

## KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF NOTE

**Topic:** 2023-2024 Preschool Grant Allotment System and Funding Rates

**Date:** June 2023

**Action Requested:**  Review  Action/Consent  Action/Discussion

**Held In:**  Full Board  Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  Operations

### SUMMARY OF ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD:

Review and approval of the 2023-2024 Preschool Grant Allotment System and Funding Rates.

### COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

The Commissioner recommends that the board approve the preschool per-child rates for 2023-2024. The rates are based upon the budget approved by the 2022 General Assembly.

### APPLICABLE STATUTE OR REGULATION:

KRS 157.3175, 702 KAR 3:250

### BACKGROUND:

*Existing Policy:*

*The state-funded preschool program is available to 3- and 4-year-old children with disabilities and 4-year-olds whose household income falls within 160% of federal poverty guidelines. Children who do not meet eligibility requirements may still participate if space is available. Established in 1990, preschool services are designed to provide children with developmentally appropriate teaching and learning experiences, as well as access to medical, mental health and social services. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) administers this program through a non-competitive state grant allocation process.*

*A formula is used to distribute funding to school districts. Amounts are based on the average number of children served on December 1 and March 1 of the previous academic year. The sum of this average is multiplied by per-child rates approved by the Kentucky Board of Education for the new school year. There is a standard "per-child" rate for three enrollment categories: speech, developmental delay and income eligible children. There is a weighted category for children with severe/multiple disabilities. While funding is based upon a "per-child" rate, funds may be used to support any allowable preschool expenditure in school districts.*

*Between December 1, 2021, and December 1, 2022, total enrollment of preschool students increased from 17,611 to 19,523. While this is an improvement, many children who didn't enroll in preschool during the height of COVID-19 may need additional academic support when they enroll in kindergarten next year.*

*Summary of Issue:*

Each spring, the Kentucky Board of Education establishes the per-child rates for the Kentucky Preschool Program for the upcoming school year based on the appropriation provided by the General Assembly. The following preschool rates for at-risk children and children with disabilities are recommended for the 2023-2024 school year:

At-Risk:	\$3,937
Speech:	\$3,937
Developmental Delay:	\$3,937
Severe:	\$7,481

*Budget Impact:*

The General Assembly appropriated \$84,481,100 to the state-funded preschool program for each year of the 2022-2024 fiscal biennium. The preschool program is level funded for 2023-2024. However, additional funding for the Early Childhood Regional Training Centers (RTCs) was not included in the final enacted budget.

According to the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER), preschool enrollment declined in nearly every state during 2020-2021. The following states experienced more than a 30 percent decline: Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Kentucky and Nevada.

This year Kentucky's enrollment grew over the previous year. The average number of children enrolled on December 1 and March 1 increased from 18,333 in school year 2021-2022 to 20,243 in school year 2022-2023.

**GROUPS CONSULTED AND BRIEF SUMMARY OF RESPONSES:** Staff communicate regularly with multiple stakeholder groups, including the Governor's Office of Early Childhood, the Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Child Care Advisory Council, the Cabinet for Health and Family Services and other advocacy groups such as the Prichard Committee, about action needed to increase quality and access to early learning environments.

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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**Commissioner of Education**

Category: <input type="checkbox"/> Educator Workforce Diversity <input type="checkbox"/> Portrait of a Graduate Partnerships <input type="checkbox"/> Racial Equity Commitment <input type="checkbox"/> Student-Centered Accountability System <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District Support
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