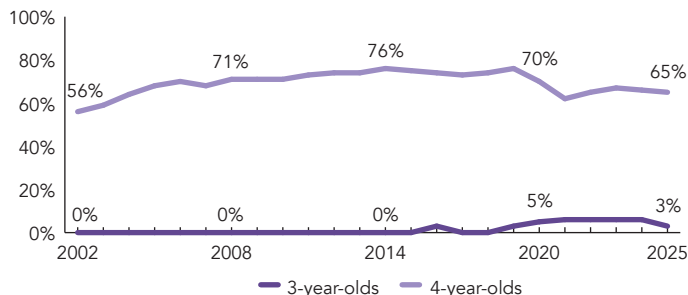
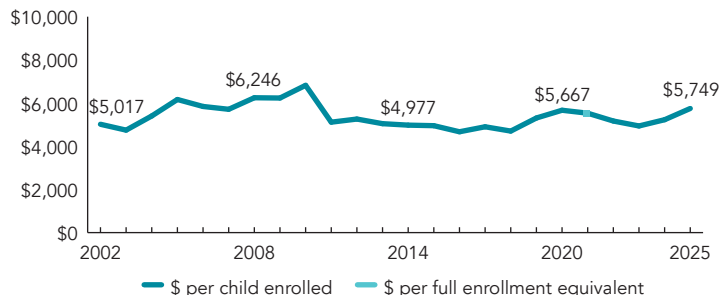


Oklahoma

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.

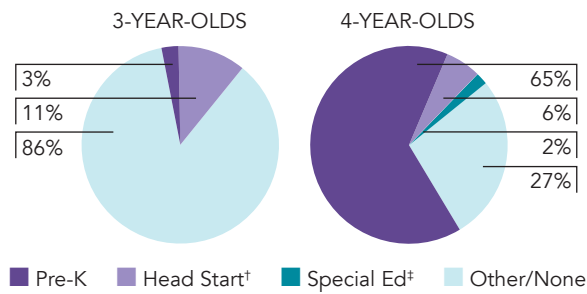
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
5	27	30	10	9

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.

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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

