In 1998, Kansas established its At-Risk Four-Year-Old Children Preschool Program, which operates exclusively in public schools. Children are eligible for the program if they meet one of the following eight criteria: academic delay based upon validated assessment, developmental delay, English Language Learner status, migrant status, free lunch eligibility, having a parent lacking a high school diploma or GED, having a single parent, or referral from the Social and Rehabilitative Services agency. Local school districts receive a per-child allocation of state funds based upon the September 20 state enrollment count.

Kansas increased its requirements for the At-Risk Four-Year-Old Children Preschool Program for the 2007-2008 school year. For the first time, class size was limited to 20 children, with a staff to child ratio of 1:10 and teachers and assistant teachers were required to have at least 15 hours of in-service training. Kansas also implemented its Early Learning Standards during this school year. Staff from many state and local agencies and organizations serving children from birth to third grade and their families worked together to develop these early learning standards as well as core competencies for staff.

Kansas began a small pilot of a prekindergarten program during the 2006-2007 school year. This initiative expanded in 2007-2008 to serve 1,500 4-year-olds in 14 of 105 counties in the state.

Kansas’ Parents as Teachers initiative is a separate program that serves children from birth to age 3 and their families. Agencies at the state and local levels collaborate to meet the needs of the children and families served in the program.
KANSAS AT-RISK FOUR-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment ............................................. 6,281
School districts that offer state program .................................. 56%
Income requirement ............................................................. 130% FPL¹
Hours of operation ................................................................. At least 2.5 hours/day, 4 or 5 days/week
Operating schedule ................................................................. Academic year
Special education enrollment .................................................... 5,716
Federally funded Head Start enrollment ................................. 6,503
State-funded Head Start enrollment ......................................... 0

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY | STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT | BENCHMARK | DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
--- | --- | --- | ---
Early learning standards ..................................................... Comprehensive² | Comprehensive | ✓
Teacher degree ................................................................. BA³ | BA | ✓
Teacher specialized .......... EE license, ECE license, ECE SpEd .......... Specializing in pre-K training license, EC Unified (B–K, B–3rd grade) license, or EE license ECE endorsement⁴ | | 
Assistant teacher degree .................................................... CDA | CDA or equivalent | ✓
Teacher in-service ............................................................. 15 clock hours⁴ | At least 15 hours/year | ✓
Maximum class size .......................................................... 20 or lower | 20⁵ | ✓
Staff-child ratio ................................................................. 1:10 or better | 1:10⁵ | ✓
Screening/referral .......... Vision, hearing, health, dental, .......... Vision, hearing, health; and and support services developmental; and support services⁶ at least 1 support service | | ✓
Meals ................................................................. Snack ...... At least 1/day | | 
Monitoring ................................................................. Other monitoring ...... Site visits | | ★

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending ............................................. $17,857,511
Local match required? .......................................................... No
State spending per child enrolled ............................................ $2,843
All reported spending per child enrolled* ............................. $2,843

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

- **PRE-K**: $2,843
- **HDST**: $7,667
- **K–12**: $11,615

¹ Eligibility for free lunch is one of eight risk factors used to determine eligibility for this program. Every child must have at least one risk factor.
² The state adopted comprehensive early learning standards. Training on the Kansas Early Learning Standards occurred during the 2007-2008 school year.
³ Teachers must have a current license. An early childhood license is recommended.
⁴ Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, all teachers are required to have 15 clock hours of professional development each year.
⁵ Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, a class size of 20 children and a staff-child ratio of 1:10 is required.
⁶ Support services include two annual parent conferences or home visits, parenting support or training, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities.