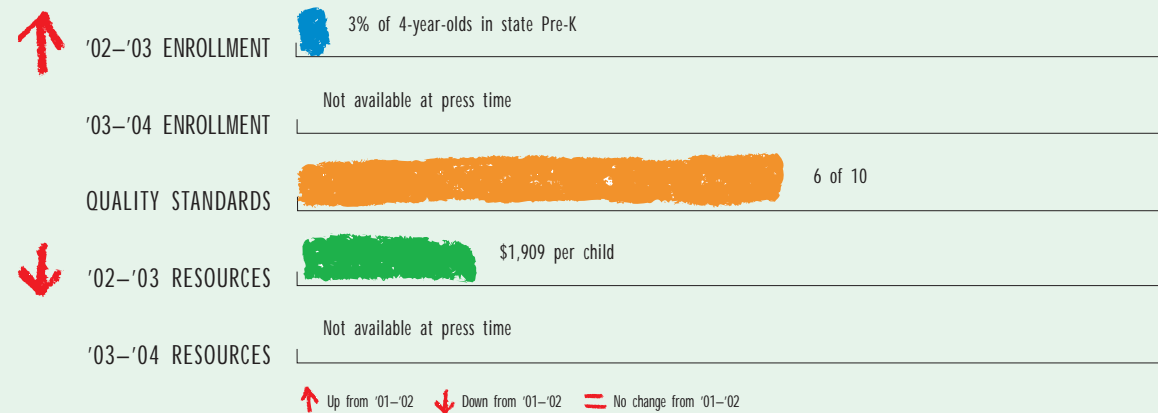


# Nebraska



Nebraska's Early Childhood Grant Program has its basis in a pilot project that was established in 1990 and implemented in 1992 with total funding of \$500,000. Legislation in 2001 expanded the initiative and made funds available for additional classrooms. The state provides grants to public schools and educational service units, which must collaborate with community initiatives and may also subcontract with other public schools and community programs, such as private child care centers or Head Start providers. Early Childhood Grant funding from the state represents an average of 34 percent, and is not allowed to exceed 50 percent, of each program's budget. Grants are intended to support collaboration, and all grantees are required to supplement grant funds with additional funding derived from federal, state, or local sources.

Most participants are 3 or 4 years old, but in programs designed to serve children of teen parents, children may enter the Early Childhood Grant Program as early as 6 weeks of age. Programs are required to designate at least 70 percent of their budgets to provide for children who meet one of four priority areas identified by the state. Priority areas include: children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, children born prematurely or with low birth weights, children of teen parents who have not completed high school, and English Language Learners. Revisions to state regulations in 2002 require that programs operated by schools and educational service units increase staff qualifications and expectations for program quality. For example, Early Childhood Grant Programs in these settings must be accredited by NAEYC within 3 years of receiving state funding.

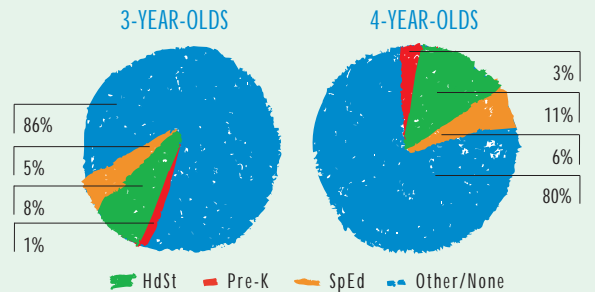
Although enrollment more than doubled between 2001–2002 and 2002–2003, a 10 percent reduction in state funds in 2003–2004 led to cuts in training and technical assistance and reduced funding for five programs.



## ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	1,100 <sup>1</sup>
School districts that offer state program	5% <sup>2</sup>
Income requirement	None <sup>3</sup>
Hours of operation	Determined locally <sup>4</sup>
Operating schedule	Determined locally <sup>5</sup>
Special education enrollment	2,584
Federally funded Head Start enrollment	4,406
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	Not comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree requirement	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training req.	Certification and EC endorsement	Specializing in Pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree req.	12 cr. hours in EC or equivalent	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service requirement	12 clock hours	At least 15 hours/year	<input 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	Determined locally	Vision, hearing, and health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Required support services	2 parent conferences and support services <sup>6</sup>	At least 1 service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meal requirement	Varies <sup>7</sup>	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>

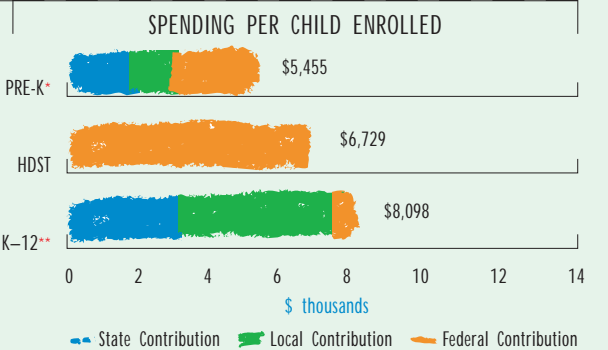
TOTAL:

# 6

of 10

## RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$2,100,000
Local match required?	Yes <sup>8</sup>
State spending per child enrolled	\$1,909
State spending per 3-year-old	\$28
State spending per 4-year-old	\$49



\* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.  
 \*\* K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.  
 Data are for the '02-'03 school year, unless otherwise noted.

1 There were 176 children younger than 3 years old enrolled in the program.  
 2 Programs are also offered in 3 out of 19 Educational Service Units.  
 3 Grants are competitive with priority given to districts with large English Language Learner or low-income populations. In addition, districts offer priority enrollment to children born prematurely or with low birth rates. Up to 30% of funds can be used to serve children without these risk factors.  
 4 Programs operate at least 12 to 15 hours per week, and approximately half run full-day, five days per week.  
 5 Grants can be either for the academic or the calendar year.  
 6 Support services include parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, and transition to kindergarten activities.  
 7 Meal requirements depend on hours during which children attend the program. All programs provide snacks, most offer lunch, and some provide breakfast as well.  
 8 The state funds up to 50% of the total cost per child, and districts supplement the remainder with local resources and other funds from sources such as Special Education, Head Start, and Title I.