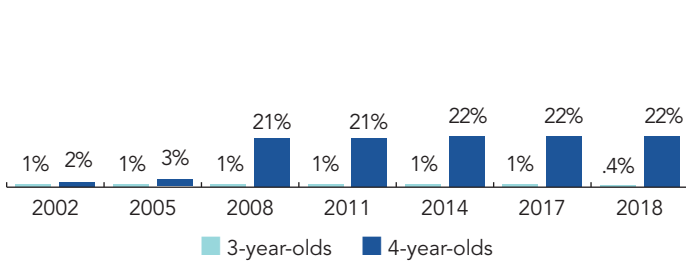
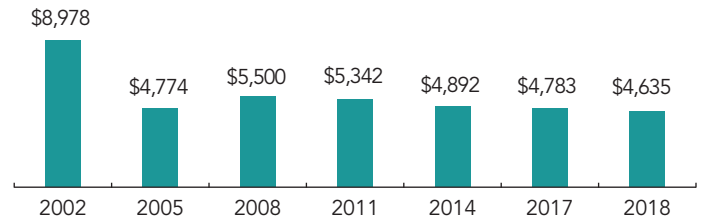


# Tennessee

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2018 DOLLARS)



## OVERVIEW

Tennessee preschool enrolled 18,354 children in 2017-2018, an decrease of 286 children from the prior year. State funding totaled \$85,062,422, down \$4,098,484 (5%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$4,635 in 2017-2018, down \$149 from 2016-2017, adjusted for inflation. Tennessee met 7 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

## WHAT'S NEW

Starting in 2017-2018, in-service professional development for directors, teachers, and assistant teachers in Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) increased from 18 to 24 clock hours per year. This requirement will further increase to 30 hours in 2018-2019, and six of the 30 hours must address developmentally appropriate literacy practices. Similar requirements for directors, teachers, and assistants are designed specifically to promote cooperative learning. Also, Tennessee's Early Learning and Development Standards were revised, approved, and went into effect in 2018.

## BACKGROUND

Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) was launched in 2005, building on the 1998 Early Childhood Education Pilot Project. Now, VPK classrooms can be found in 138 of the state's 142 school districts. Children living in low-income households are prioritized for enrollment in VPK, as are children who are homeless, or in foster care.

The Tennessee State Department of Education, Division of Early Learning and Literacy, has administrative authority over VPK. Only local education agencies may apply for VPK grants, but districts may contract with private child care agencies, Head Start agencies, institutions of higher education, public housing authorities, and any community-based or private agency rated at least three stars on the state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). Programs contracted to provide VPK services must operate within the jurisdiction of the school district.

VPK relies 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 mostly level since the 2014 school year. Federal Head Start, IDEA, Title I, and other funds are used to provide the required 25% local match.

In 2014, Tennessee received a \$17.5 million federal Preschool Development Grant to expand pre-K enrollment in Nashville and Shelby County. PDG funds supported 120 children in new slots in VPK classrooms in 2017-2018 as well as 4,077 improved slots. In addition, PDG funds supported 120 children in new slots and 1,326 improved slots in the state (outside of VPK) in 2017-2018.

Peabody Research Institute (PRI) at Vanderbilt University was involved in the ongoing external evaluation on the effectiveness of the VPK program for children who attended VPK in 2009-2010. The study reported statistically significant cognitive and social-emotional gains for VPK participants during the pre-K year and a significant reduction in kindergarten retention for participants. However, the gains appeared to gradually dissipate and turned significantly negative in some subtests (favoring the control group) by third grade. The Pre-k Quality Act of 2016 was passed as a result of this study's findings, and includes revising the Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards, creating a shared definition of "quality" to guide quality improvements, establishing a vision for early learning at statewide trainings, supporting curriculum implementation, creating guidance for district leaders, reducing the number of approved curricula from 37 to 3, shifting to a competitive grant application based on program quality, piloting CLASS observations, training CLASS observers, and implementing pre-K Student Growth Portfolios statewide.

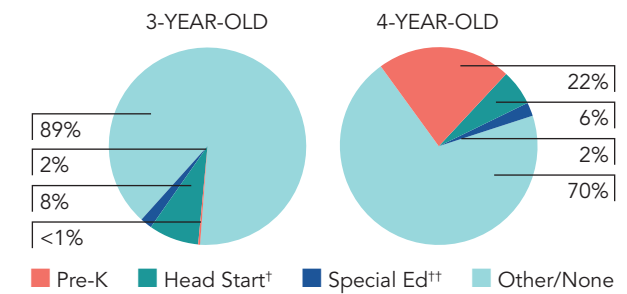
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
29	28	23	29	7

## TENNESSEE VOLUNTARY PRE-K

### ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment .....	18,354
School districts that offer state program .....	97%
Income requirement .....	185% FPL
Minimum hours of operation .....	5.5 hours/day; 5 days/week
Operating schedule .....	School or academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	7,233
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	15,050
State-funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4 .....	0

### PERCENT OF POPULATION ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ECE



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

### QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	TN PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	REQUIREMENT MEETS BENCHMARK?
Early learning & development standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Curriculum supports	Approval process & supports	Approval process & supports	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	ECE, CD, ECE SpEd	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	HSD	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff professional development	24 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching (PDG teachers)	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Screening & referral	Vision, hearing, health & more	Vision, hearing & health screenings; & referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Continuous quality improvement system	Structured classroom observations (First year teachers only, others determined locally); Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<b>7</b>

For more information about the benchmarks, see the Executive Summary and Roadmap to State Profile Pages.

### RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending .....	\$85,062,422
Local match required? .....	Yes
State Head Start spending .....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$4,635
All reported spending per child enrolled* .....	\$6,022

\* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.  
 \*\* Head Start per-child spending includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds.  
 \*\*\* K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

### SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED

