



NC Pre-K Local Policies and Procedures

2026-2027

Smart Start Rowan

**NC Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K)
Local Policies & Procedures
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Section 1: Introduction

These NC Pre-K Local Policies and Procedures will provide additional clarification to the NC Pre-K Program Requirements and Guidance. These local policies & procedures are in addition to state NC Pre-K Program Requirements & Guidance and include the written plans as required by the Division of Child Development and Early Education.

Section 2: The County/Region NC Pre-K Committee

A. NC Pre-K County Planning Team

The County Planning Team must be chaired and convened by the school superintendent (Rowan County has two LEA's) and the board chair (or designee) for the local Smart Start. They may designate staff as their representatives for ongoing meetings and planning. All superintendents in a county (or designees) should be members of the planning team.

All designated co-chairs may rotate yearly presiding over the county planning team meetings.

Rotation schedule will be as follows:

- Smart Start Rowan Board Chair (or designee)
- Rowan-Salisbury School System superintendent (or designee)
- Kannapolis City Schools superintendent (or designee)

In an effort to encourage committee diversification, leading to new ideas and new perspectives in decision-making, term limits will be established for committee members (with the exception of committee chairs as outlined above Effective July 2025, the Smart Start Rowan staff will present nominations for new Non-Conflicted and County Planning Committee Members at the July/August required meeting. The NC Pre-K Non-Conflicted Committee members will first vote on the nominee(s) and those approved nominees will then be presented to the NC Pre-K County Planning Team for approval. The Non-Conflicted and County Planning Committee member(s) will be elected for a term of three years, with the exception of the parent representative, who will serve a one-year term. At the expiration of each term, another representative will be selected. The child care representative will be selected from a current NC Pre-K site. Terms of office shall begin on the first day of July and end on the last day of June. The NC Pre-K County Planning Team is a public body subject to the NC Open Meetings Laws.

B. Additional Functions – Committee and Contractor

The Committee serves in an advisory role to the Contract Administrator in the development and implementation of local policies and procedures for implementing NC Pre-K, including the following:

1. Child Recruitment

Smart Start Rowan may place ads in newspapers, and will distribute flyers to elementary schools, child care centers, community agencies, businesses, churches, and at community events. The NC Pre-Kindergarten application will also be available in Spanish and English on the Smart Start Rowan website. Social media will also be used to assist with child recruitment. Sites will be expected to assist with recruitment efforts as well.

2. Fees

The NC Pre-K program is offered at no charge to eligible children. Under no circumstance can sites charge fees to attend the program, late fees and/or fees to purchase supplies/materials etc. Sites may however charge a reasonable fee for transportation, meals and/or wrap around care following these guidelines. During annual site selection, sites must clearly outline, to the contract administrator (Smart Start Rowan) any costs associated with transportation, meals or wrap-around services. Any of the allowable fees listed below, must be clearly outlined and provided to each family during the enrollment process.

Nominal **Transportation fees** to and from the Pre-K program are allowed.

Fees for **Meals** are allowed when children do not qualify for free/reduced priced lunch.

Sites that elect to offer **Wrap-around Services** (before and after school care) may charge a fee for Wrap-around care as long as it is no more than the fee charged to private paying families.

3. Transportation Plan

Parents are required to provide transportation to the NC Pre-Kindergarten site where their child is assigned. Some sites provide transportation on a limited basis. Parents must contact each site to discuss these options and any fees which may be charged for this service. Options for children identified as eligible but unable to attend because of transportation issues will be explored on a case by case basis and community resources will be offered to the extent that they are available. If the parents are unable to provide transportation, Smart Start Rowan will help the family by providing information regarding local resources as identified below.

- Salisbury Public Bus System
- Rider (Kannapolis/Concord area)

4. Transition Plan to Pre-Kindergarten

- Sites will contact parents before the beginning of the school year with information regarding open house, orientation, staggered entry and home visit opportunities. Home visits are mandatory, and are encouraged at the discretion of the family. Refer to the Home Visit policy in Section 5.
- Preschool teachers should meet, visit, and conference with families of their NC Pre-Kindergarten students to address concerns, throughout the school year.

5. Transition Plan to Kindergarten

- State approved developmental screenings as identified in the state NC Pre-K Guidelines at 5-2, will be completed within the first 90 days of the school year. Screenings will be used to identify children who may benefit from additional developmental support or further evaluation. Results will be used to inform individualized instruction, classroom supports, and appropriate intervention strategies as needed. The screenings shall be used for the purpose of identifying children to be referred for further evaluation and testing based on concerns in one or more developmental domains.
- Sites are encouraged to share Teaching Strategies kindergarten transition reports with families in order to share with their child's kindergarten teacher. Additionally, data will be exported to the local public-school system by DCDEE.
- Per the NC Pre-Kindergarten requirements, health providers are responsible for making appropriate referrals when indicated by the kindergarten health assessments.
- Communications will be sent to families from each of the NC Pre-Kindergarten classrooms, keeping families current with the activities of their child's classroom.
- A Kindergarten school readiness program for families may be held annually to give vital information on orientation and registration at their child's school.
- Families will be encouraged to read in the home, as well as to create learning activities suggested by their child's teacher.
- Information about summer enrichment programs for children may be distributed.
- The diversity and uniqueness of children, families and communities will be valued and included in all transitioning.
- Flyers with kindergarten orientation/registration dates and open house dates in both English and Spanish will be available to families by the local school system.
- Parents will be encouraged to attend Kindergarten orientation at their assigned school, along with their children.

6. Family Engagement

Smart Start Rowan's NC Pre-K Family Engagement Policy follows the six "Effective Family Engagement Principles" outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. All NC Pre-K sites, referred to as sites below, shall implement activities from each of the 6 principles throughout the program year. Examples have been provided under each principle, and are not all-inclusive of activities that programs may elect to implement. Examples of Family Engagement activities must be provided for review during annual site monitoring.

In addition to these local policies, the state NC Pre-K Requirements & Guidance document outlines additional expectations regarding the use of Ready Rosie.

Principle 1: Programs invite families to participate in decision-making and goal setting for their child. For example, sites provide an opportunity for home visits, ask families to complete an intake questionnaire and/or regularly schedule parent-teacher conferences.

Principle 2: Teachers and programs engage families in two-way communication. For example, sites provide opportunities for face-to-face, written, and online communication. Additionally, sites have a plan in place for communication with families whose first language is not English.

Principle 3: Programs and teachers engage families in ways that are truly reciprocal. Sites look for ways to learn about each child & family and incorporate this information into day to day activities. For example, sites encourage families to visit & participate in classroom activities, as well as to plan social events such as muffins with moms or doughnuts with dads. Sites also provide opportunities for families to share special skills, interests or talents.

Principle 4: Programs provide learning activities for the home and in the community. For example, sites provide families with parenting information and resources, as well as ways to enhance their child's learning at home & in the community.

Principle 5: Programs invite families to participate in program-level decisions and wider advocacy efforts. For example, sites encourage families to contact elected officials about services to benefit young children and invite families to provide feedback through surveys, parent forums, Board meetings, etc.

Principle 6: Programs implement a comprehensive program-level system of family engagement. For example, site leadership makes family engagement a core component, by ensuring staff have the time, professional development, and resources needed to implement the aforementioned family engagement principles.

7. Working with Children & Families with Limited English Proficiency

A goal of Smart Start Rowan's (SSR's) plan to support children and families with limited English Proficiency is to keep children and families engaged and informed throughout the school year, in their native language whenever possible. As children are developing English proficiency, SSR is committed to providing support services that will empower them to achieve academic success, while remaining respectful of their home language and culture. Because resources are limited, SSR will focus its efforts on providing translation/information in Spanish and seek additional translation services as resources are available.

SSR has staff available that speak Spanish in order to assist families as needed, as well as assisting sites with communication to families as resources/time allows. SSR will ensure that the NC Pre-K program is marketed to both English and Spanish speaking families. Additionally, families will be provided with translation services during the family application/intake process at SSR to the extent possible. SSR will support NC Pre-K

classroom teachers by providing resources/information on working with children and families with limited English proficiency.

To the extent possible, NC Pre-K sites that serve children and families who do not speak English or have limited English proficiency are encouraged to hire staff that are fluent in the child's native language. SSR's expectation is that families are fully integrated into every aspect of the NC Pre-K experience. Sites are encouraged to implement the following:

- Provide support services that may include: shadowing/supporting children in language acquisition, and labeling classroom objects/toys/materials in languages represented by the children in their program.
- Conduct home visits and conferences, in the family's native language when able.
- Provide translated materials for the classrooms (such as family newsletters, lesson plans, parent memos, etc., when able).
- When available, a volunteer/staff person that speaks the family's native language will accompany teachers on all home visits and be present during parent/teacher conferences.
- Provide information to families about English as a Second Language (ESL) classes provided by the Rowan County Literacy Council.

8. Access to Health Insurance

Smart Start Rowan and sites are encouraged to share information about the importance of a medical and dental home and about Medicaid materials as needed.

To view "Access to Resources" Brochure, go to:

<https://www.rowancountync.gov/2076/Resources>

9. Developmental Screenings

Developmental Screenings, including Finch Pre-K Entry and Exit Screener, will be completed as outlined in the NC Pre-Kindergarten program requirements and guidance document. Smart Start Rowan staff will ensure compliance with the requirements at monitoring visits. The purchase and implementation of the Developmental Screenings is the responsibility of the NC Pre-K sites.

10. Child Health Assessments and Dental Screenings

It is the NC Pre K policy that a health assessment is required to be on file at the NC Pre K site within 30 days after a child enters the program. The health assessment may be no more than 12 months old at the time of entry and shall include the following: physical examination, updated immunizations, vision screening, hearing screening, and dental screening. Sites are responsible for ensuring compliance with this requirement. **It is recommended that children are not removed from the NC Pre-K Program due to issues regarding health assessments.** See section 5 "Working with Families" in the NC Pre-K Requirements & Guidance document for additional information, about children that do not have a complete health assessment.

Health care providers are responsible for making referrals, however, site-level administrators shall review all health assessment results at the time of the child's entry into the program to determine whether the assessment includes specific instructions for identified health needs that may require physical, occupational or other therapies to support the child's development and learning goals. Sites are required to work with families and make additional referrals as needed and provide updates to SSR on the monthly statistical report. Each site should maintain documentation showing the efforts made to have assessments and screenings completed.

Smart Start Rowan will encourage parents/guardians to speak with their child's physician and stress the importance of having the health assessment documents completed in entirety during the child's physical assessment. Smart Start Rowan will also work collaboratively with the local ABCD Coordinator to help pediatricians and family practitioners understand NC Pre-K guidelines and the need for all health assessments to be completed (including vision and hearing screenings) during the child's 4 yr. old exam. Smart Start Rowan will ensure that the local documents, specifically the FAQ's, Family Information and Responsibilities form and the NC Pre-K application all contain information about the importance of completed health assessment forms.

Finally, Smart Start Rowan will look for community collaborators such as the Lions Club to provide vision screenings and a local pediatric dentist to provide dental screenings for children who have been unable to obtain these from their child's physician.

Section 3: The NC Pre-Kindergarten Staff

A. Teacher Compensation

1. Public School Lead Teachers/Long Term Substitute Leads

NC Pre-K Qualified teachers who are employed by **public school** NC Pre-K programs and who have the proper credentials will receive salaries based on the NC Public School Teacher Salary Schedule found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/finance/salary> and receive health and retirement benefits offered through the NC State Health Plan and NC State Retirement System. This salary schedule is also included in this document.

2. Nonpublic School Lead Teachers/Long Term Substitute Leads

NC Pre-K Qualified teachers who are employed by a **nonpublic school** and who have the proper credentials will receive a compensation package that aligns with the NC DPI Teacher Salary Schedule found at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/finance/salary>. This salary schedule is also included in this document.

3. Assistant Teachers

Teacher assistants who are employed by both **public school and nonpublic schools** NC Pre-K programs will receive salaries based on the NC Public School Salary Schedule from the Assistant Teacher Salary Schedule (included). Public school assistant teachers will receive health and retirement benefits offered through the NC State Health Plan and NC State

Retirement System. Nonpublic school assistant teachers will receive a compensation package that aligns with the NC DPI Teacher Salary Schedule

Lead Teachers with less than the required education and experience, and teacher assistants with less than an associate degree or CDA who work in nonpublic school NC Pre-K programs, should be compensated based on salary and benefits defined by the site administrator.

The WAGES\$ supplement, funded by Smart Start Rowan, is over and above the Salary Schedule compensation package.

In regards to the years of experience, sites should only count the years of experience in a NC Pre-K/More at Four classroom and not the level of experience denoted on their license document.

B. Professional Development

Smart Start Rowan may provide Professional Development opportunities throughout the year, above and beyond state required professional development opportunities. These opportunities will be mandatory for the individuals that Smart Start Rowan defines in the written “professional development” notification.

Additionally, Smart Start Rowan will schedule NC Pre-K orientation at a date to be determined, in the summer months, prior to the beginning of the school year. **Due to the nature of information shared, it will be mandatory for any NC Pre-K program receiving funds to send appropriate teaching staff (both Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher, if applicable).**

Administrators will be offered a separate NC Pre-K orientation meeting via Zoom. Administrators are encouraged to attend the staff orientation, as additional content will be tailored to teaching staff needs and a general program overview. Other individuals that the site administrator deems necessary, may also attend. Smart Start Rowan will poll sites to determine a date that is convenient and will make every attempt to accommodate all schedules. It will be the site’s responsibility to ensure that all mandatory staff attend.

Professional Learning Community (PLC)

To support continuous quality improvement and address ongoing classroom challenges, a monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) will be established for all NC Pre-K teaching staff, including lead teachers and assistants.

These sessions will focus on:

- Collaborative professional development
- Sharing best practices
- Enhancing instructional strategies aligned with NC Pre-K standards

In addition, in-person technical assistance will be provided to each classroom to offer targeted support and feedback on how PLC content is being applied in daily practice.

Section 4: The NC Pre-Kindergarten Site/Classroom

A. NC Pre-K Day

All NC Pre-K sites must provide a Pre-K program for a minimum of 10 calendar months and 180 days. There must be up to 9 mandatory teacher workdays (including days scheduled before and after the first/last day of school. Weeks that include closures for holidays or scheduled school breaks are excluded from this requirement. In addition, NC Pre-K lead teachers and teacher assistants are expected to work 40 hours per week with a minimum of 32.5 hours of direct child contact. (see NC Pre-K Guidelines 4-2 section B) An exception may be granted, on a case-by-case basis when a written request is provided by the site to the Local Contract Administrator. When determining the school schedule, Smart Start Rowan will allow up to 7 days for:

- Open House/Orientation,
- Staggered entry
- Home visits (mandatory).

B. Ratios

The NC Pre-K teacher to child ratio has been updated to 1:10; however, the state did not provide additional funding to provide for the increased ratio. Therefore, sites may add private paying children to meet this updated ratio if they choose. Any site that wishes to increase their NC Pre-K classroom ratio must send a written request to the Rowan County licensing consultant and copy Smart Start Rowan on this correspondence. If licensing approves the request, the site may proceed. Private paying children do not get added to the NC Pre-K attendance sheet, as they are not funded by NC Pre-K.

C. Early Learning Standards

Per program requirements, the *North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development (NCFELD)* must be used to guide and inform planning and facilitation of comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, high-quality prekindergarten learning experiences for children and in work with families. Smart Start Rowan will provide onsite technical assistance throughout the school year to ensure that NCFELD is embedded into teaching practices and reflected on every NC Pre-K lesson plan. Smart

Start Rowan may randomly request copies of the lesson plan to ensure this is being implemented appropriately and will require technical assistance when support is needed. Sites are required to allow Smart Start technical assistance staff to conduct observations to ensure the quality of the program.

D. Curriculum

Smart Start Rowan has adopted the Creative Curriculum for Preschools for use in all classrooms. (Reference pg. 5-3 of the state guidelines).

E. Formative Assessments (Reference pg. 5-7 of the state guidelines)

Smart Start Rowan has adopted the use of Teaching Strategies Gold Formative Assessment tool, which now includes the Finch Pre-K Entry and Exit Screener.

Classroom staff are required to conduct ongoing formative assessments to gather information about each child's growth and skill development, as well as to inform instruction. The teacher and teacher assistant are required to:

- Collect ongoing assessment data for each child by gathering information about what children know and do, how they interact with other children/adults, and how they process information/solve problems.
- Collect enough documentation to accurately support your assessment of each child's knowledge, skills, and abilities at the end of the check point period. SSR will monitor that each classroom is **collecting 2 pieces of documentation per child per week to substantiate the checkpoint data each quarter.**
- Use the assessment information to tailor instruction to the individual needs of each child.
- Discuss the assessment information with the teacher assistant as you plan for each child.
- Review the child's progress with his/her family.

All NC Pre-Kindergarten teachers are required to supply Smart Start Rowan with the **Preschool, Including Children with Disabilities Interrater Reliability Certification** from Teaching Strategies Gold, prior to their current certification's expiration date. Newly hired teachers have 6 months from the date of hire to obtain this certification and provide SSR with a copy. This certification must be completed every 3 years.

Smart Start Rowan will provide ongoing technical assistance and monitoring to ensure that formative assessment data is being gathered correctly. Smart Start Rowan's expectation is that anecdotal notes and supporting documentation will be entered twice weekly into each online child portfolio. Smart Start Rowan will monitor child portfolios either onsite or remotely, and will require technical assistance when support is needed.

F. Environmental Rating Scales

Each site will provide a copy of the NC Pre-K ECERS-3 assessment report for each classroom to the local NC Pre-K Coordinator, unless the site chooses to go Pathway #3. Pathway #3 sites and Head Starts will provide Accreditation documentation. Additionally, Smart Start Rowan will conduct mock rating scale assessments and provide technical assistance related to the NC Pre-K ECERS-3 assessment. (Reference pg. 7-1 of the state guidelines).

G. E-Learning/Remote Learning/Site Closures

E-Learning/remote learning days are discouraged with an exception for a limited time, in response to certain circumstances as outlined in the NC Pre-K Program Requirements & Guidance document, as well as for public school required E-learning days for public school sites only.

When providing e-learning/remote learning, sites must adhere to the NC Pre-K state guidelines for remote instruction/learning beginning on pg. 4-9. Sites **MUST** provide documentation on why they went to remote learning. (example: letter from the Heath Department requiring them to close, doctor notes of positive Covid test, letterhead statement of remote learning due to snow days, public school calendar indicating an e-learning day), the Family Contact logs, and educational activities provided to the child. Under no circumstances may sites close without discussing the situation with Smart Start Rowan.

Teaching Strategies Resources and Ready Rosie must be used for all remote learning days. (Reference Section 12, pg. 10 in the additional state guidance documents.)

I. Dropping a Child

If a child is consistently absent, and the site has documented numerous attempts to contact the family, the site may choose to drop the child only after all efforts have been exhausted and the child does not attend the program after 10 consecutive operational days. The only exemption to the 10 days is at the beginning of the school year when the family has failed to respond by accepting placement, and the family has not responded to numerous email and phone contact attempts to enroll the child. In both cases (no show at start of the year and consistent absences during the school year) the site should submit the online “Child Drop” form. As needed, the NC Pre-K site and SSR will work collaboratively to determine if the child should be exited from the program.

Section 5: Additional Information

A. Child Maltreatment Investigation

The local NC Pre-Kindergarten program site administrator shall notify the local Contract Administrator (Smart Start Rowan) within 24 hours anytime there is an open child maltreatment complaint and/or investigation in any of the facility's classrooms. 24 business hours is defined as: 24 business hours after a self-report has been made or 24 hours after a facility is notified that an allegation has been reported. Failure to notify the local Contract Administrator may result in a corrective action plan, which may include the withholding of payment equivalent to the amount of time that the failure to notify Smart Start Rowan occurred. The local Contract Administrator shall notify the NC Pre-Kindergarten State Program, the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE). If a site has an open child maltreatment investigation when it first makes application to participate in the NC Pre-Kindergarten program, and the investigation is not resolved as unsubstantiated prior to the site selection process, the site will be denied for the application year. If a complaint and investigation occur after the NC Pre-Kindergarten classroom is operating, it may continue to operate until the investigation and resolution is completed.

If the allegation of child maltreatment is substantiated, DCDEE may terminate NC Pre-Kindergarten funds where there is substantiation of child maltreatment that jeopardizes the health and safety of children enrolled in the program. In such cases, the termination of NC Pre-Kindergarten Program payments will continue through any appeals process and will not resume until a final determination has been made in the matter.

B. Home Visits

Home Visits are valuable in building a solid relationship with parents/guardians and in developing a better understanding of every child enrolled in the NC Pre-K program. Home visits are required and should occur in the enrolled child's home, prior to the first day of school. **Newly enrolled or transferred children must receive a home visit within 30 days of their enrollment or transfer.** If the parent/guardian expressly declines such a visit or fails to respond to good faith efforts to schedule a visit, documentation of such efforts must be kept on file, for review by SSR during monitoring. Alternate locations may be considered if the family is homeless, in transition or has refused a home visit. Additionally, if there are concerns about a child, it is highly encouraged that additional home visits be conducted.

In limited, special situations such as severe weather, natural disaster, or community health/safety advisory impedes the ability to conduct a home visit, a virtual visit using video technology may be conducted.

To avoid unwarranted allegations and to be mindful of safety concerns, all home visits must be conducted with two individuals present, ideally the teacher and the teacher assistant/site administrator. **Home visits need to be tracked and**

reported to Smart Start Rowan, using the home visit log, on a monthly basis as they occur.

C. Procedures for Referral Process

The NC Pre-K site should assist parents/guardians in making a referral for special education if either the parent or teacher suspects a disability. The NC Pre-K site may also notify the EC department about any child who may need additional support. Then the EC department will consult with the family to determine if they would like to initiate a referral. This Parent/Teacher conference should be documented on the monthly Statistical.

D. Suspension and Expulsion Policy & Procedures

Recent data findings indicate that expulsions and suspensions regularly occur in preschool settings. This is very concerning, considering established research which clearly indicates the link between expulsion and adverse child outcomes. The practice of suspension and expulsion creates risk factors that impact child development, physical and mental health and, educational achievement. These trends have initiated action from The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (US DHHS) and the US Department of Education (US ED) In November 2016, US DHHS and US Ed issued a joint policy statement and recommendations to assist public and private early childhood programs nationwide in partnering to prevent and severely limit expulsions and suspensions in early learning settings.

In developing a local policy that coincides with that of US DHHS and US Ed, it is the intent of Smart Start Rowan to prevent the expulsion and suspension of young children in early learning settings, ultimately working to ensure the safety and well-being of all who are represented in the early childhood programs here in Rowan County.

As stated in the NC Pre-K Program Requirements and Guidance, it is our responsibility to develop and implement a written plan to prevent the suspension and/or expulsion of children with unique needs/challenging behaviors and to ensure their families have access to appropriate resources and supports to maintain their child's placement in NC Pre-K. To this end, we have defined suspension/expulsion as anytime a preschool child has been removed from the program either short term (such as asking the parent to come pick up their child early) or on a lengthier basis (1 day or more).

Policy Statement

The goal of the NC Pre-K program is to prepare young children to succeed in school. NCPREK preschool children may not be suspended long term, short term, or expelled in support of our goal in preparing young children to succeed in school. Alternative placement may be considered as a last resort after all prevented measures have been utilized effectively and all options exhausted. More importantly, suspending or expelling preschoolers is not an age-appropriate method for addressing behavioral problems. There are no short-term or long-term outcomes that will benefit a child when he/she cannot be

in school to receive the needed support services due to out of school disciplinary measures.

Challenging behaviors exhibited by preschool children must be addressed in the context of a comprehensive approach to behavioral support that is designed to teach, nurture and encourage positive social behaviors. NC Pre-K sites should seek to involve families, teachers and other support personnel/agencies to provide support to children and prepare them for successful preschool experiences.

Adopted from NJ Department of Education

Procedures

The NC Pre-K requirements mandate specific protocol for documenting the process of working with a child with unique needs and/or challenging behaviors. When a teacher, the family or other involved person(s) has significant concerns about a NC Pre-K child's emotional, social, cognitive, language/communication development, sensory function or behavior, the following steps, in chronological order shall be followed:

Step 1

NC Pre-K teaching staff should begin to gather information through the developmental screening process, home visits, consultations with the family, daily recorded observations, documentation of modified instructional plans/differentiated lessons and documentation of the various techniques used to support the NC Pre-K child. Teachers shall observe the child to identify what may be triggering the behavior, and document daily progress made by the child or additional modifications needed as well as other resources. Teachers shall meet with families several times to discuss behavior and document meetings. These and other strategies to support the child should be documented, including the child's progress for at least four to six weeks before contacting the local school system's Preschool Exceptional Children Program and the NC Pre-K Contract Administrator (Smart Start Rowan).

The Site Administrator is encouraged to contact the following resources for additional classroom supports during this process: the healthy social behavior specialist's team through Child Care Resources Inc, the local community inclusion specialists, housed at Partners in Learning Child Development and Family Resource Center and /or the NCPREK program support, at Smart Start Rowan.

Additionally, the NC Pre-K teaching staff should refer to the pyramid model SEFEL approach (social emotional foundations for early learning) as well as other positive behavior intervention and supports (PBIS) for additional supports.

Documentation must be completed on the Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement and Developmental Needs Report found in Appendix 10 of the NC Pre-K Program Requirements & Guidance

Step 2

If challenging behavior persists, the Site Administrator shall notify the NC Pre-K Contract Administrator (Smart Start Rowan) and the local school system's Preschool Exceptional Children Program and provide each with copies of documentation as indicated above.

Step 3

The NC Pre-K Contract Administrator, Site Administrator, teacher and the family, in consultation with the school system's Preschool Exceptional Children Program and other available resources, shall work together to develop a coordinated plan to support the NC Pre-K child's placement in the NC Pre-K Program. Every effort shall be made to maintain the child's enrollment or provide alternative placement when necessary. The team shall work together to implement the action steps identified in the plan. The NC Pre-K site administrator will be responsible for keeping documentation of progress and every effort made to support the child so they can remain in the program. This documentation should be shared with any appropriate individuals, including the contract administrator (Smart Start Rowan).

Step 4

If after a period of at least 4 to 6 weeks, efforts to access the consultation needed to develop an implemented coordinated plan of support prove unsuccessful, the NC Pre-K Contract Administrator (Smart Start Rowan) shall contact the Division of Child Development and Early Education for guidance.

Program Supports

Smart Start Rowan will provide the following supports:

- Annual training opportunities to educate teachers on ways to create a positive climate that focuses on prevention of suspension and expulsion;
- On-site technical assistance regarding SEFEL implementation strategies and classroom management techniques;
- Technical Assistance and Training around the Effective Teacher Practices Supporting the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development (self-paced modules);
- Monitoring of the above-mentioned steps and procedures through announced and unannounced classroom visits and the use of research-based assessment tools throughout the school year;
- Provision of free resources to support programs and teachers in addressing children's social-emotional and behavioral health and strengthening family-program relationships. (<https://www.pinterest.com/Tuckersncnest/>)
- Provision of resources to support families in fostering young children's development, social-emotional and behavioral health and relationships.
- SSR will work in conjunction with the early care and education community, contracted providers and families to address plans, procedures, and practices to support eliminating suspensions and expulsions in preschool and to ensure the child's continued enrollment in an appropriate NC Pre-K classroom environment.

Teacher Resources

The following is a list of proactive actions to help eliminate/prevent challenging behaviors

- Staff will redirect child from negative behavior and provide another activity.
- Staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriate activities and supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will use visuals and social stories to encourage appropriate behavior.
- Staff will consistently apply natural, logical consequences for rules that are posted and referenced.
- Child will be given verbal reminders and visual supports.
- Child will be given time to regain control.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally and in writing.
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of (observations & assessments).
- The director, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors using evidence based strategies.
- The parent/guardian will be given literature or other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.

Resources adapted from <http://www.redballoonpreschool.com/state-requirements-and-policy-s/>

Resources

<http://preventexpulsion.org/>
<https://fpg.unc.edu/>

<https://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>

Additional resources can be found in the NC Pre-K program policy & procedure manual.

Bachelors Degree Certified Teacher Salary Schedule Effective July 1, 2026

Bachelor's Teacher

Years of Experience	Monthly Salary	Annual Salary (10 Months)
0	\$4,800	\$48,000
1	\$4,825	\$48,250
2	\$4,850	\$48,500
3	\$4,875	\$48,750
4	\$4,900	\$49,000
5	\$4,950	\$49,500
6	\$5,000	\$50,000
7	\$5,050	\$50,500
8	\$5,100	\$51,000
9	\$5,150	\$51,500
10	\$5,314	\$53,140
11	\$5,365	\$53,650
12	\$5,416	\$54,160
13	\$5,467	\$54,670
14	\$5,570	\$55,700
15	\$5,682	\$56,820
16	\$5,682	\$56,820
17	\$5,682	\$56,820
18	\$5,682	\$56,820
19	\$5,682	\$56,820
20	\$5,682	\$56,820
21	\$5,682	\$56,820
22	\$5,682	\$56,820
23	\$5,682	\$56,820
24	\$5,682	\$56,820
25	\$5,900	\$59,000

20265-202726
Assistant Teacher
Salary Schedule
Effective July 1, 2026

Curriculum Support

Classification	Salary Grade	Monthly Minimum	Monthly Maximum
Distance Learning Instructional Asst	NC05-NC05	2,733	4,783
Educational Interpreter I	NC05-NC05	2,733	4,783
Educational Interpreter II	NC07-NC07	3,013	5,273
Educational Interpreter III	NC09-NC09	3,322	5,814
School Health Assistant	MH01-MH01	2,600	3,718
Teacher Assistant	NC04-NC06	2,600	5,022
Therapeutic Recreation Specialist	MH03-MH03	2,733	3,582
Vocational Technical Assistant	NC04-NC06	2,600	5,022
Deaf/Blind Intervener I/II	NC12-NC14	3,846	7,420