

## Voluntary Pre-K Fact Sheet

### 2023-24

#### Overview

The Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005 was passed with strong bipartisan support from the Tennessee General Assembly, increasing the state's investment in Early Childhood Education and access for students. The Voluntary Pre-K initiative provides Tennessee's three- and four-year-old children, with an emphasis on four-year-olds who are at-risk, an opportunity to develop school readiness skills (pre-academic and social skills). Voluntary Pre-K classes promote a high-quality academic environment, which fosters the love and joy of learning and promotes success in kindergarten and throughout the child's life.

#### History

The legislation for the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005 was passed by the House and Senate in May 2005. This law provided for the use of \$25 million in excess lottery dollars in the 2005-06 school year to establish quality pre-kindergarten classrooms through a competitive grant process. In subsequent years (2006-07 and 2007-08), Governor Bredesen's approved budget included additional state funding to expand Tennessee's VPK program classes to reach an ever-growing number of at-risk Pre-K children.

In 2016, the state legislature passed S.B. 1899 (H.B. 1485.) This bill, referred to as the Pre-K Quality Act, requires the following:

- Competitive grant based on quality
- Pre-K and kindergarten student growth portfolios
- Legislative intent added that VPK prepare students for kindergarten
- Alignment between Pre-K and K-12 instruction
- Office of Early Learning will develop definition of quality with which programs will comply

#### 2023-24 Facts

- Funding total: \$110,558,090 (state and local funds) with \$86,437,438.26 provided by state funds
- Number of classes: 941 allocated classrooms
- Location: 138 districts in 94 counties (includes Achievement School District and TN Public Charter School Commission)
- Number of income-eligible children enrolled in VPK: 16,185
- State-wide utilization rate: 86%
- State-wide capacity: 93%
- State-approved VPK curricula options: Connect4Learning, Creative Curriculum, HighScope