

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Tennessee's Voluntary Pre-K Program

PRI & TN DOE Division of School Readiness and Early Learning

RDD TIMELINE

Research Questions

- 1. Does participation in TN-VPK improve school readiness at the beginning of kindergarten for the economically disadvantaged children eligible for the program?**
- 2. What characteristics of teachers, classrooms, and organizational context are associated with improvements in school readiness?**

Requires assessing children and observing Pre-K classrooms for a statewide representative sample of students, teachers, and schools. Examines only school readiness for kindergarten, not long-term effects.

Research Design: Data collection from Pre-K classrooms taught by the same teacher two years in a row, and following one cohort of those children into kindergarten. Kindergarten entry skills of children completing Pre-K will be compared to those of children who have not yet completed Pre-K with statistical adjustments for the age difference. Classrooms will be observed and data collected about the school to determine the characteristics associated with success. The entire state will be covered in four waves across the 5 years of the project. Classrooms only participate for a 2-year period. *All data collected will be confidential and summarized across the state.*

Timeline

This part of the evaluation does not require parent consent; however, parents will be informed of the study in the Spring and reminded in the Fall of the two years their region is participating. Parents are requested to contact us, if they do not want their child assessed. Parents will be sent a letter after the assessment was completed.

As we track these children, school districts and elementary schools in every district will be asked to help us locate, verify school, and provide us with the current classroom. We ask for full support from district and school administrators.

Region 1 Central West (includes Nashville) Selection of Representative Sample

- Participating Classrooms were observed and Pre-K teachers were interviewed in Winter 2010
- Pre-K Coordinators and School Administrators were interviewed in Spring 2010
- 2009-2010 Group 1 Pre-K children moved into K and assessed in Fall 2010
- 2010-2011 New Group 2 Pre-K children were assessed in Fall 2010
- Central West Group 2 students were followed into Kindergarten, but not assessed in Fall 2011

Region 2 West (includes Memphis) Selection of Representative Sample

- Participating Classrooms were observed and Pre-K teachers were interviewed in Winter 2011
- Pre-K Coordinators and School Administrators were interviewed in Spring 2011
- 2010-2011 Group 1 Pre-K children moved into K and were assessed in Fall 2011
- 2011-2012 New Group 2 Pre-K children were assessed in Fall 2011

- West Group 2 were followed into Kindergarten, but not assessed in Fall 2012

Region 3 Central East (includes Chattanooga) Selection of Representative Sample

- 2011-2012 Pre-K children in selected Classrooms
- Pre-Test Assessment in Fall 2011
- Participating Classrooms were observed and Pre-K teachers were interviewed in Winter 2012
- Pre-K Coordinators and School Administrators were interviewed Winter 2012
- 2011-2012 Group 1 Pre-K children moved into K and were assessed in Fall 2012
- 2012-2013 New Group 2 Pre-K children were assessed in Fall 2012

 **Central East Group 2 is being followed into Kindergarten and assessed in Fall 2013**

Region 4 (Far) East (includes Knoxville) Selection of Representative Sample

- Participating Classrooms were observed and Pre-K teachers were interviewed in Winter 2013
- Pre-K Coordinators and School Administrators were interviewed Winter 2013
- 2012-2013 Group 1 Pre-K children moved into K and are being assessed in Fall 2013
- 2013-2014 New Group 2 Pre-K children are being assessed in Fall 2013
- (Far) East Group 2 will be followed into Kindergarten, but not assessed in Fall 2014