
WHAT'S NEW
In 2018, HB 1415, “Education - Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education” was passed by the Maryland legislature and signed into law. This Bill provides state funding beginning in FY 2020 for prekindergarten at the FY 2019 funding level when the federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) expires. The Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (Kirwan Commission) is also in the process of finalizing recommendations that will expand access to full-day pre-K at no cost for 3- and 4-year-olds from families with incomes up to 300% FPL through a mixed-delivery system. Through this plan, full-day pre-K will also be available to 4-year-olds between 300-600% FPL on a sliding scale. The plan will be phased in over 10 years. Also in 2018, the Maryland State Department of Education was awarded $10.6 million under the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five.

BACKGROUND
Maryland created the Extended Elementary Education Program (EEEP) in 1980 as a pilot preschool program in Baltimore City and Prince George’s County. The Maryland Prekindergarten Program was started in 2002, giving local boards of education until 2007 to provide pre-kindergarten in public schools to all 4-year-olds from families with incomes at or below 185% FPL. The state provides funding through the school-funding formula.

Maryland enacted the Prekindergarten Expansion Act in 2014, adding $4.3 million per year to increase access to full-day public pre-K for 4-year-olds from families with household incomes up to 300% FPL. That same year, Maryland was awarded a federal PDG of $15 million per year to support pre-K for children in families with incomes at or below 200% FPL. That funding supported almost 4,300 children in new and enhanced quality state pre-K slots in 2017-2018.

The Division of Early Childhood (DEC) in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is responsible for early care and education. Funding for the Maryland Prekindergarten Program is based on the K–12 per pupil amount, prorated for the percent of children attending half- and full-day programs. DEC staff monitor pre-K programs annually using a self-developed checklist. State Pre-K programs are required to participate in Maryland EXCELS, the state’s QRIS, and are able to access targeted technical assistance.

Maryland also has 54 “Judy Centers” located in Title 1 school districts that work collaboratively with elementary schools to offer comprehensive, year-round early learning services for children birth to age 6.

Through recommendations from the Kirwan Commission, prekindergarten supplemental grants were provided to local boards of education in which all additional prekindergarten students are provided full-day prekindergarten, for fiscal years 2018 through 2020. The supplemental prekindergarten grant for eligible local boards equals the State share of the per pupil foundation amount multiplied by the number of full-time equivalent eligible children enrolled in a public full-day pre-K program on September 30 of the previous school year. The grant program phases in between 2018 and 2020.
MARYLAND PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS
Total state pre-K enrollment: 31,474
School districts that offer state program: 100%
Income requirement: 185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation: 2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule: School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 8,685
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 7,727
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4: 0

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY | MD 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 | HSD | CDA or equivalent | ☐
Staff professional development | 6 credit hours/5 years (teachers); 24 hours/year (assistants); PD plans | For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching | ☐
Maximum class size | Average of 20 (3- & 4-year-olds) | 20 or lower | ☐
Staff-child ratio | 1:10 (3- & 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: $124,726,542
Local match required? No
State Head Start spending: $1,800,000
State spending per child enrolled: $3,963
All reported spending per child enrolled*: $8,166

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-YEAR-OLD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>Head Start†</td>
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<tr>
<td>88%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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† 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

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<td>K-12***</td>
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* 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.

Data are for the 2017-2018 school year, unless otherwise noted.