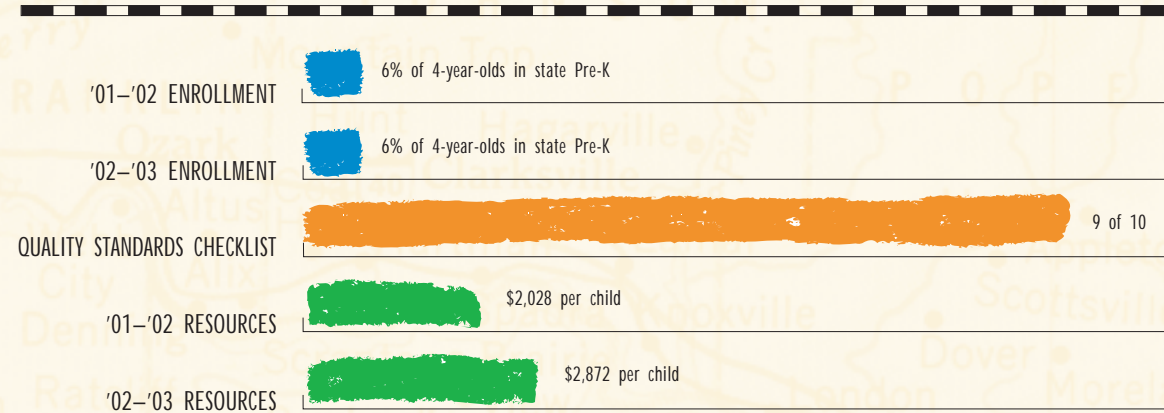


# Arkansas



The Arkansas Better Chance program began in 1991 as part of a larger education reform initiative supported by a dedicated sales tax for the Educational Excellence Trust Fund. In 2001, to help maintain funding for prekindergarten, the state passed an excise tax on package beer; 80 percent of the funds are dedicated to the prekindergarten program. The program serves children ages birth to 5 from low-income backgrounds or who have other risk factors, such as being low birth weight, having parents without a high school diploma, or having experienced abuse or neglect. Schools, state universities, educational cooperatives, nonprofit agencies, and Head Start agencies receive funding to operate the program.

The state places a high priority on early literacy and has designed a literacy training program to help teachers and parents in developing young children's pre-literacy skills.

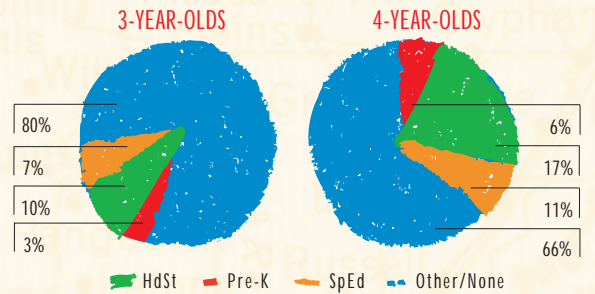
During the 2002–2003 year, there were 848 3-year-olds and 2,238 4-year-olds in the Arkansas Better Chance program, and the program received \$8,863,075 in state funds.



## ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	3,166 <sup>1</sup>
School districts that offer state program	17% <sup>2</sup>
Income requirement	156% FPL
Hours of operation	Full-day, full-week
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment	6,429
Federally-funded Head Start enrollment	10,200
State-funded Head Start enrollment	0

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



## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

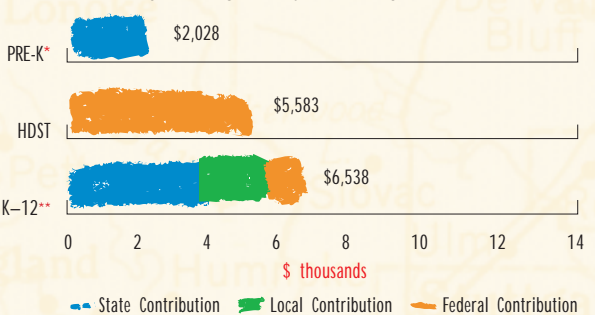
POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Curriculum standards	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree requirement	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training requirement	P-4 teacher license	Specializing in EC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree requirement	CDA	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service requirement	30 clock hours	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	20		
4-year-olds	20		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	1:10		
4-year-olds	1:10		
Screening/referral requirements	Vision, hearing, and health	Vision, hearing, and health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Family support service requirements	None	At least 1 service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meal requirements	Lunch and snack	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



## RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$6,419,864
Local match required?	Yes—40% <sup>3</sup>
State spending per child enrolled	\$2,028
State spending per 3-year-old	\$52
State spending per 4-year-old	\$123

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



<sup>1</sup> Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.  
<sup>2</sup> K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

Data are for the '01-'02 school year, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>1</sup> This enrollment figure only includes children in the center-based component of the program. Arkansas Better Chance also has a home-based component, but the enrollment for this component is not included here.  
<sup>2</sup> There are 5 educational cooperatives, 2 state universities, 18 nonprofits and 4 Head Start agencies that offer Arkansas Better Chance outside of the 54 school districts that provide the program. Other districts have Pre-K, but not Arkansas Better Chance.  
<sup>3</sup> Local match funding totaled \$4,279,909, given in cash or kind. This represents 40% of the total (state plus local) funding for Arkansas Better Chance.