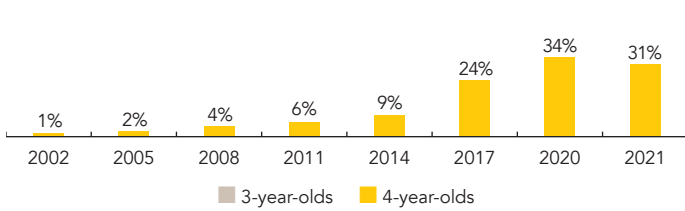
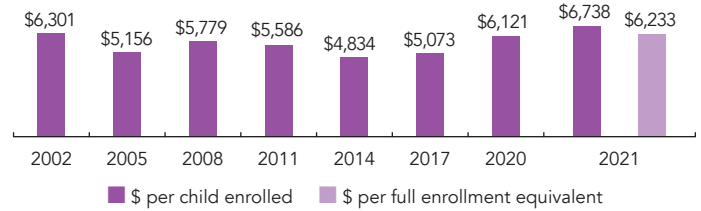


Alabama

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2021 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2020-2021 school year, as the COVID-19 pandemic continued, Alabama First Class Pre-K (FCPK) enrolled 18,906 children, a decrease of 1,533 children from the prior year. The program had a total capacity to serve 22,284 preschoolers. State funding totaled \$126,450,264 with an additional \$947,813 in federal recovery funds, up \$2,293,314 (2%) adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$6,738 (including federal recovery funds) in 2020-2021, up \$618 from 2019-2020, adjusted for inflation. In addition to the school year program, Alabama offered a summer learning program for 708 outgoing preschoolers that lasted up to 8 weeks. State spending for the summer program totaled \$348,381. Alabama met 10 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a mix of in-person and remote instruction throughout the 2020-2021 school year and into the 2021-2022 school year. The state developed systems to overcome some of the COVID-19-related challenges, including providing meals for all students in the program (virtual and in person), developing innovative ways to recruit and enroll students, providing electronic devices for students, and continuing virtual child assessments into the 2021-2022 school year. Alabama also utilized \$947,813 in CARES funding for FCPK during the 2020-2021 school year.

BACKGROUND

FCPK is a grant program administered by the Office of School Readiness within the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECE) under the Governor's Office. The program funds full-day preschool education for all 4-year-old children in every county in a variety of settings, including public schools, private centers, Head Start programs, community organizations, faith-based centers, colleges and universities, and military agencies. Using a multi-pronged approach, the ADECE Office of School Readiness has implemented evidence-based strategies and methods grounded in research to ensure that all 4-year-old children in Alabama have access to excellent, high quality early learning classrooms in their communities.

Funding for FCPK is distributed from the Alabama Education Trust Fund Budget through competitive grants at three levels for pre-K programs: (1) Pre-K Excellence Grants (up to \$46,800) are awarded to help programs meet quality standards and are not intended as the primary source of funding; (2) Pre-K Tiered Grants (\$83,304 to \$96,408 per grant) to classrooms serving a certain share of the free and reduced-price lunch eligible child population and are primary sources of pre-K funding; (3) New Classroom or Plus Grants (\$120,000 to \$150,000 per grant) cover costs of materials, equipment, furnishings, and general operating expenses in new classrooms for one year. Grantees must provide at least a 25% match to the awards locally, which can include sliding-scale fee revenue.

All teachers in FCPK classrooms must center their instructional strategies, classroom environment and activities in accordance with the Alabama First Class Framework. All FCPK classrooms are supported by a coach and monitor to support continuous improvement. Alabama requires each classroom to have a lead teacher with a minimum of a bachelor's degree in an early childhood-related field. Assistant teachers, who are also required for every classroom, must have a CDA or equivalent. To support the development of a qualified workforce, high school students are encouraged to complete a CDA while in high school and can use the FCPK classrooms housed in the high schools to satisfy some of the observation hours that are required for the credential. In 2015, the ADECE introduced policies to support salary parity for all pre-K teachers.

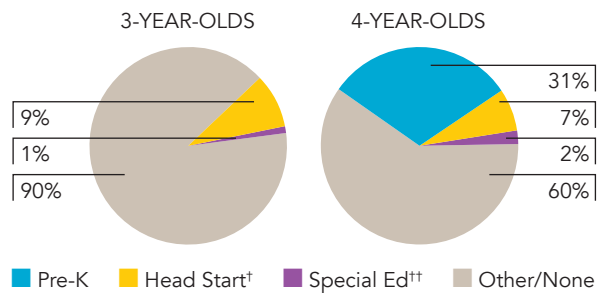
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
16	None Served	18	12	10

ALABAMA FIRST CLASS PRE-K PROGRAM

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment	18,906
School districts that offer state program	100% (counties)
Income requirement	No income requirement
Minimum hours of operation	6.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	3,490
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	10,620
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	AL PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	CDA or 9 ECE/CD credits	CDA or equivalent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	30 hours/year (teachers); 20 hours/year (assistants); PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations; Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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



RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$127,398,077
Local match required?	Yes
State Head Start spending	\$3,820,271
State spending per child enrolled	\$6,738
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$9,729

* 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

