

## FY2025 VOLUNTARY PRE-K GRANT APPLICATION QUESTIONS AND SCORING RUBRIC

### QUESTION 1

In 750 words or less, please describe how your district supported Pre-K teachers' implementation of state-approved curriculum for Pre-K, TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement (or other research-based, sounds-first foundational skills supplement), and the use of high-quality instructional materials as part of everyday instructional practice. Your response must include the following:

- The specific state-approved curriculum and sounds-first foundational skills supplement used and how the district supported teachers and assistants in the implementation of these high-quality materials
- Examples of how your district ensured curricula is being used to fidelity without additional supplements outside of the required foundational skills supplement
- Examples of how high-quality instructional materials are being used to support teaching and learning
- A plan for delivering relevant and meaningful professional development to voluntary pre-kindergarten teachers, specific to ensuring a high-quality pre-kindergarten experience\*
- A breakdown of the required 5.5 hours of instructional time and how this time is used to promote learning goals with preschool children
- How the district ensures coordination and alignment between VPK classrooms and kindergarten with the goal of ensuring that elementary grade instruction builds upon pre-kindergarten classroom experiences\*

ARTIFACTS: Pre-K Daily Schedule, training schedule related to curriculum implementation

	Exceptional	Enhanced	Acceptable	No Score
	3	2	1	0
Implementation of approved curricula and foundational skills supplement	<p>District names and provides an <b>exceptional plan</b> for implementing state-approved curriculum for Pre-K, TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement, or other research-based supplement (e.g., Heggerty, CKLA), and high-quality instructional materials.</p> <p>An exceptional plan includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific strategies used to support teachers and assistants in implementing curricula</li> <li>• Many examples of how high-quality instructional materials are being used to support teaching and learning</li> <li>• Many examples of coordination and alignment between VPK and kindergarten</li> <li>• Clear evidence of HQIM usage within the daily schedule</li> </ul>	<p>District names and provides an <b>enhanced plan</b> for implementing state-approved curriculum for Pre-K, TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement, or other research-based supplement (e.g., Heggerty, CKLA), and high-quality instructional materials.</p> <p>An enhanced plan includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific strategies used to support teachers and assistants in implementing curricula</li> <li>• Examples of how high-quality instructional materials are being used to support teaching and learning</li> <li>• Examples of coordination and alignment between VPK and kindergarten</li> </ul>	<p>District names and provides an <b>acceptable plan</b> for implementing state-approved curriculum for Pre-K, TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement, or other research-based supplement (e.g., Heggerty, CKLA), and high-quality instructional materials.</p> <p>An acceptable plan includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of how high-quality instructional materials are being used to support teaching and learning</li> <li>• A plan for delivering relevant and PD to teachers and assistants</li> <li>• One example of coordination and alignment between VPK and kindergarten</li> </ul>	<p>District does not name and/or provide a plan for implementing for state-approved curriculum for Pre-K, TN Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement, or other research-based supplement (e.g., Heggerty, CKLA), and high-quality instructional materials.</p>

Curriculum implementation			<p>District provides a <b>clear plan</b> for curricula implementation.</p> <p>A plan includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of how teachers and assistants implement curricula with fidelity</li> <li>• Ongoing efforts to ensure curricula being implemented with fidelity throughout the school year</li> </ul>	<p>District does not provide information on how curricula is implemented to fidelity and/or district uses curricula outside of approved comprehensive curricula and foundational skills supplement.</p>
Daily schedule			<p>District provides a daily schedule indicating 5.5 hours of instructional time and includes details on how various parts of the day are used to promote learning</p>	<p>District does not provide a daily schedule indicating 5.5 hours of instructional time</p>
Q1 Comments:				Q1 Score: ____ /5 pts

## QUESTION 2

In 750 words or less, please explain how the district focuses on engaging VPK parents and families throughout the school year beyond what is minimally required within the VPK Scope of Services\*. Please include how your district encourages participation on the VPK family satisfaction survey and how this data is used to support programming decisions.

*ARTIFACTS: Districts do not have to submit artifacts for this question.*

	Exceptional	Enhanced	Acceptable	No Score
	3	2	1	0
Demonstration of how families are informed, engaged, and supported throughout the school year	<p>Provides <b>exceptional response</b> that demonstrates how families are informed, engaged, and supported throughout the school year.</p> <p>An exceptional response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific strategies used</li> <li>• Strategies for increasing participation on the VPK family satisfaction survey</li> <li>• How data from the VPK satisfaction survey is used to support programming decisions</li> <li>• Examples of data collected on the VPK family survey and programming improvements made as a result of this data</li> </ul>	<p>Provides <b>enhanced response</b> that demonstrates how families are informed, engaged, and supported throughout the school year.</p> <p>An enhanced response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific strategies used</li> <li>• Strategies for increasing participation on the VPK family satisfaction survey</li> <li>• How data from the VPK satisfaction survey is used to support programming decisions</li> </ul>	<p>Provides <b>acceptable response</b> that demonstrates how families are informed, engaged, and supported throughout the school year.</p> <p>An acceptable response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific strategies used</li> <li>• Strategies for increasing participation on the VPK family satisfaction survey</li> </ul>	<p>Response does not demonstrate how families are informed, engaged, and supported throughout the school year.</p>
Frequency of communication	Families receive communication from the program <b>on a weekly basis</b> throughout the school year.	Families receive communication from the program <b>monthly</b> throughout the school year.	Families receive communication from the program, but on a <b>less than monthly basis</b> throughout the school year.	Response does not demonstrate frequency of communication.

Q2 Comments:

Q2 Score: \_\_\_\_  
/6pts

### QUESTION 3

In 750 words or less, please describe how your district used pre-K observational data to improve quality in the 2022-23 school year (must minimally include data points and focus areas) and how the data was used to increase high-quality teaching and learning. For the 2023-24 school year, describe what data you have collected and how you are using this data to provide coaching and support to teachers and assistants to ensure that your students have a high-quality VPK experience. Specifically describe ways your district ensures continuous quality improvement of the pre-K program by implementing quality measurement tools and at what frequency these measures occur. Your response must include the following:

- The specific pre-K observational tool utilized to provide coaching support
- Areas of identified coaching support for teachers and teaching assistants including data points guiding decisions related to areas of support
- The specific tool used to evaluate environmental quality on all new teachers to pre-K and all other teachers on a rotating three-year basis
- Areas of identified support related to environmental quality and how support led to quality improvement

*ARTIFACTS: Districts do not have to submit artifacts for this question.*

	Exceptional	Enhanced	Acceptable	No Score
	3	2	1	0
Pre-K observational data	<p>Provides an <b>exceptional plan</b> for maintaining and supporting assistant and lead teachers.</p> <p>An exceptional plan should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific observational tool used to provide coaching support</li> <li>• Specific tool used to evaluate environmental quality (inclusive of methods for selecting teachers for environmental observations)</li> <li>• Areas of identified support inclusive of data points</li> <li>• Examples of coaching supports provided to lead teachers and assistants</li> <li>• Quality</li> </ul>	<p>Provides an <b>enhanced plan</b> for maintaining and supporting assistant and lead teachers.</p> <p>An enhanced plan should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific observational tool used to provide coaching support</li> <li>• Specific tool used to evaluate environmental quality (inclusive of methods for selecting teachers for environmental observations)</li> <li>• Areas of identified support inclusive of data points</li> <li>• Examples of coaching supports provided to lead teachers and assistants</li> </ul>	<p>Provides an <b>acceptable plan</b> for maintaining and supporting both assistant and lead teachers.</p> <p>An acceptable plan should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific observational tool used to provide coaching support</li> <li>• Specific tool used to evaluate environmental quality</li> <li>• Areas of identified support inclusive of data points</li> </ul>	<p>District does not name a pre-k observational tool used and/or provide a plan for maintaining and supporting both lead teachers and assistant teachers.</p>

	improvements experienced as a result of coaching supports provided			
Q3 Comments:				Q3 Score: ____/3pts

#### QUESTION 4

In 750 words or less, please describe how your district prioritized enrollment of income-eligible four-year old children, including children with disabilities in the 2023-24 school year. Your response must include:

- Current utilization rate (if your utilization rate is below 80%, you must include additional information on ongoing efforts to increase the utilization rate including recruitment and enrollment strategies)
- A breakdown of how many children in your VPK seats are income-eligible and non-income eligible and percent of how many children qualify as children with disabilities representing various categories assigned to children ages 3-5 in the district
- Utilization trends from last three years including how you supported an increase in enrollment for qualifying children
- Efforts to ensure prioritization of income-eligible children including specific strategies your district uses to decide when to enroll three-year-olds or over-income children
- Efforts to ensure equal access for income-eligible children with disabilities including what general education options your district uses to serve preschool children who are not eligible for VPK
- Wait list including income-eligible and non-income eligible students and specific information on how children are enrolled from the waitlist

ARTIFACTS: Districts do not have to submit an artifact for this question.

	Exceptional	Enhanced	Acceptable	No Score
	3	2	1	0
Current utilization rate	Response demonstrates <b>at least a 100% current utilization rate</b> in FY24.	Response demonstrates an <b>90-99% current utilization rate</b> in FY24.	Response demonstrates a <b>80-89% current utilization rate</b> in FY24.	Response demonstrates <b>&lt;80% current utilization rate</b> in FY24.
Inclusive practices	Provides an <b>exceptional and proactive plan</b> for accommodating children with disabilities and their families in the enrollment process. An exceptional response includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple strategies used to recruit and support children with disabilities and their families with enrollment</li> <li>• Data regarding the percentage of children with disabilities enrolled</li> </ul>	Provides an <b>enhanced plan</b> for accommodating children with disabilities and their families in the enrollment process. An enhanced response includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies used to recruit and support children with disabilities and their families with enrollment</li> <li>• Data regarding the percentage of children with disabilities enrolled</li> </ul>	Provides an <b>acceptable plan</b> for accommodating children with disabilities and their families in the enrollment process. An acceptable response includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies used to recruit and support children with disabilities and their families with enrollment</li> <li>• Data regarding the percentage of children with disabilities enrolled</li> </ul>	Response does not provide guidance on how children with disabilities and their families are accommodated in the enrollment process.



	<p>into VPK seats and how these children are supported in the general education environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional general education options available in your district to serve preschool children who do not meet eligibility requirements for VPK</li> </ul>	<p>into VPK seats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional general education options available in your district to serve preschool children who do not meet eligibility requirements for VPK</li> </ul>	<p>into VPK seats</p>	
<p>Outreach and strategies for enrolling eligible children</p>	<p>Provides <b>an exceptional plan</b> of outreach and strategies for serving all four-year old children and prioritize enrollment of eligible children.</p> <p>An exceptional response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data indicating how many children are currently income-eligible vs. non-income-eligible in VPK</li> <li>• Utilization data showing how trends determine classroom placement, seat placement, recruiting strategies, etc.</li> <li>• Efforts utilized to recruit and enroll eligible children</li> <li>• Wait list information and strategies for enrolling at-risk children from the waitlist</li> </ul>	<p>Provides <b>an enhanced plan</b> of outreach and strategies for serving all four-year old children and prioritize enrollment of eligible children.</p> <p>An enhanced response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data indicating how many children are currently income-eligible vs. non-income-eligible in VPK</li> <li>• Utilization trends over time</li> <li>• Efforts utilized to recruit and enroll eligible children</li> <li>• Wait list information and strategies for enrolling at-risk children from the waitlist</li> </ul>	<p>Provides <b>an acceptable plan</b> of outreach and strategies for serving all four-year old children and prioritize enrollment of eligible children.</p> <p>An acceptable response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data indicating how many children are currently income-eligible vs. non-income-eligible in VPK</li> <li>• Utilization trends over time</li> <li>• Efforts utilized to recruit and enroll eligible children</li> </ul>	<p>Response does not provide evidence of outreach made and strategies employed to serve all four-year old children and prioritize enrollment of eligible children.</p>

Q4 Comments:

Q4 Score: \_\_\_\_ 9pts

### QUESTION 5

In 750 words or less, describe how your district's Voluntary Pre-K program benefits children and families in your community. Your response must include:

- Districts long-range plan for serving all four-year old children regardless of income including the proposed sources of local matching funds\*
- Statement of need including preschool opportunities, poverty rates\*, workforce demographics and other outstanding factors impacting families throughout your community including specific sources of information and data
- Collaborative partnerships supporting children and families in your district
- Additional services you have provided to VPK families in order to increase enrollment (ex: transportation, extended care, same hours as K-12, etc.) and support at-risk families
- Student level data to demonstrate children leaving VPK have the skills necessary to excel in kindergarten
- If applicable, requests for additional classroom allocations for FY25 including plan for facility space, teacher recruitment, and additional costs related to opening a new classroom

ARTIFACTS: Districts do not have to submit an artifact for this question.

	Exceptional	Enhanced	Acceptable	No Score
	3	2	1	0
Statement of need	<p>Provides an exceptional statement of the benefits of VPK for children and families in the community.</p> <p>An exceptional response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of unmet need of quality childcare options (with specific sources of data)</li> <li>• Evidence of poverty trends (with specific sources of data)</li> <li>• Numerous collaborative partnerships supporting children and families</li> <li>• Evidence of other factors that may impact enrollment</li> <li>• Innovative strategies used to meet the needs of families and children within the district</li> </ul>	<p>Provides an enhanced statement of the benefits of VPK for children and families in the community.</p> <p>An enhanced response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of unmet need of quality childcare options (with specific sources of data)</li> <li>• Evidence of poverty trends (with specific sources of data)</li> <li>• Collaborative partnerships supporting children and families</li> </ul>	<p>Provides an acceptable statement of the benefits of VPK for children and families in the community.</p> <p>An acceptable response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool opportunities within the community</li> <li>• Poverty trends</li> <li>• Workforce demographics</li> <li>• Collaborative partnerships supporting children and families</li> </ul>	<p>Response does not provide data or evidence related to children and families in the community</p>

Student-level data	<p>Response provides an exceptional demonstration of how student-level data indicates children leaving VPK have the skills necessary to excel in kindergarten.</p> <p>An enhanced response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific tools and/or methods used to collect student level data on all students in FY23</li> <li>• Longitudinal data on VPK student outcomes in kindergarten and beyond</li> <li>• How evidence and data is used to make programmatic and instructional changes</li> </ul>	<p>Response provides an enhanced demonstration of how student-level data indicates children leaving VPK have the skills necessary to excel in kindergarten.</p> <p>An enhanced response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific tools and/or methods used to collect student level data on all students in FY23</li> <li>• How evidence and data is used to make programmatic and instructional changes</li> </ul>	<p>Response provides an acceptable demonstration of how student-level data indicates children leaving VPK have the skills necessary to excel in kindergarten.</p> <p>An acceptable response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific tools and/or methods used to collect student level data on all students in FY23</li> </ul>	<p>Response does not demonstrate how student-level data indicates children leaving VPK have the skills necessary to excel in kindergarten.</p>
Long range plan for serving all			District provides a long-term plan for supporting all four-year old children regardless of income including proposed sources of local matching funds.	District does not provide a long-term plan for supporting all four-year old children regardless of income or proposed sources of local matching funds.
Additional supports for families (BONUS)			District does not provide additional services to VPK families such as transportation, extended care, same hours as K-12, etc.	District does not provide additional services to VPK families such as transportation, extended care, same hours as K-12, etc.
Q5 Comments:				Q5 Score: ____ /7 pts

### QUESTION 6

In 750 words or less, describe how your district supports Voluntary Pre-K teaching assistants in becoming instructional partners in the classroom in accordance with TCA § 49-6-104. Your response must include:

- The number of teaching assistants holding a Child Development Associate (CDA), early childhood technical certificate, associate degree in early childhood, or higher credentialing in a related field.
- How your district supports teaching assistants in obtaining the appropriate credentials
- Specific ways teaching assistants are included in professional development and training beyond what is required in the VPK Scope of Services and Chapter 0520-12-01

ARTIFACTS: Districts do not have to submit an artifact for this question.

	Exceptional	Enhanced	Acceptable	No Score
	3	2	1	0
Teaching assistants as instructional partners	<p>Provides an enhanced statement regarding how VPK teaching assistants are supported as instructional partners.</p> <p>An enhanced response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of teaching assistants holding a CDA or higher education</li> <li>• Specific ways your district supports assistant teachers through continued education and professional development including support in obtaining CDAs or other credentialing</li> <li>• Strategies for including teaching assistants in professional development beyond what is minimally required</li> <li>• Strategies used to attract and retain pre-K teaching assistants</li> </ul>	<p>Provides an enhanced statement regarding how VPK teaching assistants are supported as instructional partners.</p> <p>An enhanced response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of teaching assistants holding a CDA or higher education</li> <li>• Specific ways your district supports assistant teachers through continued education and professional development including support in obtaining CDAs or other credentialing</li> </ul>	<p>Provides an acceptable statement regarding how VPK teaching assistants are supported as instructional partners.</p> <p>An acceptable response includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of teaching assistants holding a CDA or higher education</li> <li>• Specific ways your district supports assistant teachers through continued education and/or professional development</li> </ul>	<p>Response does not provide data or information on how VPK teaching assistants are supported as instructional partners.</p>

Q6 Comments:

Q6 Score: \_\_\_\_/3 pts