

# Campus Personnel

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2018-2019

### HOW DO I DETERMINE IF A STUDENT IS ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED?

Use the table below to determine if a child qualifies to attend prekindergarten for free based on economically disadvantaged status.

2018–2019 Income Chart to Determine Economic Disadvantage Prekindergarten Eligibility			
Total # in Household	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$22,459	\$1,872	\$432
2	30,451	2,538	586
3	38,443	3,204	740
4	46,435	3,870	893
5	54,427	4,536	1,047
6	62,419	5,202	1,201
7	70,411	5,868	1,355
8	78,403	6,534	1,508
For each additional member add:	+7,992	+666	+154

If the child qualifies, you will need to ask the parent to provide proof of income, which can be submitted as any of the following:

- Current paycheck stub
- Paycheck envelope – envelope has to state the wage on the outside of the 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 can be any of the following:

- Business or farming document, such as ledger books and/or a self-issued pay check stub
- Last year’s tax return

### CAN PARENTS USE SNAP OR TANF CARDS TO DOCUMENT ELIGIBILITY FOR THEIR CHILD TO ATTEND PRE-K?

Yes. All 4-year-olds in a SNAP or TANF household are categorically eligible to enroll in prekindergarten because they qualified to receive free meals. When a household submits a complete application that contains the name of the child, a current SNAP or TANF case number, and an adult signature, no further proof of income will be required. Lone Star Card account numbers are not to be used as SNAP case numbers on the application.

The SNAP or TANF card can be used as proof that the student qualifies for free lunch, which qualifies the student for National School Lunch Program (NSLP). This is how the student should be coded in Chancery.

### HOW DO I DETERMINE THE TOTAL INCOME FOR A HOUSEHOLD?

Look at the total amount of gross wages for all incomes listed on the application. All gross wages listed should be added together to get a total household gross income.

Campus personnel can then use the 2018–2019 Income Chart (*left*) to determine economic disadvantage for pre-K enrollment.

### WHAT SHOULD CAMPUSES DO IF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN DOES NOT HAVE PROOF OF INCOME BECAUSE THERE IS NO INCOME?

Campus personnel will have to determine how to code the student properly by asking the parent/guardian questions to see how the student would qualify.

Some questions to ask include:

- **Is the parent homeless?** If the answer is yes, the student qualifies as being a homeless student and not necessarily economically disadvantaged. Even if they are living with someone else, they could still be considered homeless if the home they are living in is not providing them with income. The campus personnel can use the household income to determine if the student is economically disadvantaged.
- **Does the parent collect unemployment?** If yes, the parent would need to provide a pay stub or some form of documentation from the unemployment office.
- **Does the parent have a SNAP or TANF card?** If yes, the student qualifies for free lunch under NSLP and is considered economically disadvantaged.
- **Does the child qualify for free/reduced lunch?** If yes, the student is considered economically disadvantaged because he/she qualifies for free lunch under NSLP.
- **Are the parents living off savings?** Even if yes, savings still do not qualify as income and would thus still fall under the Zero Income Declaration. Use the Zero Income Declaration form to document lack of income. This form can be found on the HISD pre-K website, [www.houstonisd.org/preK](http://www.houstonisd.org/preK).

### IF A CHILD IS ADOPTED, DOES THAT COUNT AS BEING IN THE CUSTODY OF THE STATE TO QUALIFY FOR PRE-K ELIGIBILITY?

Campus personnel will need to ask parents/guardians if the adoption was from the state (or if the child has ever been in the custody of the state) or if the child was adopted through a private adoption.

If the adoption was from the state (or if the child has ever been in the custody of the state), the parent should have documentation of the adoption. This can be used as proof of qualification for pre-K eligibility.

Private adoptions do not count as being in the custody of the state. Therefore, children who are adopted through private adoption would not qualify to attend pre-K for free.

### DOES HISD ENROLL 3-YEAR-OLD STUDENTS IN PREKINDERGARTEN?

If there are additional spots in prekindergarten after all eligible 4-year-olds have been enrolled, campuses can enroll up to five 3-year-olds. Campuses must enroll all eligible 4-year-old students first.

### WHAT PROOF OF PRE-K ELIGIBILITY DOES CAMPUS PERSONNEL NEED TO COLLECT FOR STUDENTS OF MILITARY FAMILIES?

Schools must have written proof that a district employee verified the student's Department of Defense (DoD) photo ID card for children of active duty service members. **IMPORTANT:** Do not make a copy of the identification.

If the student does not have a DoD photo ID card, then documentation must be on file that a district employee verified both of the following:

- the parent or guardian's military DoD photo identification card or whatever documentation proves the person is an active-duty member of the military.
- that the student is a child of the military member (such as with a birth certificate).

To see a list of acceptable alternate proof of military affiliation, visit the TEA website at <http://tea.texas.gov/ece/eligibility.aspx>

### WHAT MUST BE KEPT ON FILE FOR STUDENTS OF MILITARY FAMILIES WHO WISH TO ENROLL IN PRE-K?

The documentation to be kept on file must include the printed name and signature of the person who verified the DoD ID (or other documentation) and the date that it was verified, as well as a photocopy of the birth certificate showing that the student is a child of the military member. **IMPORTANT:** Your district should not make a copy of the DoD identification.

## HOW DO I DETERMINE STAR OF TEXAS AWARD PRE-K ELIGIBILITY?

The Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division honors recipients annually in September. The resolution (certificate) awarded to an individual serves as proof of eligibility to enroll these children in free prekindergarten if they are age-eligible. A list of past honorees may be viewed on the [Criminal Justice Division-Past Honorees](#) webpage. If an individual has a prekindergarten-aged child and has been nominated, but not notified as an honoree prior to the current school year, an individual may make a request to the Office of Early Childhood Education to make an eligibility determination based on the nomination submitted for review to the Criminal Justice Division.

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR STUDENTS TO QUALIFY AS A LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENT TO ATTEND PRE-K FOR FREE?

The process for qualifying LEP student status is as follows:

- Parent/guardian submits the application for pre-K
- Parents are given a Home Language Survey to fill out at the campus
- Campus personnel review the Home Language Survey to determine if the student needs to be administered English Language Learner (ELL) identification testing
- After testing, the campus has up to 20 days to complete the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) process

## DO STUDENTS HAVE TO COMPLETE THE LPAC PROCESS BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR LEP?

No. Campuses must have the entire ELL identification process completed by the 20<sup>th</sup> instructional day of school enrollment for students qualifying as LEP only. Students must be tested and identified before the first day of school to be placed in the proper pre-K program.

## CAN PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF LEP STUDENTS SIGN THE LANGUAGE CONSENT FORM BEFORE THE STUDENT HAS COMPLETED THE LPAC PROCESS?

Yes. Parents can sign the consent form upon initial enrollment regardless of whether they have completed the LPAC process.

## DOES THE PRINCIPAL HAVE TO SIGN THE PRE-K APPLICATIONS BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF ENROLLMENT?

Yes. An original current year completed application must be maintained in the students' permanent record folder with the principal's signature in ink (not a stamp) reflecting approval or rejection. The principal or a designee appointed by the principal must sign and date any approved application prior to the student's first day of attendance.

A prekindergarten application is a legal document and must contain the principal's signature. Clerical staff may not sign for a principal; signatures must be from an administrator with signature approval.

## IS THERE ZONING IN HISD FOR PRE-K STUDENTS?

There are no zoned schools for Pre-K. However, campuses are encouraged to enroll their elementary zoned applicants first to ensure all eligible neighborhood students have access to their community school. Eligible Pre-K applicants with older siblings already enrolled in the school should be given preference for admission.

Campuses should engage their zoned population of eligible students first before enrolling students outside of their neighborhood zone.

## CAN A CHILD OF AN HISD EMPLOYEE WHO LIVES OUTSIDE OF THE HISD BOUNDARY ATTEND AN HISD PRE-K PROGRAM?

District employees with qualifying pre-k children who live outside the district may enroll their child in HISD. An "[Application for Out-of-District Student Transfer](#)" must be completed, and signed by the receiving principal and submitted to the Student Transfer Department. Non qualifying students may be accommodated if all eligible four year old students have been enrolled. Children of HISD employees who do not meet the eligibility requirements will have to pay tuition.

## WHAT IF A STUDENT'S ELIGIBILITY STATUS CHANGES AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED INTO THE PRE-K PROGRAM?

Once a student is determined to be eligible for prekindergarten, the student remains eligible for the remainder of the school year in the district in which the student resides or is otherwise entitled to attend. For example: The child of a member of the armed forces

remains eligible for enrollment, even if the parent leaves the armed forces or is no longer on duty, once the student has already begun a prekindergarten class.

**DOES A STUDENT HAVE TO REQUALIFY IF THEY PREVIOUSLY WITHDREW FROM HISD?**

The school district does not need to re-qualify a student for the prekindergarten program as long as the student has been withdrawn for fewer than 30 regular calendar days. If the child has been withdrawn for more than 30 regular calendar days, the school district will be required to re-qualify the student to allow the student back into the program.

**DOES CAMPUS PERSONNEL HAVE TO SUBMIT PRE-K ROSTERS WITH ID'S FOR APPROVAL OF PRE-K ENROLLMENT EXCEPTION REASONS TO THE TRANSFERS DEPARTMENT?**

For approval of out-of-district pre-K enrollment pending exception reasons, campus personnel will have to submit an out-of-district transfer application.

For in-district pre-K enrollment, campus personnel will be required to create a pending pre-K enrollment exception reason.