

## Talking Points: Pre-K Expansion/Funding

The Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics strongly supports the Alabama School Readiness Alliance's/Pre-K Task Force's recommendation to increase state investments for First Class Pre-K by \$25 million for Fiscal Year 2021.

### General messages to lawmakers:

- Thank you for increasing state pre-kindergarten investments over the past eight years. Since 2012, state leaders have incrementally increased the level of investment in Alabama's First Class Pre-K program from \$19 million to \$122.8 million. As a result, Alabama's high-quality First Class Pre-K program has expanded its reach from six to 40 percent of four-year-olds statewide.
- Please build on this progress by support Governor Ivey's proposal to increase state investments in First Class Pre-K by \$25 million during the 2020 Legislative Session. This increase will bring the total level of funding for First Class Pre-K to \$147.8 million, and keep our state on track to fully fund the program by the 2022-2023 school year.
- This plan to incrementally increase state funding for First Class Pre-K by a total of \$125 million over a ten-year period was developed in 2012 by the Alabama School Readiness Alliance's statewide, business-led Pre-K Task Force.

### Pre-K is working in Alabama:

- For 13 years in a row, the National Institute for Early Education Research has ranked Alabama's pre-k program as the number one state-funded pre-kindergarten program in the country for quality. Research by the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama and the University of Alabama at Birmingham has found that students who participate in a First Class Pre-K classroom - regardless of demographics, zip code or school - are more likely to be proficient in math and reading than their peers.
- The Alabama Department of Children's Affairs administers First Class Pre-K by providing and monitoring grants to support quality pre-k classrooms in a variety of settings.