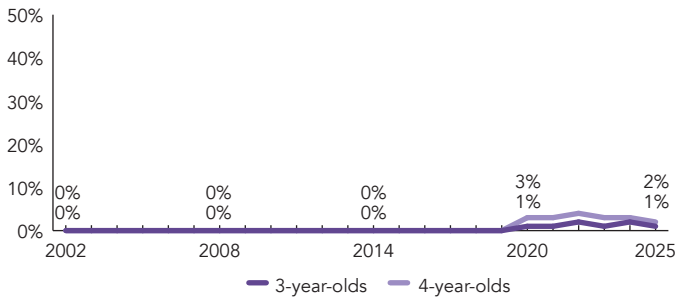
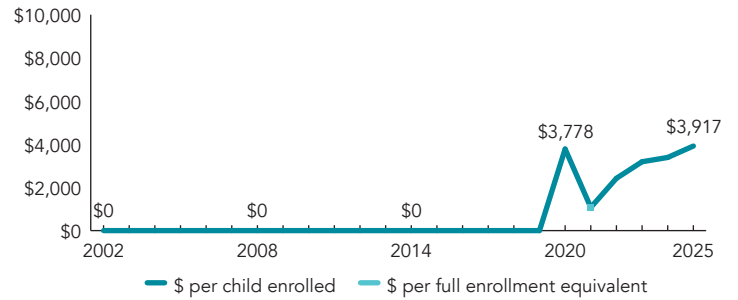


Utah

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2025 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2024–2025 school year, Utah preschool programs enrolled 1,653 children, a decrease of 358 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$6,474,481, down \$338,229 (5%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$3,917 in 2024–2025, up \$529 from 2023–2024, adjusted for inflation. Utah met 6 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2024–2025 program year, Utah revised governance of the High Quality School Readiness Grant program, shifting oversight from an appointed School Readiness Board to a School Readiness Team made up of staff from the Department of Workforce Services Office of Child Care and the Utah State Board of Education. This change streamlined administration, improved responsiveness to grantees, and strengthened focus on implementation and monitoring of legislatively required program elements. Recent legislative action also extended grant terms from one year to three years, reducing administrative burden for participating programs.

Following several years of declining funded capacity, the legislature increased federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) support for the program. Utah allocated an additional \$2 million in TANF funding for the 2025–2026 program year and approved continued funding of \$2 million annually for FY 2026 through FY 2028, allowing the addition of new grantees and an increase in funded preschool seats. Utah also received a new Preschool Development Grant Birth–Five (PDG B–5) Systems Building award of \$7,269,293 to support statewide care coordination, continued implementation of the Pyramid Model, family engagement through the Sparkler app, development of the Early Childhood Utah one-stop intake website, and partnerships to strengthen early education and early literacy.

BACKGROUND

Utah established the High-Quality School Readiness Program Expansion in 2016 to expand access to high-quality preschool for four-year-olds experiencing intergenerational poverty. In 2019, the legislature restructured the program to include the Expanded Student Access grant, supporting preschool access for eligible three- and four-year-olds, and the Becoming High Quality grant, focused on program improvement. Legislative revisions in 2024 further streamlined program management, modified eligibility requirements, and prioritized funding for preschool seats in high-quality programs.

Utah's Core State Standards for Early Learning for ages 3–5 were approved in 2020, with a phased approach to updating content areas alongside the K–12 standards. The early learning English Language Arts standards were updated in 2023, while mathematics and physical education standards are currently under revision.

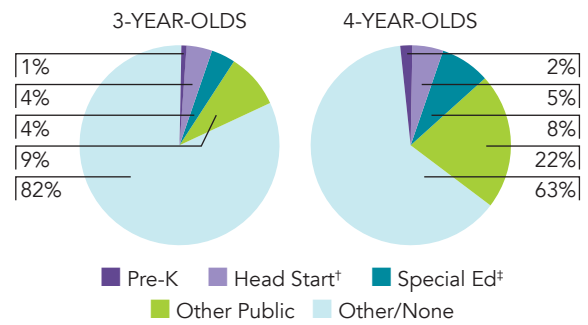
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
44	32	39	36	6

UTAH HIGH QUALITY SCHOOL READINESS GRANT PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	1,653
School districts that offer state program	38% (counties)
Income requirement	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	Determined locally
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	6,877
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,974
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

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	UT 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	CDA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	CDA	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year (teachers only); Coaching (teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; Coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	None	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input 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.

6

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$6,474,481
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,917
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$6,134

* 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

