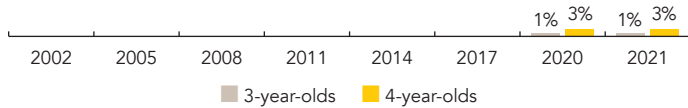
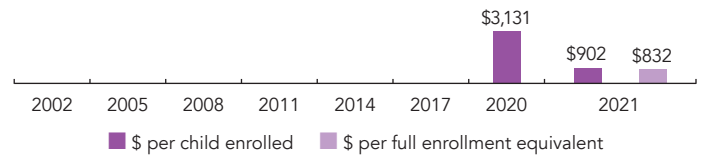


Utah

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, Utah preschool enrolled 2,083 children, a decrease of 175 children from the prior year. State funding totaled \$1,878,272, down \$5,192,059 (73%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$902 in 2020-2021, down \$2,230 from 2019-2020, adjusted for inflation. Utah met 3 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

As a result of the pandemic, \$6 million of state general funding was removed from the preschool program budget. CCDF funding was used instead, and programs were therefore required to meet several additional requirements related to child care licensing. An appropriation of \$3 million was also returned to the legislature during a special session, leaving many programs to run on insufficient funds for two consecutive years.

BACKGROUND

In 2016, the High-Quality School Readiness Expansion (HQSR-E) grant program was established to expand access to high-quality school readiness programs for eligible children. The HQSR-E grant program provided grant funds to LEAs and private providers with existing early education programs deemed high-quality, as determined by the ECERS-3 assessment and additional quality rating criteria. School readiness programs were eligible to apply for HQSR-E funding if they provided services to economically disadvantaged 4-year-old children, could illustrate how funds would be used to expand their preschool programs, and were deemed high-quality based on the criteria noted above. The HQSR-E program ended in June 2019 but was replaced by the Expanded Student Access to High Quality School Readiness (ESA) grant program.

With the passing of SB 166 in 2019, the School Readiness Board governs both the Becoming High-Quality (BHQ) and ESA grant programs for both public and private providers. The BHQ program provides funding to help existing preschool programs increase program quality to later qualify for ESA grant funding. The ESA program allows high quality preschool programs to expand access and provide seats to eligible students. An eligible student is one who is economically disadvantaged and whose parent or guardian reports they also have experienced at least one risk factor (e.g. mother is 18 or younger, parents with a low reading ability, exposure to substance abuse, etc.) or a student that is an English Learner.

This new legislation also codified Utah's UPSTART Program. The program provides a home-based, technology-delivered kindergarten readiness program to children throughout the state and prioritizes children from low-income families. The program includes an annual independent evaluation contracted by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE).

In May 2020, the new Utah Early Learning Standards: Ages 3-5 were approved by the USBE. The writing committee consisted of professionals working in higher education, Head Start programs, the Office of Child Care, public preschool coordinators, and preschool general and special educators. USBE staff collaborated with other agencies and early childhood professionals to provide professional learning during the 2020-2021 school year to encourage and assist with the implementation of the new standards. The Utah Early Learning Standards: Ages 3-5 provide essential standards that are developmentally appropriate in eight content areas including English Language Arts, Fine Arts, Health Education, Lifelong Learning Practices, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, and Social Studies. Programs are expected to fully implement the new standards starting in the 2021-2022 school year.

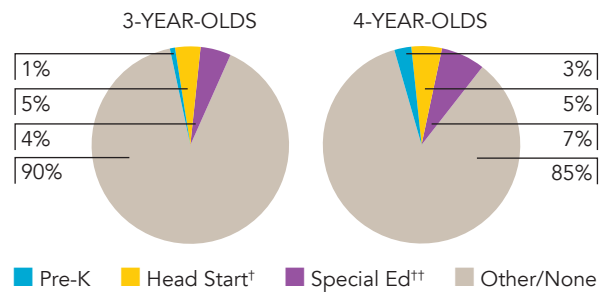
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
43	28	44	43	3

EXPANDED STUDENT ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS (ESA)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	2,083
School districts that offer state program	41% (counties)
Income requirement	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	Determined locally
Operating schedule	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	6,125
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	4,917
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 with child assessments, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process	Approval process & supports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	CDA or AA (ECE not required)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, Elem. Ed., ECE SpEd, SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	Coaching (teachers only)	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.

3

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$1,878,272
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$902
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$3,523

* 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

