



# Early Childhood Education Programs at Tennessee's Community Colleges & TCATs

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July 2023

A photograph of a classroom scene. A female teacher is sitting on the floor, reading a book to a group of young children. The children are sitting on the floor, facing the teacher. The classroom is filled with educational materials, including a calendar, a bulletin board, and various toys. The image has a dark blue overlay.

# Pathways to Careers in Early Childhood Education

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Workforce-Ready Programs at Tennessee's  
Community Colleges & TCATs

# Thirteen TBR colleges offer workforce-ready programs in Early Childhood Education.



## Associate of Applied Science

**NINE** community colleges offer associate of applied science degree programs in early childhood education.

These programs require approximately 60 credit hours to complete.



## Long-Term Technical Certificate

**TEN** community colleges offer long-term technical certificates in early childhood education.

These programs require approximately 24 credit hours to complete.



## Short-Term Technical Certificate

**THREE** community colleges offer short-term technical certificates in early childhood education.

These programs require approximately 12 credit hours to complete.

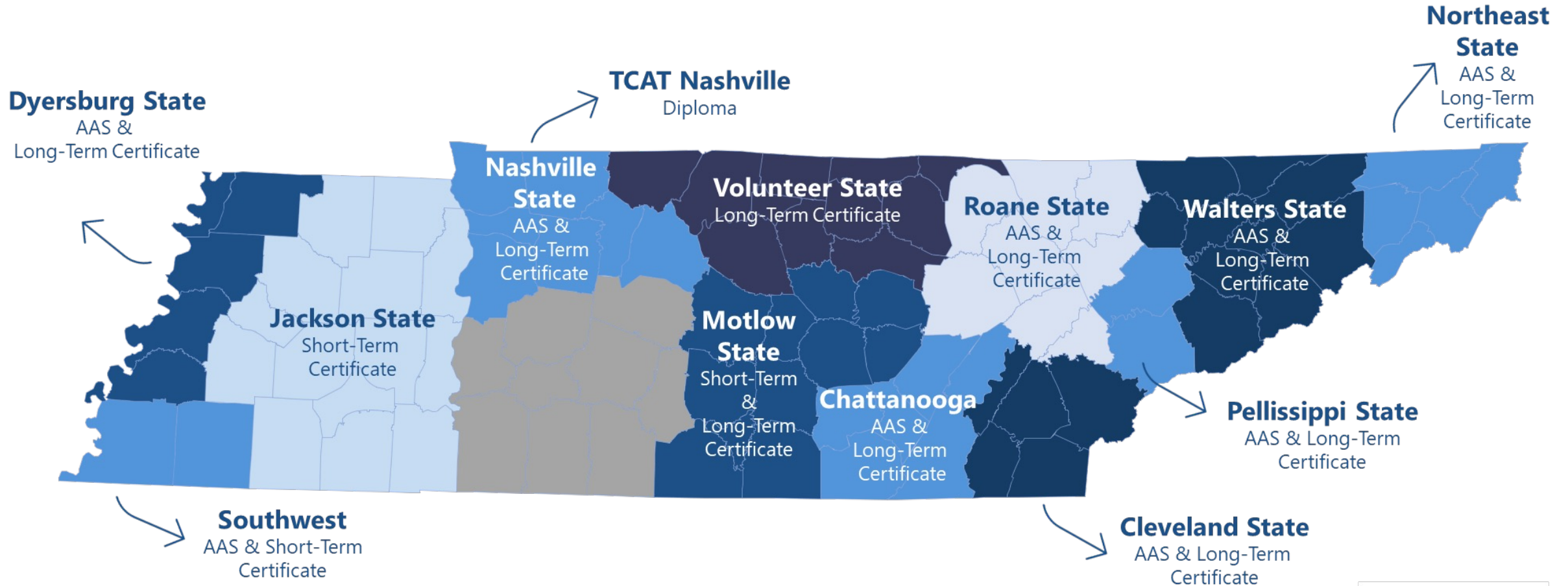


## TCAT Diploma

**ONE** Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT Nashville) offers a diploma in early childhood education.

This program requires approximately one year (1,296 clock hours) to complete.

# Thirteen TBR colleges offer workforce-ready programs in Early Childhood Education.



\*Note: Associate degree programs were also phased out at Columbia (in 2018), Motlow (in 2023), and Volunteer (in 2020).

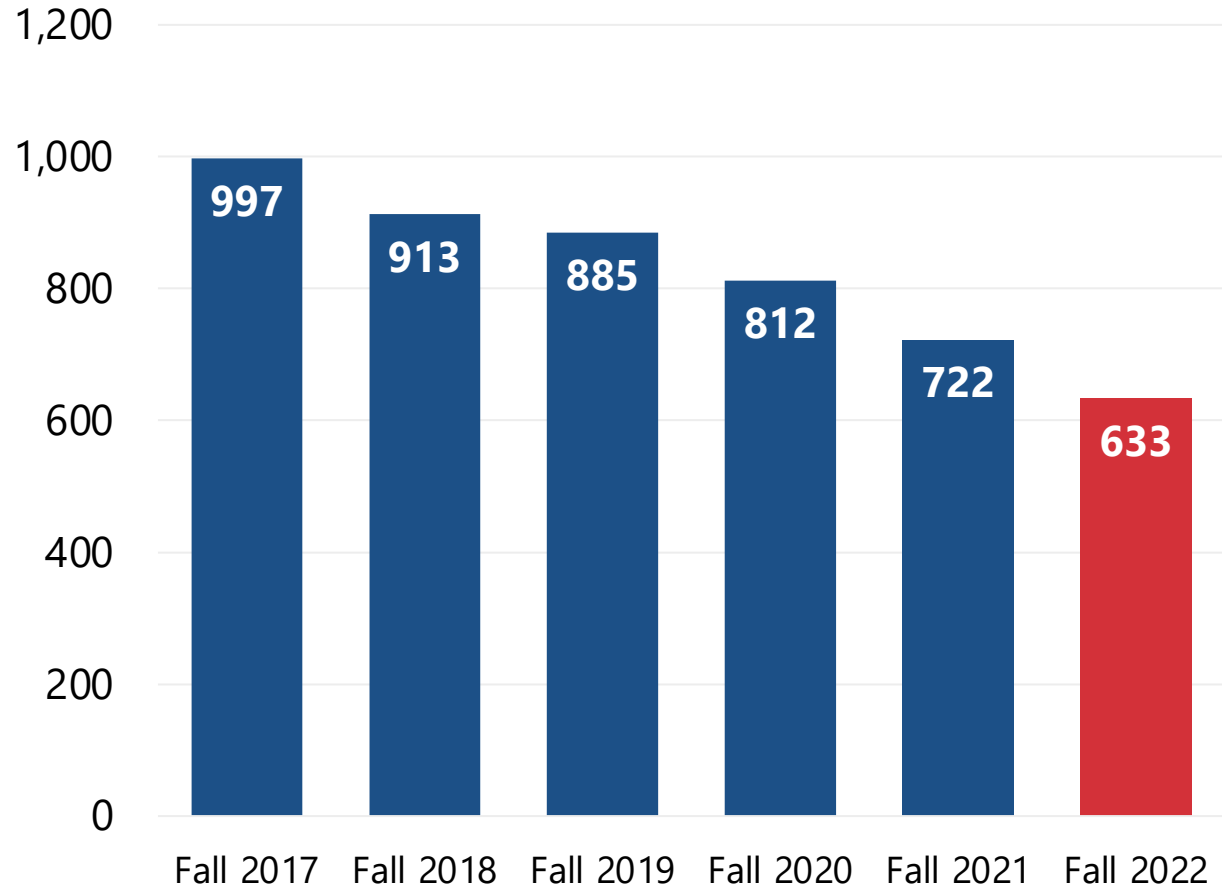
A photograph of two students, a young woman and a young man, sitting at a desk in a classroom or computer lab. They are both looking at a computer monitor. The woman is in the foreground, and the man is behind her. They are both wearing white t-shirts. The woman's t-shirt has some text on it, including "Smile for Life". The man is typing on a keyboard. The background shows a window with a grid pattern. The overall tone of the image is blue and slightly dim.

# The College Pipeline of Early Childhood Educators

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At Tennessee's Community Colleges & TCATs

# More than 600 students are enrolled in Early Childhood Education programs.



**As of fall 2022, 633 students were enrolled in early childhood education programs at community colleges & TCATs.**

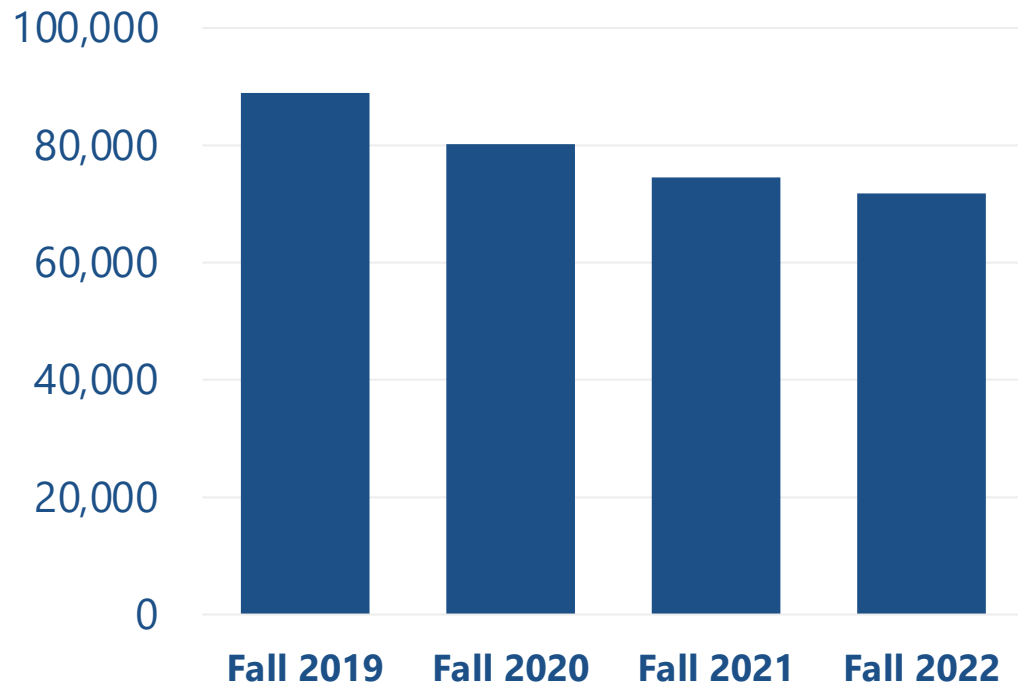
Enrollment in these programs has declined slightly over time.

\*Source: TBR end-of-term data. Includes AAS, certificate, and diploma programs at community colleges and TCATs. Enrollment totals include students at programs that will be terminated. Jackson State added the certificate program in 2020.

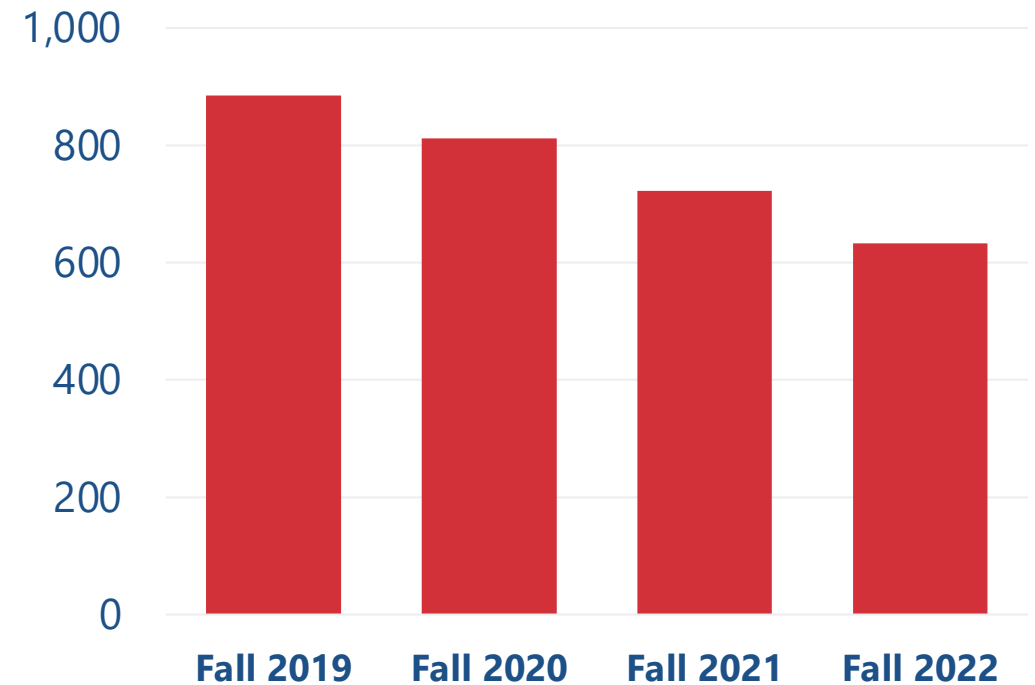
# Declines in early childhood programs have outpaced broader declines at community colleges.



From fall 2019 to 2022, overall community college enrollment in TN **declined 19%.**



From fall 2019 to 2022, enrollment in early childhood programs **declined 28%.**



\*Source: TBR end-of-term data. Includes AAS and certificate programs at community colleges.

# In fall 2022, more than 600 students were enrolled in programs across the state.

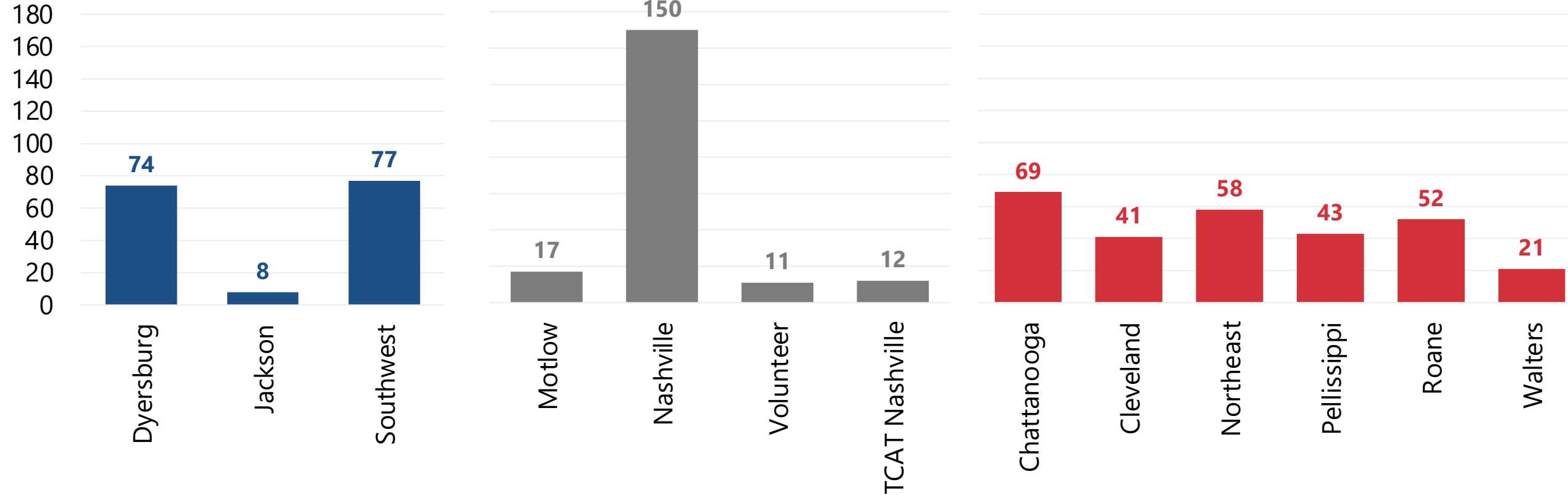


Number of Students Enrolled in Fall 2022

## West Tennessee 159 students

## Middle Tennessee 190 students

## East Tennessee 284 students



\*Source: TBR end-of-term data. Includes AAS, certificate, and diploma programs at community colleges and TCATs. Enrollment totals include students at programs that will be terminated. Jackson State added the certificate program in 2020.



# Most early childhood education students are female, and many are over age 25.



**97% of students were female.**

99% of credentials were earned by female students.



**33% of students were Black or Hispanic.**

23% of credentials were earned by Black and Hispanic students.



**53% of students were age 25 or older.**

74% of credentials were earned by adult students age 25+.

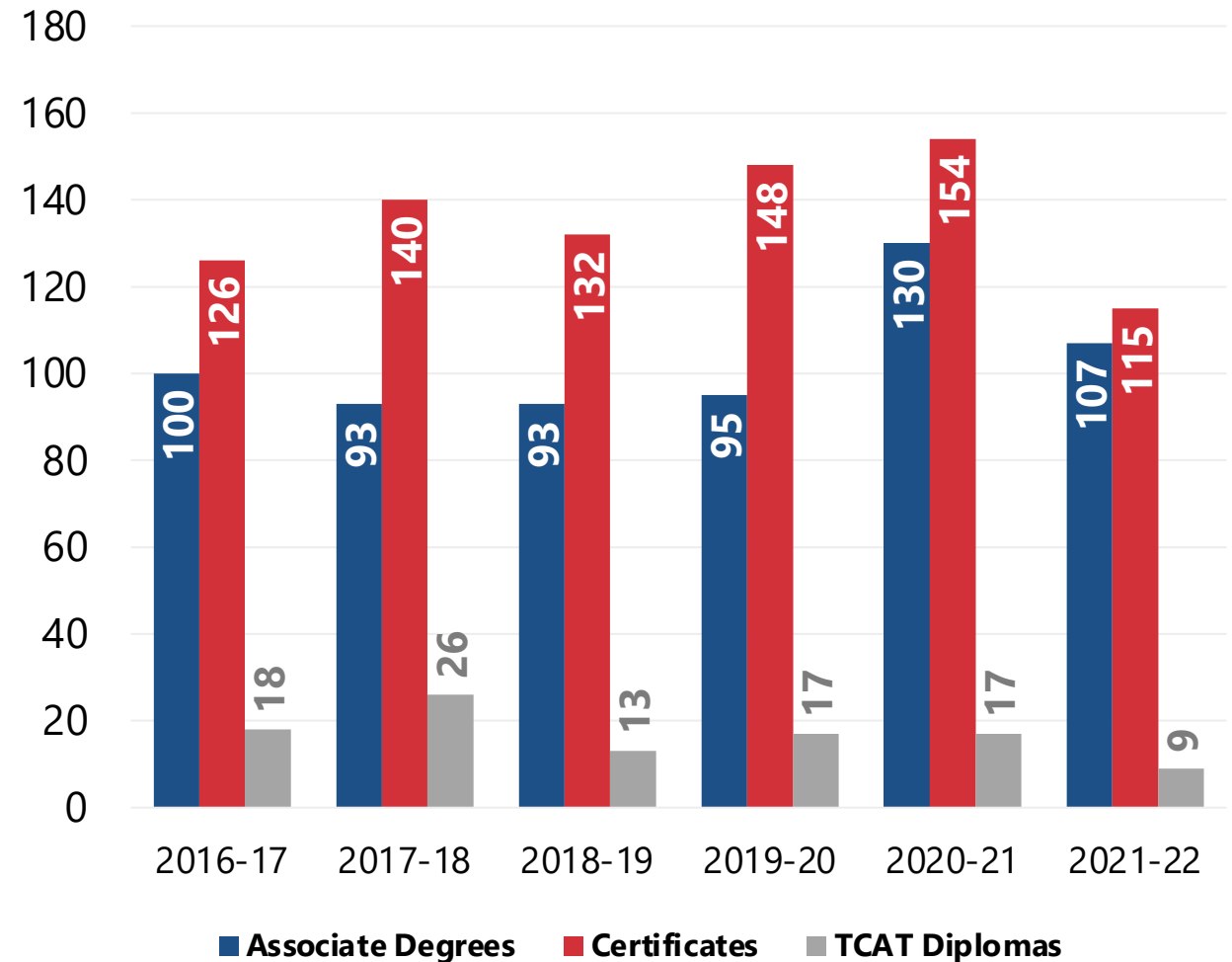


\*Source: TBR end-of-term data. Includes AAS, certificate, and diploma programs at community colleges and TCATs. Enrollment totals include students at programs that will have been or will be phased out. Enrollment data is based on fall 2022 enrollment. Awards are based on 2021-22 academic year awards.

# The number of graduates in early childhood education programs fell in 2021-22.



In the 2021-2022 academic year, students earned **231** diplomas, certificates, and associate degrees in early childhood education.

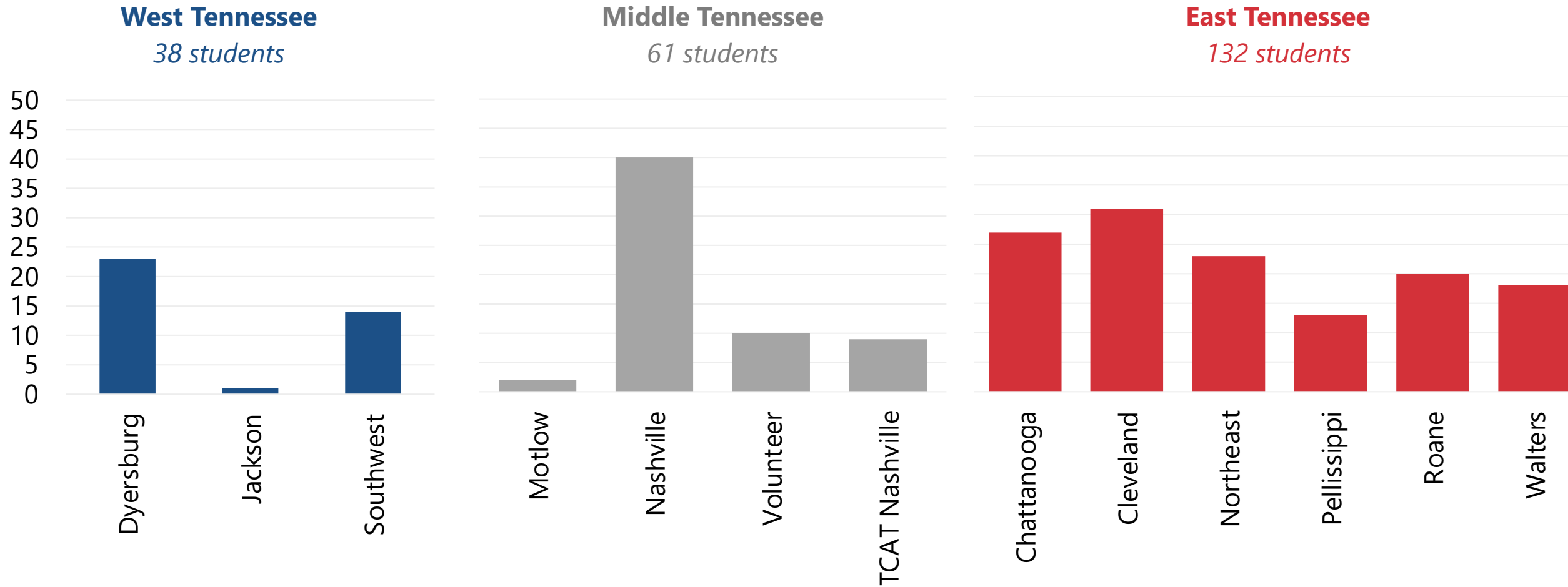


\*Source: TBR end-of-term data. Includes AAS, certificate, and diploma programs at community colleges and TCATs. Award totals include students at programs that will have been or will be phased out.

# Colleges in East Tennessee produced the highest number of early childhood education graduates.



Number of Awards Earned in 2021-2022



\*Source: TBR end-of-term data. Includes AAS, certificate, and diploma programs at community colleges and TCATs. Award totals include students at programs that will have been or will be phased out.

# Student Success in Early Childhood Education Programs



On average, graduates took **3.3 years** to complete associate degrees in early childhood education



In fall 2019, there were 247 first-time students enrolled in early childhood education programs at community colleges. Of these students, **17% graduated within three years**, 10% were still enrolled at a community college after three years, and 3% had transferred to a non-TBR college.



# Pathways to Bachelor's Degrees

Tennessee Transfer Pathways

# Ten TBR colleges offer programs designed to transfer to a university in Early Childhood Education.



Early Childhood  
Education (Pre-K to 3)

**TEN community colleges**  
offer Tennessee Transfer  
Pathways (TTP) in early  
childhood education.

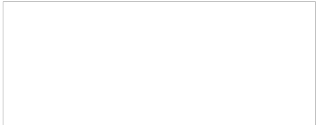
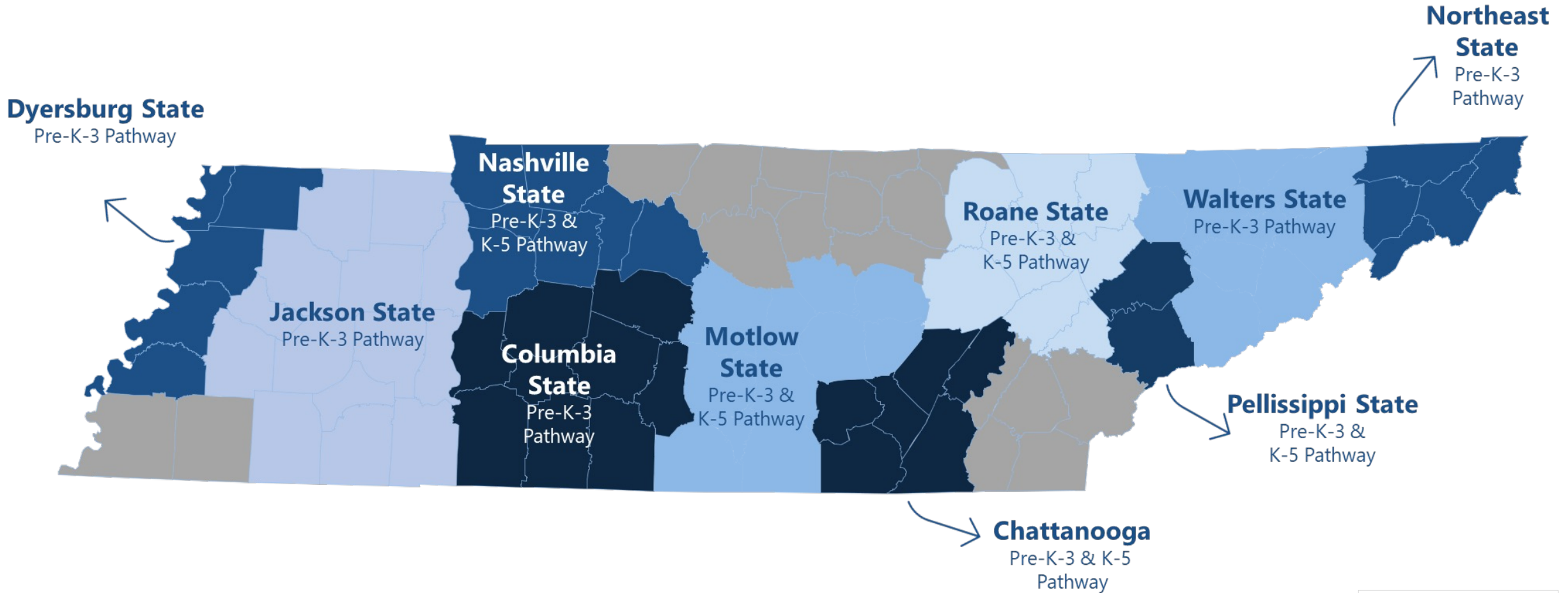


Elementary Education  
(K to 5)

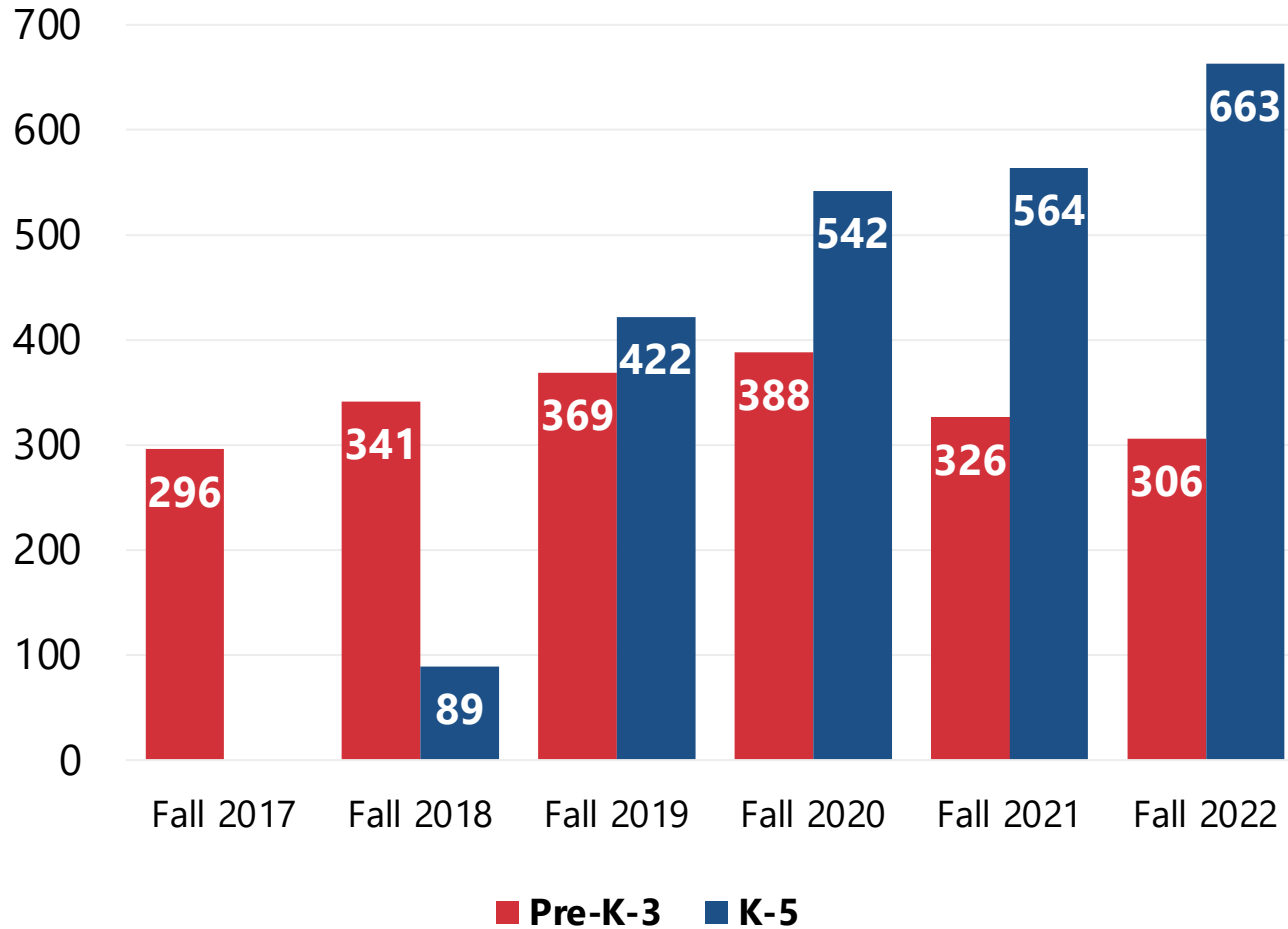
**FIVE community colleges**  
offer Tennessee Transfer  
Pathways (TTP) in  
elementary education.

These programs are part of the **Associate of Science in Teaching** program and require approximately 60 credit hours to complete. Tennessee Transfer Pathway (TTP) programs are designed to transfer to a four-year university.

# Ten TBR colleges offer programs designed to transfer to a university in Early Childhood Education.



# 890 students are enrolled in transfer programs in early childhood & elementary education.



**In fall 2022, 969 students were enrolled in early childhood and elementary education transfer pathways.**

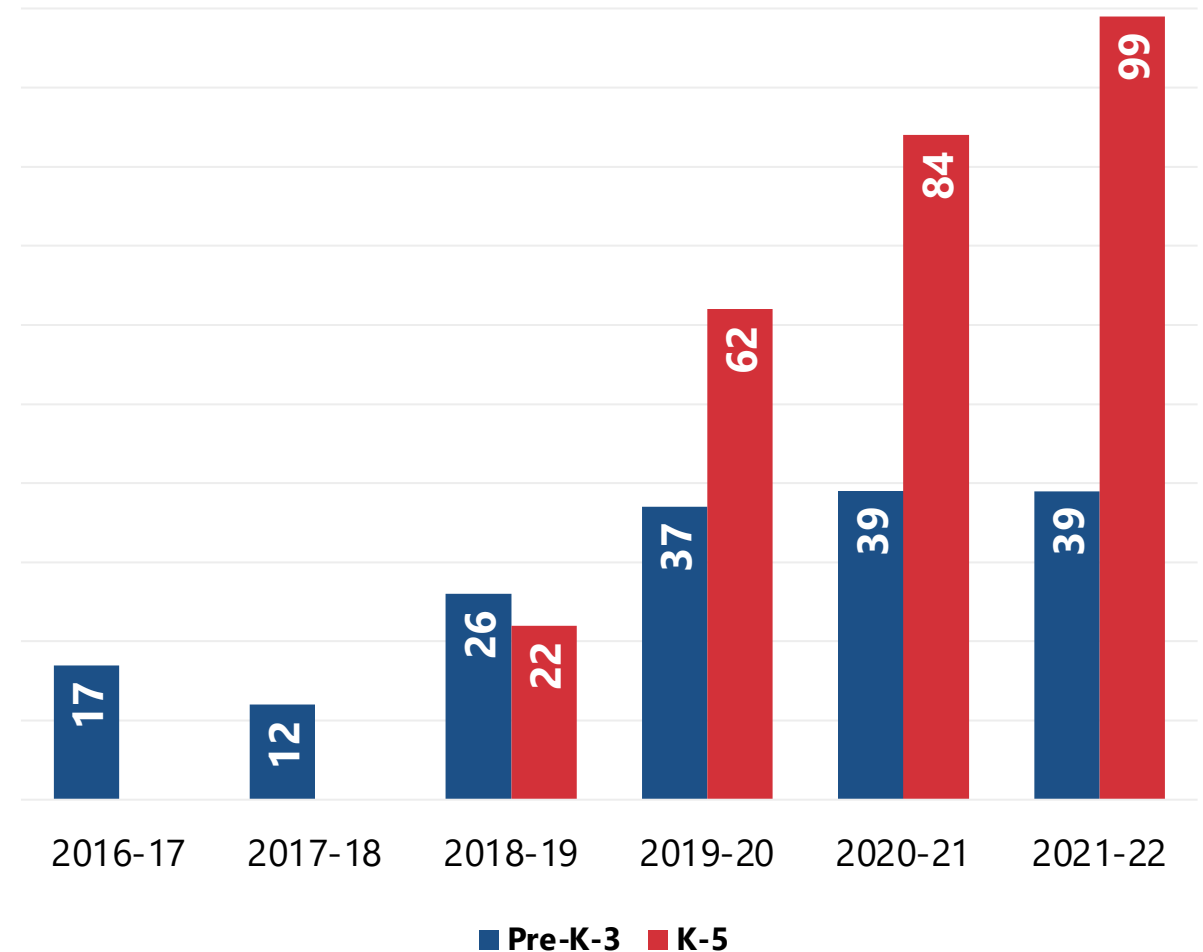
\*Source: TBR end-of-term data. Enrollment totals include students in Pre-K-3 and K-5 concentrations within the Associate of Science in Teaching programs at community colleges.



# The number of graduates from early childhood transfer pathways has increased.



In the 2021-2022 academic year, students earned **138** associate degrees in early childhood transfer pathways.



\*Source: TBR end-of-term data.

# However, only one in three students in these transfer pathways ultimately transferred to a university.



Among students who enrolled in early childhood education transfer programs, **one in three (32%)** transferred to a university within three years of enrolling at a community college.

However, transfer rates are much higher for students who graduated from a community college TTP program. Transfer rates in early childhood TTP programs are higher than transfer rates generally for TTP students.

	Student Type	Any Tennessee Transfer Pathway (TTP)	Early Childhood Education TTP
Transfer Rate	Among Students Who Enrolled in the TTP Program	23%	32%
	Among Students who Graduated from the TTP Program	57%	74%

\*Source: Based on data for students who enrolled as first-time freshmen in fall 2019. Using TBR end-of-term enrollment data and transfer data from the National Student Clearinghouse.