



SOUTH SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Agenda Item Summary

Meeting Date: August 4, 2025

Agenda Section: Consent

Agenda Item Title: SSAISD Pre-K Updated Regulations

From: Dr. Gutierrez, Deputy Superintendent

Additional Presenters if Applicable: Rebecca Herrera, Program Administrator

Description: The SSAISD Pre-Kindergarten program is a critical component of our district's commitment to early childhood education, designed to provide a strong foundation for our youngest learners. Its purpose is to ensure all eligible 3- and 4-year-old children in our community have access to high-quality, comprehensive early learning experiences that promote their school readiness and long-term academic success.

Historical Data: Texas has supported public Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) since 1984, initially targeting at-risk 4-year-olds based on factors like income, homelessness, or limited English proficiency, with eligibility later expanding to include children in foster care and those of military families. While studies consistently show the positive long-term impact of high-quality Pre-K, state funding historically focused on a half-day model, even as many districts, including those in San Antonio, moved to offer full-day programs. For districts like South San Antonio Independent School District (SSAISD), which serves a significant number of economically disadvantaged students, Pre-K is a vital program. SSAISD leverages various funding streams, including the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant (EHBG), and potentially collaborates with outside community initiatives to ensure comprehensive early learning opportunities.

Recommendation: SSAISD strongly recommends that the Board of Managers approve the updated SSAISD Pre-Kindergarten regulations. This approval is essential to ensure that our Pre-Kindergarten program remains fully compliant with the latest state and federal guidelines, including the Texas Education Agency's mandates for high-quality Pre-K and relevant components of the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant.

Goal 3: SSAISD will ensure all students are provided a learning environment centered on their well-being that impacts their learning and success.

Funding Budget Code and Amount: N/A

E – Special Programs: Pre-Kindergarten EHBG
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South San Antonio ISD offers tuition-free Pre-Kindergarten and Head Start for 3- and 4-year-olds (must be 3 or 4 by September 1st) to provide developmentally appropriate preschool experiences for children.

Our mission is to prepare young children to succeed in school and life beyond school by delivering services to children and families in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being while engaging parents as partners every step of the way.

Eligibility

A child is eligible for enrollment in free prekindergarten if the child is at least three years of age and:

1. Is unable to speak and comprehend the English language;
2. Is educationally disadvantaged;
3. Is homeless [see FD] regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent of the child, or of the child's guardian or other person having lawful control;
4. 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;
5. 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;
6. Is or ever has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing under Family Code 262.201 or foster care in another state or territory, if the child resides in Texas; or
7. Is the child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award as:
 - a. A peace officer under Government Code 3106.002;
 - b. A firefighter under Government Code 3106.003; or
 - c. An emergency medical first responder under Government Code 3106.004.
8. [Is the child of a teacher employed by South San Antonio ISD, as per Texas House Bill 2 \(HB 2\).](#)

A child who is eligible for enrollment for free prekindergarten at the age of three and enrolls in prekindergarten class at the age of three remains eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten class for the following school year.

A child who is eligible for enrollment under item 4 or 5 above remains eligible if the child's parent leaves the armed forces, or is no longer on active duty, after the child begins the prekindergarten class. *Education Code 29.153(a)–(b), (e-1), (f)*

Pre-K 3 Enrollment and Waitlist

The SSAISD preschool program will accept a limited number of 3-year-old children each academic year, with the maximum number of students determined annually based on available resources, classroom capacity, and staffing levels (6-8 students per classroom). Parents or guardians must complete an application during the designated enrollment period, and students will be enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to teachers' children as outlined in HB 2, until the maximum capacity is reached. Families will be notified of their child's enrollment status once the application submission has been reviewed.

Once the enrollment cap for 3-year-olds is reached, SSAISD will create a waitlist for additional applicants. Children will be placed on the waitlist in the order in which their applications were received, and families will be informed of their waitlist status. If a spot becomes available, the first child on the waitlist will be offered enrollment, and families will have a specified time frame to accept or decline the offer. If the offer is declined, the spot will be offered to the next child on the list.

Head Start

South San Antonio ISD offers a Head Start program that plays an important role in promoting the health and safety of children by helping them to establish lifelong healthy patterns. Healthy students are better learners, and academic achievement bears a lifetime of benefits for health. Our Head Start program staff ensure that our children are up to date on immunizations, their state's Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) schedule, learn healthy eating habits, and promote the physical and social, and emotional well-being of children and their families. Our staff works diligently to assist families to establish a medical and dental home or affordable no-cost community resources that will always have access to quality health care.

Important Links:

Pre-Kindergarten

<https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/texas-prekindergarten-guidelines>

Head Start

<https://www.southsanisd.net/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=11318&dataid=20444&FileName=2022-2023%20Revised%20Parent%20Handbook.pdf>

<https://www.southsanisd.net/departments/early-childhoodhead-start/pre-kindergarten/pre-khead-start-information>

<https://www.southsanisd.net/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=11318&dataid=20445&FileName=2022-2023%20Revised%20Parent%20Handbook%20Spanish.pdf>

<https://www.southsanisd.net/departments/early-childhoodhead-start/required-postings>