

# 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.

**80,493 kids**

enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K  
in the 2018-19 school year.

Representing



of all  
four-year-olds  
in Georgia.

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

**159** counties in **1,871** locations

which operate

**3,860 Pre-K Classes**

Approximately



are located in a  
public school system



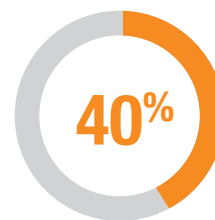
are located in  
private centers

**1% – other** (technical colleges and university systems)



Georgia is one of only nine  
states and D.C. that provides  
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 2018-19 school year, there still were  
**4,602 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 old's who did  
not attend Georgia's Pre-K program

✓ **Sustain gains made in Pre-K** through  
kindergarten and first grade

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 and  
are sustained through the end of first grade.

## About Georgia's Pre-K



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

Administered by 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 Develop-  
ment 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



**659** of the Pre-K centers are Quality Rated, a voluntary,  
quality rating system for early and child care centers.

## Funding Georgia's Pre-K

**\$367  
MILLION**

GA Lottery dollars  
were allocated to  
Georgia's Pre-K  
in 2019

For the 80,493 children enrolled  
in the 2018-19 school year



**\$4,369**

**was spent  
per child**

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 average salary for lead teachers for the 2018 school year was:

**4-yr  
Degree**

**\$31,638**

**4-yr Degree  
& Certified**

**\$40,338**

**Masters  
Degree**

**\$44,338**



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.



Sources: <https://tinyurl.com/y2nraoye>