The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (PA) currently serves pre-kindergarten-age children via four different pre-kindergarten programs: The Pennsylvania Four-Year-Old and School-based Prekindergarten and Kindergarten programs SBPK/K4), the Ready to Learn (RTL) Block Grant (known prior to the 2014-2015 school year as the Accountability Block Grant Program, the Pennsylvania Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (PAHSSAP), and the Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts Program (PAPKC). The PA Department of Education provides oversight for each of these programs. Policy for the PAPKC and PAHSSAP is developed by the Department of Education, but the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL, an office jointly accountable to the Departments of Education and Human Services) administers and monitors these programs.

The prekindergarten programs in PA with the most longevity are the K4/SBPK programs, which are funded through the state’s general fund. Funds are available to districts wishing to offer these programs, and currently just over 18% of districts offer pre-K through the K4/SBPK program. Many of the policy decisions for this program are decentralized to the local level, meaning the individual districts make most of the decisions relative to the criteria in the quality benchmarks.

During the 2004-2005 school year, Pennsylvania authorized its second prekindergarten program, the Education Accountability Block Grant, now called the Ready to Learn Block Grant. RTL is funded through a state aid formula, with 75% of funds targeted to serving children who have not achieved proficiency on the PA System for School Assessment test. School districts can opt to offer this pre-K program or choose from a list of other approved services; currently, approximately 5.2% of districts use these funds for pre-kindergarten programs, which is a 2% increase from the 2013-2014 school year. This increase is, in part, because the legislature eliminated the Accountability Block Grant line item from the budget, creating a new line item for RTL and allocating additional funds for the program. As with the K4/SBPK programs, many of the policy decisions for the RTL programs have been devolved to the district level, rendering decisions related to the quality benchmarks a local decision.

The PAHSSAP was also created during the 2004-2005 school year, with an original investment of $15 million. The PAHSSAP provides extended-day services for federally funded Head Start children, as well as additional slots in Head Start programs. All programs are also required to meet the Head Start Performance Standards. It is by way of these requirements that the HSSAP meets the majority of the quality benchmarks.

The PAPKC Program was created in the 2007-2008 school year, with the intention of further expanding access within the Commonwealth to high-quality pre-kindergarten programs. PAPKC serves children who are income-eligible at 300% FPL, though districts have the option to set lower income thresholds. PAPKC programs can also serve children up to two years before their locally determined kindergarten entry age, though individual programs have the flexibility to make decisions based on local demand. PAPKC funds are awarded on a competitive basis every five years, with the most recent re-bidding occurring in 2013, and programs from a variety of auspices (e.g., Head Start, child care, family child care, and school districts) can apply for PAPKC funding. In 2014, the legislature awarded additional funds to expand PAPKC slots. Fiscal monitoring is required of each grantee in all four programs and is conducted by the state. For the HSSAP and PAPKC programs, onsite monitoring is conducted annually by PK program specialists. Additional program- and child-level monitoring activities occur in the PA HSSAP and PAPKC programs. PA HSSAP programs are required to use either CLASS, ECERS, or another locally selected tool to annually conduct structured observations of classroom quality; PAPKC programs are required to have an ECERS assessment annually. In addition, PAPKC and PAHSSAP programs are required to regularly input program and child assessment data into the statewide data system, called PELICAN. Outcomes from ongoing child assessment are collected twice annually, using a tool approved by OCDEL.

In the 2014-2015 school year, the Commonwealth implemented a new tool, called the Kindergarten Entry Inventory (KEI). This program is only required in select school districts and programs, use by others is voluntary. The KEI is designed to provide teachers with an instructional strategy for documenting students’ proficiency across cognitive and non-cognitive domains at kindergarten entry. The KEI is aligned with the PA Early Learning Standards and the PA Core.

The first two pages of this state profile provide data on the Commonwealth’s commitment and contributions to serving children in state-funded pre-K programs, including state expenditures and enrollment data, aggregated across the four programs. The subsequent pages provide disaggregated data for each individual program.

THE STATE OF PRESCHOOL 2015 - STATE PRESCHOOL YEARBOOK - NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EARLY EDUCATION RESEARCH - WWW.NIEER.ORG
STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment ........................................... 26,038
Total state spending .......................................................... $146,590,191
State spending per child enrolled ........................................... $5,630
All reported spending per child enrolled*............................... $5,630

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 2014-2015 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 '14-'15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

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

3-YEAR-OLDS

84%
4%
6%
6%

4-YEAR-OLDS

12%
8%
6%
74%

- Pre-K
- Head Start†
- Special Ed††
- Other/None

† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
†† Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

PA PGMS*

$5,630

HDST**

$8,445

K-12***

$18,972

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24

$ THOUSANDS

- State Contributions
- Federal Contributions
- Local Contributions
- TANF Spending

* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

††† K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures. Data are for the '14-'15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

ACCESS RANKINGS

4-YEAR-OLDS 3-YEAR-OLDS

30 15

RESOURCES RANKINGS

STATE SPENDING ALL-REPORTED SPENDING

15 23

POLICIES TO SUPPORT

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS WORKFORCE

- -
PENNSYLVANIA READY TO LEARN BLOCK GRANT

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .................................................. 5,027
School districts that offer state program ........................................... 5% (school districts)
Income requirement ........................................................................ No income requirement1
Hours of operation .................................................. 5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule ....... Determined locally, based on local school year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ................................. 21,199
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ............ 26,630
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ............. 5,567

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 P-K-4; ECE N-3 .............. Specializing in pre-K
Assistant teacher degree .................................... Meets NCLB requirements2 .......... CDA or equivalent
Teacher in-service .............................................. 180 clock hours/5 years .............. 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 ........................................................................ 1:10
4-year-olds ........................................................................ 1:10
Screening/referral .............................................. Determined locally .............. Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service
and support services
Meals ................................................................. No meals are required .............. At least 1/day
Monitoring ............................................................... Other monitoring .............. Site visits

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .................................................. $5,735,048
Local match required? ................................................................. No
State Head Start spending .................................................. $38,721,977
State spending per child enrolled ........................................ $1,141
All reported spending per child enrolled* ......................... $1,141

* 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 2014-2015 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 ‘14-‘15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

1 Eligibility requirements are locally determined.
2 Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, assistant teachers had to meet NCLB requirements and were required to have two years of post-secondary education/60 college credits, an AA or higher, or the ability to meet a rigorous standard of quality and to demonstrate through formal state or local assessments knowledge of the ability to assist in instruction.

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The Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007 requires that by 2011 all lead teachers must have at least an AA; by 2013, 50 percent must have at least a BA. If teachers are employed by a school district, EC certification is required. Federal Head Start requires that by 2013 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 NIEER's assistant teacher benchmark.
**Pennsylvania Kindergarten for Four-Year-Olds and School Based Pre-K**

**Access**

Total state program enrollment: 1,988

School districts that offer state program: 18% (school districts)

Income requirement: No income requirement

Hours of operation: 5 hours/day, 5 days/week

Operating schedule: School or academic year

Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 21,199

Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 26,630

State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 5,567

**Quality Standards Checklist**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>State Pre-K Requirement</th>
<th>Benchmark</th>
<th>Does Requirement Meet Benchmark?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early learning standards</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Teacher specialized training</td>
<td>ECE PK-4; ECE N-3 (public); Specializing in pre-K Elementary (nonpublic)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant teacher degree</td>
<td>No minimum degree (K4); CDA or equivalent</td>
<td>Meets NCLB requirements (SBPK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher in-service</td>
<td>180 clock hours/5 years</td>
<td>At least 15 hours/year</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum class size</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-year-olds</td>
<td>No limit (K4); 20 (SBPK)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year-olds</td>
<td>No limit (K4); 20 (SBPK)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-child ratio</td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-year-olds</td>
<td>No limit (K4); 1:10 (SBPK)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year-olds</td>
<td>No limit (K4); 1:10 (SBPK)</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>Screening/referral</td>
<td>Vision; hearing; height/weight/BMI; Vision, hearing, health; and blood pressure; immunizations</td>
<td>at least 1 support service</td>
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<tr>
<td>and support services</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>No meals are required</td>
<td>At least 1/day</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Site visits</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Resources**

Total state pre-K spending: $6,908,540

Local match required?: No

State Head Start spending: $38,721,977

State spending per child enrolled: $3,475

All reported spending per child enrolled*: $3,475

* 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 2014-2015 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 ‘14-’15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

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**Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, assistant teachers had to meet NCLB requirements and were required to have two years of post-secondary education/60 college credits, an AA or higher, or the ability to meet a rigorous standard of quality and to demonstrate through formal state or local assessments knowledge of the ability to assist in instruction.**
Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts

Access
Total state program enrollment ..................................................... 13,456
School districts that offer state program ........................................ 83% (school districts)
Income requirement ................................................................... 300% FPL
Hours of operation ..................................................................... 5 hours/day, 5 days/week
Operating schedule ..................................................................... 180 days/year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ......................... 21,199
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ........... 26,630
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .................. 5,567

Quality Standards Checklist

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<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>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher degree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher specialized training</td>
<td>ECE P-K-4; ECE N-3</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant teacher degree</td>
<td>Meets NCLB requirements¹</td>
<td>CDA or equivalent</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher in-service</td>
<td>180 clock hours/5 years</td>
<td>At least 15 hours/year</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum class size</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-child ratio</td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-year-olds</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year-olds</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening/referral</td>
<td>Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and support services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>Snack (part day); Snack and meal (full 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 ................................................. $95,224,626
Local match required? ......................................................... No
State Head Start spending .................................................... $38,721,977
State spending per child enrolled ................................. $7,077
All reported spending per child enrolled* .................. $7,077

* 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 2014-2015 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 ’14-’15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

Spending Per Child Enrolled

1 Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, assistant teachers had to meet NCLB requirements and were required to have two years of post-secondary education/60 college credits, an AA or higher, or the ability to meet a rigorous standard of quality and to demonstrate through formal state or local assessments knowledge of the ability to assist in instruction.