OVERVIEW
Rhode Island preschool enrolled 1,080 children in 2017-2018, an increase of 72 children from the prior year. State funding totaled $6,240,000, up $913,563 (17%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled $5,778 in 2017-2018, up $494 from 2016-2017, adjusted for inflation. Rhode Island met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW
The Rhode Island Department of Human Services was awarded a Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five award in 2018 for $4.19 million to support development, planning, and coordination of the State’s B-5 Early Learning Childhood System.

BACKGROUND
The Rhode Island State Pre-Kindergarten Program, launched in 2009, is provided in public schools, Head Start programs, and private child care. All children who turn 4 years old by September 1 and are living in participating communities are eligible for the program, but enrollment is determined by lottery.

The Rhode Island Department of Education oversees the pre-K program, which is funded through the Rhode Island school funding formula, approved in 2010. Using a phased-in approach, $10 million is to be invested over 10 years to expand access to high-quality pre-K, beginning with communities with a high proportion of children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

In 2014, Rhode Island received a $19 million federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) to expand access to its high-quality pre-K program. PDG funding was used to expand access in high-need communities and to improve program monitoring, evaluation, and technical assistance. As a result of PDG support, enrollment nearly doubled between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, and leveled off as planned in 2017-2018.

Teachers in the program must hold a bachelor’s degree with an early childhood teaching certificate. The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provides training and technical assistance through a vendor to all staff on an ongoing basis. The Rhode Island Pre-Kindergarten Program has been assessed for both process quality and program impact/child outcomes, including classroom quality and child outcomes in literacy, arithmetic, and social-emotional development. Additionally, a new evaluation of the program is underway, which will gauge child outcomes, overarching classroom quality and include an analysis of long-term costs.
RHODE ISLAND STATE PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS
Total state pre-K enrollment ..................................................... 1,080
School districts that offer state program .................................. 28% (communities)
Income requirement ................................................................. No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation ..................................................... 6 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule ................................................................. School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ............................ 1,862
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .......... 1,891
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .......... 130

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>RI PRE-K REQUIREMENT</th>
<th>BENCHMARK</th>
<th>REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early learning &amp; development standards</td>
<td>Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive</td>
<td>Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum supports</td>
<td>Approval process &amp; supports</td>
<td>Approval process &amp; supports</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher degree</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>BA</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher specialized training</td>
<td>ECE</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant teacher degree</td>
<td>HSD + 12 ECE/CD credits (public); HSD + 12 ECE/CD credits or a CDA (nonpublic)</td>
<td>CDA or equivalent</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff professional development</td>
<td>20 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching</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>18 (4-year-olds)</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-child ratio</td>
<td>1:9 (4-year-olds)</td>
<td>1:10 or better</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening &amp; referral</td>
<td>Vision, hearing, health &amp; more</td>
<td>Vision, hearing &amp; health screenings; &amp; referral</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous quality improvement system</td>
<td>Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement</td>
<td>Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

RESOURCES
Total state pre-K spending ..................................................... $6,240,000
Local match required? ............................................................. No
State Head Start spending ..................................................... $1,190,000
State spending per child enrolled ..................... $5,778
All reported spending per child enrolled* ..................... $11,239

* 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 2017-2018 school year, unless otherwise noted.