

TIMELINE OF STATE-FUNDED PRE-K IN MISSISSIPPI

2012

Mississippi First published two major reports: *the Title I Preliminary Report*, which highlighted districts using Title I dollars to provide pre-K services, and *Leaving Last in Line*, which recommended a model for state-funded pre-K. These reports served as the foundation of the Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013.

2013

The Early Learning Collaborative Act established Mississippi's state pre-K programs, known as "Early Learning Collaboratives," or ELCs. We worked with Senator Brice Wiggins and then-Representative Toby Bark to pass the Early Learning Collaborative Act, which we wrote to reflect *Leaving Last in Line*. Passing both the House and the Senate with over 80% of the vote, the pre-K law was the most popular education effort in many years. The legislature appropriated \$3 million for the program, the first-ever state investment in pre-K.

2014

The Mississippi Department of Education identified the first 11 early learning collaboratives (ELCs) to receive state funding for pre-K.

2015

Mississippi First released our first *State of Public Pre-K in Mississippi* report. The report detailed programmatic and contextual data about public school pre-K programs and the communities they serve.

2016

The Mississippi legislature expanded the Early Learning Collaborative Act by appropriating an additional \$1 million for the program, making the total appropriation \$4 million.

2017

Mississippi First published the second edition of the *State of Pre-K in Mississippi* report. The 2017 report updated our 2015 report on public pre-K and expanded it to include information about licensed childcare centers serving four-year-olds. Our 2017 report is the first attempt to quantify pre-K access—whether public or private—in every Mississippi community.

2018

The Legislature expanded the Early Learning Collaborative Act by appropriating an additional \$2.5 million for the program, making the total appropriation \$6.5 million.

2019

The Legislature slightly increased funding to nearly \$6.7 million. Mississippi First also published the *Pre-K Briefing Book* for candidates running for the legislature or statewide office in fall 2019. Mississippi First completed briefings for two gubernatorial candidates, several legislative candidates, an attorney general candidate, and a lieutenant governor candidate. These briefings were highly effective in developing pre-K support among politicians moving into 2020.

2020

Mississippi First successfully advocated a raise to the per-pupil funding rate for collaboratives from \$2,150 to \$2,500. A classroom of 20 will now have \$100K. Because of the pandemic, this change was made directly in the budget bill as nearly all general bills were shelved. In this extremely difficult budget year, this was a tremendous sign of recognition of the hard work our Early Learning Collaboratives do.

2021

The Legislature made its largest commitment to pre-K yet—\$16 million. With this new investment, 16% of Mississippi four-year-olds (roughly 6,080 children) will have access to an ELC seat. The Legislature also renewed the rate language increasing the per pupil funding from \$2,150 to \$2,500 for another year. Finally, the legislature updated our original Early Learning Collaborative Act to include language that reflected changes to the NIEER standards, curriculum issues, and other small changes. Over this year, Mississippi First also published the third iteration of the *State of Pre-K* series as a set of small briefs.

2022

The Legislature gave pre-K two additional gifts in the budget—an overall funding amount of \$24M, which is an \$8M increase, and a coaching line item of \$3.25M, which is a little over double last year's amount. These budget amounts will allow the state-funded pre-K program to reach 25% of four-year-olds in Mississippi and provide pre-K teachers the support to ensure quality.