

Industry briefing for private childcare providers

Universal Pre-Kindergarten & Private Childcare

About Tuscany

Tuscany Strategy is a U.S. management consulting firm providing strategic and management services to senior executives across the entire spectrum of knowledge and learning industries. www.tuscanystrategy.com.

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Intended Audience

This report is pertinent to industry executives and investors, individual business owners, state and federal representatives, and advocacy groups seeking to better understand what UPK is and its implications on private childcare.

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Introduction

18 states are currently offering some level of Universal Pre-K (UPK) largely in response to consumer demand and labor market pressures driving up the cost of delivering quality, early childhood education (ECE). UPK poses different opportunities and threats to private early childhood education providers. Policy makers, media, and providers are focusing on UPK post-pandemic¹ for notable reasons:

- **Closure of lower cost options:** Lower-cost providers experienced the highest rate of closures from 2019 to 2022 with home-based programs experiencing an 11% decline over that timeframe.³ Post-pandemic, families are facing fewer lower-cost options in communities across the nation.²
- **End of federal funding support:** The federal government spent \$24B in child-care stabilization funds during the pandemic to allow providers to remain in operation, pay to attract and retain teachers, and reduce the cost of care for families. However, these funds have expired as of September 30, 2023.²
- **The ECE sector is additionally facing a declining child population and tightening labor supply which are driving labor costs** (see Tuscany's Dynamics Affecting Private Childcare Report, Spring 2024).⁴
- **Growing need for state-level support:** Private citizens and independent operators are now turning to their state-level lawmakers to continue to stabilize the childcare industry at the same time that states are seeking to combat documented learning loss.^{2,5}

18 *States currently offer some level of Universal Pre-K (UPK)*

17 *Of 18 states allow private providers to participate in UPK*

14 *Of 18 states fund part-day programs only*

789K *4-year-olds participated in UPK programs in 2021-22*

23%-83% *Range of 4YO participation percentages across states in 2021-22*

\$2.9K-\$15.8K *Range of annual spending per student across states*

Multiple Qualifying Factors *Many states require PD, staffing ratios, or curriculum requirements more stringent than those of state licensure*

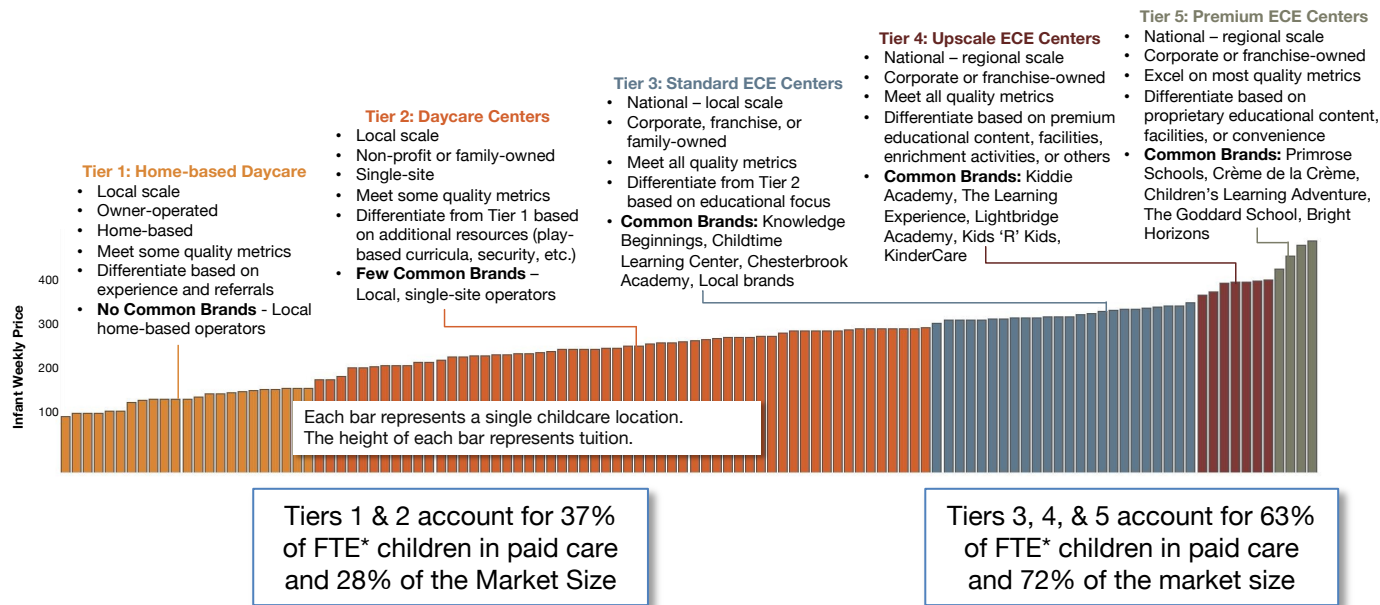
Sources: Tuscany Strategy Analysis, ¹[First Five Years Fund: 2024 State of the State Addresses](#), ²[The Century Foundation - Childcare Cliff Report](#), ³[ChildCareAware](#), ⁴Dynamics Affecting Early Childhood Education Report (Spring 2024), ⁵[Cadence Education](#)

Private operators' UPK opportunity and risk differs by their Quality/Price Tier™

The private childcare market consists of five Quality/Price Tiers™ with Tiers 3, 4, and 5 representing early childhood education market

The Five Quality/Price Tiers™

Tuscany groups the private childcare market into five Quality/Price Tiers™ with increasing quality, price, and parent expectations at each higher tier. **Tiers 1-2** include in-home and center-based daycare providers. **Tiers 3-5** make up the early childhood education (ECE) market and are increasingly, large, multi-state center-based providers. Providers in higher tiers typically meet UPK participation requirements without operational changes due to their larger scale, centralized resources and support, and larger operating budgets. However, providers at all tier levels need to weigh the costs and benefits before opting-in.



Operator Implications

Tier 5: Premium ECE and

Tier 4: Upscale ECE

Tier 4/5 providers generally meet or exceed operational requirements for UPK. However, providers should weigh the benefits of additional enrollments against the potential operational and brand impacts of UPK participation.

Tier 3: Standard ECE

Tier 3 providers meet most UPK requirements. Providers should consider how they will recruit and retain qualified teachers in their UPK classrooms.

Tier 2: Center-based Daycare

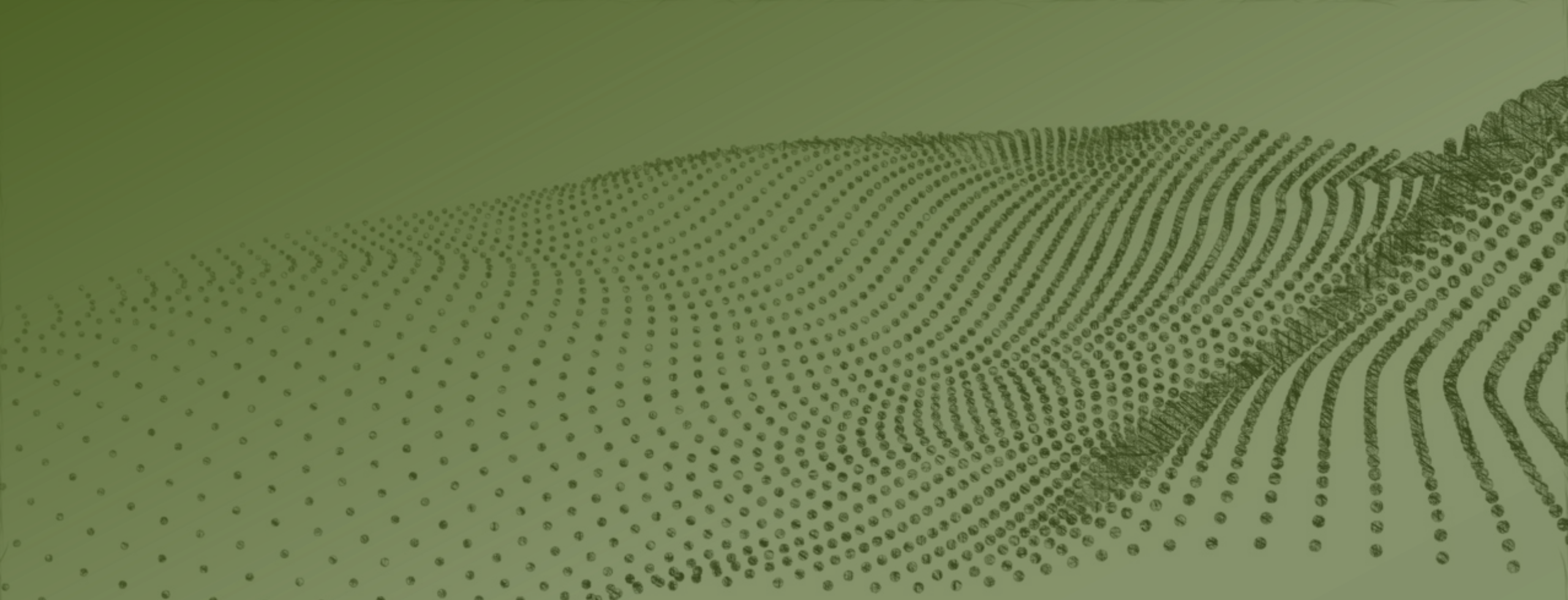
Tier 2 providers typically do not meet all requirements for UPK participation. Providers should weigh the benefits of additional funding against the operational challenges and investments necessary for participation.

Tier 1: Home-based Daycare

Tier 1 providers typically do not meet all requirements for UPK participation. Providers should first confirm family childcares (FCCs) can participate in UPK, then weigh additional funding against operational changes and investments.

Notes: Our methodology has been tested through quality and price analysis of hundreds of early childhood and daycare providers and nine years of primary qualitative and quantitative research. Within early childhood, we weigh multiple factors captured through mystery shopping. Our weighting is based on factors that parents prioritize in their evaluation & enrollment process. This visualization is based on the proportion of the number of centers per tier for three representative markets: Nashville, TN, Minneapolis, MN, and Phoenix, AZ. *FTE = Full-Time Equivalent.

Sources: State Licensing Data, Provider Websites, Tuscany Analysis. Estimated weekly infant prices are derived from mystery shopping conducted in each market from 2020-2024.



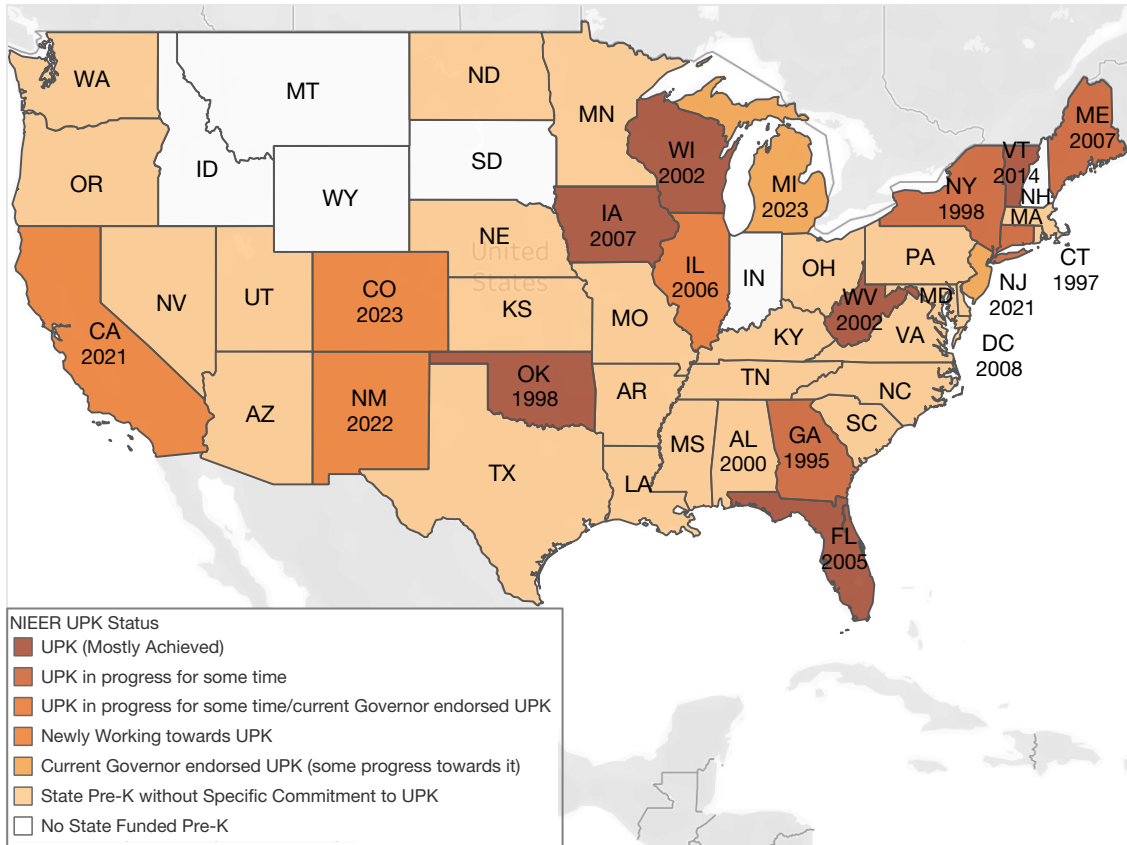
Tuscany Insights

Universal Pre-Kindergarten and Private Childcare

Most regions in the U.S. provide some form of state-supported Pre-K, though only 7 states are classified as having “mostly achieved” UPK

All UPK programs except California’s allow private provider participation, though the requirements and mechanisms vary

National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) UPK Status^{1*}



Background

- UPK can be defined as a program where the sole eligibility criteria to participate in the pre-kindergarten program is age. For UPK programs, this is either 3 and/or 4-year-olds.
- UPK is different from other programs, such as Head Start, which targets low-income students. Additionally, there may be areas in states that have UPK, but the state does not offer a UPK program. For instance, Boston has a UPK program, but the state of Massachusetts does not.² **This presentation focuses exclusively on state-wide UPK programs with designations from the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) within the contiguous U.S.**
 - **The only exception is the addition of Alabama**, which the NIEER indicates has a State Pre-K without specific commitment to UPK. It is included in this analysis due to the quality and reach of its First-Class Pre-K program.³
- **States vary in their progress towards UPK** with NIEER UPK Status roughly correlating with program longevity. The earliest states initiated programs in the 1990s.
 - UPK implementation progress was not found to correlate with state political party alignment with states having “mostly achieved” UPK being equally split between democratic and republican.³
- **UPK is delivered through a mixed delivery system in most states**, which includes public schools, private early childhood education centers, family childcare homes, and community-based organizations.
 - **California’s UPK program does not allow private providers to participate** as all services are delivered through LEAs.

Notes: ³NIEER does not designate AL’s program as progressing toward UPK because there is not a state legislative mandate to offer universal preschool. *Where unclear, the year established date is determined based on NIEER status and/or most applicable policy action.

Sources: ¹NIEER State of Preschool 2022, ²Boston Public Schools, UPK, ³270 to Win State Electoral Vote History, State Department of Education and UPK Websites

No two UPK programs are exactly alike. Programs vary in per-student funding, hours provided, placement priorities and mechanisms, among other components

Some criterion may impact the ability of private providers to participate without major impacts to their operations and/or financial models

State	Program Name	Spending-Per-Student ¹	Private Provider Participation Method ²	Ages Served ³	Student Placement Priority ⁴	Placement Methods for ECEs ⁵	4-YOs Enrolled (% Total 4YOs) 2021-22	Program Hours	Staff: Child Ratio*	Curriculum Requirements	Lead Teacher Requirements	Professional Development	On-Site Quality Monitoring
New Jersey	New Jersey Preschool Expansion	\$15,800	Intermediary	3-4	None	N/A	31,711 (29%)	6 hrs/day	N/A	N/A	Bachelor's	N/A	N/A
D.C.	PK3 and PK4	\$15,249	Direct	3-4	None	Open Enrollment	6,716 (83%)	6.5 hrs/day	1:10	Selected from list or submitted for approval	CDA	21 hrs/yr	Yes
California	Transitional Kindergarten	\$10,951	N/A	4	None	District Boundaries	147,351 (31%)	3 hrs/day	1:12	CA Standards	CDA	None required	N/A
New Mexico	New Mexico Pre-K	\$10,300	Direct	3-4	Priority for Title 1, homeless, & foster care	Not specified	10,048 (42%)	6.5 hrs/day	1:10*	Selected from list or submitted for approval	Bachelor's	Onboarding training + 24 hrs/yr	No
Connecticut	School Readiness Program	\$8,924	Intermediary	3-5	60% of enrollees must be low-income	Lottery w/ Boundaries	6,798 (11%)	2.5-10 hrs/day	1:10	CT Standards	Bachelor's	1% total hrs	Yes
Michigan	Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)	\$7,520	Intermediary	4	85% low income, tiered priority by income	Lottery w/ Boundaries	35,895 (31%)	3-6 hrs/day	1:8*	MI Standards	Bachelor's	None	No
Alabama	First-Class Pre-K	\$6,953	Direct	4	None	Lottery w/ Ranking	21,939 (36%)	6.5 hrs/day	1:9*	AL Standards + Follow AL Pre-K Model	Bachelor's	30 hrs/yr	Yes
West Virginia	West Virginia Pre-K	\$6,551	Intermediary	3-4	3YO need IEP	Varies by District	11,707 (63%)	48,000 mins/yr	1:10*	WV Standards	Bachelor's	1.5 hrs/yr	Yes
New York	State-Administered Pre-Kindergarten Programs	\$5,400	Intermediary	3-4	None	Matching in NYC, Lottery w/ Boundaries	116,144 (52%)	2.5-5 hrs/day	1:12	NY Standards + Evidence-based	Bachelor's	175 hrs/5 yrs	Yes
Illinois	Preschool for All (PFA)	\$5,398	Intermediary	3-5	80% enrollees must be at-risk populations	Matching w/ Priority	45,613 (31%)	2.5 hrs/day	1:10	IL Standards + Research-based	Bachelor's	Written plans required	Yes
Georgia	Georgia Pre-K	\$5,283	Direct	4	None	Open Enrollment, Matching for waitlists	73,117 (55%)	6.5 hrs/day	1:11	Selected from list or submitted for approval	Bachelor's	10 days/yr	Yes
Colorado	Universal Preschool Colorado	\$4,837	Direct	3-4	3YO must be low-income/IEP/foster care	Matching, some boundaries	15,177 (23%)	10-15 hrs/wk	1:10	CO Standards	Bachelor's	N/A	No
Oklahoma	Oklahoma Pre-K	\$4,708	Intermediary	4	None	Some Lottery w/ Boundaries	33,731 (65%)	2.5 hrs/day	1:10*	OK Standards	Bachelor's	1.5 hrs/yr	Yes
Maine	Public Preschool Program	\$4,056	Intermediary	4	None	Lottery w/ Ranking	5,315 (41%)	10 hrs/wk	1:8	ME Standards	Bachelor's	6.5 credits/5 yrs	Yes
Vermont	Vermont Universal Prekindergarten	\$3,884	Intermediary	3-5	None	Open Enrollment w/ District Boundaries	3,917 (65%)	10 hrs/wk	1:10	VT Standards	Bachelor's	15 hrs/yr	Yes
Iowa	Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP)	\$3,706	Intermediary	4	None	Open Enrollment	25,329 (64%)	10 hrs/wk	1:10	Must pass 1 of 3 standards	Bachelor's	15 hrs/yr	Yes
Wisconsin	4K	\$3,643	Intermediary	3-5	3YO need IEP	Matching w/ Ranking	41,218 (61%)	437 hrs/yr	N/A	WI Standards	Bachelor's	None required	Yes
Florida	VPK (Voluntary Pre-K)	\$2,941	Voucher	4	None	Open Enrollment	157,451 (68%)	540 hrs/yr	1:11*	FL Standards	CDA	15 hr training	Yes

Notes: ¹Spending based on the maximum hours a program offers. Data collected from state websites, latest available year. ²Providers can be funded directly by the state, subcontracted by a public intermediary, or paid via parent voucher. More information on [slide 6](#). ³States that serve 5YOs are those who are not otherwise eligible for state kindergarten programs due to birthday cutoffs and/or developmental readiness. ⁴IEP is an individualized education plan for students with special education needs. ⁵More information on [slide 6](#). *Programs with an asterisk have a lower maximum ratio than state requirements.

Source: State Department of Education and UPK Websites, [NIEER State of Preschool Yearbook 2022](#)

Notable differences exist in the ways private providers are able to participate in UPK, qualify and/or prioritize enrollees, set program schedules, and charge for services

Providers should consider how UPK program specifications can impact current business operations

Private Provider Participation Methods

- All states except California allow private childcare operators to participate in UPK, while family childcare center (FCC) participation is explicitly permitted in 9 states.
- There are three methods through which private providers participate in UPK¹:
 1. **Public intermediaries (11 states):** Local education agencies (LEAs) operate UPK programs and may subcontract placements to private providers.
 2. **Direct (5 states):** Private providers apply to participate and receive funding directly, with eligibility and approvals processes governed by the UPK program/department.
 3. **Parent vouchers (1 state):** Parents are provided tuition vouchers. This method is currently unique to Florida's VPK program.

Child Eligibility & Prioritization

- **All states recruit four-year-olds for UPK.** Many states extend programs to three-year-olds but often only those with special needs. Several states prioritize participants under a certain income or those experiencing other challenges.
- **All states except Florida require private providers to admit families who have been selected for the state's UPK program.**
- D.C. and Colorado allow states to designate what IEP services they can serve before enrolling students through UPK. Other states do not explicitly describe whether private ECEs can opt in or out of enrolling students with IEPs.

Enrollment & Placement Methods²

- There are four main ways that states assign students to specific placements, however many use a combination of multiple placement methods:
 1. **Open enrollment (5 states):** Parents directly apply to center(s) of interest and are given a spot if one is available.
 2. **Matching (4 states):** Parents rank their preferred centers, and placements are assigned based on a matching algorithm.
 3. **Lottery (6 states):** Students are randomly selected from a pool of applicants.
 4. **School district boundaries (7 states):** Several states use boundaries on top of lottery or matching processes to prioritize placement of local students. It is often up to a district to decide whether to prioritize or require residency.
- Exact processes vary state-to-state, and preference may also be given based on factors such as sibling enrollment, special education needs, income levels, etc.

Hours & Funding

- **Many programs operate on a part-time basis with varying levels of funding.** In seven states³, providers have the flexibility to determine how to allocate hourly requirements instead of being bound to a 5-day schedule. An operator in a state offering 10 hours of UPK per week could opt for two five-hour sessions on Tuesday and Thursday or hold two-hour sessions from Monday to Friday.
- **All states allow providers to charge for non-funded hours.** The ability to select operating hours and offer wraparound care for an additional cost can help private providers decide whether to participate.

Notes: ¹New Jersey's private provider participation method is still being determined. for its expansion program. ²Assignment processes total to more than 18 states as some states use a combination of methods. New Jersey, New Mexico, and West Virginia do not describe their placement methods. ³West Virginia, Colorado, Maine, Vermont, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Florida do not mandate daily instruction.

Source: State Department of Education and UPK Websites



Operational changes necessary for UPK participation vary by Quality/Price Tier™ including curriculum, lead teacher qualification, and enrollment status

The implications of changing operations to meet these requirements will vary by program

Operational Impact

Low

Moderate

Major

Representative characteristics of ECE providers by Quality/Price Tier™, including operational impact to meet UPK requirements

	Tier 1 (Home-Based Daycare)	Tier 2 (Daycare Centers)	Tier 3 (No Frills ECE Center)	Tier 4 (Upscale ECE Centers) and Tier 5 (Premium ECE Centers)
Average Monthly Tuition	\$600	\$640	\$1,090	\$1,235*
Ages Served	May not enroll older age groups	Centers serves all age groups	Centers serves all age groups	Centers serves all age groups
Enrollment Preference	Accept part- and full-time enrollment	Accept part- and full-time enrollment	Prioritize full-time enrollment	Prioritize full-time enrollment
Hours of Operation	Centers are open 12 hours/day	Centers are open 12 hours/day	Centers are open 12 hours/day	Centers are open 12 hours/day
Curriculum	Infrequently use formal/structured educational approach or curriculum	Infrequently use formal/structured educational approach or curriculum	Use 3 rd party curriculum approved for use in UPK programs	Use proprietary curriculum that may require UPK program approval to use
Staff : Child Ratio	Centers operate below state ratio	Centers operate at or below state ratio	Centers operate at or below state ratio	Centers operate at or below state ratio
Lead Teacher Qualifications	Few lead teachers have a Bachelors Degree	Few lead teachers have a Bachelors Degree	Few lead teachers have a Bachelors Degree	Most lead teachers have a Bachelors Degree
Professional Development	Owner must complete state-required training to operate their center	Some centers may have PD plans available for their staff	Most centers have a PD plan available that may be comprehensive at Corporate Tier 3 providers.	Tier 4/5 centers have a comprehensive PD plan available for their staff
On-Site Quality Monitoring	Have standards and compliance measures in place that meet state regulatory requirements	Have standards and compliance measures in place that meet state regulatory requirements	Have multiple standards and compliance measures in place. Corporate locations may have more extensive measures.	Have multiple standards and compliance measures in place which meet or exceed state requirements.

Note: *Average monthly tuition estimated using the data from of ~450 Tier 4 and 5 schools collected during 2022.

Source: Tuscany Analysis

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Tier 4/5 providers generally meet or exceed operational requirements for UPK

Providers should weigh the benefits of additional enrollments against the potential operational and brand impacts of UPK participation

Participation Overview

Tier 4/5 providers generally meet or exceed UPK requirements. However, financial and operational considerations may outweigh program participation benefits. Tier 4/5 operators/owners need to consider the following to determine if/how UPK participation can be advantageous to their businesses:

Curriculum	In states that don't require specific curricula for UPK, proprietary curricula will still need to meet state standards for use. In D.C., Georgia, and New Mexico, where specific curricula are required, Tier 4/5 providers could be required to move away from proprietary offerings. This process may require teacher re-training, assessment adoption, and additional quality monitoring. In these instances, there could also be operational and/or brand implications of changing or using alternative curricula.
Part-time v. Full-time Enrollment	Tier 4/5 providers often seek to maximize occupancy and prioritize full-time enrollment. Operating multiple part-time classrooms and enrolling additional part-time students pose both revenue implications and administrative burdens.
Lead Teacher Qualifications	Attracting and retaining highly-qualified lead teachers can be challenging, even for Tier 4/5 providers. A tight labor market may make it difficult to immediately replace departing teachers with another qualified individual, posing a compliance risk.
Other UPK Considerations	Impact of enrolling children at rates below target tuition. Feasibility of operating at required staff-to-child ratios. Willingness to submit to additional on-site quality monitoring.

Questions to Consider

- Will UPK participation allow you to increase asset/resource utilization?
- What operational changes may be needed to account for part-day UPK funding?
- How will UPK participation impact brand/reputation-building in local markets?
- How will UPK participation affect the perceptions of quality for your premium service?
- How will the potential enrollment of students outside of your target demographic impact your business model?
- How will lead teacher qualifications required for UPK impact your hiring/staffing/training practices?
- How will the potential requirement to use alternative curriculum for UPK impact perceptions of equity for your program?
- How comfortable are you with accepting additional quality monitoring from UPK governing entities?

Source: Tuscany Analysis

Tier 3 providers meet most UPK requirements

Providers should consider how they will recruit and retain qualified teachers in their UPK classrooms

Participation Overview

Tier 3 providers generally meet most UPK requirements, but staffing qualified teachers could be a challenge in a tight labor market. The hourly funding-per-child will likely be closer to typical tuition rates of a Tier 3 provider, so operators/owners need to consider the following to determine if/how UPK participation can be advantageous to their businesses:

Curriculum	Most Tier 3 providers already use 3rd party curricula that are pre-approved in many states operating UPK. It is likely that this is an area that will require little to no adjustments, unless a Tier 3 is using a curriculum that is not approved or aligned to state requirements in a state it operates in.
Part-time v. Full-time Enrollment	Tier 3 providers often seek to maximize capacity and prioritize full-time enrollment. Operating multiple part-time classrooms and enrolling additional part-time students can pose both revenue implications and administrative burdens.
Lead Teacher Qualifications	Attracting and retaining degreed-teachers may be difficult for Tier 3 centers, which do not always require bachelor's degrees and are not always able to offer salaries as competitively as Tier 4/5 providers due to lower tuition rates. It may also be difficult to immediately replace departing teachers with another qualified individual, posing compliance risks.
Other UPK Considerations	Impact of enrolling children at rates below target tuition. Feasibility of operating at required staff-to-child ratios. Willingness to submit to additional on-site quality monitoring.

Questions to Consider

- How will lead teacher qualifications required for UPK impact your hiring/staffing/training practices?
- Will UPK participation allow you to maximize asset/resource utilization?
- How will UPK participation impact brand/reputation-building in local markets?
- What operational changes may be needed to account for part-day UPK funding?
- How will the potential enrollment of students outside of your target demographic impact your business model?
- What professional development resources and investments may be needed to meet UPK requirements?
- How comfortable are you with accepting additional quality monitoring from UPK governing entities?

Source: Tuscany Analysis

Tier 2 providers typically do not meet all requirements for UPK participation

Providers should weigh the benefits of additional funding against the operational challenges and investments necessary for participation

Participation Overview

Tier 2 providers will need to make multiple changes to comply with UPK requirements. For most Tier 2 providers, the state UPK funding may exceed their current tuition rates. Additionally, it will allow more families to afford tuition, which will incentivize participation. Tier 2 operators/owners need to consider the following to determine if/how UPK participation can be advantageous to their businesses:

Curriculum	Tier 2 providers would need to invest in a state-approved curriculum if they do not currently implement a formal curriculum. This process may include purchasing curriculum, re-training teachers, and adopting assessment and oversight processes. However, these changes can be advantageous as parents will likely perceive the brand to be of a higher quality once implemented.
Part-time v. Full-time Enrollment	Tier 2 providers accept both part-time and full-time enrollment. However, operating multiple part-time classrooms and enrolling additional part-time students pose both revenue implications and administrative burdens.
Lead Teacher Qualifications	Tier 2 providers will be impacted by UPK programs' bachelor's degree requirements as they will most likely need to hire and/or replace teachers. This will be an important consideration given this tier's smaller budgets. D.C. and Florida only require CDAs for UPK lead teachers and may be easier for Tier 2 operators to participate in.
Other UPK Considerations	Willingness to submit to additional on-site quality monitoring. Implications of adopting or changing professional development practices.

Questions to Consider

- How will lead teacher qualifications required for UPK impact your hiring practices?
- What are the financial and operational implications of adopting a new curriculum?
- What professional development resources and investments may be needed to meet UPK requirements?
- Would any additional costs need to be passed through to non-UPK enrolled families? If so, what impact could this have on enrollment?
- How will UPK participation impact brand/reputation-building in local markets?
- How will UPK participation affect the perceptions of quality for your center?
- Will UPK participation allow you to maximize asset utilization?
- How comfortable are you with accepting additional quality monitoring from UPK governing entities?
- What start-up subsidies or grants exist in your state to support your participation in UPK?

Source: Tuscany Analysis

Tier 1 providers typically do not meet all requirements for UPK participation

Providers should first confirm FCCs can participate in UPK, then weigh additional funding against operational changes and investments

Participation Overview

9 states explicitly allow Tier 1 providers to participate: CO, CT, FL, IL, ME, NJ, NM, VT, and WI. Other states do not provide clear instruction on whether Tier 1 providers can participate in UPK.

If allowed to participate, Tier 1 providers align with most UPK requirements. Due to the smaller scale of Tier 1 providers, implementing operational changes may be easier than other tiers where operational changes impact more staff. Tier 1 operators/owners need to consider the following to determine if/how UPK participation can be advantageous to their businesses:

Curriculum	Tier 1 providers would need to invest in a state-approved curriculum if they do not currently implement a formal curriculum. This process may include purchasing curriculum and adopting assessment and oversight processes. However, these changes can be advantageous as parents will likely perceive the offering to be higher quality once implemented.
Part-time v. Full-time Enrollment	Tier 1 providers accept both part-time and full-time enrollment, but they typically run only one classroom. Consequently, they need to carefully assess factors like current enrollment, revenue implications, and administrative burdens before opting to participate in UPK programs.
Lead Teacher Qualifications	Most Tier 1 providers will be impacted by UPK programs' bachelor's degree requirements. Those that do not currently have a bachelor's degree will need to complete the degree themselves as the sole owner/operator. This is an important consideration given this tier's smaller budget and staff.
Other UPK Considerations	Expanding ages served, especially for low-capacity Tier 1 providers. Implications of adopting or changing professional development practices. Willingness to submit to additional on-site quality monitoring.

Source: Tuscany Analysis

Questions to Consider

- Does your state UPK program allow family childcare providers to participate?
- Does your center currently serve 3- & 4-year old's?
- Would any additional costs need to be passed through to non-UPK enrolled families? If so, what impact could this have on enrollment?
- How would UPK participation impact your current occupancy?
- Are you prepared to complete a Bachelor's degree if your state requires it?
- What professional development resources and investments may be needed to meet UPK requirements?
- What additional administrative burdens are you willing to take on?
- What are the financial and operational implications of adopting a new curriculum?
- How will UPK participation impact brand/reputation-building in local markets?
- How will UPK participation affect the perceptions of quality for your center?
- How comfortable are you with accepting additional quality monitoring from UPK governing entities?
- What start-up subsidies or grants exist in your state to support your participation in UPK?



Appendix

Several states have planned expansions to their UPK programs, including CO, GA, MI, NJ, and WI

Program changes and/or expansions may lead to additional opportunities or concerns for private ECE providers

UPK in the News

- **Colorado:** Colorado's UPK program is still very new, but in its first year, its program more than doubled the number of 4-year-olds receiving a state-funded education prior to kindergarten.¹ State voters have already approved an additional \$23M to go into the program for the 2024-25 school year.
- **Georgia:** As of January 2024, Georgia House Republicans are looking to boost spending for their prekindergarten program by more than \$100M.² This is in response to the inability of the state to meet the current demand for free pre-k.
- **Michigan:** In 2023, Michigan Governor Whitmer pledged free pre-k for all Michigan 4-year-olds by 2027 and is proposing more than \$250M towards this goal.³ This is an expansion to the current program which is targeted to low-income families in the state.
- **New Jersey:** Governor Murphy has laid out an extensive proposal to expand full-day, high-quality preschool to all 3- and 4-year-olds regardless of any requirements⁴, but the expected timeline is not yet determined. The expansion has already opened funding to more providers. 2023-24 marks the first time any school district – not just one meeting certain income requirements - has been able to apply for preschool expansion funding from the state.⁵
- **Wisconsin:** In January 2024, lawmakers in Wisconsin began legislation which would allow private child-care providers to more easily receive 4K funding and loosen requirements around changing curriculums or ratios if they are already otherwise licensed to operate.⁶

Additional Resources

States UPK Home Pages:

- [Alabama](#)
- [California](#)
- [Colorado](#)
- [Connecticut](#)
- [District of Columbia](#)
- [Florida](#)
- [Georgia](#)
- [Illinois](#)
- [Iowa](#)
- [Maine](#)
- [Michigan](#)
- [New Mexico](#)
- [New Jersey](#)
- [New York](#)
- [Oklahoma](#)
- [Vermont](#)
- [West Virginia](#)
- [Wisconsin](#)

Other:

- [NIEER State of Preschool Yearbook](#)

Source: ¹[The Coloradoan](#), ²[AP News](#), ³[Makinac Center](#), ⁴[North Jersey Strategic Plan for Preschool Expansion](#), ⁵[State of New Jersey](#), ⁶[The Wisconsin Examiner](#)

