The Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) was initiated in 1985 in response to calls for early childhood education reform. The program primarily targets 4-year-olds from families at or below 110 percent of the federal poverty level, but can be extended to 3-year-olds after eligible 4-year-olds have been served. Additionally, space is reserved to meet the needs of preschool children of migrant workers or Native Americans, as well as children with environmental or developmental risk factors. Funding is provided through a competitive grant process to contractors from public schools, child care centers, and nonprofit organizations, which can then subcontract with a range of agencies to deliver services. The state strongly encourages contractors to use the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Program (DECA) to identify children’s social and emotional strengths and use that information in tailoring classroom strategies and working with parents.

In recent years, state budget decisions have reduced funding for ECEAP, which has resulted in the loss of slots and services. In 2003–2004, the state provided $26,537,328 to serve 5,436 4-year-olds and 1,446 3-year-olds.

**State-funded Head Start enrollment**

- 0

**Federally funded Head Start enrollment**

- 11,339

**Special education enrollment**

- 7,039

**Operating schedule**

- Determined locally

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total state program enrollment</th>
<th>6,918</th>
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<th>3-YEAR-OLDS</th>
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**K–12 expenditures**

- Capital spending
- Current operating expenditures

**Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.**

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