

# CAPITOL FACTS & FIGURES

## ● ● ● EDUCATION

### State Financing for Prekindergarten Education

**The percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in prekindergarten, or pre-k, programs increased between 2002 and 2009.**

- More than 1 million 4-year-olds, or approximately 25 percent of that population, attended a state-funded preschool program in 2009, compared with 14 percent in 2002.<sup>1</sup>
- Thirty-eight states funded pre-k programs during 2008-09. Two states, Alaska and Rhode Island, began pilot preschool programs in 2009-10.<sup>1</sup>
- Among states with state-funded pre-k in 2008-09, 29 had increases in enrollment percentages, while nine reported decreases.<sup>1</sup>

**Research shows that children who attend pre-k programs are more successful in later grades.**

- While targeted programs in some states have served at-risk children for more than a decade, advocates point to research that shows all children are more likely to succeed and graduate from high school if they attended a high-quality pre-k program.<sup>2</sup>
- One study found that children attending state-funded pre-k programs in five states— Michigan, New Jersey, Oklahoma, South Carolina and West Virginia—had significant academic gains regardless of ethnic background or economic circumstances.<sup>3</sup>
- Research on the economic benefits of high-quality pre-k education programs in California conclude that investing public money to make preschool available to every 4-year-old in California would generate an estimated \$2 to \$4 in benefits for every dollar spent. These economic benefits include economic growth and competitiveness and economic and social equality.<sup>4</sup>

**Several state legislatures made funding for pre-k programs a priority. However, great disparities in pre-k funding still exist. In 2008-09:**

- State funding per child exceeded \$5,000 in 14 states, but was below \$2,500 in five other states.<sup>1</sup>



- When adjusting for inflation, state funding per child declined in 24 of 38 states.<sup>1</sup>
- In just nine states, a majority of 4-year-olds attend a public preschool program.<sup>1</sup>

**State policies can enhance a child's preschool experience.**

- Kentucky 704 KAR 3:410 requires all new pre-k teachers have a bachelor's degree and early childhood certificate. The New Jersey Supreme Court required all Abbott Preschool Program teachers to obtain both a bachelor's degree and certification in early childhood education. All teachers, including those at private centers, are paid according to public school teacher salary scale.<sup>5</sup>
- Pre-K Now, a campaign of the Pew Center on the States, suggests creating a task force as a first step toward developing comprehensive policies related to pre-k delivery and design. In Maryland, House Bill 1466 established the Maryland Task Force on Universal Preschool Education.
- A report from the Pew Center on the States recommends providers be required to engage families through active participation in their children's education in order to qualify for state funding. Eighteen states currently have these policies in place.<sup>6</sup> Sixteen states appoint a state leader to oversee family involvement in state-funded pre-k programs and 13 states require a parent to serve on state early childhood advisory councils.<sup>3</sup>



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#### REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup>Barnett, W. Stephen, et al. The National Institute for Early Education Research. The State of Preschool 2009.

<sup>2</sup>Pre[k]now. The ABCs of Pre-K. Accessed at <http://www.preknow.org/resource/abc/whyprek.cfm> on July 8, 2010.

<sup>3</sup>Barnett, W. Stephen, et al. The National Institute for Early Education Research. The Effects of Five State Prekindergarten Programs on Early Learning. (2007)

<sup>4</sup>Karoly, Lynn and James Bigelow. The Rand Corporation. The Economics of Investing in Universal Preschool Education in California. (2005).

<sup>5</sup>Pre[k]now. Model Professional Development Policy. Accessed at <http://www.preknow.org/policy/profdevelopment.cfm#badegree> on August 6, 2010.

<sup>6</sup>Stark, Deborah, The Pew Center on the States, Engaged Families, Effective Pre-K: State Policies that Bolster Student Success (2010)

# State Enrollment in Pre-K Programs

State	Percentage of four-year olds enrolled	Ranking for four-year old enrollment	Percentage of three-year olds enrolled	Ranking of three-year old enrollment	Spending per child enrolled
Alabama	5.5	34	0	n/a	\$5,134
Alaska	No State Funded Program				
Arizona	5.4	35	0	n/a	\$2,247
Arkansas	43.7	8	5.9	8	\$5,421
California	12.6	26	5.4	9	\$3,681
Colorado	20.2	20	6	7	\$2,237
Connecticut	10.9	28	8.2	6	\$8,144
Delaware	7.3	31	0	n/a	\$6,795
Florida	66.7	2	0	n/a	\$2,448
Georgia	53.4	3	0	n/a	\$4,234
Hawaii	No State Funded Program				
Idaho	No State Funded Program				
Illinois	28.7	13	21.2	1	\$3,438
Indiana	No State Funded Program				
Iowa	28.7	14	1.3	19	\$2,945
Kansas	21.2	19	0	n/a	\$3,270
Kentucky	28.3	15	10	4	\$3,497
Louisiana	31.7	12	0	n/a	\$5,492
Maine	19	22	0	n/a	\$1,507
Maryland	35.1	11	1.2	20	\$3,765
Massachusetts	11.3	27	2.9	16	\$5,994
Michigan	19.1	21	0	n/a	\$4,286
Minnesota	1.6	38	1.1	21	\$9,994
Mississippi	No State Funded Program				
Missouri	3.9	36	1.9	18	\$2,880
Montana	No State Funded Program				
Nebraska	7.3	32	2.9	15	\$2,822
Nevada	2.3	37	0.6	24	\$2,973
New Hampshire	No State Funded Program				
New Jersey	26.5	16	17.3	3	\$5,076
New Mexico	16.5	23	0	n/a	\$3,355
New York	42.6	9	0.1	25	\$3,668
North Carolina	25	17	0	n/a	\$5,414
North Dakota	No State Funded Program				
Ohio	8.1	30	5.3	10	\$8,680
Oklahoma	7.1	1	0	n/a	\$4,084
Oregon	8.3	29	4.8	12	\$8,020
Pennsylvania	16.4	24	4.8	11	\$4,251
Rhode Island	No State Funded Program				
South Carolina	38.1	10	4.1	14	\$3,946
South Dakota	No State Funded Program				
Tennessee	21.6	18	0.8	23	\$4,520
Texas	45.4	7	4.7	13	\$3,790
Utah	No State Funded Program				
Vermont	5.3	4	17.3	2	\$1,291
Virginia	14.1	25	0	n/a	\$4,023
Washington	7.2	33	2.4	17	\$6,890
West Virginia	50.6	5	8.5	5	\$5,264
Wisconsin	48.4	6	1	22	\$5,094
Wyoming	No State Funded Program				

Data from 2008-2009 obtained from The State of Preschool 2009, published by The National Institute for Early Education Research.