



The State of Preschool 2019

STATE PRESCHOOL YEARBOOK

The National Institute for Early Education Research



THE STATE OF PRESCHOOL 2019

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS—The opinions expressed in this report are solely those of the authors. We wish to thank the Heising-Simons Foundation for supporting data collection and the development, production, and dissemination of this publication. Established in 2007 by husband and wife Mark Heising and Elizabeth (Liz) Simons, The Heising-Simons Foundation is dedicated to advancing sustainable solutions in the environment, supporting groundbreaking research in science, and enhancing the education of the nation’s youngest learners. Finally, the authors would like to extend our thanks to Sandy Ogilvie and Ernest Landante Jr. for their assistance on this report.

This publication is a product of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), a unit of the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. NIEER supports early childhood education policy by providing objective, nonpartisan information based on research.



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Executive Summary



ALL TOGETHER NOW: BIPARTISAN PROGRESS AMID THE COVID-19 CRISIS

As we write, America is focused on the nation's responses to COVID-19. This virus has created considerable uncertainty about the remainder of this school year, the next school year, and beyond. Federal, state, and local government responses should be informed by understanding current policies and their history, including the effects of the last major economic crisis, the Great Recession, on America's state-funded preschool programs.

The 17th edition of *The State of Preschool*, the National Institute for Early Education Research's (NIEER) report on our annual survey of state preschool policies, provides government policymakers valuable information for planning short- and long-term responses to the crisis. The report includes information for every state on child enrollment, resources (including staffing and funding), and quality standards. It also provides information on where children are served, operating schedules, and other program features relevant to planning the education of children in a post-COVID-19 world.

OVERVIEW

State-funded pre-K is an increasingly important part of public education. These programs support early learning and development to better prepare children to succeed in the primary grades and to reduce achievement gaps that emerge well before kindergarten. They also serve the child care needs of some children and families. Many state-funded preschool programs rely on mixed delivery systems of public and private programs, including Head Start, to facilitate integration with child care.

Since NIEER's first survey in 2002, state-funded pre-K has changed markedly, though year-to-year change has been slow and uneven. States have added more than 930,000 seats, the vast majority of these at age 4. Enrollment of 4-year-olds has expanded by 20 percentage points to 34%. Enrollment of 3-year-olds increased only three percentage points to six percent. More states fund preschool than in 2002. State financial investments in preschool have more than doubled since 2002 when adjusted for inflation. Quality standards have generally improved.

CHALLENGES, IMMEDIATE AND LONG TERM

Progress in recent years has been slow, and states face remarkable challenges to reach even modest goals. Whether a state seeks to ensure all children in poverty are served or to serve all children, most must dramatically increase expansion rates to reach these goals.

Nationally, about 40% of children in families with annual incomes below \$10,000 still do not attend any center-based program prior to kindergarten, which is stunning because these children are eligible for the federal Head Start program as well as pre-K programs in states where offered. Participation rates are not much higher for children in low and moderate income families.

Unless states greatly accelerate their efforts, it will be centuries before the United States reaches levels of preschool attendance now common in other high income nations. Although some states serve most or all 4-year-old children, most do not. There is far more to be done to reach 3-year-olds, who are largely unserved except by a very few states.

The challenge for states is not limited to increasing enrollment. They must also provide quality pre-K education at a level that produces meaningful impacts on learning and development. This level of quality is not present in many state pre-K programs (nor in many Head Start programs).

The long-term challenge is made more daunting by the economic stress and uncertainty from COVID-19. We do not yet know if the economic downturn will be as bad as the Great Recession, but it is quite possible. We must learn from that experience. Despite federal intervention, the Great Recession hurt state budgets and seriously damaged pre-K. This damage, possibly delayed by the federal stimulus, was protracted.

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

Clear lessons on how we should respond to the current crisis can be drawn from the historical data on pre-K:

- The Great Recession officially ended in June 2009, but it was not until the 2010-2011 school year that inflation-adjusted pre-K funding per child nationally began to fall. Real spending declined more the following year.
- In 2012-2013, states cut pre-K enrollment as real spending continued to fall. As spending declined, so did program quality standards.
- The impact of these cuts remains today. Despite a brief upturn, pre-K's long-term growth rate remains lower than before the Great Recession. Some states had not fully reversed their quality standards reductions by 2018-2019.
- Decreases in pre-K enrollment, quality standards, and funding are not rapidly reversed and can permanently hinder progress.



Even if the current economic crisis is short, its impact on state funding for pre-K—a discretionary program with a small constituency in most states—will be persistent. Unlike K–12 education programs, which reach the entire eligible population, state pre-K programs must receive extra support to ensure they can continue to expand even in difficult times. The danger is not just that children will miss out now, but that long-term progress will be permanently stunted.

This leads us to five policy recommendations.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The federal government should provide states with dedicated funding to stabilize and expand preschool programs while maintaining or enhancing enrollment and quality. The goal is to support states' continued progress despite anticipated lower state revenues and unexpected costs associated with COVID-19.
2. Improve coordination of Head Start and state pre-K policy to better serve preschoolers living in poverty. As Head Start programs shift funding to serve more infants and toddlers, its enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds has fallen to the lowest level in decades. This shift may explain why so many preschoolers living in poverty remain unserved despite the expansion of state-funded pre-K. Federal approval of shifts in Head Start funding and enrollment should not empty seats for 3- and 4-year-olds as fast or faster than states can make seats available. Federal and state policymakers should coordinate their policies to serve all preschoolers in poverty while expanding services for children under age three. Our proposed new federal funding would support expanded pre-K programs for all children under age five.
3. Make funds available to state pre-K programs for developing rapid response plans to the current crisis and long-term plans for its lasting consequences. The federal government should permit the 26 states awarded the recent Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five award (PDG B–5) to redirect those funds for immediate and long-term planning projects. Other states will need to reallocate resources or draw on partners in other sectors to plan. The federal Administration for Children and Families should offer technical and financial support to states to coordinate planning between state-funded pre-K programs, child care, and Head Start.
4. State pre-K programs must rapidly develop new policies to provide emergency services and educate young children remotely for the remainder of this school year and for the coming summer and fall. Any proposed changes to pre-K standards in response to the current crisis should either (a) apply strictly to services for children at home due to building closures or (b) be time-limited waivers with a specific expiration date. Time-limited waivers will help avoid the mistake made during the Great Recession when policymakers loosened standards on pre-K programs. Eventually and without justification, the lower standards became permanent in some cases. Looking to the summer and fall, states must anticipate the increased numbers of children who will be eligible for income-tested programs due to the economic downturn.
5. Each state should develop long-term plans that incorporate a definitive timeline and realistic funding estimates for a high-quality pre-K program that provides access to all children. More important than the timeline's length is setting the timeline. States may debate whether access should be free for all children, like K–12, or subject to an income-eligibility limit. However, no state has accomplished universal enrollment using an income-tested approach. Providing a high-quality program will require a combination of (a) high standards for learning and teaching and (b) support for continuous improvement of practice to meet those standards.





A BIPARTISAN HOPE

We are hopeful future progress will be greater than past—despite the current challenges—because our survey finds state funded preschool is highly bipartisan. In today’s political climate bipartisan issues are few and far between, but support for preschool comes from both sides of the aisle. States that have emerged as preschool leaders are as likely to be “Red” as they are to be “Blue.” Take Alabama and New Jersey as examples. These states have very different political leanings, yet both are leaders in providing high-quality preschool. In Alabama, a “Red” state, support for preschool is strong among state leaders, their preschool program meets all 10 of NIEER’s quality standards benchmarks, and enrollment has expanded by 28 percentage points since 2002. In New Jersey, a “Blue” state, high-quality preschool is mandated by a court decision. Per child spending for preschool in New Jersey tops all other states, and there is bipartisan support for preschool expansion.

Taking a closer look at leaders in preschool access, spending, and quality standards, “Red” states and “Blue” states come out on top, though leaders vary by indicator. As shown in Figure 1, the leading states in preschool access for 4-year-olds vary across the political spectrum. The top 10 include “liberal” District of Columbia, Vermont, and New York and “conservative” Oklahoma, Georgia, West Virginia, and Texas. Seven of the top states for 4-year-old access currently have Republican governors. States in the top 10 for serving 3-year-olds are more likely to be “Blue” but four currently have Republican governors.

FIGURE 1: TOP STATES FOR STATE PRESCHOOL ACCESS ARE BOTH “RED” AND “BLUE”

TOP 10 STATES FOR 4-YEAR-OLD ACCESS		TOP 10 STATES FOR 3-YEAR-OLD ACCESS	
State	Percent served	State	Percent served
1. District of Columbia	87%	1. District of Columbia	71%
2. Vermont	78%	2. Vermont	65%
3. Oklahoma	76%	3. Illinois	22%
4. Florida	75%	4. New Jersey	20%
5. Wisconsin	72%	5. Arkansas	18%
6. Iowa	66%	6. Massachusetts	16%
7. Georgia	60%	7. Nebraska	15%
8. West Virginia	59%	8. California	12%
9. New York	54%	9. Pennsylvania	10%
10. Texas	49%	10. Connecticut	9%

Note: States are color coded based on political ideology from a 2018 Gallop Poll. Red = Conservative, Blue = Liberal, Purple = Average. Data retrieved from: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/247016/conservatives-greatly-outnumber-liberals-states.aspx>

As shown in Figure 2, funding per child is similarly bi-partisan and non-ideological, though there are political differences regarding state versus local share. Eight of the top 10 for state government spending per child are “Blue” states. However, when we examine “all-reported” spending, which includes local, state, and federal dollars for pre-K, six of the top 10 states are “Red.”

FIGURE 2: TOP STATES FOR STATE PRESCHOOL SPENDING PER CHILD ARE BOTH “RED” AND “BLUE”

TOP 10 STATES FOR STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED		TOP 10 STATES FOR “ALL REPORTED” SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED	
State	Spending per child	State	Spending per child
1. District of Columbia	\$18,669	1. District of Columbia	\$19,710
2. New Jersey	\$13,172	2. New Jersey	\$13,502
3. Oregon	\$9,820	3. Rhode Island	\$11,784
4. Washington	\$8,969	4. West Virginia	\$11,052
5. Connecticut	\$8,786	5. Oregon	\$9,820
6. Montana	\$8,492	6. Montana	\$9,633
7. California	\$8,253	7. Mississippi	\$9,468
8. West Virginia	\$7,316	8. Arkansas	\$9,332
9. Delaware	\$7,277	9. North Carolina	\$9,162
10. Hawaii	\$7,208	10. Oklahoma	\$9,096

Note: States are color coded based on political ideology from a 2018 Gallop Poll. Red = Conservative, Blue = Liberal. Data retrieved from: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/247016/conservatives-greatly-outnumber-liberals-states.aspx>

Both conservative and liberal states are leaders in setting policies that meet NIEER’s minimum benchmarks for quality standards (See Figure 3). The four states, Alabama, Michigan, Mississippi, and Rhode Island, that meet all 10 quality standards benchmarks are evenly split between Republican and Democratic governors and include two “Red” states. The states that meet 9 benchmarks are a mix of conservative and liberal, with Democrats and Republicans both represented in their governor’s offices.

FIGURE 3: STATES LEADING IN PRESCHOOL QUALITY STANDARDS ARE BOTH “RED” AND “BLUE”

LEADERS IN POLICIES TO SUPPORT HIGH QUALITY PRESCHOOL	
States meeting all 10 quality standards benchmarks	States meeting 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks
Alabama	Delaware
Michigan	Maine
Mississippi	New Mexico
Rhode Island	Oklahoma
	West Virginia

Note: States are color coded based on political ideology from a 2018 Gallop Poll. Red = Conservative, Blue = Liberal, Purple = Average. Data retrieved from: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/247016/conservatives-greatly-outnumber-liberals-states.aspx>

WHAT'S NEW?

RESOURCES

- Total state funding for preschool programs surpassed \$8.75 billion across the 44 states and D.C.* that offered preschool during the 2018-2019 school year, an increase of \$301 million (or 3.6%) from 2017-2018, adjusted for inflation. Though state investments in preschool continued to climb this year, the increase was small compared to high growth years.
- Average state funding per child was \$5,374 in 2018-2019. Like last year, there was a small increase (\$183) in nominal state spending per child, however, spending per child was essentially flat after adjusting for inflation.
- Ten states reported an inflation-adjusted increase in total state spending of more than \$10 million. Two states increased their inflation-adjusted preschool spending by more than 50%.
- Seventeen states increased spending per child (inflation-adjusted). However, unlike prior years, no state increased per child spending by more than \$1,000.
- All-reported spending, which includes local and state dollars to the extent states can report it, topped \$10 billion for the first time. All-reported spending per child was \$6,188.
- Sixteen of the 18 states awarded 2014 competitive federal Preschool Development Grants (PDG) used almost \$218 million of those funds to support preschool enrollment in 2018-2019. Approximately 53% of federal PDG funds supported increased enrollment or quality enhancements in state preschool. The remaining funds supported children in other preschool programs.

ENROLLMENT

- States enrolled almost 1.63 million children in state-funded preschool, including almost 1.38 million 4-year-olds, which is just over one-third of all 4-year-olds in the country. Enrollment of 3-year-olds was just 239,000, which is not even six percent of 3-year-olds.
- More than 23,000 four-year-olds enrolled in state-funded preschool were supported either entirely or partially by federal PDG funds.
- Enrollment in state-funded preschool nationwide increased by only 43,286 four-year-olds and only 12,064 three-year-olds from 2017-2018. The increase in 4-year-olds was slightly higher than last year's but only represents a three percent increase in enrollment of 4-year-olds. The increase in 3-year-olds was smaller than last year's increase.
- Thirteen states increased enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds by more than 1,000 while 12 states decreased enrollment of 3- and 4-year-olds.
- Once again, just 10 states served nearly 50% or more of 4-year-olds. Five states served more than 70% of 4-year-olds. Only D.C. and Vermont served more than 50% (and even 25%) of 3-year-olds.
- Across all public programs—preschool general and special education plus federal- and state-funded Head Start—44% of 4-year-olds and 17% of 3-year-olds were served. This shows virtually no progress in several years.

QUALITY

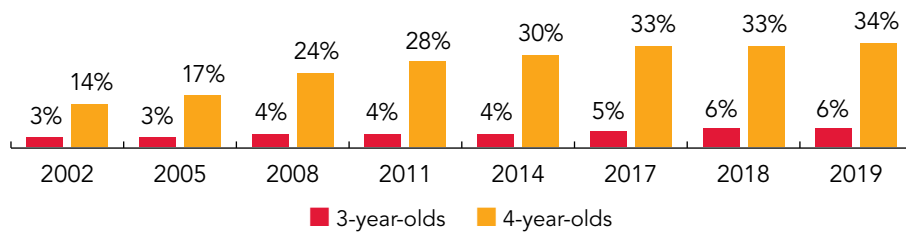
- For the fourth year, NIEER assessed state preschool policies using an updated set of minimum quality standards benchmarks that focus on process quality and reflect research on effective early childhood education. Like last year, we report on only these new quality standards benchmarks.
- Mississippi joined Alabama, Michigan, and Rhode Island as the only states to meet all 10 of NIEER's benchmarks for minimum state preschool quality standards.
- Seven state-funded preschool programs gained one quality standards benchmark as a result of policy changes: Delaware, Hawaii, Mississippi, and the Missouri Preschool Program all met the Staff Professional Development benchmark for the first time in 2018-2019. Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia all newly met the Continuous Quality Improvement System benchmark.
- Twelve programs met fewer than half of the quality standards benchmarks, including programs in the three largest states, which also serve the most children in their preschool programs—32% of all children enrolled in state-funded preschool.

*Consistent with U.S. government statistical reporting practices, the District of Columbia will be referred to as a "state" throughout this report. Hence, we report 45 "states" providing state-funded preschool.

IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

- In 2018-2019, Missouri began supporting a second state-funded preschool program. For the first time school districts could use Foundation Formula funding to support preschool. This program served 3,680 4-year-olds (five percent) and 713 3-year-olds (one percent) and met five quality standards benchmarks. State funding for the program was just over \$14 million.
- This year, NIEER included a supplemental survey about state preschool administration.
- The vast majority of state preschool programs (51 of 63) are administered at least partially by the State Education Agency (SEA), and over 96% of state agencies with oversight of public preschool reported having staff with expertise in child development.
- The state agencies administering publicly funded preschool programs often share oversight with local education agencies (LEAs), especially in the management of programmatic and fiscal matters. Oversight of child assessments is left almost entirely up to LEAs.
- Sixteen of the 18 states that were awarded a 2014 PDG used PDG funds to support preschool enrollment during the 2018-2019 school year. Alabama used state funding to support previous PDG slots, and also expanded enrollment. Rhode Island used carryover PDG for professional development. A total of almost \$218 million was used to support 37,153 income-eligible 4-year-olds and to raise preschool quality. About 53% of that funding was used to support more than 23,000 4-year-olds enrolled in state-funded preschool. PDG has substantially increased preschool enrollment in many states. As PDG funding will not be available to support preschool enrollment in 2019-2020, it remains to be seen if and how states will maintain access and quality. At the time of data collection, 14 states reported having a plan to sustain PDG funding and enrollment through other means once their 2014 PDG award ran out.
- In December 2019, 20 states were awarded a three-year renewal PDG Birth through Five award (PGD B-5). The single year amounts ranged from \$3.7 million to \$13.4 million. An additional three states and three territories were awarded initial planning grants ranging from \$1 million to almost \$10 million to complete a needs assessment and strategic plan. Unlike the 2014 initial PDG awards, PDG B-5 awards are not intended to fund increased enrollment in preschool.

PERCENT OF U.S. POPULATION ENROLLED IN STATE-FUNDED PRESCHOOL



AVERAGE STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED
(2019 DOLLARS)

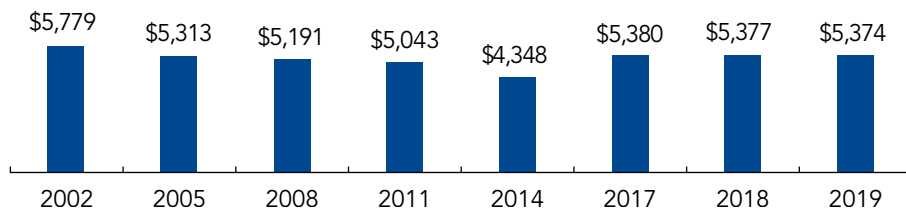


TABLE 1: STATE RANKINGS AND QUALITY CHECKLIST SUMS

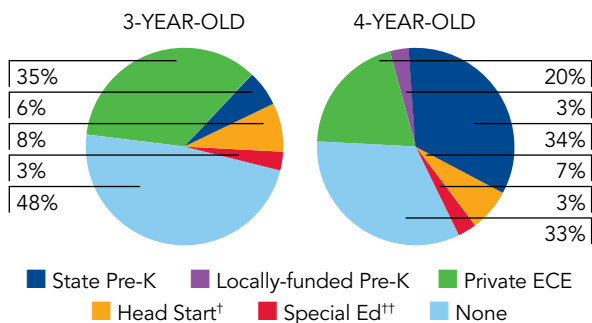
STATE	Access for 4-Year-Olds Rank	Access for 3-Year-Olds Rank	Resources Rank Based on State Spending	Resources Rank Based on All Reported Spending	Quality Standards Checklist Sum (Maximum of 10)
Alabama	19	None Served	21	28	10
Alaska	37	21	19	32	1
Arizona	43	24	29	36	3
Arkansas	17	5	18	8	8
California	15	8	7	16	4.7
Colorado	28	12	39	35	4
Connecticut *	21	10	5	12	5
Delaware	41	22	9	19	9
District of Columbia	1	1	1	1	4
Florida	4	None Served	42	43	2
Georgia	7	None Served	26	34	8
Hawaii	44	None Served	10	20	8
Illinois	20	3	24	31	8
Iowa	6	19	36	39	7.9
Kansas	26	23	43	44	4
Kentucky	25	11	22	14	8
Louisiana	22	None Served	25	33	7.9
Maine	12	None Served	33	17	9
Maryland	14	17	28	15	7
Massachusetts	24	6	40	40	5.2
Michigan	18	None Served	14	23	10
Minnesota*	34	28	15	24	5.4
Mississippi	42	None Served	41	7	10
Missouri	39	26	37	41	5.9
Montana	45	32	6	6	6
Nebraska	16	7	44	13	8
Nevada	40	None Served	32	22	7
New Jersey	23	4	2	2	8
New Mexico	13	18	17	30	9
New York	9	25	13	21	7
North Carolina	27	None Served	20	9	8
North Dakota	36	None Served	45	45	2
Ohio	33	27	30	37	5
Oklahoma	3	20	27	10	9
Oregon	32	14	3	5	7.5
Pennsylvania *	30	9	16	25	6.6
Rhode Island	35	None Served	12	3	10
South Carolina	11	30	38	42	7
Tennessee	29	31	23	27	8
Texas	10	13	34	38	3
Vermont	2	2	11	18	7
Virginia	31	None Served	31	26	6
Washington	38	16	4	11	8
West Virginia	8	15	8	4	9
Wisconsin *	5	29	35	29	3
Idaho	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
Indiana	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
New Hampshire	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
South Dakota	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
Utah	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program
Wyoming	No program	No program	No program	No program	No program

* At least one program in these states did not break down total enrollment figures into specific numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds served. As a result, enrollment by single year of age was estimated.

NATIONAL ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment, all ages.....	1,629,804 ¹
State-funded preschool programs.....	62 programs in 44 states and D.C. ¹
Income requirement.....	33 state programs have an income requirement
Minimum hours of operation.....	30 part-day; 13 school-day; 6 extended-day; 13 determined locally ²
Operating schedule.....	1 full calendar year; 44 school/ academic year; 17 determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	477,714
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	668,059 ³
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	17,083 ⁴

PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN 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.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST SUMMARY

OF THE 62 STATE-FUNDED PRE-K INITIATIVES, NUMBER MEETING BENCHMARK

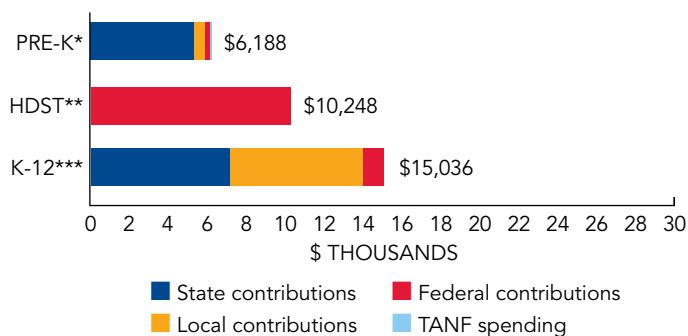
POLICY	BENCHMARK	NUMBER MEETING BENCHMARK
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	58
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	57
Teacher degree	BA	37
Teacher specialized training	Specializing in pre-K	51
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or equivalent	17
Staff professional development	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; Individual PD plans; Coaching	13
Maximum class size	20 or lower	46
Staff-child ratio	1:10 or better	50
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	39
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement	39

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

NATIONAL RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending.....	\$8,750,666,956 ⁵
Local match required?.....	14 state programs require a local match
State Head Start spending.....	\$171,787,891 ⁶
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$5,374 ⁵
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$6,188

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



* 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.

¹ Throughout this report, the District of Columbia is included like a state, resulting in a list of 45 states for rankings. In 2015-2016, Guam began offering a "state"-funded pre-K program but is not included in totals or rankings in this report.

² NIEER's definitions of hours of operation are as follows: part-day programs serve children for fewer than 4 hours per day; school-day programs serve children at least 4 hours per day but fewer than 6.5 hours per day; and extended-day programs serve children for 6.5 or more hours per day. Some programs offer multiple hours of operation but only the minimum one is listed here.

³ The enrollment figures for federal Head Start include children enrolled in the program in all 50 states, D.C., and the U.S. territories, as well as enrollment in the Migrant & Seasonal and American Indian/Native Alaskan programs. These numbers do not include children funded by state match.

⁴ This figure is based on the Head Start enrollment supported by state match as reported by ACF and additional information from surveys of state supplemental Head Start programs. This figure includes 16,191 children who attended programs that were considered to be state-funded preschool programs and are also included in the state-funded preschool enrollment total.

⁵ This figure included federal TANF funds directed toward preschool at states' discretion.

⁶ This figure includes \$150,990,615 also included in the total state pre-K spending.

National Overview

ENROLLMENT: SLOW AND STEADY ISN'T WINNING ANY RACE

State-funded preschool served 1,629,804 children during the 2018-2019 school year. The vast majority—85% or 1,375,961—were 4-year-olds as state-funded preschool continues to be a program predominantly for 4-year-old children. Table 2 reports the number and percentage of the population of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled by state, and nationally. Nationwide, 34% of 4-year-olds and 5.9% of 3-year-olds were enrolled in state-funded preschool in 2018-2019.

Total enrollment in state-funded preschool continued to grow at a snail's pace. States added only 43,286 four-year-olds, a 0.9 percentage point increase, since 2017-2018. Progress was slower for 3-year-olds as states added only 12,064 three-year-olds, a 0.3 percentage point increase over the previous year. Compared to changes seen the prior year, slightly more 4-year-olds but fewer 3-year-olds were added. As 16 states used PDG funding to support enrollment of 4-year-olds, it remains to be seen how support for enrollment will change in the 2019-2020 when this funding is no longer available.

However, some states stood out. Thirteen states added more than 1,000 three- and four-year-olds, including Missouri where an additional 3,345 children were enrolled statewide as districts were able to use Foundation Formula funding for preschool. Three states added more than 5,000 children to state-funded preschool in 2018-2019: Pennsylvania added more than 13,000 children, Texas added more than 7,000, and Illinois added more than 6,000. Two states decreased enrollment by more than 1,000 children. Table 3 reports the changes in the number and percent of children served from the first year NIEER started tracking state preschool enrollment (2001-2002) and from last year (2017-2018).

State-funded preschool enrollment varies widely across states. D.C. continues to rank first in access for both 3- and 4-year-olds, serving 87% of 4-year-olds and 71% of 3-year-olds. Four other states (Vermont, Oklahoma, Florida, and Wisconsin) served more than 70% of 4-year-olds. And another five states served about half or more of 4-year-olds (Iowa, Georgia, West Virginia, New York, and Texas). Conversely, 11 states served less than ten percent of 4-year-olds in state-funded preschool (Rhode Island, North Dakota, Alaska, Washington, Missouri, Nevada, Delaware, Mississippi, Arizona, Hawaii, and Montana). Six states did not operate a preschool program in 2018-2019 that met NIEER's definition of a state-funded preschool program used in this report. After only two years, Montana's preschool program ended after the 2018-2019 school year. Figure 4 displays a map of the percent of 4-year-olds enrolled in state-funded preschool in each state. And Figure 5 shows the percent of 4-year-olds served by each state in descending order, color coded based on the state's majority party in the U.S. House of Representatives.

FIGURE 4: PERCENT OF 4-YEAR-OLDS SERVED IN STATE PRESCHOOL VARIES WIDELY

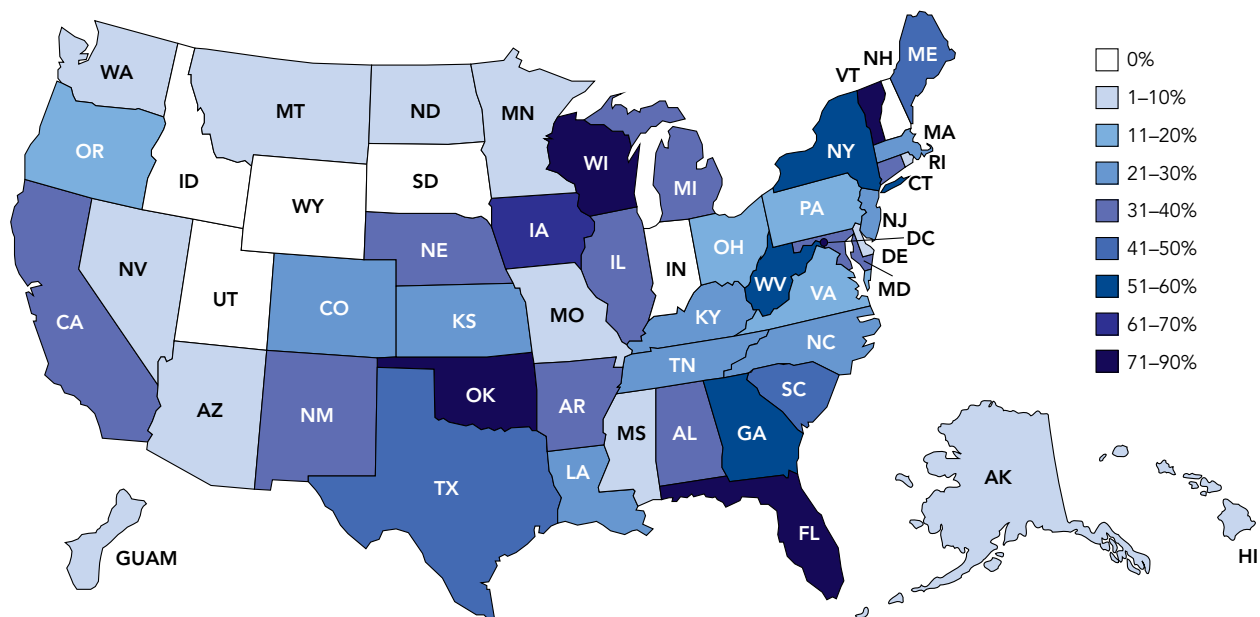
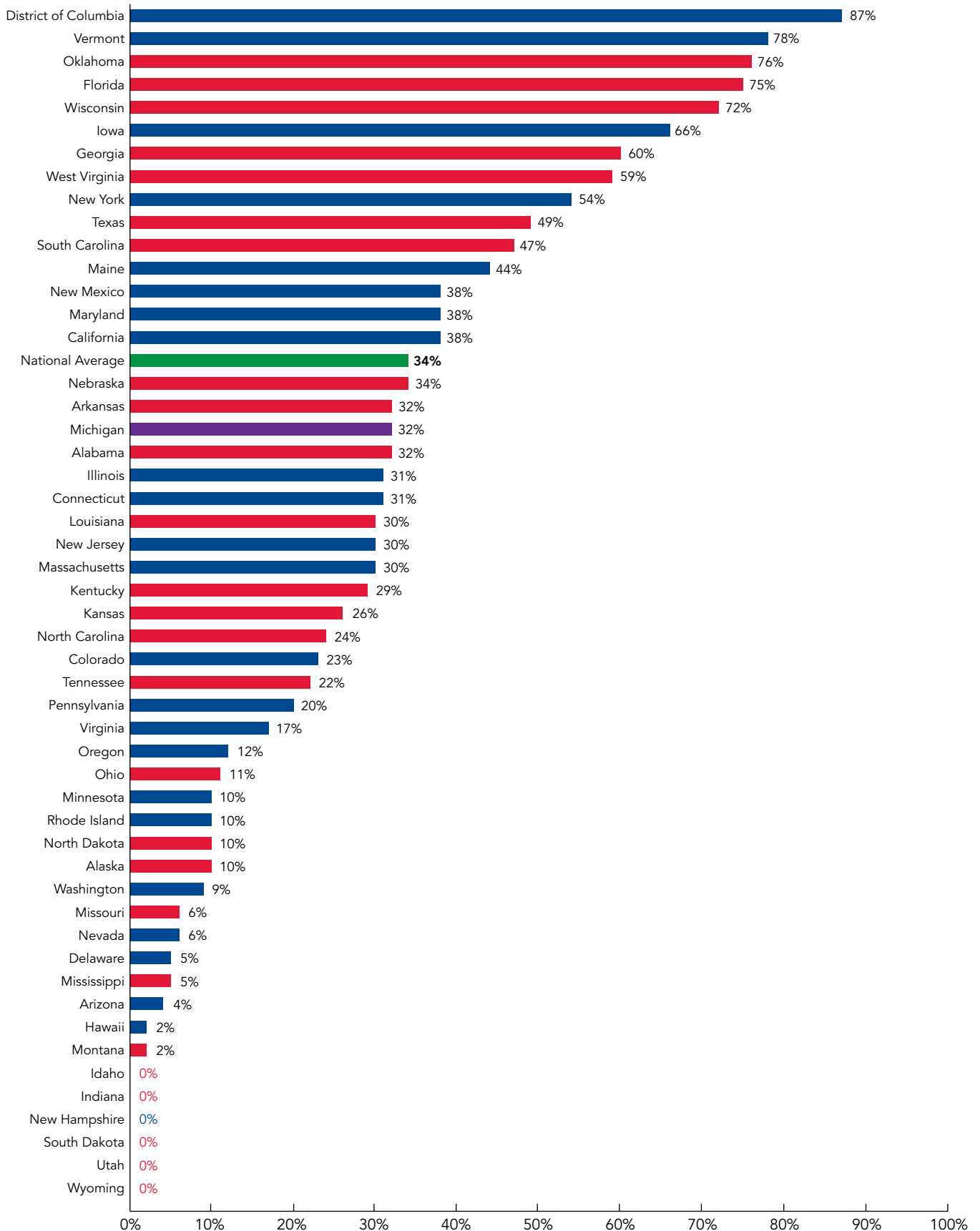
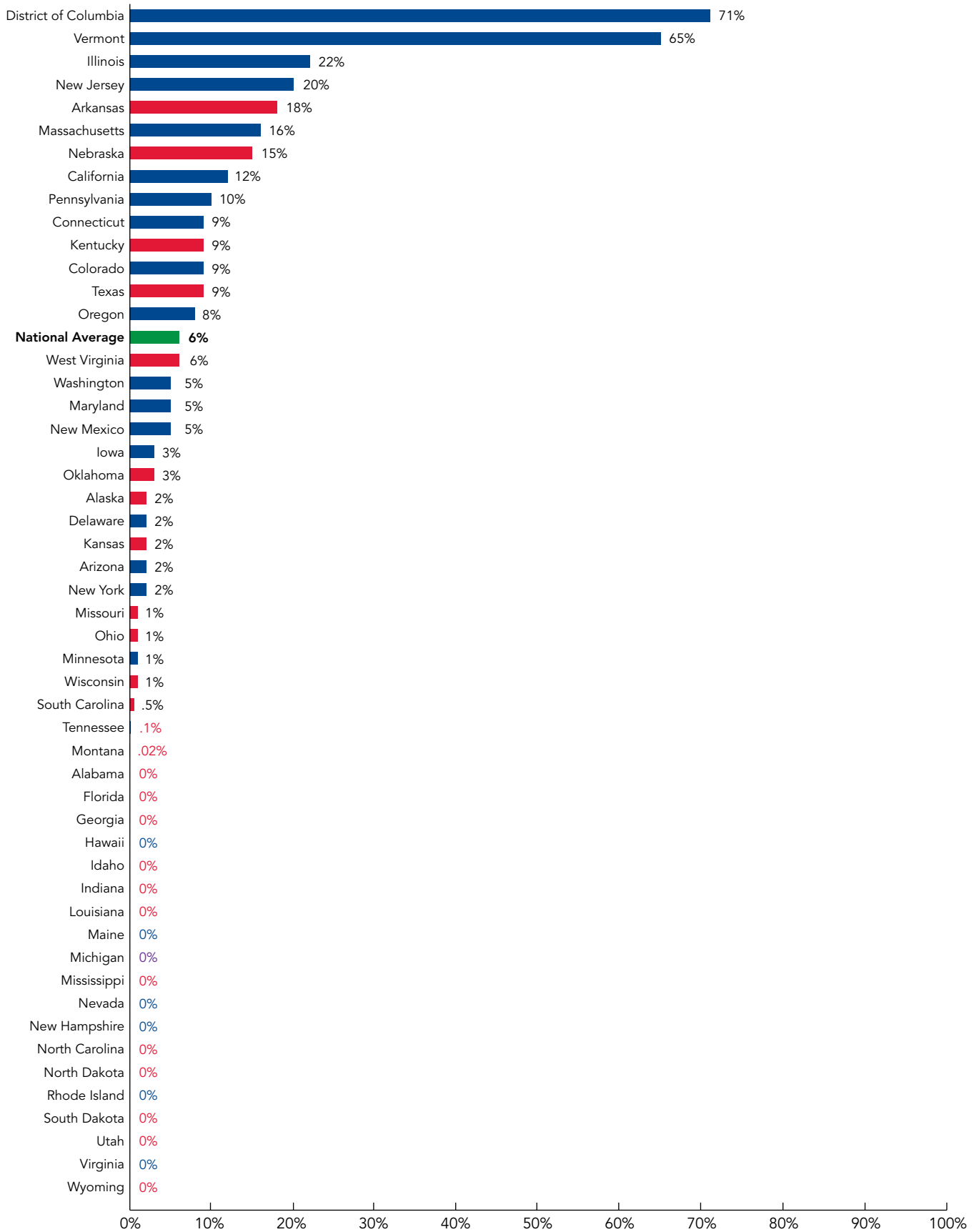


FIGURE 5: VARIATION IN PERCENT OF 4-YEAR-OLDS ENROLLED IN EACH STATE



Note: Colors reflect the state's majority party in the U.S. House of Representatives. Michigan's house delegation is evenly split between Republican and Democrats.

FIGURE 6: VARIATION IN PERCENT OF 3-YEAR-OLDS ENROLLED IN EACH STATE



Note: Colors reflect the state's majority party in the U.S. House of Representatives. Michigan's house delegation is evenly split between Republican and Democrats.

STATE PRESCHOOL POLICIES RELATED TO PROGRAM QUALITY: BIGGER IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

A primary goal of state-funded preschool education is to support the learning and development of young children as a means of improving the quality of their lives now and in the future. Research finds that preschool programs can accomplish this goal, but that doing so at scale has proven difficult.² Only high-quality preschool programs can be expected to produce large and lasting gains in outcomes such as achievement, educational attainment, personal and social behavior (e.g., reductions in crime), and adult health and economic productivity.³

NIEER has developed a set of 10 research-based preschool policy standards related to quality to help guide policymakers seeking to enhance and support high quality. To do this, we employed a process that business and government commonly use to design for success: “benchmarking” against acknowledged leaders. Benchmarking identifies common features of highly successful organizations as well as what differentiates them from the rest.

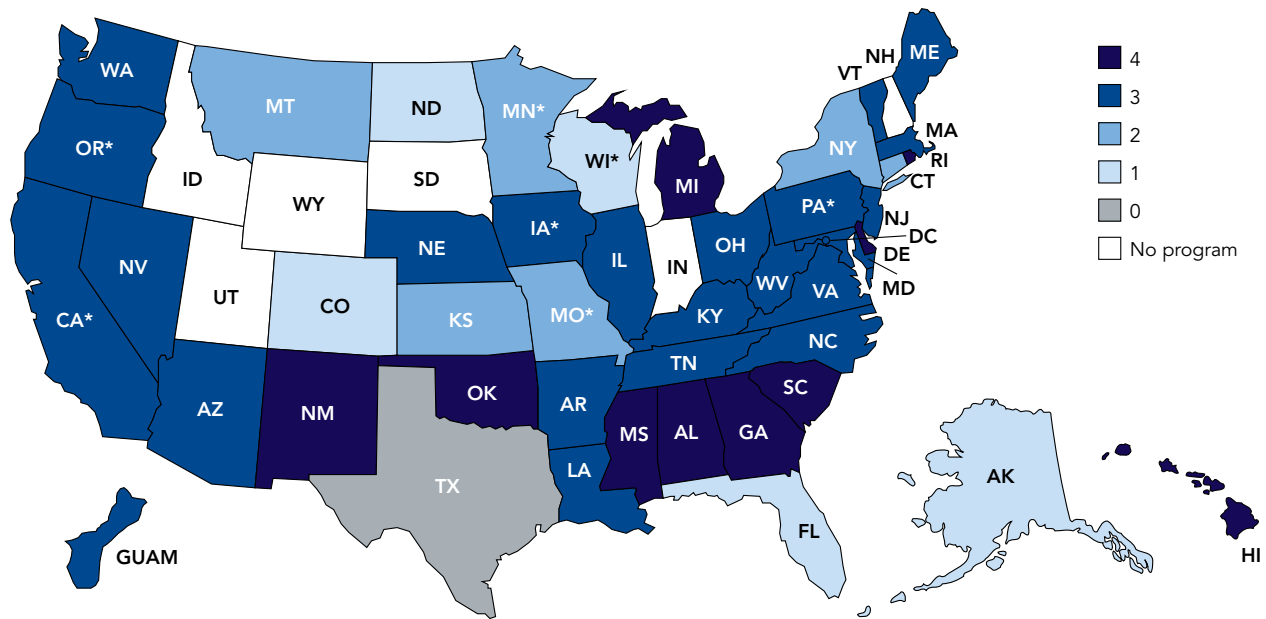
We began by identifying preschool programs that research has found to produce large, broad, and lasting improvements in children’s learning and development.⁴ Not surprisingly, the quality of a child’s experiences in the classroom is a key to success. Public policies cannot directly control quality, but they can specify program features and state operations that support classroom quality. We identified 10 key features common to highly effective programs that can be determined by policy, and set “benchmarks” for policies related to those features.

Since NIEER first developed the benchmarks, both policies and research on program effectiveness have advanced. As the *Yearbook* has documented, most states have strengthened their preschool policies. All or nearly all states now meet several of the original benchmarks. In addition, the field has learned more about how program features contribute to quality and effectiveness at scale.⁵ Based on progress and a review of the new evidence, we revised our benchmarks for state policy. The revised benchmarks place less emphasis on structural quality and monitoring, and more emphasis on a coherent system of continuous improvement for process quality. We believe these revisions are a shift in favor of policies better able to shape classroom experiences in ways that can strongly enhance learning and development.

The benchmarks provide a coherent set of minimum policies to support meaningful, persistent gains in learning and development that can enhance later educational and adult life achievement. Programs supported by these policies will be more likely to achieve their goals. However, the benchmarks cannot guarantee success, which depends on other factors including adequate funding and strong implementation of both policy and practice. Even the best policies can be undermined by lack of funding or inattention to full implementation. The benchmarks are described in detail in the Roadmap section on page 42, including an explanation of each benchmark, the evidence and reasoning behind it, and the criteria to meet it.

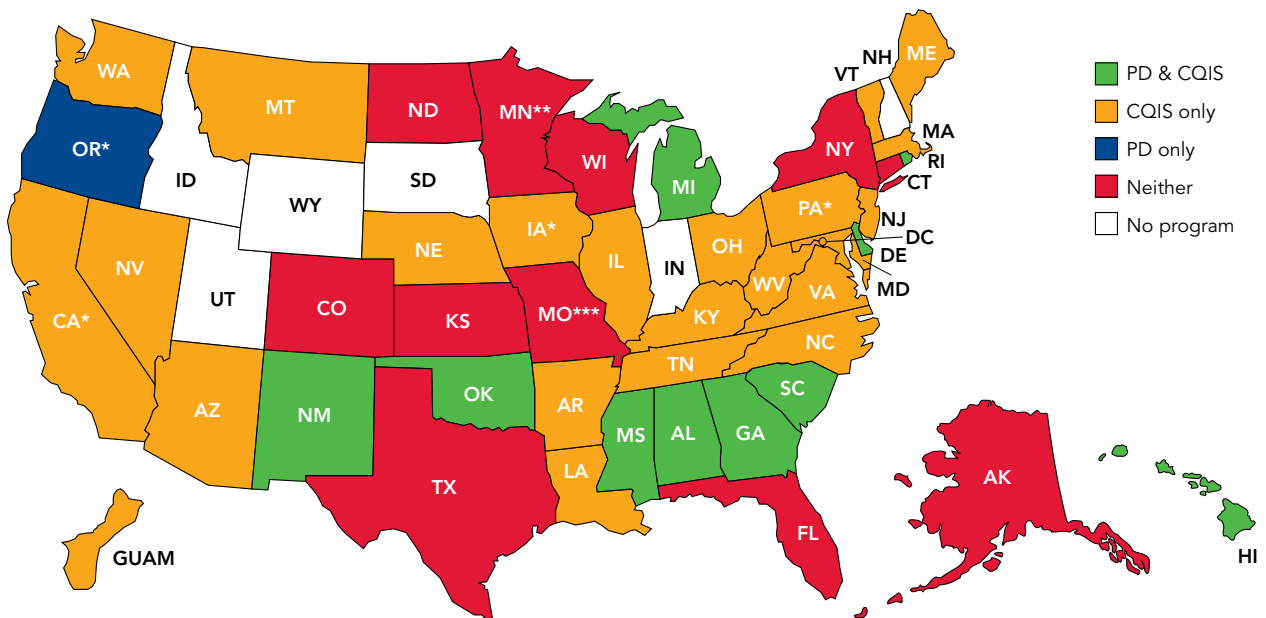


FIGURE 8: TEN STATES MEET ALL FOUR PROCESS-QUALITY FOCUSED QUALITY STANDARDS BENCHMARKS



* These multi-program states have programs with different quality standards. Data displayed on the map reflect quality standards benchmarks in the largest program in the state.

FIGURE 9: TEN STATES MEET BOTH THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) AND CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (CQIS) QUALITY STANDARDS BENCHMARKS



* These multi-program states have programs with different quality standards regarding PD and CQIS. Data displayed on the map reflect quality standards benchmarks in the largest program in the state.

** Minnesota's smaller program meets the PD benchmark, but not CQIS.

*** Missouri's smaller program meets both the PD and CQIS benchmarks.



The State of Preschool 2019 reports on 10 quality standards benchmarks that are viewed as the minimum for effective preschool education. Table 5 summarizes the quality standards benchmarks met by each program.

Four states met all ten of NIEER's quality standards benchmarks: Alabama, Michigan, Rhode Island, and Mississippi, who joined the list for the first time this year after newly meeting the Professional Development benchmark. Seven other programs met nine benchmarks (Delaware, Louisiana NSECD, Maine, Missouri Preschool Program, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and West Virginia). Only eight percent of children enrolled in state-funded preschool attend a program that meets 9 or 10 quality standards benchmarks.

Twelve programs met less than half of the quality standards benchmarks: Colorado, D.C., Kansas' two programs, and Pennsylvania K4 & SBPK met four; Arizona, California TK, Texas, and Wisconsin 4K met three; Florida and North Dakota met two; and Alaska only met one. Almost 40% of all children in state-funded preschool are served in these programs, raising concerns about quality of the programs attended by a large portion of young children. Children are much more likely to be served in state preschool programs meeting less than half of NIEER's quality standards benchmarks than programs meeting nearly all of them. The District of Columbia falls short because charter schools serving a substantial part of the population (more than 50%) are not required to follow the District's preschool standards.

Some progress was made towards improving policies to support quality preschool practices. Seven states enacted new policies that led to meeting additional NIEER quality standards benchmarks in 2018-2019. Four state-funded preschool programs (Delaware, Hawaii, Mississippi, and Missouri Preschool Program) met the Professional Development benchmark for the first time. Three state-funded preschool programs (Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia) improved their policies to meet the Continuous Quality Improvement System (CQIS) benchmark in 2018-2019.

Looking at the four benchmarks that focus on process quality (Early Learning and Development Standards-ELDS, Curriculum Supports, Professional Development, and CQIS), only eleven state-funded preschool programs met all four (Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri Preschool Program, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, and South Carolina). Texas did not meet any of these four benchmarks and six programs met only one. Figure 8 displays the number of these four benchmarks met by each state.

The Professional Development benchmark continued to be met by the fewest programs—only 13 (Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota Head Start, Mississippi, Missouri Preschool Program, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon Pre-K, Rhode Island, and South Carolina)—though four additional programs did meet it this year. Thirty-nine state programs met the CQIS benchmark this year, showing progress from last year. Figure 9 shows which states met the Professional Development and CQIS benchmarks in 2018-2019.

RESOURCES: TOTAL SPENDING INCHED UP, BUT SPENDING PER CHILD WAS STAGNANT

In 2018-2019, 44 states and the District of Columbia spent more than \$8.7 billion on preschool. California alone spent over \$2 billion on its two state-funded preschool programs, much more than twice what the next largest spenders, Texas and New York, each invested in pre-K. California's investment in state-funded preschool amounts to almost one-quarter of all state funding for preschool in the country. The four states that invested the most in preschool—California, Texas, New York, and New Jersey—account for more than half of all state preschool spending.

Total state spending for preschool rose by \$301 million, adjusted for inflation, a 3.6% increase in spending from 2017-2018. This is similar to last year's increase. Four states increased spending on preschool by more than \$25 million, adjusted for inflation, since 2017-2018 (California, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania). However, 16 states and Guam decreased spending (adjusted for inflation).

Spending per child averaged \$5,374 in 2018-2019. Though this is a nominal increase of \$183 over last year, spending per child was essentially flat (down by \$3), adjusted for inflation, continuing a trend of no progress in real spending per child in recent years.

State spending varied widely across the states, with the gap between the highest and lowest continuing to grow. The District of Columbia continued to spend the most per child enrolled in preschool: \$18,669. New Jersey was the only other state to spend more than \$10,000 per child this year: \$13,172. At the low end, two states, North Dakota and Nebraska spent less than \$2,000 per child using state funding. Six other states spent less than \$3,000 per child (South Carolina, Colorado, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Florida, and Kansas). In comparison, no state's share of K-12 spending was less than \$4,000 per child. And federal Head Start spending was, on average, more than \$10,000 per child.

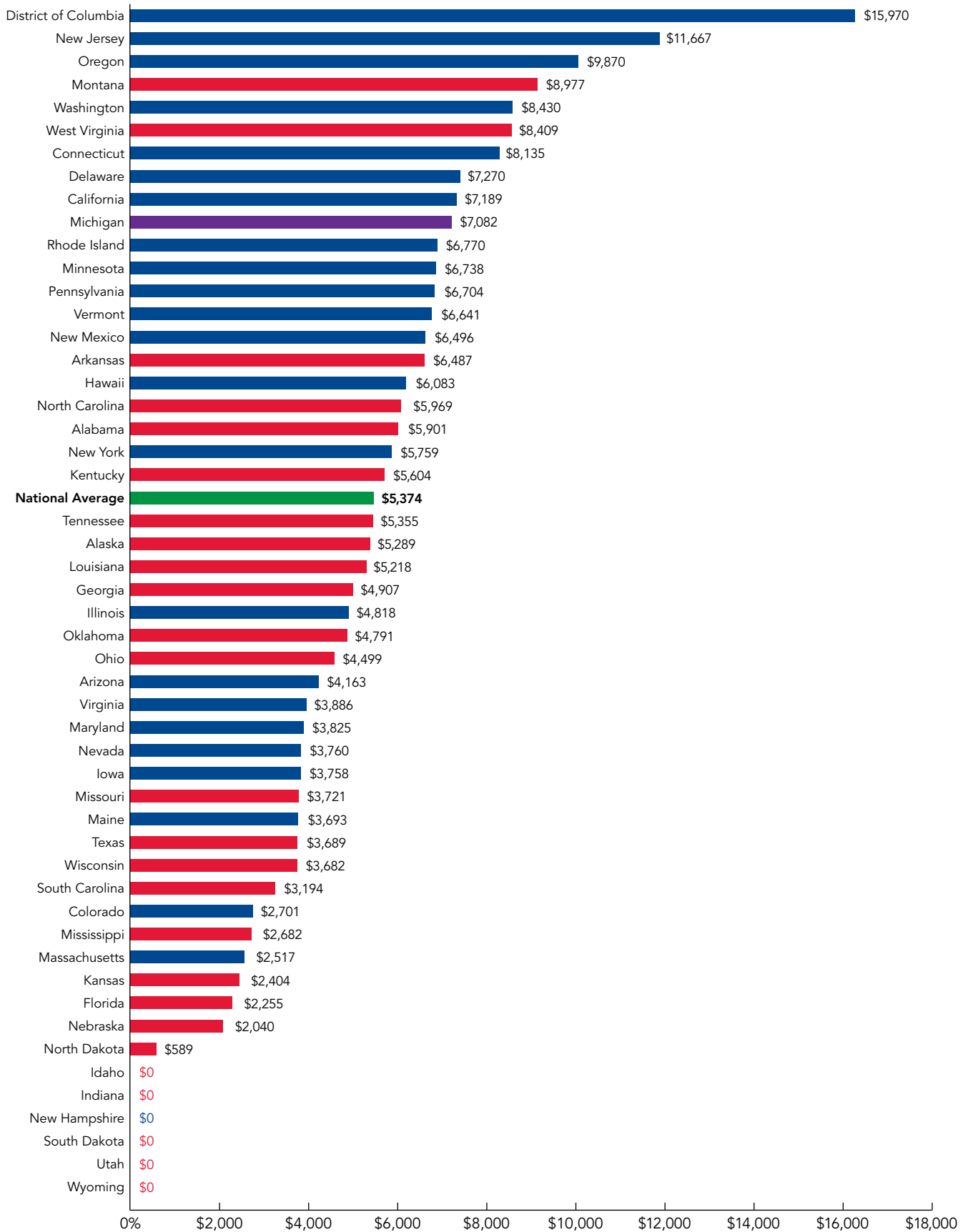
The cost of providing the same quality of pre-K varies among the states. To provide an alternate ranking of states that takes this into account we re-calculated state spending per child adjusting for cost of living differences among the states.⁶ These spending per child figures are presented in Figure 10. The impacts of cost of living adjustments are modest, and the overall pattern of large disparities across the states remains evident.

Four states increased spending per child by more than \$500 (Connecticut, Kansas, Rhode Island, and West Virginia). Both Alabama and Rhode Island invested additional state funds for preschool to compensate for the end of their federal PDG funding. Four states decreased spending per child by more than \$500.

Many states (including some of those with the lowest state spending per child), rely on federal and local sources to provide additional funds for their preschool programs. Fourteen state-funded preschool programs require a local match. In 2018-2019 sixteen states used funds from their 2014 federal PDG grants to support preschool—a total of almost \$218 million, including nearly \$116 million that supports either new or enhanced seats in state-funded preschool. This federal source of preschool support will not be available in the 2019-2020 school year, and the new PDG Birth to Five awards are not intended to support enrollment. Several states have plans to replace federal dollars with state funds to sustain and even expand enrollment but other states reported still developing plans at the time of data collection.

Local and federal funds added more than \$1.3 billion to state preschool during the 2018-2019 school year including approximately \$116 million from the 2014 federal PDG. Spending from all reported sources surpassed \$10 billion for the first time in 2018-2019. All-reported spending increased by \$374 million from the prior year, adjusted for inflation. Non-state funds reported include \$586 million in required local funds, \$277 million in non-required local funds, and almost \$464 million in non-TANF federal funds (including 2014 PDG). All reported spending per child was \$6,188, an inflation-adjusted increase of \$13 from 2017-2018. Reported local and federal spending added more than \$5,000 per child in Mississippi, Nebraska, and Rhode Island. These additional funding sources more than doubled the state per child funding in Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.

FIGURE 10: VARIATION IN STATE SPENDING PER CHILD, ADJUSTED FOR STATE COST OF LIVING



Note: Colors reflect the state's majority party in the U.S. House of Representatives. Michigan's house delegation is evenly split between Republican and Democrats.

FEDERAL PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS (PDG)

Preschool Development Grants were competitive federal grants awarded to 18 states in December 2014 to (1) build the state's capacity to provide high-quality preschool or (2) to expand access to high-quality preschool for high-need communities. The PDG program was part of the Preschool for All initiative jointly administered by the Department of Education (ED) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act moved PDG administration solely to HHS.

The federal PDG awards were intended to be used over four years (ending in December 2018), but 16 of 18 states received no-cost extensions of their grants to utilize PDG carryover funds for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year. In total these states spent almost \$218 million in federal PDG for the 2018-2019 school year. Alabama did not use PDG funding in 2018-2019, but funded all slots previously created by their PDG award with state funds. Rhode Island used PDG funds to support professional development, technical assistance, and Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) contracts, while enrollment was supported using state funds.

In some states, all PDG funding was used to create new seats in state-funded preschool and/or enhance the quality of (including extending the length of the day) existing state-funded preschool seats. In other states, PDG funding supported enrollment of children in preschool programs outside of state-funded preschool, or in a combination of state preschool and other programs. PDG-funded seats were required to meet 12 program quality standards including the provision of a full school day. Many of the required PDG standards align with NIEER's quality standards benchmarks (e.g., high staff qualifications, small class sizes, and low child-staff ratios).

We estimate that federal PDG funding supported a total of more than 37,000 income-eligible (200% FPL) 4-year-olds in 2018-2019 through either new seats or quality enhancements. About 53% of PDG funding (\$116 million) was used to serve more than 23,000 four-year-olds in state-funded preschool (either through the creation of new seats or enhancing the quality of existing seats). Figure 11 describes PDG funding and the enrollment during the 2018-2019 school year in each state.

The PDG is an example of an effective federal-state partnership that has helped states provide high-quality preschool to more children. For example, in 2018-2019, Maryland provided new seats in high quality pre-K programs to 1,509 children and provided 2,976 enhanced slots, with a plan to sustain funding for the 2019-2020 school year. All children in Nevada's state-funded preschool program were supported in part by federal PDG funding and the state plans to shift to use state funds in the future. Most states have plans to sustain PDG funding, though three states, Arizona, Arkansas, and Louisiana, had not solidified a plan at the time of NIEER's data collection. It remains to be seen how the loss of this federal PDG funding will affect access to high-quality preschool for children in low-income families. Given the slow growth in state preschool enrollment in recent years and the current downturn in the economy, the loss of PDG funding may have negative consequences for enrollment in high-quality preschool. It is time for the federal government to step-up and for policy makers to work with their colleagues across the aisle to renew support for high-quality preschool.



FIGURE 11: FEDERAL PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT (PDG) ENROLLMENT AND SPENDING

STATE	PDG-SUPPORTED ENROLLMENT					PDG SPENDING		
	Total	Total new seats	Total enhanced seats	New seats in state pre-K	Enhanced seats in state pre-K	Total	Included in state preschool spending*	Plans to sustain funding?
Alabama**	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	\$0	Yes
Arizona	3,074	2,540	534	0	0	\$20,000,000	\$0	In progress
Arkansas	2,832	1,368	1,464	0	1,464	\$18,706,410	\$4,586,953	In progress
Connecticut	740	0	740	0	740	\$9,793,455	\$9,793,455	Yes
Hawaii	231	231	0	0	0	\$5,158,332 ¹	\$0	Yes
Illinois	4,217	2,348	1,869	2,348	1,869	\$17,919,957	\$17,919,957	Yes
Louisiana	4,060	1,720	2,340	0	0	\$7,908,238 ¹	\$0	In progress
Maine	434	0	434	0	434	\$3,380,342	\$3,380,342	Yes
Maryland	4,485	1,509	2,976	1,509	2,976	\$10,699,813	\$10,699,813	Yes
Massachusetts	787	787	0	0	0	\$15,253,340	\$0	Yes
Montana	1,323	0	1,323	0	0	\$13,175,414 ¹	\$0	No
Nevada	3,519	1,380	2,139	0	2,139	\$15,039,563	\$6,765,180	Yes
New Jersey	1,987	1,295	692	1,295	692	\$17,352,852	\$17,352,852	Yes
New York	2,465	2,465	0	2,465	0	\$25,000,000	\$25,000,000	Yes
Rhode Island***	0	0	0	0	0	\$5,516,739	\$5,516,739	Yes
Tennessee	2,733	0	2,733	0	2,733	\$8,826,865 ¹	\$8,826,865 ¹	Yes
Vermont	496	0	496	0	496	\$4,926,495 ¹	\$4,926,495 ¹	Yes
Virginia	3,770	1,485	2,285	0	2,285	\$18,875,218	\$1,219,836	Yes
Total	37,153	17,128	20,025	7,617	15,828	\$217,533,033	\$115,988,488	

Note: Data come from the survey of state preschool administrators and states' PDG Annual Performance Reports unless otherwise noted. Where possible, PDG funding is reported for the 2018-2019 school year, but some states can only report information for the calendar year.

In some PDG states, NIEER's calculation of state spending per child can be distorted compared to other years by PDG funding. State spending is divided by total enrollment, which includes children supported entirely and/or partially by federal PDG funds. For PDG states, the all-reported spending per child may better represent the level of support in comparison to prior years (before PDG).

* Federal PDG funding is included in the total, or all-reported, spending numbers.

**Alabama had a PDG but did not use federal funds during the 2018-2019 school year. State funds were used to support enrollment previously funded by PDG.

*** Rhode Island used PDG funds to support PD/TA and ECMH contracts. Enrollment was supported by state funds.

¹ The PDG funding amount was not reported; instead it was estimated based on information reported in 2017-2018.

In 2018, HHS funded another round of grants with a name similar to the PDG, the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) award. This new funding was provided for state administrative work to support systems building, rather than for direct services to preschool children. In December 2018, 46 states and territories received one-year planning awards to develop a comprehensive needs assessment and strategic plan to align birth through five systems in the state. These grants ranged from \$538,000 to \$10.6 million, with a total federal investment of almost \$250 million.

In December 2019, twenty states received PDG B-5 renewal grants to implement the strategic plans created with the planning grant, which represented an additional federal investment of \$216 million annually for three years. Additionally, six states and territories were awarded initial planning grants in the 2019 round to conduct a needs assessment and formulate a strategic plan, adding another \$24 million to federal investments. Unlike the initial PDG awards from 2014, these grants are not designed to increase access to high-quality preschool. And as a comparison, the amount of these 2019 grants is just 3% of what states spent on state-funded preschool in 2018-2019.

Figure 12 lists the states and territories that received each of the three different PDG awards. Over the last six years, 48 states, the District of Columbia, and four territories have received and used at least one of the federal PDG awards. Nine states (Alabama, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Virginia) received all three types of PDG funding.

FIGURE 12: SUMMARY OF FEDERAL PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT AWARDS BY STATE

STATE	Preschool Development Grant (total 4 year award) ¹	PDG-B-5 Planning Grant (total 1 year award) ²	PDG-B-5 Renewal Grant (per year) ³	PDG-B-5 Planning Grant (total 1 year award) ³
	Awarded in 2014	Awarded in 2018	Awarded in 2019	
Alabama	\$71,375,218	\$10,620,000	\$11,178,750	
Alaska		\$2,617,353		
Arizona	\$81,375,127	\$1,396,806		
Arkansas	\$61,347,218	\$3,506,749		
California		\$10,620,000	\$13,414,500	
Colorado		\$5,801,793	\$11,171,969	
Connecticut	\$48,941,545	\$8,591,087	\$8,943,000	
Delaware		\$4,236,837		
District of Columbia		\$10,620,000		
Florida		\$8,520,000	\$13,414,500	
Georgia		\$2,961,044	\$3,721,584	
Hawaii	\$16,256,586	\$965,530		
Idaho			\$3,343,592	
Illinois	\$81,096,560	\$3,702,937	\$13,414,500	
Indiana		\$6,895,336		
Iowa		\$2,190,119		
Kansas		\$4,482,305		
Kentucky		\$10,620,000		
Louisiana	\$33,281,953	\$7,100,000	\$11,178,750	
Maine	\$15,800,020	\$1,011,080		
Maryland	\$61,375,120	\$10,618,584	\$8,942,996	
Massachusetts	\$58,230,218	\$1,801,346		
Michigan		\$5,058,813	\$13,413,552	
Minnesota		\$4,705,603	\$8,941,881	
Mississippi		\$10,620,000		
Missouri		\$6,539,934	\$11,176,961	
Montana	\$41,375,218	\$4,208,250		
Nebraska		\$4,141,560		
Nevada	\$43,773,206	\$606,515		
New Hampshire		\$3,843,557	\$8,942,186	
New Jersey	\$71,363,396	\$10,620,000	\$11,178,750	
New Mexico		\$5,374,596		
New York	\$100,453,326	\$8,732,006	\$13,414,500	
North Carolina		\$4,486,842	\$13,414,500	
North Dakota		\$2,275,771		
Ohio		\$10,486,896		
Oklahoma		\$3,116,729		
Oregon		\$4,257,418	\$8,866,711	
Pennsylvania		\$10,553,711		
Rhode Island	\$19,761,049	\$4,194,057	\$8,943,000	
South Carolina		\$3,453,679		
South Dakota				
Tennessee	\$71,019,744			
Texas		\$1,789,455		
Utah		\$538,000		
Vermont	\$25,363,067	\$3,363,695		
Virginia	\$71,375,218	\$9,900,948	\$11,178,750	
Washington		\$5,270,656	\$11,175,769	
West Virginia				
Wisconsin			\$9,999,809	
Wyoming			\$2,098,776	
American Samoa				
Northern Mariana Islands			\$2,125,989	
Guam			\$1,000,000	
Palau				
Puerto Rico			\$5,647,875	
Virgin Islands		\$725,112		
TOTAL FEDERAL INVESTMENT	\$973,563,789	\$247,742,709	\$216,027,109	\$24,216,041

¹ These PDG awards were used to provide direct preschool services to 4-year-olds from low-income families. Data were retrieved from: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/pdg-summary-rpt-final-12202019.pdf>.

² Data were retrieved from: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/pdg-b-5-initiative>.

³ Data were retrieved from: <https://www.ffyf.org/preschool-development-grant-funding-awarded-to-26-states-for-2020/>.

TABLE 2: STATE PRESCHOOL ACCESS BY STATE

ACCESS FOR 4-YEAR-OLDS RANK	STATE	PERCENT OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PREKINDERGARTEN (2018-2019)			NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN STATE PREKINDERGARTEN (2018-2019)		
		4-year-olds	3-year-olds	Total (3s and 4s)	4-year-olds	3-year-olds	Total (3s and 4s)
1	District of Columbia	87%	71%	79%	7,237	6,360	13,597
2	Vermont	78%	65%	72%	4,818	3,830	8,648
3	Oklahoma	76%	3%	40%	40,625	1,567	42,192
4	Florida	75%	0%	37%	173,633	0	173,633
5	Wisconsin	72%	1%	36%	48,943	504	49,446
6	Iowa	66%	3%	34%	26,528	1,244	27,772
7	Georgia	60%	0%	30%	80,493	0	80,493
8	West Virginia	59%	6%	33%	11,913	1,150	13,063
9	New York	54%	2%	28%	121,610	4,692	126,302
10	Texas	49%	9%	29%	203,650	35,271	238,921
11	South Carolina	47%	0.5%	24%	28,137	284	28,421
12	Maine	44%	0%	22%	5,805	0	5,805
13	New Mexico	38%	5%	22%	9,987	1,264	11,251
14	Maryland	38%	5%	22%	27,780	4,000	31,780
15	California	38%	12%	25%	187,565	57,447	245,012
16	Nebraska	34%	15%	24%	9,057	4,021	13,258
17	Arkansas	32%	18%	25%	12,256	7,071	19,327
18	Michigan	32%	0%	16%	37,140	0	37,140
19	Alabama	32%	0%	16%	18,756	0	18,756
20	Illinois	31%	22%	26%	47,360	33,598	80,958
21	Connecticut	31%	9%	20%	11,528	3,330	14,858
22	Louisiana	30%	0%	15%	18,841	0	18,841
23	New Jersey	30%	20%	25%	31,221	21,332	52,553
24	Massachusetts	30%	16%	23%	21,642	11,791	33,433
25	Kentucky	29%	9%	19%	16,497	4,854	21,351
26	Kansas	26%	2%	14%	10,147	913	11,060
27	North Carolina	24%	0%	12%	29,509	0	29,509
28	Colorado	23%	9%	16%	15,616	5,877	21,493
29	Tennessee	22%	0.1%	11%	17,812	67	17,879
30	Pennsylvania	20%	10%	15%	29,141	13,726	42,867
31	Virginia	17%	0%	9%	17,657	0	17,657
32	Oregon	12%	8%	10%	5,767	3,593	9,360
33	Ohio	11%	1%	6%	16,091	1,779	17,870
34	Minnesota	10%	1%	6%	7,613	624	8,237
35	Rhode Island	10%	0%	5%	1,080	0	1,080
36	North Dakota	10%	0%	5%	1,062	0	1,062
37	Alaska	10%	2%	6%	1,043	261	1,304
38	Washington	9%	5%	7%	8,432	5,059	13,491
39	Missouri	6%	1%	4%	4,626	1,097	5,723
40	Nevada	6%	0%	3%	2,139	0	2,139
41	Delaware	5%	2%	4%	581	264	845
42	Mississippi	5%	0%	3%	1,954	0	1,954
43	Arizona	4%	2%	3%	3,424	1,986	5,410
44	Hawaii	2%	0%	1%	415	0	415
45	Montana	2%	0.02%	1%	269	2	271
No program	Idaho	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	Indiana	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	New Hampshire	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	South Dakota	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	Utah	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
No program	Wyoming	0%	0%	0%	0	0	0
	50 states + DC	34%	6%	20%	1,377,484	239,104	1,616,589
	Guam	2%	0%	1%	72	0	72

For details about how these figures were calculated, see the Methodology section and Roadmap to the State Profile Pages.

*Nationwide, an additional 13,215 children of other ages were enrolled in state prekindergarten, for a total of 1,629,804 children.

TABLE 3: CHANGE IN PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT OVER TIME

STATE	ENROLLMENT CHANGES FROM 2001-2002 TO 2018-2019				ENROLLMENT CHANGES FROM 2017-2018 TO 2018-2019			
	Change in 3-year-olds		Change in 4-year-olds		Change in 3-year-olds		Change in 4-year-olds	
	Number	% served	Number	% served	Number	% served	Number	% served
Alabama	0	0.0%	18,000	30.4%	0	0.0%	2,705	4.1%
Alaska	261	2.5%	1,043	9.8%	261	2.5%	728	6.9%
Arizona	1,986	2.2%	-853	-1.8%	53	0.0%	101	0.0%
Arkansas	6,129	15.6%	10,032	25.8%	-166	-0.7%	-5	-0.5%
California	46,523	9.4%	143,031	29.3%	404	0.1%	2,749	0.7%
Colorado	5,147	7.4%	7,296	8.9%	164	0.1%	292	0.0%
Connecticut*	1,795	5.5%	7,111	21.1%	107	0.2%	302	0.7%
Delaware	264	2.4%	-262	-2.7%	5	0.0%	-5	-0.1%
District of Columbia	5,235	51.4%	4,226	43.3%	297	-1.8%	-32	2.3%
Florida	0	0.0%	173,633	74.9%	0	0.0%	3,917	-0.1%
Georgia	0	0.0%	16,880	6.7%	0	0.0%	-43	-0.7%
Hawaii	0	0.0%	415	2.3%	0	0.0%	42	0.3%
Idaho	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Illinois	19,500	13.5%	8,458	9.4%	280	0.0%	5,738	3.8%
Indiana	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Iowa	733	1.7%	24,972	61.6%	-49	-0.1%	626	0.9%
Kansas	913	2.4%	7,917	20.3%	913	2.4%	-3,875	-9.8%
Kentucky	-18	-0.6%	3,680	5.6%	-506	-0.9%	587	0.8%
Louisiana	0	0.0%	11,322	18.5%	0	0.0%	-70	-0.6%
Maine	0	0.0%	4,365	34.3%	0	0.0%	254	2.0%
Maryland	2,592	3.4%	9,406	12.8%	426	0.5%	192	0.3%
Massachusetts	2,359	4.4%	12,210	18.1%	-617	-0.9%	-80	-0.2%
Michigan	0	0.0%	10,663	12.6%	0	0.0%	-185	-0.6%
Minnesota*	-191	-0.4%	6,343	8.6%	-84	-0.1%	649	0.7%
Mississippi	0	0.0%	1,954	5.2%	0	0.0%	114	0.3%
Missouri	-1,449	-2.0%	940	1.2%	385	0.5%	2,960	3.9%
Montana	2	0.0%	269	2.1%	-12	-0.1%	4	0.0%
Nebraska	4,077	14.8%	8,701	32.2%	-38	-0.4%	346	0.7%
Nevada	-111	-0.4%	1,818	4.6%	-232	-0.6%	269	0.7%
New Hampshire	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
New Jersey	8,547	9.0%	7,340	9.2%	381	0.4%	1,488	1.6%
New Mexico	794	3.1%	9,617	36.9%	373	1.5%	1,759	7.0%
New York	-1,143	-0.3%	58,111	29.3%	971	0.4%	3,759	2.9%
North Carolina	0	0.0%	28,269	22.7%	0	0.0%	1,124	0.6%
North Dakota	0	0.0%	1,062	9.9%	0	0.0%	97	0.6%
Ohio	-7,935	-5.2%	2,206	2.4%	42	0.0%	-85	-0.1%
Oklahoma	1,576	3.0%	14,746	20.7%	1,576	3.0%	818	1.8%
Oregon	2,484	5.1%	3,178	6.3%	-23	-0.1%	-81	-0.3%
Pennsylvania*	13,726	9.6%	26,591	18.5%	3,742	2.6%	9,415	6.5%
Rhode Island	0	0.0%	1,080	9.9%	0	0.0%	0	-0.1%
South Carolina	-66	-0.2%	12,487	17.7%	94	0.1%	884	0.8%
South Dakota	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Tennessee	-775	-1.1%	16,054	19.4%	-263	-0.3%	-212	-0.4%
Texas	15,530	2.4%	76,067	10.2%	2,703	0.5%	4,733	0.0%
Utah	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Vermont	3,528	59.3%	4,283	69.7%	57	3.0%	294	2.4%
Virginia	0	0.0%	11,779	10.8%	0	0.0%	-302	-0.4%
Washington	3,910	3.9%	3,647	3.1%	587	0.5%	413	0.3%
West Virginia	-618	-2.8%	6,828	35.2%	237	1.3%	-1,803	-7.7%
Wisconsin*	-184	-0.3%	35,439	52.7%	5	0.0%	2,705	3.8%
Wyoming	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
United States	135,115	3.2%	812,354	19.9%	12,067	0.3%	43,286	0.9%
Guam	0	0.0%	72	2.3%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%

* At least one program in 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 the table are estimates.

TABLE 4: 2018-2019 ENROLLMENT OF 3- AND 4-YEAR-OLDS IN STATE PRESCHOOL, PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION, AND FEDERAL AND STATE HEAD START

STATE	PRE-K + PRE-K SPECIAL EDUCATION				PRE-K + PRE-K SPECIAL EDUCATION + HEAD START ^{††}			
	3-year-olds		4-year-olds		3-year-olds		4-year-olds	
	Number enrolled	% of state population	Number enrolled	% of state population	Number enrolled	% of state population	Number enrolled	% of state population
Alabama [†]	1,006	1.7%	19,238	32.5%	6,654	11.1%	23,629	39.9%
Alaska*	643	6.1%	1,669	15.8%	1,846	17.4%	3,011	28.4%
Arizona	5,032	5.6%	8,443	9.4%	10,868	12.1%	16,499	18.3%
Arkansas	8,876	22.8%	16,006	41.7%	12,583	32.4%	18,861	49.1%
California	73,526	14.8%	200,600	40.4%	109,949	22.1%	234,809	47.3%
Colorado	8,820	12.9%	19,420	28.5%	12,414	18.2%	23,979	35.2%
Connecticut* ^{††}	5,431	14.4%	13,454	35.7%	7,378	19.6%	14,870	39.5%
Delaware	867	7.8%	1,399	12.7%	1,579	14.2%	2,346	21.2%
District of Columbia [†]	6,360	71.4%	7,237	87.3%	6,360	71.4%	7,237	87.3%
Florida*	7,185	3.1%	173,633	74.9%	22,078	9.5%	191,290	82.5%
Georgia [†]	2,515	1.9%	82,623	61.7%	13,998	10.4%	86,643	64.7%
Hawaii	641	3.7%	1,117	6.2%	1,634	9.3%	2,408	13.5%
Idaho	765	3.2%	1,102	4.7%	1,956	8.1%	2,982	12.6%
Illinois [†]	34,033	21.9%	51,912	33.9%	44,783	28.8%	63,296	41.3%
Indiana	3,954	4.6%	5,356	6.3%	9,133	10.6%	11,670	13.7%
Iowa [†]	2,101	5.2%	27,373	67.8%	4,380	10.8%	28,588	70.8%
Kansas*	3,491	9.1%	13,583	34.9%	5,655	14.7%	16,559	42.6%
Kentucky [†]	4,854	8.7%	16,497	29.5%	10,566	18.9%	22,309	39.9%
Louisiana*	692	1.1%	19,880	32.1%	11,334	18.3%	26,945	43.4%
Maine [†]	555	4.2%	5,977	45.3%	1,532	11.7%	6,476	49.1%
Maryland* [†]	6,920	9.3%	29,828	40.7%	11,046	14.9%	32,894	44.9%
Massachusetts [†]	11,791	16.2%	21,766	29.8%	15,837	21.8%	24,466	33.5%
Michigan [†]	3,888	3.3%	38,468	32.9%	15,986	13.7%	43,962	37.6%
Minnesota**	3,610	5.0%	13,046	17.9%	8,491	11.7%	17,512	24.1%
Mississippi [†]	531	1.4%	3,776	10.0%	10,070	26.7%	12,967	34.4%
Missouri	4,146	5.5%	10,141	13.4%	10,009	13.2%	15,174	20.0%
Montana*	127	1.0%	534	4.2%	1,875	14.6%	2,649	20.8%
Nebraska [†]	4,201	15.4%	9,057	33.7%	4,996	18.3%	9,835	36.6%
Nevada	1,738	4.5%	4,624	12.3%	2,998	7.8%	5,810	15.4%
New Hampshire	934	7.1%	1,157	8.9%	1,506	11.4%	1,763	13.5%
New Jersey [†]	26,773	25.5%	38,330	36.4%	30,698	29.2%	41,724	39.6%
New Mexico	2,449	9.6%	10,901	41.8%	6,149	24.0%	14,628	56.2%
New York [†]	20,632	9.0%	131,173	58.1%	37,923	16.5%	139,609	61.9%
North Carolina [†]	3,546	2.9%	33,560	27.1%	10,778	8.7%	38,294	31.0%
North Dakota*	384	3.5%	1,576	14.7%	1,389	12.5%	2,873	26.8%
Ohio	6,483	4.6%	22,699	16.0%	19,770	13.9%	37,363	26.3%
Oklahoma	2,290	4.3%	40,625	76.3%	10,562	20.0%	46,060	86.5%
Oregon	5,502	11.5%	8,305	17.2%	8,839	18.5%	11,904	24.7%
Pennsylvania*	20,965	14.6%	39,024	27.0%	31,609	22.0%	52,154	36.1%
Rhode Island	730	6.6%	1,916	17.6%	1,666	15.0%	2,987	27.5%
South Carolina	1,589	2.6%	28,137	47.1%	7,608	12.6%	31,828	53.3%
South Dakota	405	3.2%	695	5.5%	2,046	16.3%	2,667	21.2%
Tennessee [†]	2,394	2.9%	19,664	23.9%	9,100	11.0%	23,984	29.2%
Texas*	37,023	8.9%	203,650	49.4%	68,572	16.5%	234,036	56.8%
Utah	2,473	4.8%	3,342	6.5%	4,658	9.1%	6,066	11.9%
Vermont	3,897	64.6%	4,903	78.3%	4,326	71.7%	5,439	86.8%
Virginia	3,593	3.5%	21,654	21.0%	9,457	9.1%	27,369	26.6%
Washington	7,839	8.4%	12,751	13.7%	12,899	13.8%	18,548	19.9%
West Virginia [†]	1,150	5.8%	11,913	59.4%	3,221	16.3%	12,265	61.2%
Wisconsin**	2,850	4.2%	48,943	71.9%	9,336	13.7%	53,471	78.6%
Wyoming	727	9.8%	1,035	14.0%	1,349	18.3%	1,825	24.8%
United States	362,931	9.0%	1,503,723	37.4%	671,452	16.6%	1,776,543	44.2%
Guam	33	1.0%	85	2.7%	187	5.8%	466	14.8%

* These states serve special education children in their state pre-K programs but were not able to provide the number of children for at least one of their programs. Estimates were used based on the average percent of special education students in state pre-K across all programs and enrollment numbers for each program.

** These states serve special education children in their state-funded Head Start pre-K programs but were not able to provide the number of children. Estimates were used based on the percent of children with IEPs in Head Start in the state as reported by the PIR.

[†] At least one program in these states was able to report the number of children enrolled in state pre-K and Head Start. This information was used to estimate an unduplicated count of Head Start enrollment.

^{††} Totals can overestimate public enrollment in state pre-K, pre-K special education, and Head Start as some or all of Head Start children may be served in a state's pre-K program and many states could not report this information.

For details about how these figures were calculated see the Methodology section and the Roadmap to the State Profile Pages.

TABLE 5: 2018-2019 STATE PRESCHOOL QUALITY STANDARDS

STATE/ PROGRAM	Early learning & development standards	Curriculum supports	Teacher has BA	Specialized training in pre-K	Assistant teacher has CDA or equiv.	Staff professional development	Class size 20 or lower	Staff-child ratio 1:10 or better	Vision, hearing, & health screening & referral	Continuous quality improvement system	New Quality Standards Checklist Sum 2018-2019
Alabama	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Alaska		✓									1
Arizona	✓	✓								✓	3
Arkansas	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	8
California CSPP	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	6
California TK	✓	✓	✓								3
Colorado	✓			✓			✓	✓			4
Connecticut CDCC	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			5
Connecticut SR	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			5
Connecticut Smart Start	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			6
Delaware	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
District of Columbia	✓	✓							✓	✓	4
Florida	✓						✓				2
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	8
Hawaii	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Illinois	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Iowa Shared Visions	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓		6
Iowa SWVPP	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Kansas Preschool Pilot	✓	✓	✓					✓			4
Kansas PA AR	✓	✓	✓					✓			4
Kentucky	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Louisiana 8(g)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	7
Louisiana LA 4	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Louisiana NSECD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Maine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Maryland	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Massachusetts UPK	✓	✓		✓				✓		✓	6
Massachusetts Chapter 70	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓	5
Michigan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Minnesota HdSt	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		8
Minnesota VPK/SRP	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		5
Mississippi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Missouri PP	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Missouri Pre-K FF	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			5
Montana		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	6
Nebraska	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	8
Nevada	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	7
New Jersey Abbott	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
New Jersey ECPA	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
New Jersey ELLI	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
New Mexico	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
New York	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	7
North Carolina	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
North Dakota	✓		✓								2
Ohio	✓	✓		✓					✓	✓	5
Oklahoma	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Oregon Pre-K	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		8
Oregon Preschool Promise	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			5
Pennsylvania RTL	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			5
Pennsylvania HSSAP	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		6
Pennsylvania K4 & SBPK	✓	✓	✓						✓		4
Pennsylvania PKC	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Rhode Island	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
South Carolina	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	7
Tennessee	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Texas			✓	✓					✓		3
Vermont	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Virginia	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	6
Washington	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	8
West Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Wisconsin 4K		✓	✓	✓							3
Wisconsin HdSt	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		7
TOTAL	58	57	37	51	17	13	46	50	39	39	
Guam	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	6

TABLE 6: PRE-K RESOURCES PER CHILD ENROLLED BY STATE

STATE	Resource rank based on state spending	State \$ per child enrolled in preschool	Change in state per child spending from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 Adjusted dollars	Total state preschool spending in 2018-2019	Change in total state spending from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 Adjusted dollars	State reported non-state funds	All reported \$ per child enrolled in preschool
District of Columbia	1	\$18,669	\$497	\$256,938,561	\$11,760,137	Yes	\$19,710
New Jersey	2	\$13,172	-\$311	\$692,241,537	\$8,856,569	Yes	\$13,502
Oregon	3	\$9,820	-\$183	\$91,917,617	-\$2,880,539	No	\$9,820
Washington	4	\$8,969	-\$201	\$121,004,051	\$6,454,018	No	\$8,969
Connecticut	5	\$8,786	\$902	\$131,864,893	\$16,866,664	No	\$8,786
Montana	6	\$8,492	-\$220	\$2,887,242	\$221,278	Yes	\$9,633
California	7	\$8,253	\$324	\$2,027,027,473	\$105,860,705	Yes	\$8,427
West Virginia	8	\$7,316	\$575	\$99,009,024	-\$2,784,511	Yes	\$11,052
Delaware	9	\$7,277	-\$260	\$6,149,300	-\$219,917	No	\$7,277
Hawaii	10	\$7,208	-\$5	\$2,991,420	\$300,784	No	\$7,208
Vermont*	11*	\$6,807*	-\$51*	\$61,006,297*	\$547,827*	Yes*	\$8,164*
Rhode Island	12	\$6,675	\$691	\$7,209,482	\$746,322	Yes	\$11,784
New York	13	\$6,668	-\$119	\$842,225,288	\$17,033,873	Yes	\$6,912
Michigan	14	\$6,586	-\$182	\$244,600,000	-\$8,022,571	No	\$6,586
Minnesota	15	\$6,570	\$51	\$54,114,602	\$4,105,137	No	\$6,570
Pennsylvania	16	\$6,563	-\$1,583	\$293,749,908	\$45,078,547	No	\$6,563
New Mexico	17	\$6,060	\$6	\$68,184,800	\$12,976,400	No	\$6,060
Arkansas	18	\$5,612	-\$115	\$113,276,553	-\$4,800,418	Yes	\$9,332
Alaska	19	\$5,521	-\$5,001	\$7,200,000	\$3,885,559	No	\$5,521
North Carolina	20	\$5,450	-\$172	\$160,828,280	\$1,245,989	Yes	\$9,162
Alabama	21	\$5,116	\$118	\$95,962,050	\$15,729,732	Yes	\$6,257
Kentucky	22	\$4,925	\$250	\$105,163,876	\$5,718,259	Yes	\$8,453
Tennessee	23	\$4,841	\$41	\$86,552,900	-\$1,551,601	Yes	\$6,266
Illinois	24	\$4,746	-\$25	\$385,174,818	\$26,699,373	Yes	\$5,811
Louisiana	25	\$4,701	-\$207	\$88,579,785	-\$4,238,469	Yes	\$4,793
Georgia	26	\$4,539	-\$31	\$365,326,541	-\$2,660,448	No	\$4,539
Oklahoma	27	\$4,264	\$490	\$181,685,479	\$31,460,481	Yes	\$9,096
Maryland	28	\$4,184	\$80	\$134,159,629	\$4,972,504	Yes	\$8,432
Arizona	29	\$4,013	-\$185	\$21,712,929	-\$356,383	No	\$4,013
Ohio	30	\$4,000	-\$144	\$71,480,000	-\$2,755,199	No	\$4,000
Virginia	31	\$3,967	-\$18	\$70,049,572	-\$1,519,203	Yes	\$6,299
Nevada	32	\$3,669	-\$500	\$7,848,995	-\$1,202,408	Yes	\$6,832
Maine	33	\$3,634	\$91	\$22,220,882	\$2,213,552	Yes	\$8,414
Texas	34	\$3,579	-\$108	\$854,984,186	\$1,609,841	Yes	\$3,640
Wisconsin**	35	\$3,402	-\$658	\$175,620,801	-\$22,488,770	Yes	\$6,110
Iowa***	36	\$3,375	-\$99	\$89,752,273	-\$356,665	Yes	\$3,516
Missouri	37	\$3,330	-\$1,388	\$19,274,567	\$8,054,483	No	\$3,330
South Carolina	38	\$2,888	-\$32	\$82,651,532	\$2,304,654	Yes	\$3,138
Colorado	39	\$2,787	\$161	\$61,161,584	\$4,842,826	Yes	\$4,525
Massachusetts	40	\$2,716	\$443	\$101,170,969	\$15,273,807	Yes	\$3,430
Mississippi	41	\$2,298	\$60	\$4,490,818	\$372,178	Yes	\$9,457
Florida	42	\$2,253	-\$66	\$391,215,901	-\$2,342,412	No	\$2,253
Kansas	43	\$2,164	\$784	\$23,930,010	\$4,579,775	No	\$2,164
Nebraska	44	\$1,828	-\$15	\$25,506,522	-\$177,195	Yes	\$8,585
North Dakota	45	\$531	-\$40	\$564,009	\$13,172	No	\$531
Idaho	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	\$0
Indiana	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	\$0
New Hampshire	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	\$0
South Dakota	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	\$0
Utah	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	\$0
Wyoming	No Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	NA	\$0
50 states + DC		\$5,374	-\$3	\$8,750,666,956	\$301,427,739		\$6,188
Guam		\$4,901	-\$394	\$352,876	-\$23,078	No	\$4,901

For details about how these figures were calculated, see the Methodology section and Roadmap to the State Profile Pages.

* Vermont did not report spending information for 2018-2019 so their 2017-2018 spending is used here. They could not break out the state, local, and federal spending (other PDG) from the total amount reported. Therefore, the portions of total spending attributable to state, local, and federal sources were estimated based on K-12 spending.

** Wisconsin 4K could not break out the state and local spending from the total amount reported. Therefore, the portions of total spending attributable to state and local sources were estimated based on information from 2017-2018.

*** 1,413 children with instructional IEPs were served in Iowa's SWPPP program but were funded by sources not reported by the state. Similar to prior years, these children were removed from the per-child spending calculations.

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- ⁶ Per child spending was adjusted for state cost of living using the Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Price Parities from 2017. Retrieved from: <https://apps.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?acrdn=8&isuri=1&reqid=70&step=1#acrdn=8&isuri=1&reqid=70&step=1>