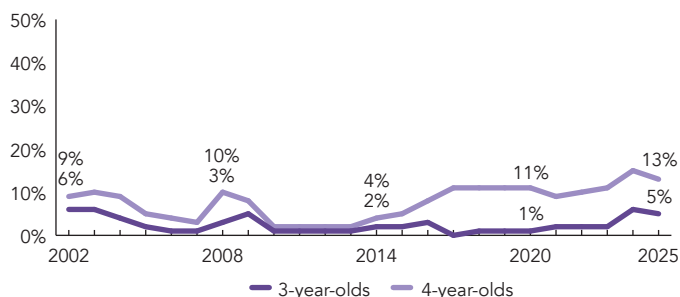
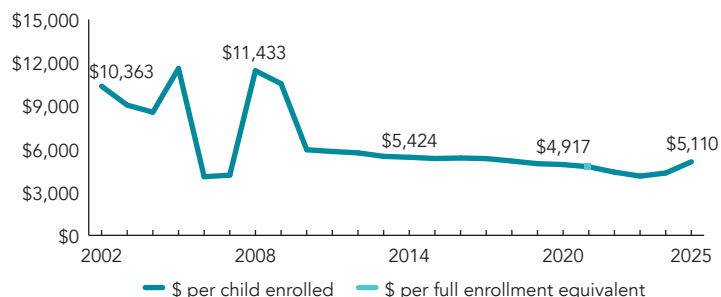


Ohio

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.

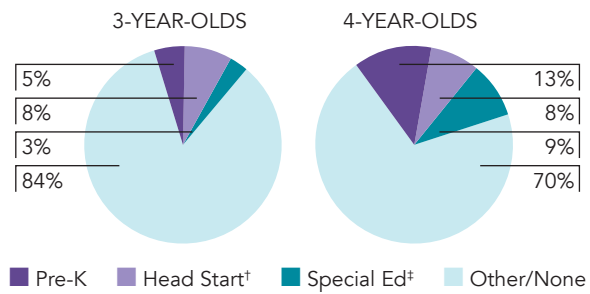
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
38	23	32	39	5

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.

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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

