Maine

OVERVIEW

WHAT’S NEW
The Maine Department of Education (DOE) was awarded a Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five award in 2018 for over $1 million to conduct a needs assessment of programs and services for children birth to age five and their families to determine overlaps and gaps. After the completion of the needs assessment, Maine DOE, Department of Health and Human Services, and multiple stakeholders will create a strategic plan to guide their work in early childhood systems at both the state and local level.

BACKGROUND
Maine established its Two-Year Kindergarten initiative in 1983 by allocating resources to local districts through the school funding formula. Since 2007, state-funded programs for 4-year-olds have been separately defined as the Public Preschool Program (PPP), still funded through Maine’s school funding formula, with distribution of funds to 146 of the 225 school administrative units (SAUs). PPP funds are available to any SAU choosing to offer the program.

PPP classrooms function as either stand-alone programs located in public schools or SAUs partner with community-based child care programs or Head Start agencies. Schools are required to provide a local match to draw down a per-pupil state subsidy. The required local match is part of the school funding formula based on property wealth.

Maine’s Public Preschool Program Standards, promulgated as a regulation in December 2014, outlined programmatic changes including reduced child-staff ratio and group size, the use of evidence-based curricula, and child screening and assessments.

In 2014, Maine was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant: Expansion Grant award. In 2017-2018, the grant supported 504 children through enhancing the quality of existing slots or creating new slots in PPP.
MAINE PUBLIC PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

ACCESS
Total state pre-K enrollment .................................................. 5,648
School districts that offer state program............................ 65% (school
administrative units)
Income requirement ............................................................. No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation ............................................... 2 hours/day
Operating schedule ............................................................... Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ............... 1,908
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ......... 2,308
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .............. 0

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY | ME PRE-K REQUIREMENT | BENCHMARK | REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
--- | --- | --- | ---
Early learning & development standards | Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive | Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive | ✔
Curriculum supports | Approval process & supports | Approval process & supports | ✔
Teacher degree | BA | BA | ✔
Teacher specialized training | ECE | Specializing in pre-K | ✔
Assistant teacher degree | Educator Technician II | CDA or equivalent | ✔
Staff professional development | 6 credit hours/5 years (teachers only); PD plans (teachers only) | For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching | ☐
Maximum class size | 16 (4-year-olds) | 20 or lower | ✔
Staff-child ratio | 1:8 (4-year-olds) | 1:10 or better | ✔
Screening & referral | Vision, hearing, health & more | Vision, hearing & health screenings; referral | ✔
Continuous quality improvement system | Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement | Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement | ✔

For more information about the benchmarks, see the Executive Summary and Roadmap to State Profile Pages.

RESOURCES
Total state pre-K spending .................................................. $19,316,515
Local match required? ............................................................. Yes
State Head Start spending .................................................... $3,124,038
State spending per child enrolled ........................................ $3,420
All reported spending per child enrolled* ......................... $7,216

For more information about the spending, see the Executive Summary and Roadmap to State Profile Pages.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION LEVEL</th>
<th>State contributions</th>
<th>Federal contributions</th>
<th>Local contributions</th>
<th>TANF spending</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE-K*</td>
<td>$7,216</td>
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<td>HDST**</td>
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<tr>
<td>K-12***</td>
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Data are for the 2017-2018 school year, unless otherwise noted.