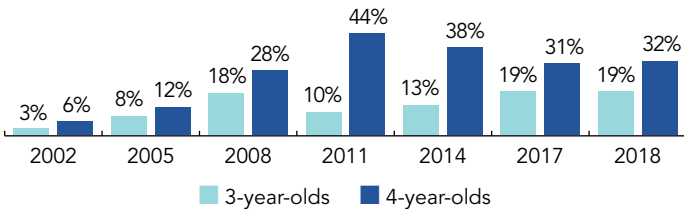
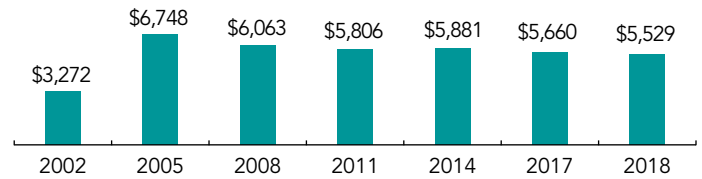


Arkansas

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2018 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

Arkansas preschool enrolled 20,618 children in 2017-2018, an increase of 333 children from the prior year. State funding totaled \$106,500,000 and \$7,500,000 in TANF funds were also used to support program, down \$812,767 (1%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child (including TANF funds) equaled \$5,529 in 2017-2018, down \$131 from 2016-2017, adjusted for inflation. Arkansas met 8 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the Governor committed an additional \$3 million per year to improve the quality of Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) pre-K programs, including funds to improve and reward teacher quality and to encourage and enhance innovation in the programs. Additionally, the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS)/Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (DCCEDE) was awarded a Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five award in 2018 for \$3.5 million to address the need for Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) work across the state. Through this grant, the DCCEDE will update the existing needs assessment to identify research gaps on trauma and ACEs, use this data to update the existing strategic plan, and work with identified stakeholders to further the ACEs work in Arkansas by broadening our reach through education on trauma informed care.

BACKGROUND

The Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) program began in 1991 as part of a statewide education reform initiative, with funding (\$10 Million) earmarked to serve children birth to 5 years old based on family income, developmental, and/or economic risk factors. In 2003, legislation known as Arkansas Better Chance for School Success (ABCSS) set priorities for funding supporting 3- and 4-year-olds in households with incomes up to 200% of the federal poverty level. School districts with 75% or more of students scoring below proficient in literacy and math on the State Benchmark exams, and children in schools designated as "school improvement status" received funding priority. To date, a total of \$111 Million is appropriated for ABC/ABCSS programs which provide pre-K access in a diverse set of mixed-delivery settings.

During the 2017-2018 school year, ABC/ABCSS was administered by the Arkansas DCCEDE which is responsible for operations through a shared governance structure with ADE and the State Board of Education. In 2014, Arkansas was awarded a \$14.9 million federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) enabling the state to expand quality services to 1,363 additional children and enhance preschool services for 1,509 children already enrolled during the 2017-2018 school year. Arkansas is working on a plan to sustain PDG funding after the grant ends in June 2019.

ABC/ABCSS components intended to ensure quality include teachers with at least a bachelor's degree in public classrooms and an associate's degree in nonpublic classrooms; teacher assistants/paraprofessionals with a minimum of a CDA or equivalent; low child-to-teacher ratios (1:10); health and development screenings; parent involvement and community engagement; statewide evaluation (Work Sampling); an approved list of curriculum aligned with the 2016 Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards; and classroom quality observations to inform technical assistance; and an evaluation of child outcomes through a longitudinal study.

Arkansas provides additional pathways for those working with young children to gain advanced knowledge and skill, such as Birth through Kindergarten Licensure and a Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential. These options provide a route to higher education for preparation of teachers and teacher assistants for all children, birth through age five, including children with special needs.

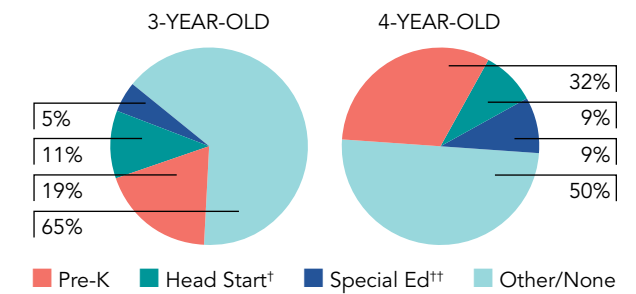
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
17	5	19	8	8

ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE/ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	20,618
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	8,689
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	7,470
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
 †† Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AR 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; AA (beyond first classroom at a site)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year; PD plans	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	Vision, hearing, health & more	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" 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.



RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$114,000,000
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,529
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,070

* 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

