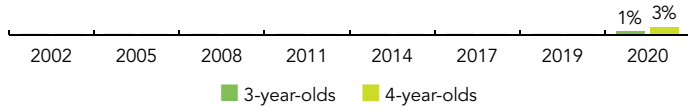


# Utah

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2020 DOLLARS)



## OVERVIEW

Utah preschool enrolled 2,258 children in 2019-2020, the first year the state’s program is being included in the Yearbook. State funding totaled \$6,940,000, and state spending per child equaled \$3,074 in 2019-2020. Utah met 2 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

## WHAT’S NEW

In March 2020, state-funded preschool programs were physically closed in public schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but preschool programs run by private providers were able to choose if they would close or stay open. For programs required or choosing to close physically, remote instruction was required.

During the 2019 legislative session, the state of Utah passed SB 166, “School Readiness Amendments,” to improve the coordination of preschool programming. The state appropriated almost \$6 million in general funds to supplement \$3 million in ongoing funding from the High-Quality School Readiness Initiative (HQSR). Combined, these funds support both the Becoming Quality (BQ) grant and the Expanded Student Access School Readiness Grant (continued to fund seats previously funded through the High Quality School Readiness Expansion (HQSR-E) Grant). The state intended to add another \$3 million during the 2020 legislative session, but this funding was cut due to the pandemic. Regardless, with the change from TANF funding to the use of state general funds, Utah met the qualifications of a state preschool program as defined by NIEER for the first time starting in 2019-20.

## BACKGROUND

In 2016, the HQSR-E grant program was established to expand access to high-quality school readiness programs for eligible children. The HQSR-E grant program provided grant funds to LEAs and private providers with existing early education programs deemed high-quality, as determined by the ECERS-3 and some additional rubric criteria. School readiness programs were eligible to apply for HQSR-E funding if they provided services to economically disadvantaged 4-year-old children, could illustrate how funds would be used to expand their preschool programs, and were deemed high-quality based on the criteria noted above. The HQSR-E program ended in June 2019 but was replaced by the Expanded Student Access to High Quality School Readiness (ESA) grant program.

With the passing of SB 166, the School Readiness Board governs both the BQ and ESA grant programs for both public and private providers. The BQ program provides funding to help existing preschool programs increase elements of high-quality. The ESA program allows high quality preschool programs to expand access and provide seats to eligible students. An eligible student is one who is economically disadvantaged and whose parent or guardian reports they also have experienced at least one risk factor (mother is 18 or younger, parents with a low reading ability, exposure to substance abuse, etc.) or a student that is an English learner.

This new legislation also codified Utah’s UPSTART Program. The program provides a home-based, technology-delivered kindergarten readiness program to children throughout the state, and prioritizes children from low-income families. The program includes an annual independent evaluation contracted by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE).

In May 2020 the new Utah Early Learning Standards: Ages 3-5 were approved by the USBE. The writing committee consisted of professionals working in higher education, Head Start programs, the Office of Child Care, public preschool coordinators, and preschool general and special educators. USBE staff collaborated with other agencies and early childhood professionals to provide professional learning during the 20-21 school year to encourage and assist with the implementation of the new standards. The Utah Early Learning Standards: Ages 3-5 provide essential standards that are developmentally appropriate in eight content areas including English Language Arts, Fine Arts, Health Education, Lifelong Learning Practices, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, and Social Studies. Programs are expected to fully implement the new standards starting in the 21-22 school year.

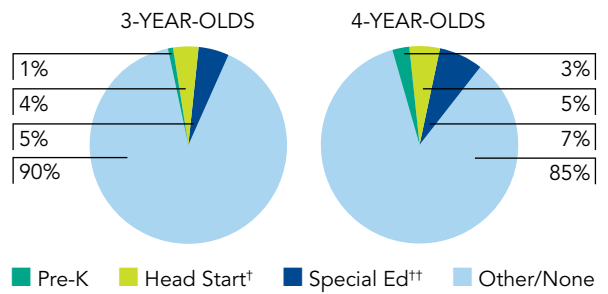
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
44	28	37	42	2

# UTAH EXPANDED STUDENT ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAMS GRANT PROGRAM

## ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment .....	2,258
School districts that offer state program .....	32%
Income requirement .....	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation .....	Determined locally
Operating schedule .....	Determined locally
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	6,800
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	4,764
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	0

## PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



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

## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	UT PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, horizontally aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<b>Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process	<b>Approval process &amp; supports</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	CDA or AA (ECE not required)	<b>BA</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, Elem. Ed., ECE SpEd, SpEd	<b>Specializing in pre-K</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None	<b>CDA or equivalent</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	Coaching	<b>For teachers &amp; assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	<b>20 or lower</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 4-year-olds)	<b>1:10 or better</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	None	<b>Vision, hearing &amp; health screenings; &amp; referral</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations determined locally; Data used for program improvement	<b>Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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



## RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .....	\$6,940,000
Local match required? .....	No
State Head Start spending .....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$3,074
All reported spending per child enrolled* .....	\$3,074

\* 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

