

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PRE-K

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QUALIFYING FOR FREE PRE-K

Who qualifies for free Pre-K?

Qualifying for free Pre-K is a two-step process. To qualify, a child must meet age AND eligibility requirements. The child must be:

1. At least 4 years old by 9/1/18¹
2. AND meet at least 1 of the following criteria:
 - a. Low family income (see chart).
 - b. Speaks English as a Second Language (speaks a language other than English or has limited English).²
 - c. Been in Texas DFPS, Texas Foster Care or CPS custody, not out of state.
 - d. Homeless or lives in a shelter, or family is migrant.
 - e. Mom/dad is an active member of the Armed Forces, including state military forces or reserves; or mom/dad was injured or killed while in active duty.
 - f. **New Qualifier:** mom/dad is a first responder in Texas, injured or killed in line of duty.
 - g. Mom or dad is eligible for the Star of Texas Award as a peace officer, firefighter, or emergency medical first responder.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES
[Effective from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019]

| Household size | Federal poverty guidelines | Reduced Price Meals—185% | | | | | Free Meals—130% | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| | | Annual | Monthly | Twice per month | Every two weeks | Weekly | Annual | Monthly | Twice per month | Every two weeks | Weekly |
| 48 Contiguous States, District of Columbia, Guam, and Territories | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 12,140 | 22,459 | 1,872 | 936 | 864 | 432 | 15,782 | 1,316 | 658 | 607 | 304 |
| 2 | 16,460 | 30,451 | 2,538 | 1,269 | 1,172 | 586 | 21,398 | 1,784 | 892 | 823 | 412 |
| 3 | 20,780 | 38,443 | 3,204 | 1,602 | 1,479 | 740 | 27,014 | 2,252 | 1,126 | 1,039 | 520 |
| 4 | 25,100 | 46,435 | 3,870 | 1,935 | 1,786 | 893 | 32,630 | 2,720 | 1,360 | 1,255 | 628 |
| 5 | 29,420 | 54,427 | 4,536 | 2,268 | 2,094 | 1,047 | 38,246 | 3,188 | 1,594 | 1,471 | 736 |
| 6 | 33,740 | 62,419 | 5,202 | 2,601 | 2,401 | 1,201 | 43,862 | 3,656 | 1,828 | 1,687 | 844 |
| 7 | 38,060 | 70,411 | 5,868 | 2,934 | 2,709 | 1,355 | 49,478 | 4,124 | 2,062 | 1,903 | 952 |
| 8 | 42,380 | 78,403 | 6,534 | 3,267 | 3,016 | 1,508 | 55,094 | 4,592 | 2,296 | 2,119 | 1,060 |
| For each add'l family member, add | 4,320 | 7,992 | 666 | 333 | 308 | 154 | 5,616 | 468 | 234 | 216 | 108 |
| Alaska | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 15,180 | 28,083 | 2,341 | 1,171 | 1,081 | 541 | 19,734 | 1,645 | 823 | 759 | 380 |
| 2 | 20,580 | 38,073 | 3,173 | 1,587 | 1,465 | 733 | 26,754 | 2,230 | 1,115 | 1,029 | 515 |
| 3 | 25,980 | 48,063 | 4,006 | 2,003 | 1,849 | 925 | 33,774 | 2,815 | 1,408 | 1,299 | 650 |
| 4 | 31,380 | 58,053 | 4,838 | 2,419 | 2,233 | 1,117 | 40,794 | 3,400 | 1,700 | 1,569 | 785 |
| 5 | 36,780 | 68,043 | 5,671 | 2,836 | 2,618 | 1,309 | 47,814 | 3,985 | 1,993 | 1,839 | 920 |
| 6 | 42,180 | 78,033 | 6,503 | 3,252 | 3,002 | 1,501 | 54,834 | 4,570 | 2,285 | 2,109 | 1,055 |
| 7 | 47,580 | 88,023 | 7,336 | 3,668 | 3,386 | 1,693 | 61,854 | 5,155 | 2,578 | 2,379 | 1,190 |
| 8 | 52,980 | 98,013 | 8,168 | 4,084 | 3,770 | 1,885 | 68,874 | 5,740 | 2,870 | 2,649 | 1,325 |
| For each add'l family member, add | | | | | | | | | | | |

Children with no documentation of US Citizenship ARE eligible for Pre-K!

Children with a disability may qualify for District Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities through a different school evaluation process. Ask your school district.

¹ Some school districts serve children who are 3 years old as of 9/1/18. Ask your school district.

² To qualify, your child may need to complete a simple language assessment in their second language and possibly their first language to determine proper placement. This would take place at the school.

What if my child is not 4 years old by September 1st?

Some districts serve children who are 3 years old as of September 1st. Ask your school district. Anyone can also access a FREE parent guide to school readiness at <http://e3alliance.org/pre-k/>. It provides easy-to-use tools to help your child successfully prepare to enter school. You can also call 2-1-1 for a referral to a high quality childcare center that offers Pre-K programming.

What if my child doesn't qualify for free Pre-K?

Families who do not qualify for free Pre-K can call 2-1-1 for a referral to high quality childcare centers who offer Pre-K programming and Workforce Childcare solutions that offers financial assistance for childcare in some cases. Many districts also offer tuition slots for children who do not qualify for free Pre-K. Ask your district. Also, any caregiver can access a FREE parent guide to school readiness at <http://e3alliance.org/pre-k/>. It provides easy-to-use tools to help your child prepare to enter school.

Do parents have to be U.S. citizens?

No. Also, schools do not ask for immigration status of children. Children born in other countries ARE eligible for free Pre-K. (See documentation required on page 4.)

Is there a lottery system to get in?

No! All children who meet eligibility requirements can enroll.

ENROLLING IN PUBLIC SCHOOL PRE-K

What phone number do I call to enroll my child?

Contact your school districts at the number below. *Some districts offer tuition slots for non-eligible students so ask if you would like to participate!*

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Hays CISD 512-268-2141 x 46038 | Austin ISD 512-414-PREK | Pflugerville ISD 512-594-0130 |
| Bastrop ISD 512-772-7100 x 27143 | Hutto ISD 512-759-3771 x 1004 | Round Rock ISD 512-464-5024 |
| Del Valle ISD 512-386-3032 | Lake Travis ISD 512-533-6023 | San Marcos CISD 512-393-6031 |
| Elgin ISD 512-281-3457 x 1303 | Leander ISD 512-570-0320 | Smithville ISD 512-237-2519 |
| Georgetown ISD 512-943-5080 x 6812 | Lockhart ISD 512-398-0026 | Taylor ISD 512-352-2275 |
| | Manor ISD 512-278-4422 | |

What documentation do I need to provide to enroll my child?

To enroll in a public school Pre-K program, parents must provide the following documents:

1. Child's official birth certificate
 - Schools do not ask for immigration status of children. If a child is born in another country, parents can provide that birth certificate. If a child does not have a birth certificate, parents can instead provide any 1 of the following documents:
 - A 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 purposes,
 - Passport,
 - School ID card, records, or report card,
 - Military ID,
 - Hospital birth record,
 - Adoption records,
 - Church baptismal record, or
 - Any other legal document that establishes identity and age.
2. Child's up-to-date immunization record.
3. Current proof of address: *like a utility bill, lease or tax bill with parent name and address.*
4. Parent/guardian photo identification.
5. To establish eligibility based on status, 1 of the following documents may be required:
 - Current proof of family income: *like a current paycheck stub or pay envelope; a letter from employer stating gross wages paid and how often they are paid; unemployment document; Worker's Compensation or Disability payment stub; **OR** documentation of eligibility for SNAP or TANF benefits.*
 - For current or former Foster children, a letter from DFPS.
 - For children of active members of the Armed Forces, a copy of mom or dad's Department of Defense ID or a statement of service.
 - For homeless or migrant children, parents will complete a residency questionnaire or migrant survey at time of registration.
 - For children of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award as a peace officer, firefighter, or emergency medical first responder, a copy of official documentation.

What if I don't have all of these documents?

You'll need all of these documents to officially enroll your child, but your school will work with you to make sure you have everything you need. Call your school or school district and let them know what you have and don't have.

Visit <http://e3alliance.org/pre-k/> to access a FREE parent guide to school readiness.

What is the deadline for enrolling?

Schools enroll all year long! It is best to enroll your child over the summer so that he/she can attend all year, but if you don't enroll before the school year starts, you can still enroll your child in the fall, winter or even spring.

WHY SHOULD MY CHILD GO TO PRE-K?

Why is Pre-K important?

Pre-K activities build the foundation of academic and social/emotional skills needed for school success. Students who attend Pre-K are less likely to need to repeat a grade or receive special education services. AND students who attend Pre-K have higher graduation rates and even higher wages as adults!

Will my child like Pre-K?

Most children love pre-K, so your child probably will too. Children enjoy meeting and playing with friends, learning letters and numbers, playing games, listening to and making up stories, playing outside, and learning from a loving, caring teacher.

OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT PRE-K

What happens in Pre-K?

Children participate in individual and group activities like story time, learning centers, music and movement lessons, art projects, and letter and number lessons. Children also play with friends and practice learning with other children. In Pre-K, children build creativity and curiosity, and learn problem-solving skills. This will help your child be ready for school on his/her first day of kindergarten!

What are the hours of public school Pre-K, and where are classes held?

Class times vary by school district. In general, "full day" Pre-K is about 6 hours/day, and "part-time" Pre-K is about 3 hours/day. Ask your school district for exact times.

Is there a bus to take my child to Pre-K?

Some schools provide transportation to/from schools and some do not. Call your school or school district to find out the answer.

Is after-school care provided?

After-school childcare may or may not be available. Ask your school or school district.

What if my child does not speak English well?

That's okay! The classes will help your child learn English so that he/she is ready for Kindergarten.

How much does Pre-K cost?

For families that meet eligibility requirements, Pre-K is free! (See eligibility requirements on page 2.) Some schools offer tuition slots for students who don't meet the eligibility requirements for free Pre-K. Ask your school or school district.

Visit <http://e3alliance.org/pre-k/> to access a FREE parent guide to school readiness.

What can I do at home to help my child be ready for Kindergarten?

Children get ready for school at home by listening, talking, playing and loving. Simple things you can do with children can make a big difference. E3 Alliance has a free school readiness guide you can download with easy-to-use tools to prepare your child for school. It's in English and Spanish. Visit <http://e3alliance.org/pre-k/>.