Wisconsin’s Constitution has included a promise to provide free, voluntary education for 4-year-olds since it became a state in 1848. Districts are not required to offer 4K, but if they do, it must be open to all age-eligible children. Funds for 4K are paid to public schools, which then may subcontract with private child-care centers, community-based programs, or Head Start agencies. Most programs operate part-day, 4-5 days per week, but some operate full-day 2-3 days per week.

Funding for 4K is part of the overall school funding formula, at 0.5 of funding for other grade levels. Districts receive 0.6 if they offer 87.5 hours of parent outreach.

In the 2011-2012 school year, Wisconsin implemented a statewide early literacy assessment for kindergarten students, and 4K programs began early literacy screening with PALS PK in 2013-14. The state does not require other assessment at 4K, so districts determine their own assessment process. The 4K program was last evaluated for both process quality and program impact/child outcomes during the 2003-2004 year, but the University of Wisconsin Madison is currently involved in a national study exploring 4K in WI and NJ. Literacy learning standards were revised in 2013.

The Wisconsin Head Start program is a separate state-funded program offering supplemental state finances to federal Head Start grantees to provide comprehensive early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities or from low-income families. Participating programs follow the federal Head Start Performance Standards, and children meet Head Start enrollment guidelines. Reductions in state supplemental funding have led to fewer spaces, however. Efforts have been made to bring together Head Start technical assistance and training with other professional development efforts at both the state and local levels. The state is exploring options for developing a longitudinal data system.

Wisconsin is a recipient of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge funds, and many of the tasks supported by the grant involve 4K, including alignment with their QRIS and LDS. The department is revising the 4K policy bulletin.

The first two pages of Wisconsin’s profile give a general idea of the state’s overall promise and assistance to state-funded prekindergarten programs, including enrollment and state expenditure for both the Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program and the Head Start state supplement. The third page presents specific facts on the 4K program, and the fourth page focuses on the Wisconsin Head Start program.
STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .................................................... 49,687
Total state spending ................................................................. $175,264,100
State spending per child enrolled .............................................. $3,527
All reported spending per child enrolled* ................................ $5,620

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3-YEAR-OLDS</th>
<th>4-YEAR-OLDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/None</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** 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 2013-2014 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 ‘13-‘14 school year, unless otherwise noted.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3-YEAR-OLDS</th>
<th>4-YEAR-OLDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>$5,620</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>$7,405</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed</td>
<td></td>
<td>$12,355</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESOURCES RANKINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4-YEAR-OLDS</th>
<th>3-YEAR-OLDS</th>
<th>STATE SPENDING</th>
<th>ALL REPORTED SPENDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**WISCONSIN FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM**

**ACCESS**
- Total state program enrollment: 48,590
- School districts that offer state program: 93%
- Income requirement: No income requirement
- Hours of operation: Determined locally
- Operating schedule: Determined locally
- Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 8,790
- Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 12,216
- State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 0

**QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>BENCHMARK</th>
<th>DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early learning standards</td>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher degree</td>
<td>BA and EC teacher license</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher specialized training</td>
<td>EC endorsement, with or without Specializing in pre-K SpEd; K-3rd</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant teacher degree</td>
<td>HSD or equivalent (public); As per child</td>
<td>CDA or equivalent care licensing standards (nonpublic)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher in-service</td>
<td>6 credit hours/5 years</td>
<td>At least 15 hours/year</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum class size</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-child ratio</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening/referral</td>
<td>Health; Vision, hearing, health; and support services</td>
<td>at least 1 support service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>Depends on length of program day</td>
<td>At least 1/day</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>Site visits and other monitoring</td>
<td>Site visits</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESOURCES**

- Total state pre-K spending: $169,000,000
- Local match required?: Yes
- State spending per child enrolled: $3,478
- All reported spending per child enrolled* | $5,618

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

- 3-YEAR-OLDS: 86%
- 4-YEAR-OLDS: 14%

**TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET** 5

**RESOURCES**

- 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 2013-2014 year includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds served. Past years figured have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start.

**RESOURCES**

1. Districts must provide a minimum of 437 hours of direct instruction per year, or 349.5 hours of instruction plus 87.5 hours of parent outreach. Most programs are part-day, 4.5 days per week for an academic year, but some districts may offer the program full-day for 2-3 days per week.
2. Wisconsin did not break this figure into specific numbers of 3- or 4-year-olds. As a result, age breakdowns used in the Access pie chart were estimated.
3. Assistant teachers in public settings can meet one of three requirements: at least two years of higher education, an associate (or higher) degree, or meet a rigorous standard of quality through a state or local academic assessment regardless of degree. The requirement for assistant teachers in nonpublic settings reflects child care licensing regulations. School districts that are Head Start grantees may require assistant teachers to have an AA and assistant teacher license.
4. State law supports vision, hearing, and general health screenings prior to enrollment. When 4K uses a community approach with Head Start, screenings are required. Support services include parent involvement activities, health services for children, referral to social services, referral for special education, parent conferences and/or home visits, and access to a school nurse, psychologist, and social worker.
5. If a school-based program operates longer than 2.5 hours, it is required to provide a meal or snack through the school nutrition program. Programs implemented in child care or Head Start must follow applicable requirements.
WISCONSIN HEAD START STATE SUPPLEMENT

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .................................................1,097
School districts that offer state program ................................100% (Federal
Head Start Grantees)
Income requirement .................................................................100% FPL
Hours of operation .................................................................100% FPL
Operating schedule ..............................................................3 hours/day
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ..............8,790
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .................12,216

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY | STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT | BENCHMARK | DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
--- | --- | --- | ---
Early learning standards ..............................................Comprehensive | Comprehensive | ✔️
Teacher degree .......................................................BA (public); AA (nonpublic) | BA | ✔️
Teacher specialized training ..............ECE (public); AA in CDA (nonpublic) | Specializing in pre-K | ✔️
Assistant teacher degree .........................CDA or equivalent | ✔️
Teacher in-service ................................................15 clock hours/year | At least 15 hours/year | ✔️
Maximum class size .................................................20 or lower | ✔️
3-year-olds .................................................................20 | ✔️
4-year-olds .................................................................20 | ✔️
Staff-child ratio .........................................................1:10 or better | ✔️
3-year-olds ...............................................................2:17 | ✔️
4-year-olds ...............................................................1:10 | ✔️
Screening/referral ......................Vision, hearing, health, dental, other | Vision, hearing, health; and | ✔️
and support services development; and support services | at least 1 support service | ✔️
Meals .................................................................Lunch and snack | At least 1/day | ✔️
Monitoring ......................................................Other monitoring | Site visits | ✔️

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending ..............................................$6,264,100
State spending per child enrolled ........................................$5,710
All reported spending per child enrolled* .......................$5,710

* 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 2013-2014 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 ‘13-’14 school year, unless otherwise noted.

1 Districts must provide a minimum of 437 hours of direct instruction per year, or 349.5 hours
of instruction plus 87.5 hours of parent outreach. Most programs are part-day, 4-5 days per
week for an academic year, but some districts may offer the program full-day for 2-3 days per
week.
2 Wisconsin did not break this figure into specific numbers of 3- or 4-year-olds. As a result, age
breakdowns used in the Access pie chart were estimated.
3 Starting in 2013, the federal Head Start program requires all assistant teachers have a CDA
or be enrolled in a program to receive a CDA, AA, or BA within two years. This now meets
the benchmark for assistant teachers.
4 State law supports vision, hearing, and general health screenings prior to enrollment. When
4K uses a community approach with Head Start, screenings are required. Support services
include parent involvement activities, health services for children, referral to social services,
referral for special education, parent conferences and/or home visits, and access to a school
nurse, psychologist, and social worker.
5 If a school-based program operates longer than 2.5 hours, it is required to provide a meal or
snack through the school nutrition program. Programs implemented in child care or Head
Start must follow applicable requirements.