

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

Note: This document will be updated on an ongoing basis as new questions are received. Please submit all questions to prekpartnerships@tamus.edu

1. Can applicants have existing pre-k partnerships?

Yes. Applicants may have existing pre-k partnerships.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application - Eligibility Requirements, Page 2](#)

2. Can districts currently using an intermediary for existing pre-k partnerships apply? (UPDATED 10/1/25)

School districts acting as an intermediary by accepting or distributing ADA generated funds are **not** eligible to apply for this grant.

School districts contracted with a third-party intermediary to support pre-k partnerships may be eligible to apply for this grant. In addition, while this grant cannot be used to fund intermediary services, school districts may continue working with their intermediary through the duration of this grant at their own expense.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application - Eligibility Requirements, Page 2](#)

3. Are we eligible to apply if licensed childcare providers are not within our district boundaries?

Yes. Districts may partner with Texas Rising Star Three- and Four Star certified child care programs outside their geographic boundaries if they are willing to enroll students who meet at least one of the pre-k eligibility criteria outlined in Texas Education Code §29.153(b).

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application – Program Assurances, Open Enrollment, Page 7](#)

4. Will Child Care centers to partner with be provided to our district?

Yes. 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 Pre-K staff to identify the eligible child care programs.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application – Program Assurances, Minimum Partnerships, Page](#)

5. Can legal fees be paid for with award monies?

Yes. Legal, audit, or compliance functions may be covered through indirect costs.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application - Indirect Costs, Page 4](#)

6. If a Texas Rising Star program is already in place, will the grant offset existing costs associated with that program?

No. Existing program costs are not covered. However, staff overseeing the grant may also have other assigned duties.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application - Allowable Use of Funds, Page 3](#)

7. If a district has an accountability rating or a district FIRST rating of D, is it still eligible to apply for the grant?

No. To be eligible, a district must have both an accountability rating of C or higher and a district FIRST rating of C or higher for the past three years.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application - Eligibility Requirements, Page 2](#)

8. Is this grant the only way districts can establish Pre-K partnerships?

No. Districts may establish Pre-K partnerships outside of this grant. This funding opportunity is specifically designed to support child care programs that are willing to partner, but do not have the opportunity to partner with a local district.

9. Is this grant intended only for establishing new partnerships?

Yes. This grant is intended for establishing new partnerships. However, districts with existing partnerships are eligible to apply if they meet all other eligibility criteria. Selected districts must also agree to all program assurances, including establishing a minimum of 10 new Pre-K partnerships with Texas Rising Star 3- and 4-star certified child care programs.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application - Program Assurances, Page 7](#)

10. Once the Intent to Apply is submitted, will an application be sent in response?

No. Application requirements are outlined in the Request for Application (RFA) document.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application - Application Requirements, Page 5](#)

11. If we currently only offer Pre-K 4, are we still eligible to apply for the grant?

Yes. Districts may apply but must agree to serve all eligible Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 students through their partnerships. A Pre-K partnership is a collaboration between a local education agency 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 for three- and four-year-old children.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Overview, Page 1

12. Does the partnership have to be with an external child care provider, or would a district-owned and operated child care facility also qualify? (UPDATED 9/25/25)

A district-owned and operated child care facility, if not already partnered and if it meets eligibility as a Texas Rising Star 3- or 4-star center, may count as one of the 10 new partnerships, as required by the *Program Assurances* section of the *Request for Application*. However, an emphasis will be placed on external providers, including those residing outside of the district's geographic boundaries with Texas Rising Star Three- and Four-star certified child care programs.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Assurances, Page 7

13. Does the Request for Application include everything needed for submission, or will there be an additional application form or process?

There is no separate application form. The components listed in the *Application Requirements* section of the *Request for Application* make up the full application that must be completed and submitted.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Application Requirements, Page 5

14. Can I request a virtual meeting or phone call to ask questions about the grant?

Currently, individual meetings are not being scheduled. All questions should be submitted by email (prekpartnerships@tamus.edu), and will be answered on the FAQ page, to ensure a fair process and to allow all applicants access to the same information.

15. Is eligibility for the one-time \$125,000 grant award based on partnering with 10 child care providers?

Yes. The grant award is based on partnering with a minimum of 10 new child care partners. An emphasis will be placed on partnerships residing outside of the district's geographic boundaries. The school district will work directly with the Texas Workforce Commission Pre-K staff to identify eligible child care programs.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Assurances, Page 7

16. Can charter schools apply for the grant?

Open-enrollment charter schools are not eligible to apply for this grant due to Texas Education Code §100.1035 (c), which limits charter schools to partnering with child care programs located within 25 miles of the campus with which it is associated.

17. Is a district eligible if it is only open enrollment for pre-k and not for K-12 students?

Yes. A district may be open enrollment specifically for pre-k even if it is not open enrollment for K-12. For example, a district is not open enrollment for K-12 students but allows open enrollment for pre-k. This flexibility supports partnerships with child care centers that may serve children residing outside of their district's attendance zones. Districts should consult their local board policy when establishing open enrollment for pre-k partnerships.

18. Are districts required to staff a certified teacher at every partnered childcare center to receive dual funding?

No. School districts are not required to have a certified teacher at every partnered child care center until September 1, 2029. Prior to that date, districts and child care centers have the flexibility to determine the most effective staffing structure for each pre-k partnership classroom, provided they comply with the requirements outlined in Texas Education Code [§29.167](#) (b-1) and (b-2).

19. What level of ongoing support or coaching will TAMUS, TEA, or TWC provide after the initial award?

Selected school districts will receive comprehensive technical assistance and support throughout the agreement period from TAMUS, TWC, and TEA Pre-K staff. Support includes training, data collection guidance, and ongoing coaching to help districts establish, implement, and sustain pre-k partnerships, along with regular check-ins to ensure quality and compliance throughout the agreement period.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Agreement Support, Page 2; Program Assurances, District Engagement, Page 7

20. When does the \$125,000 have to be spent?

The one-time, up-front award of \$125,000 covers the agreement period from February 1, 2026 through August 30, 2027.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Agreement Period, Page 1; Available Funding, Page 3

21. Are there expectations for sustaining partnerships after August 2027, and will any follow-up funding opportunities be available?

Yes. Applicants are required to include a Sustainability Plan in their application detailing how partnerships will be maintained beyond the end of the agreement period. While partnerships are encouraged to continue after August 2027, there is no guarantee of additional or follow-up funding once the agreement term concludes.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Application Requirements, Sustainability Plan, Page 5

22. Can the district terminate a partnership early if quality or compliance issues arise, and how would that impact funding?

If quality or compliance concerns arise, the district will work with TAMUS, TWC, and TEA to determine the best path forward for both parties and address any necessary funding adjustments. Partnership termination procedures will be followed as outlined in the partnership's MOU agreements.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Assurances, Local Partnerships, Page 7

23. Who is responsible for evaluating the teacher in the childcare classroom?

Each district must ensure that all pre-k partnership classrooms comply with program standards and legal requirements of both the district and the partnering entity. The district, in collaboration with child care partner leadership, retains responsibility for oversight, curriculum alignment, and professional development to support fidelity of implementation across all partnership sites.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Assurances, Provision of Services and Curriculum Alignment, Page 7

24. What happens if the district cannot secure all 10 partnerships by January 15, 2027?

Districts are expected to establish formal partnerships with at least 10 Texas Rising Star Three- and Four-Star certified child care programs by January 15, 2027. TWC and TAMUS Pre-K staff will actively support and work alongside districts to ensure they successfully identify and secure the required partnerships.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Assurances, Minimum Partnerships, Page 7; Pre-K Partnership FAQ, Question 4 and 15

25. What does it mean to partner between school systems and childcare programs?

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 outlined in Texas Education Code §29.171. Eligible children are dually enrolled in both the public school and the child care program, typically receiving pre-k instruction and wraparound care at the child care center.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Overview, Page 1

26. What resources will be integrated?

Partnerships are designed to braid funding and share resources between districts and child care programs. Integrated support may include curriculum resources, professional development, data sharing, and enrollment coordination, as well as joint use of funding streams to expand access to high-quality pre-k.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Overview, Page 1; Allowable Uses of Funds, Pages 3-4; Program Assurances, Provision of Services, Page 7

27. What are teachers required to do?

Teachers in partnership classrooms must implement a developmentally appropriate, state-approved curriculum that aligns with the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. Districts are expected to support teachers through professional development, curriculum alignment, and ongoing communication between the district and child care partner.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Assurances, Curriculum Alignment, Page 7

28. How does it affect Head Start?

This initiative focuses on partnerships with Texas Rising Star Three- and Four-Star certified child care programs. Districts may continue existing Head Start collaborations separately; however, the grant funds are designated for establishing new partnerships under the Collaborative District Model and are not intended to duplicate other funding streams.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Overview, Page 1; Program Assurances, Minimum Partnerships, Page 7

29. Who are the Texas Rising Star Three- and Four-Star certified providers?

Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers are licensed child care programs that have earned Three- or Four-Star certification through the Texas Workforce Commission's quality rating and improvement system. Districts will collaborate directly with TWC Pre-K staff to identify eligible TRS-certified child care programs within their designated region.

[Refer to Pre-K Partnership Request for Application](#) - Program Assurances, Minimum Partnerships, Page 7; Pre-K Partnership FAQ, Question 4



Updated 10/27/2025 11:33 AM

30. Once we submit our application, will there be confirmation that our application has been received?

Yes. Applicants who successfully submit their application to prekpartnerships@tamus.edu will receive a confirmation email verifying receipt of their submission. The confirmation message will also include important dates and general information about the next steps in the review process.