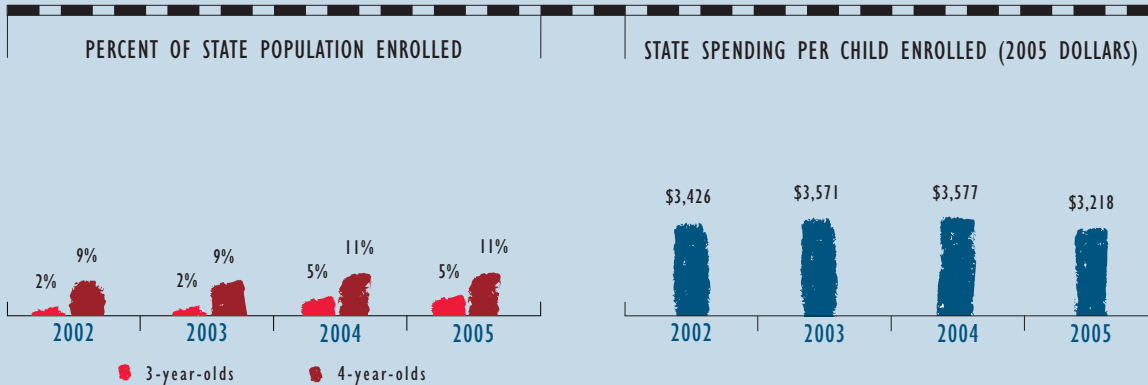


California



The California State Preschool Program, established in 1965, provides child care and development programs for 3- to 5-year-old children. Children are eligible to participate if their family income is below 230 percent of the federal poverty level. Regardless of income, children who are receiving protective services, who have been abused, neglected, or exploited, or who are at risk for abuse or neglect are also eligible to participate and are given top priority. Funded through a competitive grant process, programs are administered by school districts, Head Start agencies, and private child care providers.

Although the State Preschool Program primarily supports part-day services, funds are also provided through coordination with federally and state-funded child care assistance programs to help parents working full time receive extended hours of care. The state also provides funds to support full-time slots for 3- and 4-year-olds in General Child Care Programs, which must follow the same curriculum standards and program requirements as the State Preschool Program, but are targeted to working parents who need full-day care for their children.

Programs are required to record children’s development using the Desired Results for Children and Families system and to use the findings to plan curriculum and developmentally appropriate activities. In September 2003, the state implemented final regulations to standardize the use of this system across programs.

In 1998, an early childhood initiative known as First 5 was approved through the California Children and Families Act. This initiative established a tobacco tax to fund programs promoting early childhood development from prenatal care to age 5. Allocated by county commissions, First 5 funds may be used for services such as early care and education, parent education, family support, or child health care. In addition, California reserved \$200 million over four years for a School Readiness Initiative. Data in this report focus only on California’s State Preschool Program.

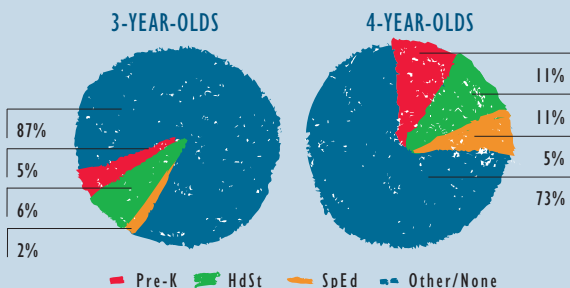
In June 2006, California voters will decide whether to approve a ballot initiative that would make part-day preschool available on a voluntary basis to all 4-year-olds in the state. This universal preschool program would be funded by raising income taxes for the top 1 percent of earners.



ACCESS

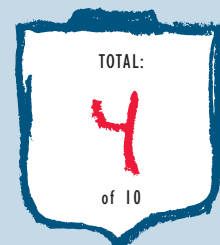
Total state program enrollment	82,172
School districts that offer state program	28%
Income requirement	Approximately 230% FPL ¹
Hours of operation	At least 3 hours/day, 5 days/week ²
Operating schedule	Academic year ³
Special education enrollment	36,900
Federally funded Head Start enrollment '03-'04	88,774
State-funded Head Start enrollment	0

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



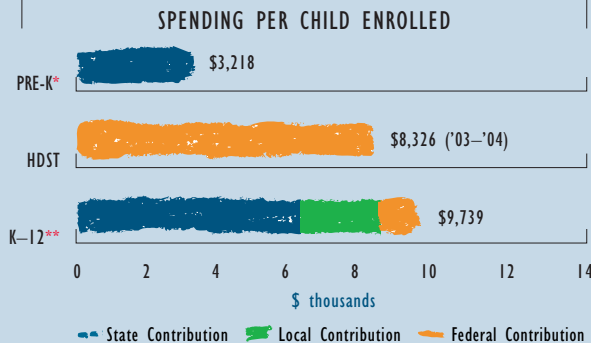
QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards	None ³	Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	CDA ⁴	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Meets CDA requirements ⁴	Specializing in Pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CD Asst. Tchr. Permit ⁵	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	105 clock hours/5 years	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size		20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	No limit ⁶		
4-year-olds	No limit ⁶		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	1:8		
4-year-olds	1:8		
Screening/referral and support services	Support services only ⁷	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Depend on length of program day ⁸	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$264,429,940
Local match required?	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,218 ⁹
State spending per 3-year-old	\$149 ⁹
State spending per 4-year-old	\$351 ⁹



* 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 '04-'05 school year, unless otherwise noted.

- The income cutoff applies to all children except for those who receive protective services, who are identified as abused, neglected, or exploited, or who are at risk for abuse or neglect.
- Programs are required to operate a minimum of 3 hours per day, 5 days per week, and 175 days per year. Agencies such as year-round schools may operate up to 250 days per year.
- The state is in the process of developing formal Pre-K standards. Pre-K guidelines are currently available and programs are encouraged, but not required, to use them. While the state does not have a full curriculum or learning standards, it does have tools it uses with programs, including the Desired Results for Children and Families system. Educators must document the progress made by children and families in achieving desired results.
- The Associate Teacher permit requires 12 credits in ECE or child development and 50 days of work experience in an instructional capacity. A CDA credential issued in the state may be substituted for this requirement. The Associate Teacher may function as the lead teacher in a classroom and the permit may be renewed one time for a 5-year period. The full Child Development Teacher permit requires a minimum of 40 semester units of education of which a minimum of 24 units must be in ECE or child development. A CDA may be used as 9 semester units toward the required 24.
- The Child Development Assistant Teacher Permit requires 6 credits in ECE or child development.
- While class size is not statutorily controlled, it is typically limited to 24 children to meet the staff-child ratio requirement of 1:8.
- Decisions regarding health screenings and referrals are made at the local level. A physical exam is required for program entry. Health and social services referral and follow-up to meet family needs are required. Other support services include two annual parent conferences or home visits, parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, and transition to kindergarten activities.
- Contractors must provide meals and snacks that meet nutritional requirements specified by the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program or the National School Lunch Program. Contractors must provide a breakfast and/or lunch if they specified in their application for services that those meals would be provided. For a 3.5 hour program, licensing rules require that all programs provide at least a snack, but do not require lunch or breakfast.
- These figures reflect state spending for preschool programs only, and do not reflect spending for General Child Care programs.