



The SB 1882 Prekindergarten Partnerships Guide



A complete guide to applying SB 1882 Texas Partnerships to innovate and improve access to prekindergarten.

Updated 2024

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Interactive Resources

Clickable resources are embedded throughout this guide.

Wherever you see this symbol, click to explore the related resource.



Introduction

Across the state, there is a significant need for high-quality early childhood education and to eliminate structural barriers to building and sustaining the infrastructure to deliver it to every child.

Currently:



1,983,171 children under five live in Texas

89,464 low-income children live in a child care desert

56% of child care workers qualify for at least one form of public assistance

Districts can play a key role in supporting the expansion of access to high-quality early learning and pre-k ensuring that families have options that meet their needs and work with local providers and partners to develop innovative solutions to benefit their districts' youngest learners, their families and the community. ^[1]

How to Use this Guide

When a district considers their options in expanding early childhood education (ECE) models within their district there are broadly two sets of considerations for ECE programming: Teaching and Learning, and Operational Structure. TEA has developed materials to address both:



Teaching and Learning: How do three- and four-year-olds learn best? What are the school-level systems that help them reach kindergarten readiness and beyond?

- [The Early Childhood Education Model Playbook](#)
 - Aligns the components of a high-quality ECE school model to the Effective Schools Framework
 - Focuses district and campus leaders on impactful aspects of the ECE school design
 - Measures fidelity of implementation of a high-quality ECE school model



Operational Structure: In expanding access to ECE programming, districts can leverage a variety of partnership opportunities that can support districts to run and fund programs to serve three- and four-year-olds.

- The *SB 1882 Prekindergarten Partnerships Guide* (this document)
 - Provides a high-level overview of the different types of partnerships
 - Focuses deeply on the design and launch of SB1882/Texas Partnerships for pre-k. The guide supports districts in weighing SB 1882 partnership options for pre-k through partnership design and structure considerations, issuing a Call, and other factors to determine the right SB 1882 partnership for district, campus, and family needs.

There are several ways that you can use this guide:

- ✓ Read it like a novel, cover to cover, go through each section to learn more
- ✓ Use it as a troubleshooting guide, engage with certain sections or components to support your work
- ✓ Use it as a resource bank, use linked resources throughout to learn more

[1] Adapted from Children at Risk Dashboards

What are the Requirements for Prekindergarten?



In Texas, LEAs are required to offer full-day pre-k for four-year-olds if a district identifies 15 or more eligible children who are four years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year. House Bill 3 (2019) requires that all pre-k programs offered to eligible four-year-old students:

- Be full-day: **75,600 operational minutes**
- Meet the **high-quality requirements** adopted by the legislature in 2015:
 - curriculum,
 - student progress monitoring,
 - teacher qualifications,
 - teacher-to-student ratio,
 - family engagement plan, and
 - program evaluation

LEAs have the option of creating a pre-k 3 program that operates half-day, 32,400 minutes, full-day, or a combination of the two, in alignment with district policy.

Prekindergarten Eligibility

To be eligible for enrollment in a free pre-k class, a child must be at least three years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year (if a three-year-old program is available) or four years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year and meet at least one of the following eligibility requirements:

- unable to speak and comprehend the English language
- is educationally disadvantaged (eligible to participate in the national school lunch program.)
- is homeless
- is the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active duty by proper authority
- is the child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty
- is or has ever been in the conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (foster care) or has been in foster care in another state or territory but currently lives in Texas
- is the child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award

Eligibility requirements for pre-k 3 are the same as those for pre-k 4; however, it is a local decision to serve 3s. Students who are eligible and enrolled in pre-k 3 are automatically eligible for pre-k 4. [2]

[2] Early Childhood Education FAQs | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/ar/node/106372>

What are Senate Bill 1882 Texas Partnerships?

Every Texas student and family deserves access to a high-quality school that meets their unique needs within their school district. Not every district has the array of options necessary to satisfy the diverse needs of local families, particularly districts that have historically been under-resourced. Families may be looking for a school with a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) focus, for example, or opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit or get real-world career training in high school. The policies and procedures of a school district often are not set up to provide the flexibility for schools to innovate to better reflect the needs of the student population, meet local workforce requirements, and adapt to other social and economic conditions in the community.

Texas Partnerships provide every school district in the state the opportunity to identify and develop its own solutions and ensure that every educational option that families want is available within the district. In these Partnerships, school districts identify a need, evaluate potential partners to determine which has the right model and expertise to meet the community need, and then authorize the partner to operate the campus as an in-district charter school by entering into a multiyear performance agreement with the selected partner. The operating partner may be an institution of higher education, a government entity, or a nonprofit, including existing charter schools.

Districts play the role of the authorizer, maintaining ultimate authority over the partnership, selecting the operating partner and holding them accountable for school success. The district defines what success looks like for the school, including academic, financial, and operational performance and other measures that reflect community priorities, such as college persistence or teacher retention. The operating partner manages the day-to-day decisions to achieve that vision of success, with sole responsibility for personnel, curriculum, the school calendar, and the budget. Texas Partnerships are an opportunity to change the lives of students, particularly those in districts that have historically been under-resourced, by matching community demand with ideas and resources.

Key Components of a Texas Partnership ^[3]

- District authorizes the partner to operate an in-district charter school (TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C)
- The partner manages the district school and is responsible for student outcomes
- The partner has sole autonomy over personnel, curriculum, calendar, and assessments
- The district school board and staff hold partners accountable through a performance contract



[3] From TEA Texas Partnerships Guide

There are two types of Texas Partnerships:



INNOVATION PARTNERSHIPS

Innovation Partnerships can be used to launch a new school or model or to replicate or strengthen an existing model. They can even help improve existing schools that, for example, may be performing well overall but struggling to meet the needs of certain groups of students. SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships are innovation partnerships.



TURNAROUND PARTNERSHIPS

Turnaround Partnerships provide districts with schools that received an F overall in the state Accountability Rating System the previous year the space and flexibility to implement a new model with a proven track record of success. Improving a struggling school requires a coherent, schoolwide approach to culture, talent, curriculum and assessment, resource allocation, school calendar and schedule, and family and community engagement. With a Texas Partnership, the district can identify and bring in an expert partner to use a proven model to increase student achievement and ensure that all students have access to the high-quality schools they deserve.



About Senate Bill 1882

The Texas Legislature signed Senate Bill (SB) 1882 into law in 2017. This bill incentivizes districts to create Texas Partnerships by offering two benefits:

- Partnerships may receive additional per-pupil state funding for the Partnership school ranging from \$0 to \$1,500 annually. In 2021–22, the average amount of additional SB 1882 funding a school received was \$911 per student.
- Schools that received an F overall in the state Accountability Rating System are eligible to receive a two-year exemption from specific accountability interventions. Sometimes, Texas Partnerships are called SB 1882 Partnerships or 1882 Partnerships. **In this guide, we will refer to Texas Partnerships for pre-k as SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships.**

TEA does not approve partnerships or select partners.

Rather, TEA approves the partnership benefits, to districts who are eligible according to SB 1882 and associated rules, ensuring that strong authorizing processes have been followed.

Key Terms

Charter School

A charter school is defined as a public school that operates independently under a charter or contract with an authorizer, such as a local school district or the state

Child Care Regulations (CCR)

Child Care Regulation is the division of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission that is responsible for permitting and monitoring of child care operations for compliance with state regulations, rules, and laws.

Child Care Subsidy / Scholarship Eligibility

A child care subsidy is a form of financial assistance provided to low-income families to help cover the costs of child care. These are also known as child care scholarships. This program is administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and is funded through the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Eligibility is based on factors including family income, family work/education requirements, child's age, citizenship, and residency status. Eligibility is granted for 12 months.

Child Care Subsidy Rates

Texas child care subsidy payment rates vary based on several factors, including the type of provider, the age of the child, and the quality rating of the child care facility.

Early Education Allotment Funding

The Texas Early Education Allotment is a funding mechanism generated by eligible K-3 students. The allotment is designed to improve student performance in reading and math for students in pre-k through third grade. It aims to assist school districts in achieving the goals outlined in their early childhood literacy and mathematics proficiency plans.

Early Learning Program (ELP)

This term is used to refer to the various settings where children can receive educational and developmental services before they enter kindergarten. This may be a child care center, child care home, Head Start, or Early Head Start program.

Formal Partnership

A partnership in which children are dually enrolled in both public-school pre-k and the child care program or a public school pre-k and Head Start entity. They stay at the child care center, even before and after pre-k instruction. These partnerships are useful for families with working parents and help children have consistent care and learning. The teacher leading the pre-k part of the class can work for the school or the child care program and needs to meet specific standards.

Foundation School Program (FSP) Funding

The primary source of state funding for Texas school districts is the Foundation School Program (FSP). This program ensures that all school districts, regardless of property wealth, receive "substantially equal access to similar revenue per student at similar tax effort."

Head Start Program

Head Start is a program of the United States Department of Health and Human Services that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to families experiencing poverty for children age 3 to age 5 and their families.

Informal Partnership

A school and a child care program share resources and information. This includes things like learning opportunities for teachers, what children need to be ready for school, and ways to involve families. In informal partnerships, children are not dually enrolled in both public school pre-k and the child care program, so there is no money passed from the school to the child care program. Even so, informal partnerships can be a good start to making a formal pre-k partnership later.

Licensed Child Care Center (LCCC)

There are several categories of regulated child care programs in Texas. Licensed centers operate in facilities in the community and serve seven or more children aged thirteen and under at least three days per week.

Licensed Child Care Home (LCCH)

This form of regulated child care provides care and supervision for seven to 12 children ages 13 or younger in the primary caregivers home. ^[4]

[4] Child care site definitions- What are the Types of Child Care Operations? | Texas Health and Human Services.
<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care/frequently-asked-questions-about-texas-child-care/types-child-care-operations>

Local Educational Agency (LEA)

A public school district, open-enrollment charter school, or regional education service center.^[5] This guide will refer to LEAs when requirements apply to local public school districts and charter schools; otherwise will refer to public school districts as “districts.”

Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)

The Texas Workforce Commission allocates Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) through 28 Local Workforce Development Boards across the state to administer child care services and to support the improvement of child care quality across the state.

Mixed Delivery System

This refers to an approach where preschool and child care services are offered through a variety of settings and providers. These often blend and braid funding from multiple sources and offer families options to meet their needs, preferences, and schedules.

Prekindergarten Eligibility

This refers to the criteria established by the state of Texas for children to be eligible for enrollment in a free public pre-k program.

Public-Private Prekindergarten Partnerships

Public-private pre-k partnerships are collaborations between local educational agencies (LEAs) and private early learning programs (ELPs) or Head Start programs. The resulting partnership allows programs to dual enroll children and provide pre-k and/or additional comprehensive wrap-around services. Each partnership is uniquely created to leverage the strengths of the LEA and ELP.^[6]

Registered Child Care Home (RCCH)

This form of child care is delivered in the primary caregiver's home for up to 12 children aged thirteen and under within certain conditions. Registered homes are slightly less regulated than Licensed Child Care Homes

[5] Glossary of Acronyms | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/es/node/106455>

[6] Prekindergarten Partnerships | Texas Workforce Commission. <https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/child-care-prekindergarten-partnerships>

Senate Bill 1882 Partnership

A partnership between a district and an eligible operating partner (a nonprofit including open-enrollment charter schools, an Institution of Higher Education, or a governmental entity) where the district authorizes the operating partners to operate a campus as an in-district charter (Subchapter C). These partnerships are sometimes referred to as Texas Partnerships or 1882 partnerships. This guide will specifically discuss Senate Bill 1882 partnerships for pre-k. Throughout the guide, these will be referred to as SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships.

Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The state agency responsible for overseeing elementary and secondary public education in Texas.

Texas Rising Star Program:

This quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for child care and early learning programs in Texas is designed to improve the quality of child care services provided across the state.

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)

This state government agency in Texas oversees and provides workforce development services to employers and job seekers as well as the state's Child Care Services program and the Texas Rising Star child care quality rating system.

Section 1: Exploring the Ecosystem



Understanding the Early Childhood Landscape

The large population of young children in Texas poses significant challenges in ensuring adequate availability and access to early childhood services across the state. With over 2.38 million children under the age of five, representing nearly one-third of the state's child population, the demand for early childhood services in Texas is immense. Across all sectors (early learning, intervention, and family support), the current capacity of programs and services is not sufficient to meet the needs of families with young children statewide. There are capacity constraints and geographic disparities. Understanding this complex landscape is essential for regions to identify opportunities for and potential benefits of partnerships.

The early childhood ecosystem in Texas is diverse and extensive, aimed at addressing the developmental and educational needs of children from birth to age five. The early childhood system in Texas is comprised of three main sectors:

✓ Early Learning and Care Sector

This includes center and home-based child care providers, Head Start programs, public pre-k, and child care subsidies.

✓ Early Childhood Intervention Sector

This includes Early Childhood Intervention services and Early Childhood Special Education provided by public schools.

✓ Early Childhood Family Support Sector

This encompasses home visiting programs, parenting support, family education, and family resource centers.



At the state level, several agencies play crucial roles in the early childhood system:

Texas Workforce Commission: Oversees [Child Care & Early Learning Program - Texas Workforce Commission](#), child care subsidies, and the Texas Rising Star quality rating system.

Texas Education Agency: Responsible for public pre-k, early childhood curriculum standards, and early childhood special education services.

Texas Health and Human Services Commission: Administers [Early Childhood Intervention Services](#), [Child Care Regulations](#), and [Texas Department of Family and Protective Services](#) which administers federally funded home visiting programs and provides support for parent education programs.

In the Early Learning and Care Sector, the state offers a mix of public and private programs, each designed to support different aspects of early childhood development and funded through different public funding streams. The key components of early childhood education programs for three and four-year-olds include:

Public Prekindergarten

Texas provides free publicly funded pre-k for eligible students through the Foundation School Program, which is the primary source of funding for Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). It is free for three- and four-year-old children who meet eligibility requirements. These services have been traditionally delivered on public or charter school campuses for half-day (three-year-olds) and full-day (four-year-olds). At the state level, the Texas Education Agency provides oversight.

Head Start

Head Start is a program of the United States Department of Health and Human Services that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to families experiencing poverty from age 3 to age 5 and their families. Many Head Start programs also provide Early Head Start (EHS), which is a comprehensive child development program for low-income pregnant women, infants, and toddlers (from birth through 2), including young children with disabilities. Head Start programs provide comprehensive early learning, health, and family well-being services. The federal government contracts directly with local entities as grantees for Head Start and Early Head Start.

Child Care Regulation

Licensed child care programs in Texas are privately funded businesses or nonprofits that provide classroom-based services for children from birth to age 13. Child care is regulated by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (THHSC). Specifically, the Child Care Regulation (CCR) division within the HHSC is responsible for overseeing child care facilities, ensuring they meet state standards for health, safety, and education.

The CCR sets rules and guidelines for various types of child care operations, conducts inspections, and investigates complaints to ensure compliance with regulations.

[Child Care Regulation](#) | [Texas Health and Human Services](#)



There are categories of licensed child care programs^[7]:

Licensed Child Care Center (LCCC): provides care and supervision

- to seven or more children that are ages 13 or younger;
- for at least two hours but less than 24 hours per day, for three or more days a week, and
- at a location other than the license holder's home.

A licensed child care center must meet minimum standards for child care centers and receive at least one unannounced monitoring inspection by Child Care Regulations (CCR) per year.

Licensed Child Care Home (LCCH) provides care and supervision

- for seven to 12 children ages 13 or younger;
- for at least
 - two hours, but less than 24 hours per day,
 - for three or more days a week; and
- in the primary caregiver's home.

A licensed child-care home must meet minimum standards for licensed and registered child-care homes as applicable and receive at least one unannounced monitoring inspection by CCR per year.

Registered Child Care Home (RCCH): provides care and supervision

- for up to six unrelated children who are ages 13 or younger during school hours, and can also provide care and supervision for six additional school-age children after school hours. (No more than 12 children can be in care at any time, including children related to the caregiver.)
- for at least:
 - four hours a day, three or more days a week, for three or more consecutive weeks, or
 - four hours a day for 40 or more days in a 12-month period, and
- in the primary caregiver's home.

A registered child-care home must meet minimum standards for licensed and registered child-care homes as applicable and receive at least one unannounced monitoring inspection by CCR every one to two years.

[7] Types of Child Care Operation | Texas Workforce Commission. <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care/frequently-asked-questions-about-texas-child-care/what-are-types-child-care-operations>

Subsidized Child Care

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is a federal grant that provides funding to states to help low-income families access licensed child care. Texas uses this grant to subsidize child care costs for eligible families, ensuring that children receive quality care while their parents work or attend education/training programs. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) administers the [Child Care Services \(CCS\) program](#), which uses CCDBG funds along with state funds to provide financial assistance for child care to low-income families. The TWC partners with local workforce development boards to manage the program at the regional level. At this level, [Local Workforce Development Boards](#) (LWDB) administer the CCS program through their child care contractor, who determines eligibility for families to receive child care subsidies. Regulated child care providers may elect to participate in the CCS program, and receive payment based upon the region's approved payment rate; parents may select the provider they wish to enroll their children with.

Texas Rising Star Program

Child care programs that participate in the CCS program are also required to participate in the [Texas Rising Star quality rating system](#) administered by TWC. It aims to recognize and improve the quality of child care providers participating in the subsidized child care program. Quality is evaluated to be TRS 2 Star, TRS 3 Star or TRS 4 Star, based on a continuum of quality.

Public pre-k, Head Start, and the CCS program all offer early childhood education services for low-income families. Each program has distinct funding sources, eligibility criteria, and programmatic requirements, which can make navigating the ecosystem challenging. However, these differences also allow for a variety of resources to meet the diverse needs of families and communities, fostering valuable partnerships.



Data Sources to Understand the Landscape


Before embarking on potential partnerships, it is critical to compile and review local and regional data in order to understand the early learning landscape and needs. At the state level, as of 2021/2022, only 66% of eligible four-year-olds and 11% of eligible three-year-olds were enrolled in public prekindergarten programs.^[8] Partnerships are an ideal opportunity to increase pre-k enrollment. Many data sources can assist with identifying the strengths, needs, and opportunities in local communities.

Current Enrollment and Program Participation Resources

The Texas Public Education Information Resource (TPEIR) is a dedicated information repository and data warehouse committed to providing valuable insights on Texas public school students. TPEIR is the Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) for Texas, and it includes data from the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

For pre-k enrollment, eligibility, and participation data


Information on Texas public school pre-k programs, including the number of school districts and schools offering full-day and half-day programs as well as student enrollment, is included in TPEIR reports. Student enrollment is shown by gender, race/ethnicity, ADA eligibility status, Emergent Bilingual (EB)/English Learner (EL) status, economically disadvantaged status, special education status, and other student subpopulations. Additionally, this report provides enrollment by pre-k funding sources and high-level financial information. This report is at the state, district, and school level. Understanding the percentage of eligible children in a region participating in current pre-k programs helps districts and potential partners identify opportunities to leverage partnerships to increase enrollment in pre-k.

[Prekindergarten Programs | TPEIR](#) 

Kindergarten readiness data

Students who are eligible and attend public pre-k exceed peers who did not attend pre-k on kindergarten readiness assessments. In 2022-2023, 61% of students who attended pre-k were school-ready compared to 49% of students who did not.^[9]

Kindergarten program and readiness reports provide information on Texas public school kindergarten enrollment and beginning-of-year reading assessments. Enrollment in kindergarten is shown for students by race/ethnicity, gender, economic disadvantage, Emergent Bilingual (EB)/English Learner (EL), and other student programs. Additionally, this report provides high-level information on enrolled kindergartners administered a reading assessment and assessment results. Kindergarten readiness information is provided for all kindergartners and for those kindergartners who attended Texas public pre-k the previous school year for eighty or more days. Additionally, this report provides information on kindergartners attending Texas public pre-k in the same district or school as they enrolled in Texas public kindergarten.

[Kindergarten Programs & Readiness | TPEIR](#) 

[8] Prekindergarten Utilization Dashboard | E3 Alliance. <https://data.e3alliance.org/pre-k-utilization/p20/TX/x/p20/CTX/>


[9] Texas Public Kindergarten Programs and Kindergarten Readiness - Statewide 2022-2023

Child Care Services

The Texas Workforce Commission hosts Child Care by the Numbers. Child Care by the Numbers provides:

- Information on the number of child care providers serving subsidized children, and the number and percent of these providers who are Texas Rising Star certified.
- The number of children served, and
- The number and percent of children who selected a Texas Rising Star certified program.

This information is available at the state level and for each of the 28 workforce areas – both current and historical data. This data helps identify numbers of potentially eligible children for current or future partnerships.

[Child Care by the Numbers | Texas Workforce Commission](#) 

This link provides information to identify Local Workforce Development Boards that oversee the subsidized child care programs and contact information and links to contact information for each Board.


[Find My Local Child Care Services Office | Texas Child Care Solutions](#) 

Children At Risk Child Care Deserts landing page provides an interactive tool to explore the local availability of child care across the state of Texas, by county, Workforce Development Board and school district.

[Child Care Deserts Landing Page | Children at Risk](#) 


Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded program that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and families. Head Start programs are strongly encouraged to collaborate with state pre-k programs and align their curriculum and learning standards with state early learning guidelines. The Texas Head Start Collaboration Office provides information, reports, and a locator for finding Texas Head Start programs.


[Program Locator | Head Start](#) 

Projecting the Need

Several tools exist to support projecting the need for early learning opportunities including the birth rate by county.

[Live Births in Texas | Texas Department of Health and Human Services](#) 

Kids Count data includes data related to Texas children and overall well-being, including economic well-being, education, health, family and community .

[2024 KIDS COUNT Data Book | KIDS COUNT](#) 

Exploring Partnership Models

Public-Private Prekindergarten Partnership Models

Public-private pre-k partnerships are collaborations between local educational agencies (LEAs) and private early learning programs (ELPs) or Head Start programs. The resulting partnership allows programs to dual enroll children and provide pre-k and/or additional comprehensive wrap-around services. Each partnership is uniquely created to leverage the strengths of the LEA and ELP. Partnerships can be formed with the following models .^[10]

Informal Partnerships

Many LEAs, child care programs, and Head Start programs choose to establish informal partnerships prior to or instead of establishing formal partnerships. Resources shared in an informal partnership may include, but are not limited to, professional development, classroom observations/assessments, alignment of curriculum and/or assessments, family engagement, and/or transitions to kindergarten. In informal partnerships, there is no dual or co-enrollment of children.

Formal Partnerships

In formal partnerships, children are dually enrolled, and programs combine two or more sources of funding to offer care, education, and services for children and families onsite at a child care program, Head Start program, or on an LEA campus. In formal partnerships, partners create and establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outline services, roles, and responsibilities and ensure that all applicable program standards are met.

LEA and Head Start Program Partnerships

- In this model, LEAs and Head Start programs partner to provide pre-k and additional services, these can be provided onsite at the LEA or at the Head Start program. The teacher(s) may be employed by the LEA or the Head Start program.
- LEA and Head Start program partnerships are funded with FSP funding, early education allotment, other available local funding sources, and Head Start program funding. LEAs may pass through funding to Head Start programs, or Head Start programs may pass through funding to LEAs. The amount of funding one entity passes to the other will depend on the employer of the teacher(s) and the services provided by each entity. LEAs and Head Start programs may fund the same program hours provided that each entity meets its respective requirements and standards.
- The partnership program must meet the standards and regulations of the LEA and Head Start, including, but not limited to, teacher certification/qualification requirements, curriculum, assessment, attendance procedures, classroom sizes and ratios, services provided to children and families, nutrition requirements, instructional minutes, etc. During the contract development phase, partnership program staff should work together to determine how to meet the requirements of each entity and to ensure that program staff become trained in each other's standards and guidelines.

[10] Early Learning Public-Private Partnerships | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/early-learning-public-private-partnerships>

LEA and Child Care Program Partnerships

- In this model, LEAs and child care programs partner to provide pre-k and additional services, these can be provided onsite at the LEA or at the child care program. The teacher(s) may be employed by the LEA or by the child care program.
- These partnerships are funded with FSP funding, Early Education Allotment, other available local funding sources, child care subsidies, and/or tuition. Typically, the LEA passes through funding to the child care program. However, the amount of funding passed through depends on the employer of the teacher(s) and the services provided by each entity. Tuition and/or child care subsidies may NOT fund hours funded by the LEA. For dually enrolled children, child care programs should contact their local workforce board to determine which child care subsidy rate they are eligible to receive (full-time, part-time, or blended) based on the number of hours funded by the LEA.
- The partnership program must meet the standards and regulations of the LEA and the child care program, including, but not limited to, teacher certification/qualification requirements, curriculum, assessment, attendance procedures, classroom sizes and ratios, services provided to children and families, nutrition requirements, instructional minutes, etc. The partnership program must also meet any applicable standards/requirements of the child care program, including, but not limited to child care licensing standards, Texas Rising Star, Texas School Ready, NAEYC, or other accreditations. During the contract development phase, partnership program staff should work together to determine how to best meet the requirements of each entity and to ensure that program staff become trained in each other's standards, guidelines, policies, and procedures.

SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

In this model, districts may partner with a nonprofit organization, government entity, institute of higher education, or an existing charter school to provide pre-k and additional services. The district authorizes a carefully selected partner to operate an in-district charter school under a performance contract. The partner must have their own board of directors and hold responsibility for staff, curriculum, calendar, assessments, and other school-level decision-making. The district holds the partner accountable for academic and financial performance. The process for authorizing an in-district charter campus requires the approval of several stakeholders and may extend the timeline needed to initiate a partnership program.

Some formal public-private pre-k partnerships could become an SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership. An SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership must include an eligible operating entity, a partnership developed through a rigorous authorizing process meeting TEA requirements, and a performance agreement that meets the requirements for SB 1882.

The partnership program must meet the standards and regulations of the LEA and the child care program, including, but not limited to, teacher certification/qualification requirements, curriculum, assessment, attendance procedures, classroom sizes and ratios, services provided to children and families, nutrition requirements, instructional minutes, etc. The partnership program must also meet any applicable standards/requirements of the child care programs, including, but not limited to child care licensing standards, Texas Rising Star, Texas School Ready, NAEYC, or other accreditations. During the contract development phase, partnership program staff should work together to determine how to best meet the requirements of each entity and to ensure that program staff become trained in each other's standards, guidelines, policies, and procedures.

Section 2 of this guide will specifically focus on SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships.



Program Eligibility Requirements^[11]

All LEAs and school districts are eligible to authorize public-private partnerships. Districts may authorize SB 1882 partnerships.

LEA and Head Start Partnerships

Head Start is an eligible provider for all partnerships.

LEA and Child Care Partnerships

Eligibility for programs to partner to serve eligible three-year-old children:

- At a minimum, comply with the applicable child-care licensing standards
- It is recommended that, whenever possible, LEAs choose providers that meet additional quality indicators for pre-k 4 classrooms.

Eligibility for programs to partner to serve eligible four-year-old children and mixed classrooms of eligible three-year-old and four-year-old children:

- Licensed by and in good standing with Child Care Regulation under the Health and Human Services Commission. A private provider is in good standing with Child Care Regulation under the Health and Human Services Commission if the department has not taken an action against the provider's license during the 24-month period preceding the date of a contract with a school district.
- And meet one of the requirements below:
 - accredited by a research-based, nationally recognized, and universally accessible accreditation system approved by the commissioner.
 - a Texas Rising Star Program provider with a three-star certification or higher.
 - a Texas School Ready! participant.
 - accredited by an organization that is recognized by the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission; or
 - in an existing partnership with a school district to provide a pre-k program not provided under this subchapter. TEC, §29.171(b)

Additional resources for Child Care Partnerships:

[TWC Prekindergarten Partnerships | Texas Workforce Commission](#)



[11] Early Learning Partnership Provider Eligibility Guidance | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/sites/default/files/early-learning-partnership-provider-eligibility.pdf>

Exploring Funding

Partnerships afford the opportunity to leverage multiple potential funding streams to provide comprehensive services to children, meeting community needs.

Funding Sources

State Education Funds through TEA

Districts can utilize the following state education funds to provide for pre-k instruction for three- and four-year-olds.

Foundation School Program Funding (FSP)

Tier One Program Allotment for Prekindergarten : Regular Program Allotment and other Special Allotments

The state delivers funding to schools through the FSP. Tier One Funding includes the regular program allotment. In Texas, full-day pre-k attendance counts as .5 for funding purposes. As the current Basic Allotment is \$6,160 per Average Daily Attendance (ADA), which means that the Basic Allotment for pre-k eligible students would draw down 50% = \$3,080.

Special Allotments

There are several special allotments that could be applicable to students in a pre-k partnership.

- Special Education Adjusted Allotment - a range in weights depending on needs
- Compensatory Education Allotment - Economically Disadvantaged students
- Bilingual Education Allotment - a range in weights depending on setting
- School Safety Allotment - \$10 per student and \$15,000 per campus, but this would depend on the specifics of the partnership.

Tier Two is a multiplier of Tier One

The funding above that is dependent on the District's tax rate. The amount depends on the number of pennies that the district levies.

Early Education Allotment

A district's Early Education Allotment is based on the average daily attendance (ADA) of K-3 economically disadvantaged students and ADA of K-3 bilingual students. If a K-3 student is both economically disadvantaged and bilingual, their ADA counts twice. A funding weight of 0.1 is applied against the Basic Allotment (\$616 per ADA). Note that enrolled pre-k students do not generate Early Education Allotment funding. The Early Education Allotment can be used to support pre-k programs because it must be used to improve performance in reading and math in pre-k-3rd grade. It has a 100% spending requirement.

Additional Days School Year Incentive

Schools can add half-day funding for up to 30 additional days (days above the campus academic calendar including 180 days with 75,600 operational minutes). This requires a certified teacher and at least 2 hours of instruction on designated days which are separate from regular instructional calendar days (e.g., ADSY days cannot be hosted in the second part of a regular instructional day). Since many child care programs operate on a year-round basis, this is an excellent option for districts to utilize.

Senate Bill 1882

For pre-k partnerships that meet 1882 eligibility, this enhancement provides the same amount of funding a charter school receives. This is based by campus and district and can generate additional funding per student. It is most beneficial for districts with more than 5,000 ADA and districts with less than 0.06 Tier 2 pennies. As pre-k is funded based on a half day, SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships generally can be expected to receive half the generated 1882 allotment.

[Financial Modeling Resources for Pre-k Partnerships | Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Education Agency](#)



Federal Title One Funding

Title I, Part A

Improving Basic Programs Operated By Local Educational Agencies of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, provides supplemental funding to state and local educational agencies to acquire additional education resources at schools serving high concentrations of students from low-income homes. These resources are used to improve the quality of education programs and ensure students from low-income families have opportunities to meet challenging state assessments. School districts that have [Title I, Part A funds](#), can utilize these funds as long as they have an appropriate supplement, not a supplant methodology implemented. ^[12]

State Compensatory Education Funding

[State Compensatory Education \(SCE\)](#) funds are supplemental and cannot be used to fund state mandated rules or programs or positions. According to state criteria, not all students in a pre-k program are automatically eligible for SCE. Compensatory education funds can be used to purchase items for pre-k classrooms as long as the students meet the eligibility for use of compensatory education funds, i.e. meet one of the criteria in TEC, §29.081(d) or are economically disadvantaged. In addition, if a pre-k classroom has both eligible and ineligible students then allocating the cost of these items is allowable. For example, if 50% of the students are eligible for free and reduced lunch, then compensatory education funds can pay for 50% of the pre-k classroom items

[12] Early Childhood Education FAQs | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/early-childhood-education-faqs>

[13] Finance and Grants. | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/financial-compliance/sce-faq.pdf>

State Child Care Funds

Child Care Subsidy

Parents receiving CCS financial assistance (subsidies) select the child care program that they want their children to attend. The child care program receives payment based on payment rates that are established by each Local Workforce Development Board and vary based on based on age of the child, hours of care (part-time or full-time) and quality of the child care program. Rates are effective from October 1 of the year through September 31 of the following year.

Rates can be found at <https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/child-care/data-reports-plans> (see *Provider Payment Rates*) or by contacting the Local Board. Child care subsidies reimburse for a full day of care for children enrolled for 6 hours or more of care, and part-day for children enrolled for less than 6 hours. In cases where full-day pre-k children need part-day care on a school day and full-day child care on holidays, TWC calculates a blended rate.

- For three-year-olds in partnerships, child care programs can receive a full-day subsidy payment to cover the care before and after the half day considered as hours for pre-k.
- Although the FSP funding for pre-k 4 is only half day, four-year-olds in partnerships may receive less than 6 hours of before and after school care due to full-day pre-k instruction. As a result, child care programs may receive a blended payment rate.

Federal Head Start Funding

Unlike child care and pre-k, Head Start has a federal-to-local grantee model. Depending on the local county in Texas, this could be a school district, nonprofit, or faith-based institution. Head Start funding can be full day (6 hours), full working day (10 hours), full working day - full year (10 hours), or part-day. Generally, Head Start is only available for children in families who meet federal low-income guidelines or who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program public assistance services. Other eligible participants include children who are in the foster care system or experiencing homelessness. Head Start funding can be braided or blended with state pre-k funding. It's important to note that Head Start requirements for additional support and services for families are extensive. The majority of Head Start programs operate on a 6-hour day program.

Braiding and Blending Funds

Partnerships provide a unique opportunity to braid and blend funding, including state education funds, child care subsidies, and Head Start funds. Districts receive FSP funding for the first half of the pre-k day for four-year-olds and three-year-olds. Other sources of funding indicated above can be used to fund the second half of the day as well as wrap-around services, including child care before and after pre-k hours. It is important to review and understand unique eligibility requirements and limitations based on rules related to supplanting funding.

Braiding coordinates funds from multiple sources to support the total cost of a service, but each funding source maintains its own identity. In braiding funds, revenues are allocated, and expenditures are tracked by different categories of funding sources. This requires detailed cost allocation measures.

Alternatively, blending funds involves combining funds from two or more sources into a single pool to finance an initiative. In blending, funds are commingled, and costs are not necessarily allocated or tracked by individual funding sources.

Section 1: Key Takeaways

- 1. The early childhood ecosystem in Texas is diverse and extensive, aimed at addressing the developmental and educational needs of children from birth to age five. The early childhood system in Texas is comprised of three main sectors:**
 - Early Learning and Care Sector: This includes center and home-based child care providers, Head Start programs, public pre-k, and child care subsidies.
 - Early Childhood Intervention Sector: This includes Early Childhood Intervention services and Early Childhood Special Education provided by public schools.
 - Early Childhood Family Support Sector: This encompasses home visiting programs, parenting support, family education, and family resource centers.
- 2. Texas provides free publicly funded pre-k for eligible students through the Foundation School Program, which is the primary source of funding for Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). Services have been traditionally delivered on public or charter school campuses for half-day (three-year-olds) and full-day (four-year-olds). At the state level, the Texas Education Agency provides oversight.**
- 3. In Texas, LEAs are required to offer full-day pre-k for four-year-olds if a district identifies 15 or more eligible children who are four years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year.**
- 4. LEAs must ensure potential partners meet eligibility requirements.**
- 5. There are several ways in which LEAs and districts can partner with early learning providers including informal partnerships, formal partnerships, and SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships.**
- 6. In Texas, full-day pre-k for three- and four-year-olds count as .5 for funding purposes. Both eligible three- and four-year-olds produce the same funding, a half-day ADA. Districts and early learning providers blend and braid funds to cover a student's full day of care.**



Section 2: Design and Launch of SB 1882

Pre-K Partnerships



SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership Structures

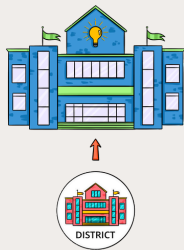
Districts may consider an SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership for a number of reasons, including:

- These partnerships can bring in additional funding to support pre-k classrooms through the incentives in SB 1882
- Districts can leverage the expertise of early learning partners within their communities.
- By working with child care centers, SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships can support districts in making available early learning and child care opportunities for families within the district.
- SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships can increase the available seats for pre-k students within a district.
- SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships can increase a district's enrollment.
- Districts can enact strong authorizing process to launch and monitor SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships to ensure quality learning opportunities for their youngest students.
- SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships can support district goals to increase kindergarten readiness.

Within the Texas Partnership structure and the ecosystem of early childhood education and care, there are several ways that districts can structure SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

Direct Partnership

Districts can directly partner with an SB 1882-eligible entity to provide pre-k



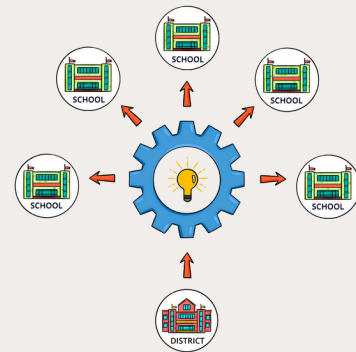
- This partner could be an existing child care center (provided it is an eligible entity type), nonprofit, government entity, institution of higher education or a newly launched eligible entity
- Learning occurs at either the child care center or a district facility
- Depending on where learning occurs, students may be co-enrolled between a child care center and district or may only be enrolled in the district.

Examples

- A district converts a current pre-k partnership into an SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership
- A district enters into a partnership with a new pre-k entity
- A district creates a new nonprofit to operate existing pre-k programs

Hub Partnership

Districts can partner with a Hub entity that holds contracts with community-based early learning providers that serve pre-k students



Districts can partner with a Hub entity that holds contracts with community-based early learning providers that serve pre-k students

- The Hub entity must be an SB 1882-eligible entity
- The Hub entity provides support for community-based early-learning providers
- Learning occurs at the child care center and students in pre-k are co-enrolled in the center and the district

How do Early Learning Public-Private Partnerships fit in with SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships?

Public-private pre-k partnerships are collaborations between local educational agencies (LEAs) such as school districts or open-enrollment charter schools, and private child care or Head Start programs. LEAs and private child care or Head Start programs may establish formal or informal partnerships based on enrollment and development activities.

Formal partnership models allow for the LEA and early learning providers or Head Start program to dually enroll children, provide pre-k and/or additional comprehensive services or extended hours, and blend multiple sources of funding. Each partner must meet the requirements and standards of their respective programs.

Informal partnership models are individualized to meet the unique needs and resources of the community they serve. LEAs and ELPs can be innovative in creating models that best serve their communities. In an informal partnership, children are not dually enrolled so district ADA funds are not shared with the early learning provider.

Some formal pre-k partnerships may be SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships and some may not be, depending on the eligibility of the operating entity, the process to enter into the partnership, and the nature of the contract in place. However, in many cases, districts may already be collaborating with early learning providers through formal or informal public-private partnerships. As a district considering SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships, leveraging existing formal partnerships may be a place to start.

- Could an existing public-private early learning partnership become a Texas Partnership?
- Could a Hub partnership structure support multiple existing public-private early learning partnerships?



Design and Launch Process for SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

Districts are the decision-makers in Texas Partnerships. Districts play the role of authorizer, the entity that decides when to seek a partnership, setting expectations for outcomes, overseeing performance, and determining renewal or revocation decisions. Quality authorizers ensure each school has freedom and flexibility to innovate and meet student needs while also making sure the school is succeeding and open to all. The extent to which authorizers fulfill their responsibilities—approving new schools, monitoring performance, and closing failing schools—determines the overall quality of schools in a community and increases the number of high-quality, best-fit options for students and families. ^[14]

Strong district authorizers will:

- ✓ Follow processes to plan for, launch, and oversee partnerships
- ✓ Ensure transparency in their decision-making
- ✓ Focus on maintaining high standards, upholding school autonomy, protecting student/public interests and improving educational outcomes

Authorizing Stages

The authorizing process follows several stages:

- Planning
- Application Process and Decision Making
- Pre-Opening
- Monitoring
- Renewal and Revocation Decisions

Resources to support the partnership design and launch process. The [TEA Authorizing Handbook](#) and associated suite of resources provide reference materials, templates, and exemplars, are intended to serve as guidance for Texas independent school district boards seeking to authorize and oversee in-district charter partnerships. TEA has developed model documents to support the phases of the process. These can be found on the Tools page of the Texas Partnerships website.



[14] TEA Authorizer Handbook | Texas Education Agency. https://txpartnerships.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/TEA-Authorizer-Handbook_2024-2.pdf

1. Planning: Set A Vision ^[15]

Texas Partnerships can help districts meet their student outcome goals. Districts should create a clear mission and vision around their authorizing work that is connected and aligned with the overall goals of the district and its strategic plan. The work of authorizing and Texas Partnerships are most effective when they connect to a district's broader vision for student success that considers academic goals, the diversity of student needs, expectations for low-performing schools, and a desire for continuous and dramatic improvement. As part of the vision setting, districts should consider the following:

- How could engaging in partnerships improve student learning and encourage innovative learning methods, and how is this tied to the district's broader strategy to improve student outcomes?
- How would a partnership create more opportunities that would attract or retain teachers to your district?
- How would the district's process for selecting and overseeing the performance contract with a partner bolster accountability in the district?

Considerations for SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

As key players in the early childhood ecosystem, including early learning providers and child care providers as part of the visioning is instrumental to the overall success of any future partnerships. The district and early learning providers should be aligned on the vision for success for students, families, and the community, and both entities should be clear about the mutual benefits of partnerships.

SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships Benefits Eligibility Requirement

As a first step to partnerships, districts applying for Texas Partnerships benefits are required to adopt a local authorizing policy which informs district actions. Districts may adopt TEA's Model District Charter Authorizing Policy or a similar policy, approved by TEA, that meets eligibility requirements. Districts that are not using the TEA model charter authorizing policy must have the locally developed policy approved prior to submitting the application for Texas Partnership benefits.

2. Planning: Set A Vision

Community engagement is critical to establishing and maintaining successful partnerships, and this engagement should not happen at only one point in the process. Rather, districts should actively engage their community in the partnership process, giving students, parents, staff, and other community members an opportunity to ask questions, learn what is happening, voice their concerns and hopes, and actively participate in the process of choosing a partner.

Although the specifics will be different for every partnership, clear and consistent communication is critical. The district should communicate about the reasons for the partnership, the district's goals for the partnership, and what families can expect from the process. It is also important to set clear expectations for community involvement. Community members should know when they will have an

[15] Process follows content in Authorizer Handbook and Texas Partnerships Guides

opportunity to vote, shape a policy or statement, or provide feedback – and how the district will then use that information to shape the partnership.

It is important to anticipate that Texas Partnerships may not be well-understood, especially in districts where such partnerships do not already exist, and families and school staff feel uncertain about the future of their school or child’s learning environment. Districts must set clear expectations about the partnership, including how it will form and how it will work, and communicate at each step along the way.

Considerations for SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

- Particularly for pre-k partnerships, understanding the needs and desires of families when it comes to care is critical in designing partnerships that meet the needs of the community
- Engaging with the child care community and the many stakeholders who play a role in the child care ecosystem in the planning process is critical to ensuring partnerships are a benefit across the district

3. Application Process and Decision Making: Assess Need and Recruit Operating Partners

As the authorizer, districts are responsible for determining when to seek a partner. Conducting a rigorous and comprehensive application and decision-making process, also referred to as the Call for Quality Schools (CQS), is a key responsibility for district authorizers. The CQS encompasses the process by which a district authorizer communicates its needs for operating partners, evaluates applications submitted by potential operators, develops evidence-based recommendations for approval or denial, and takes board action on those recommendations.

As a precursor to this process, the district will need to determine need. This process is often called a Quality Seats Analysis (QSA). Through a QSA, the district reviews and analyzes performance, community feedback, and plans strategic school actions according to district needs.

Considerations for SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

- What early learning opportunities exist currently within the district?
- Where are there gaps in the care provided for families?
- What are the trends in pre-k enrollment? Are all eligible students enrolled in district pre-k opportunities? Is enrollment equitable for students across the district?
- Does the district offer pre-k for three-year-olds?
- What does kindergarten readiness look like within the district?
- Where does early learning and care occur within the district? Are there child care or pre-k “deserts” within the district?
- What structure of pre-k partnership meets the district's vision and needs?

Once the needs of the district and community are determined. The next step includes publishing a Call for Quality Schools that communicates the district's need and invites potential partners to apply for the partnerships identified.

A Strong Call

- Articulates the unique needs of the district
- Shares the application process, including the timeline, submission requirements, application content and format, and process and criteria for evaluation of proposals
- Details about the types of partnerships desired, students to be served, and community priorities for the partnerships
- Application questions to elicit information needed for evaluation of the applicant's capacity and plans
- Any non-negotiables for partnership from the district's perspective

Considerations for SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

Districts need to be aware of the requirements in the Texas Education Code

- LEAs must solicit and consider proposals from community-based child care providers for partnerships to provide prekindergarten classes prior to constructing, repurposing, or leasing a classroom facility, or issuing bonds for the construction or repurposing of a classroom facility, to provide prekindergarten classes. TEC, §29.153(g)
- Before establishing a new prekindergarten program, a school district shall consider the possibility of sharing use of an existing Head Start or other child-care program site as a prekindergarten site. TEC, §29.1533

Districts must meet these requirements in advance of launching their Call for Quality Schools, the Call for Quality Schools does not supplant the RFP requirement.

Districts should be clear in the Call about the type of SB 1882 Pre-k Partnership structure they are looking for, a hub model or a direct partnership model.

SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships Benefits Eligibility Requirement

Partnerships benefits are required to adopt TEA's Model Local Campus Partner Application and Model Scoring Rubric or a similar local application and scoring rubric, approved by TEA, that meets eligibility requirements. Districts may wish to adapt the Model Application based on the pre-k partnership structure they wish to launch, if this is the case the district can consider amending the Call application but must have it approved by TEA before the Call launches.

4. Application Process and Decision Making: Collect and Evaluate Local Campus Partnership Applications

Local campus partner applications allow the district to assess the partner’s capacity to operate the school, including how they will address the specific school needs identified in the Call. As part of the Call for Quality Schools process, the district evaluates applications to ensure applicants have the capacity to operate the school and partnerships. Districts should also carefully consider and clearly communicate the role that parents and other school community members will play in the application review and approval process, including how the application process will work and how and when decisions will be made. Districts can create opportunities for parents and community members to play an active role in the approval process by including community representatives on the application review team or by forming parent/community councils that select partners (or submit preferences) from a pool of district-approved operators.

A strong partner application includes sections that require the potential partner to provide:

- Evidence of the partner’s capacity to manage the campus, including ensuring the partner will have at least three people on the board and one full-time staff member when the district applies for benefits
- Evidence that the partner has a consistent vision
- Information about the partner’s curriculum, assessments, instructional strategies
- Description of how the partner will recruit and manage their staff and any professional development activities or programs

A strong partner evaluation process includes:

- Engage a review panel to identify partner strengths, weaknesses, past performance, and best fit to campus and district needs
- Conducting capacity interviews with board members and proposed staff member

The TEA Authorizer Handbook contains additional details and resources to support the application review process and capacity interviews.

Considerations for SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

Districts will want to ensure that any potential partners are able to meet the multiple requirements and regulations depending on their program (for example, Child Care Licensing, Head Start, Texas Rising Star)

Applications should detail how partners will meet TEA requirements for high-quality prekindergarten (HQPK).

What is the High-Quality Prekindergarten Program (HQPK)?

House Bill 3 (2019) required that all prekindergarten offered to eligible four-year-old students be full day, and that the prekindergarten meet the high-quality requirements adopted by the legislature in 2015.



Curriculum: The curriculum used in a prekindergarten classroom serving eligible four-year-old students must be aligned with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. A district may use a locally designed curriculum as long as the curriculum aligns with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. (see the current [adopted instructional materials list](#)).

Student Progress Monitoring: All four-year-old eligible students are assessed at beginning-of-year (BOY), middle-of-year (MOY), and end-of-year (EOY) using a progress monitoring tool listed on the Commissioner's List of Approved Prekindergarten Progress Monitoring Instruments. The list can be found on [TEA's Data Tool Selection Guidance webpage](#). The five developmental domains include:

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

Teacher Qualifications: House Bill (HB) 2729, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023 included updates to the additional teacher qualifications as well as teacher qualification updates for prekindergarten teachers teaching in a contracted prekindergarten classroom. Teacher qualifications under HB 2729 are only applicable to prekindergarten classrooms serving eligible four-year-old students.

Teachers in a LEA-provided prekindergarten classroom: Each prekindergarten teacher serving eligible four-year-old students has a current Texas certification that enables them to teach prekindergarten and meets one of the following additional qualification options:

- Certified + Has a certification offered through a training center accredited by Association Montessori Internationale or through the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education
- Certified + Be employed as a prekindergarten teacher in a school district that has ensured specific prekindergarten professional development has been met:
 - Has completed 150 hours of professional development in ECE-specific topics over a consecutive five-year period; 75 of the 150 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship or;
 - 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
- Certified + Has a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)
- Certified + Completion of TSR-Comprehensive Program
- Certified + Has an associate or baccalaureate degree in ECE, Special Education-ECE or a non-ECE degree with 15 units of ECE-specific coursework Certified + Has taught for at least 8 years in a nationally accredited child care program or Texas Rising Star program

For teachers in a pre-k classroom provided by a contracted entity which includes classrooms operated by an 1882 partner: Each teacher must be supervised by a person who meets the requirements under subsection (b) TEC §29.167 (b-1) and have one of the following qualifications

- **Contract Entity** At least two years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or Texas Rising Star Program and a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or another early childhood education credential approved by the agency
- **Contract Entity** At least two years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or Texas Rising Star Program and a certification offered through a training center accredited by Association Montessori Internationale or through the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education
- **Contract Entity** Been employed as a prekindergarten teacher in a school district that has ensured specific prekindergarten professional development requirements have been met
 - Has completed 150 hours of professional development in ECE-specific topics over a consecutive five-year period; 75 of the 150 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship or;
 - 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
- **Contract Entity** An associate or baccalaureate degree in ECE, Special Education-ECE or a non-ECE degree with 15 units of ECE-specific coursework
- **Contract Entity** At least eight years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or Texas Rising Star Program

Student to Teacher Ratio: Districts attempt to maintain an average teacher to student ratio of 1:11 in their prekindergarten classroom(s). Districts maintain the appropriate records to document compliance with this high-quality component.

Family Engagement Plan: Districts have developed a written Family Engagement Plan that is used to achieve and maintain high levels of family involvement and includes a primary point of contact and contact information. Districts must review the Family Engagement Plan at least annually for its effectiveness in achieving positive child and family outcomes and must make their HQPK Family Engagement Plan available to their community on their website by November 1st of each school year. 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

Program Evaluation: Districts must select a method of evaluating its prekindergarten program and implement the method selected to evaluate its prekindergarten program annually. Data from a student progress monitoring instrument from the commissioner's list of approved prekindergarten instruments is reviewed as part of the program evaluation. Districts must create a data driven program improvement plan based on the program evaluation to ensure all high-quality prekindergarten components are met. Results of the program evaluation are reported to parents annually, and districts maintain the appropriate records to document compliance with this high-quality component.



5. Application Process and Decision Making: Evidence-Based Recommendation and Board Approval

All local campus partner applications must receive approval from the local board of trustees.

Before a formal recommendation goes before the board, the review committee considers the data collected from the application, the capacity interview, and composes a written comprehensive evaluation of the application. This evaluation also informs the overall recommendation for approval or denial of the application. The review committee submits its recommendation to the district lead for the authorizing process, who will then submit a recommendation, informed by the review committee's recommendation, to the district superintendent to present to the board. The school governing board may conduct a public hearing to allow applicants to present their application and school plans to the district board and for community input on the proposed partnership prior to formal consideration.

Districts should be sure to schedule time for this step that recognizes both the board's meeting schedule and the time needed to inform the entire school community about the benefits of the partnership and to win support. Partnerships shift roles and responsibilities for the school district, the new operating partner, and potentially other community members and organizations that have had an ongoing relationship with the school. District leaders can help prepare their local boards to make these difficult decisions by providing detailed information about the desired SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership structure and partner selection and allowing adequate time for board members to evaluate the opportunity and hear community input.

6. Pre-Opening: Negotiate and Execute Performance Contracts with Selected Partners

In accordance with a district's local authorizing policy, the performance contract formalizes the partnership, clarifies roles and responsibilities, and sets expectations for the partnership. The performance contract outlines the operating partner's autonomy over the academic model, staffing, budget, and calendar, and it includes the academic model the partner will implement at the campus(es) they will manage.

The contract will also include the funding structure of the partnership and the academic and financial goals the operating partner must meet. The operating partner will already have provided most of these details through the application process, and the contract codifies those details.

Any district that applies for partnership school benefits must submit an executed performance contract to TEA. TEA will review the contract against a rubric to confirm that the contract meets SB 1882 benefits eligibility requirements. To maintain eligibility for 1882 benefits, the performance contract must continually meet these requirements throughout the existence of the partnership. The district must notify TEA of any changes to the performance contract within 30 calendar days. TEA has also created a contract template that districts can use to begin negotiations and finalize negotiation terms.


Considerations for SB 1882 Pre-k Partnerships

SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships impact many departments across districts and stakeholders within the child care ecosystem. When creating agreements, a diverse group of stakeholders should be part of negotiations, including:

- The operating partner
- District leadership across departments, including innovation/authorizing, early childhood education, enrollment, finance, multilingual education, and special education
- Local Workforce Development Board
- Child care providers, depending on the partnership structure

Enrollment in SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships

Enrollment in pre-k is ongoing; families may enroll eligible children throughout the year. Once a student is 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. Students may not be denied or excluded from participating in a prekindergarten program for any reason if they are deemed eligible. Districts and operating partners will need to work together to ensure that students are appropriately enrolled and appropriate documentation is collected for the partnership meeting different program requirements. Annually the district can begin verifying eligibility for enrollment in the upcoming school year after April 1st.

Pre-K Eligibility and Registration Webinar 

Tuition-Supported Prekindergarten

A district may charge tuition to provide

- half-day and full-day pre-k classes to children who are ineligible for free pre-k classes; and
- an additional half day of pre-k classes to those three-year-old children who are eligible for free pre-k classes

If a district charges tuition:

- the tuition may not be higher than is necessary to cover the added costs of providing the additional pre-k classes, including any costs associated with data collection and reporting requirements. These rates are updated each year in the summer for the next school year.
- the district must submit a proposed tuition rate to the commissioner for approval annually.

The Contract

The contract should clarify the enrollment process for students in the SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership.

The contract must describe the financial arrangement, the funding sources available to the partnership site (Foundational School Program, 1882 funds, tuition, child care subsidies), how funds will be passed through to the partner, and what services the operating partner will purchase from the district.

The contract should describe processes for data sharing and clarify which entity owns what data.

The contract must include financial and academic performance goals for the schools and students in the partnership, as well as consequences for failure to meet those goals.

Applying for SB 1882 Benefits

After a district develops and authorizes a partnership, the district can apply to TEA for partnership benefits available through SB 1882. The district board of trustees approves the partnership. TEA only approves the application for the financial and accountability benefits. All districts seeking approval for a Texas Partnership must submit:

1. A completed Texas Partnership Benefits Application
2. The district's Local Board-Approved Charter Authorizing Policy. If the district is not using the TEA model policy, the charter authorizing policy must be approved by TEA prior to the application submission
3. The Local Campus Partner Application submitted by the partner and the district's completed evaluation documentation. If the district is not using the TEA model application and scoring rubric, these must be approved prior to the application submission
4. The Partnership Performance Contract (approved by the district and operating partner boards)

Once the partnership agreement is in place and the partnership is launched, the role of the district authorizer is to monitor the progress of the partnership and determine the renewal or revocation of the agreement.^[16]

For more information on monitoring, renewal, and revocation decisions, please refer to the *TEA Authorizer Handbook*.



[16] TEA Texas Partnerships Guide

Section 2: Key Takeaways



1. There are many reasons why a district may want to launch an SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership. Districts should create a clear vision behind the “why” of any potential partnership within the district and include key stakeholders as part of the visioning process.
2. SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships should be mutually beneficial to both the district and the operating partner.
3. Districts can create SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships under two structures, directly partnering with an eligible provider or through a hub model.
4. Any public pre-k program serving eligible four-year-olds must meet the high-quality prekindergarten program (HQPK) components.
5. The performance contract is a key document in the authorizing process to execute the partnership. It holds the operating partner to a high standard to achieve the goals within the contract and impact the success of the district.
6. Clear and consistent stakeholder engagement and communication are crucial. Districts should anticipate that many stakeholders are not familiar with SB 1882 or SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships and will need to implement plans and strategies for two-way communication.

Section 3: Navigating Challenges and Best Practices



Navigating Challenges and Best Practices

While there are significant benefits associated with SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships, there are many challenges to overcome in the process of developing, implementing and sustaining partnerships. These challenges are based on organizational capacity and leadership, diverse standards and regulations across systems, and limitations of resources.

District Capacity and Coordination

Districts must dedicate capacity and resources to the authorizing of partnerships. In districts with multiple Texas Partnerships, this may look like a dedicated authorizing or innovation office. District authorizing leads have the responsibility of working with operating partners and ensuring effective coordination across district departments (e.g. finance, HR, enrollment). Implementing partnerships requires internal district departments to operate in collaboration with each other to allow for strong support for and oversight of partnerships. With SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships, district authorizers will need to set clear expectations about who owns the work, particularly between the authorizing department and the district's early childhood department, and ensure effective collaboration and coordination.

Organizational Capacity and Leadership of Prospective Partners

Creating partnerships between school districts and private providers in the licensed child care system can be challenging due to the scope, size, and administrative infrastructure of these two different systems. As noted in Section 2, districts are the decision-makers in Texas Partnerships. Historically, the implementation and expansion of public pre-k unilaterally through school districts led to decreased four-year-old enrollment with private child care providers. The loss of four-year-olds created financial difficulties for private child care centers. Care for four-year-olds is generally more profitable and less costly compared to caring for younger children. For many private child care providers, the profits from caring for four-year-olds were necessary to balance the costs of infant and toddler care, and the decreased enrollment has resulted in financial losses for private providers. This has resulted in child care programs experiencing a lack of trust in school districts. Partnerships can help mitigate this impact and better stabilize the child care business model. It is helpful for school districts to have an understanding of the child care business model in order to build trust with prospective partners.

School districts and private child care providers often have very different organizational structures, sizes, and administrative capacities, which can make collaboration challenging. The size and composition of administrative teams in child care programs can vary widely depending on factors such as the size of the facility, the number of children enrolled, and the funding streams supporting the center. Often these are small teams who have extensive responsibilities managing all aspects of day-to-day operations within a system that is highly regulated. They may lack real or perceived capacity to partner.

Navigating Diverse Program Regulations and Requirements

As noted, the state offers a mix of public and private programs, each designed to support different aspects of early childhood development and funded through different public funding streams. As a result, there are different program regulations and requirements associated with the different funding streams. Understanding these differences is essential to creating successful collaborations.

Eligibility

While there are some similarities in eligibility for public pre-k and child care scholarships, there are key differences. The income threshold for a child to qualify for a child care subsidy (85% of the State Median Income) is higher than the income threshold for public pre-k (180% of the Federal Poverty Level). So when seeking to identify child care programs with potentially eligible children to co-enroll, it requires a more extensive review of family income than identifying families that receive a child care scholarship. This is most commonly done through household income screeners provided by the district.

Similarly, there are additional eligibility options for public pre-k that are not income-based, such as language proficiency and children of military families who are not eligible for child care scholarships. In such cases, the potential partnership has fewer options for leveraging multiple funding streams for the collaboration.

It is important to note that children who qualify and are enrolled in Head Start are categorically eligible for public pre-k.

In addition, multiple different application and enrollment processes for children can be challenging for families especially when the timelines for application and enrollment do not align.

Quality Standards

Community-based child care programs must comply with Texas Child Care Regulations [Minimum Standards](#), and if they contract with a Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) to accept child care scholarships, they must be [Texas Rising Star certified](#). Programs are monitored annually by both Child Care Regulations and the LWDB for different standards. While the [Texas High-Quality Prekindergarten Requirements](#) are similar in terms of categories, it is important to work through the details of compliance with all of these standards. For example, to achieve a Texas Rising Star, it's possible to have a higher teacher-to-student ratio than the 11:1 required by High-Quality Prekindergarten components, as well as a larger group size of no more than 22 students at one time.

Facilities | Safety Standards

In some cases, standards or regulations between the public school setting and child care setting are in conflict, which requires collaboration to resolve. For example, the recently updated [Texas School Safety Standards](#) require that classroom doors remain locked. The Minimum Standards for child care require that any locked doors cannot be counted as exits in terms of fire safety.

Meeting Staffing Requirements



SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships must navigate staff certification and qualifications requirements based on students served and partnership structure, including meeting TEA teacher certification requirements and Texas Rising Star Guidelines. As outlined in the Texas Rising Star Guidelines, in order to be certified, child care programs must meet standards for director and staff qualifications and training. The specific standards for a teacher can vary widely from program to program, with the minimum requirement being 30 hours of pre-service training and a high school diploma.

Requirements for teachers in a partnership classroom are significantly more rigorous. Recent legislation amended requirements for teachers in pre-k 4 partnership classrooms to allow for specific early childhood education experience without Texas Teacher Certification.^[17]

Partnerships can use one of two models for staffing partnership classrooms:

- **District Teacher** In this case, the district employs the qualified teacher and assigns that teacher to a partnership classroom. Usually, the district uses ADA funding to pay the teacher directly and does not pass funding through to the partnership center.
- **Child Care Teacher** In this case, the partnership center employs the teacher of record.

Regardless of which model, it is essential for the teacher, teacher assistants, administrators, operating partners, and district personnel to collaborate to ensure that the staff in the classroom is clear on the unique expectations of the partnership classroom and has a clear reporting structure.

[Texas Rising Star Certification Guidelines | Texas Rising Star](#)



[HQPK - Teacher Qualifications | TEA](#)

[17] Early Childhood Education Academics. Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/hb2729-faq.pdf>

Meeting Needs of Special Populations

Special populations of students with unique needs can be challenging to navigate in partnerships due to additional requirements mandated by the state and federal government. In contrast, child care programs have only minimum standards for implementing recommendations for a child identified with special needs.^[18]

It is essential for the district and partner to negotiate processes and procedures related to both serving children identified with special needs as well as the process for screening and evaluation of children who may be at risk. There are potential additional funding streams to support the necessary accommodations and services for children in a partnership setting when/if it is determined to be the most appropriate environment by the ARD Committee. For example, the Texas Workforce Commission Child Care Services Program allows for an Inclusion Assistance Rate.^[19]

Emergent Bilingual Requirements and Practices

Children who are unable to speak and comprehend the English language are eligible for public pre-k. Similarly to different requirements for children with special needs, there are significant additional requirements for educator qualifications and programmatic elements for meeting the needs of emergent bilingual students in public pre-k. While there are recommendations for meeting a child's home language needs in child care settings in the [Texas Early Learning Guidelines](#), there are no such requirements in the Texas Child Care Minimum Standards. It can be challenging to recruit a qualified educator who is appropriately credentialed to serve in a licensed child care setting and to meet the requirements for bilingual pre-k programs.

Nutrition Requirements

Districts must comply with the National School Lunch Program requirements. Child care programs must follow the meal and snack patterns established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that is administered by the Texas Department of Agriculture, regardless of whether a program is participating in the program for reimbursement. Only about 54% of Texas child care programs participate in the CACFP.^[20] If the child care program does not participate in the CACFP, it may have challenges meeting the requirements of the district for nutrition.

[18] §746.2202. Minimum Standard. <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>

[19] Children with Disabilities | Texas Workforce Commission. <https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/child-care/children-with-disabilities>

[20] CACFP Participation in Texas | National CACFP Sponsors Association. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f57996634d394990a60e82cd216babcb>

Managing Funding Requirements

While there are significant advantages to partnerships through the blending and braiding of different funding sources, it is critical that partnership planning processes carefully consider both the funds that are available and the process for distributing funding.

In most cases, districts identify the Foundation School Program funds per enrolled pre-k student as available to support partnership and, at the end of the year, can allocate the Weighted Average Daily Attendance funds that are based on. It's essential for all potential partnerships to note that FSP funding for pre-k 4 students remains at a half-day rate, while districts are required to provide a full-day pre-k 4 program. Districts can also include the Early Education Allotment. Of note, the Early Education Allotment is generated by K-3rd grade students; however, LEAs can use the Early Education Allotment to fund pre-k.

Districts should consider the potential benefits of increased enrollment through pre-k partnerships and surveying all other potentially available funds to support them. For example, for the 2023-2024 school year, certain districts and open-enrollment charter schools are eligible for adjustments to their instructional materials and technology allotments to accommodate substantial growth in enrollment between the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years.^[21]

The SB 1882 benefits formula takes into account student characteristics and funding discrepancies between districts and charters, which vary by district and by school.

Generally, Head Start programs are well-suited for collaboration with local districts. Collaboration is one of Head Start's highest priorities. The [Texas Head Start Collaboration Office](#) can support training and technical assistance, exchange and collaboration across state boundaries, and engage a wide variety of public and private partnerships. Head Start funding is easily blended and braided without concerns related to supplantation.

The Child Care Services (CCS) Program run by the Texas Workforce Commission has outlined how Child Care Development Funds (CCDF) subsidized child care can be braided with pre-k funds to support wraparound child care services for eligible children before and after the pre-k half- or full-day.^[22] It is important to note that the income eligibility levels are different between CSS and pre-k. CCS are based on 85% of the State Median Income and pre-k is based on the Federal Poverty Level. CCS funding for children who are eligible for both programs can be used.

CCDF funding supports costs for child care, including wraparound child care services for children enrolled in pre-k. TWC rules define how CCDF pays for child care, based on the number of hours of child care provided:

TWC Child Care Services rule §809.93 defines full-day and part-day child care as follows:

- *Full-day = six to 12 hours of care within a 24-hour period*
- *Part-day = fewer than six hours within a 24-hour period*

[21] State Adopted Instructional Materials | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/instructional-materials/state-adopted-instructional-materials/instructional-materials-and-technology-allotment>

[22] CCDF-subsidized child care may be braided with pre-K funds to support wraparound child care services for eligible children before and after the pre-K half- or full-day.

Typically, eligible four-year-olds enrolled in full-day pre-k programs will require part-day wraparound childcare. Eligible three-year-olds enrolled in half-day pre-k will typically require full-day wraparound child care.

For school-age and full-day pre-k children who need part-day child care on school days and full-day child care on school holidays, TWC calculates a blended rate for child care services provided during the school year. The blended rate combines the full-day rate with the part-day rate as follows:

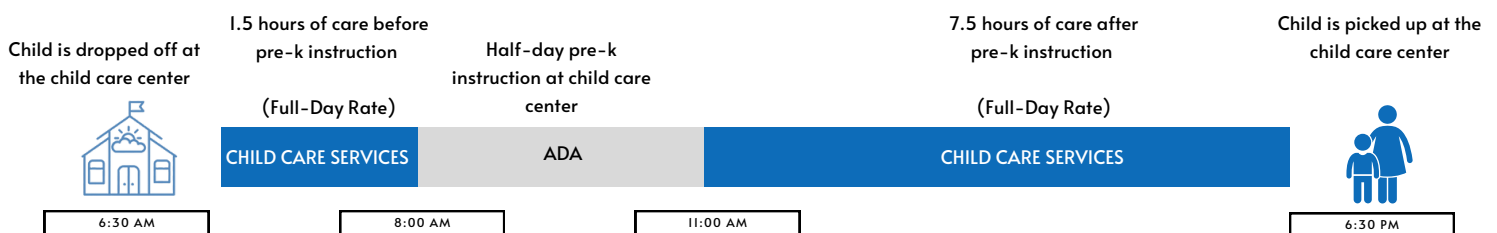
- Part-day rate for 175 days + full-day rate for 30 days
- Divided by the total number of days during the school year (205 days)

For partnerships for pre-k 3 students, braiding these funds generally maximizes all funding streams. TWC's CCS program will support wrap-around child care for pre-k 3 students, which is needed for more than 6 hours per day. Therefore, three-year-old partnership classrooms will receive a full-day CCS payment rate.

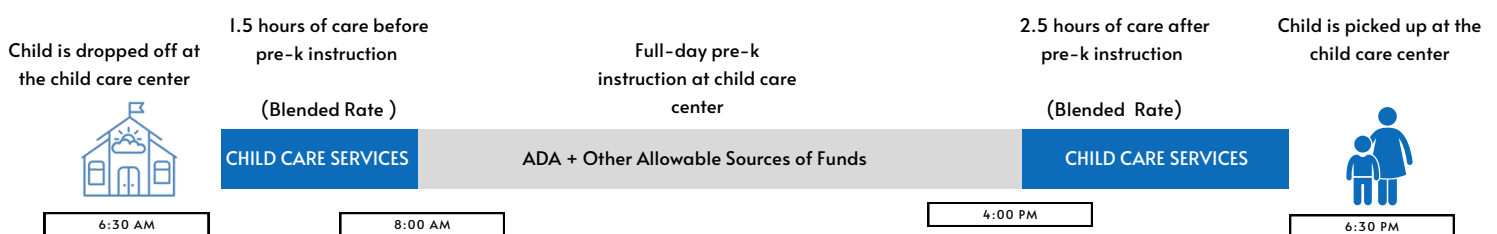
For partnerships for pre-k 4 students, TEA's funding for four-year-old pre-k requires additional braiding and blending of funding to cover the full day of pre-k instruction. TWC's CCDF funds support wrap-around child care, for pre-k 4 students; which is needed for less than 6 hours per day. Therefore, four-year-old partnership classrooms will receive a part-day CCS payment rate. CCDF funds do not support the costs of pre-k instruction. Classrooms for pre-k 4 must identify other available and allowable funds to support the costs of full-day pre-k instruction.

Hypothetical Funding Scenarios

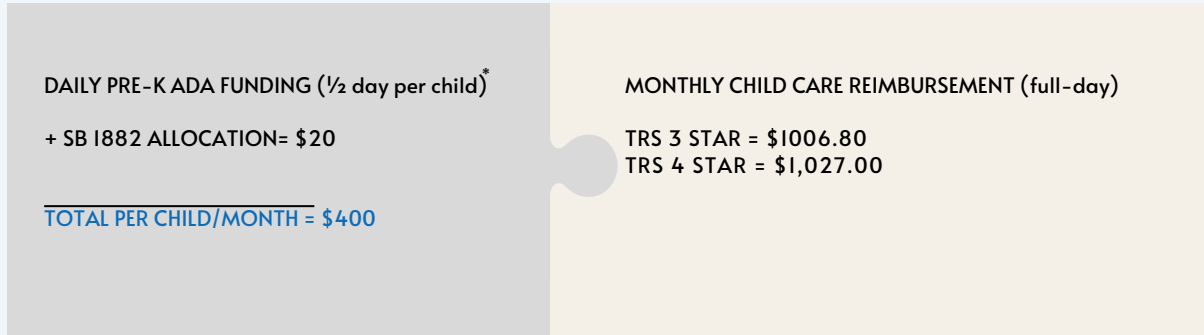
Formal partnership for pre-k 3 located at a community-based child care center for children eligible for child care subsidy and pre-k co-enrollment.



Formal partnership for pre-k 4 located at a community-based child care center for children eligible for child care subsidy and pre-k co-enrollment.



PRE-K 3



*Assuming 20 day per month max reimbursement

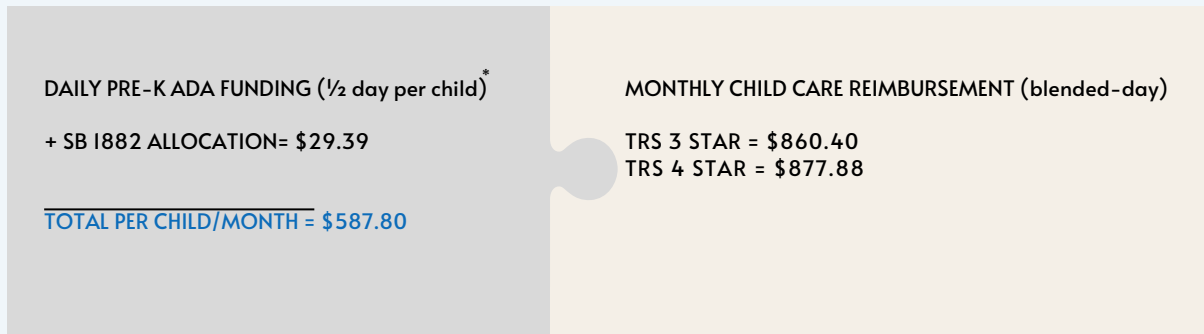


Monthly Revenue Per Child

TRS 3
\$1,406.80

TRS 4
\$1,427.00

PRE-K 4



*Assuming 20 day per month max reimbursement



Monthly Revenue Per Child

TRS 3
\$1,448.20

TRS 4
\$1,465.60

Another consideration is related to the cash flow or outlay of costs vs. payment timeline. Child care programs are traditionally small businesses that have a 1% profit margin.^[23] Considering the outlay of costs and reimbursement timeline it can be challenging for child care programs with a low profit margin to cover expenses of operating with required standards and paying a qualified teacher without an initial investment of funding while waiting to be reimbursed with other funds such as ADA. Districts should consider opportunities to provide for an initial drawdown of funding and then establish a cadence of settling up.

[23] The Economics of Childcare Supply | US Treasury Dept. <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/The-Economics-of-Childcare-Supply-09-14-final.pdf>

Section 3: Key Takeaways



Successful collaborations are grounded in building trust and understanding the goals of all parties to benefit children, families, and the community.

1. Set a vision that addresses the strengths and opportunities for pre-k services in your district and community.
2. Conduct the Quality Seats Analysis (QSA) to assess the early childhood provider landscape, understand student data, and what barriers exist to pre-k enrollment for both pre-k 3 and pre-k 4.
3. Consider how the goals and challenges can inform the structure of a potential partnership. For example, in a district that has physical capacity issues but wants to offer a pre-k 3 program, a partnership located in community-based child care programs can provide space for expansion. In a district that has underutilized space, a partnership located on a campus with a local child care center can maximize opportunities. In a large district, considering options for a hub to organize multiple subcontracting programs can reduce the administrative burden on the district while maximizing potential co-enrollment at multiple sites across the community, representing the collective voice of partners.
4. When developing a performance contract, ensure all district departments are informed and engaged in the process. This includes innovation/authorizing, early childhood education, enrollment, data and evaluation, food services, finance, human resources, multilingual education, and special education. This will help in identifying potential conflicts in managing requirements as part of the negotiations before implementation.
5. Remember that Texas Partnerships are designed for innovation. This does not necessarily mean replication of campus-based pre-k classrooms in community settings. It also may require considerations in innovations in district processes and procedures. Creating crosswalks around requirements and practices can help identify opportunities to compromise and maximize the potential of partnerships.

Section 4: Opportunities for Support



Opportunities for Support

There are different avenues for support, resources, technical assistance, and grant opportunities for LEAs interested in exploring pre-k partnerships and in the design and launch of SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships.

TEA Charter School Authorizing Division

The Charter School Authorizing Division team provides support to district authorizers and oversees the SB 1882 benefits application process. The division has tools, resources, and model documents for districts to use in the authorizing process. These can be found at <https://txpartnerships.org/>.

Annually, the division hosts the Texas Authorizers Leadership Academy (TALA) for districts new to the authorizing process. Districts and operating partners may also request technical assistance in key areas, including talent pipelines, district charter engagement, community engagement, charter school board governance, and financial best practices and sustainability through the District-Charter Support Network.

TEA Early Childhood Education Division

TEA's Early Childhood Education (ECE) Division provides pre-k partnership guidance and support to LEAs and child care providers. The ECE Division collaborates with the Texas Workforce Commission to expand pre-k partnerships across Texas. The ECE Division offers several resources on the [Early Learning Partnerships](#) webpage to assist with pre-k partnership implementation. The ECE Division also hosts a support portal to assist LEAs and child care providers with questions related to early childhood education. The support portal directs stakeholders to resources and the Early Childhood Education team. [Early Childhood Education Support Portal](#).

Texas Workforce Commission

For Districts that are interested in informal or formal pre-k partnerships, the Pre-K Partnership Team at TWC is committed to helping pre-k partnerships grow in Texas including reaching out to potential partners, finding matches and assisting partners during talks.

TWC will give eligible child care programs a one-time award of up to \$25,000 for each new partnership classroom. This money will help programs working with TWC cover some of the costs associated with the new pre-k partnership classroom.

To apply for the award, the child care program must be working with the TWC Pre-K Partnership Team and Texas Rising Star Three- or Four-Star certified, have a contract with a school for a formal partnership, have a new partnership classroom in operation with students dually enrolled, and meet the minimum number of dually-enrolled students if applying for an award for more than one partnership classroom of the same grade level.

To learn more visit <https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/child-care/investments-partnerships>.

School Action Fund Grant Program

The School Action Fund (SAF) is one of the grants available to LEAs through the Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities (LASO) bundle of grants which is a universal consolidated application cycle that strategically batches grant funding opportunities that are supporting with continued learning acceleration and innovation opportunities. The LASO application opens in Fall of each year

The School Action Fund (SAF) aims to increase the number of students in great schools by providing customized planning and implementation support to school districts committed to transforming low-performing schools and creating better options for students through bold school actions. The School Action Fund grant may support districts in the planning and implementation of SB 1882 Pre-k Partnerships.

To learn more about school actions, please visit the Center for School Actions website at www.centerforschoolactions.org.

Charter School Program Grants

The Charter School Program Grant (CSP) aims to increase the number of great schools by supporting the start-up and replication of high-performing charter and partnership schools. The CSP offers a start-up and replication grant to support districts to implement and expand partnership schools. Eligible applicants can apply for funding to open new charter schools and replicate high-quality charter schools. Eligible applicants must meet the federal definition of charter schools (ESSA), have never received CSP funds under ESSA, and meet the requirements outlined in TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C. It is important to note that a pre-k campus on its own does not meet the federal definition of charter school, and any partnerships applying for this grant opportunity must include students in grades K-12. A campus charter school must apply through its public school district, and the application must be signed by the district's superintendent or the appropriate designee. To learn more about the Charter School Program grants please the [TEA Grant Opportunities page](#).

Section 4: Key Takeaways



1. Many types of support are available for pre-k partnerships, including resources, tools, training, technical assistance, and grant programs. **Districts and potential operators should determine what supports are most relevant to their context.**

2. **It is important to note that grant programs may have different requirements and restrictions on funds.** Districts and operators should be aware of these to ensure the successful application and implementation of programs with grant funds.

Frequently Asked Questions



Partnership Structures

Q: In a hub-style partnership, can the hub entity partner with a Head Start site?

A: Yes, the hub entity can partner with child care sites and Head Start sites.

Time and Calendars

Q: What are the time requirements to meet the requirement for full-day pre-k?

A: For full-day pre-k – 75,600 operational minutes are required. For half-day pre-k – 32,400 instructional minutes are required

- Operational minutes: includes intermission, meals, recess, and rest time
 - Instructional minutes: includes intermission, meals, recess, but excludes rest time ^[24]
-
-
-

Q: If September 1 is the birthday cutoff to be eligible for free pre-k, but the school year starts before September 1, can the district report students with August birthdays as enrolled in pre-k for the final days of their two or three-year-old year?

A: Yes, if school starts before the student's birth date, the student is still allowed to begin school on the start date, as long as they are the required age on or before September 1st. ^[25]

[24] Student Attendance & Accounting Handbook section 3.2.2. | Texas Education Agency <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/early-childhood-education-faqs#hqpkfaq>

[25] SAAH, Section 14, Glossary | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/early-childhood-education-faqs#pkeligibility>

Teacher Workforce

Q: What are teacher certification requirements (if any) to teach pre-k to eligible three-year-olds? Can these be met in alternative ways or entirely or partially waived (for example, via District of Innovation)?

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

- House Bill (HB) 2729, 88th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2023 included updates to the additional teacher qualifications as well as teacher qualification updates for prekindergarten teachers teaching in a contracted prekindergarten classroom. Teacher qualifications under HB 2729 are only applicable to prekindergarten classrooms serving eligible four-year-old students
- **Teachers in a LEA-provided prekindergarten classroom:** Each prekindergarten teacher serving eligible four-year-old students has a current Texas certification that enables them to teach prekindergarten and meets one of the following additional qualification options:
 - Certified + Has a certification offered through a training center accredited by Association Montessori Internationale or through the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education
 - Certified + Be employed as a prekindergarten teacher in a school district that has ensured specific prekindergarten professional development has been met:
 - Has completed 150 hours of professional development in ECE-specific topics over a consecutive five-year period; 75 of the 150 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship or;
 - 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
 - Certified + Has a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)
 - Certified + Completion of TSR-Comprehensive Program
 - Certified + Has an associate or baccalaureate degree in ECE, Special Education-ECE or a non-ECE degree with 15 units of ECE-specific coursework
 - Certified + Has taught for at least 8 years in a nationally accredited childcare program or Texas Rising Star program
- **Teachers in a prekindergarten classroom provided by a contracted entity which includes classrooms operated by an 1882 partner:** Each teacher must be supervised by a person who meets the requirements under subsection (b) TEC §29.167 (b-1) and have one of the following qualifications:
 - Contract Entity - At least two years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or Texas Rising Star Program and a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or another early childhood education credential approved by the agency

- Contract Entity - At least two years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or Texas Rising Star Program and a certification offered through a training center accredited by Association Montessori Internationale or through the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education
- Contract Entity - Been employed as a prekindergarten teacher in a school district that has ensured specific prekindergarten professional development requirements have been met
 - Has completed 150 hours of professional development in ECE-specific topics over a consecutive five-year period; 75 of the 150 hours being in a mentoring/coaching relationship or;
 - 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
- Contract Entity- An associate or baccalaureate degree in ECE, Special Education-ECE or a non-ECE degree with 15 units of ECE-specific coursework
- Contract Entity - At least eight years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program or Texas Rising Star Program

All school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and districts of innovation must employ pre-k teachers who are appropriately certified and meet one of the teacher qualification options referenced above if they are serving eligible four-year-old students.

Q: Are all pre-k programs impacted by HB 2729?

A: The bill adds the following two options for meeting qualification requirements for all pre-k teachers:

- An associate or baccalaureate degree in early childhood education or related field
- At least eight years' experience teaching in a Texas Rising Star Program.

For a full list of additional qualifications, see TEA's [HQPK Additional Qualifications Options](#). The additional qualifications apply to all pre-k classes serving eligible four-year-olds, but not to pre-k classes serving three-year-olds. All other provisions of the bill primarily impact pre-k partnership classes that serve eligible four-year-olds.^[26]

[26] Early Childhood Education Academics | Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/hb2729-faq.pdf>

Teacher Workforce

Q: What ongoing training requirements are there for educators of three or four-year-olds?

A: For any staff working in a licensed child care program in Texas, the State Minimum Standards require 24 clock hours of annual training. ^[27]

Q: Is the teacher in a pre-k partnership required to meet the science of teaching reading requirement?

A: House Bill 3, passed during the 86th Texas Legislature, established the requirement that all teacher candidates who teach students in grades pre-K-6 demonstrate proficiency in the science of teaching reading on a new, standalone certification exam. Certified teachers in a pre-k partnership who were certified after January 1, 2021 will be required to demonstrate proficiency.

[27] Minimum Standards | Texas Health and Human Services. <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation/minimum-standards>

Eligibility and Tuition

Q: Imagine a classroom in which there are 22 students and 2 teachers. If 15 of the students are eligible for free pre-k and 7 are not, can the district choose whether to report enrollment of 15 students or enrollment of 22 students?

A: In a partnership, students who are not dually enrolled are not reported because they are not enrolled/attending the district/charter. For students directly attending a local educational agency, who is operating a tuition-based or district-supported program, those students are enrolled in the charter/district and are marked as ineligible. There are PEIMS codes to indicate how those students are funded.

Q: Question: Can the district charge tuition to students who do not meet eligibility requirements for pre-k? Is there a cap or any regulations around how or when this tuition is set?

A: A district may charge tuition to provide:

- half-day and full-day pre-k classes to children who are ineligible for free pre-k classes; and
- an additional half day of pre-k classes to those three-year-old children who are eligible for free pre-k classes

If a district charges tuition:

- the tuition may not be higher than is necessary to cover the added costs of providing the additional pre-k classes, including any costs associated with data collection and reporting requirements; and
- the district must submit a proposed tuition rate to the commissioner for approval annually^[28]

If awarded the Charter School Program grant, districts must follow CSP guidelines regarding tuition.

[28] Prekindergarten Tuition. Texas Education Agency. <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/prekindergarten-tuition>

Enrollment

Q: Are there any laws or rules that require certain groups to be prioritized for enrollment over others (for example, homeless students, then foster students, then economically disadvantaged students, in that order)?

A: Answer: There are no rules regarding the priority of the existing eligibility requirements. Districts must enroll all eligible four-year-old students. If a district offers a program for eligible three-year-old students, a waiting list or lottery for three-year-olds only may be established under district policy TEC, §29.153(a). If awarded the Charter School Program grant, districts must follow CSP guidelines regarding enrollment and waitlists.

Q: Can a child care center operating as an SB1882 site give priority spots to the children of its own educators and employees, even if they are not pre-k-eligible?

A: All eligible children must be enrolled first before enrolling non-eligible children. Enrollment policies may prioritize children of educators and employees above other non-eligible children. If awarded the Charter School Program grant, districts must follow CSP guidelines regarding enrollment and waitlists.

Q: Do SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership sites have to prioritize students who reside within the boundaries of the district before admitting students from outside the boundaries? Would they be permitted to enroll students who are eligible for pre-k but do not reside in-boundary before admitting students who are not eligible for pre-k but do live in-boundary?

A: TEC, §12.065(a): Eligibility criteria for admission of students to the campus or program for which a charter is granted under this subchapter must give priority on the basis of geographic and residency considerations. After priority is given on those bases, secondary consideration may be given to a student's age, grade level, or academic credentials in general or in a specific area, as necessary for the type of program offered.

Funding

Q: How is additional ADSY funding calculated for a SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership school?

A: Schools serving pre-k students are eligible for ADSY funding. The funding is half-day for programs meeting the requirement of 2 hours provided by a certified educator.

Q: Are SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership schools eligible for the Mentor Program Allotment?

A: Yes, provided teachers meet eligibility and provisions within size of program are met.

SB 1882 Pre-K Partnership Profiles

Examples of SB 1882 Pre-K Partnerships across the state



Pre-K Academy at Midland College at Midland ISD



PRE-K PARTNERSHIP TYPE



Direct

Eligible entity holds a Texas Partnership agreement with the district.

OPERATOR TYPE



Institution of Higher Education

YEAR BENEFITS BEGAN

2019

LOCATIONS

Midland

GRADES SERVED

Pre-K 3-4

DEMOGRAPHICS

Black/ African American	16%	White	9%	American Indian	0%
Hispanic/ Latino	74%	Asian/Pacific Islander	2%	Two or More	0%
Emergent Bilingual/ English Learner	27%	SPED	10%	Economically Disadvantaged	90%

Source: TAPR 2022-2023

About Pre-K Academy at Midland College



In response to a pressing community need for additional pre-k seats, Midland College and Midland ISD leveraged SB 1882 Texas Partnerships benefits to provide high-quality early childhood education. This initiative aimed to expand enrollment capacity and create adequate space for pre-k students, while also addressing the need for diverse educational programs and professional development opportunities for teachers. Through strategic collaboration, the partnership worked to meet these demands, ensuring that both students and educators benefit from the enhanced resources and support.

Why They're Great

Building for the future: The partnership's successful fundraising efforts have led to the development of new educational buildings, providing much-needed space for growing student populations.

Expanding horizons: Pre-k enrollment capacity has significantly increased, ensuring more young learners have access to high-quality early education.

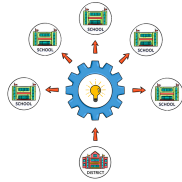
Operational autonomy: The partnership enjoys flexibility in its operations, including aligning the school calendar with Midland Colleges, staffing autonomy, and extending school days to maximize learning time.

Efficiency through collaboration: Cost-saving measures, such as shared services with MISD, including cafeteria contracts, allow the partnership to allocate resources more effectively for student success.

United Way for Greater Austin Pre-K Partnerships at Austin ISD



PRE-K PARTNERSHIP TYPE



Hub

Eligible entity holds a Texas Partnership agreement with the district and holds contracts with community based early learning providers.

OPERATOR TYPE



Nonprofit

YEAR BENEFITS BEGAN

2019

LOCATIONS

Austin

GRADES SERVED

Pre-K 3-4

DEMOGRAPHICS

Black/ African American	19%	White	17%	American Indian	0%
Hispanic/ Latino	60%	Asian/Pacific Islander	1%	Two or More	3%
Emergent Bilingual/ English Learners	14%	SPED	2%	Economically Disadvantaged	90%

Source: TAPR 2022-2023

About United Way for Greater Austin Pre-K Partnerships



United Way for Greater Austin launched its partnership with Austin ISD in 2019. This partnership supports and expands high-quality early childhood instruction within the district, creating options at local child development centers for three- and four-year-olds. Through the partnership, United Way for Greater Austin is able to support community-based care providers while improving the sustainability of innovative partnerships throughout the district. In school year 23-24, the partnership included 15 3- and-4 star Texas Rising Star child care centers and 7 Head Start centers.

Why They're Great

Coordinating learning: The hub allows United Way to support centers and teachers through the distribution of resources, coaching supports in the classroom, and providing high-quality professional development.

Full-day care: The partnership creates full-day options for families, ensuring high-quality early care and education in a single location, providing coverage for all-day life schedules.

Funding and development: The partnership enables partnership classrooms to leverage state prekindergarten funds from TEA, in addition to blending and braiding funds from other sources including, grant funds and local workforce board child care subsidies.

Administrative innovation: The hub model supports centers in a wide range of ways, including processing registration and supporting test administration. In addition to this, this model supports recruiting and hiring teachers by creating a pipeline of quality candidates and sharing screened finalists with the childcare centers for interviews. Teacher retention stipends are also available when funding permits.

Gardendale Pre-K 4 SA Early Learning Program

at Edgewood ISD

PRE-K PARTNERSHIP TYPE



Direct

Eligible entity holds a Texas Partnership agreement with the district.

OPERATOR TYPE



Government Entity

YEAR BENEFITS BEGAN

2019

LOCATIONS

San Antonio

GRADES SERVED

Pre-K 4, K-2

DEMOGRAPHICS

Black/ African American	3%	White	5%	American Indian	0%
Hispanic/ Latino	91%	Asian/Pacific Islander	0%	Two or More	1%
Emergent Bilingual/ English Learners	30%	SPED	9%	Economically Disadvantaged	93%

Source: TAPR 2022-2023



About Gardendale Early Learning Program



Gardendale Pre-K 4 SA Early Learning Program is an Innovative School Partnership that brings together two professional learning organizations, the Edgewood Independent School District and Pre-K 4 SA. Together, the program creates greater capacity for high-quality early childhood education for students in prekindergarten through 2nd grade. Gardendale's Early Learning Program opened to incoming prekindergarten and kindergarten children in August 2019. It expanded to include children in first grade in 2020 and second grade in 2021.

Why They're Great

City-wide investment: San Antonio citizens voted "yes" in 2012 to investing in four-year-olds and Pre-K 4 SA was born, after former San Antonio Mayor Julián Castro convened a blue-ribbon task force of Chief Executive Officers, Superintendents, and education professionals to identify the most effective method for improving the quality of education in San Antonio. The Brainpower Taskforce recommended the development of a program focused on high-quality prekindergarten services for four-year-old children. Pre-K 4 SA utilizes revenue from sales tax, prekindergarten state funding, and other sources.

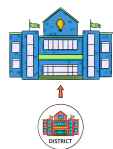
Partnering with local districts: Pre-K 4 SA operates four model centers across the city, that dually enroll eligible students through a memorandum of understanding (MOU), in addition to the Gardendale Early Learning Center with Edgewood ISD.

Expanding impact with SB 1882: High-quality early childhood education does not stop at prekindergarten. The same methods and philosophies that work in the earliest years are just as beneficial to children in kindergarten, first, and second grade. That is what we are demonstrating at Gardendale Early Learning Program - Pre-K 4 SA's first innovation site. Teachers at Gardendale remain district employees, and Pre-K 4 SA uses the flexibility of SB 1882 to create additional staff positions, including extra assistant teachers, a family liaison, and instructional specialists. Pre-K 4 SA follows the HighScope whole-child approach and project-based learning. It hinges on consistent routine and purposeful play that nurtures children's learning and thinking. While the children think they are just playing, they are developing social-emotional and cognitive skills, as well as an understanding of literacy, language, math, and science concepts.

Early Learning Academy at Plemons-Stinnett-Phillips CISD



PRE-K PARTNERSHIP TYPE



Direct

Eligible entity holds a Texas Partnership agreement with the district.

OPERATOR TYPE



Government Entity

YEAR BENEFITS BEGAN

2024

LOCATIONS

Stinnett

GRADES SERVED

Pre-K 3-4, Kindergarten

ENROLLMENT

The new school opened in September 2024 with:

- Pre-K 3: 15 students
- Pre-K 4: 20 students
- Kindergarten: 30 students

About the Early Learning Academy



Launched in 2024, the PSP CISD Early Learning Academy, a partnership between Plemons-Stinnett-Phillips CISD and Region 16 Education Service Center, supports the district to expand access to early childhood education opportunities within the district and recruit and retain high-quality teachers. This first-of-its-kind collaboration between a school district and an education service center lays a strong foundation for this innovative school, which serves as a valuable resource for early learners across the community

Why They're Great

Utilizing grant support: Following a strategic planning process that identified the need for increased opportunities for early childhood education within the district, PSP CISD utilized the School Action Fund grant from the Texas Education Agency to engage in the Call for Quality Schools process to plan and launch a new campus for eligible three- and four-year-olds and kindergarten students. The new campus enables students to receive high-quality early education and a seamless transition into elementary school.

Early care: Onsite adjacent to the new pre-k - kindergarten school is a licensed child care facility serving infants and toddlers. By aligning these two learning centers together, PSP CISD and Region 16 are meeting the needs of the local community to provide high-quality care from birth to kindergarten.

Expanding impact with SB 1882: The partnership performance contract sets rigorous goals for pre-k 3, pre-k 4, and kindergarten students in the Early Learning Academy to ensure that students are kindergarten-ready and prepared for elementary school.

Appendix



Resources

This resource page consolidates essential references and tools highlighted throughout the guide.

[Child Care and Early Learning Program](#) | Texas Workforce Commission

[Child Care Regulation](#) | Texas Health and Human Services Commission

[Early Childhood Education](#) | Texas Education Agency

[Early Childhood Education Model Playbook](#) | SEN

[Early Learning Public-Private Partnerships](#) | Texas Education Agency

[Financial Modeling Resources for PreK Partnerships](#) | Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Education Agency

[Texas Rising Star Program](#) | Texas Workforce Commission

[Texas Partnerships](#) | Texas Education Agency

[TEA Authorizer Handbook](#) | Texas Education Agency

[Grant Opportunities](#) | Texas Education Agency

[Learning Acceleration Support Opportunities \(LASO\)](#) | Texas Education Agency

[Early Childhood Education Model Playbook](#) | Texas Education Agency

[Texas Partnerships Toolkit](#) | Empower Schools

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