

**Request for Application  
The Texas A&M University System  
Pre-K Partnership Collaborative Districts**

Posted Date: September 22, 2025

Application Due Date: October 31, 2025

Agreement Period: February 1, 2026 through August 30, 2027

Award: One time up-front award of \$125,000

## **Program Overview**

The Texas A&M University System received a grant from the Texas Education Agency to expand partnerships to interested childcare providers that do not have local LEA partners, support day-to-day administrative operations, staffing, and quality improvement efforts for partnerships established, and remove barriers to PreK Partnerships.

A pre-k partnership is a collaboration between a local education agency (LEA), such as a school district or open-enrollment charter school, and a child care program that meets at least one of the criteria in [Texas Education Code §29.171](#) to provide high-quality care and education to three and four-year-old children. In a formal pre-k partnership, eligible children are dually enrolled in public school pre-k and the child care program, most often receiving their pre-k instruction and wraparound care (the hours before and after pre-k instruction) at the child care center.

To promote the development of pre-k partnerships in the state, The Texas A&M University System is introducing a new initiative to establish pre-k partnerships using a Collaborative District Model. Through this Request for Applications (RFA), three school districts will each be awarded a one-time, upfront payment in the amount of \$125,000 to implement a Collaborative District Model across three designated regions. Selected school districts will serve as collaborative districts, partnering with Texas Rising Star Three- and Four-Star certified child care programs to dually enroll pre-k eligible children, braid funding, and share resources.

This effort reflects the broader commitment to strengthening early childhood education through scalable partnerships that bridge public school systems and the child care sector. The goals of the initiative are to:

- Expand access to high-quality pre-k by fostering partnerships between school districts and child care programs;

- Enable dual enrollment of eligible children in both school districts and licensed child care settings;
- Facilitate transparent funding models; and
- Build capacity to deliver professional development, resources, and technical assistance.

Selected districts will be expected to demonstrate strong leadership in building and sustaining effective pre-k partnerships. Awardees must align systems with their child care partners, ensure compliance with funding and quality standards, and promote transparency through regular reporting. Each selected district will serve as a model site, documenting its progress, sharing insights, and contributing to a broader statewide strategy to expand access to high-quality early learning. The success of this work will be measured by effective coordination with child care partners and stakeholders, as well as increases in pre-k enrollment and sustainable partnerships.

### **Award and Agreement**

An agreement will be issued to each selected applicant as a result of this RFA process. The agreement will outline the scope of work, deliverables, payment terms, reporting requirements, and other applicable terms and conditions, including any required flow-down provisions from the grant with the Texas Education Agency. Selection for award does not constitute an obligation until the agreement is fully executed by both parties.

### **Agreement Support**

Selected school districts will receive support from The Texas A&M University System, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and Texas Education Agency (TEA) to recruit, establish, and sustain pre-k partnerships throughout the agreement period of performance.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

1. School district currently serving pre-k students within Texas
2. Open enrollment school district
3. Adhere to all high-quality pre-k requirements
4. Have a district accountability rating of C or better for the last three (3) years
5. Have a district FIRST rating of C or better for the last three (3) years
6. Must not accept Average Daily Attendance (ADA) generated funds from another school district or open-enrollment charter school as an intermediary or for other pre-k partnership services.
7. Must not distribute ADA generated funds to another school district or open-enrollment charter school as an intermediary or for other pre-k partnership services.

## Available Funding

- Total number of awards: 3
- Award amount: \$125,000 (one-time, up-front payment) per school district
- To cover the anticipated Period of Performance: February 1, 2026 through August 30, 2027

## Allowable Uses of Funds

### Direct Costs

All direct costs must be reasonable, necessary, and allocable to the objectives of the agreement. Below are the allowable direct cost categories (includes examples):

#### 1. Personnel

- Salaries and wages for staff directly supporting the Collaborative District Model (e.g., Pre-K Partnership Coordinator, Family Engagement Specialist, Fiscal Manager, Data Specialist).
- Stipends for existing staff assuming partnership-related duties.
- Expenses to support dedicated staff time coordinating partnership activities.

#### 2. Fringe Benefits

- Health insurance, retirement contributions, payroll taxes, and other benefits for agreement-funded personnel.

#### 3. Travel

- In-state travel only.
- Mileage reimbursement for travel to partner sites.
- Costs associated with attending required TAMUS, TEA, TWC-sponsored meetings, training, or convenings.

#### 4. Supplies, Materials, and Resources

- Office supplies and materials used directly for partnership coordination.
- Printed materials for partner onboarding, family engagement, enrollment campaigns, or instructional resources.

#### 5. Technology

- Laptops, tablets, or software licenses used by personnel directly supporting partnership efforts.
- Data systems or tools used for enrollment tracking, fiscal reporting, or monitoring implementation fidelity.

- Ownership of Technology will be addressed in the agreement with the selected school district. It is anticipated that ownership of certain Technology by the school district will be permitted under the award terms.

#### **6. Professional Development**

- Fees for training, coaching, or professional learning for district or partner staff related to early childhood education, instructional practices, or partnership management.
- Consultant costs for trainers or technical assistance providers delivering services aligned with agreement goals.

#### **7. Contractual**

- Costs for third-party services that support partnership implementation (e.g., evaluation, translation services, curriculum alignment support).

#### **8. Communications & Outreach**

- Development and distribution of outreach materials to promote Pre-K enrollment.
- Translation services or digital marketing efforts related to partnerships.

### **Indirect Costs**

Indirect costs are those that are not readily assignable to a specific project activity but are necessary for the general operation of the organization in support of the agreement. These costs should be categorized separately and capped at 5% of the total agreement allocation.

Examples of indirect costs may include:

- Administrative support (e.g., payroll, accounting, purchasing)
- Office space and utilities not directly tied to agreement-funded personnel
- General technology infrastructure (e.g., email systems, internet service, security)
- Legal, audit, or compliance functions
- General supplies not allocated to a specific program function

### **Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds**

1. Student field trips
2. Capital expenditures
3. Travel Cost for executive leadership
4. Direct administrative costs
5. Building purchase, construction, or remodeling
6. Promotional items, gifts, or souvenirs
7. Membership dues

## Application Requirements

**Applicants must include the following in their application:**

1. **Cover Page**
  - a. School district name, address, primary contact
2. **Executive Summary (1 page)**
  - a. High-level overview of proposed approach
3. **Capacity Statement (1-2 pages)**
  - a. Prior experience, staff qualifications, organizational readiness
4. **Partnership Plan (4-6 pages)**
  - a. Indicate the number of child care programs the school district is equipped to support including those that are local and outside the district's boundaries
  - b. Roles and responsibilities of each partner
  - c. Child care program onboarding process
  - d. Strategy for dually enrolling students
  - e. Process for ensuring compliance with state early learning standards, TEA, TWC, and Health and Human Services (HHSC)
  - f. Professional development plan
  - g. Process for sharing curriculum resources and assessments
  - h. Communication and governance plan
5. **Sustainability Plan (1-2 pages)**
  - a. How partnerships will be maintained beyond the agreement period
6. **Budget and Budget Narrative (1-2 pages)**
  - a. Detailed budget for the proposed use of \$125,000
  - b. Percent of state funds to be passed through to child care partners
  - c. Process for ensuring timely and accurate allocation of pass-through funds to child care partners
7. **Timeline (1 page)**
  - a. Plan for meeting program implementation and deliverable deadlines
8. **Marking of Confidential Information:** Confidential information should be marked as such by the applicant. Applicant's submission may be shared with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as well as TWC to assist in scoring of the application (refer to "Virtual Interviews for Scoring"). **By submission of a response to this RFA, applicant hereby authorizes The Texas A&M University System to share the proposal in full with both TEA and TWC with the exception of applicant's confidential information marked in accordance with this item 8.** Should there be confidential information marked in the applicant's submission, prior written consent will be requested from the applicant (refer to "Virtual Interviews for Scoring").

## Scoring and Review

Applications will be scored based on the following:

Criteria	Maximum Points Available
School district's capacity and readiness to implement	25
Strength of the school district's partnership plan	20
Clarity and feasibility of the district's strategy for dually enrolling students	10
Process for fair and transparent allocation of state-generated funds to child care partners	25
Quality of the proposed resources and support provided to child care partners	10
School district's alignment with the state's goals for early learning	10

**Maximum score of 100 points**

## Virtual Interviews for Scoring

As part of the evaluation process and to assist with scoring the application, The Texas A&M University System reserves the right to conduct virtual interviews with any applicant and, if necessary, to invite TWC and TEA to participate in the interviews. As part of their participation, TWC and TEA may receive a copy of applicant's submission. To protect the confidentiality of an applicant's submission, no information marked as confidential information will be shared with TWC and TEA without the applicant's prior written consent (refer to item 8, above "Application Requirements" for marking of confidential information). Interviews are not a requirement as part of the scoring process and an applicant can be scored without a virtual interview. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide comprehensive and complete responses to this RFA. While the virtual interview may clarify or expand on the applicant's response, it will not be relied upon to introduce new or critical information not already included in the application.

## Program Assurances

**As part of this application, the school district affirms the following commitments:**

1. **Open Enrollment:** The school district is willing to enroll students who meet at least one of the pre-k eligibility criteria outlined in [Texas Education Code §29.153\(b\)](#), including those residing outside of the district's geographic boundaries, through pre-k partnerships with Texas Rising Star Three- and Four-star certified child care programs.
2. **Minimum Partnerships:** The school district will establish formal pre-kindergarten partnerships with a minimum of 10 Texas Rising Star Three- and Four-star certified child care programs within the designated region by January 15, 2027. The school district will work directly with Texas Workforce Commission PreK staff to identify the eligible child care programs.
3. **Provision of Services:** The school district will provide essential support services to partnership sites, which may include, but are not limited to, professional development, data sharing, technical assistance, and coordination of enrollment processes. All early learning partnership classrooms must comply with the program standards and legal requirements of both the school district and the partnering entity.
4. **Curriculum Alignment:** The school district will ensure that all pre-k partnership classrooms implement a developmentally appropriate, state-approved curriculum that is aligned with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines and will support fidelity of implementation across sites.
5. **Local Partnerships:** The school district is willing to terminate a pre-k partnership when a child care program's local school district or open-enrollment charter school is prepared to take on a pre-k partnership, and both the district and child care program mutually agree to the transition. Transition will occur according to a reasonable defined timeline to ensure continuity of services and minimize disruption for students and families.
6. **District Engagement:** The school district will participate in regular meetings, data collection, and reporting as requested by the Texas A&M University System.

## Reporting Requirements

Selected school districts must submit progress reports using the provided template, which should include the following:

- Number of child care centers engaged
- Number of partnered child care centers
- Number of terminated partnerships, including child care centers “released” for local partnership opportunities

- Student enrollment totals for pre-k partnership classrooms by grade level (i.e., prek-3 and prek-4)
- Summary of professional development opportunities (if applicable)
- Support provided to promote curriculum alignment across sites (if applicable)
- Funding generated and passed through as a result of Average Daily Attendance of the dually enrolled students in the partnership classrooms at the child care program.
- Ongoing agreement expenditures
- Successes and challenges of program implementation

**Progress reports will be due:**

- 1) September 30, 2026
- 2) January 31, 2027
- 3) July 30, 2027

**RFA Timeline and Submission Instructions**

Date	Event
September 22, 2025	<b>Request for Application available:</b> Request for Applications posted: <a href="https://www.tamus.edu/pre-k/">https://www.tamus.edu/pre-k/</a>
October 15, 2025	<b>Notice of Intent to Apply Due:</b> Applicants are requested, but not required, to submit notice of intent to apply via email to <a href="mailto:prekpartnerships@tamus.edu">prekpartnerships@tamus.edu</a>
October 31, 2025	<b>Request for Application Due Date:</b> Due date for the RFA, which must be submitted via email to <a href="mailto:prekpartnerships@tamus.edu">prekpartnerships@tamus.edu</a> . The RFA application must be received by TAMUS no later than 11:59 p.m., Central Time
November 28, 2025	<b>Request for Application Review Period:</b> The RFA review period may include virtual oral interviews as needed.
December 5, 2025	<b>Anticipated Award Announcement</b>
February 1, 2026	<b>Anticipated Start date of agreement</b> (if selected for funding)
August 30, 2027	<b>Anticipated End date of agreement</b> (if selected for funding)



## Application Assistance

The following types of assistance are available to applicants.

### Resources:

[Pre-K Eligibility](#)

[TAMUS Pre-K Initiative](#)

[TEA Early Childhood FAQs](#)

[TEA Early Learning Public-Private Partnerships](#)

[TWC Prekindergarten Partnerships](#)

[Video: Pre-K Partnership Funding Stream – Part 1](#)

[Video: Pre-K Partnership Financial Template – Part 2](#)

[Video: Additional Considerations for Pre-K Partnerships – Part 3](#)

[Video: 2025 Review | Pre-K Partnership Financial Template](#)

### Budget Template

Applicants are permitted to submit their budgets using their own internal template(s) provided that the submission includes all required information and cost information as outlined in this solicitation.

### Contacts

For questions about the Request for Application, the agreement program, or for assistance with the application process, please send an email to the following:

Josh West, Executive Director

Kendra Wuest, Executive Director

[prekpartnerships@tamus.edu](mailto:prekpartnerships@tamus.edu)