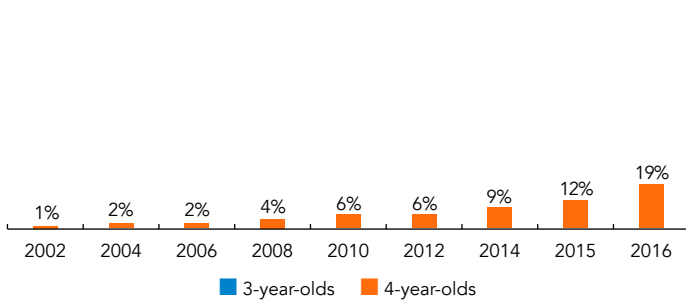
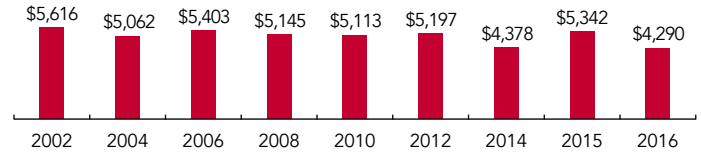


# Alabama

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2016 DOLLARS)



**F**irst Class Pre-K: the Alabama Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (FCVPK) is a supplemental grant program administered by the Department of Early Childhood Education that provides funding for preschool education for 4-year-olds. First Class is available in all counties throughout Alabama and provides funding to start new classrooms, support quality improvements in existing classrooms, and provide extra support to classrooms serving low-income populations. First Class classrooms are in all 67 Alabama counties and are housed in many different locations, including Head Start programs, private child-care centers, community organizations, faith-based centers, colleges and universities, military agencies and public schools.

The program began in 2000, serving 750 children. As of 2015-2016, the program serves more than 11,000 4-year-olds in a full-day education program, approximately 19% of the state's four-year-old population, and enrollment increased by approximately 4,000 children from the prior school year. The 2015-2016 enrollment total includes around 3,000 additional children partially financed by a \$17.5 million federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG), which was awarded to Alabama in 2014 to expand pre-K access across the state in high-risk areas. State funding in 2015-2016 rose by \$10 million to \$48.5 million. Looking forward, slots created by PDG are expected to be funded on an ongoing basis with state and local appropriations. All state residents who meet the age criteria are automatically eligible for FCVPK.

FCVPK requires use of a curriculum incorporating recently updated early learning standards aligned to kindergarten content standards and Teaching Strategies GOLD objectives, the required formative assessment tool. All FCVPK classrooms are supported by a coach and monitored for continuous improvement. Monitors work with program administrators to ensure that FCVPK grants are properly administered, provide appropriate leadership to teaching staff in concert with coaches to improve instruction, and support the development of leadership skills necessary for effective program management and improvement. Alabama requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a BA plus an early learning credential and in 2015 introduced policies to support salary parity.

Funds for FCVPK are distributed by the Alabama Education Trust Fund Budget on a competitive awarding basis to programs running full-day, school-year programs. Grantees must locally match the award, and sliding-scale fees can be included in the matching funds. There are three levels of grants that can be awarded to pre-K programs: (1) Pre-K Excellence Grants of up to \$45,000 per grant are awarded to aid programs in meeting Alabama's quality standards, such as financing teacher education and teacher support programs. These grants are intended for use by programs that have other primary sources of funding and are awarded on a three-year cycle. (2) Pre-K Tiered Grants of \$80,200 to \$92,700 per grant differ from the Excellence grants as they are intended to be primary sources of funding. These grants are awarded to classrooms serving a certain share of the free and reduced-price lunch eligible population. These grants are also awarded on a three-year basis. (3) New Classroom or Plus Grants of \$120,000 to \$150,000 per grant are one-year grants awarded to new classrooms for the cost of materials, equipment, furnishings, and one full year of the general expenses of operation.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
28	None Served

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
25	17

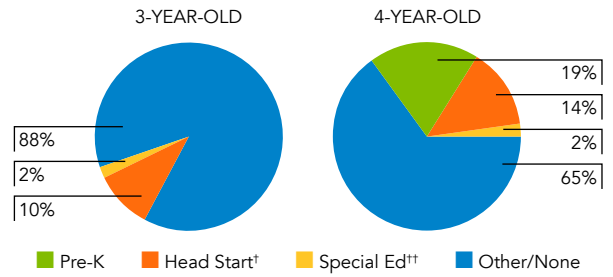
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET	
CURRENT STANDARDS	NEW STANDARDS
10	10

# FIRST CLASS PRE-K: ALABAMA'S VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

## ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment ..... 11,296  
 School districts that offer state program ..... 100% (counties/parishes)  
 Income requirement ..... No income requirement  
 Minimum hours of operation ..... 6.5 hours/day; 5 days/week  
 Operating schedule ..... School or academic year  
 Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ..... 3,787  
 Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ..... 14,388  
 State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ..... 1,986

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



† 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	AL PRE-K REQUIREMENT	CURRENT BENCHMARK	MEETS CURRENT BENCHMARK?	NEW BENCHMARK	MEETS NEW BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	New in 2015-2016	—	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or 9 ECE/CD credits	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year (teachers); 20 hours/year (assistants); PD plans; coaching	For teachers: At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more; Support services	Vision, hearing, health & at least one support service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Lunch <sup>5</sup>	At least one meal/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Discontinued	—
Monitoring/Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (more than once/year); Improvement plan <sup>15</sup>	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			10		
				10	

## RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending ..... \$48,462,050  
 Local match required? ..... Yes  
 State Head Start spending ..... \$5,040,000  
 State spending per child enrolled ..... \$4,290  
 All reported spending per child enrolled\* ..... \$7,299

\* 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

