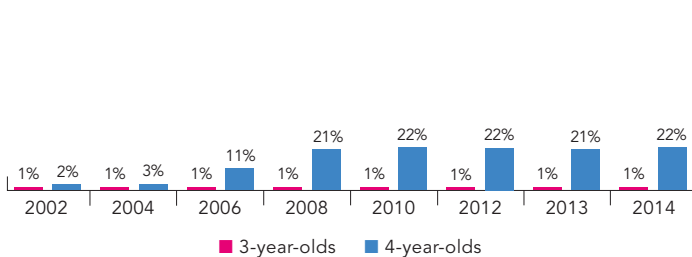


Tennessee

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED*



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED*
(2014 DOLLARS)



In 1998, Tennessee initiated the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Pilot Project, hosting 30 classrooms in a variety of settings through a competitive grant program. In 2005, the Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program was launched, prompted by the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act legislated that year. The VPK added 300 new classrooms to the existing ECE Pilot Project. By the 2011-2012 school year, every district offered at least one VPK classroom and a total of 18,609 children were enrolled throughout the state. Figures for the 2013-2014 school year were unavailable, but due to no increase in the number of funded slots, numbers are estimated to be similar to figures in 2011-2012.

The Tennessee Department of Education (DOE) restructured to create the Division of Special Populations (DSP) in 2011. The Office of Early Learning (OEL) was situated within DSP and was responsible for a variety of programs including: VPK, oversight of the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Family Resource Centers, and the School Administered Child Care program. Program administration tasks for VPK include training, technical assistance, monitoring, and data collection. The OEL also coordinated and collaborated with other state agencies, local school systems, and community providers to gather information on best practices and research in support of early childhood education. The Tennessee Department of Education restructured the DSP in January 2013, and oversight for the VPK program was transferred to the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, Department of Content and Resources Pre-K-12. The OEL ceased its function as a formal entity at that time.

Only public schools are eligible to apply for state-funded VPK grants through a competitive process. Grant recipients may, however, contract with private child care agencies, Head Start agencies, institutions of higher education, public housing authorities, and any three-star rated community-based or private child-serving agency where lead teachers are licensed in early childhood education. There is at least one VPK classroom in all 135 school districts. Programs contracted to provide VPK services must operate within the jurisdiction of the school district. Since the 2011-2012 school year, lack of funding to expand VPK has resulted in systems being required to submit continuation applications for operating previously awarded VPK classrooms.

Eligibility is determined using a three-tier prioritization system. First priority is given to tier one 4-year-olds whose family income qualifies for free- or reduced-priced lunch as well as children in foster care or who are homeless. If space is available, children who have a history of abuse or neglect, are English Language Learners, have an IEP, or are in state custody may enroll as the second tier of eligibility. Any remaining slots may then be given to children who qualify for third tier eligibility based on locally determined risk factors, including single-parent families, teen parents, low parent education level, or a parent on active military duty. VPK only serves 4-year-olds, although at-risk 3-year-olds may be enrolled in pilot programs. Changes in age eligibility for VPK were phased in beginning in the 2013-2014 school year to correspond with legislated changes made for kindergarten eligibility.

Since its inception, funding for VPK has relied on numerous sources, including general education revenue and, in the past, lottery revenue and federal TANF funds. State funds for the VPK program were level funded in the 2013-2014 school year. Federal Head Start, IDEA, Title I, and other funds are used to provide the required local match which may include in-kind contributions for facilities, staffing, and operational costs. There was no change in the funding level for the required local match in 2013-2014.

Program quality is monitored annually by state personnel and consultants through on-site visits and review of submitted reports including use of classroom quality assessment with program level outcomes incorporated into a program plan for continuous improvement. During the 2013-2014 school year, the Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University was involved in the fifth year of an on-going external evaluation on the effectiveness of the VPK program.

In 2014, Tennessee was awarded a competitive federal Preschool Development Grant for \$17.5 million.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
23	25

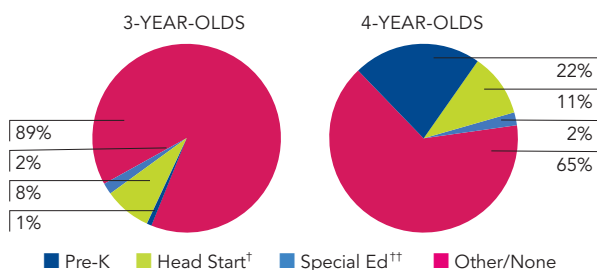
RESOURCES RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
15	16

TENNESSEE VOLUNTARY PRE-K

ACCESS

Total state program enrollment	18,609 ¹
School districts that offer state program	100%
Income requirement	185% FPL ²
Hours of operation	5.5 hours/day, 5 days/week ³
Operating schedule	Academic year
Special education enrollment, ages 3 and 4	6,278
Federally funded Head Start enrollment, ages 3 and 4	15,129
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?
Early learning standards	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher degree	BA	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Teacher specialized training	Pre-K–Grade 3, Pre-K–Grade 4, Pre-K–K, EC SpEd Pre-K–1, SpEd Pre-K–3 ⁴	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Assistant teacher degree	None ⁵	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher in-service	18 clock hours/year ⁶	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maximum class size		20 or lower	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3-year-olds	16 ⁷		
4-year-olds	20 ⁷		
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, health, developmental; and support services ⁸	Vision, hearing, health; and at least 1 support service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meals	Lunch and either breakfast or snack	At least 1/day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Monitoring	Site visits and other monitoring	Site visits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET

9

RESOURCES

Total state pre-K spending	\$85,807,267
Local match required?	Yes ⁹
State spending per child enrolled	\$4,611
All reported spending per child enrolled*	\$5,895

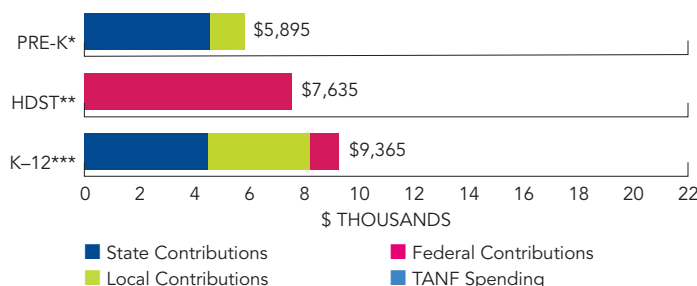
* Pre-K programs may receive additional funds from federal or local sources that are not included in this figure.

** Head Start per-child spending for the 2013-2014 year includes funding only for 3- and 4-year-olds served. Past years figured have unintentionally included funds for Early Head Start.

*** K-12 expenditures include capital spending as well as current operating expenditures.

Data are for the '13-'14 school year, unless otherwise noted.

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



¹ Enrollment figures for 2013-2014 were unavailable. Figures reported are based on 2011-2012 enrollment.

² Once all available students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch are enrolled, LEAs are permitted to enroll children whose families do not meet this income criterion.

³ Naptime cannot be counted in the 5.5 hour minimum.

⁴ Permissible types of endorsements include those in: Pre-K- Grade 3, Pre-K-4, Pre-K-K, Pre-K-1 Special Education, and Pre-K-3 Special Education. The pre-K-4 certification and Special Education Pre-K-1 are no longer issued, but are still accepted for pre-K teachers in public and nonpublic settings. All Pre-K endorsements extend to include children from birth.

⁵ 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 high school diploma and relevant experience working with ECE programs and the assistant must demonstrate progress toward completion of a CDA or AA.

⁶ All lead teachers working in public schools must meet the state requirement of 30 hours of in-service per year. The 18 hours required in early childhood for preschool teachers may count toward this total.

⁷ In mixed-age groups, a maximum of eight 3-year-olds can be in the class with 12 4-year-olds. If there are nine or more 3-year-olds, the classroom capacity is 16 students.

⁸ Dental screening and referrals are locally determined. Support services include parent conferences or home visits, parenting support or training, parent involvement activities, referral for social services, and transition to kindergarten activities. Other comprehensive services are determined locally.

⁹ The state Basic Education Plan (BEP) funding formula determines the state share and the amount of the local match for the classroom component based on each county's tax base. The local match may be in actual dollars or in-kind contributions e.g., (facilities, utilities, staffing, etc.).