



Financing a Comprehensive State Workforce System: The NJ Abbott Pre-K Story

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ECE personnel system: Theory of change

If we get these components right:

Pre-service Preparation

In-service Professional Development

Comparable Compensation

Supportive Working Conditions

It enables:

- **Improved Recruitment**
- **Positive Teaching Environment**
- **Ongoing Professional Growth**
- **Continuous Improvement**
- **Effective Practice**
- **Retention**

Which lead to:

- **Beneficial outcomes for children that last**



NJ Abbott Pre-k Program: Fast Facts

- 1998 NJ Supreme Court ordered funding for high quality universal pre-k for 3s and 4s in lowest income districts (25% of population; ~45K population; 2/3 served in private providers)
- Structural features: Certified teachers and trained assistants, Full-day (6 hour), Maximum class size of 15
- Programmatic features: Evidence-based curricula, Support for potential learning difficulties, Professional development & coaching, Administrator training
- ECE expertise scarce throughout state in 1999
- Continuous improvement cycle: Establishing and measuring early learning and program standards
- Rapid expansion; increased quality from minimal to good; ES in 5th grade > 0.2

Nearly Universal Scarcity of Qualifications and Expertise

- Teaching Staff
- Center Directors
- Master Teachers (Coaches)
- Principals
- Child Study Team/ PIRT/ Nurses
- Fiscal Specialists
- District Supervisors
- IHE Faculty
- Family Workers
- DOE staff



Cost ingredients: Building the workforce

Condition	Strategies
Limited qualified teacher pool	Scholarships/Signing bonus Alternate Route credential Comparable salary
No state P-3 cert. Scarcity of ECE faculty	Add P-3 cert & ECE alternate route Grants to colleges for ECE faculty Early Learning Improvement Consortium MOUs w/ IHEs
Center directors w/out ECE or admin expertise	Directors Academies Center director salary scale: Size of center + ECE degree + Admin credits = > \$\$\$
All other positions needed PD	State and ELIC provide various PD modules (e.g. Master teacher seminar with certificate; TACSIE for PIRT team; the fiscal specialist as TA provider not budget cop; PLC for ECE supervisors)



Serendipitous Financing of the System

- When universal pre-k is fully implemented and all staff are equally compensated, cost will be:

(1st grade enrollment) x (K-12 per pupil cost) x (# of years of pre-k offered)

- Initially in Abbott Pre-K, this would mean:

22K x \$14K X 2 = \$ 616 million (Approximate figures)

- In start-up years, initial per pupil costs were closer to \$11K and enrollment was not full
- Remaining budget went to scholarships, grants, classroom improvements and other PD
- 2% set aside for state infrastructure was crucial



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