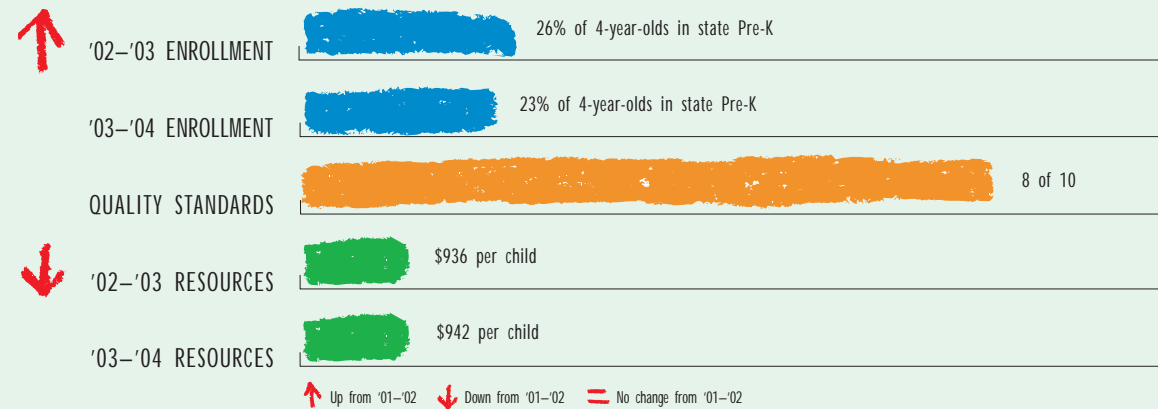


Maryland



Started in 1979 as a pilot program in Baltimore City and Prince George's County, the Extended Elementary Education Program (EEEP) grew into a state prekindergarten initiative serving Maryland's at-risk 4-year-olds. Since 2002, the initiative has been referred to as the Prekindergarten Program. A state report on school readiness found that those who had participated in the state prekindergarten program—children considered at risk who generally start school with lesser skills than more advantaged children—perform as well as their peers upon entering kindergarten.

As of 2002–2003, children automatically qualified for the program if they had limited English proficiency, were homeless, had special health care needs, or were previously enrolled in Head Start or Even Start. The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act revised the eligibility criteria for 2003–2004 and laid out a timetable for expanding prekindergarten. All local school systems are now required to provide prekindergarten to all 4-year-old applicants who are homeless or from economically disadvantaged families (defined by eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch). Once these children are served, districts may enroll other children based on secondary factors such as developmental delay in social, academic, health, language, or other areas. Local boards of education are expected to gradually expand the availability of prekindergarten sites and will be required to accommodate all eligible 4-year-olds seeking enrollment by 2007–2008.

Although most programs operate in public schools, some districts subcontract with Head Start and child care centers to provide services that meet Prekindergarten Program standards. The state expects to make greater use of settings outside of public schools as the program expands.

In 2003–2004, the Prekindergarten Program received \$19,262,500 in state funding, and enrolled 4,008 3-year-olds and 16,450 4-year-olds. The state places an emphasis on coordinating funding streams from various sources in support of prekindergarten. Districts blend state prekindergarten funds with other federal, state, and local sources to meet operating costs and to provide a coherent program that expands available services. The state intends to fund universal Pre-K by significantly increasing state aid money available to districts by 2007–2008, at which time EEEP funds will be phased out.

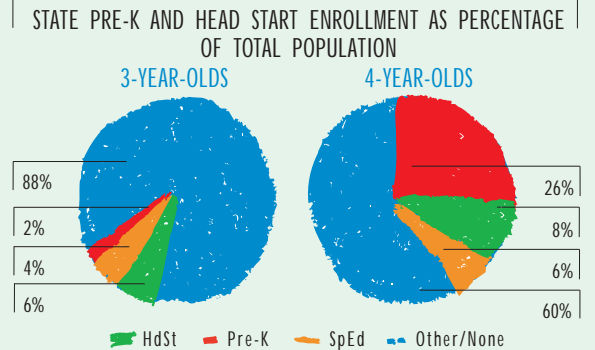
Maryland also supplements the federal Head Start program. In fiscal year 2003, \$3 million in state funding was used for extended-year and extended-day services as well as quality improvement. In addition, the Judith P. Hoyer Early Care and Education Enhancement Program earmarks about \$8 million to support comprehensive early childhood centers that are based in or linked to schools.

Maryland promotes quality in its early education programs by providing professional development opportunities and establishing quality standards for prekindergarten, kindergarten, Head Start, and center-based programs that voluntarily allow state validation/accreditation.



ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	20,569 ¹
School districts that offer state program	100%
Income requirement	None
Hours of operation	Half-day ² , full-week
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment	6,762
Federally funded Head Start enrollment	9,535
State-funded Head Start enrollment	26 ³



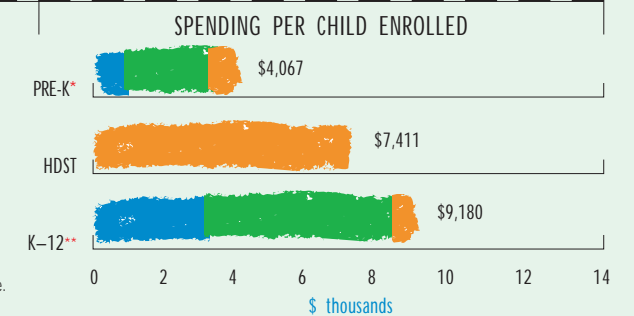
QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Curriculum standards	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree requirement	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training requirement	Degree in EC + certification in N-3, -6, or -8, and must be licensed	Specializing in Pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree requirement	HSD or equivalent	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service requirement	6 credit hours/5 years ⁴	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA ⁵		
4-year-olds	20		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA ⁵		
4-year-olds	1:10		
Screening/referral requirements	Vision, hearing, health, immunization, and lead screening ⁶	Vision, hearing, and health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Required support services	2 parent conferences and support services ⁷	At least 1 service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meal requirement	Determined locally ⁸	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL: 8 of 10

RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$19,262,500 ⁹
Local match required?	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$936 ⁹
State Head Start spending	\$3,000,000
State spending per 3-year-old	\$19
State spending per 4-year-old	\$246



* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.
 ** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

Data are for the '02-'03 school year, unless otherwise noted.

- The enrollment total includes children served by public school districts through a combination of funds derived from EEEP as well as other federal, state, and local sources. Because districts blend these funding sources, a specific number of children supported by state Pre-K funds is not available. Additionally, 1,426 3-year-olds served in public school Pre-K programs are included in this enrollment total. These children were supported by sources other than EEEP funds, which can only be used to serve 4-year-olds.
- Programs must operate for a minimum of 2.5 hours per day, and 450 children attend for more than 6 hours per day.
- Maryland's state Head Start funds were also used to expand services or extend the program day for 484 children. Additionally, programs used state funds for professional development, parent education, mental health services, expanded transition services, and literacy projects. The state did not track the number of additional children served through its Head Start supplement. This figure is an estimate based on the number of non-federally funded children in Maryland reported in Head Start's 2002–2003 Program Information Report and proportions of Maryland's federal Head Start enrollees who were 3 or 4 years old.
- Some in-service requirements may be imposed locally. Also, all schools involved in the Prekindergarten Program have adopted the Maryland Model for School Readiness, which entails 5 days of training in teachers' first year, 4 days of training in their second, and 2-day institutes in their school-system-selected focus area in subsequent years. There are new professional development standards as of 2003–2004. In addition, teachers must meet the requirements for "highly qualified" teachers under NCLB.
- By policy, 3-year-olds are not eligible for the Prekindergarten Program, but the state reported the maximum class size and staff-child ratio requirement for 3-year-olds under child care regulations as 24 and 1:12, respectively.
- Vision and health screening and referral are the responsibility of the school health services program in conjunction with the health department. These services are not all required by the Prekindergarten Program, but they are required under Title I, which applies to all children enrolled.
- Support services include parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, health services for children, transition to kindergarten activities, and specific locally determined services. Many of these services are offered in accordance with Title I requirements.
- Children in full-day programs are offered breakfast and lunch. In school-based half-day programs, nutrition requirements for preschool children are determined locally and are consistent with meal programs available to older children in each school.
- This figure reflects EEEP funds only. Districts may use other sources of state money, such as state-aid funds, to support Pre-K.