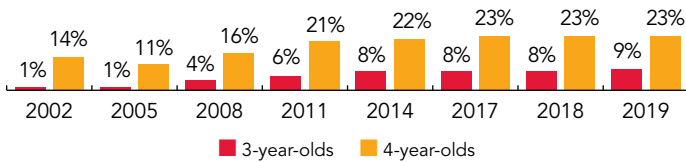
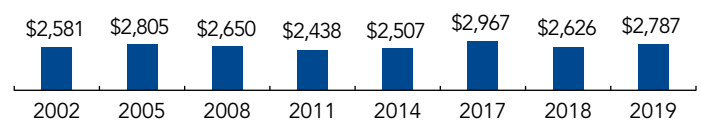


Colorado

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2019 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

Colorado preschool enrolled 21,944 children in 2018-2019, an increase of 498 children from the prior year. State funding totaled \$61,161,584 up \$4,842,826 (9%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$2,787 in 2018-2019, up \$161 from 2017-2018, adjusted for inflation. Colorado met 4 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2018-2019 school year the legislature authorized 1,000 additional Colorado Preschool Program slots that could be used by districts to provide half-day preschool, full-day preschool, or full-day kindergarten services. Many of the 1,000 slots went toward full-day kindergarten in 2018-2019. However, recent legislation (House Bill 19-1262) provided separate funding for voluntary full-day kindergarten for all children starting in the 2019-2020 school year, which will divert an estimated 5,241 slots previously used for full-day kindergarten to the pre-K program.

Additionally, the Colorado Department of Human Services was awarded a renewal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five award in 2019 for almost \$11.2 million annually through 2022 to continue the work that began in 2018. The initial grant required the completion of a comprehensive, statewide birth through five Needs Assessment of the current landscape of the early care and education mixed-delivery system, which resulted in *Colorado Shines Brighter: Opportunities for Colorado's Early Childhood System*. To address the 12 key findings from the needs assessment, the *Colorado Shines Brighter Strategic Plan* includes opportunities to maximize the availability of high-quality early care and education options for low-income and underserved families across providers and partners; improve the quality of care; streamline administrative infrastructure; and improve state-level early care and education funding efficiencies.

BACKGROUND

The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) launched in 1988 for 3- and 4-year-olds who needed language development support in hopes of lowering school dropout rates and reducing dependence on public assistance. In 1992, CPP became a permanent program and expanded eligibility to young children lacking overall school readiness due to family risk factors, as defined by statute, including eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, being a dual language learner, being in foster care, a family history of abuse or neglect, homelessness, parental substance abuse, or having a teen parent, as well as locally determined risk factors. 4-year-olds must meet at least one risk factor to enroll in CPP, while 3-year-olds are required to meet a minimum of three risk factors.

In the 2018-2019 school year, 98% of the state's 179 school districts offered CPP. CPP slots can serve eligible pre-K students, and Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE) slots can serve either pre-K students or provide full-day services for eligible kindergartners. Two half-day slots can be combined to create full-day opportunities for pre-K children with very high needs. Schools may provide pre-K service by subcontracting with private child care centers, Head Start, or other community-based or public agencies. Funding is awarded competitively with priority given to districts with exemplary implementation plans and/or not currently participating in CPP.

CPP funding is determined by the Colorado school finance formula, with preschoolers receiving half the amount for students in grades 1 through 12. Funds are distributed directly to school districts, which are given a predetermined number of half-day slots to serve eligible children. CPP providers may use additional funding sources, such as federal Head Start money, to extend the program day, supplement services, or provide wraparound care.

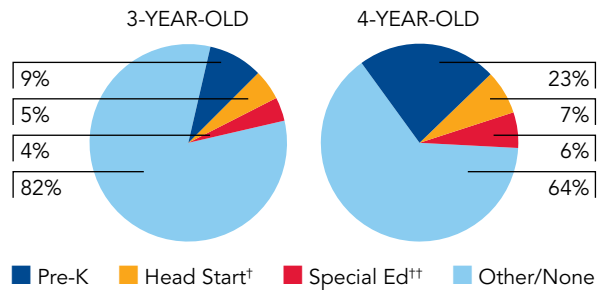
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
28	12	39	35	4

COLORADO PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	21,944
School districts that offer state program.....	98%
Income requirement.....	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	2.5 hours/day
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	8,624
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	8,152
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	CO 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	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	Early Childhood Teacher	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Early Childhood Teacher	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	16 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:8 (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 (above QRIS Level 2); Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

4

For more information about the benchmarks, see the Executive Summary and Roadmap to State Profile Pages.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending.....	\$61,161,584
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$2,787
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$4,525

* 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

