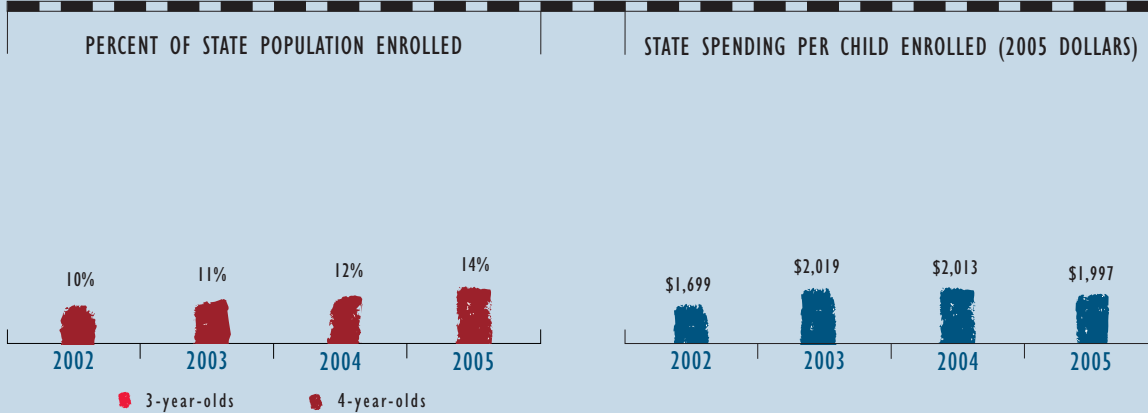


Maine



The Two-Year Kindergarten Program was established in 1983 through a legislative measure that allows any district to begin programs for 4-year-olds. The legislation is permissive and establishment of programs at the local level is voluntary. Districts offering programs receive reimbursement through Maine’s school funding formula provided that local matching funds are also used. This initiative has remained relatively small, with access limited to children who live in participating districts, although the state Department of Education has recently encouraged more districts to offer the program. Prekindergarten programs are primarily offered in public schools, though the state permits and encourages partnerships with Head Start and subcontracting with child care centers.

The state has implemented a new school funding formula, known as Essential Programs and Services, effective with the 2005–2006 school year. This formula will give additional per pupil weight to Pre-K–2 programs, children with special needs, low-income children and ESL students. Reimbursement is based on average daily attendance and a district is entitled to a full per-pupil subsidy with a minimum of ten hours of programming per week.

In June 2005, the state Legislature passed an act to promote coordination between public prekindergarten and early childhood programs in the community in an effort to maximize resources and meet the child care needs of working parents. The act also authorizes the Department of Education to adopt rules to include standards for early childhood programs that are developed by school administrative units.

The establishment of the State of Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines, a cross-systems document endorsed by both the commissioner of the Department of Education and the commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services, is expected to facilitate consistency and collaboration among all components of the state’s system of early care and education.

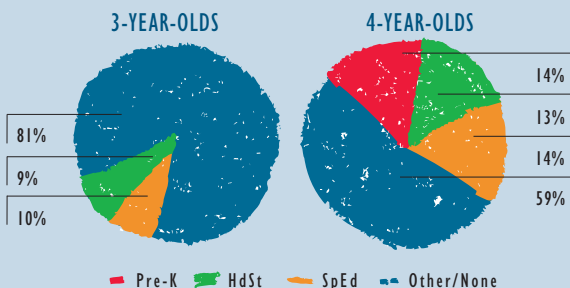
In addition to providing funds for the Two-Year Kindergarten Program, Maine also provided \$3,600,018 as a supplement to the federal Head Start program during fiscal year 2005.



ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	1,921
School districts that offer state program	25%
Income requirement	None
Hours of operation	Determined locally ¹
Operating schedule	Determined locally ¹
Special education enrollment	3,214
Federally funded Head Start enrollment '03-'04	2,970
State-funded Head Start enrollment	301 ²

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



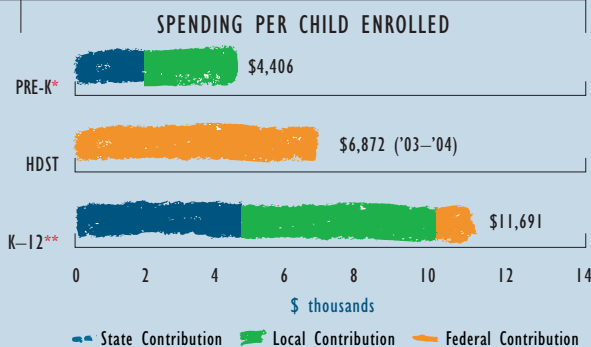
QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards	Comprehensive, but not required ³	Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	EC or elem. certification	Specializing in Pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	30 credit hours	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	90 clock hours/5 years	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size		20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA		
4-year-olds	No limit ⁴		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA		
4-year-olds	1:15 ⁴		
Screening/referral and support services	Vision, hearing ⁵	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meals	None	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	None	Site visits	<input type="checkbox"/>



RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$3,836,002
Local match required?	Yes—tied to school funding formula
State spending per child enrolled	\$1,997
State Head Start spending	\$3,600,018
State spending per 3-year-old	\$0
State spending per 4-year-old	\$284



* 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 '04-'05 school year, unless otherwise noted.

- Many programs operate 2.5 hours per day. A program must operate a minimum of 10 hours per week to receive a per-pupil subsidy through the school funding formula. Programs are expected to operate for 34 weeks per year.
- Maine was not able to break its state-funded Head Start enrollment down by single year of age. As a result, this figure is an estimate based on the percentage of federal Head Start enrollees in Maine who were 3 or 4 years old.
- The relevant document for 2004–2005 is the State of Maine Learning Results. The State of Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines were adopted in March 2005 and address all NEGP domains. The guidelines apply to all children in state-funded Pre-K and are jointly endorsed by the Commissioners of Education and Health and Human Services. They are offered as guidance to preschool programs but not required.
- The Maine statute pertaining to Basic School Approval and addressing “classroom student-teacher ratios” is intended to guide classroom size. The majority of programs operate with a teacher and educational technician, reducing the ratio to 1:8 or 1:10.
- The number of annual parent conferences or home visits is determined locally.