Since 1997, Connecticut has provided funds for School Readiness programs in priority districts and districts with severe-need schools. Priority districts receive an allocation of funds for prekindergarten programs, while funds for severe-need schools are awarded through a competitive grant process. Participating communities must establish School Readiness Councils that provide guidance to the chief elected official and the superintendent of schools on how to distribute the funds to individual programs. Programs are offered in accredited or state-approved public schools, private child care centers, and Head Start centers. Both 3- and 4-year-olds are served through the program.

At least 60 percent of available School Readiness slots in each community must be full-day, full-year slots, and 60 percent or more of enrolled children must come from families at or below 75 percent of the state median income. The state provides three additional types of slots to accommodate varying family needs—part-day, part-year slots; extended day slots; and, effective with the 2004–2005 school year, school-day, school-year slots. Regardless of the type of slot, the same teacher degree requirements and accreditation requirements are followed. Families participating in the School Readiness program are charged fees based on a sliding scale, although communities are allowed to exempt families in part-day programs from paying fees. The state also maintains a list of 23 types of family income that are not counted when assessing fees, such as rental subsidies and child support payments.

Connecticut has been moving toward making preschool available to all 3- and 4-year-olds by 2012. Among the steps that have been taken include a number of statewide meetings and forums and the formation of a Preschool Advisory Group by the State Department of Education. The governor has also instituted an Early Childhood Cabinet, which will focus on the achievement of universal preschool.
Types of slots include full-day, full-year (10 hours/day, 50 weeks/year); part-day, part-year (2.5 hours/day, 180 days/year); and extended-day (extends the hours, days and weeks of a non-School Readiness program to meet full-day requirements). The new school day, school-year slots operate 7 hours/day, 5 days/week, and 180 days/year. All programs operate 5 days per week, and about 75% of programs are full-day, though each community chooses its own specific combination of slots.

Connecticut did not track the number of children served through its Head Start supplement. As a result, this figure is an estimate based on the number of non-federally funded children in Connecticut reported in Head Start's 2003–2004 Program Information Report, and proportions of Connecticut's Head Start enrollees who were 3 or 4 years old.

K–12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

The amount of the 2004–2005 state Head Start supplement was not available at press time. This figure is an estimate based on flat funding for the previous two fiscal years.

All children must have an annual well-child checkup that conforms to EPSDT standards. Most communities provide vision, hearing, and dental checkups.

For nonpublic settings, child care licensing regulations of 1% of total hours worked apply.

The new school day, school-year slots operate 7 hours/day, 5 days/week, and 180 days/year. All programs operate 5 days per week, and about 75% of programs are full-day, though each community chooses its own specific combination of slots.