



Prekindergarten 101

Eligibility/Enrollment/Programming

Eligibility & Enrollment

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Eligibility & Enrollment

Eligibility Information

- Must be three-years-old (if a 3-year-old program is available) or 4-years-old by September 1 of the current school year.
- AND must meet at least one of the following eligibility requirements:
 - English Learner/ Emergent Bilingual
 - Educationally Disadvantaged
 - Homelessness
 - Child of Active-Duty Military/ Armed Forces
 - Foster Care
 - Star of Texas

- A child must be three or four years of age on September 1 of the current school year
- An eligible 3-year-old, who enrolls at age 3, remains eligible for the following school year
- Three- and four-year-olds may be served in the same pre-k class

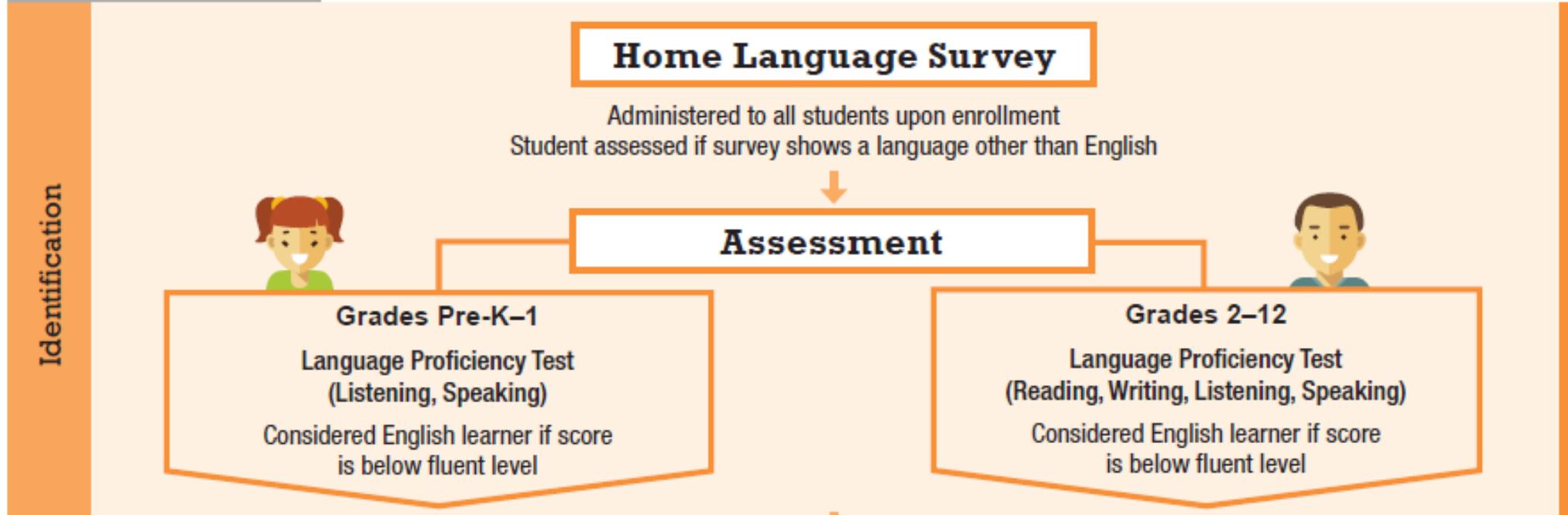


- Parental Option for Student Retention, TEC 28.02124
 - A parent or guardian may elect for a student to:
 - (1) repeat prekindergarten
 - (2) enroll in prekindergarten, if the student would have been eligible to enroll in Prekindergarten during the previous school year under Section 29.13 (b) and the student has not yet enrolled in kindergarten

Bilingual Education Program



A bilingual education program is provided by teachers certified in bilingual education and who are trained in effective second language acquisition methods. The goal of bilingual education programs is for English learners to build on their primary language and literacy skills to attain full proficiency in English in order to participate equitably in school. The information below highlights the process of identifying English learners (ELs).



- Documentation required
 - Home Language Survey
 - “What language is used in the child’s home most of the time?”
 - “What language does the child use most of the time?”
 - Results from the state’s English oral language proficiency test
 - Documentation of the LPAC’s identification of the student as an English learner/emergent bilingual

Pre-k eligibility is based on the student's eligibility to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Students are eligible based on income level or meeting automatic eligibility criteria, which is provided by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Each district has a Food and Nutrition Specialist, sometimes referred to as a Child Nutrition Director (CND), who can provide additional support

Documentation Required

- Children who are or were previously in the conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services:
 - PreK verification letter
 - DFPS foster/kinship placement documentation
- Children who are currently or were previously in foster care in another state or territory, but currently live in Texas:
 - Foster care documents stating closure of a case
 - Court documents stating “state foster care” involvement
 - Adoption paperwork completed by the originating state



To be eligible based on homelessness, the district's local homeless education liaison identifies the student as homeless, regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent, or of the child's guardian or other person having lawful control of the child.

Documentation Required

- A letter from the local homeless education liaison is an acceptable form of documentation.

Definition

- Active duty uniformed members (parents or official guardians) of the US Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard who have eligible children residing in Texas
- Activated or mobilized uniformed members of the Texas National Guard (army or air guard), or activated or mobilized members of the reserve components of the US Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard who have eligible children residing in Texas
- Children of uniformed service members who are missing in action (MIA) or who were injured or killed while serving on active duty

Documentation

- Can include district employee verified documents, statements of service, line of duty determination documentation, Purple Heart orders or citation

Star of Texas Award

The Star of Texas Award is presented to honorees and family members of peace officers, firefighters, and emergency first responders who are killed or suffer serious injury in the line of duty.

For a student to be eligible, the parent must have been deemed eligible for the Star of Texas Award between 2004 and the current year of the awards ceremony.

Key Points on Eligibility

- Each district must develop a system to notify families with eligible children of the availability of the program
- Students may not be denied or excluded from participating in a prekindergarten program for any reason if they are deemed eligible.
- “Child” includes stepchild.

- Once determined eligible, a student remains eligible for the remainder of the current school year in the district in which he or she resides or is otherwise entitled to attend for Foundation School Program benefits.
- A three-year-old student who is eligible and enrolled in pre-k remains eligible to attend as a four-year-old student. Districts are required to follow their usual enrollment procedures.

Early childhood programs have long term benefits for children yet fail to reach those who would most benefit.

Building enrollment and increasing access create positive outcomes for these children.



Enrollment Basic Elements

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
LEA's Service to Pre-k	Serving eligible 3-year-old students is a local decision made by the LEA.	LEAs that identify at least 15 eligible 4-year-old students must offer a pre-k program.	TEC 29.153 (a-1)
Enrollment	LEAs have the authority to determine how many eligible 3-year-old students to serve.	LEAs that identify at least 15 eligible 4-year-old students must offer a pre-k program for all eligible 4-year-old students who enroll throughout the school year.	TEC 29.153 (a-1)

Enrollment Basic Elements cont.

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Use of Waiting Lists	Allowed	Not Allowed	TEC 29.153 (a-1)
Registration	LEAs may begin registration for Pre-k 3 on or after April 1 of each school year	LEAs may begin registration for Pre-k 4 on or after April 1 of each school year. Registration for eligible 4-year-old students must be allowed throughout the school year.	



Prekindergarten Programming

Program Requirements

- A district **shall** offer prekindergarten classes if a district identifies 15 or more **eligible** children who are at least **four** years of age by September 1 of the current school year.
- Districts must have a system to notify their communities of the availability of pre-k.
- Eligible students generate half-day ADA funding through the Foundation School Program.
- The class size limit for prekindergarten is 22 students.
- A pre-k class for children who are at least four years of age must comply with high-quality prekindergarten program standards.
- Districts are required to report program data to PEIMS and ECDS.

HB3 was passed during the 86th Legislature in 2019 and impacted prekindergarten in the areas of:

- Early Education Allotment
 - Funds are allocated to improve student performance in early elementary reading and mathematics, which include supporting full-day prekindergarten.
- Full-day prekindergarten for Eligible Four-Year-Old's
 - Requires full-day program for eligible four-year-old's
- High-Quality Prekindergarten (HQPK)
 - Requires programs to comply with high quality components for all four-year-old prekindergarten programs.
 - HQPK Components: curriculum, student progress monitoring, teacher qualifications, family engagement, teacher-student ratio, program evaluation

Programming Elements cont.

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Funding	Pre-k 3 is funded using ½ day Foundation School Program (FSP) funding based on students’ average daily attendance (ADA).	<p>Pre-k 4 is funded using ½ day Foundation School Program (FSP) funding based on students’ average daily attendance (ADA).</p> <p>LEAs can fund the remaining full-day costs of PK4 through other sources of funding, i.e., local district share funding, early education allotment funds, Title 1, and/or federal funding.</p>	<p>TEC 29.153 (c) TEC 48.005 (a) (4)</p>

Pre-k 3

- Full-Day
- Full-Day – Pre-k Partnership
- District Supported
- Tuition Supported
- **Half Day**
- **Lottery Enrollment**
- **Enrollment Wait List**

Pre-k 4

- Full-Day
- Full-Day – Pre-k Partnership
- District Supported
- Tuition Supported

If a district charges tuition:

- the tuition may not be higher than is necessary to cover the added costs of providing the additional prekindergarten classes, including any costs associated with data collection and reporting requirements
- the district must submit a proposed tuition rate to the commissioner for approval annually. See the [Sample Proposed Tuition Rate Letter](#).
- Send proposed tuition letter to earlychildhoodeducation@tea.texas.gov

Considerations for setting a prekindergarten tuition rate:



- Consult with the LEA finance and legal teams
- Plan ahead because determining and requesting tuition may require board approval
- The prekindergarten tuition rate cannot exceed the allowable rate for the LEA
- Tuition rate letters will be accepted after the 22-23 rate chart is posted to the Tuition Webpage.
- Notify potential tuition supported prekindergarten families of the tuition rate **after** the rate is approved by TEA



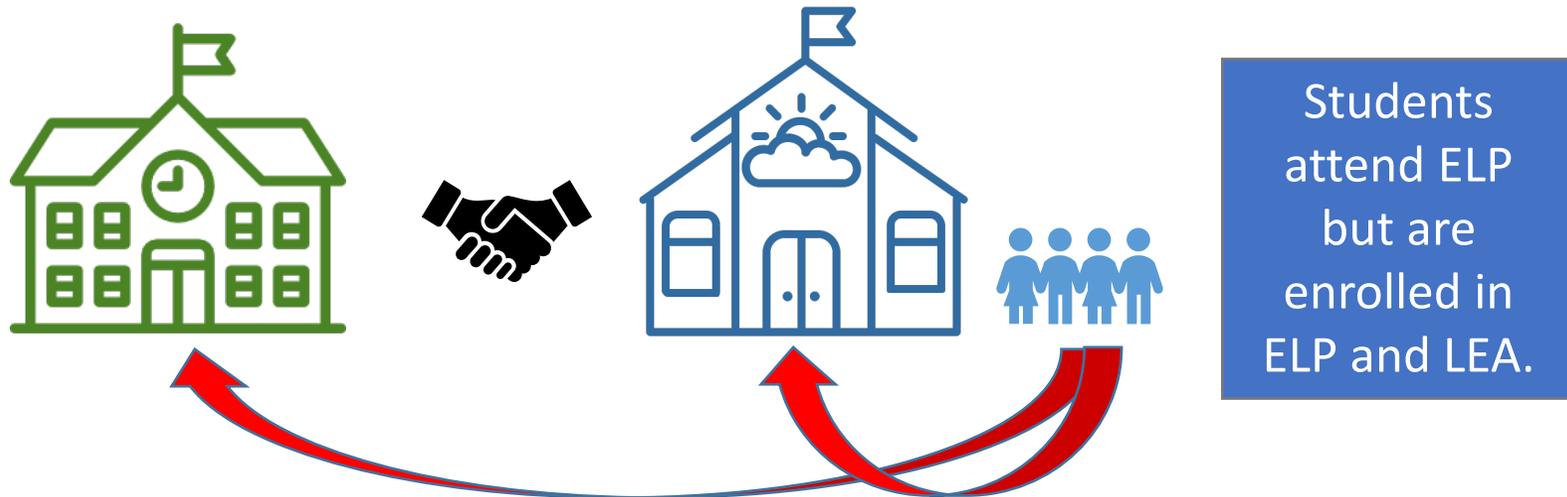
Still have questions? <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/prekindergarten-tuition>

Programming Elements

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Mixed-Age Group Classrooms	<p>Pre-k 3 and Pre-k 4 students can be served in the same classroom.</p> <p>*Classrooms with eligible four-year-old students must meet all the High-Quality Prekindergarten Components.</p>	<p>Pre-k 3 and Pre-k 4 students can be served in the same classroom.</p>	
Meals	<p>Students must be offered meals/snacks in alignment with the National School Lunch Program.</p>	<p>Students must be offered meals/snacks in alignment with the National School Lunch Program.</p>	<p>https://squaremeals.org/Programs/NationalSchoolLunchProgram.aspx</p>
Transportation	<p>Offering transportation for Pre-k 3 students is a local decision.</p> <p>Transportation can be funded as part of the LEA's regular transportation system.</p>	<p>Offering transportation for Pre-k 4 students is a local decision.</p> <p>Transportation can be funded as part of the LEA's regular transportation system.</p>	<p>TEC 29.153 (c)</p>

Program Options: Partnerships

Public-Private Pre-k Partnerships are collaborations between local education agencies (LEAs) and private early learning programs (ELPs) or Head Start programs. The resulting partnership allows programs to dual enroll children and provide prekindergarten and/or additional comprehensive wrap-around services.



Pre-k partnerships benefits

Expand opportunities for families



Open communication between LEA & ELP to align resources and services

Serve more eligible students



Help LEA meet full-day pre-k requirement

Open new funding streams



Increase quality of early childhood program to build school readiness

Formal

- Partners dually enroll children to provide prekindergarten and/or additional wrap-around services
- LEA passes through state funding to the ELP



Informal

- Partners share resources and information across LEA and ELP
- Students are not dually enrolled
- No funding is passed through

If you would like to learn more about early learning partnerships, please contact Rachel Robinson at Rachel.Robinson@tea.Texas.gov

- [Early Learning Partnerships](#)
- [Partnerships Guidebook](#)



High Quality Prekindergarten



Access to high quality prekindergarten is shown to have long-lasting, positive impact on students.

Elements of High-Quality Prekindergarten

- Curriculum
- Student Progress Monitoring
- Prekindergarten Teacher Qualifications
- Teacher to Student Ratio
- Family Engagement Plan
- Program Evaluation
- Applicable to all Pre-k 4 classes
- TEC 29.153 (c), TEC 29.153 (c-1), and TEC 29.164, Subchapter E-1
- [High-Quality Prekindergarten Website](#)



Quality Elements- Curriculum

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Curriculum	Curriculum used in a Pre-k 3 classroom should align with all the Texas Pre-k Guidelines.	Curriculum used in a Pre-k 4 classroom must align with all the Texas Pre-k Guidelines.	<p>TEC 29.167 TAC 102.1003 (b)</p> <p>Link to the HQ Pre-k webpage (curriculum): https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/hqpk-curriculum</p> <p>Link to the Instructional Materials List (SBOE): https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/P2021%20Instructional%20Materials%20Adopted.pdf</p>

Quality Elements- Student Progress Monitoring

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Student Progress Monitoring	<p>Eligible Pre-k 3 students should be assessed at BOY and EOY in the *5 developmental domains using a tool on the Commissioner’s List; if an LEA conducts assessment with eligible Pre-k 3 students using an approved tool, the BOY and EOY data must be submitted into the ECDS annually.</p> <p>In a mixed-age group classroom (Pre-k 3 and Pre-k 4), the teacher should implement progress monitoring that is developmentally appropriate for each age group and may adjust or exclude Pre-k 3 students if the assessment is deemed developmentally inappropriate.</p>	<p>Eligible Pre-k 4 students must be assessed at BOY and EOY in the *5 developmental domains using a tool on the Commissioner’s List. The BOY and EOY data must be submitted into the ECDS annually.</p> <p>The use of formative assessment tools is encouraged to inform instruction.</p>	<p>TEC 29.169 (c) TAC 102.1003 (c)</p> <p>Link to the HQ Pre-k webpage (progress monitoring): https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/hqpk-progress-monitoring</p> <p>Commissioner’s List of Approved Prekindergarten Assessment Instruments: https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/Appendix H Final List of Pre-K Recommendations.pdf</p>

*5 developmental domains: Emergent Literacy Reading, Emergent Literacy Writing, Language & Communication, Math, and Health & Wellness.

Quality Elements- Teacher Qualifications

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Teacher Qualifications	<p>A Pre-k teacher serving eligible 3-year-old students within a district must be appropriately certified.</p> <p>It is best practice for open-enrollment charters and districts of innovation to hire teachers that are appropriately certified in EC to teach Pre-k 3 students, while following the specifications within their local charter or innovation plans, respectively.</p>	<p>A Pre-k teacher serving eligible 4-year-old students must be appropriately certified and have an “additional qualification.”</p> <p>This is applicable to districts, open-enrollment charters, and districts of innovation.</p>	<p>TEC 29.167 (b) TAC 102.1003 (d)</p> <p>Link to the HQ Pre-k webpage (teacher qualifications): https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/hqpk-teacher-qualifications</p> <p>Link to Teacher Additional Qualification Options document: https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/Teacher-Qualification-Options.pdf</p>

Quality Elements- Ratios

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Teacher-to-Student Ratio	LEAs should attempt to maintain a student to teacher ratio of 11:1 in a Pre-k 3 classroom. Due to the developmental needs of 3-year-old students, the use of paraprofessionals to lower the student to teacher ratio is highly recommended.	LEAs must attempt to maintain a student to teacher ratio of 11:1 in a Pre-k 4 classroom. Due to the developmental needs of 4-year-old students, the use of paraprofessionals to lower the student to teacher ratio is highly recommended.	TEC 29.167 (d) TAC 102.1003 (h) Link to the HQ Pre-k webpage (student-teacher ratio): https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/hqpk-student-teacher-ratio



Quality Elements- Family Engagement Plan

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Family Engagement Plan	LEAs should write, implement, and put on their website a family engagement plan that contains the six required components.	LEAs must write, implement, and put on their website a family engagement plan that contains the six required components.	<p>TEC 29.168 TAC 102.1003 (e)</p> <p>Link to the HQ Pre-k webpage (family engagement): https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/hqpk-family-engagement</p> <p>Link to the Family Engagement Plan Sample Activities: https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/FE-Plan-Activities.pdf</p>

Quality Elements- Program Evaluation

Topics	Pre-k 3	Pre-k 4	Additional Information
Program Evaluation	<p>LEAs should select and implement appropriate methods of evaluating their prekindergarten program using child outcome data and make the results of the program evaluation available to families.</p> <p>It is recommended that LEAs use the Pre-k version of the Early Childhood Program Self-Assessment as their program evaluation tool.</p>	<p>LEAs must select and implement appropriate methods of evaluating their prekindergarten program using child outcome data and make the results of the program evaluation available to families.</p> <p>It is recommended that LEAs use the Pre-k version of the Early Childhood Program Self-Assessment as their program evaluation tool.</p>	<p>TEC 29.169 TAC 102.1003 (g)</p> <p>Link to the Pre-k version of the Early Childhood Program Self-Assessment: https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/PreK_Self-Assessment_9-28-20_v3.pdf</p> <p>Link to the Self-Assessment Guide: https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/Program%20Eval%20Guide%209-24-20.pdf</p> <p>Link to the Online Version: Early Childhood Program Self-Assessment Prekindergarten</p>

If you would like to learn more about high-quality prekindergarten, please contact the Early Childhood Education Division at earlychildhoodeducation@tea.texas.gov





- For technical assistance, please reach out to the ECE team. We are here to support you.
- [earlychildhoodeducation@tea.Texas.gov](https://twitter.com/earlychildhoodeducation@tea.Texas.gov)

- Five Strategies for Successful Recruitment and Retention of Children and Families in Human Service Programs <https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TL242.html> RAND Corporation, 2017
- Office of Head Start: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/foundations_for_excellence_complete_guide.pdf
- ECE FAQs page: <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/early-childhood-education-faqs>
- [Bilingual and English as a Second Language Programs](#)
- [Squaremeals.org](#)
- Data Driven Instruction: <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/data-driven-instruction-in-early-childhood-education>
- Division of Educator Certification: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/certification>
- Early Learning Partnerships: <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/early-learning-partnerships>
- High Quality Prekindergarten General Information: <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/high-quality-prekindergarten/hqpk-general-information>



Thank you

