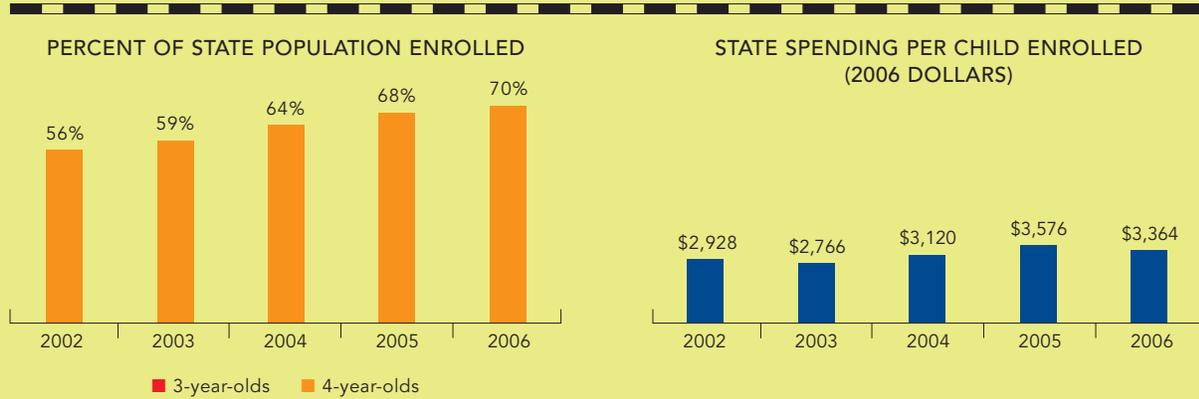


# Oklahoma



Oklahoma's Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program began in 1980 with a pilot program serving 4-year-olds. The program expanded in 1990 to include 4-year-olds eligible for Head Start, and in 1998 it became the second state-funded program in the U.S. to offer universal access to prekindergarten. Services are free to all 4-year-olds in the state and enrollment is voluntary. The number of participants has grown steadily, and Oklahoma has ranked first in the nation for the percentage of 4-year-olds enrolled in state-funded prekindergarten since the 2003-2004 school year. Districts are not required to offer prekindergarten, however, and 7 percent of districts do not operate an Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program.

The Early Childhood Four-Year-Old Program mainly operates in public schools, but some school districts subcontract with child care centers, Head Start programs and other community agencies to provide services. Regardless of the program auspice, all teachers must have a bachelor's degree with certification in early childhood education and are paid on the same state salary schedule as public school teachers. School districts that provide prekindergarten are reimbursed at the per-pupil rate for the school district, although the funding amount depends on whether schools offer a half-day program or a full-day program. Also, Oklahoma has developed an English Language Learner screening instrument to qualify students for additional federal dollars for bilingual education in the 2006-2007 school year.

Oklahoma also supplements Head Start through a separate initiative, which provides existing federal Head Start grantees with funds to support additional enrollment, expanded services, and extended program hours. In fiscal year 2006, Head Start programs received \$3,900,000 from the state.

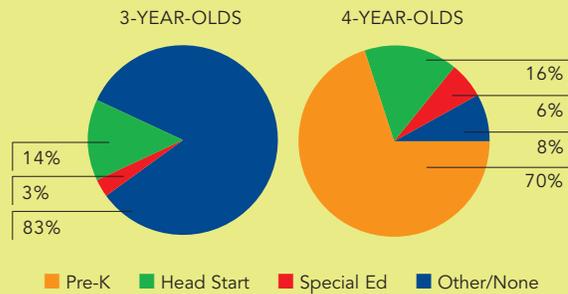
The state appropriated funds to develop an Early Childhood Pilot Program for children from birth to age 3 beginning in the 2006-2007 school year. This initiative will provide comprehensive services to at-risk children and their families, and will require local programs to employ a family support worker and teachers with BA degrees and early childhood certification. Funding will be a blend of private and public dollars, requiring a two-to-one match from the private sector. The State Department of Education was appointed by the state Legislature to develop program guidelines as well as the application and funding award process.

ACCESS RANKING-4s	ACCESS RANKING-3s	RESOURCES RANKING
1	None Served	19

## ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .....	33,402
School districts that offer state program .....	93%
Income requirement .....	None
Hours of operation .....	Determined locally <sup>1</sup>
Operating schedule .....	Academic year
Special education enrollment .....	4,101
Federally funded Head Start enrollment .....	14,220
State-funded Head Start enrollment .....	0 <sup>2</sup>

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



## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

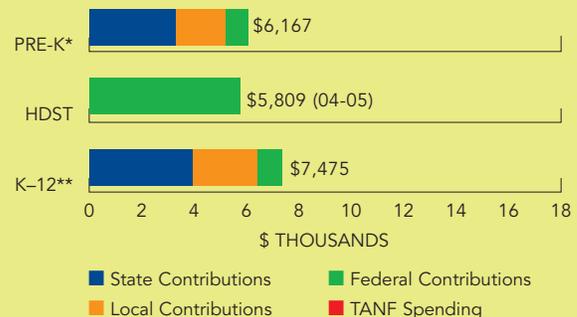
POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards .....	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree .....	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training .....	EC certification for pre-K-3	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree .....	See footnotes <sup>3</sup>	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service .....	15 clock hours	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size .....		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds .....	NA		
4-year-olds .....	20		
Staff-child ratio .....		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds .....	NA		
4-year-olds .....	1:10 <sup>4</sup>		
Screening/ referral and support services .....	Vision, hearing, health, and developmental; and support services <sup>5</sup>	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals .....	At least 1 meal <sup>6</sup>	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring .....	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET**  
**9**

## RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .....	\$112,352,971
Local match required? .....	No
State Head Start spending .....	\$3,900,000
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$3,364
State spending per 3-year-old .....	\$0
State spending per 4-year-old .....	\$2,360

### SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



\* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

\*\*K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

Data are for the '05-'06 school year, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>1</sup> Half-day programs operate for 2.5 hours, while full-day programs operate for 6 hours. Many districts offer both full- and half-day programs. All programs operate 5 days per week.

<sup>2</sup> In 2005-2006, state funds were used to enhance the federal Head Start program by extending or expanding services or providing intervention.

<sup>3</sup> Assistant teachers must have an AA, 48 credit hours of college coursework, or pass one of two state-approved tests that do not have specific educational requirements. One test is the Oklahoma General Education Test (an exam required for K-12 public school teachers) and the other is a state test for para-professional status.

<sup>4</sup> The state Department of Education encourages a ratio of 1:8 for districts in at-risk settings.

<sup>5</sup> New state regulations for 2005-2006 require vision, hearing, and developmental screenings and referrals. Support services include parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, transition to kindergarten activities, provision of a counselor, psychologist, psychometrist, and school nurse, special education services, and referral for outside assistance if needed. Additional specific services may be offered at local discretion.

<sup>6</sup> Specific meal requirements depend on the length and time of the program day.