

Information Item

July 31, 2018

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED

Subject: Prekindergarten and the National School Lunch Program Guidance for 2018-2019

The following information should be shared with early childhood staff, data stewards (PEIMS), and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) staff to ensure the appropriate prekindergarten guidance is applied.

For the 2018-2019 school year, the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has received a one-year waiver regarding prekindergarten and the National Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Program. **All students enrolled in state-funded prekindergarten will be eligible for free meals.** The guidance from TDA is listed below as well as some additional clarification from the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

For School Year (SY) 2018-2019, USDA has approved automatic free meal eligibility for all students attending state-funded prekindergarten programs operated under the administration of the Texas Education Agency Early Childhood Program. To determine eligibility for these students, contracting entities (CEs) will need to: (1) obtain an enrollment list with names of the enrolled students and official signatures from the appropriate school district officials; or (2) verify the students' enrollment in the state-funded prekindergarten programs if submitted on an application.

Implications for Local Education Agencies (LEAs):

Free meals will be available to otherwise non-eligible prekindergarten students enrolled in a public prekindergarten program (whether locally-funded or tuition-based), three-to-five-year-old students receiving Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities (PPCD) services, and three-to-five-year-old students enrolled but not in membership.

Many LEAs use the NSLP lunch application as a document for coding economically disadvantaged students. If this is your LEA's process, please know this change may affect the plan for coding. LEAs must ensure that coding is correct by PEIMS submission 1 for accountability purposes.

For help with School Nutrition questions:

- Regional Education Service Center school nutrition contact

For help with School Nutrition state prekindergarten questions:

- Regional Education Service Center
- Early Childhood Education Division at TEA (earlychildhoodeducation@tea.texas.gov)

For help with PEIMS coding questions:

- Regional Education Service Center PEIMS Champions

For help with Student Attendance Accounting Handbook questions:

- Financial compliance at TEA (attendance@tea.texas.gov)

Other Resources:

- [TDA Food and Nutrition](#)
- [Prekindergarten Eligibility and Documentation](#)
- [Student Attendance Accounting Handbook](#)

If you have policy questions, please contact Howard Morrison in TEA's Early Childhood Education Division at Howard.Morrison@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

Jacque Porter, Director
Early Childhood Education Division