Oklahoma began their Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program in 1980, planning to ultimately serve all 4-years-olds in the state. In 1990, the program received statewide funding for 4-year-olds eligible for the federal Head Start program, but local areas could choose to serve additional 4-year-olds through local funds or tuition. In 1998, Oklahoma became the second state in the nation to provide free admission to preschool programs for all 4-year-olds. The program is now available in 99 percent of school districts, and registration in the Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program has increased steadily. Since 2004, this program has been assessed for program impact/child outcomes in several studies, including an efficiency study in 2008 and an ongoing longitudinal study by Georgetown University.

Through the state’s school finance formula, public school districts receive funding for the Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program. A per-pupil rate, calculated using the age of the child and the length of the program day, is used to repay districts. Districts can support other centers by placing public school teachers in child care centers, Head Start settings, and community-based programs. Children in these sites receive the same services as children in public school locations, and are considered public school enrollees. State budget cuts across the board in education have affected early childhood education programs as well, and subsidy for the state pre-K program was amended proportionally with all other public school grade levels for the 2011-2012 school year.

Although the state does not specifically support services for typically developing 3-year-olds, some Oklahoma school boroughs provide preschool programs for these younger students. During the 2011-2012 school year, using a combination of special education, Title I, Head Start, and general funds, 3-year-olds were aided in various state-supported classrooms. In 2011, the Early Childhood Expansion Project used public and private backing to serve 314 children from birth through age 4. Oklahoma also delivered $2,191,700 in state funds to complement the federal Head Start program, supporting extended-day and additional services for the 2011-2012 school year.

In addition, the Pilot Early Childhood Program, started in 2006, was funded in the 2010-2011 school year. Rules and regulations for this program are recognized by the Oklahoma State Board of Education, while funding comes from both public and private foundations. Services are delivered year-round to at-risk children, using annual contracts with the Community Action Project of Tulsa County. In the 2011-2012 school year, 2,642 children from birth through age 3 were helped in this pilot program.

During the 2011 Oklahoma state lawmaking session, the state’s previous Reading Sufficiency Act was updated. New legislation to guarantee that all students are reading on grade level by the end of third grade, focusing on early intervention for children in pre-K, was considered. Specific requirements include showing a series of evaluations, studying literacy instruction in kindergarten through third grade, and offering intensive interventions (including an individualized reading plan and ongoing progress monitoring) to the students identified as having a reading deficit. No major changes occurred during the 2012-2013 school year, and none are anticipated for 2013-2014.
OKLAHOMA EARLY CHILDHOOD FOUR-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

ACCESS
Total state program enrollment..........................40,114
School districts that offer state program ..................98%
Income requirement ................................................None
Hours of operation .................................................2.5 or 6 hours/day, 5 days/week
Operating schedule ......................................Academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ..............4,156
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ......14,370
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ........0

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY                                      STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT                BENCHMARK
Early learning standards ................................Comprehensive ........Comprehensive
Teacher degree ................................................BA/BS ..............BA
Teacher specialized training ............................EC Endorsement with or ........Specializing in pre-K
without SpEd, Pre-K–K (public)                   
Assistant teacher degree ...................................Other, see notes3 ..............CDA or equivalent
Teacher in-service ........................................75 clock hours/year ........At least 15 hours/year
Maximum class size ........................................20 or lower
3-year-olds ......................................................NA
4-year-olds ......................................................20
Staff-child ratio .............................................1:10 or better
3-year-olds ......................................................NA
4-year-olds ......................................................1:10
Screening/referral ..........................................Immunizations; ........Vision, hearing, health; and
and support services ...........................................and support services4 at least 1 support service
Meals..............................................................Lunch5 ..............At least 1/day
Monitoring ....................................................Site visits and other monitoring ....Site visits

RESOURCES
Total state pre-K spending .......................................$144,859,409
Local match required? ..............................................No
State Head Start spending ..............................$2,191,700 10
State spending per child enrolled .........$3,611
All reported spending per child enrolled* ..............$7,597

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

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<td>PRE-K*</td>
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1 Programs have the option of operating a part-day or a school-day program or a combination of both within each district. Districts can choose to offer a longer day but will not receive state funding. Programs must be offered at least 175 days per year or 1080 hours per school year.
2 State Head Start funds are used to provide extended-day and additional services.
3 Teacher Assistants are only required to hold a high school diploma or GED diploma and pass the FBI criminal history check. However, if the teacher assistant is employed in a Title I school, s/he must be highly qualified using one of the following methods: 1. Hold an associate’s degree or higher. 2. Complete at least two years or 48 credit hours of study at an institution of higher education. 3. Pass the OGET (Oklahoma General Education Test) 4. Pass the ET5 (Education Testing Service) ParaPro Assessment Test or the WorkKeys Assessment. About 67 percent of school sites are Title 1.
4 Support services include parent conferences and/or home visits, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities. Programs must also offer, or make referrals for, other services including mental health services (counselor), health services (school nurse), and all other typical public school program services (such as early intervention, transition programs, and literacy coaches).
5 At least one meal is provided through the Federal Child Nutrition Program. This federal program does not provide snacks for students, so snacks are determined locally.

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*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 figures have intentionally 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.