



Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten, School Readiness Plus and Early Learning Scholarship Overview

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Early Learning Scholarships

Purpose of Scholarships

Purpose: Increase access to high-quality early childhood programs for three to five year olds, and zero to two year olds in some circumstances, and to support the kindergarten readiness of children with the highest needs.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) manages the Early Learning Scholarships Program under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.165.

History of State Early Learning Scholarships

Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Availability	Scholarship Amount	Children Served
FY 2013	\$2 million	10 communities	\$4,000	507
FY 2014	\$23 million	44 counties	\$5,000	5,871
FY 2015	\$27 million	57 counties	\$5,000	8,225
FY 2016	\$44.1 million	Statewide	\$7,500	11,219
FY 2017	\$59.9 million	Statewide	\$7,500	14,000
FY2018	\$70.2 million	Statewide	\$7,500	16,000

Pathway I: Awarded to eligible children through an Area Administrator

Pathway II: Early Learning Scholarships awarded to children through a Four Star Parent Aware rated early childhood site

Legislatively Driven Changes

- Held Pathway II funds to FY2017 amounts.
- Extended the time frame to July 1, 2020 that mandates only Parent aware rating of Three or Four Stars are eligible to accept scholarship.
- Expanded Child Eligibility

Early Learning Scholarships-FY2018-FY2020

Pathway I: Awarded to children through an Area Scholarship Administrator, amount based on provider's Parent Aware rating:

Parent Aware Program Rating Level	Scholarship Award
Four-Star Parent Aware Rating	Up to \$7,500 per child
Three-Star Parent Aware Rating	Up to \$5,000 per child
One or Two-Star Parent Aware Rating	Up to \$4,000 per child
Currently in a Full-Rating Pathway Cohort	Up to \$3,000 per child

Pathway II: Awarded to children through a Four-Star Parent Aware rated early childhood site.

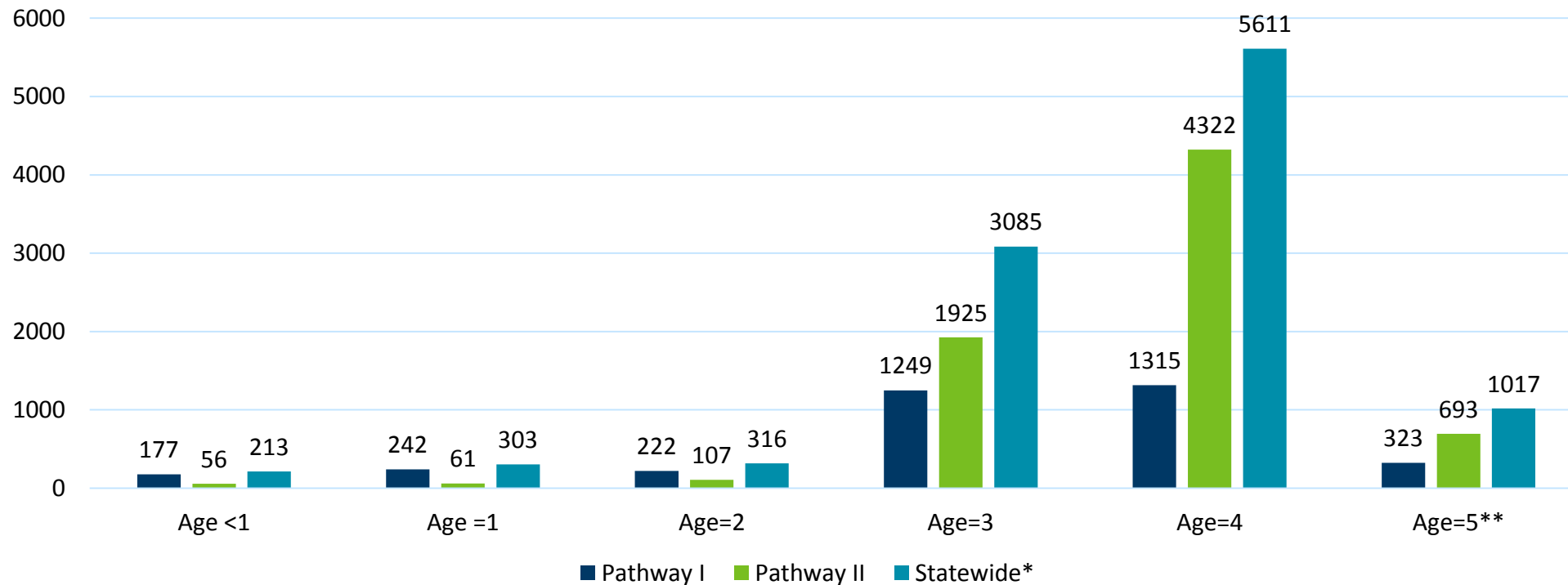
Priority for Scholarships-**FY2018 (new)**

- A child between the ages of zero and five of a parent under the age of 21 who is pursuing a high school or General Education Development (GED®) diploma
- **Child between the ages of zero and five experiencing Homelessness-McKinney Vento Definition**
- **Child between the ages of zero and five in Foster Care-Foster Care worker applies n behalf of the child**
- **Child between the ages of zero and five in need of protective services-MDE is working with DHS to define the population that should be eligible, and documentation**
- Sibling between the ages of zero and five of a child who has been awarded a scholarship is eligible upon request, provided the sibling attends the same program and funds are available.

Mid-Year Data FY2017 (December 31, 2016)

Year to Date FY2017 - 12-31-16	Total	Pathway I	Pathway II
Statewide	10,584	3,532	7,164

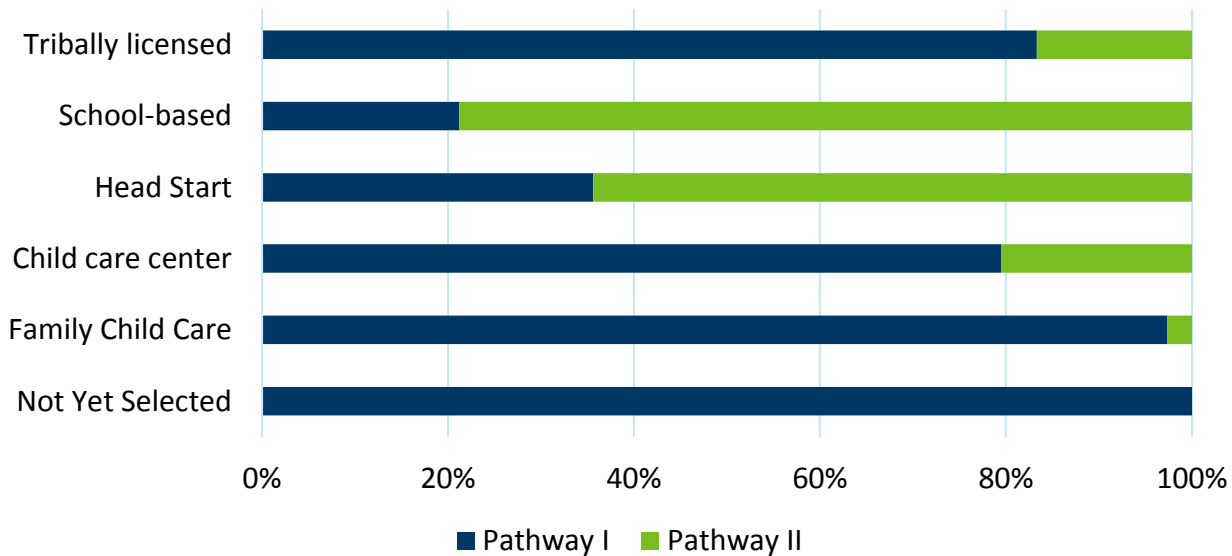
Age of Children with Scholarships



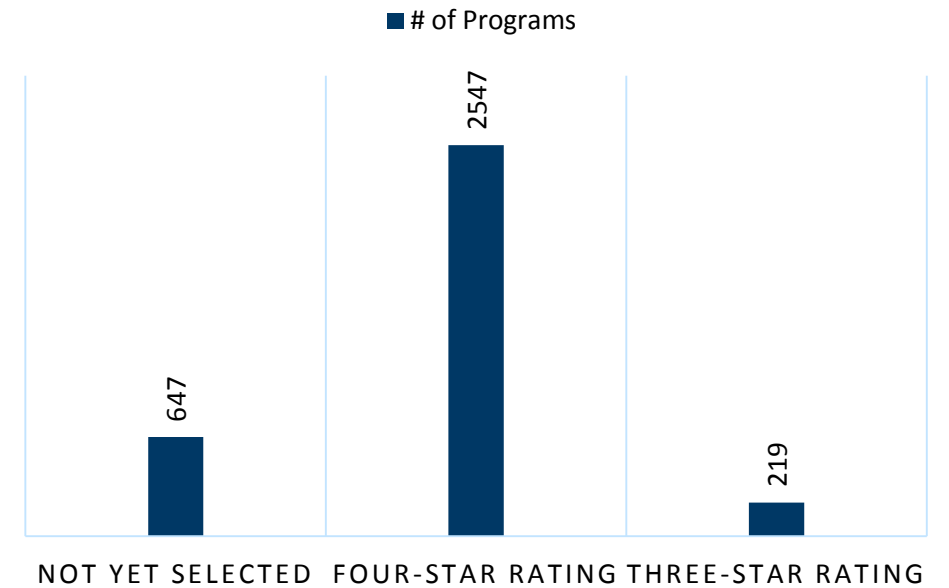
Mid-Year Data FY2017 (December 31, 2016)

Special Populations	PWI	PWII	Statewide-Unduplicated
Teen Parent	53	45	98
Homeless	332	165	495
Foster Care	158	73	223

Pathway by Program Type

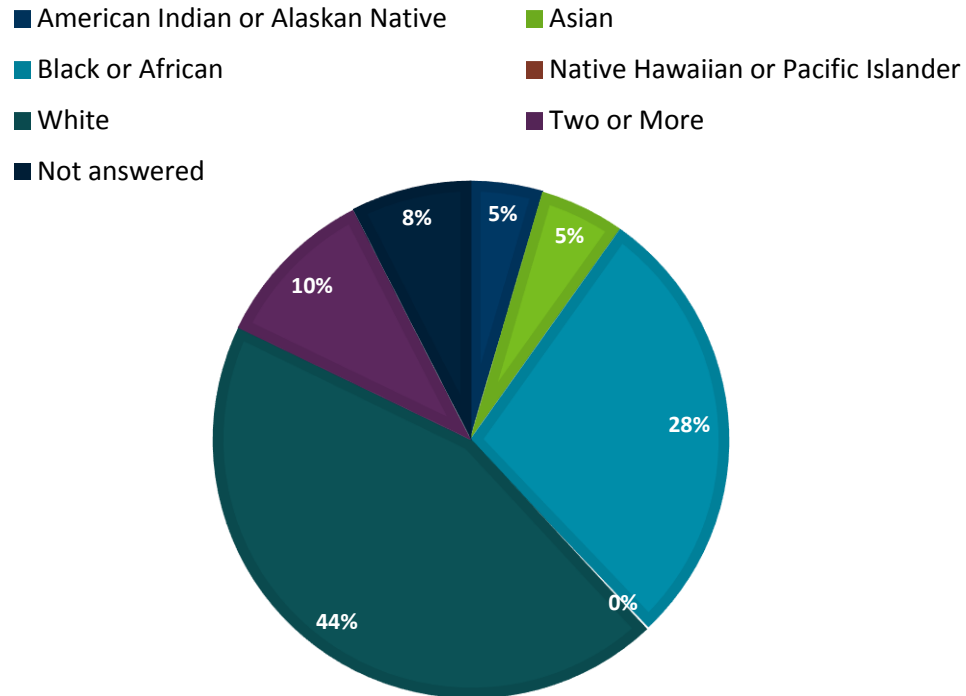


STAR RATING OF PATHWAY I

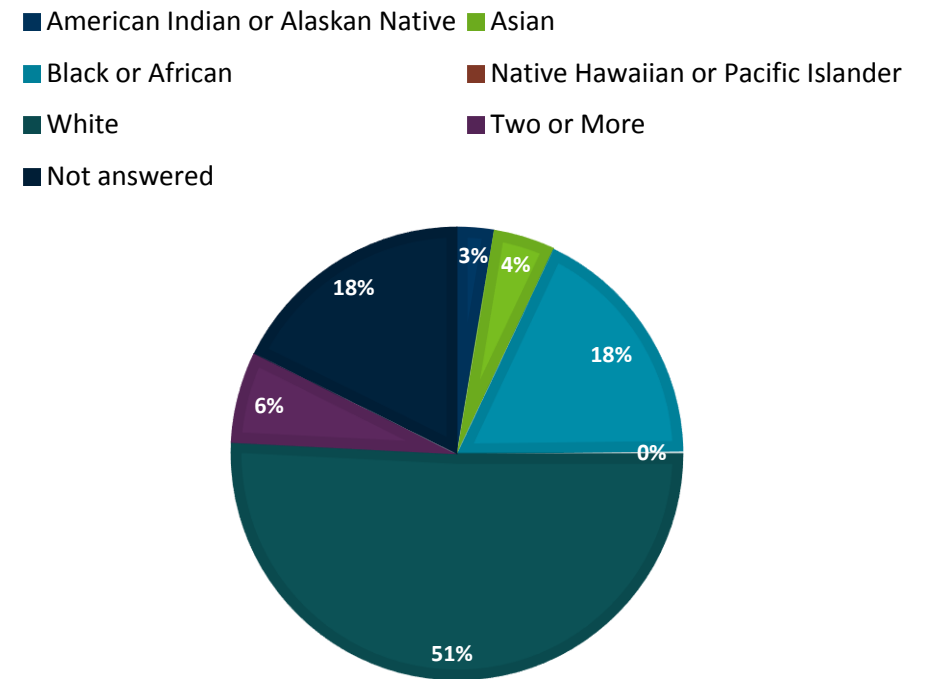


Mid-Year Data FY2017 (December 31, 2016)

% OF CHILDREN RECEIVING PATHWAY I BY RACE



% OF CHILDREN RECEIVING PATHWAY II BY RACE



This data and additional are available on the [MDE website](#) in the [Early Learning Scholarships Use in Minnesota State Fiscal Year 2017-Mid Year report](#)



Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten and School Readiness Plus

Purpose of Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) and School Readiness Plus (SRP)

- **Purpose of VPK/SRP:** Prepare children for success as they enter kindergarten the following year.
- **Goals of VPK/SRP Align with World's Best Work Force Legislation:**
 - Meet school readiness goals
 - Reduce educational achievement gaps.
 - Achieve grade level literacy by third grade.
 - Help ensure every child is ready to succeed in school and life.

Overview of New Preschool Funding Legislation

1. Creates a new SRP funding for FY 2018 and FY 2019 only.
2. Changes the VPK cap from a limit on the state total aid entitlement to a limit on number of participants.
 - For FY 2018, creates a combined cap of 6,160 participants for VPK and SRP
 - The cap of 6,160 covers the 3,160 FY 2017 VPK participants that have renewed their application for FY 2018, plus 3,000 new participants
 - For FY 2019, creates a combined cap of 7,160 participants for VPK and SR+.
 - For FY 2020 and later, SRP sunsets and the cap for VPK is set at 3,160 participants.

Application Ranking

- All applications meeting program requirements were rank-ordered based on three criteria:
 1. Free and reduced lunch concentration of students in kindergarten at the site* as of October 1 of the previous fiscal year;
 2. Proximity of a three- or four-star Parent Aware rated program; and
 3. Whether the district has implemented a mixed delivery program.

*However, a school site may contract to partner with a community based provider or Head Start, or establish an early childhood center, and use the free and reduced lunch concentration of students in kindergarten at the school site as long as those eligible children are prioritized and guaranteed services at the mixed-delivery site or early education center.

Voluntary Pre-K and School Readiness Plus Allocations

Fiscal Year	# Site Applications	District Allocations	# of Sites	Seats Allocated
FY 2017 VPK	262	74	102	3300
FY 2018 VPK RENEWAL		74	102	3,160
FY 2018 VPK NEW	242	43	81	2660
FY 2018 SRP NEW	85	11	14	340
FY 2019 SRP/VPK		Applications Open January 2018	TBD	1,000

Disbursement of VPK/SRP Allocations

- Funding was divided into four groups identified legislatively and based on total state kindergarten enrollment:
 - Minneapolis and St. Paul School Districts 10%
 - Metro Suburban School Districts 40%
 - Non-Metro School Districts 43%
 - Charter Schools 7%

Funding Allocation

The number of participant slots for each group is determined as follows based on state kindergarten enrollment:

	Minneapolis - St Paul	Metro Suburbs	Non-Metro	Charter	Total
% of FY17 K	9.56%	39.59%	42.97%	7.88%	100.00%
Total Slots - FY 18	589	2,439	2,646	486	6,160
FY 17 Renewals	240	1,208	1,464	248	3,160
New Slots - FY 18	349	1,231	1,182	238	3,000
Est Additional New Slots FY 19	95	396	430	79	1,000

Funding Supports-Layering, Blending, and Braiding

State Resources	Federal Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Education Funding• Literacy Incentive Aid• State Early Learning Scholarships• Q-comp• Professional Development• ECFE• School Readiness• Head Start• Compensatory Revenue• Integration Revenue• Early Childhood Screening• Special Education Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title I Part A• Head Start• Title II, Part A• Title II, Part A• Migrant Education Program• Special Ed. Part B 619• Special Ed. Funds for State Personnel Development Grant• Resources provided through Centers of Excellence

Additional Funding Supports—Early Learning Scholarships

- Scholarships cannot be used during scheduled VPK or SRP programming for 4-year-olds generating ADM
- If space allows, 3-year-olds could utilize an early learning scholarship in a VPK or SRP classroom
- Early learning scholarships (Pathway I or II) could be used to expand services for children, such as adding time to the day, additional days a week, or length of the year

Implementing Mixed Delivery Systems

- A mixed delivery system is defined as a district or charter school contracting with a Head Start, child care center, family child care program or community-based organization for delivery of a school readiness plus or voluntary pre-K program
- Definitions of mixed delivery partnerships were spelled out in the Program Design and Site Location guidance material

What does a **mixed delivery system** of pre-K look like?



Key elements:

- Parent choice.
- High-quality programs.
- Coordinated transitions between program types.
- Joint professional development between program types.
- Aligned curriculum, assessment and instruction between program types.
- Continuous, data-driven improvement.

Current MDE Work With Mixed Delivery

- Working 1:1 with districts implementing new partnerships
- Provide a sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish relationships
- Developing a “Tool Kit” for community use in establishing partnerships between:
 - Head Start
 - Center-Based Child Care
 - Family Home Child Care
 - Community-Based Organizations

Understanding Program Requirements— Comparison of Early Learning Programs

School Readiness -- School Readiness Plus -- Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten

- For further information see the program comparison chart on the MDE SRP and VPK webpage
- [ECE Comparison Chart](#)
- [Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program Standards and Head Start Federal Regulations Crosswalk - 12/1/16](#)
- Encouraging blended programs to adopt the highest program requirement

Program Requirements-Eligibility

Voluntary Pre-K

- All children who are four years of age as of September 1 are eligible to participate in a VPK program free of charge

School Readiness Plus

- All children who are four years of age as of September 1 are eligible to participate in SRP free of charge.
 - A child who is four years of age as of Sept 1 and who demonstrates one or more **risk factors** is eligible to participate in the program free of charge.
 - A child who is four years of age as of Sept 1 and who does not demonstrate any of those risk factors is eligible to participate on a fee-for-service basis, if capacity allows
 - A district must adopt a sliding fee schedule for students not demonstrating risk factors, but must waive the fee for participants unable to pay

Program Requirements—Eligibility Continued

Voluntary Pre-K

- May develop district criteria for VPK enrollment priority

School Readiness Plus

- Qualifies for free or reduced price meals
- Is an English learner
- Is homeless
- Has an individualized education program, or interagency intervention plan
- Is identified through health and developmental screening with a potential risk factor that may influence learning
- Is in foster care

Program Requirements—Health and Instruction

Voluntary Pre-K

- Each eligible child must complete a health and developmental screening within 90 days of program enrollment under sections 121A.16
- Provide documentation of required immunizations 121A.15
- The VPK program must provide a minimum of 350 hours of instruction

School Readiness Plus

- SAME
- SAME
- SAME

Questions and Comments

THANK YOU!

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