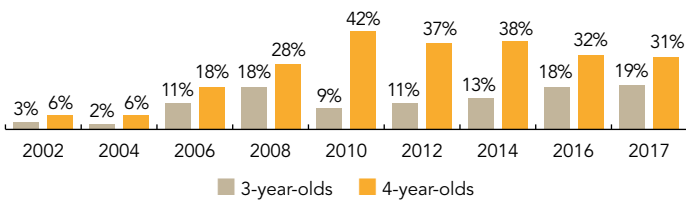
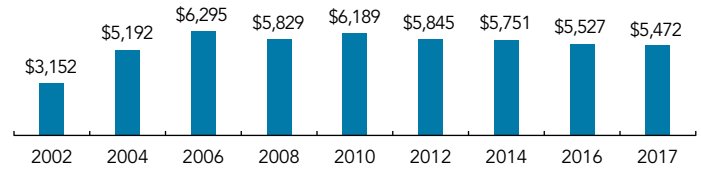


# Arkansas

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2017 DOLLARS)



The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program began in 1991 as a part of a statewide education reform initiative. Since the first funding of \$10 Million in 1991, the ABC funds were earmarked with the option to serve children birth to 5 years old based on family income, developmental, and/or economic risk factors. During the 2003 Legislative Session, Act 49 was passed, better known as Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS), which includes priorities for funding for 3- and 4-year-olds up to 200% of the federal poverty level. Districts that have 75% of their children scoring below proficient in literacy and math on the State Benchmark exams and those children in schools designated as in “school improvement status” received funding priority. To date, a total of \$111 Million is appropriated for the ABC/ABCSS programs which provide pre-K access in diverse settings, including Head Start, education service cooperatives, public schools, private business, family care homes, and nonprofit organizations.

The ABC/ABCSS program is funded through an appropriation in the Arkansas Department of Education’s (ADE) Public School Fund budget. ADE contracts with the Arkansas Department of Human Services’ (DHS) Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE) to administer the program. The DCCECE is responsible for all operational duties associated with ABC through a shared governance structure with the AR Department of Education and AR State Board of Education.

Core components of ABC/ABCSS are intended to ensure quality education through provision of the following: qualified staff (teachers with a minimum of a bachelor’s degree and teacher assistants/paraprofessionals with a minimum of a CDA or its equivalent); low child-to-teacher ratios; health and development screenings; parent involvement and community engagement; non-curriculum, specific statewide evaluation (Work Sampling); an approved list of curriculum (which aligns with the state Early Learning Standards and Kindergarten Standards); and observations using the Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS).

Arkansas provides a Birth through Kindergarten Licensure as well as the Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential to provide an additional professional pathway for individuals wishing to pursue a more advanced level of knowledge and skill in working with young children and their families. These options provide a route to higher education for the preparation of teachers and teacher assistants for all children, birth through age five, including children with special needs.

The Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months was approved in 2016 replacing the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework for Three- and Four-Year-Old Children. The new standards encompass birth through five years of age and are aligned with the Arkansas Academic Standards for K-4/Language Arts and Math. Kellogg Foundation funding supported development of the Early Learning Standards via a cadre of Arkansas early education professionals as well as standards review and critique by nationally recognized leaders in the early childhood education field. ABC utilizes the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale to evaluate classroom quality and to design needed technical assistance for improvement, as well as evaluating the impact on child outcomes through a longitudinal study that is updated annually.

In December 2014, Arkansas was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant for \$14.9 million. This grant afforded the state an opportunity to expand quality services to an additional 1,364 four-year-old children and enhance preschool services for 1,506 children enrolled in the ABC/ABCSS programs.

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

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
17	11

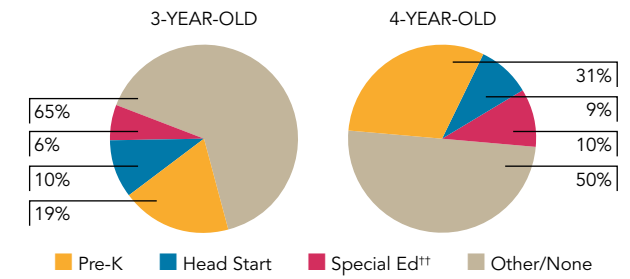
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET	
CURRENT STANDARDS	NEW STANDARDS
9	8

# ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE/ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

## ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	20,285
School districts that offer state program .....	100% (counties)
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 .....	8,675
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	7,506
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	0

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



\*\* 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; AA (beyond the first classroom at a site)	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; Data used for program improvement	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			<b>9</b>		
					<b>8</b>

## RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .....	\$111,000,000
Local match required? .....	Yes
State Head Start spending .....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$5,472
All reported spending per child enrolled* .....	\$7,696

\* 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

