

## PRESCHOOL FACT SHEET

For the past several years, Montana has been investing in sensible, high quality preschool options. The results of these investments have been overwhelmingly positive. Soon that funding will run out.

In 2014, Montana was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant (MPDG). The state received \$10 million per year for up to four years to develop preschools for low- and moderate-income families in 16 communities.

In 2017, Montana budgeted \$6 million to expand high quality early childhood educational services for Montana's four and five-year old children through the STARS Preschool Pilot.

### PRESCHOOL FACTS

- Every \$1 spent on high-quality preschool programs creates at least \$7 in future savings to the communities and states that invest.
- Quality preschool programs not only prepare children for reading and math, but also for paying attention, following directions, and getting along with others.
- Children with high-quality early learning opportunities are more likely to: read at grade level, graduate from high school, and earn more money as adults.
- Montana is one of just six states that does not have a permanent state preschool program.

### STARS EVALUATION FINDINGS

- All children enrolled in STARS Preschools benefitted academically.
- Children enrolled demonstrated 21% overall increase in school readiness and 93% of participants were ready for kindergarten at the end of the year.
- 97% of family survey respondents felt engaged with the STARS preschool classroom and their child's education.
- 61% of enrolled children identified in one or more high needs category.