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Great Start Readiness Program Funding

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The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), originally named the Michigan School Readiness Program, is Michigan’s free pre-kindergarten program for eligible four-year-olds. The program began in 1985 to provide preschool to “at-risk” children, and it has been expanded since that time. The program is funded through the School Aid budget and is administered by the Office of Great Start in the Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP). Approved GSRP programs must meet eligibility standards regarding teacher qualifications and educational curriculum.

In its current form, grants are distributed to intermediate school districts (ISDs) to be distributed to schools and other entities that provide GSRP programs. Intermediate school districts must contract with public and private for-profit and nonprofit community-based providers for at least 30% of their total allocation. If an ISD is unable to contract for at least 30% of its total allocation, the ISD must show MiLEAP that it increased the percentage of its total allocation for which it contracts with community-based providers and that the ISD took measures to attempt to contract for at least 30% of its allocation.

Grant amounts are determined based on how many students are in a classroom, with different amounts paid depending on whether the student is served in a part-day program, a school-day program, or an extended program. Funding also is adjusted if a classroom is blended between GSRP and Head Start, a Federal program that provides early learning and development services to children from low-income families. A part-day program operates at least four days per week, 30 weeks per year, for at least three hours per day. A school-day program operates at least four days per week, 30 weeks per year, for at least the same length of day as the surrounding district’s first grade program. An extended program operates at least five days per week, 36 weeks per year, for at least the same length of day as the surrounding district’s first grade program.

Funding for GSRP began in fiscal year (FY) 1985-86 with \$1.0 million. Core funding has increased through the years; in FY 2024-25, the program is funded at \$597.7 million. The history of core funding is shown in [Figure 1](#) below. Outside of core funding, the GSRP program includes funding for student transportation, classroom startup grants, marketing efforts to raise awareness about the availability of services, and professional development and training materials for educators.

As funding has increased, the criteria restricting which students are eligible for the program have changed. The current model has been in place since FY 2014-15. It requires all children served within an ISD to be from families with a household income below a certain percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG). If an ISD determines that all children from families below the initial threshold are being served, it may open enrollment to children from families with a household income below some higher threshold. In FY 2024-25, the secondary threshold has been removed, meaning that if an ISD has funding remaining after all children from families below the threshold (currently 400% FPG) have been served, the ISD may enroll children from families at any income level. [Table 1](#) below shows the amount of core funding for the previous 15 fiscal years, the funding amount per school-day slot, the equivalent number of children that could be served in school-day programs at the funding level, and the primary and secondary FPG thresholds in each year.

Figure 1.

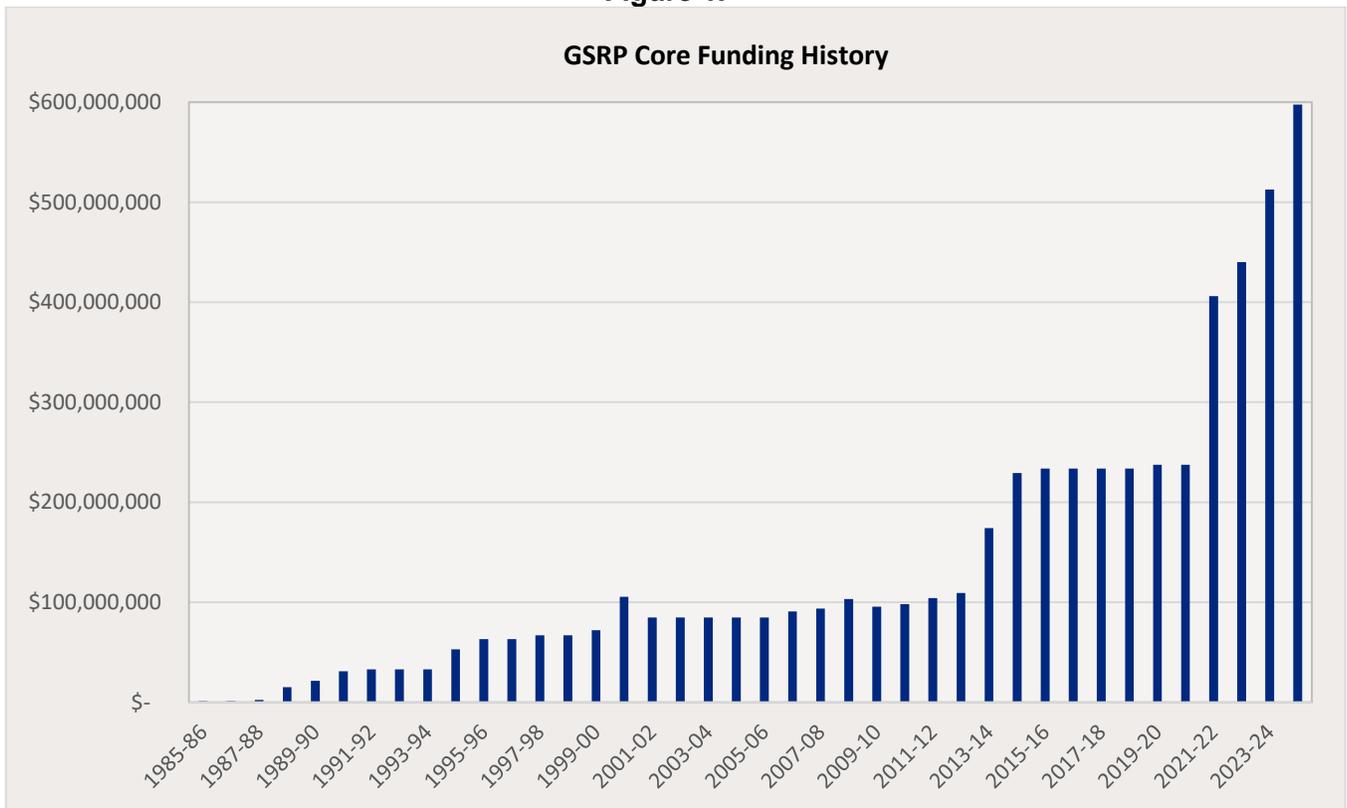


Table 1

Recent GSRP Funding Detail					
Fiscal Year	Core Program Funding	Funding per School-Day Slot	Equivalent School-Day Slots	Primary FPG	Secondary FPG
2010-11	\$ 98,275,000	\$ 6,800	14,452	300%	N/A
2011-12	104,275,000	6,800	15,335	300	N/A
2012-13	109,275,000	6,800	16,070	300	N/A
2013-14	174,275,000	7,250	24,038	250	N/A
2014-15	229,275,000	7,250	31,624	250	300%
2015-16	233,600,000	7,250	32,220	250	300
2016-17	233,600,000	7,250	32,220	250	300
2017-18	233,600,000	7,250	32,220	250	300
2018-19	233,600,000	7,250	32,220	250	300
2019-20	237,600,000	7,250	32,772	250	300
2020-21	237,600,000	7,250	32,772	250	300
2021-22	406,120,000	8,700	46,680	250	300
2022-23	440,120,000	9,150	48,100	250	300
2023-24	512,720,000	9,608	53,363	300	400
2024-25	597,720,000	10,185	58,686	400	N/A