Wisconsin's Constitution has included a promise to provide free, voluntary education for 4-year-olds since it became a state in 1848. Districts in Wisconsin are not required to offer the Four-Year-Old Kindergarten program (4K), but if they do, it must be open to all age-eligible children. As it currently stands, 399 of Wisconsin's 413 school districts do offer the program. Funds for 4K are distributed to public schools, which then may subcontract with private child-care centers, community-based programs, or Head Start agencies. Most programs operate part-day, four or five days per week, but some operate full-day, two or three days per week.

Funding for 4K is part of the overall school funding formula, funded at 50% of the funding for other grade levels. Districts receive 60% of full-day funding if they offer additional hours of parent outreach. During the 2015-2016 school year, almost 71% of the state's 4-year-old population was enrolled in 4K.

In the 2011-2012 school year, Wisconsin implemented a statewide early literacy assessment for kindergarten students, and 4K programs began early literacy screening with PALS PK in 2013-2014. The state does not require another assessment at 4K, so districts determine their own assessment process. The 4K program was last evaluated for both process quality and program impact/child outcomes during the 2003-2004 year, but the University of Wisconsin-Madison is currently involved in a national study exploring 4K in Wisconsin and New Jersey. Literacy learning standards were revised in 2013.

The Wisconsin Head Start program is a separate, state-funded program offering supplemental state finances to federal Head Start grantees to provide comprehensive early childhood education for 3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities or from low-income families. Participating programs follow the federal Head Start Performance Standards, and children meet Head Start enrollment eligibility guidelines. Reductions in state supplemental funding have led to fewer spaces. Efforts have been made to bring together Head Start technical assistance and training with other professional development efforts at both the state and local levels.

The first two pages of Wisconsin's profile give an overview of the state's overall promise and assistance to state-funded prekindergarten programs, including enrollment and state expenditures for both the 4K program and the Head Start State Supplement. The third page presents information on the 4K program, and the fourth page focuses on the Wisconsin Head Start program.
**ACCESS**

Total state pre-K enrollment: 51,551
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 8,930
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 12,052
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 705

**RESOURCES**

Total state pre-K spending: $189,542,429
State Head Start spending: $4,842,429
State spending per child enrolled: $3,677
All reported spending per child enrolled*: $5,791

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

- 3-YEAR-OLD: 65%
- Special Ed**: 5%
- Head Start†: 15%
- Other/None: 1%
- Pre-K: 71%
- 4-YEAR-OLD: 7%
- Special Ed**: 22%
- Other/None: 7%

† 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.

**SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED**

- PRE-K*: $5,791
- HDST**: $8,042
- K-12***: $12,414

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- State contributions
- Federal contributions
- Local contributions
- TANF spending

* 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.

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**ACCESS RANKINGS**

- 4-YEAR-OLDS: 4
- 3-YEAR-OLDS: 25

**RESOURCE RANKINGS**

- State spending: 30
- All reported spending: 27

**TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET**

- CURRENT STANDARDS: 4.1
- NEW STANDARDS: 3
**ACCESS**

- Total state pre-K enrollment: 50,846
- School districts that offer state program: 97%
- Income requirement: No income requirement
- Minimum hours of operation: 2.5 hours/day
- Operating schedule: Determined locally
- Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 8,930
- Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 12,052

**TOTAL STATE PRE-K ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-year-old</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year-old</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>WI 4K REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>CURRENT BENCHMARK</th>
<th>MEETS CURRENT BENCHMARK?</th>
<th>NEW BENCHMARK</th>
<th>MEETS NEW BENCHMARK?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early learning &amp; development standards</td>
<td>Comprehensive, aligned with other state standards, supported, culturally sensitive</td>
<td>Comprehensive</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum supports</td>
<td>Approval process &amp; supports</td>
<td>New in 2015-2016</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Approval process &amp; supports</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher degree</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher specialized training</td>
<td>ECE, ECE SpEd</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant teacher degree</td>
<td>Other††</td>
<td>CDA or equivalent</td>
<td></td>
<td>CDA or equivalent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff professional development</td>
<td>6 credit hours/5 years (teachers only); coaching (public teachers only)††</td>
<td>For teachers: At least 15 hours/year</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>For teachers &amp; assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum class size</td>
<td>Determined locally (4-year-olds)§</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-child ratio</td>
<td>Determined locally (4-year-olds)§</td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td></td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening &amp; referral</td>
<td>Immunizations, developmental, full physical exam; Referral determined locally; Support services††</td>
<td>Vision, hearing, health &amp; at least one support service</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vision, hearing &amp; health screenings; &amp; referral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>Depends on length of program day§</td>
<td>At least one meal/day</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discontinued</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring/Continuous quality improvement system</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Site visits</td>
<td></td>
<td>Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESOURCES**

- Total state pre-K spending: $184,700,000
- Local match required?: Yes
- State spending per child enrolled: $3,633
- All reported spending per child enrolled*: $5,776

* 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**

- WI 4K: $5,776
- HDST**: $8,042
- K-12***: $12,414

Data are for the 2015-2016 school year, unless otherwise noted.
ACCESS
Total state pre-K enrollment .............................................................. 705
School districts that offer state program... 100% (federal HdSt grantees)
Income requirement.................................Per Federal HdSt requirements
Minimum hours of operation............................... 3.5 hours/day
Operating schedule.............................................Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ...................... 8,930
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ......... 12,052

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

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<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>WI HDST REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>CURRENT BENCHMARK</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Early learning &amp; development standards</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum supports</td>
<td>Approval process &amp; supports</td>
<td>New in 2015-2016</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Approval process &amp; supports</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher degree</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher specialized training</td>
<td>Per federal Head Start requirements</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
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<td>15 hours/year</td>
<td>For teachers: At least 15 hours/year</td>
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<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum class size</td>
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<td>20 or lower</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-child ratio</td>
<td>2:17 (3-year-olds); 1:10 (4-year-olds)</td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening &amp; referral</td>
<td>Vision, hearing, health &amp; more; Support services</td>
<td>Vision, hearing, health &amp; at least one support service</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Vision, hearing &amp; health screenings; &amp; referral</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meals</td>
<td>At least one meal/day</td>
<td>At least one meal/day</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Discontinued</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring/Continuous quality improvement system</td>
<td>Other monitoring</td>
<td>Site visits</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESOURCES
Total state pre-K spending .................................................. $4,842,429
Local match required?.............................................................. No
State spending per child enrolled.................................$6,869
All reported spending per child enrolled*..........................$6,869

* 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

Data are for the 2015-2016 school year, unless otherwise noted.