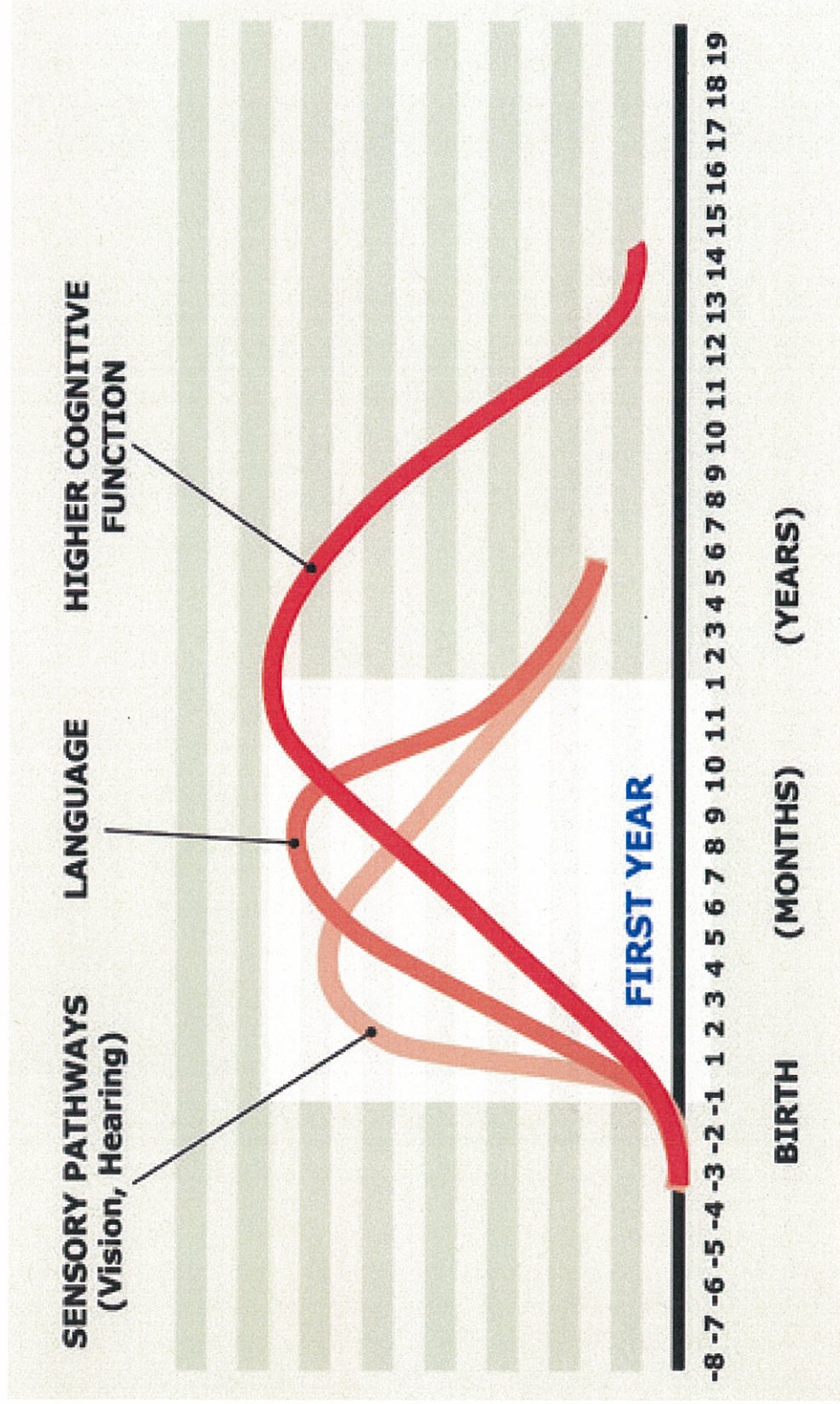


Arkansas Better Chance Update



Joint Education Committee
February 3, 2014
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
www.arkansas.gov/childcare

Brain Development



History

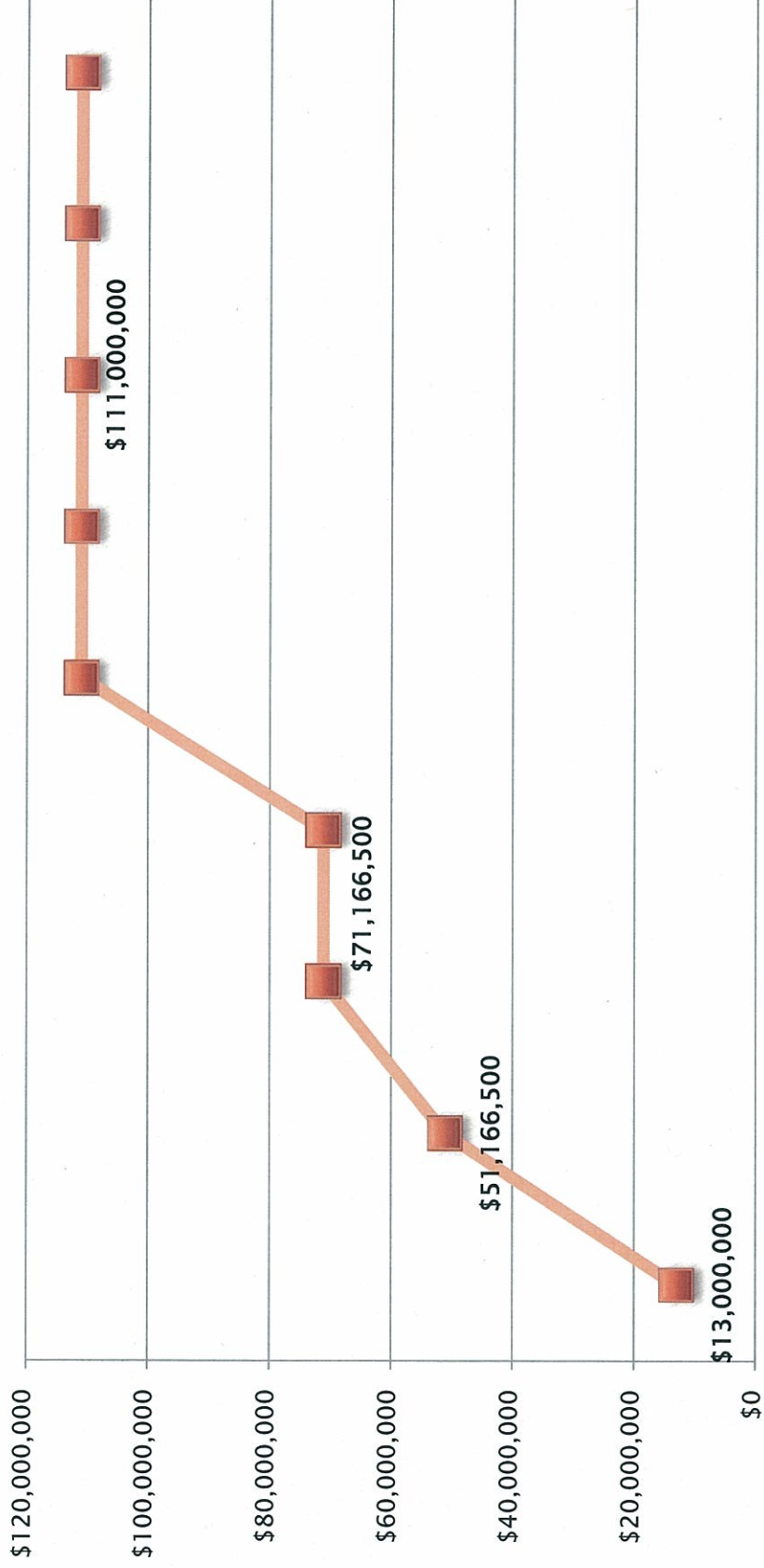
- ▶ Initially, Act 212 of 1991 created Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) with funding of \$10 million.
- ▶ Purpose was to provide quality early education opportunities to children birth through 5 years with variety of developmental and economic risk factors.
- ▶ Currently the program is funded with \$111 million dollars—\$103.5M in state funding and \$7.5M in federal dollars.
- ▶ Goal of funding is to reach 70% of 3- and 4-year olds below 200% federal poverty level.

Core ABC Components

- Staff qualifications and compensation
- Low student to teacher ratio (1:10)
- Health and development screenings
- Meaningful parent and community engagement activities
- Proven curriculum (aligns with early learning standards and K standards)
- Environmental Rating Scale assessment

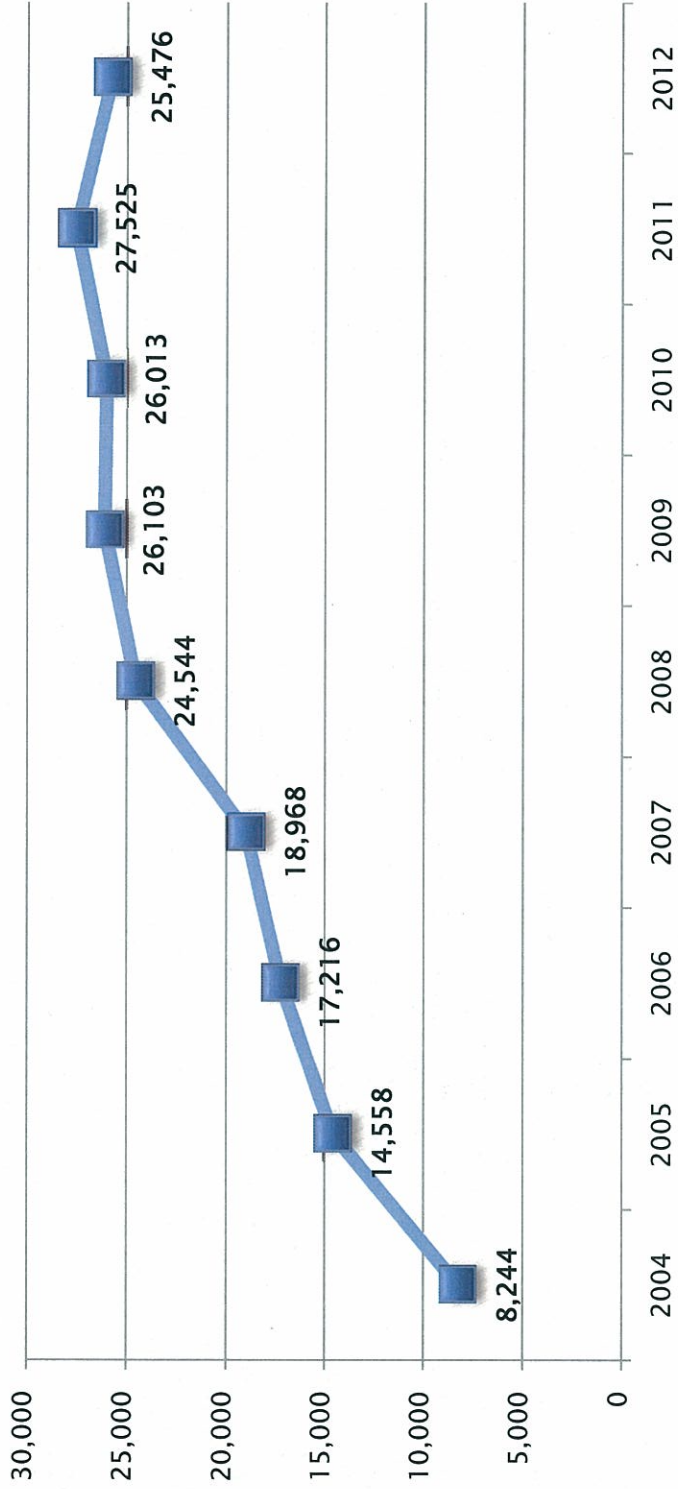
Funding

Arkansas Pre-K Funding



Children Served

Children Served in Arkansas Pre-K



ABC Delivery Model

Diverse delivery model

- ❖ School Districts
- ❖ Education Service Cooperatives
- ❖ State Universities
- ❖ For Profit and Non-profit Community-Based Early Childhood Programs

Program models

- Center-based
- Home Visiting

Program Information

- ▶ Total ABC Agencies: 280
- ▶ Total Sites: 556
- ▶ Total ABC Classrooms: 1,518

- ▶ 79% of programs are center-based
- ▶ 21% of programs are home visiting

- ▶ Center-based funding per child = \$4,860
- ▶ Home visiting funding per child = \$1,750

Curriculum

- ▶ Each ABC program must utilize a comprehensive curriculum approved by the DCCECE and State Board of Education
- ▶ All approved curriculums must be aligned with the Early Learning Standards and meet the following goals and objectives:
 - Social/emotional development
 - Creative/aesthetic learning
 - Cognitive/intellectual learning
 - Physical development
 - Language development
 - Cultural sensitivity

2012-2013 ABC Classroom ERS Average Scores

| Subscale | Score |
|------------------------|-------|
| Space and Furnishing | 5.08 |
| Personal Care Routines | 3.51 |
| Language-Reasoning | 5.69 |
| Activities | 5.65 |
| Interaction | 5.40 |
| Program Structure | 5.58 |
| Parents and Staff | 6.15 |
| Overall | 5.27 |

% of classrooms passing ERS Rating Scale at first visit.

82.00

Training/Professional Development

All ABC teachers and paraprofessionals are required to participate in a 30 hours of professional development annually on topics relevant to early childhood education.

ABC Regulations.
11.09

Training Course Content

Classroom staff are required to receive training in the following areas:

- Arkansas Early Childhood or Infant/Toddler Education Frameworks
- Pre-K ELLA (Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas)
- INDEX (Math and Science for Young Children)
- Social/Emotional Learning in Arkansas
- Work Sampling Online (Child Assessment)
- COPA (ABC Database)

Classroom Teacher Education

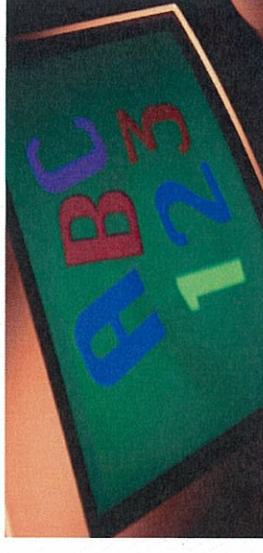
- ▶ **Master's Degree: 20%**
- ▶ **Bachelor's Degree: 69%**
- ▶ **Associate's Degree: 2%**
- ▶ **CDA: 8%**
- ▶ **High School Diploma: 1%**

Staff members not qualifying to serve as a Classroom Teacher may work in an ABC program under an approved Staff Qualification Plan.

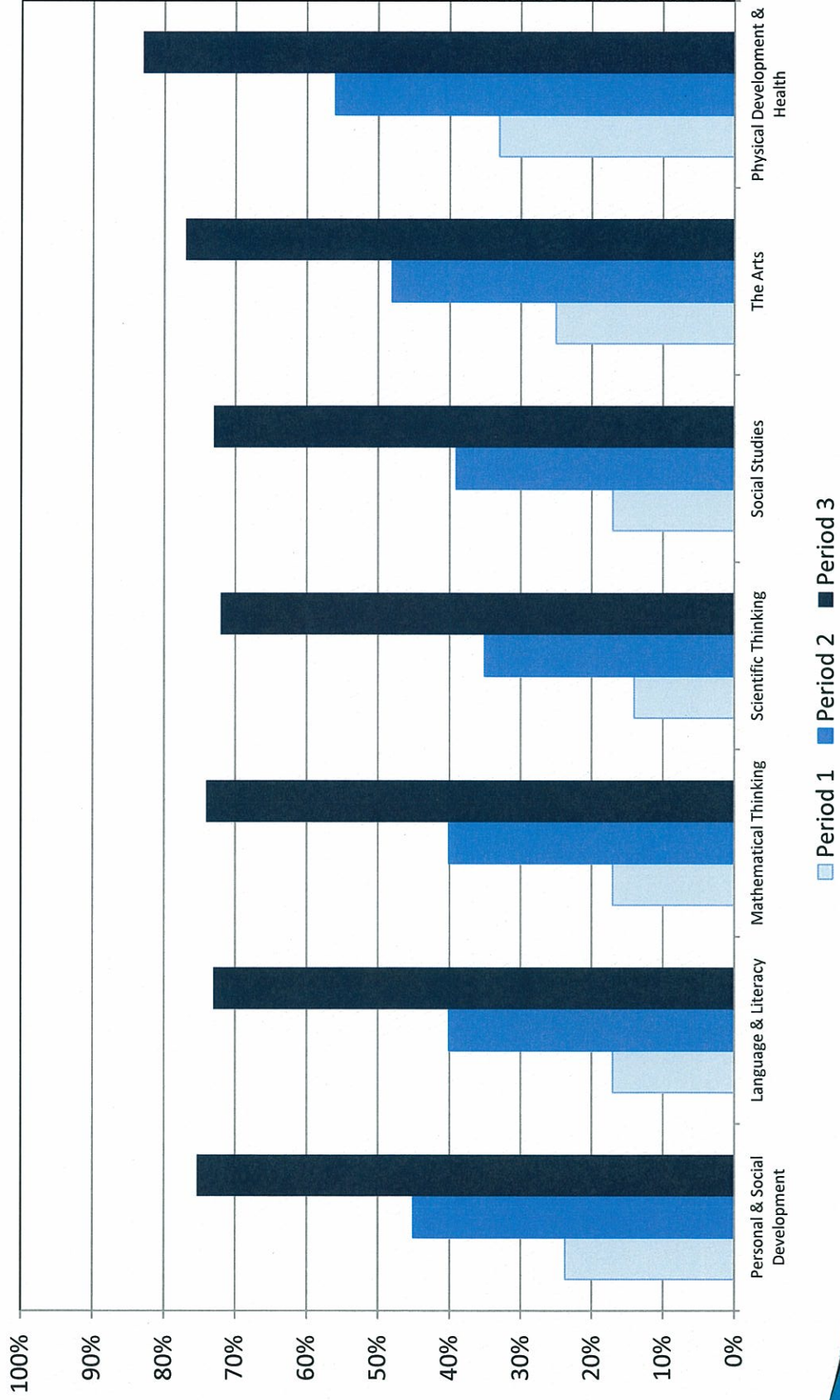


Student Assessments

- ✓ Individual Child Assessment
- ✓ Developmental and Health Screenings
- ✓ Arkansas Research Center Data
- ✓ ABC Longitudinal Study



Work Sampling Child Assessment

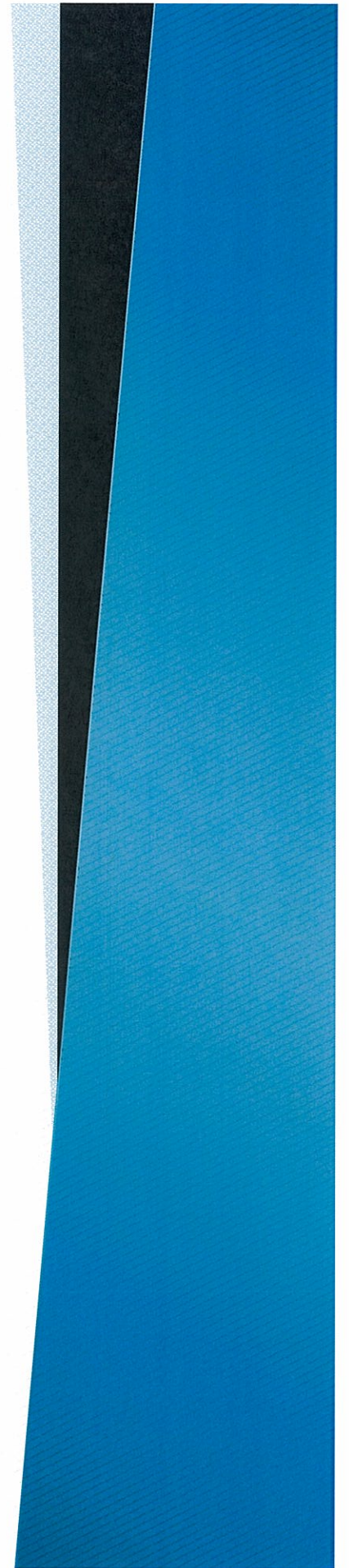


Collaboration with Arkansas Research Center

The Arkansas Research Center conducted research to show the positive impact of the ABC Program on student success.

The research showed that ABC children who entered kindergarten and participated in the free and reduced lunch program scored higher on the Qualls kindergarten entry assessment than their peers who did not participate in the ABC high-quality program.





Rutgers Longitudinal Study

- Arkansas's state-funded preschool program has been found to have significant positive effects on children's receptive vocabulary and math through grade 2 and on literacy through grade 3
- Children who attended ABC pre-K were less likely to have been retained by the end of third grade than those who did not attend any pre-K, which can be seen as an early indicator of program's effect on school success

Health and Safety Conditions

- DCCECE Licensing Unit assesses ABC programs for adherence to the minimum licensing (health and safety) requirements.
- Each program is visited by a licensing specialist an average of 2 times annually. The ABC program administration is notified of any issues with specific programs.



Family Engagement

- ❖ Each program must have a plan for parent involvement which includes opportunities for parental input into the program operation and design
- ❖ Each program shall encourage visiting and participation in classroom activities
- ❖ Opportunities for at least 2 parent/teacher conferences shall be offered to parents

National Perspective

The National Institute of Early Education Research ranked Arkansas in *The State of Pre-K 2011 Yearbook*.

Recognized for 11 years for Quality Standards as one of the best pre-k programs in the country

- ▶ 4th in the nation for access to 3-year-olds
- ▶ 10th in the nation for access to 4-year-olds
- ▶ 9 out of 10 quality standards

www.nieer.org

