Vermont’s Early Education Initiative (EEI) began in 1987 and provides grants to increase access to preschool programs for the state’s 3- and 4-year-old children at risk. Direct funding is distributed by the state to public schools, Parent-Child Centers, private child care programs, and Head Start. The state requires EEI programs to coordinate funds and services with other community resources. During 2003–2004, nearly half of the children served came from families with incomes below 185 percent of the federal poverty level. Other risk factors related to program eligibility include exposure to violence, neglect or substance abuse, low parental education levels, social isolation, limited English proficiency, and developmental delay. State funding for EEI has remained level for the past 5 years, but because of inflation the value of grants received by programs has diminished. Some programs have thus reduced enrollment and intensity of services.

Since 2002–2003, the state has increased support for a second preschool initiative—Vermont Average Daily Membership-funded Prekindergarten. State education funds are distributed based on Average Daily Membership (ADM) counts, with 10 hours of weekly service generating one ADM per child (or 40 percent of full-day K-12 funding). ADM-funded programs are offered in public schools or in other facilities that are licensed by the state Department of Education.

All EEI programs are expected to reference the Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS) in their curriculum. Promotion of the VELS and related professional development activities is part of an ongoing effort to bring early education to the forefront of state policy decisions.

In order to document the contributions Vermont makes to prekindergarten through its separate initiatives, we first present summary information reflecting the state’s overall commitment to prekindergarten. Enrollment and state spending for both the ADM and EEI initiatives are taken into account. Next, we present specific details about each initiative in the state. The third page of this profile focuses exclusively on the ADM program, while the final page focuses exclusively on the EEI program.
STATE OVERVIEW

Total state program enrollment - 3,634
Total state spending - $9,040,024
State spending per child enrolled - $2,488
State spending per 3-year-old - $259
State spending per 4-year-old - $1,177

Data are for the '04–'05 school year, unless otherwise noted.

* 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.
**QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST**

**POLICY** | **STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT** | **BENCHMARK** | **DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?**
--- | --- | --- | ---
Early learning standards | Comprehensive | Comprehensive | ✓
Teacher degree | BA | BA | ✓
Teacher specialized training | Early Ed. or ECSE license | Specializing in Pre-K | ✓
Assistant teacher degree | Determined locally | CDA or equivalent | ☐
Teacher in-service | 9 credit hours/7 years | At least 15 hours/year | ☐
Maximum class size | 20 | 20 | 20
3-year-olds | 20 | 20 | 20
4-year-olds | 1:10 | 1:10 | 1:10
Staff-child ratio | 3-year-olds | 1:10 | 1:10
4-year-olds | 1:10 | 1:10 | 1:10
Screening/referral | Vision, hearing, health; and support services | Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 service | ✓
Meals | Depend on length of program day | At least 1/day | ☐
Monitoring | Other monitoring | Site visits | ☐

**RESOURCES**

Total state Pre-K spending | $7,711,200 | ✓
Local match required? | No | No
State spending per child enrolled | $3,030 | ✓
State spending per 3-year-old | $3,175 | ✓
State spending per 4-year-old | $1,054 | ✓

**SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED**

| ADM | $3,030 |
| HDST | $8,559 ('03–04) |
| $13,308 |

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* 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.
3 Support services include two annual home visits or parent conferences, health services for children, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities.
4 Programs operating fewer than 4 hours per day must offer a snack; programs operating for more than 4 hours per day must offer snack and lunch.
5 This figure is an estimate based on a new funding formula that went into effect as of the 2004–2005 program year.
6 The state did not break ADM enrollment into specific numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds. As a result, these calculations are estimates based on proportions of enrollees who were ages 3 or 4 in states that served 3-year-olds and provided age breakdowns for 2004–2005.

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**POLICY STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT BENCHMARK DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?**

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<th>ADM</th>
<th>EEI</th>
<th>HDST</th>
<th>SpEd</th>
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**TOTAL:** 7 of 10
QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY
Early learning standards ☐ Comprehensive ☐
Teacher degree ☐ BA ☐
Teacher specialized training ☐ License in EC or ECSE (public), Degree in ECE (nonpublic) ☐
Assistant teacher degree ☐ BA (public), Determined locally (nonpublic) ☐
Teacher in-service ☐ 9 credit hours/7 years (public), 9 clock hours/year (nonpublic) ☐
Maximum class size ☐ 3-year-olds ☐ 16 ☐
☐ 4-year-olds ☐ 16 ☐
Staff-child ratio ☐ 3-year-olds ☐ 1:8 ☐
☐ 4-year-olds ☐ 1:8 ☐
Screening/referral ☐ Vision, hearing, health, and developmental; and support services ☐
Meals ☐ Depend on length of program day ☐
Monitors ☐ Other monitoring ☐

BENCHMARK
Comprehensive ☐
BA ☐
Specializing in Pre-K ☐
CDA or equivalent ☐
At least 15 hours/year ☐
20 or lower ☐
1:10 or better ☐

DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?

RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending ☐ $1,328,824 ☐
Local match required ☐ No ☐
State spending per child enrolled ☐ $1,220 ☐
State spending per 3-year-old ☐ $84 ☐
State spending per 4-year-old ☐ $123 ☐

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

TOTAL:

* 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.

1 Children may also qualify based on risk factors such as developmental delay, risk for abuse or neglect, limited English proficiency, exposure to violence or substance abuse, social isolation, or low educational attainment by parents. During 2003–2004, 45% of enrollees qualified based on income.

2 Programs average 18.5 hours per week. Public schools and Head Start programs generally follow the academic year, while programs in child care centers usually operate throughout the calendar year.

3 District-wide screenings for all 3- to 5-year-olds are conducted, and referrals for services are provided to children whether or not they are EEI eligible. Support services include two annual parent conferences or home visits for academic-year programs and three for year-round programs, education services or job training for parents, parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, and transition to kindergarten activities.

4 Programs operating for 3 hours must provide a snack, while programs operating for at least 4 hours must provide a meal plus a snack.