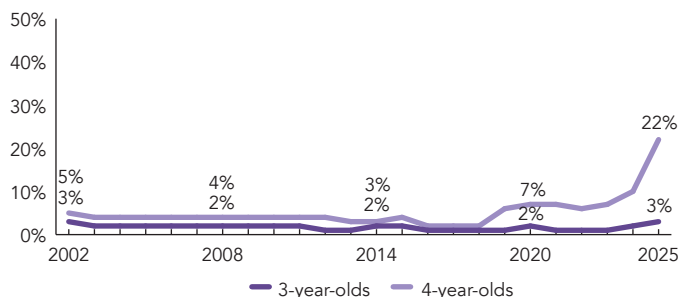
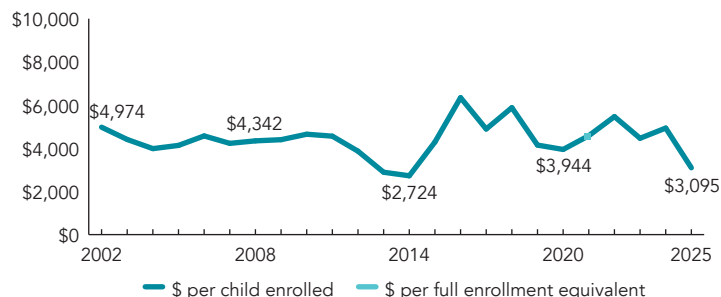


Missouri

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).