

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children



Fact Sheet



Iowa Department of Education
July 2019



MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR QUALITY LEARNING

Iowa's Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children (SWVPP) is an important part of the state's comprehensive early childhood effort, providing more opportunities for young children to access quality preschool and enter school ready to learn. The preschool programs are expected to serve four-year-old children with a range of abilities representing the social, linguistic, cultural, and economic diversity of families within the communities.

The SWVPP was established May 10, 2007, in House File 877.

In the Fall of 2018, approximately 26,711 Iowa preschoolers in 323 school districts benefited from the SWVPP by providing at least 10 hours per week of developmentally appropriate instruction. More children than are reflected in the funded enrollment count have access to this preschool program through other funding sources.

The SWVPP along with other state and federally funded preschool programs and community partners in Iowa—such as Head Start, Early Childhood Special Education, Title I, and Shared Visions—make up Iowa's comprehensive preschool.

THE BENEFITS

A child's brain is 90% developed by age five (Early Childhood Education Degrees, 2013).¹ Quality early childhood programming is the best way to prepare children for success in life.

Young children exposed to high-quality settings exhibit better language and math skills, better cognitive and social skills, and better relationships with classmates than do children in lower-quality settings (Barnett & Lamy, 2013).²

- A study of the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program had meaningful long-term effects for children who participated including significant positive effects on children's receptive vocabulary and math through grade two and on literacy through grade three. Children who attended ABC pre-K were less likely to have been retained by the end of third grade than those who did not attend any Pre-K (Jung, Barnett, Hustedt & Francis, 2013).³
- Whatever you can do to ensure that more children receive a high quality, effective preschool education will pay substantial human and economic dividends far into the future (Bartik, 2014).⁴
- Economists have shown that high-quality early childhood programs bring impressive returns on investment to the public. Long-term studies have found the return on investment could be as high as \$17 for every dollar invested in early learning programs (Meloy et al, 2019).⁵ Program participants followed into adulthood benefit from increased earnings. Returns on investment to the public include reduced special education, welfare, and crime costs, and increased earnings and tax revenues from program participants later in life (Phillips et al, 2017).⁶

FUNDED ENROLLMENT

- 5,126 children in 2007-2008
- 9,676 children in 2008-2009
- 13,666 children in 2009-2010
- 19,799 children in 2010-2011
- 19,900 children in 2011-2012
- 21,629 children in 2012-2013
- 22,265 children in 2013-2014
- 22,695 children in 2014-2015
- 23,141 children in 2015-2016
- 23,518 children in 2016-2017
- 24,610 children in 2017-2018
- 25,215 children in 2018-2019*

*These numbers indicate only the children funded through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program. Amended code language for the SWVPP effective for FY2018 increased flexibility in the use of SWVPP funds, inclusive of paying the cost of attendance of a child older or younger than age 4 based on local school board decision. However, only 4-year-olds generate state funding. The number of 4-year-olds which were counted for state funding in 2018-2019 was 25,002. In addition to children funded through the SWVPP, children also attended with support from other funding sources.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

In 2018-2019, the SWVPP was provided in:

- 323 districts out of 330 statewide
- 286 community partners

1. Early Childhood Education Degrees, *The Milestones of Your Little Rocket Scientist's Development, 2013*, available at <http://www.early-childhood-education-degrees.com/milestones/>.
2. Barnett, W.S. & Lamy, C. Achievement Gaps Start Early: Preschool Can Help. In P.L. Carter & K.G. Welner (Eds.), *Closing the Opportunity Gap: What American Must do to Give Every Child an Even Chance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
3. Jung, K., Barnett, W., Hustedt, J. T., & Francis, J. (2013). *Longitudinal effects of the Arkansas Better Chance program: Findings from first grade through fourth grade [Executive summary]*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.
4. Bartik, T.J. (2014). *From preschool to prosperity: The economic payoff to early childhood education*. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Retrieved from www.upjohn.org/sites/default/WEfocus/FromPreschooltoProsperity.pdf.
5. Meloy, B., Gardner, M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). *Untangling the evidence on preschool effectiveness: Insights for policymakers*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.
6. Phillips, D.A., Lipsey, M.W., Dodge, K.A., Haskins, R., Bassok, D., Burchinal, M.R., Duncan, G.J., Dynarski, M., Magnuson, K.A., & Weiland, C. (2017). *The Current State of Scientific Knowledge on Pre-Kindergarten Effects*. Brookings Institution and the Duke Center for Child and Family Policy.

FUNDING

- \$15 million in 2007-2008
- \$32 million* in 2008-2009
- \$45 million* in 2009-2010
- \$64 million* in 2010-2011
- \$58 million** in 2011-2012
- \$60 million** in 2012-2013
- \$66 million** in 2013-2014
- \$70 million** in 2014-2015
- \$73 million** in 2015-2016
- \$76 million** in 2016-2017
- \$78 million** in 2017-2018
- \$82 million** in 2018-2019

* Both grant allocation and formula funding

**Formula funding only

Allocation of state funds for the Preschool Program is intended to provide predictable, equitable, and sustainable funding.

State aid received for SWVPP children is equal to one-half of the state cost per pupil.

RANKINGS

According to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), in 2017—2018, Iowa's national rank was:

- 7th for four-year-old access to quality preschool programming.
- 37th for state spending on access to quality preschool.



WHAT THE FOUR-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL PROGRAM OFFERS

- **A licensed teacher.** An early childhood licensed teacher is responsible for designing and implementing effective learning environments using instructional strategies to enhance children's learning.
- **A minimum of 10 hours per week of quality preschool instruction.** Providers may provide more hours and childcare through other federal, state, or local programming. There may be a charge for these services if not funded through state or federal sources.
- **Community collaboration.** Programs must provide family involvement opportunities such as home visits, family nights, and conferences. The delivery of quality preschool services are provided by an appropriately licensed teacher. These services could be provided in the public school setting, or the district could collaborate with community-based early childhood programs, nonpublic, faith-based, non-profit, or for profit centers.
- **High quality program standards.** School districts and partners select and implement at least one of three approved program standards: the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Learning Program Accreditation Standards and Assessment Items, or the Head Start Program Performance Standards.
- **High quality learning standards.** Programs must have rigorous and relevant curriculum and assessments to enhance children's strengths, interests, and knowledge (based on the Iowa Early Learning Standards); and alignment with K-12 standards and academic expectations.
- **Appropriate adult-child ratio of 1 to 10 and a maximum group size of 20.**



Early Indicators of Success

The Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program continues to meet high quality standards that support positive effects on Iowa’s incoming kindergarteners. Participating school districts follow the Iowa Early Learning Standards. These standards identify the knowledge, skills, motivation, and attitudes needed by preschoolers that lead to success as students enter school and as adults. Additionally, participating programs must meet one of three program standards: Head Start Program Performance Standards, Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, or National Association for the Education of Young Children Early Learning Program Accreditation Standards and Assessment Items. Each set of program standards is indicative of high quality programming efforts.

Studies continue to show increased proficiencies in beginning reading skills among all children who attend the state’s preschool program. All students in grades K-3 are required to be assessed three times per year with a universal literacy screening tool. The vast majority of districts use the Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST). The number of students proficient in early literacy skills upon kindergarten entry is increasing overall. In the Fall of 2014, 53 percent of kindergarteners were proficient on the FAST assessment. In the Fall of 2018, 61 percent of kindergarten children were proficient. Continuing efforts to support quality literacy instruction, such as intentionally embedding literacy into classroom curricula, routines, and activities are recommended.



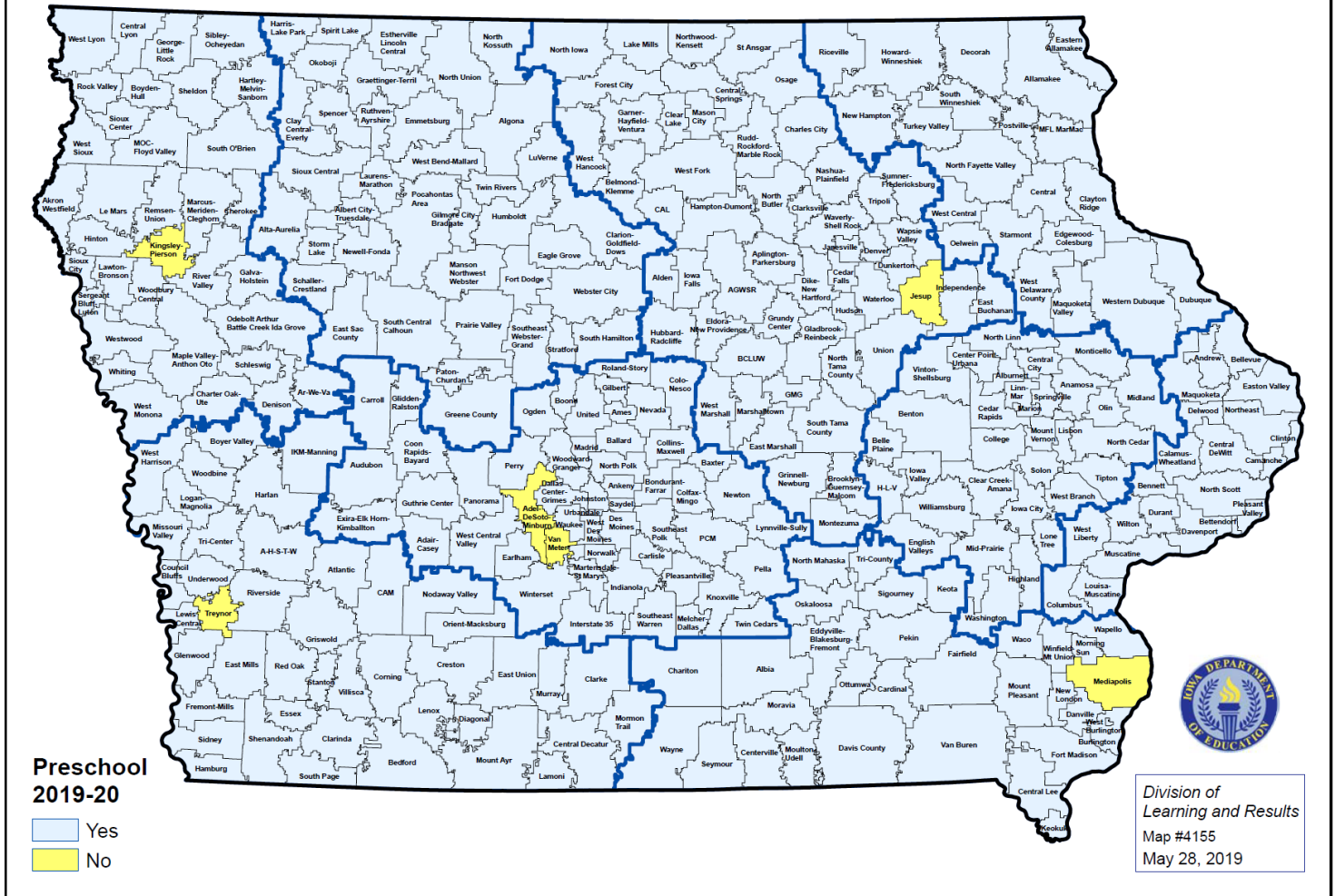
Iowa School Districts Participating in the SWVPP 2019-2020

District Name	County	District Name	County	District Name	County
Adair-Casey	Guthrie	Camanche	Clinton	Davis County	Davis
AGWSR	Hardin	Cardinal	Wapello	Decorah	Winneshiek
A-H-S-T-W	Pottawattamie	Carlisle	Warren	Delwood	Clinton
Akron Westfield	Plymouth	Carroll	Carroll	Denison	Crawford
Albert City-Truesdale	Buena Vista	Cedar Falls	Black Hawk	Denver	Bremer
Albia	Monroe	Cedar Rapids	Linn	Des Moines	Polk
Alburnett	Linn	Center Point-Urbana	Linn	Diagonal	Ringgold
Alden	Hardin	Centerville	Appanoose	Dike-New Hartford	Grundy
Algona	Kossuth	Central	Clayton	Dubuque	Dubuque
Allamakee	Allamakee	Central City	Linn	Dunkerton	Black Hawk
Alta-Aurelia	Buena Vista	Central Clinton	Clinton	Durant	Cedar
Ames	Story	Central Decatur	Decatur	Eagle Grove	Wright
Anamosa	Jones	Central Lee	Lee	Earlham	Madison
Andrew	Jackson	Central Lyon	Lyon	East Buchanan	Buchanan
Ankeny	Polk	Central Springs	Worth	East Marshall	Marshall
Aplington-Parkersburg	Butler	Chariton	Lucas	East Mills	Mills
Ar-We-Va	Crawford	Charles City	Floyd	East Sac County	Sac
Atlantic	Cass	Charter Oak-Ute	Crawford	East Union	Union
Audubon	Audubon	Cherokee	Cherokee	Eastern Allamakee	Allamakee
Ballard	Story	Clarinda	Page	Easton Valley	Jackson
Baxter	Jasper	Clarion-Goldfield-Dows	Wright	Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont	Wapello
BCLUW	Grundy	Clarke	Clarke	Edgewood-Colesburg	Delaware
Bedford	Taylor	Clarksville	Butler	Eldora-New Providence	Hardin
Belle Plaine	Benton	Clay Central-Everly	Clay	Emmetsburg	Palo Alto
Bellevue	Jackson	Clayton Ridge	Clayton	English Valleys	Iowa
Belmond-Klemme	Wright	Clear Creek Amana	Johnson	Essex	Page
Bennett	Cedar	Clear Lake	Cerro Gordo	Estherville-Lincoln Central	Emmet
Benton	Benton	Clinton	Clinton	Exira-EHK	Shelby
Bettendorf	Scott	Colfax-Mingo	Jasper	Fairfield	Jefferson
Bondurant-Farrar	Polk	College	Linn	Forest City	Winnebago
Boone	Boone	Collins-Maxwell	Story	Fort Dodge	Webster
Boydell Hull	Sioux	Colo-NESCO	Story	Fort Madison	Lee
Boyer Valley	Harrison	Columbus	Story	Fremont-Mills	Fremont
Brooklyn-Guernsey-		Coon Rapids-Bayard	Louisa	Galva-Holstein	Ida
Malcom	Poweshiek	Corning	Carroll	Garner-Hayfield-Ventura	Hancock
Burlington	Des Moines	Council Bluffs	Adams	George-Little Rock	Lyon
CAL	Franklin	Creston	Pottawattamie	Gilbert	Story
Calamus-Wheatland	Clinton	Dallas Center-Grimes	Union	Gilmore City-Bradgate	Humboldt
CAM	Cass	Danville	Dallas	Gladbrook-Reinbeck	Grundy
		Davenport	Des Moines		
			Scott		

Iowa School Districts Participating in the SWVPP 2019-2020, *cont.*

District Name	County	District Name	County	District Name	County
Glenwood	Mills	North Mahaska	Mahaska	Waco	Henry
Glidden-Ralston	Carrroll	North Polk	Polk	Wapello	Louisa
GMG	Tama	North Scott	Scott	Wapsie Valley	Bremer
Graettinger-Terril	Palo Alto	North Tama County	Tama	Washington	Washington
Greene County	Greene	North Union	Emmet	Waterloo	Black Hawk
Grinnell-Newburg	Poweshiek	Northeast	Clinton	Waukee	Dallas
Griswold	Cass	Northwood-Kensett	Worth	Waverly-Shell Rock	Bremer
Grundy Center	Grundy	Norwalk	Warren	Wayne	Wayne
Guthrie Center	Guthrie	Odebolt Arthur Battle Creek		Webster City	Hamilton
Hamburg	Fremont	Ida Grove	Sac	West Bend-Mallard	Palo Alto
Hampton-Dumont	Franklin	Oelwein	Fayette	West Branch	Cedar
Harlan	Shelby	Ogden	Boone	West Burlington Ind	Des Moines
Harris-Lake Park	Dickinson	Okoboji	Dickinson	West Central	Fayette
Hartley-Melvin-Sanborn	O'Brien	Olin Consolidated	Jones	West Central Valley	Guthrie
Highland	Washington	Orient-Macksburg	Adair	West Delaware County	Delaware
Hinton	Plymouth	Osage	Mitchell	West Des Moines	Polk
H-L-V	Iowa	Oskaloosa	Mahaska	West Fork	Cerro Gordo
Howard-Winneshiek	Howard	Ottumwa	Wapello	West Hancock	Hancock
Hubbard-Radcliffe	Hardin	Panorama	Guthrie	West Harrison	Harrison
Humboldt	Humbolt	Paton-Churdan	Greene	West Liberty	Muscatine
Hudson	Black Hawk	PCM	Jasper	West Lyon	Lyon
IKM-Manning	Crawford	Pekin	Jefferson	West Marshall	Marshall
Independence	Buchanan	Pella	Marion	West Monona	Monona
Indianola	Warren	Perry	Dallas	West Sioux	Sioux
Interstate 35	Madison	Pleasant Valley	Scott	Western Dubuque	Dubuque
Iowa City	Johnson	Pleasantville	Marion	Westwood	Woodbury
Iowa Falls	Hardin	Pocahontas Area	Pocahontas	Whiting	Monona
Iowa Valley	Iowa	Postville	Allamakee	Williamsburg	Iowa
Janesville Consolidated	Bremer	Prairie Valley	Webster	Wilton	Muscatine
Johnston	Polk	Red Oak	Montgomery	Winfield-Mt Union	Henry
Keokuk	Lee	Remsen-Union	Plymouth	Winterset	Madison
Keota	Keokuk	Riceville	Howard	Woodbine	Harrison
Knoxville	Marion	River Valley	Woodbury	Woodbury Central	Woodbury
Lake Mills	Winnebago	Riverside	Pottawattamie	Woodward-Granger	Dallas
Lamoni	Decatur	Rock Valley	Sioux		
Laurens-Marathon	Pocahontas	Roland-Story	Story		
Lawton-Bronson	Woodbury	Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock	Floyd		
Le Mars	Plymouth	Ruthven-Ayrshire	Palo Alto		
Lenox	Taylor	Saydel	Polk		
Lewis Central	Pottawattamie	Schaller-Crestland	Sac		
Linn-Mar	Linn	Schleswig	Crawford		
Lisbon	Linn	Sergeant Bluff-Luton	Woodbury		
Logan-Magnolia	Harrison	Seymour	Wayne		
Lone Tree	Johnson	Sheldon	O'Brien		
Louisa-Muscatine	Louisa	Shenandoah	Page		
LuVerne	Kossuth	Sibley-Ocheyedan	Osceola		
Lynnvile-Sully	Jasper	Sidney	Fremont		
Madrid	Boone	Sigourney	Keokuk		
Manson Northwest Webster	Calhoun	Sioux Center	Sioux		
Maple Valley-Anthon-Oto	Monona	Sioux Central	Buena Vista		
Maquoketa	Jackson	Sioux City	Woodbury		
Maquoketa Valley	Delaware	Solon	Johnson		
Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn	Cherokee	South Central Calhoun	Calhoun		
Marion	Linn	South Hamilton	Hamilton		
Marshalltown	Marshall	South O'Brien	O'Brien		
Martensdale-St Marys	Warren	South Page	Page		
Mason City	Cerro Gordo	South Tama County	Tama		
Melcher-Dallas	Marion	South Winneshiek	Winneshiek		
MFL MarMac	Clayton	Southeast Polk	Polk		
Midland	Jones	Southeast Warren	Warren		
Mid-Prairie	Washington	Southeast Webster Grand	Webster		
Missouri Valley	Harrison	Spencer	Clay		
MOC-Floyd Valley	Sioux	Spirit Lake	Dickinson		
Montezuma	Poweshiek	Springville	Linn		
Monticello	Jones	St Ansgar	Mitchell		
Moravia	Appanoose	Stanton	Montgomery		
Mormon Trail	Wayne	Starmont	Fayette		
Morning Sun	Louisa	Storm Lake	Buena Vista		
Moulton-Udell	Appanoose	Stratford	Hamilton		
Mount Ayr	Ringgold	Sumner-Fredericksburg	Bremer		
Mount Pleasant	Henry	Tipton	Cedar		
Mount Vernon	Linn	Tri-Center	Pottawattamie		
Murray	Clarke	Tri-County	Keokuk		
Muscatine	Muscatine	Tripoli	Bremer		
Nashua-Plainfield	Chickasaw	Turkey Valley	Winneshiek		
Nevada	Story	Twin Cedars	Marion		
New Hampton	Chickasaw	Twin Rivers	Humboldt		
New London	Henry	Underwood	Pottawattamie		
Newell-Fonda	Buena Vista	Union	Black Hawk		
Newton	Jasper	United	Boone		
Nodaway Valley	Adair	Urbandale	Polk		
North Butler	Butler	Van Buren	Van Buren		
North Cedar	Cedar	Villisca	Montgomery		
North Fayette Valley	Fayette	Vinton-Shellsburg	Benton		
North Iowa	Winnebago				
North Kossuth	Kossuth				
North Linn	Linn				

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An electronic version of this map can be found at the [Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program website](https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/statewide-voluntary-preschool-program-four-year-old-children):

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/statewide-voluntary-preschool-program-four-year-old-children>