Prekindergarten Eligibility – Foster Care

Overview

Statute: TEC, §29.153(b)(6) & Texas Family Code Section 262.201

Resources: Student Attendance and Accounting Handbook (SAAH) Section 7.2.6, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/, & TEA Foster Care Webpage (includes information on how to find the foster care liaison for your district)

Contact: District Foster Care Liaison or the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services – Child Protective Services Regional Education Specialist

Documentation

At least annually, the DFPS and Child Protective Services mail verification letters of pre-k eligibility to the parents and caregivers of eligible children. These letters serve as proof of eligibility. However, if a parent or caregiver does not receive this letter, he or she may obtain evidence of a child’s eligibility for pre-k services by contacting a DFPS education specialist.

The DFPS education specialist will write and sign a letter addressed to the school district attesting to the student’s eligibility for free pre-k based on having been in foster care. The parent or guardian presents this signed letter to the appropriate district personnel.

More information about DFPS education specialists can be found at https://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/CPS/.

Key Points

- If a student qualifies for pre-k on the basis of having ever been in foster care, the student remains eligible for enrollment after the student begins a pre-k class even if that student is no longer in foster care.
- Many districts pre-register pre-k students to determine and plan for the size of the next school year’s pre-k program. Districts may begin this process on or after April 1 of each year. Once a child is determined to be eligible, they remain eligible without reverification prior to the next school year.