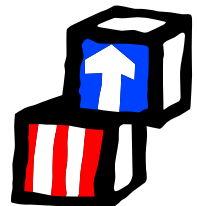




2025 Annual Report

West Virginia Universal Pre-K





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2025-2026**

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Contents

WV Universal Pre-K Program Overview.....2

Updates from School Year 20252

Pre-K Data3

WV Pre-K Funding3

WV Pre-K Program Enrollment.....3

Participant Transition Rates from WV Pre-K to Kindergarten5

Participant Transition Rates by County- School Year SY2025 6

West Virginia’s Collaborative Pre-K Model7

Collaboration Rate by County- SY2025 8

WV Universal Pre-K Program Review 9

2025 State of Preschool Yearbook: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)-
West Virginia12

WV Universal Pre-K Resources 14

WV Universal Pre-K Steering Team Members15

WV Universal Pre-K Program Overview

West Virginia is a national pioneer in providing a pre-k program for all four-year-olds and three-year-olds with special needs since passage of Senate Bill 247 during the 2002 legislative session. However, the foundation for pre-k in the state began as early as 1983, when legislation granted local education agencies (LEA) the authority to offer preschool programs. Today, W.Va. Code §18-5-44 requires county school systems to provide Universal Pre-K Programs for all eligible children. By the 2012–2013 school year, county boards of education were required to develop pre-k programs in partnership with community partners such as Head Start and licensed child care centers, with support from the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and the Department of Human Services (WV DoHS).

West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2525: West Virginia’s Universal Access to a Quality Early Education System (WVBE Policy 2525) was first developed in 2004 to meet state code, related policies, regulations, and address the needs of families of eligible children in West Virginia communities. The WV Universal Pre-K Program includes high-quality pre-k standards to address all areas of children’s development. The WV Pre-K Standards (Ages 3-5) are research-based, developmentally appropriate learning expectations to guide pre-k educators in providing high-quality environments and experiences that are responsive to individual children’s needs to support school readiness efforts.

Updates from School Year 2025

Although WV Pre-K enrollment decreased by 190 children in SY2025, the participation rate increased by 2% because the state served a higher proportion of an overall smaller population of eligible children.

The West Virginia Pre-K Standards were updated in SY2025 to be implemented in SY2026 with the Pre-K Instructional Materials adoption cycle required by WV Code AS 18-2A and WVBE Policy 2445.40. The revised standards include updates in the Guiding Principles, Mathematics, English Language Arts, and Science. The updates provide stronger alignment with the most recent kindergarten standards, as well as federal Head Start Child Outcomes, resulting in continuity of education for young children in the earliest grades.

In partnership with the WVDE Office of Special Education, the WV Behavior Mental Health TA Center at Marshall University launched individualized Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) in pre-k classrooms across West Virginia. This collaborative effort builds on our longstanding work together to strengthen educators’ skills in responding to challenging behavior using the Pyramid Model, a research-based framework for promoting children’s social-emotional development.

Pre-K Data

This annual report provides WV Pre-K data and information for the 2024–2025 school year, with a focus on funding, enrollment, collaboration, and high-quality pre-k programs, specifically:

- Blending state and federal funding sources, including state school aid funding, special education, child care, and Head Start contributions.
- Providing access to pre-k services in settings that best meet children and family needs through collaborative classrooms with community partners (at least 50% collaboration with community programs when available)
- Implementing the program review process to support and guide local continuous quality improvement planning with individualized data
- Providing a summary of West Virginia’s rankings published in The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) 2025 State of Preschool Yearbook

WV Pre-K Funding

WV Code requires that counties reinvest funding into the pre-k program, as well as maximize resources by using the existing capacity of community-based programs in a blended model. In a blended model, county programs braid funds from federal, state, and local sources to facilitate shared resources to support high-quality programs.

WV Pre-K Funding Summary SY2025

Funding	Funding Amount
State School Aid Funding	\$115,116,798
Non-Required Local Share	\$634,008
Federal Funding (Head Start, Special Education, TANF/CCDF)	\$47,211,192
Total	\$162,961,998

WV Pre-K Program Enrollment

Enrollment SY2025

Age	Enrollment of children with IEPs	Total Enrollment
Age 2	281	281
Age 3	1,279	1,279
Age 4	1,681	11,904
Age 5	80	210
Total	3,322	13,674

WV Universal Pre-K Enrollment Trend Data 2009-2025

Trend	Year	Pre-K Enrollment
System developed	2009	13,135
	2010	13,878
	2011	14,647
	2012	15,268
System required by code and policy to be available to all four-year-olds and three-year-olds with an IEP.	2013	15,767
	2014	15,459
	2015	15,256
	2016	15,113
	2017	14,940
	2018	15,101
	2019	13,534*
	2020	15,142
	2021	11,981**
	2022	13,268
	2023	13,731
	2024	13,864
	2025	13,674

Total pre-k enrollment based on 2nd month enrollment annually. Beginning with SY2024, enrollment data includes children enrolled in Pre-K programs at charter schools in the total counts

**During the 2017 legislative session, the age eligibility date for West Virginia Universal Pre-K was changed from September 1 to July 1 beginning with the 2018-2019 school year. The decrease in pre-k enrollment and participation rates is attributed to changes in the date of age eligibility.*

***Enrollment in WV Universal Pre-K dropped significantly due to the Covid-19 pandemic.*

Participant Transition Rates from WV Pre-K to Kindergarten *(Previously Participation Rates)*

SY2025 Enrollment-Based Transition Rate

The participation transition rates were previously reported as the participation rate; however, this information does not capture the number of four-year-olds eligible to participate versus the number of those children who participated in WV Universal Pre-K. The participation transition rate from WV Pre-K to kindergarten reflects the number of four-year-olds who participated in WV Universal Pre-K, who also participated in kindergarten the following year, based on the October enrollment collection data.

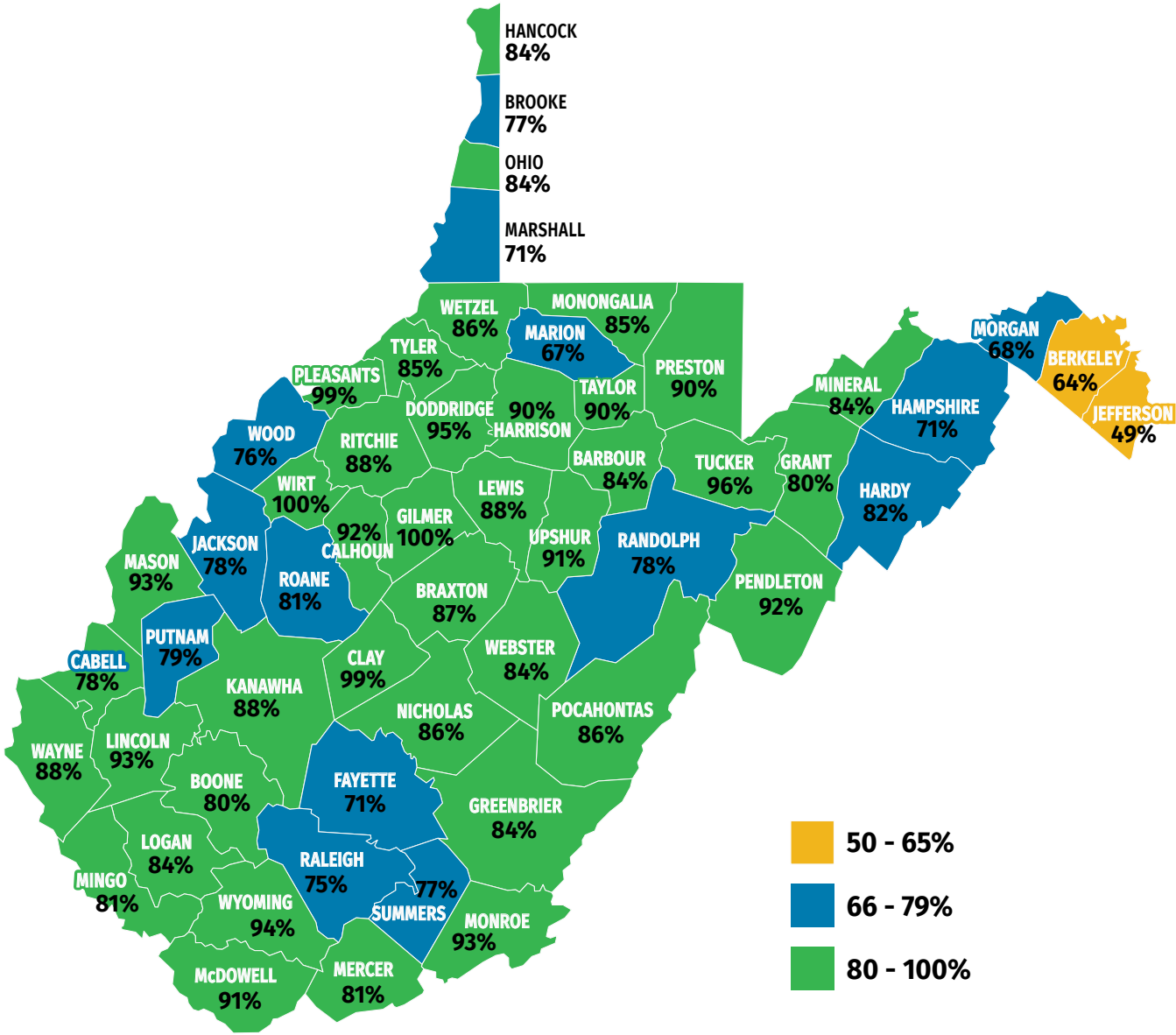


Participant Transition Rates from WV Pre-K to Kindergarten Trend Data 2013-2025

Year	WV Universal Pre-K 4-year-old participation
2012-2013	69%
2013-2014	73%
2014-2015	75%
2015-2016	76%
2016-2017	76%
2017-2018	76%
2018-2019	75%
2019-2020	78%
2020-2021	84%*
2021-2022	66%*
2022-2023	74%
2023-2024	78%
2024-2025	80%

*Changes in participation rates for the 2021-2022 school year reflect lower enrollment during the Covid-19 pandemic than in previous years.

Participant Transition Rates by County School Year SY2025



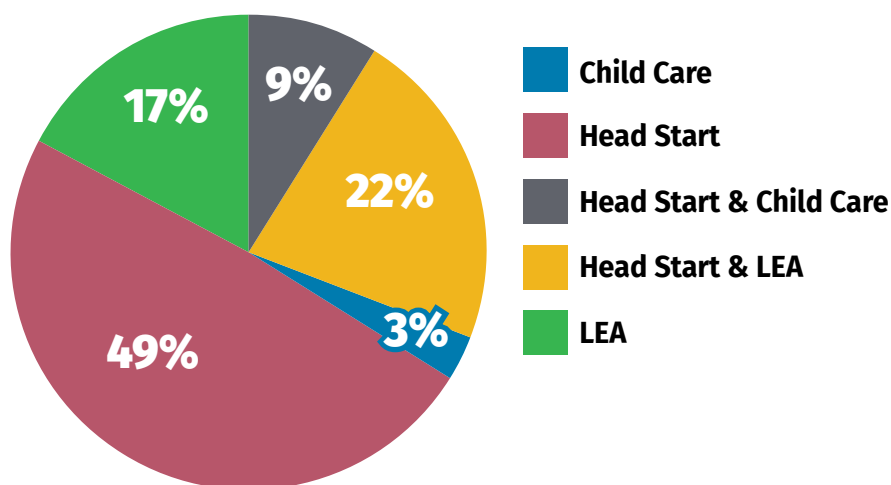
West Virginia's Collaborative Pre-K Model

The West Virginia Universal Pre-K collaborative model is designed to include partnerships among local education agencies (LEAs), Head Start programs, and child care centers. Collaborative partnerships increase access, maximize resources, and increase the quality of programs overall. Because LEAs are required to maintain 50% partnerships with community programs, these collaborations have not only been instrumental in building access prior to the 2012-2013 school year, but they have exceeded collaboration requirements statewide. Because of the state's nationally recognized collaborative approach, an array of services to support school readiness are available to young children and their families.

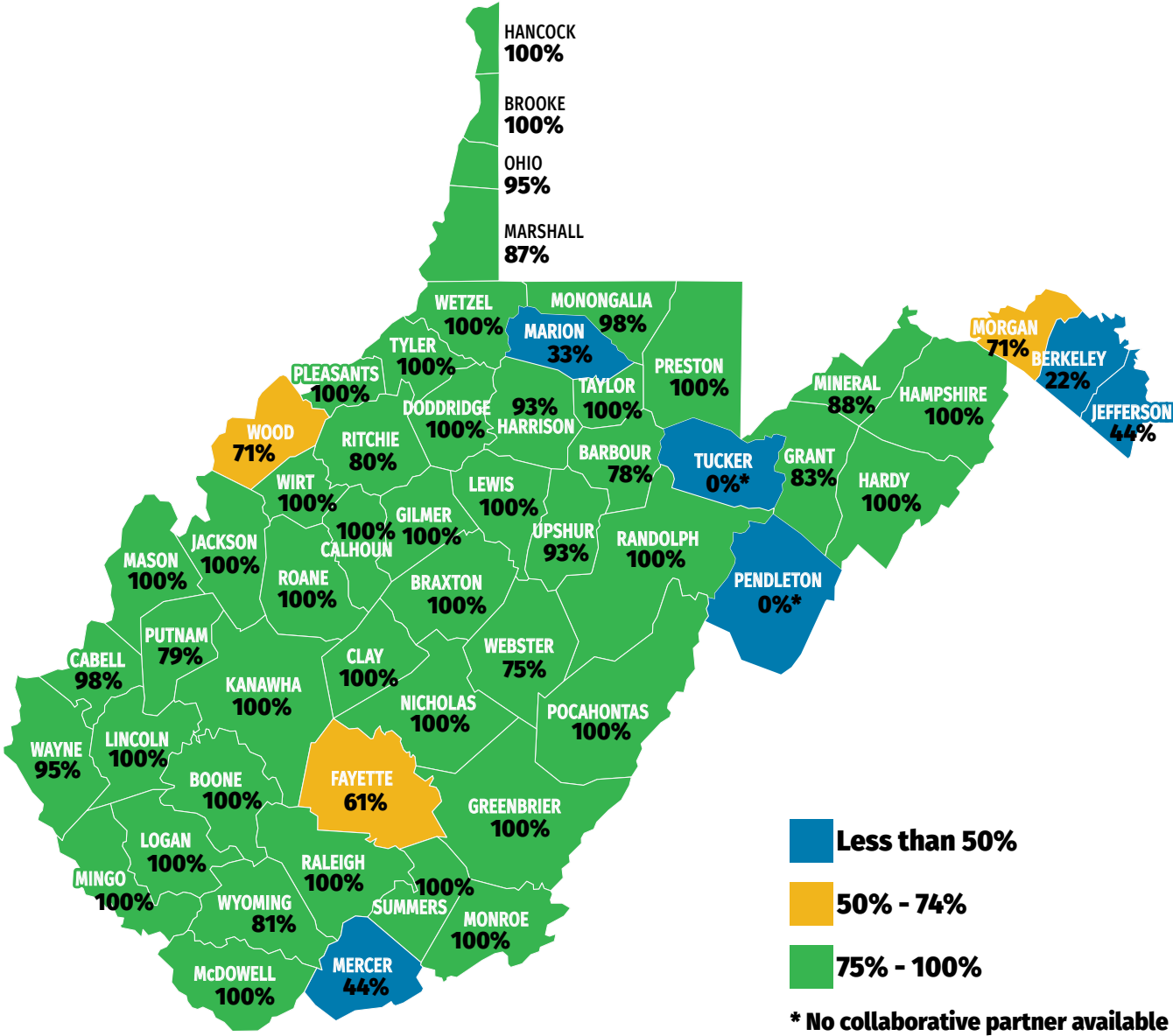
Collaboration Yearly Data 2016-2025

Partnerships	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Head Start	61%	64%	66%	66%	67%	68%	69%	70%	71%	71%	71%
Child Care	15%	14%	14%	14%	13%	12%	11%	12%	10%	9%	9%
Head Start And Child Care	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%
LEA	21%	19%	18%	18%	18%	18%	17%	17%	17%	17%	17%
Total	79%	81%	82%	82%	82%	82%	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%

Collaboration Summary SY2025



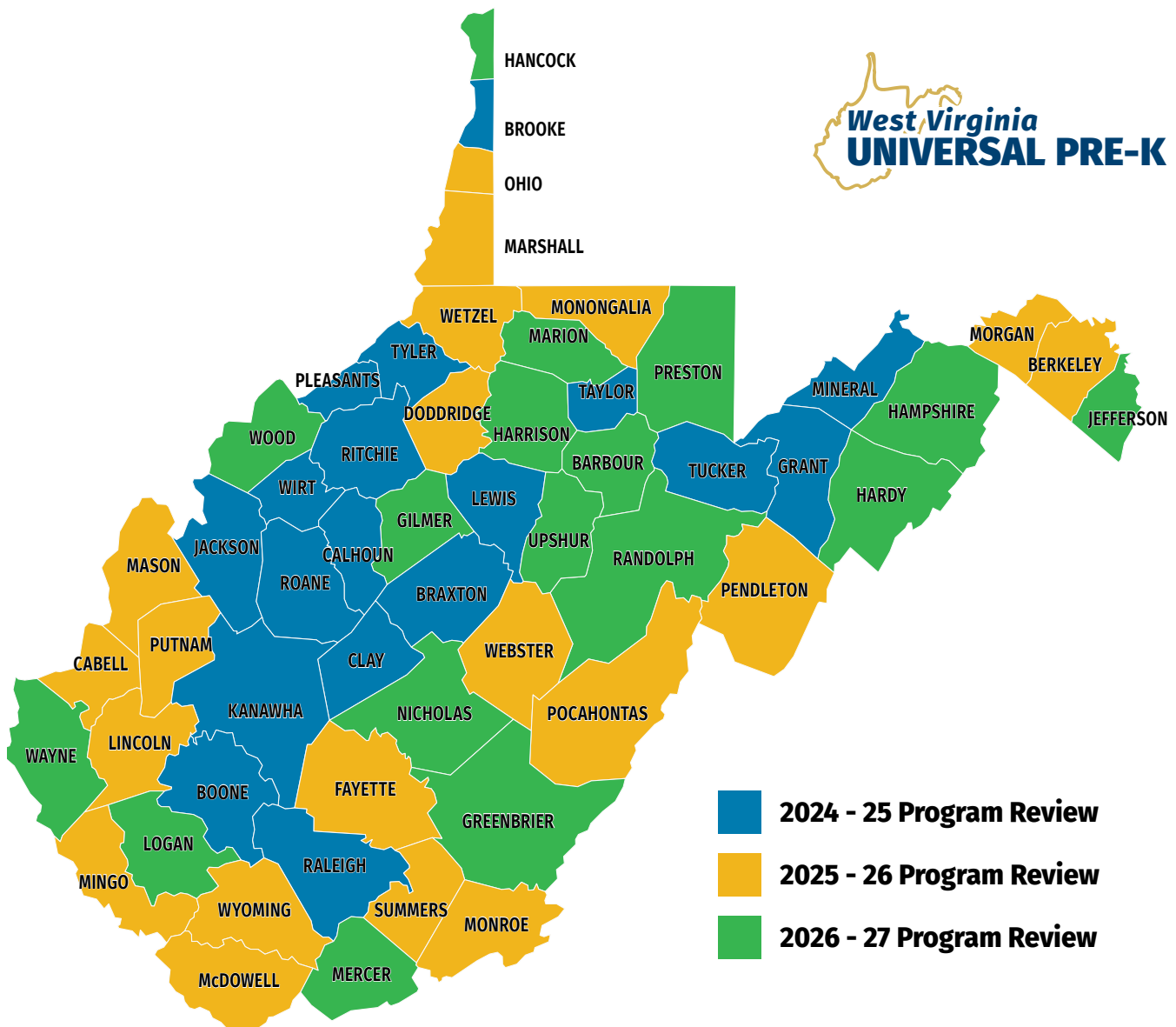
Collaboration Rate by County SY2025



WV Universal Pre-K Program Review

WVBE Policy 2525 requires that the WV Universal Pre-K Steering Team conduct a Pre-K Program Review of each county every three years. The purpose of the program review is to verify that counties maintain implementation of WV Universal Pre-K programs in compliance with policy while supporting continuous quality improvement within each county. Program reviews are designed to provide individualized technical assistance to county collaborative early childhood teams. Further, a summary of the WV Pre-K Program Reviews must be provided annually to the WVBE.

WV Universal Pre-K Triennial Program Review Schedule 2024-2027



WV Universal Pre-K Program Review Summary SY2025

The 2025 Pre K Program Review Summary highlights commendations, recommendations, and required follow-up for each county reviewed during SY2025.

- **Commendations** recognize strengths within a county pre-k program.
- **Recommendations** support improvements in policies, procedures, and alignment with WVBE Policy 2525 to strengthen overall program practices.
- **Required follow-up** is identified when compliance with WVBE Policy 2525 is not evident; timelines for correction are provided; and the WV Universal Pre K Steering Team offers support to counties as part of continuous quality improvement efforts.

Commendations

- **§126-28-3. School Readiness/§126-28-10. Transitions:** Boone, Clay, Lewis
- **§126-28-4. County Collaborative Early Childhood Team:** Brooke
- **§126-28-5. Eligibility and Enrollment:** Calhoun, Mineral
- **§126-28-6. Attendance:** Kanawha
- **§126-28-7. Transportation:** Tucker
- **§126-28-8. Inclusive Settings:** Pleasants, Tyler
- **§126-28-13. Environmental Design:** Mineral
- **§126-28-14. Child Guidance:** Mineral
- **§126-28-15. Curriculum and Assessment:** Mineral
- **§126-28-17. Staff Training:** Jackson, Lewis
- **§126-28-18. Program Assessment and Continuous Quality Improvement:** Lewis

Recommendations

- **§126-28-3. School Readiness/§126-28-10. Transitions:** Brooke, Roane, Tucker
- **§126-28-4. County Collaborative Early Childhood Team:** Boone, Calhoun, Grant, Lewis, Mineral, Raleigh, Ritchie, Roane, Taylor
- **§126-28-5. Eligibility and Enrollment:** Boone, Brooke, Lewis, Raleigh, Ritchie, Wirt
- **§126-28-6. Attendance:** Brooke, Wirt
- **§126-28-8. Inclusive Settings:** Boone, Brooke, Taylor, Ritchie, Wirt
- **§126-28-9. Family Engagement:** Boone
- **§126-28-12. Health and Safety:** Calhoun, Clay, Grant, Jackson, Taylor, Tyler
- **§126-28-13. Environmental Design:** Boone, Braxton, Brooke, Calhoun, Clay, Grant, Jackson, Kanawha, Lewis, Pleasants, Raleigh, Roane, Tyler, Wirt
- **§126-28-14. Child Guidance:** Calhoun, Taylor
- **§126-28-15. Curriculum and Assessment:** Boone, Braxton, Brooke, Calhoun, Clay, Grant, Jackson, Kanawha, Lewis, Pleasants, Raleigh, Ritchie, Roane, Tucker, Tyler
- **§126-28-17. Staff Training:** Boone, Calhoun, Jackson, Taylor
- **§126-28-18. Program Assessment and Continuous Quality Improvement:** Boone, Brooke, Clay, Mineral, Roane, Tucker, Wirt
- **§126-28-19. Finance:** Boone, Brooke, Calhoun, Grant, Kanawha, Lewis, Mineral, Raleigh
- **§126-28-20. Program Oversight:** Boone, Jackson, Taylor, Wirt



Required Follow-Up

- **§126-28-4. County Collaborative Early Childhood Team:** Roane
- **§126-28-8. Inclusive Settings:** Roane
- **§126-28-11. Meals:** Gilmer
- **§126-28-12. Health and Safety:** Raleigh, Ritchie, Taylor
- **§126-28-13. Environmental Design:** Ritchie
- **§126-28-14. Child Guidance:** Boone, Ritchie
- **§126-28-15. Curriculum and Assessment:** Calhoun, Ritchie, Roane, Taylor
- **§126-28-16. Personnel:** Calhoun, Mineral, Raleigh, Roane
- **§126-28-17. Staff Training:** Taylor
- **§126-28-18. Program Assessment and Continuous Quality Improvement:** Calhoun, Ritchie

The following counties reviewed during the 2025–2026 school year had no required follow-up resulting from their WV Universal Pre-K Program Reviews:

- Brooke
- Clay
- Grant
- Jackson
- Kanawha
- Lewis
- Pleasants
- Tucker
- Tyler
- Wirt

2025 State of Preschool Yearbook: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) West Virginia

The State of Preschool Yearbook is a publication released by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) to track the funding, access, and policies of state-funded preschool programs. The annual yearbook seeks to improve the public’s knowledge and understanding of state efforts to expand the availability of high-quality education to young children. NIEER ranks states based on access for three and four-year-olds, state and other spending to support the pre-k program, and measures each state’s pre-k policies against a checklist of ten research-based quality standard benchmarks. West Virginia is one of only a few states to meet at least nine of ten quality benchmarks. West Virginia’s profile is included below. The current State of Preschool annual report can be accessed at [2025 Yearbook | National Institute for Early Education Research](#).

NIEER WV Rankings SY 2024

Access Rankings		Resource Rankings		Total Benchmarks
4-Year-Olds	3-Year-Olds	State Spending	All Reported Spending	
4 TH	20 TH	13 TH	14 TH	9



NIEER Quality Standards Benchmark Checklist SY 2025

Policy	WV Pre-K Requirement	Benchmark	State Requirement Meets Benchmark
Early learning and development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	✓
Curriculum supports	Approval process and supports	Approval process and supports	✓
Teacher degree	BA	BA	✓
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	✓
Assistant teacher degree	CDA	CDA or equivalent	✓
*Staff professional development	15 hours/year; PD plans	For teachers and assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	✓
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- and 4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	✓
Screening and referral	Vision, hearing, health, and more; Support services	Vision, hearing, health, and at least one support service	✓
Monitoring/Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (more than once/year); Improvement plan	Structured classroom observation; program improvement plan	✓
Total Benchmarks Met			9 of 10

*Staff professional development - WVBE Policy 2525 requires that all pre-k staff participate in 15 hours of professional learning annually based on needs determined in the county continuous quality improvement process, which includes program assessment data. Classrooms that are collaborative with Head Start are required to implement a research-based universal pre-k coaching model that utilizes educator self-assessments and data to identify strengths and areas of needed support as part of the CQI process. Further, it is recommended that all WV Pre-K classrooms include an effective pre-k coaching model as part of the CQI process to best support the individualized professional learning needs of education staff. Therefore, West Virginia meets part of the staff professional development NIEER Quality Standard.

WV Universal Pre-K Resources

West Virginia Code Chapter 18. Education. §18-5-44. Early childhood education programs

<https://code.wvlegislature.gov/18-5-44/>

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510 - Assuring Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/policy.php?p=2510andalt=1>

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525 - West Virginia's Universal Access to a Quality Early Education System

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/policy.php?p=2525andalt=1>

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2419 - Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/policy.php?p=2419andalt=1>

West Virginia Pre-K Standards (Ages 3-5)

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/policy.php?p=2520.15andalt=1>



WV Universal Pre-K Steering Team Members

Contact the West Virginia Universal Pre-K Steering Team at WVPreKsteeringteam.wvde@k12.wv.us.

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Notes



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