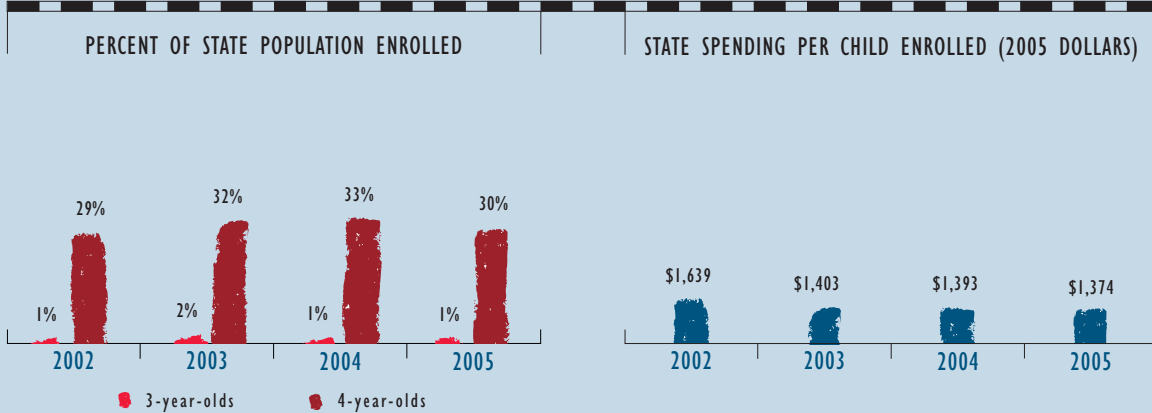


South Carolina



The Half-Day Child Development Program, known as 4K, was established under South Carolina's 1984 Education Improvement Act. In order to better prepare 4-year-olds to enter kindergarten and first grade, each school district in the state must provide at least one 4K class. Districts receive funding allotments from the state for a half-day program, based on the number of kindergartners eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Nearly all children are served in public school settings, although programs may also be offered in Head Start centers or private child care centers through public-private partnerships. Approximately 15 percent of 4K programs use additional local, federal, or state funds to offer full-day services.

Eligibility criteria for 4K programs are developed at the district level, based on risk factors specified by the state—such as having single parents or parents who did not graduate from high school, homelessness, or qualification for a state-funded family literacy program. Although poverty is stated as one of the risk factors, a state-specified income requirement is not used to determine eligibility.

Another state-funded early childhood initiative offered in South Carolina is the First Steps to School Readiness program. Through this separate initiative, First Steps County Partnerships distribute funds at the local level to provide a variety of services for young children and their families. Some funds from this initiative are used to extend half-day 4K programs to a full day, offer new full-day classes, or serve additional children in half-day 4K slots. Although First Steps is not a primary focus of data in this report, the use of First Steps funds to serve children in coordination with 4K is addressed in the profile of the 4K program on the following page.

The 4K program has experienced some cuts in funding due to state budget crises, although no further cuts took place in 2003–2004. Nevertheless, there were more than 3,900 children on waiting lists for 4K during that school year.

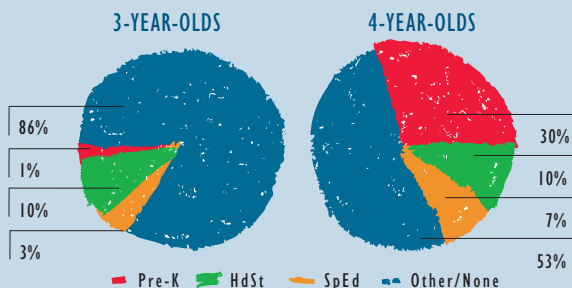
The state is developing a voluntary tiered rating system for prekindergarten programs, known as Palmetto Stars, and is also working to provide training on Good Start, Grow Smart early learning standards for all programs.



ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	17,351
School districts that offer state program	100%
Income requirement	None
Hours of operation	2.5 hours/day, 5 days/week ¹
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment	5,454
Federally funded Head Start enrollment '03-'04	11,410
State-funded Head Start enrollment	0

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



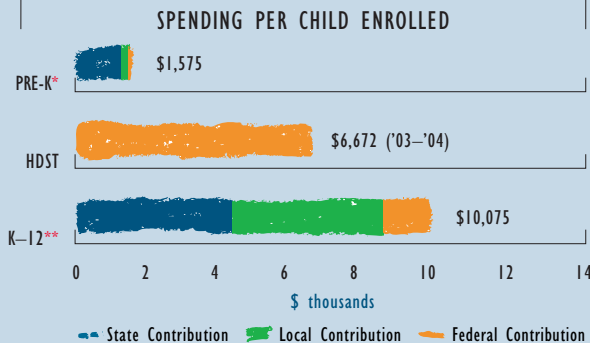
QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards	Not comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	EC certification and licensure	Specializing in Pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD (public), None (nonpublic) ²	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	12 clock hours/year and 6 cr. hours/5 years	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 and support services	Vision, hearing, and health; and support services ³	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals	1 meal and snack ⁴	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$23,832,678
Local match required?	No
State spending per child enrolled	\$1,374
State spending per 3-year-old	\$12
State spending per 4-year-old	\$417



* 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 '04-'05 school year, unless otherwise noted.

- Approximately 15% of programs use local, First Steps, or Title I funds to operate for a full school day or 7 hours per day.
- Assistant teachers in Title I schools must either hold an AA degree or pass a state test. It is recommended that all assistant teachers complete an early childhood class within one year of their hiring date.
- Support services include four annual parent conferences or home visits, education services or job training for parents, parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, health services for children, and transition to kindergarten activities.
- Half-day programs must provide breakfast or lunch plus a snack; full-day programs must provide breakfast and lunch plus a snack.