Maryland

Maryland promotes quality in its early education programs by providing professional development opportunities and establishing quality standards for prekindergarten, preschool, and other early childhood programs. The state has set standards for teacher qualifications and ongoing professional development. In 2003–2004, the Prekindergarten Program received $19,262,500 in state funding, and enrolled 4,008 3-year-olds and 16,450 4-year-olds. The state places an emphasis on coordinating funding streams from various sources to meet operating costs and to provide a coherent program that expands available services. The state intends to fund universal Pre-K by significantly increasing state aid money available to districts by 2007–2008, at which time EEEP funds will be phased out.

Maryland also supplements the federal Head Start program. In fiscal year 2003, $3 million in state funding was used for extended-year and extended-day services as well as quality improvement. In addition, the Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Education Enhancement Program earmarks about $8 million to support comprehensive early childhood centers that are based in or linked to schools.

Maryland's state Head Start funds were also used to expand services or extend the program day for 484 children. Additionally, programs used state funds for professional development, parent education, mental health services, and support services.

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