

LINCOLN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Third graders are more likely to read proficiently if they have had access to high-quality Pre-K programs. In addition to Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) funds, two funding sources that school districts can use for such programs are the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) and funds allocated by Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Last year, Arkansas schools spent nearly \$8.7M from these sources to provide critical Pre-K opportunities to Arkansas children, however, only 63 districts (25%) use NSLA and only 17 districts (7%) use Title 1 funding for Pre-K.

“Our teachers can tell a definite difference between our program and others in measuring kindergarten readiness; our Pre-K students are far and above their peers.”

— Dr. Mary Ann Spears, Superintendent, Lincoln Consolidated School District

Serves 40 students in two ABC classrooms and 20 in a third that accepts some paying students due to growing program popularity

USES NSLA FUNDS (\$50,273.04) TO PAY FOR:

- ✓ **Third Pre-K teacher**

*Percent of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Meals (2015-16): 71.4%

USES TITLE 1 FUNDS (\$24,464.38) TO PAY FOR:

- ✓ **Paraprofessional for third Pre-K classroom (CDA)**

**TOTAL NSLA/TITLE 1
FUNDS: \$74,737.42**

LINCOLN PRE-K'S HIGH- QUALITY PROGRAM INCLUDES:

- ✓ **Certified teachers providing high-quality instruction in all classrooms**
- ✓ **Option to stay another year in Pre-K program if warranted in order ensure kindergarten readiness**



Every teacher in the district's Pre-K program is certified, a requirement Lincoln has upheld for the 12-year duration of its program. They each receive extensive training and professional development in accordance with the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R).

High-Quality Pre-K Increases District Enrollment

ACADEMIC:

- Helps mitigate developmental delays that would otherwise require special attention in kindergarten
- Average percentage of students considered developed in 2012 QELI (6 categories) Lincoln Consolidated School District: 58.31%
- Utilize Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning, as well as ongoing work sampling assessments that require the completion of a Developmental Checklist three times a year. Each student enters kindergarten with a completed Developmental and Kindergarten Readiness Checklist.

FINANCIAL:

- Increased enrollment in Lincoln Elementary School and beyond Lincoln's Pre-K program always has a waiting list; some parents drive from as far as 15 miles away to attend

The Issues:

EARLY LITERACY AND SCHOOL READINESS

Arkansas' goal, supported by the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, is for all school children to read on grade level by the end of third grade. Pre-K preparation is identified as one of three key factors affecting third-grade success, but only 31 percent of Arkansas third graders read on grade level.

POVERTY HINDERS SUCCESS

Twenty-nine percent of Arkansas children, from birth to age five, live in poverty. Research has found that children in poverty hear roughly 30 million fewer words, compared to their more affluent peers, by the time they enter Kindergarten.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND WORKFORCE PREPAREDNESS

Many soft skills children learn - like character, communication and social skills - make them more successful in school, higher ed and in their future employment. These are skills that employers demand, so investing in Pre-K meets these critical workforce needs.

HEALTHY MINDS AND BODIES

Access to high-quality, voluntary Pre-K is a smart investment from a public health standpoint. Economically disadvantaged children are less likely to be vaccinated and have access to healthy meals. Early childhood programs benefit school achievement, encourage grade retention, and reduce preventable special education placement.

INCARCERATION AND RE-ENTRY

When our kids have these early learning opportunities, they are more likely to build the critical skills that lay the foundation for future academic success and make it less likely that they will eventually drop out. That is important — seven out of 10 inmates in state prisons do not have a high school diploma.

For additional information, please contact:

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Arkansas Association
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