Minnesota provides supplemental funding to both Head Start and Early Head Start (EHS) in order to increase access for children from birth to age 5. This additional funding is available to any agency that receives federal Head Start funding. These agencies may collaborate with public schools, family child care homes, and private child care centers, though all providers receiving state funding must adhere to the federal Head Start Performance Standards. Additionally, the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, the state’s early learning standards, guide technical assistance and training for all program staff members.

Programs can use their additional funds to supplement either Early Head Start or Head Start. In recent years, local programs have increasingly used funds to enroll families in Early Head Start while their children are young, resulting in decreased enrollment in Minnesota Head Start. Longitudinal spending and enrollment information was corrected in the 2009-2010 school year to reflect only Head Start participation.

In the 2008-2009 school year, statutory changes affected the operation of state-funded pre-K in Minnesota. Programs that provide EHS services could use a per-child rate up to the federal EHS average within the state even if the program did not receive federal funding for EHS. A second change exempted some programs from strict enrollment requirements provided they were approved to serve a high-risk population, such as the homeless.

A second state initiative, the School Readiness Program, provides services through community-based organizations, school districts, and subcontracted charter schools. The goal of this program is to promote kindergarten readiness through an assortment of approaches, including home visits, preschool education programs, and services for children with disabilities. Individual school districts decide which services to offer. To participate, programs must use research-based program content, coordinate with other local programs, encourage parent involvement, and ensure that children receive appropriate screenings and referrals. Program enrollment and funding data for center-based preschool education services are not tracked at the state level, however, so the School Readiness Program is not featured in this profile.
The Head Start reauthorization that went into effect in December 2007 requires...

State pre-K children must meet the federal Head Start income guidelines. Effective...

Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources...

All reported spending per child enrolled* .................. $7,475

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

** Head Start per-child spending for the 2010-2011 year includes funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

** K–12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

Data are for the ’10-’11 school year, unless otherwise noted.

1 State pre-K children must meet the federal Head Start income guidelines. Effective December 2007, 35 percent of enrollment may be children whose family incomes are between 100 and 130 percent FPL after priority is given to children at 100 percent or below FPL.

2 Schedules are determined locally but must be in compliance with federal Head Start regulations. Programs must operate at least 3.5 hours per day, 4 days per week, and 32 weeks per year.

3 The Head Start reauthorization that went into effect in December 2007 requires that by 2011 all lead teachers must have at least an AA degree and by 2013 at least 50 percent must have at least a BA related to teaching preschool children. Currently, about 80 percent in Minnesota Head Start programs have at least an AA and 60 percent have at least a BA in ECE or a related field. In a public school, teacher union rules require that teachers have at least a bachelor’s degree.

4 Assistant teachers in settings subject to child care regulations must work under the supervision of a teacher, be at least 18 years old, and meet one of nine combined credential, educational, and experience requirements, such as a high school diploma, 12 quarter units in early childhood or a related field, and 2,080 hours of experience. Federal Head Start requires that by 2013 all assistant teachers have a CDA or be enrolled in a program to receive a CDA, AA, or BA within two years.

5 Programs are also required to provide screenings and referrals for nutrition issues. Support services include parent conferences or home visits, education services or job training for parents, parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, health services for parents and children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities.

6 Federal Head Start Performance Standards require half-day programs to provide children with at least one-third of their daily nutritional needs (breakfast or lunch), and full-day programs to provide two meals or two-thirds of their daily nutritional needs.

7 All spending through this initiative is directed toward Head Start programs.