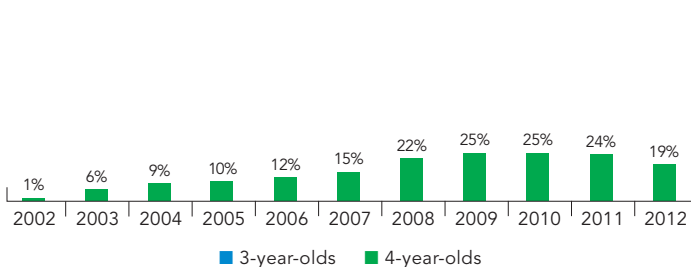
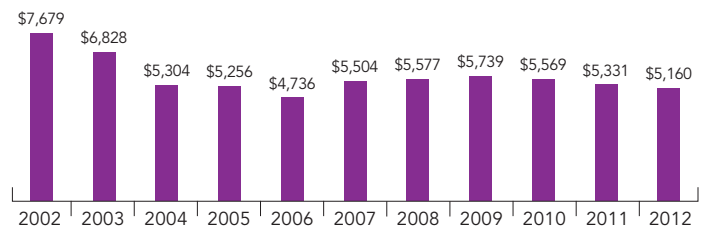


North Carolina

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2012 DOLLARS)



North Carolina has offered early childhood education through the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program since 2001. More at Four, now known as NC Pre-K, aims 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. At-risk children are defined based on a number of risk factors, which include coming from a family with an income at or below 75 percent of the state median income, having a developmental delay or identified disability, limited English proficiency, and chronic health condition. In addition, children whose parents are active duty military personnel are automatically granted eligibility. Funding for the state pre-K program comes from general state funds and revenue from the state lottery, in addition to federal and non-required local sources.

For the 2011-2012 school year, funding for the state pre-K program was cut by 20 percent, resulting in decreased enrollment in the program. There was an expansion in March 2012 that allowed for additional children to be enrolled in the program, bringing the total enrollment count up to 26,818. Administrative control of the program was moved from the Department of Public Instruction to the Department of Health and Human Services during the 2011-2012 school year, and the program was renamed NC Pre-K. As a result of this restructuring, the program was subject to cuts to funding as well as administrative staff. However, the NC Pre-K program was directed to maintain the same high-quality program standards that were in place for the More at Four program.

NC Pre-K classrooms are available statewide in Head Start programs, private licensed child care centers, and public schools. However, nonpublic settings must earn high-quality ratings under the state child care licensing system in order to be eligible for state funding. Program standards set for NC Pre-K have to be met in both public and nonpublic settings. Lead teachers are required to 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 NC Pre-K funds.

NC Pre-K classrooms have been required to follow the early learning standards adopted by the State Board of Education since the 2005-2006 school year. An online orientation to these standards was made available statewide in the 2009-2010 school year after a pilot test the previous year. A list of prekindergarten curricula that aligns with the early learning standards was also approved by the State Board of Education during the 2009-2010 school year. NC Pre-K is evaluated through an ongoing annual process for both process quality and program impact/child outcomes.

North Carolina was awarded a grant through Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, although these funds have not been focused on NC Pre-K. There are, however, several activities designed to improve the quality of child care overall, support teacher and technical assistance providers, and provide professional development opportunities. The state has been involved in an ongoing court case regarding access to and funding for early education services in order to meet the constitutional right of a sound and basic education. In 2011, the state Superior Court ruled that the state pre-K program must serve all eligible children and could not erect any barriers to enrollment for at-risk 4-year-olds. This ruling was upheld in 2012 by the North Carolina Court of Appeals.

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

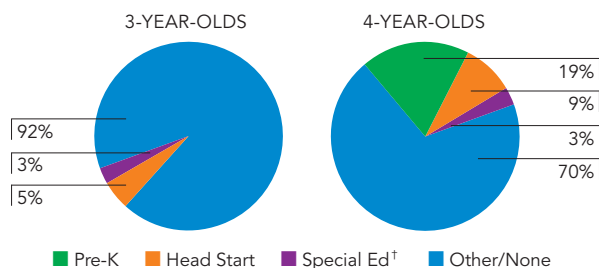
RESOURCES RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
11	9

NORTH CAROLINA NC PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	24,836 ¹
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties)
Income requirement	80% of children must be at or below 75% SMI
Hours of operation	6.5-10 hours/day, 5 days/week
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment	10,604
Federal Head Start enrollment, ages 3 & 4	18,542
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 ²	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Birth-K or Preschool add-on license ²	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or meets NCLB requirements (public); CDA (nonpublic) ³	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	75 clock hours/5 years	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-oldsNA		
4-year-olds18		
Staff-child ratio	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-oldsNA		
4-year-olds1:9		
Screening/referral.....	Vision, hearing, health, dental, and support services	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

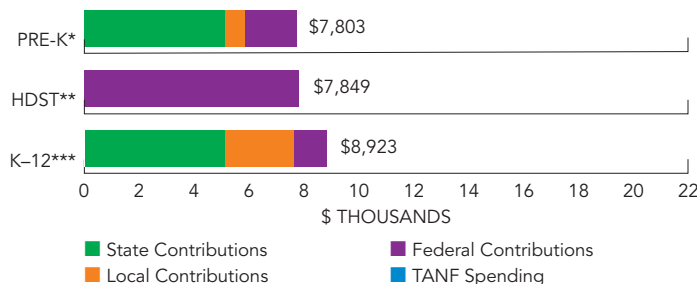
Total state pre-K spending	\$128,147,360
Local match required?	Yes, amount not specified
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,160
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$7,803

* 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 2011-2012 year includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds served. Past years' figures have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start.

*** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures. Data are for the '11-'12 school year, unless otherwise noted.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



¹ This figure is based on Fall 2011 enrollment. There was an expansion made possible in March 2012 that allowed for additional children to be enrolled in the program, bringing the total enrollment count up to 26,818.

² All lead teachers in NC Pre-K classrooms are required to hold a BA in ECE or a related field and a North Carolina birth-kindergarten teacher licensure or preschool add-on license. Teachers in nonpublic settings must have a minimum of a BA/BS and work to obtain a BA in ECE or a related field and a birth-kindergarten license or preschool add-on license within four years of the program beginning to receive state pre-K funds. Certain exceptions to this were granted due to the transition of the program from the Office of Early Learning to the Division of Child Development and Early Education.

³ NCLB generally requires assistant teachers to have a two-year degree. NC Pre-K 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.

⁴ Support services include parent involvement activities, health services for children, referral to social services, 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.