



Michigan

Michigan School Readiness Program

The Michigan School Readiness Program (MSRP) has two sources of funds: state aid for public schools, and competitive aid for community-based programs. The state aid budget is six times the competitive aid budget, although about 20 percent of public schools (funded through state aid) do sub-contract with community-based providers. Most programs are part-day—two and a half to three hours per day—for a minimum of 30 consecutive weeks, although full-day, alternative schedules and home visiting programs are permitted.

Eligibility

Income: 50 percent must be low-income (about 250 percent of the poverty rate)

Age: 4-years-old on December 1

Priority: children must show evidence of two of 25 risk factors and at least 50 percent must have low-income status

Length of Program

Hours/day: a minimum of two and a half hours per day, four days per week (alternative schedules are permitted, including two full days); full-day programs must operate the same number of hours as the district's first grade program, four days per week

Days/year: 30 consecutive weeks

Eligible Providers

Only local school districts and public academies can apply for state aid. Any public or private nonprofit agency can apply for competitive aid. Family child care providers are not eligible.

Number Served¹

25,712 (2001-02); 3,712 are served in community-based settings

Total Annual Budget

\$84.85 million (2005-06): \$72.6 million in school aid; \$12.25 million in competitive aid

Monitoring

All programs must meet the "Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Pre-kindergarten" and be administered or supervised by an early childhood specialist with a graduate degree in early childhood education or five years experience. Programs must also be licensed by the Division of Child Care Licensing and participate in a self-evaluation process. On-site verification occurs when monitoring staff have other reasons to visit a school site. Competitive agencies are visited once in each three-year funding cycle.

¹ For updated figures on the program budget and number served, please see the NIEER State Preschool Yearbook at: <http://nieer.org/yearbook/states/>

Governance

How are state pre-k programs integrated into community-based settings?

Michigan has a dedicated funding stream (competitive aid) to ensure MSRP programs exist in community-based settings. In addition, about 20 percent of schools (funded through the school aid formula to provide MSRP) sub-contract with community-based providers. While programs in public schools are created and funded based on a formula that guarantees funding, community-based programs must compete for funds.

The Michigan Department of Education oversees both the school aid and the competitive programs, but the separate funding streams dictate the extent of integration into the community. Collaborative agreements with Head Start and other community agencies and providers are required. Any efforts to promote coordination among programs at the local level would take place in the local MSRP advisory committee, or Great Start Collaboratives, a state-local systems-building approach.

Are there requirements to integrate the state pre-k and subsidized child care programs at the state or local level?

The legislation does not require collaboration between state agencies or offices. There are several inter-agency efforts to promote early care and education, but none specifically focused on MSRP.

Each school district has a MSRP advisory committee that includes state agencies as well as local services providers (for example, Child Care Resource & Referral, Head Start Grantees, and other MSRP providers). While the advisory committee does not grant MSRP funds or monitor quality, it is intended to promote relationships among stakeholders and facilitate the coordination of supplemental services for preschool children.

Procedures and Supports for Community-based Providers

What are the rules/guidelines for notifying and selecting pre-k providers?

In the past, potential pre-k providers received an individual mailing. To save on cost, the department is now posting notifications on the web and in newsletters, such as the newsletter produced by the child care licensing office that goes to all licensed programs. They also notify the R&R network (4C's) to spread the word when applications are being accepted for MSRP funds. In some areas where there is unmet need, there may be strategic outreach to qualified child care centers.

All programs must be licensed (or “approved”) by the Division of Child Care Licensing, which does require an on-site review, although for a different set of standards. There is no on-site review specific to MSRP before funds are granted. All programs must meet the program standards when they begin operation.

What resources are available to help providers become eligible to deliver pre-k services?

In the first year, programs receive the full cost per child (\$3,300) but are only required to provide 20 of the 30 weeks of services. This allows programs to hire necessary staff and purchase start-up equipment. The state recently raised the cap on the percentage of the per-pupil funds that could be spent on professional development. While this did not increase funding, it encouraged pre-k programs to invest in professional development. Michigan also has a T.E.A.C.H. program, but these funds are not earmarked for MSRP teachers.

Do teachers working in community settings earn comparable wages and benefits once they obtain the same credential as teachers in school-based settings?

Compensation rates are determined locally. Schools and programs receive a flat, per-child reimbursement.

Supports for Working Families

Is there any explicit discussion in the legislation or regulations of extending the day, coordinating with the child care subsidy program, or helping working families?

Yes. Legislation mandates that priority for new programs receiving either state aid or competitive grants will go to programs providing supplementary child care. In 2005-06, state aid programs were allowed to enroll one child in two “slots,” thus creating a school-day program.

What policies help working families access pre-k and other supports?

The MSRP standards indicate staff must provide parents with referrals and access to supportive services. The law states:

A comprehensive compensatory program funded under this section shall include an age-appropriate educational curriculum, nutritional services, health screening for participating children, a plan for parent and legal guardian involvement, and provision of referral services for families eligible for community social services.

Program standards require that the program works with public and private community agencies and educational institutions to meet the comprehensive needs of children and families.

Funding

What is the per-child payment for the pre-k program?

For the 2005-06 program year, the per-child payment was \$3,300 for part-day programs and \$6,600 for school-day programs. Approximately 22,000 slots were funded from \$72.6 million in state funds, and 3,712 slots were funded through \$12.25 million in competitive grants.

How does the state pre-k funding affect other potential sources of funds for a provider?

MSRP programs can receive child care subsidies for care outside of the part-day or school-day program. In Michigan, subsidies are pro-rated on an hourly basis. Programs cannot receive both Head Start and MSRP funds for the same child, since these are considered to be parallel programs. MSRP requires that families income-eligible for Head Start are referred to a Head Start program, although waivers are possible and local groups are encouraged to develop a recruitment and referral process that maximizes all funding sources.

Sources

- Interview: Lindy Buch and Renee De Mars-Johnson
- Website: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/1,1607,7-140-5234_6809---,00.html
- Legislation: Public Act 121 of 2001, Sec. 32d:
<http://michiganlegislature.org/documents/2001-2002/publicact/htm/2001-PA-0121.htm>
- Program Guidelines and Requirements:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/ImpManual_11363_7.PDF
- Eligibility: risk factors available at
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/MSRP_Risk_Factors_11372_7.PDF; low income guidelines available at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/01-02_Income_Eligibility_Guidelines_11242_7.PDF
- Collaboration sign-off form: http://www.michigan.gov//documents/02-03_CNRA_Collaboration_Form_11252_7.PDF

For information about national trends, read CLASP's *All Together Now: State Experiences in Using Community-Based Child Care to Provide Pre-kindergarten* at http://www.clasp.org/publications/all_together_now.pdf.