

## 2021-2022 PRE-K ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The Children's Learning Institute Early Education Center at F.W. Gross is pleased to offer a full day pre-school program to qualified students.

### ELIGIBILITY:

Prekindergarten Eligibility Overview Statute: TEC §29.153 (b) Resources: Student Attendance and Accounting Handbook (SAAH), Section 7.2 & 3.5

**To be eligible for enrollment in a free prekindergarten class**, a child must be at least three years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year 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... guidelines about NSLP eligibility can be found in sections 4 and 6 of the Texas Department of Agriculture's Administrators Reference Manual)
- is homeless, as defined by 42 USC, §11434a, 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 of the child
- 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) following an adversary hearing held as provided by Family Code §262.201
- is the child of a person eligible for the Star of Texas Award as:

- o a peace officer under Texas Government Code §3106.002,
- o a firefighter under Texas Government Code §3106.003
- o an emergency medical first responder under Texas Government Code §3106.004

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Why isn't my child eligible for prekindergarten?

The Texas Legislature determines eligibility requirements for free, public prekindergarten in Texas. When the Texas legislature established the prekindergarten program the intent was, and still is, to provide early learning experiences to students who are most at risk for school failure. Therefore, the eligibility is limited. The legislature believed that a high-quality prekindergarten program could mitigate the impact of the at-risk characteristics, thereby assisting these students to become school ready when they enter kindergarten.

### 2. Does my child have to go to prekindergarten if he or she is eligible?

No. Prekindergarten is not mandatory. However, on enrollment in prekindergarten, a child must attend school. All students are subject to compulsory school attendance rules while they are enrolled in school. If a child has not reached 6 years of age as of September 1 of the current school year, the child may be withdrawn from school without violating compulsory attendance rules. TEC §25.085(c), SAAH, Section 3.5

### 3. Is it necessary to verify/qualify a four-year-old student for PK who was eligible and enrolled in PK as a three-year-old student?

LEAs are still required to do their normal qualification process for previously enrolled three-year-old students, even though they would automatically qualify for PK based on their qualification and enrollment as three-year old PK students. The PEIMS qualification code of automatic eligibility is a code of last resort and is only to be used if a student does not qualify for PK in any other way.