

Voluntary PreK FAQs

How much does it cost to send my child to PreK?

\$0. Voluntary PreK(VPK) is a free PreK program. In addition, breakfast and lunch are included for all students who financially qualify. Buses are available to most students, depending on the location of their homes in relation to the PreK they are attending. Afterschool care may be available for a fee at some schools if there are enough interested participants. More information will be given to those parents at the appropriate schools with letters of acceptance.

What is the due date for the application?

Letters of acceptance begin being mailed mid-June; however, Sumner County is still recruiting students, as many seats remain open. There are twenty seats per classroom/school. The goal is to fill all twenty seats with students who have financial need or who lost a parent as a direct result of war. Any students who do not meet this criterion will be placed on the waiting list. As the school year approaches and seats remain unfilled, students in the second group will be called. The second group consists of students who have English as their second language or require special education services. If other seats remain, students in the third group will be called. In addition, any application received without documentation verifying income and/or a copy of the child's birth certificate will automatically be placed on the waiting list.

What qualifies as financial need?

The Tennessee Department of Education follows the US Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines, which has more specific numbers, but examples include an annual income for a family of:

3: \$38, 443

4: \$46,435

5: \$54,427

How do you turn in the application?

Families have several different options. Applications can be completed online. Be sure to submit the required documents. Documents can be uploaded by scanning or taking a picture of the birth certificate, proof of income, and shot records or those can be mailed to the Sumner County Board of Education. If families prefer to print the application and mail all the documents in together, that can be done, as well. The address is listed on the back. If copies are needed of the documents, they can be brought to the address on the back of the application and copies will be made. During the school year, the application can also be dropped off at one of the elementary schools listed on the application.

What are the days and hours of the PreK class?

The VPK classroom follows the Sumner County calendar. The first week of school is a phase in week so students can slowly get to know the school and their teacher. Students attend school for 5.5 hours a day. The hours are as follows:

J.W. Wiseman: 7:40-1:10

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Millersville Elementary: 7:15-12:45

Vena Stuart Elementary: 7:30-1:00

Westmoreland Elementary: 8:00-1:30

Do you have to be zoned for that school?

No, in fact, if you live in Sumner County, you can apply for any of the VPK programs. Since there are only four classrooms, there may not be one at your zoned elementary school. Some families prefer to send their child to the one closest to their home while others prefer to send their child to the one closest to the parent's work. At the time of registration, families will be asked to provide proof of residence within Sumner County.

I thought the school for which we were zoned had a PreK, but it is not one of the four listed under VPK.

Yes, many schools do have another PreK program. It is a typical peers and special education PreK program. However, that PreK classroom runs through pupil services and serves students with special needs and has spots for typical peers. That program is at approximately sixteen elementary schools, but the application process and classroom structure are different. Typical peers can apply for those classrooms in early spring.

Who is the teacher in the VPK classroom?

All VPK teachers are certified teachers, with a range of educational and teaching backgrounds. All are experienced teachers and have backgrounds in early childhood. In addition, each classroom has an early childhood PreK assistant. These two work together to teach the children in small groups and in centers, where children are learning through play.

What curriculum is used in the VPK classroom?

Teachers in Sumner County use [Connect4Learning](#). "Effective family engagement is an important part of C4L. The curriculum includes special events to invite families into the classroom, so children can share what they are learning and experiencing. C4L's Online Portal is a valuable communication tool for families to use to keep track of children's progress. When families have up-to-date knowledge of what their children are exploring at school, they are more likely to continue the learning at home."