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 60% 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.

Demand is Still High

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.

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.

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:

✓ Make greater growth than expected for typical developmental growth

✓ 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.

www.georgiavoices.org
About Georgia’s Pre-K

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

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

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.

In comparison, the average wage for kindergarten teachers in Georgia is: $54,080

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