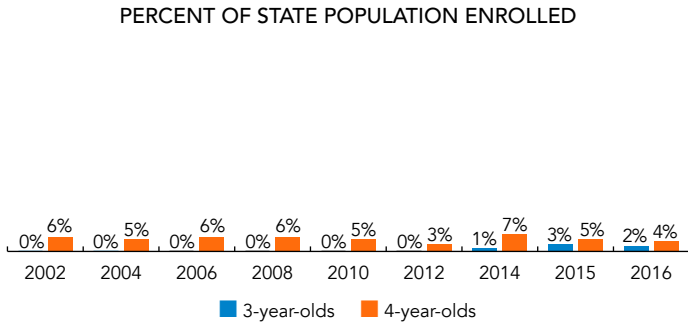
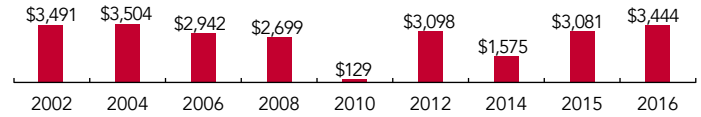


Arizona

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2016 DOLLARS)



Arizona began funding preschool programs in 1991. Supplemental services for preschool, full-day kindergarten, and first-third grade education were supported by the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) from 1996 to 2010. Children from families with incomes at or less than 185% of the federal poverty level qualified for ECBG-funded programs. ECBG funds were distributed to school districts with the requirement that some of the funds are passed through to private childcare centers or faith-based programs. ECBG funds were frozen in fiscal year 2010, due to budget constraints, and then revoked.

In 2006, Arizona voters established a dedicated funding source, using tobacco taxes, for early childhood development and health programs, and created the Early Childhood Development and Health Board, known as First Things First (FTF), to oversee use of those funds. The FTF Board allocates public funds to communities based on their birth to five population and the percentage of young children in poverty. Informed by local data, volunteer regional councils prioritize and recommend early childhood programs to fund. These public funds can be used for various early childhood programs, including increasing access to early learning. This is accomplished through Quality First (QF) Scholarships serving young children living at or below 200% FPL. The QF Scholarship program receives the bulk of FTF funding, about \$41.4 million in 2017.

Private child care, public schools, Head Start settings, tribally regulated programs, family child care homes, and faith-based programs are eligible to receive QF Scholarships as long as they participate in Quality First, the state's Quality Improvement and Rating System (QIRS) and (with limited exceptions) have met QIRS quality standards. QF Scholarship reimbursement rates vary by program type.

In the 2015-2016 school year, 5,365 preschool-aged children were served in center-based programs. Allocations of early childhood funds to regional councils decreased in 2015-2016 due to a 24% drop in tobacco tax revenue between 2007 to 2015 (about \$40 million less per year) and a projection that tobacco revenues would continue to decrease. In response, the FTF Board determined that a budget reset was necessary to ensure consistent funding levels over the next nine to 15 years. As a result, regional spending on QF Scholarships decreased by 38% between 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. Despite the decrease, the scholarships remain the highest funded program at FTF.

QF Scholarships also help Arizona draw down a greater amount of federal funds for child care vouchers to working families. Arizona receives more than \$118 million per year in federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) funds, which are administered by the state Department of Economic Security (DES) and require the state to provide both Maintenance of Effort (MOE) and matching funds. Historically, these requirements were met with state General Fund dollars appropriated by the Legislature. In fiscal year 2012, all General Fund appropriations to child care vouchers were eliminated. FTF collaborated with DES to leverage FTF investments in early learning quality and access (including scholarships) to meet federal MOE and state match requirements. Over the six years this MOU has been in place, Arizona has leveraged almost \$228 million in CCDF funds that otherwise would have been lost.

In 2014, Arizona was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) award, providing funding for access to preschool for 2,370 children in 15 high-needs communities statewide. The PDG also enhanced the quality of those programs by funding their participation in the state QIRS, which includes on-site and inclusive coaching, mental health consultation, child care health consultation, community-based professional development and college scholarships for early educators, and financial incentives.

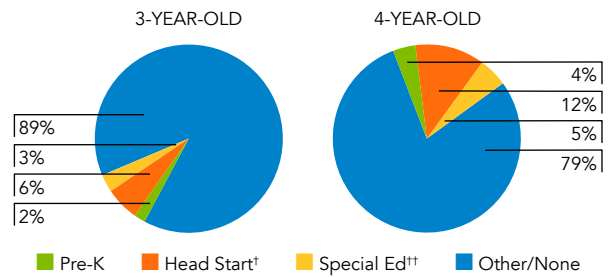
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	CURRENT STANDARDS	NEW STANDARDS
37	21	32	39	3	1

QUALITY FIRST SCHOLARSHIPS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	5,365 ²
School districts that offer state program	86% (Regional Partnership Councils)
Income requirement	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	3 hours/day; 3 days/week
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,928
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	14,951
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

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



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
 ** Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AZ PRE-K REQUIREMENT	CURRENT BENCHMARK	MEETS CURRENT BENCHMARK?	NEW BENCHMARK	MEETS NEW BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned with other state standards, supported, culturally sensitive ¹³	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	New in 2015-2016	—	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	12 credit hours in ECE, CDA (25% of teachers) ¹⁵	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	12 credit hours in ECE, CDA (25% of teachers) ¹⁵	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD ¹⁶	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	18 hours/year ^{19,20}	For teachers: At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	26 (3-year-olds); 30 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:13 (3-year-olds); 1:15 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations; Support services	Vision, hearing, health & at least one support service	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Depends on length of program day ¹⁰	At least one meal/day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Discontinued	—
Monitoring/ Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observation in randomly selected classrooms (every 2-3 years); Improvement plan	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
			3		
					1

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$18,477,063
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,444
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$3,444

* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.
 ** Head Start per-child spending includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds.
 *** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

