

# Georgia's Pre-K: Midpoint in Early Learning



Georgia's Pre-K Program is a voluntary, free program available to all of Georgia's four-year-olds regardless of parental income. Approximately **1.6 million Georgia students** have been served by Georgia's Pre-K since it began in **1992**. The program continues to be nationally recognized for its success.

**80,825 kids**

enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K in the 2015-16 school year.

Representing



of all four-year-olds in Georgia.

Georgia's Pre-K operates in all of the state's

**159 counties** in **1,837 locations**

which operate

**3,834 Pre-K Classes**

— Approximately —



are located in a public school system

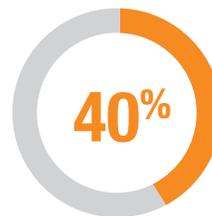


are located in private centers



Georgia is one of only eight states and D.C. that provide high-quality care to more than **50% of 4-year-olds**.

## Demand is Still High



of Georgia's 4-year-olds are *not* currently enrolled. Some receive supplemental forms of care, while others receive no care at all.

At the end of the 2016-17 school year, there still were **4,609 kids on the waitlist**.

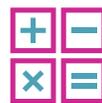
## Georgia's Pre-K Improves Outcomes

In 2011, the Georgia General Assembly began a multi-year evaluation led by the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. So far, the study has found that children enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K Program:

- ✓ **Are more prepared for Kindergarten** compared to four-year-olds in other forms of care
- ✓ **Earn higher grades** and retain more of what they learn
- ✓ Spanish speaking children showed **growth in both English and Spanish**



Children in Georgia's Pre-K showed significant growth across all learning domains including:



**Math Skills**



**Language & Literacy Skills**



**Social-emotional Skills**

These gains happened for all students, regardless of gender and income differences.

## About Georgia's Pre-K



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Administered by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning



Full day program

Maximum of

22

kids per class



Operates 180 days a year



Required to use the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)



Hearing, vision, and dental screenings are required



Required to have a lead teacher and assistant teacher



All Pre-K lead and assistant teachers must meet credential requirements



497 of the 1,837 centers are Quality Rated, a voluntary, quality rating system for early and child care centers.

## Funding Georgia's Pre-K

\$321  
MILLION

GA Lottery dollars were allocated to Georgia's Pre-K in 2016

For the 80,825 children enrolled in the 2015-16 school year



\$3,891



was spent per child

Although spending per child has risen since the recession, recent spending lags behind 2002 levels **by more than \$1,800 per child.\***

\*Adjusted for inflation

In 2016, the Georgia General Assembly approved a \$34 million increase for Pre-K salaries. Despite recent increases, Pre-K teacher salaries are lower than similar professions. Assistant teachers make \$15,873/year. The salary for lead teachers for the 2018 school year range from:

2-yr Degree	4-yr Degree	4-yr Degree & Certified	Masters Degree
\$21,500	\$27,000	\$36,000	\$40,000

In comparison, the average wage for **Kindergarten teachers** in Georgia is:

\$52,630



Research shows a significant factor in an early childhood teacher's decision to leave the profession is **low pay.**



**High turnover rates** have been linked to lower program quality and shown to negatively impact a child's social and emotional development and relationships between teachers, children, and parents.



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