

# THE STATE OF PRESCHOOL 2006

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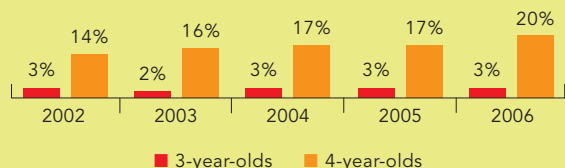
STATE PRESCHOOL YEARBOOK

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By W. Steven Barnett, Ph.D., Jason T. Hustedt, Ph.D., Laura E. Hawkinson, M.P.A., and Kenneth B. Robin, Psy.D.

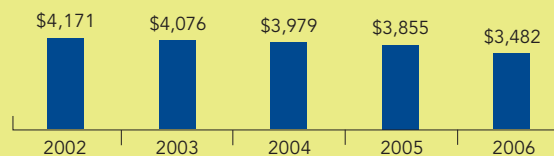
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# United States

PERCENT OF NATIONAL POPULATION ENROLLED



AVERAGE STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED  
(2006 DOLLARS)



This national profile provides a summary of state-funded prekindergarten data across the United States in the 2005-2006 academic year. As on the individual state profiles found on pages 39 to 161 of this report, we focus on access to state preschool, quality standards, and spending, but present national (rather than statewide) totals and averages.

During the 2005-2006 program year, 38 states funded prekindergarten initiatives. Some states offered multiple programs, so across the states there were 48 distinct preschool education initiatives in total. The 12 states not offering state-funded prekindergarten in 2005-2006 were Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. Florida started a new state prekindergarten initiative in 2005-2006, which offered voluntary preschool to all 4-year-olds in the state. Much of the nationwide increase in enrollment was due to Florida's new program, as was almost half of the drop in spending per child since 2004-2005.

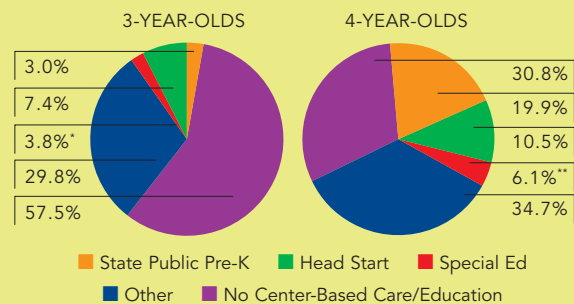
In 2005-2006, states offering prekindergarten initiatives enrolled 20 percent of the nation's 4-year-olds, up from 17 percent in 2004-2005 and just 14 percent in 2001-2002. The percentage of 3-year-olds enrolled, in contrast, has not changed substantially over this time period. After accounting for inflation, the average state spending dropped \$373 per child enrolled since 2004-2005, continuing a pattern of steady decline since 2002.

Nationwide, 942,766 children participated in state prekindergarten initiatives in 2005-2006. Quality standards varied enormously across the states. Almost half of the state preschool education initiatives failed to meet the important benchmark of requiring a bachelor's degree or higher for all lead teachers. State prekindergarten spending totaled nearly \$3.3 billion during the 2005-2006 academic year. Some state prekindergarten initiatives reported financial support from local and federal sources in addition to state funding, adding at least \$400 million to the total spending in these initiatives. Still, total spending per child enrolled was much less for state prekindergarten than for grades K-12 in public schools.

## NATIONAL ACCESS

Total state program enrollment, all ages .....	942,766
States that fund preschool .....	38 states
Income requirement .....	27 state programs have an income requirement
Hours of operation .....	8 full-day, 12 half-day, 28 determined locally
Operating schedule .....	31 academic year, 17 determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 & 4 .....	398,679
Federal Head Start enrollment, ages 3 & 4 .....	721,289 <sup>1</sup>
Total federal Head Start and .....	894,354 <sup>1</sup>
Early Head Start enrollment, ages 0-5 .....	
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 & 4 .....	15,487 <sup>2</sup>

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



\* 1.5 of the 3.8 percent overlaps with other programs

\*\*1.9 of the 6.1 percent overlaps with other programs

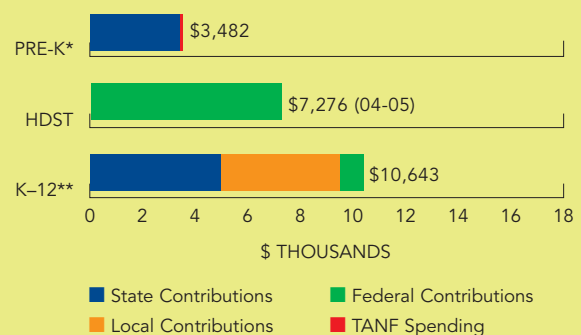
## NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST SUMMARY

POLICY	BENCHMARK	OF THE 48 STATE PRE-K INITIATIVES, NUMBER MEETING BENCHMARKS
Early learning standards .....	Comprehensive .....	37
Teacher degree .....	BA .....	26
Teacher specialized training .....	Specializing in pre-K .....	35
Assistant teacher degree .....	CDA or equivalent.....	10
Teacher in-service .....	At least 15 hours/year .....	33
Maximum class size.....	20 or lower .....	37
3-year-olds		
4-year-olds		
Staff-child ratio .....	1:10 or better .....	39
3-year-olds		
4-year-olds		
Screening/referral .....	Vision, hearing, health; and .....	34
and support services	at least 1 support service	
Meals.....	At least 1/day .....	23
Monitoring .....	Site visits .....	35

## NATIONAL RESOURCES

Total state preschool spending .....	\$3,271,913,604 <sup>3</sup>
Local match required? .....	11 state programs require a local match
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$3,482 <sup>3</sup>
State Head Start spending .....	\$123,218,580
State spending per 3-year-old.....	\$112 <sup>4</sup>
State spending per 4-year-old.....	\$742 <sup>4</sup>

## SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



\* 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 '05-'06 school year, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>1</sup> The enrollment figure for federal Head Start, ages 3 and 4, is limited to children served in the 50 states and in DC. The enrollment figure for total federal Head Start and Early Head Start, ages 0 to 5, includes all children served through the program in any location, including the U.S. territories.

<sup>2</sup> This figure includes 11,415 children who attended programs that were considered to be state-funded preschool initiatives. These children are also counted in the state-funded preschool enrollment total.

<sup>3</sup> This figure includes federal TANF funds directed toward preschool at states' discretion.

<sup>4</sup> These calculations are based on the total population of 3- and 4-year-olds in the 38 states that fund a preschool initiative.

**TABLE 1: STATE RANKINGS AND QUALITY CHECKLIST SUMS**

State	Access for 4-Year-Olds Rank	Access for 3-Year-Olds Rank	Resources Rank	Quality Standards Checklist Sum (Maximum of 10)
Alabama	38	none served	11	10
Arizona	29	none served	33	4
Arkansas	15	5	9	9
California	24	7	20	4
Colorado	20	14	24	4
Connecticut	19	11	4	6
Delaware	26	none served	5	8
Florida	4	none served	35	4
Georgia	2	none served	13	8
Illinois	13	2	21	9
Iowa	32	17	25	5
Kansas	18	none served	28	3
Kentucky	10	4	31	8
Louisiana	14	none served	8	7.8
Maine	17	none served	36	4
Maryland	9	21	37	7
Massachusetts	25	6	16	6
Michigan	16	none served	14	6
Minnesota	37	19	3	8
Missouri	34	13	27	6
Nebraska	35	15	29	8
Nevada	36	23	22	7
New Jersey	12	1	1	8.5
New Mexico	27	24	34	4.8
New York	11	26	17	5.6
North Carolina	21	none served	15	10
Ohio	33	20	32	4
Oklahoma	1	none served	19	9
Oregon	31	12	2	7
Pennsylvania	30	16	7	4
South Carolina	8	10	38	8
Tennessee	23	25	12	9
Texas	5	9	26	4
Vermont	3	3	30	6.7
Virginia	22	none served	18	7
Washington	28	18	6	6
West Virginia	6	8	10	7
Wisconsin	7	22	23	5.1
Alaska	no program	no program	no program	no program
Hawaii	no program	no program	no program	no program
Idaho	no program	no program	no program	no program
Indiana	no program	no program	no program	no program
Mississippi	no program	no program	no program	no program
Montana	no program	no program	no program	no program
New Hampshire	no program	no program	no program	no program
North Dakota	no program	no program	no program	no program
Rhode Island	no program	no program	no program	no program
South Dakota	no program	no program	no program	no program
Utah	no program	no program	no program	no program
Wyoming	no program	no program	no program	no program

# Executive Summary

## STATE-FUNDED PRESCHOOL EDUCATION: A LONG AND WINDING ROAD



In 2005-2006 state-funded preschool education reached new highs and at least one new low in the three areas tracked by our survey of the states: access, quality standards, and resources. Thirty-eight states enrolled nearly 950,000 children in their prekindergarten programs. Enrollment rose over previous-year levels, enough to make state pre-K the largest source of public preschool education. About two-thirds of these children are served in public schools, and one-third are in other settings such as private child care and Head Start. States also made real progress in improving quality standards in 2005-2006. Sixteen states raised their quality standards enough to meet NIEER benchmarks that they had not previously met, some more than one standard. For the first time, two states—Alabama and North Carolina—met all 10 of the NIEER benchmarks for state standards. Total state spending for prekindergarten increased to nearly \$3.3 billion. However, in many states funding did not keep up with increased enrollments and inflation. After adjusting for inflation, funding per child fell to the lowest level since NIEER began collecting such data in 2001-2002.

Hidden behind the national picture is tremendous variation among states. Access ranges from universal availability to no availability, quality standards from excellent to poor, and funding varies from state to state by several orders of magnitude. The *Yearbook's* cross-state comparisons and individual state descriptions reveal all of these details. Oklahoma continues to lead the nation as the only state to close in on universal enrollment, and it does so with high standards. In addition, evaluations of Oklahoma's pre-K program provide evidence that this is a program that works.

Total enrollment in state-funded pre-K rose to 942,766 children in 2005-2006, including 805,807 at age 4. This represents a 40 percent increase in the number of 4-year-old children enrolled in state pre-K over the past five years. Thus, state preschool education now serves 20 percent of the 4-year-old population in the U.S. The 130,709 increase over the prior year for 4-year-olds reflected Florida's new commitment to serve all 4-year-olds (it had no state program the year before) and incremental increases in other states. Enrollment at age 3 increased to 119,602, a gain of 8,598 children. A very small number of children are served at younger ages. State pre-K continues to be essentially a program for 4-year-olds in most states. Only 26 states offered pre-K to 3-year-olds and only five states served more than 10 percent of that age group. As the need for education of young children does not begin at age 4, this is a cause for concern. It also points to the need to coordinate with other public programs that serve larger numbers of children at age 3, such as Head Start and government-funded child care.

Although many states still fall short, 2005-2006 was a banner year for improvement in state quality standards. NIEER specifies 10 benchmarks for state standards relating to program quality. Programs that meet the benchmarks correspond at least roughly in their design to programs demonstrated to produce substantial gains in children's learning and school success. These benchmarks may be viewed as necessary, though not entirely sufficient, conditions for highly effective preschool education. Sixteen states met more benchmarks in 2005-2006 than they did in 2004-2005. The most common area of improvement was in the adoption of comprehensive learning standards. The programs in Alabama and North Carolina met all 10 benchmarks, and six more state prekindergarten initiatives achieved nine of the 10. At the other extreme, 10 states failed to meet at least half of the benchmarks.

Before adjusting for inflation, total spending on state prekindergarten increased by \$380 million, or 13 percent, from the previous program year. Florida's new program contributed more than half of that increase. States spent an average of \$3,482 per child on their preschool education programs in 2005-2006. This is a new low and marks the fourth year in a row that average inflation-adjusted funding per child declined. Although Florida's low per-child spending contributed to this decline, many other states failed to increase funding in proportion to growing enrollments and inflation. As educational effectiveness requires adequate funding, the continuing decline in already low state expenditure per child causes concern.

The decline in per-child expenditure can be attributed to: (1) increases in enrollment that outrun increases in funding and (2) states' failure to keep up with inflation. States face a constant temptation to increase the number of children served without a proportionate increase in expenditure. When enrollment increases outpace funding growth, states run the risk that effectiveness will deteriorate. Inflation can have equally insidious effects. As inflation in the state and local government sector of the economy runs about twice as high as in the overall economy, increases in preschool education funding that might look generous before inflation can be budget cuts after inflation takes its toll. The effects of inflation add up quickly over the years. Since 2001-2002, inflation-adjusted state pre-K spending per child has declined by more than 17 percent.

Key findings for 2005-2006 in each of the three main topic areas are highlighted below.

## ACCESS

- Thirty-eight states funded one or more state prekindergarten initiatives. There were 12 states without state-funded prekindergarten, listed in the sidebar.
- Florida, which had no state pre-K in the prior year, launched a new initiative to serve all 4-year-olds in response to a voter approved constitutional amendment. Florida added 105,896 children to the state pre-K rolls in 2005-2006.
- State prekindergarten initiatives served 942,766 children. In addition to Florida, 27 other states increased their enrollments over the previous year. Nine states served fewer children, one state served the same number of children, and 12 states continued to serve none.
- State prekindergarten programs continued to focus primarily on 4-year-olds. Twenty percent of the nation's 4-year-olds were enrolled, up from the 17 percent served in the previous year and 14 percent served in 2001-2002. This is a 40 percent gain in just 5 years.
- Only 3 percent of the nation's 3-year-olds were enrolled, virtually the same percentage served in 2001-2002. Just five states served more than 10 percent of their 3-year-olds: Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, New Jersey, and Vermont. Nearly half the states (24) served no 3-year-olds.
- Oklahoma (70 percent enrollment) and Georgia (51 percent enrollment) were the only states to serve more than half of their children at age 4 in 2005-2006. However, Florida and Vermont (47 percent enrolled) are poised to overtake Georgia. Texas (44 percent enrolled) ran a surprising fifth, especially since Texas has not announced a goal of serving all 4-year-olds.
- State-funded preschool education employed diverse delivery systems in many states, with one-third of the children served outside the public schools.
- Head Start and preschool special education also serve many children under age 5, so not all children would enroll in a state-funded pre-K program even if made universally available. However, not all services provided by Head Start and special education are alternatives to state preschool education—sometimes they are supplemental or collaborative services. For example, some children receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) may also attend state pre-K or Head Start. State pre-K and Head Start may also jointly serve children. For example, state funds may support enhanced quality or increased hours in Head Start, or each program might fund a half-day of services to provide a full day of education.

### States with No Program 2005-2006

Alaska  
Hawaii  
Idaho  
Indiana  
Mississippi  
Montana  
New Hampshire  
North Dakota  
Rhode Island  
South Dakota  
Utah  
Wyoming



## QUALITY STANDARDS

- Alabama and North Carolina met all 10 of NIEER's quality benchmarks. Six additional state preschool initiatives met nine of the 10 benchmarks—Arkansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, as well as the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program in Louisiana and New Jersey's "Abbott" program.
- States are developing policies that establish stronger and more uniform quality standards. Nineteen programs in 16 states made policy changes that increased the number of benchmarks met by their quality standards, a remarkable single-year improvement. The number of state initiatives meeting fewer than five benchmarks decreased from 15 to 11.
- Twenty states did not require all state pre-kindergarten teachers to hold at least a bachelor's degree. Eight of these states did not require any state prekindergarten teachers to have a bachelor's degree. Eight more exempted at least some teachers outside the public schools; and four had multiple prekindergarten initiatives, at least one of which did not require a BA of all teachers. Ten states did not require all teachers to have specialized preparation in the education of preschool children. At a time when the national No Child Left Behind law is pressing for every child in kindergarten or above to have a "highly qualified" teacher, it is striking that a number of states fail to require even the most basic qualifications of preschool teachers.
- Twenty-eight states used regular site visits to monitor local programs as part of a continuous quality improvement process. Such efforts are a key way for states to maintain and improve program effectiveness.

## Oklahoma—A Pre-K Leader

Oklahoma leads the nation in providing preschool education to 4-year-olds, enrolling 70 percent of the state's children. Counting children in special education and Head Start, enrollment in public pre-K in Oklahoma is about 90 percent at age 4. In addition, Oklahoma has relatively high standards, meeting nine of 10 benchmarks in the *Yearbook* (and coming close to meeting the requirement regarding assistant teacher preparation). This makes Oklahoma a national leader, and it is fair to ask what evidence exists for the program's educational effectiveness.

Two rigorous independent studies have been conducted to evaluate the program's impacts on children's learning. Dr. William Gormley and colleagues at Georgetown University evaluated the effects of Oklahoma's program in the Tulsa Public Schools. They employed a regression-discontinuity design that reduces the chances that family background effects are confounded with preschool program effects. Their sample consisted of 1,567 pre-K children and 1,461 kindergarten children who had just completed pre-K. The study found substantial positive effects on achievement test scores for early literacy and mathematics. Hispanic, Black, White, and Native American children all gained from the program, as did children from across diverse income brackets. Positive effects in language, literacy and mathematics test scores were revealed in preliminary findings from a study conducted by NIEER, applying the same methodology to a statewide sample of 838 Oklahoma children.

William T. Gormley Jr., Ted Gayer, Deborah Phillips, and Brittany Dawson (2005). The Effects of Universal Pre-K on Cognitive Development. *Developmental Psychology*, 41(6) 872–884.

## RESOURCES

- Total state spending for prekindergarten initiatives reached \$3.27 billion. To put this in perspective, state governments spent more than \$250 billion on grades K-12. Thus, states spent about one penny on preschool education for every \$1 they spent on K-12.
- Total state pre-K spending grew by \$380 million (without accounting for inflation), or 13 percent. Florida's new program accounted for 60 percent of that increase.
- Average state spending per child enrolled was \$3,482. States varied greatly in their per-child spending. The top-ranked state—New Jersey—spent \$9,854 per child. Three states spent less than \$2,000 per child, and 12 spent nothing.
- Some states provide all of the funding for state pre-K programs. Others depend on local school districts and other sources of funds as well. States that fund preschool education through the same public education funding formula as K-12 education combine state and local dollars to fund the program. Local schools may use federal education dollars as well. Some states fund programs that are also supported by government-funded child care, Head Start, and other funds. In some states, the state pre-K dollars may only pay for a certain portion of hours and days even though providers that offer full-day, year-round services deliver the program. Despite cost-sharing arrangements, whenever the state per-child expenditure is set far below the level of K-12 funding (for an equivalent number of hours), it cannot help but limit quality and effectiveness.
- Florida's new program is particularly worrisome because it enrolls so many children in a program that has very low per-child funding (it ranks 35th of 38 states) and low quality standards.
- Inflation is a hidden drag on the progress of preschool education. From 2001 to 2005, state and local government cost inflation was a cumulative 18 percent compared to 10 percent for the overall economy. This is not widely understood, and it seems likely that the public underestimates how much more money is needed each year just to maintain preschool education service levels. Flat funding or even modest increases in funding can mean a substantial decrease in real financial support once inflation is taken into account.
- Inflation-adjusted spending per child declined in 25 of 37 states (Florida's initiative was new and not included here). In other words, real spending per child declined in twice as many states as it increased. Worse yet, nominal spending per child (that is, without any adjustment for inflation) declined in 14 states. In a few states (North Carolina, for example) spending declines may be explained by the fact that high start-up costs in the initial years of a new program decline as the program goes to scale. However, this explanation justifies reductions in spending per child only in states that adequately funded their programs from the start.

### Honey, Who Shrank the Kids?

Six states cut the number of children served over the previous year by more than 2 percent. These states and the reductions in children served are as follows: California (2,551), Kansas (125), Michigan (3,291), Missouri (98), Nevada (74), Ohio (2,628).

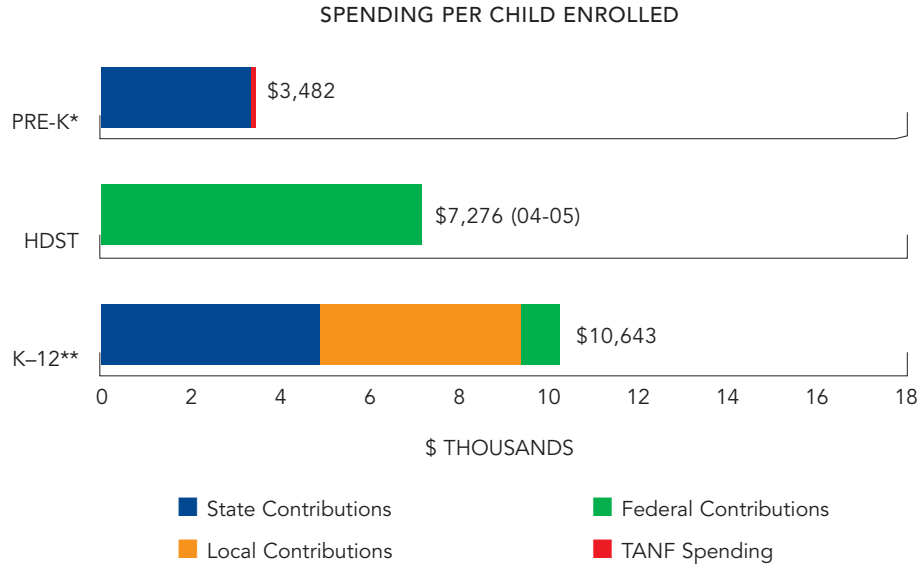
### Honey, Who Shrank the Kids' Budget?

Four states cut total funding for preschool education by more than 2 percent, over the previous year. These states are: Maine, Massachusetts, Ohio, and South Carolina. Eight more states had greater than 2 percent reductions in 2005-2006 after adjusting for inflation. These states are: California, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Oregon, and Texas.

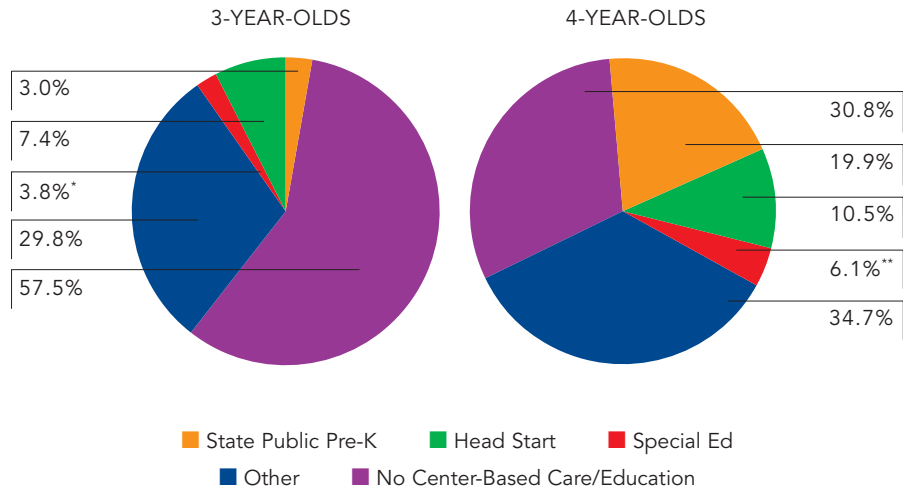
*The State of Preschool 2006: State Preschool Yearbook* is the fourth in the series of NIEER's annual reference volumes tracking state-funded preschool education programs. Its purpose is to provide a compendium of data on state efforts to offer preschool education as well as analyses of key measures of program progress: access, quality standards and resources. This volume encompasses the 2005-2006 school year and describes trends of the five years from 2001-2002, the year covered by NIEER's first *Yearbook*.



## SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



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



\* 1.5 of the 3.8 percent overlaps with other programs

\*\* 1.9 of the 6.1 percent overlaps with other programs

**TABLE 2: STATE RANKINGS BY PRE-K ACCESS FOR 4-YEAR-OLDS**

ACCESS FOR 4-YEAR-OLDS RANK	STATE	PERCENT OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PREKINDERGARTEN (2005-2006)			NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PREKINDERGARTEN (2005-2006)		
		4-year-olds	3-year-olds	Total (3s and 4s)	4-year-olds	3-year-olds	Total (3s and 4s)
1	Oklahoma	70.2%	0.0%	35.0%	33,402	0	33,402
2	Georgia	51.5%	0.0%	26.0%	71,645	0	71,645
3	Vermont	47.0%	14.1%	30.6%	2,966	890	3,856
4	Florida	46.5%	0.0%	23.6%	105,896	0	105,896
5	Texas	44.3%	4.5%	24.5%	165,170	16,464	181,634
6	West Virginia	39.9%	4.5%	22.3%	8,048	896	8,944
7	Wisconsin	32.1%	0.7%	16.5%	21,713	487	22,200
8	South Carolina	31.0%	4.2%	17.8%	17,755	2,362	20,117
9	Maryland	30.7%	1.0%	15.9%	23,492	727	24,219
10	Kentucky	29.3%	11.0%	20.2%	15,722	5,797	21,519
11	New York	28.6%	0.5%	14.6%	71,428	1,162	72,590
12	New Jersey	24.9%	14.8%	19.9%	28,981	17,280	46,261
13	Illinois	23.0%	14.4%	18.7%	41,521	25,592	67,113
14	Louisiana	21.6%	0.0%	10.9%	13,791	0	13,791
15	Arkansas	18.2%	10.6%	14.4%	6,777	3,886	10,663
16	Michigan	16.2%	0.0%	8.2%	21,571	0	21,571
17	Maine	15.5%	0.0%	7.8%	2,088	0	2,088
18	Kansas	14.5%	0.0%	7.3%	5,375	0	5,375
19	Connecticut	13.7%	3.2%	8.5%	5,876	1,356	7,232
20	Colorado	13.5%	2.2%	7.9%	9,345	1,514	10,859
21	North Carolina	12.2%	0.0%	6.2%	15,227	0	15,227
22	Virginia	11.1%	0.0%	5.6%	11,343	0	11,343
23	Tennessee	10.6%	0.5%	5.6%	8,187	414	8,601
24	California	9.9%	4.5%	7.2%	52,849	24,156	77,005
25	Massachusetts	9.8%	8.8%	9.3%	7,808	6,940	14,748
26	Delaware	7.8%	0.0%	3.9%	843	0	843
27	New Mexico	6.8%	0.6%	3.7%	1,802	157	1,959
28	Washington	6.0%	1.4%	3.7%	4,752	1,057	5,809
29	Arizona	5.8%	0.0%	2.9%	5,339	0	5,339
30	Pennsylvania	5.6%	1.5%	3.6%	8,061	2,209	10,270
31	Oregon	5.0%	2.6%	3.8%	2,301	1,185	3,486
32	Iowa	4.5%	1.4%	2.9%	1,575	496	2,071
33	Ohio	4.4%	1.0%	2.7%	6,440	1,486	7,926
34	Missouri	4.0%	2.3%	3.1%	2,917	1,692	4,609
35	Nebraska	3.6%	2.1%	2.8%	861	499	1,360
36	Nevada	2.1%	0.6%	1.4%	758	215	973
37	Minnesota	1.8%	1.0%	1.4%	1,156	683	1,839
38	Alabama	1.7%	0.0%	0.9%	1,026	0	1,026
No Program	Alaska	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Hawaii	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Idaho	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Indiana	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Mississippi	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Montana	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	New Hampshire	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	North Dakota	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Rhode Island	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	South Dakota	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Utah	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
No Program	Wyoming	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
	<b>50 State Population</b>	<b>19.9%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>805,807</b>	<b>119,602</b>	<b>925,409<sup>1</sup></b>

For details about how these figures were calculated, see the Methodology section and Roadmap to State Pre-K pages.

<sup>1</sup> Nationwide, an additional 17,357 children of other ages enrolled in state prekindergarten, for a total enrollment number of 942,766.

## ACCESS: UNEVEN GROWTH

Access to state-funded preschool education picked up steam in 2005-2006, posting a remarkable 18 percent increase over 2004-2005. Nationwide, nearly 950,000 children attended a state program. Beyond the national totals, however, lies a picture of uneven growth in which a single state accounts for the majority of the growth, the South continues to outpace other regions of the country and 4-year-olds are seeing gains in access while 3-year-olds have not enjoyed similar gains and in many cases endured reductions.

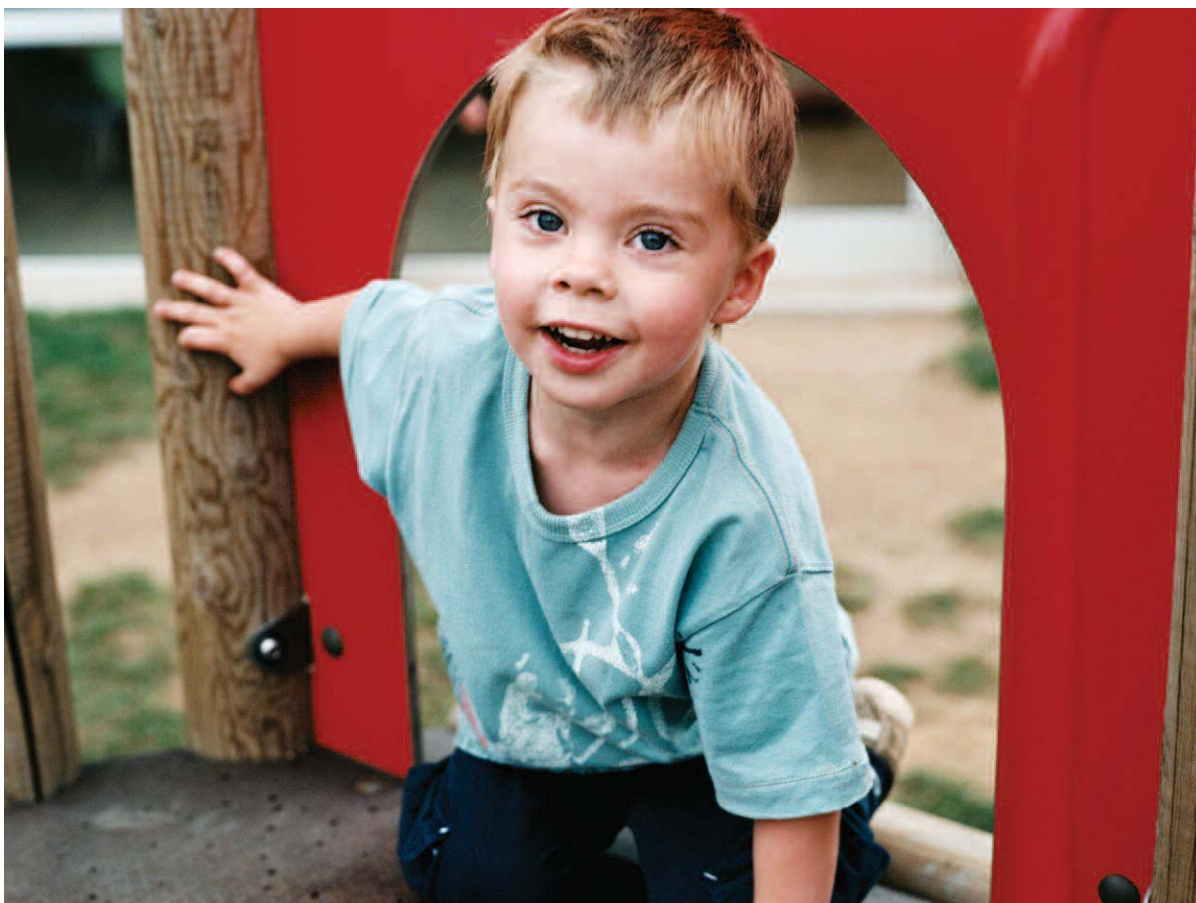
As Tables 2 and 3 show, the benefactors of the expansion in the vast majority of cases have been 4-year-olds who experienced a more than 40 percent increase over five years. The breakdown in enrollments for 3- and 4-year-olds in the table shows how prevalent the concentration on 4-year-olds has been even though research makes a convincing case for starting preschool education at age 3, particularly for disadvantaged children.

Overall, however, total enrollment has risen steadily nationwide. There are two important sources of the growth we are seeing in access: the introduction of a new, large scale initiative in Florida, and incremental enrollment gains in many other states.

Four-year-olds  
have experienced  
a more than 40  
percent increase  
in enrollment over  
five years.

The single most important factor in the large increase in enrollment nationally for 2005-2006 was the start of Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) initiative. This new initiative is designed to offer state-funded prekindergarten to all 4-year-olds in Florida, a state that did not offer a state pre-K program in 2004-2005. VPK served 105,896 4-year-olds in the first year of operation. This amounts to 11 percent of state prekindergarten enrollment nationwide. Florida provides an example of the magnitude of change that can be produced when a large state creates and implements a pre-K program for all children.

Incremental increases in enrollment in 27 other states also contributed to higher enrollments in 2005-2006. These smaller changes include a new pre-K initiative in New Mexico focusing on children living in communities with a high concentration of poverty. This program served 1,538 4-year-olds in its first year. Expansion of the New Mexico Pre-K initiative is continuing.



### National Picture

Overall, 28 of the 38 states funding prekindergarten served more children in 2005-2006 than in 2004-2005. One state, Delaware, served the same number of children as it did during the previous year. Six states decreased enrollment by more than 2 percent—California, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, and Ohio. There are 12 states that continue to have no state-funded pre-K programs. While many of these states have some type of child care programs, their parameters do not fit the definition of preschool education. Hawaii is one of them. In a change from our previous reports, we no longer count Hawaii's Preschool Open Doors Project as a state-funded preschool education program. Based on new information about its design, we have concluded that it is a support for working families, but not a program with a primary emphasis on preschool education. Data from Hawaii do not enter into our year-to-year enrollment comparisons.



### The South

While Florida posted by far the largest gains of any state, other states in the South are continuing the expansionist trend that has marked this region in recent years. Tennessee made notable gains during 2005-2006 as well. Nearly 6,000 additional prekindergarten slots were offered through that state's Voluntary Pre-K Initiative, which builds upon a previously existing pilot program. Programs in North Carolina and Arkansas also had particularly notable increases in enrollment during the 2005-2006 school year. North Carolina, which established its initiative in 2001, illustrates how a strategy of sustained, incremental enrollment increases can produce substantial change over time. The number of children served in the state's *More at Four* program has increased in each of the past five years from 1,240 children in 2001-2002 to 15,227 children in 2005-2006.

### Regional Trends

Figure 1 displays enrollment as a percentage of the population across the United States. Again, the Southern states are the nation's trailblazers in providing prekindergarten to a substantial percentage of 4-year-olds, as in previous years. Eight of the top ten states for the percentage of the population enrolled are in the South. The debut of Florida's VPK program in 2005-2006 raises the count of Southern initiatives pursuing universal access to four states, including Oklahoma and Georgia. Also, West Virginia has passed legislation requiring the state to make preschool available to all 4-year-olds by 2012. Regional differences in state provision of access to preschool education continue to be quite pronounced.

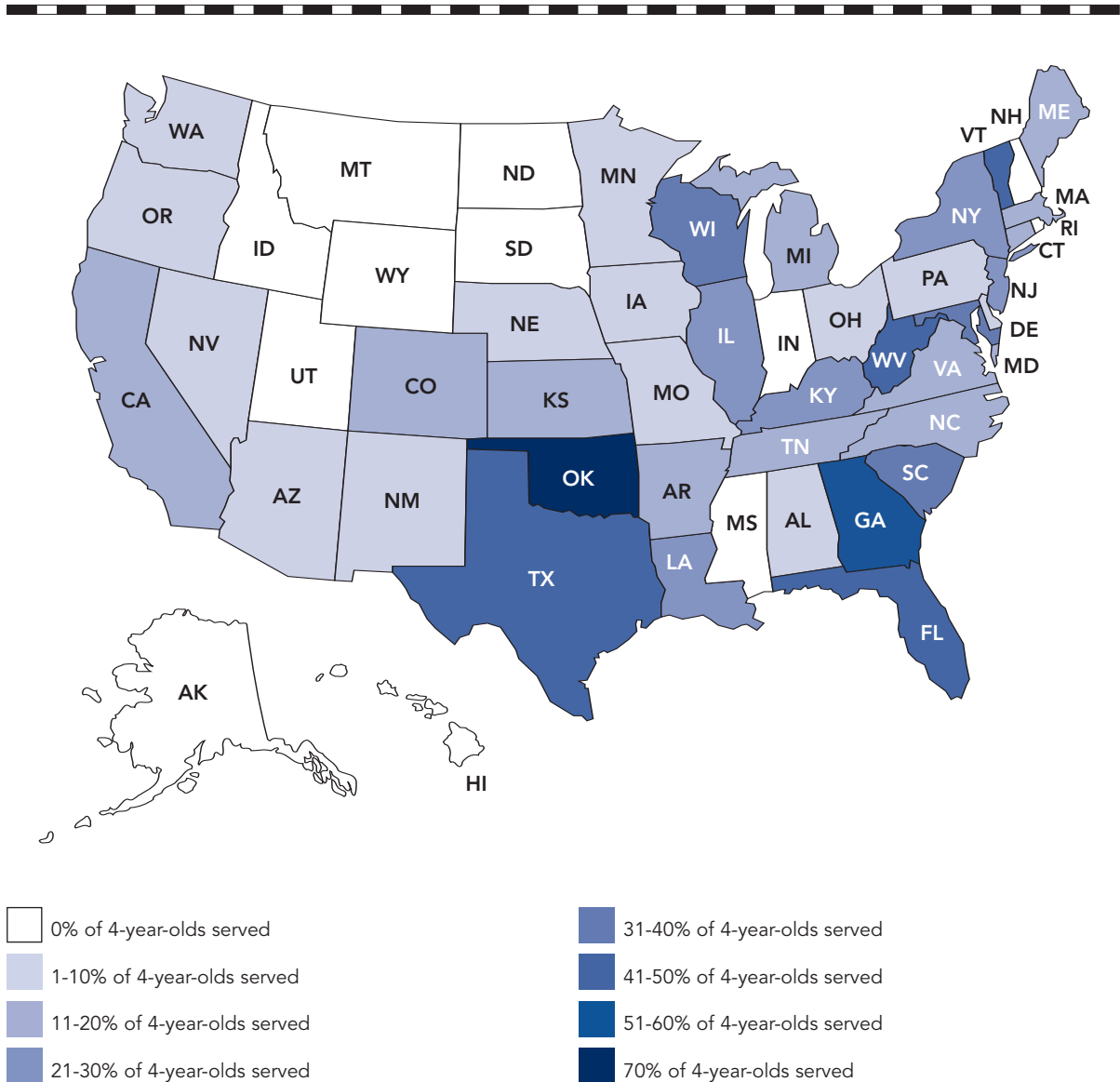
All but three states in the South provide services to at least 10 percent of 4-year-olds. One that does not is Alabama. The state has a high quality program with no set enrollment criteria, so all 4-year-olds could qualify for services. Yet Alabama has not provided adequate funding to expand access beyond 2 percent of eligible children, and in fact reaches the smallest percentage of 4-year-olds among the states funding prekindergarten. Another Southern state, Mississippi, has no state prekindergarten program. The federal Head Start program does enroll 36 percent of 4-year-olds in Mississippi—a much higher percentage than for any other state, and an illustration of the important role Head Start continues to provide as an educational safety net for young children.

The South also leads the way in providing full-day kindergarten and in enacting other education reforms. Prekindergarten programs that began in recent years, particularly those offering universal access, are often part of larger education reform legislation.

Several Midwestern and Northeastern states also have developed universal preschool education initiatives. For example, Illinois and New York have made commitments to serve all children. Both states served about one-quarter of 4-year-olds in 2005-2006. New York had planned to offer prekindergarten to all 4-year-olds statewide by 2002, but for years efforts to commit sufficient funding were blocked. New York now appears to be back on track, but this will bear close watching.

In 2005-2006, states in the Western and Northern Plains areas of the U.S. continued to lag behind the rest of the nation in offering services to prekindergartners. A sizeable block of states in that region have no preschool initiative at all, including Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. States in the West that do have pre-K initiatives tend to serve a very small percentage of their children, typically less than 10 percent.

**FIGURE 1: PERCENT OF 4-YEAR-OLDS SERVED IN STATE PRE-K**





### ***Troubling Picture***

Of the states with decreased enrollment in 2005-2006, Ohio is the most troubling. Changes in the state's former state-funded Head Start initiative led to drastic declines in enrollment beginning with the 2003-2004 school year. Continued changes in the primary focus of this initiative eventually led to its exclusion from the *2006 State Preschool Yearbook*. Effective with the 2005-2006 school year, the initiative was renamed the Early Learning Initiative, but despite the name children's eligibility is now tied to parents' work status. Thus, the program has become a support for working families rather than a program that primarily emphasizes preschool education, effectively eliminating 5,200 state preschool education slots for 2005-2006. At the same time, there has been some recent growth in Ohio's ongoing state-funded Public School Preschool education program. Taking Public School Preschool enrollment into account, the overall reduction in statewide enrollment was about 2,600 children in 2005-2006.

### ***Forgetting 3-Year-Olds***

As shown in Table 3, changes in enrollment from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 are quite different for 3- and 4-year olds. Nationwide, state preschool enrollment increased much more among 4-year-olds than among 3-year-olds. The majority of children in state prekindergarten have traditionally been age 4, but the balance has shifted further in favor of 4-year-olds over the past five years. For example, both programs that began during the 2005-2006 school year (in Florida and New Mexico) focus exclusively on 4-year-olds. In addition, over the past few years, several states that serve both 3- and 4-year-olds have increased enrollment of 4-year-olds while reducing the number of 3-year-olds served. However, Illinois became unique among the states with a recent commitment to offer access to all 3-year-olds, in addition to 4-year-olds.

Cutbacks in support for access at age 3 is a troubling trend, since support for learning and development is important for children of all ages. Much of the research base supporting the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of preschool education is for programs that served children beginning at age 3 or even earlier. Although a case can be made for educating all children at age 4 before moving on to do this for all 3-year-olds, it makes little sense to roll back services for younger children, particularly the most disadvantaged. Investing in early childhood education yields a high rate of return at every age, and there is no need to trade off services for one age group against another when there are so many government expenditures lacking any evidence of cost-effectiveness.

**TABLE 3: CHANGE IN PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT OVER TIME**

STATE	ENROLLMENT CHANGES FROM 2001-2002 TO 2005-2006				ENROLLMENT CHANGES FROM 2004-2005 TO 2005-2006			
	Change in 3-year-olds		Change in 4-year-olds		Change in 3-year-olds		Change in 4-year-olds	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alabama	0	NA	270	36%	0	NA	54	6%
Alaska	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Arizona	0	NA	1,062	25%	0	NA	289	6%
Arkansas	2,944	313%	4,553	205%	868	29%	2,315	52%
California	13,232	121%	8,315	19%	-325	-1%	-2,003	-4%
Colorado	784	107%	1,025	12%	641	73%	2,308	33%
Connecticut*	-179	-12%	1,459	33%	313	30%	-378	-6%
Delaware	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Florida	0	NA	105,896	NA	0	NA	105,896	NA
Georgia	0	NA	8,032	13%	0	NA	852	1%
Hawaii	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Idaho	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Illinois	11,494	82%	2,619	7%	3,413	15%	-3,937	-9%
Indiana	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Iowa	-15	-3%	19	1%	28	6%	11	1%
Kansas	0	NA	3,145	141%	0	NA	-125	-2%
Kentucky	925	19%	2,905	23%	53	1%	6	NA
Louisiana	0	NA	6,272	83%	0	NA	1,412	11%
Maine	0	NA	648	45%	0	NA	167	9%
Maryland	-699	-49%	4,887	26%	25	4%	814	4%
Massachusetts*	-2,492	-26%	-1,624	-17%	1,280	23%	1,442	23%
Michigan	0	NA	-4,906	-19%	0	NA	-3,291	-13%
Minnesota	-132	-16%	-114	-9%	-134	-16%	-75	-6%
Mississippi	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Missouri	-854	-34%	-769	-21%	-80	-5%	-18	-1%
Montana	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Nebraska	375	303%	505	142%	223	81%	226	36%
Nevada	104	94%	437	136%	9	4%	-69	-8%
New Hampshire	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
New Jersey	4,495	35%	5,100	21%	74	NA	-80	0%
New Mexico	-313	-67%	1,432	387%	1	1%	1,562	651%
New York	-4,673	-80%	7,929	13%	-81	-7%	3,217	5%
North Carolina	0	NA	13,987	1128%	0	NA	3,060	25%
North Dakota	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Ohio*	-8,228	-85%	-7,445	-54%	-1,639	-52%	-1,165	-15%
Oklahoma	0	NA	7,523	29%	0	NA	1,690	5%
Oregon	76	7%	-288	-11%	-6	-1%	-10	0%
Pennsylvania*	2,209	NA	5,511	216%	808	58%	864	12%
Rhode Island	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
South Carolina	2,012	575%	2,105	14%	1,882	392%	884	5%
South Dakota	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Tennessee	-428	-51%	6,429	366%	-86	-17%	5,787	241%
Texas	-3,277	-17%	37,587	30%	1,392	9%	4,381	3%
Utah	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Vermont*	521	141%	2,346	378%	91	11%	152	5%
Virginia	0	NA	5,465	93%	0	NA	1,036	10%
Washington	-92	-8%	-33	-1%	-24	-2%	114	3%
West Virginia	-872	-49%	2,963	58%	-6	-1%	970	14%
Wisconsin*	-201	-29%	8,209	61%	-122	-20%	2,351	12%
Wyoming	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA	0	NA
<b>50 states</b>	<b>16,716</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>243,456</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>8,598</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>130,709</b>	<b>19%</b>

\* These states did not break down total enrollment figures into specific numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds served. As a result, the figures in this table are estimates.

**TABLE 4: 2005-2006 STATE PRE-K QUALITY STANDARDS**

	Comprehensive early learning standards	Teacher has BA	Specialized training in pre-K	Assistant teacher has CDA or equiv.	At least 15 hrs/yr in-service	Maximum class size ≤ 20	Staff-child ratio 1:10 or better	Vision, hearing, health, and one support service	At least one meal	Site visits	Quality Standards Checklist Sum 2005-2006
Alabama	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Arizona	✓					✓	✓			✓	4
Arkansas	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
California			✓		✓		✓			✓	4
Colorado			✓			✓	✓			✓	4
Connecticut	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	6
Delaware	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Florida	✓					✓	✓			✓	4
Georgia	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Illinois	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	9
Iowa						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	5
Kansas		✓		✓				✓			3
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		8
Louisiana (8g)	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	7
Louisiana (LA4/SP)	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Louisiana (NSECD)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Maine	✓	✓		✓	✓						4
Maryland	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			7
Massachusetts	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	6
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				6
Minnesota	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Missouri	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				6
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	8
Nevada	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	7
New Jersey (Abbott)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
New Jersey (ECPA)	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	6
New Jersey (ELLI)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	8
New Mexico (CDP)					✓			✓	✓	✓	4
New Mexico (Pre-K)	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	5
New York (TPK)		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
New York (UPK)					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	5
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Ohio			✓		✓			✓		✓	4
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Oregon	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Pennsylvania (EABG)	✓				✓						2
Pennsylvania (HdSt)	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		6
Pennsylvania (K4)	✓	✓			✓						3
South Carolina		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Texas	✓	✓	✓		✓						4
Vermont (ADM)	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			7
Vermont (EEI)	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			6
Virginia			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Washington			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	6
West Virginia	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Wisconsin (4K)	✓	✓	✓		✓					✓	5
Wisconsin (HdSt)	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>35</b>	

Note: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming are not included in this table because they do not fund state prekindergarten initiatives.

For more details about quality standards and benchmarks, see Roadmap to State Profile Pages.



## QUALITY STANDARDS: ENSURING VALUE

The quality of a preschool education program is the key to determining its educational value. Many preschool programs in the United States offer services that are of poor or mediocre quality. However, by establishing standards in state-level policy, states can require that programs provide children with a high-quality education. The *Yearbook* compares quality standards for state-funded initiatives against a research-based checklist of quality benchmarks. As in previous years, there are 10 benchmarks. Each benchmark represents a different aspect of program quality, including teacher preparation requirements, early learning standards, and required comprehensive services. All of the benchmarks are important, but they are not equally important as indicators of high quality. Also, these benchmarks do not cover all conceivable aspects of program quality. The number of benchmarks met by a program is a rough gauge of a state's commitment to ensuring high levels of quality, but careful attention to which benchmarks are met is also necessary.



It is important to emphasize that the NIEER benchmarks refer to minimum state policies rather than actual program quality. Some providers may exceed minimum standards—for example, by providing a teacher certified in early childhood education without being required to do so. Other providers may offer services at lower levels of quality than required, by not always meeting the standards specified in state policy. The quality benchmarks we use for the 2005-2006 school year are unchanged from the previous year. Details about each benchmark and the relevant supporting research are provided on pages 32 and 33.

Improvements in quality standards can be relatively slow to materialize, as they require changes in state policy that may be phased in over a period of time. States reported few changes in program quality between the 2001-2002 and 2004-2005 school years. However, there were a great many changes in state program standards effective with the 2005-2006 school year. Prominent among these changes was a more widespread implementation of new state early learning standards, which help to ensure that programs cover a broad range of content areas important to children's learning. Specific quality improvements made by state prekindergarten programs in 2005-2006 are described below for programs that were already in place at the time of our last report.

During the 2005-2006 program year, for the first time two states—Alabama and North Carolina—had programs that met all 10 quality benchmarks. Both states met nine benchmarks in our previous report, and made policy improvements during the past year—Alabama in the area of teacher specialized training and North Carolina in the area of early learning standards. Six additional state preschool initiatives each met nine of the 10 benchmarks in 2005-2006: those in Arkansas, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Tennessee, as well as the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program (NSECD) in Louisiana and the Abbott initiative in New Jersey. All of these programs provide high-quality services across a range of indicators, but cannot be considered equal in overall quality. For example, state prekindergarten programs in Arkansas lack a requirement for all classroom teachers to have a four-year college degree, while programs in Illinois lack a meal requirement.

Florida's new Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) initiative, which was responsible for a good deal of the growth in state prekindergarten enrollment during 2005-2006, met only four of the 10 benchmarks. Although there are two slightly different versions of VPK based on whether it is offered during the school year or as a summer-only program, each version met four benchmarks. The other state prekindergarten initiative that began in 2005-2006, New Mexico Pre-K, met five of 10 benchmarks.

Across all the state prekindergarten initiatives, the median number of benchmarks met in 2005-2006 was 6.5. Overall, there were 19 state prekindergarten initiatives in 16 states that met more benchmarks during the 2005-2006 school year than during 2004-2005. Thirteen of these initiatives each met one additional benchmark for 2005-2006. Three state prekindergarten initiatives each met two additional benchmarks: Louisiana's Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program, the Michigan School Readiness Program, and New York's Universal Prekindergarten program. Finally, three additional states—Nebraska, Nevada, and Virginia—had programs that each met three additional benchmarks for the 2005-2006 school year. Tennessee met the benchmark for screening, referral, and support services for the first time, but no longer met the benchmark for assistant teacher degree requirements. As a result, that state met the same number of benchmarks as in the previous year. Table 4 shows which benchmarks were met by each state prekindergarten initiative in 2005-2006.

Overall, there were 19 state prekindergarten initiatives in 16 states that met more benchmarks during the 2005-2006 school year than during 2004-2005.

Teacher preparation is a critical component of program quality. A four-year degree represents the minimum that would be required of any teacher in a public school kindergarten or first grade classroom, and the same minimum requirement for prekindergarten is key to ensuring high-quality teaching. A worrisome finding from our review of prekindergarten quality standards is that only 18 states required the lead teachers in every classroom to have a four-year college degree. The other 20 states—representing more than half of the states that funded prekindergarten—did not. Eight of the 20 states without a BA requirement did not require any state prekindergarten teachers to have a 4-year-degree. An additional eight states exempted teachers in specific types of settings (such as all teachers in nonpublic schools, or some teachers in sites with multiple classrooms). The remaining four states funded multiple initiatives including at least one initiative that did not require all teachers to have a BA. On a positive note, both Michigan and Missouri met our teacher degree benchmark for the first time in the 2005-2006 school year, due to state policy improvements requiring a BA.

Twenty-eight of the 38 states with preschool initiatives required all lead teachers to have specialized training in prekindergarten education, and 15 of the 28 were states that also required a four-year college degree. Alabama and one Louisiana initiative began requiring specialized training in all state prekindergarten programs during the 2005-2006 year. Nearly three-quarters of states lacked sufficient requirements for their assistant teachers, with just 10 states requiring them to have a CDA or equivalent credential. None of the states with preschool initiatives added a CDA requirement for assistant teachers in 2005-2006. Twenty-three states required at least 15 hours of annual in-service training for all preschool teachers. Virginia was the only new state to meet this benchmark.

#### States That Do Not Require Any Preschool Teachers to Hold a BA

Arizona  
California  
Colorado  
Delaware  
Georgia  
Minnesota  
Ohio  
Washington

During the 2005-2006 school year, early learning standards were a major area of growth across state preschool initiatives. There were 28 states with comprehensive early learning standards that applied to state-funded prekindergarten. Six of these states—Maine, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania—met our benchmark for the first time due to policy changes that were effective for 2005-2006.

It is also important to offer children opportunities for interactions with adults and individualized attention by providing them with appropriate class sizes and staff-child ratios. Twenty-eight states required all preschool programs to limit class sizes to 20 children or fewer. Thirty states required staff-child ratios of 1:10 or better. Nevada's state prekindergarten initiative met each of these benchmarks for the first time in the 2005-2006 program year.

Two additional elements of our Quality Standards Checklist focused on the availability of comprehensive services. Comprehensive services are not educational in nature but help to ensure optimal conditions for children's learning, such as health and nutritional services. Twenty-five states met the benchmark of requiring

all programs to provide screening and referral covering vision, hearing, and health, plus at least one additional support service. New states meeting this benchmark were Connecticut, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. However, only the changes in Ohio, Oklahoma, and Tennessee reflect new state policies in 2005-2006. The other two states reinterpreted policies that already existed. One of Louisiana's prekindergarten initiatives (NSECD) also met this benchmark for the first time, but the benchmark was not met for all initiatives statewide. Sixteen states met the benchmark of requiring all programs to provide at least one meal. New states meeting this benchmark were Nebraska and Virginia, although only the change in Nebraska reflects a new state policy for 2005-2006.

Finally, 28 states met our benchmark for monitoring. Program monitoring is important to ensure that the quality requirements are being implemented and can actually produce the results desired by the state. Our benchmark for monitoring is that state initiatives require classrooms to receive site visits. Due to changes in the way that we surveyed states about their monitoring activities, responses may not necessarily reflect policy changes or be entirely comparable to the responses presented in our previous report. However, new states meeting the monitoring benchmark in 2005-2006 were Nebraska, New York, Virginia, and West Virginia. The Four-Year-Old Kindergarten initiative in Wisconsin also met this benchmark for the first time, but the benchmark was not met for the state's other prekindergarten initiative.

## POLICY CHANGES IN STATE PRE-K QUALITY

STATE PRE-K INITIATIVE	NEW BENCHMARK MET
Alabama	Teachers required to have specialized training in pre-K
Connecticut	Vision, hearing, health screening/referral; and at least 1 support service
Louisiana NSECD	Teachers required to have specialized training in pre-K Vision, hearing, health screening/referral; and at least 1 support service
Maine	Comprehensive early learning standards
Michigan	Comprehensive early learning standards Teacher degree requirement of a BA
Missouri	Teacher degree requirement of a BA
Nebraska	Comprehensive early learning standards At least 1 meal required Site visits required
Nevada	Comprehensive early learning standards Maximum class size of 20 or fewer Staff-child ratio of 1:10 or better
New York TPK	Vision, hearing, health screening/referral; and at least 1 support service
New York UPK	Vision, hearing, health screening/referral; and at least 1 support service Site visits required
North Carolina	Comprehensive early learning standards
Ohio	Vision, hearing, health screening/referral; and at least 1 support service
Oklahoma	Vision, hearing, health screening/referral; and at least 1 support service
Pennsylvania EABG	Comprehensive early learning standards
Pennsylvania HSSAP	Comprehensive early learning standards
Pennsylvania K4	Comprehensive early learning standards
Tennessee	Vision, hearing, health screening/referral; and at least 1 support service
Virginia	At least 15 hours/year of teacher in-service At least 1 meal required Site visits required
Washington	Site visits required
Wisconsin 4K	Site visits required

**TABLE 5: RANKINGS OF STATE PRE-K RESOURCES PER CHILD ENROLLED**

Resources Rank	State	\$ per child enrolled in pre-K	State spending per child in K-12	Difference in pre-K and K-12 spending
1	New Jersey*	\$9,854	\$5,260	\$4,594
2	Oregon	\$7,932	\$4,803	\$3,129
3	Minnesota	\$7,203	\$8,769	-\$1,566
4	Connecticut	\$7,101	\$5,426	\$1,675
5	Delaware	\$6,261	\$8,680	-\$2,419
6	Washington	\$5,886	\$6,961	-\$1,075
7	Pennsylvania	\$5,080	\$4,305	\$775
8	Louisiana	\$5,012	\$4,829	\$183
9	Arkansas	\$4,836	\$3,731	\$1,105
10	West Virginia	\$4,529	\$6,735	-\$2,206
11	Alabama	\$4,216	\$4,518	-\$302
12	Tennessee	\$4,061	\$3,410	\$651
13	Georgia	\$3,977	\$4,501	-\$524
14	Michigan	\$3,934	\$7,278	-\$3,344
15	North Carolina	\$3,892	\$5,350	-\$1,458
16	Massachusetts	\$3,619	\$6,004	-\$2,385
17	New York	\$3,512	\$6,947	-\$3,435
18	Virginia	\$3,396	\$4,604	-\$1,208
19	Oklahoma	\$3,364	\$3,917	-\$553
20	California	\$3,341	\$6,413	-\$3,072
21	Illinois	\$3,298	\$3,204	\$94
22	Nevada	\$3,116	\$2,417	\$699
23	Wisconsin	\$3,108	\$6,625	-\$3,517
24	Colorado	\$3,056	\$4,277	-\$1,221
25	Iowa	\$2,929	\$4,225	-\$1,296
26	Texas	\$2,653	\$3,234	-\$581
27	Missouri	\$2,632	\$2,975	-\$343
28	Kansas	\$2,554	\$5,699	-\$3,145
29	Nebraska	\$2,482	\$3,128	-\$646
30	Vermont	\$2,439	\$12,149	-\$9,710
31	Kentucky	\$2,398	\$5,195	-\$2,797
32	Ohio	\$2,345	\$5,290	-\$2,945
33	Arizona	\$2,296	\$3,521	-\$1,225
34	New Mexico	\$2,269	\$7,187	-\$4,918
35	Florida	\$2,163	\$3,993	-\$1,830
36	Maine	\$1,793	\$5,037	-\$3,244
37	Maryland	\$1,787	\$4,428	-\$2,641
38	South Carolina	\$1,085	\$4,676	-\$3,591
No Program	Alaska	\$0	\$6,957	NA
No Program	Hawaii	\$0	\$8,578	NA
No Program	Idaho	\$0	\$4,414	NA
No Program	Indiana	\$0	\$5,412	NA
No Program	Mississippi	\$0	\$4,122	NA
No Program	Montana	\$0	\$4,148	NA
No Program	New Hampshire	\$0	\$4,706	NA
No Program	North Dakota	\$0	\$3,334	NA
No Program	Rhode Island	\$0	\$4,233	NA
No Program	South Dakota	\$0	\$2,995	NA
No Program	Utah	\$0	\$3,613	NA
No Program	Wyoming	\$0	\$6,547	NA

\* State per-child spending in New Jersey appears to be higher for state prekindergarten programs than for K-12 education, but in fact this is not the case in the districts that offer state pre-K. More than 80 percent of state prekindergarten enrollment is in Abbott districts, which also have a K-12 state aid payment nearly 3 times the statewide average per child.

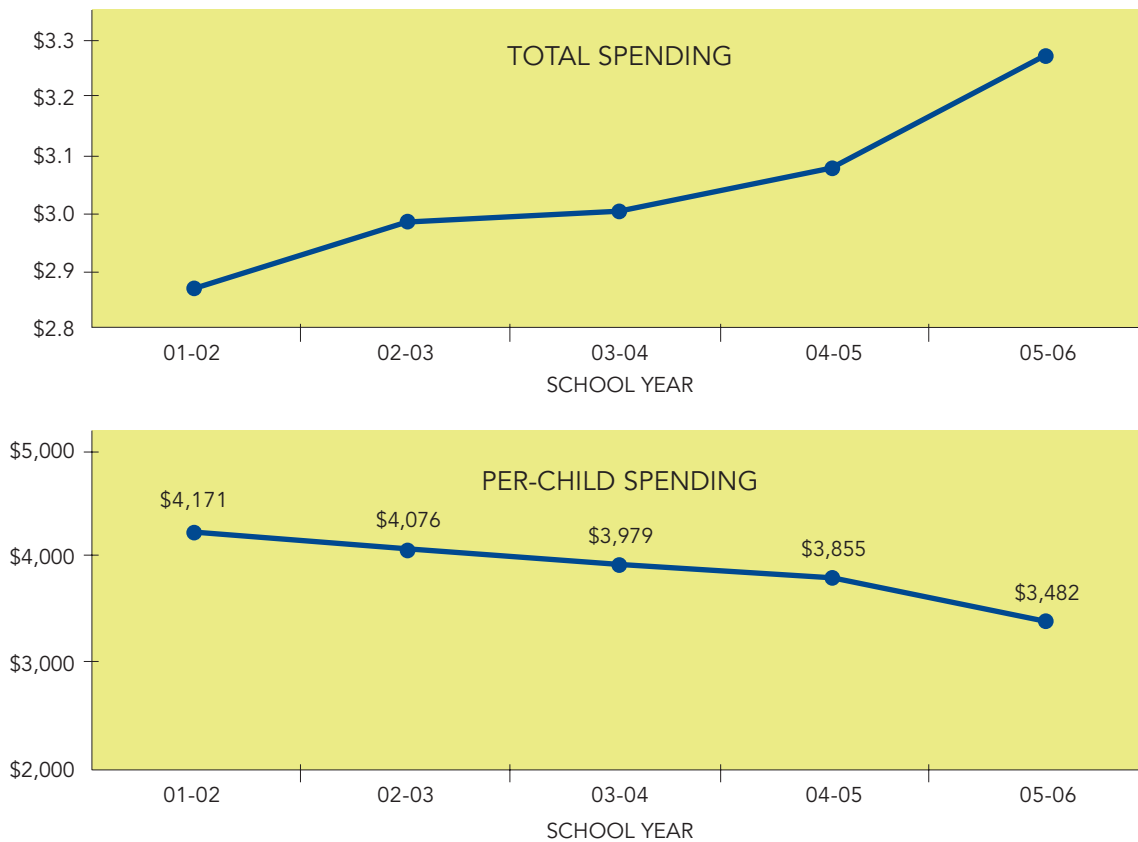
For details about how these figures were calculated, see Methodology section and Roadmap to State Pre-K pages.

## RESOURCES: UNCERTAIN COMMITMENT

There is no perfect formula to determine ideal state spending amounts for publicly funded preschool, for several reasons. For one, the ideal spending amount hinges on the cost of providing prekindergarten. This cost can vary significantly according to state-level factors such as geography and population density, the cost of living, and the existing infrastructure available to support preschool services. Also, the amount of state funding needed for prekindergarten may be reduced when it is possible to tap into additional federal and local funding sources. For example, state prekindergarten programs sometimes rely on substantial contributions at the local level, including parent tuition. Other states use federal funding sources such as Title I. States vary tremendously in the amount of funding they obtain from these additional sources, and as a result state spending alone is not always indicative of the program's total level of funding. Still, the resources states expend on preschool initiatives serve as a good indicator of their commitment to ensuring that young children have access to high-quality early childhood education. Also, the amount a state spends per child enrolled is useful in gauging the state's commitment to program quality.

In 2005-2006, states spent \$3.27 billion on preschool initiatives, a 6 percent increase from the previous year. This change is substantial, nearly doubling the percentage that spending increased over the previous four years combined. The increase in spending for the 2005-2006 school year appears to be promising news about states' commitment to prekindergarten, although closer analysis reveals that the nationwide surge in spending is largely due to the \$229.1 million spent on Florida's new Voluntary Prekindergarten program. The spending jump due to Florida's new program illustrates the type of nationwide increase that can be expected when states quickly implement models of universally available prekindergarten. However, the overall increase in state prekindergarten spending for 2005-2006 does not indicate a nationwide departure from the incremental growth in state spending seen in previous years. (See Figure 2 for trends in total state spending nationwide since 2001-2002, and average state spending per child enrolled, adjusted for inflation).

**FIGURE 2: STATE SPENDING OVER TIME** (2006 DOLLARS)



Tennessee is the most notable among states that made an incremental increase in 2005-2006. In that first year of its expanded prekindergarten effort, the state increased funding from an inflation-adjusted \$10.6 million to \$35 million. Ohio was the state with the largest decrease in total state spending during 2005-2006. After adjusting for inflation, prekindergarten spending in Ohio declined by more than \$53 million from 2004-2005 levels. This was almost entirely due to the change in focus by Ohio's former state-funded Head Start initiative, which was revamped into a program for working families effective with the 2005-2006 school year. However, Ohio's continuing prekindergarten initiative—the Public School Preschool Program—also experienced a funding decline of about \$1.3 million in 2005-2006.

Table 6 shows the total spending and per-child spending for each state, and also includes the inflation-adjusted change in total and per-child spending from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006. Data from Hawaii do not enter into our spending comparisons, since we have dropped our coverage of the state's Preschool Open Doors Project effective with this report. As Table 6 indicates, there is tremendous diversity in the size of state preschool budgets. Among the states funding prekindergarten initiatives, total state spending ranges from just over \$3 million in Nevada, a sparsely populated state with around 70,000 children ages 3 and 4, to almost \$484 million in Texas, a large and highly populated state with almost 742,000 children in this age group.

State spending per child enrolled also varies tremendously. The nationwide average of state spending per child was \$3,482 in 2005-2006. Four states spent more than double the national average per child, including New Jersey, Oregon, Minnesota, and Connecticut. At the other end of the spectrum, three states spent around half of the national average—South Carolina, Maryland, and Maine. The states with the very lowest state per-child spending figures also reported substantial federal and/or local contributions to program funding.

Still, a handful of states spent less than \$2,500 per child and reported total spending figures that did not include funds from any additional local or federal sources. These states include Florida, New Mexico, Arizona, Ohio, and Vermont. Some state programs may actually use other funding sources without collecting specific statewide data on the amounts generated through these sources. Nonetheless, there is cause for concern that the low funding level in these states could jeopardize the quality of the educational services, thereby reducing the potential effectiveness of the program. Table 5 shows complete rankings by state for spending per child enrolled.

The average state spending per child was lower in 2005-2006 than the previous program year, continuing a downward trend in the amount states spend on each prekindergartner. After accounting for inflation, state per-child spending was 10 percent lower in 2005-2006 than in 2004-2005. This may or may not be a worrisome trend, depending on the state circumstances surrounding the decline in spending. For example, some states may spend more per child during the pilot or start-up phase of a program, and reduce the per-child cost over time as programs become more established. Also, growing programs may take advantage of economies of scale as they serve more children, or they may need to spend less as they expand to serve less disadvantaged children with fewer intensive needs. Programs may also reduce the state share of total funding over time, shifting part of the program costs to localities or to other funding sources.

**The number of states that decreased spending per child was more than two times the number of states that increased funding per child in 2006 dollars.**

However, the above examples do not seem to apply in all 25 states that spent less per child during the 2005-2006 school year. Ohio was the state with the largest per-child decrease, \$4,379. This significant decrease is partly attributable to the high level of funding per child provided by the state's former state-funded Head Start initiative, which was no longer offered in 2005-2006. However, the state's remaining prekindergarten initiative, which already spent less per child than the Head Start initiative, itself experienced an inflation-adjusted spending cut of more than \$1,300 per child in 2005-2006. Massachusetts also reduced its spending by more than \$1,500 per child enrolled in 2005-2006. Its Community Partnerships for Children initiative saw an enrollment increase of more than 3,000 children while at the same time sustaining a cut in state funding.



Among the remaining states that made spending reductions in 2005-2006 and in previous years, some have simply failed to keep up with inflation or growing enrollment when determining funding allocations each year. Others have cut program budgets, signaling a reduced commitment to the program over time. Even without adjusting for inflation, five states had lower total and per-child spending in 2005-2006 than in 2001-2002. The differences in funding are even more drastic after adjusting for inflation. Seven other states spent more in nominal dollars but failed to keep pace with inflation.

Spending cutbacks in these states are an issue of concern for policymakers and the general public, because insufficient funding may lead to cutbacks in program enrollment, program quality, or both. Initiatives that reach fewer children offer fewer overall benefits to children in the state, and those that cut back on quality risk jeopardizing children's gains in learning and development. In either case, high rates of return to taxpayers could be diminished.

Despite this nationwide trend of spending decreases, 13 of the 38 states funding prekindergarten actually increased per-child spending in 2005-2006. The increase of \$2,163 per child due to Florida's initiative was the largest among this group of states, although per-child spending in the state's VPK initiative is still far below the national average. Per-child spending also increased by more than \$500 in Kansas, Alabama, and Tennessee.

Spending figures for children in K-12 public schools are a good point of comparison for state per-child spending on preschool, even though differences between these types of figures make for rough, rather than precise, comparisons. For example, K-12 spending figures include the cost of special education, but prekindergarten spending figures usually do not. Also, K-12 figures are almost entirely for full-day educational services (except kindergarten in some states), while many states only fund half-day prekindergarten services. Meanwhile, preschool programs generally require smaller class sizes and more classroom staff than are required for older children, increasing the cost of providing services. Finally, prekindergarten initiatives in some states target disadvantaged children, adding costs for supplemental services provided to these children, but reducing operating costs in low-income areas with lower property values and salary levels. Some of these differences add extra costs to K-12 education, while others add extra costs to preschool education. In the end, however, there is little reason to expect state spending per child in preschool to be sufficient if it is substantially lower than the K-12 amount.

While state spending on preschool has grown steadily in recent years, total state prekindergarten spending is still fairly small in comparison to the resources devoted to K-12 education. In 2005-2006, state prekindergarten expenditures amounted to about 1 percent of the roughly \$247 billion spent by state governments on K-12 education. Table 5 shows state spending for K-12 education in comparison to state spending amounts for prekindergarten, and also highlights the differences between these figures. The nationwide average of state spending per child is also much higher for K-12, at \$5,066, than for preschool, which averaged just \$3,482. This disparity suggests that there is still ample room for growth in states' commitment to preschool education.

**TABLE 6: STATE PRESCHOOL SPENDING DURING 2005-2006 AND CHANGES FROM 2004-2005**

STATE	TOTAL STATE PRESCHOOL SPENDING			STATE SPENDING PER CHILD		
	Total state preschool spending in 2005-2006	Change in total spending from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006, Nominal dollars	Change in total spending from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006, Adjusted dollars	State spending per child in 2005-2006	Change in spending per child from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006, Nominal dollars	Change in spending per child from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006, Adjusted dollars
Alabama	\$4,326,050	\$1,035,000	\$827,664	\$4,216	\$830	\$617
Alaska	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Arizona	\$12,258,488	\$728,174	\$1,764	\$2,296	\$13	-\$131
Arkansas	\$57,157,279	\$13,265,579	\$10,500,402	\$4,836	\$125	-\$172
California	\$266,018,034	\$1,588,094	-\$15,070,992	\$3,341	\$123	-\$80
Colorado	\$37,770,856	\$10,663,270	\$8,955,492	\$3,056	-\$22	-\$215
Connecticut	\$52,490,190	\$3,870,654	\$807,623	\$7,101	\$438	\$18
Delaware	\$5,278,300	\$375,100	\$66,198	\$6,261	\$445	\$78
Florida	\$229,100,000	\$229,100,000	\$229,100,000	\$2,163	\$2,163	NA
Georgia	\$289,894,973	\$13,894,973	-\$3,493,027	\$3,977	\$78	-\$167
Hawaii	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Idaho	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Illinois	\$237,950,581	\$21,454,076	\$7,814,796	\$3,298	\$318	\$130
Indiana	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Iowa	\$6,800,000	-\$87,531	-\$521,445	\$2,929	-\$249	-\$450
Kansas	\$13,728,825	\$3,783,145	\$3,156,567	\$2,554	\$746	\$632
Kentucky	\$51,600,000	\$0	-\$3,250,800	\$2,398	-\$6	-\$158
Louisiana	\$69,115,436	\$12,981,839	\$9,445,422	\$5,012	\$477	\$192
Maine	\$3,744,583	-\$91,419	-\$333,087	\$1,793	-\$204	-\$330
Maryland	\$43,269,366	\$0	-\$2,725,970	\$1,787	-\$64	-\$180
Massachusetts	\$62,789,962	-\$5,810,038	-\$10,131,838	\$3,619	-\$1,229	-\$1,534
Michigan	\$84,850,000	\$1,163,300	-\$4,108,962	\$3,934	\$568	\$356
Minnesota	\$19,022,975	\$1,922,975	\$845,675	\$7,203	\$274	-\$162
Mississippi	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Missouri	\$12,129,270	\$1,519,401	\$850,980	\$2,632	\$378	\$236
Montana	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Nebraska	\$3,680,471	\$1,583,471	\$1,451,360	\$2,482	\$519	\$395
Nevada	\$3,032,172	\$135,589	-\$46,896	\$3,116	\$349	\$175
New Hampshire	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
New Jersey	\$455,843,248	\$23,495,292	-\$3,742,629	\$9,854	\$549	-\$37
New Mexico	\$4,444,507	\$3,424,607	\$3,360,353	\$2,269	-\$307	-\$469
New York	\$254,950,090	\$8,527,112	-\$6,997,536	\$3,512	-\$36	-\$260
North Carolina	\$59,257,237	\$9,879,866	\$6,769,092	\$3,892	-\$166	-\$422
North Dakota	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ohio	\$19,002,195	-\$48,866,727	-\$53,142,469	\$2,345	-\$3,980	-\$4,379
Oklahoma	\$112,352,971	\$5,673,803	-\$1,046,985	\$3,364	\$0	-\$212
Oregon	\$27,650,000	\$950,000	-\$732,100	\$7,932	\$308	-\$173
Pennsylvania	\$39,430,989	\$14,884,024	\$13,337,565	\$5,080	\$601	\$319
Rhode Island	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
South Carolina	\$21,832,678	-\$2,000,000	-\$3,501,459	\$1,085	-\$289	-\$375
South Dakota	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Tennessee	\$35,000,000	\$25,000,000	\$24,370,000	\$4,061	\$728	\$518
Texas	\$483,709,332	\$5,709,332	-\$24,404,668	\$2,653	-\$54	-\$225
Utah	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Vermont	\$9,595,209	\$555,185	-\$14,337	\$2,439	-\$49	-\$205
Virginia	\$38,518,874	\$3,264,939	\$1,043,941	\$3,396	-\$24	-\$240
Washington	\$34,194,952	\$2,103,525	\$81,765	\$5,886	\$278	-\$76
West Virginia	\$40,511,010	\$6,011,010	\$3,837,510	\$4,529	\$206	-\$67
Wisconsin	\$69,612,500	\$8,400,000	\$4,543,613	\$3,108	\$43	-\$150
Wyoming	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>50 states</b>	<b>\$3,271,913,604</b>	<b>\$380,087,621</b>	<b>\$197,902,582</b>	<b>\$3,482</b>	<b>-\$138</b>	<b>-\$372</b>



**TABLE 7: FEDERAL HEAD START ENROLLMENT 2005-2006**

STATE	3-YEAR-OLDS		4-YEAR-OLDS		3- AND 4-YEAR OLDS	
	Number Enrolled	Percent of State Population	Number Enrolled	Percent of State Population	Number Enrolled	Percent of State Population
Alabama	5,394	9.3%	9,500	15.8%	14,894	12.6%
Alaska	942	9.4%	1,358	13.5%	2,300	11.5%
Arizona	5,371	5.9%	11,479	12.5%	16,850	9.2%
Arkansas	3,973	10.8%	5,404	14.5%	9,377	12.7%
California	33,167	6.2%	56,188	10.5%	89,355	8.4%
Colorado	3,005	4.4%	5,097	7.4%	8,102	5.9%
Connecticut	2,669	6.3%	3,276	7.7%	5,945	7.0%
Delaware	539	4.9%	999	9.2%	1,538	7.0%
Florida	12,384	5.6%	20,125	8.8%	32,509	7.3%
Georgia	11,396	8.4%	10,150	7.3%	21,546	7.8%
Hawaii	967	5.4%	1,511	8.6%	2,478	7.0%
Idaho	772	3.8%	2,378	11.5%	3,150	7.7%
Illinois	14,094	7.9%	18,941	10.5%	33,035	9.2%
Indiana	4,628	5.5%	7,462	8.5%	12,090	7.0%
Iowa	2,475	7.0%	3,803	10.8%	6,278	8.9%
Kansas	2,854	7.7%	3,601	9.7%	6,455	8.7%
Kentucky	5,858	11.1%	8,807	16.4%	14,665	13.8%
Louisiana	9,434	15.0%	8,941	14.0%	18,375	14.5%
Maine	1,222	9.2%	1,660	12.3%	2,882	10.8%
Maryland	4,344	5.8%	4,830	6.3%	9,174	6.0%
Massachusetts	4,783	6.0%	5,784	7.2%	10,567	6.6%
Michigan	12,492	9.7%	19,085	14.4%	31,577	12.0%
Minnesota	3,071	4.7%	5,162	7.9%	8,233	6.3%
Mississippi	10,482	25.6%	14,965	35.8%	25,447	30.8%
Missouri	6,007	8.2%	8,019	10.9%	14,026	9.5%
Montana	1,660	15.8%	2,269	21.9%	3,929	18.8%
Nebraska	1,732	7.2%	2,414	10.2%	4,146	8.7%
Nevada	1,216	3.5%	1,596	4.5%	2,812	4.0%
New Hampshire	516	3.5%	779	5.2%	1,295	4.3%
New Jersey	5,204	4.5%	7,259	6.2%	12,463	5.3%
New Mexico	3,096	11.7%	4,780	18.0%	7,876	14.8%
New York	18,813	7.6%	24,409	9.8%	43,222	8.7%
North Carolina	5,871	4.9%	11,304	9.1%	17,175	7.0%
North Dakota	1,089	15.5%	1,733	25.2%	2,822	20.3%
Ohio	13,396	9.3%	18,691	12.7%	32,087	11.0%
Oklahoma	6,514	13.6%	7,706	16.2%	14,220	14.9%
Oregon	2,705	6.0%	4,537	9.9%	7,242	8.0%
Pennsylvania	10,342	7.2%	15,968	11.1%	26,310	9.2%
Rhode Island	611	4.9%	1,197	9.6%	1,808	7.2%
South Carolina	5,650	10.1%	6,073	10.6%	11,723	10.4%
South Dakota	1,351	13.4%	2,048	20.5%	3,399	17.0%
Tennessee	5,675	7.5%	9,757	12.7%	15,432	10.1%
Texas	27,381	7.4%	34,986	9.4%	62,367	8.4%
Utah	1,521	3.3%	3,810	8.3%	5,331	5.8%
Vermont	555	8.8%	607	9.6%	1,162	9.2%
Virginia	4,446	4.4%	7,059	6.9%	11,505	5.7%
Washington	3,992	5.2%	7,028	8.9%	11,020	7.1%
West Virginia	2,769	13.9%	4,111	20.4%	6,880	17.1%
Wisconsin	6,223	9.3%	6,421	9.5%	12,644	9.4%
Wyoming	643	10.7%	928	15.9%	1,571	13.2%
<b>50 states</b>	<b>295,294</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>425,995</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>721,289</b>	<b>9.0%</b>

## HEAD START

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State-funded preschool programs are part of a larger system of early childhood education in the United States. Another important contributor to this system is the federal Head Start program. Since 1965, Head Start has offered preschool education and other services to young children from families in poverty. The program represents the federal government's largest commitment to preschool education, with \$6.8 billion spent to serve 11 percent of the nation's 4-year-olds and 7 percent of the nation's 3-year-olds in 2005-2006. Programs operate for a minimum of 3.5 hours per day, but in recent years a greater proportion of children enrolled have received full-day services.

Although Head Start served more than one million individual children over the course of the 2005-2006 program year, the number of funded slots available at a given time was fewer than 900,000. We estimate that of the slots funded in programs within the 50 states, 721,289 children ages 3 and 4 participated in the Head Start program through federal funding. This number is less than half of the eligible population. The gap in services available to disadvantaged children is one of the reasons that states fund targeted programs of their own. Estimates for 3- and 4-year-olds in Head Start are shown for each state in Table 7. There are considerable differences among states in the percentage of children enrolled in Head Start, ranging from less than 5 percent of 4-year-olds in Nevada to 36 percent in Mississippi. Only some of this variability is explained by disparities in poverty rates. Further, there is some evidence that when states serve a high percentage of 4-year-olds in state-funded preschool, a larger proportion of Head Start funds can be directed to services for 3-year-olds, but in spite of that, 3-year-olds remain vastly underserved nationwide.

The federal Head Start program provided \$7,287 per child during fiscal year 2005, which is roughly double the average state spending per child in state-funded preschool. In addition to federal funds, programs obtain a 20 percent local match, which can either be cash or in-kind contributions of resources (e.g., donated facilities). Head Start offers a wide range of comprehensive services, including health screening and referrals, meals, and parenting support. However, teachers are not required to have a four-year degree. Teacher salaries in Head Start are currently about half the average compensation for K-12 teachers, and this discrepancy would likely need to narrow considerably if Head Start is to attract and retain highly qualified teachers. We estimate that an additional investment of about \$1.3 billion would cover salaries and benefits for fully qualified Head Start teachers without reallocating funds from other parts of the Head Start mission.



## PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Preschool special education is another important component of the nation's approach to providing educational services to young children. In 1973-1974, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin were the first states to create entitlements to a free education for 3- to 5-year-old children with disabilities. By 1992-1993, all states were offering a free appropriate education to young children with disabilities, in part due to legislation providing federal funds as an incentive. Enrollment has grown steadily, and by 2005-2006, 6 percent of the nation's 4-year-olds and 4 percent of the nation's 3-year-olds were served in preschool special education. States are required by the federal government to serve children identified with a disability, and at their discretion may serve children with developmental delays that fall short of constituting a disability.

Policies on preschool special education can be quite different across the states, and these differences may contribute to tremendous variability in enrollment rates, as shown in Table 8. More than 10 percent of 3- to 4-year-olds in Maine, Kentucky, and Wyoming were enrolled in preschool special education, exceeding twice the national average. A possible explanation for these higher rates may be found in how these states interpret eligibility guidelines and coordinate preschool special education with other early childhood education programs.

Because federal financial support for preschool special education has steadily declined over the past decade, states have had to assume a greater portion of the total cost. The federal government paid \$377 million through preschool aid (IDEA Part B, section 619 funds) to cover the nearly \$6 billion needed to support the 398,679 children enrolled in 2005-2006. There is some overlap between the cost of preschool special education and the cost of regular preschool education, but the vast majority of special education funding goes to support special education services alone.

## ADDING UP THE ENROLLMENT FIGURES

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To report the percentage of children served in federally and state-funded early childhood education programs, we include pie charts on each state profile page showing the percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds in state prekindergarten, federal Head Start, and preschool special education. However, these pie charts slightly overestimate the total percentage of children served, because they do not take into account that some children are included in enrollment counts for more than one of these programs. We estimate this overlap to be between 1 and 2 percent of children.

This overlap occurs either because children receive special education services in addition to early childhood education, or because programs collaborate in serving children. In the first instance, an example is a child enrolled in state prekindergarten who has a speech delay. The child may continue to attend the prekindergarten program to participate in general early childhood education, and may also receive services through IDEA specifically to address the speech delay. The child will be included in enrollment counts for both programs. These are distinct services with different goals, and dual enrollment does not constitute "double dipping" in programs funded by taxpayer dollars.

In the second instance, an example is a child attending a program that draws on resources from both Head Start and state prekindergarten, as a result of a local partnership agreement. Head Start might serve the child for a half day in the morning, while the state prekindergarten initiative serves the child for a half day in the afternoon to provide a full day of education services. Again, the child would be counted in enrollment numbers for both programs. However, the child is not double funded, because the child receives the full services provided by each program.

**TABLE 8: PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION ENROLLMENT 2005-2006**

STATE	3-YEAR-OLDS		4-YEAR-OLDS		3- AND 4-YEAR OLDS	
	Number Enrolled	Percent of State Population	Number Enrolled	Percent of State Population	Number Enrolled	Percent of State Population
Alabama	1,430	2.5%	2,595	4.3%	4,025	3.4%
Alaska	477	4.8%	704	7.0%	1,181	5.9%
Arizona	3,126	3.4%	5,176	5.6%	8,302	4.5%
Arkansas	2,272	6.2%	4,345	11.7%	6,617	8.9%
California	15,086	2.8%	23,502	4.4%	38,588	3.6%
Colorado	2,532	3.7%	3,749	5.4%	6,281	4.6%
Connecticut	1,967	4.6%	2,898	6.8%	4,865	5.7%
Delaware	459	4.2%	707	6.5%	1,166	5.3%
Florida	6,221	2.8%	11,626	5.1%	17,847	4.0%
Georgia	3,409	2.5%	6,848	4.9%	10,257	3.7%
Hawaii	615	3.5%	844	4.8%	1,459	4.1%
Idaho	938	4.6%	1,508	7.3%	2,446	5.9%
Illinois	7,624	4.3%	12,599	7.0%	20,223	5.6%
Indiana	4,510	5.3%	6,250	7.1%	10,760	6.2%
Iowa	1,354	3.8%	2,112	6.0%	3,466	4.9%
Kansas	2,182	5.9%	3,246	8.8%	5,428	7.3%
Kentucky	4,349	8.3%	8,086	15.1%	12,435	11.7%
Louisiana	1,892	3.0%	3,502	5.5%	5,394	4.3%
Maine	1,116	8.4%	1,671	12.4%	2,787	10.4%
Maryland	2,988	4.0%	4,203	5.5%	7,191	4.7%
Massachusetts	3,672	4.6%	5,480	6.9%	9,152	5.8%
Michigan	5,300	4.1%	8,078	6.1%	13,378	5.1%
Minnesota	3,186	4.9%	4,567	7.0%	7,753	5.9%
Mississippi	1,154	2.8%	2,586	6.2%	3,740	4.5%
Missouri	3,108	4.2%	5,465	7.4%	8,573	5.8%
Montana	343	3.3%	639	6.2%	982	4.7%
Nebraska	1,159	4.8%	1,573	6.6%	2,732	5.7%
Nevada	1,061	3.1%	1,964	5.6%	3,025	4.3%
New Hampshire	717	4.8%	1,030	6.8%	1,747	5.8%
New Jersey	4,353	3.7%	6,376	5.5%	10,729	4.6%
New Mexico	1,384	5.2%	2,410	9.1%	3,794	7.1%
New York	17,045	6.9%	23,377	9.4%	40,422	8.1%
North Carolina	3,726	3.1%	6,892	5.5%	10,618	4.3%
North Dakota	313	4.4%	539	7.8%	852	6.1%
Ohio	4,855	3.4%	7,739	5.2%	12,594	4.3%
Oklahoma	1,430	3.0%	2,671	5.6%	4,101	4.3%
Oregon	2,143	4.8%	2,950	6.4%	5,093	5.6%
Pennsylvania	6,718	4.7%	9,847	6.8%	16,565	5.8%
Rhode Island	602	4.8%	1,007	8.1%	1,609	6.4%
South Carolina	1,692	3.0%	3,730	6.5%	5,422	4.8%
South Dakota	591	5.9%	954	9.5%	1,545	7.7%
Tennessee	2,190	2.9%	3,861	5.0%	6,051	4.0%
Texas	7,977	2.2%	13,267	3.6%	21,244	2.9%
Utah	1,814	3.9%	2,671	5.8%	4,485	4.9%
Vermont	425	6.8%	536	8.5%	961	7.6%
Virginia	3,583	3.6%	6,031	5.9%	9,614	4.7%
Washington	2,892	3.7%	4,619	5.9%	7,511	4.8%
West Virginia	977	4.9%	1,858	9.2%	2,835	7.1%
Wisconsin	3,524	5.2%	5,690	8.4%	9,214	6.8%
Wyoming	674	11.2%	946	16.2%	1,620	13.6%
<b>50 states</b>	<b>153,155</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>245,524</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>398,679</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

## WHAT QUALIFIES AS A STATE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM?

Our *Yearbook* focuses on state-funded preschool initiatives meeting these criteria:

- The initiative is funded, controlled, and directed by the state.
- The initiative serves children of prekindergarten age, usually 3 and/or 4. Although initiatives in some states serve broader age ranges, programs that serve only infants and toddlers are excluded.
- Early childhood education is the primary focus of the initiative. This does not exclude programs that offer parent education but does exclude programs that mainly focus on parent education.
- The initiative offers a group learning experience to children at least two days per week.
- State-funded preschool education initiatives must be distinct from the state's system for subsidized child care. However, preschool initiatives may be coordinated and integrated with the subsidy system for child care.
- The initiative is not primarily designed to serve children with disabilities but may include children with disabilities.
- State supplements to the federal Head Start program are considered to constitute *de facto* state preschool programs if they substantially expand the number of children served and the state assumed some administrative responsibility for the program. State supplements to fund quality improvements, extended days, or other program enhancements and that expand enrollment minimally are not considered equivalent to a state preschool program.

While ideally this report would identify all prekindergarten funding streams at the state, local, and federal levels, there are a number of limitations on the data that make this extremely difficult to do. For example, prekindergarten is only one of several types of educational programs toward which local districts can target their Title I funds. Many states do not track how Title I funds are used at the local level and the extent to which they are spent on prekindergarten. Another challenge involves tracking total state spending for child care, using a variety of available sources, such as CCDF dollars, TANF funds, and any state funding above and beyond the required matches for federal funds. Also, although some of these child care funds may be used for high-quality, educational, center-based programs for 3- and 4-year-olds that closely resemble programs supported by state prekindergarten initiatives, it is nearly impossible to determine what proportion of the funds are spent this way.

### AGE GROUPINGS USED IN THIS REPORT

Children considered to be 3 years old during the 2005–2006 school year are those who were eligible to enter kindergarten two years later, during the 2007–2008 school year. Children considered to be 4 years old during the 2005–2006 school year were eligible to enter kindergarten one year later, during the 2006–2007 school year. Children considered to be 5 years old during the 2005–2006 school year were already eligible for kindergarten at the beginning of the 2005–2006 program year.