Wisconsin’s constitution has included a commitment to free education for 4-year-olds since 1848. The current Four-Year-Old Kindergarten (4K) program dates back to 1873, although state aid was suspended from 1957 to 1984. Through the 4K program, local school districts that choose to provide half-day classes for 4-year-olds receive 50 percent of the standard state per-pupil contribution provided for K–12, or 60 percent if the school also offers parent support. Most prekindergarten classes are offered in public schools, but the state is encouraging more subcontracting with local Head Start and child care centers for services.

The state promotes the expansion of the 4K program by urging districts that do not offer prekindergarten to take advantage of the option to do so, and by encouraging districts that already offer prekindergarten to serve more children. Other recent efforts to improve the program include the development of Model Early Learning Standards through collaborative work among state agencies. During the 2003–2004 school year, 4K programs received a total of $43 million in state funds (plus $22 million in local funds) and served 16,968 children.

In addition to supporting the 4K program, Wisconsin also reserves funding to supplement federal Head Start grants. These programs follow the federal Head Start Performance Standards and provide comprehensive early education for 3- and 4-year-old children who are from low-income families or who have disabilities. The state supplement to Head Start was reduced during the 2003–2004 year.

Although most states have a single state-financed prekindergarten initiative, Wisconsin makes significant contributions to prekindergarten through two separate initiatives—4K and the state-funded Head Start model. As a result, in the first two pages of this profile we present summary information reflecting the state’s overall commitment to prekindergarten. Enrollment and state spending for both the 4K and state-funded Head Start 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 4K program, while the final page focuses exclusively on the state-funded Head Start program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESOURCE</th>
<th>State Pre-K spending</th>
<th>Local match required</th>
<th>Meals, meal delivery, or vouchers required</th>
<th>Special education enrollment</th>
<th>Related services</th>
<th>Head Start enrollment</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>State-funded Head Start spending</th>
<th>Federally funded Head Start spending</th>
<th>Federally funded Head Start spending as percentage of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Pre-K</td>
<td>$7,425,000</td>
<td>$43,000,000</td>
<td>Determined locally</td>
<td>At least 1 service</td>
<td>At least 1/year</td>
<td>3,468</td>
<td>1,449</td>
<td>12,901</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total state Pre-K spending</td>
<td>$7,425,000</td>
<td>$43,000,000</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**POLICY**

- Preschool attendance standards: None
- Teacher degree requirement: BA
- Teacher credential requirement: Preschool
- Required support services: Parent involvement activities, health services for parents and children, referral to social services, transportation, and school counseling
- Special education enrollment: At least 1 year

**QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST**

- Preschool attendance standards: None
- Teacher degree requirement: BA
- Teacher credential requirement: Preschool
- Required support services: Parent involvement activities, health services for parents and children, referral to social services, transportation, and school counseling
- Special education enrollment: At least 1 year

**RESOURCES**

- State Pre-K spending: $7,425,000
- Local match required: Yes
- State-funded Head Start enrollment: 1,449
- Federally funded Head Start enrollment: 12,901
- Federally funded Head Start enrollment as percentage of total population: 85%

**ACCESS**

- State Pre-K spending: $7,425,000
- Local match required: Yes
- State-funded Head Start enrollment: 1,449
- Federally funded Head Start enrollment: 12,901
- Federally funded Head Start enrollment as percentage of total population: 85%