

**Date:** March 3, 2025

**Division:** Learning and Teaching

**Subject:** PreK/Early Childhood Update

**Background Information:**

- According to Texas Education Code § 29.153, a district *shall* offer pre kindergarten classes if the district identifies 15 or more children who are eligible and at least four years of age. A school district *may* offer pre kindergarten classes if the district identifies 15 or more eligible children who are at least three years of age. A district may not charge tuition for a prekindergarten class offered in order to comply with this law.
- A child is eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten class (as described above) if they are at 4 or 3 years old on/before Sept. 1 and meets one or more of the following criteria:
  - Is learning English as a second language;
  - Is educationally disadvantaged;
  - Is or has ever been in foster care;
  - Is a homeless child;
  - Is the child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States or who was injured or killed while serving in active duty.
  - dependents of Star of Texas Award recipient
- According to Texas Education Code § 29.1531, a school district *may* offer on a tuition basis or use district funds to provide
  - An additional half day of prekindergarten class to children eligible for classes (as described above); and
  - Half day and full day prekindergarten classes to children not eligible for classes (as described above)
  - LISD provides tuition based prekindergarten through Discovery Academy and Employee PreK at LJJ.
- The 2019 passage of HB3 contained important legislation that impacted prekindergarten. The following are critical highlights:
  - Requires LEA's to provide High Quality full-day prekindergarten to eligible four-year-old's
  - Eligibility requirements for prekindergarten remain the same
  - State only funds half-day prekindergarten via ADA
  - Provided the Early Education Allotment to help fund full day prekindergarten
  - Provided a full day prekindergarten Exemption opportunity (waiver) for a limited time period
- LISD applied for a full day implementation waiver which was granted for the 2019-20, 2020-21

2021-22 school years and expired at the end of the 2021-22 school year.

- LISD is no longer utilizing the full day prekindergarten waiver.
- The 2022-23 school year was LISD's first year to implement full day prekindergarten district wide.
- LISD only enrolls prekindergarten eligible four-year-old students into full day classes. Enrolling only eligible four-year-olds started in the 2020-21 school year and since that time, the enrollment of PreK eligible four-year-old students has increased year-over-year from 404 full day four-year-olds served in 2020-21 to 1,035 full day four-year-olds served in 2023-24.
- The 2021-22 school year was the first to require PreK classes to adhere to the 22 class size cap while continuing to strive to maintain an 11:1 ratio.
  - Exceptions include:
    - ECSE only students in co-teach classes do not count toward the 22 cap
    - The last 12 weeks of the school year
    - A class that has received a class size waiver

### **Information for Consideration:**

- All enrolled prekindergarten eligible four-year-old students are served in full day classes district wide. PreK eligible three-year-olds can be enrolled in tuition based Discovery Academy as well as ECSE three-year-olds who also qualify for prekindergarten.
- LISD has both types of prekindergarten programs described by statute: PreK for state eligible children and tuition-based PreK for non state eligible.
- During the 2024-25 school year, 18 campuses have PreK classes and there are 67 full day PreK classes.
  - 48 full day ESL/English PreK classes
  - 19 full day BIL/Spanish PreK classes
  - 34 of the 67 PreK classes are co-teach
  - 2023-24 PEIMS Snapshot PreK enrollment was 1,206. This count includes three and four-year old PreK eligible students (not including children who only qualify for ECSE)
    - At the time of the 2024-25 PEIMS snapshot, 1,373 three and four-year old students were counted
  - As of Jan. 23, 2025 there are 1,226 PreK eligible and 183 ECSE only students enrolled for a total of 1,409 students in Early Childhood Programs.
    - 177 of enrolled students are in Discovery Academy and LJJ Employee PreK.
      - Tuition based Discovery Academy and LJJ Employee PreK are 96% full
  - As of Jan. 2025 Gen Ed space in LISD full day PreK is 91% full.
    - 90% Full in ESL
    - 95% Full in BIL
  - Based on 2024-25 PreK staffing, we have the capacity to enroll 1,474 students with the 67 PreK classes filled to the state cap of 22.
  - Plans are underway to provide a second annual, district wide, Spring PreK enrollment event May 6 & 7, 2025.
  - As a result of school retirements, 9 PreK classes are being relocated to new campuses in 2025-26 also resulting in 16 total campuses having PreK classes in 2025-26
  - 2023-24 Early Ed Allotment was \$5,284,331 and we spent \$8,280,528 on state required Prekindergarten.

- There are currently 14 Texas Bills filed with PreK implications
  - SB 42, marked as “High Priority” expands full-day PreK for ALL 4-year olds and requires districts that offer free PreK for 3-year olds to do so on a full-day basis.
  - HB 1569 and HB 494 relate to the eligibility of children of public school employees and HB 1996 relate to prekindergarten eligibility for children enrolled in special education
  - A number of Bills reference prekindergarten funding.
- In the context of student data, Social Emotional Learning is a Texas PreK Guideline Domain and is one of the domains required to be progress monitored by TEA in accordance with their High Quality Prekindergarten Requirements.
  - Progress monitoring is required for all four-year-old students and their beginning and end-of-year data is required to be submitted to the state.
  - CLI is the state approved progress monitoring tool used by LISD PreK.
  - In 2023-24, students assessed in English on the CLI Circle Social Emotional Checklist achieved the end-of-year goal earning an average of 47 points on the checklist and students assessed in Spanish exceeded the 47 point end-of-year goal, earning an average of 50 points.
  - The CLI Circle Social Emotional Checklist addresses the following areas:
    - Positive social behaviors
    - Classroom and community
    - Emotion and behavior regulation
    - Self-care
    - Approaches to learning