

# Enrollment: Frequently Asked Questions

*Updated September 2020*

## **General Enrollment**

### **1. Does the agency have any outreach materials to help schools notify communities about their prekindergarten programs?**

Yes. The Early Childhood Education Division developed the [Enrollment Toolkit](#) that includes materials to support program availability outreach to communities.

### **2. How do we know if our child is the right age?**

Age is always calculated as of September 1 of the current school year (for the purposes of establishing eligibility). If school starts before the student's birth date, the student is still allowed to begin school on the start date, as long as they are the required age on or before September 1st.

[SAAH, Section 14, Glossary](#)

## **PreK Enrollment**

### **1. Does a school have to notify families about the availability of prekindergarten programs?**

Yes. Each district offering a prekindergarten program must develop a system to notify families with eligible children of the availability of the program. The notice must be made in English and Spanish.

[TEC §29.153\(e\)](#)

### **2. What are some ways school districts can notify the availability of the prekindergarten program?**

The following sources can be used for prekindergarten notification:

- Letter of notification sent home with students
- Identification systems in place at times of registration of older siblings
- Newspaper articles
- Notices in public places
- Radio announcements
- Display on school marquee
- Community newsletters
- Social media announcements

[TEC §29.153\(e\)](#)

### **3. May eligible students be excluded from enrollment if they are not potty trained or have frequent bathroom accidents?**

No, they may not be excluded from enrollment because eligible students are not required to be potty trained. TEA does not regulate procedures for assisting a child with bathroom capabilities; local district policy governs hygiene assistance. It is recommended that schools establish written guidelines for managing these situations.

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### **4. May a child who is five years old on September 1 be enrolled in prekindergarten?**

A child who is five years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year is not eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten class. It is the agency's position that children who reach age five on or before September 1 are most appropriately served in kindergarten, and that the law specifically established the prekindergarten program to serve students who have not reached age five. Given the intent of the law, if a district enrolls a five-year-old student in the prekindergarten program, the student must be reported as ineligible for Average Daily Attendance (ADA eligibility code 4 or 5) and the student's grade level must be reported as pre-k.

[SAAH, Section 7.2.1](#)

### **5. May a child be retained in prekindergarten?**

Districts are responsible for local policies on promotion and retention. However, prekindergarten is intended for three- and four-year-old students and not considered a proper placement for students who are five years old or older on September 1 and state prekindergarten funding is not provided for these students.

[SAAH, Section 7.2.1](#)

### **6. May districts keep "waiting lists" of eligible children who are not being served?**

No, not for eligible four-year-olds. By law, a school district must offer prekindergarten classes if it identifies 15 or more children who are eligible and are four years of age by September 1 of the current school year.

If a district offers a program for eligible three-year-old students, a waiting list or lottery for three-year-olds only may be established under district policy.

[TEC §29.153\(a\)](#)

## **K-2 Enrollment**

### **1. May a child younger than five years of age enter kindergarten?**

A student younger than five years of age is entitled to the benefits of the Foundation School Program if: (1) the student performs satisfactorily on the assessment instrument administered under [TEC Section 39.023\(a\)](#) to students in the third grade; and

(2) the district has adopted a policy for admitting students younger than five years of age.

[TEC §48.003\(d\)](#)