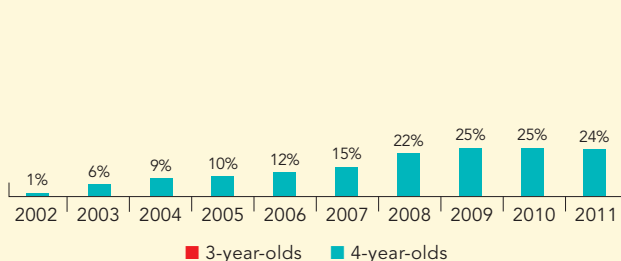
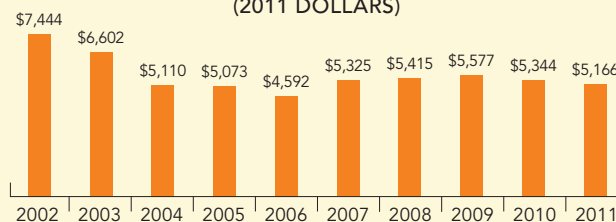


North Carolina

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2011 DOLLARS)



Since 2001, North Carolina has offered early childhood education through the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program. The goal of More at Four is to provide an educational experience during the year prior to kindergarten entry by targeting at-risk 4-year-old children from low-income families who are not served in other formal programs. Children are defined as “at risk” based on a number of risk factors, including coming from families with an income at or below 75 percent of the state median income or having a developmental delay, a chronic health condition, an identified disability, or limited English proficiency. Automatic eligibility is granted to children whose parents are active duty military personnel.

More at Four prekindergarten classrooms are available statewide in Head Start programs, public schools, and private licensed child care centers, though nonpublic settings must earn high-quality ratings under the state child care licensing system in order to be eligible for state funding. Both public and nonpublic settings must meet the same standards set by the North Carolina State Board of Education. Lead teachers must have a bachelor’s degree and a birth-kindergarten license, although teachers in nonpublic settings may begin with an AA provided they meet the required credentials within four years of the classroom receiving More at Four funds.

More at Four funding comes from general state funds and revenue from the state lottery, which has contributed to several years of rapid program expansion. However, funding was reduced by approximately \$5 million in both the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years, resulting in decreased enrollment in the program.

Since the 2005-2006 school year, More at Four classrooms have been required to follow the early learning standards adopted by the State Board of Education. An online orientation to these standards was piloted during the 2008-2009 school year and was available in the 2009-2010 school year. The State Board of Education also approved a list of prekindergarten curricula that were aligned with these early learning standards in the 2009-2010 school year. Through an ongoing annual process, the More at Four initiative is evaluated for both process quality and program impact/child outcomes.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction established the Office of Early Learning in the 2009-2010 school year in order to focus on the pre-K through grade 3 continuum of learning and development, as well as its impact on high school graduation rates. The Office of Early Learning has also partnered with FirstSchool, an initiative of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, with the goal of improving the quality of prekindergarten and early elementary grades.

During the biennial budget writing session in 2011, More at Four funding was cut by 20 percent. In addition, the program was renamed NC Pre-K, moved from the Department of Public Instruction and placed administratively in the Department of Health and Human Services, in a move to align the program with the state’s child care subsidy system. It is yet to be seen how reductions in staff and enrollment slots will affect the educational goals of the program. The state Superior Court ruled that More at Four must serve all eligible children to meet the constitutional right of a sound and basic education and must eliminate any barriers to enrollment for at-risk 4-year-olds. The North Carolina General Assembly has filed a notice of appeal. This legal issue, as well as other debates over the program, is ongoing at the time of publication.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
19	None Served

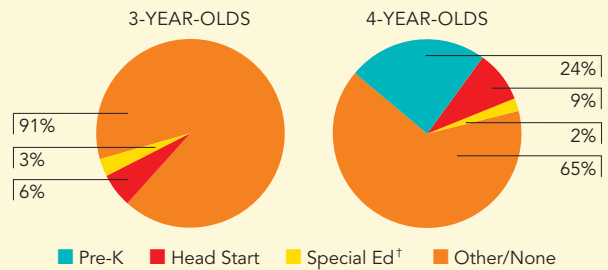
RESOURCES RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
11	8

NORTH CAROLINA MORE AT FOUR PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	30,767
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties)
Income requirement	80% of children must be at or below 75% SMI
Hours of operation	6-6.5 hours/day, 5 days/week
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment	10,417
Federally funded Head Start enrollment	18,935
State-funded Head Start enrollment.....	0

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



† This is an estimate of children in special education who are not enrolled in state-funded pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA ¹	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Birth-K license ¹	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or meets NCLB requirements (public); CDA (nonpublic) ²	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	15 CEUs/5 years	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 or lower		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA		
4-year-olds	18		
Staff-child ratio	1:10 or better		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA		
4-year-olds	1:9		
Screening/referral.....	Vision, hearing, health, dental, and support services developmental; and support services ³	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Lunch and either breakfast or snack	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

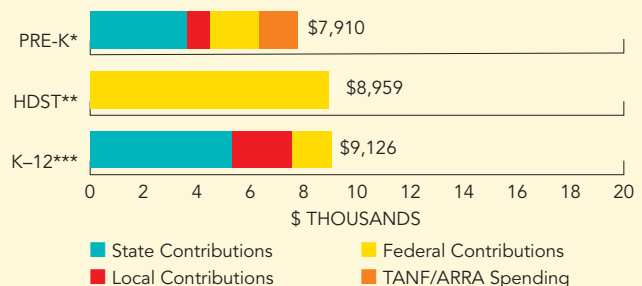
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET

10

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$158,928,389
Local match required?	Yes, amount not specified
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,166
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$7,910

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

** Head Start per-child spending for the 2010-2011 year includes funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

*** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

Data are for the '10-'11 school year, unless otherwise noted.

¹ All lead teachers in a More at Four classrooms are required to hold a BA in ECE or a related field and a North Carolina birth-kindergarten teacher licensure. Teachers in nonpublic settings must have a minimum of an AA and work to obtain a BA and birth-kindergarten license within four years of the program being recognized as a More at Four program. In some circumstances, exceptions to this timeline may be granted if the provider is working in good faith to reach this level of credential.

² NCLB generally requires assistant teachers to have a two-year degree. More at Four requires that assistant teachers who meet NCLB requirements but do not hold a CDA to have six semester hours of ECE coursework or two years experience in an early childhood classroom. An AA in ECE is highly encouraged for assistant teachers.

³ Support services include parent involvement activities and transition to pre-K and kindergarten activities. Programs must also provide information on medical homes and health insurance. Parent conferences and home visits are strongly recommended but are not required.