Connecticut has provided funds for School Readiness programs since 1997 to increase access to high-quality preschool programs. Three- and four-year-olds are eligible to participate. At least 60 percent of children served in each community must have family incomes at or below 75 percent of the state median income. Families participating in the program are charged fees on a sliding scale basis. Communities are allowed to exempt families in part-day programs from paying fees, and the state has issued guidelines on other types of exemptions.

The state allocates funds to priority school districts and awards competitive grants to schools considered to have severe needs. The mayor or superintendent designates a fiscal agent to receive the funds and local School Readiness Councils provide guidance on how to distribute the funds to individual programs. Programs may be offered in public schools, child care centers, and Head Start centers that are accredited or have state approval. At least 60 percent of slots must be full-day, full-year slots.

Professional development opportunities for staff, as well as other efforts, have contributed to the establishment and implementation of preschool standards. A recent focus has been to link these standards with the Preschool Assessment Framework. In 2003-2004, School Readiness programs received approximately $37,576,500 from the state to fund 6,554 slots for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Connecticut also supplemented Head Start funds in 2003-2004 with $4.5 million in state general funds. While most of these funds were used to enhance services to existing classrooms, they also supported an estimated 332 additional Head Start slots for 3- and 4-year-olds.

**State Head Start Spending:** $4,500,000

**Total State Pre-K Spending:** $35,674,423

**Spending Per Child Enrolled:**
- Pre-Kindergarten: $5,601 per child
- Kindergarten: $7,098 per child
- 1st Grade: $5,733 per child

**Operating Schedule:** Determined by type of slot:
- Full-day: 9 hours per day, 50 weeks per year
- Part-day: 2.5 hours per day, 180 days per year
- Extended-day: 10 hours per day, 50 weeks per year

**Income Requirement:** 60% of students must be at or below 200% of federal poverty guidelines.

**Program Requirements:**
1. At least 60% of slots must be full-day, full-year slots.
2. Programs provide two or more services: educational services or job training for parents, parenting support, or Early Head Start services.
3. All programs provide two or three services.
4. All programs provide three or four services.
5. All programs provide four or more services.
6. All programs provide five or more services.
7. All programs provide six or more services.
8. All programs provide seven or more services.
9. All programs provide eight or more services.
10. All programs provide nine or more services.
11. All programs provide ten or more services.
12. All programs provide eleven or more services.

**Teacher Requirements:**
- At least 75 CEUs in 5 years (public), 5 years (nonpublic)
- At least 75 CEUs in 5 years (public), 75 CEUs in 7 years (nonpublic)
- At least 75 CEUs in 5 years (public), 100 CEUs in 10 years (nonpublic)
- At least 75 CEUs in 5 years (public), 125 CEUs in 12 years (nonpublic)

**Staffing Requirements:**
- Staff-child ratio: 1:10 or better
- Staff-child ratio: 1:10
- Staff-child ratio: 1:12
- Staff-child ratio: 1:12 or better

**Maximum Class Size:**
- Pre-Kindergarten: 20
- Kindergarten: 20
- 1st Grade: 20

**Screening/Referral Requirements:**
- Health
- Vision
- Hearing

**Teacher In-Service Requirements:**
- At least 35 hours/year
- At least 35 hours/year (full-time)
- At least 35 hours/year (part-time)
- At least 35 hours/year (full-time), 30 hours/year (part-time)

**Nutritious Meals Requirement:**
- Varies

**State-funded Head Start Enrollment:** 332

**Enrollment as Percentage of Total Population:**
- 1% of 3- and 4-year-olds in state Pre-K
- 10% of 4-year-olds in state Pre-K
- 2% of the state Pre-K population
- 3% of the state Pre-K population
- 4 of 10
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

**State-funded Pre-K Enrollment as Percentage of Total Population:**
- 1% of 3- and 4-year-olds in state Pre-K
- 10% of 4-year-olds in state Pre-K
- 2% of the state Pre-K population
- 3% of the state Pre-K population
- 4 of 10
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

**Estimated 332 Additional Head Start Slots for 3- and 4-Year-Olds:**