



[Home \(/\)](#) / [Academics \(/academics\)](#)

High-Quality Prekindergarten FAQ Menu

Click on a link below to go directly to that section.

General

Curriculum

Student Progress Monitoring

Teacher Qualifications

Teacher-to-Student Ratio

Family Engagement Plan

Data Reporting

Program Evaluation

updated 9/4/19

High-Quality Components FAQ: General

1. When should the high-quality prekindergarten components be implemented?

The high-quality components should be implemented beginning September 1, 2019. The previous implementation of the high-quality components that was referenced in Rider 78 have become statutory requirements in House Bill (HB) 3 of the 86th Texas Legislature.

2. Do the high-quality components apply to charter schools and districts of innovation?

Yes, they do. Any public prekindergarten program serving eligible four-year-old students must implement the high-quality prekindergarten components.

Texas Education Code (TEC) §29.153 (c) (c-1); TEC §12A.004

3. How do I get information regarding the high-quality components that are required of prekindergarten programs serving eligible four-year-old students?

Please refer to the document titled "Full-day High-Quality Prekindergarten Program Components" for the basic information regarding the high-quality prekindergarten components: <https://tea.texas.gov/HB3/>

(<https://tea.texas.gov/HB3/>). Webinars with corresponding checklists specific to each component are also available: https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Early_Childhood_Education/Webinars/ (https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Early_Childhood_Education/Webinars/).

4. My district offers prekindergarten on-site at a local childcare center or Head Start program. Are partnership classrooms required to meet the high-quality prekindergarten components?

The partnership classroom (in which an LEA's eligible four-year-old students are enrolled) must meet the high-quality prekindergarten components for the full-day prekindergarten program.

5. Does Rider 78 exist beyond the 2018-2019 school year?

No. The rider was limited to the previous biennium, and the rider's language was not included in the appropriations bill of House Bill 1.

High-Quality Components FAQ: Curriculum

1. What are the HB 3 requirements related to curriculum for a prekindergarten program?

The curriculum used in a prekindergarten classroom serving eligible four-year-old students must be aligned with the 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (<https://tea.texas.gov/pkg.aspx>)

TEC §29.167 (a); Title 19, Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §102.1003 (c)

2. May a district use a locally designed curriculum for its prekindergarten program?

If the district's locally designed curriculum aligns with the 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, the district meets the requirement. The district should have evidence of the alignment of their locally designed curriculum to the 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines, if requested by TEA.

3. I heard that a district must use a curriculum that is listed on the current Instructional Materials List; is that true?

The Instructional Materials List

(https://tea4avfaulk.tea.texas.gov/ematevi/EMATREPORTS/RptInst/EM_CURR_ADPN.pdf) is developed by the State Board of Education. The curricula that are contained on the Instructional Material List have been reviewed, and it has been determined that they align with the 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. A district does not have to use a curriculum on the Instructional Materials List. Districts must, however, use a curriculum that aligns with the 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines.

4. Are there physical education requirements for prekindergarten?

Full-day prekindergarten students are required to participate in moderate or vigorous daily physical activity for at least 30 minutes throughout the school year as part of the district's physical education curriculum or through structured activity during daily recess.

Learning relates directly to mobility and motor skills, and, therefore, activities that enhance gross motor development are recommended for young students. The 2015 Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines suggest at least 45 minutes of outdoor time in their sample full-day schedule (page 16).

TEC §28.002(l)

5. Are children required to have a rest time in prekindergarten?

Policy relating to rest time for full-day prekindergarten students is determined at the local level. Rest time, if given, can be counted as part of the daily instructional minutes in full-day prekindergarten.

High-Quality Components FAQ: Student Progress Monitoring

1. If a district or charter school has developed its own student progress monitoring tool and wants to continue to use it, will the district be able to submit the data into ECDS?

School districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and districts of innovation must submit the student progress monitoring data for their eligible four-year-old students into Early Childhood Data System (ECDS) that assesses the five developmental domains from a tool that is listed on the 2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Prekindergarten Assessment Instruments (<https://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=51539615089>)

TEC §29.167 (a) (2); TEC §29.169; TEC §29.1532 (c); 19 TAC §102.1003 (d) (g) (h)

2. If an assessment instrument is included as part of the curriculum used by the prekindergarten program, can that assessment instrument be considered an appropriate student progress monitoring tool?

School districts, open-enrollment charter school, and districts of innovation must submit the student progress monitoring data for their eligible four-year-old students into ECDS from a tool that assesses the five developmental domains and is listed on the 2017-2021 Commissioner's List of Approved Prekindergarten Assessment Instruments (<https://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=51539615089>)

TEC §29.167 (a) (2); TEC §29.169; TEC §29.1532 (c); 19 TAC §102.1003 (d) (g) (h)

3. What if a child in our prekindergarten program will not participate in the formal assessments that are a part of the student progress monitoring tool we are using?

It is recommended that prekindergarten children be given adequate time to adjust to the new experience of going to school. For some students, that adjustment time takes longer. It is allowable to schedule the formal assessments at a time that the child will be more willing to participate.

Young children may hesitate to participate in a pull-aside activity when their interests are focused on something occurring in the classroom. Teachers may want to consider one of the following strategies:

- conducting formal assessments at one of the learning centers
- changing the time of the day when the formal assessment is attempted
- changing the location of where the formal assessment is attempted

The focus should always be on collecting authentic, accurate data and to help the child feel comfortable in the assessment process.

4. Should student progress monitoring be done with children who have a disability?

Districts should always follow the instructions and guidance on a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP). An IEP may include instructions regarding whether it is appropriate to use the student progress monitoring tool with the child or not. At times a teacher may be instructed to conduct part of a student progress monitoring tool with a student with a disability (e.g., a child with a mobility difficulty could be assessed in all measures except those that require movement). Written instructions regarding appropriate accommodations may also be included in a child's IEP.

5. Is it necessary for teachers to conduct student progress monitoring using more than one tool if the prekindergarten program is funded by more than one source?

Funding sources may have differing guidelines regarding student progress monitoring. It is recommended that a district review the expectations of each funding source and choose a student progress monitoring tool that meets all of the specifications of each funding source. As an example, if a prekindergarten program receives Foundation School Program (FSP) funding from the state of Texas along with Head Start funding from the federal government, the district or charter could choose to use the Children's Learning Institute CIRCLE assessment tool. It meets the expectations of both Texas and the federal government.

6. Are districts required to submit BOY, MOY, and EOY student progress monitoring data?

Districts must submit beginning-of-year (BOY) and end-of-year (EOY) student progress monitoring data for their eligible four-year-old students into ECDS. It is recommended that districts use the results of BOY, middle-of-year (MOY), and EOY student progress monitoring data to inform classroom instruction.

TEC §29.167 (a) (2); TEC §29.169; TEC §29.1532 (c); 19 TAC §102.1003 (d) (g) (h)

7. Where can a district or charter school get specific answers regarding the student progress monitoring tool they are using?

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) can answer questions about the expectations in statute and/or Commissioner's rule regarding student progress monitoring. However, the best source of information regarding specific assessment tools are the publishers of the tools.

8. What are the five developmental domains that are required to be assessed?

The five developmental domains include:

- Health and wellness
- Language and communication
- Emergent literacy – reading

- Emergent literacy – writing
- Mathematics

TEC §29.167 (a) (2); TEC §29.169; 19 TAC §102.1003 (d)

9. What skills are included in health and wellness?

- Gross motor and/or fine motor
- Self-care
- Self-awareness/self-regulation
- Relationship skills
- Communication of feelings, wishes, and needs
- Motivation and encouragement

10. How often should student progress monitoring be done?

Formal/summative assessment should be done three times a year (BOY, MOY & EOY). The BOY and EOY data must be uploaded into the ECDS at the end of each school year. BOY and EOY data show the progress the student made within that grade level. MOY data can be used to determine whether a major change of instructional strategies is needed.

Informal/formative assessment is done by teachers during the daily activities of each school day as they observe how students are responding to their instruction. This informal assessment data enables the teachers to adjust their instruction immediately to meet individual students' needs.

All assessment data, both formal and informal, should be used to inform instruction.

High-Quality Components FAQ: Teacher Qualifications

1. Do districts need to provide their teachers with a mentor for 15 hours?

Districts serving eligible four-year-old students must employ prekindergarten teachers who are appropriately certified to teach early childhood (as per TEC Subchapter B, Chapter 21) and meet one of the following qualification options:

1. Certified + Has a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)
2. Certified + Has a Montessori certification
3. Certified + Has taught for at least 8 years in a nationally accredited childcare program
4. Certified + Has a degree in ECE, Special Education-ECE or a non-ECE degree with 15 units of ECE-specific coursework
5. Certified + Completion of TSR-Comprehensive Program
6. Certified + Has completed 150 hours of professional development in ECE-specific topics, 75 of the 150 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship

7. Certified + Completes 30 hours of ECE-specific professional development annually with 15 of the 30 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship until 150 hours are documented

TEC §29.167 (b) (c); 19 TAC §102.1003 (e)

2. Are prekindergarten teachers who work within a charter school or district of innovation required to be certified?

All school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and districts of innovation must employ prekindergarten teachers who are serving eligible four-year-old students who meet one of the teacher qualification options referenced above. Please note that in all options, appropriate certification in prekindergarten teaching is required.

TEC §29.153 (c) (c-1); TEC §12A.004; TEC §29.167 (b) (c); 19 TAC §102.1003 (e)

3. When will teachers be expected to meet the qualifications?

Prekindergarten teachers who teach eligible four-year-old students must meet one of the teacher qualification options listed above during the 2019-2020 school year.

4. My existing prekindergarten teacher holds valid Texas certificates in both Elementary Early Childhood Education (PK-6) and Elementary Self-Contained (PK-6). Does this meet the qualifications?

School districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and districts of innovation serving eligible four-year-old students must employ prekindergarten teachers who are certified and meet one additional qualification. Please refer to the list above for clarification on the teacher qualification options.

5. Will the Children's Learning Institute provide documentation of completion of Texas School Ready (TSR) - Comprehensive training?

The Children's Learning Institute should be able to provide documentation to the district or charter school upon request.

6. Does the additional teacher qualification pertain to Early Childhood-Special Education (ECSE) teachers?

The additional teacher qualification applies to any teacher, including an ECSE teacher, who is the lead teacher in a prekindergarten class that includes at least one eligible four-year-old student.

7. If an ECSE teacher in a self-contained classroom serves eligible prekindergartners who do not attend a high-quality prekindergarten class at any time, does the additional teacher qualification apply to that ECSE teacher?

No, it does not. However, it is best practice to apply the additional teacher qualification to such an ECSE teacher, in order to facilitate the best possible educational outcomes for students.

8. I have been a prekindergarten teacher for 20 years. I have 9 hours of specific ECE coursework within my degree; I have also taught in a nationally accredited site for 3 years. Have I met the additional qualifications requirement?

No. Prekindergarten teachers serving eligible four-year-old students must be appropriately certified to teach prekindergarten and must meet one of the additional qualifications referenced above. Options cannot be combined to create another option.

9. What is considered “early childhood – specific” coursework?

Coursework that is early childhood-specific covers the age span from birth through 2nd grade. This same definition applies to the professional development referenced in the “additional qualifications” options.

10. Can you provide additional guidance on mentoring/coaching?

The core elements of mentoring/coaching are:

- a one-to-one relationship between a mentor/coach and the teacher(s)
- on-the-job support that focuses on the development of specific early childhood education knowledge, skills or practices that can be used in daily work with children
- a shared commitment to continuous improvement to ensure positive outcomes for all children

A mentor/coach could be:

- An early childhood expert
- Early childhood staff from a Regional Educational Service Center (ESC)
- An instructional coach within/outside of school district/li>
- A supervisor*
- A principal or another leadership administrator with an early childhood background within a school district
- A coach from an early childhood agency, such as the Children’s Learning Institute (CLI) or Texas School Ready (TSR)
- A peer teacher who is considered an expert in early childhood education or in a specific early childhood skill or practice
- A coach/leader/facilitator of an established professional learning community
- A professional mentor/coach who specializes in technology-based coaching

*It is advised that a supervisor keep their mentoring/coaching role separate from their supervisory role.

Effective mentoring/coaching is implemented in a cyclical manner over a designated timeframe. The mentoring/coaching cycle includes:

- Observation(s) of teaching practice with feedback
- Collaborative, reflective goal setting
- Action plans focused on improvement

Mentoring/coaching relationships can be implemented through a variety of methods, including but not limited to the following:

- Face to face interactions (ongoing planned and unplanned interactions between the mentor/coach and the teacher)

- Professional Learning Communities (ongoing planned interactions between the mentor/coach and a group of teachers that are working or learning the same knowledge, skill or practice)
- Technology-based coaching (ongoing planned interactions between the mentor/coach and the teacher that are facilitated through some form of technology, rather than face to face interactions)
- Hybrid or a combination of methods

11. Would meeting with teachers in a campus PLC count as “mentoring/coaching” hours?

A professional learning community (PLC) that has ongoing planned interactions between a mentor/coach and a group of teachers that is working or learning the same early childhood knowledge, skill or practice could be counted as mentoring/coaching hours.

It is important that the PLC is implemented in a cyclical manner over a designated timeframe. A mentoring/coaching cycle that includes the following actions should be included in the PLC:

- Observation(s) of teaching practice with feedback
- Collaborative, reflective goal setting
- Action plans focused on improvement

High-Quality Components FAQ: Teacher-to-Student Ratio

1. How do you define “attempt” in connection with teacher-to-student ratios?

In meeting this high-quality component, districts would want to make a continuous effort in maintaining the 1:11 ratio until it is achieved.

TEC §29.167 (d); 19 TAC §102.1003 (i)

2. What qualifications must a teacher aide meet?

The qualifications for a teacher aide position is a local decision. There are certifications for which a teacher aide may apply. In order to apply, the teacher aide must first be employed by a school district. Teacher aides are encouraged to contact their employing school district for application instructions.

For Educational Aide I, Educational Aide II, and Educational Aide III requirements, please visit

https://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Certification/Initial_Certification/Becoming_an_Educational_Aide_in_Texas/
(https://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Certification/Initial_Certification/Becoming_an_Educational_Aide_in_Texas/)

High-Quality Components FAQ: Family Engagement Plan

1. When is the Family Engagement Plan due?

In implementing the high-quality prekindergarten components, districts must have a written Family Engagement Plan containing the six required components and should be in the process of implementing the plan throughout the current biennium. The Family Engagement Plan URL must be submitted to TEA within ECDS.

TEC §29.168; 19 TAC §102.1003 (f)

2. Should the Family Engagement Plan be a district document, or can it be relevant to just one campus?

Districts must write and implement a Family Engagement Plan associated with the district's prekindergarten program. A district should have one document that covers the whole district. Campus-level modifications within a district may be made to suit the needs of each prekindergarten program. The Family Engagement Plan associated with the entire district URL must be submitted to TEA within ECDS.

3. What information must the Family Engagement Plan contain?

The written Family Engagement Plan must contain information on how the district is achieving and maintaining high levels of family involvement and positive family attitudes toward education through the following six components:

- Facilitating family-to-family support
- Establishing a network of community resources
- Increasing family participation in decision-making
- Equipping families with tools to enhance and extend learning
- Developing staff skills in evidence-based practices that support families in meeting their children's learning benchmarks
- Evaluating family engagement efforts and using evaluations for continuous improvement

TEC §29.168; 19 TAC §102.1003 (f)

4. How can a district make their Family Engagement Plan available for families of students and community stakeholders?

The Family Engagement Plan must be made available on the district's or campus's website.

TEC §29.168; 19 TAC §102.1003 (f)

5. Our district already has a document that addresses how to encourage family involvement. Can we use that document to comply with this high-quality component?

Often districts/charter schools already have a written document that describes their approach to working with the families of the students they serve. This is especially true if a district receives Title 1 funds or is in partnership with a Head Start grantee. It might be possible to use that existing document as the Family Engagement Plan if:

- the existing document contains the six expected components;
- the activities listed in the document are implemented in the prekindergarten program; and

- the document is available on the web.

High-Quality Components FAQ: Data Reporting

1. Is data for three- and four-year-old students submitted in ECDS?

Yes, data for three- and four-year-old students is submitted to ECDS. TEC §29.1532 Prekindergarten Program Requirements do not differentiate between the two ages.

2. Do all prekindergarten programs with eligible four-year-old students need to mark the High-Quality Prekindergarten Indicator in PEIMS/ECDS?

Yes. All programs serving eligible four-year-old students in a full-day program need to select the High-Quality Prekindergarten Program indicator.

3. If a district is missing a High-Quality Prekindergarten component, do they still mark the High-Quality Prekindergarten indicator?

Yes, the district should still mark the High-Quality indicator in PEIMS/ECDS. If they did not address a specific component, they can leave that indicator blank (unchecked). They will receive a special warning when submitting the data, but they will still be able to finalize/submit.

4. Do we need to report tuition-based or locally funded prekindergarten students?

Yes, data on tuition-based and locally funded students in public prekindergarten programs should be submitted in ECDS.

5. If a prekindergarten student was enrolled at the beginning of the year, but has since withdrawn, would a district report the student in the ECDS collection?

Yes. If a student was enrolled at the beginning of the year and has BOY assessment data, a district submits that information. The same would apply if a student was only enrolled at the end of the year and had EOY assessment data.

6. What is a TIMS ticket?

The Texas Student Data System (TSDS) Incident Management System, or TIMS, is a web-based system that allows you to submit incidents when you encounter problems, have questions about TSDS applications, or want to request software enhancements.

7. What is a champion?

Each ESC has trained and certified "Champions" in the key subject areas of TSDS: PEIMS, Dashboards, Unique ID, TEAL, ECDS and Technical. These champions are responsible for training and supporting the TSDS specialists ("Stewards") at districts and charter schools and for disseminating news and updates from TEA to districts and charter schools. For more information:

http://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/About/Deployment/Deployment/ESC_TSDS_Champions_1-11
(http://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/About/Deployment/Deployment/ESC_TSDS_Champions_1-11)

8. Are assessment results of three-year-old students in a prekindergarten program included?

Yes, if they were assessed with an instrument from the Commissioner's Approved List. TEC §29.1534 does not differentiate between ages.

9. Where can a district or ESC find additional information regarding specific assessment instruments?

A district or ESC may refer to:

- The Commissioner Approved Prekindergarten/Kindergarten Assessment List to see what domains are covered by each assessment instrument:http://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Early_Childhood_Education/Educator_Resources (http://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Early_Childhood_Education/Educator_Resources)
- Section 10 of the TEDS Data Standards:
http://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/TEDS/1920A/TEDS_Section_10_-_TSDS_Core_Collections (http://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/TEDS/1920A/TEDS_Section_10_-_TSDS_Core_Collections)
- A publisher of a specific assessment instrument

10. If we have students placed in our program per an Admission, Review, Dismissal (ARD) committee, do we report their data?

Yes, if they are enrolled in a public prekindergarten program and were assessed with a Commissioner-approved assessment.

11. What changes in data reporting will occur beginning with the 2019-2020 school year?

Districts should be aware of the following changes in data reporting requirements beginning in the 2019-2020 school year:

- Updating and adding instructional program type code for prekindergarten – school districts and charter schools document what type of prekindergarten program each student attended; “non-public prekindergarten” will be added to the list of options - TEC §29.1543 (7)
- Full-day waiver indicator code – This code will indicate whether the district has received an exemption from offering full-day prekindergarten – TEC §29.152 (c)
- Prekindergarten school type code – SB 1679 allows for a three-year-old eligible student who was enrolled in public prekindergarten to automatically be eligible for enrollment as a four-year-old student whether or not they meet the current eligibility requirements for prekindergarten. Districts and charter schools will report which students fall within this new code.
- Prekindergarten sources of funding – “Early Education Allotment” will be added to the list of options for districts – TEC §29.1532 (c)

12. Who can help an LEA if they are having difficulty uploading their data into the ECDS?

Local education agencies (LEAs) are encouraged to seek help from or via one of the following when having trouble uploading their data:

- Each district's assigned PEIMS Coordinator
- Each Education Service Center's trained and certified “ECDS Champion”
http://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/About/Deployment/Deployment/ESC_TSDS_Champions_1-11
(http://www.texasstudentdatasystem.org/TSDS/About/Deployment/Deployment/ESC_TSDS_Champions_1-11)

- Submit a TIMS ticket; TIMS is a web-based system that allows submission of incidents when problems or questions arise.

High-Quality Components FAQ: Program Evaluation

1. Is there a program evaluation tool that is required for districts to use in meeting this requirement?

Districts must select and implement a method for evaluating their prekindergarten program. They must at least use student progress monitoring data within their program evaluation process.

TEC §29.169; 19 TAC §102.1003 (h)

2. What methods could a district use in giving families the results of the prekindergarten program evaluation?

There are a variety of ways districts could inform families of the results of the program evaluation, including the following: using the web; sending home a written report; or hosting a meeting to discuss the results. Districts should document how the results of the prekindergarten program evaluation are communicated with families.

3. How often should a prekindergarten program evaluation be done?

Program evaluations should be done annually.

4. I know TEA has developed a program evaluation tool; do LEAs have to use that tool in order to meet this high-quality prekindergarten component?

No. TEA has developed the Early Childhood Program Self-Assessment and the Early Childhood Program Self-Assessment Guide (https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Early_Childhood_Education/High-Quality_Early_Childhood_Program_Self-Assessment/) to assist district-level personnel in meeting this high-quality requirement, but LEAs are able to determine which program evaluation tool they want to use.

Folder Access

Early Childhood Education (</taxonomy/term/1161>)