

ATTACHMENT II
Text of Proposed New 19 TAC

Chapter 102. Educational Programs

Subchapter AA. Commissioner's Rules Concerning Early Childhood Education Programs

§102.1003. High-Quality Prekindergarten Grant Program.

- (a) From funds appropriated for this purpose, all eligible school districts and open-enrollment charter schools may receive grant funding for each qualifying student in average daily attendance in a high-quality prekindergarten program in the district or charter school.
- (1) The amount of funding per qualifying student will be determined based on the total amount of appropriated funding, the number of eligible grant applicants, and the number of qualifying students served by each eligible grant applicant. Funding under this program for each qualifying student in attendance for the entire instructional period on a school day shall not exceed \$1,500.
 - (2) Each applicant seeking funding through the high-quality prekindergarten grant program authorized by the Texas Education Code (TEC), §29.165, must submit an application in a format prescribed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) through a request for application (RFA).
 - (3) Each applicant must meet all the requirements established under the TEC, Chapter 29, Subchapter E-1.
- (b) An eligible applicant receiving funds under this program must provide educational services to qualifying students. A student qualifies for additional funding under this grant program if the student is four years of age on September 1 of the year the student begins the program and:
- (1) is unable to speak and comprehend the English language;
 - (2) is educationally disadvantaged;
 - (3) is a homeless child, as defined by 42 United States Code §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;
 - (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; or
 - (6) is or ever has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held as provided by the Texas Family Code, §262.201.
- (c) To be eligible to receive grant funding under this program, a school district or an open-enrollment charter school shall implement a curriculum for a high-quality prekindergarten grant program that addresses all of the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (updated 2015) in the following domains:
- (1) social and emotional development;
 - (2) language and communication;
 - (3) emergent literacy reading;
 - (4) emergent literacy writing;
 - (5) mathematics;
 - (6) science;

- (7) social studies;
 - (8) fine arts;
 - (9) physical development and health; and
 - (10) technology.
- (d) To be eligible to receive grant funding under this program, a school district or an open-enrollment charter school shall measure:
- (1) the progress of each student in meeting the recommended end of prekindergarten year outcomes identified in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (updated 2015) using a progress monitoring tool included on the commissioner's list of approved prekindergarten instruments that measures:
 - (A) social and emotional development;
 - (B) language and communication;
 - (C) emergent literacy reading;
 - (D) emergent literacy writing; and
 - (E) mathematics; and
 - (2) the preparation of each student for kindergarten using a kindergarten readiness instrument for reading.
- (e) To be eligible to receive grant funding under this program, each teacher of a high-quality prekindergarten grant program must be certified under the TEC, Chapter 21, Subchapter B, and have one of the following additional qualifications:
- (1) a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential;
 - (2) a certification offered through a training center accredited by Association Montessori Internationale or through the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education;
 - (3) at least eight years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program;
 - (4) a graduate or undergraduate degree in early childhood education or early childhood special education; or
 - (5) be employed as a prekindergarten teacher in a school district that has ensured that:
 - (A) prior to assignment in a prekindergarten class, teachers who provide prekindergarten instruction have completed at least 150 cumulative hours of continuing professional education (CPE) over a consecutive five-year period;
 - (B) teachers who have not completed training required in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph prior to assignment in a prekindergarten class complete the first 30 hours before the end of the 2016-2017 school year and complete the additional CPE hours in the subsequent four years in order to continue providing instruction in a high-quality prekindergarten classroom;
 - (C) at least half of the hours required by subparagraph (A) or (B) of this paragraph are completed in face-to-face training opportunities that include experiential learning, practical application, and direct interaction with master teachers; and
 - (D) training used to meet the requirement in subparagraph (A) or (B) of this paragraph addresses all ten domains in the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines (updated 2015).
- (f) To be eligible to receive grant funding under this program, a school district or an open-enrollment charter school shall develop and implement a family engagement plan to assist the district in achieving and maintaining high levels of family involvement and positive family attitudes toward education. An effective family engagement plan creates a foundation for the collaboration of mutual partners, embraces the

individuality and uniqueness of families, and promotes a culture of learning that is child centered, age appropriate, and family driven.

(1) The following terms, when used in this section, shall have the following meanings.

(A) Family--Adults responsible for the child's care and children in the child's life who support the early learning and development of the child.

(B) Family engagement--The mutual responsibility of families, schools, and communities to build relationships to support student learning and achievement and to support family well-being and the continuous learning and development of children, families, and educators. Family engagement is fully integrated in the child's educational experience and supports the whole child and is both culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate.

(2) The family engagement plan shall:

(A) facilitate family-to-family support using strategies such as:

(i) creating a safe and respectful environment where families can learn from each other as individuals and in groups;

(ii) inviting former program participants, including families and community volunteers, to share their education and career experiences with current families; and

(iii) ensuring opportunities for continuous participation in events designed for families by families such as training on family leadership;

(B) establish a network of community resources using strategies such as:

(i) building strategic partnerships;

(ii) leveraging community resources;

(iii) monitoring and evaluating policies and practices to stimulate innovation and create learning pathways;

(iv) establishing and maintaining partnerships with businesses, faith-based organizations, and community agencies;

(v) identifying support from various agencies, including mental and physical health providers;

(vi) partnering with local community-based organizations to create a family-friendly transition plan for students arriving from early childhood settings;

(vii) providing and facilitating referrals to family support or educational groups based on family interests and needs;

(viii) communicating short- and long-term program goals to all stakeholders; and

(ix) identifying partners to provide translators and culturally relevant resources reflective of home language;

(C) increase family participation in decision making using strategies such as:

(i) developing and supporting a family advisory council;

(ii) developing, adopting, and implementing identified goals within the annual campus/school improvement plan targeting family engagement;

(iii) developing and supporting leadership skills for family members and providing opportunities for families to advocate for their children/families;

(iv) collaborating with families to develop strategies to solve problems and serve as problem solvers;

- (v) engaging families in shaping program activities and cultivating the expectation that information must flow in both directions to reflect two-way communication;
- (vi) developing, in collaboration with families, clearly defined goals, outcomes, timelines, and strategies for assessing progress;
- (vii) providing each family with an opportunity to review and provide input on program practices, policies, communications, and events in order to ensure the program is responsive to the needs of families; and
- (viii) using appropriate tools such as surveys or focus groups to gather family feedback on the family engagement plan;
- (D) equip families with tools to enhance and extend learning using strategies such as:
 - (i) designing or implementing existing home educational resources to support learning at home while strengthening the family/school partnership;
 - (ii) providing families with information and/or training on creating a home learning environment connected to formal learning opportunities;
 - (iii) equipping families with resources and skills to support their children through the transition to school and offering opportunities for families and children to visit the school in advance of the prekindergarten school year;
 - (iv) providing complementary home learning activities for families to engage in at home with children through information presented in newsletters, online technology, social media, parent/family-teacher conferences, or other school- or center-related events;
 - (v) providing families with information, best practices, and training related to age-appropriate developmental expectations;
 - (vi) emphasizing benefits of positive family practices such as attachment and nurturing that complement the stages of children's development;
 - (vii) collaborating with families to appropriately respond to children's behavior in a non-punitive, positive, and supportive way;
 - (viii) encouraging families to reflect on family experiences and practices in helping children; and
 - (ix) assisting families to implement best practices that will help achieve the goals and objectives identified to meet the needs of the child and family;
- (E) develop staff skills in evidence-based practices that support families in meeting their children's learning benchmarks using strategies such as:
 - (i) providing essential professional development for educators in understanding communication and engagement with families, including training on communicating with families in crisis;
 - (ii) promoting and developing family engagement as a core strategy to improve teaching and learning among all educators and staff; and
 - (iii) developing staff skills to support and use culturally diverse, culturally relevant, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies; and
- (F) evaluate family engagement efforts and use evaluations for continuous improvement using strategies such as:
 - (i) conducting goal-oriented home visits to identify strengths, interests, and needs;

