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Science, Vol. 320 Author: Gormley, W.T., Phillips, D. & Gayer, T. Source: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) Format: Article Publication Date: 27 Jun 2008

AVAILABILITY - Article in pdf [2]

Description:

Early childhood programs have been heralded by both scholars and decision-makers as a promising avenue for fostering school readiness. In the United States, these sentiments have fueled ambitious preschool initiatives from both state and federal resources. Oklahoma's prekindergarten (pre-K) program has generated attention because it is universal, is based in the school system, and reaches a higher percentage of 4- year-olds than any other state pre-K program. Oklahoma's statefunded pre-K program channels aid to local school districts, which are free to run full-day programs, half-day programs, or both. Federally funded Head Start programs, which are targeted to poor or otherwise at-risk children, and private day care centers are also eligible for state funding if they establish "collaborative" relations with their local school district.

This article looks at the school readiness (reading, writing and math skills), short-term test score gains, of the Oaklahoma prekindergarten universal program and the Head start targeted program.

Region: United States [3] Tags: poverty [4] outcomes [5] full-day early learning [6]

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