In 1985, Washington created the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), to provide preschool, health and nutrition, family support, and parent involvement activities to low-income 3- and 4-year-olds. Public or private nonsectarian organizations receive direct funding from the state through a grant process and may then contract with other organizations to offer services. ECEAP-funded programs are offered in settings such as public schools, child care centers, community organizations, and Head Start agencies.

ECEAP provides services primarily to 4-year-olds. Three-year-olds may be served after all eligible 4-year-old applicants have been enrolled. Families served are at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level, although up to 10 percent of program slots may be offered to over-income families with developmental or environmental risk factors. Additionally, space is reserved to meet the needs of preschool children of migrant workers or Native Americans.

In 2006, the state funded a new cabinet level agency named the Department of Early Learning and launched a new public-private partnership called Thrive by Five Washington. Both the state agency and the nonprofit organization will coordinate efforts and fund programs to increase school readiness in children under age 5. Washington is currently redesigning its Early Learning Benchmarks.
Total state program enrollment .........................5,810
School districts that offer state program ......................92% (counties)
Income requirement ............................90% of children must be at or below 110% FPL
Hours of operation ..........................Determined locally
Operating schedule ..................................30 weeks/year
Special education enrollment ......................7,511
Federally funded Head Start enrollment .........11,020
State-funded Head Start enrollment .............0

POLICY

Early learning standards ............................................None

Teacher degree ..............................................................AA  BA

Teacher specialized training ......30 quarter units in ECE ..............Specializing in pre-K

Assistant teacher degree......CDA or 1 year ECE certificate ..............CDA or equivalent

Teacher in-service ........................................Not specified 

Maximum class size ..................................................20 or lower

3-year-olds ....................................................................24

4-year-olds ....................................................................24

Staff-child ratio ..........................................................1:10 or better

3-year-olds ....................................................................1:9

4-year-olds ....................................................................1:9

Screening/........Vision, hearing, health;..............Vision, hearing, health; and dental, and developmental; at least 1 support service
referral and support services and support services 

Meals ............................................................................At least 1 meal

Monitoring......................................................................Site visits and other monitoring

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending ...............................$34,194,952
Local match required? ........................................No
State spending per child enrolled ...................$5,886
State spending per 3-year-old ............................$80
State spending per 4-year-old ............................$355

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>State Contributions</th>
<th>Federal Contributions</th>
<th>Local Contributions</th>
<th>TANF Spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE-K*</td>
<td>$6,600</td>
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<td>HDST</td>
<td>$9,016 (04-05)</td>
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<td>K-12**</td>
<td>$11,162</td>
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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.

Data are for the ’05–’06 school year, unless otherwise noted.

1 The state is working on revising drafted Early Learning Benchmarks, which have yet to be implemented. The draft is available at: http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/Benchmarks.aspx.
2 Professional development hours are required, but the number is not specified. Beginning in July 2006, 15 hours are required.
3 Beginning in July 2006, the maximum class size is 20.
4 In classes of 18 students, the staff-child ratio must be 1:9; and in classes of 24, the staff-child ratio must be 1:6.
5 Support services include 3 hours of parent conferences, 3 hours of family support services, parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, transition to kindergarten activities, mental health consultation, services of a dietician, and oral/dental health services.
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