Tennessee began funding the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Pilot Project in 1998. The legislation that established this program makes an explicit connection between the need to serve low-income 3- and 4-year-olds, and the need to care for the preschool-age children of families enrolled in the state’s welfare program. First priority goes to low-income families, and significant federal funds supplemented the $6 million state investment in prekindergarten in the 2002 and 2003 fiscal years. Public schools, Head Start, institutes of higher education, and not-for-profit child care programs are all eligible to receive direct funding to provide services through this program, and ECE funds are distributed through a competitive process. Some services are delivered through partnerships between agencies. In 2002–2003, the numbers of 3- and 4-year-olds in the ECE program were estimated at 800 and 2,400, respectively.

During the 2004 fiscal year, there have been significant cutbacks in funds (totaling approximately 34 percent) for the ECE program. These cutbacks are expected to result in reductions in enrollment. Quality standards, including teacher-student ratios, teacher qualifications, and requirements for a full-day program, remain in place.

**RESOURCES**

- **Total state Pre-K spending**: $6,000,000
- **State spending per child enrolled**: $2,226
- **State spending per 3-year-old**: $25
- **State spending per 4-year-old**: $51

**ACCESS**

- **Total state program enrollment**: 2,696
- **State-funded Head Start enrollment**: 0
- **Federally-funded Head Start enrollment**: 15,652

**QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST**

- **At least 1 service for each day**: Yes
- **At least 1 parent conference per year**: Yes
- **At least 3 parent conferences**: Yes
- **At least 2 parent conferences**: Yes
- **At least 1 parent contact**: Yes

**POLICY**

- **Curriculum mandated**: Yes
- **Teacher degree requirement**: Not required
- **Teacher specialty training requirement**: Specializing in EC
- **Transportation**: Free
- **School districts that offer state Pre-K**: 38%
- **Income requirement**: Not required

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

- **Special education enrollment**: 5,295
- **State special education enrollment**: 5,269
- **State special education enrollment**: 0

**RENOVATION**

- **Renovation required**: No

**FEDERAL CONTRIBUTION**

- **Federal contribution for Pre-K**: $2,000,000

**SCORE**

- **Remedial assistance score**: 8
- **Comprehensive plan**: 8

**SUMMARY**

- **Score**: 8
- **Total score**: 8

**DATA**

- **State Pre-K and Head Start enrollment as percentage of total population**: 3% of 3-year-olds, 7% of 4-year-olds
- **Spending per child enrolled**: $2,226