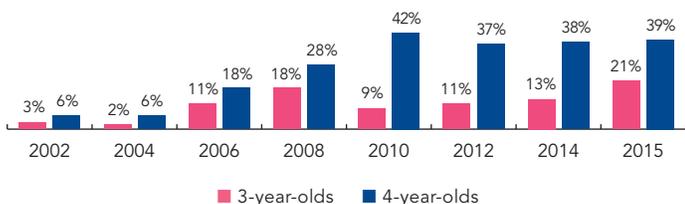
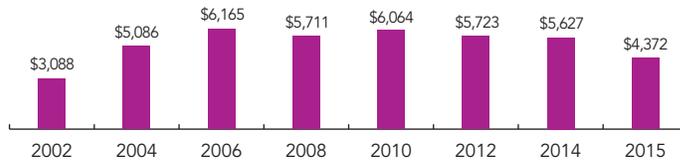


Arkansas

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED*



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED* (2015 DOLLARS)



The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) and Arkansas Better Chance for School Success programs were founded as part of a statewide education reform initiative in 1991. ABC was initially funded only through dedicated sales tax and, between 2001 and 2007, an excise tax on packaged beer provided additional funding. Forty percent of the program’s overall financial support must be local contributions (either in-kind or monetary); however the program does receive some federal funding as well.

As additional funds became available in the 2004-2005 program year, the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) was launched. Three- and 4-year-olds in families whose income falls below 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for the ABCSS program. Children from low-income families from birth to age 5 are eligible for early childhood education services offered by ABC. Children and families with other risk issues may also be eligible, including: developmental delay, foster care, family aggression, low parental education level, having a parent in active overseas military duty, non-English speaking family members, having a teen parent, or low birth weight.

Pre-K access through the program is offered in diverse settings, including through Head Start, service cooperatives, public schools, private business, and nonprofit organizations. For the program’s pre-K teachers, the Arkansas Better Chance program offers funding for professional development, such as pursuing college degrees.

Act 187 of 2009 became effective in January 2011 and established the Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential. Five institutions have been permitted to offer the credential, allowing an additional professional path for preschool teachers in the ABC program.

ABC also assesses both quality outcomes and impact on child outcomes, through an ongoing study that began in the 2005-2006 year. ECERS and CLASS are used to evaluate classroom quality. Head Start programs use CLASS. The QRIS will allow either.

The Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework for Three and Four Year Old Children outlines a framework for 3- to 5-year-old services, describes development of the framework, and was revised in 2013. Standards are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, and the Kellogg Foundation has provided funding to help align the early learning standards and the Public Education Learning Standards.

In December, 2014, Arkansas was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant for \$14.9 million. They will also have an additional \$3 million funding for a one-time COLA cost.

Arkansas does collect data about children in their preschool programs who are English language learners. The state requires that recruitment and information materials be provided in languages other than English, primarily Spanish. Learning standards and professional development requirements related to cultural awareness and literacy standards are part of state policy, but most practice related to DLL is locally determined.

The state Quality Model addresses salaries for preschool teachers. Pay parity with public school teachers is not in policy, although there is a requirement for 30% fringe benefits. The state provides guidelines around paid planning and PD time, but most other benefits for teachers are locally determined.

This report outlines the ABC and ABCSS programs together as they have related requirements and standards.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
12	3

RESOURCES RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
22	27

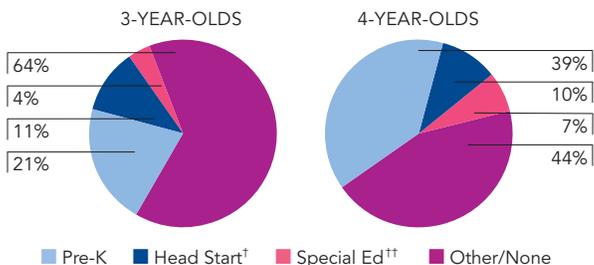
DUAL-LANGUAGE LEARNERS	WORKFORCE
✓	—

ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE/ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	25,389
School districts that offer state program.....	98% (school districts)
Income requirement	200% FPL
Hours of operation	7 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,314
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,383
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

STATE PRE-K AND HEAD START ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION



† 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	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	AR Teacher Licensure (public); BA (nonpublic) ¹	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training.....	AR Teacher Licensure, Pre-K-4th grade (public); BA in ECE (nonpublic)	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	30 clock hours/year	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size.....		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds.....	20		
4-year-olds.....	20		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	1:10		
4-year-olds	1:10		
Screening/referral	Vision; hearing; height/weight/BMI; immunizations; blood pressure; psychological/behavioral; developmental; full physical exam; and support services	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Breakfast; lunch; snack	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET

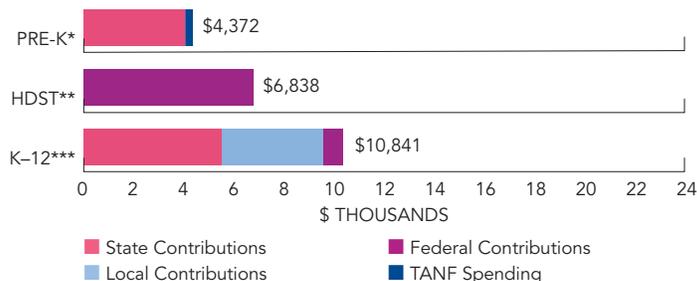
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RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$111,000,000
Local match required?.....	Yes
State spending per child enrolled	\$4,372
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$4,372

* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.
 ** Head Start per-child spending for the 2014-2015 year includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds served. Past years' figures have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start.
 *** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures. Data are for the '14-'15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



¹ The lead teacher in a public school must hold a standard Arkansas teacher license with P-4 certification. The lead teacher in a nonpublic-school-based program must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development. For all programs with multiple classrooms at a single location, the teacher of the second classroom shall hold, at a minimum, an associate degree in early childhood education or early childhood development. State policy does allow programs to hire staff under an approved staff qualifications plan, while they are completing coursework to obtain minimum credentialing.