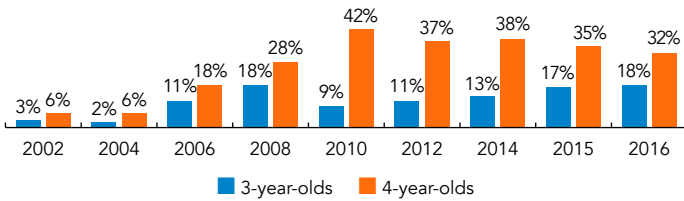
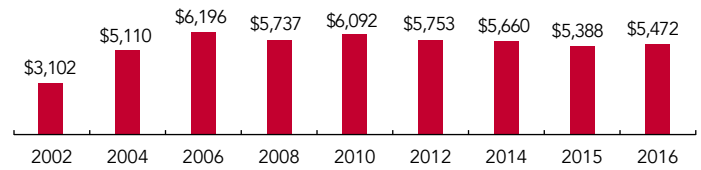


# Arkansas

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2016 DOLLARS)



The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) and Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) programs were founded as part of a statewide education reform initiative beginning in 1991. ABC was initially funded through a dedicated sales tax. Between 2001 and 2007, an excise tax on packaged beer provided additional funding for the program. Forty percent of the program’s overall financial support must be local contributions, either in-kind or monetary. The program also receives federal funding.

When additional funds became available in the 2004-2005 program year, ABCSS was launched. Three- and 4-year-olds in families whose income falls below 200% of the federal poverty level are eligible for the ABCSS program. Children birth to 5 from low-income families (below 200% FPL) are eligible for early childhood education services offered by ABC. Eligibility for ABC is also determined by other risk factors including: developmental delay, foster care, low parental education level, having a parent in active overseas military duty, non-English speaking family members, having a teen parent, parental substance abuse, or low birth weight. Pre-K access through both programs is offered in diverse settings, including Head Start, service cooperatives, public schools, private business, and nonprofit organizations.

An additional path for preschool teachers in the ABC program, the Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential, was established in January 2011, when Act 187 of 2009 became effective. Five institutions have been permitted to offer the credential.

The Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework for Three and Four Year Old Children, outlining guidelines for providing services to 3- to 5-year-olds, was revised in 2016. Standards are aligned with the AR Learning Standards and the state’s infant and toddler standards. The Kellogg Foundation has provided funding to help align the early learning standards with the K–12 Learning Standards. ABC also assesses both quality outcomes and impact on child outcomes through an ongoing study that began in the 2005-2006 year. ECERS is used to evaluate classroom quality.

In December, 2014, Arkansas was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant for \$14.9 million. This grant enabled the state to create 1,371 new slots and enhance 1,506 existing slots in the ABC/ABCSS programs. The state also received a one-time \$1.5 million cost of living adjustment.

This report outlines the ABC and ABCSS programs together as they have similar requirements and standards.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
18	5

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
18	13

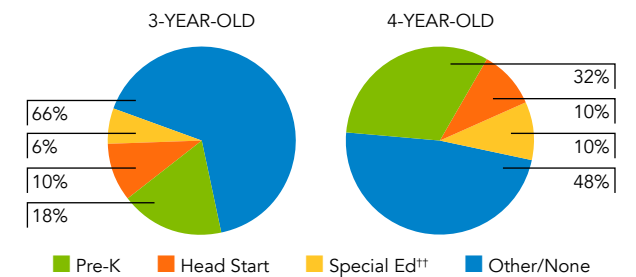
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET	
CURRENT STANDARDS	NEW STANDARDS
9	7

# ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE/ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

## ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	20,558
School districts that offer state program .....	98%
Income requirement.....	200% FPL
Minimum hours of operation.....	7 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule.....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	8,540
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	7,744
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

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



<sup>††</sup> Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AR 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 <sup>15</sup>	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>	BA	<input 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	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year; PD plans	For teachers: At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	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"/>	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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	Breakfast, lunch, snack	At least one meal/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Discontinued	—
Monitoring/Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (less than once/year); Improvement plan; Site visits	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>9</b>		
					<b>7</b>

## RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .....	\$112,500,000
Local match required? .....	Yes
State Head Start spending .....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$5,472
All reported spending per child enrolled* .....	\$7,773

\* 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

