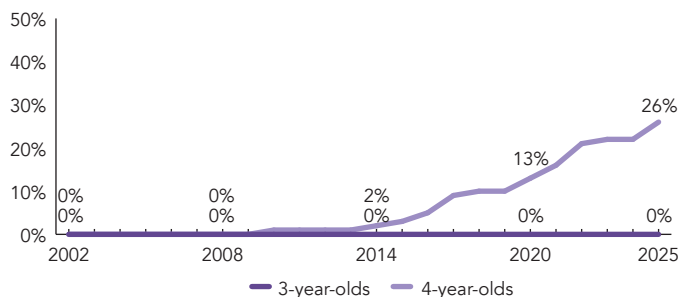
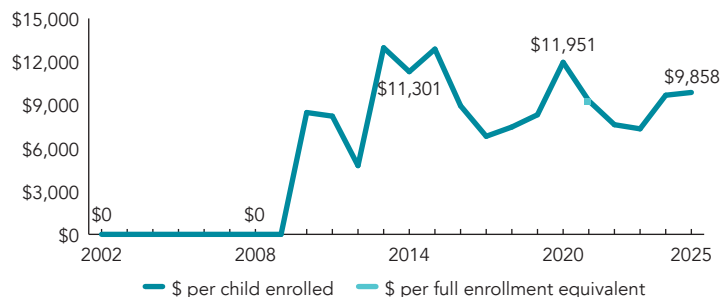


Rhode Island

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

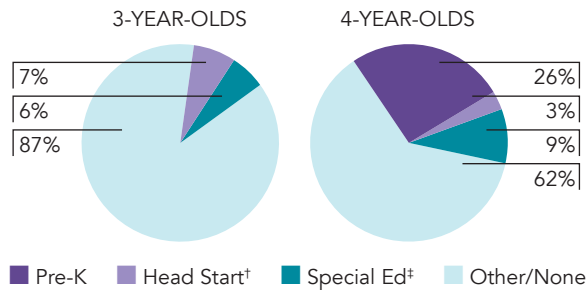
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
10

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

