

Louisiana



Prekindergarten Program Guidelines

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Louisiana Prekindergarten Program Guidelines

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LOUISIANA PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Louisiana Department of Education believes in the strong relationship between the quality of early childhood experience and later academic success. It is our philosophy that developmentally appropriate practices in prekindergarten programs provide young children with the opportunities needed for learning and development that allow for active engagement and participation in their environment.

The ***Louisiana Prekindergarten Program Guidelines*** have been developed to promote the ongoing development, evaluation, and improvement of early childhood programs serving four-year-old children. These *Program Guidelines* which include goals and indicators are based on research in developmentally appropriate practice for preschool children. In developing the goals and indicators, the Accreditation Standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Head Start Performance Standards were reviewed. The *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition (ECERS-R)* was also reviewed and considered when developing the *Program Guidelines*.

The ***Louisiana Prekindergarten Program Guidelines*** are intended to provide and maintain safe, welcoming, age-appropriate and culturally-sensitive learning environments for young children and their families. The implementation of the ***Louisiana Prekindergarten Program Guidelines*** is highly recommended to ensure quality prekindergarten programs across the state. However, all prekindergarten programs are still required to meet the guidelines / regulations outlined by their individual funding source.

The ***Louisiana Prekindergarten Program Guidelines*** provide goals and indicators for each of the following areas*:

- Assessment
- Collaboration
- Curriculum
- Family Involvement and Support
- Group Size and Ratio
- Health and Safety Practices
- Interactions Between Staff and Children, and Among Children
- Nutrition and Food Service
- Physical Environment
- Staff Qualifications and Staff Development
- Transportation

NOTE:** The areas addressed by the ***Louisiana Prekindergarten Program Guidelines are all equally important for providing quality programs and are listed alphabetically so as not to put more emphasis on one area over another.

*The Louisiana Department of Education wishes to thank the Massachusetts Department of Education for the use of its **Early Childhood Standards** draft document in developing the **Louisiana Prekindergarten Program Guidelines** for our state.*

AREA: ASSESSMENT

GOAL: Assessment of prekindergarten students shall be used to plan for and modify program activities to address the specific needs of individual children. To help determine the needs of the individual students when planning for instruction, classroom teachers shall maintain a portfolio on each student. Children of this age shall not be given a pencil and paper test.

ASSESSMENT INDICATORS

A. Student assessment should be used to PLAN FOR AND MODIFY the instructional program.

1. Portfolios are kept up-to-date in the classroom and are available for review by the child's parent/guardian and appropriate LEA and State Department personnel. Information from assessments is used to plan/modify program activities to address the specific needs of individual children
2. To help determine the needs of the individual students when planning for instruction, classroom teachers are to maintain a portfolio on each student. The portfolio will contain, but not be limited to, the following information/items:
 - **Work samples**, including items such as photos or tapes of child created products (e.g., block creations, sculptures, dramatizations, child interviews), actual (or copies of) developmental writing samples, or other items to document child development;
 - **Anecdotal records**, including informal notes on the child's problem solving and critical thinking behaviors related to classroom, social, and academic interactions;
 - **Checklists and inventories** for recording observations of child behaviors and skills that are research-based, such as the *Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum*, *High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR)*, *Work Sampling Systems (WSS)*, state or locally developed checklists, etc.; and
 - **Parent conferences**, including information on the child provided by the parent and conference notes.

AREA: COLLABORATION

GOAL: Collaboration shall serve to start and build a local network of programs that support the diverse needs of prekindergarten children and their families. Collaboration implies that responsibility for the care and education of young children extends beyond the immediate family and beyond any one agency. The providers of early childhood programs and related family services differ in each local community. Successful collaborations support activities across public and private domains.

COLLABORATION INDICATORS

A. The programs are ENHANCED BY COLLABORATION among the local school system, community programs and agencies that serve prekindergarten age children and their families.

1. Prekindergarten stakeholders collaborate with other government and private agencies and /or providers of early childhood education and care.
2. The program maximizes existing services in the community to meet the specific needs of the children in the areas of education, health, and support services.
3. Interagency collaboration provides a forum to ensure communication and coordination by sharing ideas and concerns such as:
 - Providing cross-programmatic professional development opportunities;
 - Involving the families in appropriate educational opportunities;
 - Providing smooth transitions for children and their families from one setting to another; and/or
 - Conducting a needs assessment that includes demographics, an analysis of existing resources and a description of unmet needs of children and families.

B. PROCEDURES have been developed to facilitate the goals of the collaboration.

1. Formal, written interagency agreements have been developed with collaborating partners that include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Guidelines for resolving conflicts;
 - Clearly defined decision-making process; or
 - Well-defined leadership roles and shared responsibilities.
2. Meetings are held in accordance with the program guidelines and / or interagency agreement.
 - Meetings are scheduled that are accessible to all members;
 - A process for raising issues and concerns is included;
 - Tasks are defined in concrete and doable terms; and
 - Working groups are established to address specific projects.
3. New efforts are integrated with other ongoing activities as much as possible.

AREA: FAMILY INVOLVEMENT & SUPPORT

Goal: The staff will coordinate the provision of support services for all enrolled prekindergarten children and their families to support maximum early education and care benefits to children so that they are well prepared for formal schooling, and therefore, more likely to experience later academic success.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT INDICATORS

A. WRITTEN information is provided to parents.

1. Written information about the program is given to parent(s) or guardian(s) upon admission.
2. Information is provided to parent(s) or guardian(s) in the form of a parent handbook or other appropriate mechanism.
3. A home and school agreement has been developed and signed by the participating parties. This agreement outlines the responsibilities of each party. Each party has received a copy of the signed document.

B. The program provides an ORIENTATION process.

1. An orientation is provided for families of children entering prekindergarten before or soon after the program commences. The orientation may include, but is not limited to the opportunity to visit the classroom, meet the on-site-administrator, review written material, and observe and talk with teachers and staff.
2. Programs assist families whose primary language is other than English or who require the use of alternative communication methods to understand the program.

C. The program has a system to gather FAMILY/CHILD INFORMATION.

1. There is a process that enables the program to learn about the child's and the family's interests and needs.

D. The program provides PARENTING SUPPORT.

1. Family members' knowledge of child development and involvement with their children's educational experiences are enhanced through a variety of informational parenting seminars, volunteer opportunities at the school, parent/teacher conferences, etc.
2. Seminars and conferences are flexibly scheduled to accommodate working parents/guardians.
3. Family members of children enrolled in prekindergarten are informed of all locally available adult education opportunities (such as Even Start, GED programs, vocational/technical schools) to increase literacy levels.
4. Family members of children enrolled in prekindergarten are informed of all locally available employment counseling services related to available opportunities, training requirements for these positions, and counseling to support the employment interview process.
5. Opportunities are provided for parents to enhance their knowledge of child development, positive parenting, educational, employment, and health resource information through workshops in collaboration with the prekindergarten teachers and school administrators.

AREA: FAMILY INVOLVEMENT & SUPPORT...cont.

D. The program provides PARENTING SUPPORT. (cont.)	
	6. Regularly scheduled meetings are held with prekindergarten teachers to discuss relevant information concerning support for children and families.
	7. There is a process for assisting with transition activities, such as locating and obtaining all necessary documentation and health-related requirements for kindergarten entry the following year.
E. There are mechanisms in place for PARENT PARTICIPATION.	
	1. A variety of opportunities are provided for family members to participate in the prekindergarten program activities, facilitating their success as partners in promotion of the academic success of their children.
	2. The program permits and encourages unannounced visits by family members while their child is present; however, all school policies for visitors must be followed.
	3. The program has a process for allowing parents to provide input in the development of program policy.

AREA: GENERAL CURRICULUM

See also *Bulletin 105 - Louisiana Content Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children* and the *Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum*

GOAL: Curriculum is defined as everything the staff does with children. The curriculum shall be developmentally appropriate and designed for active involvement by children in the learning process. Young children learn through play, active manipulation of the environment, concrete experiences, and communicating with peers and adults. The curriculum shall provide a well-balanced variety of activities and materials that encourage these behaviors and are appropriate to each child's age, background, and stage of development and individual considerations, including disabilities.

This section addresses general curriculum indicators for prekindergarten programs, including daily routines and broad curriculum goals. Programs are expected to meet the following indicators, document the use of *Louisiana Content Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children*, and support the *Prekindergarten Grade Level Expectations*.

GENERAL CURRICULUM INDICATORS

A. The program provides opportunities for CURRICULUM PLANNING.

	1. In conjunction with the <i>Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum</i> , the program uses a prekindergarten curriculum that is research-based, supports interrelated development and addresses the <i>Louisiana Content Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children</i> in the following domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Cognitive (Math, Science, and Social Studies)b. Creative Artsc. Health and Physicald. Language and Literacye. Social and Emotional
	2. The program has a complete educational program directed toward the development of cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and communication skills in a manner and at a pace consistent with the needs and capabilities of the individual child.
	3. There is documentation that the program utilizes the <i>Louisiana Content Standards for Programs Serving Four-Year-Old Children</i> and supports the <i>Prekindergarten Grade Level Expectations</i> , evidenced through written plans that demonstrate a wide range of activities designed to support a developmentally appropriate instructional program/curriculum.
	4. Written plans describe whole group activities (teacher-initiated activities), as well as interest area/activity center plans (child-initiated activities) for engaging children in the thematic exploration/study that provides for developmentally appropriate and integrated learning experiences to address development.
	5. The daily group time and activity center plans indicate appropriate adaptations/modifications that are necessary for children with disabilities to meet their IEP goals.
	6. At least weekly, classroom staff discusses the curriculum and plans for individual children's needs and growth.

AREA: GENERAL CURRICULUM...cont.

B. There are a variety of ACTIVITY AREAS.	
	1. Interest areas (a minimum of 5) are provided to accommodate and facilitate developmentally appropriate learning activities, such as: block building, dramatic play, art, music, science, technology, math, literacy, sand/water play, woodworking, and manipulatives, etc.
	2. Interest areas are accessible and modified/adapted to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities.
	3. Time and space are available both indoors and outdoors for physical skill development and gross motor activities.
C. Goals are adapted to meet INDIVIDUAL NEEDS.	
	1. Curriculum goals and/or activities allow for a variety of learning styles and diverse abilities and are based on the individual needs, temperaments and interests of the children enrolled.
	2. Experiences are provided that support the lifestyle, cultural, and linguistic background of the children enrolled while increasing their knowledge of other backgrounds.
	3. Activities and routines are designed to accommodate Individualized Educational Program (IEP) services and therapies within the classroom as integrated services.
	4. To accommodate each child's individual pattern and timing of development, the activities and materials increase in complexity and become more challenging as they develop and understand skills.
D. There is a STRUCTURE that provides opportunities for activities that meet the variety of learning needs of young children.	
	1. The daily schedule provides the following activities in accordance with <i>Bulletin 741, Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. child-initiated b. teacher-directed c. bathroom and snack d. nap and rest time
	2. The daily schedule includes the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. indoor centers b. outdoor centers including gross motor c. quiet/active d. individual/small group/ large group
	3. Most materials are visible and readily accessible so children can remove and replace materials independently or with minimal assistance.
	4. The amount of time spent in whole group activities is limited and appropriate for the developmental stages of the children.
	5. The program provides children the opportunity to play alone or with selected peers, if preferred.
	6. The program allows children to find and create a space for privacy.
	7. A regular daily routine/schedule is posted in the classroom.
	8. The program prepares children for transitions, which occur in a timely, predictable manner to meet their individual needs.
	9. The program gives the children opportunities to select activities and move around freely from one interest area to another.

AREA: GROUP RATIO AND SIZE

GOAL: The program will have the number of staff necessary to provide adequate group supervision and to provide individual attention to children in order to promote their development in all domains.

GROUP RATIO AND SIZE INDICATORS

A. The program maintains at least minimum STAFF/CHILD RATIOS.

	1. Children are supervised at all times.
	2. Each classroom has no more than a maximum of 20 children enrolled.
	3. Each class has a child-to-adult staff member ratio of no more than 10 to 1, which is consistently maintained throughout the day.
	4. The staffing in each class is adequate to meet the needs of all children, including children with disabilities.

AREA: HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES

GOAL: The program will be operated in a way that fosters healthy development and safety of children.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES INDICATORS

A. HEALTH CARE and SAFETY Policy

	1. The program has a written health care policy that ensures that the appropriate actions are taken to ensure that the health requirements of all children are met, including those with disabilities and specifically identified health needs.
	2. The written health care policy includes, but is not limited to, plans and procedures to address the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate emergency numbers for the local fire department, police department, poison control, and local medical facility are prominently posted on or near the telephone; • Using and maintaining first aid supplies; and • Meeting individual children's specific health needs, including but not limited to identifying children's allergies and ensuring that children are not exposed to foods, chemicals or other materials to which they are allergic.

A. HEALTH CARE and SAFETY Policy (cont.)	
	3. The program has a written plan concerning the management of children who become ill while at school, including notification of parents.
	4. A minimum of 50% of the prekindergarten program staff members are trained in CPR and Pediatric First Aid, have current certification, and are immediately accessible at all times.
	5. The program site has a written plan for the prevention of injuries, including but not limited to monitoring the program routinely to remove or repair any facility, equipment, or materials that may cause injury. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All toxic substances, medications, sharp objects and other hazardous objects are stored in a secure/locked place out of reach of the children; and • Containers with hazardous contents are labeled in order to facilitate contacting the Poison Control Center.
B. Child HEALTH RECORDS	
	1. A written, confidential health record is maintained for each child as part of the child's individual record. Individual child health records include but are not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record of immunizations or current religious or medical exemption; • Pertinent health history (such as allergies or chronic conditions); • Log of medications administered and permission form for administration of medications; • Log or copy of injury reports; and • Vision, hearing, developmental, and health-related referrals.
C. Child ABUSE AND NEGLECT	
	1. The program site has written procedures for protecting children against abuse and neglect, including, but not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each staff member is provided with a written statement clearly defining child abuse and neglect; and • All staff receives training regarding policies, procedures, and legal and professional responsibilities about reporting suspected child abuse/neglect.
D. Medical EMERGENCY/EVACUATION PLAN	
	1. The program has plans for medical emergencies and evacuation procedures.
	2. First aid supplies are adequate in variety and quantity and do not have outdated expiration dates. A plan exists for regularly checking for completeness, and supplies are replaced prior to expiration dates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first aid supply kit includes but is not limited to adhesive tape, Band-Aids, bandage compress, gauze pads, gauze roller bandage, disposable gloves, instant cold pack, water, scissors, tweezers, and thermometer.
	3. The program has an evacuation plan which includes but is not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific procedures for any children who may need additional assistance during evacuation, including those children with disabilities. • Evacuation procedures are practiced with all teachers and staff, and all groups of children at least every other month, or more often if required by local guidelines.

E. CLEANING	
	1. All cleaning supplies and disinfectants are stored in a secure place and out of reach of children.
	2. Trash is removed from all indoor spaces daily.
	3. Stuffed animals and other fabric toys are used only if machine washable and cleaned monthly.
	4. Toys, materials, and furniture used by the children are cleaned and/or sanitized at least once a week or more frequently if needed.
F. PERSONAL HYGIENE of Staff/Children	
	1. All staff is trained in infection control procedures by certified personnel.
	2. Staff educates children about and promotes hand washing and universal precautions.
	3. Bodily fluids are properly disposed of, and the accompanying tools and affected areas are cleaned and disinfected immediately.
	4. Toileting is done in a sanitary and appropriate manner to meet the emotional and physical needs of each individual child, including those with disabilities.
	5. Children's personal items and clothing that are soiled are sealed in a plastic bag and sent home for laundering.
G. PETS	
	1. Before introducing a pet to the program, teachers and staff consider the effect on all children's health and safety, including but not limited to allergies.

AREA: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN STAFF AND CHILDREN, AND AMONG CHILDREN

GOAL: Each child's unique identity, language and cultural background are respected through warm, personal interactions between staff and children. Staff is supportive and responsive to children and facilitates interactions among children. Staff promotes the development of social skills, language, intellectual and emotional growth. Discipline is designed to develop self-discipline and problem-solving strategies.

INTERACTIONS BETWEEN STAFF AND CHILDREN, AND AMONG CHILDREN INDICATORS

A. There are opportunities for POSITIVE PEER INTERACTIONS.

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| | 1. The classroom environment and activities are designed to promote peer interaction for a major part of the child's day. |
| | 2. Staff models and encourages cooperation and responsible behaviors among children. |
| | 3. Children are given opportunities to choose from a variety of activities in which they can play alone or with one or several peers. |
| | 4. Staff assists children in dealing with emotions such as anger, sadness, and frustration by comforting, identifying feelings, and helping children use words to solve their problems in age-appropriate ways. |
| | 5. Staff encourages pro-social behaviors among children, including cooperating, helping, sharing, and taking turns. |

B. There are POSITIVE STAFF/CHILD INTERACTIONS.

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| | 1. Staff greets children and parents warmly. |
| | 2. Staff has frequent meaningful conversations with children and is responsive to children's needs, temperaments, learning styles, and interests. |
| | 3. Staff assists children and encourages them to be involved and to share experiences, ideas, and feelings. |
| | 4. Staff is physically at the child's level when communicating with them most of the time. |
| | 5. The majority of staff conversations is with individual children or small groups rather than with the whole group most of the time. |
| | 6. Staff frequently uses open-ended questions and statements when conversing with children. |

C. The staff relates FAIRLY AND EQUITABLY to all children and adults.

- | | |
|--|---|
| | 1. Staff treats all children and adults with equal respect and consideration regardless of race, age, language, religion, culture, and family composition. |
| | 2. Staff provides all children, including those with disabilities and those whose primary language is not English, with equal opportunities to participate in all activities. |

AREA: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN STAFF AND CHILDREN, AND AMONG CHILDREN ...cont.

D. The staff fosters INDEPENDENCE in all children.	
	1. Staff supports the children to acquire the skills necessary to independently solve problems and make decisions.
	2. Opportunities are provided to all children to develop self-help skills such as dressing, personal hygiene, tying shoes and using eating utensils appropriately. Accommodations are provided for children with disabilities, as needed.
	3. Materials and equipment are arranged in a manner that is visible and readily accessible to children, so that children may select, remove and replace the materials independently or with minimal assistance.
E. Children's BEHAVIOR is managed in a positive manner.	
	1. Discipline is based on an understanding of each child's individual needs and development.
	2. The program has written procedures for behavior management appropriate for four-year-olds, including positive techniques, such as modeling, redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement. The procedures are provided to and discussed with parents at the time of enrollment.
	3. Staff and children develop clear, consistent and developmentally appropriate rules.
	4. Facility arrangement, daily scheduling and allowing children to solve their own conflicts with appropriate guidance, are used to facilitate the development of self-discipline in children.
	5. Punishment is not discipline or guidance. The following punishments are never used: abusive or neglectful treatments of children, including corporal punishment, isolation, verbal abuse, humiliation and denial of outdoor time, food or basic needs; and punishment of soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, including forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing, to remain on the toilet, or any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
	6. If a child without an IEP continually causes physical harm to himself/herself or others or continually impedes the learning of himself/herself and others because of other challenging behavior, the following procedure is followed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prekindergarten teacher implements appropriate interventions and consults with the parent/guardian and other appropriate consultants, including the resource coordinator, if one is available; and • A referral to the School Building Level Committee has been made. If a decision is made to request emergency removal of the child from the classroom, then the child is also suspected of being in need of special education services and is due the same safeguards as a child receiving special education services. (These procedures are specified in <i>Bulletin 1706, Subpart A, Regulations for Students with Disabilities Act</i>, July 2004, part L and in <i>Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Disabilities</i>, July 2004.)

AREA: NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE

GOAL: Children will be provided with experiences that promote adequate nutrition and good eating habits.

NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE INDICATORS

A. Food is served in POSITIVE, RELAXED, SOCIAL atmosphere.

	1. Children are given sufficient time at mealtimes and snacks for each child to eat at a reasonable rate.
	2. Food (meals or snacks) is NOT used as a reward or punishment.
	3. Children are not forced to finish all their food.
	4. No child is denied a meal or snack for any reason other than written medical direction.
	5. Children are encouraged without coercing or negative consequences to eat a well-balanced diet.
	6. Foods that are representative of the children's cultural backgrounds are served periodically.

AREA: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: Both indoor and outdoor space shall be safe and accessible to all children, including those with disabilities. The indoor and outdoor physical environment will reflect children's interests and offer opportunities for varied play experiences and exploration that will foster children's learning, growth and development.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT INDICATORS

A. The OUTDOOR PLAY AREA is safely maintained and encourages play and learning.

	1. The program maintains or has access to an outdoor play area, accessible to all young children including children with disabilities, with a minimum of 75 usable square feet per child for the number of children who are outside at any one time. Outdoor play for groups may be scheduled at alternating time periods to allow for space. (It is recommended that this indicator apply to any new public school construction as of 2013.)
	2. There is play equipment (portable and stationary) of sufficient quantity and variety and appropriate to the needs and ages of the children.
	3. There is an appropriate safety surface material under all playground equipment as recommended by the Consumer Products Safety Commission (www.cpsc.gov).
	4. Equipment that encourages active physical play (trampolines are prohibited) and quiet play or activity is available.
	5. All play equipment and equipment necessary for the operation of prekindergarten programs is maintained in good repair.
	6. There is an outdoor play space that is safely accessible from the classroom building. Appropriate safety precautions are implemented when crossing public streets.
	7. The outdoor play space is enclosed with a fence or other barrier to protect the children from traffic hazards, to prevent children from leaving the premises without proper supervision, and to prevent contact with animals or unauthorized persons.
	8. The area of the facility and yard that children may access is clean and free from hazards.
	9. Crawlspace and mechanical, electrical and other hazardous equipment are inaccessible to children.
	10. Fencing is around areas where there are open cisterns, wells, ditches, fishponds, and swimming pools or other bodies of water.
	11. The outdoor play area offers some protection from the elements (e.g., trees, canopies, awnings).

B. The INDOOR ENVIRONMENT is safely maintained.

	1. There is a minimum of 35 square feet per child of usable indoor classroom activity space, exclusive of hallways, lockers, bathrooms, kitchens, closets, offices, and areas regularly used for other purposes, such as sleeping or dining. (It is recommended that this indicator apply to any new public school construction as of 2013.)
	2. The indoor environment is safe, clean and physically accessible to all young children, including those with disabilities.

AREA: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT...cont.

B. The INDOOR ENVIRONMENT is safely maintained. (con't)	
	3. The area of the facility that children may access is clean, free from hazards, and in good repair.
	4. There is access to ample storage/file space, and there is convenient storage for personal belongings.
	5. There is satisfactory space for conferences and adult group activities.
C. The ENVIRONMENT protects the health and safety of children.	
	1. The prekindergarten program site meets each of the annual fire prevention and safety requirements (the Office of State Fire Marshal and/or City Fire Department) for schools. For immediate reference, refer to the school/district policy.
	2. All areas of the site used by the children, including sleep areas, are properly heated, cooled, ventilated, and lighted to prevent extreme conditions.
	3. The prekindergarten bathrooms and hand washing areas are located within the classroom. If not, the bathrooms and hand washing areas are in close proximity and easily accessible to the classroom.
	4. Secure railing is provided for flights of more than three steps and for porches more than three feet from the ground.
	5. Gates are provided at the head or foot of each flight of stairs to which children have access.
	6. Accordion gates are prohibited unless there is documentation on file that the gate meets requirements as approved by the Office of Public Health, Sanitation Services.
	7. There is a working and readily available telephone at each site that is accessible to the teacher, teacher assistant, and/or administrative staff. (Coin-operated phones are not allowed for this purpose.)
	8. The address of the school and the exact geographical location of each prekindergarten classroom in the school are posted with the necessary emergency numbers.
	9. Prescription and over-the-counter medications, poisons, cleaning supplies, harmful chemicals, equipment, tools and any substance with a warning label stating it is harmful is locked in a room or in cabinets inaccessible to children.
	10. Refrigerated medication is in a secure container to prevent access by children and to avoid contamination of food.
	11. First aid supplies are available at the site.
	12. The use of alcohol and the use or possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances, firearms, pellets, or BB guns (loaded or unloaded) are prohibited in the classroom, on the playground, and on any prekindergarten class field trip.
	13. The use of tobacco is prohibited in any form in indoor areas, on the playground, and on any sponsored field trips.
	14. There is a visual check by the staff after the last child departs to ensure that no child is left unattended at the end of each day. Documentation includes date, time, and signature of staff conducting the visual check and is reviewed periodically and signed/initialed by the school principal (or the person of highest authority) to ensure that the procedure is consistently followed.

AREA: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT...cont.

D. There are REST or SLEEP periods.	
	1. The daily schedule allows for adequate nutrition and rest, with alternating periods of active and quiet activity. The recommended rest period is one hour or not more than 20% of the day except to address the specific needs of individual children. (See <i>Bulletin 741</i> , Standard 2.090.03, for minimum time requirements for preschool.)
	2. A space and quiet activities are provided for children who do not sleep.
	3. Each child has his/her own individual cot or mat of the appropriate size, height, and material, sufficient to ensure his/her health and safety (cribs may be required by the IEP or through medical documentation for children with specific disabilities.)
	4. Either the site or the parent provides labeled sheets for children to lie on and a labeled sheet or blanket for covering the child.
	5. Cots, mats, or cribs are spaced at least 18 inches apart when in use, with a head/toe arrangement so that no two children's heads are adjacent or there may be a solid barrier separation.
E. There is a defined CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT that offers appropriate play and storage areas.	
	1. Indoor play areas are defined clearly by spatial arrangement.
	2. There is sufficient child-sized furniture for routine care, play and learning.
	3. There are low, open shelves, bins or other open containers within easy reach of the children for the storage of play materials in each play area. Toy chests with attached lids are prohibited.
	4. Shelves and containers are clearly labeled for independent use by children.
	5. There is space set aside for children to play alone or with a friend, protected from intrusion from other children.
	6. There is an individual, labeled space for each child's personal belongings.
	7. There are child-related displays that show work done by the children and that relate to the current activities.
F. There is physical ACCESS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.	
	1. The program ensures access for persons with disabilities by compliance with Title 2 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
	2. The program makes reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities and provides access to the full range of activities provided by the program.
	3. A child who is identified as eligible for special education and/or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) through <i>Louisiana Bulletin 1706</i> and <i>Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Disabilities</i> – is NOT denied access to prekindergarten classes and/or before- and after-school enrichment classes. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Division for Early Childhood (DEC), Council for Exceptional Children have identified inclusive programs as the preferred service delivery option for most young children with disabilities. However, the most appropriate placement should be determined through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. (See <i>Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Disabilities</i> , July 2004 and <i>Bulletin 1706, Subpart A, Regulations for Students with Disabilities Act</i> , July 2004) The child having an IEP placement in a prekindergarten class with typically developing peers should not be removed from the class roster for any reason without the IEP team reconvening to determine the most appropriate placement.

AREA: STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: The program will be sufficiently staffed by well-qualified adults who understand child development and who recognize and provide for children's individual needs and differences. Staff will participate in ongoing staff development. The program will encourage staff to further their education and training.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & STAFF DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

A. There are common REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STAFF.

1. The program ensures that the highest quality staff is hired for all positions, including support and custodial staff, teacher assistants, teachers, and administrative staff.
2. The program keeps the appropriate registration, certification, or license in the personnel file for all staff.
3. All personnel having contact with children enrolled in the program's prekindergarten programs have had a criminal background check and must comply with all other hiring procedures required by the school system. Documentation is on file with the school system.

B. The program is in compliance with the qualifications for TEACHER.

1. All teachers possess one of the following credentials:
 - a. A valid and current Louisiana *teaching certificate* in Nursery School Education, Kindergarten, PreK-3, Non-categorical Preschool, or Early Intervention; or
 - b. A valid and current Louisiana *teaching certificate* in Elementary Education **and** an Out-of-Field Authorization (OFAT) in Nursery School Education, Kindergarten, PreK-3, Non-categorical Preschool, or Early Intervention; or
 - c. A teacher with a baccalaureate degree and a Temporary Authority to Teach (TAT), Temporary Employment Permit (TEP), or an Out-of-State Provisional Certificate (OP) in Nursery School Education, Kindergarten, PreK-3, Non-categorical Preschool or Early Intervention.

C. The program is in compliance with the qualifications for TEACHER ASSISTANT / TEACHER AIDE/PARAPROFESSIONAL.

1. The program abides by the qualifications listed below:
 - a. Possesses a high school diploma and have two years of college for a total of 48 credit hours, or an Associate's Degree in a closely related field, or have passed the ParaPro Test;
 - b. Possess proficient communication skills; and
 - c. All other local, state, and federal requirements for employment.

D. The RESOURCE COORDINATOR is a qualified member of the staff.

1. The program has access to a person to coordinate the provision of support services for all enrolled prekindergarten children who would benefit from such assistance and their families. These services are intended to support maximum early education and care benefits to children so that they are well prepared for formal schooling, and therefore, more likely to experience later academic success.
2. Persons providing resource coordination services shall meet the following qualifications:
 - a. Possesses a baccalaureate degree in Social Work, Psychology, Child Welfare, or other field closely related to providing social services to families of young children; and
 - b. Possesses proficient oral and written communication skills.

AREA: STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & STAFF DEVELOPMENT...cont.

E. There are opportunities for STAFF DEVELOPMENT.	
	1. All prekindergarten teachers, teacher assistants, and caregivers providing services in participating programs shall attend training relevant to early childhood.
	2. Annual professional development for continuing education shall be provided for all staff working directly with prekindergarten children. NOTE: Continuing education opportunities include various early childhood education topics, including, but not limited to, the following: early language and literacy development, brain research, technology, health and safety, child growth and development, curriculum planning, guidance and discipline techniques, community collaboration, communication/relations with families, working with culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and families, detecting and reporting child abuse and neglect, advocacy for early childhood programs and the profession, inclusion of children with disabilities, and the profession's code of ethical conduct.
	3. Professional development for all staff working directly with prekindergarten children should include training dedicated to inclusion of children with disabilities.
	4. Staff development programs include a variety of experiences, such as classroom observations, individual consultations, technical assistance, group workshops, visits to other programs, and attendance at conferences.
	5. Documentation of professional development for the teacher and assistant is kept on file.
F. The program has a process for STAFF ORIENTATION.	
	1. All prekindergarten teachers, teacher assistants, and caregivers providing services should have attended curriculum training prior to commencement of the program each school year, in order to effectively implement the prekindergarten curriculum model selected by the school system.
	2. The LEA has collaborated with other governmentally funded and interested <u>private</u> providers of early education and care to children in the school system's jurisdiction who may benefit from the curriculum training opportunity.

AREA: TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: Transportation is provided in a safe and efficient manner.

TRANSPORTATION INDICATORS

A. TRANSPORTING prekindergarten students, including those with disabilities.

	1. Transportation is provided to prekindergarten students to ensure that each child is present for the educational/instructional portion of the day.
	2. The teachers and staff, in cooperation with parents, work to ensure the health and safety of children while being transported.
	3. A communication device (i.e., cell phone, walkie talkie) is provided and in working order.
	4. For children with disabilities, transportation services meet the requirements of the child's Individual Education Plan.