Early Childhood Education Program is designed to provide high quality educational experiences to positively impact the long-term outcomes including success in school. Based on the targeted population, characterized as “at-risk”, the goal is to have students achieve at academic levels comparable to or higher than the classroom peers who did not participate in district ECE programs. The longitudinal data reported in this section includes 18,381 students who were in grades 3 or above during this program year and had attended a district or ESU early childhood center- or home-based program prior to kindergarten. Of that group, 64% continued to qualify for free or reduced lunch and of this subgroup, 53% qualify for free lunch. It is important to note that of the total public school population within Nebraska, approximately 45% of the students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch with 36% qualifying for free lunch.

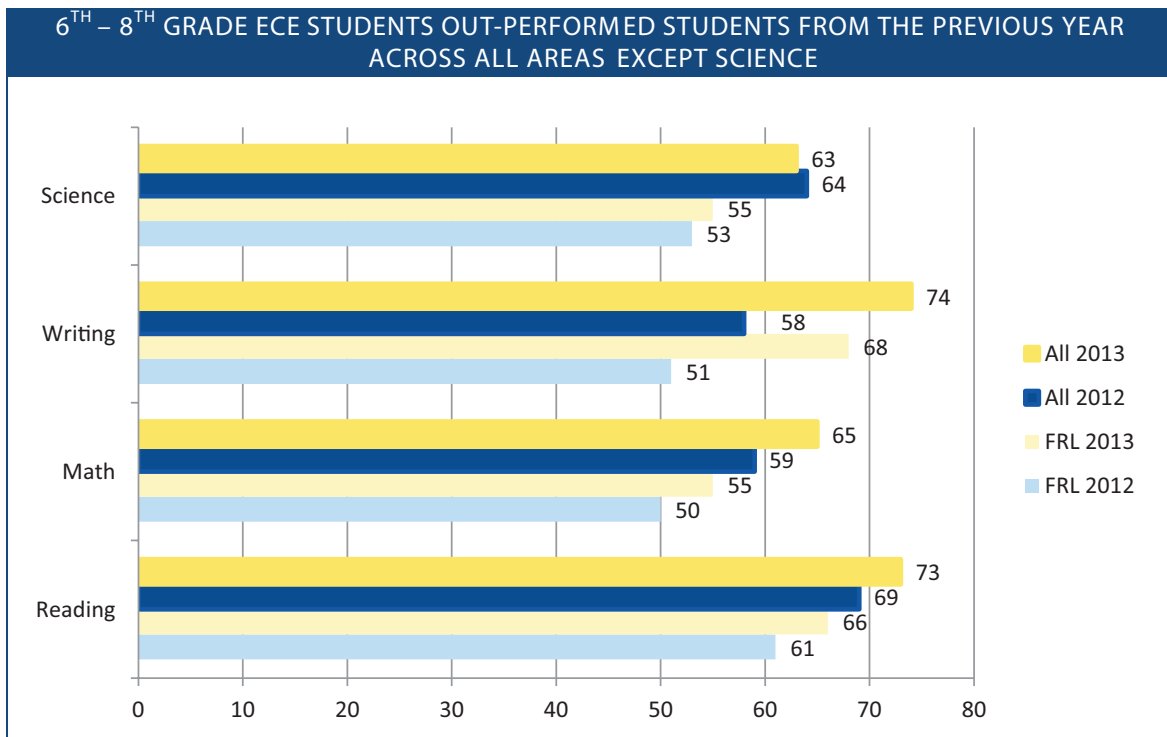
### PERCENT OF STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STATE STANDARDS

Nebraska Statewide Assessment (NeSA) reading and math tests were administered in grades 3 through 8 and 11. NeSA writing tests were administered in grades 4, 8, and 11. The Nebraska Statewide Assessment in science was administered in grades 5, 8, and 11. Few former Early Childhood Education students who were in 11th grade during this program year (75) were assessed, so those analyses were omitted from this summary. The following section will summarize two different comparisons: 1) ECE student progress on NESA data from the 2012 and 2013 years and 2) students with an ECE experience to the school age population as a whole.

#### ECE STUDENT PROGRESS ON NESA DATA ACROSS TWO YEARS: FYY2012 AND FYY2013

The percentage of students with ECE experience that were proficient on NESA assessments were compared across a two year period. In almost all areas, higher percentages of students who were in 3rd through 5th grade during this program year were proficient in 2103 than in 2012. The percentages of former early childhood education students who were proficient in 6th through 8th grade showed greater variability.

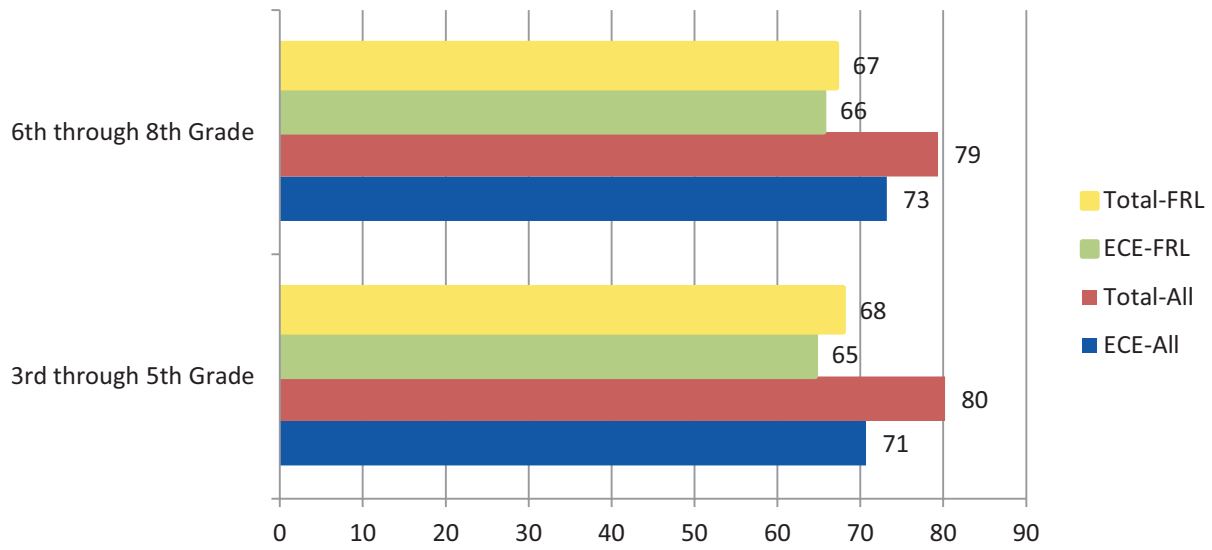




**COMPARISONS OF STUDENTS WITH AN ECE EXPERIENCE TO THEIR PEERS**

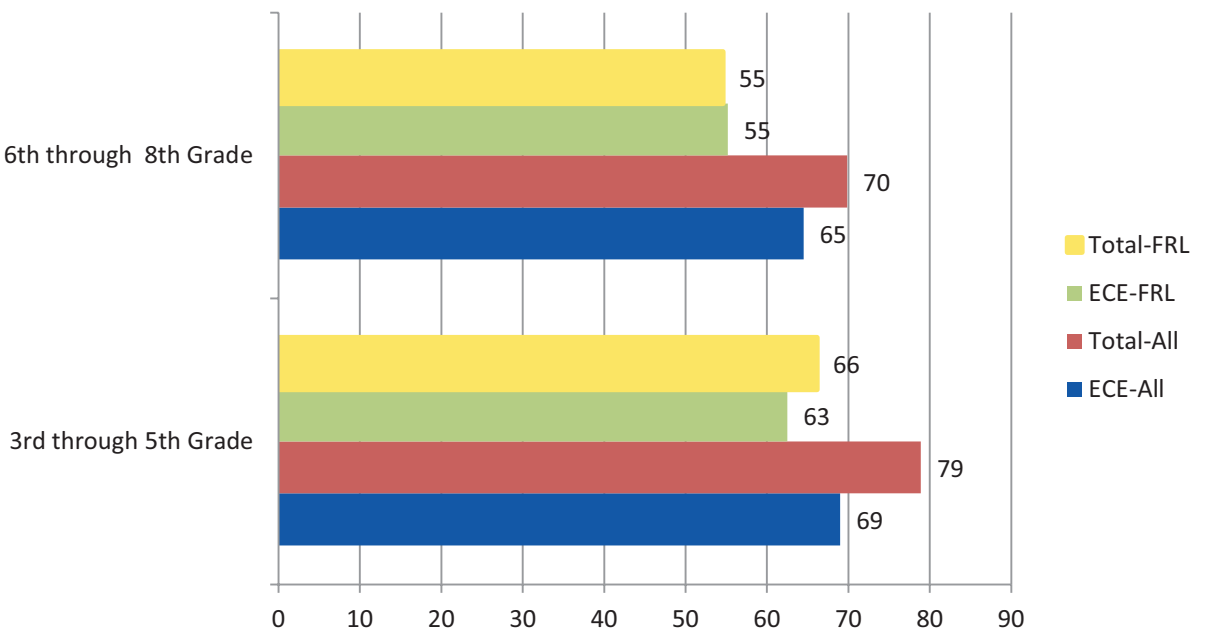
Comparisons were also made between students who had attended a district or ESU ECE program to the overall student results (with the ECE students removed). These comparisons were made for all students, and students who were low income. Low income was determined by eligibility for free or reduced price lunch. The results found the majority of the students in all grade levels met or exceeded the state standard. Fewer ECE students who were eligible for FRL met or exceed the state standard. In most areas the peers out-performed students with ECE experience. The Nebraska student population as a whole has fewer students eligible for either free or reduced lunch than the population of students who were former ECE students. The increased percentage of students in the ECE group that were eligible for free lunch may have influenced these findings. Additionally, while not presented on the following charts, the former ECE students had higher percentages of students with disabilities, and children who were English language learners. As a result, interpretation of the findings needs to be made with caution as the two groups are substantially different.

**PERCENT OF STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STATE STANDARDS IN READING**



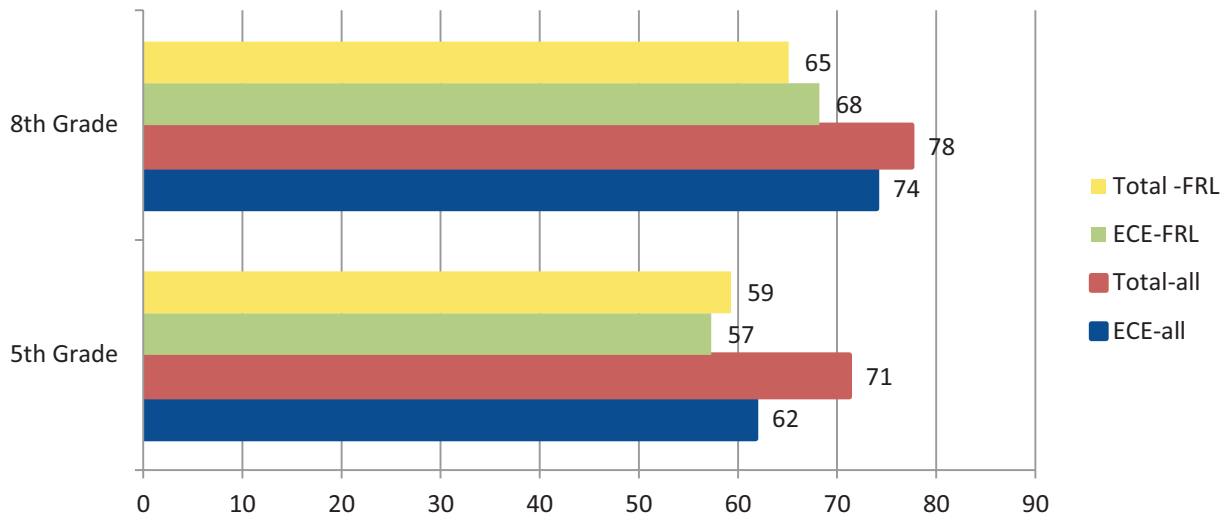
# of Children Assessed	3 <sup>rd</sup> through 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
All ECE Children	16549	1699
ECE Children: FRL	10683	1063

**PERCENT OF STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STATE STANDARDS IN MATHEMATICS**



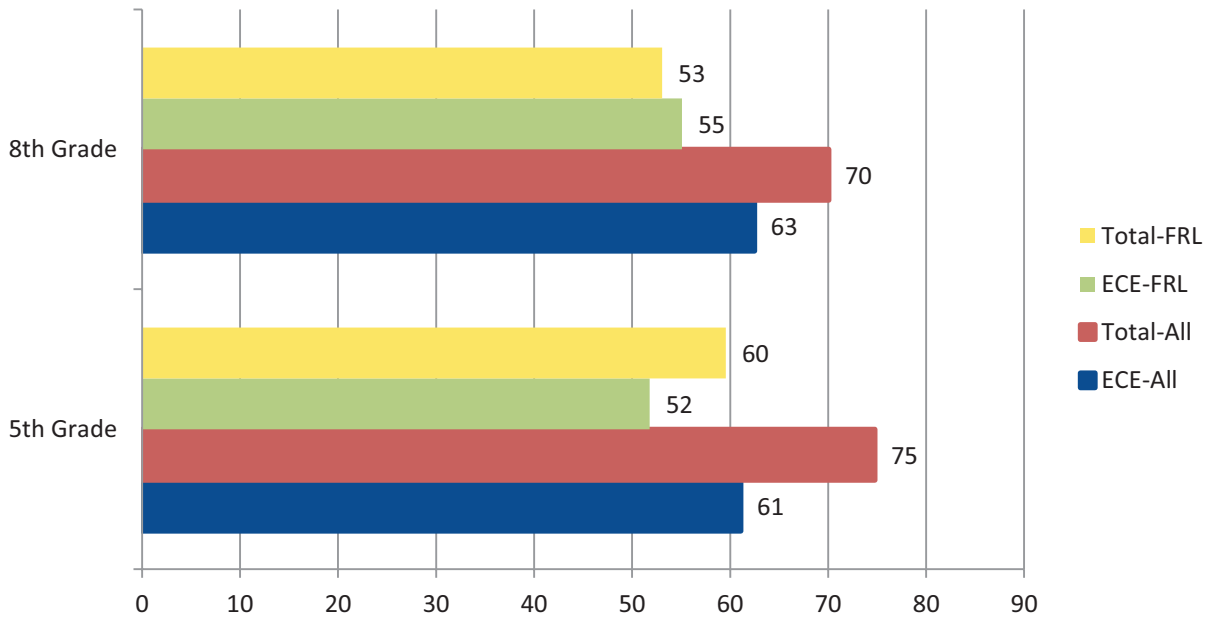
# of Children Assessed	3 <sup>rd</sup> through 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
All ECE Children	16548	1699
ECE Children: FRL	10689	1063

PERCENT OF STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STATE STANDARDS IN WRITING



# of Children Assessed	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
All ECE Children	5516	384
ECE Children: FRL	3574	242

PERCENT OF STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STATE STANDARDS IN SCIENCE



# of Children Assessed	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
All ECE Children	4503	392
ECE Children: FRL	2946	247



## FAMILY OUTCOMES

Data has been collected to assess the impact of infant and toddler programs whose primary focus is family engagement. Research has shown family engagement is a strategy to support children's development.

### IDEA PART C

---

OSEP requires monitoring of family outcomes for infants and toddlers with disabilities. Three outcomes have been identified for families who have a child with an IFSP. They include the percent of families participating in Part C who report that early intervention services have helped the family in the following ways:

- ◆ Know their rights;
- ◆ Effectively communicate their children's needs; and
- ◆ Help their children develop and learn.

Each year families are asked to complete a family survey. A total of 1,065 surveys were completed with a return rate of 67.7%. Data was analyzed and compared against state determined targets. The results found that the state met or exceeded all targets.

### SIXPENCE

---

For children and families participating in the Sixpence programs, family outcomes focused on parent-child interaction and the degree to which the home environment supports development and provides emotional support. Results found that participation in Sixpence positively impacted families. Parents with low scores on a measure of the home environment that promotes cognitive and emotional support for their child demonstrated significant increases in skills. Parents whose scores were high on these measures, maintained high quality environments and interaction skills throughout the time the family was enrolled in a Sixpence program. Sixpence programs made a significant impact on parent-child interaction. Parents had a strong relationship with their children and demonstrated significant improvements in supporting their children's learning and self-confidence. Parents who were either associated with lower risk factors (<3) or were served more than one year demonstrated the highest level of parenting skills. The full report of these findings is posted at: <http://www.singasongofsixpence.org/>.

## FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

---

- ◆ The majority of the infant/toddler classrooms were of high quality and met the state standard for quality.
- ◆ Preschool classrooms were evaluated as part of a continuous improvement process with technical assistance provided to improve quality.
- ◆ Home-based programs were of high quality with family educators establishing positive family engagement.

### CHILD OUTCOMES: AN EARLY CHILDHOOD PERSPECTIVE

---

- ◆ The majority of the children made greater than expected gains across all areas of development, thereby narrowing the achievement gap.
- ◆ Children who were English Language Learners made significantly higher gains than their English speaking peers.
- ◆ Children made significant gains across all functional outcomes.
- ◆ The majority of kindergarten bound children demonstrated the foundational skills for entrance to school.

### STUDENT OUTCOMES: A LONGITUDINAL PERSPECTIVE

---

- ◆ The majority of students in an ECE classroom met or exceeded the state standards for reading, writing, science, and math.
- ◆ Overall, higher percentages of ECE students were proficient across areas in 2013 than in 2012.
- ◆ In most areas, ECE students living in low income families were performing similarly to their peers who living in low income families. This is a positive finding considering the ECE population represented higher levels of poverty.

### FAMILY OUTCOMES

---

- ◆ The state targets for all of the family outcomes for children with an IFSP were met.
- ◆ Families who participated in Sixpence programs increased or maintained home environments that promote emotional support and cognitive skills and showed increased parent-child interaction skills.

## REFERENCES

- Campbell, F. A., Pungello, E. P., Burchinal, M., Kainz, K., Pan, Y., Wasik, B. H., Ramey, C. T. (2012). Adult outcomes as a function of an early childhood educational program: An abecedarian project follow-up. *Developmental Psychology*, 48(4), 1033-1043. doi:10.1037/a0026644.
- Harms, T., Cryer, D., & Clifford, R. (2003). *Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Harms, T., Cryer, D., & Clifford, R. (2005). *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Roggman, L., Cook, G., Jump, V., Innocenti, M., Christiansen, K., Boyce, L., Aikens, N, Boller, K., Pulsel, D Hallgren, K. (2008). Unpublished Measure. Home visit rating scale.



Office of Early Childhood  
Nebraska Department of Education  
**301 Centennial Mall South**  
**P.O. Box 94987**  
**Lincoln, NE 68509-4987**  
**<http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC>**

---

December 2014