

getting
reA dy

The 2011-2012
Maryland School Readiness
Report

**birth to five:
a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity**

The time from birth to age five offers children their greatest opportunity for learning. Since most brain development happens during this period, and the brain depends on the experiences a child receives, these years of stimulation are the most important in a child's life.

Children's school readiness – their ability to successfully perform kindergarten work – hinges on their birth-to-five learning experiences. For our investment in early care and education during children's most powerful learning years, we reap far greater lifetime rewards for students and for society: measurably higher reading and math skills by grade three; less need for Special Education and remediation; lower rates of delinquency, teen pregnancy, and dropping out of school; more successful young adults in our communities and workforce.



Maryland statewide school readiness data

all children show higher achievement

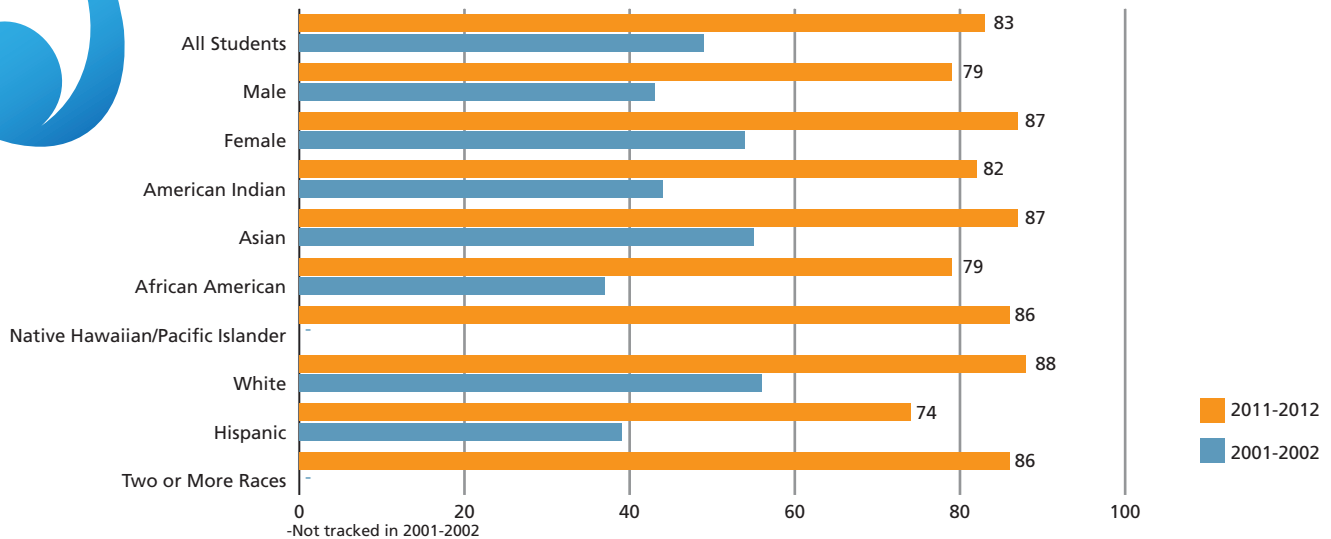
Across the state, there were improvements in school readiness in all subgroups of Maryland kindergarteners. This includes tremendous gains in those subgroups whose school readiness has consistently been lower than that of Maryland kindergarteners as a whole and who are considered to be at risk of not being as successful in school as their peers. Although the disparities remain challenges for Maryland schools, the gaps are narrowing.

The 2011-2012 data show:

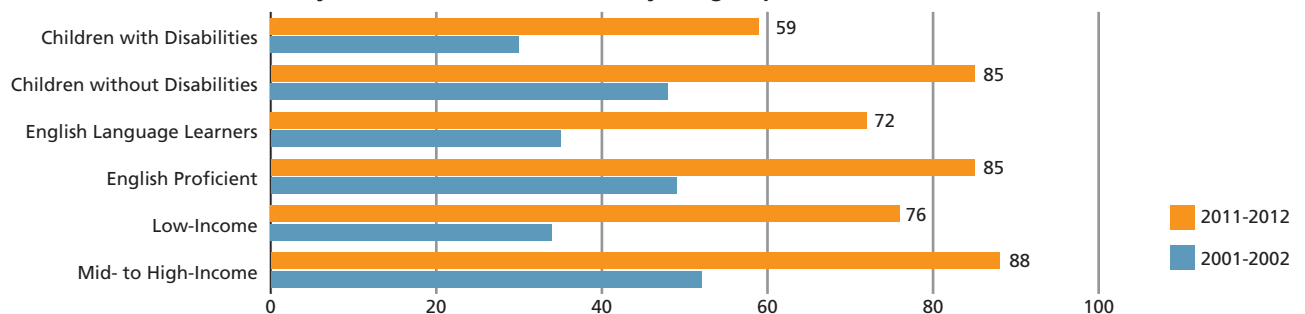
- 79% of African-American children are fully school-ready – a 42-point readiness gain from 2001-2002 and 3 points more than last year. These gains are substantially higher than the overall statewide gains.
- 74% of Hispanic children are fully school-ready, up from 39% in 2001-2002 and 70% in 2010-2011.

- 76% of kindergarteners from low-income households (as indicated by Free and Reduced Price Meal status) rose to full readiness, up from 34% in 2001-2002 and 73% in 2010-2011. The 42-point increase from 2001-2002 brings children from low-income households to within 7 points of the statewide average.
- 72% of English Language Learners (ELL – children whose first language is not English) are fully ready, up from 35% in 2001-2002 and 68% in 2010-2011. These gains bring ELL within 11 points of the statewide average and are significant because of the rapidly increasing number of kindergarteners who are not English-proficient (over 9,500 kindergarteners in 2011-2012 are ELL – a 9% one-year gain).
- 59% of children with disabilities are fully ready, a substantial 29-point gain from 2001-2002 and 3 points more than last year.

Maryland Full School Readiness by Gender & Ethnicity



Maryland Full School Readiness by Subgroup



the MMSR predicts higher achievement to grade three

A 2010 Johns Hopkins University study indicated conclusively that kindergarteners who were fully ready for school tend to show higher achievement on the grade three Maryland School Assessment (MSA). This confirms earlier correlations between MMSR and MSA results, and it provides additional evidence that early care and education experiences contribute significantly to children's later success in school.

the focus on Language & Literacy is paying off

There is a direct correlation between increases in children's Language & Literacy skills and improvements in their MMSR composite scores. Not only have Maryland kindergarteners made substantial gains in Language & Literacy in 2011-2012 (a 37-point gain since 2001-2002), but overall school readiness has improved as a result of these gains. Of the seven Domains of Learning, Language & Literacy is the most closely linked to overall school readiness. This tells us that Maryland's emphasis on Language & Literacy in early care and education is productive and needs to be sustained and strengthened to see further gains in school readiness.

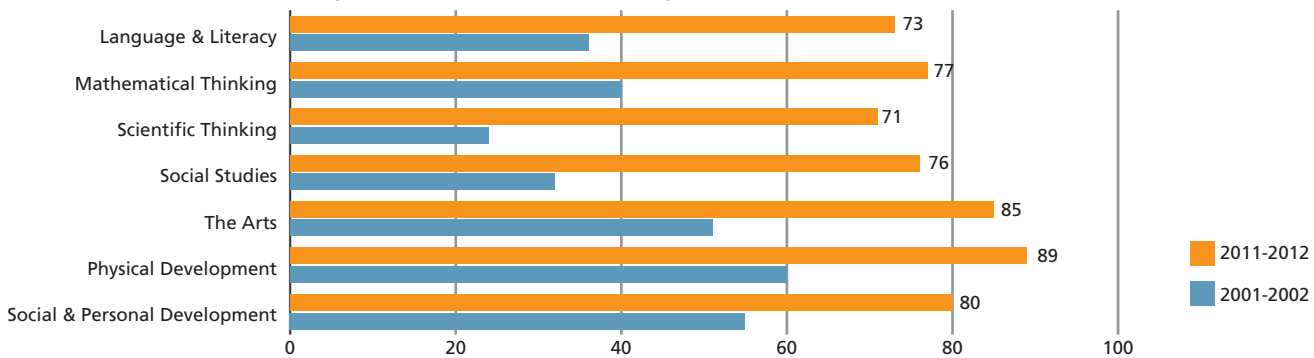
enrollment in early education programs is essential

Children enrolled in formal early education programs tend to be better prepared for school. In fact, the data show programs like PreK are extremely beneficial. In 2011-2012:

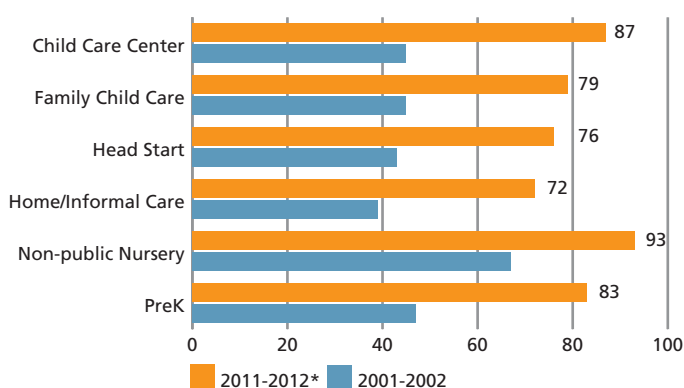
- 83% of kindergarteners who were enrolled in public PreK programs the year prior to starting school are fully ready, up from 47% in 2001-2002 and 81% last year.
- Kindergarteners previously enrolled in PreK programs are on par with the statewide readiness average.
- Kindergarteners previously enrolled in PreK programs show greater long-term improvements (a 36-point gain from 2001-2002, compared with the 34-point Statewide gain).

Because public PreK programs serve a high percentage of children with risk factors (low income, ELL, and children with disabilities), these data are significant for addressing the achievement gaps.

Maryland Full School Readiness by Domain

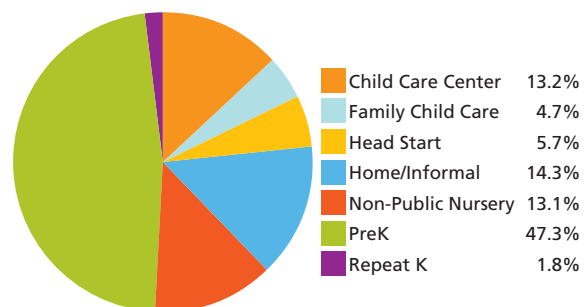


Maryland Full School Readiness by Prior Care*



**Statewide Prior Care data does not include Anne Arundel County due to an AACPS system error.

Maryland Prior Care Enrollment*
School Year 2010-2011



* Some prior care settings have enrollment criteria. For example, Head Start 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 that are considered at risk.



why has Maryland improved? investments

Maryland's long-term improvements in children's school readiness stem from a variety of investments:

- **PreK:** State spending on PreK increased by 28% from \$3,207 per child in 2007, the year that Bridge to Excellence was fully implemented, to \$4,116 in 2010. ² In school year 2010-2011, Maryland served 29,377 children in its state-funded PreK program (approximately 47% of four-year-olds who matriculated to kindergarten in 2011-2012). This year, 28,850 children are enrolled in PreK -- a 42% increase from 2001- 2002. Twenty-nine percent of PreK children participate in full-day programs, with 10 jurisdictions currently offering full-day programs for some or all PreK children.

Additionally, early education programs are aligning their work with state PreK standards and curricula. This has exposed

many more children to the educational advantages of PreK.

- **Full-day Kindergarten:** In 2001-2002, about half of all kindergarteners participated in a full-day program, compared with 100% of children in 2011-2012. This tremendous growth, which is a result of the 2007 Bridge to Excellence mandate for full-day kindergarten, means children have increased instructional time. Through full-day kindergarten, young children obtain the foundation for long-term academic achievement and success.
- **Race to the Top.** The latest validation of Maryland's national leadership in education is our being one of only nine states to receive the competitive federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant funds.

the MMSR: Maryland's measurement of school readiness

Maryland was first in the nation to create a tool for assessing children's school readiness: the Maryland Model for School Readiness, or MMSR, developed by the Maryland State Department of Education. The MMSR¹ evaluates what each kindergartener knows and is able to do in the seven Domains of Learning: Social & Personal Development, Language & Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Social Studies, the Arts, and Physical Development.

Population Data, MD Dept of Planning, 2010

Children < 5 (age 0-4) 364,488

School Demographics Maryland Department of Education, School Year 2011-2012

Kindergarten Students	64,726
Kindergarten Ethnicity	
• American Indian	0.4%
• Asian	5.9%
• African American	32.7%
• Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2%
• White	41.0%
• Hispanic	15.5%
• Two or More Races	4.3%
Kindergarteners by Subgroup	
• Children with Disabilities	8.2%
• English Language Learners	14.9%
• Free/Reduced Priced Meals	44.7%
PreK Students	28,850
• Full-Day Program	29.3%
• Half-Day Program	70.7%

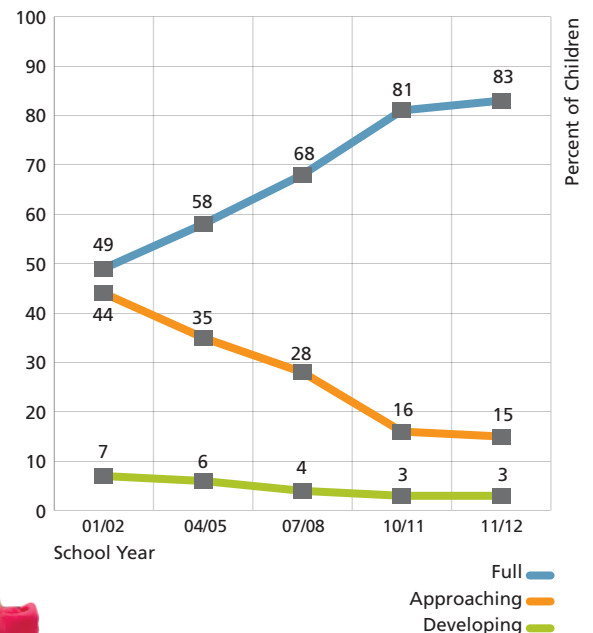
May not total 100% due to rounding

Maryland statewide school readiness data

strong gains in the short term, and stunning improvement in the long term

In 2011-2012, 83% of Maryland kindergarteners are fully school-ready, up from 81% in 2010-2011. Maryland's school readiness has now increased by a stunning 34 points – a 69% improvement – since 2001-2002. This is borne out by robust increases in school readiness in jurisdictions across Maryland. All of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions showed growth from 2001-2002. Thirteen jurisdictions reported higher levels of school readiness than 2010-2011, and five jurisdictions are on par with last year's readiness levels. Sixteen jurisdictions exceeded the statewide average.

Maryland School Readiness Data



¹The MMSR kindergarten assessment uses a modified Work Sampling System (WSS)TM as its assessment instrument.



• **Accreditation & Credentialing:**

The number of accredited early education programs and family child care homes increased from 120 in 2002 to 970 in 2012 – a spectacular growth of 708% in the last 10 years. In addition, the number of early educators participating in the Maryland Child Care Credential Program rose 17% in one year and 1630% over the last ten years. Increases in accreditation and credentialing mean higher-quality programs that benefit more of Maryland’s children.

• **Judy Center Partnerships:** Maryland created 25 “Judy Centers” or public school/early childhood partnerships for children birth to age six, which currently serve 12,000 children in 40 (out of 412) Title I attendance areas.

• **Research and Policy:** Researchers are studying data to identify trends and best practices that have the greatest impact. Policy makers are making school readiness a more highly-visible public priority.

School Enrollment	2001-2002	2010-2011	2011-2012	10-Year Gain
Kindergarten				
• Full-day	56,384	62,701	64,726	+ 15%
	50%	100%	100%	+ 130%
PreK	20,314	29,377	28,850	+ 42%
Early Childhood Accreditation	FY 2002	FY 2011	FY 2012	
Center-based Programs and Family Child Care Homes	120	763	970	+ 708%
MD Child Care Credential Program (MCCCP)	FY 2002	FY 2010	FY 2011	
Participating Providers (Levels 1-6)	358	5,291	6,195	+ 1630%

• **Jurisdictional Actions:** Individual jurisdictions are carrying out initiatives to raise school readiness:

- Districts are requesting disaggregated MMSR data in order to analyze and act on particular local school readiness issues.
- Administrators and educational leaders are reviewing and tracking trends, defining areas of need, and monitoring their school readiness investments.
- Schools are supporting teachers’ classroom instruction by providing targeted professional development and curriculum implementation assistance.
- Teachers are making greater use of the MMSR to support student learning by identifying areas where children need to strengthen their skills.

• **Community Commitment:** Maryland has reached out to parents to increase family awareness of school readiness skills. As a result, parents know more about how to build children’s school readiness. Throughout the State, early education professionals, schools, and parents are collaborating and implementing proven best practices that focus on the areas of greatest need. And business leaders are promoting and supporting school readiness as a smart investment for their employees and colleagues.

• **Monetary Support:** Foundations and businesses in Maryland recognize the importance of young children starting kindergarten fully ready to succeed, and are investing more in early care and education.

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