

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

KODY H. KINSLEY
SECRETARY

July 8, 2024

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

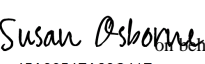
Mr. Brian Matteson, Director
Fiscal Research Division
Suite 619, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

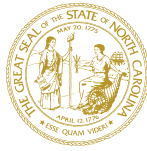
Dear Director Matteson:

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9D.1.(f) requires the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), to submit an annual report on the NC Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) program to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the Department is pleased to submit the attached report.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Karen Wade, Director of Policy, at Karen.Wade@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

on behalf of Kody H. Kinsley
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Kody H. Kinsley
Secretary



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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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The Honorable Joyce Krawiec, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 308, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

The Honorable Donny Lambeth, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 303, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

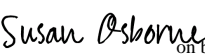
The Honorable Larry Potts, Chair
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on
Health and Human Services
North Carolina General Assembly
Room 307B1, Legislative Office Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

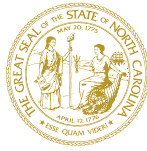
Dear Chairmen:

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9D.1.(f) requires the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), to submit an annual report on the NC Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) program to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the Department is pleased to submit the attached report.

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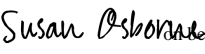
Ms. Kristin Walker
State Budget Director
Room 5200, Administration Building
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Director Walker:

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9D.1.(f) requires the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), to submit an annual report on the NC Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) program to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division. Pursuant to the provisions of law, the Department is pleased to submit the attached report.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Karen Wade, Director of Policy, at Karen.Wade@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

Susan Osborne, on behalf of Kody H. Kinsley
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Kody H. Kinsley
Secretary

**Annual NC Pre-K Report
State Fiscal Year 2022-2023**

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9D.1.(f)



**Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health
and Human Services**

Office of State Budget and Management

Fiscal Research Division

**By
North Carolina Department of Health and
Human Services**

July 8, 2024

Reporting Requirements

Session Law 2023-134, Section 9D.1.(f) requires the Division of Child Development and Early Education to submit an annual report no later than March 15 of each year to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall include the following:

- (1) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K Program by county.
- (2) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K Program who have never been served in other early education programs such as childcare, public or private preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, or early intervention programs.
- (3) The expected NC Pre-K expenditures for the programs and the source of the local contributions.
- (4) The results of an annual evaluation of the NC Pre-K Program.

The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K Program by county:

In Program Year 2022-2023, there were a total of 29,184 children participating in NC Pre-K services, see below for the distribution by county.

County	# Total Children	Percent
Alamance	539	1.85
Alexander	71	0.24
Alleghany	74	0.25
Anson	116	0.40
Ashe	86	0.29
Avery	66	0.23
Beaufort	134	0.46
Bertie	79	0.27
Bladen	191	0.65
Brunswick	239	0.82
Buncombe	463	1.59
Burke	405	1.39
Cabarrus	386	1.32
Caldwell	275	0.94
Camden	56	0.19
Carteret	206	0.71
Caswell	76	0.26
Catawba	419	1.44
Chatham	202	0.69
Cherokee	65	0.22
Chowan	92	0.32
Clay	53	0.18
Cleveland	490	1.68

County	# Total Children	Percent
Columbus	302	1.03
Craven	256	0.88
Cumberland	1444	4.94
Currituck	50	0.17
Dare	147	0.50
Davidson	355	1.22
Davie	167	0.57
Duplin	345	1.18
Durham	614	2.10
Edgecombe	236	0.81
Forsyth	757	2.59
Franklin	159	0.54
Gaston	877	3.01
Gates	36	0.12
Graham	39	0.13
Granville	154	0.53
Greene	113	0.39
Guilford	2240	7.68
Halifax	222	0.76
Harnett	392	1.34
Haywood	154	0.53
Henderson	138	0.47
Hertford	133	0.46
Hoke	310	1.06
Hyde	13	0.04
Iredell	366	1.25
Jackson	83	0.28
Johnston	343	1.18
Jones	64	0.22
Lee	317	1.09
Lenoir	158	0.54
Lincoln	299	1.02
Macon	103	0.35
Madison	26	0.09
Martin	95	0.33
McDowell	244	0.84
Mecklenburg	1657	5.68
Mitchell	0	0.00
Montgomery	208	0.70
Moore	64	0.22
Nash	331	1.13
New Hanover	647	2.22

County	# Total Children	Percent
Northampton	82	0.28
Onslow	684	2.34
Orange	239	0.82
Pamlico	47	0.16
Pasquotank	170	0.58
Pender	307	1.05
Perquimans	37	0.13
Person	142	0.49
Pitt	595	2.04
Polk	93	0.32
Randolph	401	1.37
Richmond	242	0.83
Robeson	593	2.03
Rockingham	255	0.87
Rowan	330	1.13
Rutherford	287	0.98
Sampson	367	1.26
Scotland	314	1.08
Stanly	260	0.89
Stokes	154	0.53
Surry	271	0.93
Swain	124	0.42
Transylvania	99	0.34
Tyrrell	18	0.06
Union	360	1.23
Vance	257	0.88
Wake	1475	5.05
Warren	60	0.21
Washington	61	0.21
Watauga	108	0.37
Wayne	596	2.04
Wilkes	362	1.24
Wilson	167	0.57
Yadkin	151	0.52
Yancey	38	0.13
Total	29,184	100

The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K Program who have never been served in other early education programs such as childcare, public or private preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, or early intervention programs.

Of the 29,184 children participating in a NC Pre-K in Program Year 2022-2023, 16,636 (57%) were never previously served in other early education programs.

The NC Pre-K expenditures for the programs and the source of local contribution

The SFY 2022-2023 average funds allocated for NC Pre-K Districts by source are listed below. Dollar values for in-kind resources are not included.

	SFY 2022-2023
Total direct service funds allocated	\$1,877,243.26
Smart start resources	\$97,946.68
Head start resources	\$182,181.12
Title 1 resources	\$154,807.14
Preschool Disability resources	\$92,342.86
City count resources	\$41,924.29
Subsidy resources	\$19,304.13
CACFP resources	\$59,826.45
Private provider resources	\$29,647.16

The source of local contributions as certified and reported by NC Pre-K contractors from July 1, 2022 through November 30, 2022 (part year) are noted in the chart below. Certification of expenditures of other resources in each NC Pre-K Program through November 30 is an annual reporting requirement. Certified Other Resources are reported to the Division of Child Development by local contractors each year and should represent up to five (5) months of actual expenditures. These expenditures listed by funding source represent the amount of cash – not in-kind contributions- that has been spent during this time period from other sources to support the NC Pre-K Program. NC Pre-K subcontractors serve children for ten months. If a similar amount of funds were expended for the remaining five months of services, a total of \$116 million of other resources may be expended.

<u>Certified Other Resources</u>	<u>Expenditures Reported through 11/30/22</u>
Title I	\$ 15,142,364
Smart Start	\$ 6,095,765
Child and Adult Care Food Program	\$ 2,927,405

Preschool Disabilities Program	\$ 7,459,333
Head Start	\$15,468,738
Local Appropriations	\$4,452,517
Private Providers	\$ 2,226,006
Other	\$ 4,301,436
Total (Five months)	\$ 58,073,564

The Results of the Annual Evaluation of the NC Pre-K Program¹

The Division of Child Development and Early Education contracts with the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute to conduct an annual evaluation of the NC Pre-K Program. Program evaluation and trend analyses were completed using administrative and descriptive data from three main NC Pre-K databases with the following key findings:

- For SFY 2022-2023, the NC Pre-K Program served over 29,000 children in over 2,079 classrooms.
- Most NC Pre-K classrooms were located in (54%) public school settings, about one-third (33%) private settings, and 13% Head Start.
- Average class size was 17.8 children, which was the same as the average Pre-K classroom size in the 2021-22 school year. Children attended an average of 132 days, representing 78% of the average days of operation (169) or 73% of the 180 intended days of operation.
- Characteristics for children enrolled resembled historic characteristics of children enrolled in NC Pre-K programs; specifically:
 - about half were boys and half girls
 - nearly a quarter (23%) identified as Latinx ethnicity. Nearly one-half were White, over one-third Black or African American, about 7% were multiracial, and fewer than 5% of children were either Native American or Alaskan Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander; children could identify as Latinx in addition to race categories
 - about 79% of the children attending NC Pre-K had at least one parent in the workforce

¹ Leggett T and Zadrozny S. (2024). Findings from the North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten Program. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute.

- children served by the NC Pre-K Program primarily came from low-income families, with 7% eligible for free or reduced-price lunch
- for other eligibility factors, 13% identified as having limited English proficiency, 20% with a developmental/educational need, and 3-7% with either an identified disability, chronic health condition, or military parent
- information on children’s prior placement indicated that over half had never previously been served in any preschool setting and an additional 14% were unserved at the time of enrollment
- For the NC star-rated licenses (the Quality Rating and Improvement System or QRIS in NC), approximately 80% of the sites had a five-star rating and 17% had a four-star rating.
- About 95% of classrooms reported using Creative Curriculum and its companion assessment (Teaching Strategies Gold or the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum). All classrooms reported using an approved developmental screening tool.
- Almost all (over 98%) lead teachers in the NC Pre-K Program in 2022-23 had at least a bachelor’s degree or higher in both public school and private settings. Nearly all teachers in public and private settings had a Birth-Kindergarten (B-K) license (or the equivalent). Relatively few teachers in public school settings (less than 1%) reported no credential. A higher percentage (4%) of teachers in private settings reported no credential.
- Results from trend analyses examined whether there have been any long-term changes in key program characteristics since the NC Pre-K Program (formerly More at Four) became statewide (2003-2004) through the 2022-23 program year, indicating:
 - little change over time in the distribution of NC Pre-K classrooms by setting types
 - fairly consistent patterns over time for children’s prior placement
 - consistent increases in teacher qualifications over time for all aspects of teacher qualifications that were examined (% with bachelor’s degree, % with B-K license, and % with no credential)
 - For lead teacher licensure and credentials, the results indicate two corresponding trends – an increasing trend in the percentage of those with a B-K license and a decreasing trend in the percentage of those with no credential