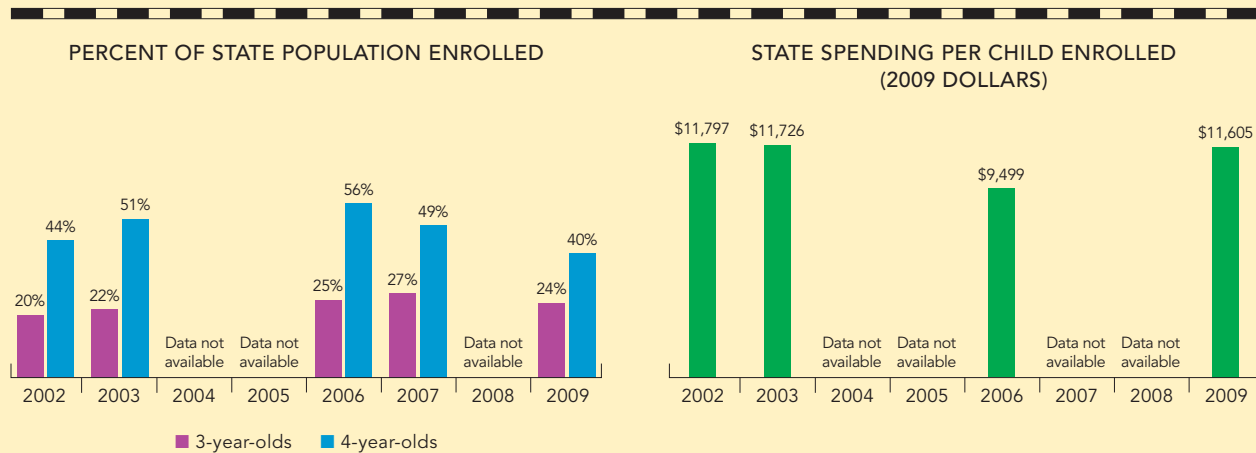


# District of Columbia



Since the 1960s, the District of Columbia has funded preschool through the Public School Preschool program (PSP). All public elementary schools in the District of Columbia offered the Public School Preschool program during the 2008-2009 school year through either a Head Start or non-Head Start program. Actual enrollment is limited by the number of available slots in the program, but all 3- and 4-year-olds in the District are eligible for Public School Preschool. The District of Columbia has been working to increase access to preschool by increasing the number of available programs. Funding for Public School Preschool is based on the school funding formula.

The District of Columbia has a second preschool program, the Pre-K Program (formerly called the Pre-K Incentive Program), which serves 3- and 4-year-olds in community-based settings. The Pre-K Incentive Program operated from 2005-2008 and led to the enactment of the Prekindergarten Enhancement and Expansion Act of 2008. For the first wave of the act, 23 Pre-K Program classrooms in nine community-based organizations served 368 children during the 2008-2009 school year. The program is funded by the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and administered by the Early Care and Education Administration of the Department of Human Services. Recognizing the significance of support services to ensure children enter school ready to learn, the Pre-K Program offers comprehensive support services such as health, dental, mental health, vision, and hearing screenings. Program sites are monitored quarterly and program providers have monthly meetings with parents. Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, the pre-K services required under the act will expand to DCPS and DC public charter schools.

DCPS also collaborates with the Children's Literacy Initiative to implement a model literacy program in preschool classes. The model literacy program was first implemented during the 2006-2007 school year and was expanded to more preschools during the 2007-2008 school year. The executive director of School Readiness and Early Childhood Programs has been working to develop a school readiness assessment instrument, build a comprehensive service system for children ages 3 to 5, and define school readiness.

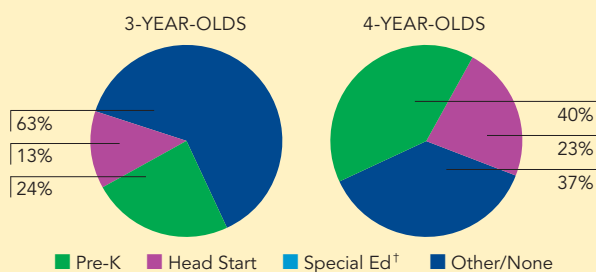
The District of Columbia has the unique situation of being a city that is not within a state. This report includes information about the District's preschool initiatives because, unlike other cities, it has not been included in any state profile. Due to the differences between city-level and statewide programs, the District's preschool initiatives cannot be directly compared to state programs. Therefore, the District is not ranked among the states according to resources or enrollment. The Public School Preschool program and Pre-K Program are profiled together because they have similar standards and requirements.

## D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOL PRESCHOOL (PSP) AND PRE-K PROGRAM

### ACCESS

Total district program enrollment .....	4,435 <sup>1</sup>
School districts that offer program.....	100% (elementary schools) <sup>2</sup>
Income requirement .....	None
Hours of operation .....	6.5 hours/day, 5 days/week
Operating schedule .....	Academic year
Special education enrollment.....	287
Federally funded Head Start enrollment .....	2,435 <sup>1</sup>
District-funded Head Start enrollment .....	0

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



<sup>†</sup> All special education students are included in district-funded pre-K enrollment.

### QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	DISTRICT PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards.....	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree.....	BA <sup>3</sup>	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training .....	Degree in EC <sup>3</sup>	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree .....	AA, 48 credits, or para-pro exam (PSP); CDA (Pre-K Program) <sup>4</sup>	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service.....	56 clock hours (PSP); 1 day/month (Pre-K Program) <sup>5</sup>	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size .....		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds .....	15 <sup>6</sup>		
4-year-olds .....	20 <sup>6</sup>		
Staff-child ratio .....		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds .....	2:15 <sup>6</sup>		
4-year-olds .....	1:10 <sup>6</sup>		
Screening/referral .....	Health, developmental; and support services <sup>7</sup>	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meals .....	Breakfast and lunch <sup>8</sup>	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring .....	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET**

**8**

### RESOURCES

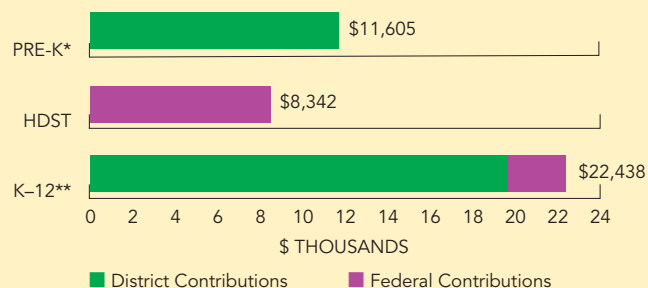
Total district pre-K spending .....	\$51,467,867 <sup>9</sup>
Local match required? .....	NA
District spending per child enrolled .....	\$11,605 <sup>9</sup>
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$11,605 <sup>9</sup>

\* 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 '08-'09 school year, unless otherwise noted.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



Pre-K Program requires teachers to attend professional development trainings that are held at least once a month during the school year as well as a week-long professional development institute held in the summer.

<sup>1</sup> For the 2008-2009 school year, there were 4,067 children enrolled in the Public School Preschool program and 368 children enrolled in the Pre-K Program. These numbers do not include children in charter schools. Some duplication may exist in enrollment counts for PSP and federal Head Start.

<sup>2</sup> Every elementary school in the District of Columbia has at least one Public School Preschool class. The Pre-K Program has pre-K classes at nine sites.

<sup>3</sup> Teachers in the Public School Preschool program are required to have a BA with early childhood certification. Teachers in the Pre-K Program, which are community-based providers, are required to have at least an associate degree in child development, early childhood education, or child and family studies, and must be enrolled in a bachelor's degree program and on track to receive the degree within five years. All lead teachers must have a BA degree by 2014.

<sup>4</sup> In the Public School Preschool program, an assistant teacher must have an associate degree, 48 college credit hours, or have passed the paraprofessional exam, which is a basic skills test. It is not required that the degree be in ECE. In the Pre-K Program, assistant teachers must hold at least a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and be enrolled in an associate degree program and on track to receive the degree within five years or by 2014.

<sup>5</sup> For the 2008-2009 school year, teachers in the Public School Preschool program had eight 7-hour required professional development days totaling 56 hours. The

<sup>6</sup> In the Pre-K Program, the requirements are a maximum class size of 16 and ratio of 1:8 for 3-year-olds, and a maximum class size of 20 and ratio of 1:10 for 4-year-olds.

<sup>7</sup> The Public School Preschool program requires health screenings and up-to-date immunizations for enrollment. The Pre-K Program provides behavioral, speech, language, health, and hearing screenings. Support services include four annual parent conferences (plus one annual home visit for Head Start programs), parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities.

<sup>8</sup> The Public School Preschool programs provide breakfast and lunch. Lunch is either free, reduced or full price. The Pre-K Program requires that all sites provide a balanced, nutritional breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack for all children.

<sup>9</sup> Spending was based on the per-pupil funding amount of \$11,401 for the Public School Preschool program and the reported \$5,100,000 total spending for the Pre-K Program. The total spending for the Pre-K Program includes support services for pre-K children such as high-quality classrooms, professional development, training and technical assistance, comprehensive services, and assessments.