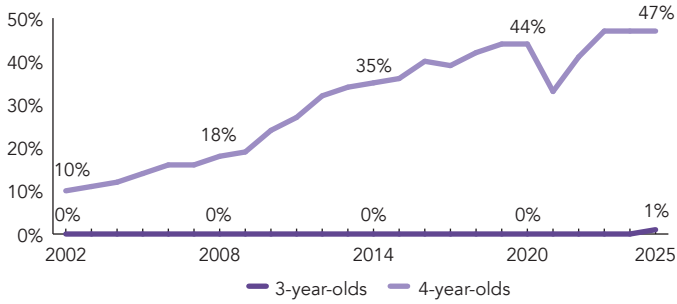
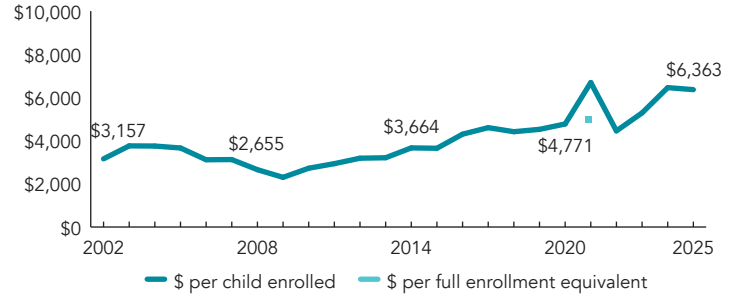


Maine

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.

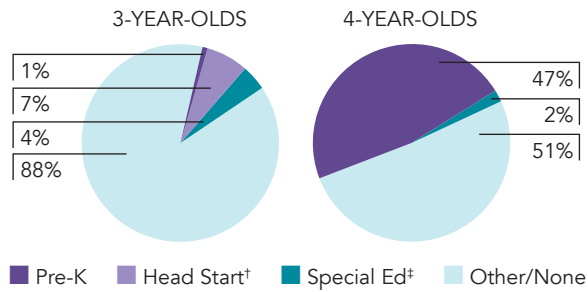
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
13	34	24	16	9

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

