Rhode Island

The Rhode Island Prekindergarten Demonstration Project was launched as a prekindergarten demonstration initiative in the fall of 2009. As of September 2010, the program was available to 4-year-old children in seven classrooms located in four of the state's urban communities. Four of the seven demonstration classrooms were funded with $700,000 allocated by the state, while local school districts funded the other three classrooms using federal Title I dollars. A total of 126 preschool education slots were available to 4-year-olds in these seven classrooms during the 2010-2011 school year.

Teachers in the Rhode Island Prekindergarten Demonstration Project are required to hold a bachelor's degree with an early childhood teaching certificate. The Rhode Island Department of Education provides teachers with training and technical assistance on an ongoing basis at all seven locations. The program is available to all children in each participating community who are 4 years old by September 1, though enrollment is determined by a lottery. Public schools, private child care, and Head Start programs are eligible to apply to be pre-K sites and receive funding through a competitive request for proposal process conducted by the Rhode Island Department of Education. The Rhode Island Prekindergarten Demonstration Project is included in the state's newly adopted school funding formula enacted through legislation in 2010.

Funding for the Rhode Island Prekindergarten Demonstration Project was not included in the school funding formula for the 2011-2012 school year during the state’s transition to the new funding methodology. However, alternate bridge funding consisting of a combination of funds from the state, private foundations, and Title I was used. Rhode Island plans to fully implement the state funding formula, which will include funding for the state pre-K program, in the 2012-2013 school year. The funding formula includes an expansion plan for pre-K that will increase the state investment each year for 10 years up to $10 million per year.

Through an ongoing process, starting in the 2009-2010 school year, this program is evaluated for both process quality and program impact/child outcomes, including classroom quality and child outcomes in literacy, mathematics, and social-emotional development.

Rhode Island also provides supplemental state funding to the federal Head Start program through the Department of Human Services, but substantial cutbacks have been made to this initiative in recent years. During the 2010-2011 school year, 156 children were served using $800,000 in state funds, including $200,000 through TANF.

**Access Rankings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4-year-olds</th>
<th>3-year-olds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>None Served</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Resources Rankings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Spending</th>
<th>All Reported Spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RHODE ISLAND PREKINDERGARTEN DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .......................................................... 1261
School districts that offer state program ........................................... 10% (communities)
Income requirement ...................................................................... None
Hours of operation ................................................................. 6 hours/day, 5 days/week
Operating schedule ................................................................. Academic year
Special education enrollment ...................................................... 1,753
Federally funded Head Start enrollment ........................................ 1,774
State-funded Head Start enrollment ................................................ 1202

Quality Standards Checklist

POLICY
Early learning standards ............................................................. Comprehensive
Teacher degree ............................................................................. BA
Teacher specialized training ..................................................... EC certification (pre-K–grade 2)
Assistant teacher degree ............................................................... HSD + 12 college credits of ECE
Teacher in-service ........................................................................ 20 clock hours
Maximum class size ...................................................................... NA
3-year-olds ................................................................................. NA
4-year-olds ................................................................................. 20 or lower
Staff-child ratio ............................................................................ 1:10 or better
3-year-olds ................................................................................. NA
4-year-olds ................................................................................. 1:9
Screening/referral ...................................................................... Vision, hearing, health, developmental
and support services .................................................................. Speech/language; and support services3
Meals ............................................................................................. Lunch and snack
Monitoring ...................................................................................... Site visits and other monitoring

BENCHMARK
Comprehensive ......................................................................... Comprehensive
BA ............................................................................................... BA
Specializing in pre-K ................................................................. Specializing in pre-K
CDA or equivalent ...................................................................... HSD + 12 college credits of ECE
At least 15 hours/year .................................................................. At least 15 hours/year
18 ............................................................................................... 20 or lower
1:10 or better ............................................................................. 1:10 or better
1:9 ............................................................................................. 1:9
1:10 or better ............................................................................. 1:10 or better
Vision, hearing, health, developmental, ...................................... Vision, hearing, health, and support services
and support services .................................................................. Speech/language; and support services3
At least 1 support service ............................................................ At least 1 support service
At least 1/day .............................................................................. At least 1/day
Site visits and other monitoring ................................................ Site visits

DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET

10

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending ............................................................. $700,000
Local match required? .................................................................. No
State Head Start spending ............................................................... $800,0004
State spending per child enrolled .................................................. $5,556
All reported spending per child enrolled* ..................................... $9,127

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

PRE-K* ........................................................................................ $9,127
HDST** .................................................................................... $10,430
K-12*** ..................................................................................... $16,515

1 This is the total enrollment, which is made up of 76 children being served with state funds only and 50 children being served with Title I funds only.
2 Rhode Island was not able to break its state-funded Head Start enrollment down by single year of age. As a result, this figure is an estimate based on the percentage of federal Head Start enrollees in Rhode Island who were 3 or 4 years old.
3 This sum also represents $200,000 in TANF funds dedicated to Head Start.

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