



Pre-Kindergarten (pre-K) has received national attention since President Obama spoke about it in his State of the Union address, released a plan for a federal-state partnership to make high quality publicly funded pre-K available to all 4-year-olds, and made this new initiative a centerpiece of the Administration’s budget proposal released on April 10th. Members of Congress in both chambers have long understood the importance of making high quality pre-K available for every child. As in past years, these members have introduced legislation in the 113th Congress that would increase the availability and improve the quality of publicly funded pre-K. Three of these bills are the Prepare All Kids Act (S.502/H.R.1368), introduced by Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) and Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY); the Pre-K Act (S.519/H.R.1041), introduced by Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI) and Representative Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY); and the Ready to Learn Act (S.322), introduced by Senator Murray (D-WA). Though the president’s plan includes specific dollar amounts from the budget proposal, which the other bills do not include, and lacks some of the specific provisions that would be included in legislation, it is useful to compare his plan for pre-K with those in Congress. Below is a comparison of key provisions of the three bills and the President’s plan for pre-K for 4-year-olds. The President’s budget proposal also has a comprehensive pre-natal to age 5 continuum of services that the other bills do not include, and it is not included in this fact sheet. For more information on the comprehensive plan, please visit www.firstfocus.net.

Table with 5 columns: Question, President Obama's Pre-K Plan, Prepare All Kids Act S.502/H.R.1368 (Sen. Casey/Rep. Maloney), Pre-K Act S.519/H.R.1041 (Sen. Hirono/Rep. McCarthy), and Ready to Learn Act S.322 (Sen. Murray). The table compares funding distribution methods for pre-K across these four different legislative proposals.

A Comparison of Pre-K Plans

	President Obama's Pre-K Plan	Prepare All Kids Act S.502/H.R.1368 (Sen. Casey/Rep. Maloney)	Pre-K Act S.519/H.R.1041 (Sen. Hirono/Rep. McCarthy)	Ready to Learn Act S.322 (Sen. Murray)
	awarded by the Secretary of Education in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.			
How will the state and federal government share funding?	States must contribute a 10 percent match of federal funds in the first year, with the share increasing incrementally each year to 100 percent after 8 years and 300 percent after 10 years. The state share is lower if that state's pre-K initiative enrolls a certain number of children from middle income families.	Both contribute 50 percent of the cost to provide adequate subgrants to providers.	Qualified States are required to match 30 percent of federal funds. Selected States are required to match 50 percent of federal funds.	Both contribute 50 percent of the cost to provide adequate subgrants to providers. The Secretary of Education can grant state waivers to adjust the state share.
Are there any set-asides?	None specified.	15 percent to serve infants and toddlers from birth to age 3, and 10 percent to extend pre-K to full day and full year.	10 percent to serve infants and toddlers from birth to age 3.	15 percent to improve quality through expanding a quality rating and improvement system in the state, professional development for teachers, or providing comprehensive services to children.
What are the class size requirements?	Low staff to child ratio and small class sizes.	Maximum class size of 20 children and a ratio of 10 students for every teacher, with at least one teacher in each classroom.	Qualified States must meet nationally established best practices for class size and teacher to student ratios.	Maximum class size of 20 children and a ratio of 10 students for every one teacher in each classroom.
What are the teacher requirements?	Must have a bachelor's degree (BA).	Must have a BA with specialization in early childhood education or early childhood development within 6 years of bill becoming law.	In Qualified States, must have associate's degree or higher in early childhood education or related field and states must have a plan for all teachers to have a BA within 5 years.	Must have a BA or advanced degree in early childhood education or a BA and specialized training in early childhood development within two years of a state receiving a grant.
Who is eligible for pre-K?	Four-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families first, and 4-year-olds from middle-income families. After a state has universal pre-K for 4-year-olds under 200 percent of the FPL, grant funds can go to providing high quality full-day kindergarten and pre-K for 3-year-olds.	Children ages 3-5 with priority for children who live in families under 200 percent of the FPL. Pre-K must also meet the needs of English language learners, students with disabilities, homeless children, and children in foster care.	Children ages 3-5 with priority in both Qualified States and Selected States on low-income families if it is not universal pre-K. In Qualified States, pre-K must also meet the unique needs of children with disabilities, English language learners, and children in rural areas.	Four-year-olds, and pre-K must first serve children from families living under 200 percent of the FPL and English language learners.

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What kind of curriculum should pre-K have?	Developmentally appropriate and research-based, with an appropriate learning environment as well.	Evidence and research based, meet the developmental needs of children, and support children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development.	In Qualified States, must be research-based and promote children's language, literacy, math, science, creative arts skills, and social, emotional, and physical development.	Developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate with valid and reliable assessments to improve instruction.
Will pre-K offer additional services to children?	On-site comprehensive services will be available for children.	Must have a parent engagement plan, provide referrals to other supports, and provide a smooth transition to kindergarten.	In Qualified States, must provide at least one of the following services: health screenings, parent involvement, or nutrition assistance.	States can use the 15 percent quality set-aside to provide comprehensive wraparound services for children.
How will states and pre-K providers use the grant funds?	To ensure that pre-K is high quality and available to 4-year-olds living below 200 FLP, for professional development, and to ensure that pre-K teacher salaries are comparable to K-12 teacher salaries. Preschool Development Grants are used to address fundamental needs of creating and implementing high quality state-funded pre-K, such as facility creation and workforce development.	To ensure that pre-K supports children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, professional development for teachers, and extend pre-K to full day and year-round.	In both Qualified States and Selected States, priority is on improving quality (such as through professional development, extending pre-K to full day and year-round, and renovating existing facilities), then states can use remaining funds to expand access.	Must first be used to improve quality through implementing the class size and ratio, curriculum, and teacher requirements above. Then grant funds can be used to serve younger children, increase teacher salaries, provide additional services, and construct new facilities.
What is the state maintenance of effort?	None specified, but federal funds must supplement, not supplant, current state funding.	State expenditures on early childhood must be equal to or greater than the previous fiscal year.	Qualified and Selected States must maintain total and per-child expenditures on pre-K and total expenditures on child care at the previous fiscal year level or above.	State per-child expenditures must be equal to or greater than the previous fiscal year, with state waivers available through the Secretary of Education.
What are reporting and monitoring requirements?	States would monitor the quality of their pre-K initiatives, but specifics are not included.	An annual report from the Secretary of Education to Congress that reviews the effectiveness of each pre-K provider that receives a subgrant, including the number and ages of children enrolled (including family income, race, gender, disability status, and native language of each child), a description of the curriculum, and an	An annual report from the Secretary of Education to Congress that includes how states are improving or enhancing state-funded pre-K, the progress of Selected States toward becoming a Qualified State (if applicable), and the number of children served by subgroup (children with disabilities,	An annual report from the Secretary of Education to Congress that includes how each state that receives a grant is providing high quality pre-K to all four-year-olds, a timetable of implementation, state efforts to integrate pre-K with K-12, and state efforts at parental education.

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		explanation of all funding sources.	English language learners, low-income children and children in rural areas).	
Can the children be tested?	Not specified.	Test scores can't be used for rewards or sanctions for children, teachers, or providers.	Test scores can't be used for rewards or sanctions for children or teachers.	There is no prohibition against testing for rewards or sanctions for children or teachers.
Where does the money come from?	Funding for pre-K comes from an increase of the tobacco tax by 94 cents per pack of cigarettes.	Discretionary appropriations of such funds as necessary.	Discretionary appropriations of such funds as necessary.	Discretionary appropriations of such funds as necessary.