

The *Florida Cost Model* for estimating the costs of universal prekindergarten builds upon:

- The cost estimation work completed in Illinois, Ohio, and South Carolina;
- Program information from Georgia; and
- Recommendations from the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the Center for the Study of Social Policy.

Estimating the First Year Costs of the Voluntary Universal Prekindergarten Program using the *Florida Cost Model*

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Amendment to the State Constitution. Florida's Constitution Section 1: Public Education, paragraph (b) reads:

"Every four-year-old child in Florida shall be provided by the State of Florida a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An early childhood development program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory, and moral capacities through education in basic skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine appropriate."

The Policy Group for Florida's Families and Children strongly urges Florida to invest the state's resources wisely in a quality prekindergarten program for our four-year-olds and their families. Funding a quality system will assist families, communities, and our state in realizing the best outcomes for Florida's children. To assist the state with making informed investments, *The Policy Group* developed the *Florida Cost Model* for estimating the costs of universal prekindergarten.

In December 2004, the Florida Legislature passed legislation to create the Voluntary Universal Prekindergarten program. Using the *Florida Cost Model*, *The Policy Group* has developed estimates for the costs to fund a quality system within the parameters of the legislation. ***The estimates of the costs for serving Florida's four-year olds (shown in the table) are based on planning for and funding 1:10 teacher-to-child ratios with a maximum group size of 18, qualified and educated teachers, a three-hour-day program, and accountability measures and systems.*** Note, the calculations do not include comprehensive services or the cost of care beyond 180 days a year for the indicated 3 hours of instruction. The calculations do include first-year non-recurring start up costs.

The Policy Group for Florida's Families and Children recommends that funding for Florida's Voluntary Universal Prekindergarten program ensures a high quality system that provides the most qualified and credentialed teacher workforce, recognizing that initially Florida will have to start with a mix of credentials. *The Policy Group* recommends differential teacher salary payments based on credentials in order to move toward having all lead teachers with baccalaureate degrees, the goal identified in legislation. **Incorporating direct program, outcome and accountability, governance, administrative, and facility costs (most of which are not covered in the \$2,500 per child under consideration by the Legislature); the estimated cost for this starting point is \$3,862 per child.**

The Policy Group for Florida's Families and Children is an independent, non-partisan policy research organization composed of local and state leaders who are working together to enhance the well-being of Florida's families and children. The vision of *The Policy Group* is that, together, we will ensure a generation of young people who grow up to be responsible adults – ready, willing and able to contribute to self, to family and to their community.

Additional information regarding *The Universal Prekindergarten Cost Model for Florida* is available at <http://www.policygroup.org>.
Look for *Estimating the Cost of Voluntary Universal Prekindergarten in Florida-Calculations and The Cost of Voluntary Universal Prekindergarten – Working Papers*

First Year Florida VUPK Cost Detail

Part-day model - 3 hours of instruction
147,972 children (67%)¹
Lead teachers with mix of credentials²

Cost Category	Statewide Cost	Cost per Child
Direct Program — Provider Payments	73.7%	
Personnel Costs	\$184,462,798	\$1,247
Operating Costs	\$236,755,200	\$1,600
<i>Sub-total Direct Program Costs</i>	<i>\$421,217,998</i>	<i>\$2,847</i>
Governance and Administration	3.8%	
State and Local Administration	\$14,047,548	\$95
Monitoring	\$7,560,000	\$51
<i>Sub-total Governance & Administration Costs</i>	<i>\$21,607,548</i>	<i>\$146</i>
Outcome and Accountability	11.0%	
Professional Development	\$13,153,600	\$89
Program Evaluation	\$23,412,580	\$158
Consultation and Technical Assistance	\$26,320,000	\$178
<i>Sub-total Outcomes & Accountability Costs</i>	<i>\$62,886,180</i>	<i>\$425</i>
Facilities	11.5%	
Start-up costs (non-recurring)	\$65,768,000	\$444
Total (147,972 Children)	\$571,479,726	
Total Cost per Child		\$3,862

¹ Based on 4-year-old 2005 population estimate of 220,853 by the Office of Economic and Demographic Research of the Florida Legislature

² Mix of credentials reflects existing workforce: 20% baccalaureate, 20% associate degrees, and 60% with Child Development Associate credentials