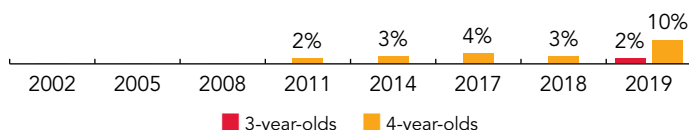
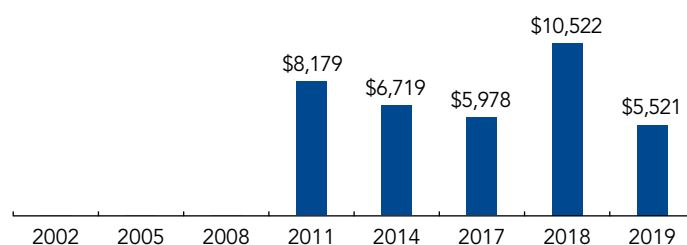


Alaska

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2019 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

Alaska preschool enrolled 1,304 children in 2018-2019, an increase of 989 children from the prior year. State funding totaled approximately \$7,200,000 up approximately \$3,885,559 (117%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$5,521 in 2018-2019, down \$5,001 from 2017-2018, adjusted for inflation. Alaska met 1 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

During the 2017-2018 school year, state legislature approved an additional \$6 million for Alaska Pre-Elementary programs for the next two years (2018-2020). Additionally, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development was awarded a Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five award in 2018 for \$2.6 million to conduct a statewide needs assessment and a strategic plan that maximizes parental choice. The state also plans to share best practice by revising the 2009 Early Learning Guidelines; expanding provider trainings and coaching activities; developing a trauma-informed module; creating an Alaska version of Strengthening Families training; and offering rural author mini-grants.

BACKGROUND

Since the 1980s, Alaska has supplemented federal funding for Head Start programs in an effort to enhance school readiness and professional development, and expand opportunities for children and families. During the 2017-2018 program year, the state provided \$6.8 million to support Head Start programs in Alaska. In 2009-2010, the state launched the Alaska Pre-Kindergarten pilot program for school districts, now known as the Alaska Pre-Elementary program. During the 2018-2019 school year, the program was open to preschool-age children in 25 of the 54 school districts statewide though funding was available to all districts on a competitive basis. The financial support is part of an effort to develop program quality through school readiness activities and professional improvement. The funds also offer admission to additional children and families whenever possible.

In 2015, the state changed the way competitive grants are offered to include two types of grantees. Districts new to the program may apply for a 3-year pre-elementary development grant geared toward strategic planning to begin implementing or supporting existing Pre-Elementary goals. Previously funded grantees may apply for three-year renewal grants to support the program while the districts worked towards sustainability of the program once the state grant funding ends. Development grants are geared toward strategic planning to begin implementing or support existing Pre-Elementary goals until they can be switched to renewal grants.

Budget reductions have continued to be a challenge, as inconsistent funding has affected program implementation and quality. Alaska receives no federal funding for the Pre-Elementary program, though some districts utilize Title IA or Title IC funding for preschool. Funding for the Alaska Pre-Elementary program goes directly to school districts or Head Start agencies. Participating programs may subcontract with public schools, Head Start programs, or private agencies.

The Teaching Strategies assessment was piloted by the state during the 2011-2012 school year. State policy requires all Pre-Elementary grantee programs to use this tool multiple times throughout the year. In addition to classroom quality observations, Education Northwest is in the process of conducting a formal assessment of the programs using the 3-year Developmental grants.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
37	21

RESOURCE RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
19	32

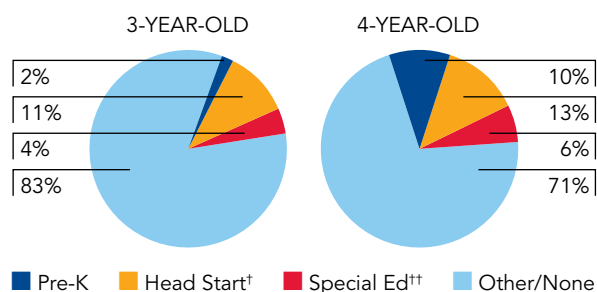
TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
1

ALASKA PRE-ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	1,304
School districts that offer state program.....	46%
Income requirement.....	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	Determined locally
Operating schedule.....	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	1,435
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	2,409
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	136

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
 †† Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	AK PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA (public); AA (Head Start)	BA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	None (public); ECE (Head Start)	Specializing in pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD (public); CDA (Head Start)	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	6 credit hours/5 years (public teachers only); Per Head Start Standards (Head Start); PD plans; Coaching (Head Start)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	Determined locally	20 or lower	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	Determined locally	1:10 or better	<input type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	None	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations determined locally; Data used for program improvement at local level only	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>

For more information about the benchmarks, see the Executive Summary and Roadmap to State Profile Pages.

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RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$7,200,000 ¹
Local match required?	No
State Head Start spending	Not reported
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,521
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,521

¹ Alaska's 2018-2019 preschool spending was estimated.

* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

** Head Start per-child spending includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds.

*** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

