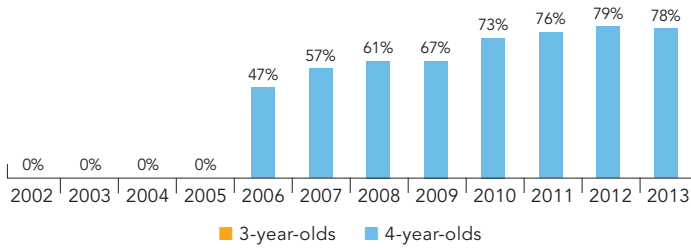
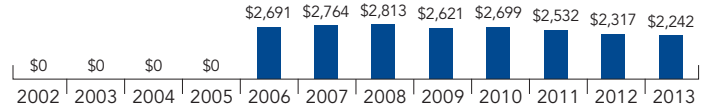


# Florida

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2013 DOLLARS)



The 2002 state constitutional amendment requiring prekindergarten access for all of Florida’s 4-year-olds led to creation of Florida’s Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program. The program became effective in 2005, enrolling approximately 100,000 children, increasing to more than 174,000 children in the 2012-2013 program year. VPK was jointly managed in 2012-2013 by Florida’s Office of Early Learning (OEL), the Department of Education (DOE), and the Department of Children and Families. In 2011, OEL was moved from Florida’s Agency for Workforce Innovation and established as an independent agency administratively linked to the DOE.

Age-eligible children can enroll in either a summer program (totaling 300 instructional hours) or a school year program (totaling 540 instructional hours). All school districts are required to offer a summer program. The minimum teacher degree in the school-year program is the Child Development Associate (CDA) or equivalent credential, while a bachelor’s degree is required in the summer program. More than 65 percent of the lead teachers hold a Child Development Associate or Associate degree. In 2012-2013, programs were required to meet the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds* which was approved by the State Board of Education in 2011.

VPK is provided in a variety of settings, such as public schools, licensed child care centers, accredited non-public schools, accredited faith based centers, and licensed family child care homes. More than 80 percent of the children are provided services in nonpublic-school settings. Regional early learning coalitions monitor programs for compliance and administer VPK, including distributing funds to VPK programs based on a fixed hourly rate.

VPK providers are evaluated annually, based on results of the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) administered within the first 30 days of kindergarten, comparing both children and programs that participated in VPK to those that did not. FLKRS comprises two measures, the Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS) and the Florida Assessment for Instruction of Reading (FAIR). Since 2011, the State Board of Education must periodically adopt a minimum kindergarten readiness rate to assess provider delivery of the VPK program. Beginning with the 2011-2012 program year, the state changed the kindergarten readiness requirements to ensure that children be rated as proficient on both the ECHOS and FAIR components of FLKRS. Also, commencing with the 2012-2013 school year, all providers are required to administer the Florida VPK Assessment. Results from the first and third assessment periods are collected and used as pre- and post-evaluation to determine learning gains.

Florida’s School Readiness Program, a separate initiative begun in 1999, expanded in 2001 by incorporating two other state programs (the Prekindergarten Early Intervention Program, which focused on young children’s health, and the State Migrant Prekindergarten Program, which served 3- and 4-year-olds whose parents are migratory agricultural or fishing industry laborers) offers financial assistance for child care to qualified parents. This report focuses solely on the VPK program.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
2	None Served

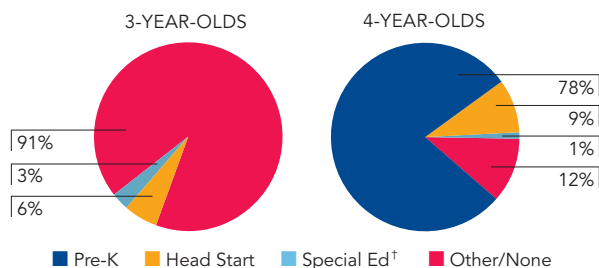
RESOURCES RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
35	37

# FLORIDA VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

## ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .....	174,145
School districts that offer state program .....	100% (counties)
Income requirement .....	None
Hours of operation .....	Determined locally <sup>1</sup>
Operating schedule .....	Determined locally <sup>1</sup>
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	20,236
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	33,311
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	0

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



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

## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards .....	Comprehensive .....	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree .....	BA (summer); CDA or equivalent (school year) <sup>2</sup>	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training.....	EC or EE certification (summer); CDA (school year) <sup>2</sup>	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree .....	None <sup>3</sup>	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service .....	10 clock hours/year <sup>4</sup>	At least 15 hours/year	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size .....		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds .....	NA		
4-year-olds .....	12 (summer); 20 (school year) <sup>5</sup>		
Staff-child ratio .....		1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds .....	NA		
4-year-olds.....	1:12 (summer); 1:11/2:12-20 (school year) <sup>5</sup>		
Screening/referral..... and support services	Determined locally <sup>6</sup>	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meals .....	Depends on length of program day <sup>7</sup>	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring .....	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET**

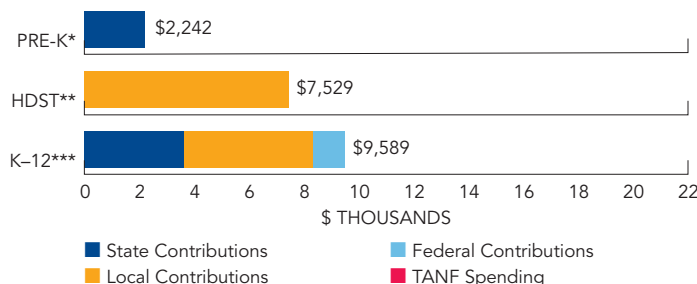
**3**

## RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .....	\$390,360,150
Local match required? .....	No
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$2,242
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$2,242

\* 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 2012-2013 year includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds served. Past years figured have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start.  
 \*\*\* K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures. Data are for the '12-'13 school year, unless otherwise noted.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



<sup>1</sup> All school districts are required to offer the summer VPK program. VPK programs may choose to operate a 300-hour summer program or a school year program, totaling at least 540 hours of service. The operating schedule and hours are determined locally, but most school year programs operate 3 hours per day, 5 days per week. Most summer programs operate 8 hours per day, 5 days per week. Providers are allowed to determine their individual calendars to meet those requirements.  
<sup>2</sup> Teacher qualification requirements are different for the summer and school year programs. Teachers in the summer programs must have a BA in early childhood, primary, or preschool education, prekindergarten disabilities, family and consumer science, or elementary education. Teachers in the school year programs are required to have a CDA or the Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) equivalent and must have completed a Department of Education course on emergent literacy.  
<sup>3</sup> Assistant teachers do not have to meet any degree requirements, but must complete a 40-hour training for licensed child care providers.

<sup>4</sup> Lead teachers must participate in a minimum of 10 hours of professional development annually. Lead teachers in licensed programs are required to maintain a valid CDA or the FCCPC as a minimum credential for the school-year program, which must be renewed every five years. Lead teachers in the summer program must have a bachelor's degree in a specified major and/or maintain their teacher certification, which includes 6 semester hours of college credit or equivalent earned during each five-year renewal period.  
<sup>5</sup> During a special legislative session in 2009, the Legislature adjusted the staff-child ratio for the summer program from 1:10 to 1:12. The maximum class size is now 12. The staff-child ratio for the school year program was not changed, with one teacher required for classes of up to 10 students, and a second staff member required in classes of 11 to 18 students.  
<sup>6</sup> All children participating in programs in licensed child care facilities or public schools must have evidence of vision, hearing, and immunization/general physical health screenings. For public school programs, referrals for further follow-up, as appropriate, are also required.  
<sup>7</sup> Meals and snacks are required for extended-day programs.