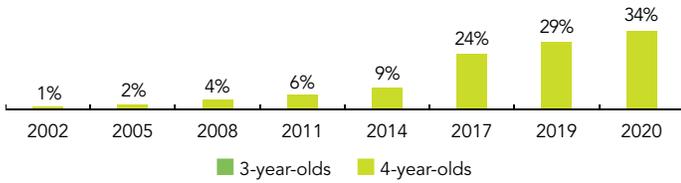
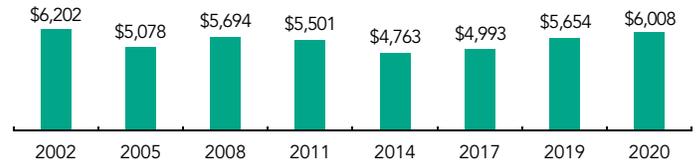


Alabama

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2020 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

Alabama First Class Pre-K enrolled 20,439 children in 2019-2020, an increase of 3,219 children from the prior year. The program had a total capacity to serve 21,654 preschoolers. State funding totaled \$122,798,645, up \$25,439,359 (26%) adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$6,008 in 2019-2020, up \$354 from 2018-2019, adjusted for inflation. Alabama met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Alabama was one of 23 states awarded a three-year PDG B-5 renewal grant for almost \$11.2 million annually designed to implement the strategic plan developed with the 2018 PDG B-5 planning grant. On March 26, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor closed schools for the remainder of the year with online instruction beginning on April 6, 2020 for all students. Programs made the determination about the type of remote instruction provided when buildings physically closed in the Spring of 2020 based on the availability of technology devices and family access to the internet. Some programs sent home packets of learning activities and conducted family phone call conferences, while others utilized web-based learning experiences. All children were provided backpacks of materials to support virtual learning. There was a mix of in-person and remote instruction when the 2020-2021 school year began. In preparation for reopening schools in Fall 2020, the department created comprehensive guidance in the FCPK Reopening and Operating Framework: Reimagining Education as we Build it Better. This information was in response to a survey conducted to gauge parents' and teachers' experience during the pandemic.

BACKGROUND

First Class Pre-K: Alabama's voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program (FCPK) is a grant program administered by the Office of School Readiness within the ADECE under the Governor's Office. The program funds full-day preschool education for all 4-year-old children in every county in a variety of settings including public schools, private centers, Head Start programs, community organizations, faith-based centers, colleges and universities, and military agencies. Using a multi-pronged approach, the ADECE Office of School Readiness has implemented evidence-based strategies and methods grounded in research to assure that all Alabama 4-year-old children have access to excellent, high quality early learning classrooms in their communities.

Funding for FCPK is distributed by the Alabama Education Trust Fund Budget through competitive grants at three levels for pre-K programs: (1) Pre-K Excellence Grants (up to \$46,800) are awarded to help programs meet quality standards and are not intended as the primary source of funding; (2) Pre-K Tiered Grants (\$83,304 to \$96,408 per grant) a to classrooms serving a certain share of the free and reduced-price lunch eligible child population and are primary sources of pre-K funding; (3) New Classroom or Plus Grants (\$120,000 to \$150,000 per grant) cover costs of materials, equipment, furnishings, and general operating expenses in new classrooms for one year. Grantees must provide at least a 25% match to the awards locally, which can include sliding-scale fee revenue.

All teachers in FCPK classrooms must center their instructional strategies, classroom environment and activities according to the Alabama First Class Framework, first implemented beginning in the 2013-2014 academic year. The FCPK requires use of a curriculum incorporating early learning standards aligned to kindergarten content standards and Teaching Strategies GOLD objectives, the required formative assessment tool. All FCPK classrooms are supported by a coach and monitor to support continuous improvement. Alabama requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a minimum of a bachelor's degree in an early childhood-related field. Assistant teachers, which are also required for every classroom, must have a CDA or equivalent. In 2015, the ADECE introduced policies to support salary parity for all pre-K teachers.

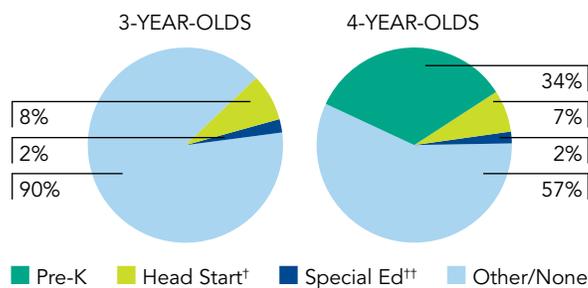
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
17	None Served	18	12	10

FIRST CLASS PRE-K: ALABAMA'S VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	20,439
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties/parishes)
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	6.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,237
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	10,531
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



[†] Estimates children in Head Start not also enrolled in state pre-K.
^{††} Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AL PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or 9 ECE/CD credits	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year (teachers); 20 hours/year (assistants); PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

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RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$122,798,645
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$4,189,471
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,008
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$8,926

* 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

