The Early Years
Impact of School Readiness

School Readiness

• A child’s ability to successfully do kindergarten work.

A Powerful Impact

• School Readiness is one of the most important factors for educational and life success.

• Investments in high-quality early learning are the most cost-effective of any educational investment, returning as high as 15-17 percent on the investment each year.
How does Maryland Assess Readiness?  
Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR)

An annual assessment on what each kindergartener knows and is able to do in the following areas or Domains of Learning:

- Language & Literacy
- Mathematical Thinking
- Physical Development
- Scientific Thinking
- Social & Personal Development
- Social Studies
- The Arts
How does Maryland Assess Readiness?
Maryland Model for School Readiness

Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR)

A kindergarten child is identified as:

- **Fully Ready**
  - Consistently demonstrates the skills, behaviors, and abilities, which are needed to meet kindergarten expectations successfully.

- **Approaching Readiness**
  - Inconsistently demonstrates the skills, behaviors, and abilities, which are needed to meet kindergarten expectations successfully and requires targeted instructional support in specific areas.

- **Developing Readiness**
  - Does not demonstrate the skills, behaviors, and abilities, which are needed to meet kindergarten expectations and requires considerable instructional support in specific areas.
Key Trends in Maryland

- **Compelling Long-Term Gains**
  - 82% of children entering kindergarten in school year 2012-2013 are fully school-ready, up from 49% in 2001-2002. This represents a 67% improvement in overall school readiness.
  - More kindergarteners are ready for school than ever before – an additional 1,400 students are fully school-ready in 2012-2013 compared with last year.

- **Making Significant Strides**
  - The upward trend from school year 2001-02 is evident for all subgroups of children.
  - Children with academic risk-factors – children from low-income families, English Language Learners, and children with disabilities – exhibit overall higher school readiness.
Key Trends in Maryland, continued

- **Addressing the School-Readiness Gaps**
  - 76% of kindergarteners from low-income households (as indicated by Free and Reduced Price Meal status) are fully school-ready in 2012-2013, up from 34% in 2001-2002.
    - The 42-point increase from 2001-2002 reduced the readiness gap between children from low-income households and their peers from 18 points to 11 points in 2012-2013.
  - English Language Learners (ELL: children whose first language is not English) and children with disabilities made considerable overall progress (a 34-point gain and a 27-point gain from 2001-2002, respectively).
    - Readiness for these children declined slightly since 2011-2012, impacting the school-readiness gaps between these subgroups and their Maryland peers.
Maryland
Demographics of Young Children

### Population Data
MD Department of Planning, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Children Age 4</td>
<td>72,898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children &lt;5 (age 0-4)</td>
<td>364,488</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### School Enrollment
MSDE, School Year 2012-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK Students (4-year-olds)</td>
<td>24,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Day Program</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-Day Program</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Kindergarten Students         | 66,896 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarteners by Subgroup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarteners by Ethnicity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children with Disabilities</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free/Reduced Priced Meals</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
82% of children entering kindergarten in school year 2012-2013 are fully school-ready, up from 49% in 2001-2002 – a 33-point or 67% improvement in overall school readiness.

Maryland continues to exhibit an overall upward trend and maintains high readiness levels even with the one-point decline from 2011-2012.

Note: A “Trendline” denotes the overall upward progression of Maryland’s full school readiness levels.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
Kindergarteners show high readiness levels in key Domains of Learning – the core areas that predict future academic success:

- Language & Literacy (72% fully ready for 2012-2013)
- Mathematical Thinking (75% fully ready)
- Scientific Thinking (70% fully ready)
Upward Trends for All Ethnicities
MMSR, 2012-2013

• 79% of African-American children are fully school-ready in 2012-2013, up from 37% in 2001-2002 and on par with last year. The 42-point jump from 2001-2002 is substantially higher than the State’s 33-point readiness gain.

• 71% of Hispanic children are fully school-ready, up from 39% in 2001-2002.
Good Progress Among Males & Females
MMSR, 2012-2013

- 86% of females are fully school-ready in 2012-2013, up from 54% in 2001-2002.
- 78% of males are fully ready, a 35-point gain from 2001-2002.
- These gains reduced the readiness gap between males and females from 11 to 8 points.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
Gap Narrows for Low-Income Children
MMSR, 2012-2013

- 76% of children from low-income households (as indicated by Free and Reduced Price Meal status) are fully school-ready in 2012-2013, up from 34% in 2001-2002.
- The readiness gap between children from low-income households and their mid-/high-income peers narrowed to 11 points in 2012-2013.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
Demographics & Key Trends

• Children from Low-Incomes Households
  ➢ The 42-point increase from 2001-2002 reduced the readiness gap between children from low-income households and their mid- to high-income peers from 18 points to 11 points in 2012-2013.
  ➢ This trend is projected to continue.
  ➢ This is significant because of the rising number of kindergarteners who are from low-income households – an 8% one-year increase.
  ➢ 46% of kindergarteners (nearly 31,000 children) in 2012-2013 are from low-income households.
More ELL Fully School-Ready
MMSR, 2012-2013

- 69% of English Language Learners (ELL: children whose first language is not English) are fully school-ready in 2012-2013, up from 35% in 2001-2002.

- The 15-point readiness gap between ELL and English-proficient children remains virtually unchanged in recent years.

- There are nearly 10,000 ELL kindergarteners (a 3% one-year increase).

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
Progress Among Children with Disabilities
MMSR, 2012-2013

- 57% of children receiving special education services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) are fully school-ready in 2012-2013 – a 27-point jump from 2001-2002.
- There is a widening of the school-readiness gap for children with disabilities: 18 points in 2001-2002 grew to 27 points in 2012-2013.
There is a direct correlation between Language & Literacy skills and overall school readiness.

Language & Literacy readiness is most closely linked to proficiency on the subsequent Maryland State Assessment (MSA) in Grade 3.
In Language & Literacy, the school-readiness gap for children who are academically at-risk (children from low-income households, ELL, and children with disabilities) remains virtually unchanged in recent years.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
Prior Care Enrollment
Predominate Care Prior to Kindergarten

• 43% of the State’s children who are currently enrolled in kindergarten attended a public PreK program in 2011-2012.

In 2012-2013:
• 28,500 children (3- and 4-year-olds) attend a public PreK program.
• 25% of PreK children participate in full-day programs (11 jurisdictions currently offer a full-day option for some or all PreK children).

NOTE: Some prior care settings have enrollment criteria. For example, Head Start Centers and public PreK almost exclusively serve children from low-income households and children with disabilities—two subgroups that have consistently had significantly lower school readiness than Maryland kindergarteners, as a whole, and are considered at risk.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
Early Learning Success
MMSR, 2012-2013

Maryland
Full School Readiness by Prior Care Settings*

- 87% of children enrolled in Child Care Centers are fully ready in 2012-2013 – a 42-point increase from 2001-2002.
- There was a 33-point jump to 76% full readiness for children enrolled in Head Start.
- The upward trend can be attributed to the increased number of accredited early education programs from 123 in 2002 to 1,077 in 2012.

NOTE: The 2011-2012 Statewide Prior Care data does not include Anne Arundel County due to an AACPS system error.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
83% of children previously enrolled in PreK are fully ready in 2012-2013.

Children previously enrolled in PreK exceed the statewide readiness average (82% fully ready) and outperform their low-income peers (76% fully ready).

PreK programs serve a high percentage of low-income children; based on the results, PreK can be considered an effective way to address the readiness gap.

NOTE: The 2011-2012 Statewide Prior Care data does not include Anne Arundel County due to an AACPS system error.
Maryland’s 33-point school-readiness gains since 2001-2002 affirm that we are clearly doing a number of things right.

**Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC)**

$50 million federal investment is supporting comprehensive infrastructure improvements in Maryland. Investments advance:

- State (and local level) governance structures
- High-quality, accountable programs
- Access to high-quality, early learning and development programs
- Early learning and development standards
- Alignment of standards with early learning curricula, activities, assessments, and professional development
- Comprehensive assessment systems
- Intervention and prevention programs
- Family engagement
- The early childhood education workforce
Behind the Numbers
Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge

Maryland’s Benchmark:

- 92% of kindergarteners fully school-ready by 2015.
- While Maryland was on track to meet this goal, the 2012-2013 readiness levels (82% fully ready) fall slightly below our annual targets.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
Maryland’s RTT-ELC efforts are only some of the many investments that account for the overall gains. Our innovations, targeting young children birth to five, are key to our success:

**Building Infrastructure**
- Establishing a comprehensive, aligned, and highly-effective early care and education system.
- Working with the 24 local Early Childhood Advisory Councils (ECAC).

**Improving Quality**
- Using MMSR data to drive school readiness strategies.
- Aligning PreK and Kindergarten benchmarks with the Common Core.
- Implementing new specialized curricula.
- Promoting higher standards: Maryland Excellence in Early Learning Standards (Maryland EXCELS).
- Accrediting more programs and credentialing additional professionals.
Focusing on Academic Risk Factors
• Enrolling children with one or more academic risk factors in state-funded PreK programs.
• Launching 2 new satellite Judy Centers.

Engaging Families and Communities
• Helping families, and community members learn how to support children’s school readiness.
• Utilizing a Coalition of Family Engagement to develop a family engagement framework.

Supporting Healthy Beginnings
• Promoting developmental screenings to ensure early detection of delays or disabilities.
• Working with pediatricians to promote early literacy programs.
Nearly 12,000 Maryland kindergarteners needed targeted or considerable support to be successful in school. To ensure that our children succeed in school and in life, we are:

**Striving to Meet New Benchmarks**
- Committed to achieving ambitious goal: 92% kindergarteners fully school-ready by 2015.

**Addressing the School-Readiness Gaps**
- Taking proactive measures to reduce school-readiness gaps among academically at-risk subgroups.

**Continuing & Enhancing Current Efforts**
- Supporting the ECACs, which are critical for helping to address the challenges and continue our momentum.
- Exploring innovative early childhood investment strategies.

**What’s Next?**
More Work to Do
Creating a Strong Workforce

• Promoting rigorous and developmentally appropriate instructional practices that support our Common Core Standards.
• Credentialing and workforce competency standards will serve as the basis for a comprehensive early childhood education career ladder for skilled and dedicated personnel.

Building Better Access

• Improving access to PreK and other high-quality early learning programs.
• Establishing Preschool For All Sites.
• Improving case management for families receiving child-care subsidies to further improve access to PreK, Head Start, and quality child care.