
Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

As an educational agency, the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service supports the Texas Education Code and recognizes the academic responsibility of 4-H members. Extension faculty must be dedicated to complying with the provisions of the Texas Education Code. This is a requirement for the Texas 4-H Program to maintain its status as an extracurricular organization.

In all 4-H competitive events, 4-H members must be eligible to compete. This applies regardless of the day or time during the week the event is held. Eligibility requirements apply to all 4-H members whether they are enrolled in public, private, or home school.

Eligibility is determined by the school, not the county Extension agent. Parents should ask the school about their child's eligibility.

At the beginning of each school year, meet with school district officials to determine how to help the 4-H members obtain excused absences to participate in 4-H events, and whether 4-H members are eligible to participate in competitive events. The document *Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities* contains these key elements:

- **Extracurricular status:** 4-H must be designated as an extracurricular organization in each of the individual school districts in the county.
- **Adjunct faculty appointment:** Local school boards have the opportunity to recognize county Extension agents as adjunct staff members, which enables the school to count the students in attendance for the purposes of the Foundation School Program. Information on adjunct faculty is sent from the state 4-H office in August. The local school board must approve county Extension agents as adjunct staff members and the activities in which students are participating. Follow up with the schools and maintain communication throughout the year.
- **Eligibility information:** Verify the eligibility of members to participate in 4-H competition events/activities.
- **Eligibility information and authorization to receive an excused absence:** Verify the members' eligibility to participate and their authorization to receive excused absences. This would be used for events held during school hours such as livestock shows and county, district, state and national 4-H contests. Because each school's excused absence policy is different, you must communicate with each school annually.

For more information, refer to:

- **Memorandum distributed annually:** *Extracurricular Activities and 4-H Eligibility Issues*
- **Current year's TEA/UIIL Side by Side document:** Check the TEA website annually. This document is also posted on the agent login part of the Texas 4-H website.

Other key tasks

- Always **check with the school districts** to determine the most effective way to send in the academic eligibility forms (hand carry, mail, email, fax, etc.). Also ask how far in advance the schools want to receive the forms.
- Determine a system for tracking eligibility documents. Do not assume that no response means that all students are eligible.
- Eligibility is determined by the school and the school district rules, not the county Extension agent.
- Refer to *Declaration of Eligibility Form and Guidelines*. These documents are posted on the county Extension agent page of the Texas 4-H website. See examples on the following page.



Declaration Of Eligibility Form



*This form could be used when an individual form is needed for each student.
The Extension office completes the top section, then faxes, emails, hand delivers, etc., it to the school.
The principal then completes and signs it, and the school returns it. This form can also be used with home-school students.*

Declaration of Eligibility Form

This information is requested in accordance with the requirement of the Texas Education Code in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency and local public school board policies.

County Extension Agent: Complete this section

In accordance with 4-H policy, provided by our Extension office, I respectfully request (check (√) one):

- Eligibility information only
- Eligibility information and authorization to receive an extracurricular absence from school

Name of activity _____ Date: _____

I hereby certify that _____ is a member of 4-H in _____ County and is scheduled to participate in this activity representing 4-H. The student will be under the supervision of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service faculty or agency's designated volunteer leader.

County Extension Agent _____ Date: _____

Principal: Please complete this section

Check (√) one:

- I do certify that the student is eligible to participate in the above-mentioned extracurricular activity.
- I do not certify the student because he/she is NOT eligible to participate in the above-mentioned extracurricular activity.

Check (√) one:

- An extracurricular absence will be granted.
- An extracurricular absence will NOT be granted.
- Does not apply

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name of school: _____

Declaration of Eligibility Form

This information is requested in accordance with the requirement of the Texas Education Agency Code, in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency and local public school board polices.

I hereby certify that the **students on the attached list** are members of 4-H in _____
County and are scheduled to participate in the following representing 4-H:

They will be under the supervision of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service faculty or the agency's designated volunteer staff.

County Extension Agent _____ Date _____

Signed _____ Date _____
School Official

Name of school

Sample

A list of students should be attached to this cover sheet. School officials indicate eligibility and return the form to the Extension office via email, mail, fax, etc.