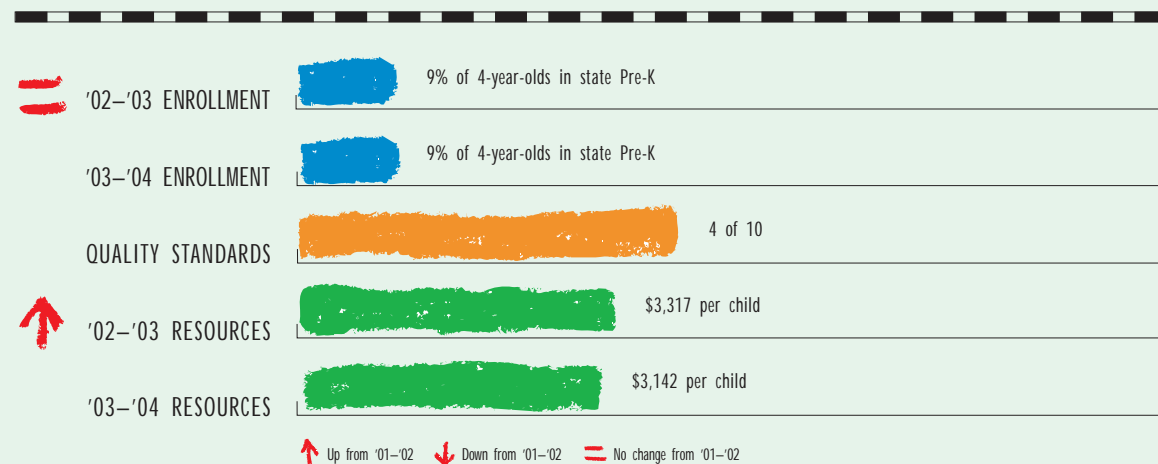


# California



Established in 1965, the California State Preschool Program provides child care and development programs for the state's 3- to 5-year-old children from low-income families. Programs are funded through a competitive grant process and administered by school districts, Head Start agencies, and private child care providers. Children are eligible to participate if their family's income falls below 230 percent of the federal poverty level. 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, regardless of income, and are given top priority.

California administrators view the State Preschool Program as one of several state early childhood programs designed to meet the varied needs of children and families and that together comprise a broader child development system. Although the State Preschool Program primarily supports part-day services, coordination with federally and state-funded child care assistance programs provides funds to help parents working full time cover the costs of extended hours of care. In addition, the state provided \$247,196,000 to support 30,370 full-time slots for 3- and 4-year-olds in General Child Care programs, bringing total state funding for prekindergarten and child care to \$496,718,000 in 2002–2003. General Child Care programs have 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.

The components of high-quality programming are laid out for child development programs in the Prekindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines, which were published in 2000. Programs are required to record children's development using the Desired Results system, and then use the findings to plan the curriculum and developmentally appropriate activities.

The State Preschool Program was provided with \$303.8 million in state funds to support a total of 96,685 slots during the 2003–2004 school year. However, because some contractors lacked staff or facilities to fill all of their slots, approximately 75,000 children were enrolled and not all of the funds were spent on preschool.

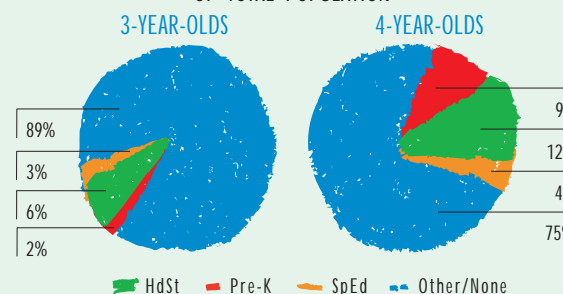
An additional early childhood initiative was approved in 1998 through the California Children and Families Act. Also known as First 5, this initiative established a dedicated tobacco tax to fund programs promoting early childhood development, from prenatal care to age 5. First 5 funds are allocated by county commissions and may be used for services including early care and education, parent education, family support, or child health needs. California also reserved \$200 million over four years for a School Readiness Initiative.



## ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	75,231 <sup>1</sup>
School districts that offer state program	95% (counties) <sup>2</sup>
Income requirement	230% FPL <sup>3</sup>
Hours of operation	Determined locally <sup>4</sup>
Operating schedule	Academic year <sup>5</sup>
Special education enrollment	34,701
Federally funded Head Start enrollment	90,496
State-funded Head Start enrollment	0

STATE PRE-K AND HEAD START ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION<sup>6</sup>

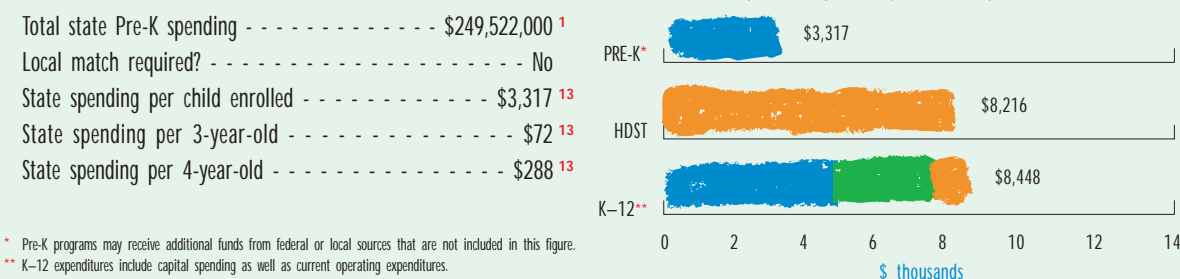


## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Curriculum standards	Not comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree requirement	CDA <sup>7</sup>	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training requirement	Meets CDA requirements <sup>7</sup>	Specializing in Pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree requirement	CD Asst. Tchr. Permit <sup>8</sup>	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service requirement	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 <sup>9</sup>		
4-year-olds	No limit <sup>9</sup>		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	1:8		
4-year-olds	1:8		
Screening/referral requirements	None <sup>10</sup>	Vision, hearing, and health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Required support services	2 parent conferences and support services <sup>11</sup>	At least 1 service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meal requirement	Varies <sup>12</sup>	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL:  
**4**  
of 10

## RESOURCES



\* 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 '02-'03 school year, unless otherwise noted.

1 A total of \$303.8 million was provided for the State Preschool Program to fund 96,685 slots. However, some contractors were not able to spend all of the funding because they lacked staff or facilities, because working families opted for full-day instead of part-day programs, or due to other reasons. These figures reflect unallocated and under-earned contracts.  
2 There are a total of 476 contracts or agencies providing State Preschool services. The program is offered in 320 out of 1,165 (27%) Local Education Agencies, which include school districts, county offices of education, and community colleges.  
3 The income cutoff applies to all children except those who receive protective services, who are identified as abused, neglected, exploited, or who are at risk for abuse or neglect.  
4 Programs are required to operate a minimum of 3 hours per day, 5 days per week.  
5 Children must be served for at least 175 days per year (equivalent to a school year), but an agency is permitted to operate for up to 250 days per year.  
6 Percentages of children in Pre-K reflect only those served in state preschool, and do not include 30,370 slots in General Child Care programs. An estimated 3.4% of 3-year-olds and 13.6% of 4-year-olds were enrolled in either state Pre-K or General Child Care during 2002–2003.  
7 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 California may be substituted for this requirement. The Associate level 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 credential may be used as 9 semester units toward the required 24.  
8 The Child Development Assistant Teacher Permit requires 6 credits in early childhood education or child development.  
9 Class size is not statutorily controlled, but is typically limited to 24 in order to meet the staff-child ratio requirement of 1:8.  
10 A physical exam is required for program entry. Health and social services referral and follow-up to meet family needs are required.  
11 Support services include parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, health services for children, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities.  
12 Each contractor must provide meals and/or snacks that meet nutritional requirements specified by the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program or the National School Lunch Program. Most programs offer a meal, and virtually all programs provide a snack.  
13 These figures reflect state spending for preschool programs only. During 2002–2003, state spending across both Pre-K and General Child Care programs was \$4,704 per child enrolled, \$168 per 3-year-old and \$692 per 4-year-old.