



State of Tennessee

Justin P. Wilson, State Comptroller

For Immediate Release: Oct. 14, 2010

New Report Suggests Pre-K Students Gain Early Academic Advantage that Fades over Time

A new report released by the state Comptroller's Offices of Research and Education Accountability (OREA) is consistent with previous reports in finding that pre-kindergarten has a significant effect in the early years of elementary school, but that the effect diminishes during and after second grade.

Similar to the results of previous studies, this analysis of test scores reported from the 2008-2009 school year showed that pre-K participation was associated with small but reliable improvements in student performance in kindergarten and first grade, primarily among economically disadvantaged students. The latest analysis also suggests that a small but statistically significant difference was detectable on some assessments in second grade.

However, similar to findings in earlier reports, despite an early academic advantage, pre-K program participants did not perform measurably better beyond the second grade. The report, which was released today, is the fourth in a series and will be followed by a final report next year.

"The results of the analysis of 2008-2009 test data are consistent with earlier reports," said Dr. Phillip Doss, OREA's director. "The findings show that for economically disadvantaged students, pre-kindergarten has an effect that can persist into the second grade. However, for later years, the academic advantage that pre-kindergarten attendance provides is not detectable."

Economically disadvantaged students are defined as those who qualify for free or reduced price school lunches.

OREA is an agency within the Comptroller's office that is charged with providing accurate and objective policy research and analysis for the Tennessee General Assembly and the public.

OREA commissioned the Strategic Research Group, a firm that provides data collection, consultation and research services, to produce the series of reports on pre-K's impact on student performance.

The latest report, titled "Assessing the Effectiveness of Tennessee's Pre-Kindergarten Program: Second Annual Report," may be viewed at:

[http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/Repository/RE/Second Annual Report \(Oct 11 2010\).pdf](http://www.comptroller1.state.tn.us/Repository/RE/Second%20Annual%20Report%20(Oct%2011%202010).pdf)

-30-

Media contact: Blake Fontenay, Communications Director, (615) 253-2668 or
blake.fontenay@tn.gov

[Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury](#)
State Capitol Nashville, TN 37243
Phone: (615) 741-2501
Email: comptroller.web@tn.gov