

# The New Mexico PreK Program Standards



Updated July 2023 for New Mexico PreK programs funded by the  
**Early Childhood Education and Care Department.**

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# New Mexico PreK Program Background

During the 2005 legislative session, the New Mexico legislature passed the Pre-Kindergarten Act that provided funding to develop and implement voluntary pre-kindergarten programs to advance childhood development and school readiness throughout the state of New Mexico. The Act stated that the PreK programs would address the total developmental needs of children being served, including physical, cognitive, social, and emotional needs, and would include health care, nutrition, safety, and multicultural sensitivity.

**The Goal of NM PreK is to:**

1. Increase statewide access to voluntary, quality NM PreK developmental readiness programs.
2. Focus on enrolling new children and building community capacity.
3. Provide developmentally appropriate activities for New Mexico children.
4. Focus on school readiness; and
5. Expand early childhood community capacity.

The New Mexico PreK Program Standards were revised in July 2022 to better align and clarify program requirements for New Mexico PreK programs<sup>1</sup>, including programs funded by New Mexico PreK, Title I, and PreK Special Ed. ECECD continues its commitment to supporting high-quality standards for NM PreK programs. NM PreK programs:

- Expand upon early learning experiences
- 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 educators and professional decision-makers
- Ensure equitable access to PreK.
- Honor all cultures, languages, and abilities
- Align services through intentional collaboration within the early learning system

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1 Note: The terms PreK, preschool, pre-kindergarten are used interchangeably throughout this document.

# 1. Family and Community Engagement

PreK Programs must collaborate to support the establishment of a seamless continuum of quality early care and education programs in their respective communities.

## STANDARDS

### 1.A: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**1.A.1** PreK program administrators will meet at least quarterly with other early care and education programs in their community including public schools, community-based early care and education providers, Head Start, including Migrant, Tribal, and Early Head Start; and Family Infant Toddler (FIT) programs, to promote collaboration opportunities and strengthen early childhood program partnerships.

**1.A.2** PreK programs will collaborate with the community early care and education providers, including Head Start Programs, to coordinate services, address saturation or duplication of services in the community, and share waitlists to ensure children have access to the program that best fits their needs while honoring family choice.

**1.A.3** PreK programs at capacity will share information on other preschool opportunities in the community with families seeking services and/or families on their waitlist.

### 1.B: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

**1.B.1** PreK programs will implement family-centered practices that support the engagement of families in all aspects of their child's learning and development. Practices must be culturally and linguistically responsive. All family engagement **opportunities and communications** must be accessible to multi-lingual families. Professional interpretation and translation must be provided when applicable.

**1.B.2** PreK programs must provide a minimum of 90 hours of family engagement activities. Activities/events must be shared with families in a timely manner prior to the events. Family engagement activities aside from home visits and family/educator conferences should be planned based on feedback from families and offered in a variety of formats to provide equity in participation and access.

Family engagement activities must include:

- A minimum of one family home visit for each child prior to the start of school or within two weeks of enrollment for children who enroll after the start of the school year.
- Two family/teacher conferences that include a review of child's progress and learning; creation of joint goals with the family to support progress in all areas of development; results from development and health screenings; and transition planning.

**1.B.3 PREK PROGRAMS** must provide a family handbook to all enrolled families. The family handbook must be written in plain language. Families should be engaged in the development and review of the handbook. Every effort must be made to provide the materials in the family's home language. The handbook must include at a minimum: guidance policy, expulsion policy, philosophy, transition activities and curriculum.

### 1.C: ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, AND ATTENDANCE

#### 1.C.1 ELIGIBILITY

- Early PreK: children must be three years old by 12:00am on September 1 of the current school year.
- Mixed Age PreK: children must be three- or four-years-old by 12:00am on September 1 of the current school year.
- PreK: children must be four years old by 12:00am on September 1 of the current school year.
- Priority will be given to families
  - Residing within the boundaries of a Title I school district
  - Experiencing homelessness/displacement
  - Children who are in foster care

#### 1.C.2 RECRUITMENT

Programs will create and implement a recruitment policy and plan. The plan should include:

- How families are informed of the availability of the PreK program
- Methods of recruitment
- Ensuring recruitment efforts are linguistically responsive
- How wait lists are maintained based on the programs established selection criteria
- To promote equitable access for all eligible children, families on a waitlist will be provided information on all available early care and education opportunities in their community.

#### 1.C.3 ENROLLMENT

Birth certificate will be used to verify date of birth and full legal name. If a child ceases to attend, the program must develop a plan to re-engage the family to resume attendance. If child's attendance does not resume, then the program will consider the slot to be vacated. Children may not be dismissed from the PreK program due to special or behavioral needs. (See Inclusive Practices for Children with Diverse Abilities section).

#### 1.C.4 ATTENDANCE

Programs will demonstrate support of families to ensure their child attends regularly (at least 85% of time), efforts to support the family must be clearly documented. Track attendance and develop strategies to promote attendance. Provide information on the benefits of regular attendance and support families in ensuring their child's regular attendance.

## 2. Inclusive Practices for Children with Diverse Abilities

PreK programs implement inclusive teaching and learning strategies with curricula and assessment designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant, and accessible to all.

### STANDARDS

#### 2.A INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

**2.A.1** Program personnel must understand and commit to inclusionary practices that build on each child's culture, language, experiences, and abilities. Inclusion in early childhood programs refers to including children with disabilities in early childhood programs, together with their peers without disabilities; holding high expectations and intentionally promoting participation in all learning and social activities, facilitated by individualized accommodations; and using evidence-based services and supports to foster their development (cognitive, language, communication, physical, behavioral, and social-emotional), friendships with peers, and sense of belonging. This applies to all young children with disabilities, from those with the mildest disabilities, to those with the most significant disabilities.

**2.A.2** All indoor and outdoor physical and learning environments must be accessible to children with disabilities and/or developmental delays. a) For children with an Individualized Educational Program (IEP), supports should be provided according to the IEP. Link: [Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs \(2015\)](#)

**2.A.3** PreK program staff must complete training specific to inclusionary practices to meet each child's needs including those with an IEP. The Local Education Agency (LEA) is obligated to provide training specific to each child's accommodations or program plans documented in an IEP. In partnership with the family, PreK programs have the right to contact the LEA to request support for children with an IEP when needed.

**2.A.4** PreK classrooms will provide inclusive settings for children with developmental delays and disabilities based on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and consistent with a child's IEP, (if applicable).

- a. IDEA states the IEP team consists of the general education teacher that is knowledgeable about the child. Educators participate in the IEP process with parental consent.
- b. In collaboration and consultation with the special education services providers, educators integrate IEP goals and objectives into the daily schedule, classroom activities, and lesson plan. During the IEP meeting, staff may request additional training from the LEA specific to each student's needs, goals, and objectives. Collaborative efforts must occur to determine ongoing needs.
- c. A program must develop interagency agreements, if applicable, with the local educational agency responsible for implementing IDEA to improve service delivery to children eligible for services under IDEA. This includes the referral and evaluation process, service coordination, promotion of service provision in the least restrictive environment including appropriate community-based settings, and reduction in dual enrollment which causes reduced time in a less restrictive setting, and transition services as children move from services provided under Part C of IDEA to services provided under Part B of IDEA and from preschool to kindergarten.
- d. PreK Programs collaborate and coordinate with the LEA to integrate ancillary services (e.g., occupational, speech/language, and physical therapies) within regular program activities and routines to the maximum extent appropriate, as described by the IEP team working with the individual child. Programs must develop an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the LEA so that each agency is aware of their responsibility for providing Special Education Supports and Services listed in each IEP keeping in mind the continuum of placement and services.
- e. Depending on the group of children served and the nature and severity of the disabilities of children served a smaller class size or adult-to-child- ratio may be required. Programs should consult with the ECECD PreK Bureau Chief for approval to limit or reduce class size adjustments. Programs will be required to submit a formal plan outlining and justifying the need to limit the number of students in the classroom. The plan will include details outlining classroom supports/professional development to clarify how PreK funding will be allocated or amended.
- f. Children may not be dismissed from the PreK program due to special or behavioral needs. Instead, a referral should be made, or the IEP team must reconvene to determine training needs, and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

**2.A.5** PreK programs must inform families of the Child Find process and their legal rights of consent and refusal.

# 3. Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Instruction

PreK programs leverage and support the cultural and linguistic uniqueness of each child to support learning and development.

## STANDARDS

### 3.A CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

- 3.A.1** PreK program personnel and administration demonstrate cultural and linguistic responsiveness in all aspects of the PreK program including but not limited to the use of cultural learning tools that students bring to the classroom.
- 3.A.2** PreK program personnel must respect each child’s homelanguage and promote development of both home language and English.
- 3.A.3** PreK program staff must complete professional learning related to second language acquisition to support multi-lingual children.
- 3.A.4** Materials, books, and visuals in the classroom reflect the culture and language of the children and families enrolled in the program.
- 3.A.5** Lesson plans are individualized to address each child’s developmental progress. Modifications are incorporated into the classroom activities. Progress is documented and measured through ongoing observation and assessment.
- 3.A.6** The program will provide a written policy that demonstrates how the program supports children’s home language while supporting English language development. The policy should include (but not limited to) the following components:
- a. **Validation** — the intentional and purposeful legitimatization of the home culture and language of the student.
  - b. **Affirmation** — the intentional and purposeful effort to reverse the negative stereotypes of non-mainstream cultures and languages portrayed in historical perspective
  - c. **Building** — creating connections between the home culture/language and the school culture/language through instruction for success in school and society
  - d. **Bridging** — creating opportunities for increased engagement by utilizing appropriate cultural and linguistic aspects of the children in the classroom
- 3.A.7** Program must create and conduct an annual home language survey.
- 3.A.8** Based on the Home Language Survey, personnel must ensure that the planning and decision making about language and early literacy practices are intentional, program wide, and based on research.
- 3.A.9** Personnel must build respectful relationships with children and families, ensuring that family engagement opportunities meet the culture, language, and literacy needs of children and families.
- 3.A.10** Teaching approach must incorporate the following evidence-based strategies:
- a. Developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate practice that promotes equity for all children and helps children learn and thrive
  - b. Early language and early literacy environments and experiences that are known to support children’s optimal learning and development
  - c. Consistent and responsive family engagement in children’s educational and social growth, especially in supporting the home language of multi-lingual learners (MLLs)
  - d. Careful and intentional implementation of research-based practices that can prevent reading failure and promote school success

# 4. Promoting Social and Emotional Development

PreK programs support children in understanding their emotions, developing social awareness, feeling and showing empathy for others, establishing healthy relationships, and making good decisions.

## STANDARDS

### 4.A SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

**4.A.1** Promote the social-emotional competence of young children by implementing consistent, attuned, safe, and responsive interactions aligned with the New Mexico Pyramid Model or other evidence-based social-emotional model. Program personnel shall plan experiences, interactions, activities, and positive behavioral interventions and strategies that support the social-emotional development of each young child enrolled.

Each person has the opportunity to positively influence child development by using modeling techniques. In addition, children must practice the skills taught and modeled multiple times in a variety of setting in home, school, and community. These include developing children’s capacity for executive function, including:

- a. **Self-confidence:** Being open to new challenges and willing to explore new environments.
- b. **Self-efficacy:** Believing they are capable of performing an action.
- c. **Self-regulation/self-control:** Following rules, controlling impulses, acting appropriately based on the context.
- d. **Self-esteem:** Internalizing good feelings and positive information about themselves; Ensuring children develop healthy cultural, racial, and linguistic identities.
- e. **Persistence:** A willingness to try again when first attempts are not successful.
- f. **Conflict resolution:** Learning to identify/label emotions and helping children to resolve disagreements in a peaceful way.
- g. **Versatile communication skills:** Understanding and expressing a range of positive and negative emotions.
- h. **Empathy:** Understanding and responding to the emotions and rights of others.
- i. **Social skills and social situations:** Making friends and getting along with others; recognizing one’s emotions to regulate and strengthen personal relationships and
- j. **Morality:** Learning a sense of right and wrong.

**4.A.2** Ensure that program personnel working directly with young children demonstrate the capacity for positive relationships along with sufficient knowledge of early childhood social and emotional development.

- a. All adults working with PreK children must complete professional learning in the social-emotional development and support of young children.
- b. All adults participate in professional development geared to increase
  - knowledge of mental health issues in early childhood, including
  - trauma-informed practices, attachment, and overall social- emotional and behavioral supports.
- c. All adults working with PreK children must understand positive reinforcement skills using evidence-based strategies

**4.A.3** Implement the evidence-based practices of the New Mexico Pyramid Model or other social-emotional models to support children's social-emotional development to:

- a. identify and ensure that reinforcement strategies are developmentally appropriate and motivating for each individual student
- b. implement positive behavior strategies and interventions to support the development of each child.
- c. Identify classroom management practices with administrator and coach to inform continuous quality improvement and classroom practices.
- d. provide—when necessary and with parental consent—referrals and follow-up for children and families to community-based or school district’s early childhood.
- k. Provide - when necessary and with parental consent - referrals to mental health services;
- l. and provide family education and information related to attachment and social-emotional support, such as the Pyramid Family Modules and resources.

# 4. Promoting Social and Emotional Development

## STANDARDS

**4.A.4 BUILDING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS:** The classroom staff demonstrates positive interactions and guidance with children to:

- a. Develop their self-esteem by interacting as follows:
  - Actively listening to children
  - Refraining from judgmental statements
  - Responding to children's ideas
  - Recognizing children's efforts
  - Using proper names and verbally interacting with each child
  - Engaging in positive interactions that are supportive
  - Interacting with children at their eye level
  - Supporting strength-based toilet learning
- b. Encourage autonomy by interacting as follows:
  - Providing children with opportunities to make choices
  - Creating opportunities for decision-making, problem solving and working together
- c. Teaching children strategies for self-regulating and/or self-monitoring behaviors using visuals and toolkits, such as the Pyramid Framework. Programs will ensure that they have written policies and or procedures that clearly outline their guidance practices that include the following:
  - Guidance that is consistent and age appropriate
  - Guidance that is positive with clear limits and redirection practices
  - Guidance that demonstrates the prohibited use of physical restraint or abuse
  - Guidance that demonstrates the prohibited use of humiliation, threats, sarcasm, or physical punishment.

**4.A.5** Research suggests that school expulsion and suspension practices are associated with negative educational and life outcomes. If an alternative placement is being considered due to behavior, programs must engage in dialogue with the state monitor to communicate the following support interventions have been implemented:

- a. Solicit input from the family regarding placement preferences
- b. Adult child interactions have been evaluated
- c. Modifications have been made to the environment and/or teaching practices to support the child
- d. Interventions, strategies, and techniques have been implemented and evaluated
- e. Observation and input from the PreK consultant or coach have been implemented
- f. Developmental, academic, and social/emotional screening results have been evaluated
- g. Results of referrals (Child Find, family physician, behavioral specialist, etc.) Child Find screenings shall serve as interventions for children that are not identified and do not have an IEP. With parent permission, a functional behavior assessment (FBA) will be conducted and, if warranted, a behavior intervention plan (BIP) will be developed. All staff who provide services to the child implement the behavior intervention plan in all settings the child interacts within the school day (including staff in community-based programs)
- h. Any other documentation to demonstrate that all avenues for child success have been exhausted



# 5. Health Promotion and Developmental Screenings

PreK programs must comply with appropriate local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to health, safety, and nutrition for young children, including-but not limited to-buildings and grounds, equipment, sanitization, water quality, fire protection, storage, and handling of food.

## STANDARDS

### 5.A: HEALTH SCREENINGS

PreK programs must ensure each PreK participant has current health screenings completed within 90 days from the date of enrollment

- Annual Well Child Check
- Vision Screening
- Dental Screening
- Hearing Screening
- Current Immunization Record or Public Health Division approved exemption. Unless the child is experiencing homelessness. A child experiencing homelessness must be enrolled regardless of lack of immunization records.

### 5.B: SAFETY

PreK programs must continue to be in substantial compliance with the applicable state rules, standards, and federal regulations that govern the program, services provided, and fiscal responsibilities. PreK programs must notify their PreK program monitor at ECECD within three days if they've been sanctioned, placed under a condition of operation, or have encountered an inability to comply with the regulations.

5.B.1 Applicants will comply with all appropriate city, county or other state authority approvals such as; fire-prevention , NM environmental department, or other environmental health authorities.

- PreK Programs will ensure they have a written policy for reporting to ECECD the following incidents as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours from the date and time of the incident occurrence:
  - Lost, missing, or unattended child
  - Serious injury to child that requires medical attention or hospitalization
  - Abuse or neglect of a child
  - Environmental incidents such as fire, flood or other disaster that creates structural damage or poses a health hazard for staff and children
  - Any legal incident that could affect eh background check eligibility of staff on site

### 5C: NUTRITION

All NM PreK programs must provide at least one meal for children in the 540-hour program (either breakfast or lunch) and two meals for children in the 1080-hour program (breakfast and lunch) that meet USDA/CACFP requirements for children.

Meals provided reflect the cultural diversity of the children in the classroom and promote variety.

**5.C.1** Programs must participate in USDA School Lunch Program or Child and Adult Care Food Program and comply with all regulatory compliancerequirements

**5.C.2** Family style meals are developmentally appropriate for children. When feasible, programs should implement family style meals.

# 6. Professional Qualifications: Administrators and Educators

Professional personnel are qualified to work with your children and families by education, training, and experience.

## STANDARDS

### 6.A: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPLIANCE

**6.A.1** Teachers must hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood, be licensed in early childhood, or be pursuing a bachelor's degree or alternative licensure in early childhood as outlined in their professional development plan (PDP) completing a minimum of 6 credit hours per semester

**6.A.2** Educational Assistants must hold an associate degree in early childhood education and in school-based programs be a licensed education assistant or be pursuing an associate degree in early childhood as outlined in their Professional Development Plan (PDP) completing a minimum of 6 credit hours per semester.

**6.A.3** PreK program personnel must have a current PDP. Personnel must document ongoing activities to increase knowledge, specialization, and qualifications in early childhood education, individualization, and family support. PDP's must be updated throughout the year to include specific coursework that is entered into the locally utilized database upon successful course completion and as goals are met.

### 6.B: TRAINING REQUIREMENTS COMPLIANCE INDICATORS

Each PreK teacher, coordinator/administrator, educational assistant (EA), and PED or ECECD approved long-term substitute must successfully complete all required training as stated in the annually updated PreK professional learning plan. Upon completion or required training, a minimum of 24 professional learning hours must be completed annually for PreK teachers and educational assistants. PreK administrators must attend NM PreK administrators' meeting(s) and required professional development.

### 6.C: ADMINISTRATOR QUALIFICATIONS COMPLIANCE INDICATORS

**6.C.1** 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.

# 7. Intentional Teaching Standards

PreK programs implement thoughtful and purposeful teaching practices based on knowledge, judgment, and expertise while recognizing and taking advantage of spontaneous learning opportunities for children.

## STANDARDS

### 7.A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

**7.A.1** PreK classrooms must conduct an annual environmental assessment using one of the recommended environmental ratingscale tools.

**7.A.2** The purpose of the environmental assessment is to identify areas to enhance and support children’s learning and development adult-child interactions

- a. Intentional, developmentally appropriate, individual, small-and large-group activities
- b. Provision of adequate materials and equipment that are accessible to children—such as books, dolls, toys, and wall displays, ensuring that materials represent diverse cultures, ethnic groups, gender roles, family configurations, and abilities
- c. Provisions for adequate space for indoor and outdoor activities, for adult planning and management activities, and for privacy
- d. Classroom environments, ensuring there are identifiable learning centers that are flexible and designed for children to self-select activities
- e. Accommodations, modifications, and adaptations, ensuring they are evident as needed for individual children

### 7B: CURRICULUM

**7.B.1** Each program has curricula based on the following:

- a. Lesson plans that reflect developmentally appropriate early childhood practices
- b. The needs, interests, desires, and relevant life experiences of the children and families served
- c. The language, home experiences, and cultural values of the children served, ensuring the child's culture is represented
- d. The program's goals and objectives
- e. Family engagement
- f. Individualization for all children; and
- g. Social emotional development strategies and supports

**7.B.2** PreK program curricula must be research and/or evidence based, culturally and linguistically responsive, and align with the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Birth through Kindergarten (ELG)

Currently approved curricula include:

- Tribally endorsed
- Three cheers for PreK
- Connect 4 learning
- Other ECECD approved curriculum

**7.B.3** The program administrators must specify and ensure that PreK curriculum does not include any religious instruction or material.

### 7C: PLANNING AND OBSERVATION

Culturally and linguistically responsive learning experiences are intentionally 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. PreK programs must:

**7.C.1** Develop curriculum plans based on observed and documented interests and needs of the children.

**7.C.2** Provide lessons and activity planning that intentionally reflects the needs for the whole group and individual children. Lesson plans support the development of cognitive skills, encouraging each child to understand concepts and to develop language fluency, literacy, numeracy, problem solving, and decision-making skills.

**7.C.3** Include curriculum planning time in the program schedule. This must include at least two hours per week without children present.

- a. Include classroom preparation time in the program schedule. This is in addition to the minimum scheduled planning time.
- b. Teachers with am and pm sessions should have additional planning time due to increased number of children.

# 7. Intentional Teaching Standards

## STANDARDS

**7.C.4** Complete and post weekly lesson plans in alignment with the New Mexico PreK Lesson Plan Components Checklist. The lesson plan must at a minimum include the following:

- The New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines Essential Indicators
- Family engagement activities
- Individualization
- Large and small group activities
- Learning centers
- Mealtime activities
- Oral Language – Key Vocabulary words
- Oral Language-key questions
- Outdoor / large motor activities
- Repeated reading plan (first, second, third read-aloud)
- Transition activities
- Heggerty Phonological and Phonemic Awareness (if applicable)

**7.C.5** Ensure daily, intentional, developmentally appropriate early literacy practices that include the following:

- a. Daily phonological awareness activities (e.g., songs, finger-plays, rhyming, beginning sounds, and syllable work)
- b. Oral language and vocabulary activities
- c. Alphabet knowledge activities
- d. Concepts of print activities
- e. Daily read aloud with comprehension strategies
- f. Daily, ongoing individual and small group (two to three children) read aloud, with documentation that each child is read to at least once weekly in 540-hour programs and twice weekly in 1080-hour programs, in addition to larger group reading activities
- g. Opportunities for developmentally appropriate writing activities

## 7.D: ASSESSMENT

**7.D.1** PreK personnel must complete observations of each child’s progress in all developmental areas and in multiple settings, using the PreK Observational Assessment to evaluate the effect of the program on the child’s development and learning. Children’s gains over time are emphasized, not just upon exiting the program.

**7.D.2** All PreK programs will assess children utilizing the PreK Observational Assessment recorded in EPICS or ECOT. This PreK observational assessment will be incorporated into the early childhood outcomes (ECO) report for each child with an IEP.

**7.D.3** All PreK teachers must complete child observational assessments, including portfolio forms and report data into the respective system. Data must be entered:

- a. Within 45 calendar days of enrollment.
- b. For extended day (1080 and 1380 hour) programs, by the first Friday in February.
- c. Ten days prior to program end date

**7.D.4** PreK programs must use observational assessments in a continuous, dynamic process, in which results are used to inform instruction, improve teacher practices, and modify curricula for all children. Assessment results will also be used by the interdisciplinary team, which includes family members, to develop the child’s Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Intentional Teaching Standards continued on next page.

## 7. Intentional Teaching Standards

### STANDARDS

**7.D.5** Preschool program staff must screen each child with an approved developmental screening instrument that includes a social-emotional component, within 45 calendar days of the child's enrollment date. Programs must screen for early detection of children at risk for developmental delays.

- a. When possible, the dominant language of the child is used during screening. Appropriate referrals must be made to address all identified concerns.
- b. All developmental screening instruments must be valid, reliable, non-biased, linguistically, and culturally appropriate, and individually administered by trained personnel.

**7.D.6** PreK programs must immediately inform families of screenings and observational assessment results no later than the next family conference. If there are concerns and if the child screens outside typical parameters, a referral for further screening or evaluation will be made.

**7.D.7** PreK programs must use the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Essential Indicators as an ongoing assessment of children's progress and as a primary source of information for individualized lesson planning.

**7.D.8** PreK program administrators, teachers, educational assistants, and long-term substitutes must complete the required observational assessment training.

# 8. Program Administration

PreK program administrators ensure that administrative tasks are successfully accomplished, and that the program is in compliance with all federal, state, and local requirements.

## STANDARDS

### 8.A: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

**8.A.1** PreK programs must notify the ECECD PreK Bureau Chief within three days if they've been sanctioned, placed under a condition of operation, or have encountered an inability to comply with the standards or regulations.

**8.A.2** PreK program teachers must participate in the consultant or coaching model of job-embedded professional development.

**8.A.3** PreK programs must inform the ECECD state representative within 10 calendar days of a long-term substitute teacher or assistant being hired/placed in a PreK classroom.

**8.A.4** PreK program administrators must maintain an inventory of equipment purchased using PreK funds.

**8.A.5** PreK programs must inform the ECECD state representative immediately upon all unscheduled closures.

**8.A.6** PreK program administrators must ensure that all PreK staff successfully complete the required PreK trainings.

**8.A.7** 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 PreK program personnel and other professionals must maintain discretion and confidentiality when sharing information about children and their families

**8.A.9** The program administrators must specify and ensure that PreK funds shall not be used for any religious, sectarian, or denominational purposes; instruction; or material.

**8.A.10** PreK program administrators must develop a Family PreK Handbook or PreK specific section in the district handbook that contains (see handbook section reference).

### 8B: ADMINISTRATIVE ENROLLMENT, STAFFING, AND RATIO COMPLIANCE INDICATORS

**8.B.1** PreK program administrators ensure that classroom enrollment, staffing, and ratios comply with all contractual/agreement obligations.

**8.B.2** PreK program administrators must share copies of the items below with each, teacher and educational/instructional assistant

- NM PreK Program Standards
- PreK Lesson Plan Template or lesson plan components checklist
- NM PreK Essential Indicators with Rubrics
- New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Birth through Kindergarten.
- Family Handbook

\*Copies of these documents are available on [nmeccd.org/pre-k](http://nmeccd.org/pre-k).

**8.B.3** PreK program administrators must provide a minimum of 30 minutes release time (without responsibility for direct supervision of children) for consultation with the assigned consultant or coach immediately following each visit.

**8.B.4** Preschool program teachers and EAs assigned to PreK classrooms must not be assigned to non-PreK duties during PreK day.

**8.B.5** PreK program group/class size for four-year olds must not exceed 20 children with an adult-child ratio no greater than 10:1 with one lead teacher and, if the group size is 11 or more, one EA

**8.B.6** PreK program group/class size for Early PreK (three-year-old's) and Mixed Age PreK (three- and four-year old's) must not exceed 16 children with an adult ratio no greater than 8:1 with one lead teacher and, if the group size is 9 or more, one EA.

Program Administration Standards continued on next page.

## 8. Program Administration Standards

### STANDARDS

**8.B.7** PreK programs must maintain a minimum of 95% enrollment. The ECECD will monitor enrollment at the 40<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> day counts through the database.

**8.B.8** PreK program teachers and EAs must be employees of the program/district/charter school.

### 8C: BUDGET/FINANCE COMPLIANCE INDICATORS

**8.C.1** PreK program administrators ensure that all budget and finance policies/tasks comply with contractual/agreement obligations.

**8.C.2** PreK programs shall coordinate with federal Head Start and all other community providers to avoid duplication of effort and maximize the use of available resources in the implementation of the Early PreK and PreK programs.

**8.C.3** Any purchased curriculum must align with the NM Early Learning Guidelines and be approved by the ECECD. Purchased curriculum must be evidence-based and culturally and linguistically appropriate.

**8.C.5** Approval must be granted prior to purchase for items over \$5,000. Equipment expenditures over \$5,000 are considered capital outlay and will not be approved for expenditure on direct services.

**8.C.6** Indirect costs for NM PreK programs cannot exceed 7 percent.

**8.C.7** PreK funds cannot be used for out-of-state travel costs or for in-state travel other than approved early childhood conferences, home visits, internal coach travel, and training.

**8.C.8** The program administrators must specify and ensure that PreK funds shall not be used for any religious, sectarian, or denominational purposes; instruction; or material.

**8.C.9** PreK program administrators must submit monthly invoices for reimbursement of program costs.

**8.D.1** PreK program administrators ensure that all data entry and reporting comply with all contractual obligations. Failure to submit data in a timely manner may result in non-compliance.

**8.D.2** PreK program administrators must ensure that current program, child, and personnel data is entered accurately and maintained and updated in the database by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. The PreK databases (EPICS or NOVA) are the official record of enrollment, child assessment data, personnel education, and license information. Personnel changes must be updated in the database and reported to the ECECD State Representative within 10 days.

**8.3.3** PreK program administrators must report program progress by responding to Administrative Reports in a format and due date designated by the ECECD.

### 8D: DATA ENTRY/REPORTING COMPLIANCE INDICATORS

**8.D.1** PreK program administrators ensure that all data entry and reporting comply with all contractual obligations. Failure to submit data in a timely manner may result in non-compliance.

**8.D.2** PreK program administrators must ensure that current program, child, and personnel data is entered accurately and maintained and updated in the database by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. The PreK databases (EPICS or STARS) are the official record of enrollment, child assessment data, personnel education, and license information. Personnel changes must be updated in the database and reported to the ECECD State Representative within 10 days.

**8.3.3** PreK program administrators must report program progress by responding to Administrative Reports in a format and due date designated by the ECECD.

## 9. Continuous Quality Improvement Standards

Program sites have specific goals and objectives within a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan 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.

### STANDARDS

#### 9A: CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (CQI) COMPLIANCE

**9.A.1** PreK programs must use multiple measures to evaluate program compliance and quality. Child demographics and assessments, information about personnel qualifications, administrative practices, classroom assessments, and coaching and monitoring reports must be used for evaluation purposes. A CQI must be developed and implemented to address findings. That includes a data analysis process with a focus on improving child outcomes