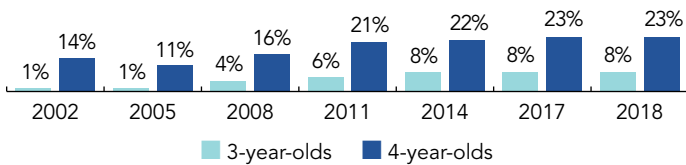


Colorado

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2018 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

Colorado preschool enrolled 21,446 children in 2017-2018, a decrease of 176 children from the prior year. State funding totaled \$54,374,180, down \$7,633,514 (12%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$2,535 in 2017-2018, down \$332 from 2016-2017, adjusted for inflation. Colorado met 5 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2017-2018 school year, Colorado integrated a P-3 approach to build a comprehensive, high-quality continuum of learning from birth to age 8 that vertically and horizontally aligns to support the unique needs of all children. Additionally, the state revised the Colorado Academic Standards, which are set to be fully implemented by Fall 2020. The state also passed legislation to add 1,000 additional slots to the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) for the 2018-2019 school year.

The Colorado Department of Human Services was awarded a Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five award in 2018 for \$5.8 million to help build a quality early learning system for children birth to age five and their families. Colorado aims to do this through Colorado Shines Brighter. Colorado Shines Brighter is based on the state's shared vision to ensure all children are ready for school when entering kindergarten. The program will work towards three outcomes: (1) increased access to and choice of quality formal early childhood care and education settings which best meet the needs of each child and family; (2) enhanced informal early childhood care and education environments (parental, friend, family, and neighbor care) to enrich and support children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development; and (3) coordination and alignment of Colorado's B-5 early childhood state system to enhance the resources available to families and improve the quality of relationships among families, caregivers, and children.

BACKGROUND

The Colorado Preschool Program (CPP) launched in 1988 for 3- and 4-year-olds who needed language development support in hopes of lowering school dropout rates and reducing dependence on public assistance. In 1992, CPP became a permanent program and expanded eligibility to young children lacking overall school readiness due to family risk factors, as defined by statute, including eligibility for free or reduced-price meals, being a dual language learner, being in foster care, a family history of abuse or neglect, homelessness, parental substance abuse, or having a teen parent, as well as locally determined risk factors. Four-year-olds must meet at least one risk factor to enroll in CPP, while 3-year-olds are required to meet a minimum of three risk factors.

In the 2017-2018 school year, 98% of the state's 179 school districts offered CPP. CPP slots can serve eligible pre-K students, and Early Childhood At-Risk Enhancement (ECARE) slots can serve either pre-K students or provide full-day services for eligible kindergartners. Two half-day slots can be combined to create full-day opportunities for pre-K children with very high needs. Schools may provide pre-K service by subcontracting with private child care centers, Head Start, or other community-based or public agencies. Funding is awarded competitively with priority given to districts with exemplary implementation plans and/or not currently participating in CPP.

CPP funding is determined by the Colorado school finance formula, with preschoolers receiving half the amount for students in grades 1 through 12. Funds are distributed directly to school districts, which are given a predetermined number of half-day slots to serve eligible children. CPP providers may use additional funding sources, such as federal Head Start money, to extend the program day, supplement services, or provide wraparound care.

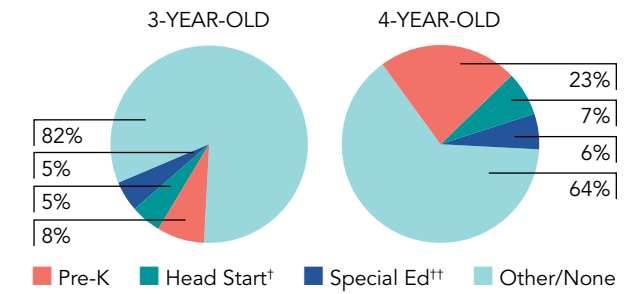
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
28	11	39	36	5

COLORADO PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	21,446
School districts that offer state program	98%
Income requirement	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation	2.5 hours/day
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,516
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	8,198
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	CO 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	CDA	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	CDA	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	15 hours/year	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	16 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:8 (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 (above QRIS Level 1); Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
			5

For more information about the benchmarks, see the Executive Summary and Roadmap to State Profile Pages.

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$54,374,180
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$0
State spending per child enrolled	\$2,535
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$4,240

* 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

