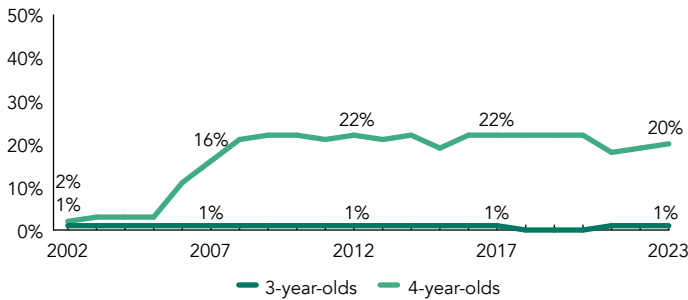
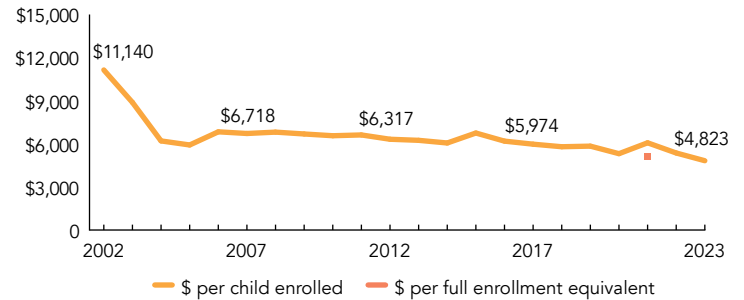


Tennessee

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2023 DOLLARS)



OVERVIEW

During the 2022-2023 school year, Tennessee preschool enrolled 17,837 children, an increase of 1,203 from the prior year. State spending totaled \$86,029,013, down \$3,144,078 (4%), adjusted for inflation, since last year. State spending per child equaled \$4,823 in 2022-2023, down \$538 from 2021-2022, adjusted for inflation. Tennessee met 9 of 10 quality standards benchmarks.

WHAT'S NEW

In May 2023, the following curricula were approved to be used in VPK classrooms through May 2028: Kaplan Connect4Learning, Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum, and HighScope Preschool Curriculum.

The Tennessee Department of Education received a \$4 million Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) planning grant in December of 2022 to develop and implement a comprehensive, statewide, birth through five needs assessment. This assessment will be followed by the development of a related strategic plan that also addresses activities that lead to more meaningful parent engagement, the sharing of resources and best practices among the different early childhood program providers, and improvements in overall quality. The plan also aims to improve the coordination of existing early childhood service delivery models and funding streams for the purpose of serving more children birth through age five.

BACKGROUND

Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) was launched in 2005, building on the 1998 Early Childhood Education Pilot Project. VPK classrooms are now in 137 of the state's 142 school districts. Children from families meeting the income eligibility requirements are prioritized for enrollment in VPK, as are children with disabilities and dependent children of a parent who died as a result of war.

The Tennessee State Department of Education and Early Learning Division have administrative authority over VPK. Only local education agencies may apply for VPK grants, but districts may contract with private childcare agencies, Head Start agencies, institutions of higher education, public housing authorities, and any community-based or private agency with a rating of at least three stars on the state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) operating within the jurisdiction of the school district.

With commencement during the 2018-2019 school year, in-service professional development for directors, teachers, and assistant teachers in Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K increased from 24 to 30 clock hours per year, six of which were allocated to address developmentally appropriate literacy practices. Tennessee's Early Learning and Development Standards were instituted in 2018. The state also continues to implement the Pre-K Quality Act of 2016, a platform for revising the Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards. This created a shared definition of "quality" to guide quality improvements, established a vision for early learning at statewide trainings, supports curriculum implementation, provides guidance for district leaders, reduced the number of approved curricula, shifted to a competitive grant application based on program quality, piloted CLASS observations, trained CLASS observers, and enforced pre-K Student Growth Portfolios statewide. Each yearly cohort of Tennessee Pre-K classrooms observed by state level CLASS observers have seen statistically significant improvements in the Instructional Support domain from fall 2020 (3.0) to spring 2021 (3.4). VPK relies on numerous funding sources, including general education revenue. Federal Head Start, IDEA, Title I, and other funds are used to provide the required local match.

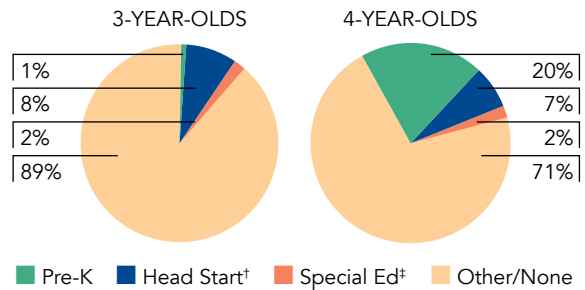
ACCESS RANKINGS		RESOURCE RANKINGS		TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS	STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING	
31	29	29	30	9

TENNESSEE VOLUNTARY PRE-K (VPK)

ACCESS

Total state pre-K enrollment.....	17,837
School districts that offer state program.....	96%
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.....	9,191
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4.....	14,151
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	30 hours/year; PD plans; Coaching	For teachers & assistants: At least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size	20 (3- & 4-year-olds)	20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Staff-child ratio	1:10 (3- & 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; Data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending.....	\$86,029,013
Local match required?.....	Yes
State Head Start spending.....	\$0
State spending per child enrolled.....	\$4,823
All reported spending per child enrolled*.....	\$6,211

* 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

