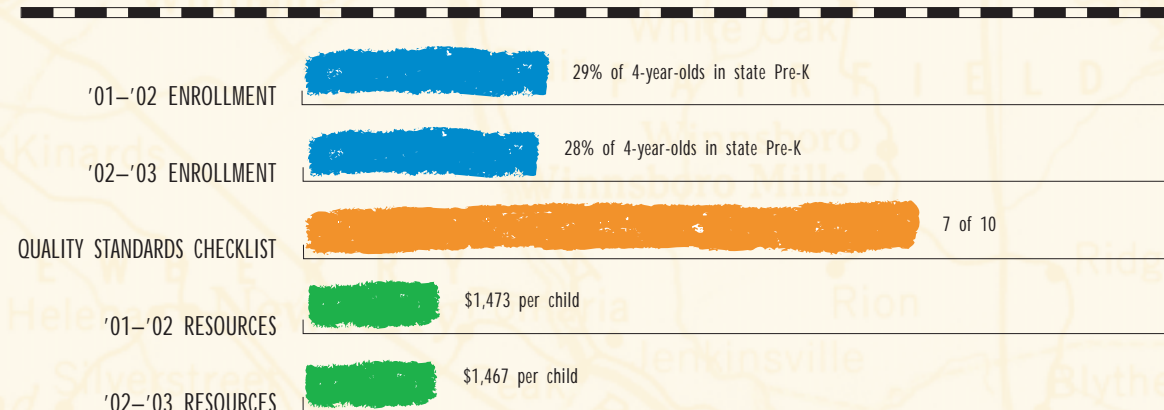


South Carolina



The Half-Day Child Development Program (also known as 4K) grew out of 1984's Education Improvement Act as an effort to better prepare 4-year-olds for kindergarten and first grade. School districts receive allocations based on the number of children who fail readiness tests in first grade, and give priority to 4-year-olds most at risk of school failure. Every district must provide at least one 4K program. Although public schools may collaborate with private child care settings or Head Start to provide 4K services, this is rarely done. State funding only pays for a part-day program during the school year, but many districts use Title I or local funds to extend the 4K program day.

During 2002–2003, an estimated 16,000 children attended 4K programs, which received \$23,476,278 in state funding.

While not the focus of data in the current report, the state-funded First Steps to School Readiness program supplements 4K funding. Signed into law in 1999, First Steps combines public and private support through county partnerships to enable individual communities to address the unmet needs of young children and their families. Local First Steps County Partnerships decide how to distribute funds, with some guidance from the state. Many partnerships choose to fund the extension of half-day 4K programs to full-day, add new full-day classes, or to have additional children served in half-day 4K in public schools. In fiscal year 2003, First Steps counties also funded full-day 4K in 16 private child care settings.

It is expected that budget cuts will lead to reductions in enrollment in South Carolina's preschool initiatives during fiscal year 2004. More than 1,600 slots have already been cut and some districts are seeking alternative sources of funding so as not to further reduce the number of slots.

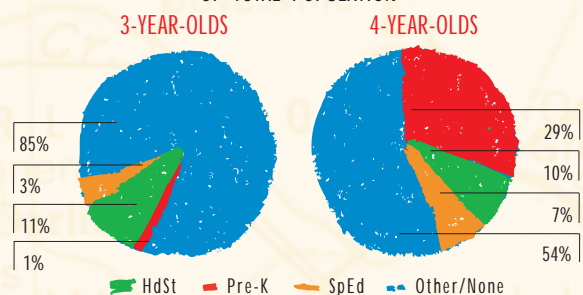
A new data-gathering system for early childhood in the state was implemented in the 2002–2003 school year. It is expected to result in increased accuracy of program information.



ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	16,000 ¹
School districts that offer state program	100% ²
Income requirement	None ³
Hours of operation	Half-day, full-week ⁴
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment	5,585
Federally-funded Head Start enrollment	10,725
State-funded Head Start enrollment	0

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



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

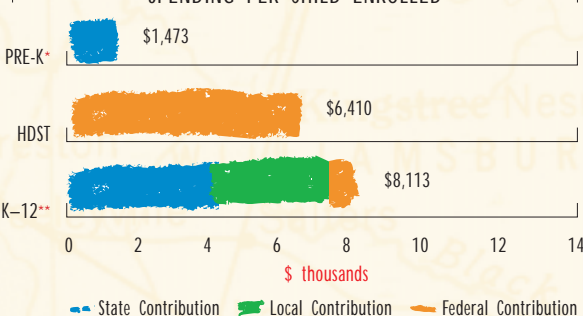
POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Curriculum standards	Not comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree requirement	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training requirement	EC certification	Specializing in EC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree requirement-HSD (public), None (nonpublic)	None (nonpublic) ⁵	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service requirement-6 credit hours/5 years, 12 clock hours/year		At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	20		
4-year-olds	20		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	1:10		
4-year-olds	1:10		
Screening/referral requirements	Vision, hearing, and health	Vision, hearing, and health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Family support service requirements	4 parent conferences ^{6,7}	At least 1 service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meal requirements	Snack only ⁸	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>



RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$23,574,212 ⁹
Local match required?	No ¹⁰
State spending per child enrolled	\$1,473
State spending per 3-year-old	\$10
State spending per 4-year-old	\$433

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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 '01-'02 school year, unless otherwise noted.

- 1 First Steps funds at least an additional 423 children, plus either extends the regular 4K day or provides full-day funding for 2,762 others. Of the 423 known to be fully funded by First Steps, 97 are in Head Start and 326 are in half-day programs.
- 2 First Steps is available in 55 of 85 districts, and provides funds for the Early Childhood 4K Program in 16 private child care settings.
- 3 Factors that impact eligibility include parent education, enrollment in an Even Start or family literacy program, the existence of an IEP, and low SES.
- 4 Programs operate a minimum of 180 days per year, and for at least 2.5 hours per day.
- 5 It is recommended that assistant teachers in nonpublic settings complete an early child development class within one year of their hiring date.
- 6 Two of the parent conferences ideally take place in the home, and are required to be held in a setting other than the school.
- 7 Every district must offer a family literacy or parenting program, for which 4K families often qualify.
- 8 Snack is required by legislation, but all 4K programs in school districts also provide either breakfast or lunch.
- 9 This figure does not include an additional \$8,500,000 of First Steps funding.
- 10 A local match of 15% is required for county partnerships receiving First Steps funds. This match may include local and federal sources, and may be in cash or in-kind. Programs funded by partnerships are not required to match, but nearly all do.