

A young girl with long, wavy brown hair is sitting at a desk, focused on drawing. She is holding a yellow pencil in her right hand and has her left hand resting on the desk. The desk is covered with various drawing supplies, including a box of colored pencils and a container with brushes. The background is softly blurred, showing a bright, indoor setting with warm lighting. The text "Prekindergarten Registration and Enrollment" is overlaid in a large, blue, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

Prekindergarten Registration and Enrollment



Common Acronyms

ADA: Average Daily Attendance

ARM: Administrator's Reference Manual

EB: Emergent Bilingual

ECDS: Early Childhood Data System

ECE: Early Childhood Education

Eco Dis: Economically Disadvantaged

ECSE: Early Childhood Special Education

ESC: Education Service Center

FAQ: Frequently Asked Question

HQPK: High-Quality Prekindergarten

LEA: Local Educational Agency

NSLP: National School Lunch Program

PK: Prekindergarten

SAAH: Student Attendance Accounting Handbook

TPEIR: Texas Public Education Information Resource

TDA: Texas Department of Agriculture

TEA: Texas Education Agency

TSDS: Texas Student Data System

TWC: Texas Workforce Commission

TWEDS: TSDS Web-Enabled Data Standards

Enrollment is Ongoing

Brief Eligibility Recap

PK Tuition

Registration Information

Enrollment and Documentation

Common Registration Scenarios

Registration FAQs

Registration Resources

In today's presentation, participants will:

- Understand prekindergarten registration and enrollment
- See tangible examples of documentation and common registration scenarios
- Discover resources for prekindergarten registration

Prekindergarten
Enrollment is
Ongoing

Reminder: Prekindergarten Registration is Ongoing


Families may enroll their eligible children for prekindergarten throughout the school year






A family may return to register their child if their income status changes at any time during the school year

The Student Attendance Accounting Handbook

Section 7 Prekindergarten
Section 7.2 for PK eligibility
information

Section 3 General Attendance
including coding information


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Student Attendance Accounting Handbook

State law requires that every Texas school district adopts an attendance accounting system that includes procedures to ensure the accurate recording and reporting of student attendance data. The *Student Attendance Accounting Handbook* (SAAH) contains the official attendance accounting requirements that all public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools in Texas must meet. The agency collects student attendance data primarily to ensure that [Foundation School Program](#) (FSP) funds can be correctly allocated to Texas's public schools.

The SAAH

- describes the FSP eligibility requirements for all students,
- prescribes the minimum standards for all attendance accounting systems,
- lists the documentation requirements for attendance audit purposes, and
- details the responsibilities of all district personnel involved in student attendance accounting.

The proposed version of the 2022-2023 SAAH has been added to the table below. The comment period for the proposed SAAH is from June 24, 2022 to July 25, 2022. Public comments can be sent to: <https://form.jotform.com/210613401561138>. The webpage will be updated with the final adopted version of the document after the completion of the comment period.

SAAH	PDF Version	Change Document	PDF Version
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Eligibility

Eligibility Information for Free Prekindergarten

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:

Emergent Bilingual

Educationally Disadvantaged

Students Experiencing 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

SB 1697 Impact on Emergent Bilingual Students

Frequently Asked Question:

A child did **not attend pre-k this year**, but the parent now wants to enroll the child in **pre-k for the upcoming year** rather than enrolling the child in kindergarten. How do you qualify a student based on previous year eligibility if **qualifying by language**? If a child did not attend pre-k this year, and considering that the child has had a year of language development, what documentation would be used to establish eligibility in this scenario?

ANSWER

If the child registered/was **eligible for pre-k last year**, never enrolled, and the parents **wish to enroll in pre-k again under SB 1697**, then the child is eligible to enroll in pre-k. Any pre-k eligibility qualification from the prior year remains in effect for the purpose of eligibility for the following pre-k year, regardless of change in language proficiency level.

If the child registered/was **eligible for pre-k last year**, never enrolled, and the parents **wish to enroll in in kindergarten based on the child's age**, then the regular guidance applies: a new Home Language Survey is administered, and the identification process begins again.

If the child **never registered or was not deemed eligible for PK enrollment** previously, the child would not be eligible to enroll in Pre-k. The student could still be identified as EB and qualify for language services as a kindergartener.

Key Points on Eligibility

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.

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

Registration



Prepare for Registration

Understand local population of eligible 3- and 4-year-old students in the area

Use TPEIR to look at past enrollment information

Contact TEA ECE Programs Team for support in understanding eligibility estimates

Tips for Successful Registration

Simplify the registration process

Use family-friendly language. Avoid acronyms

Determine communication strategies to notify families of registration

Offer registration packets

Provide family friendly registration information

Provide examples of documentation needed for registration

Enrollment and Documentation

Verification for Enrollment

Remember districts may begin the process to verify eligibility on or after April 1st of each year.

Documentation related to prekindergarten eligibility and verification may not be collected until April 1 of each year.

SAAH Section 7:

Districts may begin communications about prekindergarten programs and begin collecting preliminary registration information such as student and parent contact information on January 1 of each year.

Preparing for the Next School Year

January-April

Collect contact information for students and parents.

Remind parents of eligibility criteria for free prekindergarten.

Share information on other LEA early childhood programs and partnerships.

April 1st or after

Collect documentation to verify eligibility for free prekindergarten.

Continue planning for class size.

All eligible 4-year-olds must be served in full-day.

PK3 Program Information

PK3 eligibility requirements are the same as PK4

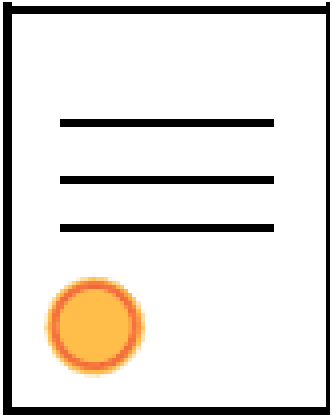
Eligible PK3 students generate $\frac{1}{2}$ Average Daily Attendance

Eligible and enrolled PK3 students are automatically eligible for PK4

Not all 3-year-old students must be served. Waitlists are acceptable

It is a local decision to serve three-year-olds

Documentation Needed for All Students



Birth Certificate



Proof of Address



Parent ID



Immunization Record



Enrollment Reminder

Obtain proof that the student enrolling is three or four years old as of September 1 of the current school year (or upcoming school year for early registration).

Then, prekindergarten staff can determine eligibility based on the additional free prekindergarten eligibility criteria.

Any of the following documents is acceptable for proof of identity and age:

- birth certificate

- statement of the child's date of birth issued by the division of the Texas Department of State Health Services responsible for vital statistics for school admission purposes¹⁹¹

- Passport

- school ID card, records, or report card

- military ID

- hospital birth record

- adoption records

- church baptismal record

- any other legal document that establishes identity and age

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for enrollment, a child must meet the age requirements and meet at least one of the following:

Unable to speak and comprehend the English Language

Educationally Disadvantaged

Students Experiencing Homelessness

Child of Active-Duty Military/ Armed Forces

Child of Military/ Armed Forces, who was injured or killed while on active duty

Foster Care

Star of Texas

Emergent Bilingual (EB) Student Eligibility

Home Language Survey

Administered to all students enrolling for the first time in a Texas public school.

Standardized (TEA-developed) [letter](#) with 3 questions

“Which languages are used at home?”

“Which languages are used by the child at home?”

"If the child had a previous home setting, which languages were used? If there was no previous home setting, answer Not Applicable (N/A).

If the response to any question includes a language other than English, the identification process begins.

Emergent Bilingual Identification Process

HLS contains a language other than English

Single Statewide Identification Assessment (pre-LAS)

- Administered by trained staff

- English listening and speaking sections required for EB student identification

- Spanish pre-LAS administered for students in Spanish/English bilingual programs to get a complete picture of the student's linguistic profile only

- Spanish/English comparison scores should not be used to determine bilingual vs. ESL program participation

LPAC meets to formally identify student and make program recommendation.



EB Students- Resources

HLS and identification questions: [Frequently Asked Questions – LPAC and Emergent Bilingual Students \(texas.gov\)](#)

EB students also served by Special Education: [Guidance on Identification and Placement of English Learners Prior to Kindergarten \(txel.org\)](#)

LAS Links identification assessment information: [LAS Links Texas Page](#)

EB Student Documentation Required

Student Attendance Accounting Handbook (SAAH) Section 7.2.2.1

Home Language Survey

Proof that the student's score on the pre-LAS is below the level designated for English proficiency

Documentation of the LPAC's identification of the student as emergent bilingual

Temporary placement, or placement pending EB identification, is not best practice.

Educationally Disadvantaged

Educationally Disadvantaged Information

PK 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.

Squaremeals.org

Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM): Sections 3, 4, and 6

Local Child Nutrition Director

Educationally Disadvantaged- Documentation

Income Qualifiers:

Current paycheck stub

Current tax return, if self-employed

Current TANF or SNAP eligibility letter (must have child's name listed)

NSLP Categorical Qualifiers:

SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR

Homeless

Foster

Migrant

Head Start and Early Head Start

Medicaid Free and Reduced, IF DIRECTLY CERTIFIED in TEXAS-ELMS

Work with the LEA Child Nutrition Director or use ARM resources for documentation

Recommend 2 verifiers when checking income.

It is recommended to serve a student when a district calculation error has occurred.

Develop a process to include the Eco Dis application after July 1st.

Verification of educationally disadvantaged for PK eligibility purposes does not count for qualifying a student as economically disadvantaged

Verification for PK Eligibility

Can begin April 1

Must be verified against the following school year's NSLP income chart

Families provide documentation

Qualifying for Eco Dis to receive State Come Ed funding

Can begin July 1

Families fill out a local application or a federal application (with current income info)

Based on that application, students are determined to be eco dis and coded accordingly

Example: Educationally Disadvantaged vs Eco. Dis.

A pre-K age student is determined educationally disadvantaged and eligible for free pre-K during spring registration after April 1, based on the documentation submitted for pre-K enrollment. At the beginning of the school year, the student does not qualify for free or reduced meals based on the federal NSLP application and is not coded as economically disadvantaged.

The student is eligible for pre-K, and his ADA eligibility code is 2 - Eligible for Half-Day Attendance.

The student is not considered economically disadvantaged and is coded 00 - Did Not Qualify As Economically Disadvantaged. The student will continue to draw half-day ADA for free pre-K but will not draw additional state compensatory education funds for an economically disadvantaged status.

More Assistance for Economically Disadvantaged Students

Encourage LEAs to work with the ESCs, including ESC Data Champions.

Seek support from local Child Nutrition departments

Submit a TIMS ticket when there is a coding question

Guidance in [TWEDS](#), scroll down to DR6, which starts Traditional Claiming

Contact the State Comp Ed team and/or Texas Department of Agriculture for specific questions

State Comp Ed Resources

[State Comp Ed website](#)

[State Comp Ed FAQ](#)

Income Guidelines available for NSLP

The income guidelines for the National School Lunch Program are available and can be found on the Texas Department of Agriculture's website, <https://squaremeals.org/FandN-Resources/Income-Eligibility-Guidelines>.

Please click on the section titled, "The following guidelines apply to the CACFP, NSLP, SBP, and SFSP."

Students Experiencing Homelessness

Students Experiencing Homelessness Information

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 could be a letter from the local homeless education liaison is an acceptable form of documentation.

Military Service

Military or Armed Services

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

Resources:

Student Attendance Accounting Handbook, Section 7.2.5

Early Childhood Pre-k Eligibility FAQs

Documentation:

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

Foster Care

Foster Care Information

A child who currently lives in Texas, and is or was previously in foster care either in Texas or in another state or territory.

If a student qualifies for pre-k on the basis of ever having been in foster care in Texas, the student remains eligible for enrollment after the student begins a pre-k class, even if that student is no longer in foster care.

Resources:

Student Attendance and Accounting Handbook (SAAH) Section 7.2.6

[Texas Department of Family and Protective Services](#)

[TEA Foster Care Webpage](#)

Foster Care- Documentation

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

Star of Texas Award

Star of Texas Award

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.

Resources:

The Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division

Past years are also included online

[Star of Texas Awards](#)

Documentation:

Resolution (certificate) awarded to an individual for the Star of Texas Award

Prekindergarten Tuition

Tuition Supported Prekindergarten

LEAs may offer a tuition-supported program to provide:

- An additional half-day of prekindergarten classes to eligible PK3 students; and
- Half-day and full-day prekindergarten classes to students not eligible for free prekindergarten. (TEC §29.1531)

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; and
- the district must submit a proposed tuition rate letter to the commissioner for approval annually. See the Sample Proposed Tuition Rate Letter.

The letter must include:

- Proposed tuition rate
- A brief explanation of how the proposed tuition rate relates to current district costs for providing the program
- Assurance that the rate does not exceed current costs for providing the program

****Serving tuition students must not interfere with serving eligible students.****

Proposed Tuition Letter Process

Local education agencies will submit the following to the Early Childhood Education Division on an **annual basis**:

- Proposed Prekindergarten Tuition Rate Letter.
- Send tuition rate letter to Rebecca.matz@tea.texas.gov
- The letter will be reviewed by the agency. Additional information may be asked of the local education agency, if needed.
- Notification of approval will be sent to the person indicated in the proposed tuition rate letter.

Common Registration Scenarios

Common Scenarios

Question: My child's birthday is September 3rd. Is there any waiver for my soon-to-be 4-year-old to attend prekindergarten?

- Answer: No, there is no waiver for meeting the age criteria to attend prekindergarten. A prekindergarten 3-year-old program may be available with the LEA.

Question: I have a Medicaid card. Why can't I receive free prekindergarten?

- Answer: Medicaid alone is not an eligibility criterion for free prekindergarten. A student must meet eligibility by one of the eligibility criteria such as being considered educationally disadvantaged, i.e., eligible to participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

More Common Scenarios

Question: Can Pre-K pre-registration be hosted prior to April 1st? PreK pre-registration is in the spring. Is eligibility verified at that time?

- Answer: No, verification of eligibility begins on or after April 1st.

Question: Do families need to be re-verified after the income eligibility guidelines are released on July 1?

- Answer: When verifying income, the documentation should correlate the eligible school year with the qualifying NSLP year. In this case, the income guidelines for the 2025-2026 year should be used with the current income level documentation (on or after April 1st).
- To determine participation for a student to receive additional **State Comp Ed funding**, the appropriate process should be followed in conjunction with the Child Nutrition Director.

Question: A student is transferring to PK4 in our district and previously qualified as homeless in their previous district. Can they still qualify based on the qualification in the prior district?

- Answer: The LEA should request the documentation/verify that the student was appropriately determined eligible in the first district, where the student was initially enrolled, even if the student no longer meets eligibility for this criterion at the new LEA.

Contact us:

- TEA - Early Childhood Education Division
- [ECE Support Portal](#)



Registration Resources and Upcoming Support Sessions

- [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook \(SAAH\), Section 7 Prekindergarten](#)
- [Prekindergarten 3](#)
- [Early Childhood Education FAQs including eligibility and program FAQs](#)
- [Prekindergarten Tuition](#)
- [Texas Workforce Commission Childcare Scholarship Assistance](#)
- [Texas Child Care Availability Portal \(also available in Spanish\)](#)

Resources – EB and Star of Texas

- Identification questions: [Frequently Asked Questions – LPAC and Emergent Bilingual Students \(texas.gov\)](https://www.texas.gov)
- EB students also served by Special Education: [Guidance on Identification and Placement of English Learners Prior to Kindergarten \(txel.org\)](https://www.txel.org)
- LAS Links identification assessment information: [LAS Links Texas Page](#)
- [Star of Texas Awards](#)

Resources – NSLP, Military, and Foster Care

- For NSLP eligibility information and resources:
www.squaremeals.org Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM):
 - [Section 3](#)
 - [Section 4](#)
 - [Section 6](#)
- Military and Armed Services: [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook, Section 7.2.5](#)
- Foster Care: [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](#)

Early Childhood Education Website:

- [Educator Resources](#)
- [ECE Resources](#)
- [Family Resources](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Thank You!