West Virginia

OVERVIEW
West Virginia preschool enrolled 13,534 children in 2018-2019, a decrease of 1,567 children from the prior year. State funding totaled $93,905,795 and $5,103,229 in TANF funds were also used to support the program, down $2,784,511 (3%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including TANF funds) equaled $7,316 in 2018-2019, up $575 from 2017-2018, adjusted for inflation. West Virginia met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT’S NEW
During the 2017 legislative session, the age eligibility date for West Virginia Universal Pre-K was changed from September 1 to July 1 beginning with the 2018-2019 school year. The decrease in pre-K enrollment and participation rates are attributed to changes of the age eligibility date for pre-K instituted in West Virginia code. Preliminary enrollment data for the 2019-2020 school year indicates increased enrollment and participation.

BACKGROUND
West Virginia introduced public preschool in 1983 for 3- and 4-year-olds through the Public School Early Childhood Education program, after the state allowed local school boards to serve children before kindergarten. In 2002, legislation passed that required pre-K to be available to all 4-year-olds by 2012.

Today, West Virginia’s Universal Pre-K System provides prekindergarten programs in all 55 counties in the state, serving 4-year-olds, as well as some 3-year-olds with special needs, and some kindergarten-eligible children if it is determined that kindergarten placement is not in the child’s best interest.

Public schools receive West Virginia Universal Pre-K funding directly, with half of all programs required to partner with child care centers, private prekindergarten, or Head Start agencies to meet demand. During the 2018-2019 school year, the collaboration rate was 82%. Programs are permitted to use additional funding from IDEA and federal Head Start.

The state has focused on improving program quality. As of July 2013, all new lead teachers in nonpublic settings are required to have at least a bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood or a related field and, as of July 2014, all assistant teachers are required to apply for the Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher Authorization, which requires a CDA or equivalent, as determined by the West Virginia Board of Education. West Virginia also increased instructional days per year and hours per week to at least 1,500 minutes (25 hours) of instruction per week and 48,000 minutes (800 hours) of instruction per year. Programs must operate no fewer than four days per week to meet annual and weekly operational requirements.

The West Virginia Universal Pre-K program is undergoing a multiyear study to assess the effects of program participation. Programs develop monitoring systems to offer ongoing continuous quality improvement, using monitoring tools recognized by a local collaborative team. Children are assessed three times per year using the Early Learning Scale, and this information is used to track child and program outcomes over time, guide teacher professional development and coaching, make adjustments to curricula, and measure kindergarten readiness.
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSAL PRE-K

ACCESS
Total state pre-K enrollment ........................................ 13,534
School districts that offer state program .......... 100% (counties/parishes)
Income requirement ........................................ No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation ................. 25 hours/week; 4 days/week
Operating schedule .................................. School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .................. 2,738
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ........ 6,781
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ............... 0

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>WV 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, CD, ECE SpEd</td>
<td>Specializing in pre-K</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant teacher degree</td>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>CDA or equivalent</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff professional development</td>
<td>15 hours/year (all teachers &amp; non-public assistant teachers), 18 hours/year (public assistant teachers); PD plans</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>20 (3- &amp; 4-year-olds)</td>
<td>20 or lower</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff-child ratio</td>
<td>1:10 (3- &amp; 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 ........................................ $99,009,024
Local match required? ........................................ No
State Head Start spending .................................. $0
State spending per child enrolled .................. $7,316
All reported spending per child enrolled* .............. $11,052

* 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 2018-2019 school year, unless otherwise noted.