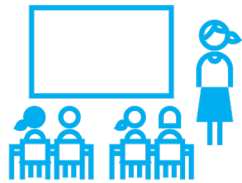


Georgia's Pre-K Program has served more than **2 million students** since it began in **1992**.<sup>1</sup> This voluntary, free program is open to all four-year-olds in Georgia, regardless of parental income. The program continues to be nationally recognized for its success.

## 2022-2023 Participation



**73,462** students<sup>2</sup>

**3,708** classes<sup>3</sup>

Operating in **159** counties in **1,837** locations<sup>4</sup>

At the end of the year, **2,611 kids** were on the waitlist<sup>5</sup>

**45%** of Georgia's Pre-K programs were located public school systems<sup>6</sup>

**55%** of Georgia's Pre-K programs were located private centers<sup>7</sup>

## Program Structure<sup>8</sup> and Highlights



Maximum of 22\* kids per classroom

Full day program, 180 days a year



Lead and assistant teachers must meet credential requirements

Curriculum is based on the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards



In 2021-2022, Georgia ranked **8th** best in the nation for access to pre-k for four-year-olds.<sup>9</sup>

**More than half** of Georgia's Pre-K providers are Quality Rated, a voluntary, quality rating system for early and child care programs.<sup>10</sup>

\*DECAL is conducting a pilot during the 2023-2024 school year for reducing the Pre-K class size from 22 to 20 students. The recommended class size is 1:10.<sup>12</sup>

## How Georgia's Pre-K Program Improves Outcomes

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and the Frank Porter Graham Institute conducted a multi-year evaluation to understand the short- and long-term benefits of Georgia's Pre-K. The study followed children from Georgia's Pre-K through fourth grade and found that children:<sup>11</sup>

- **Are more prepared for kindergarten** compared to four-year-olds who did not attend a Georgia Pre-K program.
- **Sustain gains made in pre-k** through kindergarten. The greatest gains were observed during the pre-k and 4th grade years.

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



Math skills



Language and literacy skills



Social-emotional skills

Gains happened for all students, regardless of gender and income differences, and were shown to be sustained through the end of kindergarten, with another period of higher than expected gains occurring in 4th grade.

# Funding for Georgia's Pre-K Program

Georgia's Pre-K Program is funded by the Georgia Lottery. **\$444 million** lottery dollars were allocated to Georgia's Pre-K for FY24.<sup>13</sup>



Research shows **low pay** is a significant factor in an early childhood teacher's decision to leave the profession.<sup>14</sup> **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.<sup>15</sup>

In 2016, the Georgia General Assembly approved a \$34 million increase for pre-k salaries. Georgia's current pre-k salaries for the 2023-2024 school year are as follows:

Assistant Teacher <sup>16</sup>	4-year degree, Lead Teacher <sup>17</sup>	4-year degree/ certified, Lead Teacher <sup>18</sup>	Master's Degree, Lead Teacher <sup>19</sup>
<b>\$20,190.35</b>	<b>\$34,315.60</b>	<b>\$42,820.73</b>	<b>\$47,343.04</b>



## References for Georgia's Pre-K Program

Suggested citation: Voices for Georgia's Children. (2023). Fact Sheet: Georgia's Pre-K Program. Voices for Georgia's Children. <https://adobe.ly/47xRwqw>.

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