High-Quality Prekindergarten Components: Teacher Qualifications
Overview of high-quality prekindergarten components referenced in HB3

High-quality prekindergarten component – Teacher qualifications

- Research
- Description
- FAQs

- Higher quality
- Mentoring/coaching
- Resources & support
Overview
“...not all pre-k programs successfully support early learning. It is decidedly not the case that just any pre-k program operating under just any circumstances will provide young children with the inputs they need to produce, let alone sustain, early developmental gains.”

High-Quality Prekindergarten Components

- Curriculum
- Student progress monitoring
- Teacher qualifications
- Teacher/student ratio
- Family engagement
- Program evaluation
- Data reporting
All information contained in this webinar can be found in:

- Statute: TEC §29.164 – 29.172
- Commissioner’s Rule: TAC §102.1003
- 86th Legislative Session: HB3
Teacher Qualifications
“One of the most consistent indicators of quality is the presence of qualified teachers who have attained a bachelor’s degree and some additional specialized content in child development or early childhood education.”


## Teacher Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Appropriately certified to teach early childhood</th>
<th>Additional qualification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option #1</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Has a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)</td>
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<td><strong>Option #2</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Has a Montessori certification</td>
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<td><strong>Option #3</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Has taught for at least 8 years in a nationally accredited child care program</td>
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<td><strong>Option #4</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Has a degree in ECE, Special Education–ECE or a non-ECE degree with 15 units of ECE-specific coursework</td>
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<td><strong>Option #5</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Completion of TSR – Comprehensive program</td>
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<td><strong>Option #6</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Has completed 150 hours of professional development in ECE-specific topics; 75 of the 150 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship</td>
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<td><strong>Option #7</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Completes 30 hours of ECE-specific professional development annually with 15 of the 30 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship until 150 hours are documented</td>
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Child Development Associate (CDA)

- Credential given by the Council for Professional Recognition

- Numerous vendors, including Children's Learning Institute (CLI)

- Steps:
  - 120 hours of education
  - Application
  - 480 hours of experience
  - Verification visit
  - Exam
  - Portfolio
  - Family Questionnaires
Montessori Certification

- Must get certification from one of two accredited training centers
  - Limited availability
- Requirements are different
  - Usually requires a BA/BS degree
  - Academic component (approximately 300 hours)
  - Practicum component (usually a one-year internship)
Teaching in an Accredited Site

- Eight years of teaching experience
- Examples of national accreditations:
  - Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE)
  - American Montessori Society (AMS)
  - Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
  - Council on Accreditation (COA)
  - National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC)
  - National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
Degree

- Undergraduate or graduate degree
  - Early childhood education
  - Early childhood special education
- Non-early childhood degree
  - Minimum of 15 hours of early childhood-specific coursework
Texas School Ready (TSR) - Comprehensive

- 3-year intensive teacher intervention
- Core set of 26 trainings (128.5 hours)
- Available from Children's Learning Institute
Employed with 150 Hours of PD

- Has current teaching assignment in prekindergarten class
- Completed 150 documented hours of professional development in last 5 years:
  - 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines
  - Student progress monitoring to inform classroom instruction
  - Improving the prekindergarten classroom environment
  - Improving teacher interaction with students as determined by evaluation tool
- Half of the 150 hours of documented professional development must include experiential learning, practical application and direct interaction with early childhood education specialists, mentors or instructional coaches
Employed with 30 Hours of Annual PD

- Has current teaching assignment in prekindergarten class
- Fifteen (15) hours of documented professional development annually:
  - 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines
  - Student progress monitoring to inform classroom instruction
  - Improving the prekindergarten classroom environment
  - Improving teacher interaction with students as determined by evaluation tool
- The additional hours done in the subsequent four years
- Fifteen (15) of the thirty (30) hours includes experiential learning, practical application and direct interaction with early childhood education specialists, mentors or instructional coaches
Prekindergarten Teachers

Teacher Certification

High-Quality Teacher

One of the "Additional Qualifications"
Question:
I have been a PK teacher for 20 years. I have 9 hours of specific ECE coursework within my degree; I have also taught in a nationally accredited site for 3 years. Have I met the additional qualifications requirement?

Answer:
Prekindergarten teachers serving eligible 4-year-old students must meet one of the seven options for the additional qualification. Options cannot be combined to create another option.
Question:
What is considered “early childhood-specific” coursework?

Answer:
Coursework that is early childhood-specific covers the age span birth through 2^{nd} grade. This same definition applies to the professional development referenced in the “additional qualifications” options.
Higher Quality
Goal

Higher Quality leads to Positive Child Outcomes
Items to Ponder:

- Does the LEA consider other unique qualities in the hiring process that are beneficial when teaching young students?
- Could the paraprofessionals that work in the prekindergarten program also participate in the early childhood-specific professional development given to prekindergarten teachers?
- Is the professional development offered to prekindergarten teachers linked to the identified needs of students?

It is best practice that prekindergarten programs serving eligible 3-year-old students also adhere to the high-quality components referenced in statute and Commissioner’s Rule.
Mentoring/Coaching
"The research literature supports the view that professional development done right— that is, content-specific training involving teacher teams, sustained efforts, and reinforced support with mentors and coaches— can lead to increased teacher knowledge and desired classroom practice."

### Option #6 & #7

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Core Elements of Mentoring/Coaching

- A one-to-one relationship between a mentor/coach and the protégé(s)
- On-the-job support that focuses on the development of specific early childhood education knowledge, skills or practices that can be used in daily work with children
- A shared commitment to continuous improvement to ensure positive outcomes for all children
Who Can Be a Mentor/Coach?

- An early childhood expert
- Early childhood staff from an ESC
- Instructional coach within/outside of school district
- Supervisor (supervisory responsibilities should be kept separate from mentoring/coaching)
- Principal or other leadership personnel with an early childhood background within a school district
- Coach from an early childhood agency
- Peer teacher who is considered an expert in ECE or in a specific early childhood skill or practice (30% rule)
Mentoring/Coaching Cycle

- Observation(s) of teaching practice with feedback
- Implementation of Action Plan focused on improvement
- Collaborative and reflective goal-setting
Delivery Models

- Face-to-face interactions
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Technology-based coaching
- Hybrid or combination of methods

All mentoring/coaching delivery models should contain:
- Observation(s) of teaching practice with feedback
- Collaborative and reflective goal setting
- Implementation of action plan focused on improvement
Elements to document:

- Name of mentor/coach
- Name of staff member
- Focus of mentoring/coaching (ECE-specific topic)
- Time spent in mentoring/coaching activities
Resources & Support
Resources

- Children's Learning Institute (CLI) https://www.childrenslearninginstitute.org/

- Education Service Centers http://tea.texas.gov/regional_services/esc/

- Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) https://tecpds.org/


- *Early Childhood Program Self-Assessments* https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Early_Childhood_Education/High-Quality_Early_Childhood_Program_Self-Assessment/
Each prekindergarten teacher has a Texas certification that enables them to teach prekindergarten.

Each prekindergarten teacher has or is completing one of the “additional qualifications.”

The school district or charter maintains the appropriate records to document each prekindergarten teacher’s certification and “additional qualification(s).”

Each prekindergarten teacher (Option #7) participates in at least thirty (30) hours of professional development annually.

Each prekindergarten teacher’s (Option #7) professional development activities include at least fifteen (15) hours of mentoring/coaching.

Each prekindergarten teacher’s professional development is developed for their individual needs.

All professional development conducted with prekindergarten staff is focused on early childhood education topics.

Professional development is conducted for paraprofessionals who work within a prekindergarten classroom.

The school district or charter keeps the appropriate records to document prekindergarten staff completion of professional development activities, including mentoring/coaching.

The school district or charter uses both resources within and outside the district/charter to conduct professional development for its prekindergarten staff.

The school district has a system in place to evaluate the effectiveness of their professional development activities in relationship to increased positive child outcomes.
Support

Website

https://tea.texas.gov/earlychildhoodeducation.aspx

Phone/email support

earlychildhoodeducation@tea.texas.gov
“Every child deserves a CHAMPION, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.”

- Rita Pierson -