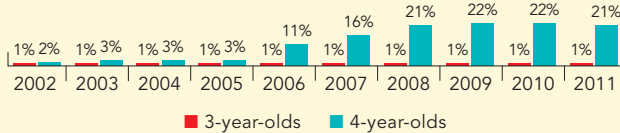
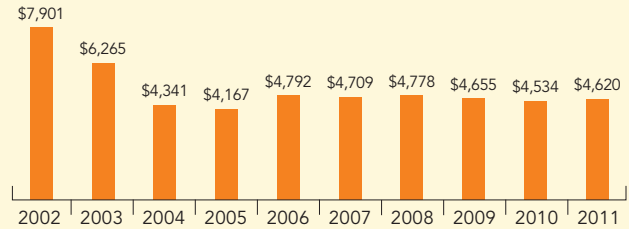


# Tennessee

PERCENT OF STATE POPULATION ENROLLED



STATE SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED (2011 DOLLARS)



Started in 1998 with 30 classrooms, Tennessee’s Early Childhood Education (ECE) Pilot Project was a competitive grant program for public schools, Head Start agencies, private child care agencies, public housing authorities, and institutions of higher education to provide preschool education programs. Tennessee launched the Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program in the 2005-2006 school year, adding 300 new classrooms to the existing ECE Pilot Project. During the 2010-2011 school year, a total of 18,453 children were served across 934 VPK classrooms with every district in the state offering at least one classroom.

Only public schools may compete for state-funded VPK grants, though these schools may subcontract with Head Start agencies, private child care agencies, public housing authorities, institutions of higher education, and any three-star rated community-based or private child-serving agency. Contracted programs must operate within the LEA’s jurisdiction.

Eligibility is determined using a three-tier prioritization system. Four-year-olds whose family income meets up to 185 percent of poverty income guidelines, as determined by Department of Health and Human Services, are top priority for enrollment. If space is still available, children who have an IEP, have a history of abuse or neglect, are English Language Learners, or are in state custody may enroll. Any remaining spots may then be offered based on locally determined risk factors, including low parent education level, single-parent families, teen parents, 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.

Since its inception, VPK has received funding from multiple sources, including lottery revenue, general education revenue, and, in the past, TANF funds. The use of lottery funds had allowed program enrollment to expand. In 2010-2011, the VPK program was funded fully through general education revenue. Other funds used to provide the required local match for VPK include federal Head Start, Title I Even Start, and IDEA. Since the 2008-2009 school year, the program has maintained its funding for 934 classrooms. While the budgets have included inflationary adjustments, there have been no additional funds for expansion.

The Division of School Readiness and Early Learning (DSREL), formerly the Office of Early Learning, within the Tennessee Department of Education, grew out of the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005. The DSREL is responsible for technical assistance, program administration, monitoring, oversight, training, and data collection for VPK. This office is also responsible for coordinating and collaboration with local school systems, community providers, and intra-state agencies to gather best practices and information in support of early childhood education. DSREL includes the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Even Start State Coordinator Office, Family Resource Centers, Pre-K Data monitoring, and School Administered Child Care Program Evaluation.

A five-year, external evaluation on the effectiveness of the VPK program is being conducted by the Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University. This study began in the fall of 2009.

ACCESS RANKINGS	
4-YEAR-OLDS	3-YEAR-OLDS
20	22

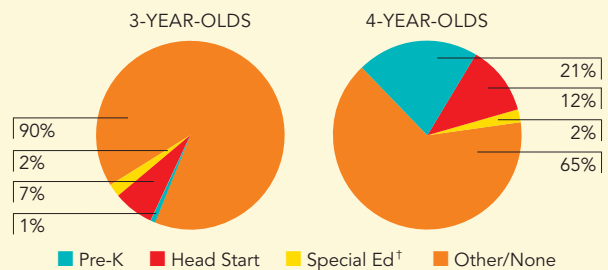
RESOURCES RANKINGS	
STATE SPENDING	ALL REPORTED SPENDING
15	16

# TENNESSEE VOLUNTARY PRE-K

## ACCESS

Total state program enrollment .....	18,453
School districts that offer state program .....	100%
Income requirement .....	185% FPL <sup>1</sup>
Hours of operation .....	5.5 hours/day, 5 days/week <sup>2</sup>
Operating schedule .....	Academic year
Special education enrollment .....	6,679
Federally funded Head Start enrollment .....	15,657
State-funded Head Start enrollment.....	0

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



<sup>†</sup> This is an estimate of children in special education who are not enrolled in state-funded pre-K or Head Start.

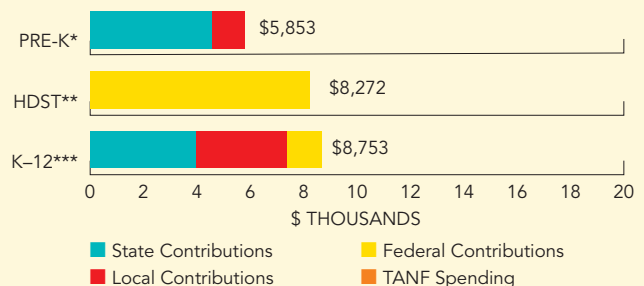
## QUALITY STANDARDS CHECKLIST

POLICY	STATE PRE-K REQUIREMENT	BENCHMARK	DOES REQUIREMENT MEET BENCHMARK?	TOTAL BENCHMARKS MET <b>9</b>
Early learning standards .....	Comprehensive .....	Comprehensive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher degree .....	BA .....	BA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher specialized training .....	Teaching license and EC endorsement <sup>3</sup>	Specializing in pre-K	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Assistant teacher degree .....	CDA (ECE pilot); HSD + pre-K experience (VPK) <sup>4</sup>	CDA or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Teacher in-service .....	18 clock hours <sup>5</sup> .....	At least 15 hours/year	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Maximum class size .....	20 or lower		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3-year-olds .....	16 <sup>6</sup>			
4-year-olds .....	20 <sup>6</sup>			
Staff-child ratio .....	1:10 or better		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3-year-olds .....	1:8			
4-year-olds .....	1:10			
Screening/referral .....	Vision, hearing, health, and support services developmental; and support services <sup>7</sup>	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"/>	

## RESOURCES

Total state pre-k spending .....	\$85,254,000
Local match required? .....	Yes <sup>8</sup>
State spending per child enrolled .....	\$4,620
All reported spending per child enrolled* .....	\$5,853

SPENDING PER CHILD ENROLLED



\* 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 2010-2011 year includes funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

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

Data are for the '10-'11 school year, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Naptime cannot be counted in the 5.5 hour minimum.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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. Some other comprehensive services are required, but specific services are determined locally.

<sup>8</sup> 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 include in-kind contributions.