The state of Michigan established the Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP) in 1985 to offer preschool education to at-risk 4-year-olds. Effective for the 2008-2009 program year, the program’s name was changed to the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). GSRP is directly aligned with the governor’s early childhood initiative, Project Great Start. Beginning with the 2008-2009 program year, more than half of the children enrolled in the program must come from families with an income below 300 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL), an increase from 250 percent FPL in previous years. Children who meet this income threshold must also have at least one of 24 other risk factors for educational disadvantage while children above the income threshold must have at least two of these risk factors to be eligible for GSRP.

A school funding formula is used to calculate funding for GSRP based on the level of need in each district. Public school districts directly receive GSRP funding for preschool education programming and are permitted to use some of these funds for parent education and involvement programs. Public school districts can subcontract with other local providers to offer GSRP. The state also awards competitive preschool education grants to private child care centers, Head Start agencies, and social service and mental health agencies to provide preschool. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of children served in full-day GSRP programs, decreasing the total number of children that could have been served with the level of funding had they been enrolled in half-day programs.

The Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) was established in 2005 as part of the state’s efforts to integrate Michigan’s system of early childhood education and related family services. ECIC establishes standards and guidelines for early childhood development activities in order to promote a high-quality, statewide system. There have been recent proposals to increase funding for state preschool programs in order to allocate funds to programs serving children prenatally through age 3. This increased funding would allow the state to tie the pre-K reimbursement rate to that of K–12 so that increases in K–12 funding would impact pre-K.
MICHIGAN GREAT START READINESS PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment: 24,091
School districts that offer state program: 81%
Income requirement: 50% of children must be below 300% FPL
Hours of operation: 2.5 hours/day (half-day), 6-7 hours/day (full-day), 4 days/week
Operating schedule: 30 weeks/year
Special education enrollment: 13,716
Federally funded Head Start enrollment: 31,811
State-funded Head Start enrollment: 0

State Contributions
Other/None
Special Ed†

Federal Contributions
Local Contributions
Head Start
Pre-K
TANF Spending

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT BENCHMARK DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards: Comprehensive BA
Teacher degree: BA
Teacher specialized: EE certification + ECE endorsement Specializing in pre-K
training (public); EE certification + ECE endorsement or CDA, or BA in CD (nonpublic)
Assistant teacher degree: CDA or equivalent* CDA or equivalent
Teacher: 6 semester credit hours/5 years (certified); At least 15 hours/year; in-service; 12 clock hours/year (other staff)
Maximum class size: 20 or lower
3-year-olds: NA
4-year-olds: 18
Staff-child ratio: 1:10 or better
3-year-olds: NA
4-year-olds: 1:8
Screening/referral: Vision, hearing, health; and support services
developmental; and support services1 at least 1 support service
Meals: Snack8 At least 1/day
Monitoring: Other monitoring9 Site visits

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending: $103,250,000
Local match required?: Yes10
State spending per child enrolled: $4,286
All reported spending per child enrolled*: $4,286

Pre-K*: $4,286
HDST: $7,593
K–12**: $12,052

SPEAKING PER CHILD ENROLLED

$10 There is not a monetary local match, but occupancy costs must be part of the match because GSRP does not allow funding to cover facilities costs.

1 This is the number of children planned to be served rather than the number of slots. Some children were served in full-day programs that use two half-day slots, but they are only counted once in the enrollment.
2 The income requirement increased from 250 percent FPL to 300 percent FPL beginning in the 2008-2009 school year.
3 The minimum teacher degree requirement in nonpublic settings changed from an AA plus a CDA to a BA for 2005-2006. Teachers whose training is incomplete may be considered “out of compliance” but must be enrolled in a training program and reach compliance within four years, completing at least two courses per year.
4 An associate degree or early childhood education/child development or equivalent training approved by the State Board of Education is also permissible. If a suitable candidate cannot be hired, an associate teacher may start “out of compliance” but must have completed one course in child development and have a plan to complete the requirements within two years.
5 All classroom staff must have 12 clock hours of professional development per year, not including CPR, first aid, and blood pathogen training. Certified teachers need at least 6 semester credit hours of professional development (or an equivalent number of State Board Continuing Education Units) per 5 years to renew their certificates.
6 A qualified teacher and associate teacher must be present in classes of 9-16 children. If more than 16 children are in a class, a third adult must be present.
7 Programs must assure that children have health screenings, including vision and hearing, but they do not have to provide the screenings. Screenings are often provided in the program by the local health department. Programs are required to make referrals; dental screenings and referrals are determined locally. Support services include four parent conferences or home visits, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities.
8 Part-day programs must provide at least a snack. They are encouraged to offer a meal and to extend the day to at least 3 hours if they do so. Full-day programs must provide one meal and two snacks or two meals and one snack.
9 The state oversight agency’s monitoring plan includes site visits to programs, but the visits are not written into state policy requirements. Site visits for competitive grantee agencies occur once during each 3-year funding cycle. Site visits for school district programs are more limited, though the plan includes monitoring every three years for them as well.
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