# Prekindergarten Program Requirements

## Program Offerings

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. *

A school district may offer prekindergarten classes if the district identifies 15 or more eligible children who are at least three years of age.

> *tuition may not be charged for a prekindergarten class under this section*

For eligibility inquiries, please view the eligibility one-pagers at the end of this document.

**Reference:** TEC §29.153 (a-1)

## Notification of Programs

Each school district shall develop a system to notify the population in the district with children who are eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten class under this section of the availability of the class. The system must include public notices issued in *English* and *Spanish*. Notification may include, but is not limited to the following options:

- A written letter sent home with students
- Identification systems during registration for older siblings
- Newspaper articles
- Notices in public places
- Radio announcements
- Displays on school marquee
- Community newsletters
- Social media announcements

**Reference:** TEC §29.153 (e)

## Funding

Districts can receive half-day average daily attendance (ADA) funding through the Foundation School Program (FSP) for their PK3 and/or PK4 programs. Funding for the second half of the day must come from another funding source. Options for other possible funding sources include:

- Early education allotment
- Compensatory education
- Title I

**Reference**: Student Attendance & Accounting Handbook *section 3.2.2*; TEC 29.153 (c); TEC 48.005 (a) (4)

## Instructional Minutes

**Full-Day Prekindergarten** – 75,600 operational minutes are required
**Half-Day Prekindergarten –** 32,400 instructional minutes are required

- Operational minutes: includes intermission, meals, recess, *and* rest time
- Instructional minutes: includes intermission, meals, recess, but *excludes* rest time

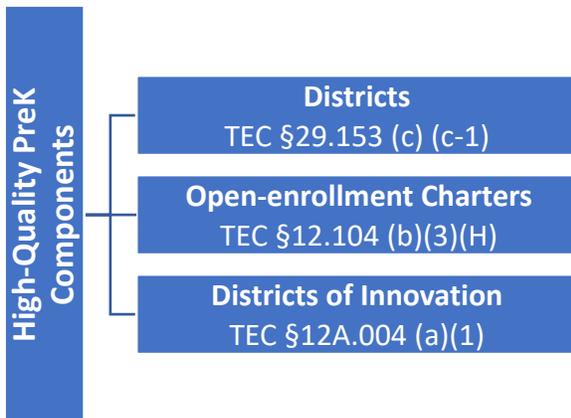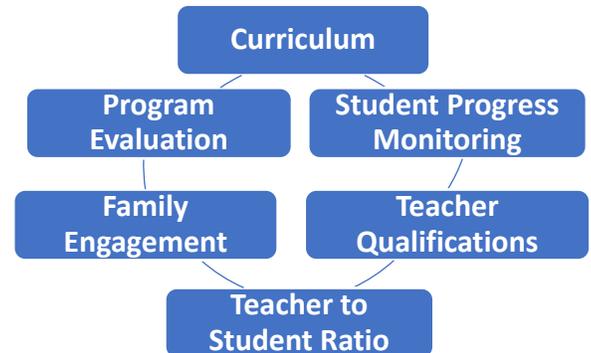**Reference**: Student Attendance & Accounting Handbook *section 3.2.2.*

# Prekindergarten Program Requirements

## High-Quality Prekindergarten Components

A prekindergarten class under this section for children who are at least <u>four</u> years of age must comply with the program standards required for high quality prekindergarten programs.

The high-quality program standards (also known as high-quality components) include:

- *Curriculum*
- *student progress monitoring*
- *teacher qualifications*
- *teacher to student ratio*
- *family engagement*
- *program evaluation*

**Curriculum**

**Program Evaluation** | **Student Progress Monitoring**

**Family Engagement** | **Teacher Qualifications**

**Teacher to Student Ratio**

**High-Quality PreK Components**

**Districts**
TEC §29.153 (c) (c-1)

**Open-enrollment Charters**
TEC §12.104 (b)(3)(H)

**Districts of Innovation**
TEC §12A.004 (a)(1)

The high-quality components apply to all prekindergarten programs serving eligible four-year-olds. This includes districts, open-enrollment charters, and districts of innovation.

**Reference:** TEC §29.153 (c-1)

## Data Reporting

Districts that offer a prekindergarten program are also required to report data to PEIMS and ECDS.

**PEIMS** = Public Education Information Management System (for all local education agencies)
**ECDS** = Early Childhood Data System (for prekindergarten and kindergarten programs only)

**Purpose:** To better inform families, school administrators, educators, community stakeholders, and policy makers about the effectiveness of specific programs.

Full details regarding the state reporting data standards can be accessed by viewing the Texas Education Data Standards webpage or TWEDS, the web-based version. These standards describe data reporting requirements, responsibilities, and specifications.

**References:** TEC §29.1532(c), TEC §29.161, TEC §29.167 -170, TEC §42.006

# Prekindergarten Program Requirements

## Frequently Asked Questions

**If a district begins offering a full-day prekindergarten program for eligible four-year-olds and begins to see an influx of eligible four-year-olds wanting to enroll mid-year, is the district still required to serve all eligible four-year-olds?**

Yes. The district would be required to serve all eligible four-year-olds. However, a district may request a full-day exemption if fewer eligible students would be served if a full-day program were implemented (typically due to physical capacity or personnel constraints).

**Are students who are eligible for prekindergarten and also receiving early childhood special education services automatically required to be served in a full-day prekindergarten program?**

The ARD committee will determine the frequency, location, and duration of the prekindergarten program that the student participate in. For example, ECSE students eligible for pre-k are entitled to participate in a full-day pre-k program, unless the ARD committee determines that a shorter day is appropriate.

**Who can help an LEA if they are having difficulty uploading their data into ECDS??**

LEAs are encouraged to seek help from one of the following when experiencing difficulty uploading their data:
- Each district's assigned PEIMS Coordinator
- Each Education Service Center's trained and certified "ECDS Champion"
- Submit a TIMS ticket; TIMS is a web-based system that allows one to submit incidents when problems or questions come up.

## Additional Resources

**Summary Documents**
- Eligibility
  - [Overview](#)
  - [Age](#)
  - [Limited English Proficient (LEP)](#)
  - [Educational Disadvantaged](#)
  - [Homelessness](#)
  - [Military and Armed Forces](#)
  - [Foster Care](#)
  - [Star of Texas](#)
- High-Quality Prekindergarten Components
  - [Overview](#)

**Handbooks**
- [Student Attendance & Accounting Handbook](#)

**TEA Webpages & Resources**
- [TEA's Laws & Rules Webpage](#)
- [Early Childhood Education Webpage](#)
- [Early Childhood Education FAQ's Webpage](#)
- [Prekindergarten Enrollment Toolkit](#)