In an effort to increase access for children from birth to age 5, Minnesota provides supplemental funding to both Head Start and Early Head Start (EHS) programs. Any agency that receives federal Head Start funding is eligible for the funding. The agencies may work in partnership with public schools, private child care centers, and family child care homes while adhering to the federal Head Start Performance Standards. Additionally, the state’s early learning standards, the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress, guide assistance and training for all program staff members as well as technical assistance.

These additional program funds can be used to supplement either Early Head Start or Head Start. 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. In the 2009-2010 school year, longitudinal spending and enrollment information was corrected to reflect only Head Start participation. Minnesota is a recipient of a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant.

Statutory changes during the 2008-2009 school year affected the operation of state-funded pre-K programs in Minnesota. Programs that provided 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. Additionally, programs could be exempt from strict enrollment requirements if they were approved to serve a high-risk population, such as the homeless.

The School Readiness Program, a second state initiative, provides services through community-based organizations, subcontracted charter schools, and school districts. The program is intended to promote kindergarten readiness through an assortment of approaches, including preschool education programs, home visits, and services for children with disabilities. Individual school districts determine which services to provide. Programs must have research-based program content, coordinate with other local programs, encourage parent involvement, and ensure that children receive appropriate screenings and referrals. Funding data and program enrollment for center-based preschool education services are not tracked at the state level, hence the absence of the School Readiness Program in this profile.
MINNESOTA HEAD START

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment ..............................................1,813
School districts that offer state program ........................................100% (counties)
Income requirement ..................................................At least 90% of children must be at or below 100% FPL or receiving TANF

Hours of operation ..............................................At least 3.5 hours/day, 4 days/week
Operating schedule ..............................................At least 32 weeks/year
Special education enrollment ..............................................8,765
Federal Head Start enrollment, ages 3 & 4 ..........................................10,033
State-funded Head Start enrollment ..............................................1,731

POLICY STATE PRE-K BENCHMARK DOES REQUIREMENT

PRE-K *
Head Start **
Special Ed†
Other/None 8

1% 8% 6% 85%

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending ..............................................$13,764,296
Local match required? ..................................................No
State Head Start spending ..................................................$13,764,296
State spending per child enrolled ..............................................$7,592
All reported spending per child enrolled* ..............................................$7,592

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 All state-funded Head Start enrollment is through the state pre-K program, but the state could not break into a specific number of 3- and 4-year-olds. As a result, age breakdowns used in the Access pie chart were estimated, using proportions of federal Head Start enrollees in Minnesota in each age category 2011-2012.

4 Under the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, all lead teachers were required to have at least an AA by October 2011; by September 30, 2013, 50 percent must have at least a BA. By September 30, 2013, all assistant teachers must have at least a CDA or be enrolled in a program to receive a CDA, AA, or BA within two years. Currently, about 87 percent of Minnesota Head Start teachers have at least an AA and 65 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 BA.

8 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.

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

** Head Start per-child spending for the 2011-2012 year includes funding only for 3-and 4-year-olds served. Past years’ figures have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start.

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

Data are for the ’11-’12 school year, unless otherwise noted.

1% 8% 6% 85%