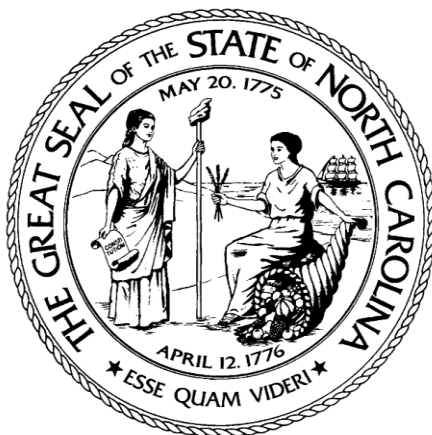


North Carolina Pre-K Program Annual Report

Session Law 2015-241, Section 12B.1



Report to the

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee

on Health and Human Services

and

Office of State Budget and Management

and

Fiscal Research Division

By

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

March 15, 2018

Reporting Requirements

Session Law 2015-241, Section 12B.1 requires the Division of Child Development and Early Education to submit an annual report on the NC Pre-K program no later than March 15 of each year to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the Fiscal Research Division. The report is to include the following:

- (1) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program by county.
- (2) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program who have never been served in other early education programs such as child care, public or private preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, or early intervention programs.
- (3) The expected NC Pre-K expenditures for the programs and the source of the local contributions.
- (4) The results of an annual evaluation of the NC Pre-K program.

(1) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program by county:

A total of 28,385 children are in contract to receive NC Pre-K services in SFY 2017-18.

The number of children contracted by county is as follows:

County	Contractor	Total Children
Alamance	Alamance Partnership for Children	450
Alexander	Alexander County Partnership for Children	69
Alleghany	Alleghany County Schools	62
Anson	Anson County Partnership for Children	152
Ashe	Ashe County Schools	134
Avery	Avery County Schools	109
Beaufort	Beaufort/Hyde Partnership for Children	148
Bertie	Bertie County Schools	142
Bladen	Bladen County Schools	204
Brunswick	Smart Start of Brunswick County, Inc.	250
Buncombe	Buncombe County Partnership for Children	395
Burke	Burke County Smart Start, Inc.	379
Cabarrus	Cabarrus County Partnership for Children	411

County	Contractor	Total Children
Caldwell	Caldwell County Schools	189
Camden	Albemarle Alliance for Children and Families, Inc.(Camden)	36
Carteret	Carteret County Schools	228
Caswell	Caswell County Partnership for Children	80
Catawba	Catawba County Partnership for Children	356
Charlotte	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	1,421
Chatham	Chatham County Partnership for Children	269
Chowan	Edenton - Chowan Board of Education	70
Cleveland	Cleveland County Partnership for Children, Inc.	421
Columbus	Columbus County Schools	345
Craven	Craven County Board of Education	264
Cumberland	Partnership for Children of Cumberland County, Inc.	1,825
Currituck	Currituck County Schools	45
Dare	Dare County Schools	106
Davidson	Smart Start of Davidson County	347
Davie	Davie County Schools	166
Duplin	Duplin County Schools	304
Durham	Durham's Partnership for Children	542
Forsyth	Smart Start of Forsyth County	677
Franklin	Franklin Granville Vance Smart Start, Inc.	146
Gaston	Gaston County Schools	839
Gates	Gates County Schools	31
Granville	Granville County Schools	151
Guilford	Guilford County Partnership for Children	2,037
Halifax/Warren	Halifax-Warren Smart Start Partnership for Children	360
Harnett	Harnett County Partnership for Children	341

County	Contractor	Total Children
Henderson	Western Carolina Community Action, Inc.	189
Hertford	Hertford County Schools	162
Hoke	Hoke County Schools	401
Hyde	Hyde County Schools	31
Iredell	Iredell County Partnership for Children	284
Johnston	Partnership for Children of Johnston County, Inc.	345
Jones	Jones County Partnership for Children	73
Lee	Lee County Partnership for Children	249
Lenoir/Greene	Lenoir/Greene County Partnership for Children	246
Lincoln	Partnership for Children of Lincoln/Gaston Counties, Inc.	174
Madison	Community Action Opportunities	47
Martin	Martin County Schools	127
McDowell	McDowell County Schools	185
Mitchell	Intermountain Children's Services, Inc.	34
Montgomery	Montgomery Public Schools	184
Moore	Moore County Schools (model)	50
Nash/Edgecombe	Down East Partnership for Children	564
New Hanover	New Hanover County Schools	552
Northampton	Northampton County Schools	120
Onslow	Onslow County Partnership for Children, Inc.	736
Orange	Orange County Partnership for Young Children	288
Pamlico	Pamlico County Schools	58
Pasquotank	Elizabeth City - Pasquotank County Schools	141
Pender	Pender County Schools	250
Perquimans	Perquimans County Schools	36
Person	Person County Partnership for Children	123

County	Contractor	Total Children
Pitt	Pitt County Schools	512
Polk	Polk County Schools	79
Randolph	Randolph County Partnership for Children	311
Region A (Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain)	Region A Partnership for Children	579
Richmond	Richmond County Schools	231
Robeson	Robeson County Partnership for Children, Inc.	828
Rockingham	Rockingham County Partnership for Children, Inc	222
Rowan	Smart Start Rowan, Inc.	337
Rutherford	Rutherford County Schools	228
Sampson	Sampson County Partnership for Children	324
Scotland	Scotland County Schools	248
Stanly	Stanly County Partnership for Children, Inc.	300
Stokes	Stokes Partnership for Children	180
Surry	Surry County Early Childhood Partnership	261
Transylvania	Smart Start of Transylvania County	82
Tyrrell	Tyrrell County Schools	18
Union	Alliance for Children	375
Vance	Vance County Schools	145
Wake	Wake County Smart Start	1,540
Washington	Washington County Schools	83
Watauga	Children's Council of Watauga County, Inc	91
Wayne	The Partnership for Children of Wayne County, Inc.	558

County	Contractor	Total Children
Wilkes	Wilkes County Schools	379
Wilson	Wilson County Partnership for Children	119
Yadkin	Yadkin County Schools	164
Yancey	Yancey County Schools	41
	TOTAL	28,385

(2) The number of children participating in the NC Pre-K program who have never been served in other early education programs such as child care, public or private preschool, Head Start, Early Head Start, or early intervention programs.

Of the children participating in NC Pre-K in SFY 2017-18, contractors reported that 59.3%, or approximately 16,823 were never served in other early education programs.

(3) The expected NC Pre-K expenditures for the programs and the source of the local contributions.

The SFY 2016-17 Year-to-Date expenditures for NC Pre-K through January 31, 2018 total \$60,429,595. Based on previous years' expenditures, it is expected that 99% of funds budgeted will be expended. If this trend continues in SFY 2017-18, the expected NC Pre-K program expenditures would be approximately \$151 million.

The source of local contributions as certified and reported by NC Pre-K contractors from July 1, 2017 through November 30, 2017 are noted in the chart below. Certification of expenditures of other resources in the NC Pre-K program through November 30 is an annual reporting requirement. NC Pre-K subcontractors serve children for ten months. If a similar amount of funds is expended for the remaining five months of services, a total of \$54.9 million of other resources may be expended.

Certified Other Resources	Expenditures Reported 7/1/17-11/30/17
Child Care Subsidy	\$67,100
Title I	\$5,680,048
Smart Start	\$2,756,807
Child and Adult Care Food Program	\$1,549,713
Preschool Disabilities Program	\$4,432,657
Head Start	\$7,592,055

Certified Other Resources	Expenditures Reported 7/1/17-11/30/17
Local Appropriations	\$1,988,706
Private Providers	\$1,306,576
Other	\$2,096,058
TOTAL (Five months)	\$27,469,720

(4) The results of an annual evaluation of the NC Pre-K program¹

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) contracts with the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute to conduct an annual evaluation of the NC Pre-K program. During the SFY 2016-17 program year, this evaluation specifically focused on local contractor operations and enrollment practices within NC Pre-K and how local contracting agencies may operate differently across the state related to recruitment, enrollment application and placement, and waitlist practices. The research also provided an evaluation of NC Pre-K program characteristics, including classroom quality and teacher qualification.

The evaluation found that practices do vary substantially in terms of local contractors' size, in terms of both number of children served and overall budget, and therefore the administrative effort and resources available to manage county activities and operate classrooms. County contractors' programs especially varied in the length of their recruitment process, the types of recruitment strategies attempted (and with which populations), the number of applicants received, their selection process, and the size of local waitlists. The full report provides detailed information regarding study findings and specific information regarding county programs. The full report is posted on the Division of Child Development and Early Education website (www.ncchildcare.gov).

Most county NC Pre-K programs believe that they are reaching most eligible applicants, but are also aware of specific populations that are harder to reach and more likely to be missed. These difficult-to-reach populations – families whose home languages are not English, those without existing community connections, those without transportation, and more transient families – experience barriers to enrollment in NC Pre-K at all phases from recruitment to application to placement to waitlist. In order to attempt to overcome barriers, local contractors utilize multiple types of message delivery and distribution and also provide information in English and Spanish language formats, as well as a small number of additional languages.

¹ **Excerpted from:** Peisner-Feinberg, E.S., Van Manen, K.W., & Mokrova, I.L. (2018). *Variations in Enrollment Practices in the NC Pre-K Program: 2016-2017 Statewide Evaluation*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.

A full copy of the report may be found at www.ncchildcare.nc.gov

Collaboration with other agencies was a common theme across these all practices, especially regarding recruitment and the direct provision of services and available resources. NC Pre-K is designed to promote collaboration both at the administrative or contract level through the oversight committee structure, which is required to include multiple partner representatives, and at the implementation level through the provision of services in multiple types of existing early education settings. Local contractors report significant collaboration with school systems, Head Start, child care providers, and child care resource and referral agencies, as well as local departments of social services, public health centers, and pediatricians' offices to reach families and deliver services.

In looking at the NC Pre-K Program characteristics, it is notable that these traits have remained stable over time. NC Pre-K began in the 2001-2002 school year, and 2016-2017 was the 14th year since the program became statewide. Even as NC Pre-K has scaled up, it has remained true to its mission of providing Pre-K services to a largely unserved target population of children from low income families of diverse backgrounds in a variety of early education settings. Many structural characteristics of the program – class size, teacher-child ratio, days and hours of operation, use of curriculum, formative assessment, and developmental screening – have remained consistent, with good quality standards and facility/classroom guidelines throughout the program.

One important area of enhancement in the NC Pre-K program has been a continuing improvement in the levels of teacher education and credentials. There have been significant increases in teacher education and licensure levels, and a significant decrease in those with no credential over the past 14 years, since NC Pre-K became a statewide program. Given the focus of NC Pre-K at the state level on improving teacher qualifications within the program (and more broadly in the field), this is a key achievement.

The findings from the 2016-17 study provide a picture of a mature state Pre-K program that has maintained a consistent pattern of operations as it has scaled up implementation over time. The current system of county-level contract administration, including various early childhood partners in the community, and provision of services within existing early education settings, seems to allow for a combination of local variations in enrollment processes while still promoting collaboration among relevant parties – all with the goal of serving children and families in need.