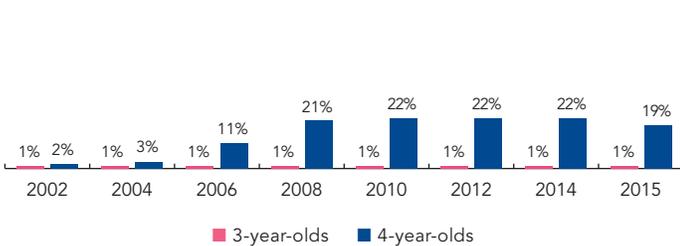
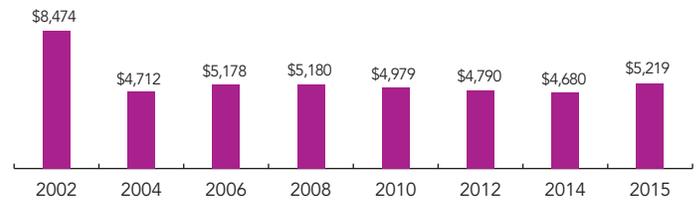


Tennessee

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED*



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED* (2015 DOLLARS)



Building upon the 1998 Early Childhood Education Pilot Project, Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) was launched in 2005, following enactment of the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act (2005). Since 2012, almost every district has offered at least one full-day VPK classroom where children who are from low-income families, homeless, or in foster care receive priority enrollment. The second tier includes students with an IEP and English Language Learners. VPK enrollment has leveled off since 2008, and, in 2015, approximately 18,700 at-risk children were served, or 22% of the state's 4-year-old population.

The Tennessee State Department of Education, Division of Special Populations (DSP) has administrative authority over VPK. Only public schools are eligible to apply for state-funded VPK grants. Grants were awarded through a competitive process up through 2008, and districts have submitted a reapplication for continuation of funding in the years since then. Districts may, however, contract with private child-care agencies, Head Start agencies, institutions of higher education, public housing authorities, and any three-star QRIS rated program in a community-based or private child-serving agency. Programs contracted to provide VPK services must operate within the jurisdiction of the school district.

Since its inception, VPK has relied on numerous funding sources, including general education revenue and, in the past, lottery revenue and federal TANF funds. State funds for the VPK program have been level funded since the 2014 school year. Federal Head Start, IDEA, Title I, and other funds are used to provide the required local match which averages out to 25% across the districts. Districts have used the same funding, \$117,490 per classroom, to operate VPK for the past three years. In 2014, Tennessee was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant for \$17.5 million, to expand pre-K enrollment in Nashville and Shelby County.

During the 2014-2015 school year, the Peabody Research Institute (PRI) at Vanderbilt University was involved in the fifth year of an ongoing external evaluation on the effectiveness of the VPK program. The study reported statistically significant gains for VPK participants during the pre-K year and a significant reduction in kindergarten retention for participants. The gains, however, appeared to gradually dissipate and turned significantly negative in some subtests (favoring the controls), by third grade. PRI reports that the quality of pre-K programs across the state is inconsistent, and in some cases below expectations, based on ECERS classroom observations. ECERS data collected by PRI on a statewide sample find that the average ECERS score is about 4 with the Activities subscale at 3 (on a 7.0 scale). Only a very small fraction of classrooms scored 5 or higher overall. PRI has received additional funding to continue to follow a portion of the children through their 7th grade year (2018-2019).

As part of the required annual 18 clock hours of in-service professional development, DSP sponsors training on developmentally appropriate practice aligned with TN's early learning standards, ELLCO, and ECERS. Programs' plans of actions based on self-assessment ECERS and ELLCO observations are submitted to DSP, as well as data collected from the Education Information System, including student demographic data, monthly financial reports, and annual family surveys.

Although no policy requires services for dual language learners enrolled in VPK, there are opportunities for professional development afforded to pre-K teachers, information is presented to families in their primary language, and translators are made available when needed. Tennessee has adopted WIDA standards, which support academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students.

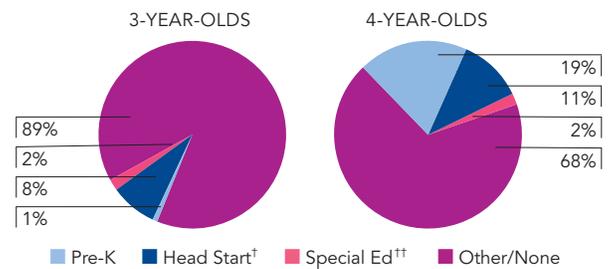
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCES RANKINGS		POLICIES TO SUPPORT	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS	WORKFORCE
26	26	18	14	-	+

TENNESSEE VOLUNTARY PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	16,274
School districts that offer state program.....	96% (school districts)
Income requirement	185% FPL
Hours of operation	5.5 hours/day, 5 days/week
Operating schedule	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	6,283
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	15,419
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	0

STATE PRE-K AND HEAD START ENROLLMENT AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION



† Some Head Start children may also be counted in state pre-K.
 †† Estimates children in special education not also enrolled in state pre-K or Head Start.

QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

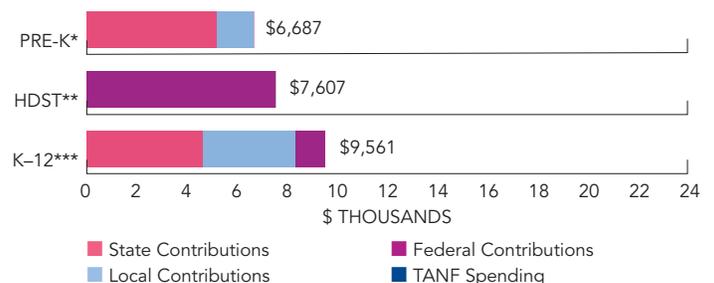
POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?	TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET 9
Early learning standards	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher specialized training.....	Early Childhood Ed Pre-K-3; Early Development and Learning; SpEd Early Childhood	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Assistant teacher degree.....	Other ¹	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher in-service	18 hours/year	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Maximum class size.....		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3-year-olds	16			
4-year-olds	20			
Staff-child ratio		1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3-year-olds	1:8			
4-year-olds	1:10			
Screening/referral and support services	Vision; hearing; height/weight/BMI; blood pressure; immunizations; developmental; psychosocial/behavioral; full physical exam; and support services	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Meals	Breakfast; lunch; snack	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Monitoring	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$84,941,414
Local match required?.....	Yes
State spending per child enrolled	\$5,219
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$6,687

* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.
 ** Head Start per-child spending for the 2014-2015 year includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds served. Past years' figures have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start.
 *** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures. Data are for the '14-'15 school year, unless otherwise noted.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



¹ The LEA is required to hire an assistant teacher with a CDA or AA if one is available. If not, the LEA may hire one with a HSD and relevant experience working with ECE programs and the assistant must demonstrate progress towards the completion of a CDA or AA.