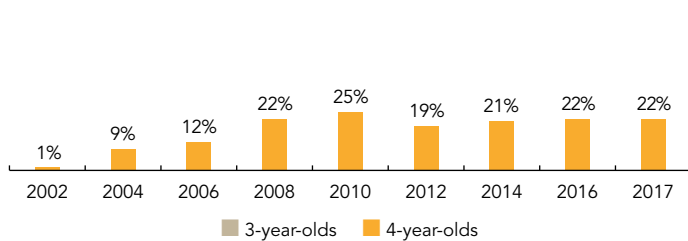


# North Carolina

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2017 DOLLARS)



Since 2001, North Carolina has provided state-funded pre-kindergarten education, originally via the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program. During the 2011-2012 school year, administrative control of the program was relocated from the Department of Public Instruction to the Department of Health and Human Services, and the program was renamed the North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) Program. The NC Pre-K Program delivers a high-quality educational experience during the year prior to kindergarten entry, enrolling at-risk 4-year-olds from low-income families who have not participated in other early childhood programs.

The program currently serves 27,019 four-year-olds, approximately 22% of the 4-year-old population in North Carolina. Pre-K programs receiving funding are mandated to operate 6.5 hours per day for 36 weeks each year. Student eligibility for services generally consists of being from a household with income at or below 75% of the state median income. Yet, up to 20% of children enrolled may have a household income above that threshold contingent on having one of five risk factors, such as a developmental delay or identified disability, a chronic health condition, or limited English proficiency. Not all eligible children are able to enroll in NC Pre-K, as funding is limited. Waiting lists exist in counties where funding is not sufficient to serve all eligible children.

NC Pre-K classrooms are available statewide in privately licensed Head Start programs, childcare centers, and public schools. All programs must earn high-quality ratings under the state child-care licensing system to qualify for participation in NC Pre-K and the state's subsidy system. Program standards set for NC Pre-K must be met in both public and nonpublic settings.

North Carolina has a maximum class size of 18 four-year-olds and requires a staff-child ratio of 1:9. Lead teachers must have a bachelor degree and a birth-through-kindergarten license. Classroom staff are required to use approved curricula and formative assessments that are aligned with the state's early learning standards. Staff conduct ongoing formative assessments to gather information about each child's growth and skill development, as well as to inform instruction.

Starting in 2017, North Carolina began implementation of a standardized Kindergarten Transition Plan. The plan is meant to inform the transition of children from preschool to kindergarten by addressing recommendations for sharing information from preschool to kindergarten teachers, training preschool teachers to transition children, and collecting requisite data.

Funding for the state pre-K program comes primarily from state general appropriations and North Carolina Education Lottery receipts, as well as from federal funds and a required contribution from local sources. In 2016-2017, approximately \$209 million of federal, state, and local funds supported the program. The majority of funding for NC Pre-K comes from the state, including \$78 million generated by the North Carolina Education Lottery.

| ACCESS RANKINGS |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 4-YEAR-OLDS     | 3-YEAR-OLDS |
| 26              | None Served |

| RESOURCE RANKINGS |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| STATE SPENDING    | ALL REPORTED SPENDING |
| 18                | 10                    |

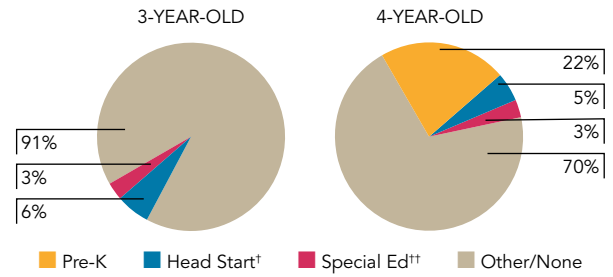
| TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| CURRENT STANDARDS    | NEW STANDARDS |
| 9                    | 8             |

# NORTH CAROLINA PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

## ACCESS

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Total state pre-K enrollment.....                          | 27,019                     |
| School districts that offer state program .....            | 100% (counties/parishes)   |
| Income requirement .....                                   | 75% SMI                    |
| Minimum hours of operation.....                            | 6.5 hours/day; 5 days/week |
| Operating schedule.....                                    | School or academic year    |
| Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....           | 10,796                     |
| Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 ..... | 17,329                     |
| 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 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   | NC 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"/> | <b>Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive</b>                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Curriculum supports                              | Approval process & supports  | New in 2015-2016                                       | —                                   | <b>Approval process &amp; supports</b>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher degree                                   | BA   | BA   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>BA</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher specialized training                     | ECE, CD  | Specializing in pre-K                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>Specializing in pre-K</b>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Assistant teacher degree                         | HSD  | CDA or equivalent                                      | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <b>CDA or equivalent</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Staff professional development                   | 80 hours/year (teachers only); PD plans (teachers only); Coaching    | For teachers: At least 15 hours/year                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>For teachers &amp; assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching</b> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Maximum class size                               | 18 (4-year-olds)   | 20 or lower  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>20 or lower</b>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Staff-child ratio                                | 1:9 (4-year-olds)  | 1:10 or better   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>1:10 or better</b>   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Screening & referral                             | Vision, hearing, health & more; Support services                     | Vision, hearing, health & at least one support service | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>Vision, hearing &amp; health screenings; &amp; referral</b>                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Meals  | Lunch and either breakfast or snack                                  | At least one meal/day                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>Discontinued</b>   | —                                   |
| Monitoring/Continuous quality improvement system | Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement | Site visits  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan</b>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|  |  |  | <b>9</b>                            |   |                                     |
|  |  |  |                                     |   | <b>8</b>                            |

## RESOURCES

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Total state pre-K spending .....                | \$143,419,198 |
| Local match required? .....                     | Yes           |
| State Head Start spending .....                 | \$0           |
| State spending per child enrolled .....         | \$5,308       |
| All reported spending per child enrolled* ..... | \$7,748       |

\* 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

