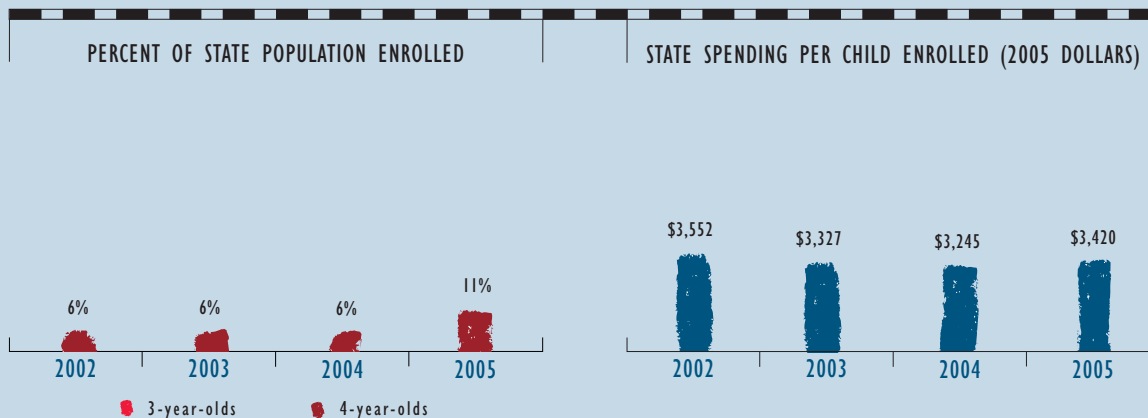


Virginia



The Virginia Preschool Initiative was established in 1995 to meet the needs of 4-year-old children who were not being served by existing early education programs. Public schools receive an allocation of funds from the state, and may subcontract with Head Start or YMCA programs to operate prekindergarten classes. Localities are required to contribute additional funds to the program based on a composite index designed to promote equity across communities. All children who participate in the Virginia Preschool Initiative must be at risk, although the specific risk factors used to determine eligibility are chosen and identified at the local level. Such risk factors include poverty, homelessness, parents who have dropped out of school or who have limited education, family underemployment or incarceration, and limited English proficiency.

Until the 2004–2005 program year, all classrooms funded through the Virginia Preschool Initiative operated on a full-day schedule. Beginning in 2004, districts had the option of offering either a half-day (3-hour) or full-day (6-hour) program. Programs choosing to operate on a half-day schedule receive 50 percent of the funding offered to full-day programs. Unlike full-day programs, which are required to offer meals, half-day programs determine at the local level which meals to offer. The basis for allocating funds to local sites changed first in 2004–2005 and again for 2005–2006. Previously, public schools received allocations to fund prekindergarten for 60 percent of at-risk 4-year-olds in their communities not already being served through Head Start or Title I programs. Regulations made funds available to serve 90 percent of at-risk 4-year-olds not enrolled in Head Start for 2004–2005, and 100 percent of such children for 2005–2006. These changes have led to significant increases in funding and enrollment for the Virginia Preschool Initiative. Also during the 2005–2006 school year, the maximum class size increased to 18, with a staff-child ratio of 1:9.

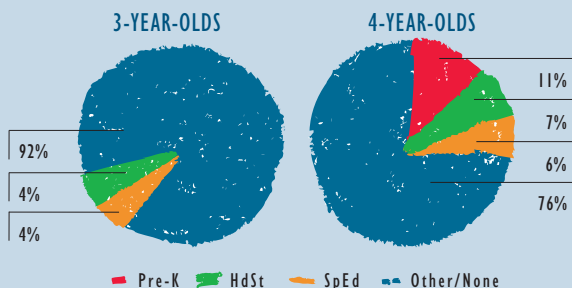
In 2004, the state began emphasizing early learning standards in literacy and mathematics, with the adoption of Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Literacy and Mathematics.



ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	10,307
School districts that offer state program	66%
Income requirement	None
Hours of operation	Determined locally ¹
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment	9,559
Federally funded Head Start enrollment '03-'04	11,569
State-funded Head Start enrollment	0

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



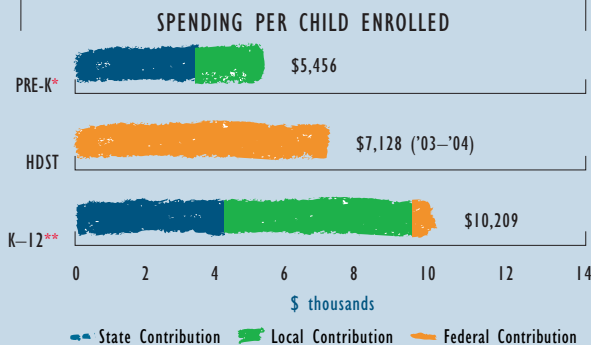
QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?
Early learning standards	Not comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (public), CDA (nonpublic) ²	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	License + certification in Pre-K-3 or-6 (public), Meets CDA requirements (nonpublic) ²	Specializing in Pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD or GED	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	Determined locally	At least 15 hours/year	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA		
4-year-olds	16 ³		
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	NA		
4-year-olds	1:8 ³		
Screening/referral and support services	Vision, hearing, health; and support services ⁴	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Depend on length of program day ⁵	At least 1/day	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	None ⁶	Site visits	<input type="checkbox"/>



RESOURCES

Total state Pre-K spending	\$35,253,935
Local match required?	Yes;
based on composite index of local ability to pay	
State spending per child enrolled	\$3,420
State spending per 3-year-old	\$0
State spending per 4-year-old	\$363



* 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.

¹ Effective with the 2004-2005 school year, localities may choose to offer half-day programs for 3 hours per day or full-day programs for 6 hours per day.

² All staff must have some training in early childhood development. Teachers in Head Start settings must hold a CDA.

³ Beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, maximum class size increased to 18, with a 1:9 staff-child ratio.

⁴ Support services include parent involvement activities, health services for children, and referral to social services. The annual number of required parent conferences or home visits is determined locally.

⁵ Full-day programs must provide lunch and a snack. Beginning in 2004-2005, meal and snack requirements were determined locally for half-day programs; most offer a snack, and some offer lunch.

⁶ Parent satisfaction surveys and ongoing supervision of teachers are local responsibilities.