

# Pre-kindergarten Retention Question and Answer Document

1. *What is the policy of SBISD on pre-kindergarten retention?*

The district follows the recommendation of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) on prekindergarten retention in all cases but those with very extenuating circumstances.

The TEA recommendation states:

“It is the Texas Education Agency’s position that children who reach age five on September 1 are most appropriately served in kindergarten, and that the law specifically established the PK program to serve students who have not reached age five. In that context, if a district enrolls a five-year-old in the PK program, the student must be reported as ineligible for Average Daily Attendance (ADA).”

2. *Can a parent choose to retain a child in pre-kindergarten?*

Yes, in certain circumstances. A parent may choose to retain a child in prekindergarten if (1) the child has a summer birthday, and (2) the child previously attended a public or private pre-kindergarten program. A parent who is interested in having their child retained in pre-kindergarten should request an assessment of the child at their elementary school home campus from a Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT). The STAT will perform an assessment and make a recommendation for placement of the child based on the assessment data and based on District guidelines.

If the STAT and the parent agree that retention is the best placement for the child, then the child may repeat pre-kindergarten. If the STAT and the parent disagree about whether retention in pre-kindergarten is the best placement for the child, the parent may still retain their child in pre-kindergarten; however, the parent must sign a letter acknowledging that the school has recommended promotion, has shared the potential negative consequences of retention, and has disclaimed responsibility for this decision.

3. *If a parent disagrees with the district’s recommendation, do they have the final choice to retain their child in Pre-kindergarten?*

Yes. Even if the STAT recommends placement in kindergarten, the parent may choose to retain the child in pre-kindergarten. Retention in pre-kindergarten will only be permitted if (1) the child has completed the STAT process, and (2) the parent has signed the letter acknowledging that the school has recommended promotion, has shared the potential negative consequences of retention, and has disclaimed responsibility for the decision.

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4. *What if a child does not have a summer birthday?*  
Students who do not have a summer birthday may be assessed through the district's Preschool Program for Students with Disabilities (PPCD) to determine the best placement for that child. Any time after a child's third birthday, a parent may request a STAT be held to assess whether developmental delays exist that would cause the student to need another year in pre-kindergarten as an intervention.
5. *If a child has never been in a PK program, public or private, can they go through the retention process?*  
No. If the student has never been in a PK program and turns five on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>, the student would not be considered for the retention process. If the parent requests additional assessment of the child, this would be handled through our Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD).
6. *Where can a parent get more information on the process involved with pre-kindergarten retention?*  
Parents should contact their elementary school home campus and request information about the prekindergarten retention process from the school's STAT coordinator.
7. *What are the assessments involved in the process and who administers them?*  
While information from other places may be included, the following assessments are required:
- The District Pre-kindergarten Math and Literacy Assessment administered by a pre-kindergarten teacher or the SIS
  - The HELP (Hawaii Early Learning Profile) and the Teacher Questionnaire completed by the current teacher
  - The HELP (Hawaii Early Learning Profile) and the Parent Questionnaire completed by the parent
  - Draw-A-Person completed by the child and evaluated by the pre-kindergarten teacher and SIS.

The process is designed to use multiple sources to gain as much data as possible about the child being considered for retention. These sources include the parent, the current teacher, and the School Improvement Specialist (SIS) at the elementary campus.

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8. *What is the timeline for the process of requesting retention? When will the decision be made?*

A parent may request a STAT at any time, but it is recommended that the child have as much time as possible in the current pre-kindergarten instructional setting prior to assessment. The school will make its final recommendation in April in accordance with the district retention timelines for all grade levels.

9. *Can I go through the lottery if I want my child to repeat pre-kindergarten?*

Yes. Parents wishing to secure a place at an elementary campus for their students the following year should go through the lottery process in January. Pre-kindergarten students repeating the grade will always have a place at our Schools for Early Learning.

10. *If my child repeats pre-kindergarten, do I have to pay tuition?*

Students who meet state eligibility requirements (low-income, limited English proficiency, or homelessness) for pre-kindergarten will not pay tuition. Scholarships for those not eligible will be awarded using the district criteria. Those students not eligible or not awarded a scholarship will be required to pay tuition.

11. *Are there scholarships available for tuition paying students who are repeating pre-kindergarten?*

Yes. The same criteria used to award initial scholarships will be used to give scholarships to students repeating pre-kindergarten. Scholarship information is available on the SBISD web page.

<http://www.springbranchisd.com/instruc/earlychild/pk.htm>

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