

# Advocating for Equity Across All Levels of Government

DIMENSION 8:

## HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING

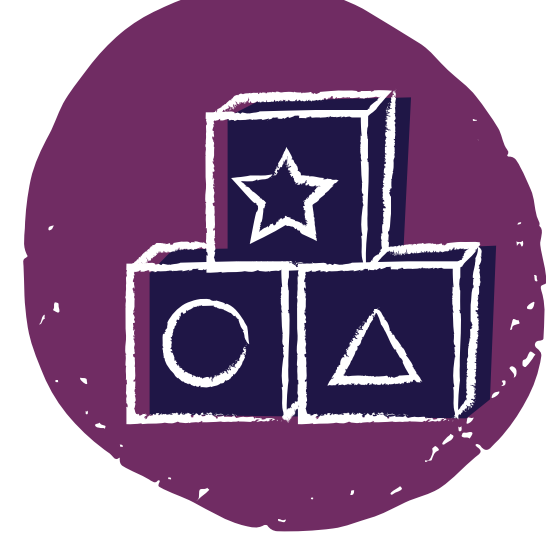
**ALLIANCE FOR  
RESOURCE  
EQUITY**

Uniting advocates and education leaders  
to unlock excellence for every student



## DIMENSION 8:

# HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING



**THE VISION:** Each student — including students of color and students with higher needs — has access to high-quality preschool programs that meet their needs, so all students can reach high standards and thrive.

### KEY QUESTION

## 8.1

**Does each student have access to high-quality preschool programs?**

### Federal

#### ● Congress can:

- Set rules for implementing state early learning programs, including mandatory child care funding plans and related consultation
- Require states to establish state advisory councils to include representation across state and local education and health agencies
- Fund programs across federal agencies to support three- and four-year-old children in early learning settings
  - The Administration for Children and Families administers:
    - Preschool Development Grants Birth through Five
    - The [Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program](#)
    - Head Start, which provides federal funding directly to localities

- The US Department of Agriculture administers reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children enrolled in participating child care centers through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- The US Department of Education administers:
  - Funding for preschool through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
  - Competitive grants to colleges and universities for campus-based child-care services for student parents with low incomes through the Child Care Access Means Parents in School grant program
  - Competitive grants for “distressed communities” to provide early learning through the Promise Neighborhoods program
- The US Department of the Interior administers the Family and Child Education program, which supports federally recognized tribal members

- States, territories, and tribes administer the Child Care and Development Fund with support from the Administration for Children and Families
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Section 619, administered by state education agencies

## State

- **States** typically take [one of three approaches](#) to oversight of early learning:
  - Creating a new entity to oversee several Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs
  - Consolidating existing offices and programs into an existing entity
  - Coordinating multiple agencies
- **State legislatures and governors** can:
  - Fund early learning programs
  - Establish a standing source of revenue for early learning programs
  - Establish state early learning advisory councils to help coordinate and implement early learning programs
  - Establish a dedicated department of early learning
  - Create children’s cabinets or other oversight bodies that facilitate collaborative action or advise on policy across various governmental and nongovernmental agencies that deal with children’s welfare, education, and well-being
- **State early learning advisory councils** provide policy recommendations and statewide coordination for early learning programs

## School District

- **Local education agencies:**
  - Distribute funding for early learning education
  - Collect local property tax revenues, sales tax revenues, soda tax or other local revenues for early learning programs
- **Local early learning advisory councils** can contribute to the state early learning advisory council’s activities and coordinate efforts at the local level

## School

- **School leaders and educators** can:
  - Choose professional development topics and family engagement strategies
  - Partner with community organizations to provide early learning
  - Provide culturally- and linguistically competent professional development for all teaching professionals on:
    - Evidence-based strategies for supporting positive behaviors
    - Developmentally appropriate practice
    - Child development (including social-emotional development)
    - [Screening and progress monitoring](#) for students with learning and attention challenges
    - Supporting language-rich environments
    - Dual language learners
    - Collaborating with families