

Early Learning Program Comparison Chart

Program Elements	School Readiness	School Readiness Plus	Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten
Purpose	A district or a group of districts may establish a school readiness program for children age three to kindergarten entrance. The purpose of a school readiness program is to prepare children to enter kindergarten.	A district, a charter school, or a group of districts and charter schools may establish a school readiness plus program for children age four to kindergarten entrance. The purpose of a school readiness plus program is to prepare children for success as they enter kindergarten in the following year.	A district, a charter school, a group of districts, a group of charter schools, or a group of districts and charter schools may establish a voluntary pre-kindergarten program. The purpose of a voluntary pre-kindergarten program is to prepare children for success as they enter kindergarten in the following year.
Allocation	Program is funded through state aid to school districts using a formula. Funding is ongoing.	Program is funded through state aid to school districts and charter schools using a formula. Funding is eliminated June 30, 2019	Program is funded through state aid to school districts and charter schools using a formula. Funding is ongoing.
Child Eligibility	<p>At-risk children must be 3 on September 1. Each eligible child must complete a health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under sections 121A.16 to 121A.19; and</p> <p>Has one or more of the following risk factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch; ii. is an English learner; iii. is homeless; iv. has an individualized education program (IEP) or standardized written plan; v. is identified, through health and developmental screenings under sections 121A.16 to 121A.19, with a potential risk factor that may influence learning; or vi. is defined as at risk by the school district. 	<p>A child who is four years of age as of September 1 in the calendar year in which the school year commences and has one or more of the risk factors is eligible to participate in a school readiness plus program free of charge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. qualifies for free or reduced price lunch; ii. is an English language learner; iii. is homeless; iv. has an individualized education program, or individual interagency intervention plan; v. is identified through health and developmental screening under Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.16 to 121.19, with a potential risk factor that may influence learning; vi. is in foster care. <p>Each eligible child must complete a health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under sections 121A.16 to 121A.19 and provide documentation of required immunizations under 121A.15</p>	<p>A child who is four years of age as of September 1 in the calendar year in which the school year commences is eligible to participate in a voluntary pre-kindergarten program free of charge.</p> <p>Each eligible child must complete a health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under sections 121A.16 to 121A.19, and provide documentation of required immunizations under section 121A.15.</p>

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<p>Inclusion of children with disabilities & provision of special education services.</p>	<p>Children with disabilities who have active IEPs are eligible to participate in school readiness. Special education services are provided by appropriately credentialed special education staff.</p> <p>The appropriate instructional setting reported in MARSS for children with IEPs in school readiness is determined by considering the program intensity and whether the majority of special education services are provided within the school readiness program. Appropriate setting values are 31-34.</p>	<p>Children with disabilities who have active IEPs may participate in School Readiness Plus. Special education services are provided by appropriately credentialed special education staff.</p> <p>Children with IEPs are considered grade level EC and generate general education revenue consistent with Minnesota Statute 126C.05.</p> <p>The instructional setting reported in MARSS for children with IEPs in school readiness plus who receive the majority of special education services in the classroom will be a 39.</p> <p>Charter schools with approved applications that receive funding for school readiness plus are responsible for initial evaluations as appropriate and service for any children with disabilities participating in their approved early learning program.</p>	<p>Children with disabilities who have active IEPs may participate in Voluntary PreK. Special education services are provided by appropriately credentialed special education staff.</p> <p>Children with IEPs are considered grade level EC and generate general education revenue consistent with Minnesota Statute 126C.05.</p> <p>The instructional setting reported in MARSS for children with IEPs in Voluntary PreK who receive the majority of special education services in the classroom will be a 30.</p> <p>Charter schools with approved applications that receive funding for voluntary pre-kindergarten are responsible for initial evaluations as appropriate and service for any children with disabilities participating in their approved early learning program.</p>
<p>Number of Hours</p>	<p>No minimum requirement. School districts have the flexibility to offer as few as one day per week, and as many as five days per week.</p>	<p>Minimum of 350 hours per school year. Must provide instructional content and activities that are of sufficient length and intensity to address learning needs including offering a program with at least 350 hours of instruction per school year.</p>	<p>Minimum of 350 hours per school year. Must provide instructional content and activities that are of sufficient length and intensity to address learning needs including offering a program with at least 350 hours of instruction per school year for a pre-kindergarten student.</p>
<p>Ratios & Group Size</p>	<p>Staff-child ratios of one-to-ten and maximum group size of 20 children with the first staff required to be a teacher. Children with IEPs are included calculation of staff-to-child ratio and group size count.</p>	<p>Staff-to-child ratios of one-to-ten and a maximum group size of 20 children with at least one licensed teacher. Children with IEPs are included calculation of staff-to-child ratio and group size count.</p>	<p>Staff-to-child ratios of one-to-ten and a maximum group size of 20 children. Children with IEPs are included calculation of staff-to-child ratio and group size count.</p>

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Program Fees	A district must adopt a sliding fee schedule based on a family's income but must waive a fee for a participant unable to pay. School districts must use school readiness aid for eligible children. Children who do not meet the eligibility requirements in subdivision 15 may participate on a fee-for-service basis.	A child who does not have one or more of the risk factors may participate on a fee-for-service basis. A district must adopt a sliding fee schedule based on a family's income but must waive a fee for a participant unable to pay. School districts and charter schools must use school readiness plus aid for eligible children.	Fees cannot be charged for voluntary pre-kindergarten students.
Program Content	Provide comprehensive program content and intentional instructional practice aligned with the state early childhood learning guidelines and kindergarten standards and based on early childhood research and professional practice that is focused on children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills and development and prepares children for the transition to kindergarten, including early literacy and language skills.	Provide comprehensive program content and intentional instructional practice aligned with the state early childhood learning guidelines and kindergarten standards and based on early childhood research and professional practice that is focused on children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills and development and prepares children for the transition to kindergarten, including early literacy and language skills.	Provide instruction through play-based learning to foster children's social and emotional development, cognitive development, physical and motor development, and language and literacy skills, including the native language and literacy skills of English learners, to the extent practicable. Provide comprehensive program content including the implementation of curriculum, assessment, and instructional strategies aligned with the state early learning standards, and kindergarten through grade three academic standards.
Parent Involvement	Must involve parents in program planning and decision making.	Must involve parents in program planning and decision making.	Involve parents in program planning and transition planning by implementing parent engagement strategies that include culturally and linguistically responsive activities in pre-kindergarten through grade three that are aligned with early childhood family education under section 124D.13.

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Teacher Qualification and Compensation	Teachers knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language development programs, and instruction.	Teachers knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language development programs, and instruction. With at least one licensed teacher.	Teachers knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language programs, and instruction. Provide voluntary pre-kindergarten instructional staff salaries comparable to the salaries of local kindergarten through grade 12 instructional staff.
Supervision	A program provided by a board must be supervised by a licensed early childhood teacher, a certified early childhood educator, or a licensed parent educator.	No statutory requirement regarding supervision.	No statutory requirement regarding supervision.
Program Coordination	<p>Coordinate appropriate kindergarten transition with parents and kindergarten teachers.</p> <p>Coordinate with relevant community-based services.</p> <p>Cooperate with adult basic education programs and other adult literacy programs.</p>	<p>Coordinate appropriate kindergarten transition with parents and kindergarten teachers.</p> <p>Coordinate with relevant community-based services.</p> <p>Cooperate with adult basic education programs and other adult literacy programs.</p>	<p>Coordinate appropriate kindergarten transition with families, community-based pre-kindergarten programs, and school district kindergarten programs.</p> <p>Coordinate with relevant community-based services, including health and social service agencies, to ensure children have access to comprehensive services;</p> <p>Coordinate with all relevant school district programs and services including early childhood special education, homeless students, and English learners.</p>
Professional Development	No statutory requirements regarding professional development	No statutory requirements regarding professional development	Provide high-quality coordinated professional development, training, and coaching for both school district and community-based early learning providers that is informed by a measure of adult-child interactions and enables teachers to be highly knowledgeable in early childhood curriculum content, assessment, native and English language development programs, and instruction.
PreK-3rd Grade Alignment	No statutory requirement regarding pre-kindergarten through grade three alignment.	No statutory requirement regarding pre-kindergarten through grade three alignment.	Implement strategies that support the alignment of professional development, instruction, assessments, and pre-kindergarten through grade three curricula.

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<p>Assessment and Impact Measure and Reporting of Data</p>	<p>Assess each child's cognitive and language skills with a comprehensive child assessment instrument when the child enters and again before the child leaves the program to improve program planning and implementation, communicate with parents, and promote kindergarten readiness.</p>	<p>Assess each child's cognitive and language skills with a comprehensive child assessment instrument when the child enters and again before the child leaves the program to improve program planning and implementation, communicate with parents, and promote kindergarten readiness.</p>	<p>Measure each child's cognitive and social skills using a formative measure aligned to the state's early learning standards when the child enters and again before the child leaves the program, screening and progress monitoring measures, and others from the state-approved menu of kindergarten entry profile measures.</p> <p>Districts and charter schools must include their strategy for implementing and measuring the impact of their voluntary pre-kindergarten program under section 120B.11 and provide results in their world's best workforce annual summary to the commissioner of education.</p>
<p>Mixed Delivery</p>	<p>A district may contract with a charter school or community-based organization to provide eligible children developmentally appropriate services that meet the program requirements in subdivision 3. In the alternative, a district may pay tuition or fees to place an eligible child in an existing program. A district may establish a new program where no existing, reasonably accessible program meets the program requirements in subdivision 3. Services may be provided in a site-based program or in the home of the child or a combination of both. The district may not restrict participation to district residents.</p>	<p>A district or charter school may contract with a charter school, Head Start or child care center, family child care program licensed under Minnesota Statutes section 245A.03, or a community-based organization to provide eligible children with developmentally appropriate services that meet the program requirements in subdivision 2.</p>	<p>A district or charter school may contract with a charter school, Head Start or child care centers, family child care programs licensed under section 245A.03, or a community-based organization to provide eligible children with developmentally appropriate services that meet the program requirements in subdivision 2. Components of a mixed-delivery plan include strategies for recruitment, contracting, and monitoring of fiscal compliance and program quality.</p>
<p>Use of Other Funds</p>	<p>No statutory requirement regarding use of other funds.</p>	<p>No supplanting. For a site first qualifying in fiscal year 2018 or 2019, mixed delivery revenue, including voluntary pre-kindergarten and school readiness plus program revenue, must be used to supplement not</p>	<p>For districts and charters receiving FY2017 funding, see the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program Implementation Manual.</p> <p>No supplanting. For a site first qualifying in fiscal year 2018 or 2019, mixed delivery revenue, including voluntary</p>

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		supplant existing state, federal, and local revenue for pre-kindergarten activities.	pre-kindergarten and school readiness plus program revenue, must be used to supplement not supplant existing state, federal, and local revenue for pre-kindergarten activities.
Application and Reporting	<p>A school readiness program provider must include a biennial plan in the district's world's best workforce plan under section 120B.11, describing how the school readiness program meets the program requirements under subdivision 3.</p> <p>Programs receiving school readiness funds annually must submit a report to the department.</p>	<p>A district or charter school submitting an application under this section must include: (1) a description of the proposed program, including the number of hours per week the program will be offered at each school site or mixed-delivery location;</p> <p>(2) an estimate of the number of eligible children to be served in the program at each school site or mixed-delivery location;</p> <p>(3) the number of children being served that will be new to the program; and</p> <p>(4) a statement of assurances signed by the superintendent or charter school director that the proposed program meets the requirements of subdivision 2.</p> <p>(d) The commissioner must award funding school readiness plus programs across school districts and charter schools in the same manner as for the voluntary pre-kindergarten program.</p> <p>The commissioner must divide all applications for new or expanded programs meeting the requirements of paragraph (a) into four groups as follows: the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts; other school districts located in the metropolitan equity region as defined in section 126C.10, subdivision 28; school districts located in the rural equity region as defined in section 126C.10, subdivision 28; and charter schools. Within each group, the applications must be ordered by rank using a sliding scale based on the following criteria:</p> <p>(1) concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches by school site on October 1</p>	<p>Application process; priority for high poverty schools.</p> <p>To qualify for program approval for fiscal year 2017, a district or charter school must submit an application to the commissioner by July 1, 2016. To qualify for program approval for fiscal year 2018 and later, a district or charter school must submit an application to the commissioner by January 30 of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the program will be implemented. The application must include:</p> <p>(1) a description of the proposed program, including the number of hours per week the program will be offered at each school site or mixed-delivery location;</p> <p>(2) an estimate of the number of eligible children to be served in the program at each school site or mixed-delivery location; and</p> <p>(3) a statement of assurances signed by the superintendent or charter school director that the proposed program meets the requirements of subdivision 2.</p> <p>The commissioner must review all applications submitted for fiscal year 2017 by August 1, 2016, and must review all applications submitted for fiscal year 2018 and later by March 1 of the fiscal year in which the applications are received and determine whether each application meets the requirements of paragraph (a).</p> <p>The commissioner must divide all applications for new or expanded programs meeting the requirements of paragraph (a) into four groups as follows: the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts; other school districts located in the metropolitan equity region as defined in section 126C.10, subdivision 28; school districts located in the</p>

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		<p>of the previous school year. For school district programs to be operated at locations that do not have free and reduced-price lunch concentration data for kindergarten programs for October 1 of the previous school year, including mixed-delivery programs, the school district average concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches must be used for the rank ordering;</p> <p>(2) presence or absence of a three- or four-star Parent Aware rated program within the school district or close proximity of the district. School sites with the highest concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches that do not have a three- or four-star Parent Aware program within the district or close proximity of the district shall receive the highest priority, and school sites with the lowest concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches that have a three- or four-star Parent Aware rated program within the district or close proximity of the district shall receive the lowest priority.</p> <p>(3) whether the district has implemented a mixed delivery system.</p> <p>The aid available for the program as specified in subdivision 6, paragraph (b), must initially be allocated among the four groups based on each group's percentage share of the statewide kindergarten enrollment on October 1 of the previous school year. Within each group, the available aid must be allocated among school sites in priority order until that region's share of the aid limit is reached. If the aid limit is not reached for all groups, the remaining amount must be allocated to the highest priority school sites, as designated under this section, not funded in the initial allocation on a statewide basis.</p> <p>Once a school site is approved for aid under this subdivision, it shall remain eligible for aid if it continues</p>	<p>rural equity region as defined in section 126C.10, subdivision 28; and charter schools. Within each group, the applications must be ordered by rank using a sliding scale based on the following criteria:</p> <p>(1) concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches by school site on October 1 of the previous school year. For school district programs to be operated at locations that do not have free and reduced-price lunch concentration data for kindergarten programs for October 1 of the previous school year, including mixed-delivery programs, the school district average concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches must be used for the rank ordering;</p> <p>(2) presence or absence of a three- or four-star Parent Aware rated program within the school district or close proximity of the district. School sites with the highest concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches that do not have a three- or four-star Parent Aware program within the district or close proximity of the district shall receive the highest priority, and school sites with the lowest concentration of kindergarten students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches that have a three- or four-star Parent Aware rated program within the district or close proximity of the district shall receive the lowest priority.</p> <p>(3) whether the district has implemented a mixed delivery system.</p> <p>The aid available for the program as specified in subdivision 6, paragraph (b), must initially be allocated among the four groups based on each group's percentage share of the statewide kindergarten enrollment on October 1 of the previous school year. Within each group, the available aid must be allocated among school sites in priority order until that region's share of the aid limit is reached. If the aid limit is not reached for all groups, the</p>

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		<p>to meet program requirements, regardless of changes in the concentration of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.</p> <p>If the total aid entitlement approved based on applications submitted under paragraph (a) is less than the aid entitlement limit under subdivision 6, paragraph (b), the commissioner must notify all school districts and charter schools of the amount that remains available within 30 days of the initial application deadline under paragraph (a), and complete a second round of allocations based on applications received within 60 days of the initial application deadline.</p> <p>Procedures for approving applications submitted under paragraph (f) shall be the same as specified in paragraphs (a) to (d), except that the allocations shall be made to the highest priority school sites not funded in the initial allocation on a statewide basis.</p>	<p>remaining amount must be allocated to the highest priority school sites, as designated under this section, not funded in the initial allocation on a statewide basis. Once a school site is approved for aid under this subdivision, it shall remain eligible for aid if it continues to meet program requirements, regardless of changes in the concentration of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunches.</p> <p>If the total aid entitlement approved based on applications submitted under paragraph (a) is less than the aid entitlement limit under subdivision 6, paragraph (b), the commissioner must notify all school districts and charter schools of the amount that remains available within 30 days of the initial application deadline under paragraph (a), and complete a second round of allocations based on applications received within 60 days of the initial application deadline.</p> <p>Procedures for approving applications submitted under paragraph (f) shall be the same as specified in paragraphs (a) to (d), except that the allocations shall be made to the highest priority school sites not funded in the initial allocation on a statewide basis.</p>