



Department of
Children & Youth
Early Childhood Education

ANNUAL REPORT

Early Childhood Education Grant

State Fiscal Year 2024



FEBRUARY 2025

Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs are an important investment in Ohio’s youngest learners. Ohio has worked to increase the availability of high-quality early learning programs for preschool children by providing Early Childhood Education grants. Funded programs deliver high-quality, comprehensive learning environments that align with Step Up To Quality program standards, focused on healthy development, and intellectual, social, and emotional success. Research is clear: children who participate in high-quality early learning programs start school better prepared for educational success.

SFY 24
Programs

Number of State-Funded Grantees:**592**

Number of Site Locations:**1,500**

Total State Funding:**\$130,000,000**

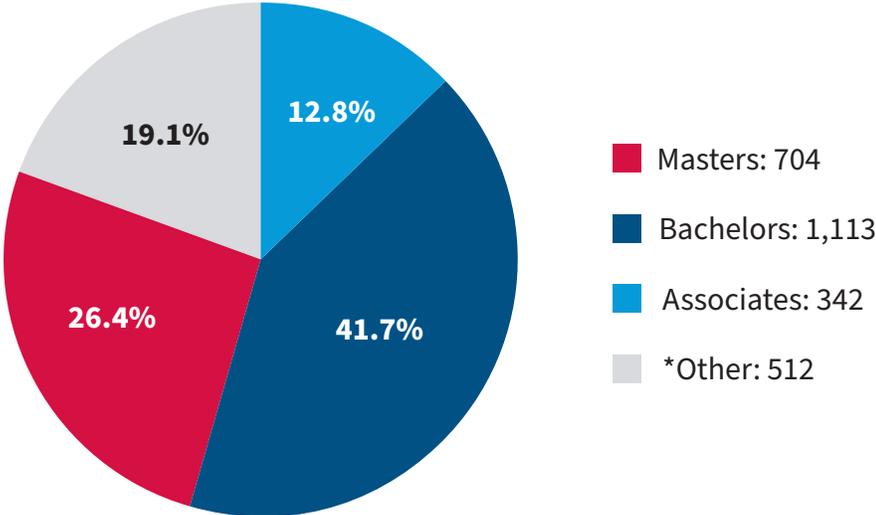
State-Funded Per-Child:**\$4,250**

Spaces Funded to Serve Children:**30,000**

In State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024), Early Childhood Education was expanded through a historic investment introduced by Governor Mike DeWine and supported by the legislature through H.B. 33. There were 592 Early Childhood Education-funded grants that served 28,144 children with the expanded \$130,000,000 investment in state funding. These grantees included public school districts, educational service centers, joint vocational schools, community schools, chartered nonpublic schools, and community-based child care providers that earned 3-, 4-, or 5-star ratings in Ohio’s quality rating system, Step Up To Quality.

TEACHER CREDENTIALS

Early Childhood Education programs must meet the teacher credential requirements in the field of early childhood education, or another field approved by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce/ Department of Children and Youth. Teachers in Early Childhood Education-funded programs are required to complete 20 hours of professional development every two years to enhance their knowledge of current best practices for supporting children’s learning.



The chart illustrates the highest degrees earned by lead teachers in all Early Childhood Education programs.

* The ‘Other’ category includes the credentials GED, doctorate, non-degree, high school diploma, education specialist, and unknown.

STEP UP TO QUALITY

Step Up To Quality is Ohio’s tiered quality rating and improvement system for early learning and development programs. The purpose of Step Up To Quality is to improve these programs by serving as a roadmap for continuous improvement efforts. All Early Childhood Education programs must participate in Step Up To Quality and meet its high-quality program standards.

CHILD ASSESSMENTS

The experiences and opportunities provided to children in the early years affect the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they acquire before entering kindergarten. Children enter preschool at varying levels of development and with different early learning experiences. The Department requires Early Childhood Education programs to assess children to determine where they are in terms of growth and development toward kindergarten readiness. Children are assessed twice per year using Ohio’s Early Learning Assessment.

The Early Learning Assessment is a comprehensive formative assessment used to assess children 36-72 months of age and aligns with Ohio’s Early Learning and Development Standards. The assessment includes 32 learning progressions in the areas of social foundations, language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, physical well-being, and motor development. Programs are required to report on ten of these learning progressions.

Ohio’s Early Learning Assessment aligns with Ohio’s Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, allowing the relationship between scores assigned in the Early Learning Assessment during preschool and kindergarten to be tracked over time.

SFY 24
Profile of Children Served

28,144 Total Children Served

772 Children Who are English Learners

Children Served by Age:

- **3-year-olds: 7,926**
- **4-year-olds: 15,732**
- **5-year-olds : 4,486**

PROGRAM MONITORING AND SUPPORT

In SFY 24, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW)/Department of Children and Youth (DCY) provided support to early childhood education programs to ensure they met program requirements. A webinar offered grantees information on program updates and clarified policy implementation. Using a risk-assessment matrix, Department staff members identified grantees to participate in program monitoring and conducted desk reviews. Staff also provided individualized technical assistance to programs through conference calls and making sure program staff understood requirements and sharing suggestions and best practices related to system and program policy development.

This annual report meets the requirements of Section 423.40 of House Bill 33, of the 135th General Assembly which says:
“The Department shall provide an annual report to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate and post the report to the Department’s web site, regarding early childhood education programs operated under this section and the early learning program standards.