



The State of Preschool 2025

STATE PRESCHOOL YEARBOOK

The National Institute for Early Education Research



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By Allison H. Friedman-Krauss, Ph.D.

W. Steven Barnett, Ph.D.

Katherine S. Hodges, M.A.

Karin A. Garver, M.A.

G.G. Weisenfeld, Ed.D.

Jennifer K. Duer, Ph.D.

Jessica A. Siegel, Ph.D.

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Executive Summary



State support for preschool education hit record highs in enrollment, quality, and funding in the 2024-2025 school year, although the pace of growth slowed from the prior year. As in the past, some states advanced more than others. This year brings to the forefront for the first time one state that excels at both access and quality standards: Georgia.

The 23rd *State of Preschool* report finds that Georgia—already a leader in preschool for 4-year-olds—invested an additional \$97.6 million including funds for quality improvements to become the first state with a universal program that meets all 10 of NIEER’s research-based benchmarks for quality. Georgia reached this pinnacle by lowering class sizes from 22 to 20 and improving teacher-to-child ratios from 1:11 to 1:10. Notably, some of Georgia’s new investment went toward increasing teacher salaries to ensure pay parity with K–12 and to increase access to summer transition programs.

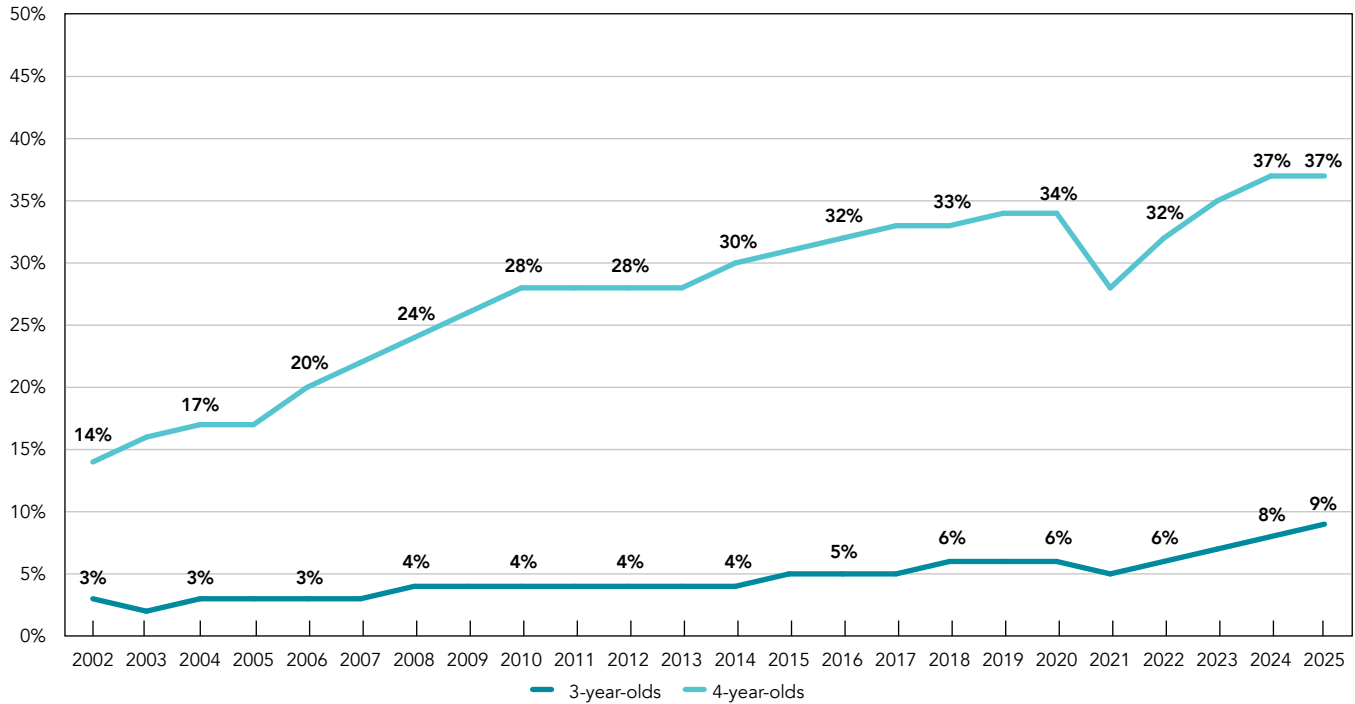
In 2024-2025, new preschool spending records were largely propelled by several states that aggressively increased enrollment and spending without raising quality standards. California, Colorado, Michigan, Minnesota, and Missouri contributed the most to increased enrollment, adding more than 52,000 new seats. Michigan and New Jersey each increased preschool spending by more than \$100 million (adjusted for inflation) as both states moved toward preschool for all.

Despite this overall progress, not every state moved forward. Some states even lost ground. If providing high-quality preschool education to all 3- and 4-year-olds were a race, some states are nearing the finish line, others have stumbled and fallen behind, and a few have yet to leave the starting line.

HISTORIC AND EMERGING PRESCHOOL LEADERS

Nationally, enrollment reached nearly 1.8 million children during the 2024-2025 school year, including 37% of 4-year-olds and 9% of 3-year-olds. California enrolled more than one-quarter of a million children and Texas came close, while Florida and New York each enrolled more than 150,000 children. Forty-six percent of all children enrolled in state-funded preschool were in these four states.

FIGURE 1: PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN STATE-FUNDED PRESCHOOL

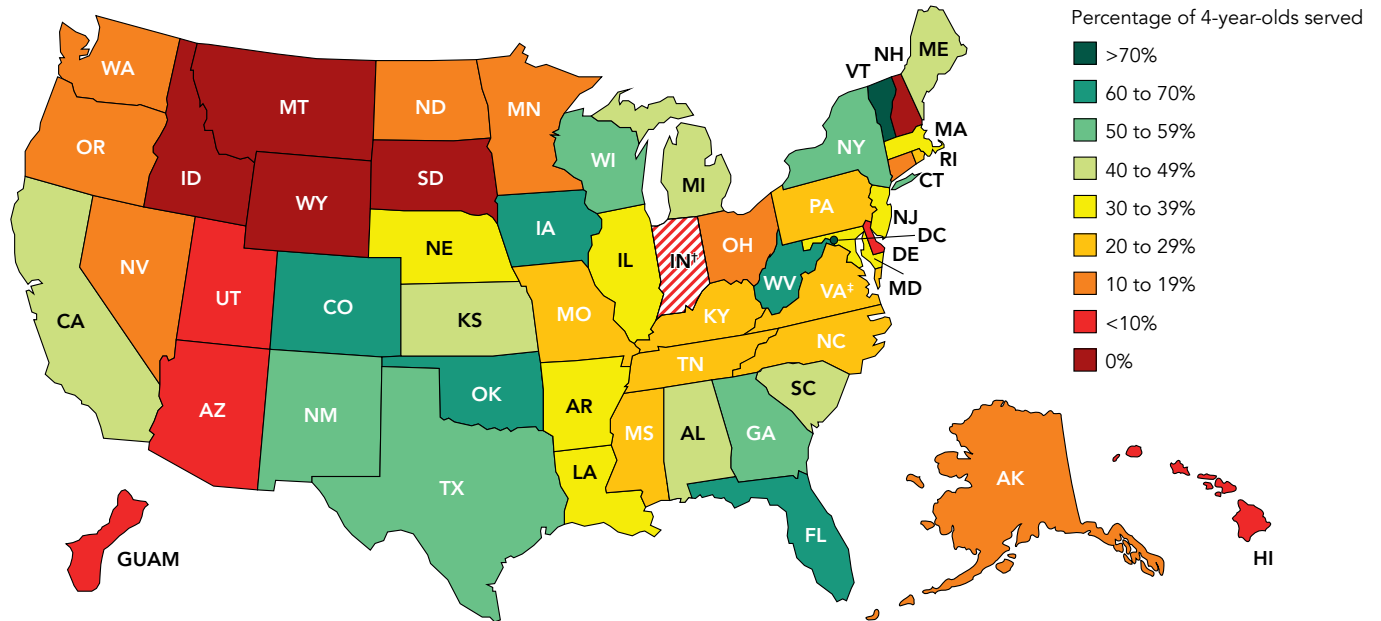


Twelve states enrolled more than 50% of their 4-year-olds in state-funded preschool programs, led by the District of Columbia, which enrolled 94% of 4-year-olds. Other states surpassing half of 4-year-olds include Vermont (72%), Colorado (70%), West Virginia (66%), Oklahoma (65%), Iowa (65%), Florida (63%), Wisconsin (59%), New York (56%), Georgia (53%), New Mexico (53%), and Texas (52%). Missouri had the largest year-over-year increase in the percentage of 4-year-olds served, increasing from 10 to 22% of 4-year-olds.

Enrollment at age 3 continued to lag behind enrollment at age 4, and it increased by only 8,000 children nationally. The District of Columbia served 76% of 3-year-olds while Vermont served 56%, far ahead of the next best state. Five other states (Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, New Mexico, and New Jersey) enrolled more than one-fifth of 3-year-olds, more than double the national average of 9%. Illinois, New Jersey, and New Mexico stand out as three states working toward preschool for all for 3-year-olds as well as 4-year-olds.

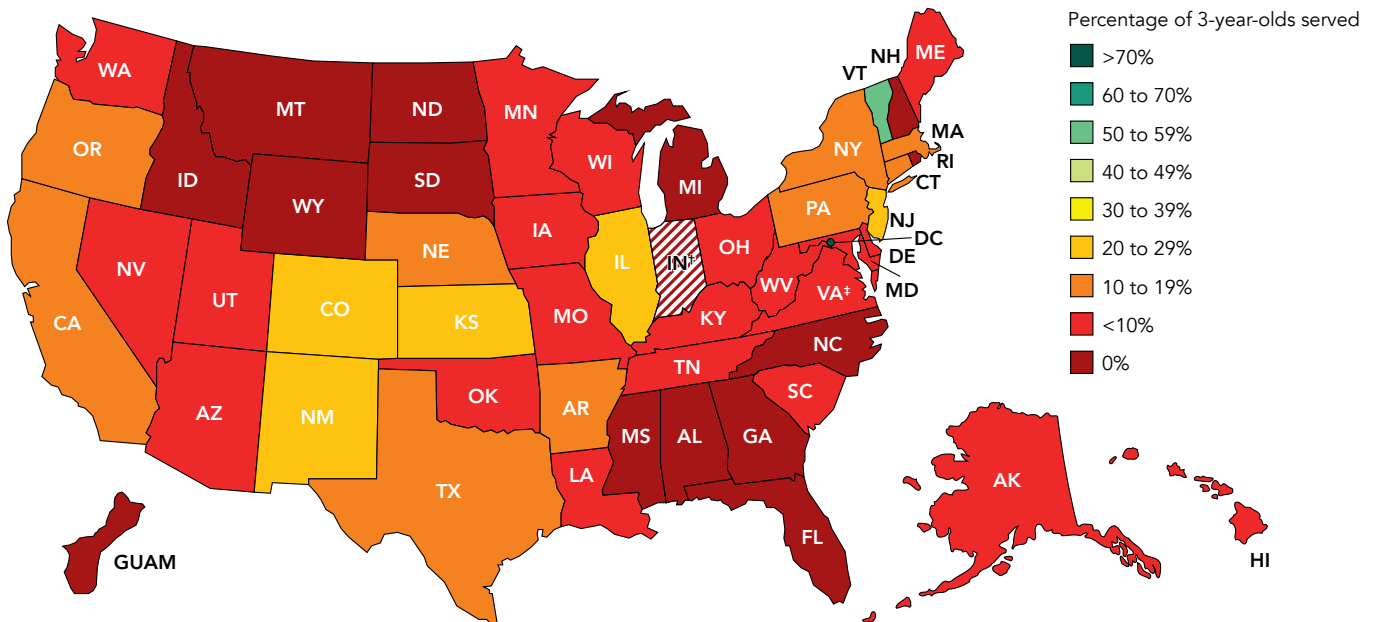
Preschool enrollment increased nationally by 44,000 children from the prior year. The numbers and the percentages of 3- and 4-year-olds served all increased, though these increases were much smaller than the prior year. California alone accounted for most of the increased enrollment, adding more than 25,000 children, driven by expansion of the state’s Transitional Kindergarten program. Missouri served nearly 10,000 more preschoolers across its two state-funded preschool programs, and enrollment in Michigan increased by more than 6,800 children as they removed their income eligibility requirements and moved toward preschool for all. Five states increased enrollment of 4-year-olds by five percentage points or more, including California and Michigan which are both working toward universal preschool for 4-year-olds. Minnesota, Missouri, and Rhode Island were also on this list of states with notable increases in the percentage of 4-year-olds enrolled.

FIGURE 2: DISPARITIES IN 4-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT CONTINUE TO GROW AS SOME STATES MOVE AHEAD



† Indiana's state-funded ECE program does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program because it has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility.
 ‡ Only VPI enrollment is shown on the map. Virginia enrolled 28% of 4-year-olds across VPI, Mixed Delivery, and CCSP.

FIGURE 3: PRESCHOOL ACCESS FOR 3-YEAR-OLDS REMAINS LOW ALMOST EVERYWHERE, LAGGING BEHIND 4-YEAR-OLD ACCESS



† Indiana's state-funded ECE program does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program because it has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility.
 ‡ Only VPI enrollment is shown on the map. Virginia enrolled 11% of 3-year-olds across VPI, Mixed Delivery, and CCSP.



States spent nearly \$14.4 billion on preschool during the 2024-2025 school year. Including federal and local dollars, total spending was nearly \$17.7 billion. Three of the most populous states spent more than \$1 billion each on preschool: California spent \$4.1 billion, New Jersey spent \$1.2 billion, and New York spent \$1 billion. Together, these three states account for 45% of all state preschool spending. Texas adds almost another \$1 billion. The smallest of these states, New Jersey, stands among this top group because of its high level of state funding per child and relatively high enrollment of 3-year-olds.

Preschool spending increased by \$434 million (3%), adjusted for inflation, since 2023-2024. Twenty-eight states increased spending, adjusted for inflation. Two states, Michigan and New Jersey, each increased preschool spending (adjusted for inflation) by more than \$100 million. Georgia increased preschool investments by \$72 million in constant 2024 dollars (i.e., after adjusting prior year spending upward for inflation) to reduce class sizes, improve teacher-to-child ratios, and improve lead and assistant teacher compensation.

On average, states spent \$8,124 per child enrolled in preschool (\$9,988 including federal and local funds). The District of Columbia, New Jersey, and Oregon provided more than \$15,000 in state funding per child enrolled in preschool. Six other states invested more than \$10,000 per child (California, Connecticut, Delaware, Michigan, New Mexico, and Washington). Taking into account state, federal, and local funding that states can report were used to support state-funded preschool, two additional states spent more than \$15,000 per child (California and New York) and 11 additional states spent more than \$10,000 per child (Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia). Twenty-eight states increased state spending per child, adjusted for inflation.

FIGURE 4: PRESCHOOL SPENDING INCREASED BUT STATE INVESTMENTS SLOWED (2025 DOLLARS)

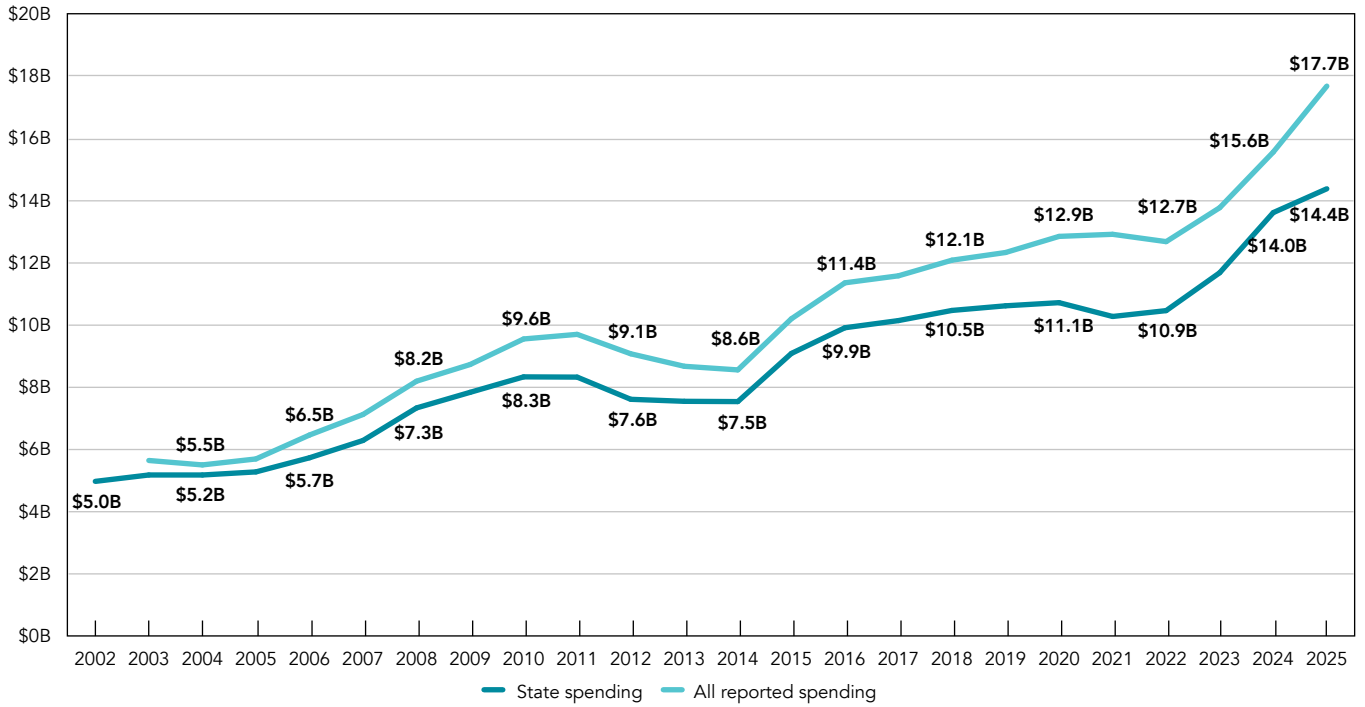
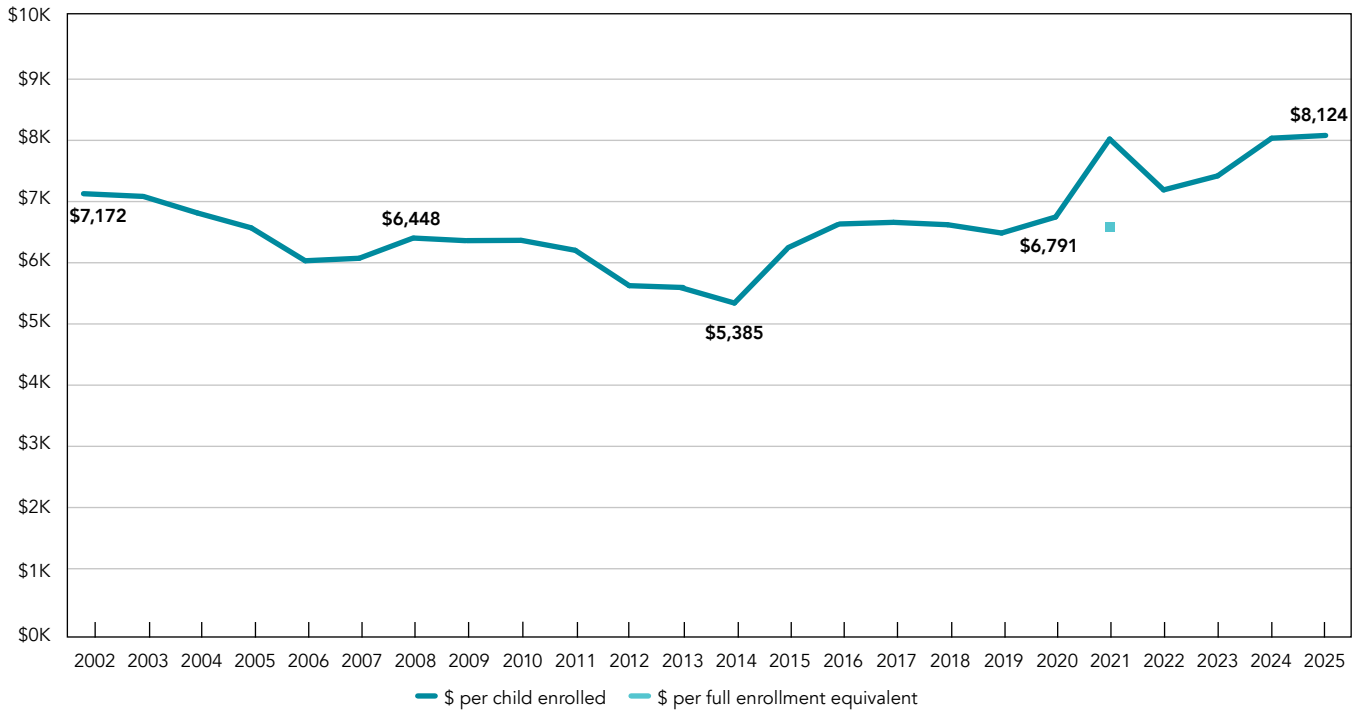
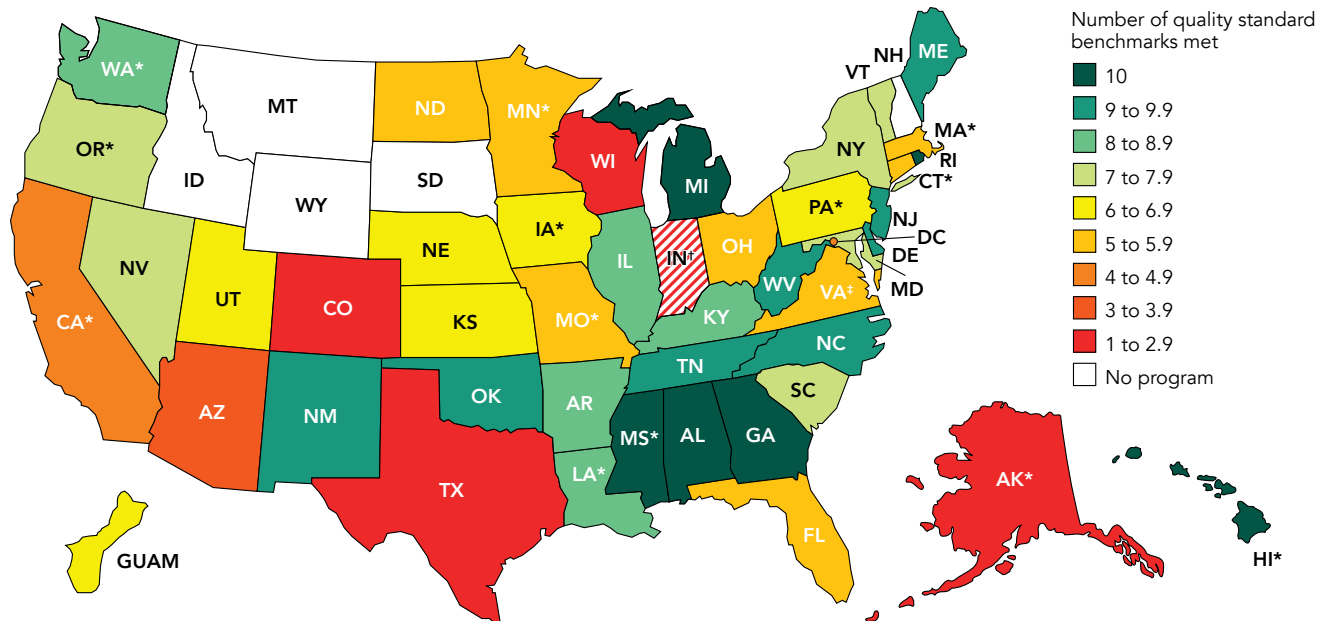


FIGURE 5: AVERAGE STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



In 2024-2025, a record six states met all 10 of NIEER’s quality standards benchmarks: Alabama, Georgia, Hawaii, Michigan, Mississippi, and Rhode Island. Georgia joined this esteemed list this year after they lowered class sizes from 22 to 20 and improved teacher-to-child ratios from 1:11 to 1:10. These six states provide a range of examples for other states aiming to improve preschool quality standards.

FIGURE 6: GEORGIA NOW MEETS ALL 10 BENCHMARKS BUT LITTLE PROGRESS MADE TO IMPROVE QUALITY STANDARDS ELSEWHERE



* For states with more than one state-funded preschool program, the weighted average number of quality standards met is shown on the map.
 † Indiana’s state-funded ECE program does not meet NIEER’s definition of a state-funded preschool program because it has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility.
 ‡ Only VPI’s benchmarks are included on the map. Virginia would meet an average of 3.4 benchmarks if VPI, Mixed Delivery, and CCSP were all included.

STATES THAT FELL BEHIND

Not all states moved forward. Twenty states enrolled fewer preschoolers in 2024-2025 than the prior year. Enrollment decreased by more than 1,000 children in six states (Arizona, Florida, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin). Some enrollment declines could be explained by declining populations of 3- and 4-year-olds. However, the percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled, which accounts for population, declined in 21 states. Wisconsin had the largest decline in the percentage of 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool, serving 4 percentage points fewer 4-year-olds than the prior year. New York’s decline is surprising given New York City’s preschool for all initiative which might have been expected to move the state ahead.

Seventeen states spent less on preschool in 2024-2025 than they did in 2023-2024, when adjusted for inflation. Texas spent \$84.5 million less than the prior year. The states with the largest percentage decline in preschool spending were Alaska, Arizona, Kentucky, Nebraska, and North Carolina.

Very low levels of funding per child enrolled are a concern because inadequate resources make it difficult if not impossible to provide a high-quality early education. Eight states invested less than \$4,000 per child (Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Missouri, Nebraska, South Carolina, Utah, and Wisconsin). As local and federal funding can be substantial, states with very low spending from all reported sources are especially noteworthy, like Florida (\$2,963). While Nebraska has low state spending per child, substantial local and federal funding support their program, raising spending per child to almost \$12,000.

STATES STILL AT THE STARTING LINE

Six states continue not to fund a state-funded preschool program meeting NIEER’s definition: Idaho, Indiana, Montana, New Hampshire, South Dakota, and Wyoming. Indiana’s On My Way Pre-K is similar to a state funded preschool program but has a parental work or school requirement, so it is profiled in this report but not included in rankings. Montana and Wyoming both have early childhood programs that provide services similar to those of a state-funded preschool program.



WHAT'S NEW: THE DETAILS

RESOURCES

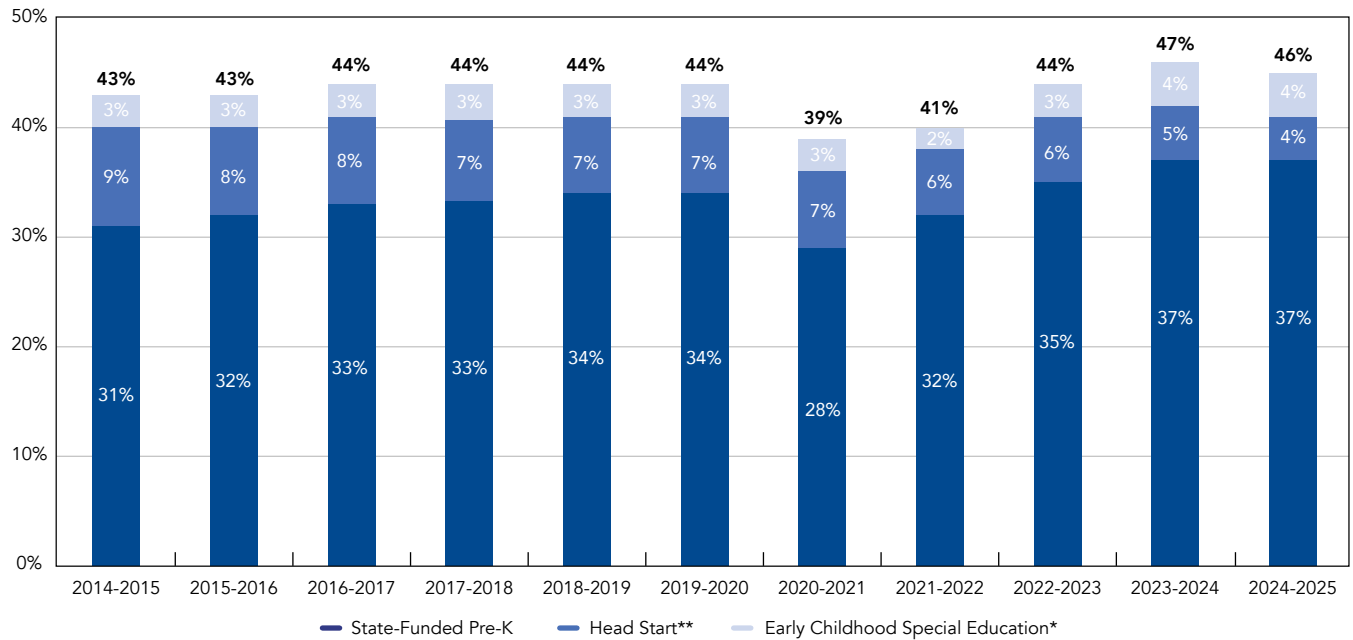
- Total state spending for preschool programs reached another all-time high of nearly \$14.4 billion across 44 states and the District of Columbia*. Six states still did not fund a preschool program meeting NIEER's definition in 2024-2025.
- States reported spending only \$28 million in federal COVID-19 relief funding on preschool, about 10% of the amount used last year.
- Including COVID-19 relief dollars, spending on state-funded preschool increased by \$434 million (3%), adjusted for inflation from 2023-2024. While spending on preschool continued to increase, the increase was much smaller than the prior year.
- Average state spending per child enrolled was \$8,124. Adjusted for inflation, this is a \$45 per child increase from 2023-2024. Last year's increase was 16 times as large.
- All-reported spending, which includes local and federal dollars to the extent states can report them, was \$17.7 billion, an inflation-adjusted increase of more than \$2 billion (14%) from 2023-2024. All reported spending per child was \$9,988, an inflation-adjusted increase of \$975 from 2023-2024, reflecting a relatively large increase in reported non-state funding.

ENROLLMENT

- States enrolled almost 1.8 million children in state-funded preschool, including 1.42 million four-year-olds and 315,293 three-year-olds. This amounts to 9% of 3-year-olds and 37% of 4-year-olds enrolled.
- While the numbers and percentages of 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds enrolled all increased, growth in preschool enrollment slowed drastically from the prior year. Enrollment in state-funded preschool increased by just 44,000 children between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, much less than last year.
- Total preschool enrollment increased in 25 states between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, but decreased in 20 states.
- In 20 states, the number of preschoolers enrolled was lower in 2024-2025 than before the pandemic.
- Across all major public programs—state-funded preschool, preschool special education, and the federal Head Start program—46% of 4-year-olds and 17% of 3-year-olds were served. Almost 29,000 fewer 3- and 4-year-olds were served across these programs in 2024-2025 than the prior year. This decline is driven by reduced federal Head Start enrollment at ages 3 and 4, which remains below pre-pandemic levels.

* Consistent with U.S. government statistical practices, the District of Columbia will be referred to as a "state" throughout this report. Hence, we report 45 "states" providing state-funded preschool.

FIGURE 7: ENROLLMENT OF 4-YEAR-OLDS IN STATE-FUNDED PRE-K, HEAD START, & EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION



* Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.
 ** Estimates children in Head Start not also in state pre-K though some children may be counted twice.

QUALITY STANDARDS

- Georgia improved from meeting 8 of NIEER’s quality standards benchmarks in 2023-2024 to meeting all 10 in 2024-2025 after lowering class sizes and improving staff to child ratios.
- Alabama, Georgia, Hawaii, Michigan, Mississippi, and Rhode Island are the only six states—a record high number—to meet all 10 of NIEER’s quality standards benchmarks for state preschool quality standards.
- Twenty state-funded preschool programs met five or fewer of the quality standards benchmarks, including three of the four largest programs (California TK, Florida, and Texas). Forty-six percent of children in state-funded preschool were in a program meeting half or fewer of the quality standards benchmarks. Only 21% of children were in programs meeting 9 or 10 benchmarks.

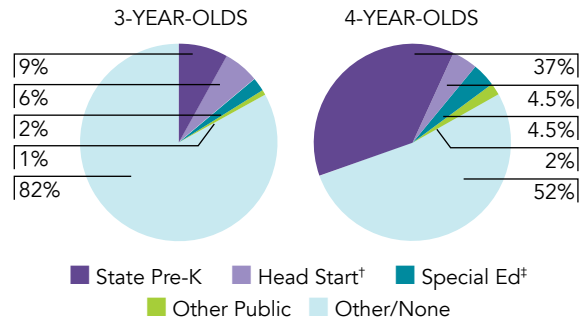
IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

- Indiana’s On My Way Pre-K program is included in the Yearbook again. Although it does not meet NIEER’s definition of a state-funded preschool program because of its parental work or school requirement, it does provide early education to 4-year-olds. The program is described on the state’s profile page but is not included in national numbers or rankings.
- Virginia’s Mixed Delivery program introduced a parental work or school requirement and therefore no longer meets NIEER’s definition of a state-funded preschool program. Virginia’s Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) is included in the Yearbook for the first time but also has a parental work or school requirement and does not meet NIEER’s definition of a state-funded preschool program. These two programs are described in profile pages but are not included in national totals or Virginia’s rankings. However, we do include a page showing what Virginia’s rankings would be if those two programs were included.

NATIONAL ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment, all ages..... 1,795,147
 State-funded preschool programs.....63 programs
 in 44 states and DC¹
 Income requirement 32 state programs have an
 income requirement
 Minimum hours of operation..... 29 part-day; 16 school-day;
 6 extended-day; 12 determined locally²
 Operating schedule..... 1 full calendar year; 41 school/
 academic year; 21 determined locally
 Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4529,007
 Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4459,043³
 State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4..... 15,666⁴

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN ECE



[†] 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.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST SUMMARY

POLICY	BENCHMARK	OF THE 63 STATE-FUNDED PRE-K INITIATIVES, NUMBER MEETING BENCHMARK
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	62
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	53
Teacher degree	BA	30
Teacher specialized training	Specializing in pre-K	47
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or equivalent	21
Staff professional development	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	21
Maximum class size	20 or lower	50
Staff-child ratio	1:10 or better	51
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	43
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement	40

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

NATIONAL RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending \$14,387,269,279⁵
 Local match required? 12
 State Head Start spending \$373,110,395⁶
 State spending per child enrolled \$8,124⁵
 All reported spending per child enrolled* \$9,988

* 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.

¹ Throughout this report, the District of Columbia is included like a state, resulting in a list of 45 states for rankings. Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program and Virginia's Mixed Delivery and CCSP are similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because they have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, the programs do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Information on these programs is included in the report but not in national totals or rankings. In 2015-2016, Guam began offering a "state"-funded pre-K program but is not included in totals or rankings in this report.

² NIEER's definitions of hours of operation are as follows: part-day programs serve children for fewer than 4 hours per day; school-day programs serve children at least 4 hours per day but fewer than 6.5 hours per day; and extended-day programs serve children for 6.5 or more hours per day. Some programs offer multiple hours of operation but only the minimum one is listed here.

³ The enrollment figures for federal Head Start include children in the program in all 50 states, D.C., and the U.S. territories, as well as enrollment in the Migrant & Seasonal and American Indian/Native Alaskan programs. These numbers do not include children funded by state match.

⁴ This figure is based on the Head Start enrollment supported by state match as reported in the survey by states. This figure includes 14,853 children who attended programs that were considered to be state-funded preschool programs and are also included in the state-funded preschool enrollment total.

⁵ This figure includes federal TANF funds and federal COVID-19 relief funds directed toward preschool at states' discretion.

⁶ This figure includes \$238,481,629 also included in the total state pre-K spending. This also includes some funding for state supplements to Early Head Start where states could not separate Head Start and Early Head Start funding.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

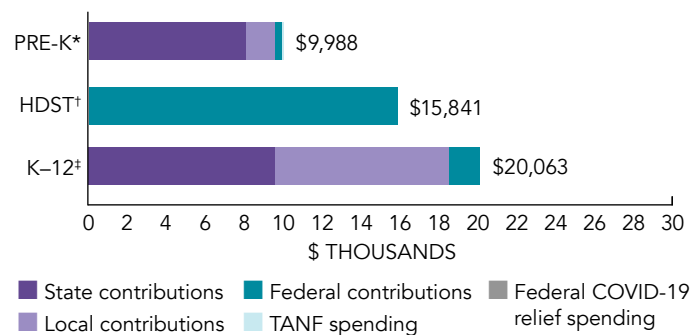


TABLE 1: STATE RANKINGS AND QUALITY CHECKLIST SUMS

STATE	Access for 4-year-olds rank	Access for 3-year-olds rank	Resources rank based on state spending	Resources rank based on all reported spending	Quality standards checklist sum (maximum of 10)
Alabama	18	None Served	18	17	10
Alaska	39	36	20	30	2.3
Arizona	45	30	14	25	3
Arkansas	24	8	26	19	8
California	14	15	4	5	4.1
Colorado	3	5	29	37	2
Connecticut	37	12	9	20	5.1
Delaware	42	24	8	11	9
District of Columbia	1	1	1	1	4
Florida	7	None Served	44	45	5
Georgia	10	None Served	19	29	10
Hawaii	43	25	16	28	10*
Illinois	20	4	22	24	8
Iowa	6	21	40	43	6
Kansas	16	6	36	40	6
Kentucky	28	19	33	8	8
Louisiana	22	33	31	38	8.8
Maine	13	34	24	16	9
Maryland	19	18	17	15	7
Massachusetts	25	10	43	34	5.2
Michigan	17	None Served	6	9	10*
Minnesota [†]	35	35	25	35	5.2
Mississippi	29	None Served	35	22	10
Missouri	30	28	42	44	5.1
Nebraska	23	11	45	13	6
Nevada	41	29	12	23	7
New Jersey	21	3	2	2	9
New Mexico	11	7	5	7	9
New York	9	9	21	4	7*
North Carolina	32	None Served	27	26	9*
North Dakota	40	None Served	23	32	5
Ohio	38	23	32	39	5
Oklahoma	5	27	30	10	9
Oregon	36	14	3	3	7.7
Pennsylvania [†]	27	13	15	27	6.6*
Rhode Island	26	None Served	10	21	10
South Carolina	15	22	38	42	7
Tennessee	33	31	34	33	9
Texas	12	16	37	41	2
Utah	44	32	39	36	6
Vermont	2	2	11	12	7
Virginia**	31	26	28	18	5
Washington	34	17	7	6	8.0
West Virginia	4	20	13	14	9
Wisconsin	8	37	41	31	1
Indiana***	Work requirement	Work requirement	Work requirement	Work requirement	2
Idaho	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
Montana	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
New Hampshire	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
South Dakota	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
Wyoming	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program

[†] At least one program in these states did not break down total enrollment figures into specific numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds served. As a result, enrollment by single year of age was estimated.

* Indicates that while a policy meets the benchmark, at least one benchmark in the program is not being fully implemented.

** Rankings and benchmarks reflect VPI only. Virginia's two other early childhood education programs (Mixed-Delivery and CCSP) have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility and do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program.

*** Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program is similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because it has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, the program does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Indiana program information is reported here but not in national totals or rankings.

TABLE 2: STATE PRESCHOOL ACCESS BY STATE

ACCESS FOR 4-YEAR-OLDS RANK	STATE	PERCENT OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PREKINDERGARTEN (2024-2025)			NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PREKINDERGARTEN (2024-2025)		
		4-year-olds	3-year-olds	Total (3s and 4s)	4-year-olds	3-year-olds	Total (3s and 4s)
1	District of Columbia	94%	76%	85%	7,056	5,963	13,019
2	Vermont	72%	56%	65%	4,131	2,998	7,129
3	Colorado	70%	24%	47%	43,398	14,709	58,107
4	West Virginia	66%	7%	37%	11,904	1,279	13,183
5	Oklahoma	65%	3%	35%	32,794	1,370	34,164
6	Iowa	65%	6%	36%	25,065	2,337	27,402
7	Florida	63%	0%	32%	149,100	0	149,100
8	Wisconsin	59%	0.04%	30%	38,397	23	38,420
9	New York	56%	17%	37%	118,427	34,577	153,004
10	Georgia	53%	0%	27%	69,314	0	69,314
11	New Mexico	53%	22%	38%	11,633	4,796	16,429
12	Texas	52%	11%	32%	204,754	43,729	248,483
13	Maine	47%	1%	25%	6,116	80	6,196
14	California	46%	11%	29%	198,998	46,352	245,350
15	South Carolina	45%	6%	26%	26,940	3,549	30,489
16	Kansas	45%	22%	34%	16,116	7,745	23,861
17	Michigan	43%	0%	22%	47,981	0	47,981
18	Alabama	40%	0%	20%	24,238	0	24,238
19	Maryland	38%	8%	24%	27,947	5,799	33,746
20	Illinois	35%	26%	31%	49,026	34,562	83,588
21	New Jersey	35%	27%	31%	37,692	27,673	65,365
22	Louisiana	35%	1%	18%	19,403	481	19,884
23	Nebraska	34%	16%	25%	8,560	4,034	12,594
24	Arkansas	33%	19%	26%	12,197	6,723	18,920
25	Massachusetts	30%	16%	23%	21,038	11,182	32,220
26	Rhode Island	26%	0%	13%	2,864	0	2,864
27	Pennsylvania	26%	14%	20%	36,377	18,348	54,726
28	Kentucky	26%	8%	17%	14,030	4,072	18,102
29	Mississippi	23%	0%	11%	8,076	0	8,076
30	Missouri	22%	3%	13%	16,367	1,814	18,181
31	Virginia	22%	3%	12%	21,596	2,829	24,425
32	North Carolina	21%	0%	11%	26,707	0	26,707
33	Tennessee	20%	1%	11%	16,627	874	17,501
34	Washington	19%	9%	14%	16,282	7,256	23,538
35	Minnesota	18%	0.5%	9%	12,304	311	12,615
36	Oregon	17%	13%	15%	7,200	5,137	12,337
37	Connecticut	16%	14%	15%	5,862	5,312	11,174
38	Ohio	13%	5%	9%	17,432	6,162	23,594
39	Alaska	11%	0.2%	6%	1,053	22	1,075
40	North Dakota	11%	0%	5%	1,076	0	1,076
41	Nevada	10%	2%	6%	3,670	618	4,288
42	Delaware	9%	4%	6%	999	419	1,418
43	Hawaii	7%	4%	5%	1,060	577	1,637
44	Utah	2%	1%	2%	1,189	464	1,653
45	Arizona	2%	1%	2%	1,674	1,117	2,791
	50 states + DC*	37%	9%	23%	1,424,670	315,293	1,739,963
Work requirement [†]	Indiana	7%	0%	4%	6,018	0	6,018
Work requirement [†]	Virginia MD & CCSP	7%	8%	7%	6,788	7,344	14,132
	Guam	2%	0%	1%	52	0	52
No program	Idaho	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	Montana	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	New Hampshire	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	South Dakota	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	Wyoming	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0

* Nationwide, an additional 55,184 children of other ages were enrolled in state prekindergarten, for a total of 1,795,147 children.

[†] Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program and Virginia's Mixed Delivery and CCSP are similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because they have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, the programs do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Information on these programs is reported here but not in national totals or rankings.

For details about how these figures were calculated, see the Methodology section and Roadmap to the State Profile Pages.

TABLE 3A: CHANGE IN PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF 3-YEAR-OLDS OVER TIME

STATE	2001-2002 TO 2024-2025		2019-2020 TO 2024-2025		2023-2024 TO 2024-2025	
	Number	% served	Number	% served	Number	% served
Alabama	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Alaska	22	0%	-259	-2%	-323	-3%
Arizona	1,117	1%	-595	-1%	-1,253	-2%
Arkansas	5,781	16%	72	2%	-204	0%
California	35,428	9%	-9,886	0%	3,496	1%
Colorado	13,979	22%	8,311	14%	5,571	9%
Connecticut	3,777	11%	-113	0%	-273	-1%
Delaware	419	4%	156	2%	21	0%
District of Columbia	4,838	56%	-472	3%	-152	-6%
Florida	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Georgia	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Hawaii	577	4%	577	4%	298	2%
Idaho	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Illinois	20,464	18%	250	4%	994	2%
Indiana**	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Iowa	1,826	5%	898	3%	35	0%
Kansas	7,745	22%	6,349	19%	192	1%
Kentucky	-800	-2%	-2,086	-3%	-55	0%
Louisiana	481	1%	481	1%	132	0%
Maine	80	1%	80	1%	80	1%
Maryland	4,391	6%	3,359	5%	572	1%
Massachusetts	1,750	4%	-840	0%	-411	0%
Michigan	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Minnesota*	-504	-1%	-225	0%	-56	0%
Mississippi	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Missouri	-732	-1%	664	1%	649	1%
Montana	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Nebraska	3,910	16%	-286	0%	2	0%
Nevada	507	1%	618	2%	163	0%
New Hampshire	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
New Jersey	14,888	15%	5,414	5%	2,360	3%
New Mexico	4,326	20%	3,226	16%	249	1%
New York	28,742	15%	23,854	12%	-5,410	-2%
North Carolina	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
North Dakota	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Ohio	-3,552	-2%	4,375	3%	-1,764	-1%
Oklahoma	1,370	3%	-1,469	-3%	-1,640	-3%
Oregon	4,028	10%	1,551	5%	19	0%
Pennsylvania*	18,348	14%	3,289	3%	843	1%
Rhode Island	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
South Carolina	3,199	5%	3,292	6%	3,414	6%
South Dakota	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Tennessee	32	0%	666	1%	17	0%
Texas	23,988	5%	6,632	2%	1,139	0%
Utah	464	1%	-55	0%	-257	-1%
Vermont	2,629	51%	-474	-2%	-277	-1%
Virginia***	2,829	3%	2,829	3%	-437	0%
Washington	6,107	7%	1,922	3%	396	1%
West Virginia	-489	-1%	47	1%	-32	0%
Wisconsin	-665	-1%	-379	-1%	-38	0%
Wyoming	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
United States	211,300	6%	61,773	2%	8,060	0.3%
Guam	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

* At least one program in these states did not break down total enrollment figures into specific numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds served. As a result, the figures in the table are estimates.

** Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program is similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because it has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, the program does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Indiana program information is reported here but not in national totals or rankings.

*** 2024-2025 enrollment numbers reflect VPI only. Virginia's two other early childhood education programs (Mixed-Delivery and CCSP) have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility and do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program.

TABLE 3B: CHANGE IN PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF 4-YEAR-OLDS OVER TIME

STATE	2001-2002 TO 2024-2025		2019-2020 TO 2024-2025		2023-2024 TO 2024-2025	
	Number	% served	Number	% served	Number	% served
Alabama	23,482	39%	3,799	6%	-402	-1%
Alaska	1,053	11%	-71	1%	113	1%
Arizona	-2,603	-4%	-1,213	-1%	-1,539	-2%
Arkansas	9,973	27%	-587	0%	120	1%
California	154,464	38%	16,607	9%	19,007	5%
Colorado	35,078	56%	26,860	46%	-81	-1%
Connecticut	1,445	6%	-2,124	-5%	918	2%
Delaware	156	1%	417	4%	159	1%
District of Columbia	4,045	50%	-300	10%	-22	-1%
Florida	149,100	63%	-17,626	-8%	-2,349	-2%
Georgia	5,701	0%	-11,014	-6%	-2,212	-2%
Hawaii	-189	-1%	382	3%	326	2%
Idaho	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Illinois	10,124	13%	-1,654	2%	252	0%
Indiana**	6,018	7%	2,501	3%	-1,930	-2%
Iowa	23,509	61%	-1,670	-1%	-541	-2%
Kansas	13,886	39%	4,743	15%	-84	0%
Kentucky	1,213	2%	-2,699	-4%	-821	-2%
Louisiana	11,884	23%	-1,052	1%	237	1%
Maine	4,676	38%	230	3%	22	1%
Maryland	9,573	13%	-2,722	-3%	446	0%
Massachusetts	11,606	18%	-576	0%	24	-1%
Michigan	21,504	24%	10,613	11%	6,861	6%
Minnesota*	11,034	16%	4,718	7%	4,803	7%
Mississippi	8,076	23%	5,012	15%	931	3%
Missouri	12,681	18%	10,726	15%	8,838	12%
Montana	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Nebraska	8,204	32%	-728	-1%	-108	-1%
Nevada	3,349	9%	600	2%	519	2%
New Hampshire	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
New Jersey	13,811	14%	4,538	3%	1,137	0%
New Mexico	11,263	51%	1,136	12%	85	2%
New York	54,928	31%	9,011	8%	-542	0%
North Carolina	25,467	20%	-4,352	-3%	-597	-1%
North Dakota	1,076	11%	-159	-1%	180	2%
Ohio	3,547	4%	1,349	1%	-2,786	-2%
Oklahoma	6,915	10%	-4,423	-4%	-555	-1%
Oregon	4,611	11%	1,426	5%	14	0%
Pennsylvania*	33,827	24%	4,331	4%	925	0%
Rhode Island	2,864	26%	1,444	14%	500	5%
South Carolina	11,290	16%	-1,743	-2%	-50	-1%
South Dakota	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Tennessee	14,869	17%	-1,630	-2%	-149	0%
Texas	77,171	12%	-6,515	1%	-122	-1%
Utah	1,189	2%	-514	-1%	-101	0%
Vermont	3,511	64%	-491	-4%	-257	-3%
Virginia***	15,718	15%	2,437	3%	-131	0%
Washington	11,497	13%	7,616	9%	1,452	1%
West Virginia	6,819	42%	-1,487	-2%	-160	-1%
Wisconsin	24,893	40%	-8,054	-9%	-2,384	-4%
Wyoming	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
United States	858,290	23%	44,592	3%	31,876	0.7%
Guam	52	2%	-19	0%	2	0%

* At least one program in these states did not break down total enrollment figures into specific numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds served. As a result, the figures in the table are estimates.

** Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program is similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because it has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, the program does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Indiana program information is reported here but not in national totals or rankings.

*** 2024-2025 enrollment numbers reflect VPI only. Virginia's two other early childhood education programs (Mixed-Delivery and CCSP) have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility and do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program.

TABLE 4: 2024-2025 ENROLLMENT OF 3- AND 4-YEAR-OLDS IN STATE PRESCHOOL, PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION, AND FEDERAL AND STATE HEAD START

STATE	PRE-K + PRE-K SPECIAL EDUCATION				PRE-K + PRE-K SPECIAL EDUCATION + HEAD START ^{††}			
	3-year-olds		4-year-olds		3-year-olds		4-year-olds	
	Number enrolled	% of state population	Number enrolled	% of state population	Number enrolled	% of state population	Number enrolled	% of state population
Alabama [†]	902	2%	25,928	43%	5,137	9%	28,525	47%
Alaska*	302	3%	1,408	15%	1,241	14%	2,431	26%
Arizona	3,972	5%	6,794	8%	8,219	10%	12,891	16%
Arkansas	8,468	24%	17,822	48%	10,386	29%	19,375	53%
California	55,222	13%	203,406	47%	81,814	20%	220,823	51%
Colorado [†]	14,709	24%	43,398	70%	16,722	27%	44,192	71%
Connecticut [†]	7,594	21%	9,349	25%	9,445	26%	11,101	30%
Delaware	1,352	13%	2,620	23%	1,565	14%	2,880	26%
District of Columbia [†]	5,963	76%	7,073	94%	5,996	77%	7,105	95%
Florida [†]	5,794	3%	158,878	67%	19,792	9%	165,038	70%
Georgia [†]	2,677	2%	73,382	56%	10,971	9%	76,728	59%
Hawaii	1,094	7%	2,129	13%	1,857	12%	3,111	20%
Idaho	635	3%	1,353	6%	1,533	7%	2,610	11%
Illinois [†]	34,562	26%	56,117	40%	42,301	32%	63,446	45%
Indiana ^{***}	3,690	5%	13,275	16%	7,494	9%	17,376	21%
Iowa [†]	2,402	7%	25,836	67%	4,426	12%	27,952	72%
Kansas	7,745	22%	17,154	48%	9,705	28%	19,531	54%
Kentucky [†]	4,072	8%	15,562	29%	9,044	17%	19,964	37%
Louisiana*	1,146	2%	24,645	44%	8,666	15%	29,364	52%
Maine [†]	538	5%	6,406	50%	1,343	11%	6,397	50%
Maryland ^{*†}	8,354	12%	30,855	42%	11,070	16%	32,401	44%
Massachusetts [†]	11,182	16%	21,243	30%	15,009	22%	24,555	35%
Michigan [†]	2,484	2%	47,981	43%	11,667	11%	50,842	46%
Minnesota*	3,446	5%	19,901	29%	7,049	11%	23,445	34%
Mississippi [†]	348	1%	9,492	27%	5,754	16%	16,097	46%
Missouri*	4,579	7%	22,090	30%	9,533	14%	25,932	35%
Montana	33	0.3%	363	3%	1,226	11%	1,840	16%
Nebraska [†]	4,034	16%	8,678	34%	4,764	19%	9,333	37%
Nevada [†]	2,183	6%	6,915	19%	3,225	9%	7,571	21%
New Hampshire	962	8%	1,275	10%	1,354	11%	1,754	14%
New Jersey [†]	34,002	33%	47,455	44%	37,264	36%	47,484	44%
New Mexico [†]	5,756	27%	12,018	55%	8,107	38%	14,369	65%
New York [†]	44,953	22%	125,577	59%	55,238	27%	133,346	63%
North Carolina [†]	2,736	2%	32,908	26%	8,251	7%	36,925	30%
North Dakota [†]	317	3%	1,967	19%	1,006	10%	2,879	28%
Ohio	10,537	8%	29,195	21%	20,655	16%	40,228	29%
Oklahoma	1,370	3%	33,638	67%	6,660	14%	36,615	73%
Oregon	5,919	15%	10,277	24%	8,164	20%	12,294	29%
Pennsylvania ^{*†}	23,537	18%	52,430	38%	32,334	24%	62,515	45%
Rhode Island [†]	599	6%	3,892	36%	1,329	13%	4,262	39%
South Carolina	3,549	6%	26,940	45%	8,391	14%	29,908	50%
South Dakota	328	3%	946	8%	1,586	14%	3,559	30%
Tennessee [†]	2,593	3%	21,011	25%	7,681	9%	25,212	30%
Texas [†]	47,513	12%	212,998	54%	64,290	16%	220,291	55%
Utah*	2,397	5%	5,232	11%	4,067	9%	7,537	16%
Vermont	2,998	56%	4,131	72%	3,233	61%	4,500	79%
Virginia ^{†***}	12,269	13%	32,279	32%	16,458	17%	37,115	37%
Washington	9,249	11%	20,175	23%	12,708	15%	24,171	28%
West Virginia [†]	1,279	7%	11,904	66%	2,940	17%	12,141	67%
Wisconsin	1,794	3%	39,529	61%	6,941	11%	43,112	66%
Wyoming	436	7%	1,139	18%	952	15%	1,665	26%
United States	407,232	11%	1,600,182	42%	629,219	17%	1,767,954	46%
Guam	29	1%	111	4%	210	7%	464	15%

* These states serve special education children in their state pre-K programs but were not able to provide the number of children for at least one of their programs. Estimates were used based on the average percent of special education students in state pre-K across all programs and enrollment numbers for each program or the percentage of children with an IEP in Head Start as reported in the PIR (MN Head Start only).

** Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program is similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because it has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, the program does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Indiana's program information is reported here but not in national totals or rankings.

*** Virginia's enrollment includes VPI, Mixed Delivery, and CCSP to show a more comprehensive picture of children in the state enrolled in publicly funded early childhood education programs.

[†] At least one program in the state was able to report the number of children enrolled in state pre-K & Head Start. This information was used to estimate an unduplicated count of Head Start enrollment.

^{††} Totals can overestimate public enrollment in state pre-K, pre-K special education, and Head Start as some or all of Head Start children may be served in a state's pre-K program and many states could not report this information.

For details about how these figures were calculated, see the Methodology section and the Roadmap to the State Profile Pages.

TABLE 5: 2024-2025 STATE PRESCHOOL QUALITY STANDARDS

STATE/ PROGRAM	Early learning & development standards	Curriculum supports	Teacher has BA	Specialized training in pre-K	Assistant teacher has CDA or equiv.	Staff professional development	Class size 20 or lower	Staff-child ratio 1:10 or better	Vision, hearing, & health screening & referral	Continuous quality improvement system	Quality standards checklist sum 2024-2025
Alabama	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Alaska Pre-Elementary	✓										1
Alaska EEP	✓						✓	✓			3
Alaska 0.5 ADM	✓						✓	✓			3
Arizona	✓	✓								✓	3
Arkansas	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	8
California CSPP	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	6
California TK	✓	✓	✓								3
Colorado	✓	✓									2
Connecticut CDCC	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			5
Connecticut SR	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			5
Connecticut Smart Start	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓			6
Delaware	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
District of Columbia	✓	✓							✓	✓	4
Florida	✓	✓							✓	✓	5
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Hawaii EOEL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Hawaii SPCS	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10*
Illinois	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Iowa Shared Visions	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		6
Iowa SWVPP	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓			6
Kansas	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		6
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Louisiana 8(g)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	7
Louisiana LA 4	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Louisiana NSECD	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Maryland	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		7
Massachusetts CPPI	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	7
Massachusetts Chapter 70	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			5
Michigan	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10*
Minnesota HdSt	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Minnesota VPK/SRP	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		5
Mississippi ELC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Mississippi SIP	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Missouri Foundation Form.	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			4
Missouri QPK	✓				✓		✓	✓		✓	6
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			6
Nevada	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	7
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
New Mexico	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
New York	✓	✓	✓*	✓			✓	✓	✓		7*
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9*
North Dakota	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		5
Ohio	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	5
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Oregon OPK	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Oregon Preschool Promise	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	6
Pennsylvania RTL	✓			✓			✓	✓			4
Pennsylvania HSSAP	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		8
Pennsylvania K4 & SBPK	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		3
Pennsylvania PKC	✓	✓	✓*	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8*
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
South Carolina	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Texas	✓								✓		2
Utah	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	6
Vermont	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Virginia VPI	✓	✓					✓	✓		✓	5
Washington ECEAP	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Washington TK	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	6
West Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Wisconsin			✓								1
TOTAL	62	53	30	47	21	21	50	51	43	40	
Indiana**	✓	✓									2
Virginia Mixed Delivery**	✓	✓						✓		✓	4
Virginia CCSP**	✓	✓						✓		✓	3
Guam	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		6

* Indicates that while the policy meets the benchmark, it is not being fully implemented.

** Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program and Virginia's Mixed Delivery and CCSP are similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because they have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, they do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Information on these programs is reported here but not in national totals or rankings.

Note: A pink checkmark indicates that the benchmark is newly met due to a policy change.

TABLE 6: STATE PRE-K RESOURCES 2024-2025

STATE	Resource rank based on state spending	State \$ per child enrolled in preschool	Change in total state per child spending from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025 Adjusted dollars	Total state preschool spending in 2024-2025	Change in total state spending from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025 Adjusted dollars
District of Columbia	1	\$27,354	\$3,127	\$356,697,970	\$36,444,483
New Jersey	2	\$18,848	\$604	\$1,231,974,000	\$103,290,612
Oregon	3	\$17,072	-\$1,912	\$216,587,540	-\$22,543,317
California	4	\$14,907	-\$1,587	\$4,148,114,798	-\$21,873,301
New Mexico	5	\$13,761	\$289	\$226,084,608	\$9,246,573
Michigan	6	\$13,604	\$606	\$652,720,000	\$118,264,216
Washington	7	\$13,484	\$438	\$329,963,994	\$45,399,141
Delaware	8	\$12,052	\$81	\$17,090,424	\$2,269,696
Connecticut	9	\$10,464	\$1,099	\$133,143,028	\$17,646,563
Rhode Island	10	\$9,858	\$193	\$28,232,929	\$5,385,882
Vermont	11	\$9,591	\$799	\$73,025,082	-\$133,489
Nevada	12	\$9,226	-\$657	\$39,560,895	\$3,923,860
West Virginia	13	\$8,810	\$760	\$120,466,591	\$8,862,817
Arizona	14	\$8,723	\$603	\$26,875,278	-\$24,464,419
Pennsylvania	15	\$8,474	-\$17	\$479,719,969	\$11,175,084
Hawaii	16	\$8,109	\$573	\$13,273,747	\$5,542,752
Maryland	17	\$7,933	\$1,662	\$269,734,230	\$62,963,083
Alabama	18	\$7,651	\$146	\$185,448,382	\$528,976
Georgia	19	\$7,630	\$1,111	\$538,431,295	\$72,157,626
Alaska	20	\$7,150	\$86	\$8,158,561	-\$1,145,285
New York	21	\$6,719	\$317	\$1,028,061,297	\$10,409,156
Illinois	22	\$6,641	\$356	\$555,609,751	\$37,242,858
North Dakota	23	\$6,510	\$279	\$7,005,089	\$1,421,869
Maine	24	\$6,363	-\$92	\$41,012,213	-\$49,661
Minnesota	25	\$6,283	-\$712	\$79,260,540	\$24,220,975
Arkansas	26	\$6,278	\$497	\$127,617,130	\$10,203,845
North Carolina	27	\$6,254	-\$995	\$167,027,011	-\$30,896,434
Virginia	28	\$6,120	-\$113	\$149,480,336	-\$6,300,712
Colorado	29	\$5,817	-\$11	\$338,023,799	\$31,380,217
Oklahoma	30	\$5,749	\$521	\$207,632,498	\$6,584,399
Louisiana	31	\$5,584	-\$198	\$111,023,907	-\$1,796,638
Ohio	32	\$5,110	\$781	\$120,573,483	-\$1,257,827
Kentucky	33	\$5,080	-\$634	\$95,692,076	-\$17,082,605
Tennessee	34	\$4,886	-\$107	\$85,505,733	-\$2,535,487
Mississippi	35	\$4,832	\$299	\$39,022,295	\$6,638,190
Kansas	36	\$4,815	\$169	\$119,446,934	\$6,836,219
Texas**	37	\$4,395	-\$373	\$996,609,407	-\$84,504,056
South Carolina	38	\$3,947	-\$387	\$120,727,185	\$2,957,556
Utah	39	\$3,917	\$529	\$6,474,481	-\$338,229
Iowa*	40	\$3,885	\$80	\$97,813,323	-\$585,985
Wisconsin***	41	\$3,882	\$0	\$165,861,752	-\$6,549,371
Missouri	42	\$3,095	-\$1,839	\$56,524,225	\$13,124,189
Massachusetts	43	\$3,046	\$140	\$105,715,076	\$3,562,184
Florida	44	\$2,946	\$56	\$443,714,085	\$1,860,701
Nebraska	45	\$2,008	-\$258	\$26,532,334	-\$3,448,914
50 states + DC		\$8,124	\$45	\$14,387,269,279	\$434,037,994
Indiana†	Work Requirement	\$601	-\$9,608	\$3,616,054	-\$77,527,198
Virginia MD & CCSP†	Work Requirement	\$8,877		\$125,456,530	
Guam		\$9,410	-\$77	\$489,340	\$14,987
Idaho	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Montana	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
New Hampshire	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
South Dakota	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Wyoming	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

* 2,446 children with instructional IEPs were served in Iowa's SWVPP program but were funded by sources not reported by the state. Similar to prior years, these children were removed from the per-child spending calculations.

** Texas includes 21,742 Non-ADA eligible children in their enrollment total. These children are removed from state funding per child calculations.

*** Wisconsin could not report pre-K spending for 2023-2024 or 2024-2025. Spending is estimated based on 2022-2023 reported spending.

† Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program and Virginia's Mixed Delivery and CCSP are similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because they have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, they do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Information on these programs is reported here but not in national totals or rankings.

For details about how these figures were calculated, see the Methodology section and Roadmap to the State Profile Pages.

TABLE 7: ALL-REPORTED PRE-K RESOURCES 2024-2025

STATE	Resource rank based on all-reported spending	All-reported \$ per child enrolled in preschool	State reported non-state funds	State \$ per child enrolled in preschool	Local \$ per child enrolled in preschool	Federal \$ per child enrolled in preschool	Total all-reported preschool spending
District of Columbia	1	\$27,354	No	\$27,354	\$0	\$0	\$356,697,970
New Jersey	2	\$18,848	No	\$18,848	\$0	\$0	\$1,231,974,000
Oregon	3	\$17,072	No	\$17,072	\$0	\$0	\$216,587,540
New York	4	\$16,940	Yes	\$6,719	\$8,748	\$1,473	\$2,591,883,353
California	5	\$15,125	Yes	\$14,907	\$6	\$213	\$4,208,957,132
Washington	6	\$13,875	Yes	\$13,484	\$387	\$4	\$339,537,052
New Mexico	7	\$13,761	No	\$13,761	\$0	\$0	\$226,084,608
Kentucky	8	\$13,685	Yes	\$5,080	\$4,963	\$3,642	\$257,788,886
Michigan	9	\$13,604	No	\$13,604	\$0	\$0	\$652,720,000
Oklahoma	10	\$12,433	Yes	\$5,749	\$5,227	\$1,457	\$449,016,421
Delaware	11	\$12,052	No	\$12,052	\$0	\$0	\$17,090,424
Vermont	12	\$11,937	Yes	\$9,591	\$514	\$1,832	\$90,889,523
Nebraska	13	\$11,926	Yes	\$2,008	\$3,993	\$5,925	\$157,568,259
West Virginia	14	\$11,918	Yes	\$8,810	\$46	\$3,061	\$162,961,998
Maryland	15	\$11,899	Yes	\$7,933	\$3,966	\$0	\$404,601,350
Maine	16	\$10,752	Yes	\$6,363	\$4,334	\$55	\$69,298,384
Alabama	17	\$10,741	Yes	\$7,651	\$3,090	\$0	\$260,343,048
Virginia	18	\$10,656	Yes	\$6,120	\$3,640	\$896	\$260,272,406
Arkansas	19	\$10,637	Yes	\$6,278	\$3,479	\$880	\$216,214,079
Connecticut	20	\$10,464	No	\$10,464	\$0	\$0	\$133,143,028
Rhode Island	21	\$9,933	Yes	\$9,858	\$0	\$75	\$28,448,058
Mississippi	22	\$9,470	Yes	\$4,832	\$3,797	\$841	\$76,477,116
Nevada	23	\$9,226	No	\$9,226	\$0	\$0	\$39,560,895
Illinois	24	\$9,179	Yes	\$6,641	\$2,538	\$0	\$767,965,483
Arizona	25	\$8,723	No	\$8,723	\$0	\$0	\$26,875,278
North Carolina	26	\$8,722	Yes	\$6,254	\$710	\$1,758	\$232,940,748
Pennsylvania	27	\$8,474	No	\$8,474	\$0	\$0	\$479,719,969
Hawaii	28	\$8,219	Yes	\$8,109	\$110	\$0	\$13,453,747
Georgia	29	\$7,630	No	\$7,630	\$0	\$0	\$538,431,295
Alaska	30	\$7,177	Yes	\$7,150	\$0	\$26	\$8,188,561
Wisconsin***	31	\$7,047	Yes	\$3,882	\$3,165	\$0	\$301,061,330
North Dakota	32	\$6,510	No	\$6,510	\$0	\$0	\$7,005,089
Tennessee	33	\$6,509	Yes	\$4,886	\$1,623	\$0	\$113,911,200
Massachusetts	34	\$6,410	Yes	\$3,046	\$2,669	\$695	\$222,470,448
Minnesota	35	\$6,283	No	\$6,283	\$0	\$0	\$79,260,540
Utah	36	\$6,134	Yes	\$3,917	\$0	\$2,217	\$10,139,286
Colorado	37	\$5,817	No	\$5,817	\$0	\$0	\$338,023,799
Louisiana	38	\$5,584	No	\$5,584	\$0	\$0	\$111,023,907
Ohio	39	\$5,110	No	\$5,110	\$0	\$0	\$120,573,483
Kansas	40	\$4,815	No	\$4,815	\$0	\$0	\$119,446,934
Texas**	41	\$4,480	Yes	\$4,395	\$0	\$85	\$1,015,817,221
South Carolina	42	\$4,211	Yes	\$3,947	\$0	\$264	\$128,789,930
Iowa*	43	\$4,084	Yes	\$3,885	\$199	\$0	\$102,827,175
Missouri	44	\$3,095	No	\$3,095	\$0	\$0	\$56,524,225
Florida	45	\$2,963	Yes	\$2,946	\$0	\$17	\$446,309,578
50 states + DC		\$9,988	Yes	\$8,124	\$1,474	\$391	\$17,688,874,755
Indiana†	Work Requirement	\$8,762	Yes	\$601	\$0	\$8,161	\$52,731,271
Virginia MD & CCSP†	Work Requirement	\$12,678	Yes	\$8,877	\$0	\$1,671	\$179,158,494
Guam		\$9,410	No	\$9,410	\$0	\$0	\$489,340
Idaho	No program	\$0	NA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Montana	No program	\$0	NA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
New Hampshire	No program	\$0	NA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
South Dakota	No program	\$0	NA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Wyoming	No program	\$0	NA	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

* 2,446 children with instructional IEPs were served in Iowa's SWVPP program but were funded by sources not reported by the state. Similar to prior years, these children were removed from the per-child spending calculations.

** Texas includes 21,742 Non-ADA eligible children in their enrollment total. These children are removed from state funding per child calculations.

*** Wisconsin could not report pre-K spending for 2023-2024 or 2024-2025. Spending is estimated based on 2022-2023 reported spending.

† Indiana's state-funded early childhood education program and Virginia's Mixed Delivery and CCSP are similar to state-funded preschool in other states. However, because they have a parent work or education requirement for eligibility, they do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Information on these programs is reported here but not in national totals or rankings. For details about how these figures were calculated, see the Methodology section and Roadmap to the State Profile Pages.

WHAT QUALIFIES AS A STATE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM?

NIEER's *State of Preschool Yearbook* series focuses on state-funded preschool education programs meeting the following criteria:

- The program is funded, controlled, and directed by the state.
- The program serves children of preschool age, usually three and/or four years old. Although programs in some states serve broader age ranges, programs that serve only infants and toddlers are excluded. The program must reach at least one percent of the 3- or 4-year-old population in the state to be included.
- Early childhood education is the primary focus of the program. This does not exclude programs that offer parent education but does exclude programs that mainly focus on parent education. Programs that focus on parent work status or programs where child eligibility is tied to work status are also excluded.
- The program offers a group learning experience to children at least two days per week.
- State-funded preschool education programs must be distinct from the state's system for subsidized child care. However, preschool programs may be *coordinated* and *integrated* with the subsidy system for child care.
- The program is *not* primarily designed to serve children with disabilities, but services may be offered to children with disabilities.
- State supplements to the federal Head Start program are considered to constitute de facto state preschool programs if they substantially expand the number of children served and if the state assumes some administrative responsibility for the program. State supplements to fund quality improvements, extended days, or other program enhancements, or to fund expanded enrollment only minimally, are not considered equivalent to a state preschool program.

While ideally this report would identify all preschool education funding streams at the federal, state, and local levels, there are a number of limitations of the data that make this extremely difficult to do. For example, preschool is only one of several types of education programs toward which local districts can target their Title I funds. Many states do not track how Title I funds are used at the local level, and therefore do not know the extent to which they are spent on preschool education. Another challenge involves tracking total state spending for child care, using a variety of available sources, such as Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) dollars, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds, and any state funding above and beyond the required matches for federal funds. Although some of these child care funds may be used for high quality, educational, center-based programs for 3- and 4-year-olds that closely resemble programs supported by state-funded preschool education initiatives, it is nearly impossible to determine what proportion of child care funds are spent this way.

AGE GROUPINGS USED IN THIS REPORT

- Children considered to be three years old during the 2024-2025 school year are those who will be eligible to enter kindergarten two years later, during the 2026-2027 school year.
- Children considered to be four years old during the 2024-2025 school year were eligible to enter kindergarten one year later, during the 2025-2026 school year.
- Children considered to be five years old during the 2024-2025 school year were already eligible for kindergarten at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

Roadmap to the State Profile Pages



How to interpret data on the individual state profiles

For each state with a preschool education program, we include one page with a description of the state's program, followed by a page with data on the program's key features, focusing on access, quality, and resources.

The first page for each state begins with two sets of line graphs. The first set shows percentages of the state's 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds enrolled in state-funded preschool in the state. The second set shows the state's spending per child enrolled in state-funded preschool. Both sets of line graphs depict changes in state preschool over time, from fiscal year 2002 (which corresponds to the 2001-2002 school year) through fiscal year 2025 (which corresponds to the 2024-2025 school year). Most of the data used for comparison purposes come from NIEER's previous Yearbooks, although spending figures are adjusted for inflation and represent 2025 dollars. In addition, there are some exceptions in cases where states revised data or reported data differently. The percent of children enrolled is calculated using Census estimates of 3- and 4-year-old children in each state. For the 2020-2021 school year, in response to the impact of COVID-19 on preschool enrollment, there is an aqua dot on the spending per child line graph which shows the state pre-K spending per the estimated full enrollment equivalent. This is an estimate of what spending per child would have been if the program was fully enrolled. This was not done again in subsequent years.

Following the line graphs is a brief narrative providing information on the main features of the state's program(s). This includes an overview of preschool enrollment, spending and quality; any new developments; details such as the program's history, the types of settings in which state-funded preschool can be offered, and eligibility criteria. In many cases, the narrative also describes unique or particularly interesting aspects of the state's program(s) that may not be highlighted elsewhere in the report, as well as expected changes for the 2025-2026 school year. Some descriptive information in the narratives was originally based on information found in the reports *Seeds of Success* from the Children's Defense Fund and *Quality Counts 2002* from Education Week.

For the 44 states with preschool programs and the District of Columbia, the bottom of the first page of each state profile presents four numbers showing the state's ranking on the following measures:

- The percentage of the state's 4-year-old population enrolled in the state's preschool program (Access Rankings – 4-Year-Olds)
- The percentage of the state's 3-year-old population enrolled in the state's preschool program (Access Rankings – 3-Year-Olds)
- State expenditures per child enrolled in the program (Resources Rankings – State Spending)
- All reported expenditures per child enrolled in the program, including local and federal spending as well as state spending (Resources Rankings – All Reported Spending).

Federal COVID-19 relief funding used for preschool is also included in the State expenditure per child calculation again this year.

The All Reported Spending ranking often provides a more complete picture of preschool spending in states using local and federal funding sources than the State Spending ranking alone. Because states vary in their ability to report spending from these other sources, however, this ranking is imperfect and sometimes underestimates total spending.

Indiana's preschool program has a parent work or education requirement for eligibility and therefore does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Information on the program is included in this report but not in national totals or rankings.

Virginia's Mixed Delivery Program and Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) also have a parent work or school requirement and therefore do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. These two programs are not included in Virginia's rankings or national averages. However, the third page in Virginia's profile reflects what the state's rankings would be if these two programs were included.

The bottom of the first page of each state profile (including Guam and Indiana) also presents a box indicating the total number of quality standards benchmarks met.

Alaska, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington each have more than one distinct preschool education initiative. Therefore, information is presented slightly differently for these states and is explained on their individual profiles.

State profile pages are also given for the five states that did not fund preschool education programs in the 2024-2025 school year. For these states, the table of quality standards is omitted. These profiles do report enrollment data for special education and federally funded Head Start, however. In addition, data on per-child spending for K-12 education and federal Head Start are included. Profile pages are also included for U.S. territories that do not offer "state-funded" preschool (American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands). For these five territories, a narrative is provided, as is information about Head Start and special education.

The following sections provide an overview of information contained in the data tables on the state profile pages and explain why these elements are important. Data in the tables are for the 2024-2025 school year except where otherwise noted.

ACCESS

The Access data table begins with the total state preschool enrollment, which is the number of children of all ages enrolled at a specific point in time. Following that is the percentage of school districts (or other local education authorities, such as counties or parishes) providing state-funded preschool programs. This information shows the extent of the initiative's geographic coverage. Next, the table shows what, if any, income requirement is used in determining eligibility for the program.

Data on the minimum hours of operation (hours per day and days per week) and operating schedule (academic or full calendar year) are shown as additional measures of access because working parents may find it difficult to get their children to and from programs that operate only a few hours a day or week. The amount of time children participate in a preschool program also matters for other reasons, such as influencing the program's effects on children's development and learning.

The Access data table also shows enrollment of 3- and 4-year-old children in two federally funded programs: preschool special education and Head Start. Beginning in 2022-2023, the special education enrollment total includes only children in school- or center-based settings and also includes 5-year-olds not yet in kindergarten. The Head Start enrollment total includes children in the American Indian/Alaskan Native and Migrant & Seasonal Head Start programs where applicable. The final item in the table reports how many children ages three and four years old are participating in Head Start through state supplemental funds.

Two Access pie charts illustrate the percentages of the state's 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in the state-funded preschool program(s), special education, Head Start, and Other Public ECE programs. The remaining children are categorized as enrolled in "Other/None." These children may be enrolled in another type of private or publicly funded program (e.g., state-subsidized child care) or may not be attending a center-based program at all. "Other public" was new for 2021-2022 and includes children enrolled in locally, city, or district-funded preschool programs (outside of state-funded preschool). In some states it also includes early childhood education programs that are similar to a state-funded preschool program but do not meet NIEER's definition of a preschool program. We calculated an unduplicated count for special education enrollment in order to more accurately represent the percentage of children served in the state. The special education percentage in the pie chart represents children who are in school- or center-based special education but not enrolled in Head Start or state preschool programs. We also calculated an unduplicated count for Head Start enrollment in order to avoid double counting Head Start children enrolled in state-funded preschool. For the states that were able to report this information, the Head Start percentage does not include children also enrolled in state-funded preschool.

QUALITY

State policies in critical areas related to quality are shown in the Quality Standards Checklist table. For each policy area, states receive a checkmark when their policy meets or exceeds the related benchmark standard. The first column in the Quality Standards Checklist table lists the policy that is being evaluated. The second column presents information about each state program's requirements regarding each policy. The third column lists the benchmark for each policy—that is, the rigor of the state requirement needed to meet the benchmark. The fourth column depicts whether the state preschool program's requirements met the benchmark. A box at the bottom of the fourth column displays the total number of benchmarks met by the state program. Starting in the 2021-2022 report, an "***" indicates that in practice a program did not meet a benchmark even though a policy was in place. For example, a program that required a bachelor's degree for lead teachers but allowed waivers resulting in a substantial portion of lead teachers not having at least a bachelor's degree received an "***" next to the check mark and the total number of benchmarks met.

The Quality Standards Checklist represents a set of minimum criteria, established by state policy, needed to ensure the effectiveness of preschool education programs, especially when serving children who are at-risk for school failure. Although the checklist is not intended to be an exhaustive inventory of all the features of a high quality program, each of these research-based standards is essential for setting the groundwork for high quality experiences for children. Meeting all 10 standards does not necessarily guarantee that a program is of high quality, but no state's prekindergarten policies should be considered fully satisfactory unless all 10 benchmarks are met. Although programs may routinely engage in practices meeting criteria for quality standards, credit is given only when the practices are explicitly required in state policy.

Judgment inevitably plays a role in setting specific benchmarks based on evidence, as research rarely is completely definitive. We have given more weight to the risk of losing substantial benefits by setting benchmarks too low than to the risk of unnecessarily raising costs by setting benchmarks too high, because research has found the benefits of high quality programs to be substantially greater than the costs. In other words, there is more to lose when programs are weak or ineffective. Nevertheless, the original benchmarks were still conceived as minimum standards. The current benchmarks raise the bar somewhat.

Based on advances in research during more than a decade and a half since establishing the original quality standards benchmarks, we have created the current set, which debuted in the 2016 Yearbook. These shifted the focus somewhat from policies regarding classroom structure toward policies that shape classroom processes associated with positive child developmental outcomes.¹ Specifically, the current benchmarks introduced one new quality standards benchmark and made substantial changes or enhancements to three others. Below, we explain each benchmark, along with the evidence and reasoning behind it.

We also describe the criteria used to assess whether state policies meet each benchmark:

Benchmark 1. Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS). A state's ELDS specify a program's goals. Clear and appropriate expectations for learning and development across multiple domains are an essential starting place for quality.² States should have comprehensive ELDS covering all areas identified as fundamental by the National Education Goals Panel³ — children's physical well-being and motor development, social/emotional development, approaches toward learning, language development, and cognition and general knowledge. Neglecting any of these developmental domains could weaken both short- and long-term effectiveness.⁴

To meet the benchmark, ELDS should be comprehensive and specific to preschool-aged children and vertically aligned with state standards for younger and older children so that children's experiences at each stage build on what has gone before.⁵ ELDS also should be aligned with any required child assessments, and sensitive to children's diverse cultural and language backgrounds.⁶ Finally, the state must provide some support for those charged with implementing the ELDS so they understand them, such as professional development and additional resources.

Benchmark 2. Curriculum supports. A strong curriculum that is well-implemented increases support for learning and development broadly, and includes specificity regarding key domains of language, literacy, mathematics, and social-emotional development.⁷ To meet the benchmark for curriculum support, states must provide guidance or an approval process for selecting curricula, and support for curriculum implementation, such as training or ongoing technical assistance to facilitate adequate implementation of the curriculum.

Benchmark 3. Teacher degree. To meet the benchmark, state policy must require lead teachers in every classroom to have at least a bachelor's degree. This follows recommendations from multiple studies by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Science that preschool teachers have a bachelor's degree with specialized knowledge and training in early childhood education.⁸ Their conclusions are supported by an analysis of what teachers are expected to know and do in order to be highly effective. Also, a comprehensive review finds that teachers with higher educational levels generally provide higher quality educational environments for young children.⁹

Much of the research has approached the question of teacher degree requirements incorrectly by assuming that teacher qualifications and other program features act independently, are unconstrained by regulation, and are independent of unmeasured contexts that affect outcomes.¹⁰ When multiple program features are interdependent, benchmarking is a more appropriate approach for identifying the features associated with success.¹¹ We found no examples of programs that have produced large persistent gains in achievement without well-qualified teachers.

It also follows that teacher qualifications should not be expected to have an effect in isolation. Compensation must be adequate to attract and retain strong teachers, regardless of qualifications requirements.¹² We have not made this part of the benchmark due to the difficulty of ascertaining exactly what "adequate compensation" is for each state, but that does not lessen its importance.

Benchmark 4. Teacher specialized training. IOM/NRC reports have also emphasized that preschool lead teachers should have specialized preparation that includes knowledge of learning, development, and pedagogy specific to preschool-age children.¹³ To meet the benchmark, policy must require specialized training in early childhood education and/or child development. We recognize that early childhood teacher preparation programs are variable. States may wish to consider supports to improve programs offered by their state institutions of higher education and alignment with the state ELDS.¹⁴

Benchmark 5. Assistant teacher degree. All members of a teaching team benefit from preservice preparation. The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential was developed as the entry-level qualification for the field.¹⁵ Other certifications or coursework can provide similar preparation. There has been limited research specific to the qualifications of assistant teachers, but evidence indicates that assistant teacher qualifications are associated with teaching quality. To meet the benchmark, policy must require that assistant teachers hold a CDA or have equivalent preparation based on coursework.



Benchmark 6. Staff professional development. To meet this benchmark both teachers and assistant teachers must be required to have at least 15 hours of annual in-service training. In addition, some professional development must be provided through coaching or similar ongoing classroom-embedded support. Lead and assistant teachers are also required to have annual written individualized professional development plans. Research indicates regular professional learning, including coaching, supports teaching practices related to high quality experiences for children.¹⁶ Individualized professional development focused on helping teachers improve in their own classrooms has been found more effective than traditional workshops and general professional development.¹⁷ Good teachers actively engage in learning and regular professional development, and there is some evidence for a 15-hour threshold.¹⁸

Benchmarks 7 and 8. Maximum class size (20) and staff-child ratio (1:10). These two benchmarks are addressed together as they are highly linked in policy and practice. To meet benchmark 7, class size should be limited to at most 20 children. To meet benchmark 8, classes should be permitted to have no more than 10 children per classroom teaching staff member. Small class size and corresponding teacher-child ratios characterize the most effective programs, even though many studies find weak or no association between these features and effectiveness.¹⁹ Yet, it seems clear that smaller classes and fewer children per teacher enable teachers to interact with each child more frequently, to work with smaller groups, and offer each child more individualized attention, which results in better outcomes. The smaller the class, the easier it is for a teacher to develop a good understanding of each child's interests, needs, and capabilities.

What may be the best designed large-scale randomized trial of class size for young children to date found substantive and lasting impacts on achievement and educational success for smaller class sizes in kindergarten.²⁰ Subsequent efforts to reproduce these results through policy changes elsewhere have been far less successful. Again, we note that key policies regarding program features are not independent of other policies, context, and implementation.

A staff-child ratio of 1:10 is lower than in programs found to have the largest persistent effects, but it is generally accepted by professional opinion. A recent meta-analysis suggests an even lower threshold, below 1 to 7.5 (class size of 15), would be better, and that finding is consistent with experimental evidence for kindergarten.²¹ On the other hand, at least one program has produced large short-term gains with a maximum class size of 22 and 1:11 staff to child ratio, just outside the benchmarks.²²

Benchmark 9. Screenings and referrals. To meet the benchmark, policies should require that preschool programs ensure children receive vision and hearing screenings and at least one additional health screening; as well as referrals when needed.²³ This benchmark recognizes that children's overall well-being and educational success involve not only cognitive development but also physical and mental health.²⁴ This quality standards benchmark no longer assesses provision of support services. Nearly all state-funded pre-K programs have some requirement for parent engagement and support, and we could not set an evidence-based benchmark that differentiated among them based on effectiveness.

Benchmark 10. Continuous Quality Improvement System. This benchmark focuses on state requirements regarding a Continuous Quality Improvement System (CQIS). This reflects a shift in focus from compliance to state support for continuous improvement. An effective CQIS operates at local and state levels to ensure that information is gathered regularly on processes and outcomes, and that this information is used to guide program improvement. To meet this benchmark, policy must at a minimum require that (1) data on classroom quality is systematically collected, and (2) local programs and the state both use information from the CQIS to help improve policy or practice. The use of a cycle of planning, observation, and feedback has characterized highly effective programs.²⁵



The original Quality Standards Checklist required that programs should provide at least one meal per day. While nutritious meals are important, this requirement has been removed from the Checklist because whether a program met the requirement was largely determined by whether the program operated for a half day or full school day.

RESOURCES

The table in the Resources section provides the following information: total state spending for the state preschool program (which includes TANF and COVID-19 relief funding); whether a local match, monetary or in-kind, is required; amount of state Head Start spending; state spending per child enrolled in the program; and all reported (local, state, and federal) spending per child enrolled in the program. These measures show various views of the resources dedicated to state preschool programs, which allows for a more complete picture of a state's commitment to preschool education. For example, a state's total spending may appear low, but may prove to be high relative to the number of children enrolled. On the other hand, a state with a high total funding level may have a low per-pupil spending level if it enrolls a large number of children. In some states, local communities contribute substantial additional funds to state preschool education by using local funding sources or by leveraging federal funding sources. In such cases, the figure that includes all reported spending is the best gauge of the level of available resources, to the extent that information about local and locally allocated federal spending is available.

The bar chart in the Resources section compares per-child spending in state-funded preschool programs to federal Head Start and K–12 per-child spending. Head Start per-child spending for the 2024-2025 year includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds served. Past years' figures have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start, which made per-child amounts seem artificially higher (although this has been corrected for the past several years). Different colors indicate the different funding sources (local, state, and federal). Separate colors are used to indicate any TANF funds or federal COVID-19 relief funds that a state directs toward its preschool initiative. While TANF and COVID-19 relief funds are federal dollars, it is the state's decision to devote these funds to preschool education, as opposed to other purposes. Therefore, TANF and COVID-19 relief funds are including in the "State" funding amount. Data on the amounts of local and federal preschool funds are included in the bar chart when available.

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Guide to State Profiles

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	Number of children of all ages in state pre-K program
School districts that offer state program	Percentage of school districts in state where program is offered
Income requirement	Maximum family income for program eligibility
Minimum hours of operation.....	Minimum hours per day and days per week program operates
Operating schedule.....	Annual schedule of operation (school/academic year or full calendar year)
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Number of 3- and 4-year-olds served by the Preschool Grants Program of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in School- or Center-Based Settings
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Number of slots for 3- and 4-year-olds in Head Start funded with federal money
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	Number of slots for 3- and 4-year-olds in Head Start funded with state money

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY

STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT

Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned with state infant & toddler and K–3 or college & career ready standards, aligned with child assessments, supported, and culturally sensitive
Curriculum supports	Approval process for selecting curricula and supports in place for curriculum implementation
Teacher degree.....	Lead teacher must have a BA, at minimum
Teacher specialized training	Lead teacher must have specialized training in a pre-K area
Assistant teacher degree.....	Assistant teacher must have a CDA or equivalent, at minimum
Staff professional development.....	Teacher and assistant teacher must receive at least 15 hours/year of in-service professional development and training, individualized annual professional development plans, and coaching
Maximum class size	Maximum number of children per classroom must be 20 or fewer
Staff-child ratio	Lowest acceptable ratio of staff to children in classroom (e.g., maximum number of students per teacher) must be 1:10 or better
Screening & referral.....	Screenings and referrals for vision, hearing, and health must be required
Continuous quality improvement system	Systematic structured observations of classroom quality and information collected is used for classroom/program improvement at the state and local levels

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	Total state funds spent on state pre-K program
Local match required?	Whether state requires local providers to match state monetary contributions to program
State Head Start spending	Total state funds spent to supplement Head Start program
State spending per child enrolled	Amount of state funds spent per child participating in pre-K program
All reported spending per child enrolled	Amount of all reported funds (local, state, and federal) spent per child participating in pre-K program

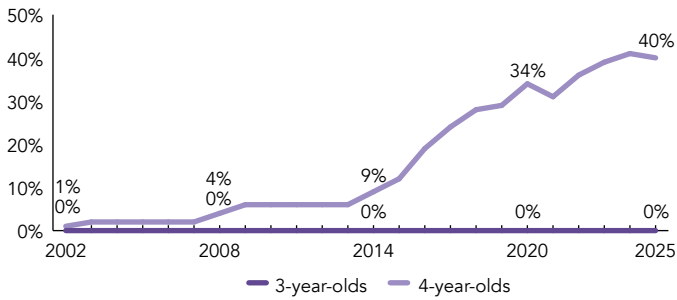
GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Associate of Arts	FEE	Full enrollment equivalent
ACF	Administration for Children and Families	FPL	Federal Poverty Level
AEPS	Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System for Infants and Children	FRPL	Free or reduced-price lunch
ARP/ARPA	American Rescue Plan/American Rescue Plan Act	FTE	Full-time Equivalent
ASQ-3/ ASQ-SE	Ages & Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition/Ages & Stages Questionnaires - Social Emotional	FY	Fiscal Year
B–	Denotes that the age range covered by a teaching license begins at birth (e.g., B–3 = birth–grade 3)	GED	General Equivalency Diploma
BA	Bachelor of Arts	GEERS	Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund
BMI	Body Mass Index	HdSt	Head Start
BS	Bachelor of Science	HSD	High School Diploma
CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program	IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act	IEP	Individualized Education Plan
CBO	Community-Based Organization	IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan
CCDF	Child Care and Development Fund	IOM	Institute of Medicine
CD	Child Development	ITERS	Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale
CDA	Child Development Associate credential	K	Kindergarten
CLASS	Classroom Assessment Scoring System	KEA/KRA	Kindergarten Entry Assessment/Kindergarten Readiness Assessment
COR	HighScope Child Observation Record	LEA	Local Education Agency
CQIS	Continuous Quality Improvement System	MA	Master of Arts
CRRSA	Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act	N–	Denotes that the age range covered by a teaching license begins at nursery (e.g., N–3 = nursery–grade 3)
DIAL	Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning	NA	Not Applicable
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills	NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
DLL	Dual Language Learner	NCLB	No Child Left Behind
DOE	Department of Education	ONBL	Outdoor/Nature-based Learning
DRDP	Desired Results Developmental Profile	PALS	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening
EC	Early Childhood	P–	Denotes that the age range covered by a teaching license begins at preschool (e.g., P–4 = preschool–grade 4)
ECE	Early Childhood Education	PD	Professional Development
ECERS-3	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition	PDG	Preschool Development Grant
ECERS-R	Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised	PDG B–5	Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five
ECSE/ ECE Sp Ed	Early Childhood Special Education	PIR	Program Information Report (Head Start)
Ed.D.	Doctor of Education Degree	PPVT	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
Ed.S.	Educational Specialist Degree	Pre-K	Prekindergarten
EE	Elementary Education	QRIS	Quality Rating and Improvement System
ELDS	Early Learning and Development Standards	SEA	State Education Agency
ELL	English Language Learner	SMI	State Median Income
ELLCO	Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation	SpEd	Special Education
ELS	Early Learning Standards	TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
ESSER	Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund	T.E.A.C.H.	Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Project)
ERS	Environmental Rating Scale	TPOT	Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool
ESL	English as a Second Language	TS GOLD	Teaching Strategies GOLD
FCC	Family Child Care	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
FCCERS	Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale	WSS	Work Sampling System

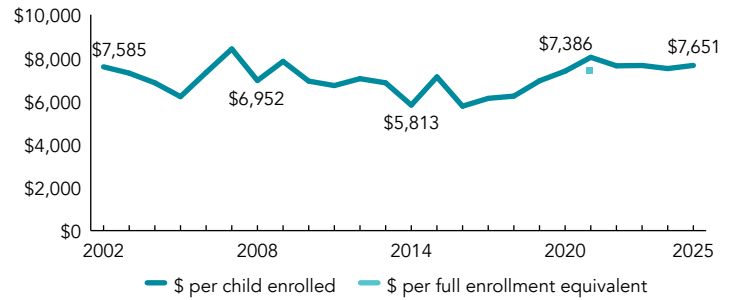
State Profiles

Alabama

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Alabama preschool enrolled 24,238 children, a slight decrease of 402 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$185,448,382, up \$528,976 (0.3%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$7,651 in 2024-2025, up \$146 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Alabama met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In December 2025, Alabama was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$3,877,350. This grant supports eight interrelated systems-building projects designed to address priority needs identified in the state's most recent needs assessment and strategic plan. The initiative focuses on strengthening workforce capacity, improving program quality and alignment across the mixed-delivery system, expanding meaningful family engagement, and enhancing cross-agency data integration.

Through coordinated implementation, these projects will expand professional learning and career pathway supports, strengthen governance and cross-sector collaboration, advance Alabama's early childhood data and analytic capacity, and elevate family voice in program design and decision-making. Together, these efforts will promote a more coordinated early childhood system serving children birth through age five across all settings, with particular attention to rural communities and historically underserved populations.

BACKGROUND

First Class Pre-K (FCPK) is a grant program administered by the Office of School Readiness within the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECE), which is part of the Governor's Cabinet. The program funds full-day preschool education for 4-year-old children in every county through a mixed-delivery model that includes public schools, private child care centers, Head Start programs, community organizations, faith-based centers, colleges and universities, and military agencies. Through a multi-pronged approach, ADECE ensures that all children enrolled in FCPK have access to high-quality early learning classrooms in their communities. FCPK remains a voluntary, universal program available to all 4-year-olds in Alabama, regardless of setting or geographic location.

To better reflect differences in community context and operating conditions across the state, FCPK recently implemented a data-informed, six-tier funding adjustment. All classrooms continue to receive the same base award; however, classrooms are placed into one of six tiers using three years of FCPK student data and community-level economic and access indicators drawn from census tracts within a 10-minute drive of each site. Classrooms in higher tiers receive additional funding to help address local economic and access barriers. This approach supports transparent and consistent funding decisions while preserving FCPK's universal access model and maintaining the same eligibility requirements, standards, and expectations statewide.

Funding for FCPK is distributed through the Alabama Education Trust Fund Budget using a competitive grant structure that includes awards to support program quality, primary classroom operations, and the start-up of new classrooms. All classrooms receive a base level of funding, and the six-tier context-based adjustment provides additional support where local conditions warrant it. Applications for funding must meet threshold eligibility requirements that include regulatory compliance and alignment with FCPK standards, they are evaluated using a structured rubric that considers organizational capacity, classroom readiness, program quality, community need, family engagement, and fiscal responsibility. The tier adjustment applies only to funding levels and does not affect eligibility, enrollment policies, or the high-quality standards required of all FCPK classrooms.

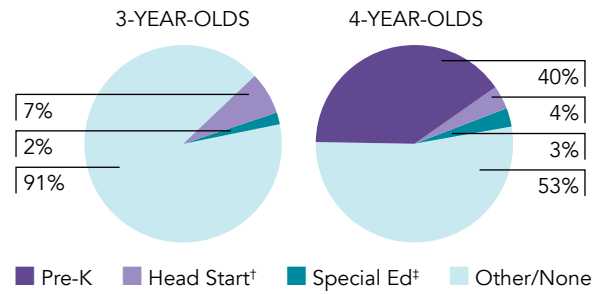
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
18	None Served	18	17	10

ALABAMA FIRST CLASS PRE-K PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	24,238
School districts that offer state program.....	100% (counties)
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.....	4,389
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	8,261
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.



RESOURCES

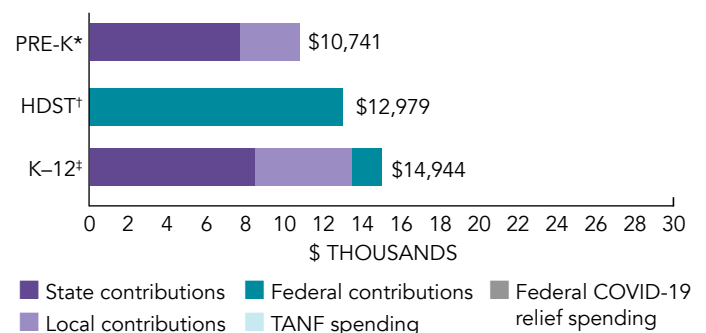
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$185,448,382
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start spending.....	\$5,492,533
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$7,651
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$10,741

* 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.

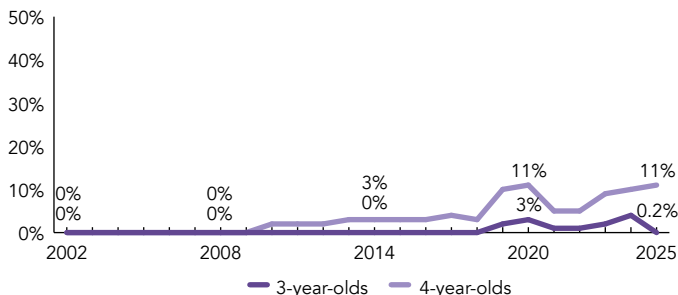
[‡] K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

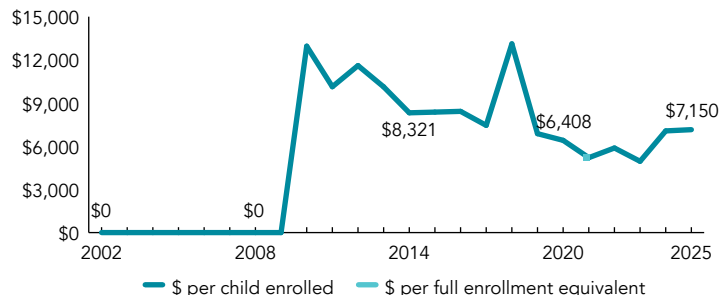


Alaska

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Alaska preschool enrolled 1,141 children, a decrease of 176 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$8,158,561, down \$1,145,285 (12%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$7,150 in 2024-2025, up \$86 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Alaska met an average of 2.3 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The Governor's fiscal year 2026 budget includes funding for the Alaska Pre-Elementary program, so the preschool program will remain intact for the 2026-27 school year.

In December 2025, Alaska was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$4,917,000 to support system building and strengthen ECE programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

BACKGROUND

Since the 1980s, Alaska has supplemented federal funding for Head Start programs in an effort to enhance school readiness and professional development and expand opportunities for children and families. During the 2024-2025 program year, the state provided \$13 million to support Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Alaska.

In 2009-2010, the state launched the Alaska Pre-Kindergarten pilot program for school districts, now known as the Alaska Pre-Elementary program. In 2015, the state changed the way competitive grants were offered to include two types of grantees. Districts new to the program would apply for a 3-year Pre-Elementary Development Grant geared toward strategic planning to begin implementing or supporting existing Pre-Elementary goals. Previously funded grantees could apply for three-year renewal grants to support the program while the districts worked towards sustainability of the program once the state grant funding ended. Development grants were geared toward strategic planning to begin implementing or supporting existing Pre-Elementary goals until they could be switched to renewal grants.

Starting in the 2020-2021 school year, the Department posted a request for applications for a three-year Pre-Elementary Grant. Any school district was eligible to apply for this competitive grant. Seventeen districts were awarded a Pre-Elementary Grant for the three-year grant cycle starting on July 1, 2020, and ending June 30, 2023. A new application was posted in Spring of 2023, open to all school districts to either start a preschool program or continue and improve their existing program for children ages three to five years. Starting July 1, 2023, nine school districts were awarded the Pre-Elementary Grant. Dependent upon annual legislative funding of \$3.2 million, the districts will receive grant funding through June 30, 2027. The financial support is part of an effort to promote school readiness and positive outcomes for participating 3-to-5-year-old children. The funds also offer admission to additional children and families whenever possible.

Starting with the 2023-24 school year, the state awarded Early Education Program (EEP) Grants to seven districts, on a 3-year cycle. These districts are working towards meeting Alaska's Early Education Program Standards. One district, Anchorage, was included in the 0.5 ADM Approval Pre-K program, which includes stable funding through Alaska's base student allocation formula for 4- and 5-year-old pre-elementary students at 0.5 Average Daily Membership (ADM). In 2024-25, two EEP districts moved to the 0.5 ADM Approval Pre-K Program and two additional districts moved into EEP. EEP districts will continue to shift into the 0.5 ADM program as they meet all the quality components.

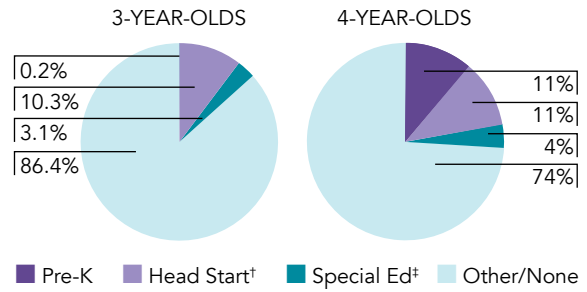
Alaska's overall support for state-funded preschool is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on Pre-Elementary, the fourth page on EEP, and the fifth page on 0.5 ADM.

ALASKA STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	1,141
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,035
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,963
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	Not reported

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

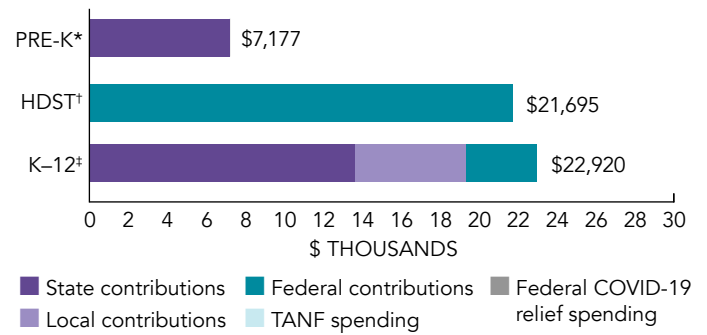


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$8,158,561
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$7,150
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$7,177

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

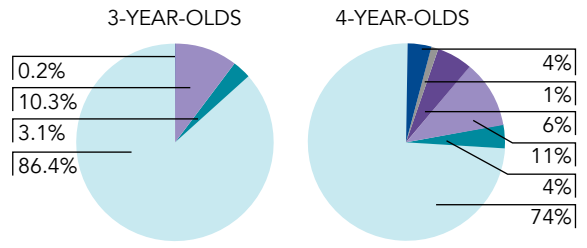
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
39	36	20	30	2.3

ALASKA PRE-ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	363
School districts that offer state program	13%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	Determined locally
Operating schedule	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



■ AK Pre-Elementary ■ AK EEP ■ AK 0.5 ADM
 ■ Head Start† ■ Special Ed‡ ■ Other/None

† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AK PRE-ELEMENTARY 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (lead teacher); HSD (classroom teacher)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Alaska Teaching Certificate	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 year (lead teacher only); PD plans (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	Determined locally	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	Determined locally	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations, Developmental; Referrals recommended	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	None	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1

RESOURCES

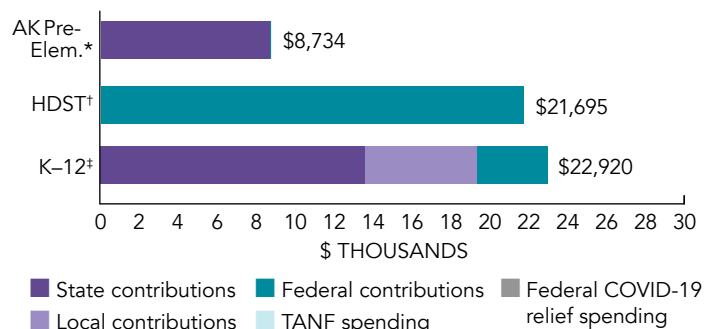
Total state pre-K spending	\$3,140,615
Local match required?	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$8,652
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$8,734

* 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

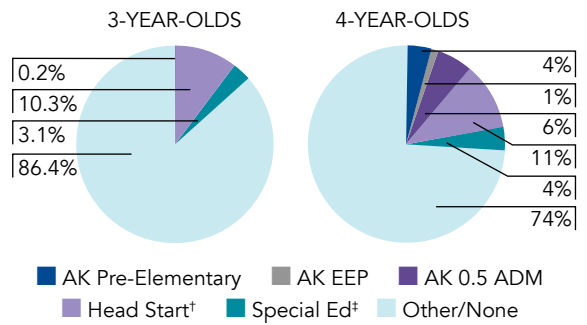


ALASKA EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM GRANT (EEP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	197
School districts that offer state program.....	17%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	2 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AK EEP 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (lead teacher); HSD (classroom teacher)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	6 ECE credits within 2 years of hire (lead teacher only); None (classroom teacher)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 years (lead teacher only); PD plans (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	2:20 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Developmental; Referrals	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	None	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

3

RESOURCES

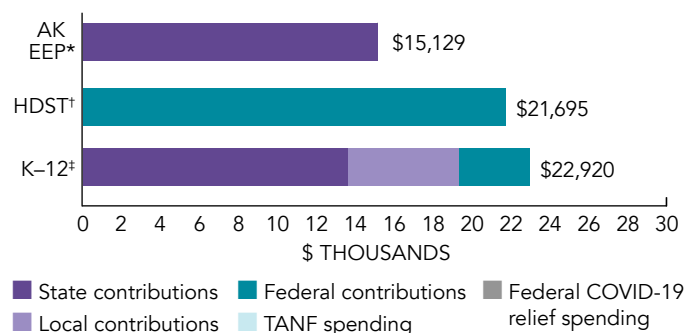
Total state pre-K spending	\$2,989,364
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$15,129
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$15,129

* 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

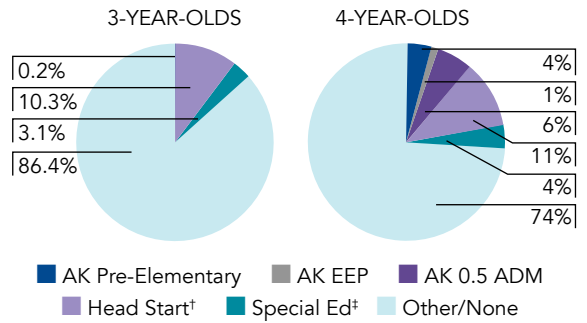


ALASKA 0.5 ADM APPROVED EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	581
School districts that offer state program.....	6%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	2 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



■ AK Pre-Elementary ■ AK EEP ■ AK 0.5 ADM
 ■ Head Start† ■ Special Ed‡ ■ Other/None
 † 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AK 0.5 ADM 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (lead teacher); HSD (classroom teacher)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	6 ECE credits within 2 years of hire (lead teacher only); None (classroom teacher)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 years (lead teacher only); PD plans (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	2:20 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Developmental; Referrals	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	None	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

3

RESOURCES

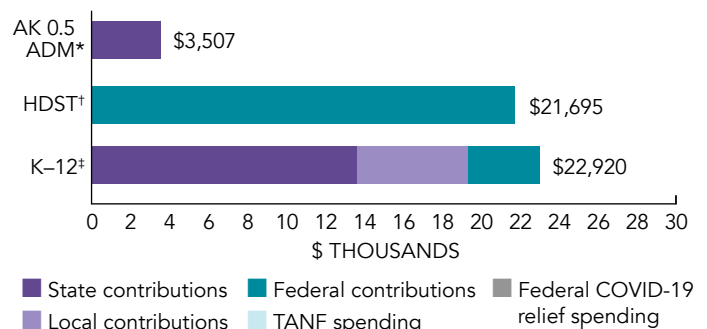
Total state pre-K spending	\$2,037,583
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,507
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$3,507

* 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.

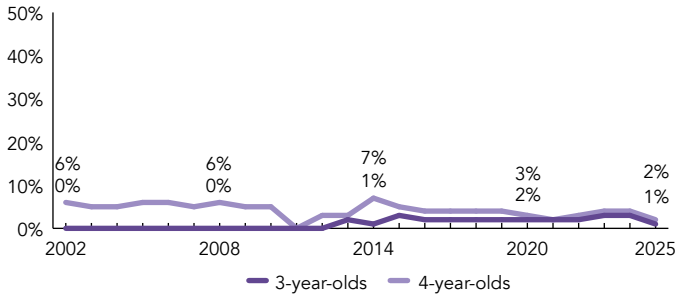
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

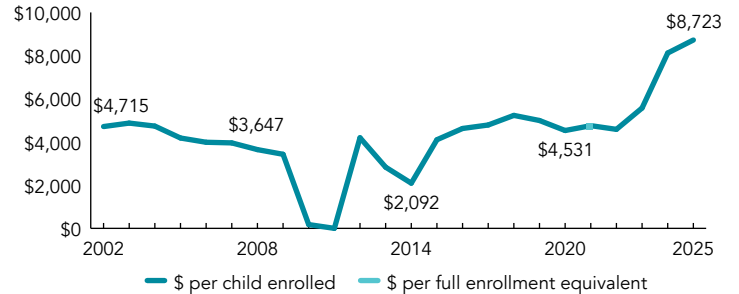


Arizona

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Arizona preschool enrolled 3,081 children, a decrease of 3,242 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$21,794,604, and an additional \$5,080,674 in federal recovery funds supported the program, down \$24,464,419 (48%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including federal recovery funds) equaled \$8,723 in 2024-2025, up \$603 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Arizona met 3 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Federal COVID-19 relief funds were used to support Quality First (QF) Scholarships by increasing reimbursement rates to the cost of quality, increasing the eligibility threshold to 300% FPL, as well as increasing the number of scholarships available. The First Things First (FTF) Board approved the maintenance of the increased reimbursement rate for QF Scholarships starting in state fiscal year 2025, which began July 1, 2024. While the increase is positive, it negatively impacted enrollment. Tobacco revenue, the state funding source for QF Scholarships, has been declining and may impact future state funding. The state recently invested \$45M in state general funds to support the state subsidy system, the Department of Economic Security Child Care Assistance Program.

In December 2025, Arizona was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$8,428,558, when added to the existing PDG B-5 award, brought the new total amount to \$50.4 million. These funds will be used to support system building and strengthen ECE programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

BACKGROUND

Arizona began funding preschool programs in 1991 along with supplemental services for preschool, full-day kindergarten, and first through third grade education supported by the federal Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) from 1996 until 2010 when that funding ended.

In 2006, Arizona voters earmarked certain tobacco tax revenues for early childhood development and health programs, and created the Early Childhood Development and Health Board, known as First Things First (FTF), to oversee those funds. FTF allocates funds to communities based on the birth to age 5 population and percentage of young children in poverty. Volunteer regional councils recommend early childhood strategies to fund, including QF Scholarships serving children birth to age 5 (before kindergarten) living at or below 300% FPL. Programs are eligible to receive QF Scholarships as long as they participate in QIRS and have met at least a three-star rating on the QIRS quality standards. During 2023-2024, the QIRS model was revised so that quality improvement supports are more individualized to the needs of the participating programs. Lower-rated programs receive more supports, while higher-rated programs receive fewer supports. QF Scholarship reimbursement rates vary by age of child (infants, toddlers, preschoolers).

Dramatic decreases in tobacco tax revenues have resulted in a \$76.2 million drop in annual revenues as of SFY25 (46.2% less than the baseline year of 2008). Despite ongoing decreases in tobacco revenue, FTF's commitment to QF Scholarships has grown, increasing from \$35 million in FY16 to \$45.2 million in FY25 in all settings (center-based and home-based) and for all ages birth through 5 (before kindergarten). FTF collaborates with the state to meet federal match requirements and preserve about \$47 million per year in federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) funds. In the 13 years this partnership has been in place, Arizona has been able to leverage \$605.7 million in federal subsidy dollars that otherwise would have been lost.

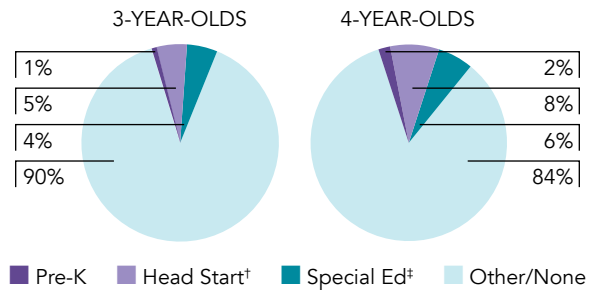
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
45	30	14	25	3

QUALITY FIRST SCHOLARSHIPS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	3,081
School districts that offer state program.....	79% (Regional Partnership Councils)
Income requirement.....	300% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	34 hours/month
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	9,409
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	10,344
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AZ 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	HSD	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	None	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	18 hours/year	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	26 (3-year-olds); 30 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:13 (3-year-olds); 1:15 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

3

RESOURCES

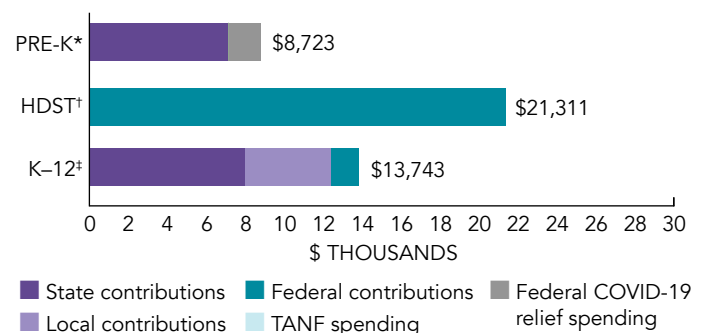
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$26,875,278
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$8,723
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$8,723

* 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.

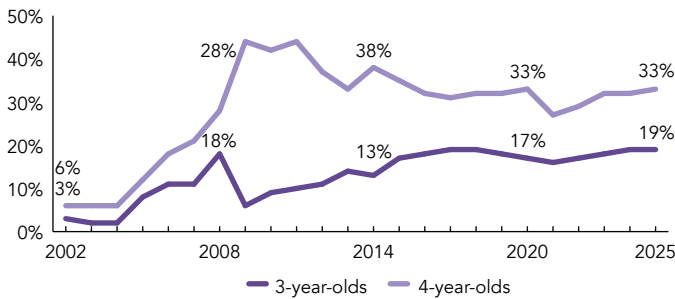
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

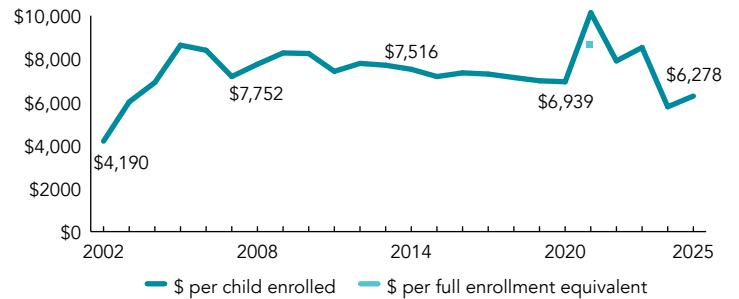


Arkansas

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Arkansas preschool enrolled 20,327 children, an increase of 16 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$106,072,095 and an additional \$7,500,000 in TANF funds and \$14,045,035 in federal recovery funds supported the program, up \$10,203,845 (9%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including TANF and federal recovery funds) equaled \$6,278 in 2024-2025, up \$497 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Arkansas met 8 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In 2025, Act 504 (Expansion of Arkansas Better Chance Early Childhood Eligibility) merged Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) and Arkansas Better Chance School Success, allowing all ABC programs to serve infants and toddlers. This new legislation will also allow for more child qualifying factors for all programs. Previously, all Arkansas Better Chance for School Success recipients could only use age and income when qualifying children and families. Now all ABC programs can qualify children with the following characteristics: family has gross income not exceeding 200% FPL; parents without a high school diploma or GED; low birth weight (below 5 lbs., 9 oz); parent is under 18 years of age at child's birth; immediate family member has a history of substance abuse and or addiction; has a demonstrable developmental delay as identified through screening; eligible for services under IDEA; income eligible for Title I programs; limited English proficiency; or parent has history of abuse or neglect or is a victim of abuse or neglect.

Additionally, in December 2025, Arkansas was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$14,751,000 to support system building and strengthen ECE programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

BACKGROUND

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program began in 1991 as part of a statewide education reform initiative, with funding (\$10 million) earmarked to serve children birth to 5 years old based on family income, developmental, and/or economic risk factors. In 2003, legislation known as Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) set priorities for funding, supporting 3- and 4-year-olds in households with incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty level. School districts with 75% or more of their students scoring below proficient in literacy and math on the State Assessment, and children in schools designated as "school improvement status" receive prioritized funding.

ABC/ABCSS components intended to ensure quality include: one teacher with at least a bachelor's degree per every three classrooms at a site and teachers with an associate degree in the other two classrooms; teacher assistants/paraprofessionals with a minimum of a CDA or equivalent; low teacher-to-child ratios (1:10); health and development screenings; parent involvement and community engagement; statewide child assessment (Work Sampling); an approved list of curriculum aligned with the 2016 Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards; and classroom quality observations to inform technical assistance; and an evaluation of child outcomes through a longitudinal study.

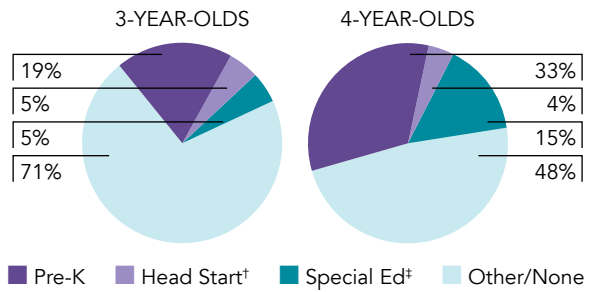
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
24	8	26	19	8

ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE/ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	20,327
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties)
Income requirement	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	7 hours/day
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	9,662
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,471
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AR 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	One BA per 3 classrooms; AA for other 2 classrooms	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching for novice teachers	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.



RESOURCES

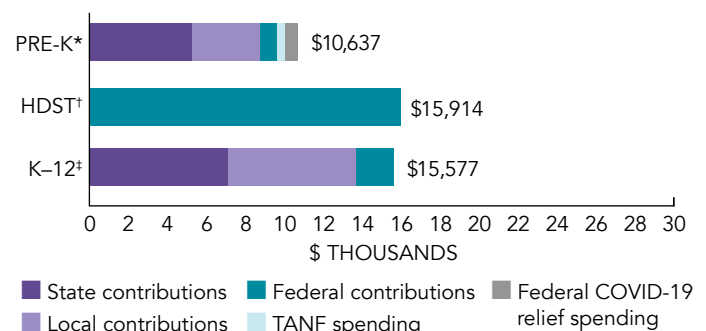
Total state pre-K spending	\$127,617,130
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,278
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$10,637

* 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.

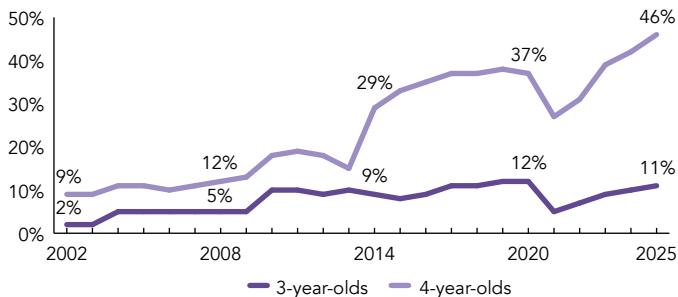
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

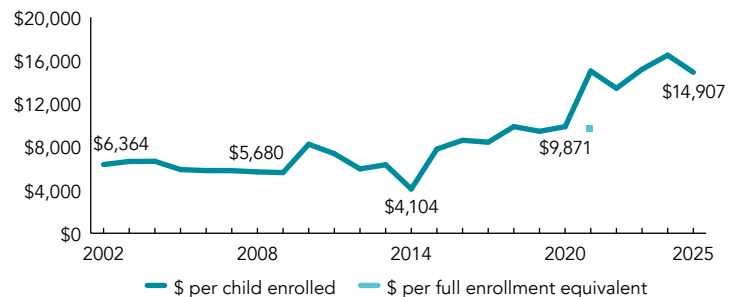


California

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, California Department of Education's (CDE) two preschool programs, California State Preschool Program (CSPP) and Transitional Kindergarten (TK), together enrolled 278,273 children, an increase of 25,447 from the prior year. State spending for the two programs totaled \$4,148,114,798, down \$21,873,301 (1%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child averaged \$14,907 in 2024-2025, down \$1,587 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. In 2024-2025, state spending per child was \$19,186 for CSPP and \$12,480 for TK. The CSPP met 6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks, and TK met 3 of 10.

WHAT'S NEW

California's FY 2026 budget included a total of \$6.2 billion of early education funding: \$2.9 billion for CSPP and \$3.3 billion for Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK). CDE updated the Preschool Learning Foundations by creating the [Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations \(PTKLF\)](#). The updated PTKLF includes a greater emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Beginning July 1, 2025, CSPP contractors are required to implement the PTKLF to guide curriculum and lesson planning.

Beginning January 1, 2024, all CSPP centers and represented family childcare providers received a cost of care plus rate once per month per child for children served who are enrolled in subsidized early learning and care. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, all CSPP contractors are required to implement the CLASS Second Edition Pre-K-3rd and CLASS Environment.

In 2024-2025, California was in the third year of ramping up its full implementation of universal TK, and the state in the FY 2026 budget will spend \$2.1 billion to support the full implementation of UTK so that all children turning four years old by September 1 of the 2025-26 school year can enroll in TK. An additional \$1.2 billion in the FY 2026 budget supported reducing the average child to teacher ratio from 12 to 10 children per 1 adult in TK classrooms during the 2025-26 school year. The maximum average TK class size remains 24 children.

In 2024-2025, local educational agencies (LEAs) continued to expend the \$500 million in the Universal Prekindergarten Planning and Implementation Grant funds allocated in prior budget years to support planning and implementation costs to expand access to classroom-based prekindergarten programs at LEAs. The expenditure date of these grants has been extended to June 30, 2028.

BACKGROUND

In 2008, the California State Preschool Program Act created the CSPP by consolidating several early childhood initiatives into one funding stream. CSPP provides part- and full-day preschool to 2-, 3-, and 4-year-old children. In addition to meeting eligibility requirements for CSPP (now 100% SMI), families are prioritized for full-day services if they have established at least one of the following: employment/seeking employment, education or vocational training, homelessness, or parental incapacity. CSPP awards funding through a competitive application process to school districts, private and faith-based agencies, Head Start programs, higher education institutions, counties, cities, and tribal organizations. Once deemed eligible, a family is eligible to remain in full-day CSPP for at least 24 months provided the child continues to meet age-eligibility requirements. A family is eligible for part-day CSPP services for the remainder of the current program year and the following program year, provided the child continues to meet age eligibility requirements. Teachers are required to have California Child Development Associate Teacher Permits and can receive grants for professional learning.

California TK began during the 2012-2013 school year when the kindergarten age eligibility shifted from December 2 to September 1. In June 2015, an amendment to state law allowed children turning 5 years old after December 2 to attend TK at the beginning of the school year, at the discretion of the local educational agency. In 2024-2025, TK served children turning five between September 2 and June 2. By the 2025-2026 school year, TK will be available to all 4-year-olds in the state. TK differs from kindergarten by requiring smaller class size, adult to child ratios, and requirements for teachers to have child development/early education and/or experience.

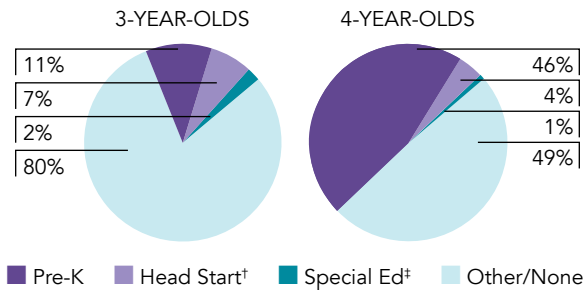
(continued)

CALIFORNIA STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	278,273
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	46,893
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	44,009
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

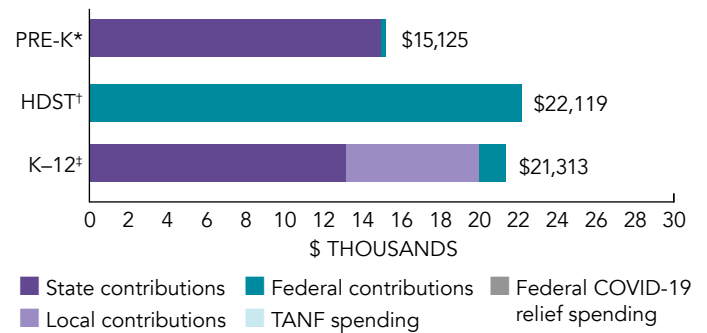


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$4,148,114,798
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$14,907
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$15,125

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
14	15	4	5	4.1

Late in 2023-24, the requirement to assess TK children using the English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC) was rescinded for all future academic years. The 2025-26 budget includes \$10 million for CDE to select developmentally appropriate screening instruments to measure the extent to which TK multilingual learners will benefit from additional support in English by screening their English language listening and speaking skills.

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, CSPP- and TK-enrolled children can be served in the same classroom. Classrooms consisting of commingled CSPP and TK children are intended to support student transition, allow school districts and charter schools to braid funding streams, and support the overall quality of the programs by requiring that standards from both programs are met.

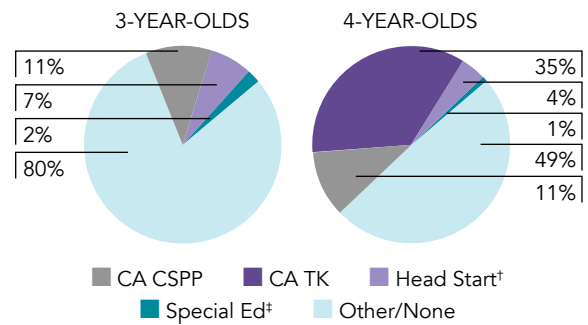
California's overall support for state-funded preschool is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on CSPP and the fourth on TK.

CALIFORNIA STATE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (CSPP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	100,705
School districts that offer state program.....	97% (counties)
Income requirement.....	100% SMI
Minimum hours of operation.....	3 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	CA CSPP 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	California Child Development Associate Teacher Permit	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	105 hours/5 years; PD plans (Determined locally)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	No limit (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:8 (3- & 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

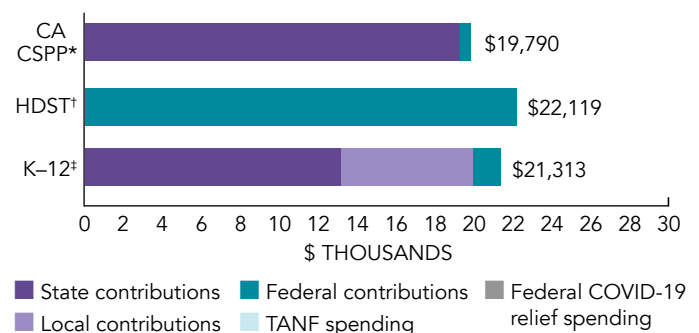
Total state pre-K spending	\$1,932,114,798
Local match required?.....	Yes
State spending per child enrolled	\$19,186
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$19,790

* 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

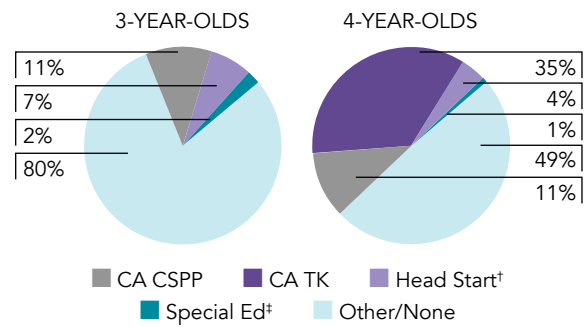


CALIFORNIA TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN (TK) PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	177,568
School districts that offer state program.....	100% (counties)
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	3 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	CA TK 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, Elem. Ed.	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	PD hours based on type of credential/permit & determined locally; PD plans (Determined locally)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	24 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:12 (average, 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations only in TK classes commingled with CSPP	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

3

RESOURCES

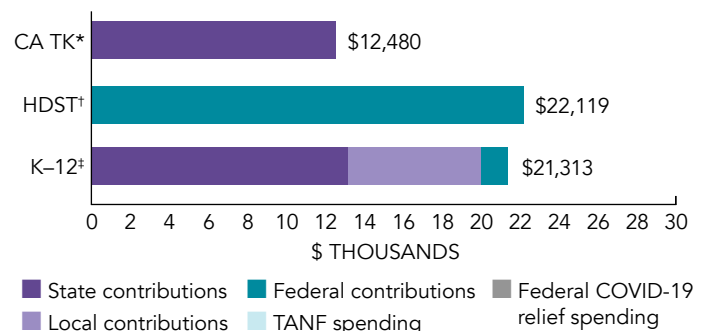
Total state pre-K spending	\$2,216,000,000
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$12,480
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$12,480

* 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.

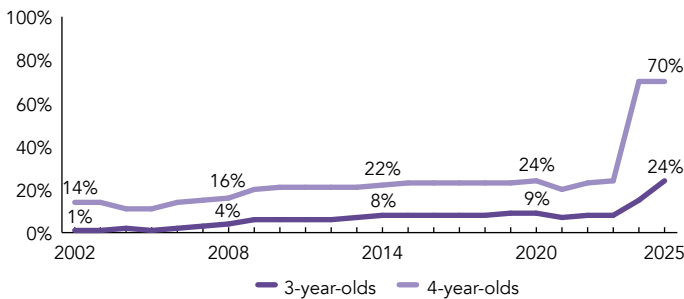
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

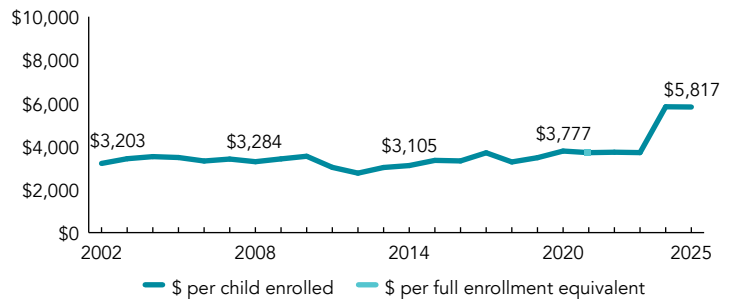


Colorado

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Colorado preschool enrolled 58,107 children, an increase of 5,490 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$338,023,799, up \$31,380,217 (10%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$5,817 in 2024-2025, down \$11 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Colorado met 2 of 10 quality standards benchmarks but may meet additional benchmarks once their new program's standards are fully in place.

WHAT'S NEW

The passage of Proposition EE in November 2020 and related laws (e.g., HB22-1295) in 2022 established the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) and the Colorado Universal Preschool program. The new statewide universal preschool program launched July 1, 2023, at which time the Colorado Preschool Program sunsetted. The new Colorado Universal Preschool program is administered by the CDEC using a mixed delivery model, and in collaboration with Local Coordinating Organizations rather than local school districts. It is funded primarily by a nicotine and tobacco tax. The Colorado Department of Education continues to administer federal and state funding for special education in accordance with IDEA and Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA) for children ages three through five.

The CDEC's Universal Preschool Program Resource Bank was launched in June 2025 which includes resources related to instructional practices (e.g., curricula), family and community engagement, and healthy development.

BACKGROUND

The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) launched in 1988 for 4-year-olds who needed language development support. It became a permanent program in 1992 and expanded eligibility to young children lacking overall school readiness due to family risk factors. The 2022-2023 school year was the last year of CPP.

The Colorado Universal Preschool program began operating in the 2023-2024 school year and is administered by the new CDEC. The new program uses a mixed delivery model where funding goes directly to providers based on enrollment and services provided. Families can choose a licensed community-based program, a school-based program, or a licensed home-based provider. All four-year-olds in the state are eligible to attend the program and receive up to 15 hours of preschool each week. Depending on available funding, families may qualify for 30 hours (full-day) for their 4-year-old if they are low-income and meet at least one qualifying factor that may impact their future academic achievement. Three-year-olds with a qualifying factor (including an IEP, low-income status, non-English home language, in foster care, experiencing homelessness) can also attend the program for a minimum of 10 hours per week. The program is offered for a 10-month school year.

As of the second year of the Colorado Universal Preschool Program, CDEC is still developing several policies for the program which will be implemented over the next few years.

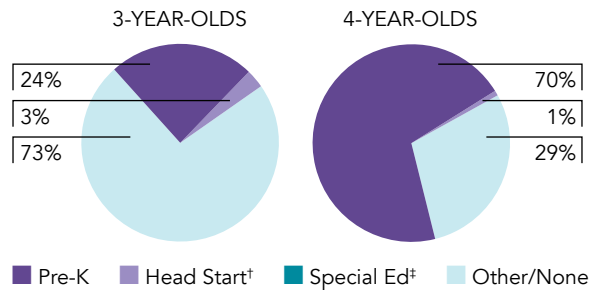
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
3	5	29	37	2

COLORADO UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	58,107
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties)
Income requirement	No income requirement (4-year-olds); 270% FPL (3-year-olds)
Minimum hours of operation	10 hours/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	9,588
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	5,116
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	CO 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	Other	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Other	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3-year-olds); 24 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3-year-olds); 1:12 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations & Full physical exam; Referrals recommended	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations per QRIS	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



RESOURCES

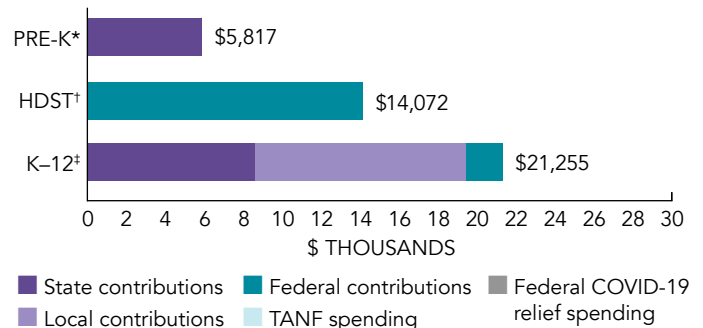
Total state pre-K spending	\$388,023,799
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,817
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,817

* 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.

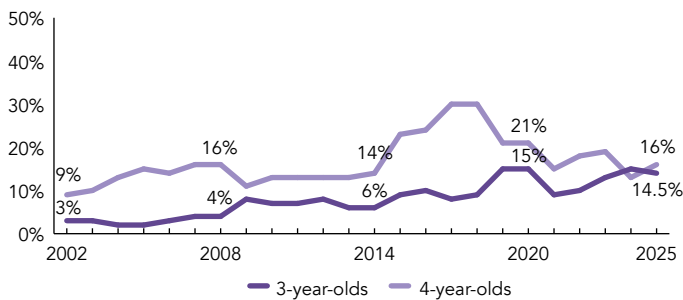
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

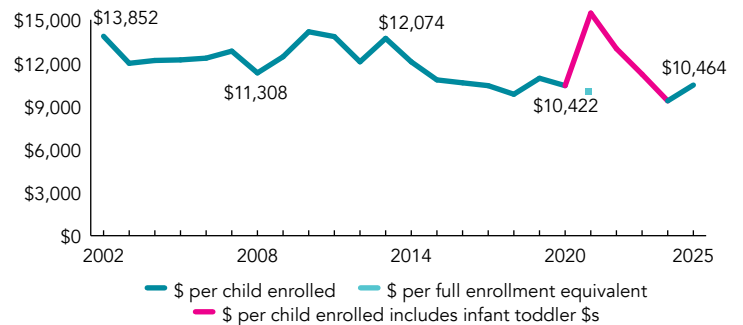


Connecticut

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Connecticut preschool enrolled 12,724 children, an increase of 391 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$133,143,028, up \$17,646,563 (15%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$10,464 in 2024-2025, up \$1,099 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Connecticut met an average of 5.1 of 10 quality standards benchmarks. The pink colored line on the spending per child enrolled figure reflects the years in which spending reported for the CDCC program included infant and toddler slots.

WHAT'S NEW

Early Start CT launched in July 2025 combining previous separate programs, School Readiness, Child Day Care Contracts, and State Head Start Supplement, into one funding system. In June 2025, the CT legislature also passed a historic investment in Early Childhood funding with the passage of the Early Childhood Education Endowment. The Governor set up an endowment to fund early childhood education that will grow over time. There are milestones, rules, and an advisory board to guide how the funds will be used. Starting in July 2025, the endowment will provide the first year of funding, up to \$36 million, to support the early care system for CT. Funding from the endowment in year 1 will increase access to families with an additional 1,000 spaces funded through the Endowment to expand Early Start CT. This funding will provide a rate payment increase to providers and create additional spaces. Each year, the Endowment funds will add spaces. In July of 2027, the Endowment will provide free family fees for families participating in Early Start CT and making less than \$100,000 a year, and low-cost family fees for families making up to \$150,000.

BACKGROUND

Connecticut serves prekindergarten children in three state-funded programs: School Readiness Program (SR), Child Day Care Contracts (CDCC), and Smart Start, all supervised by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). Non-Head Start SR, CDCC, and Smart Start programs have three years to become NAEYC accredited. Programs not NAEYC accredited or Head Start approved are required to have annual Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) ratings by state-approved raters to help prepare them for accreditation.

Connecticut has provided funding for CDCC for over 40 years through a purchase-of-service contracting system. The services provided through the CDCC are supported through state funds and must operate for at least 10 hours per day. Eligibility requirements target children with household incomes below 75% SMI for state funding CDCC programs, which must be licensed as a child care facility by the state, may operate under the contract held by an elementary or secondary school, nursery school, preschool, day care center, group child care home, family child care home, family resource center, Head Start program, or local or regional board of education.

School Readiness was founded in 1997 to expand access to early childhood programs for 3- and 4-year-olds. Financial support is available to 21 Priority School Readiness districts, as defined by legislation, and 46 Competitive School Readiness municipalities that have at least one school in which 40% or more of children are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch or fall within the 50 lowest wealth-ranked towns in the state. Any family can apply for School Readiness spaces in designated Priority or Competitive municipalities; however, 60% of children enrolled in each municipality must meet the income guideline of at-or-below 75% of the SMI.

Smart Start was created during the 2014 legislative session to expand publicly funded preschool in public school settings. Funding is distributed to local or regional boards of education through a competitive grant process.

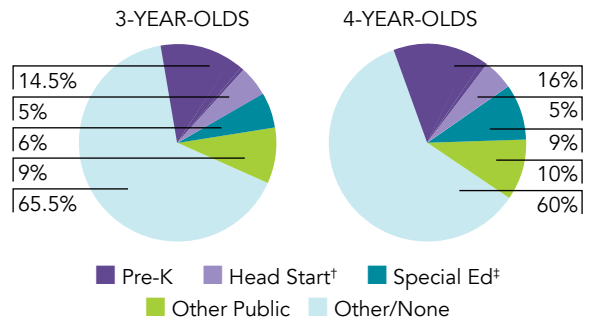
Connecticut's overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for CDCC, SR, and Smart Start, is depicted in the first two pages of the state profile. The third page focuses solely on CDCC, the fourth on SR, and the fifth on Smart Start.

CONNECTICUT STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	12,724
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,423
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,443
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	545

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

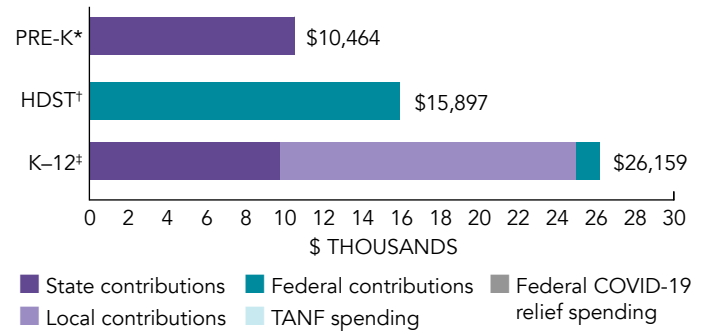


† Estimates children in Head Start not also enrolled in state pre-K.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$133,143,028
State Head Start spending	\$5,083,238
State spending per child enrolled	\$10,464
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$10,464

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
37	12

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
9	20

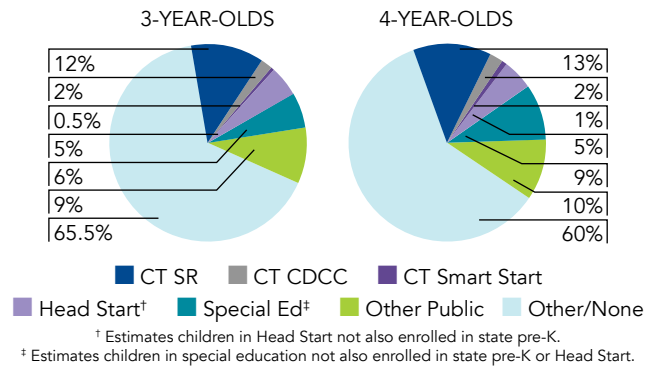
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
5.1

CONNECTICUT CHILD DAY CARE CONTRACTS (CDCC)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment 1,644
 School districts that offer state program ... 28% (towns/communities)
 Income requirement 75% SMI (60% families)
 Minimum hours of operation 10 hours/day; 5 days/week
 Operating schedule Full calendar year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	CT CDCC 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	AA in ECE (at least 50% of teachers); CDA + 12 ECE credits (other teachers)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	AA in ECE (at least 50% of teachers); CDA + 12 ECE credits (other teachers)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	No minimum education degree	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	PD: 1% of total work hours; PD plans (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (per Head Start and NAEYC accreditation requirements); Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

5

RESOURCES

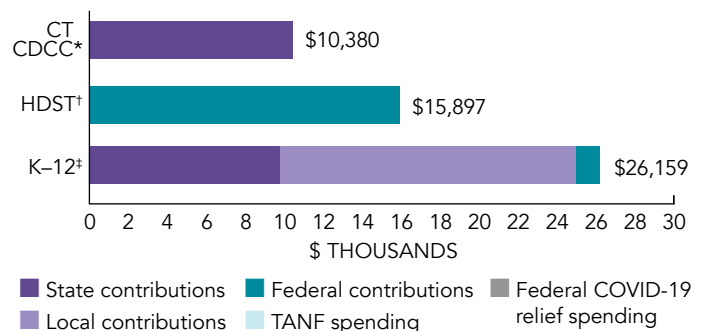
Total state pre-K spending \$17,064,040
 Local match required? No
 State spending per child enrolled \$10,380
 All reported spending per child enrolled* \$10,380

* 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

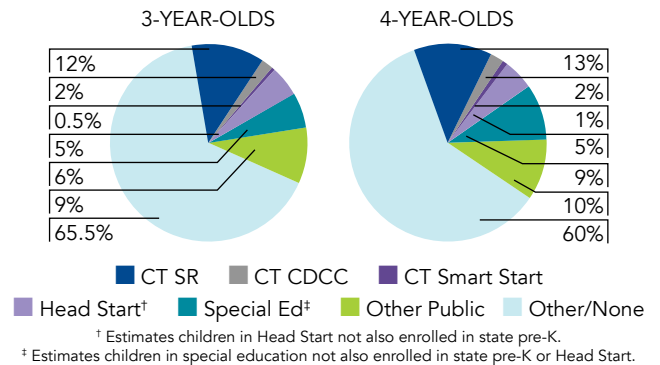


CONNECTICUT SCHOOL READINESS (SR)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	10,440
School districts that offer state program...	40% (towns/communities)
Income requirement.....	75% SMI (60% families)
Minimum hours of operation.....	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	CT SR 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	AA in ECE (at least 50% of teachers); CDA + 12 ECE credits (other teachers)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	AA in ECE (at least 50% of teachers); CDA + 12 ECE credits (other teachers)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	No minimum education degree	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	PD: 1% of total work hours; PD plans (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (per Head Start and NAEYC accreditation requirements); Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

5

RESOURCES

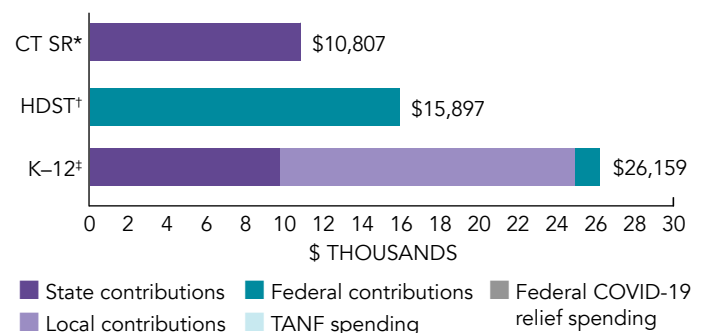
Total state pre-K spending	\$112,829,449
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$10,807
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$10,807

* 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

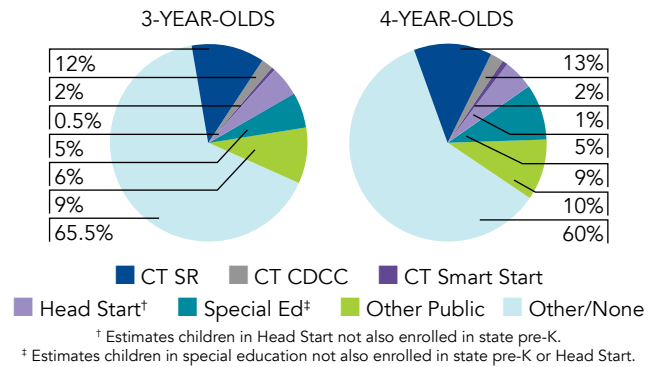


CONNECTICUT SMART START

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	640
School districts that offer state program...	14% (towns/communities)
Income requirement.....	75% SMI (60% of families)
Minimum hours of operation.....	6 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	CT SMART START 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, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	PD plans (teachers only)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	18 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:9 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (per Head Start and NAEYC accreditation requirements); Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

6

RESOURCES

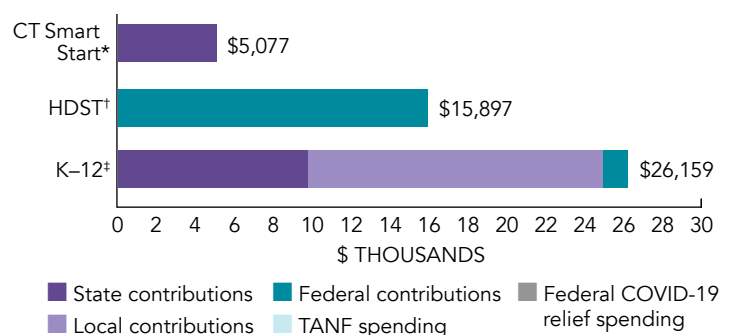
Total state pre-K spending	\$3,249,539
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,077
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,077

* 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.

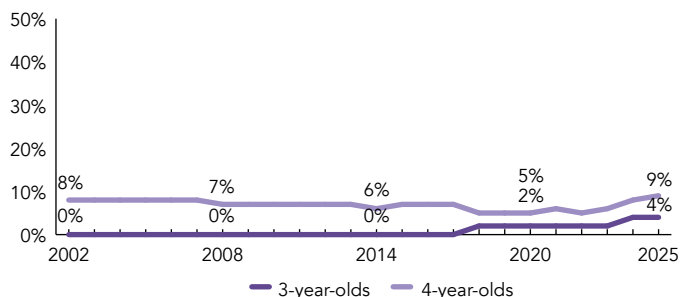
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

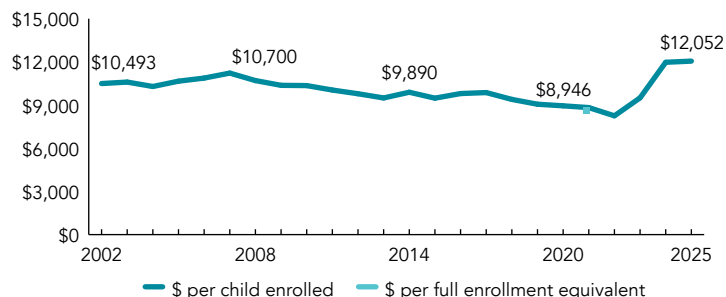


Delaware

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Delaware preschool enrolled 1,418 children, an increase of 180 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$17,090,424, up \$2,269,696 (15%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child averaged \$12,052 in 2024-2025, up \$81 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Full-day preschool seats are funded at \$14,500 and half-day seats are funded at \$7,250. Delaware met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The State Funded Early Care and Education Programs (SFECEP) blend the Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP) and the Redding Consortium funding streams, both of which are state funding streams. Delaware's new Governor and Secretary of Education are supporting state-funded preschool by deeming it as the model and foundation for building a comprehensive, universal preschool program for all children and families.

A new round of PDG B-5 Systems Building Grants were awarded in December 2025 to support states in building systems and strengthening their ECE programs that expand parental choice in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs. Delaware received \$11,312,524 in this latest round to use in 2026.

BACKGROUND

The Delaware Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP) began in 1994, providing comprehensive early learning services for 4-year-olds eligible for the federal Head Start program. Eligibility expanded to 3-year-olds in 2017-2018.

Originally modeled after the federal Head Start program, SFECEP requires participating programs to follow a statewide policies and procedures manual with required standards. Per these standards, ten percent of enrollment slots are reserved for children with disabilities. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, children were eligible for SFECEP if they had a family income up 200% of the federal poverty level.

SFECEP awards are available to private and public child care programs, such as for-profit child care, Head Start agencies, public schools, community-based organizations, family child care, and faith-based centers through an RFP process. Contracts for funded SFECEP seats are determined based on Community Needs Assessment Data. In addition to preschool, SFECEP funded 295 seats for infants and toddlers during the 2024-2025 program year.

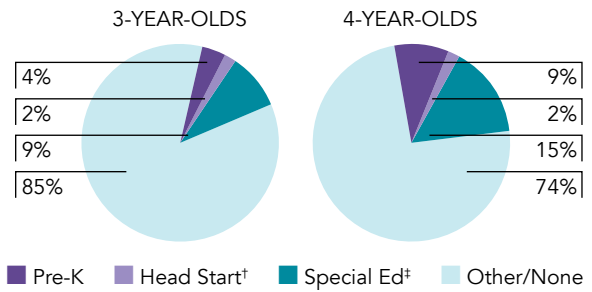
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
42	24	8	11	9

DELAWARE STATE FUNDED EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS (SFECEP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,418
School districts that offer state program.....	38%
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	3.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	170 days/year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	2,809
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	473
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	DE 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 (public); At least AA with 50% BA (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Working towards CDA or equivalent	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	90 hours/5 years (public teachers); 18 hours/year (nonpublic teachers & assistants); 15 hours/year (public assistants); PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	17 (3-year-olds); 20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	2:17 (3-year-olds); 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.

9

RESOURCES

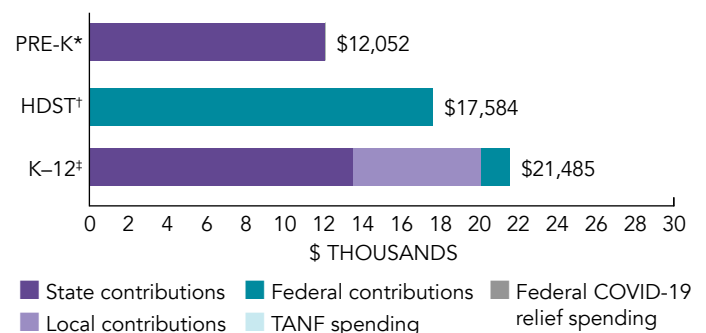
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$17,090,424
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$12,052
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$12,052

* 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.

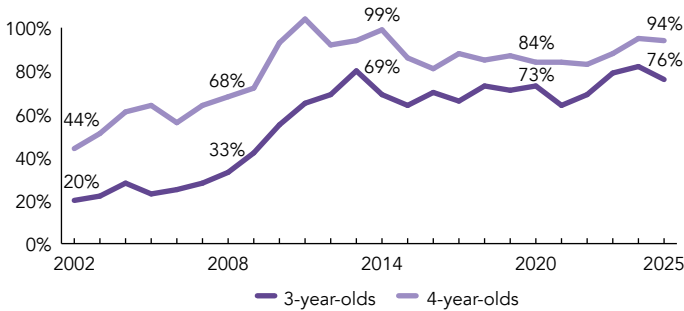
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

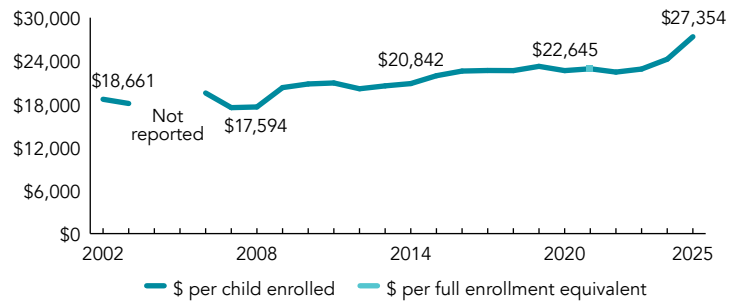


District of Columbia

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, the District of Columbia preschool enrolled 13,040 children, a slight decrease of 179 from the prior year. Spending totaled \$356,697,970, up \$36,444,483 (11%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. Spending per child equaled \$27,354 in 2024-2025, up \$3,127 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. The District of Columbia met 4 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Despite navigating an unprecedented period of fiscal challenges due to Congressional budget actions and reductions to the federal workforce, the District of Columbia continues to prioritize the needs of young children. In addition to investing over \$350 million in the Universal Pre-K Program, the District continues to invest in the [Early Childhood Educator Pay Equity Fund](#). This initiative increases wages of educators in licensed child development facilities.

BACKGROUND

Among the first in the nation to invest in early education, the District has offered pre-K since the 1960s. The District began to bolster its investment in pre-K significantly through the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion (PKEEP) Amendment Act of 2008 (Pre-K Act). The Pre-K Act provides public, quality, universally accessible pre-K via a mixed-delivery system in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Public Charter Schools (PCS), and publicly-funded Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that participate in PKEEP. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) oversees the District's Universal Pre-K Program, including programs in DCPS and CBOs. PCSs are authorized and monitored by the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB). Additionally, the District's Head Start and Early Head Start grantees serve thousands of children and their families; all District Head Start grantees also participate in the universal pre-K system, but may also serve children not eligible for public pre-K.

Pre-K programs operate a minimum of 6.5 hours per day, five days a week, 180 instructional days per year. Given the high availability and participation, this program can be considered universal. Funding for public pre-K programs is based on the Uniform Per Student Funding Formula.

Program quality is measured using the CLASS Pre-K, which informs a school rating that is included on each school's DC School Report Card. The PCSB also uses CLASS Pre-K in its Performance Management Framework, which provides all PCS with an annual score. For CBOs, CLASS Pre-K assessments are used for Capital Quality, the District's QRIS. In the 2024-2025 school year, CLASS observations were conducted in 977 pre-K classrooms. CLASS scores continued to show strong results in the Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains, and more opportunity for growth in the Instructional Support domain. CLASS scores across all domains remain higher since the 2017-2018 school year, demonstrating a trend of improvement over time. While domain-level average CLASS scores varied across the pre-K sector, DCPS, PCS, PKEEP CBOs, and Child Development Facilities all had programs that were providing high-quality early learning experiences for children.

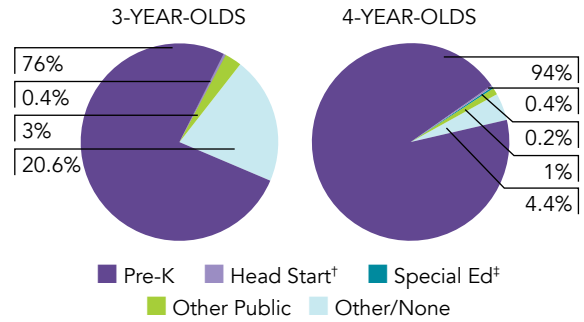
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
1	1	1	1	4

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSAL PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	13,040
School districts that offer state program	100% (wards)
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	1,797
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	376
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	DC 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 (DCPS & CBO); Determined locally (PCS)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, Elem. Ed., (DCPS); ECE or related field (CBO); Determined locally (PCS)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	AA or Paraprofessional Certification (DCPS); AA (CBO); Determined locally (PCS)	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	57 hours/year (DCPS); 21 hours/year (CBO); PD plans (Head Start teachers & CBO teachers & assistants); Coaching (DCPS)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	DCPS & CBO only: 16 (3-year-olds); 20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	DCPS & CBO only: 1:8 (3-year-olds); 1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input 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.

4

RESOURCES

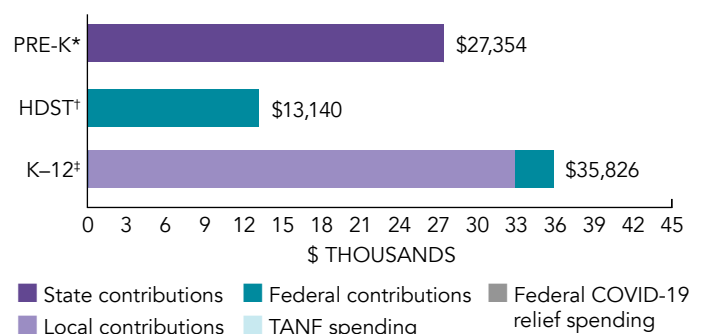
Total state pre-K spending	\$356,697,970
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$27,354
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$27,354

* 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.

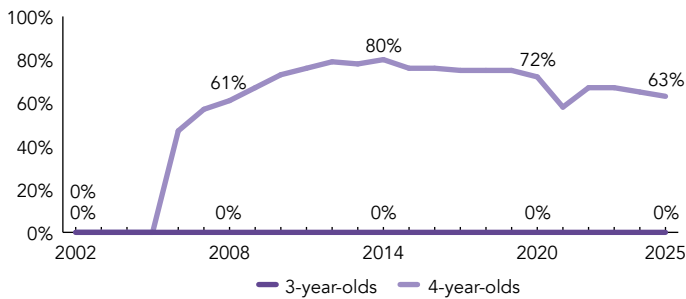
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

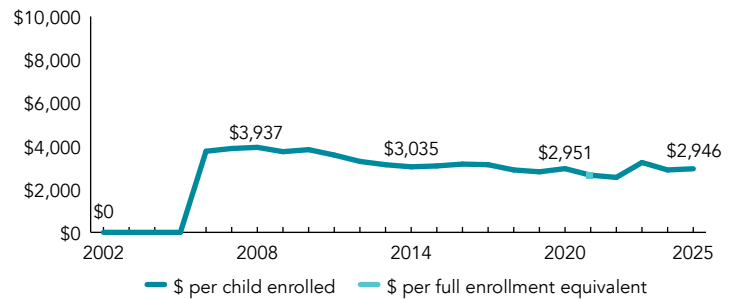


Florida

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Florida preschool enrolled 150,607 children, a decrease of 2,270 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$443,714,085, up \$1,860,701 (0.4%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$2,946 in 2024-2025, up \$56 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Florida met 5 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2023-2024 program year, the Florida Department of Education adopted a new methodology for calculating a Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) provider's performance metric using a combination of data points which include program assessment composite scores, student learning gains from the initial and final progress monitoring results, and student learning outcomes. The VPK Provider Performance Metric and designations were applied for the first time at the end of the 2024-2025 program year and are used to determine the quality of VPK programs and how well they prepare students to enter Kindergarten ready for school. This data is used for targeted professional learning and coaching supports. Beginning in 2023-2024, VPK programs must receive CLASS observation score of 4.00 or higher to be eligible to contract in the following program year. In 2024-2025, 99% of participating VPK providers met this criterion.

Starting in 2024, summer VPK programs are required to assess children twice: at the beginning and end of the program (rather than 3 times). This policy change supports the administration of the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system in the summer program. A new round of one-year PDG B-5 Systems Building Grants were awarded to support states in building systems and strengthening their ECE programs that expand parental choice in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs. Florida received \$14,751,000 to strengthen and modernize the statewide early learning information system, identify strategies to reduce administrative burden on early learning providers and advance implementation of the informal career pathway recommendations for educators.

BACKGROUND

Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) was launched in 2005 after voters in 2002 approved a constitutional amendment providing prekindergarten access for all 4-year-olds. The program is managed by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Early Learning (DEL). Age-eligible children are enrolled in either a 300-hour summer program, which every school district is mandated to offer, or a school-year program totaling 540 instructional hours. Teachers in the school-year program are required to have at least a CDA credential or equivalent credential. Teachers in the summer program are required to have a bachelor's degree. VPK is provided in a variety of settings such as public schools, accredited nonpublic schools, licensed childcare centers, accredited faith-based centers, and licensed family childcare homes. Most children attend VPK in nonpublic school settings.

The New Worlds Reading Initiative provides a free book and activity each month to VPK students not yet reading on grade level. New Worlds Scholarship Accounts were available to VPK children who exhibited a substantial delay in early literacy or mathematics skills.

Florida's School Readiness Program is a separate initiative, funded by CCDF, that offers financial assistance for childcare to eligible families. The School Readiness Plus (SRP) program was established in 2024 to provide support to families who exceed the School Readiness eligibility threshold. SRP allows families to continue to receive financial assistance for childcare services, promoting the economic stability of Florida families by providing a gradual progression off of social services. This report focuses solely on the VPK program.

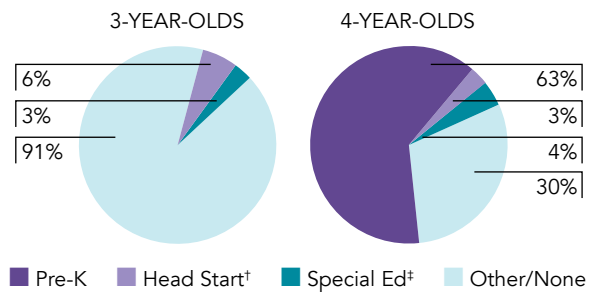
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
7	None Served	44	45	5

FLORIDA VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK) EDUCATION PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	150,607
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties)
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	3 hours/day
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	23,059
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	29,386
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	FL 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 (summer); CDA or equivalent + specified training (school year)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, Elem. Ed., Other (summer); CDA (school year)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours in first year, 5 hours/5 years after first year (teachers only); PD plans (teachers & assistants on probation)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	12 (summer); 20 (school year)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:12 (summer); 1:11 or 2:12-20 (school year)	1:10 or better	<input 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.

5

RESOURCES

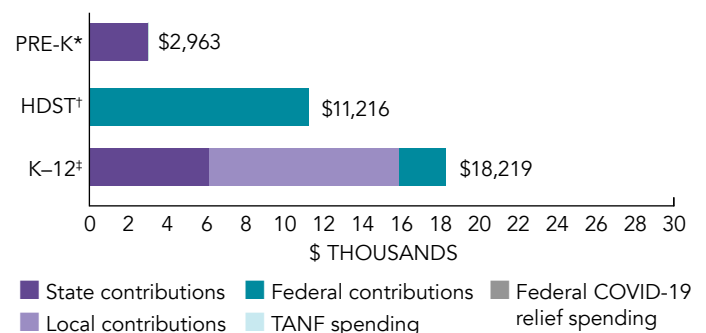
Total state pre-K spending	\$443,714,085
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$2,946
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$2,963

* 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.

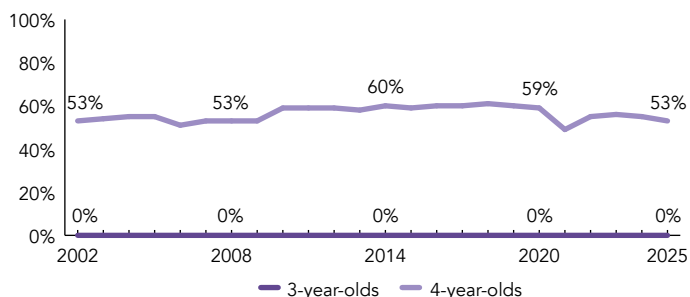
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

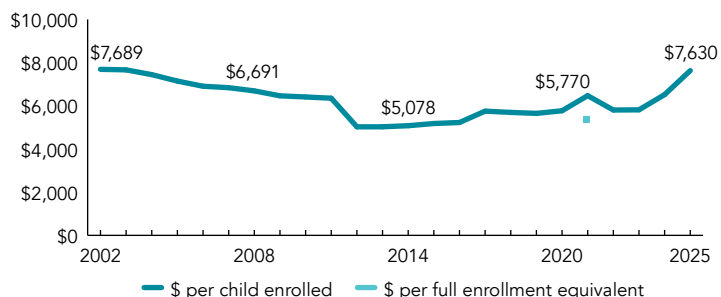


Georgia

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Georgia's Pre-K Program enrolled 70,572 children, a decrease of 954 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$538,431,295, up \$72,157,626 (15%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$7,630 in 2024-2025, up \$1,111 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Georgia met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In 2024-2025, Georgia's Pre-K Program received an additional \$97.6 million in state funding, a 22% increase in the annual budget, with a commitment to continued yearly support. The funding is designated for both program quality and accessibility. Approximately \$46 million is allocated to increase salaries for lead and assistant teachers. Salaries for Georgia's Pre-K lead teachers were adjusted to match those of K-12 public school teachers, resulting in a 13% overall salary increase for lead teachers, with 77% receiving a raise (and no salaries decreased). The state salary schedule now includes extra steps for years of experience and advanced credentials (specialist and doctorate). Additionally, assistant teacher salaries rose by 27.5%, reaching \$25,741 per year. To improve program quality and access, \$9 million was provided to lower maximum class size to 20 students and fund 100 new classrooms.

An additional four million dollars was budgeted to support increased transportation for all students. Additional allocations to ensure program quality include: (1) \$11.5 million in operating funds for private providers, (2) \$3.2 million in benefits funding for local school systems, (3) \$2 million in startup grants for new classrooms, raising the amount from \$8,000 to \$30,000 per classroom, (4) \$11.5 million for classroom replenishment grants, providing \$15,000 to continuation classrooms every five years (about 750 classrooms annually, based on start year). An additional \$9 million was budgeted for the Pre-K Summer Transition Program to expand access. An additional \$1.4 million was allocated in the Department budget for 3 Pre-K administrative positions, updates to the provider management system, COLA increase for Pre-K state staff, 2 additional Pre-K Specialists, and 1 additional Inclusion and Behavioral Supports Specialist.

The funding has been annualized and will be included in the state budget for the Pre-K Program. Additionally, over the next three years, funding for 100 new classrooms will be allocated each year, and an additional Pre-K Specialist is allocated for the next 2 years.

BACKGROUND

Georgia's Pre-K Program launched in 1992 as a small pilot program and expanded in 1995 to become the nation's first state-funded universal preschool program for 4-year-olds. State lottery revenues generate funding for the program, which is provided in a variety of settings, including public schools, private child-care centers, faith-based organizations, Head Start agencies, state colleges and universities, and military facilities.

In 2011, the Georgia General Assembly authorized an evaluation of Georgia's Pre-K Program. In response to the General Assembly, the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) commissioned national experts at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to conduct a series of studies to measure the impact of the state's nationally renowned pre-K program. Reports include recent results from the Pre-K Longitudinal Study designed to examine the short- and long-term learning outcomes for children who attended Georgia's Pre-K as well as the quality of their preschool and early elementary school experiences. Research reports with results through fourth grade can be accessed [here](https://www.nieer.org/research-reports).

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
10	None Served

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
19	29

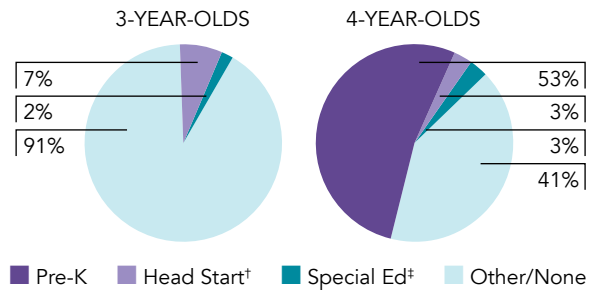
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
10

GEORGIA'S PRE-K PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	70,572
School districts that offer state program.....	100% (counties)
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.....	11,116
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	15,069
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	GA 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	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; 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.



RESOURCES

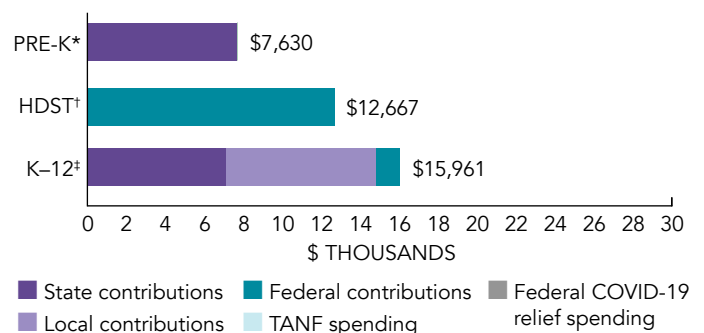
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$538,431,295
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$7,630
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$7,630

* 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.

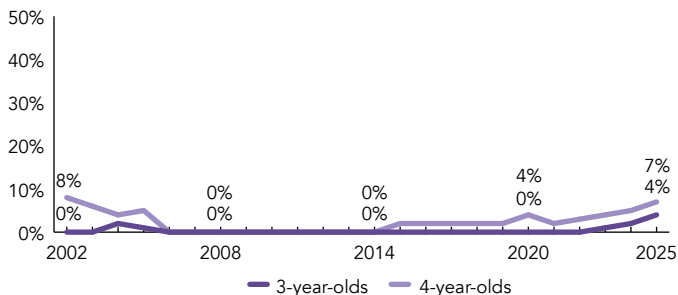
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

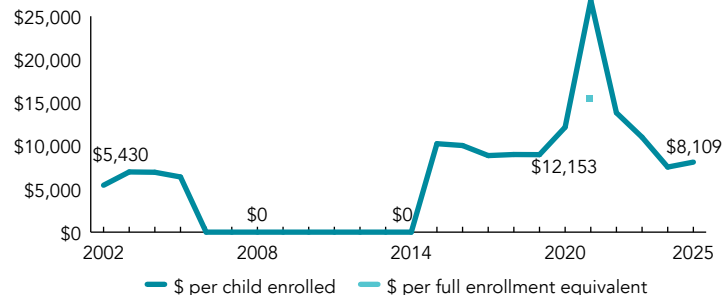


Hawaii

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Hawaii preschool enrolled 1,637 children, an increase of 611 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$13,273,747, up \$5,542,752 (72%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$8,109 in 2024-2025, up \$573 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Hawaii met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The State Legislature supported the addition of new classrooms for the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) Public Prekindergarten Program over the 2025-2026 program year through the State of Hawaii Budget Process. With the addition of new resources, the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program is now able to serve 2,275 students in 117 classrooms statewide during the 2025-2026 program year.

Through the Ready Keiki Initiative, together with community partners, the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission embraced the shared goal for the state of Hawaii aligned with Act 46 (SLH 2020) as amended by Act 210 (SLH 2021): 1) To meet fifty percent of unserved 3 and 4-year-old keiki by 2027; 2) To meet one hundred percent of unserved 3 and 4-year-old keiki by 2032; 3) To honor the two educational pathways in Olelo Hawaii (Hawaiian language) and English; 4) To commit to working collaboratively as partners to address the challenges; and 5) To maximize the use of Act 257, (SLH 2022), which invests \$200 million to expand early learning facilities.

To effectuate this plan, the Commission envisioned implementing the following: 1) Create a new pathway to increase access to pre-K programs in charter schools; 2) Maximize the use of Act 257, SLH 2022, to expand early learning facilities in charter schools; 3) Develop a pre-K-only charter application to expand pre-K-only charter schools; and 4) Communicate unified support for high-quality pre-K for all of Hawaii keiki. In addition to the programs detailed here, Hawaii's Preschool Open Doors (POD) provides subsidies to families with children age 2 to 5 and broadened the income eligibility threshold policy to 500% of the federal poverty level. The child care subsidy program helps low-income families to sustain their employment, educational efforts, and job training by paying a subsidy for their children who are in the care of Department of Human Services-approved child care providers.

BACKGROUND

In Hawaii, the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program serves 3- and 4-year-old children, with priority given to students considered "at-risk," including those from low-income families, now defined as 300% FPL. The EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program is required to operate on the same schedule as public elementary schools, providing services for 1,080 hours a year. EOEL expanded its eligibility to include three- and four-year-olds in the 2022-2023 school year.

Beginning in SY 2020-2021, through Act 46, SLH 2020, the legislature gave statutory authority to the State Public Charter School Commission to administer the early learning program in charter schools. Act 46, SLH 2020, also changed the eligibility criteria to include three- and four-year-old children.

Teachers in the EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program and the Hawaii State Public Charter School (SPCSC) Early Learning Program are part of the Hawaii State Teachers Association and, as such, receive salary and benefit parity with teachers in K-12 classrooms. Lead teachers in both programs are required to have a bachelor's degree with licensure in ECE, while assistant teachers are required to have a CDA credential or coursework for a certificate that meets the requirements for child development associate credential preparation. The EOEL Public Prekindergarten Program and the SPCSC Early Learning Program classrooms receive CLASS observations twice a year, and formative child assessments using Teaching Strategies GOLD are conducted throughout the year with three checkpoints. In addition, all programs undergo fiscal monitoring annually, and program records are reviewed more than once per year.

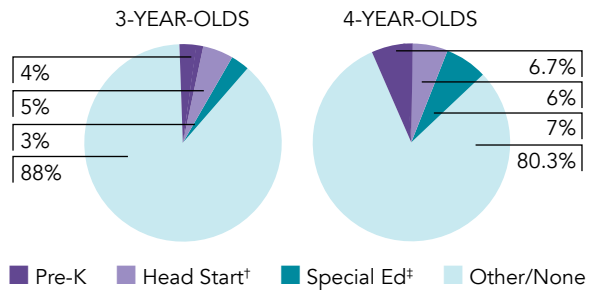
Hawaii's overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for EOEL and SPCSC, is depicted in the first two pages of the state profile. The third page focuses solely on EOEL, and the fourth on the SPCSC.

HAWAII STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	1,637
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,957
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,745
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

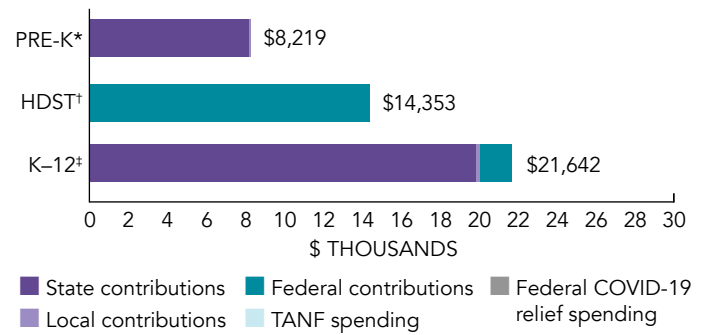


† Estimates children in Head Start not also enrolled in state pre-K.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$13,273,747
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$8,109
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$8,219

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
43	25

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
16	28

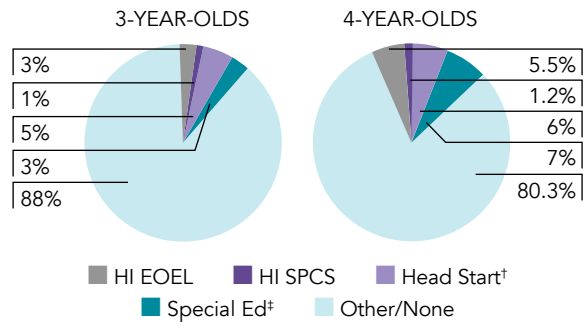
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
10*

HAWAII'S EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING PUBLIC PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,361
School districts that offer state program.....	100% (complex areas)
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	30.5 hours/week; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	HI EOEL 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	60 hours/year (teachers & assistants); PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Full physical exam (includes vision & hearing); Referrals	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.



RESOURCES

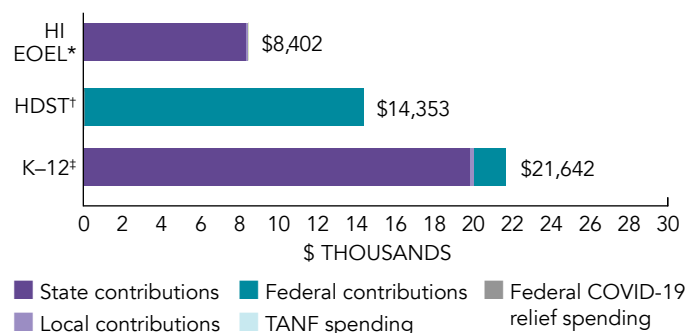
Total state pre-K spending	\$11,254,669
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$8,269
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$8,402

* 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

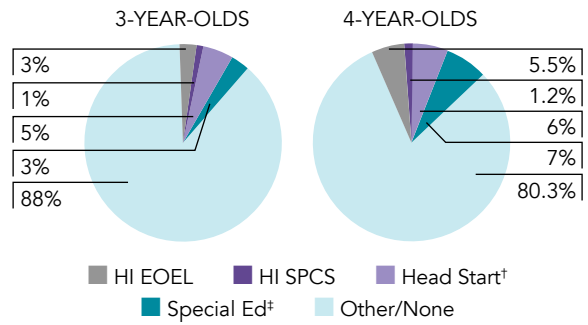


HAWAII STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	276
School districts that offer state program.....	53% (complex areas)
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	30.5 hours/week; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	HI SPCS 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	60 hours/year (teachers & assistants); PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Full physical exam (includes vision & hearing); Referrals	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.

* Indicates that while policy meets the benchmark, it is not being implemented fully.



RESOURCES

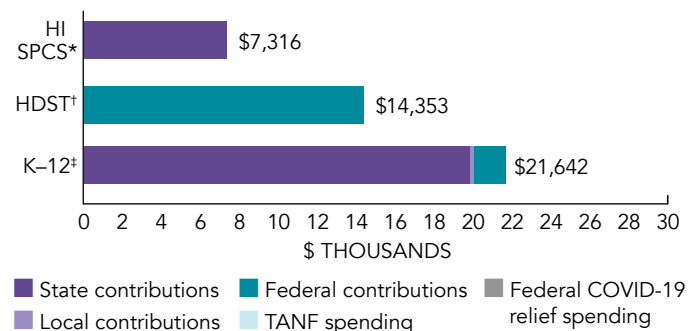
Total state pre-K spending	\$2,019,078
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$7,316
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$7,316

* 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



Idaho

NO PROGRAM

Idaho does not have a state funded preschool program as defined by this report.

A new round of PDG B-5 Systems Building Grants were awarded to support states in building systems and strengthening their ECE programs that expand parental choice in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs. Idaho received \$10,602,330 in this latest round of funding.

Idaho's Early Learning eGuidelines cover a broad range of early learning domains, including: motor development, physical wellbeing, and health; approaches to learning and cognitive development; general knowledge; social-emotional development; and communication, language, and literacy. Approaches to learning, social and emotional development, and cognition domains include guidance through third grade while the other domains cover birth through kindergarten. The eGuidelines are aligned with the Idaho Core Standards, the Head Start Child Outcome Framework, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards.

The Idaho STARS project is a multi-agency collaboration and operates in all seven regions of the state. Idaho STARS encompasses four core function areas: Continuous Quality Improvement, Professional Development System (PDS), Operations and Policy, and Outreach. These core function areas include Idaho's QRIS-Steps to Quality (STQ), Professional Development System Registry, Training Development, Program Assessment, Child Care Health Consultants, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, State Licensing and Subsidy support, and Training and Academic Scholarships. Participation in Idaho STARS is voluntary.

A coalition of early childhood advocates continues to advance efforts for state investments in high-quality preschool options, and several polls have shown that close to 80% of respondents are supportive of state investments in early learning options for Idaho families. Idaho's early learning supporters continue outreach and education for early learning and have formed Preschool the Idaho Way as an effort to galvanize and organize support. Optimistically, program work is currently underway to offer planning and implementation grants in key Idaho areas that will allow local communities to create and sustain preschools that are centered by a collaborative community effort to increase high-quality preschool seats in their area.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
None Served	

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
None Served	

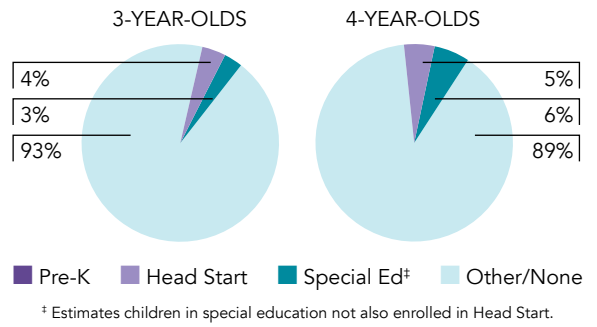
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
No Program

IDAHO

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,252
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,155
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

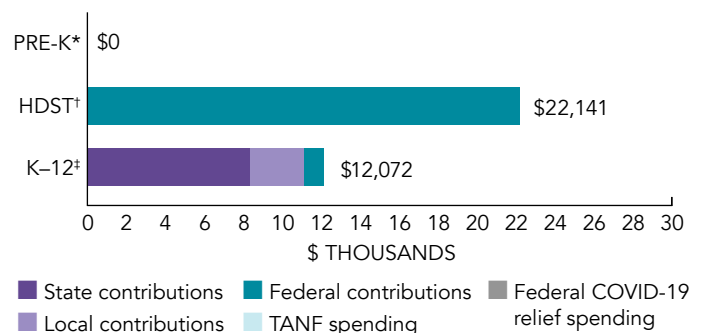
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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.

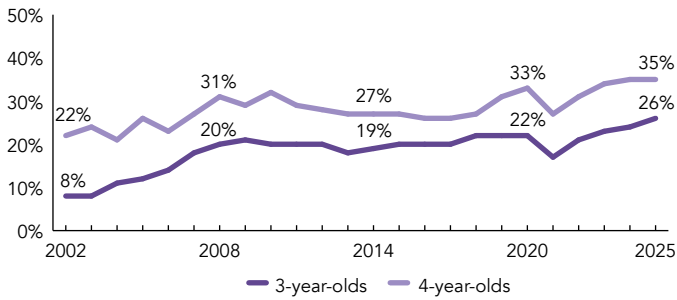
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

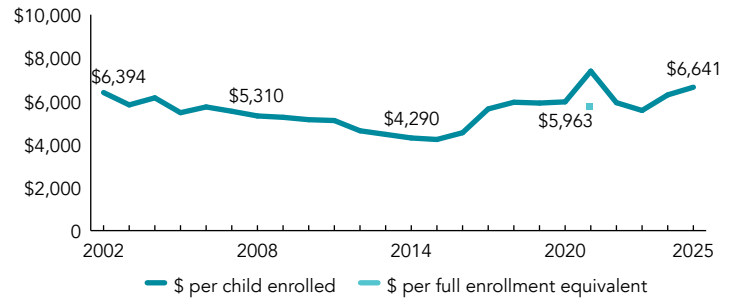


Illinois

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Illinois preschool enrolled 83,661 children, an increase of 1,187 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$555,609,751, up \$37,242,858 (7%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$6,641 in 2024-2025, up \$356 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Illinois met 8 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The Illinois General Assembly allocated an additional \$75 million for the Early Childhood Block Grant in FY25. This included expanded services for children birth to three years to serve an additional 512 children in center-based care. For preschool, 5,150 preschool seats were awarded in preschool deserts, and across FY24 and FY25, Smart Start added a total of 11,000 preschool seats across the state.

For FY26, the General Assembly allocated level funding to the Early Childhood Block Grant, and a statewide competition for additional Smart Start Initiative seats was not released. For FY27, the Early Childhood Block grant will be under a unified agency, the Illinois Department of Early Childhood. The Illinois State Board of Education is currently working with the new department to ensure the administration will be seamless for providers, parents, and children.

BACKGROUND

The Illinois Prekindergarten Program for At-Risk Children was founded in 1985. The Illinois Preschool for All (PFA) initiative began in 2006 with the goal of providing pre-K to all 3- and 4-year-olds by 2012. Starting in 2017, the PFA Expansion Program began when the State was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant. The Illinois PFA and PFA Expansion programs are now combined to operate in almost all counties. Funding for Preschool for All is awarded on a competitive basis to public schools, private childcare, Head Start, faith-based centers, higher education institutions, and regional offices of education.

Preschool for All programs are required to provide instruction in children's home language if there are 20 or more English Language Learners (ELLs) with the same home language enrolled in a program. All pre-K teachers are required to meet bilingual education certification requirements. Language of instruction is determined locally if there are fewer than 20 ELLs with the same home language, however English as a Second Language and other home language supports may be provided.

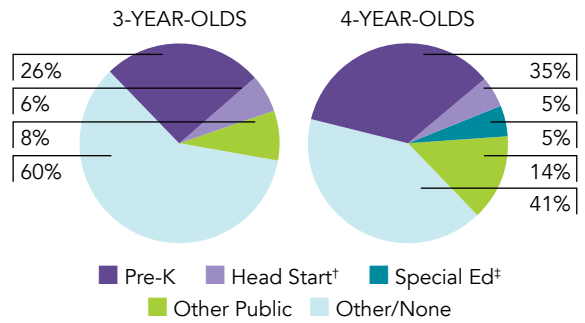
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
20	4	22	24	8

ILLINOIS PRESCHOOL FOR ALL AND PRESCHOOL EXPANSION

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	83,661
School districts that offer state program.....	99% (counties)
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	26,746
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	15,750
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	IL 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, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Educator License	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	120 hours/5 years (teachers); PD plans; Coaching (PFA Expansion)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.



RESOURCES

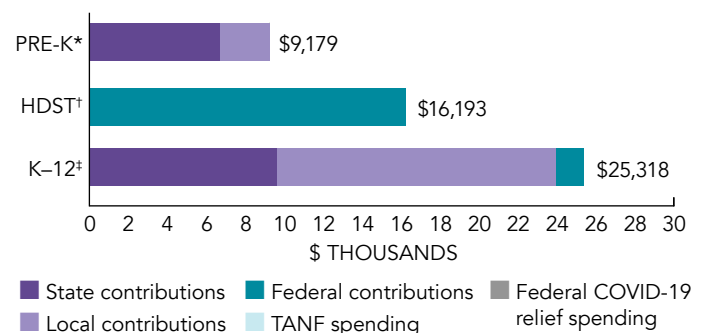
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$555,609,751
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$6,641
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$9,179

* 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.

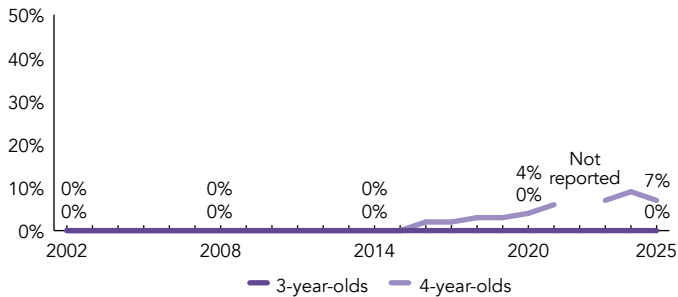
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

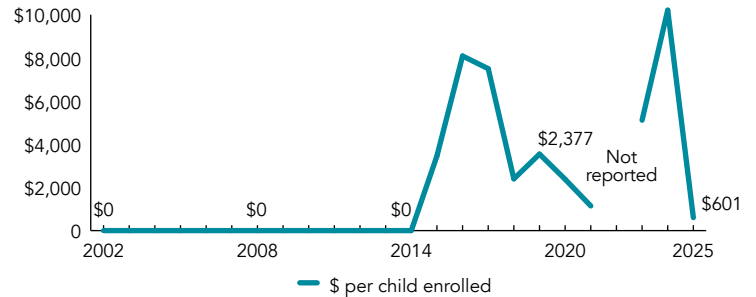


Indiana

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Indiana preschool enrolled 6,018 4-year-olds, a decrease of 1,930 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$3,616,054 but the state was not able to report the amount of federal Covid-relief funds used to support the program. State spending per child equaled \$601 in 2024-2025. Indiana met 2 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

On My Way Pre-K (OMWPK) has a parent employment or school requirement for eligibility and therefore does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. The program is included in the report but not in national totals or rankings.

WHAT'S NEW

Effective March 31, 2024, the Indiana General Assembly increased OMWPK eligibility to 150% FPL, up from 127%, which made more families eligible to participate in a voucher program.

In December 2025, Indiana was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$14,680,302 to build on the progress of the last three years through previous PDG B-5 Grant's activities, needs assessment, and strategic plan, and to design a new public-private intermediary structure for Indiana's ECE system.

The State will do this by piloting a referral slots approach for children under three to meet the significant need for high-quality, affordable child care. The goal is 1,000 slots in 2026. The State will also partner with and leverage the ability of the Indiana Economic Development Corporation to promote economic growth, develop talent, and fuel innovation and entrepreneurship by expanding the micro-facility pilot, provide business supports to all ECE businesses, and leverage new opportunities through the expansion of the 45F employer-sponsored child care tax credit. Finally, the State will create an implementation plan for a new private-public intermediary structure that will create efficiencies, provide flexibility, increase revenue, and strengthen the private-public connection between Indiana's ECE system.

BACKGROUND

The On My Way Pre-K (OMWPK) program was signed into law in 2014 to provide vouchers to eligible, low-income four-year-old children for qualified early education services statewide. Services may be delivered via public schools, licensed, or registered child care programs that have achieved Level Three or Level Four in Paths to QUALITY™, or via accredited private schools.

According to the Purdue University longitudinal study, children who attended the OMWPK program had stronger school readiness, language, and literacy skills than their peers with similar family incomes who attended lower quality child care or prekindergarten programs. Additional research by Purdue University is studying the use of curricula in Indiana and identifying the key ingredients of high-quality preschool programs. A second longitudinal study began in fall 2024. Additionally, OMWPK children have matched up positively compared to national norms established for all pre-kindergarten children in the annual Kindergarten Readiness Indicators assessment, conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago.

OMWPK has stimulated the expansion of the number of high-quality programs in Indiana, affecting not only the 4-year-old children enrolled with state funding, but all other children enrolled in those programs. There has been a stable 92% increase in high quality early care and education programs for all children statewide since the inception of OMWPK.

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET

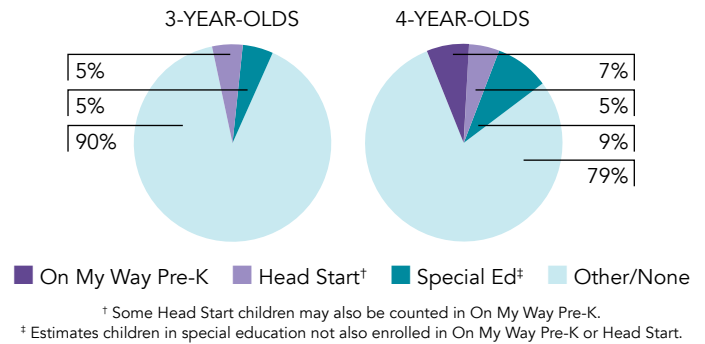
2

INDIANA ON MY WAY PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	6,018
School districts that offer state program.....	96% (counties)
Income requirement.....	150% 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.....	13,047
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	7,904
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	IN ON MY WAY 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	Varies by program requirements	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Varies by program requirements	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	12 clock hours/year; PD plans (some public teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3-year-olds); 24 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3-year-olds); 1:12 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Site visits	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



RESOURCES

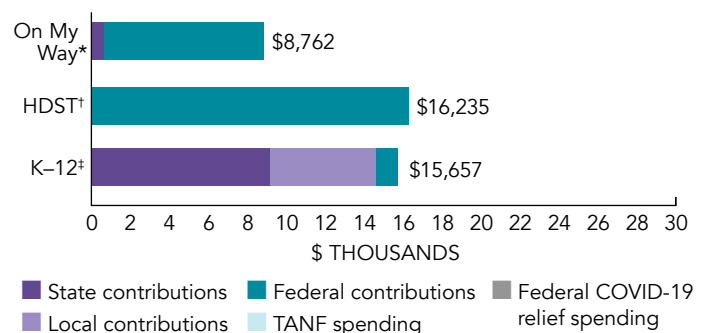
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$3,616,054
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$601
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$8,762

* 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.

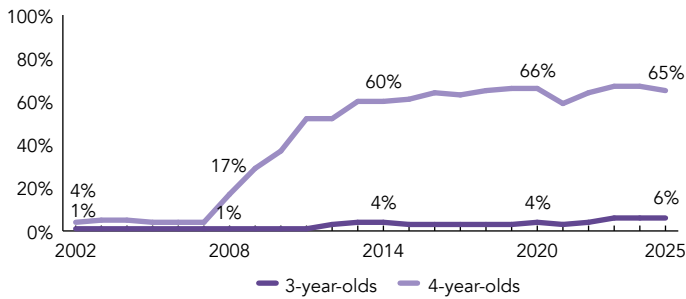
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

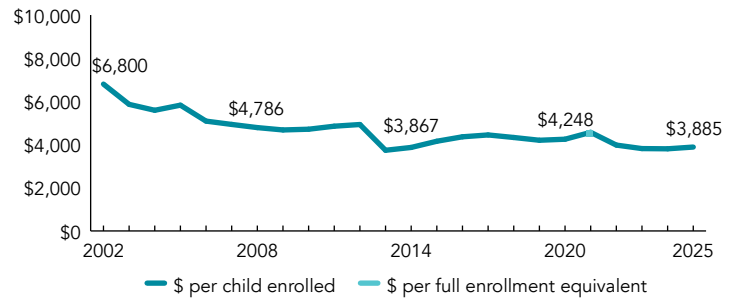


Iowa

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Iowa preschool enrolled 27,625 children, a decrease of 564 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$97,813,323, down \$585,985 (1%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$3,885 in 2024-2025, up \$80 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Iowa met an average of 6 of 10 quality standard benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, the State of Iowa offered LETRS for Early Childhood Educators professional development to all teachers in state-funded preschool programs at no cost.

BACKGROUND

Iowa has two state-funded preschool programs: Shared Visions (SV) and the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP). The SV program has provided services to 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds since 1989 through competitive grants to public schools, licensed non-profit childcare centers, other public non-profit agencies, and Head Start. SV serves children in part-, school-, or extended-day programs.

Iowa began the SWVPP in 2007 to increase 4-year-olds' access to preschool. All 4-year-olds in the state are eligible to attend SWVPP. Funding for the SWVPP is based on the state funding formula in which 4-year-olds are funded at 50% of the K-12 state aid amount. SWVPP classrooms operate at least 10 hours per week, and programs may collaborate with Head Start, other preschool programs, or childcare programs to provide the SWVPP. Some collaborations offer full-day services.

Both SWVPP and SV have undergone formal evaluations. As part of the state longitudinal data system, all children enrolled in either program receive a unique state identification number.

An important difference between the two state-funded preschool programs pertains to child eligibility. SV is a targeted program where at least 80% of children are required to meet income eligibility guidelines (family income at or below 185% FPL). Children can also qualify for the program based on other risk factors but may be required to pay a fee based on a sliding scale. Services within this program are provided in 29 of Iowa's 99 counties through 48 awarded grants. In contrast, SWVPP is available in 99.7% of school districts and all resident children who turn four on or before September 15 are eligible to attend.

SV lead teachers are required to meet the educational qualifications as outlined in the program standards selected within the awarded application. While requirements within selected program standards vary, 71% of lead teachers hold a BA degree or higher in early childhood, child development, or a related field, while another 24% hold an AA degree in early childhood or a related field. All SWVPP lead teachers must have at least a BA and an Iowa teaching license with an early childhood endorsement.

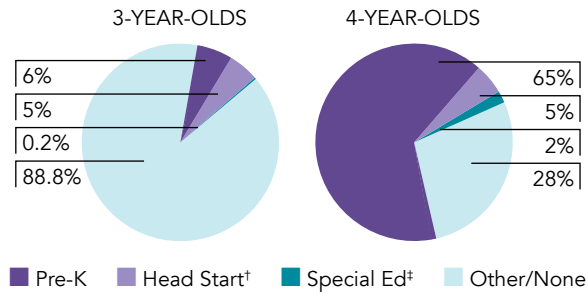
Iowa's overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for SV and SWVPP, is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on SV, and the fourth page provides information on SWVPP.

IOWA STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	27,625
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,035
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,562
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

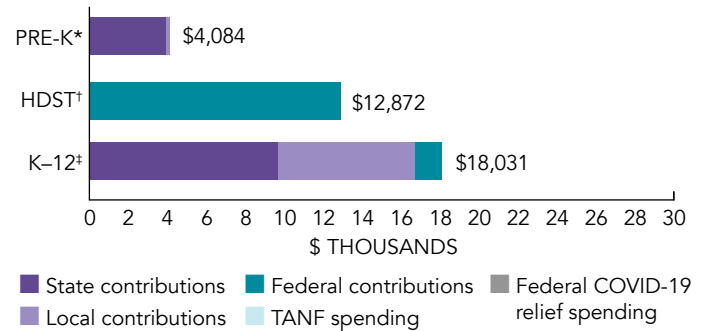


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (SWVPP).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$97,813,323
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,885
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$4,084

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
6	21

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
40	43

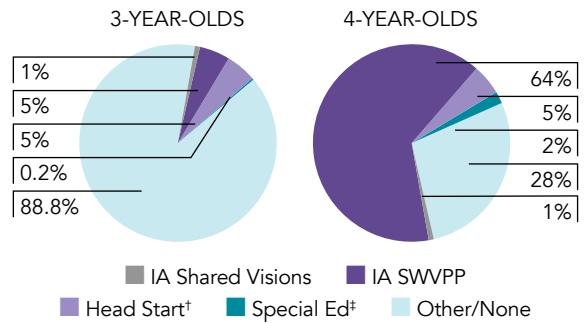
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
6

IOWA SHARED VISIONS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,088
School districts that offer state program.....	29% (counties)
Income requirement.....	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	Determined locally
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (SWVPP).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	IA SHARED VISIONS 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (public); AA (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or equivalent	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	PD hours based on program standards; PD plans; Coaching (teachers with an active teaching license only)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	17 (3-year-olds); 20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:8 (3- & 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 (every 5 years and determined locally); Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



RESOURCES

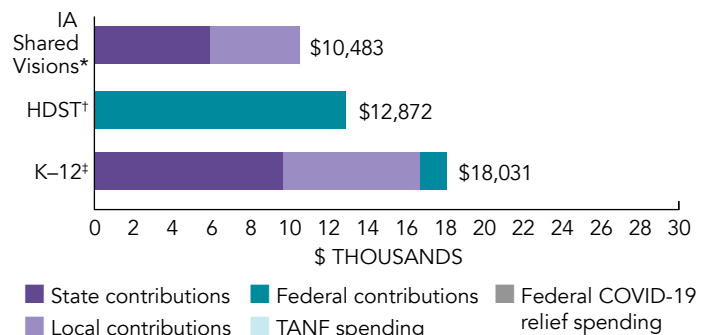
Total state pre-K spending	\$6,391,823
Local match required?.....	Yes
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,875
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$10,483

* 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

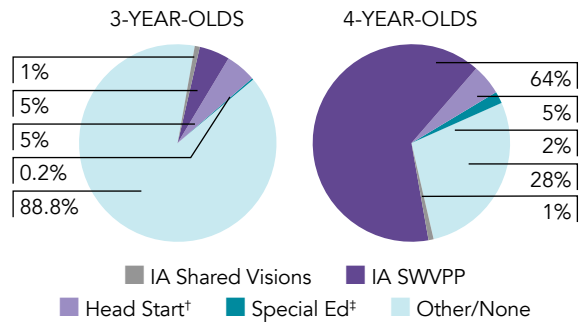


IOWA STATEWIDE VOLUNTARY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (SWVPP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	26,537
School districts that offer state program.....	99.7%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	10 hours/week
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (SWVPP).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	IA SWVPP 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, Elem Ed (with ECE endorsement)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or equivalent	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year recommended; PD plans; Coaching (1st & 2nd year teachers in public schools)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations & Full physical exam; Referrals recommended	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement at the local level only	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

6

RESOURCES

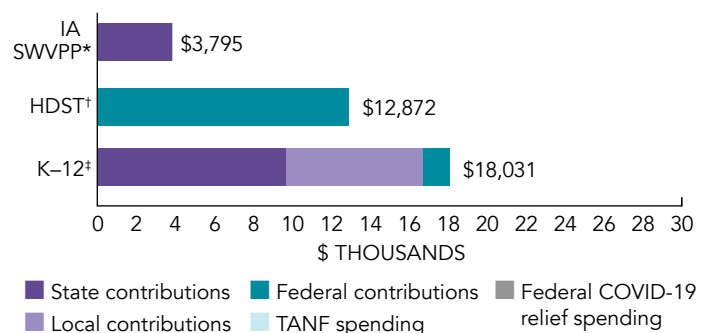
Total state pre-K spending	\$91,421,500
Local match required?	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,795
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$3,795

* 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.

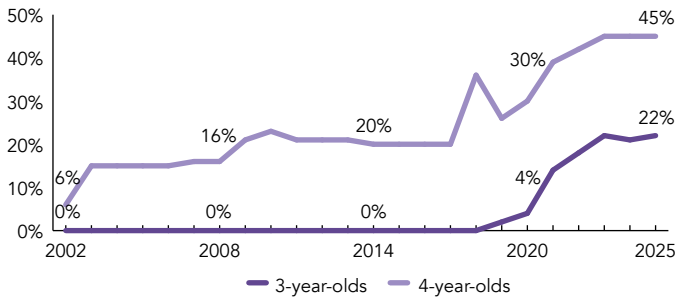
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

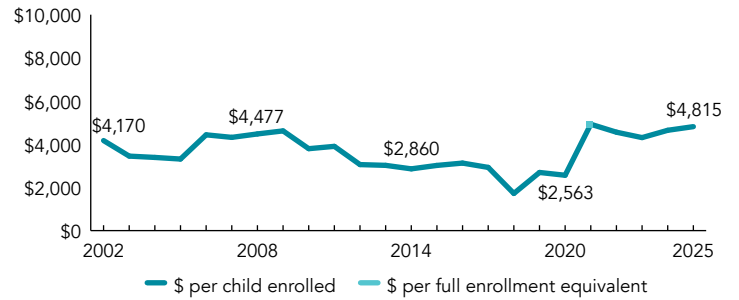


Kansas

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Kansas preschool enrolled 24,805 children, an increase of 569 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$115,314,617, and an additional \$4,132,317 in TANF funds, up \$6,836,219 (6%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including TANF) equaled \$4,815 in 2024-2025, up \$169 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Kansas met 6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The Kansas State Board of Education and the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund both adopted the fourth revision to the Kansas Early Learning Standards in February 2024. Also, 2024-2025 was the first year of an updated accreditation model for PreK-12 school systems. Preschool/early childhood is included in this work, which aligns nicely with preschool-specific quality improvement efforts related to high quality instructional materials adoption, supports for effective teaching and use of data to inform instruction, and the science of reading.

Beginning July 1, 2028, Kansas veteran educators serving in a number of positions, including general education and special education preschool teaching positions, will be required to demonstrate knowledge of the science of reading to renew their professional license. Kansas also has an exciting and growing Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

The Kansas Education Funding Task Force is currently reviewing the current state school finance formula, which expires July 1, 2027.

BACKGROUND

Kansas supports two funding streams for state prekindergarten. The first, established in 1998 as part of the state school finance formula, is the Preschool-Aged At-Risk Program (formerly named the State Pre-K 4 Year Old At-Risk Program). The state school finance formula also includes funding to support the enrollment of preschool students with disabilities. The second is the Kansas Preschool Pilot (KPP), first offered in the 2006-2007 school year. Both funding streams are administered through the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) and are reported together due to their similar standards and overlapping enrollment.

Between the two funding streams, funding was available in all 286 school districts in Kansas, and 2024-2025 marks the fourth year that 3-year-olds are included in this report.

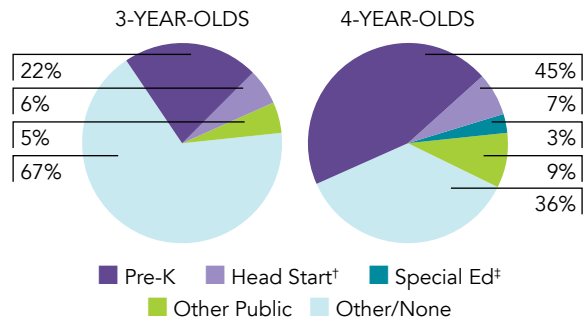
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
16	6	36	40	6

PRESCHOOL OFFERED BY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	24,805
School districts that offer state program	100%
Income requirement	130% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	465 instructional hours/year
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,174
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,337
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	KS 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, Elem. Ed.	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans (teachers only); Coaching (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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	None	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

6

RESOURCES

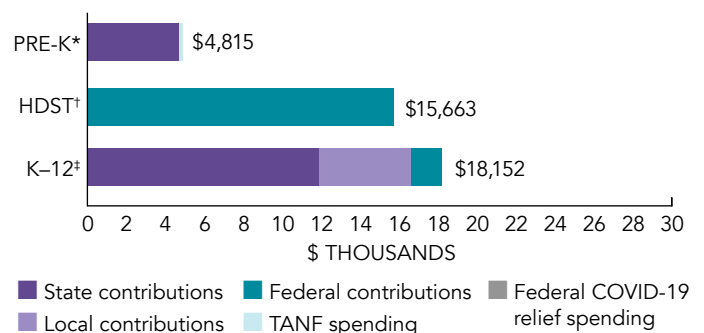
Total state pre-K spending	\$119,446,934
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$4,815
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$4,815

* 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.

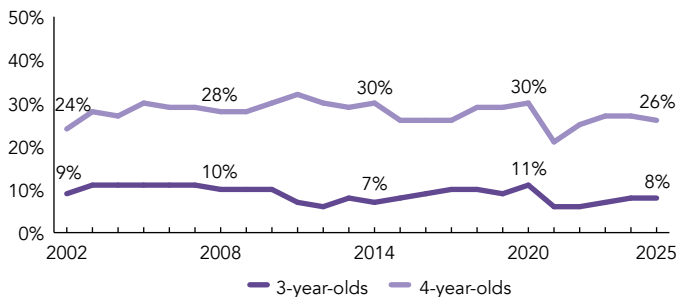
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

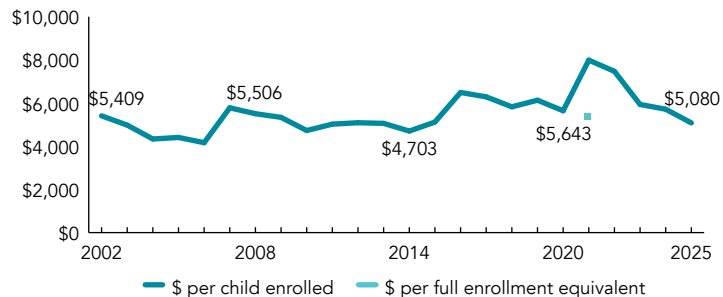


Kentucky

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Kentucky preschool enrolled 18,837 children, a decrease of 900 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$90,767,593, and an additional \$4,924,483 in federal recovery funds supported the program, down \$17,082,605 (15%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including federal recovery funds) equaled \$5,080 in 2024-2025, down \$634 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Kentucky met 8 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Kentucky successfully implemented the revised ALL STARS Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). After a pause caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the state resumed efforts to collect and review data related to the quality of preschool classrooms and programs. This program utilizes the TPOT observation tool and also incorporates components of the Pyramid Model Framework. This framework will encourage districts to implement best practices in classroom management and behavior.

Governor Andy Beshear issued Executive Order 2025-351 in June 2025, which created the Team Kentucky Pre-K for All Advisory Committee, comprised of leaders in education, childcare, workforce development, government, and business. The [Pre-K for All Findings and Recommendations Advisory Committee Report](#) was released on October 30, 2025. Based on the report, the Committee recommended that Kentucky expand preschool with an expectation of district-level partnerships, an emphasis on quality, and the establishment of a unified data system.

BACKGROUND

The Kentucky Preschool Program (KPP), launched in 1990, is available to 4-year-olds from low-income families, and 3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities. KPP programs operate half- or full-day, for at least 2.5 hours per day, four or five days per week. Income eligibility increased from 150% to 160% FPL beginning with the 2015-2016 school year. Children who do not meet state eligibility requirements may still participate if there is space, but they are funded either by the school district or tuition, rather than state dollars.

KPP is administered by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), Office of Special Education and Early Learning, the Early Learning Unit, School Readiness Branch. Funds are distributed to school districts through a funding formula. School districts may subcontract with private child care centers, Head Start programs, and special education providers to offer preschool services.

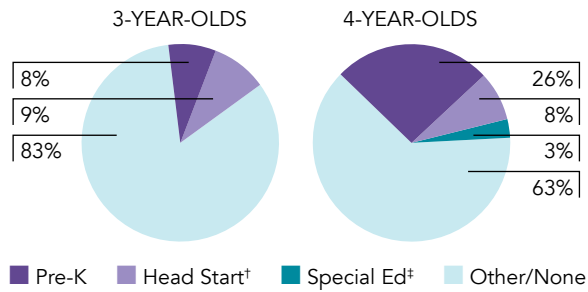
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
28	19	33	8	8

KENTUCKY PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	18,837
School districts that offer state program.....	100%
Income requirement.....	160% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	2.5 hours/day
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	12,111
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	10,012
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	KY 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	HSD or equivalent	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	24 hours/year (teachers); 18 hours/year (assistants); PD plans (public teachers only); Coaching (certified teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.



RESOURCES

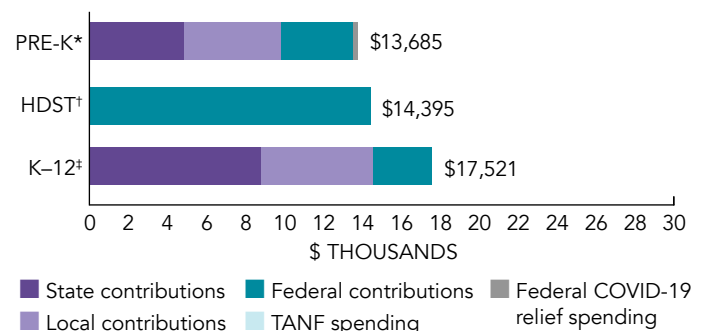
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$95,692,076
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$5,080
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$13,685

* 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.

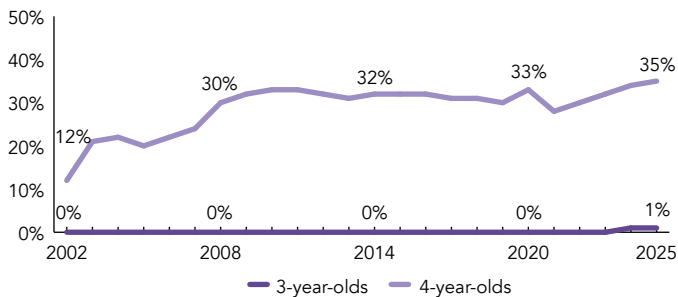
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

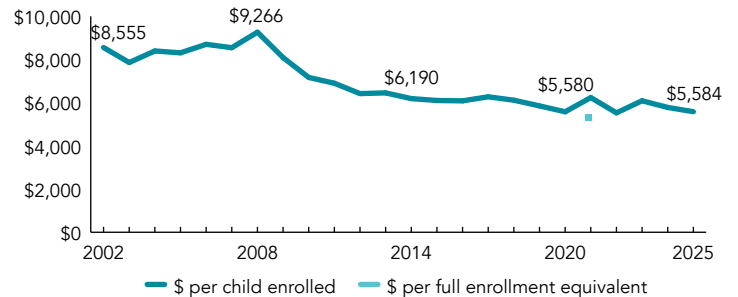


Louisiana

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Louisiana preschool enrolled 19,884 children, an increase of 369 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$91,116,479 and an additional \$19,907,428 in TANF funds supported preschool, down \$1,796,638 (2%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including TANF) equaled \$5,584 in 2024-2025, down \$198 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Louisiana met an average of 8.8 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Starting in August 2025, all Louisiana pre-kindergarten programs must adhere to the Child Safety and Welfare Minimum Standards as outlined in "Charlie's Law," R.S. 17:407.41.

In March 2025, there was a special election that introduced an amendment to provide a permanent teacher salary increase in the state and eliminate the 8(g) preschool program. The amendment did not pass, but will be reintroduced for a vote in April 2026.

In December 2025, Louisiana was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$13,723,445 to support system building and strengthen ECE programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

BACKGROUND

Louisiana has three distinct state-funded preschool programs: the 8(g) Student Enhancement Block Grant Program, the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program (LA 4), and the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program (NSECD). Many school districts also use federal Title I funding to provide high-quality pre-K to 4-year-olds in public schools, typically adopting the same standards as LA 4.

The first of Louisiana's state-funded pre-K programs, initially established in 1988, is the 8(g) program. It was created to compensate for the loss of the Model Early Childhood Program when matching annual appropriations for that program ended. The 8(g) program serves 4-year-old children, and priority is given to students living at or below 200% FPL. However, if all income-eligible children are served, additional students may be served if they are deemed "developmentally unprepared."

The largest of the three state-funded pre-K programs, the LA 4 program (formerly LA 4 and Starting Points), was established in 2001 and serves 4-year-old children in public schools and independent LEA charter schools. Programs can subcontract with Head Start, Type III licensed child care centers, and non-independent LEA charter schools to deliver the LA 4 program. Teachers in LA 4 are required to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree and meet all the qualifications required for public school teachers, regardless of where the program is located. Eligibility for this program is based on income: all children must be at or below 200% FPL to enroll.

Also established in 2001, the NSECD program supports high-quality pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds in nonpublic settings. Teachers in 4-year-old classrooms in the NSECD program are required to have a bachelor's degree and assistant teachers are required to have at least a CDA. NSECD has the same eligibility requirements as the LA 4 program, and funding is available for this program on a competitive basis.

During the 2012 session, the Louisiana Legislature passed Act 3, unifying multiple early childhood initiatives under the Department of Education and in collaboration with other state agencies. This system contains aligned program standards, a quality rating and improvement accountability system in which all programs receiving state and/or federal funds are required to participate, a unified professional development system, birth-through-five early learning and development standards, and a cross-agency integrated data system.

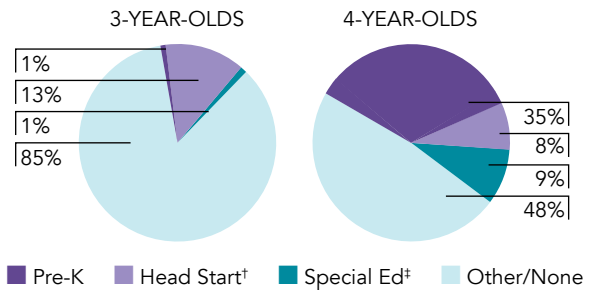
(continued)

LOUISIANA STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	19,884
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,803
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	12,239
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

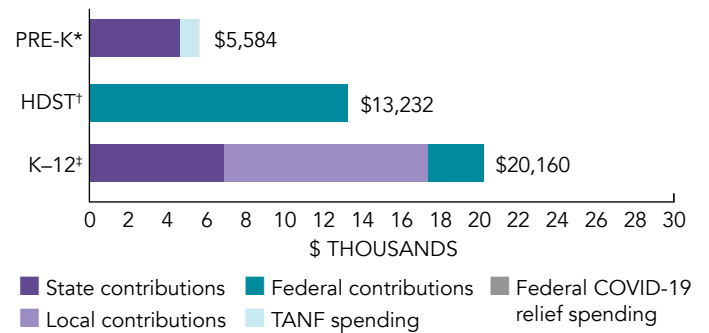


† Estimates children in Head Start not also enrolled in state pre-K.
 ‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$111,023,907
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,584
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,584

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
22	33	31	38	8.8

During the 2016-2017 school year, Louisiana completed its first full year of the unified quality rating and improvement system for all publicly funded childcare, Head Start and pre-K sites. The state shared information for all programs serving children birth to age five via a family friendly website, www.louisianaschools.com, which provides comparable information about program quality.

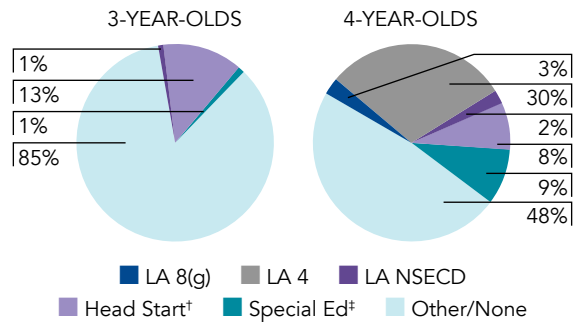
Louisiana’s overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for 8(g), LA 4, and NSECD, is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on 8(g), the fourth page on LA 4, and the fifth page on NSECD.

LOUISIANA 8(G) STUDENT ENHANCEMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,677
School districts that offer state program.....	88% (LEAs)
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	6 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	LA 8(G) 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	Pre-K–3, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	18 hours/year; PD plans (teachers only)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input 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	Referrals	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

7

RESOURCES

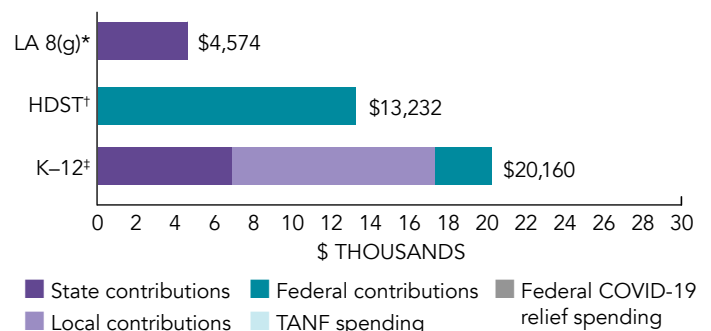
Total state pre-K spending	\$7,670,115
Local match required?	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$4,574
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$4,574

* 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

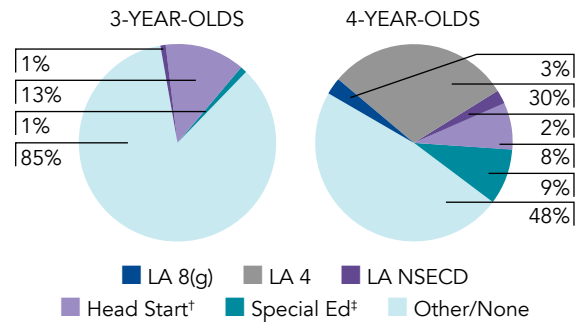


CECIL J. PICARD LA 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	16,840
School districts that offer state program.....	97% (parishes)
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	6 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	LA 4 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	Pre-K–3, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	18 hours/year; 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.

9

RESOURCES

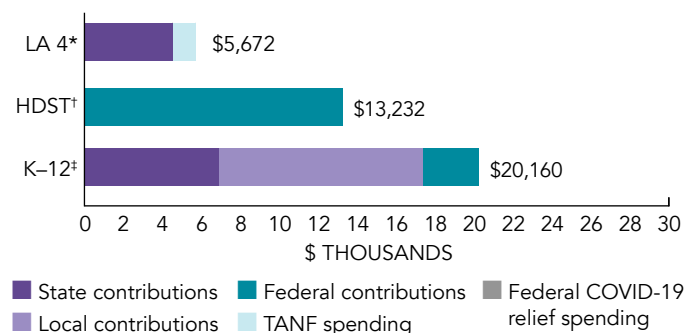
Total state pre-K spending	\$95,512,860
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,672
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,672

* 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

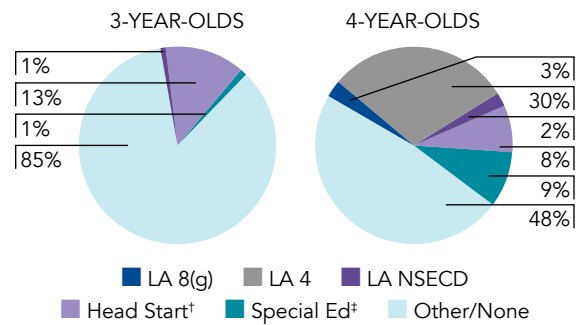


LOUISIANA NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (NSECD)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,367
School districts that offer state program.....	19% (parishes)
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	6 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	LA NSECD 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 (4-year-old classes); CDA (3-year-old classes)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Pre-K–3, ECE SpEd (4-year-old classes); CDA (3-year-old classes)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA (4-year-old classes); HSD (3-year-old classes)	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	18 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.



RESOURCES

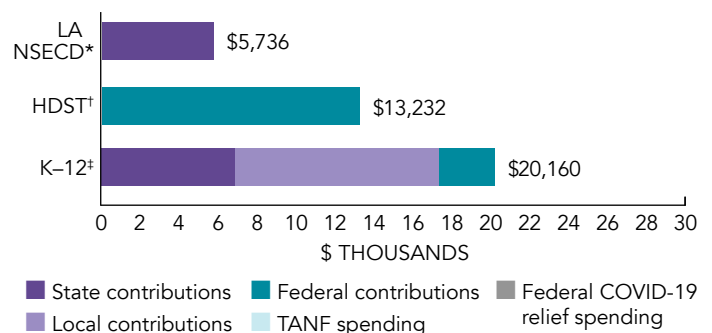
Total state pre-K spending	\$7,840,932
Local match required?	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,736
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,736

* 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.

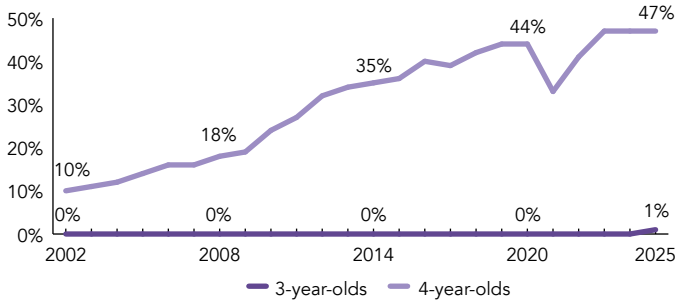
‡ K–12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

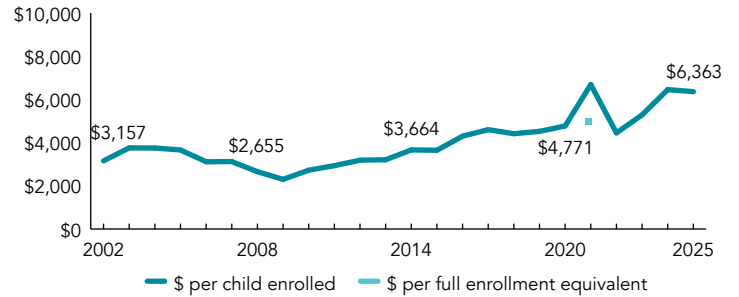


Maine

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Maine preschool enrolled 6,445 children, an increase of 84 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$39,812,310 with an additional \$1,199,903 in federal recovery funds to support the program, down \$49,661 (0.1%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including federal recovery funds) equaled \$6,363 in 2024-2025, down \$92 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Maine met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Maine began to legislatively shift responsibility for early childhood education (3- to 5-year-olds) to the public school system over a four-year period, with completion in the 2027-2028 school year. As this shift occurs, the state anticipates that more children with identified disabilities will receive services in a timely manner and that the state will continue to see steady public pre-k expansion.

In 2024-2025, some remaining COVID-19 relief funding and PDG renewal grant funding were utilized to support expansion of public pre-k funding, including partnerships with licensed child care providers. In addition, the PDG funding has supported a Pre-K Partnership Specialist position to assist with public pre-k partnership development efforts, and Covid-19 funding supported increased staff to provide technical assistance/professional learning to expansion grantees.

In December 2025, Maine was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$1,933,007 to support system building and strengthen ECE programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

BACKGROUND

Maine established its Two-Year Kindergarten initiative in 1983 by allocating resources to local districts through the school funding formula. Since 2007, state-funded programs for 4-year-olds have been separately defined as the Public Preschool Program (PPP), still funded through Maine's school funding formula, with a distribution of funds to 178 of the 191 (93%) school administrative units (SAUs) that operate kindergarten.

PPP classrooms function as either stand-alone programs located in public schools or SAUs partner with licensed community-based childcare programs or Head Start agencies. Schools are required to provide a local match to draw down a per-pupil state subsidy. The required local match is part of the school funding formula based on property value.

Maine's Public Preschool Program Standards, promulgated as a regulation in December 2014, outlined programmatic changes including reduced child-staff ratio and group size, the use of evidence-based curricula, and child screening and assessments.

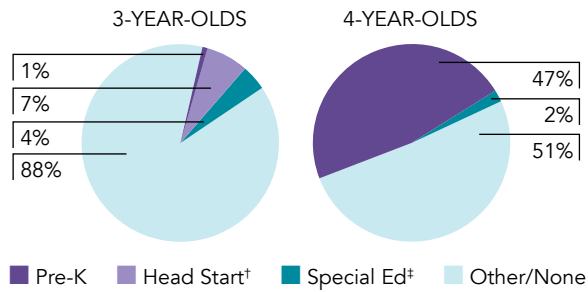
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
13	34	24	16	9

MAINE PUBLIC PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	6,445
School districts that offer state program	93% (eligible school administrative units)
Income requirement	Determined locally
Minimum hours of operation	2 hours/day
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,348
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,679
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

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	ME 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Educational Technician II (at least 9 ECE credits)	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 years (teachers); 3 credit hours/5 years (assistants)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	16 (3 & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:8 (3 & 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.

9

RESOURCES

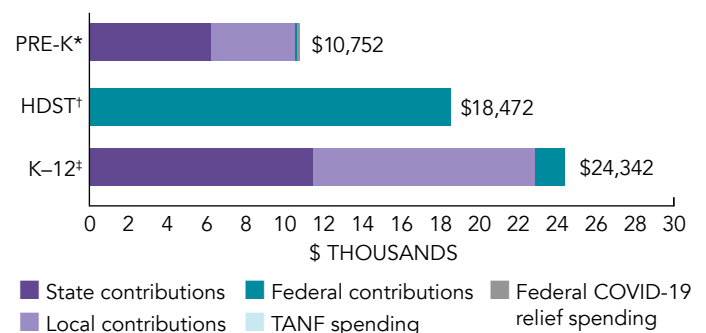
Total state pre-K spending	\$41,012,213
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$6,140,038
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,363
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$10,752

* 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.

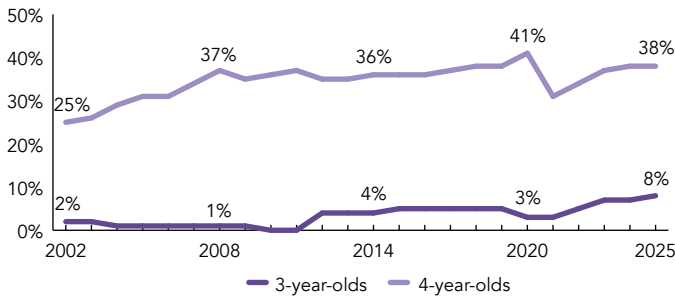
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

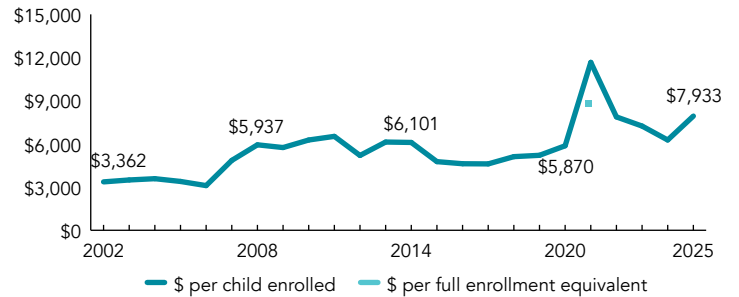


Maryland

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024–2025 school year, Maryland preschool enrolled 34,003 children, an increase of 1,031 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$269,734,230, up \$62,963,083 (30%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$7,933 in 2024–2025, up \$1,662 from 2023–2024, adjusted for inflation. Maryland met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Maryland continued implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) issuing ongoing guidance to support expansion and quality improvement, including a goal that at least 50% of new pre-K slots be delivered by private providers by 2028–29. The phase-out of federal COVID-relief funding increased pressure on local budgets that indirectly support pre-K expansion.

Legislative and budget actions in 2024–2025 focused on workforce stability, financing, and system design. HB 1441 established an experience-based pathway for lead teachers, created an Early Childhood Educator Career Ladder for eligible private providers, authorized facilities leasing funds, and required a model memorandum of understanding to support school–provider partnerships. Maryland increased the pre-K per-pupil amount in FY 2026, while preserving Blueprint-related pre-K funding after the General Assembly rejected proposed slowdowns. MSDE also continued Pre-K Expansion Grants, launched a Pre-K Systems Analysis Workgroup to assess the mixed-delivery system, implemented a licensed outdoor, nature-based preschool pilot, and moved toward a statewide \$60,000 minimum teacher salary effective July 1, 2026.

A new round of PDG B–5 Systems Building Grants were awarded to support states in building systems and strengthening their ECE programs that expand parental choice in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs. Maryland received \$14,751,000 to conduct a statewide needs assessment, unify workforce pathways through a Career Lattice, launch a centralized Pre-K enrollment portal, enhance family search tools, expand program availability through Shared Service Hubs, and integrate evidence-based instructional tools, and modernize operational systems with features like background check portability, an improved licensing portal, and user-centered design.

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-K in public schools to all 4-year-olds from families with incomes at or below 185% FPL. 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.

Funding for the Maryland Prekindergarten Program is provided through a school funding formula and is based on the K–12 per pupil amount, to support eligible children attending half-day programs. Division of Early Childhood staff monitor pre-K programs funded through the Prekindergarten Expansion Grants annually, using a self-developed checklist. Prekindergarten Expansion Grantees are required to participate in Maryland EXCELS, the state's QRIS, and are able to access targeted technical assistance. Maryland also has "Judy Centers" located in Title 1 schools that work collaboratively with elementary schools and community-based providers to offer comprehensive, year-round early learning services for children birth to age five.

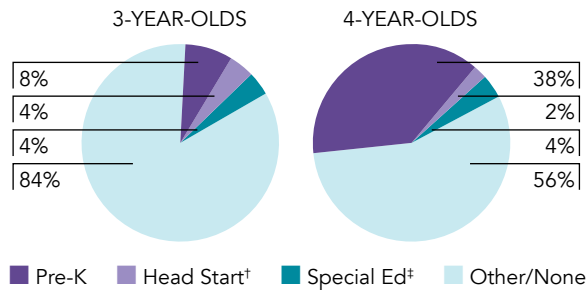
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
19	18	17	15	7

MARYLAND PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	34,003
School districts that offer state program	100%
Income requirement	185% FPL (part-day); 300% FPL (full-day)
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	11,529
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,644
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	MD 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 years (public teachers); 24 hours/year (public assistants); 20 clock hours/year (nonpublic teachers and assistants)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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 vary by program type; Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

7

RESOURCES

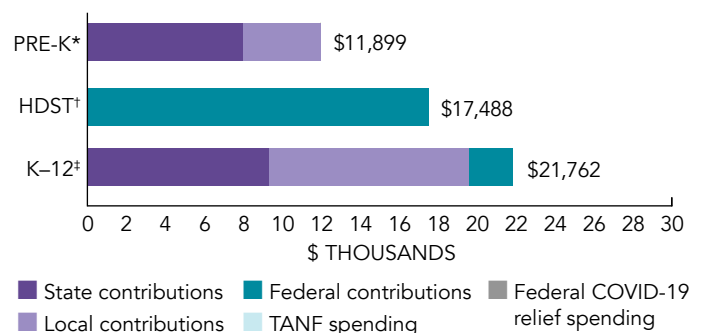
Total state pre-K spending	\$269,734,230
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$2,440,960
State spending per child enrolled	\$7,933
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$11,899

* 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.

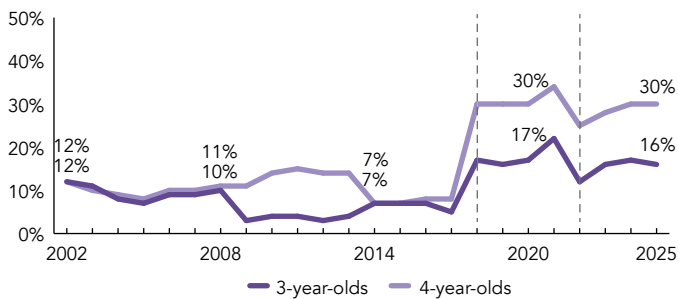
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

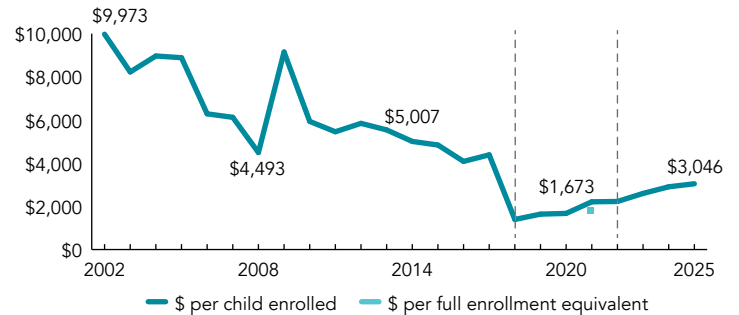


Massachusetts

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Massachusetts preschool programs enrolled 34,707 children in 2024-2025, a decrease of 447 children from the prior year. State spending totaled \$105,715,076, up \$3,562,184 (3%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$3,046 in 2024-2025, up \$140 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Massachusetts met an average of 5.2 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

Changes in the preschool programs operated by the Department of Early Education and Care in 2018 and 2022 are noted by vertical lines on the above enrollment and spending figures.

WHAT'S NEW

Massachusetts level-funded the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) grant program between FY24 and FY25 and again in FY26, maintaining support for existing communities but limiting expansion to new planning grantees. Despite flat funding, CPPI grantees collectively added 20 classrooms under the program umbrella in FY25, reflecting continued local efforts to expand preschool access within current funding constraints. CPPI also continued to receive policy support through the Governor's Gateway to Pre-K initiative.

In addition, the legislature sustained substantial state investment in provider stability through the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) Operational Grants. The state maintained a \$475 million annual commitment in FY25 to support early education and care providers, helping stabilize operations and staffing across the mixed-delivery system even as new preschool expansion opportunities remained limited.

A new round of PDG B-5 Systems Building Grants were awarded to support states in building systems and strengthening their ECE programs that expand parental choice in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs. Massachusetts received \$11,971,330 in this most recent round of funding.

BACKGROUND

In 2005, Massachusetts established the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) which has supported access to high-quality preschool through multiple grant programs. These include a Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) grant to support quality, affordability, and accessibility available to licensed programs serving 3- and 4-year-olds until 2019. The Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments (IPLE) Grant was available to programs until 2019 and was designed to support access for preschool-age children with and without disabilities to high quality, inclusive early education and care settings. These programs are no longer included in the report.

In 2019, EEC launched its Commonwealth Preschool Partnerships Initiative (CPPI), which supports high quality preschool access for children from age 3 until they reach the locally determined kindergarten eligibility age. State funding is awarded directly to public school districts that serve as the fiscal and programmatic managers of the grant. Funded school districts are required to subcontract with community-based early education and care programs from their communities to implement the grant requirements, providing preschool access across public and private classrooms.

Massachusetts also supports preschool enrollment through the Chapter 70 funding stream, the state's funding formula for PK-12 public schools. All children in the state are eligible for the program and are served in public school settings, but local districts can set their own eligibility priorities. Lead teachers are required to have at least a bachelor's degree and a Preschool through Grade 2 license.

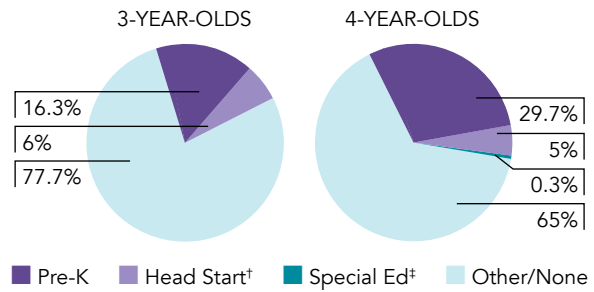
Massachusetts' overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for both CPPI and Chapter 70, is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses solely on CPPI, and the fourth page provides information on Chapter 70.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	34,707
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	11,725
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,551
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

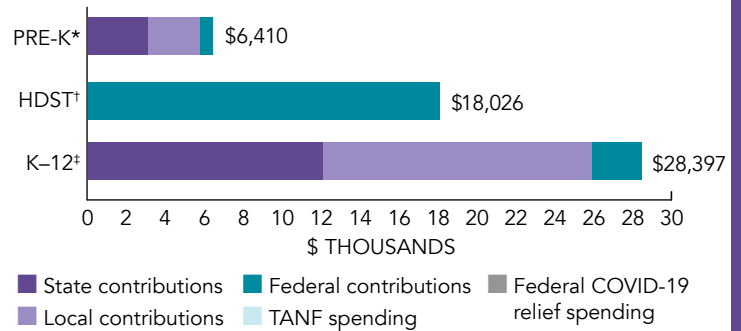


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (Chapter 70).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$105,715,076
State Head Start spending	\$18,500,000
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,046
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$6,410

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
25	10

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
43	34

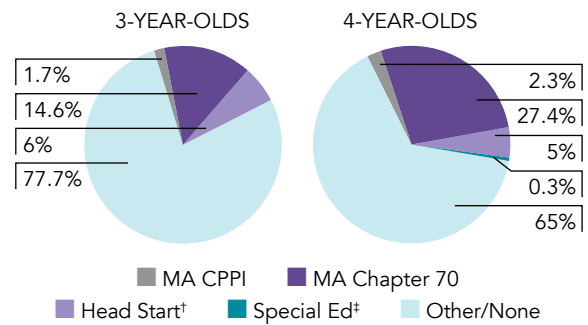
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
5.2

COMMONWEALTH PRESCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS INITIATIVE (CPPI)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment 3,249
 School districts that offer state program 6% (towns/communities)
 Income requirement Determined locally
 Minimum hours of operation 6 hours/day; 5 days/week
 Operating schedule Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (Chapter 70).
 † Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	MA CPPI 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 (public); Other (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Pre-K–2 (public); 12 college credits in ECE (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	150 Professional Development Points/ 5 years (public teachers); 20 hours/year (nonpublic teachers & assistants); PD plans (teachers & nonpublic assistants)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.

7

RESOURCES

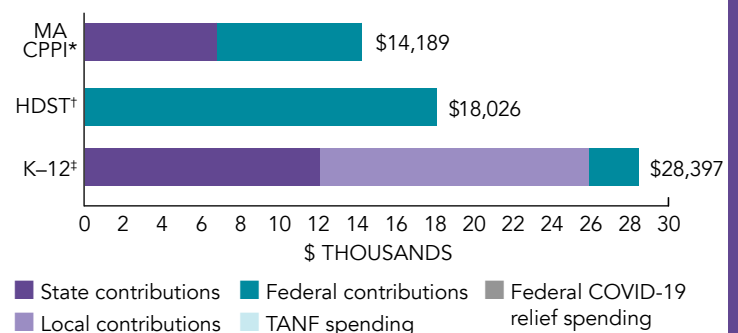
Total state pre-K spending \$21,966,339
 Local match required? No
 State Head Start spending \$18,500,000
 State spending per child enrolled \$6,761
 All reported spending per child enrolled* \$14,189

* 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

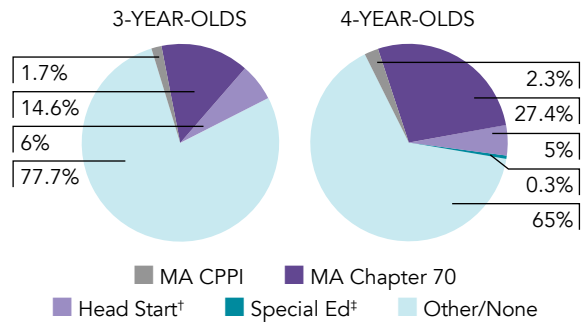


MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER 70

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	31,458
School districts that offer state program.....	100%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	Determined locally
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (Chapter 70).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	MA CHAPTER 70 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	Pre-K–2	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Determined locally	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	150 Professional Development Points/ 5 years (teachers only); PD plans (teachers only)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	No limit (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	No limit (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Determined locally	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

5

RESOURCES

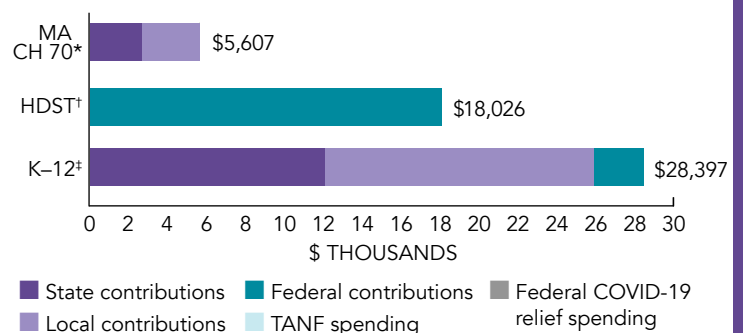
Total state pre-K spending	\$83,748,737
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$18,500,000
State spending per child enrolled	\$2,662
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,607

* 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.

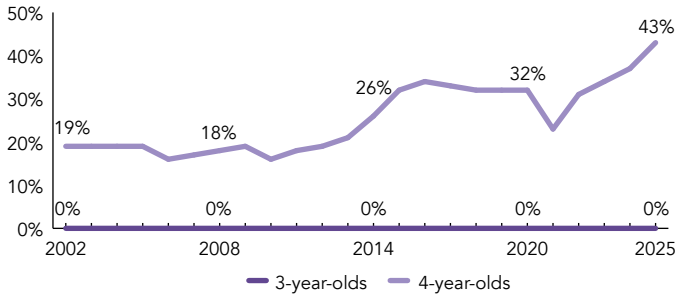
‡ K–12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

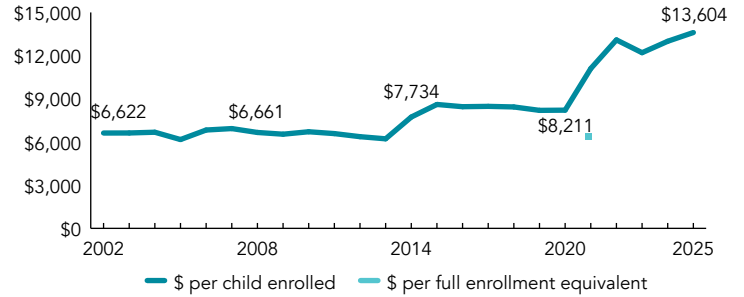


Michigan

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Michigan Great Start School Readiness (GSRP) enrolled 47,981 children, an increase of 6,861 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$652,720,000, up \$118,264,216 (22%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$13,604 in 2024-2025, up \$606 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Michigan met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

As of December 1, 2023, GSRP moved to the newly created Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) created by the Governor under Executive Order 2023-6. Michigan also created a PreK for All Initiative, which includes GSRP, Head Start, Developmental Kindergarten, and Early Childhood Special Education, and aims to provide free prekindergarten to 75% of 4-year-olds by 2027. In 2024-2025, the income requirement for GSRP eligibility was removed.

In September 2024, Michigan was one of 10 states and D.C. awarded a 3-year federal renewal Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG B-5) totaling \$8,999,241 annually. The PDG B-5 renewal grant is intended to carry out the strategic plans developed with the 2023 planning grants which focused on addressing the workforce, social-emotional well-being, and sustainable infrastructure in the state's early childhood system.

BACKGROUND

Established in 1985, the GSRP, formerly known as Michigan School Readiness Program, provides preschool education for at-risk 4-year-olds, and is associated with the state's early childhood initiative. Starting in 2013-2014, 90% of families had to be at or below 250% FPL with some exceptions for up to 300% FPL. Beginning in 2024-2025, children at or below 400% FPL are prioritized for enrollment over those from families that exceed 400%.

GSRP serves the majority of children in school-day programs. Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) serve as program grantees, but they may distribute funds to local school districts and to providers in community-based settings to offer GSRP. GSRP providers must attain an enhancing quality or higher level in Michigan's Great Start to Quality (GSQ) tiered rating and improvement system.

Overall ISD funding is determined by the level of poverty in each ISD and a funding formula, with final grantee awards based on a community needs assessment and a formula component. State funding includes a transportation fund, a curriculum/training fund, a Start Up Grant Fund, and funding to recruit families and increase public awareness of GSRP; as well as \$600,000 for ongoing statewide evaluation activities.

Michigan's Developmental Kindergarten (DK, not included in this report) is the first year of a planned two-year kindergarten program sequence for children who turn five between September 2 and December 1 or whose parents and/or schools feel they are "not ready" for kindergarten, usually those with birthdays between July and September 1. It is funded in the same way as kindergarten, using the school funding formula and follows kindergarten requirements, which are based on local district control. DK enrolled 6,740 four-year-olds with \$64,757,920 in total spending in 2024-2025. Michigan's Strong Beginnings is a pilot state-funded center-based preschool program for three-year-olds. In 2024-2025, 398 three-year-olds participated in the program with \$5,692,327 in state school aid funding.

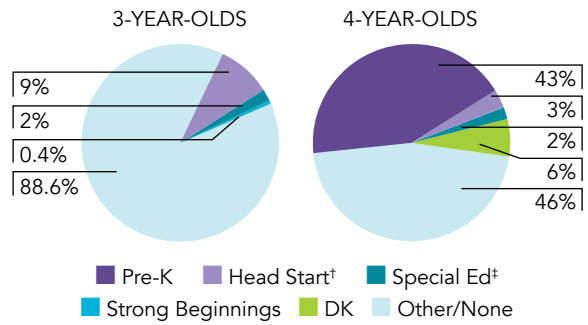
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
17	None Served	6	9	10*

MICHIGAN GREAT START READINESS PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	47,981
School districts that offer state program	98% (counties)
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	3 hours/day; 4 days/week
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	10,391
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	16,751
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	MI 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 AA in ECE/CD	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	16 hours/year; 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.

* Indicates that while policy meets the benchmark, it is not being implemented fully.

10*

RESOURCES

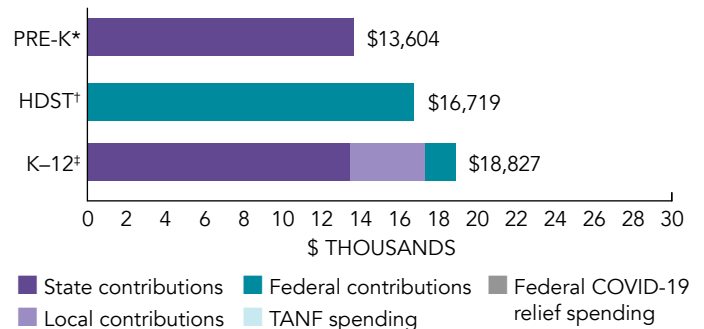
Total state pre-K spending	\$652,720,000
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$13,604
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$13,604

* 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.

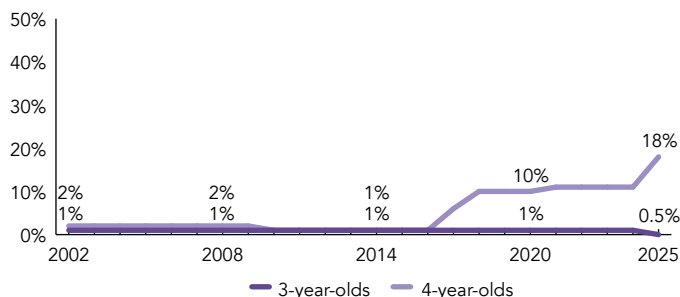
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

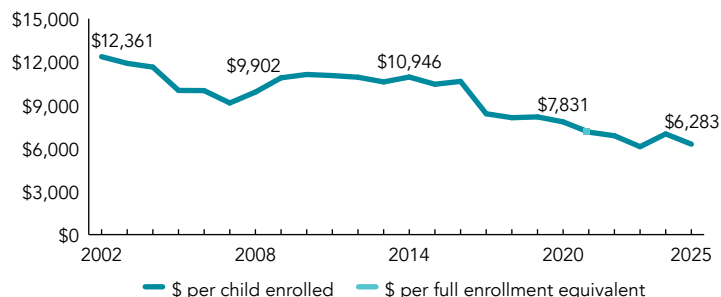


Minnesota

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Minnesota preschool enrolled 12,615 children, an increase of 4,747 children from the prior year. State spending totaled \$79,260,540, up \$24,220,975 (44%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$6,283 in 2024-2025, down \$712 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Minnesota met an average of 5.2 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Administration of early childhood programs transitioned to a new state agency as of July 1, 2024, The Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), a new agency designed to embrace a "whole family approach". In 2024-2025 the legislature increased the investment in Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK), adding an additional 5,200 seats, bringing the total to 12,360. Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, new eligibility criteria for VPK require all students to meet age eligibility and at least one identified risk factor.

Additional legislative changes for VPK include new teacher licensure requirements by 2028 and a focus on Grow Your Own programs to create on the job professional development and institute of higher education opportunities.

In September 2024, Minnesota was one of 10 states and D.C. awarded a 3-year federal renewal Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG B-5) totaling \$8 million annually. The PDG B-5 renewal grant is intended to carry out the strategic plans developed with the 2023 planning grants including: developing a mixed delivery coaching network framework, evaluating competencies for the wage scale, increasing EC mental health consultation workforce, as well as expanding and modernizing data collection systems.

BACKGROUND

Minnesota financially supplements federally designated Head Start and Early Head Start programs to increase access to early childhood education for children birth to age five. All state-supported Head Start programs are required to follow the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs), Minnesota's early learning standards birth to kindergarten entrance as well as the federal Head Start Performance Standards. Total state funding for Head Start was \$35.1 million and programs decide at the local level if funds are used for Head Start or Early Head Start. Recently there has been a shift towards more funding being used for Early Head Start.

A second state-funded preschool program, Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK), was established in 2016-2017 and funded through general education funds as a new grade level with children funded at 0.6 ADM. In 2017-2018, the state legislature created the School Readiness Plus (SRP) program, a variation of VPK. Districts could apply to be a VPK or SRP district; most chose to offer VPK. The SRP program sunsetted at the end of FY25 but the seats were renewed under a single public Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK).

Across VPK/SRP, more than 12,000 seats were allocated to 216 school districts (including charter schools) through an application and ranking process based on free and reduced-price lunch percentages of each elementary school in the state. The program operates a minimum of 350 hours per year and serves children who are 4 years old by September 1.

VPK standards build on existing School Readiness standards by requiring the use of a defined list of curriculum and assessment tools aligned with the early learning standards and Commissioner approved prekindergarten assessment tools, paying knowledgeable teaching staff wages comparable to local K-12 teachers, observing teacher-child interactions to guide professional development using an approved instrument, involving parents in transition planning, and measuring the impact of the program through either a self- or state-designed tool.

Minnesota invests state funding in several early childhood initiatives for children ages 3- and 4-years-old that are not included in this report: Early Learning Scholarship (ELS) funding provides \$78.3 million in scholarships to eligible families of 3- to 5-year-olds to offset

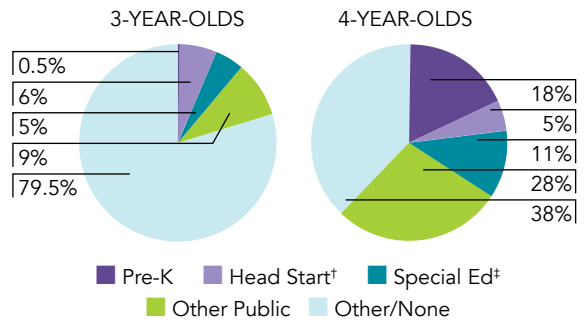
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MINNESOTA STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	12,615
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	13,521
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,147
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	617

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

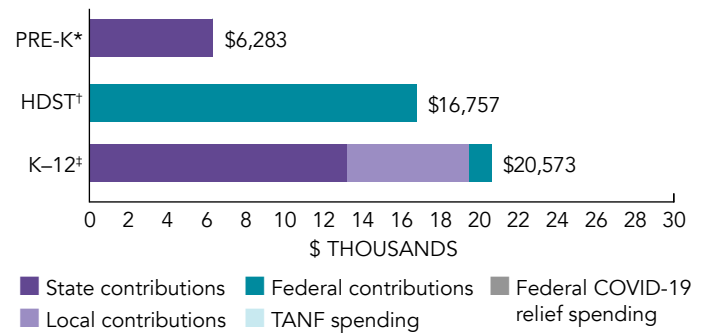


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (VPK/SRP).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$79,260,540
State Head Start spending	\$12,053,618
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,283
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$6,283

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
35	35	25	35	5.2

the cost of enrollment in early childhood programs in public pre-k, Head Start, licensed child care centers, or family child care settings participating in Parent Aware. Additionally, the state invests \$33.6 million in district-controlled School Readiness programs with widespread access and instructional standards similar to VPK/SRP for preschool aged children. The state also spends \$39.3 million on district-based Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) programs providing family education and home visits with a focus on health and developmental screening, parent engagement, and community services. Additionally, Minnesota has invested in ECFE by hiring and supporting two full time positions that provide program guidance and technical assistance for ECFE programs across the state.

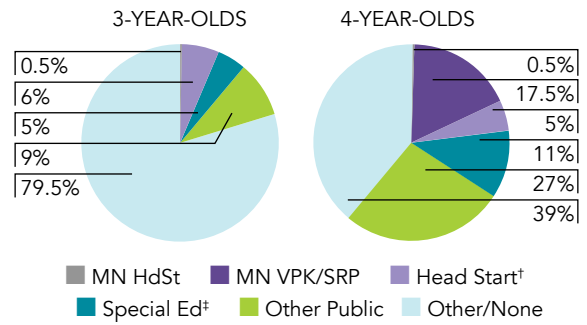
Minnesota’s overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for both Minnesota Head Start and VPK/SRP, is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses solely on Minnesota Head Start and the fourth page provides information on VPK/SRP.

MINNESOTA HEAD START

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	617
School districts that offer state program.....	100% (counties/parishes)
Income requirement.....	Per Federal Head Start: 100% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	Per Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (VPK/SRP).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	MN HDST 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 (public); AA (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	15 (3-year-olds); 20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	2:15 (3-year-olds); 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.

9

RESOURCES

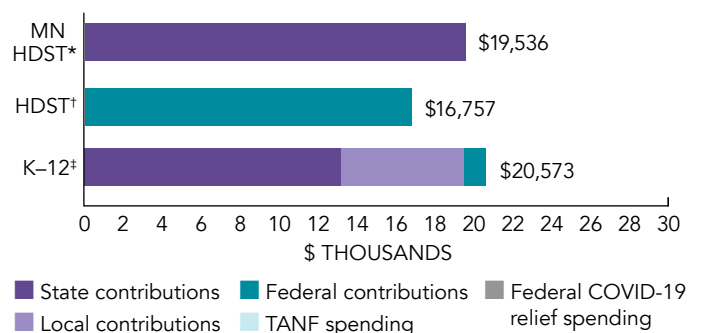
Total state pre-K spending	\$12,053,618
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$19,536
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$19,536

* 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

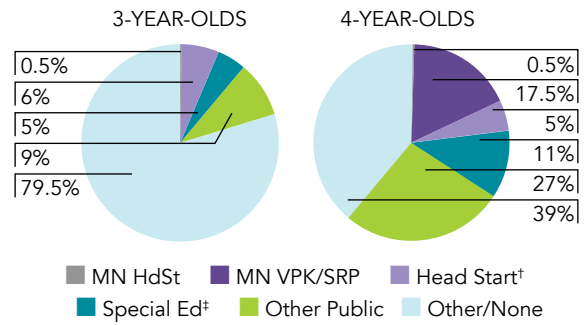


MINNESOTA VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN (VPK) AND SCHOOL READINESS PLUS (SRP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment 11,998
 School districts that offer state program 56% & 52% (charter schools with pre-K authorization)
 Income requirement 185% FPL (required for SRP; encouraged for VPK)
 Minimum hours of operation 350 instructional hours/school year
 Operating schedule School or academic year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (VPK/SRP).
 ‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	MN VPK/SRP 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	Other	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Other	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Determined locally	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	10 hours/year (all teachers & assistants); 125 hours/5 years (licensed teachers only); PD plans (teachers only); Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input 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 at the local level only	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

5

RESOURCES

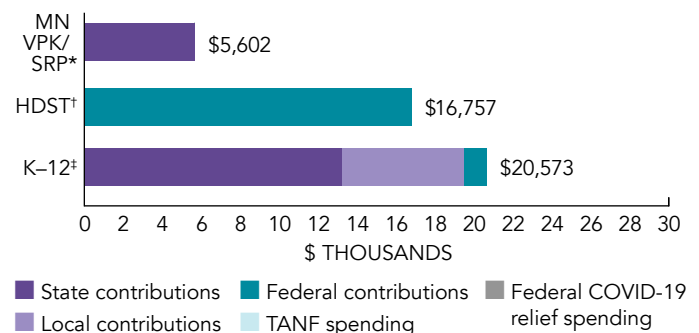
Total state pre-K spending \$67,206,922
 Local match required? No
 State spending per child enrolled \$5,602
 All reported spending per child enrolled* \$5,602

* 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.

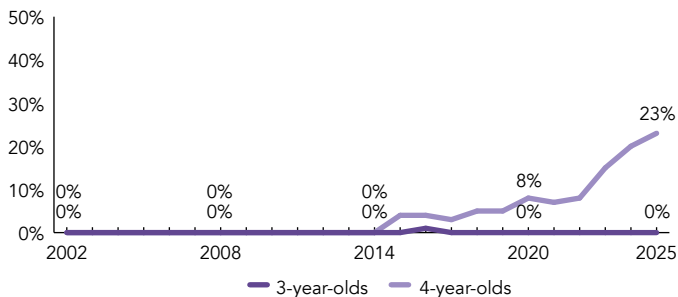
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

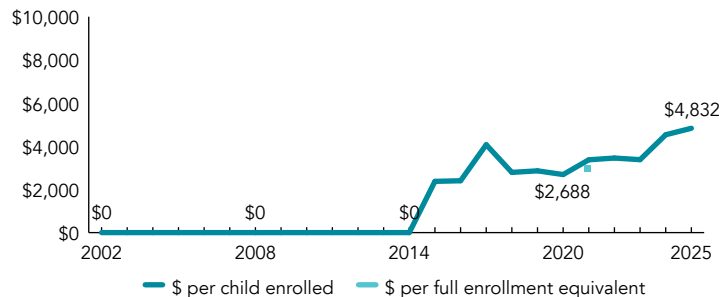


Mississippi

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Mississippi preschool enrolled 8,076 children, an increase of 931 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$39,017,901, and an additional \$4,394 in federal recovery funds supported the program, up \$6,638,190 (20%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including federal recovery funds) equaled \$4,832 in 2024-2025, up \$299 from 2023-2024 adjusted for inflation. Mississippi met an average of 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In 2024, Mississippi shifted funding from SIP to ELC, with level funding overall across the two programs. The funding was shifted because the ELC program reaches more children due to the mixed delivery model, while SIP is based only in public school classrooms. With the additional funding, the ELC program increased the funding per seat from \$2,500 to \$3,500 during the 2024-25 school year. However, despite the decrease in funding for SIP, program quality standards remained consistent.

During the 2024-2025 school year, the state changed the requirements for teacher assistants to assist with recruitment and retention. Going forward, teacher assistants must possess a high school diploma/GED, verification of WorkKeys scores, and 12 hours early childhood credit hours, or they must have a certificate of completion of an early childhood training program, pre-K Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, a Montessori certification, or an equivalent certification.

BACKGROUND

The Early Learning Collaborative (ELC) Act of 2013 established Mississippi's first state-funded, voluntary pre-K program. The ELC Act provides funding to local communities to establish, expand, support, and facilitate the successful implementation of quality early childhood education and development services. Implementation began in January 2014, with the capacity to serve 1,774 children. The program was initially funded at \$3 million per year and has expanded with additional funding to serve more children. As long as the ELC Act of 2013 is funded, current Collaboratives that meet program requirements will continue to be funded. Pre-K programs in Head Start centers, licensed child-care facilities, and public, parochial, or private schools formed and maintained stakeholder councils called ELCs, involving at least two program auspices.

During the 2022 legislative session, \$20 million was appropriated to fund additional preschool programs in school settings, specifically in the new State Invested Pre-K (SIP) Program. SIP classrooms are in public schools; however, these classrooms can include children who are dually enrolled in Head Start. Although this funding was received during the 2022-2023 program year, children were served in classrooms beginning in August 2023.

SIP provides funding per classroom rather than funding per student. Each SIP classroom receives \$100,000 to create or improve PreK-4 classrooms. In addition, for each SIP program that chooses to dually enroll students with a Head Start program, these programs receive an additional \$25,000 per classroom, totaling \$125,000 per classroom. Thus, the total funding per child, as presented in this report, may demonstrate an inflated per child funding amount. Classrooms in SIP programs vary in size; thus, if a classroom meets the standard operating requirements and is a part of SIP, that classroom receives the qualified amount of funding regardless of class enrollment. This is a unique feature of the SIP program that is different from the ELC, which is funded per child.

ELC and SIP intend to improve quality, increase access to high-quality pre-K programs for 4-year-olds, and prepare more children to enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school. These programs also support local programs in their efforts to improve pre-K quality and access. Pre-K programs also implement an integrated, effective system of early childhood curriculum, instruction, assessment, and program evaluation, which includes the utilization of evidence-based curricula aligned with the Mississippi Department of Education's Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Infants through Four-Year-Old Children.

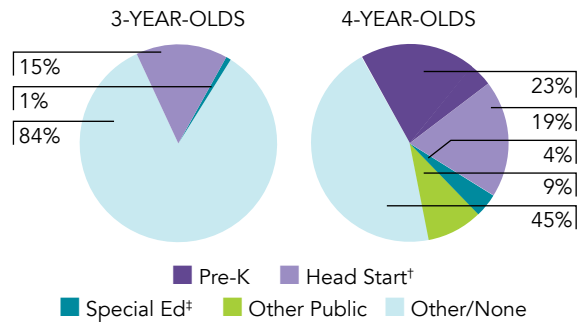
Mississippi's overall support for state-funded preschool is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on ELC and the fourth on SIP.

MISSISSIPPI STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	8,076
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,702
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	12,411
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

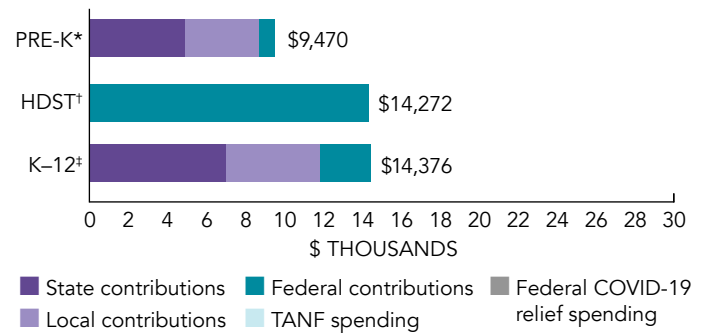


† Estimates children in Head Start not also enrolled in state pre-K.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$39,022,295
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$4,832
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,470

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
29	None Served

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
35	22

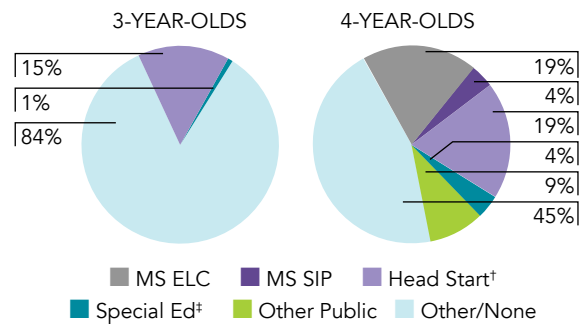
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
10

MISSISSIPPI EARLY LEARNING COLLABORATIVE (ELC)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	6,733
School districts that offer state program.....	34%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	4 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	MS ELC 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or 12 ECE credits	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; 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.



RESOURCES

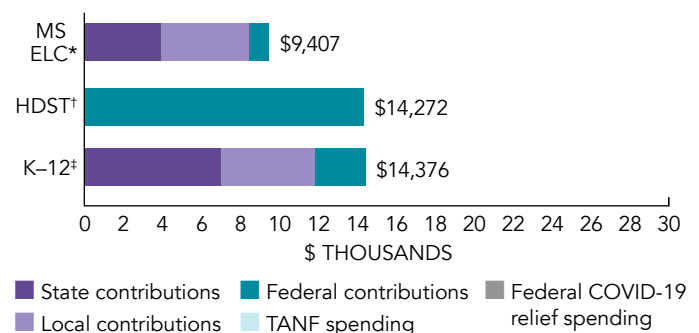
Total state pre-K spending	\$26,022,295
Local match required?.....	Yes
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,865
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,407

* 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

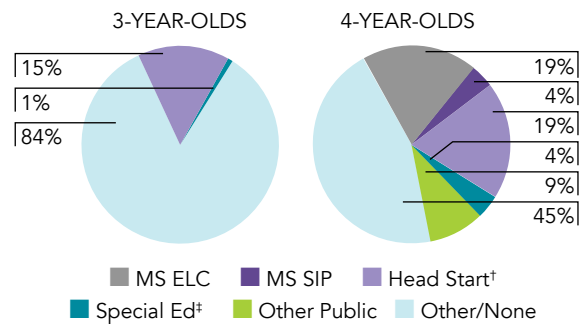


MISSISSIPPI STATE INVESTED PRE-KINDERGARTEN (SIP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,343
School districts that offer state program.....	17%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	4 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	MS SIP 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or 12 ECE credits	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; 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.

10

RESOURCES

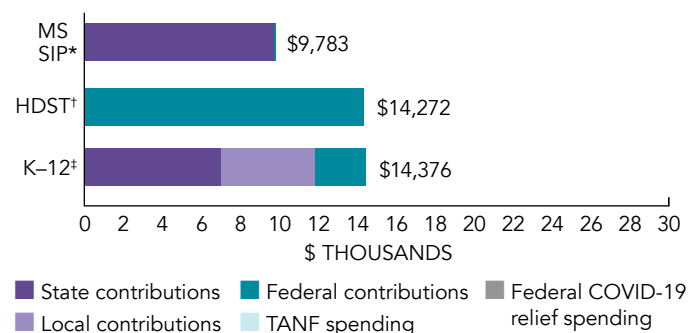
Total state pre-K spending	\$13,000,000
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$9,680
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,783

* 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.

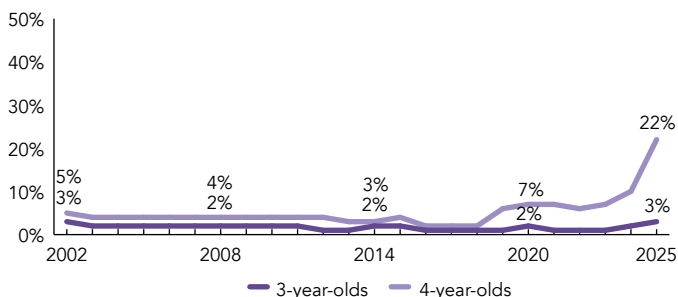
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

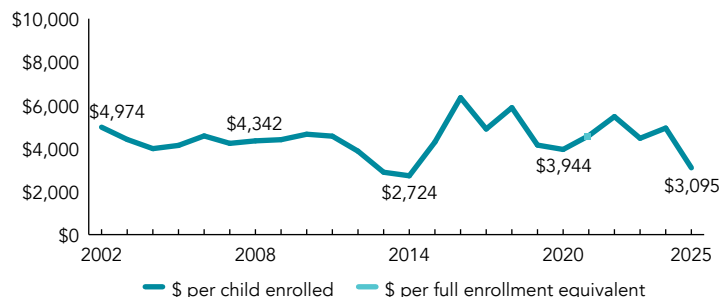


Missouri

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Missouri preschool enrolled 18,264 children, an increase of 9,468 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$56,524,225, up \$13,124,189 (30%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$3,095 in 2024-2025 down \$1,839 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Missouri met an average of 5.1 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Missouri continues to fund the Pre-K Foundation Formula at the current rate; however, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are able to claim 8% of their free- or reduced-price lunch eligible population for Pre-K students, an increase of 4% from the previous year. In 2024-2025, the Missouri Quality Prekindergarten (MOQPK) grant was in its second year and due to multiple rounds of funding there was an increase in participation by both LEAs and child care programs. Those participating in MOQPK must also participate in the Quality Assurance Report and demonstrate quality criteria within two years.

BACKGROUND

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, Missouri's LEAs were encouraged to use the Missouri Pre-K Foundation Formula fund for preschool. Most policy decisions are made by the LEAs, but programs must meet requirements around teacher to child ratios, teacher degrees and certification, and fiscal spending and reporting.

Previously, the Missouri Preschool Program (MPP), launched in 1998, served 3- and 4-year-olds in public schools, private child-care centers, and nonprofit agencies. Programs were required to work with the local Parents as Teachers program to provide parent education, family visits, group connections, health and development screenings, and services referrals. MPP was funded through the state's Tobacco Settlement Fund. Priority for funding was given to programs serving children with special needs or from low-income families. The 2020-2021 school year was the last year of operation for MPP.

In 2023-2024, the state implemented an additional preschool program, Missouri Quality Preschool (MOQPK), which provided funding for both public schools and licensed private child care centers and preschools, unlike the state's other pre-K program, Pre-K Foundation Formula that only operates in public schools. All MOQPK classrooms are observed every two years using CLASS. Lead teachers are required to have at least 18 college credits in early childhood education or child development and participate in coaching and complete 18 clock hours per year of professional development. Teaching assistants are required to have a CDA or nine college credit hours in ECE or child development.

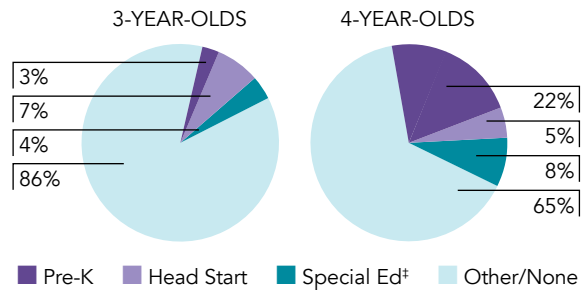
Missouri's overall support for state-funded preschool is depicted on the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on the Missouri Pre-K Foundation Formula program and the fourth page focuses on the Missouri Quality Preschool Grant (MOQPK).

MISSOURI STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	18,264
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	11,923
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,797
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

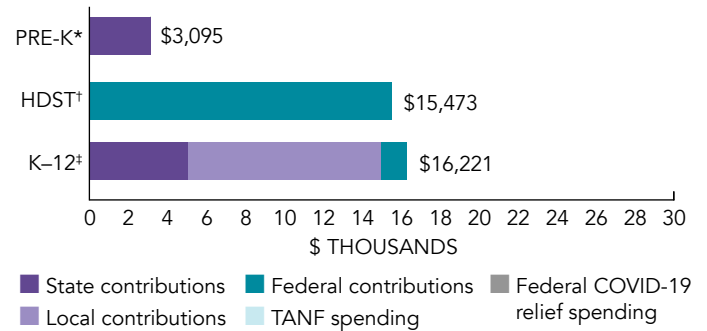


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
 † Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$56,524,225
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,095
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$3,095

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
30	28

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
42	44

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
5.1

MISSOURI PRE-K FOUNDATION FORMULA

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment 8,417

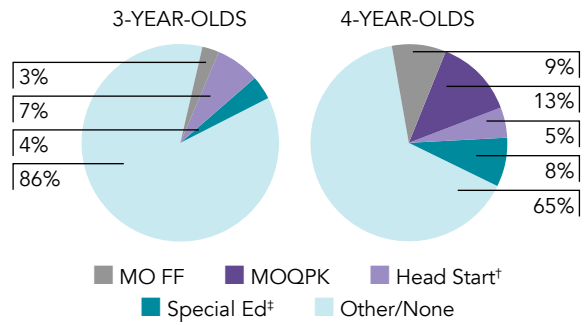
School districts that offer state program 38% (public school districts); 65% (charter schools)

Income requirement 185% FPL

Minimum hours of operation Determined locally

Operating schedule School or academic year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	MO FF 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year (teachers years 1-4); 15 hours/year (teachers year 5 until exempt); PD plans and Coaching (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	No limit (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	None	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	None	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

4

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending \$27,145,256

Local match required? No

State Head Start spending \$0

State spending per child enrolled \$3,225

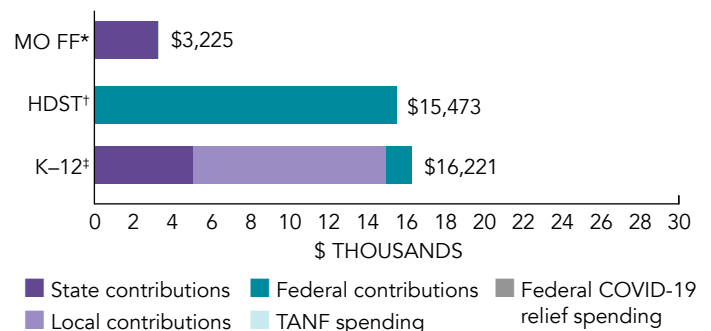
All reported spending per child enrolled* \$3,225

* 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

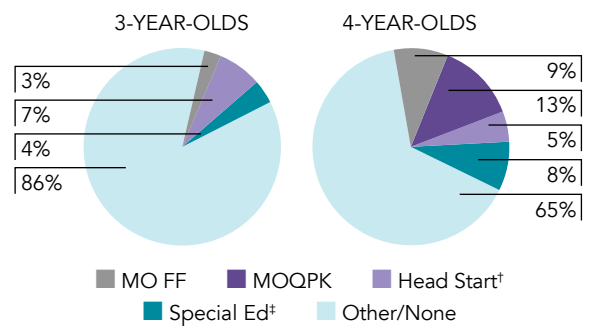


MISSOURI QUALITY PRESCHOOL GRANT (MOQPK)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	9,847
School districts that offer state program.....	34% (LEAs)
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	3 hours/day
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	MOQPK 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	AA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	18 ECE/CD credits	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or 9 ECE/CD credit hours	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	18 hours/year; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input 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	Developmental; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

6

RESOURCES

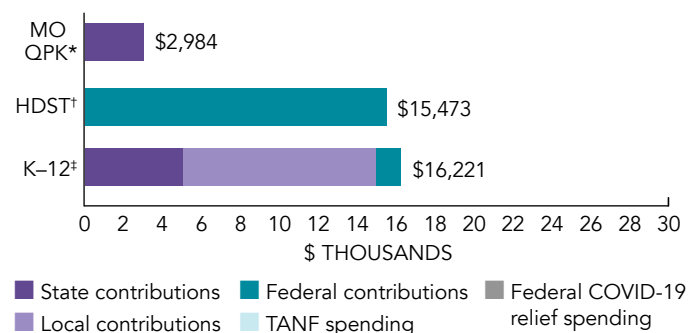
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$29,378,969
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$2,984
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$2,984

* 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



NO PROGRAM

Montana does not currently operate a public preschool program that meets the definitions used in this report. However, when funding has been available to advance the early childhood system, initiatives have impacted preschool-age children.

In 2023, the Montana legislature passed the Early Literacy Targeted Intervention Act, which is designed to increase the number of students reading proficiently by third grade through early childhood interventions. The bill was expanded during the 2025 legislative session to include numeracy skills. In 2025, the state legislature allocated \$12,732,256 for the early literacy and numeracy programs that serve children in public schools during the school year and/or the summer prior to Kindergarten entry. In 2024-2025, 2,025 students across 89 districts participated in school-year classroom-based programming, and 255 students across 20 districts participated in the summer Jumpstart program. Students are eligible to attend the programs based on their scores on an approved list of screening assessments. School districts select the screening tools and the threshold rate based on student abilities and district capacity.

In December 2022, Montana was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) three-year renewal grant for \$8 million annually. Utilizing \$3.2 million of the funding in 2025, Montana offered early childhood professionals an opportunity to apply for mini-grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000, depending on program type and focus area. The funds are intended to extend child care hours and to expand and/or enhance services to infants and toddlers or children with special needs.

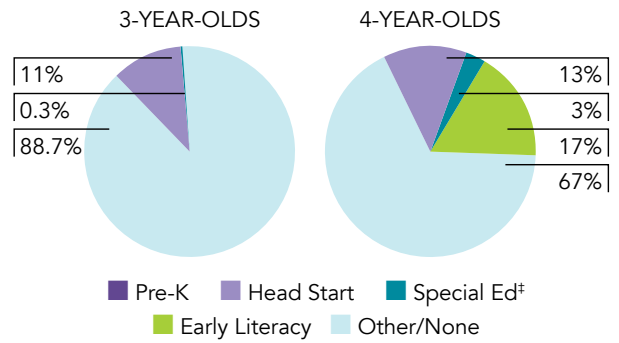
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
None Served		None Served		No Program

MONTANA

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	786
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,670
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

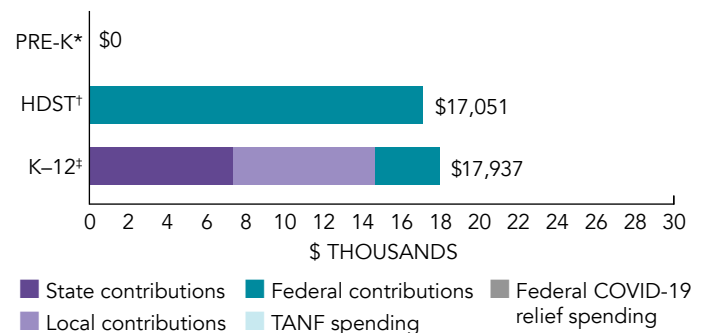
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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.

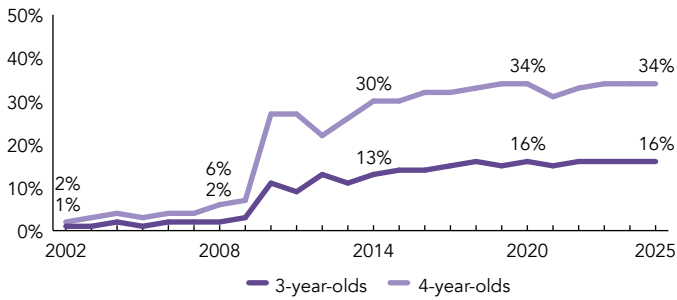
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

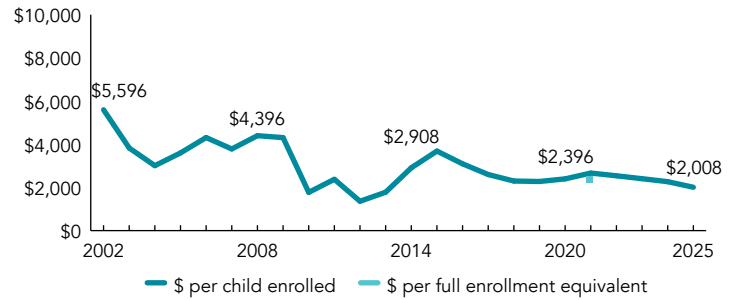


Nebraska

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Nebraska preschool enrolled 13,212 children, a decrease of 20 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$26,532,334, down \$3,448,914 (12%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$2,008 in 2024-2025, down \$258 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Nebraska met 6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In December 2025, Nebraska was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$4,036,709 to support system building and strengthen ECE programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

Nebraska is expected to face a significant budget shortfall in 2025. This has the potential to decrease funding for early childhood education and care support across the state, including preschool grant funds, and state agency staff.

In 2024, legislation was passed to allow districts to enroll kindergarten-eligible children in pre-K until they reach the compulsory attendance age. In response to this change, districts are in the process of creating and implementing policies, and the state will revise the policies and rules for this program.

BACKGROUND

The Nebraska Early Childhood Education Program began as a pilot program in 1992 and expanded in 2001, providing preschool education for children ages three to five. Direct financial support is available on a competitive basis for public schools and education service units that partner with childcare centers, Head Start agencies and/or human services agencies. Grantees are required to match 100% of the funding with local and/or federal sources.

At least 70% of the children in the program must have at least one of the following risk factors: disability or developmental delay, living in a home in which English is not the primary language, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch (185% FPL), having teen parents or parents who have not completed high school, or having been born prematurely or with a low birth weight.

Most programs operate 3.5 to 4 hours per day, four or five days per week and must operate for a minimum of 12 hours per week during the school year. All teachers in the Nebraska Early Childhood Education Program are required to have at least a bachelor's degree and training in early childhood education. The program monitors child, program, and family outcomes annually.

While the Early Childhood Education Grant Program has expanded, many districts and education service units fund their early childhood programs without the use of state grants yet follow the same regulations as the grant program. Those programs are also included in this report.

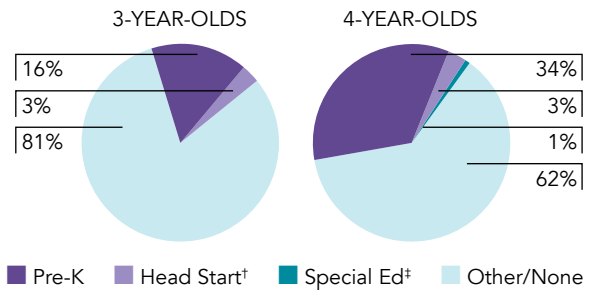
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
23	11	45	13	6

NEBRASKA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	13,212
School districts that offer state program	94%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	12 hours/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,116
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,978
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	NE 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, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA, K-6 Endorsement, 6 credits in CD or ECE, or previous experience	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching (teachers participating in the Pyramid model)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Determined locally	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations per state rubric; Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

6

RESOURCES

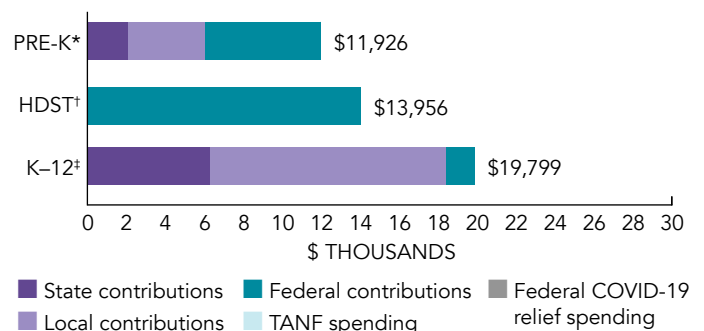
Total state pre-K spending	\$26,532,334
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$2,008
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$11,926

* 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.

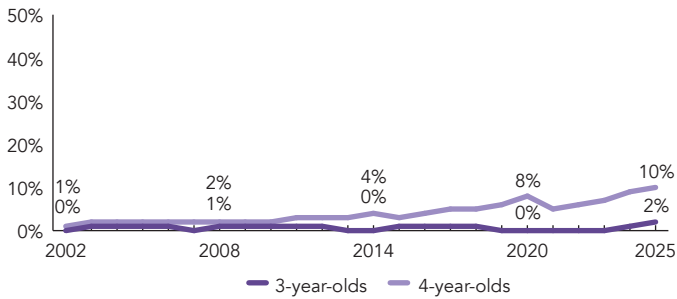
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

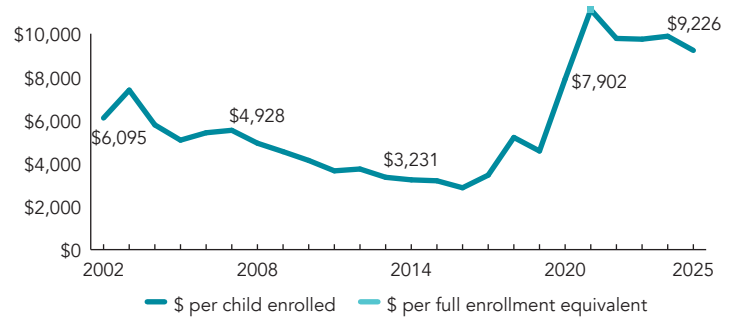


Nevada

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Nevada preschool enrolled 4,288 children, an increase of 682 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$37,103,037, and an additional \$2,457,858 in federal recovery funds supported the program, up \$3,923,860 (11%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including federal recovery funds) equaled \$9,226 in 2024-2025, down \$657 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Nevada met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The 2023 Legislative session passed the Early Childhood Innovation Literacy Program (ECILP) to expand and enhance a literacy program for children under the age of six. The \$70 million allocated funds were used to increase access to State Pre-K through expanding income eligibility and including 3-year-olds, early literacy-related innovations and interventions, and funding for infrastructure needs related to serving students under 6-years-old. The last year ECILP was funded was 2024-2025, making 3-year-olds no longer eligible for state-funded pre-K.

In December 2022, Nevada was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) renewal grant for \$10 million. Funds are being used for a variety of activities including funding a pilot program which will allow family child care homes to participate in state-funded preschool.

BACKGROUND

The Nevada Ready! State Pre-K (NR!PK) (formerly known as the Nevada State Pre-Kindergarten Program) began in 2001. Programs operate in both community-based organizations and school districts. During the 2024-2025 school year, NR!PK operated in 12 LEAs (2 with ECILP funding), 3 Nevada Institutions of Higher Education (NSHE), and 4 CBOs. In total, 13 of 17 counties offer State Pre-K. The Office of Early Learning and Development (OELD) within the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) is responsible for administering multiple early childhood state and federal funding sources, including State Pre-K. Beginning in 2019-2020, pre-K funds were no longer awarded through competitive grants but were instead distributed to existing school districts or programs based on the previous year's final expenditures.

Districts and programs determine eligibility based on highest need, which can include children from low-income families, those who are homeless, English Language Learners, or children receiving special education services. NR!PK eligibility is set at 200% of FPL based on the 2018 Preschool Development Grant (PDG) initial grant requirements. All students in the NR!PK program must meet eligibility requirements. However, programs and classrooms that braid funds may serve students from multiple program funding sources within the same classroom.

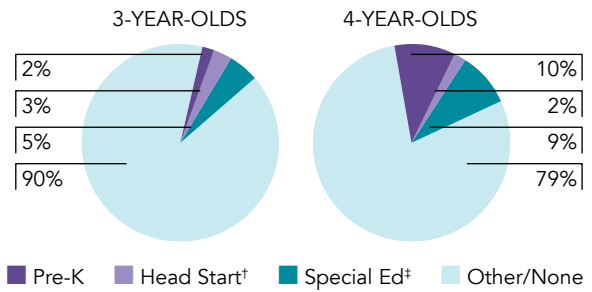
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
41	29	12	23	7

NEVADA READY! STATE PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	4,288
School districts that offer state program	71% (LEAs), 4 community-based organizations
Income requirement	200% FPL (NR!PK); 250% FPL (ECILP)
Minimum hours of operation	5 hours/day or 25 hours/week
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	5,029
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,122
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	NV 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 (public); BA (waiver if enrolled in TEACH, nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 years (public); 24 hours/year (nonpublic)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.

7

RESOURCES

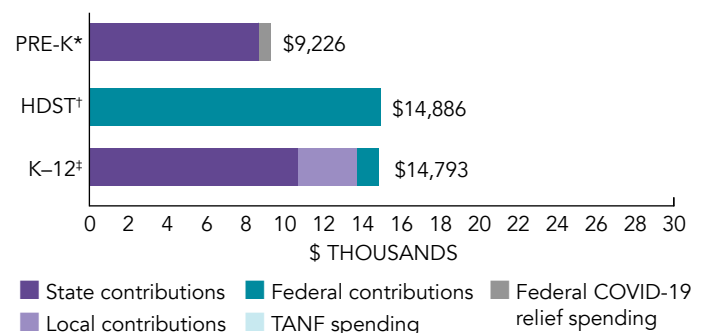
Total state pre-K spending	\$39,560,895
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$9,226
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,226

* 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



New Hampshire

NO PROGRAM

New Hampshire's approach to early childhood education is rooted in local control and flexibility, allowing communities to design preschool programs that best meet their needs. Rather than a state funded universal pre-K system, New Hampshire supports a diverse mixed delivery model that includes public school programs, private early learning providers, Head Start, Early Head Start, community-based partnerships, family childcare, and group family childcare. This decentralized approach enables school districts and communities to leverage multiple funding sources, including Title I, IDEA Part B, local taxpayer supported initiatives, and tuition-based models, ensuring that families have a variety of preschool options. The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) plays a key role in licensing early childhood programs and administering preschool scholarships through childcare assistance programs for low-income families. Meanwhile, the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHED) oversees early childhood special education programming, ensuring that preschool services align with federal IDEA Part B requirements while allowing local districts to expand access beyond special education services.

In the 2023 -2024 school year, 144 public school preschool programs were identified, serving approximately 5,067 children (about 20% of the state's 3- and 4-year-olds). While IDEA Part B funding ensures that preschool is available for children with identified disabilities, 129 of these programs also serve children without an IEP, demonstrating the state's commitment to expanding access through multiple pathways. Many districts have found creative solutions to increase preschool availability, including tuition-based models, public-private partnerships, and voter-approved local funding. This flexibility allows communities to offer part-day, full-day and five day per week options, with 38% of programs providing five-day preschool and 15% offering full day programming. While availability varies by district, the state's local control approach gives communities the ability to tailor early childhood education offerings to best fit family needs and local resources. As New Hampshire continues to strengthen its early learning system, NHED remains committed to supporting districts, expanding funding strategies, and ensuring that families have access to a variety of high-quality preschool options that reflect New Hampshire's values of local governance and family choice.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
None Served	

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
None Served	

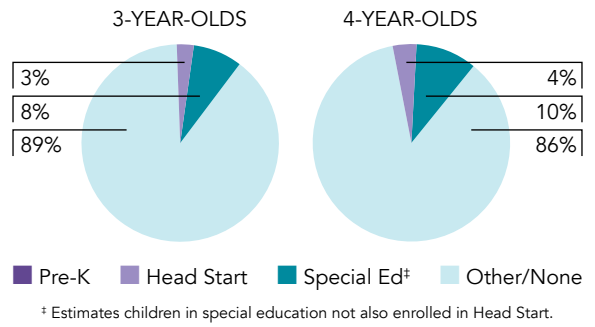
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
No Program

NEW HAMPSHIRE

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,393
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	871
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

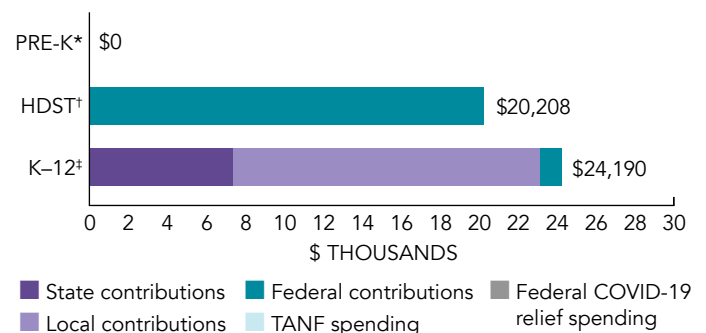
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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.

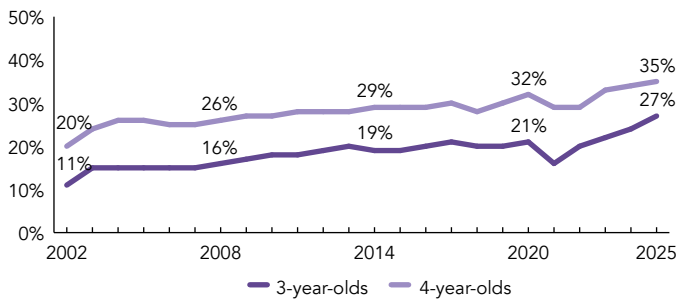
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

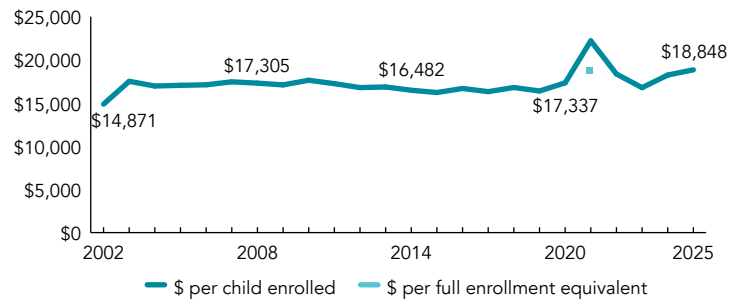


New Jersey

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, New Jersey preschool enrolled 65,365 children, an increase of 3,497 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$1,231,974,000, up \$103,290,612 (9%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$18,848 in 2024-2025, up \$604 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. New Jersey met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

New Jersey continued to expand its state preschool program, supported by increased state investment and new statutory commitments. Governor Murphy allocated an additional \$10 million in funding, allowing 18 more local education agencies to participate in preschool expansion, and provided pathways for districts previously funded through Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) and the Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI) to transition into the expansion program as those programs sunsetted. In July 2025, the Universal Preschool and Kindergarten Expansion Law was enacted, codifying the preschool funding formula in statute, requiring annual preschool expansion awards from the New Jersey Department of Education, launching a three-year cost-sharing pilot to support districts, mandating statewide full-day kindergarten by 2030, and establishing a Preschool Expansion Steering Committee to guide implementation.

A new round of PDG B-5 Systems Building Grants were awarded to support states in building systems and strengthening their ECE programs that expand parental choice in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs. New Jersey received \$3,250,719 in this latest round.

BACKGROUND

New Jersey's largest and most intensive program, formerly known as the Abbott Preschool Program, was originally established under a 1998 New Jersey Supreme Court mandate to serve all 3- and 4-year-olds in 31 of the state's lowest income school districts. Since 2018, the state has expanded the program to include almost 300 school districts that are approved to expand their preschool programs to meet Abbott standards. The New Jersey Department of Education funds these districts to provide a full-day program to resident 3- and 4-year olds, with the goal of growing to reach 90% of the preschool-age population. The original 31 Abbott districts are required to contract with licensed private child care centers or Head Start programs that meet state standards. All other districts are required to contract with willing and able Head Start agencies, and encouraged to contract with private child care.

As noted above, the state is in the process of phasing out the ECPA and ELLI programs, which now operate in less than a dozen school districts.

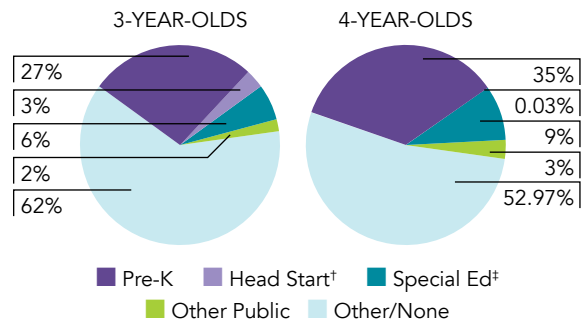
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
21	3	2	2	9

NEW JERSEY PRESCHOOL EXPANSION PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	65,365
School districts that offer state program	49%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	6 hours/day (Abbott/Expansion), 2.5 hours/day (ECPA & ELLI); 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	16,682
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	9,082
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	NJ 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	100 hours/5 years; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	15 (Abbott/Expansion); 18 (ECPA); 20 (ELLI)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	2:15 (Abbott/Expansion); 1:9 (ECPA); 1:10 (ELLI)	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.

9

RESOURCES

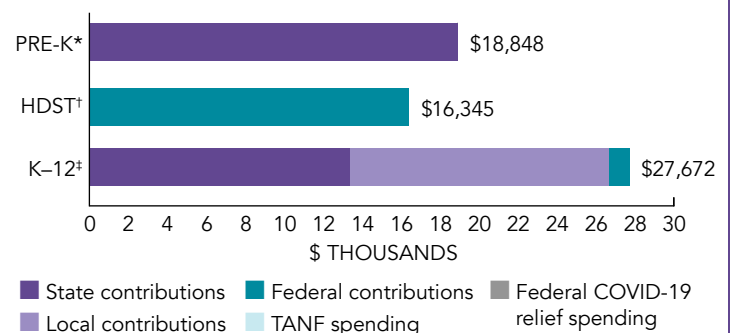
Total state pre-K spending	\$1,231,974,000
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$55,687,429
State spending per child enrolled	\$18,848
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$18,848

* 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.

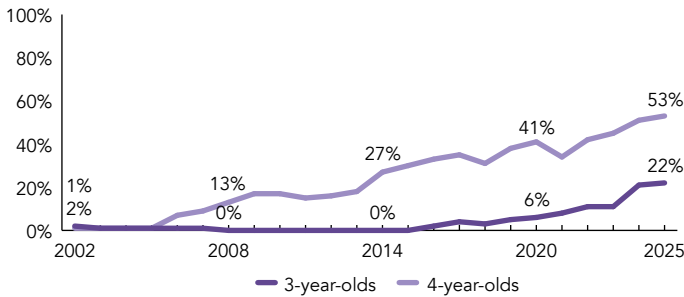
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

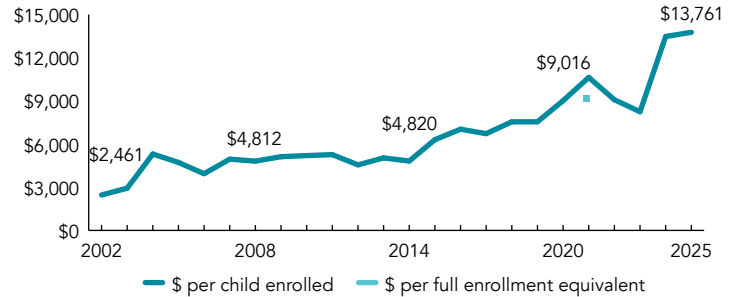


New Mexico

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, New Mexico PreK programs enrolled 16,429 children, an increase of 334 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$226,084,608, up \$9,246,573 (4%), adjusted for inflation, from the prior year. State spending per child equaled \$13,761 in 2024-2025, up \$289 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. New Mexico met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) funded 255 school-based and 330 community-based sites (home- and center-based), for a total of 585 NM PreK sites throughout the state. Additionally, ECECD awarded PreK funds to Head Start and Tribal Head Start grantees that blend these funding streams to provide early care and education to 3- and 4-year-olds in their communities.

ECECD piloted the NM PreK Executive Function Program in the spring of 2025 utilizing the Minnesota Executive Function Scale. The pilot assessment was administered in 50 NM PreK classrooms, with 617 children across 19 programs during March and April 2025. During the pilot period, NM PreK administrators and educators also received professional development training in executive function and strategies to support developing these skills in their classrooms. Full implementation of the Executive Function Program in NM PreK began in the 2025-2026 school year.

BACKGROUND

NM PreK launched in the 2005-2006 school year with the enactment of the Pre-Kindergarten Act. With the passage of the Early Childhood Education and Care Department Act in 2019, the program is now administered by ECECD, which funds and monitors NM PreK programs in both school-and community based settings. In the 2024-2025 school year, 94% of school districts, 10 charter schools, and 6 Tribal Programs offered NM PreK.

NM PreK funding is awarded through a competitive grant process, with priority given to programs in communities with public elementary schools designated as Title I. Two-thirds of enrolled children at each program site must live in the attendance zone of a Title I elementary school, though eligibility is not determined by family income.

The number of hours and days per week varies by program, with a minimum of 540 hours per year. In 2023-2024, the minimum hours for full-day NM PreK increased from 900 to 1,080 and the extended-plus program option provided a minimum of 1,380 hours over the full calendar year. In 2024-2025, 97% of all children enrolled were in a full-day Pre-K program. Some families access child care assistance funding to support wraparound care.

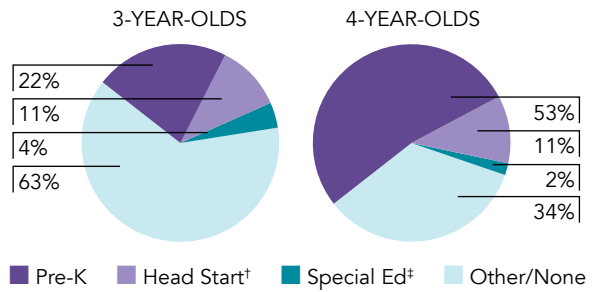
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
11	7	5	7	9

NEW MEXICO PREK

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	16,429
School districts that offer.....	94%, 10 Charter state program Schools, & 6 Tribal Programs
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	3 hours/day
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	3,754
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	5,570
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	NM 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 in ECE (public); Working toward BA in ECE (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd (public); ECE, CD (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	AA in ECE	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	24 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	16 (3-year-olds); 20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:8 (3-year-olds); 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.

9

RESOURCES

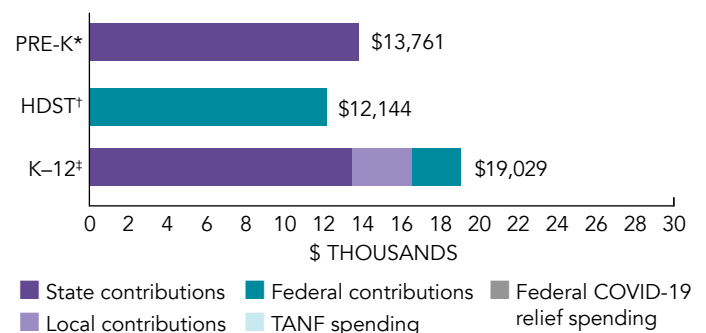
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$226,084,608
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$4,791,968
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$13,761
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$13,761

* 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.

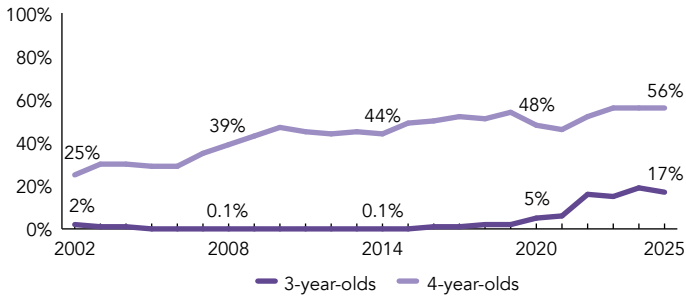
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

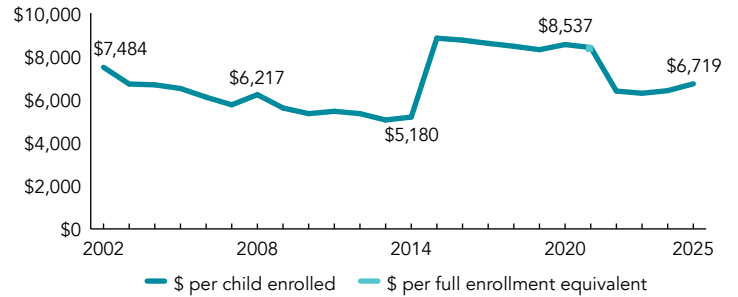


New York

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, New York preschool enrolled 153,004 children, a decrease of 5,952 from the prior year. However, a higher percentage of children enrolled in full-day preschool. State spending totaled \$1,028,061,297, an increase of \$10,409,156 (1%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$6,719 in 2024-2025, up \$317 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. New York met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Federal recovery funds ended for New York in 2023-2024. These funds rolled into State Universal PreK allocations to further enhance prekindergarten services across NY. Designed with equity at its core, New York's Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) program is free to all families based solely on age and residency, creating an expansive and inclusive educational landscape.

Purposeful Move Toward PreK Universality: The New York State Board of Regents priority is to provide truly universal prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-old children by 2035. Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, an annual review of school district curriculum and instructional practices in reading for students in prekindergarten through grade three is required. All NYS public school districts must ensure that curriculum and instruction are aligned with the literacy instructional best practices provided.

Steps to Align UPK and Childcare Systems: To better understand the relationship between district and community-based partners who collaborate to deliver prekindergarten services, NY State Education Department's (NYSED) Office of Early Learning (OEL) and NYS's Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Division of Child Care Services convened a UPK Collaboration Council.

BACKGROUND

In 1998, NY began its UPK with the goal of making prekindergarten education available to all 4-year-olds in the state. In 2007, the Targeted Prekindergarten Program merged with UPK. In 2013-2014, the state continued targeting its PreK funding, launching the New York State Priority Prekindergarten Program (NYSPPK), offering competitive grants for new full- and half-day slots for high-need children in low-income school districts and enabling districts to convert half-day slots to full-day. In 2014-2015, the SUFDPK competitive grant for full-day pre-K was launched. Most of this funding (\$300 million) went to New York City; \$40 million was used to expand full-day pre-K in the rest of the state. In 2015-2016, the Expanded Prekindergarten for 3- and 4-Year-Old Students grant began, creating new slots for 3- and 4-year-olds. NYS shifted focus to full-day programs and 95% of children were in full-day programs in 2024-2025.

The NY Board of Regents adopted revised comprehensive, multi-domain early learning standards in 2021, which are aligned with state's K-3 Learning Standards, state college and career ready standards, and the NY State Common Core Learning Standards. In 2012, the state also implemented a voluntary QRIS (QUALITYstarsNY). In 2017-2018, all districts receiving state pre-K funds were required to adopt approved quality indicators within two years, such as valid and reliable measures of environmental quality, quality of teacher-student interactions, and child outcomes. The NYS Pre-K Self-Assessment documents districts' progress in implementing the approved quality indicators. Districts develop Quality Improvement Action Plans to assess strengths and weaknesses. SED staff review plans and provide feedback to inform technical assistance and monitoring. All prekindergarten programs are required to adopt and implement curricula that contain key skill areas for 21st Century Learners that align with the full articulation of the NYS P-12 Next Generation Learning Standards. All districts are required to submit action plans to outline their Prekindergarten programming for the current school year in annual applications.

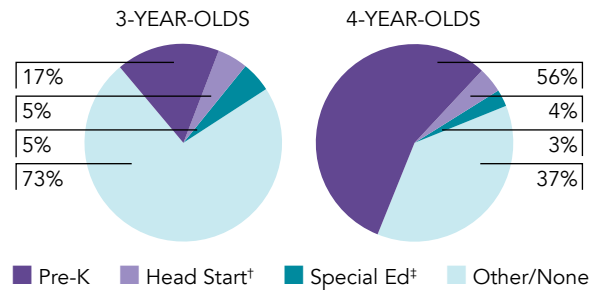
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
9	9	21	4	7*

NEW YORK STATE ADMINISTERED PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	153,004
School districts that offer state program	93%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	49,732
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	23,408
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	NY 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Level I Teaching Assistant Certificate (public); HSD (nonpublic)	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	175 hours/5 years (teachers only); Coaching (first year public school teachers only)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:9 (3- & 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	Annual structured classroom observations; Data used at the local level only	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

* Indicates that while policy meets the benchmark, it is not being implemented fully.

7*

RESOURCES

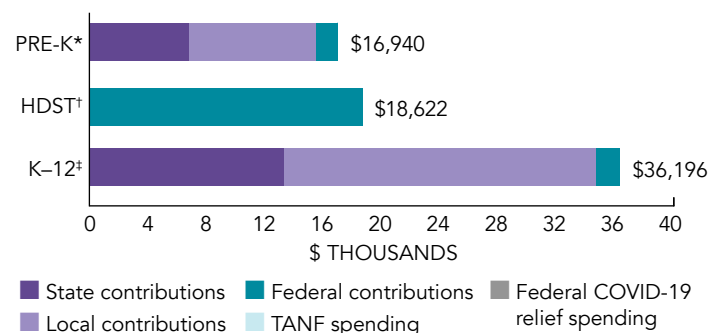
Total state pre-K spending	\$1,028,061,297
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,719
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$16,940

* 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.

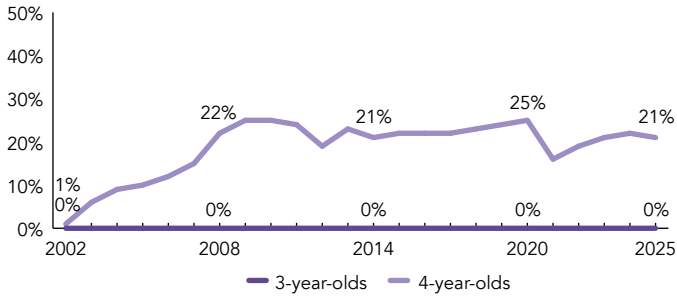
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

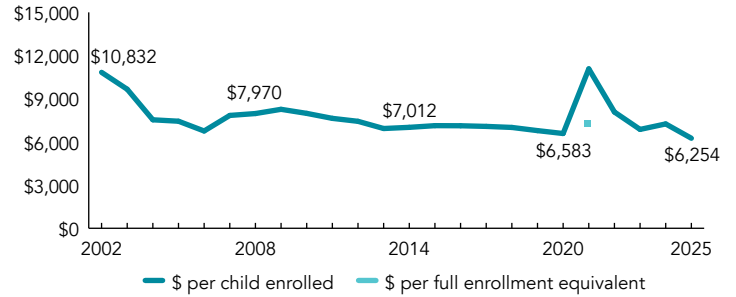


North Carolina

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, North Carolina preschool enrolled 26,707 children, a decrease of 597 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$98,840,868 and \$68,186,143 in TANF funds also supported the program, down \$30,896,434 (16%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including TANF funds) equaled \$6,254 in 2024-2025, down \$995 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. North Carolina met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In September 2024, North Carolina was one of 10 states, and D.C. awarded a 3-year federal renewal Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG B-5) totaling \$9,000,000 annually. PDG B-5 builds on past successes to enhance the state's early care and learning network through strengthening ECE programs in its mixed delivery system, supporting the ECE workforce, increasing family involvement in ECE programs, improving ECE program quality, expanding access to early childhood services, and creating seamless learning experiences from birth to kindergarten.

BACKGROUND

North Carolina has provided state-funded pre-kindergarten education since 2001, originally via the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program. In 2011-2012, the program was renamed the North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) Program, and administrative control moved from the Department of Public Instruction to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). NC Pre-K enrolls at-risk 4-year-olds from low-income families who have not participated in other early childhood programs. NC Pre-K programs are required to operate 6.5 hours per day for 36 weeks each year and serve as many eligible children as funding levels permit. Eligibility requires children to be in a household with income at or below 75% SMI, but up to 20% of children may be in a household with a higher income if they have another designated risk factor such as a developmental delay or identified disability, a chronic health condition, or limited English proficiency.

Funding for NC Pre-K includes state general appropriations and North Carolina Education Lottery receipts, federal funds, and a local contribution, with the majority of funding from the state. NC Pre-K classrooms operate statewide in settings such as privately licensed Head Start programs, childcare centers, and public schools. All programs, whether in public or private settings, must earn high quality ratings under the state child-care licensing system to participate in NC Pre-K and the state's subsidy system. NC Pre-K sets a maximum class size of 20 four-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:10. Lead teachers must have a bachelor's degree and hold or be working towards a birth-through-kindergarten license. Classroom staff are required to use approved curricula and formative assessments aligned with the state's early learning standards. Staff conduct ongoing formative assessments to gather information about each child's growth and skill development, as well as to inform instruction.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
32	None Served

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
27	26

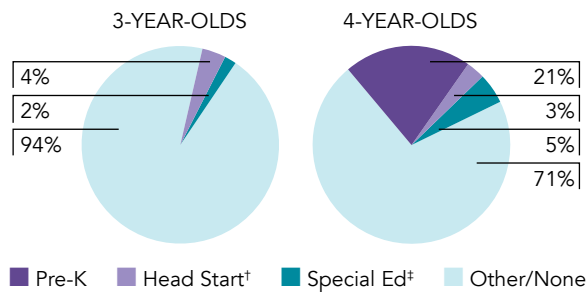
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
9*

NORTH CAROLINA PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	26,707
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties)
Income requirement	75% SMI
Minimum hours of operation	6.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	12,141
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	12,742
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	NC 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or AA in ECE or CD	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	5-20 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input 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.

* Indicates that while policy meets the benchmark, it is not being implemented fully.

9*

RESOURCES

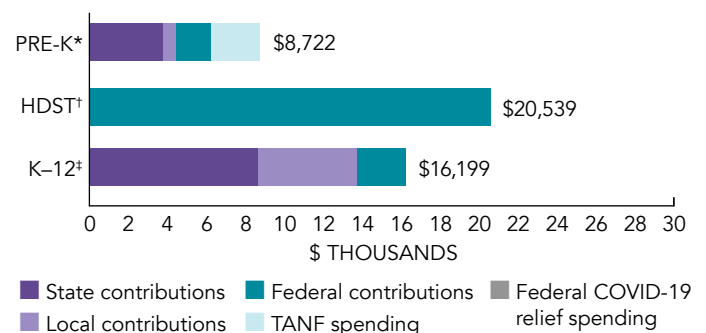
Total state pre-K spending	\$167,027,011
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,254
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$8,722

* 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.

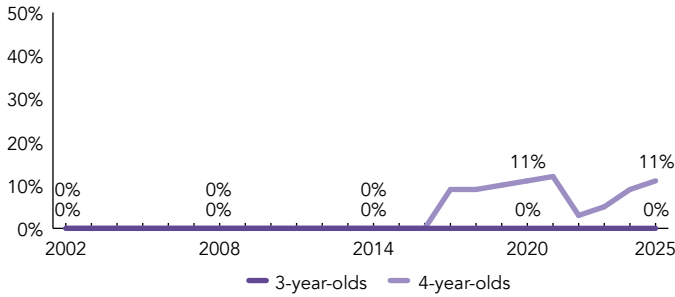
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

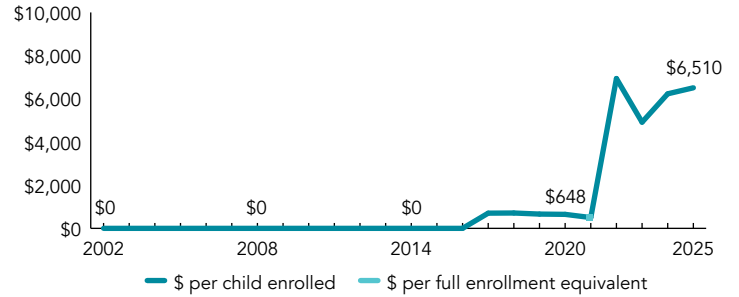


North Dakota

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, North Dakota Best in Class enrolled 1,076 children, an increase of 180 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$7,005,089, up \$1,421,869 (25%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. Spending per child equaled \$6,510 in 2024-2025, up \$279 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. North Dakota met 5 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 69th Legislative Assembly, North Dakota appropriated an additional \$4 million to expand the Best in Class preschool program, supporting continued growth in access to state-funded early learning. The legislature also approved funding to provide infant and toddler quality bonuses for all children birth to three years served in Bright & Early North Dakota-rated programs, extending these incentives beyond families enrolled in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).

BACKGROUND

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, North Dakota's legislature provided Early Childhood Education Program Grants through a biennial appropriation to the state Department of Commerce. The program provided services in 55 districts for at least 400 hours over 32 weeks per year. All program providers were required to incorporate at least 10 hours of research-based parent involvement activities. Four-year-old children who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch were eligible for the program. The program sunsetted after the 2020-2021 school year.

The 2021 Legislative Assembly authorized the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services to pilot Best in Class, North Dakota's year before kindergarten experience program, utilizing ESSER public emergency funding. The program is intended to serve at least 50% of children who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, come from families with incomes less than 60% of North Dakota's SMI, or have an identified developmental delay or disability. Funding is based on an annual competitive grant to public schools, Head Start, and licensed child care participating in the QRIS.

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) had other early childhood education initiatives as well, including grant opportunities for educators and school districts. Early Childhood Continuing Education Grants of up to \$3,000 every two years enable lead and assistant teachers in pre-kindergarten, Head Start, and child care to enhance their credentials at North Dakota state colleges and universities. Additionally, 1,000 pre-K students participated in Waterford Upstart, an at-home early learning program funded by North Dakota Health and Human Services.

The North Dakota Early Learning Standards Birth-Kindergarten, revised in 2018, are voluntary and cover multiple domains including social-emotional development, language development, physical well-being and motor development, approaches toward learning, and cognitive and general knowledge. The standards are aligned with the state's kindergarten standards and the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework.

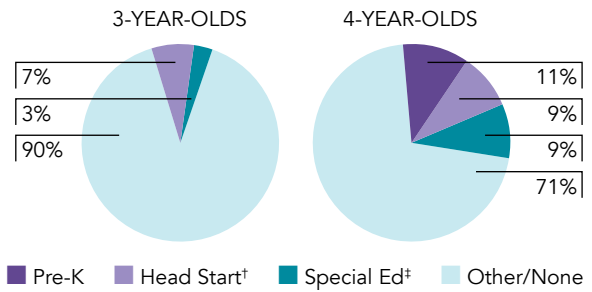
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
40	None Served	23	32	5

NORTH DAKOTA BEST IN CLASS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,076
School districts that offer state program.....	58% (counties)
Income requirement... 185% FPL, 60% SMI, or Child Care Assistance	
Minimum hours of operation.....	3 hours/day; 400 hours/year
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	1,588
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	1,644
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	ND 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 (public); Other (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, Elem. Ed., ECE SpEd (public); ECE, Elem. Ed. with K credential, Other (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year (teachers); PD varies by setting (assistants); PD plans (all public teachers & some nonpublic teachers); Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input 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	Site visits	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

5

RESOURCES

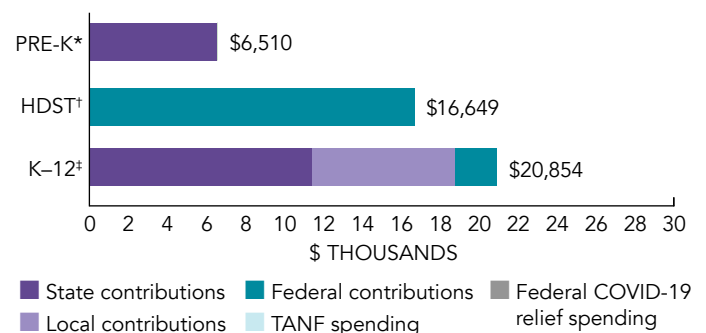
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$7,005,089
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$6,510
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$6,510

* 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.

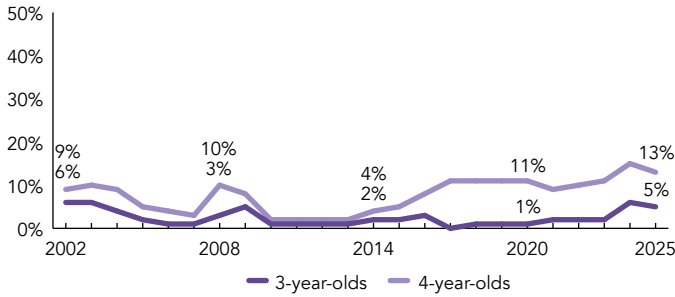
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

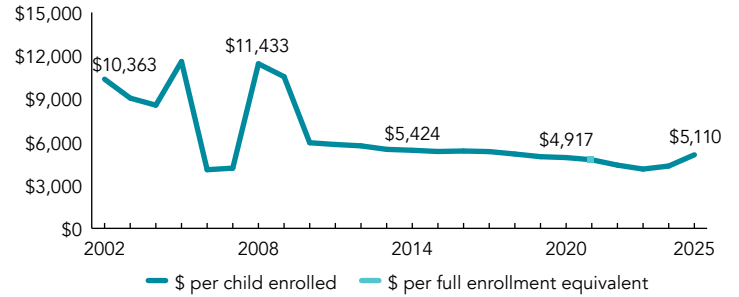


Ohio

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Ohio preschool enrolled 23,594 children, a decrease of 4,550 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$120,573,483, down \$1,257,827 (1%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$5,110 in 2024-2025, up \$781 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Ohio met 5 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In 2024, six state agencies were consolidated into the new Ohio Department of Children & Youth (DCY), creating a single agency responsible for all licensed preschool programs and all state-funded Pre-K grantees. A central part of DCY's mission is improving kindergarten readiness statewide through strengthening preschool quality and expanding access for families.

The revised Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) program standards in 2024 introduced an important change to curriculum requirements: at all rating levels, programs must obtain and implement a comprehensive, research-based assessment aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) and the Science of Reading (SOR) for all infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children. To assist providers, DCY has released an approved list of curriculum options and has made one of the approved curricula available free of charge to interested programs.

During 2024-2025, the state shifted to a centralized eligibility process with one unified application for all Early Care and Education Services. Under this approach, families were assessed for eligibility across multiple programs, including Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC), Child Care Choice Voucher Program (CCVP), and the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Grant, and were placed into the program that best matched their needs and offered the most comprehensive services.

BACKGROUND

The Ohio Public Preschool Program (PSP), established in 1990 following a four-year pilot program, strives to ensure children have access to quality programs through public preschool and publicly funded childcare. All types of programs have access to both public preschool and childcare funds. This report focuses on the Department of Children and Youth's publicly funded Early Childhood Education Grant (ECE Grant) program, formally administered by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, excluding publicly funded child care and Head Start programs. In 2023, the state lifted the requirement that 3-year-old children needed prior approval to enroll in the ECE Grant.

Ohio operates its publicly funded programs under common program and child standards. All ECE Grant programs are required to participate in the state's quality rating and improvement system, Step Up to Quality (SUTQ). Ohio updated SUTQ in July of 2024, changing the five-star rating system to a three-tier rating system. ECE Grant programs are required to be rated as either silver or gold to demonstrate that they meet high-quality standards. SUTQ program standards are based on national research identifying indicators that lead to improved outcomes for children.

In addition to participating in SUTQ, ECE Grant program sites are monitored annually for quality via desk audits, internal monitoring materials, proposal of plans, and documentation, along with annual licensing visits, classroom observations, and child assessments.

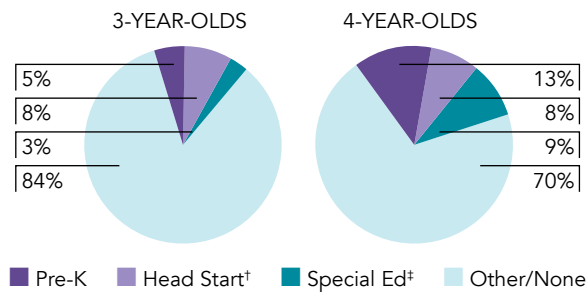
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
38	23	32	39	5

OHIO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	23,594
School districts that offer state program	41%
Income requirement	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	23,007
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	21,151
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	OH 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	AA (50% BA)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd (public); ECE, CD (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	12 clock hours/year; PD plans (teachers only)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	24 (3-year-olds); 28 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:12 (3-year-olds); 1:14 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input 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.

5

RESOURCES

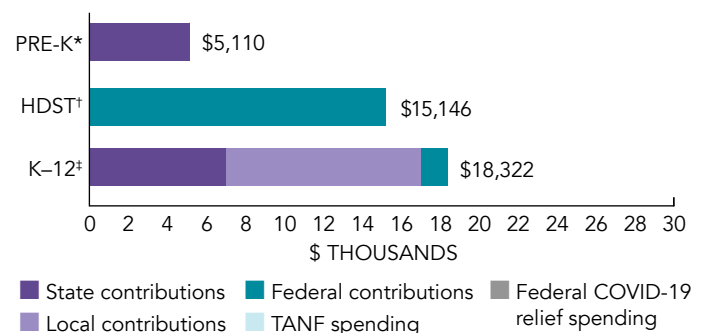
Total state pre-K spending	\$120,573,483
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,110
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,110

* 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.

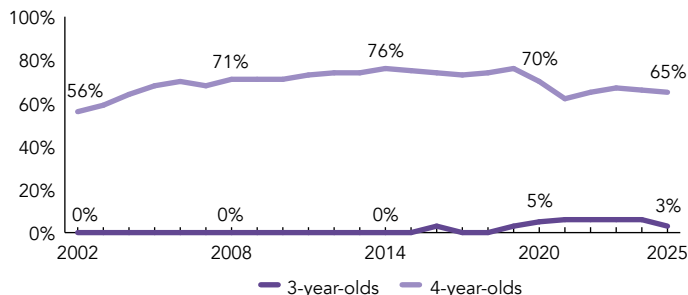
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

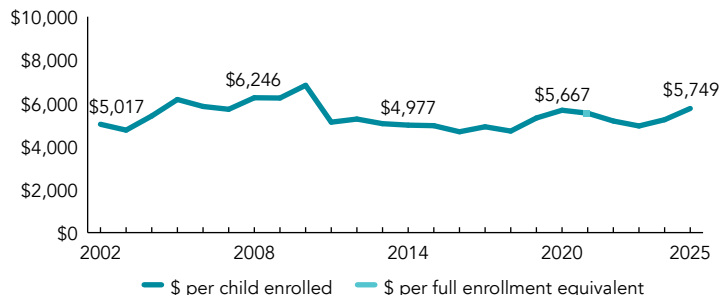


Oklahoma

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Oklahoma preschool enrolled 36,114 children, a decrease of 2,343 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$207,632,498, up \$6,584,399 (3%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$5,749 in 2024-2025, up \$521 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Oklahoma met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Oklahoma strengthened early literacy implementation through close coordination between the Oklahoma Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant team and the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) early childhood team. Through this partnership, the state supported implementation of the Early Learning Inventory (ELI) across 20 subgrantee districts by aligning professional learning, instructional resources, and coaching supports. These efforts focused on strengthening early literacy instruction grounded in the Science of Reading and promoting coherence between state early childhood literacy standards and classroom practice, with the goal of building sustainable, evidence-based instructional capacity among early childhood educators.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library mails books to children every month, from birth through their fifth birthday, at no cost to families. In 2025, OSDE contracted with the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) to be the state's managing partner for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. OPSR's leadership over the program has continued to expand its reach across the state. Currently, partners are active in 74 of 77 Oklahoma counties—bringing critical support to more communities than ever before.

The state also continued to advance system-level supports for young children and educators. Oklahoma expanded implementation of a framework of evidence-based practices that supports healthy development and positive behavior across Pre-K, kindergarten, early childhood special education, and early intervention settings. In addition, the OSDE early childhood team began developing two statewide initiatives: guidance to support the creation of outdoor learning environments and nature-based learning opportunities, and free asynchronous training to establish a clear certification pathway for early childhood teacher assistants. Together, these efforts aim to strengthen instructional quality, workforce capacity, and inclusive learning environments statewide.

OPSR received \$14,751,000 from a new round of PDG B-5 Systems Building Grants that will be used to strengthen Oklahoma's early childhood system through three strategies. First, reduce fragmentation through enhanced Head Start collaboration, a Unified Birth-Five Transitions Framework with pilots, coordinated statewide financing, and a safety alignment initiative. Second, improve workforce stability via statewide business supports, integrated workforce strategies, retention incentives, and strengthened community capacity for literacy and family engagement. Third, modernize data and navigation by unifying B-5 indicators, updating ECIDS, publishing accessible data tools, and supporting the OKDHS Portal and eligibility study. These strategies create a more effective, family-first system, improving outcomes for young children statewide.

BACKGROUND

Oklahoma launched its Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program in 1980, intending to serve all 4-year-olds in the state. In 1990, the program received statewide funding for 4-year-olds eligible for the federal Head Start program, but local areas could choose to serve additional 4-year-olds with local funds or tuition. In 1998, Oklahoma became the second state in the nation to provide free preschool for all 4-year-olds, with 100% of school districts providing the program. In addition, funding for 3-year-olds is provided by the Oklahoma Early Childhood Program (OCEP) through a pass-through from the state to public school districts.

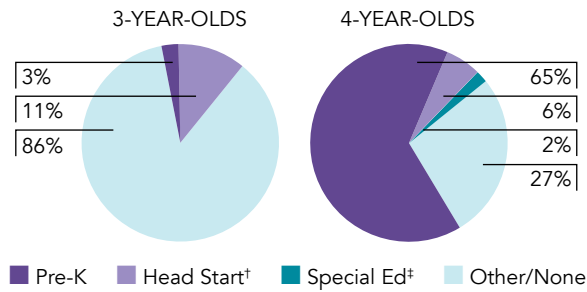
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
5	27	30	10	9

OKLAHOMA EARLY CHILDHOOD FOUR-YEAR-OLD PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	36,114
School districts that offer state program ...	100% (non-charter districts)
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,692
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,267
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	OK 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	18 (3-year-olds); 20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:9 (3-year-olds); 1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, immunizations	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.

9

RESOURCES

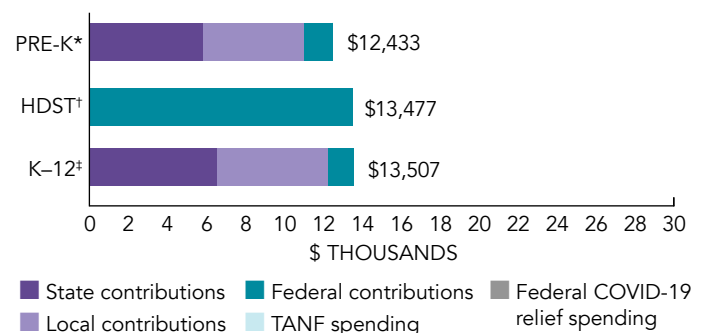
Total state pre-K spending	\$207,632,498
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$16,000,000
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,749
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$12,433

* 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.

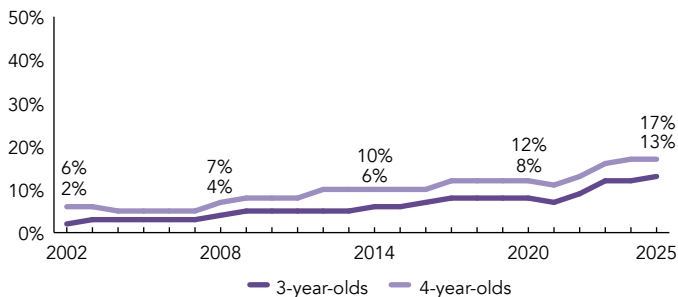
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

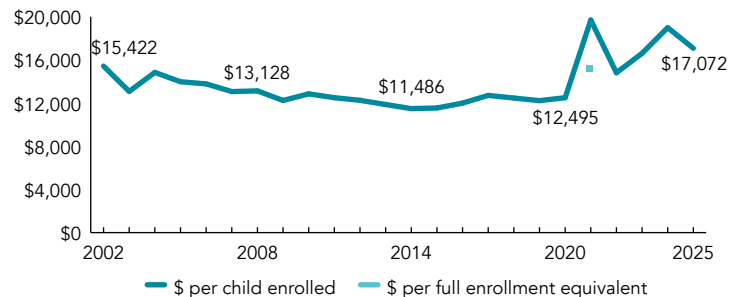


Oregon

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Oregon preschool enrolled 12,687 children, an increase of 90 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$216,587,540, down \$22,543,317 (9%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$17,072 in 2024-2025, down \$1,912 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Oregon met an average of 7.7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2025 legislative session, the legislature passed the Department of Early Learning and Care's (DELIC) budget for the 2025-2027 biennium. Due to a lower-than-expected revenue forecast that included a projected decline in corporate tax revenue for Early Learning Account (ELA) programs, DELIC was directed to implement \$35 million in reductions to programs funded by the ELA.

DELIC had discretion and authority when applying ELA reductions and prioritized preserving the current level of funds in communities. For Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten, the total budget for the 2025-2027 biennium is \$371,217,478. This will also result in a \$810.60 increase per slot or an approximately 4.24% increase for program budgets. For Preschool Promise, the total budget for the 2025-2027 biennium is \$179,017,019. This will also result in an increased cost per slot: \$16,000 for base service, \$1,150 for transportation, and an additional \$2,040 for new slots during the first year. These budgets will allow DELIC to maintain commitments to the slots requested by programs and approved.

In December 2025, Oregon was awarded a federal PDG B-5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$7,355,305 to support system building and strengthen ECE programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

BACKGROUND

Oregon has two state-funded preschool programs: the Oregon Prenatal to Kindergarten (OPK) program (formerly the Oregon Pre-Kindergarten program), established in 1987, and Preschool Promise, launched in 2016.

OPK provides comprehensive child and family development services for 3- and 4-year-old children from low-income families and is funded using the state general fund and Early Learning Account to serve additional Head Start-eligible children. Funding is awarded through a competitive process to all grantees. OPK includes Region X, Region XI, and Region XII Head Start grantees, and even though most of the funding goes to Head Start grantees, there are six non-affiliated organizations that receive OPK funding. OPK programs must follow federal Head Start Performance Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Eligibility for OPK also follows federal Head Start requirements.

Preschool Promise (PSP) is a mixed-delivery program for children from families with incomes up to 200% FPL. The mixed-delivery model includes public schools, child care centers, family child care homes, Head Start/OPK, Relief Nurseries, Education Service Districts, and other community-based organizations. While funding for Preschool Promise was initially administered through Early Learning Hubs, grantees received grants directly from DELIC. Preschool Promise programs are required to participate in Spark, Oregon's quality recognition and improvement system.

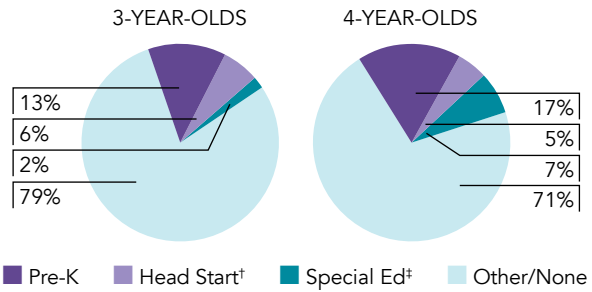
Oregon's overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for both OPK and PSP, is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses solely on the OPK program, and the fourth page provides information on PSP.

OREGON STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	12,687
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,263
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,261
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	7,150

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

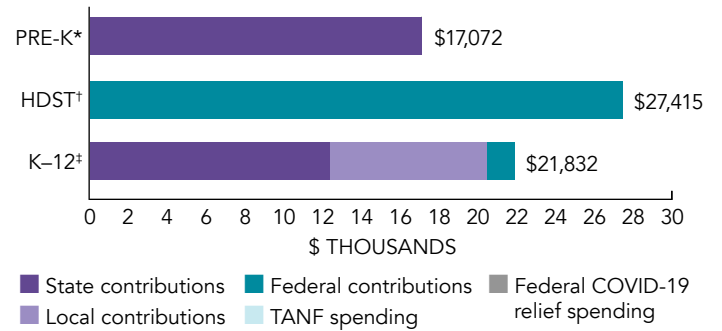


† Estimates children in Head Start not also enrolled in state pre-K.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$216,587,540
State Head Start spending	\$135,552,539
State spending per child enrolled	\$17,072
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$17,072

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
36	14

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
3	3

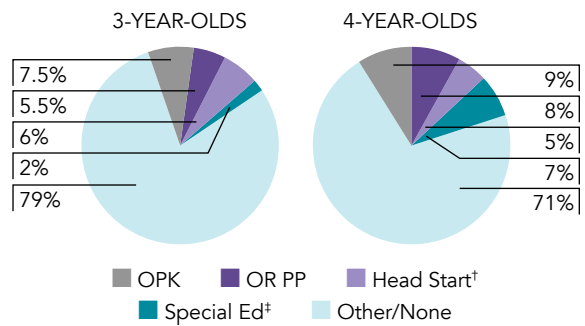
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
7.7

OREGON PRENATAL TO KINDERGARTEN (OPK)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	7,150
School districts that offer state program.....	100% (counties)
Income requirement.....	100% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	3.5 hours/day
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

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	OPK 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	AA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	24 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	17 (3-year-olds); 20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	2:17 (3-year-olds); 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

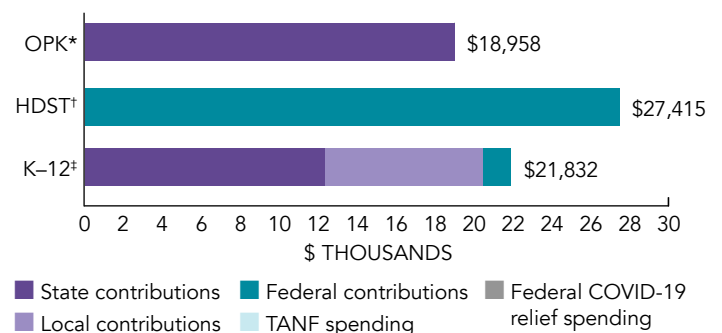
Total state pre-K spending	\$135,552,539
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$18,958
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$18,958

* 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

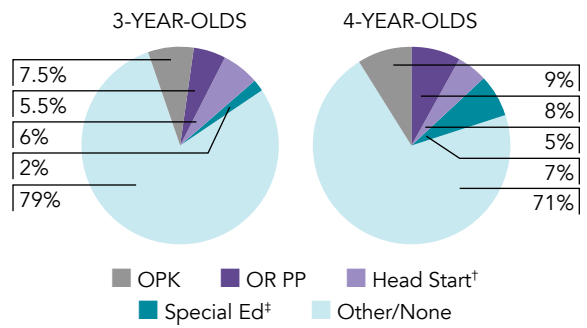


OREGON PRESCHOOL PROMISE

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	5,537
School districts that offer state program...	100% (Early Learning Hub Regions); 97% (counties)
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	6 hours/day; 4 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	OR PP 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	CDA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE or CDA	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	20 hours/year; PD plans (teachers & assistants not meeting education requirements); Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	18, or 20 with a waiver (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 with 18, 1:9 with 20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations, Developmental; Referrals	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

6

RESOURCES

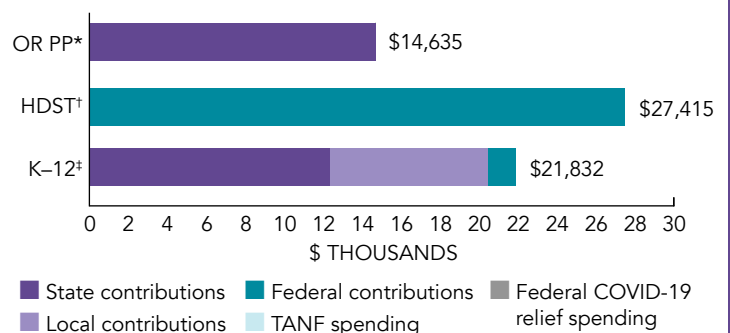
Total state pre-K spending	\$81,035,000
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$14,635
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$14,635

* 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.

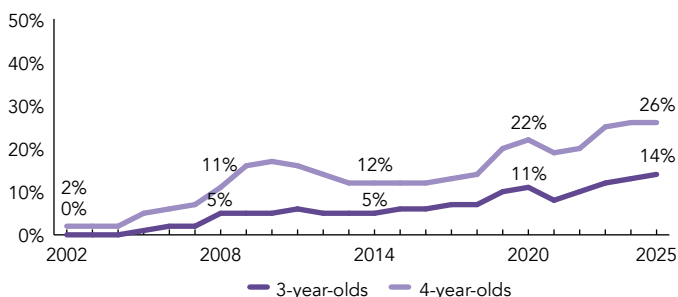
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

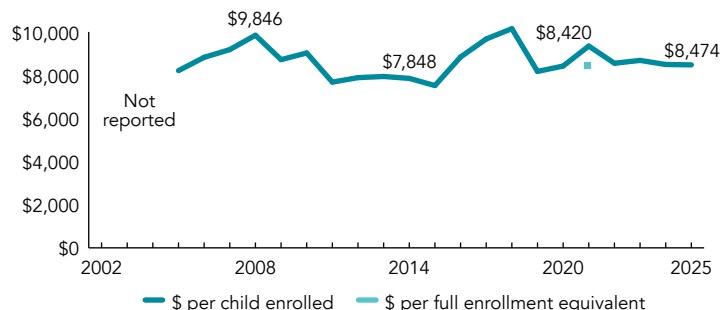


Pennsylvania

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Pennsylvania preschool enrolled 56,609 children, an increase of 1,426 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$479,719,969, up \$11,175,084 (2%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$8,474 in 2024-2025, down \$17 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Pennsylvania met 6.6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, additional funding was allocated to increase the spending per child amount from \$10,000 to \$10,500 for full-time Pre-K Count (PAPKC) slots, and Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (PAHSSAP) grantees received a 3.01% cost per child increase. PAHSSAP began implementing the revised Head Start performance standards. New statutory reporting requirements were implemented for PAPKC, requiring that programs provide updated enrollment information within 15 days of participation or ending participation in the program.

BACKGROUND

The PDE oversees and conducts fiscal monitoring for four pre-kindergarten programs: PA Ready to Learn Block Grant (RTL), PA Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (PAHSSAP), PA Kindergarten for Four-Year-Olds and School-Based Pre-K (K4 and SBPK), and PA Pre-K Counts (PAPKC).

RTL (formerly known as the Education Accountability Block Grant Program) was launched in 2004 and is funded through the school aid formula, with 75% of funds targeted to children who have not achieved proficiency on the PA System for School Assessment test. School districts may opt to offer this program or choose from a list of other services.

PAHSSAP, launched in 2004, provides extended-day services for children attending federally funded Head Start programs, as well as additional Head Start slots. Programs must meet federal Head Start Performance Standards and programs in child care centers must participate in the Pennsylvania quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). PAHSSAP programs are required to use CLASS, ECERS, or another locally selected tool to annually conduct structured observations of classroom quality. The program is monitored and administered by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), which is accountable to the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Human Services.

K4 and SBPK, the longest running of the state's pre-K programs, are financed through the state's general fund. K4 launched in the 1990s as "kindergarten for 4-year-olds" and funding is now available to any districts wishing to offer the programs, but enrollment is low. Policy decisions are decentralized to the local school district level.

PAPKC enrolls the most children of the four state pre-K programs and operates in most school districts statewide. The PAPKC program operated in 99% of the state's 500 school districts during the 2024-2025 school year. Launched in 2007, specifically to expand access to high-quality pre-K, programs can enroll children up to two years before they are eligible for kindergarten. Children living in households with incomes up to 300% FPL are eligible for PAPKC. A variety of programs — Head Start, child care, licensed private academic schools, and public school districts — are eligible to apply for funding awarded through competitive grants every five years. Site monitoring is conducted annually by program specialists, and programs are required to have an annual assessment of the learning environment, which may include self-assessments.

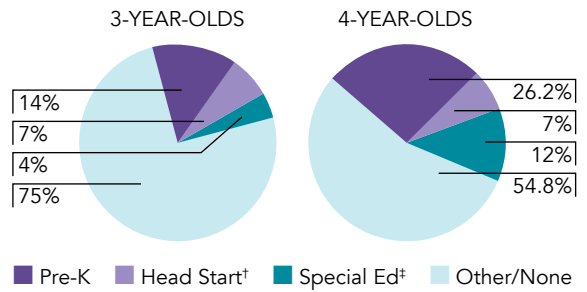
Pennsylvania's overall support for state-funded preschool, including enrollment and funding for all programs, is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on RTL, the fourth on PAHSSAP, the fifth on K4/SBPK, and the sixth on PAPKC.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	56,609
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	29,169
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	19,216
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,086

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

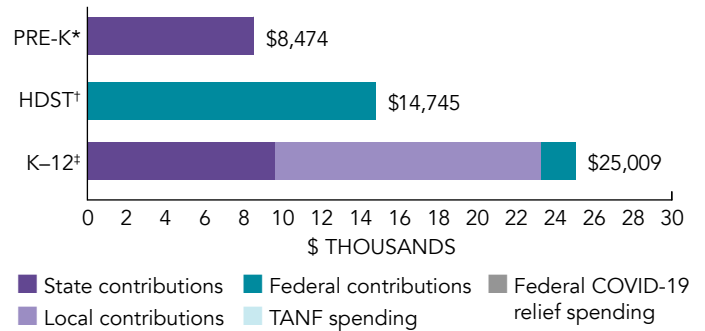


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (RTL, HSSAP, K4 & SBPK).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$479,719,969
State Head Start spending	\$90,875,472
State spending per child enrolled	\$8,474
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$8,474

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
27	13

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
15	27

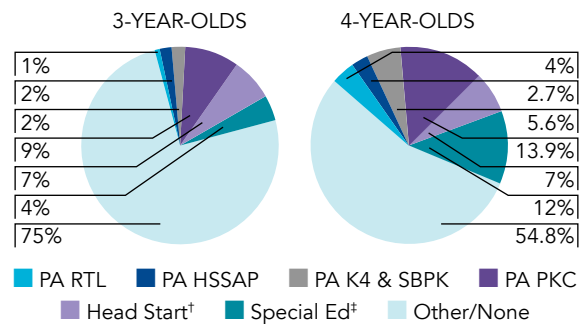
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
6.6*

PENNSYLVANIA READY TO LEARN BLOCK GRANT (RTL)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	7,554
School districts that offer state program.....	7%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (RTL, HSSAP, K4 & SBPK).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	PA RTL 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (public); AA (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	PK-4, B-3 (public); ECE (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	180 hours/5 years (teachers only); PD plans (new public teachers); Coaching (new public teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Determined locally	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Observation required for Instructional I certified teachers only; Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



RESOURCES

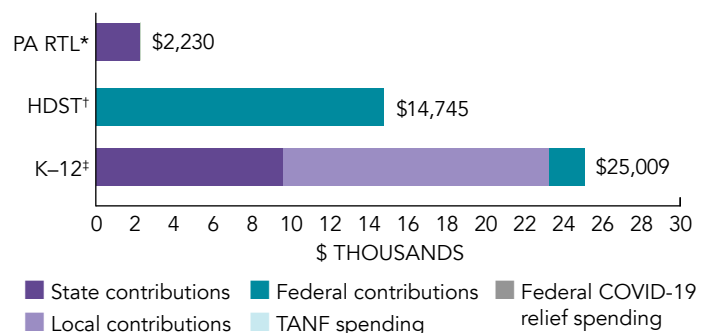
Total state pre-K spending	\$16,848,252
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$2,230
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$2,230

* 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

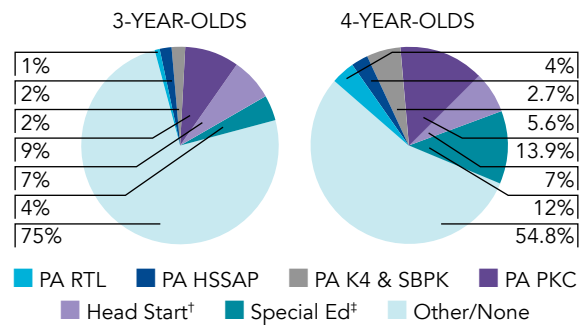


PENNSYLVANIA HEAD START SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	7,086
School districts that offer state program.....	26%
Income requirement.....	Per Federal Head Start: 100% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	3.5 hours/day
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (RTL, HSSAP, K4 & SBPK).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	PA HSSAP 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	AA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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 at the local level only	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



RESOURCES

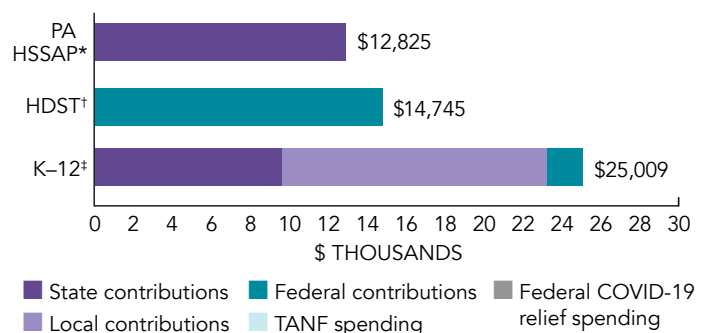
Total state pre-K spending	\$90,875,472
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$12,825
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$12,825

* 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

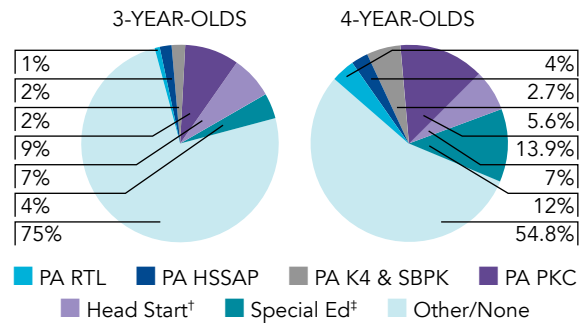


PENNSYLVANIA KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS AND SCHOOL-BASED PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	10,140
School districts that offer state program.....	22%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (RTL, HSSAP, K4 & SBPK).
 ‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	PA K4 & SBPK 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 (public); AA (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	PK-4, B-3, K-6 (public); PK-4, B-3 (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	180 hours/5 years (SBPK public teachers only); PD plans (new public teachers & some nonpublic teachers & assistants); Coaching (new public teachers & some nonpublic teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	SBPK: 20 (3- & 4-year-olds); K4: No limit	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	SBPK: 1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds); K4: No limit	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Observation required for Instructional I certified teachers only; Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

3

RESOURCES

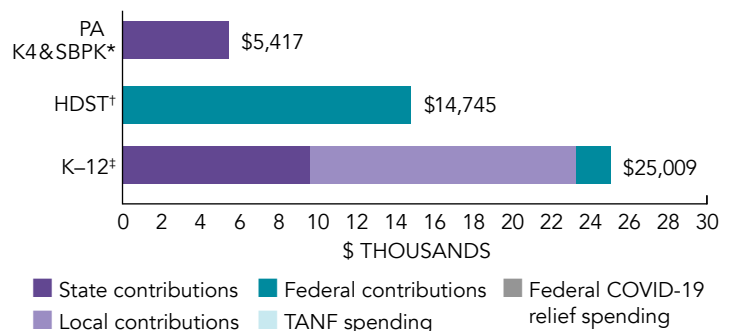
Total state pre-K spending	\$54,925,486
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,417
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,417

* 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

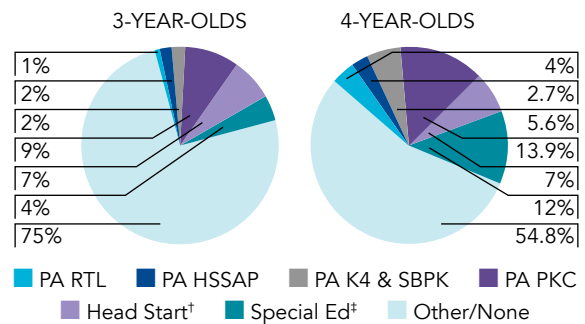


PENNSYLVANIA PRE-K COUNTS (PKC)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	31,829
School districts that offer state program.....	99%
Income requirement.....	300% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	2.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K (RTL, HSSAP, K4 & SBPK).
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	PA PKC 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	PK-4, B-3	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	Other	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	180 hours/5 years (teachers); 24 hours/year (assistants); PD plans (some teachers & assistants); Coaching (new teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.

* Indicates that while policy meets the benchmark, it is not being implemented fully.

8*

RESOURCES

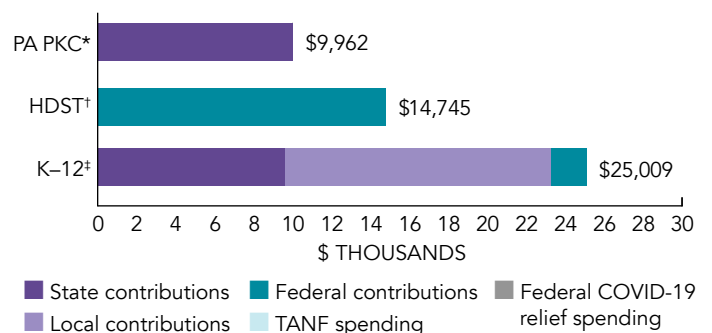
Total state pre-K spending	\$317,070,759
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$9,962
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,962

* 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.

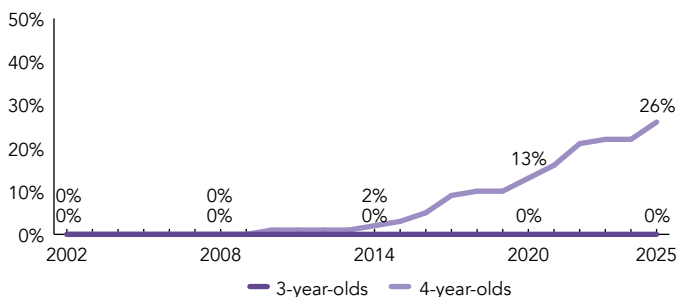
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

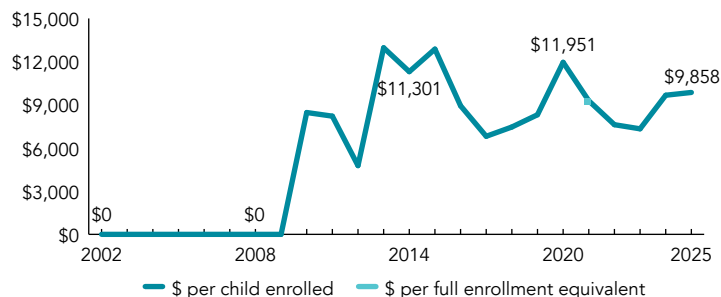


Rhode Island

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Rhode Island preschool enrolled 2,864 children, an increase of 500 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$28,232,929, up \$5,385,882 (24%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$9,858 in 2024-2025 up \$193 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Rhode Island met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In 2024-2025, Rhode Island State Pre-Kindergarten Program received a \$7 million influx of state funds for expansion, teacher increases, and comprehensive mental health supports for students. The Governor has a goal to reach 5,000 seats by FY28. Rhode Island remains committed to the high-quality pre-K programming that the model was built on and is being thoughtful on expansion, developing relationships and coaching models with programs interested in applying for RI Pre-K.

Additionally, in September 2024, Rhode Island was one of 10 states and D.C. awarded a 3-year federal renewal Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG B-5) totaling \$4,945,055 annually. The PDG B-5 renewal grant is intended to carry out the strategic plans developed with the 2023 planning grants, which focused on RI Pre-K Monitoring and Continuous Quality Improvement, RI Pre-K Lottery system enhancements, Enhancing the RI Start Early System (RISES) and Program Quality Improvements.

BACKGROUND

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

The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) oversees the pre-K program, funded through an Early Childhood Categorical line, created in 2010, within RIDE's state-budget. Using a phased-in approach, \$10 million was invested over ten years to expand access to high quality pre-K, commencing with communities containing 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. This funding was used to expand access in high-need communities and to enhance program monitoring, evaluation, and technical assistance. Enrollment nearly doubled between the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years as a result of the PDG support, which leveled off (as planned), in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

Teachers in the program must hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood. 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.

In addition to Pre-Kindergarten, the state provides \$1.19 million to supplement Head Start and has also allocated \$4 million in TANF to support Head Start programs to recruit and retain qualified staff.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
26	None Served

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
10	21

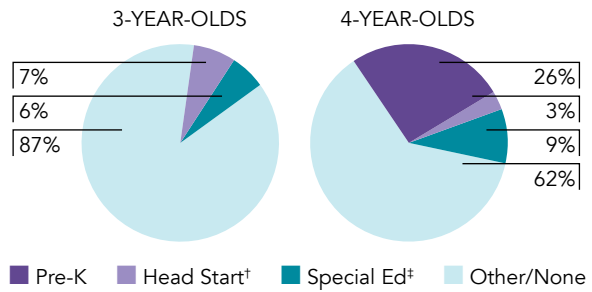
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
10

RHODE ISLAND STATE PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	2,864
School districts that offer state program	51% (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	2,199
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,340
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	130

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	RI 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	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD + 12 college credits in ECE/CD or a CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	24 hours/year; 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.



RESOURCES

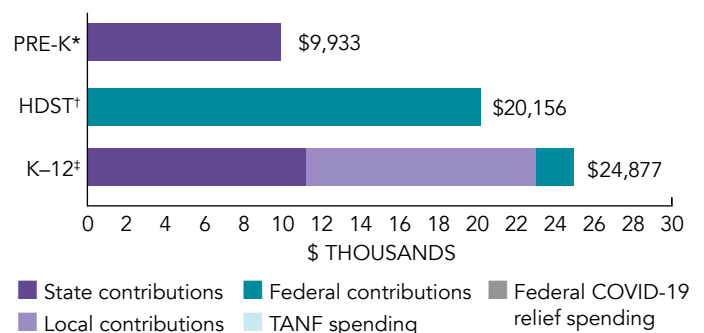
Total state pre-K spending	\$28,232,929
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$1,190,000
State spending per child enrolled	\$9,858
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,933

* 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.

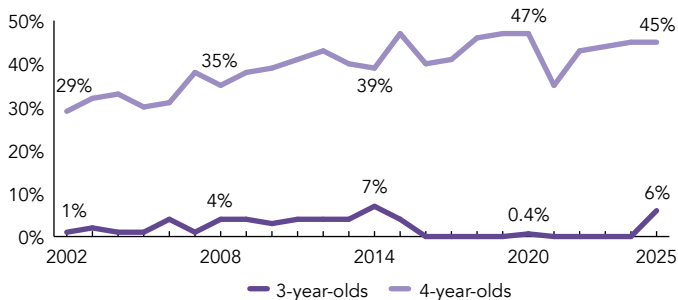
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

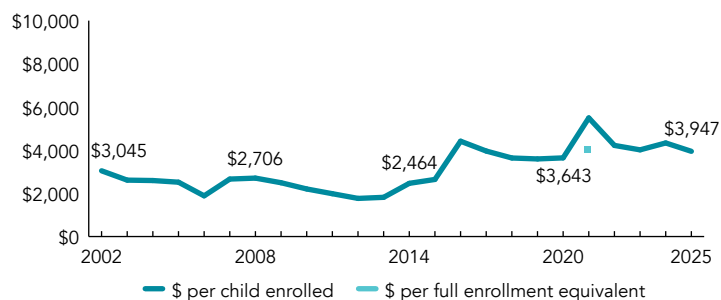


South Carolina

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, South Carolina preschool enrolled 30,586 children, an increase of 3,415 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$120,306,182 with an additional \$421,003 in federal recovery funds to support the program, up \$2,957,556 (3%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including federal recovery funds) equaled \$3,947 in 2024-2025, down \$387 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. South Carolina met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In the 2024-2025 school year, all Child Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP) teachers received training in Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling Early Childhood (LETRS EC). All South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Early Learning Specialists have taken LETRS EC and are trained as local facilitators. The Early Learning Team built coaching sessions and modules of learning around the science of reading during the 2024-2025 school year and provided coaching to CERDEP districts to build teacher capacity.

The ending of the federal ESSER funding resulted in the loss of First Steps 4K recruitment and retention stipends and support for intensive language and literacy implementation. In 2025-2026, First Steps 4K began conducting CLASS observations across all programs and rolled out an attendance campaign to support families in addressing school attendance.

BACKGROUND

South Carolina funds two preschool programs: the Education Improvement Act Child Development Program (EIA 4K) and the public/private CERDEP. Both programs are delivered in public school settings by the Office of Early Learning & Literacy (OELL). CERDEP is co-administered in private preschool settings by South Carolina First Steps (First Steps 4K), the state's school readiness initiative.

EIA 4K began in 1984 and is funded as part of a one-cent sales tax supporting public education projects. Eligibility for EIA 4K is prioritized by law for children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) or Medicaid, and allows for consideration of children with documented developmental delays. EIA 4K districts may then set their own eligibility criteria from a state-specified list of risk factors. State funding is allocated to districts by OELL using a formula according to the number of kindergarten students who qualify for FRPL in each district. School districts now provide full-day programs, except for a few that continue to offer half-day programs.

CERDEP, originally called the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP), was created as a pilot program in 2006 in response to Abbeville County School District, et. al. v. South Carolina, a lawsuit initiated by rural school districts regarding school equity funding. The program was codified in 2014 along with the state's Read to Succeed legislation (Act 284). CERDEP provides full-day preschool to at-risk children.

To monitor quality, OELL conducts visits including an evaluation based on the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO) used to provide feedback and support to ensure classrooms are language- and literacy-rich. Some programs receive additional monitoring, which includes a fidelity verification measuring curriculum implementation.

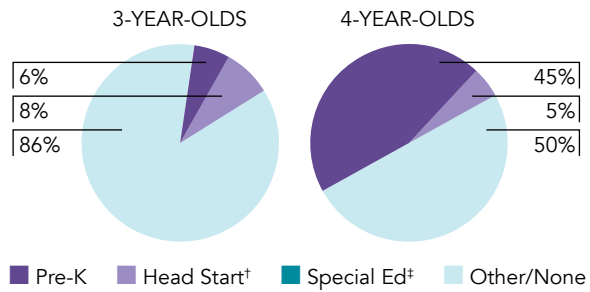
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
15	22	38	42	7

SOUTH CAROLINA CHILD EARLY READING DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAM (CERDEP)/ SOUTH CAROLINA EIA CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (EIA 4K)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	30,586
School districts that offer state program	100%
Income requirement	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation..CERDEP: 6.5 hours/day, 5 days/week; EIA 4K: 4 hours/day, 5 days/week	
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	6,298
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,810
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	SC 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 (public); AA (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; 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	Immunizations, developmental (CERDEP/EIA 4K); Vision, hearing, health & more (First Steps)	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

7

RESOURCES

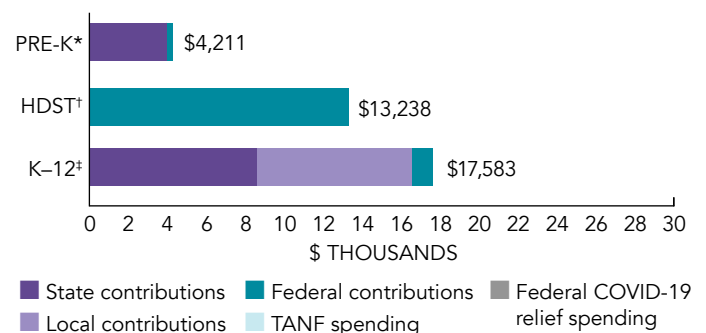
Total state pre-K spending	\$120,727,185
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,947
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$4,211

* 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



South Dakota

NO PROGRAM

South Dakota currently does not offer a state-funded preschool program as defined by this report, but the state does support early childhood education in several ways. Local education agencies can use a portion of their Title I funding to support preschool programs. The Department of Social Services oversees licensing of state-registered family day care programs as well as licensed child and school-age care programs, and administers the child care assistance program.

The South Dakota Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) are used in settings that serve children from birth to 5 years old and cover multiple domains including: health and physical development, creative arts, language and literacy, social studies, social-emotional development, approaches toward learning, mathematics, and science. Most recently, the state created a Content Standards Crosswalk to serve as a resource to support the learning environment for preschool-age children transitioning into kindergarten. This crosswalk is being distributed across the state to early childhood educators with local education agencies and public/private preschool homes and/or centers. Like the Early Learning Guidelines, this work was a collaboration between the South Dakota Department of Education, Head Start Collaboration Office, South Dakota Department of Social Services, and multiple stakeholders.

In 2017, the School Administrators of South Dakota (SASD) rolled out the SASD Preschool Levels of Excellence. Based on The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation standards, the Levels of Excellence address ten domains of program quality. Preschool programs may use the Levels of Excellence as a self-assessment tool, or to obtain a formal Level assessed by SASD.

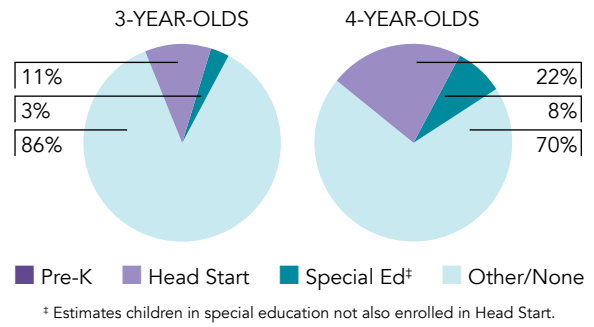
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
None Served		None Served		No Program

SOUTH DAKOTA

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,764
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,870
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

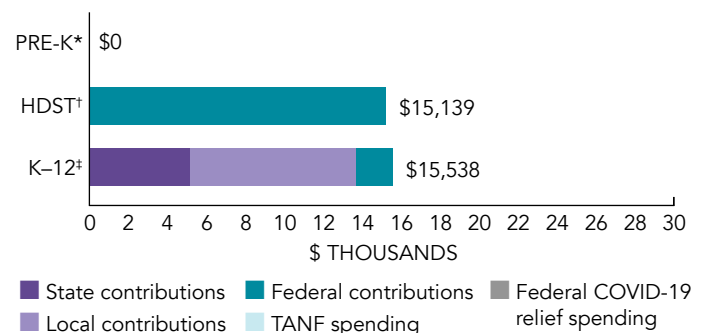
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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.

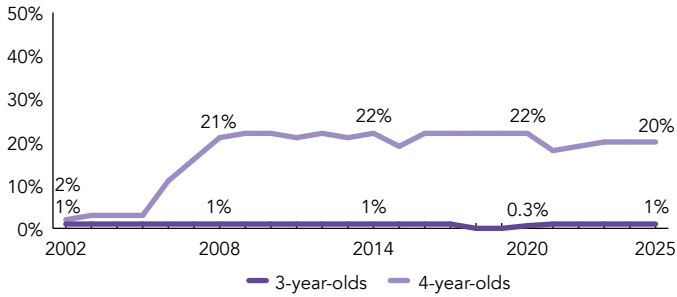
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

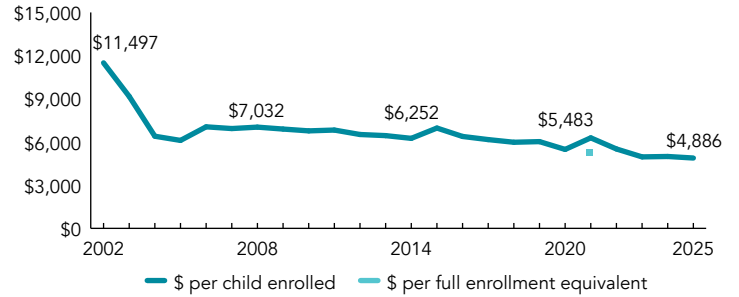


Tennessee

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Tennessee preschool enrolled 17,501 children, a decrease of 132 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$85,505,733, down \$2,535,487 (3%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$4,886 in 2024-2025, down \$107 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Tennessee met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Tennessee leveraged its Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) award to expand professional development and credentialing opportunities for early learning educators. In fall 2025, the state implemented a no-cost pathway for teaching assistants to earn a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, supporting compliance with T.C.A. § 49-6-104 by ensuring all local education agencies can meet minimum qualification requirements for Voluntary Pre-K assistant teachers. PDG B-5 funds are also supporting monetary stipends for educators who earn the credential, CLASS training for school administrators, and planning for an Early Learning Summit in summer 2026 featuring professional development on topics such as high quality instruction and working with children with challenging behaviors.

The PDG B-5 grant is further supporting system improvements and program expansion. Tennessee is preparing subgrant and microgrant opportunities for schools to increase birth-to-five slots and/or extend hours or days of service, along with materials and professional development grants to improve program quality. In addition, Public Chapter 225, enacted during the 2025 legislative session, allows four-year-old children of local education agency staff who live outside the LEA's geographic boundaries to enroll in Voluntary Pre-K after the enrollment deadline.

BACKGROUND

Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) was launched in 2005, building on the 1998 Early Childhood Education Pilot Project. VPK classrooms are now in 137 of the state's 147 school districts. Children from families meeting the income eligibility requirements are prioritized for enrollment in VPK, as are children with disabilities and dependent children of a parent who died as a result of war.

The Tennessee State Department of Education and Early Learning Division have administrative authority over VPK. Only local education agencies may apply for VPK grants, but districts may contract with private childcare agencies, Head Start agencies, institutions of higher education, public housing authorities, and any community-based or private agency attaining the highest designation under the rated licensing system administered by TN Department of Human Services.

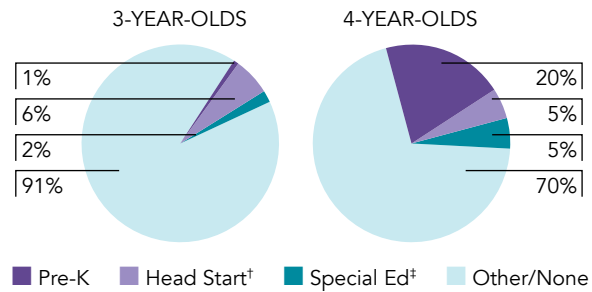
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
33	31	34	33	9

TENNESSEE VOLUNTARY PRE-K (VPK)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	17,501
School districts that offer state program.....	93%
Income requirement.....	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	6 hours/day (5.5 hours of instruction); 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	8,624
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	11,056
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	TN 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	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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

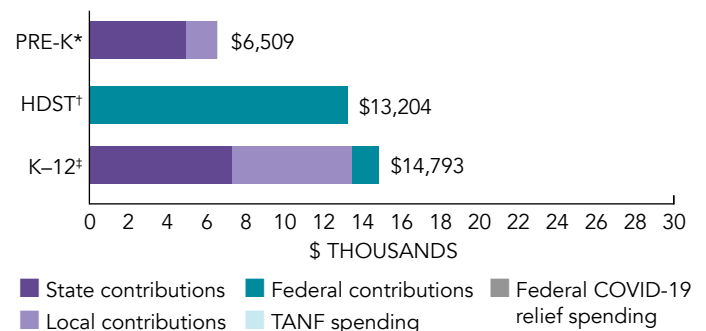
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$85,505,733
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$4,886
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$6,509

* 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.

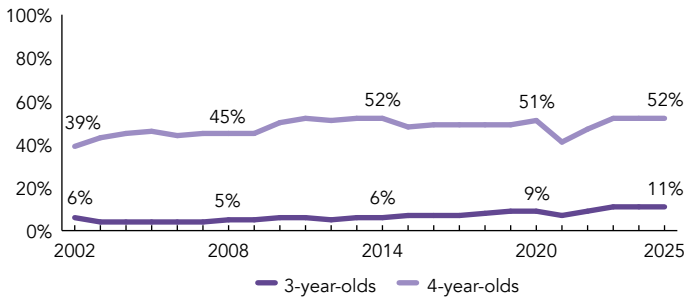
[‡] K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

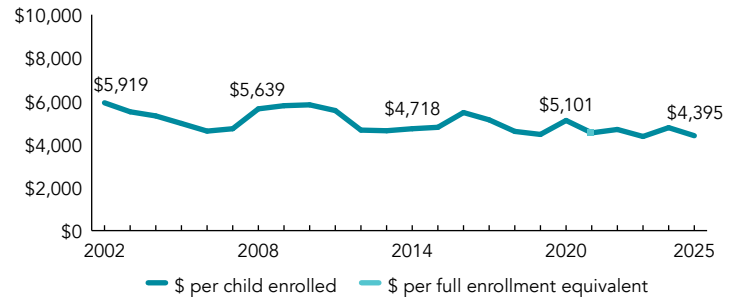


Texas

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Texas preschool enrolled 248,483 children, an increase of 112 children from the prior year. State spending totaled \$996,609,407, down \$84,504,056 (8%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$4,395 in 2024-2025, down \$373 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Texas met 2 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2025 regular session, the 89th Texas Legislature enacted House Bill 2 (HB 2), which expanded public prekindergarten eligibility to include children of classroom teachers. The legislation also established new requirements for prekindergarten partnerships and tuition-based prekindergarten programs, including provisions governing how participating school districts structure agreements with child care providers.

HB 2 requires that a minimum percentage of state prekindergarten funding be passed through to child care providers in partnership arrangements, strengthening expectations for resource sharing in mixed-delivery models. Together, these changes aim to expand access to prekindergarten while clarifying partnership requirements between school districts and community-based providers.

BACKGROUND

In 1985, Texas began funding half-day prekindergarten for eligible 4-year-olds through the Texas Public School Prekindergarten program. Currently, school districts with 15 or more eligible 4-year-olds are required to offer prekindergarten. Districts with 15 or more eligible 3-year-olds can also offer prekindergarten, but are not required to do so. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) Early Childhood Education Division oversees prekindergarten programs in school districts and open-enrollment charter schools, and school districts are permitted to subcontract with nonpublic preschools to serve eligible children.

Children are eligible to participate in a Texas public school prekindergarten program if they are age-eligible and meet at least one of the following conditions: qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (185% FPL), are homeless, are in foster care, have a parent on active military duty or who was injured or killed on active duty, are unable to speak or comprehend English, and/or have a parent eligible for the Star of Texas Award.

In 2019, the Texas PDG B-5 team and Texas Early Learning Council led the use of grant funding to conduct a statewide 0-5 needs assessment, develop a statewide 0-5 strategic plan, increase parental choice and knowledge, share best practices, and improve overall quality of care. Also in 2019, House Bill 3 was passed by the 86th Texas Legislature and signed into law by Governor Abbott. House Bill 3 added an early education allotment that school districts and charter schools can use to fund full-day high-quality prekindergarten for eligible 4-year-olds, expanded early education reporting, updated requirements for early learning progress monitoring tools (single kindergarten assessment with one alternative available), and updated requirements related to early childhood partnerships.

The Children's Learning Institute at the University of Texas-Health Science Center at Houston, in partnership with the TEA and Texas Workforce Commission, has developed a comprehensive professional development platform for early childhood educators that is free to all public school teachers, Head Start programs, families, and child care providers.

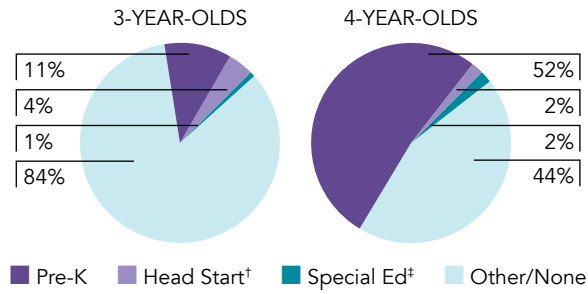
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
12	16	37	41	2

TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL PREKINDERGARTEN

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	248,483
School districts that offer state program	90%
Income requirement	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation ...	32,400 minutes/year (part-day, PK3); 75,600 minutes/year (full-day, PK4)
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	35,156
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	44,683
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	TX 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (public); Other (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	P-6 (public); Other (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year (teachers only); Coaching (some teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	22 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	No limit (3-year-olds); Must strive for 1:11 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, immunizations	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	None	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



RESOURCES

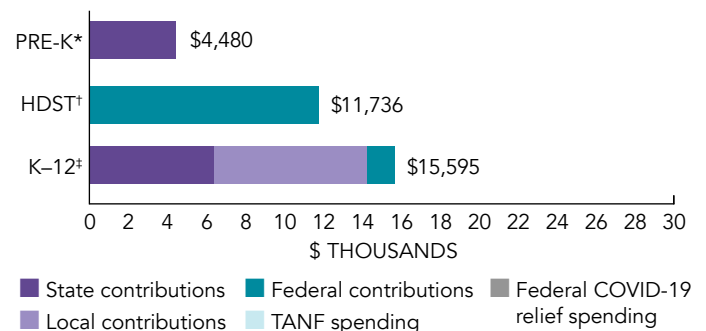
Total state pre-K spending	\$996,609,407
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$4,395
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$4,480

* 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.

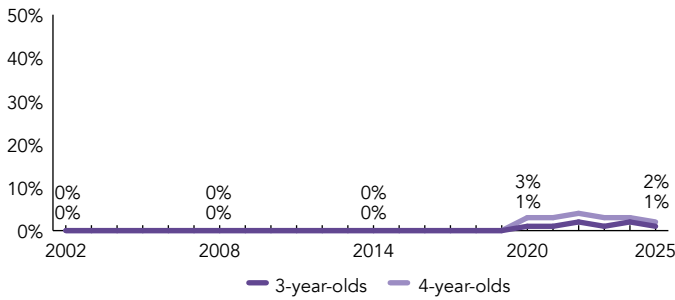
[‡] K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

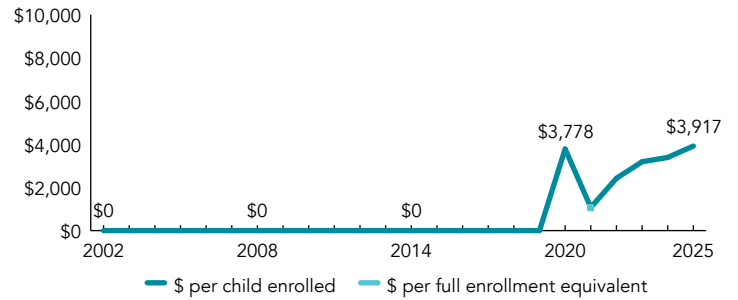


Utah

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024–2025 school year, Utah preschool programs enrolled 1,653 children, a decrease of 358 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$6,474,481, down \$338,229 (5%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$3,917 in 2024–2025, up \$529 from 2023–2024, adjusted for inflation. Utah met 6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2024–2025 program year, Utah revised governance of the High Quality School Readiness Grant program, shifting oversight from an appointed School Readiness Board to a School Readiness Team made up of staff from the Department of Workforce Services Office of Child Care and the Utah State Board of Education. This change streamlined administration, improved responsiveness to grantees, and strengthened focus on implementation and monitoring of legislatively required program elements. Recent legislative action also extended grant terms from one year to three years, reducing administrative burden for participating programs.

Following several years of declining funded capacity, the legislature increased federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) support for the program. Utah allocated an additional \$2 million in TANF funding for the 2025–2026 program year and approved continued funding of \$2 million annually for FY 2026 through FY 2028, allowing the addition of new grantees and an increase in funded preschool seats. Utah also received a new Preschool Development Grant Birth–Five (PDG B–5) Systems Building award of \$7,269,293 to support statewide care coordination, continued implementation of the Pyramid Model, family engagement through the Sparkler app, development of the Early Childhood Utah one-stop intake website, and partnerships to strengthen early education and early literacy.

BACKGROUND

Utah established the High-Quality School Readiness Program Expansion in 2016 to expand access to high-quality preschool for four-year-olds experiencing intergenerational poverty. In 2019, the legislature restructured the program to include the Expanded Student Access grant, supporting preschool access for eligible three- and four-year-olds, and the Becoming High Quality grant, focused on program improvement. Legislative revisions in 2024 further streamlined program management, modified eligibility requirements, and prioritized funding for preschool seats in high-quality programs.

Utah's Core State Standards for Early Learning for ages 3–5 were approved in 2020, with a phased approach to updating content areas alongside the K–12 standards. The early learning English Language Arts standards were updated in 2023, while mathematics and physical education standards are currently under revision.

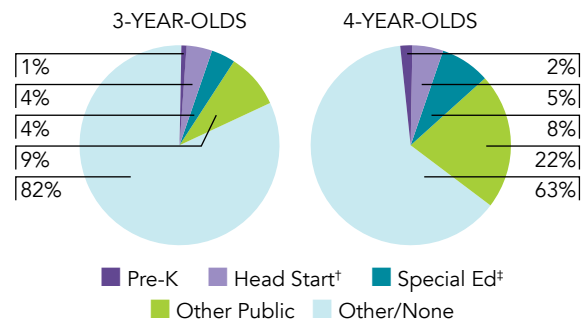
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
44	32	39	36	6

UTAH HIGH QUALITY SCHOOL READINESS GRANT PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	1,653
School districts that offer state program	38% (counties)
Income requirement	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	Determined locally
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	6,877
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,974
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	UT 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	CDA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	CDA	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year (teachers only); Coaching (teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	None	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

6

RESOURCES

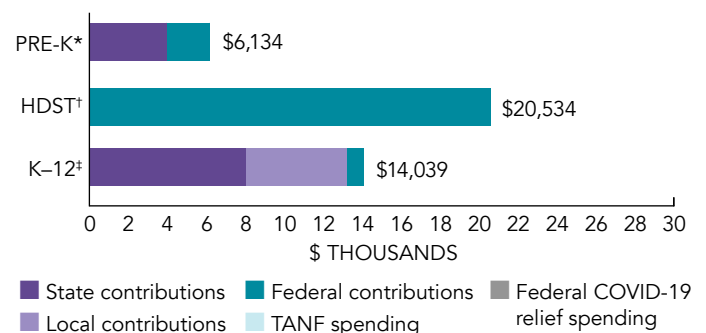
Total state pre-K spending	\$6,474,481
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,917
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$6,134

* 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.

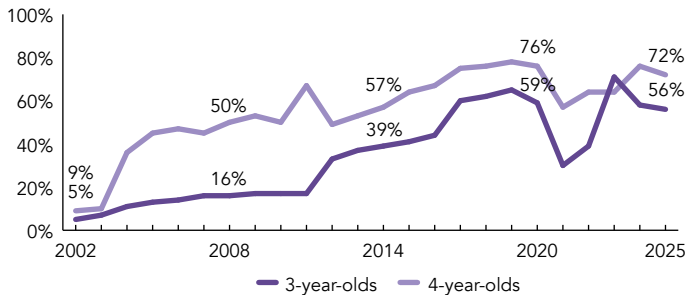
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

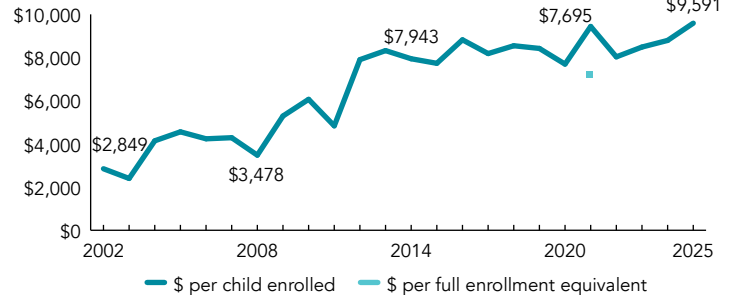


Vermont

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Vermont preschool enrolled 7,614 children, a decrease of 707 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$73,025,082, down \$133,489 (0.2%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$9,591 in 2024-2025, up \$799 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Vermont met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In 2024, the Vermont Legislature approved a five-year waiver (expires 2029) for eliminating all fees for the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) Peer Review "alternate route to licensure" for educators. Vermont Act 76 (passed June 2023) provided child care funding in the form of scholarships and loan forgiveness for professional advancement, including educator licensure.

In December 2025, Vermont was awarded a federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG 2026) Birth to 5 Systems Building Grant totaling \$12,706,625 to support system building and strengthen early childhood education programs in a mixed-delivery system, improve system efficiency and collaboration, and raise the overall quality of programs.

BACKGROUND

In 1987, Vermont created the Vermont Early Education Initiative (EEI), an annual competitive grant program to finance early education opportunities for at-risk 3- to 5-year-olds. In 2007, legislation expanded publicly funded prekindergarten education for 4-year-old children in public schools and private programs and provided funding through the state's Education Fund, similar to K-12, pro-rated based on a model of 10 hours per week.

Starting in 2014, Act 166 required all public school districts to offer Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) for every 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old child not enrolled in kindergarten, for a minimum of 10 hours per week for 35 weeks annually. UPK was fully implemented beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, with pre-K provided through school district-operated programs and in contractual partnerships with state-approved public and private programs.

Act 166 also requires an annual legislative evaluation of the state's pre-K efforts that includes the number of children and programs participating in UPK, child progress monitoring data, and quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) level information. All Vermont state pre-K programs are required to attain at least four or five stars in Vermont's QRIS, Step Ahead Recognition Systems (STARS), or hold NAEYC accreditation. STARS requires structured observations of classroom quality using CLASS and TPOT. Public schools are required to have a Vermont-licensed educator in each classroom, and nonpublic schools are required to have a licensed educator on-site during Universal Prekindergarten hours.

The AAOE and Agency of Human Services (AHS) completed the process of designing a joint agency Pre-K Monitoring System that builds upon existing monitoring systems and procedures to assess the quality of the state's approved private and public UPK programs.

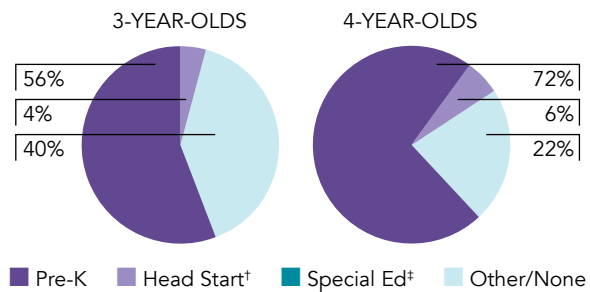
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
2	2	11	12	7

VERMONT UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN EDUCATION (ACT 166)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	7,614
School districts that offer state program.....	100%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	10 hours/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	1,200
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	604
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	VT 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 (public); BA for lead teacher, AA for classroom teacher (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, Elem. Ed. with ECE, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 years (teachers); 15 hours/year (assistants); PD plans; Coaching (public & some nonpublic)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.

7

RESOURCES

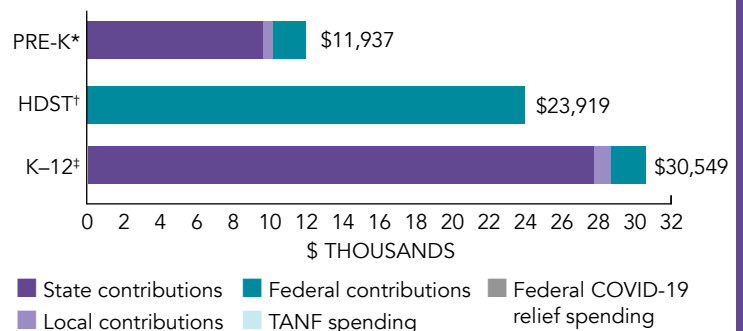
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$73,025,082
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$9,591
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$11,937

* 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.

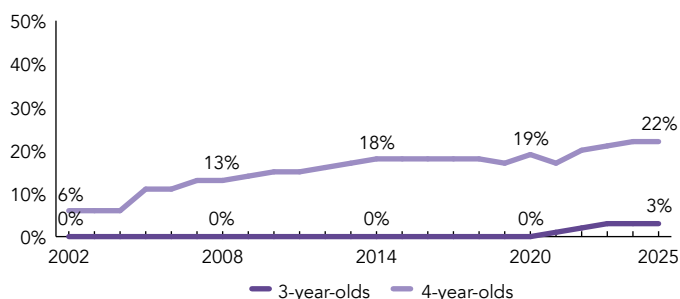
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

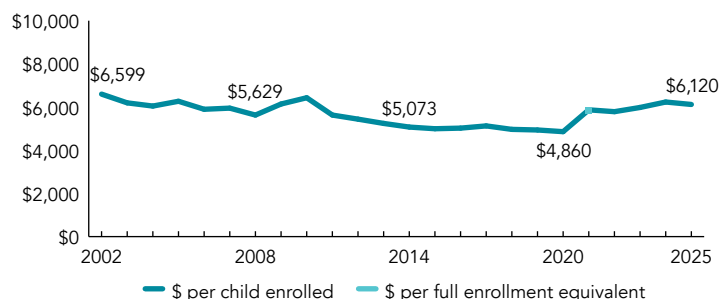


Virginia

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) enrolled a total of 24,425 children, an increase in VPI enrollment of 1,387 from the prior year. VPI spending totaled \$149,480,336, up \$25,391,932 (20%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$6,120 in 2024-2025, up \$734 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. VPI met 5 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

Previously, Virginia's Mixed Delivery program was included as a second state-funded preschool program in Virginia. Beginning in 2024-2025, Mixed Delivery Implemented a parental work related activity requirement and no longer meets NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. NIEER included Virginia's Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) in the Yearbook for the first time this year. Although CCSP does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program, it is an important component of Virginia's comprehensive early childhood system. Both CCSP and Mixed Delivery are described in the Yearbook but are not included in the enrollment or spending rankings, which reflect only VPI.

WHAT'S NEW

In 2023, Governor Youngkin introduced the *Building Blocks for Virginia Families* initiative and proposed a state budget that demonstrated a commitment to sustaining access to early care and education by using state general funds (SGF) to offset the expiration of federal COVID-19 relief funding. These historic state investments in the FY25-26 biennial budget ensured that no children lost services following the end of pandemic-era funding. The budget appropriated \$366 million in state general funds in FY25 and \$461 million in FY26 to support CCSP, Mixed Delivery, and VPI. As a result of these investments in Virginia's public-private early childhood system, more children have access to publicly funded early learning slots than ever before. In addition, VPI reimbursement rates were rebenchmarked beginning in the 2024-2025 school year to better reflect current costs of care and quality standards in school-based settings. This rebenchmarking process will occur again in advance of the 2026-2027 school year.

BACKGROUND

The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) began in 1995 to serve at-risk 4-year-olds not enrolled in existing preschool programs. During the 2024-2025 school year, VPI programs operated in 98% of eligible school divisions. Programs are required to operate for a minimum of three hours per day, though 93% of children attend full-day programs throughout the school year. VPI is funded by an annual legislative appropriation of state general funds and a required local match based on the local composite index. The local match is capped at half the per-pupil amount. Funding for VPI is available to school divisions where there are at-risk 3- and 4-year-olds not served by Head Start. The first and second pages of Virginia's profile page focus only on VPI. State rankings on this page reflect only the VPI program.

(continued on page 155)

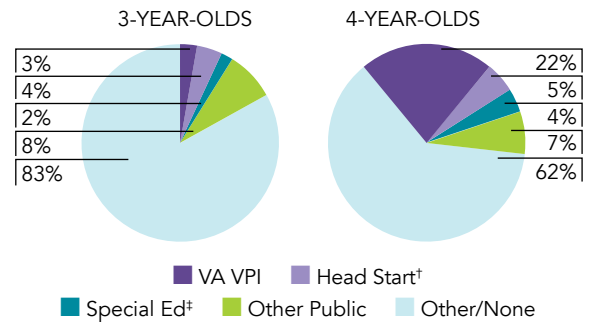
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
31	26	28	18	5

VIRGINIA PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE (VPI)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	24,425
School districts that offer state program.....	98% (school divisions)
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	3 hours/day (half-day), 5.5 hours/day (full-day); 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	11,504
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	9,080
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in Other Public.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	VA VPI 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 (public); HSD (nonpublic)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd (public); None (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD (public); None (nonpublic)	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/school year	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

5

RESOURCES

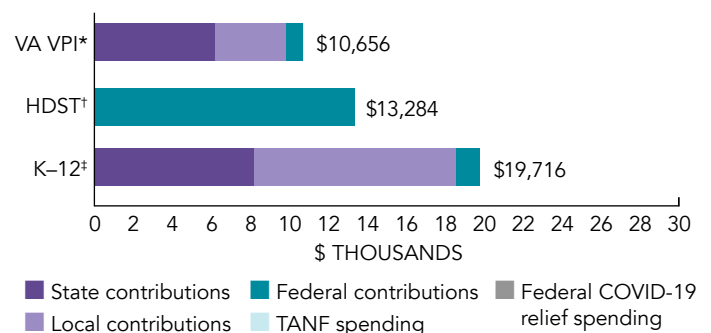
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$149,480,336
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start funding.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$6,120
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$10,656

* 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

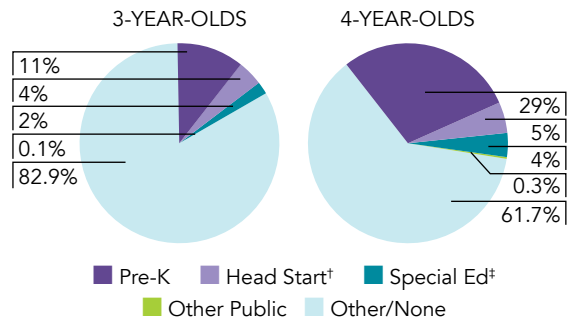


VIRGINIA STATE OVERVIEW (VPI, MIXED DELIVERY, & CCSP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	38,557
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	11,504
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	9,080
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

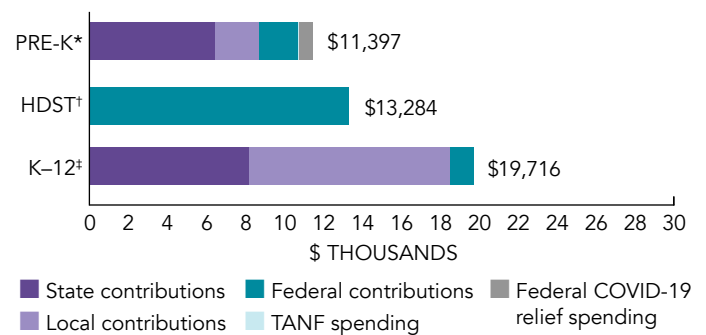


† Some Head Start children may also be counted in CCSP.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$274,936,866
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$7,131
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$11,397

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS WITH MIXED DELIVERY & CCSP		RESOURCE RANKINGS WITH MIXED DELIVERY & CCSP		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
26	17	20	16	3.4

The Mixed Delivery program began during the 2016-2017 school year and was included in the State of Preschool Yearbook for the first time in 2022. This program is administered by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) as a public/private partnership and provides publicly funded early childhood care and education (ECCE) services in licensed, non-school-based and non-faith-based private ECCE settings. Eligible children are those who have been identified as at-risk for entering kindergarten without the necessary social and academic skills for success. The Mixed Delivery program fully covers the estimated cost of quality for full-day, year-round services.

Virginia also provides substantial support for the state’s Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP). During the 2024–2025 school year, state funding for CCSP was approximately \$200 million, with about 35% of expenditures supporting preschool-aged children. Children are eligible for CCSP if their family income is below 85% of State Median Income (SMI). Subsidized children are served across a diverse range of settings, including Head Start programs, private child care centers, faith-based programs (both with and without religious content), and family child care homes.

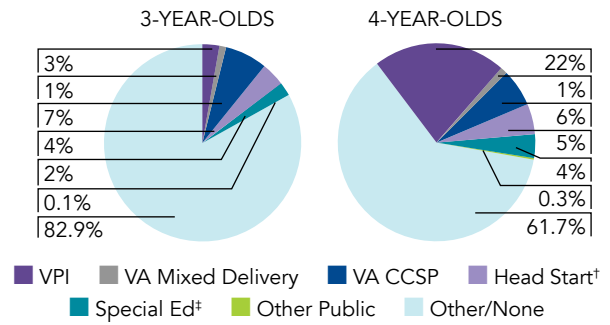
Mixed Delivery and CCSP have a parent work or education requirement and do not fully meet NIEER’s definition of a state-funded preschool program. This page shows the full Virginia ECE overview including VPI, Mixed Delivery, and CCSP. Rankings on this page reflect all three programs.

VIRGINIA EARLY CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION MIXED DELIVERY

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,989
School districts that offer state program.....	54% (localities)
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	10 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	Full calendar year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in CCSP.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	VA Mixed Delivery 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	None	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	None	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	16 hours/school year	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	30 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations, full physical exam; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

4

RESOURCES

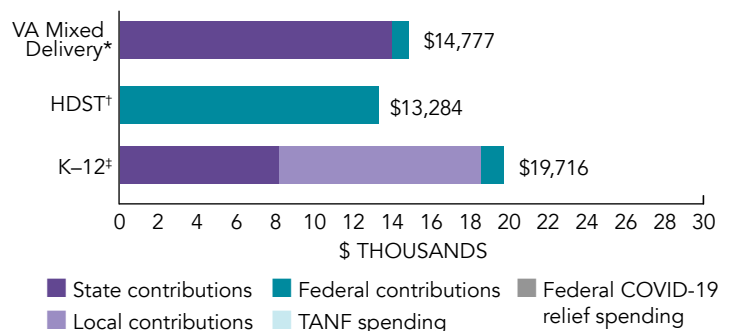
Total state pre-K spending	\$27,657,187
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$13,905
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$14,777

* 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

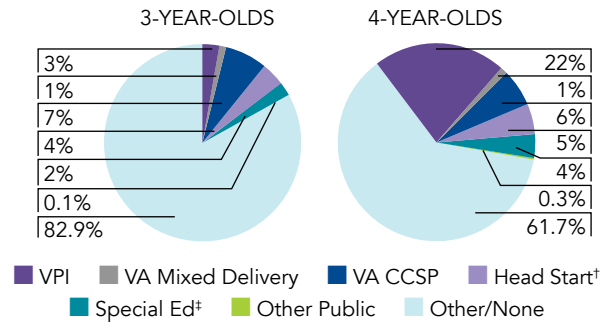


VIRGINIA CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM (CCSP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	12,143
School districts that offer state program.....	100% (localities)
Income requirement.....	85% SMI
Minimum hours of operation.....	Determined locally
Operating schedule.....	Full calendar year

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in CCSP.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	VA CCSP REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	ELDS not required to be used	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	None	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	None	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	16 hours/school year	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	30 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Immunizations, full physical exam; Referrals not required	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

3

RESOURCES

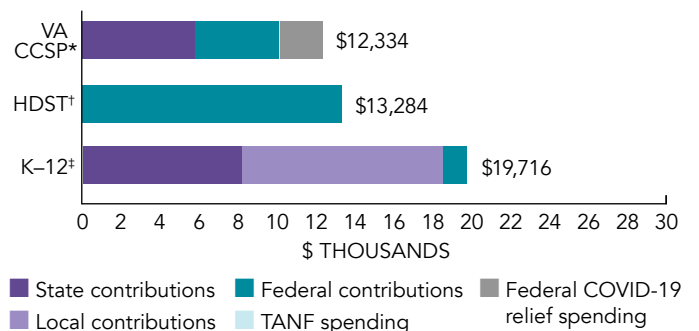
Total state pre-K spending	\$97,799,343
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$8,054
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$12,334

* 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.

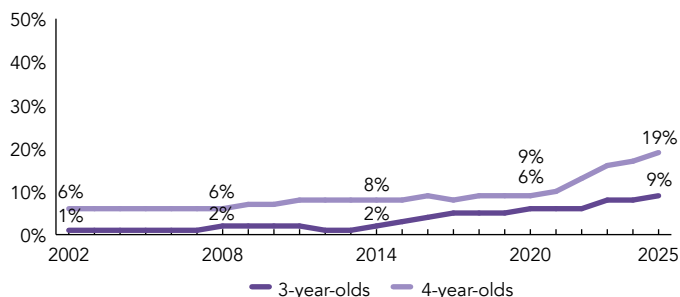
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

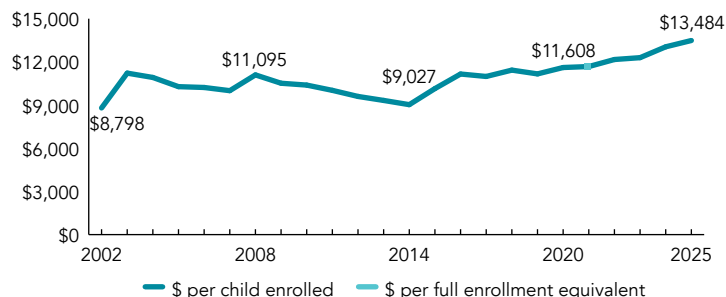


Washington

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year Washington’s Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) enrolled 16,432 children in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), an increase of 139 children from the prior year. State spending for ECEAP totaled \$223,931,571, up \$12,173,518 (6%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child on ECEAP averaged \$13,628 in 2024-25, up \$631 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Washington ECEAP met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

Washington’s Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) also served 8,039 children in a Transition to Kindergarten (TK) program during the 2024-2025 school year, an increase of 2,519 children from the prior year. State spending for TK was \$106,032,423, an increase of \$33,225,623 (46%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child on TK was \$13,190, the same as in 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. TK met 6 out of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT’S NEW

ECEAP added 300 slots in 2024-2025 as well as 1,000 part- to school-day conversions. In 2024- 2025, contractors received slot rate increases: 5% for school-day slots and 9% for working-day slots. Due to statewide budget cuts, 2025-2026 ECEAP funding was reduced which resulted in over 2,000 fewer slots. However, in November 2025, Ballmer Group Philanthropy announced a new grant to dramatically expand ECEAP by funding up to 10,000 additional ECEAP slots for the next ten years.

Transitional Kindergarten was codified by the legislature as Transition to Kindergarten and OSPI published new rules and guidance for the 2024-2025 school year to set minimum standards and requirements for TK. DCYF and OSPI are supporting TK programs with technical assistance on collaborating with community-based partners including ECEAP, Head Start, child care, family child care, and licensed tribally-led early learning programs. DCYF and OSPI jointly identified strategies to improve alignment of high-quality preschool across the two agencies and increase equitable access to preschool. Originally, TK enrollment was projected to be capped at 7,266 students for both years of the 2025–2027 biennium. A 25% reduction in TK funding for the 2026–2027 school year is expected to reduce access to the program by approximately 2,000 students.

In 2024-2025, the Washington State Legislature funded 178 Early ECEAP slots. They also funded \$7,687,754 in Complex Needs Funds. These funds were intended to support children with developmental delays (no IEP requirement), disabilities, or challenging behaviors due to complex trauma. The Early ECEAP slots are no longer funded, and CNF were reduced in 2025-2026 due to the state budget shortfall.

BACKGROUND

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) oversees early learning programs, as well as child welfare and juvenile rehabilitation. DCYF prioritizes the creation of a high-quality integrated birth-to-eight system, which includes expanding access to affordable, high-quality care that is both responsive and inclusive. ECEAP, created in 1985, is a large part of the state’s strategy to accomplish this goal. In 2010, the state Legislature established the ECEAP as a statutory entitlement for all eligible children, not funded by Head Start, with an extension to 2030-2031.

ECEAP focuses on the whole child, providing nutrition, health, education, and family support services to at-risk young children. To be eligible, children must be 3- or 4-years-old and meet specific income or special circumstance criteria, such as eligible for special education services or experiencing homelessness. ECEAP enrollment can include children whose families do not meet the income requirement but face other risk factors that are linked to development or school success.

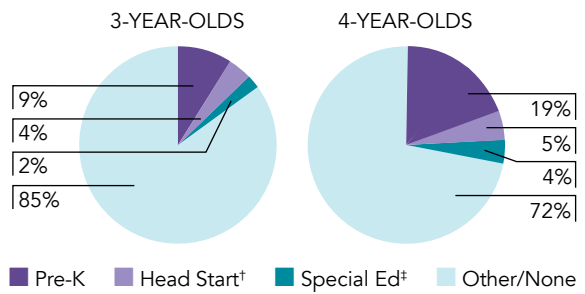
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WASHINGTON STATE OVERVIEW

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	24,471
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	11,193
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,454
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE

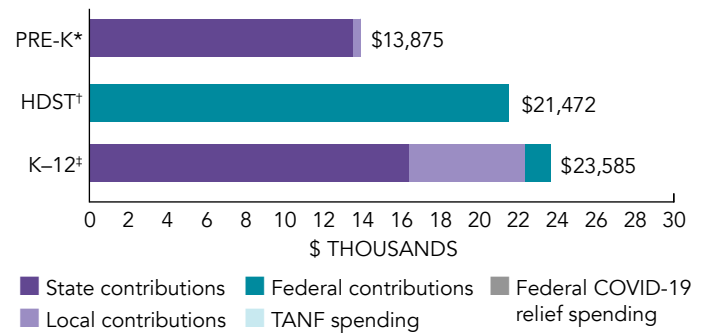


† Estimates children in Head Start not also enrolled in state pre-K.
‡ Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$329,963,994
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$13,484
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$13,875

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	ECEAP	TK
34	17	7	6	9	6

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is the primary agency charged with overseeing public K–12 education in Washington state. Working with the state’s 295 public school districts and eight state-tribal education compact schools, OSPI allocates funding and provides tools, resources, and technical assistance so every student in Washington is provided a high-quality public education. The goal of Washington’s K–12 education system is to prepare every student for postsecondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.

OSPI’s Transition to Kindergarten (TK) is a legislatively established and authorized program for children who are at least 4-years-old by August 31 and have been identified through a screening process to be in need of additional preparation to be successful kindergarten students in the following school year. Districts may offer TK programs, but they are not required to do so. The requirements for TK are outlined in the Washington State Administrative Code (WAC) [Chapter 392-425](#). TK has gained momentum in recent years as a strategy for closing opportunity gaps.

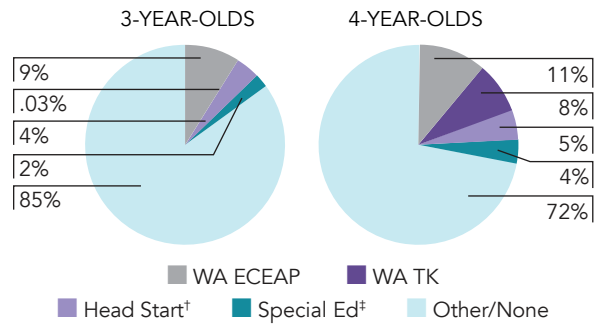
Washington’s overall support for state-funded preschool is depicted in the first two pages of this state profile. The third page focuses on ECEAP and the fourth page on TK.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ECEAP)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment 16,432
 School districts that offer state program 92% (counties)
 Income requirement 36% SMI (non-tribal children);
 100% SMI (tribal children)
 Minimum hours of operation 3 hours/day
 Operating schedule School year (part- & school day);
 Full calendar year (working-day)

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	WA ECEAP 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	AA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	20 hours/year (teachers); 15 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 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.

9

RESOURCES

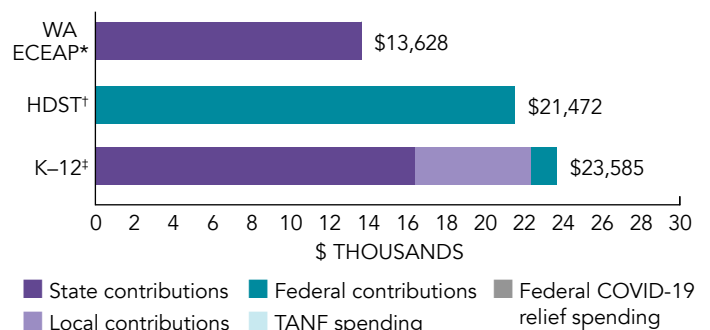
Total state pre-K spending \$223,931,571
 Local match required? No
 State spending per child enrolled \$13,628
 All reported spending per child enrolled* \$13,628

* 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

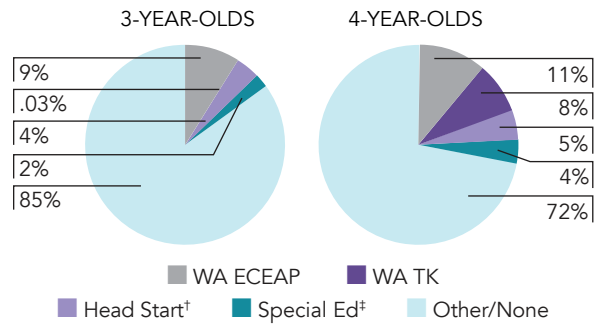


WASHINGTON TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN (TK)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	8,039
School districts that offer state program.....	54% + 1 tribal school
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	27.75 hours/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year

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	WA TK 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, Elem. Ed., ECE SpEd, SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	100 hours/5 years (teachers); 3 days/year (assistants); PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	No limit (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	No limit (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input 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

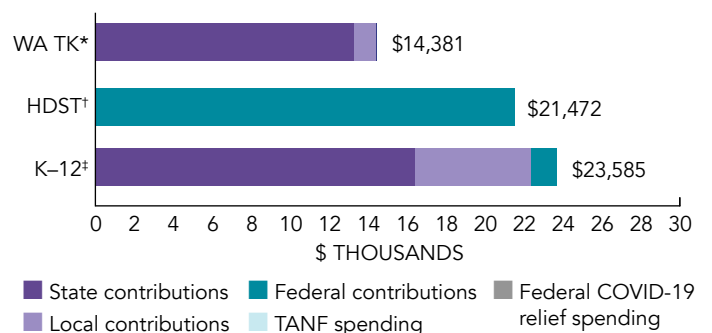
Total state pre-K spending	\$106,032,423
Local match required?.....	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$13,190
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$14,381

* 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.

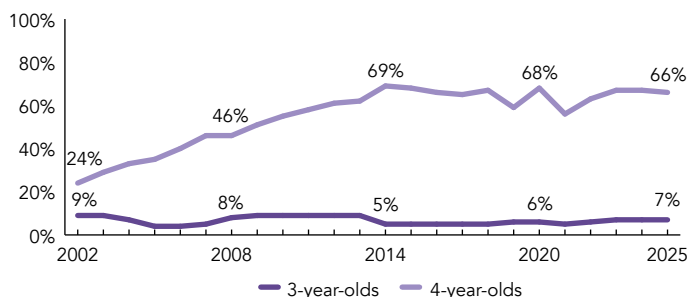
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

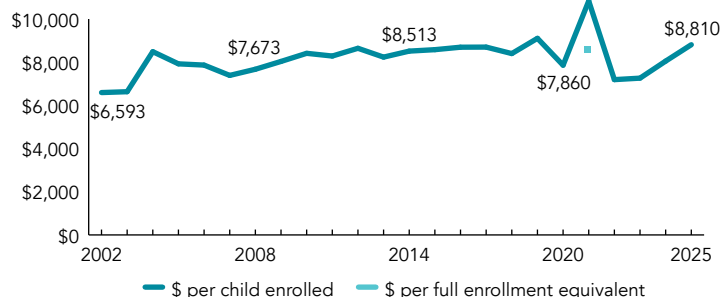


West Virginia

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, West Virginia preschool enrolled 13,674 children, a decrease of 190 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$115,116,798 and an additional \$5,326,168 in TANF funds and \$23,625 in federal recovery funds supported the program, up \$8,862,817 (8%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including TANF and federal recovery funds) equaled \$8,810 in 2024-2025, up \$760 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. West Virginia met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

The West Virginia Pre-K Standards were updated during the 2024-25 school year to be adopted for the 2025-26 school year in preparation for the 2025-26 Pre-K Instructional Materials adoption cycle required by [WV Code AS 18-2A](#) and WVBE Policy 2445.40. These code changes to instructional materials adoption impacts the selection and adoption process. Beginning with the five-year cycle (2025-26), county teams must use the state provided criteria to adopt a comprehensive curriculum. This review and adoption process must be completed by a county team that includes core team members, as defined in WV Pre-K policy. A cursory review was conducted at the request of publishers that can be used by county teams to assist in completion of the Pre-K Instructional Materials Criteria; however, there is no longer a state-approved list.

BACKGROUND

West Virginia introduced public preschool in 1983 for 3- and 4-year-olds through the Public School Early Childhood Education program. 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 pre-K 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 pre-K, or Head Start agencies to meet demand. During the 2024-2025 school year, the collaboration rate was 83%. Programs are permitted to use additional funding from IDEA and federal Head Start.

As of July 2013, all new lead teachers in nonpublic settings are required to have at least a BA in ECE 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. During the 2016-2017 school year, West Virginia 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.

The West Virginia Universal Pre-K program had undergone a multi-year study to assess the effects of program participation. Programs develop monitoring systems to offer ongoing continuous quality improvement, using reliable monitoring tools selected 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, adjust instructional practices, and support school readiness.

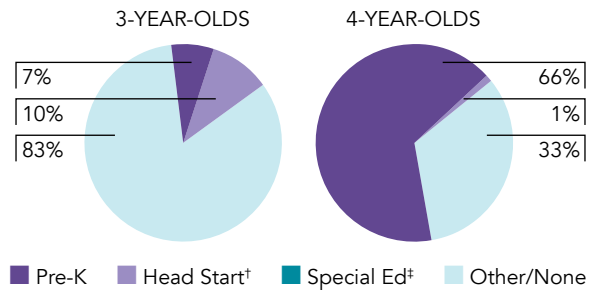
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
4	20	13	14	9

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSAL PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	13,674
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.....	3,535
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	5,959
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	WV 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 equivalent	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching (classrooms collaborating with Head Start)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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.

9

RESOURCES

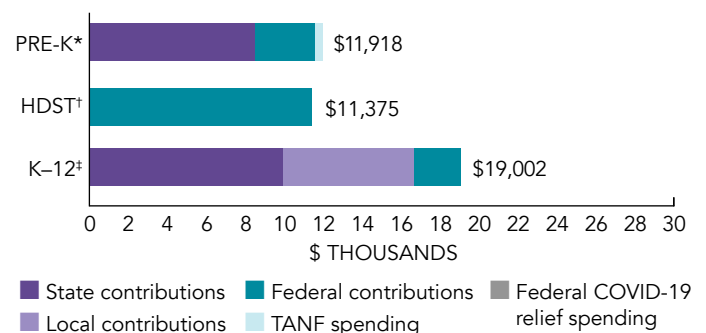
Total state pre-K spending.....	\$120,466,591
Local match required?.....	No
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$8,810
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$11,918

* 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.

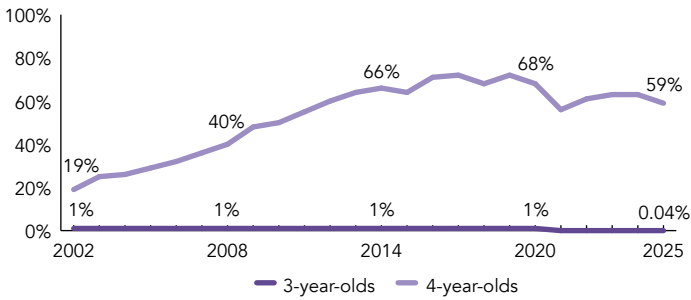
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

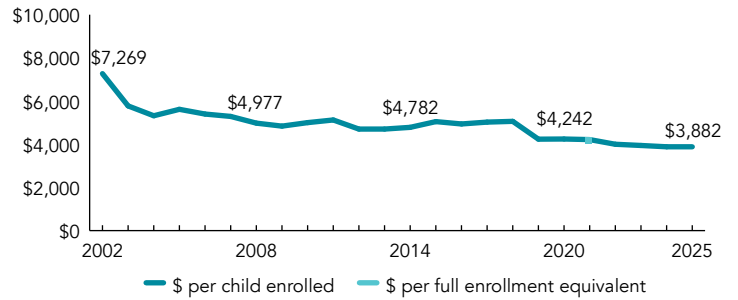


Wisconsin

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Wisconsin preschool enrolled 42,723 children, a decrease of 1,687 from the prior year. Funding for Wisconsin Four-Year-Old Kindergarten (4K) is based on a formula that results in varying spending amounts per child; However, Wisconsin could not report 2024-2025 spending, and it is estimated in this report. Wisconsin met 1 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In the winter of 2023, the Wisconsin Act 20 was passed related to requirements to support reading development in young learners. Schools are now required to conduct the Fundamental Skills Screening Assessment two times a year. However, due to funding delays for the 2024-25 school year, the screening is only required once per year. The single mandatory administration must occur after January 1, 2025, and no later than 45 days before the last day of the school term. In addition to screening, communications with families, screening training, and reporting elements will have an impact on 4K programming, especially with community partners. Act 20 provides funding for the purchase of the statewide screening tool, as well as partial funding for purchasing approved reading curricula (5K-3rd grade). Additional funding for the implementation of Act 20 within school districts was not provided.

BACKGROUND

Since becoming a state in 1848, Wisconsin's Constitution has included a promise to provide free, voluntary education for 4-year-olds. School districts are not required to offer a 4K program, but if they do, it must be open to all age-eligible children within the school district.

Funding for 4K is part of the overall school funding formula. For state aid purposes, 4K students are counted as either .5 or .6 full time equivalent (FTE), depending on the services the school provides. Districts provide either 437 hours of instruction or 349.5 hours of instruction and 87.5 hours of family outreach (for .5 FTE membership aid) or 437 hours of instruction and 87.5 hours of family outreach (for .6 FTE membership aid). Funds for 4K are distributed to public schools, which may subcontract and collaborate with community providers per guidance of public education funding and state requirements. Operating schedules are locally determined with most programs operating part-day, four or five days per week and some programs operating full-day, two or three days per week.

The Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement Grant is a separate budgetary item that offers state funding, via an application, to federal Head Start grantees in Wisconsin. Funding is used to supplement the provision of comprehensive early childhood education services for children and families enrolled in Early Head Start and Head Start. Awarded grantees continue to follow the federal Head Start Performance Standards. Ongoing collaborative efforts bring together Head Start technical assistance and training with other professional development efforts at both the state and local levels. The Wisconsin Head Start State Supplement Grant data is no longer included in this report beginning with the 2020-2021 school year since supplemental funds do not substantially expand the number of children served.

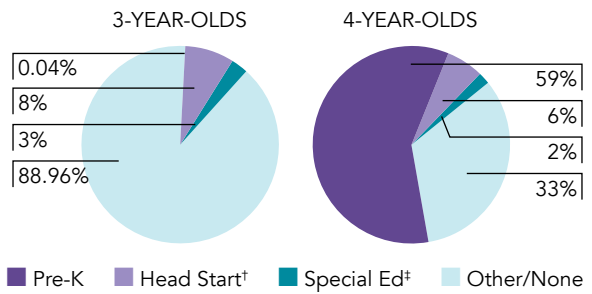
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
8	37	41	31	1

WISCONSIN FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN (4K)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	42,723
School districts that offer state program	99.5%
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,977
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,593
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	138

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† 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.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	WI PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned with other state standards, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	B-3, K-9	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD (public); Other (nonpublic)	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	PD plans (public teachers); Coaching (some nonpublic)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	Determined locally (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	Determined locally (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision & immunizations	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations determined locally; Data used for program improvement at local level only	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1

RESOURCES

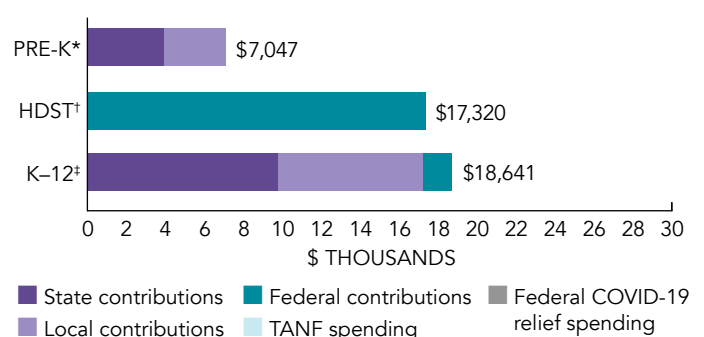
Total state pre-K spending	\$165,861,752
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$6,264,100
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,882
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$7,047

* 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



Wyoming

NO PROGRAM

The state of Wyoming does not offer a state-funded preschool program according to definitions used in this report. However, the state does provide support for other early childhood education programs. Local school districts can use a portion of Title I funding for early childhood education. The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) administers a statewide developmental preschool system to provide IDEA services for 3- to 5-year-olds, and Wyoming Department of Family Services (DFS) administers the TANF program through a competitive grant process which funds high-quality preschool services for children whose families qualify for TANF.

In 2024, the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) distributed \$2.7 million to fourteen preschools serving low-income children. DFS also licenses several programs through the University of Wyoming, community colleges, school districts, and private preschool and child care facilities to provide academic instruction. Both licensed and non-licensed programs are able to pursue accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

The Wyoming Early Childhood State Advisory Council was created in 2010 and is a collaboration of individuals across multiple disciplines. The council's mission is to serve Wyoming children and families by facilitating statewide collaboration, evaluating the early childhood system, and making recommendations to the governor, lawmakers, and state agencies. The Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities functions in the same capacity, with a focus on students who qualify and receive special education services.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
None Served	

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
None Served	

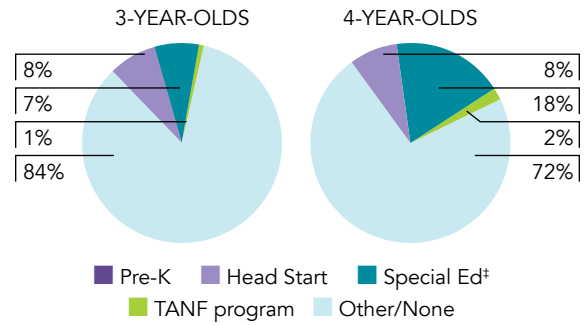
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
No Program

WYOMING

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,884
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,042
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

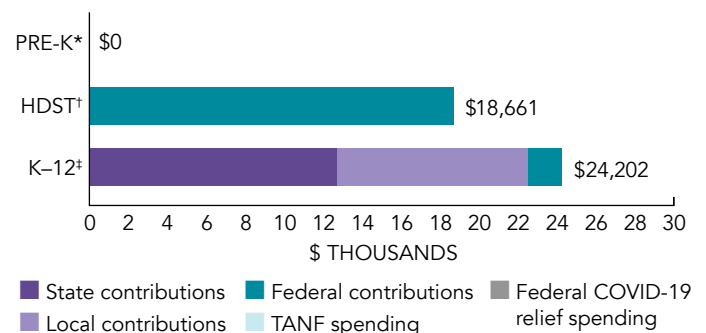
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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



American Samoa

NO PROGRAM

American Samoa does not provide publicly funded preschool as defined in this report but does support early childhood education in several other ways. The Early Childhood Education/Head Start (ECE/HS) division is housed within the American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE). The ASDOE and both elementary and secondary schools operate early childhood education centers.

American Samoa's early learning guidelines, for children ages three to five, address multiple domains including social and emotional development, mathematics, science, approaches to learning, logic and reasoning, social studies, physical development and health, language development, literacy, English language development, and creative arts expression. The early learning guidelines are aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework.

As of January 2017, American Samoa was in the late stages of developing a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) with components including parent engagement, administration, professional development, and health/safety. However, given limited resources, the Child Care Division will begin with a Territory system for quality monitoring and develop a rating platform that better aligns with the unique island early learning and care environments in American Samoa.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
None Served	

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
None Served	

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
No Program

AMERICAN SAMOA

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	16
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	760
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

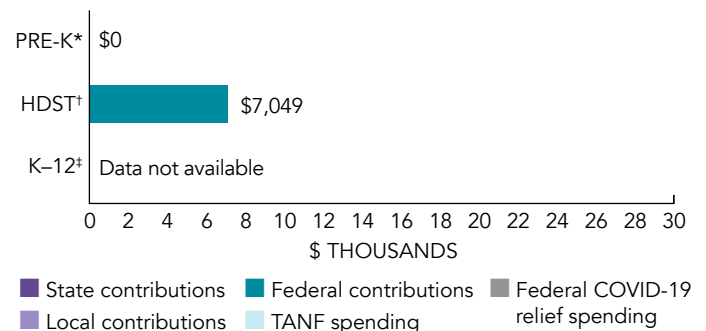
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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



NO PROGRAM

Although the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) does not provide state-funded preschool as defined in this report, the territory does support early education in other ways. Since 1984, the CNMI Public School System has operated the Head Start program in ten centers across multiple islands, providing two center-based program options: double-session/half-day (3.5 hours, four days per week, 152 days per year) and full-day (7 hours, five days per week, 160 days per year). The CNMI Head Start program had 396 preschool-aged Head Start slots and 64 Early Head Start slots in 2023-2024.

During the 2024-2025 school year, Head Start served children in fifteen classrooms, accommodating up to nineteen children in the full-day option and seventeen in the double-session option. A total of 170 children were enrolled in the double-session option and 188 children in a standard full-day format. There are seven Head Start centers on Saipan, one on Rota, and one on Tinian. Saipan classrooms are located in the villages of Chalan Kanoa, Dandan, Chinatown, Kagman, Oleai, San Antonio, and Tanapag. These nine centers continue to provide center-based program options, with two paid staff in each classroom. The program plans to establish a partnership with a family child care center, bringing the total to eight partnership slots.

Early Head Start served children in eight classrooms, with eight children per class. The program operates for 7 hours of instruction for a total of 202 instructional days from August 2024 to July 2025. There are a total of six Early Head Start grantee-operated classrooms located in Chalan Kanoa, Dandan Kagman, Susupe, and Tanapag. The Chalan Kanoa, Dandan, Kagman, and Tanapag classrooms are situated at Head Start sites. The Susupe site will be located within the campus of the largest high school on Saipan, upon completion of building renovations. Child Care Partnership slots are designed to offer services for a full working day, year-round.

In December 2019, the CNMI was awarded \$2,125,989 under the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five competition to support development, planning, and coordination of the territory's early learning system. The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA) was named as the lead agency overseeing this award to coordinate and collaborate efforts across early childhood programs.

CNMI has early learning guidelines for children birth through age five which address multiple domains, including logic and reasoning, social studies, physical development and health, language development, literacy, mathematics, science, English language development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, and creative arts expression. The guidelines are aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework.

CNMI developed a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), called Reach Higher, CNMI, that provides reviews, ratings, coaching, and technical assistance to eight local care providers. Program quality assessment tools are already used for quality assurance and monitoring and are now incorporated as one component of the QRIS.

ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
None Served		None Served		No Program

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	56
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	358
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

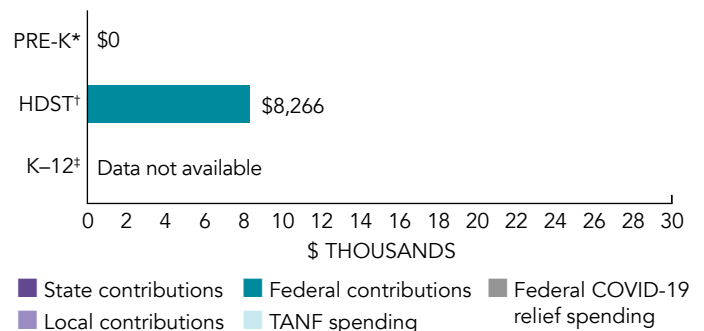
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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.

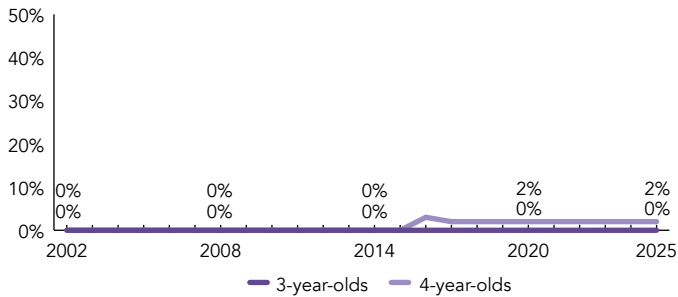
‡ K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

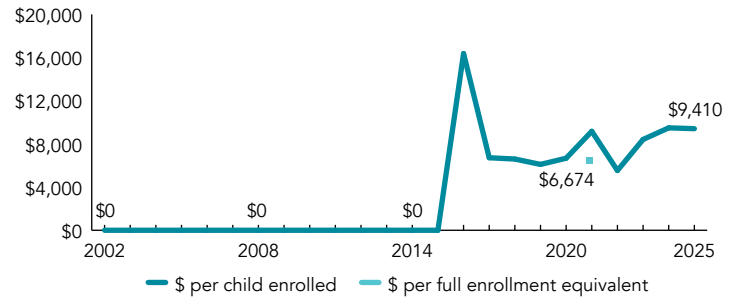


Guam

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024-2025 school year, Guam preschool enrolled 52 children, an increase of 2 children from 2023-2024. State spending totaled \$465,712, and federal COVID-19 recovery funding totaled \$23,628, an overall increase of \$14,987 (3%), adjusted for inflation since last year. State spending per child (including federal recovery funds) equaled \$9,410 in 2024-2025, down \$77 from 2023-2024, adjusted for inflation. Guam met 6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Guam saw a small increase in public preschool enrollment in 2024-2025, which led to a small decrease in funding per child. Leading up to 2024-2025, Guam used federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funds to support island-wide systemic improvements, parent engagement activities, and school readiness activities.

BACKGROUND

The Guam Department of Education's publicly funded Pilot Prekindergarten Program is available in all four regions of the territory's single school district. Each region has one Prekindergarten Program classroom located within a public school. All age-eligible children may enroll in the program, which has no income limit for eligibility. Guam's Prekindergarten Program operates six hours a day, five days a week, following the school year or academic calendar, and providing 1,080 hours of services per year. Both breakfast and lunch are served to children attending the program.

The program's maximum class size is 18 children, with a teacher-to-student ratio of 1 to 9. Lead teachers are required to have an associate degree with early childhood education specialization and either pre-K or pre-K to 2nd grade certification. Lead teachers also are required to participate in 30 clock hours of in-service professional development annually. Assistant teachers are required to hold a high school diploma but are not required to participate in any professional development.

The Guam Department of Education also oversees the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Prekindergarten Program for 4-year-olds who meet specific qualifications. GATE is a one-year program to enhance the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive needs of gifted children without pressure and unnecessary structure. It is a balance between acceleration and enrichment activities. The intention of the program is to allow children to function at the level they are ready, while providing them with a background of experiences that will help them to be eager and effective learners.

TOTAL
BENCHMARKS MET

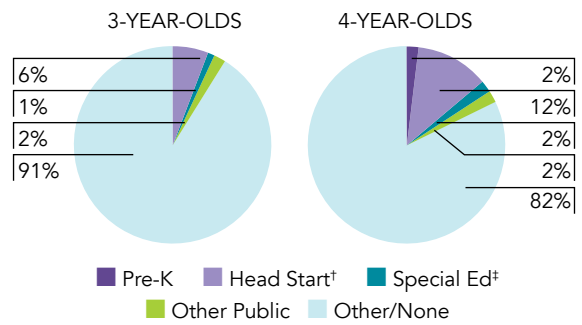
6

GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	52
School districts that offer state program	100%
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	132
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	534
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	GUAM 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	AA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year (teachers only); PD plans (teachers only); Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	18 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:9 (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	Site visits	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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RESOURCES

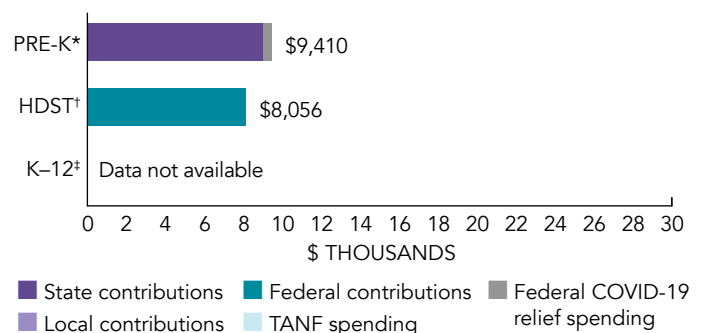
Total state pre-K spending	\$489,340
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$829,376
State spending per child enrolled	\$9,410
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,410

* 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



NO PROGRAM

The Republic of Palau does not have a state-funded preschool program meeting the criteria of this report, but does support other early childhood education initiatives. Palau Early Childhood Care and Education services come from two different systems in the Republic of Palau. The Ministry of Education serves 5- to 8-year-olds in public schools and the Palau Community Action Agency serves 3- to 5-year-olds in community-based, federally-funded Head Start programs throughout the island.

The Ministry of Education is also responsible for providing Special Education services for the ministry and the Palau Community Action Agency. In addition to this, the Ministry of Education as part of the Compact of Free Association, received additional funding to provide services to children from birth to age two. The Special Education Department, under the Ministry of Education, worked with the interagency team (the Ministry of Health and Head Start) to provide services, which began during the 2025-26 school year.

In addition, three of the predominant religious denominations (Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, and Palau Evangelical Church) have established private early childhood programs in Koror State. Many young children living in small communities outside Koror State have no access to early education because their communities do not meet the requirement of at least ten eligible children enrolled in the Head Start program.

During the 2021-2022 school year, the Ministry of Education established kindergarten in all public elementary schools. The Palau Early Childhood Comprehensive System (PECCS) established a National Framework on Early Childhood Development for School Readiness which partners with families, communities, and agencies to ensure the health and success of children in Palau.

The Ministry is in the process of starting an early childhood teacher cohort to ensure that kindergarten teachers have continuing education support.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
None Served	

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
None Served	

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
No Program

PALAU

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	230
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

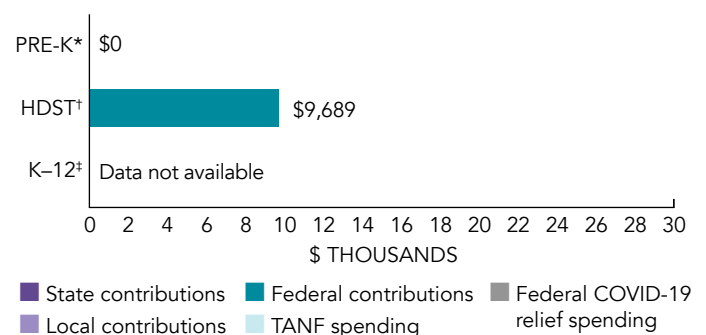
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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



Puerto Rico

NO PROGRAM

Puerto Rico has preschool education programs that are funded by grants from various areas. This description shows how Puerto Rico, which operates as a single school district, supports several early childhood education initiatives.

Early childhood preschool programs are administered by the Administration for Care and Integral Development of Childhood (ACUDEN, Spanish acronym) and the Department of Education has authority over early childhood special education. There are seven levels of education in Puerto Rico, and Level One is nursery school for children under age four, which is optional and consists of Early Head Start, Head Start and other prekindergarten programs. Level Two is compulsory preschool, also known as kindergarten, which is mandatory for 5-year-olds.

ACUDEN is the grantee that receives federal funding for Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, which operates in Puerto Rico through nine delegated agencies. In 2024-2025, these programs served 1,908 families and 1,994 children (1,571 in Head Start and 423 in Early Head Start). There is an active multi-sectoral regulatory council for Head Start, which has representation from various sectors and meets every two months.

ACUDEN is also the lead agency for the Child Care Program funds. The agency guarantees the provision of and access to comprehensive care and development for the neediest children from their early formative stages, and encourages the participation of fathers, mothers, caregivers, and relatives in the educational and formative process. Through the Child Care Program, ACUDEN funds 105 service providers and more than 319 centers, serving more than 10,739 children.

In addition, Puerto Rico was awarded a PDG B-5 grant for the purpose of updating early childhood planning efforts in Puerto Rico. Through this grant, Puerto Rico successfully disseminated the Needs Assessment, developed Early Learning Guidelines, held Virtual Wellness Cafes for more than 5,000 participants, and provided professional development opportunities to early childhood professionals, among other activities.

Through the efforts of the PDG B-5 Project, the Multisectoral Council for Early Childhood was reactivated. The Council has developed public policies in the areas of health, education, security, and family well-being. It has also been able to expand the services offered by ACUDEN through partnerships with government agencies and non-governmental organizations to create and offer inclusive and efficient services for children. As part of its service expansion strategies, the Council has developed training programs for parents, educators, and social workers about the importance of early development and the role of the family in the education of children.

The objectives of PDG B-5 primarily focused on developing a variety of workshops, certifications, and orientations, with the purpose of promoting best practices to optimize the development and well-being of children in child care centers. These activities enabled ACUDEN to meet its strategic plan and achieve a successful project closure.

ACUDEN has been implementing the instrument Centros del Futuro (Centers of the Future), a multisectoral aspiration aimed to ensure children develop in environments that foster their full and optimal growth. The instrument outlines a series of criteria to assess the quality of services, operations, and the environment in early childhood care and development centers in Puerto Rico. During the 2024 cycle, 112 centers participated.

As part of ACUDEN's ongoing efforts to strengthen and elevate the quality of services provided to children, during the program year 2024-2025, several strategic initiatives were implemented, including the Child Care 100 x 35 Program and the Effective Quality

(continued)

ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
None Served		None Served		No Program

PUERTO RICO

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	12,372
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	16,110
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

Improvement Program (EQUIP). Through the Child Care 100 x 35 Program, ACUDEN expanded the availability of child care services across the island with a primary focus on communities identified as child care deserts. This initiative provided funding and technical assistance to 66 entities to increase service capacity. Similarly, EQUIP provided financial support to 256 child care centers to implement facility improvements and acquire essential equipment necessary to meet established health and safety standards.

As the lead agency for early childhood in Puerto Rico, ACUDEN remains committed to the continuous pursuit of innovative initiatives that promote and enhance the quality of services offered to children and families.

RESOURCES

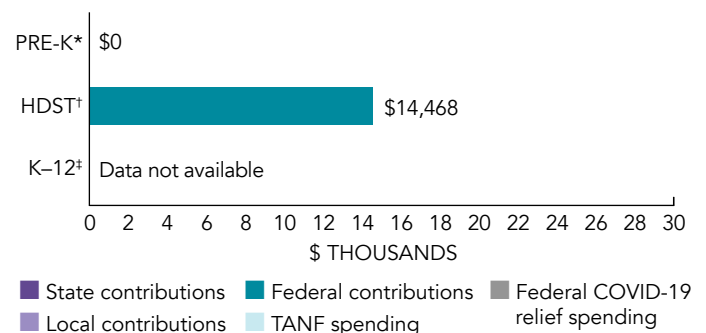
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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



Virgin Islands

NO PROGRAM

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Beginning in the 2018-2019 school year, the Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDE) introduced a preschool program called the "Granny Preschool Program," which was developed specifically for Pre-K students who will enter kindergarten during the enrollment period for the projected upcoming school year. The program was created as a result of the Learning Accomplishment Profile-Third Edition (LAP 3) and iReady data which showed that incoming kindergarteners were entering kindergarten without the necessary readiness skills.

During the 2023-2024 school year, 94 preschoolers were served in the St. Croix District.

ELIGIBILITY

Any child who turns four by December 31st of the enrollment year is eligible for the Granny Preschool Program. Registration during open enrollment period is conducted through the VIDE Division of Student Services. Interested parents must complete the Granny Preschool Eligibility Questionnaire to ensure that preschoolers meet the program requirements. Preschoolers are selected in the order in which parents have completed the questionnaire.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Prior to program implementation, state and district Department of Education stakeholders played a vital role in the execution of the Granny Preschool Program. Additionally, collaboration was instituted amongst the following community agencies for Granny Preschool operational licenses: the Department of Human Services, the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, the Virgin Islands Fire Service, and the Department of Health.

CURRICULUM

Waterford, a research-based, integrated early learning resource is utilized as the core instructional tool. Waterford provides a multi-sensory learning experience and is designed to help all children build the foundation for a lifetime of learning. Data collected through observations, individualized assessments, online courses, and work samples are used to support students through a personalized learning approach.

DATA COLLECTION

The Learning Accomplishment Profile Third Edition (LAP-3) provides a systematic method for observing the skill development of any child functioning in the 36 to 72-month age range, including children with disabilities. The LAP-3 is administered during the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.

OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES

Additionally, the Department of Human Services, which houses the Office Preschool Services, oversees early childhood education and care across multiple settings. The Department of Human Services uses local funds to surpass the federally required Head Start local match. Currently, almost 80% of low-income preschoolers are served through Head Start in the territory. The Virgin Islands Child Care Revised Rules and Regulations provide standards that all child care and early childhood education facilities, including private centers, Head Start, and Early Head Start, must follow. All early childhood education teachers and directors were required to earn a CDA credential by June 2015, and 24 hours of professional development training is required each year. These regulations also establish maximum class sizes of 18 for 3-year-olds (with a 1:9 staff to child ratio) and 20 for 4-year-olds (with a 1:10 staff to child ratio). The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Human Services was awarded \$725,112 under the Preschool Development Birth through Five (PDG B-5) grant in December 2018.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
None Served	

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
None Served	

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
No Program

VIRGIN ISLANDS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	0
School districts that offer state program	NA
Income requirement	NA
Minimum hours of operation	NA
Operating schedule	NA
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	44
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	975
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	Not reported

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

NO PROGRAM

RESOURCES

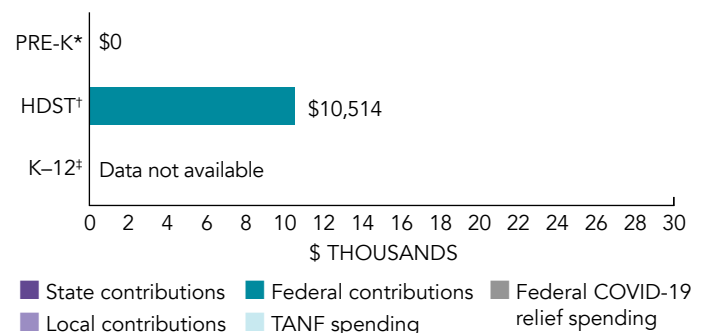
Total state pre-K spending	\$0
Local match required?	NA
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$0
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$0

* 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



THE STATE OF PRESCHOOL SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Respondent Universe

The respondent universe for this study is the state preschool administrators in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, plus the U.S. territories. Data are collected directly from these entities through a web-based survey form. More than one agency supports early childhood education programs in some states. As a result, some states have more than one respondent. Note that in some states, there are no state programs to support publicly provided early childhood education. As such, these states do not have state preschool administrators and they do not report data on the topic. Other administrators in these states, however, are contacted to update and confirm a state narrative on the status of other early childhood programs in the state each year.

Statistical Methodology

This is a universe data collection, employing a survey form. All states with publicly supported early childhood education have responded to the collection effort. Indiana completed a survey about its early childhood education program which is similar to state-funded preschool in other states but includes a parent work or education requirement for eligibility and therefore does not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. Indiana is included in the report but not in national totals or rankings. Similarly, Virginia completed surveys about its Early Childhood Foundation Mixed Delivery program and Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) which include a parent work or education requirement for eligibility and do not meet NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program. In addition, information was sought from territories; Guam is the first territory to operate its own preschool program comparable to state-funded programs. The Virgin Islands also has a preschool program but data are not yet available on that program. Because the data collection is based on a universe of sample members, weighting adjustments and adjustments to variances for statistical test purposes are not necessary. Some statistical adjustments are made to the resulting data, however, to help unduplicate enrollment counts that can arise when the same child is enrolled in more than one publicly funded program. More specifically, when states report that they have included children with disabilities in both the special education counts and the counts of preschool-aged children who are in regular preschool programs, the preschool special education in state preschool count is subtracted from the preschool special education enrollment counts. Similarly, when states reported that they have included Head Start children in counts of children in state preschool and Head Start, the Head Start in state preschool count is subtracted from the Head Start enrollment. Children with disabilities enrolled in Head Start are also subtracted from the preschool special education enrollment count to avoid duplication.

Methods to Maximize Response Rate and Ensure Data Accuracy

Several steps have been taken to maximize the response to this data collection. First, the data are collected through a web-based, computer-assisted interview (CAI) program. This flexibility allows respondents to enter information as time and data availability permit. Further, respondents are offered opportunities to check previous years' data at the beginning of data collection and can view last year's responses to many questions embedded in the current year's web-based survey. They also have multiple opportunities to review the current year's entries before the data are published. The first data check acts as a data quality control step, in terms of reminding respondents what kinds of data will be needed for the current year's collection. Allowing respondents to review current year's data entry before results are published acts as another data quality control check and also provides respondents with confidence that accurate data will be reported from their respective states, further garnering cooperation.

Once surveys are completed, data are checked by NIEER staff for entry errors, consistency with prior year's data, and consistency with information available from public documents (for example, with published state education agency regulations and guidance). Any apparent inconsistencies or errors are discussed with the respondents for resolution. When data have been compiled and summarized for publication in a public use data set and reports, the results are then sent back to the state administrators who provided the information for final verification before publication and dissemination.

Tests of Procedures and Methods

Each year, staff at NIEER review changes to policies that support early childhood education at the state and federal levels. Modifications are then made to the questionnaire and the related web-based CAI instruments to reflect these policy changes as well as new priorities in the field. In addition to the policy review, respondents are sent data from the previous year's data collection, allowing them to correct errors or to update information. NIEER staff actively solicit opinions regarding the clarity, usefulness, and availability of data requested by the survey from the primary respondents. This facilitates NIEER staff learning about new or changing policies from the provider perspective.

The CAI instruments undergo extensive testing prior to the initiation of data collection. Tests are run to verify that logical skips through the instrument are functioning as expected so that respondents are not asked questions that are not meaningful based on responses to prior questions. Prior to publication, respondents are sent current year answers for verification for accuracy and are also given the opportunity to review their state's profile page before the data are released.

All initiatives included in the current report meet the criteria outlined by NIEER, which defines state preschool education programs as initiatives that are funded and directed by the state to support group learning experiences for preschool-age children, usually ages 3 and 4. For more information about these criteria, please see, “What Qualifies as a State Preschool Program?” on page 22. This report covers the same initiatives as the 2024 report with the following exceptions: Virginia’s Early Childhood Foundation Mixed Delivery program now has a parent work or education requirement and no longer meets NIEER’s definition of a state-funded preschool program. Virginia’s Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) is included in the report for the first time but also has a parent work or education requirement and does not meet NIEER’s definition of a state-funded preschool program. Information about these two programs is included on the last three pages of Virginia’s profile but not included in rankings or national totals.

The survey included yes or no questions, questions that asked state administrators to select which of several choices best described their program, and open-ended questions. The survey included questions on access, program administration, operating schedule, child eligibility and reassessment, program standards, statewide early learning standards, curriculum, preschool child assessments, personnel, resources, structured observations of classroom quality, nature-based and outdoor learning, and important changes to the program since the last survey.

Collection of Non-Survey Data

Although most of the data in this report were collected through the State of Preschool survey there are a few exceptions. Total federal, state, and local expenditures on K–12 education in the 2024-2025 school year were calculated by NIEER based on data from the National Education Association’s report, Rankings of the States 2024 and Estimates of School Statistics 2025. Total K–12 spending for each state includes current operating expenditures plus annual capital outlays and interest on school debt. This provides a more complete picture of the full cost of K–12 education than including only current operating expenditures, which underestimate the full cost. Our estimate of K–12 expenditures is also more comparable to total preschool spending per child because this funding generally must cover all costs, including facilities. Expenditure per child was calculated for each state by dividing total expenditures by the Fall 2024 enrollment. We estimated the breakdown of expenditure per child by source, based on the percentages of revenue receipts from federal, state, and local sources in each state.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and the Office of Head Start in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services were the sources of data on federal Head Start spending and enrollment. In addition, some data were obtained from the Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) for the 2024-2025 program year. States were asked about state supplements to Head Start as part of the main survey again this year. OHS reported to NIEER that in some instances Head Start funding and enrollment for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) and Migrant Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs were reported in the state in which the program was administered, rather than the state in which children attended Head Start. The Head Start Service Location dataset, which provides the state of administration and service provision, was used correct for this in NIEER’s calculations of Head Start enrollment, funding, and per child funding by state. Adjustments were made to AZ, NM, ND, SD, and UT (AI/AN) and AL, AZ, AR, CO, FL, GA, IN, LA, MI, MN, MO, NV, NJ, NM, NC, ND, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, WI (MSHS) to align enrollment and funding by state with enrollment by location of service rather than with administrative headquarters. ACF reports the total number of Head Start slots. The number of 3- and 4-year-olds who attended Head Start was estimated using the age-breakdown of the cumulative enrollment information from the PIR. Enrollment in American AI/AN Head Start programs was calculated in a similar way and included in each state’s total. Enrollment in MSHS is based on information provided in the PIR and is also included in each state’s total. Total funding for each state includes Head Start as well as AI/AN and MSHS. Spending per child was calculated for each state by dividing the total Head Start spending by the enrollment. All data in Appendix B include AI/AN and MSHS when applicable. Information included in the report is specific to Head Start and does not include Early Head Start. Head Start data are provided in Appendix B.

Populations of 3- and 4-year-olds in each state were obtained from the Census Bureau’s datasets and are shown in Appendix C. As in the past, NIEER used estimates for the July immediately preceding the program year (e.g., July 2024 for the 2024-2025 program year) to calculate percentages of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in state preschool programs, federal Head Start, and special education. Census estimates are based on the 2020 census.

The U.S. Office of Special Education Programs provided data on special education enrollment in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Preschool Grants program (IDEA Section 619 of Part B) in the 2024-2025 program year. Beginning in the 2022-2023 year, NIEER calculated the number of children receiving special education who were in school- or center-based settings which included the following IDEA categories: Separate Class, Separate School, Other Location Regular Early Childhood Program, and Regular Early Childhood Program. Five-year-olds not yet in kindergarten are included as 4-year-olds. These data are provided in Appendix D.

In the 2025 *Yearbook*, NIEER again attempts to provide a more accurate estimate of unduplicated enrollments, whether in state preschool, Head Start, special education, or other settings, through a series of calculations. Because many children who are counted in special education enrollments are also enrolled in state preschool or Head Start programs, it is important to ensure that those children are not counted twice. This year, for the third time, we include only children in special education

who are in school- or center-based settings to get a better estimate of the children in early childhood education programs. Forty-two states and the District of Columbia reported including children in special education in their state preschool enrollment figures, while two states and Guam do not include these children in their enrollment count (but do include them in their programs). Thirty-five of the 42 states and the District of Columbia were able to provide the number of children in special education who were also counted in their enrollment; another four multi-program states provided breakdown for some, but not all, programs. Those children were subtracted from the special education enrollment figure for the state, but remain in the state preschool enrollment figure in the enrollment pie charts and when calculating total enrollment across both programs. The remaining three states were unable to report special education enrollment numbers, and, therefore, estimates were used based on the average percent of special education students in state preschool and enrollment numbers for each program. Information from the PIR regarding special education students was used for one state-funded Head Start program (See Table 4).

Three- and 4-year-olds enrolled in Head Start with an IEP or IFSP, as reported in the 2024-2025 PIR, were also removed from the special enrollment total used in the enrollment pie charts. As the PIR does not report a breakdown of special education students by age, estimates were based on total special education enrollment and the percentage of all Head Start enrollees who were 3 or 4 years old. Three-year-olds enrolled in Early Head Start programs were not included in this estimate.

Beginning with the 2014-2015 *Yearbook*, 3- and 4-year-olds who were enrolled in both Head Start and state preschool were removed from the Head Start enrollment total used in the enrollment pie charts and Table 4. In 2024-2025, 28 programs were able to report information on the number of children enrolled in state preschool who were also enrolled in Head Start. These children were subtracted from the total Head Start number but remain in the state preschool enrollment number for the enrollment pie charts and when calculating total enrollment across both programs. Eleven programs reported that children were dually enrolled in Head Start and state preschool but could not report the number of children. And eight programs reported that it was unknown if children were dually enrolled. In these states, the number of children in state preschool and Head Start may be an overestimate.

Determination of State Rankings

States are given rankings in four areas: the percentage of 4-year-olds enrolled in state preschool (Access Ranking–4-Year-Olds), the percentage of 3-year-olds enrolled in state preschool (Access Ranking–3-Year-Olds), state spending per child enrolled (Resources Ranking–State Spending), and all reported spending per child enrolled (Resources Ranking–All Reported Spending). The measures of access for 3- and 4-year-olds were calculated, as described previously, using state data on enrollment in the preschool programs and Census population data. When a state did not report separate enrollment numbers of 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds, the age breakdown was estimated by other means, such as using the average proportion of children enrolled in state preschool at each age in states that served both 3- and 4-year-olds, and provided data by age or prior year data. State per-child spending was calculated by dividing state preschool spending (including TANF spending and federal COVID-19 relief funding directed toward the state preschool initiative) by enrollment. All reported spending per child was calculated by dividing the sum of reported local, state and federal spending by enrollment. Beginning with the 2014-2015 report, we also provide an indicator of whether the state was able to report local and/or federal resources (See Table 7).

All states (and DC) that provided data were ranked, starting with “1” for the state with the highest percentage of its children enrolled in the state preschool education program or the state program that spent the most per child. Indiana and Guam are not included in the state rankings. Only Virginia’s Preschool Initiative (VPI) factored into Virginia’s rankings. States that did not serve children at age 3 receive notations of “None Served” on the ranking of access for 3-year-olds. Throughout this report, the District of Columbia is referred to by the term “state,” creating a list of 45 states for rankings. The five states that did not fund a preschool initiative during the 2024-2025 school year are omitted from all rankings and instead receive notations of “No Program” on their state profile pages.

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