

State of Alaska – Early Learning Programs – Funding Summary

Early learning is an important part of a child's education. Early learning, ideally, starts in the home. Where appropriate, the State partners with families, parents, businesses, and communities in providing that learning environment.

Early Learning Programs	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014 Enacted
Statewide Pre-Kindergarten	\$2,000.0	\$2,000.0	\$2,000.0	\$1,700.0	\$1,700.0	\$1,700.0
Intervention Districts Pre-Kindergarten	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$300.0	\$300.0	\$300.0
One-time Statewide Pre-Kindergarten Grants	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$800.0	\$0
Kindergarten - Third Grade Literacy	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$320.0
Best Beginnings	\$112.5	\$312.5	\$792.5	\$612.5	\$937.5	\$937.5
Head Start Grants	\$6,593.3	\$7,153.0	\$7,153.3	\$7,153.3	\$7,153.3	\$7,153.3
Early Learning Admin	\$652.7	\$590.6	\$599.5	\$615.2	\$632.6	\$632.6
Parents As Teachers	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$300.0	\$300.0	\$1,042.5	\$681.0
Total Early Learning	\$9,358.5	\$10,056.1	\$10,845.3	\$10,681.0	\$14,565.9	\$11,724.4

Following is a brief description of early learning programs:

Statewide Pre-Kindergarten Program

Competitive grant funds to schools districts to provide voluntary, comprehensive, half day preschool programs for four and five year olds (who miss the cut-off for school). Currently serving 248 children in 6 school districts. Data shows success in increased vocabulary and language development.

Intervention Districts Pre-Kindergarten

In FY2012, \$300,000 of the \$2 million for Statewide Pre-Kindergarten Program funding was allocated specifically for early learning programs in intervention districts. The program is currently serving two school districts with grants of \$150,000 each.

One-Time Statewide Pre-Kindergarten Grants

This one-time funding was added by the Legislature (Senate) for FY2013 to increase capacity for additional preschool grants through a competitive process. The Legislature intended to fund a \$4 million PreK program with a goal of achieving a \$10 million program. The Governor reduced the funding to a total of \$2.8 million. \$2.48 million remains in the FY2014 budget for Statewide and Intervention Districts Pre-Kindergarten Programs.

Kindergarten – Third Grade Literacy

Assessments of young children entering school to identify deficits in early literacy are essential to providing tools and resources necessary to provide early intervention for students. This data will also be available to other teachers and schools as students move from one community to another to improve efforts that support student success.

Best Beginnings

Best Beginnings is an advocate for early literacy and engages in collaborative work with state, local and other interested private parties to maintain a focus on early literacy. Best Beginnings is helping communities around Alaska create or expand Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to encourage children to read. The Imagination Library mails a book each month to enrolled children from birth to age five. Approximately 30% of all Alaskan children age 0-5 participate.

Head Start

Head Start is a federal program that promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to 5 from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social and emotional development. The state Head Start funds assist local Head Start grantees in meeting the twenty percent local match requirement to receive federal Head Start grants. Sixteen Alaska Head Start grantees provide services to approximately 3,300 children statewide.

Parents as Teachers (PAT)

PAT is a nationwide program utilizing a home visitation model to provide parent education and family support to families of young children, prenatal up to five years of age. Services include: personal visits, parent group meetings, screenings, and resource referrals; with the goals of increasing parent knowledge of early childhood development and improving parenting practices, early detection of developmental delays and health issues, preventing childhood abuse and neglect, and increasing children's readiness and school success.

State funding supports services in four communities and serves approximately 95 families. Federal funds support programs in another 16 communities