

# Voluntary Pre-K Fact Sheet

## 2022-23 School Year

### Overview

**T.C.A. 49-6-108(6) requires the Tennessee Department of Education to** “Provide an annual report to the **governor** and the general assembly on the status of pre-kindergarten programs, which shall include, at a minimum, the number, location and types of providers of pre-kindergarten classrooms and the number of at-risk children served. The annual report shall be posted on the department of education, office of early learning website to provide public access to the report.” This fact sheet serves to provide additional information regarding the status of pre-kindergarten programs to meet this statutory requirement.

### History of Voluntary Pre-K in Tennessee

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. 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, the preschool pilot expanded to statewide implementation.

The [Pre-K Quality Act](#) of 2016 was another significant milestone, with updates focused on quality of VPK programming and preparing students for kindergarten. The law requires the following:

- Office of Early Learning is tasked with developing a definition of “high quality pre-kindergarten program” and administering a competitive grants process with awards based on quality metrics;
- VPK programs must comply with all requirements in law, including completion of pre-K and kindergarten student growth portfolios;
- Programming must be structured for alignment between Pre-K and K-12 instruction

### 2022-23 Facts

- Funding total: \$110,793,070 (state and local funds) with \$86,029,013 provided by state funds
- Number of classes: 944 allocated classrooms located in public schools and community-based organizations
- Location: 137 districts in 94 counties
- Number of income-eligible children enrolled in VPK: 16,671
- State-wide utilization rate: 89%

- State-wide capacity: 95%
- State-approved VPK curricula options, selected via competitive Request for Qualifications (RFQ):  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Big Day for Pre-K, Kaplan's Connect4Learning, Teaching Strategies' The Creative Curriculum