



**New Mexico's
Early PreK Program Standards
For Program Year 2016-2017**

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Introduction

New Mexico has joined more than 36 states to become part of a movement toward standards-based early childhood education. Nation-wide, standards are used to describe desired results, outcomes, or learning expectations for children below kindergarten age. In addition, standards are used to describe desired qualifications for personnel and facilities where early learning takes place. According to a joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE) there are **four essential features in the design of standards:**

1. significant, developmentally appropriate content and outcomes;
2. informed and inclusive processes are used in the development and review;
3. ethical and appropriate implementation and assessment strategies and;
4. strong supports for early childhood programs, professionals, and families.

Essential feature number one -- significant, developmentally appropriate content and outcomes -- will be conceptualized in New Mexico's Preschool Early Learning Outcomes. The recommended, second essential element — informed and inclusive processes – has been used in the development and review of this project. The last two elements presented in this document, reflect features three and four. Typically called program standards, these serve as expectations for the characteristics or quality of schools, child-care and Head Start centers, and other educational settings where children receive preschool services.

According to Schumacher, Irish and Lombardi (2003), most recent congressional policy has pointed toward setting high learning or outcome standards, which focus on what children, are expected to learn. At the federal level, little attention has been given to improving the standards for the type, intensity and quality of early childhood programs. This document attempts to do just that. Specifically, program standards are requirements that early childhood programs must meet in order to ensure conditions in which children are more likely to learn. These include best practices to inform instruction, child group size, personnel-child ratio, teacher education, methods to collaborate with families, required curriculum, and comprehensive services.

For the purpose of this document, we use the term “essential elements” to frame the quality standards for programs serving young children and their families. Quality standards are associated with better early learning opportunities because they help promote the conditions conducive to the positive teacher – child relationships so crucial for early development and learning (Vandell & Wolfe, 2000). As stated in New Mexico's *Best Practices* (1999):

These essential elements of quality reflect current research on quality and philosophy statements of a variety of professional organizations, including but not limited to Zero to Three, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Head Start, and the Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Method

This work began with ongoing information and brainstorming with the Early Childhood Interagency Action Team and representatives from New Mexico Child Development Board. In addition, the Program Standards Task Force, established during the summer of 2004, assisted in jump-starting the framework and writing the standards presented here. As these New Mexico standards were being developed and implemented, it has been imperative that our standards of quality programs:

- expand upon early learning experiences
- avoid pressuring children
- honor the individual strengths and needs of young children
- encourage young children to value the process of learning
- ensure developmentally appropriate teaching practices
- support early childhood teachers in their roles as professional decision makers
- value diversity.

In addition to reviewing literature on the standards movement, the existing New Mexico program standards from the five major early education systems were reviewed: child care, public school, early intervention, child development, and Head Start. Standards from other states and were also reviewed. Policy statements from early childhood and special education advocacy groups such as the NAEYC, Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children, National Center for Children in Poverty, and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. The program standards for New Mexico proposed in this document represent the best ideas found, reworked and rewritten by the task force.

Framework for the standards

The framework for the presentation of these early childhood program standards is: 1) a rationale for each essential element, 2) the standard, 3) contract compliance indicators of the standard, and 4) recommended quality indicators.

A **rationale** is an explanation of the fundamental reasons why each standard is important. It provides a connection to research in the field.

A **standard** is a descriptive statement established by experts in a field. It is used as a model of qualitative or quantitative characteristics for assessment of existing programs and for the development of new programs.

A **compliance indicator** is a component of the standard such as an outcome, condition, process, role, function, etc., which **must** be observed and measured, and used to determine the extent to which standards are met. **Compliance indicators** are “musts” and are monitored by the appropriate agency, PED or CYFD.

The Preschool Program Standards are organized as follows:

- I. Family and Community Collaboration
- II. Professionalism
- III. Health, Safety and Nutrition
- IV. Child Growth, Development and Learning
- V. Developmentally Appropriate Content, Learning Environment and Curriculum Implementation
- VI. Assessment of Children
- VII. Evaluation of Programs
- VIII. Administration of NM Preschool Programs

Program Standards for New Mexico’s Early PreK Programs

Essential Element I: Family and Community Collaboration

RATIONALE: Children live in the context of community, dependent upon the “adults who touch their lives directly through relationships, and indirectly through the decisions they make” (Gestwicki, 2004). Successful programs, according to Schorr (1997), work with families as parts of neighborhoods and communities; have a long-term, preventative orientation; and provide high quality, responsive, comprehensive services. Any institution interested in effectively serving the educational needs of young children should have teachers who hold deep understandings of child development and learning processes, use developmentally appropriate, inclusive instructional approaches, and provide comprehensive services to families and their children.

I-A. Early PreK programs collaborate to support the establishment of a seamless continuum of quality early care and education programs in the community.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK program personnel meet at least annually with early care and education programs in the community such as Home Visiting Programs, Head Start (Migrant, Tribal, Early), child care, Family Infant Toddler (FIT) Programs to coordinate and strengthen early childhood programs, training and initiatives. (verified by meeting agenda, sign-in sheets and minutes)
- Early PreK program personnel collaborate to ensure that competition for funding and children does not adversely impact community capacity and is equitably disbursed, while honoring parental choice.
- Early PreK administrators meet with early care and education program personnel in the community prior to requesting expansion of their Preschool program.

I-B. Early PreK programs have a family-centered philosophy that guides all aspects of program planning and implementation.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK programs must develop and provide to families and staff a current, written *Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance Plan* following state guidance. This plan must ensure equal access to the program and meet priorities for enrollment established by the state. This document must *describe*, at a minimum:
 - 1) how families are informed of the availability of the preschool program,
 - 2) how children are recruited,
 - 3) how is the Early PreK program collaborating with other programs such as Early Head Start, Home Visiting, and FIT, DD preschool, and Title 1 to recruit children;
 - 4) priorities for enrollment,
 - 5) application process

- 6) selection criteria, and
- 7) how children are enrolled and dis-enrolled.
- 8) how program personnel work with the local school district's child find policies and procedures
- 8) how children—who do not have existing individualized education programs (IEPs)—are screened and referred to child find.
- Early PreK program administrators must develop and provide to staff, a current, written *Family Engagement Plan* that includes appropriate meaningful opportunities to build trusting relationships. Program staff will share a calendar of events with families. Effort will be made to provide this in the home language of the families represented in the program. The *Family Engagement Plan* must include two family engagement activities in addition to the three family/teacher conferences and one home visit. The plan must include how program personnel will use the children's portfolios as well as the New Mexico Preschool parent materials to assist families in supporting their child's learning (available at www.newmexicoprek.org).
- Early PreK program personnel must develop, and provide to families, a preschool handbook that offers specific information about the program. This information shall be disseminated in a brochure or as a section in the program, school, or district handbook. The program staff will make every effort to provide this in the home language of the families represented in the program. This document shall contain:
 - 1) Early PreK program plans (Please include the Family Engagement Activity Calendar in lieu of *Family Engagement Plan*.)
 - 2) *Guiding Principles for the Full Participation of Young Children in New Mexico's Early Learning System*
 - 3) A statement that describes/defines the program's family engagement approach and value for soliciting, documenting, and to engaging families as an effective way to support each child's full potential.
 - 4) Information regarding all preschool services provided (including Special Education preschool (619) services)
- Early PreK program personnel make every effort to provide all information in the home language of the family.

I-C. Early PreK program personnel and families collaborate to ensure smooth transitions for children as they move between settings, or from program to program such as Home, Early Head Start, Home Visiting, Family, Infant, and Toddler Program (FIT), DD preschool, Title 1, and NM Pre-K program, or another early childhood program.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK programs must develop and provide to families and staff a written *Transition Plan* detailing policies and procedures that assist families of children moving into the program from the home, FIT, Early Head Start, Home Visiting, or another early childhood setting or when exiting the program.
- The Transition Plan must reflect the diversity and uniqueness of the children and community in which they reside.

- The *Transition Plan* must include a series of transition activities that take place throughout the year to prepare the child and family for the upcoming changes and facilitate a positive transition to kindergarten.

I-D. Early PreK program personnel and administration are culturally and linguistically responsive.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK program personnel respect each child’s language and demonstrate knowledge and skill related to second language acquisition.
- Early PreK program personnel ensure materials and visuals in the classroom reflect the culture and language of the children and families enrolled in the program.
- There is intentionality in the lesson plan to foster relationships between children who speak languages other than English and English-speaking children.
- Implement a program policy describing how the program supports children’s home language while supporting English language development, and includes practices to communicate with families in their preferred language.

Essential Element II: Professionalism

RATIONALE: The professional training and formal education of teachers is linked to higher quality teacher-child interactions. A strong connection has been found between the number of years of formal early childhood teacher education and program quality (Bowman, Donovan & Burns, 2001). Administrators of early childhood programs need managerial and leadership skills and knowledge specific to the education of young children and their families.

II-A. Professional personnel are qualified to work with young children and families by education, training, and experience.

Compliance Indicators:

- Lead Teachers –
 - In each funded Early PreK program classroom must have the *New Mexico Early Childhood Teacher License: Birth through Third Grade* or the *New Mexico Early Childhood Teacher License: Age Three through Grade Three*. If the Lead Teacher does not hold one of these early childhood teacher licenses, he/she must be taking credit-bearing college course work toward a Bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education which may qualify them for the *New Mexico Early Childhood Teacher License: Birth through Third Grade* or the

New Mexico Early Childhood Teacher License: Age Three through Grade Three.

- Educational assistants –
 - In each funded Early PreK program classroom must have or be taking credit-bearing college course work toward an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education which qualifies them for the Associate of Early Education Certificate from the Office of Child Development.
- Early PreK program personnel must all have a current *Professional Development Plan* (PDP) with specific professional goals and timelines related to the current Preschool Program Standards. Personnel must document ongoing activities to increase knowledge, specialization, and qualifications in early childhood education, individualization, and family support. Professional Development Plans must include specific coursework that must be entered into the database upon successful course completion. The PDP must be developed by October 1 of the program year.
- Early PreK program teachers and educational assistants, approved long-term substitutes, must attend all required preschool trainings.

II-B. Preschool program personnel are compensated with salaries and benefits that are comparable with other professional positions that have similar qualifications and responsibilities.

Compliance Indicators:

- If a long-term substitute teacher or educational assistant must be hired to temporarily staff a preschool classroom, the program must inform CYFD, within 10 days of the placement.
- **The Early PreK program personnel benefits must include at least two hours per week for planning in addition to daily classroom preparation time.**
- The Early PreK program will allow a minimum of 30 minutes release time following each consultant visit.

II-C. Administrators must have early childhood knowledge and experience or have on-site administrative personnel with early childhood knowledge and experience. Administrators will support quality early childhood practices.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK program administrators in funded programs must have a Professional Development Plan that includes taking credit-bearing college course in early childhood education and in the administration of early childhood education programs. Funded preschool program administrators must demonstrate continual progress toward meeting a Professional Development Plan within an approved time frame.

Essential Element III: Health, Safety and Nutrition

RATIONALE: All children deserve to be in healthy and safe early care and education settings. There are risk factors associated with cognitive and emotional delay in young children – inadequate nutrition, environmental toxins, diminished familial interactions, trauma and abuse, and parental substance abuse (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2003). Many families need assistance in accessing health care, nutrition and social services.

III-A. All appropriate local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to health, safety, and nutrition for young children in out-of-home care are met, including but not limited to buildings and grounds, equipment, sanitation, water quality, fire protection, storage and handling of food.

Health Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK programs must refer program participants to community health providers able to provide assessments for each child prior to the beginning of the fourth month of attendance. These assessments are
 - physical examination
 - hearing screenings
 - current immunizations
 - dental screening
 - vision screenings
- Appropriate facilities must be accessible to children who are toilet-training.
- Appropriate facilities must be accessible to staff with children who are still in diapers.

Safety Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK programs must comply with all New Mexico Child Care licensing regulations.
- Early PreK programs must notify their CYFD Program Manager within three days if they have been sanctioned or have been placed under Conditions of Operation by Child Care Licensing.
- Early PreK program facilities must be smoke-free, alcohol-free, and free of illegal substances.
- The environment is physically and emotionally safe.
- Program staff share current safety information and resources with families such as the program's disaster/evacuation plan.

Nutrition Compliance Indicators:

- **All CYFD NM PreK programs** must provide at least one meal for children in the 450-hour program (either breakfast or lunch) and two meals for children in the 900-hour program that meet USDA requirements per session. All programs will participate in the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** and must meet food program guidelines. New Mexico PreK children must receive the meal provided at no cost to the parents, regardless of income eligibility for the food program. Cost for food that is above and beyond reimbursement by **CACFP** is the responsibility of the program.

- All personnel must be knowledgeable about each child's special nutritional needs (allergies, medical) and physician requests for dietary restrictions.

Essential Element IV: Child Growth, Development, and Learning

RATIONALE: Research has repeatedly demonstrated that the cognitive and social development of young children is strongly influenced by the quality of interaction and relationship between a teacher and child. A teacher can provide more warmth and responsive attention with a small group size and lower personnel-child ratio (NAEYC, National Health and Safety Performance Standards).

IV-A. Program personnel understand and commit to practices that build on each child's culture, language, experiences and abilities.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK program personnel must modify the indoor and outdoor physical and learning environments to accommodate the needs of children with disabilities and developmental delays, with supports from appropriate service providers as indicated for the child with an IEP
- The program will fully support the Family, Infant and Toddler (FIT) and Public Education Special Education program as the child and family transitions from an Individualized Family Service Program (IFSP) to an Individualized Educational Program (IEP).
- The program staff must complete training specific to inclusionary practices.
- Early PreK programs with children with special/behavioral needs must not be dismissed from the Preschool program solely because of their special/behavioral needs without approval unless a different placement is indicated in the child's IEP.
- Early PreK program personnel collaborate with a team of family members and multi-disciplinary professionals to develop or update the Individualized Educational Programs (IEP) for each child with special needs, consistent with federal and state regulations.
- Early PreK program classrooms must provide inclusive settings for children with developmental delays and disabilities based on the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Preschool classrooms will provide inclusive settings for children with developmental delays and disabilities based on the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and consistent with a child's individualized education program (IEP). The amount and location of services is determined by the student's IEP team.

- Early PreK programs integrate children with disabilities and developmental delays into groups of peers of the same age, with supports from appropriate service providers.
- Early PreK programs integrate ancillary services (e.g. occupational, speech/language, and/or physical therapy) within regular program activities and routines to the maximum extent appropriate as indicated for the child with an IEP.
- Depending on the group of children served, and the nature and severity of the disabilities of children served, the adult to child ratio might be smaller.

***Essential Element V: Developmentally Appropriate Content,
Learning Environment and Curriculum Implementation***

RATIONALE: Young children’s learning is dependent on the development of language and cognitive and socio-emotional skills (Thompson & Happold, 2002). In early childhood, the development of these foundational skills lays the foundation for later learning. A developmentally appropriate setting for young children and families is positive, responsive, stimulating and supportive. The classroom climate is inclusive, accommodating and accessible to all children. Teachers facilitate the development of attitudes and behaviors that prepare children for school success including compassion, trust, creativity, self-control and perseverance.

V-A. The physical environment and furnishings are planned to support active engagement, learning, participation and membership of all children. The atmosphere of each classroom is child-oriented, inclusive, and comfortable for all children.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK program classrooms must conduct a self-assessment using the *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale–Revised (ECERS-R) and ECERS-E, The Four Curricular Subscales Extension*.
 - Materials and equipment— such as books, dolls, toys, and wall displays— represent diverse cultures, ethnic groups, gender roles, family configurations, and abilities
 - The physical environment includes an adequate amount of space for indoor and outdoor activities, for adult planning and management activities, and for privacy.
 - Classroom environments have identifiable learning centers that are flexible and designed for children to self-select activities
 - Accommodations, modifications, and adaptations are evident as needed for individual children.

- The program must accommodate children with a developmentally appropriate curriculum that will support the age range and developmental levels of very young three year olds and children that may turn four early in the program year.
- Interactions between the staff and children are supportive of each child’s development.

V-B. Each program has curricula based upon sound child development/early childhood principles; the needs, interests, desires, and relevant life experiences of the children and families served; the language, home experiences, and cultural values of the children served; and the program’s goals and objectives.

Compliance Indicators:

- Preschool program curricula must be based on the *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Birth through Kindergarten (ELGs)* (available at www.newmexicoprek.org) and be designed to achieve long-range goals for children in all domains (i.e. physical, motor, social, emotional, language, and cognitive). The NM preschool curriculum must include all elements as described in the diagram below.



- Early PreK program personnel must adhere to the principles of *The Developmental-Interaction Approach: Defining and Describing New Mexico’s Curriculum for Early Childhood Care & Education Programs*. (available at www.newmexicoprek.org) with activities based on sound child

development/early childhood education principles; the needs, interests, desires, and relevant life experiences of the children and families served; the language, home, experiences, and cultural values of the children served; and the program's goals and objectives.

V-C. Learning experiences are carefully planned and flexible with selection of materials and experiences reflecting diversity, individual differences, and the unique interests and preferences of the group. Play is a valued context for learning.

Compliance Indicators:

Early PreK programs must:

- Base curriculum plans on observed and documented interests and needs of the children.
- Provide planned experiences for the development of cognitive skills, encouraging each child to understand concepts and to develop language fluency, literacy, numeracy, problem solving, and decision-making skills as indicated in the lesson plans, consultant reports, classroom walkthroughs, and classroom observations.
- Support the social-emotional needs of each child.
- Include curriculum planning time and classroom preparation time in the program schedule.
- Complete lesson plans on the required Early PreK form and post in the classrooms. The plans must describe teacher-initiated and child-initiated experiences that include individual activities and developmentally appropriate small and whole group activities for intentional instruction with alternating periods of active and quiet play.
- The posted daily schedule must be flexible to accommodate the developmental needs, such as toileting/potty training, of all children

Essential Element VI: Assessment of Children

RATIONALE: Assessment of individual development and learning is necessary for planning and implementing curriculum. Yet accurate assessment of young children is challenging because their development and learning are rapid, uneven, and embedded within specific cultural and linguistic contexts (Bredenkamp & Copple, 1997). Assessment of young children relies heavily on the results of observations, descriptive data, collection of work by children, and demonstrated performance over time (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1992).

VI-A. Assessment of children's educational needs is an ongoing process of collecting information from multiple sources using varied approaches and should be

used to plan for and modify program curricula and to address specific needs of individual children.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK program personnel must monitor each child’s developmental progress, strengths and needs using a variety of appropriate methods.
- Early PreK program staff must assess each child with a developmental screening instrument that includes a social-emotional component prior to the 3rd month of attendance. Programs must screen for early detection of children at risk for developmental delay and/or disability.
 - When possible, the dominant language of the child will be used during screening. Appropriate referrals must be made to address all identified concerns.
 - All developmental screening instruments must be valid, reliable, non-biased, linguistically and culturally appropriate, and individually administered by trained personnel.
- Early PreK programs must inform families of screening and observational assessment results no later than the next scheduled parent-teacher conference.
- Early PreK programs must inform families of the Child Find assessment process and their legal rights toward consent and refusal.
- Early PreK programs must align services to comply with the child’s Individual Education Program (IEP) if a child has identified special needs.
- Early PreK programs must use *The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines, Essential Indicators with Rubrics* as an ongoing assessment of children’s progress and as a primary source of information for individualized lesson planning.
- Early PreK programs must use observational assessments that are a continuous, dynamic process in which results are used to inform instruction and modify curricula for all children. Assessment results may also be used by the interdisciplinary team, which includes family members, to develop the child’s Individualized Educational Program (IEP).
- Early PreK program administrators, teachers and educational assistants must complete the required observational assessment training.
- Early PreK program personnel must implement classroom-based services with fidelity to New Mexico’s Authentic Observation Documentation Curriculum Planning Process (AODCP) available at www.NewMexicoPreK.org. Compliance with all participation and program data reporting requirement for the following:
 - Authentic Observation, Documentation Curriculum Planning Process
 - exclusive use of *the New Mexico Preschool Observational Assessment* tools (no other assessment is allowed in NM PreK programs)
 - exclusive use of the New Mexico Preschool lesson plan form

Essential Element VII: Evaluation and Continual Improvement of Programs

RATIONALE: Systematic and comprehensive program evaluation is essential to ensure quality care and education. Program evaluation is guided by program goals, using varied, appropriate, conceptually and technically sound evidence to determine the extent to which programs meet the expected standards of quality and to examine intended as well as unintended results (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003).

VII-A. Program sites have specific goals and objectives within a Continuous Quality Improvement Plan (CQI) that is evaluated annually by the state. All program components will be evaluated, including personnel/professional development, family satisfaction, and children’s progress using both formative and summative approaches.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK programs must establish a process of continuous quality improvement (CQI) by completing a Quality Improvement Plan using a variety of self-assessment tools including environmental rating scales and student data.
- Early PreK programs must use multiple measures to evaluate site programs including program data, child demographic and assessment data, and information about personnel qualifications, administrative practices, classroom quality assessments, and implementation data.
- Early PreK programs must observe children’s progress in all developmental areas in multiple settings to evaluate the effect of the program on children’s development and learning. Children’s gains over time are emphasized, not just upon exiting the program.

Essential Element VIII: Administration of NM Preschool Programs

RATIONALE: The early years in a child’s life are a special and unique time for growth and learning. Quality preschool classrooms are busy, interactive environments that promote high-level learning experiences through developmentally appropriate, well-planned play activities. Comprehensive services such as extended-day childcare, health screenings and parent education and support services are offered to ensure both the needs of the children and their families are being met. Strong teacher parent relationships are nurtured through frequent formal and informal visits, many occurring in the homes of families. Braided funding streams promote combined classrooms that serve children from different backgrounds, income and ability levels. A quality preschool is a sophisticated program that requires not only highly skilled teachers but the support from an administrator knowledgeable about early childhood growth, learning and development.

VIII-A. Preschool program administrators ensure that administrative tasks are successfully accomplished and the program complies with all contractual obligations.

Compliance Indicators:

- Early PreK programs must participate in the New Mexico FOCUS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS).
- Early PreK program administrators must provide each teacher and educational assistant with his or her own copy of the *Early NM Program Standards, The Developmental-Interaction Approach*, the *Early NM PreK Lesson Plan Form*, the *NM Essential Indicators with Rubrics*, and the prior to the first day of Preschool program services.
- Early PreK program teachers and educational assistants assigned to funded Early PreK classrooms must not be assigned to non-PreK duties during Early PreK contract hours.
- Early PreK program teachers, educational assistants and Early PreK program administrators must fully participate in the Early PreK Consultant model of job-embedded professional development. This includes providing a minimum of 30 minutes of release time to meet with the assigned Early NM PreK Consultant following each visit.
- Early PreK programs must inform CYFD within 10 days of a long-term substitute teacher or assistant educational assistant being hired/placed in an Early PreK classroom.
- Early PreK program administrators must maintain an inventory of equipment purchased using Early PreK funds.
- The program administrators must specify and ensure that Early PreK funds shall not be used for any religious, sectarian or denominational purposes, instruction or material.
- Early PreK programs funded for 540 hours must provide a minimum of 450 hours of classroom-based services and Early PreK programs funded for the Extended-Day Pilot must provide a minimum of 900 hours of classroom-based services. All PreK programs must provide 90 hours for:
 - at least one home visit early in the year;
 - at least three parent conferences;
 - at least two opportunities for parent group meetings for interaction, information and transition activities, and
 - professional development, transition, or other activities required by NM Preschool Program Standards.

Group/Class Size and Ratios for the following services:

Basic Services (450 hours)

Extended-Day Services (900 hours)

SINGLE SESSION

- Early PreK program group/class size must not exceed 16 children;
- Early PreK program adult-child ratio must be no greater than 1:8 with one lead teacher and one educational assistant.

DOUBLE SESSION

- Early PreK program group/class size must not exceed 14 children;
- Early PreK program adult-child ratio must be no greater than 1:7 with one lead teacher and one educational assistant.

Depending on the group of children served and the nature and severity of their disabilities, the adult-to-child ratio and/or group size may be reduced to meet the needs of the children.

Enrollment

- Early PreK programs must be fully enrolled by the 30th day following the first day of child attendance. CYFD will review the Early PreK database for enrollment information. The Early PreK database is the official record of enrollment.
- Early PreK programs must enroll only children who have reached their third (3rd) birthday before 12:01 AM on September 1st of the current year **and** who are not age-eligible for pre-kindergarten.
- Early PreK programs must ensure that at least sixty-six per cent (66%) of the children served live within the attendance zone of a Title 1 elementary school.

Privacy and Confidentiality

- Early PreK program administrators must ensure confidentiality of all children's information in compliance with all federal and state confidentiality and privacy laws. For example, a secure filing system must be maintained and all preschool program personnel and other professionals must maintain discretion and confidentiality when sharing information about children and their families.

Date Entry/Reporting

- Early PreK program administrators must ensure that current program, child and personnel data is maintained on the NM PreK database and that information must be updated monthly by the 5th day of each month. The PreK database is the official record of personnel education and license information.
- Early PreK program administrators must ensure that waiting list information is updated monthly by the 5th day of each month. The PreK database is the official record of waiting lists.
- Early PreK program administrators in funded programs must report program progress by providing program reports in a format designated by the CYFD no later than the 15th of October and the 15th of February and a final end- of-the-year report due no later than June 15th of each year.

Meetings/Training

- Early PreK program coordinators must attend two PreK Administrator Meetings
- Early PreK program coordinators and administrators must attend the ECERS (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales) training in the person's first year of New Mexico PreK and at least once every three years thereafter.

- Early PreK program and site administrators/principals must attend at least one NM PreK Administrators' Meeting or Training annually.
- Early PreK program staff and site administrators must attend all required FOCUS training.
- Early PreK program administrators must ensure that all preschool staff successfully complete the required PreK and FOCUS trainings.

Budget/Finances

- Early PreK program funds must supplement and expand existing resources and must not take the place of, or supplant, any funding that is being utilized for Preschool services.
- Early PreK program administrators in funded programs will submit monthly invoices for reimbursement of program costs.

Plans

- Early PreK Administrators must ensure the completion of the following Preschool Program Plans by the date specified in the Calendar of Due Dates:
 - *Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance Plan*
 - *Family Engagement Plan and Family Activity Calendar*
 - *Special Education Policies and Procedures Plan*
 - *Transition Plan*
 - *Professional Development Plan*
 - *Transportation Plan (if receiving transportation funding)*
 - *Program and classroom Quality Improvement Plans (QIP).*

(Program Plans Guidance may be found at www.newmexicoprek.org)

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