

FAQ for Pre-Kindergarten

1. Who is eligible for free public-school prekindergarten?

To be eligible for enrollment in a free prekindergarten class, a child must be four year of age on or before September 1st of 2020 and meet at least one of the following eligibility requirements:

- Is unable to speak and comprehend the English language; or
- Is homeless; or
- Is the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States; or
- Is the child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty; or
- Is or ever has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services (foster care); or
- Is the child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award
- Is educationally disadvantaged (eligible to participate in the national free or reduced price lunch program.) Here is how you would qualify:
 - If you have a family size of 2 people, and make less than \$31,284 per year
 - If you have a family size of 3 people and make less than \$39,461 per year
 - If you have a family size of 4 people and make less than \$47,638 per year
 - If you have a family size of 5 people and make less than \$55,815 per year
 - (If you have more than 5 in your family, please feel free to call the school office and we will give you more information.)

2. Why isn't my child eligible for prekindergarten?

The Texas Legislature determines eligibility requirements free, public prekindergarten in Texas with the intent to provide early learning experiences to students who are most at risk for school failure. Therefore, the **eligibility is limited**.

3. Does my Child have to go to prekindergarten if he or she is eligible?

No. Prekindergarten is not mandatory. However, on enrollment in prekindergarten, a child must attend school and is subject to compulsory school attendance rules.

4. Do I have to provide current income level documentation to the school for my child who qualifies as educationally disadvantaged?

Yes. For a student to qualify for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the student's family is required to provide the school district with current income level documentation.

Income documentation is not necessary for children who are automatically eligible for NSLP under criteria in federal law. A child who is a member of a household receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. (must provide number upon enrollment.)

- A child who is enrolled as a participant of Head Start or Even Start

- A child who is considered a migrant child
- A child who is considered homeless
- A child who is a foster child

5. Can I use my SNAP or TANF documents for prekindergarten eligibility?

Yes. All Children in a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) household are categorially eligible to receive NSLP assistance.

6. What do I need to show my child is eligible for free and reduced lunch?

Documents that show income received by the household during the month prior to verification. The document should contain the name of the person standing in parental relation, and amount and the date the income was received. A pay stub with no date would be insufficient. Gross income to be reported is any money received on a recurring basis including gross earned income. Gross income means all money earned before any deductions, such as income taxes, employee's social security taxes, insurance premiums, bonds, and charitable contributions. Acceptable documentation for earnings (wages and salary) include:

- Current paycheck stub
- Current pay envelope
- Letter from employer stating gross wages paid and how often they are paid
- Unemployment, worker's compensation, or Disability payment stub
- Acceptable documentation for self-employment income includes:
 - Business or farming documents, such as ledger books and/or self-issued paycheck stub
 - Last year's tax return

7. What is the definition of member of the armed forces:

The term member of the armed forces includes:

- Active duty uniformed members;
- Activated/mobilized uniformed members of the Texas National Guard;
- Uniformed service members who are Missing in Action.

A child is considered to be the child of a member of the armed forces if: (a) the child is the biological or adopted child of the member of the armed forces, regardless of whether the child lives with that parent; or (b) the child is a step-child of the member of the armed forces and lives in the household of the member of the armed forces.

8. What do I need to show to demonstrate my child is eligible for prekindergarten based on military criteria?

- Documentation that a district employee verified the student's US Department of Defense
- A statement of service from the installation adjutant general direction of human resources for children of active members, mobilized reservists, or members of the Texas National Guard.

- A copy of the death certificate using the service appropriate DoD form.
- A copy of Purple Heart orders or citation for children of service members.
- A copy of the line of duty determination documentation for children of service member or mobilized reservists or guardsman who were injured while serving active duty but were NOT wounded or injured in combat.
- A copy of a letter from the US Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Documentation that a service member is MIA for children of service members who are MIA.