



## **Williamson County Schools Pre-Kindergarten FAQ**

### **What is the Voluntary Pre-K program?**

The Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program (VPK) is a state funded readiness program for at-risk children who are four (4) years of age on August 15. “At-risk” is defined by the state as economically disadvantaged. Other “at-risk” factors which may be used to determine eligibility may include but are not limited to: English as a Second Language, foster care, social-emotional behaviors, and family/environmental factors. Due to state funding, there are limited classrooms available in Williamson County – priority placement is given to families that are economically disadvantaged. The VPK program provides a foundation for learning and successful transition to the school environment.

### **What if I currently do not have a Williamson County residence but my family is planning to move to Williamson County?**

Families may complete an application with their current residential address (street, city, state, zip code). In the additional information section of the application, parents will need to provide the approximate move date and the Williamson County residential address if known. Parents may also state additional information regarding the relocation. Families may complete the application process but will be kept “on hold”. Once the family has moved and resides in Williamson County, a placement decision will be provided.

### **How do I apply for the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program?**

All applications are submitted online on the [Williamson County Schools District website](#).

### **What happens next, after I turn in the application for my child?**

After you submit your child/children’s application, your application will be reviewed based on the eligibility guidelines set by the [Tennessee Department of Early Learning](#). If interested in the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Program, you will be sent an email with instructions on how to complete household Income Verification.

### **What if I have multiple children who are age-eligible for a WCS Early Learning Program?**

In the case of multiple children, complete an application for each child. All applications will be considered for placement. More than one application submitted for the same child will only hinder the application process.

### **What if I choose to wait and start my child in kindergarten at the age of 6? Would he/she be able to attend a VPK class at age 5?**

No, the VPK program is only available for children who are four (4) years of age on or before August 15, using the birthdate guidelines set by TN State Law. This is a Tennessee State Law. (*Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 1 e*)



Children who are five (5) years of age are eligible for placement in an EC Peer classroom.

**Is it first come, first serve on the application?**

No, every application will be reviewed for eligibility, but all interested parents are encouraged to turn in applications as soon as possible to be considered for enrollment.

**When will I know if my child is accepted into a VPK class?**

After a family has completed the income verification step in the application process, families will be notified of eligibility and placement decision by EMAIL. This letter will state which school location your child has been selected to attend for VPK. Every effort is made to place the child at a school closest to the child's home. You will be able to confirm your acceptance to the class list or you may deny your child's placement and participation in the program. The acceptance letter will contain information concerning enrollment materials and procedures to confirm your child's place in the class. You will also be notified if your child is not accepted and placed on a waiting list. If your child is placed on the waiting list, your child's application will be kept on file in the event of space becoming available at a later date in the school year.

**Does every elementary school have an Early Learning class?**

No, the TN State Department of Education does not provide enough funding for a VPK program in every elementary school in our county. Early Learning classrooms are community based.

**Which schools have an Early Learning class?**

Early Learning classes are housed inside elementary schools throughout the Williamson County Schools District. Each school year, the locations are determined based on the applications received and the needs of the district as well as space availability within the elementary schools.

**What determines eligibility for children to be accepted into VPK Class?**

Priority placement for classes is given to children of families who are eligible due to financial need. If after all income eligible students are placed and space is still available, additional applicants are considered for placement based on his/her individual need. Every effort is made to place the child at his/her kindergarten zoned school but if not available then the child is placed at an Early Learning school closest to their home.

**What if I have concerns about my child's development?**

Williamson County, in compliance with federal and state law, provides a service called [Child Find](#). Child Find is a screening to find children who live within the district, who may support and qualify for special education services.



### **What are the hours and days of the VPK class?**

The Pre-K class meets Monday through Friday from 8:50 am to 2:40 pm. The Pre-K class follows the Williamson County Schools calendar unless otherwise specified for the Pre-K program. Attendance is required for all five days each week for the entire Pre-K Instructional Day (5 ½ hours per day)

### **Is before/after care available for my child?**

Before/After care is not a component of WCS Early Learning Programs. The WCS School-Age Child Care Program (SACC) is only for students who are enrolled and attending grades K-5.

### **Since this is preschool, does my child need to attend every day?**

Yes, all children enrolled in an Early Learning class are expected to attend every day. Attendance is very important for a successful year of learning. Your child is expected to attend school every day and on time unless he/she fever of 100.0 degrees or higher, vomiting, or showing other symptoms of a contagious illness (following the [WCS Illness Guidelines](#)). Daily attendance, including tardiness/early dismissal, is recorded in the school district's information system (Skyward).

### **Is transportation provided for the VPK program? My child wants to ride the school bus.**

No, transportation is NOT provided for VPK students. Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting the child *for arrival and dismissal* each day.

### **Is there a cost for this program?**

No, there is not weekly or monthly cost for a WCS Early Learning Program. For children enrolled in a full day program, there is a cost for lunch. Families may apply for the [Free and Reduced Lunch Program](#).

### **Does my child need to have a screening or test to be accepted into a VPK classroom?**

No, there is not a screening or test to determine a child's eligibility for enrollment in a VPK classroom. If upon review of an application additional information is needed to determine eligibility, a parent/guardian will be contacted. Early Childhood Program placement information will be shared with parents upon application review.