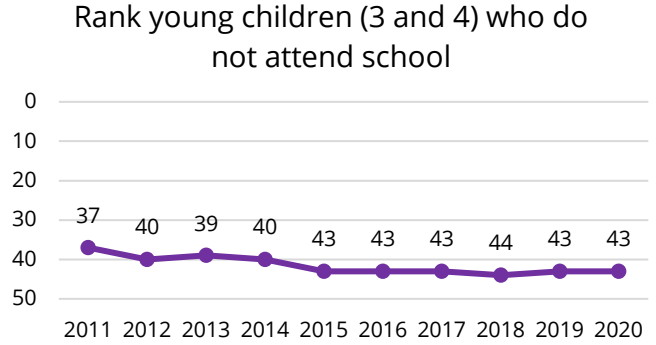
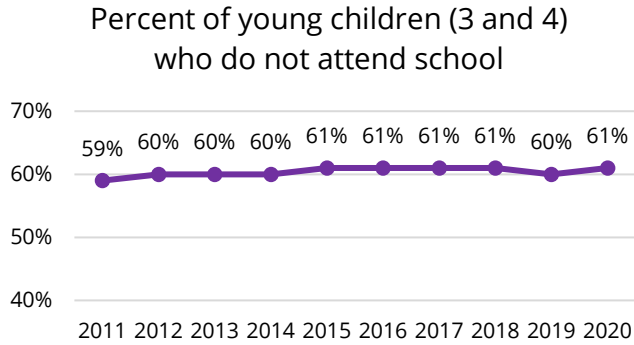
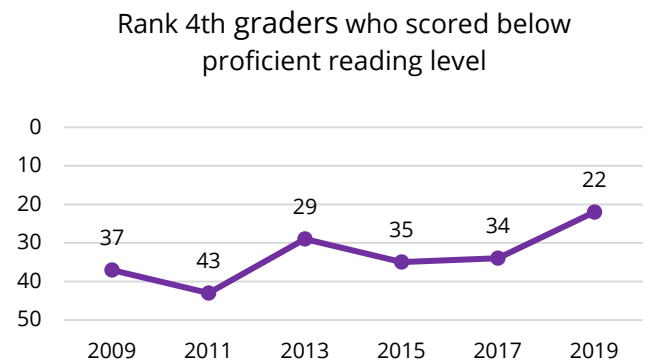
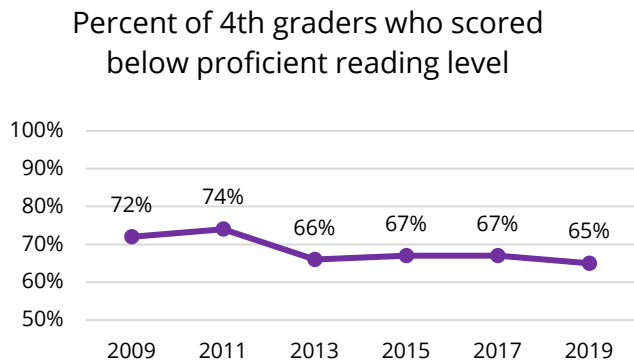


Education

The four indicators that make up the Education domain are the percentage of children ages 3 and 4 not attending school, the percentage of 4th-graders scoring below proficient levels in reading, the percentage of 8th-graders scoring below proficient levels in math, and the percentage of high school students not graduating on time.



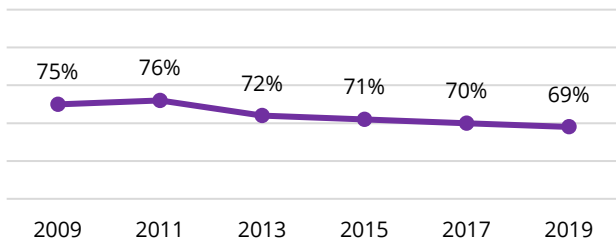
- The percent of young children attending school has changed little since it first improved with the start of Voluntary Pre-K (VPK). VPK continues to serve just about 1 in 4 children of qualifying age. Tennessee’s rank on this measure is flat in the low 40s and unlikely to change without new program offerings.
- There is some disproportionality by race in this measure, with Hispanic children less likely to attend school at age 3 and 4. Both federal and state programs target children with the most risk factors for services, and African-American children are as likely to attend school at this age as white children.
- High-quality pre-k programs for 3- and 4-year-olds can improve school readiness, with the greatest gains accruing to the highest-risk children. Head Start and the expansion of state-funded programs have increased access to preschool, but many children, especially 3-year-olds, continue to be left out.



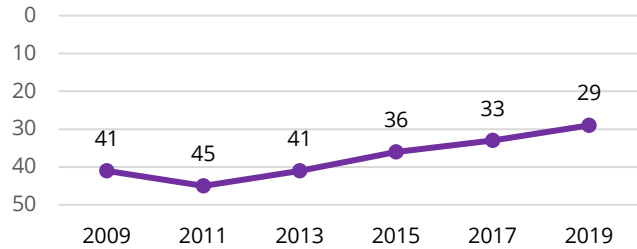
- Tennessee students have improved steadily in 4th-grade reading proficiency over the last decade, both in percentage and in rank. The state’s efforts to improve early reading skills have been paying off. Results from the 2021 national tests have not yet been updated.
- There are still racial differences in reading proficiency, with almost 6 in 10 white children lacking proficiency while closer to 8 in 10 black and Hispanic children do.

- Proficiency in reading by the end of third grade is a crucial marker in a child's educational development. Beginning in fourth grade, children use reading to learn other subjects, and mastery of reading becomes a critical component in their ability to keep up academically. Children who reach fourth grade without being able to read proficiently are more likely to drop out of high school, reducing their earnings potential and chances for success.

Percent 8th graders who scored below proficient math level

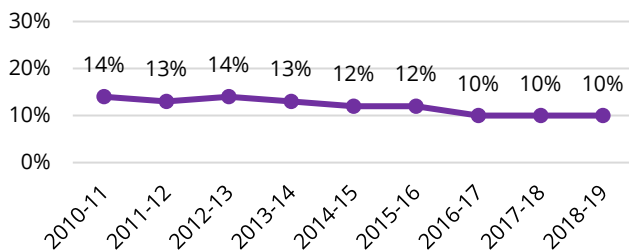


Rank 8th graders who scored below proficient math level

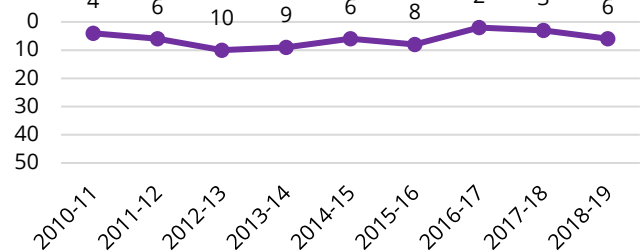


- Tennessee students have improved steadily in 8th-grade math proficiency over the last decade, both in percentage and in rank. The state's efforts to improve math skills have been paying off. Results from the 2021 national tests have not yet been updated.
- There are still racial differences in math proficiency, with 62 percent of white children lacking proficiency while 81 percent of Hispanic children, 88 percent of black children do. At the same time, a much lower 31 percent of Asian children lack math proficiency in 8th grade.
- Competence in mathematics is essential for success in the workplace, which increasingly requires higher-level technical skills. Students who take advanced math and science courses that require a strong mastery of math fundamentals are more likely to attend and complete college and have higher earnings over time.

Percent of high school students not graduating on time



Rank high school students not graduating on time



- Timely high school graduation rates have long been one of Tennessee's best ranks in the KIDS COUNT index of child well-being. Good public policy, including requirements that youth stay in school until age 18 and attend school in order to get a driver's license, contribute.
- About 1 in 6 black and Hispanic children do not graduate on time, while the number of white children missing this mark is half that. FY 2019-20 data have not yet been published.
- Students who graduate from high school on time are more likely to continue to postsecondary education and training; they are more employable and have higher incomes.