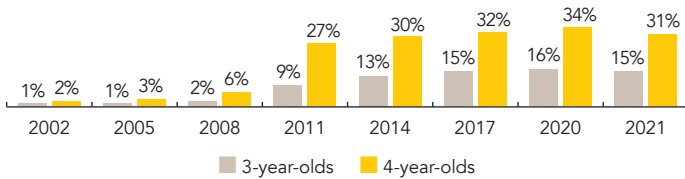
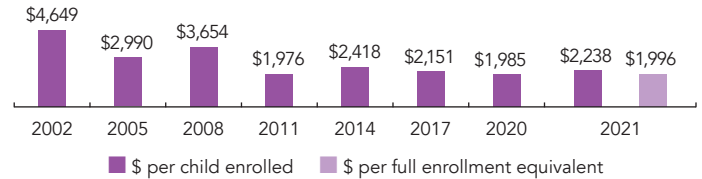


Nebraska

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2021 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2020-2021 school year, as the COVID-19 pandemic continued, Nebraska preschool enrolled 12,806 children, a decrease of 1,555 children from the prior year. State funding totaled \$28,658,207, up \$145,685 (1%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$2,238 in 2020-2021, up \$252 from 2019-2020, adjusted for inflation. Nebraska met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Fall 2020 began with a mix of in-person and remote instruction but all programs were physically open by the end of the 2020-2021 school year and into the 2021-2022 school year. Although all programs were physically open, it was locally determined whether preschoolers could participate in remote learning.

Preschool teachers are required to have a four year degree, with teaching certificate, and one of the recognized early childhood endorsements. During the 2020-2021 school year, Nebraska added a waiver to permit preschool teachers to teach with an associate degree as they work toward their bachelor's degree and appropriate certification/endorsement. The waiver option is only used when all other attempts at hiring a certified teacher have failed. A district must show proof of attempts to hire a certified teacher along with a course of study, signed off on by the certification officer, or student's advisor at the institute of higher education where the waiver candidate will complete his/her education. The course of study must show that the candidate will be able to earn a teaching certificate within four years. Every waiver request goes before the State Board individually for approval. There are a very few school districts who have asked for a waiver.

BACKGROUND

The Nebraska Early Childhood Education Program began as a pilot program in 1992 and expanded in 2001, providing preschool education for children ages three to five. Direct financial support is available on a competitive basis for public schools and education service units that partner with child care centers, Head Start agencies and/or human services agencies. Grantees are required to match 100% of the funding with local and/or federal sources.

At least 70% of the children in the program must have at least one of the following risk factors: disability or developmental delay, living in a home in which English is not the primary language, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch (185% FPL), having teen parents or parents who have not completed high school, or having been born prematurely or with a low birth weight. The program seeks to serve children of diverse social and economic characteristics.

Most programs operate 3.5 to 4 hours per day, four or five days per week and must operate for a minimum of 12 hours per week during the school year. All teachers in the Nebraska Early Childhood Education Program are required to have at least a bachelor's degree and training in early childhood education. The program monitors child, program, and family outcomes annually.

While the Early Childhood Education Grant Program has expanded, many districts and education service units fund their early childhood programs without the use of grants yet follow the same regulations as the grant program.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
17	7

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
42	13

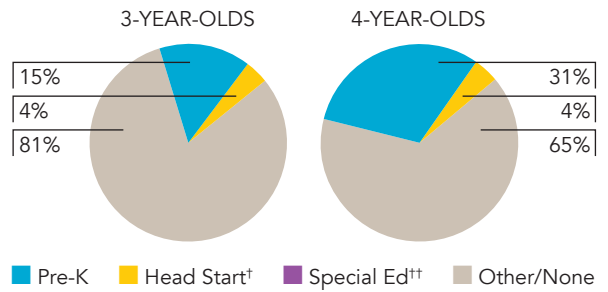
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
7

NEBRASKA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	12,806
School districts that offer state program	91%
Income requirement	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	12 hours/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,618
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,399
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	NE 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, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	K-6 Endorsement, 6 credits in CD or ECE, or previous experience	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching for teachers participating in the Pyramid model	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	Determined locally	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.

7

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$28,658,207
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$2,238
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,997

* 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

