Arizona began funding preschool education programs in 1991, and has used the Arizona Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) as a source of funding since 1996. The ECBG also provides funding in support of supplemental services for full-day kindergarten and first through third grade, in addition to funding preschool education. ECBG funds for prekindergarten are distributed to school districts, which can then offer funding to Head Start, faith-based, or private child care centers if parents choose those settings for their children. Regardless of setting, preschool programs receiving ECBG funding are required to be accredited by organizations approved by the state, such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). In order to be eligible for an ECBG-funded prekindergarten program, children must come from a family with an income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

While teachers in ECBG-funded preschool programs are currently only required to have a high school diploma or GED, all prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers teaching in public schools will be required to have an Arizona Early Childhood Certification or endorsement as of July 1, 2012. The Arizona Early Childhood Certification requires a bachelor's degree and passing a written assessment of early childhood subject knowledge. To help teachers meet this upcoming requirement, Arizona is working with colleges and universities to offer scholarships and on-site classes. A three-year formal evaluation of ECBG-funded preschool programs was completed in July 2008. This evaluation included a review of financial accounting practices, distribution of grant monies, expenditures, and monitoring of preschool providers.

In fiscal year 2010, the ECBG allocation was frozen due to budget constraints and subsequently repealed. Programs received two quarterly payments rather than the allocated four payments per year, significantly reducing the funding. Arizona's budget for fiscal year 2011 provides no funding for the ECBG program, terminating the program for the 2010-2011 school year.

In 2006, Arizona established First Things First (FTF) in an effort to support developmental and health initiatives for young children. In particular, FTF expands and enhances high-quality services for children from birth through age 5 through quality improvement incentives, a statewide quality rating system, T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, home visiting, mental and dental health services, and kith and kin training. In 2009, FTF worked with the Arizona Department of Education to allocate $90 million through state and regional initiatives that provided information and education to families and the early childhood education field.
ARIZONA EARLY CHILDHOOD BLOCK GRANT – PREKINDERGARTEN COMPONENT

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .............................................. 4,319
School districts that offer state program .................................. 15%
Income requirement ................................................................. 185% FPL
Hours of operation .............................................................. Determined locally¹
Operating schedule ................................................................. Academic year
Special education enrollment .................................................. 8,859
Federally funded Head Start enrollment .................................. 17,624
State-funded Head Start enrollment ........................................ 0

POLICY

Early learning standards ....................................................... Comprehensive
Teacher degree ................................................................. HSD², BA
Teacher specialized training ............................................... None²
Assistant teacher degree .......................................................... HSD³, CDA or equivalent
Teacher in-service ................................................................. 12 clock hours
Maximum class size .............................................................. 20 or lower
Staff-child ratio ................................................................. 1:10 or better
Screening/referral ............................................................. Vision, hearing, health; and
and support services determined locally at least 1 support service
Meals ................................................................. Depend on length of program day²
Monitoring ................................................................. Site visits and other monitoring

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .................................................... $494,687
Local match required? ................................................................. No
State spending per child enrolled ........................................ $115
All reported spending per child enrolled* ................................ $1,093

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>BENCHMARK</th>
<th>DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early learning standards</td>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher degree</td>
<td>HSD², BA</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher specialized training</td>
<td>None²</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant teacher degree</td>
<td>HSD³, CDA or equivalent</td>
<td>CDA or equivalent</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher in-service</td>
<td>12 clock hours</td>
<td>At least 15 hours/year</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum class size</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Site visits and other monitoring</td>
<td>Site visits</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TO TAL BENCHMARKS MET 3

TOTAL

STATE PRE-K AND HEAD START ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION

3-YEAR-OLDS

- Pre-K: 3%
- Head Start: 92%
- Special Ed¹: 5%
- Other/None: 2%

4-YEAR-OLDS

- Pre-K: 4%
- Head Start: 12%
- Special Ed¹: 4%
- Other/None: 80%

¹ This is an estimate of children in special education who are not enrolled in state-funded pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .................................................... $494,687
Local match required? ................................................................. No
State spending per child enrolled ........................................ $115
All reported spending per child enrolled* ................................ $1,093

* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

¹ The staff-child ratio is based on state licensing requirements, although the Arizona Department of Education recommends a ratio of 1:10. Based on further clarification, this policy does not meet NIEER’s requirement.

² Effective July 1, 2012, all pre-K teachers in settings funded by ECBG must hold an Early Childhood Certification, which requires a bachelor’s degree. Since 2005, most programs have hired new staff who have or are eligible for the ECE certification or endorsement.

³ Assistant teachers who work in Title I schools are required by NCLB to have an AA degree.

Data are for the ‘09-’10 school year, unless otherwise noted.