

High-Quality Pre-K Starts With Full-Day

Research shows students who have the most to gain—our currently eligible 4-year-olds—receive the greatest benefit in terms of early learning from enrollment in a full-day, educationally focused pre-k program. The three hours per day provided by half-day pre-k is simply not enough to effectively close early learning gaps and give each child an equal opportunity to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

Fund Full-Day the Right Way

To get more districts to offer high-quality, full-day pre-k, **Texas must fund full-day pre-k through the Foundation School Program (FSP) formulas** used to fund grades K-12, not through highly variable grant funding. The last pre-k grant was cut from \$212 million to **zero** in 2011. Research proves the return on investment far outweighs the initial costs. **We can't cut corners here.**

Require Other Critical Quality Factors

A full-day program is necessary, but not sufficient, to achieve kindergarten readiness. Other key elements of quality that must be implemented include:

- An early childhood certification or endorsement for pre-k teachers, and an ongoing requirement for early childhood-specific professional development throughout the teaching career;
- Adequate adult-to-student ratios low enough to promote meaningful teacher-student interactions that are essential for individualized instruction; and
- Progress monitoring for students and programs, including evaluations for kindergarten readiness.

Raise the Bar for All Students

The decision of whether to offer half-day or full-day pre-k should remain with local districts and communities. The time is past due, however, to **require baseline quality elements for all pre-k programs** to advance student achievement. All programs, whether half-day or full-day should be required to:

- Select curricula aligned with early childhood learning standards adopted by the Commissioner;
- Participate in ongoing early childhood-specific professional development for pre-k teachers; and
- Collect and report key pre-k data to enable the state and stakeholders to monitor and evaluate progress.

Texas Isn't Measuring Up — We Must Act Now!

Texas lacks statewide requirements that would provide every Texas pre-k student the opportunities for success in early learning (see chart). Texas must commit now to building and funding a high-quality, full-day pre-k program with lasting benefits for Texas students and the future economy of our state.

For more information about Pre-K in Texas, read the Raise Your Hand Texas research report, *Pre-Kindergarten for the Modern Age: A Scalable, Affordable, High-Quality Plan for Texas* by Dr. Robert Pianta, The University of Virginia, at http://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/PreK_ResearchReport.pdf.

Elements of Effective Pre-K Programs	How Does Texas Stack Up? An Evaluation of Public School Pre-K Statewide Requirements and Funding
Focus on Quality: Teacher-Student Interactions	No
Curriculum and Standards	Partial*
Professional Development	No
Full-Day Enrollment	No
Adult-Child Ratios	No
Credentials and Wages	Partial**
Using Data and Measurement to Drive Instruction	No
Political Leadership and Support	Partial***