

Prekindergarten Education Committee

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Children and Families**

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Agency of Education**

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PreK Committee formed by Act 76 of 2023

- Co-chaired by DCF CDD Deputy Commissioner McLaughlin and interim AOE Secretaries Bouchey then Saunders.
- Committee established on July 14, 2024. Public comment accepted each meeting.
- Facilitator/Project Manager engaged in December 2023.
- Initial report on PreK Pupil Weighting submitted in December 2023.
- Main report submitted to Legislature in December 2024.

[PreK Committee webpage](#)

PreK Committee Charge

- Act 76 charged committee with the following key changes to the existing UPK program:
 - Full school day, full-school year
 - One year of eligibility (4-year-olds and 5-year-olds not yet enrolled in kindergarten, transition 3yo to child care)
 - School district assigned responsibility of providing space for all eligible children
 - School district choice as whether to partner with community-based private programs or other public schools

Vermont's Universal Prekindergarten per Act 166

Publicly Funded

- A minimum of ten (10) hours of publicly-funded prekindergarten education 35 weeks per year

Inclusive

- 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds 5 year-olds not enrolled in kindergarten

Portable

- Parent chooses where to enroll
- Funding follows the child

"Mixed Delivery"

- Public Schools
- Community-Based Private and Nonprofit Programs
 - Child care centers
 - Head Starts
 - Family child care homes

Jointly Administered by AOE Early Education and AHS DCF Child Development Division

Designed to leverage strength and systems at each Agency

- Jointly work to set policy, support implementation, monitor compliance, and improve practice
- AOE leads: Program Approval, Child-level assessments (GOLD, Ready4K!), Early Childhood Special Education, Early MTSS, District-level Data Collection
- CDD leads: Child Care Licensing, STARS quality improvement and recognition system, SPARQS quality coaching, Head Start collaboration
- Both provide technical assistance, professional development

Public Funding for UPK under Act 166 of 2014

- Funded by resident school districts (part of a school district's budget)
- Children enroll in prequalified public school or private prekindergarten education programs and are included in a school district's ADM count.
- Average Daily Membership (ADM) is .46 for at least 10 hours/week for 35 weeks/year.
- SY 2024-2025 UPK Tuition Rate per child is \$3,884
 - Adjusted each year by the New England Economic Project cumulative price index.

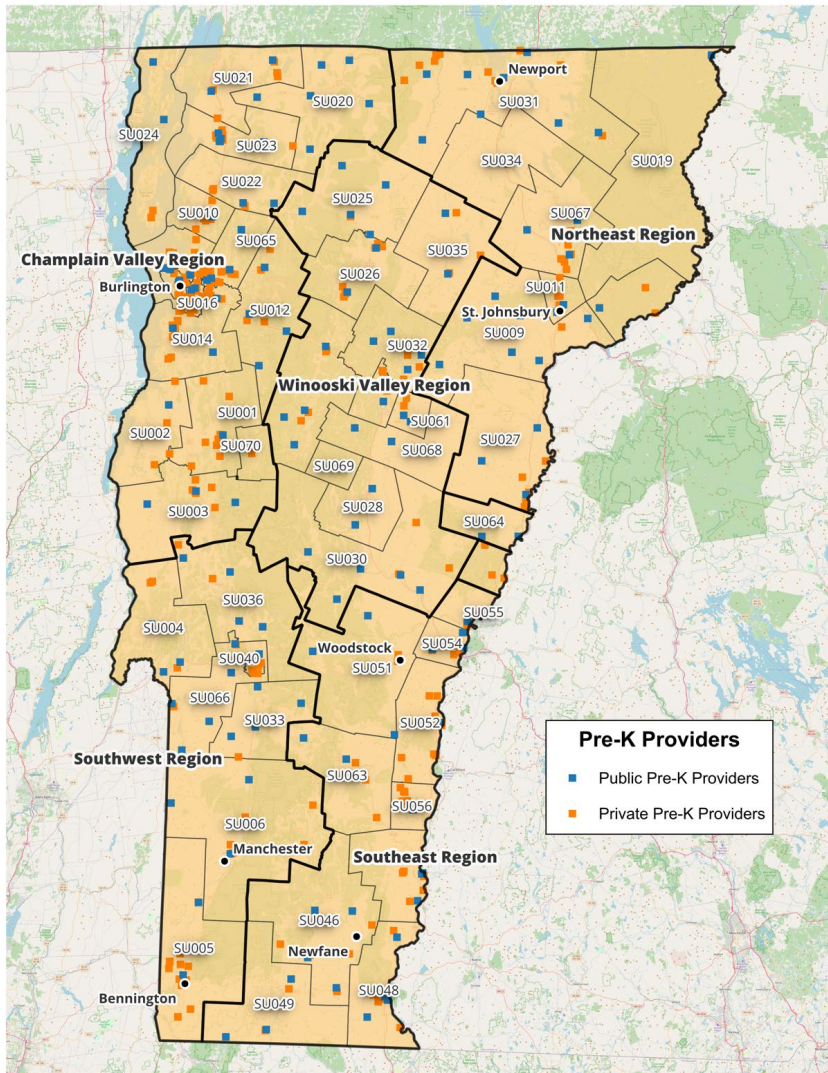
Early Childhood Special Education and Inclusion in UPK

- The federal Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act places a strong emphasis on educating children with disabilities in settings with children without disabilities with needed supports and aids in regular education settings
- A regular education setting can be a private or public UPK programs, Head Start, family childcare, licensed childcare settings, e.g.).
- A regular education setting also needs to have 50% or more children without disabilities

— 34 CFR §§300.114–300.120, 34 CFR §300.133



Pre-K Providers by SU



SUNION	SU_name
SU001	Mt.Abraham
SU002	Addison NW
SU003	Addison Central
SU004	Slate Valley
SU005	SW Vermont
SU006	Bennington-Rutland
SU007	Colchester
SU009	Caledonia Central
SU010	Milton Town
SU011	St.Johnsbury
SU012	Mt.Mansfield
SU014	Champlain Valley
SU015	Burlington
SU016	S Burlington
SU017	Winooski
SU019	Essex N
SU020	Franklin NE
SU021	Missisquoi Valley
SU022	Franklin W
SU023	Maple Run
SU024	Grand Isle
SU025	Lamoille N
SU026	Lamoille S
SU027	Orange E
SU028	Orange SW
SU030	White River Valley
SU031	North Country
SU032	Washington Central
SU033	Mill River
SU034	Orleans Central
SU035	Orleans SW
SU036	Rutland NE
SU040	Rutland City
SU042	Harwood
SU046	Windham Central
SU047	Windham NE
SU048	Windham SE
SU049	Windham SW
SU051	Mountain Views
SU052	Windsor SE
SU054	Hartford
SU055	SAU #70
SU056	Springfield SD
SU061	Barre
SU063	Two Rivers
SU064	Rivendell Interstate
SU065	Essex Westford
SU066	Greater Rutland County
SU067	Kingdom East
SU068	Central Vermont
SU069	Montpelier Roxbury

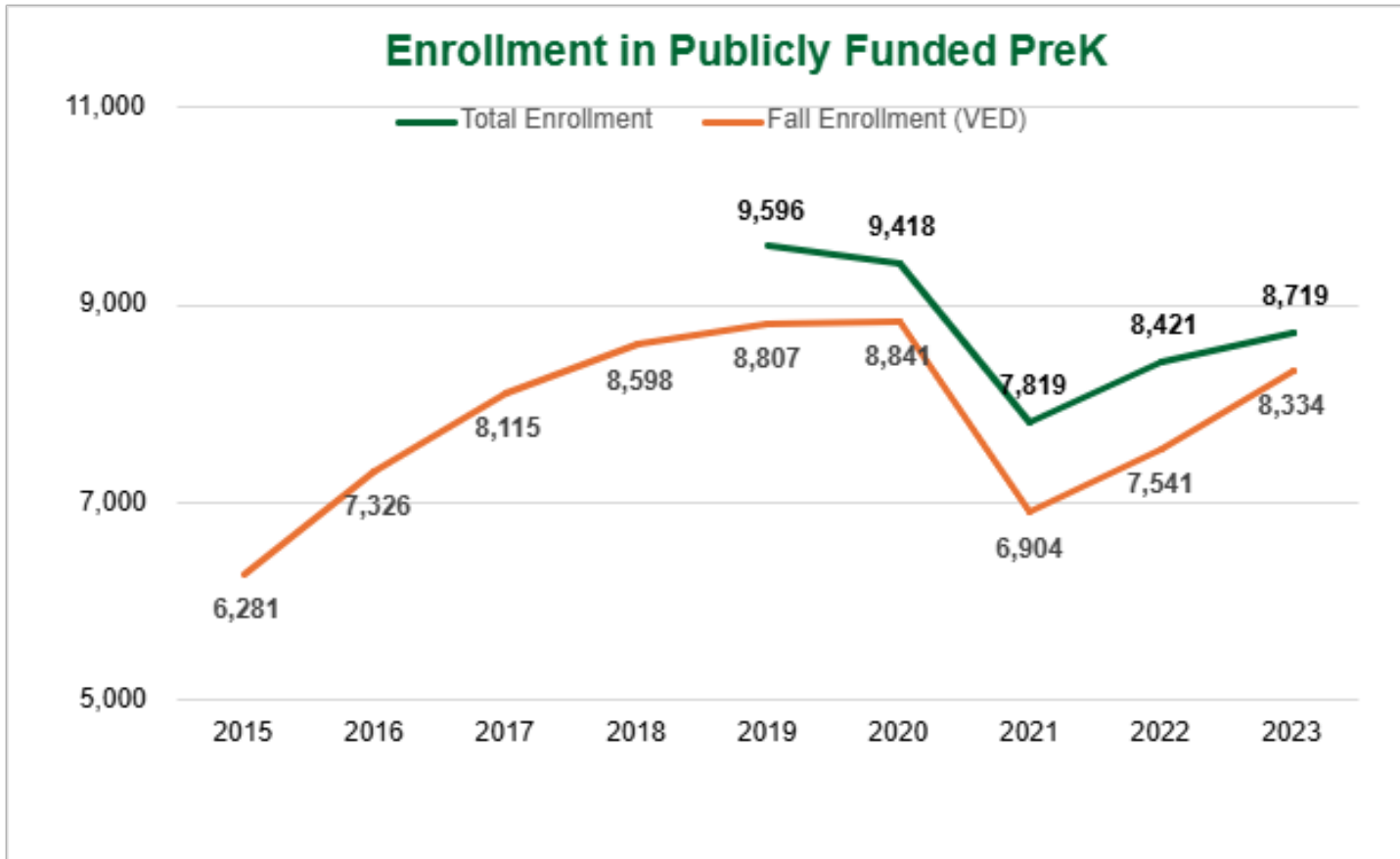
PreK Providers Serving Publicly-funded PreK Students, 2024

Vermont families choose to enroll their children in a variety of PreK programs. Factors include:

- Availability
- Hours and Schedules
- Location
- Cost
- Need for afterschool and summer care
- Family characteristics
- Special Education services
- Quality

Prekindergarten Enrollment (#)

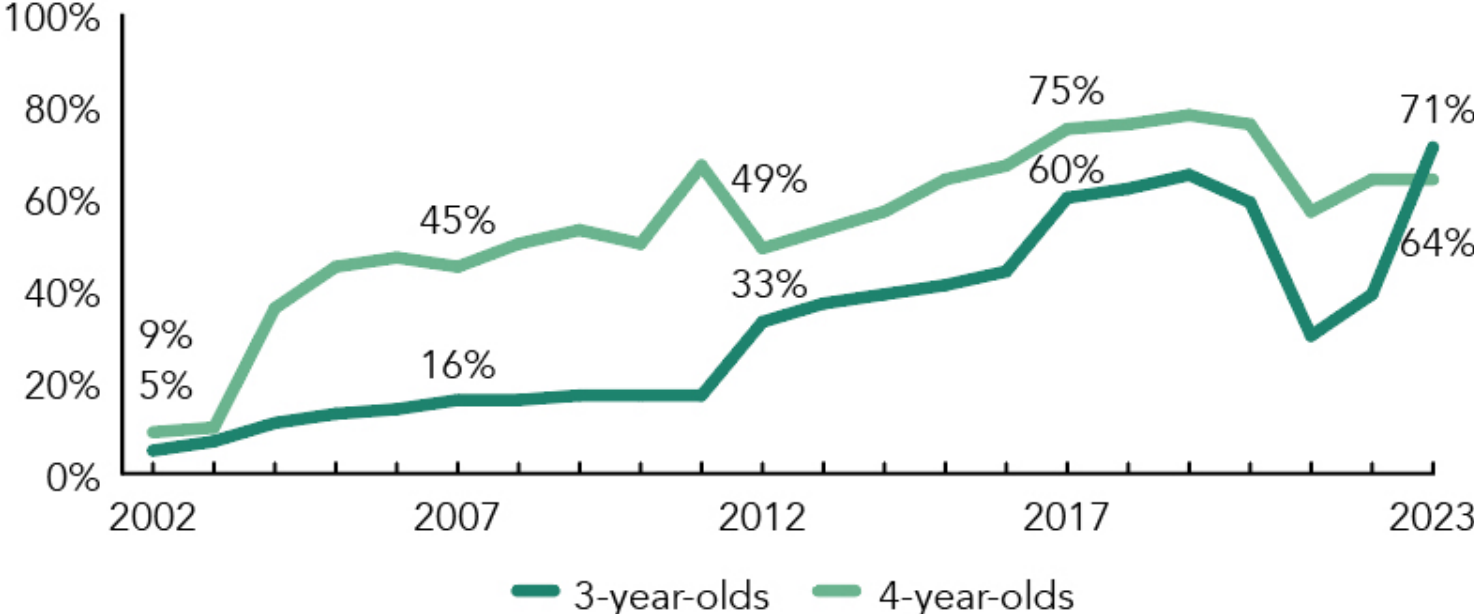
Vermont saw a steady increase in the number of children enrolled in PreK after Act 166 was implemented, a significant drop during COVID, and a rebound in the last two years.



Prekindergarten Uptake (%)

Nationwide in 22/23, Vermont had the 2nd highest enrollment of prekindergarten education for 3-year-olds in the nation at 71% of age-eligible children and the 6th highest uptake for 4-year-olds at 64%.

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



Source: Vermont | National Institute for Early Education Research

PreK Committee Recommendations

The Committee was unable to vote on a full suite of recommendations, but had agreement on four foundational recommendations:

- Maintain the 10-hour/week (350 hour/year) benefit for both three-year-olds and four-year-olds.
- Expand prekindergarten, including hours and services, for four-year olds.
- Commission an analysis of Vermont's pupil weight for prekindergarten.
- Review methodology for establishing prekindergarten payments to non-school-based programs and propose updates.

PreK Committee-Identified Considerations

While the committee was unable to vote on these topics, there was robust research, discussion and general alignment on the need for additional planning to:

- Strengthen data collection and analysis to inform future changes
- Build on Vermont's use of best practices (mixed delivery, 3s and 4s, for all) in ensuring access
- Build on Vermont's strong foundation for quality to meet additional national benchmarks
- Strengthen and streamline implementation

PreK in Governor's Education Transformation Proposal

- Maintains prekindergarten for both 3- and 4-olds in 'mixed delivery' model
 - Maintains part-day PreK for 3-year-olds
 - Expands PreK for 4-year-olds to part-day or full-school-day
- Funding will include base + weights for PreK children, plus administrative overhead for 5 school districts
 - Tuition payments to community-based PreK providers reflect pupil base + weight + part-time or full-time student count
 - Districts' central office provides PreK coordination for administration and programmatic elements
- CDD and AOE continue to partner around streamlining administration, data-informed quality improvement, and accountability measures