Hawaii’s Preschool Open Doors Project provides subsidies to low-income parents to purchase preschool for their 4-year-olds as well as 3-year-olds with special needs. The Preschool Open Doors Project uses the same income eligibility criteria as the child care subsidy program, but unlike that program does not require parents to be working or engaged in other work-related activities in order for their children to participate. Families with incomes under 85 percent of the state median income are eligible, although most children participating in the program are from families with much lower incomes. Among children whose families meet the income requirement, those with special needs are given first priority to enroll.

Hawaii’s Pre-Plus Program, a separate initiative begun in 2002 that funds the construction of prekindergarten facilities at public school sites, now has 11 sites in operation. Two more sites were expected to open during 2005–2006 and four others will begin construction with the remaining project funds. As the Pre-Plus Program does not fund direct services, the data in this report focus only on the Preschool Open Doors Project.

To strengthen the quality of preschool programs, there are a number of initiatives being proposed in Hawaii. These would expand the capacity of preschool programs, increase the availability of child care subsidies, create incentives for programs to use the state’s early learning guidelines in their curriculum, and increase the professional development of staff in preschool programs.
QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY | STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT
--- | ---
Early learning standards | Comprehensive, but not required
Teacher degree | CDA
Teacher specialized training | CDA + 1 year exp.
Assistant teacher degree | CDA + 6 mos. exp.
Teacher in-service | None
Maximum class size
3-year-olds | No limit
4-year-olds | No limit
Staff-child ratio
3-year-olds | 1:12
4-year-olds | 1:16
Screening/referral and support services | Support services only
Meals | Lunch and snack
Monitoring | Site visits and other monitoring

BENCHMARK | DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
--- | ---
Comprehensive | ☐
BA | ☐
Specializing in Pre-K | ☑
CDA or equivalent | ☑
At least 15 hours/year | ☐
20 or lower | ☐
1:10 or better | ☐
Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 service | ☐
At least 1/day | ☑
Site visits | ☑

RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending | $3,329,204
Local match required? | No
State spending per child enrolled | $3,486
State Head Start spending | $390,000
State spending per 3-year-old | $30
State spending per 4-year-old | $179

Total state program enrollment | 955
School districts that offer state program | 75% (islands)
Income requirement | 85% SMI
Hours of operation | Determined locally
Operating schedule | Calendar year
Special education enrollment | 1,453
Federally funded Head Start enrollment '03–'04 | 2,703
State-funded Head Start enrollment | 0

PRE-K

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

3-YEAR-OLDS

- Pre-K: 89%
- HDST: 1%
- SpEd: 4%
- Other/None: 6%

4-YEAR-OLDS

- Pre-K: 1%
- HDST: 10%
- SpEd: 5%
- Other/None: 80%

SPEAKING PER CHILD ENROLLED

PRE-K

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| State Contribution | $3,486
| Local Contribution |
| Federal Contribution |

HDST

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| State Contribution | $7,400 ('03–'04)
| Local Contribution |
| Federal Contribution |

K–12

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| State Contribution | $9,314
| Local Contribution |
| Federal Contribution |