

Federal Prekindergarten Development Grants—Expansion Grant

In 2014, the United States Department of Education issued a Preschool Development Grant competition to help states develop or enhance their capacity to deliver high-quality preschool programs for the most vulnerable families and their children. Preschool Development Grants for expansion enable states that already have robust state preschool programs or that had been awarded a Race to the Top—Early Learning Challenge grant. Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Development applied for the expansion grant and in December of 2014 was awarded \$15 million per year for a four year period to expand high-quality preschool.

Maryland State Department of Education sent invitations to apply as a subgrantee to Head Start programs, non-public nursery schools, licensed child care programs, public pre-k programs, charter schools and programs servicing specialty populations.

The scope of Maryland's plan is statewide, thereby including many high-need communities in all regions of the state, but with a special emphasis on high-need communities in Baltimore City, especially by expanding the highly effective Judy Center comprehensive services model.

The plan uses communities with schools that have a 65 percent FARM rate as the cut-off for determining prioritized needs, but it also intends to recruit income eligible four-year olds into high quality prekindergarten by using four additional needs assessment criteria:

- Elementary schools in school improvement (e.g., Focus or Priority schools);
- Subgrantees in jurisdictions with the highest number of income eligible four-year olds who are not enrolled in prekindergarten;
- Subgrantees in jurisdictions with high numbers of low-income and Hispanic four-year olds enrolled in informal care arrangements; and
- Subgrantees that provide specialized services for income-eligible four-year olds who are medically fragile or need therapeutic nursery services.

Eligible programs must serve four year-old children in a full-day setting at or below **200 percent of federal poverty guidelines** and meet the definition of a "High-Quality Preschool Program."

Definition of a High Quality Prekindergarten Program

High-Quality Preschool Program means an early learning program that includes structural elements that are evidence-based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality, including at a minimum—

- (a) High staff qualifications, including a teacher holding a State certification for teaching in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in any field pursuing residency through the Maryland Approved Alternative Preparation Program (MAAPP), a State-approved alternate pathway, which includes coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood, as well as teaching assistants with appropriate credentials;
- (b) High-quality professional development for all staff;
- (c) A child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1;
- (d) A class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications as outlined in paragraph (a) of this definition;
- (e) A Full-Day program;
- (f) Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities;
- (g) Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry;
- (h) Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities; Show citation box
- (i) Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff;
- (j) Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement;
- (k) On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development; and
- (l) Evidence-based health and safety standards.



Federal Prekindergarten Expansion Grant 2014

Projected Allocations by County & Program Type

County/City	Funding Amounts					Total Number of Children Served
	Local Education Agency	Judy Center	Community Based Programs	Head Start	Total	
Allegany		\$165,000		\$146,880	\$311,880	65
Anne Arundel		\$165,000	\$242,352		\$407,352	98
Baltimore City	\$1,175,040	\$825,000	\$944,752	\$1,009,800	\$3,954,592	714
Baltimore County	\$293,760		\$202,088	\$220,320	\$716,168	152
Caroline	\$807,840				\$807,840	160
Carroll		\$165,000		\$64,424	\$227,424	62
Charles		\$165,000			\$165,000	45
Dorchester	\$352,512				\$352,512	60
Frederick		\$165,000	\$176,216		\$341,216	84
Garrett	\$220,320				\$220,320	40
Harford	\$734,400		\$146,880		\$881,280	180
Howard	\$146,880		\$98,480		\$245,360	85
Montgomery	\$734,400		\$1,683,160		\$2,417,560	390
Prince George's	\$881,280		\$704,400		\$1,585,680	296
Somerset	\$220,320	\$165,000			\$385,320	85
St. Mary's		\$165,000			\$165,000	45
Washington	\$440,640				\$440,640	100
Wicomico	\$146,880	\$330,000	\$146,880		\$623,760	150
Total	\$6,154,272	\$2,310,000	\$4,345,208	\$1,439,424	\$14,248,904	2,811

Note: Rates per children vary on whether the enrollment was newly created, expanded from part-day to full-day or an existing full-day enrollment adding in comprehensive services.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Development, 2014

**Maryland State Department of Education
State and Federal Prek Expansion Comparison Chart**

Criteria	State	Federal
Income Eligibility	<=300% of FPG	<=200% of FPG
Class Size	20 children	20 children
Funding Level	\$5,600/child (for children at or below 300% of FPG); \$1,744 (Federal differential for children at 200% of FPG attending full-day)	\$7,344/child for New full-day attendance slots at 200% of FPG; \$3,672/child for Improved Slots
Daily attendance	Half-day (min. of 2.5 hours); Full-day (min. of 6 hours)	Full-day only (min. of 6 hours)
Yearly attendance	180 days	180 days
Funding Source	Maryland legislation	Federal Grant
High-Quality Definition	NIEER 10 Benchmarks of High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs	Definition of High-Quality Prekindergarten Program
Teacher Qualifications	Certified Teacher	Certified Teacher
Meal Requirements	1 full meal	1 full meal
EXCELS requirement	Level 5 by June 2015	Registered in EXCELS 2015-2016; Level 5 2016-2017
Monitoring	At least once per year	At least once per year

Source: Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Development, February 2015.