

# Optional Flexible School Day Program (OFSDP)

## Frequently Asked Questions

Updated November 2021

### Application Process

**Question:** Is there a deadline for submitting the application?

**Answer:** No – The application may be submitted at any time; however, we request school districts allow a minimum of 30 days for application review. School districts must receive approval from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) before initiating the program. TEA will notify each applicant of its approval status to begin operating an OFSDP.

**Question:** Does a district or charter school have to reapply each year to participate in the program?

**Answer:** Yes – An application must be completed and submitted annually in order to participate in the OFSDP.

**Question:** Is a board meeting required for OFSDP approval?

**Answer:** Yes – The program requires the board of trustees of the school district or the governing board of the open-enrollment charter school to discuss the proposed application and/or progress of the program before applying to operate an OFSDP each year. However, starting with the 2020-2021 school year the OFSDP application no longer needs a separate board meeting. OFSDP must be included as an item on a regular agenda for the board meeting, providing options for public input concerning the proposed application before applying to operate an OFSDP.

**Question:** How do I submit the completed application?

**Answer:** All applications should be emailed to [OPFLEX@tea.texas.gov](mailto:OPFLEX@tea.texas.gov). The district/charter school name must be included in the file name of each attachment. Application and appendices should be sent as separate attachments in the following formats:

1. The application (PDF file format)
2. Appendix Three responses (PDF file format on district letterhead)
3. Appendix Five (MS Excel file format)

**Question:** How long does it take to get the application approved?

**Answer:** It could take up to 30 days, so it is best to submit the application at least 30 days prior to the anticipated start date.

## **Eligibility**

**Question: Can all grade levels participate?**

Answer: A student in any grade level is eligible to participate in an OFSDP if the student:

- is at risk of dropping out of school, as defined by the [Texas Education Code \(TEC\), §29.081](#),
- is attending a campus implementing an approved innovative campus plan,
- is attending a TEA-designated Early College High School (ECHS), as defined by the [TEC, §29.908](#), Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH), as defined by the [TEC, §29.553](#), or Industry Cluster Innovative Academy (ICIA),
- is attending a community-based dropout recovery education program, as defined by the [TEC, §29.081 \(e-1\) or \(e-2\)](#), or
- as a result of attendance requirements under the [TEC, §25.092](#), will be denied credit for one or more classes in which the student has been enrolled.

**Question: Can a student attend class at any time?**

Answer: A student must receive instruction in the OFSDP at least 45 minutes on a given day for instructional contact time to be recorded. Instructional arrangement options could include the following:

- weekend or night classes
- extended day classes
- classes offered throughout the year
- flexible schedules
- credit recovery classes (Your district may offer these classes during the summer recess for students who have not earned a full ADA during the school year. A student cannot earn more than the equivalent of one ADA in a year.)
- a dropout recovery program in which courses are conducted online, provided your campus is designated by TEA as an Alternative Education Campus of Choice – Dropout Recovery School

**Question: I am a Dropout Recovery campus, should I apply for OFSDP?**

Answer: It depends. If your Dropout Recovery program requires 4 hours of contact a day on a fixed schedule that would not meet the requirements for OFSDP. However, if your campus allows for more than 4 hours a day on a flexible schedule then applying for OFSDP could be beneficial for students.

**Question: If a student is enrolled in the OFSDP are they eligible to participate in UIL competitions?**

Answer: Yes – A student enrolled in an OFSDP program may participate in a competition or other activity sanctioned or conducted under the authority of the UIL only if he or she meets all UIL eligibility criteria.

## **Funding**

**Question: Is the OFSDP a grant program?**

Answer: The OFSDP is not a competitive grant program. The OFSDP provides an alternate method of attendance accounting.

**Question: When does the school district receive funding for OFSDP attendance?**

Answer: The State Funding Division will use attendance data reported by districts in the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to determine the amount of state funding earned for participation in the OFSDP. This will be compared with payments made based on estimates previously provided to TEA by the district. If additional funds are owed, districts will receive this funding at near-final settle up in September of the following school year.

**Question: How are OFSDP Students coded for student attendance accounting purposes?**

Answer: Per the [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook](#), Section 3.2.1 ADA Eligibility Coding, OFSDP Students should be code 7 or code 8.

ADA Code 7 – Eligible Flexible (Alternative) Attendance Program Participation  
Code 7 applies to a student who is eligible to participate in and is enrolled and provided instruction in an alternative attendance program, such as the OFSDP or the High School Equivalency Program (HSEP).

ADA Code 8 – Ineligible Flexible (Alternative) Attendance Program Participation  
Code 8 applies to a student who is enrolled and provided instruction in an alternative attendance program, such as OFSDP or HSEP, but is ineligible to participate in the program.

**Question: Can a student earn more than the equivalent of one ADA in a 12-month period?**

Answer: No – For funding purposes, attendance for a student for a 12-consecutive-month school year cannot exceed the equivalent of one student in ADA with perfect attendance. Instructional time for the OFSDP is funded at the same rate under the FSP formulas as attendance for ADA in the traditional program; however, a single course cannot accrue more than 10,800 minutes, and a full-time equivalent student is expected to have a total of 43,200 minutes of instruction per year to generate one ADA. For an eligible OFSDP student attending summer school OFSDP courses for credit recovery, funding is limited to only funding for the attendance necessary for the student to recover class credit.

**Question:** How do districts ensure that a student does not earn more than the equivalent of one Average Daily Attendance (ADA) in a 12-month period?

**Answer:** Per the [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook](#), section 11.6.3 Participation in the OFSDP and the Regular Attendance Program, students must not be simultaneously enrolled in the OFSDP and the traditional attendance program, in terms of how the student's attendance is reported in the attendance accounting system. However, it is acceptable for a student to earn both traditional attendance and OFSDP attendance if the student's enrollment status changes from a traditional program to the OFSDP or if the status changes back to a traditional program from the OFSDP. The sum of traditional ADA earned and OFSDP ADA earned must not exceed one ADA total. Districts should use the following formula to ensure that students do not generate more than one ADA total.

Maximum OFSDP minutes a student is eligible = (Calendar Days - Traditional Days Present) x 240 minutes

**Question:** If my district participates in OFSDP Credit Recovery in the summer do we get additional funding?

**Answer:** Yes, but funding is limited to the number of minutes needed by the student to recover class credit. Example: A student is eligible for 5 days of credit recovery. The student would then be allowed (240 x 5) 1,200 minutes to make up in the summer. If the student went longer than this amount, they would not receive funding for any extra time and should not be coded as such.

**Question:** How do I record and report minutes for OFSDP students participating in an online dropout recovery program?

**Answer:** Funding for an OFSDP online dropout recovery program is based on course completion. Each online dropout recovery education program course is considered to be 60 minutes of daily classroom time for purposes of the two-through-four-hour rule. The student is considered to be scheduled and receiving instruction for 60 minutes each day for each virtual course completed. Funding is limited to 8 courses per school year.

**Question:** Can a school district or charter school incorporate the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) program within the OFSDP?

**Answer:** No – TxVSN program instruction and content are delivered primarily over the Internet, with the student and teacher in different locations for a majority of the student's instructional period. OFSDP funding is based on the total eligible minutes of instructional *contact* time each student receives, unless operating an approved online dropout recovery program.

## **Operational Guidelines**

**Question: How should I code OFSDP students who are served through the remote synchronous or asynchronous instructional methods?**

**Answer:** ADA eligibility codes for Optional Flexible School Day Program (OFSDP) students must be changed to a regular ADA eligibility code (ADA 1-6) when instruction is no longer provided on campus and their instruction changes to one of the remote methods. Once the coding is changed, these students will generate funding based on daily attendance instead of accumulating daily minutes. Once a student resumes on-campus instruction, their ADA eligibility code can be changed back to the OFSDP code, and they will resume accumulating daily minutes to generate funding.

**Question: Can I use an online curriculum?**

**Answer:** An online curriculum taught in a campus classroom with teacher support is allowed. Off-campus online programs are not allowed unless the campus is designated by TEA as an AEC of Choice - Dropout Recovery Campus and meets the requirements of [TEC, §29.081 \(e\)\(2\)](#). More information can be found on the [Performance Reporting Division website](#).

**Question: Can I use eligibility designation Credit Recovery during the regular school year?**

**Answer:** No - The Credit Recovery section in Appendix 5 should only include dates after the regular school year. This is typically referred to as summer school and should not exceed 30 days. Additionally, Credit Recovery may not extend past July 31st. For an eligible OFSDP student attending summer OFSDP classes for credit recovery, funding is limited to only funding for the attendance necessary for the student to recover class credit. A description of how attendance will be monitored to comply should be included in Appendix 3.

**Question: Can the district use student sign-in sheets to record attendance?**

**Answer:** Student sign-in sheets or digital logs are not an acceptable method of attendance accounting. OFSDP requires that the teacher of record will keep track of the number minutes students attend each day and certify the student's minutes with their signature each day. The exception to this is biometric technology. The school must be able to produce printable documentation of attendance information that must provide detailed information about the date and time that the student logged in and out of the system. A description of time recording procedures must be included in the application.