

North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) Program Requirements and Guidance Addendum

Effective SFY 2020-21

Issue Date: January 2020



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F. NC Pre-K Standardized Site Selection Process

Session Law 2012-142 SECTION 10.1.(f)

The Division of Child Development and Early Education shall establish a standard decision-making process to be used by local NC Pre-K committees in awarding NC Pre-K classroom slots and student selection.

Session Law 2013-360 SECTION 12B.1.(b)

Multiyear Contracts. – The Division of Child Development and Early Education shall require the NC Pre-K contractor to issue multiyear contracts for licensed private child care centers providing NC Pre-K classrooms.

See also Budget Bill [SESSION LAW 2012-142](#); [SESSION LAW 2013-360](#) [SENATE BILL 402](#)

History Note: Authority GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA SESSION 2011

1. The **local NC Pre-K Committee** determines a multi-year funding cycle and oversees the process to ensure the Site Selection Sub-Committee follows the standardized site selection process as outlined in the [NC Pre-K Site Selection Roles and Responsibilities](#).

The Site Selection process must be opened and all steps completed prior to the start of a new funding cycle or every three years, whichever is less, but can be opened annually.

(NEW)

NOTE: The local NC Pre-K Committee is responsible for determining if existing NC Pre-K sites must re-apply during the site selection process. The Committee may decide that existing NC Pre-K sites that are maintaining all NC Pre-K standards do not have to reapply. **(NEW)**

Examples:

- County A issues 2-year contracts for their NC Pre-K service providers – This county would need to open the Site Selection process every two years.
- County B issues 5-year contracts for their NC Pre-K service providers – This county would need to open the Site Selection process every three years.
- County C does not issue subcontracts (ex. the LEA serves as the Contracting Agency and all NC Pre-K sites are within the public school system) – This county would need to open the Site Selection process in accordance with their funding cycle or every three years, whichever is less.

The Site Selection process will be considered opened once the public notice and information session have been completed and the application due date has passed. If no eligible sites apply by the deadline, and existing sites are not required to re-apply, then the Site Selection process may be considered complete. **(NEW)**

NOTE: When there is a county/regional need for additional site(s) and there are no approved sites “waiting” the local NC Pre-K Committee must open the site selection process and recruit new programs to apply for consideration.

Questions about Site Selection? **(NEW)**

DCDEE recognizes that every county/region is unique and may experience situations that impact how Site Selection may be carried out locally. Contracting Agencies are encouraged to contact their NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant for additional guidance.

2. The **local NC Pre-K Contracting Agency** supports the process to ensure the Site Selection Sub-Committee follows the standardized site selection process as outlined in the [NC Pre-K Site Selection Roles and Responsibilities](#). The local NC Pre-K Contracting Agency must provide training to the Site Selection Sub-Committee before beginning the site selection process.

The local NC Pre-K Contracting Agency must consult with the state office on next steps for the NC Pre-K allocation (e.g., reversion) when no eligible sites are available in the county/region.

3. The **Site Selection Sub-Committee** conducts the process with the support of the NC Pre-K Contracting Agency and oversight by the local NC Pre-K Committee as outlined in the [NC Pre-K Site Selection Roles and Responsibilities](#). The local NC Pre-K Committee must appoint and approve by vote at least 3 **non-conflicted** Sub-Committee members. The Sub-Committee may include non-conflicted local NC Pre-K Committee members and/or community members who are non-conflicted. Each appointed member of the Site Selection Sub-Committee must read, understand and sign a [Site Selection Sub-Committee Conflict of Interest Statement](#).

Members of the Site Selection Sub-Committee should represent various stakeholders in the community as well as subject matter experts in the field of child development and early education. Sub-Committee members may include representatives from the local business community, Health Department, Child Care Resource & Referral Agency, County Department of Social Services, 2- and 4-year colleges/universities and/or other community volunteers.

4. The **NC Pre-K Site Application Decision Tree** is used by the local NC Pre-K Committee, NC Pre-K Contracting Agency and Site Selection Sub-Committee to guide them through the site selection process. ([click here for Decision Tree](#))

5. The **NC Pre-K Site Application** must be completed by each new or previously funded (not currently funded) site interested in applying for consideration to be a NC Pre-K site. The local NC Pre-K Committee is responsible for determining if existing NC Pre-K sites must re-apply during the site selection process. ([click here for Site Application](#))

The NC Pre-K Site Application, created by DCDEE, must be used for the site selection process and **cannot be altered or modified**.

6. The **NC Pre-K Site Selection Rubric** is designed to be used by the NC Pre-K Site Selection Sub-Committee as a comparative tool to help standardize the site selection process in each county or region across the state. These standards and indicators are designed to guide the Site Selection Sub-Committee's decisions in recommending sites for participation in the NC Pre-K program. The Site Selection Sub-Committee is required to complete a Rubric for each eligible site applicant, using information from the **NC Pre-K Site Application** and supporting documentation submitted by applicants. ([click here for Rubric](#)) Instructions for the Rubric should be reviewed prior to scoring. ([click here for Instructions for using Rubric](#))

The Teacher and Teacher Assistant Education Worksheet is included in the application and must be completed by the site administrator and scored by the Site Selection Sub-Committee.

The NC Pre-K Site Selection Rubric, created by DCDEE, must be used for the site selection process and **cannot be altered or modified** with the exception of the additional locally determined indicators as described below in number 7.

7. **Additional Locally Determined Indicators** are determined by the local NC Pre-K Committee for the purpose of assigning up to eight (8) additional points to the Rubric score, for a total of 100 possible points. The local NC Pre-K Committee may decide to use only a portion or none of the 8 points for additional locally determined indicators. In this case, the total points on the Rubric score would be less than 100 points. The Site Selection Sub-Committee must list the additional indicators in section 5 of the Rubric. All additional locally determined indicators must be applied across all site applicants to ensure fairness during the site selection process.

Additional information gathered through routine monitoring visits and other information during an onsite visit to verify staff education and/or licensure, Plans of Study, a facility's license, etc., **may be included** in the decision-making process.

Additional measures or subscales of the ECERS-R, CLASS, or similar tools **may not be used** in addition to the indicators included in the Rubric, except as part of the 8 additional points.

The local NC Pre-K Committee makes the final site selection decisions based on the performance and compliance history of existing, already approved NC Pre-K sites, the rankings from the Rubrics for any sites that completed a NC Pre-K Site Application and recommendations from the Site Selection Sub-Committee. Final funding of slots is contingent upon approval of the budget passed by the North Carolina General Assembly. All awards are contingent upon and subject to appropriation, allocation and availability of funds.

Local NC Pre-K Committee members who may benefit directly or indirectly from decisions made by the Site Selection Sub-Committee may participate in discussions and offer input but should abstain from voting when the site involved is under consideration.

Section 3: The NC Pre-K Child

A. NC Pre-K Child Application and Enrollment Eligibility

During the application process, **information and documentation must be collected for each child and family in accordance with the definitions and guidance provided in this section.** This information will serve two purposes:

- (1) to determine NC Pre-K eligibility and
- (2) for the State to determine TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) and CCDF (Child Care and Development Fund) Maintenance of Effort (MOE) matching contributions.

The **Contracting Agency is responsible for determining a child’s eligibility and maintaining documentation** used to complete the NC Pre-K Program Eligibility Scorecard and support the child’s enrollment. This documentation must include a complete and signed application with supporting documents that provide verification for the eligibility of each child enrolled in the NC Pre-K Program.

Contracting Agencies may delegate the responsibility for determining eligibility to the local NC Pre-K sites/subcontractors; however, the local **Contracting Agency is ultimately responsible** for ensuring that eligibility determinations made by subcontractors are accurate and in accordance with NC Pre-K Eligibility Guidelines. This responsibility is part of the NC Pre-K contracts issued by DCDEE as described in the *NC Pre-K Fiscal and Contract Manual*.

IMPORTANT: (NEW)

- **Children receiving NC Pre-K services must reside in North Carolina.**
- Determination of child **eligibility does not guarantee placement** in the NC Pre-K Program. Placement is dependent on the availability of NC Pre-K funds that are appropriated each year by the NC General Assembly during the legislative session.
- Once a child is deemed **eligible**, they **remain eligible throughout the program year**, regardless of changes to the family’s situation. However, if a child was deemed **ineligible**, a **family may reapply if their situation has changed** since the initial date of application.

Priority to Serve (NEW)

Contracting Agencies are required to serve eligible children as defined below:

Income eligible - Children who are determined eligible based on their family’s income being at or below 75% of the state median income level are given the **highest priority** and **served first**.

Other factors to consider:

- a. **Never served** - children who have received no prior early education services outside the home
- b. **Underserved** - children who were in child care previously but are currently not being served
- c. **Continuity of care** - children who are currently enrolled at a NC Pre-K site in a non-NC Pre-K classroom

NC Pre-K Program Eligibility Requirements**1) Age Requirements**

- a.) To be enrolled, a child must be four-years-old on or before **August 31st** of the current program year.
- b.) Children who are not age eligible (*less than 4 years or eligible for kindergarten*) cannot be served with NC Pre-K funds.

Age eligibility is determined by the child’s birth certificate, medical records, or immunization records.

2) Income Requirements

- a) To be eligible, the family (*as defined in Section E*) must prove that their income is at or below 75% of the State Median Income level.
- b) Up to 20% of children whose families exceed the income requirements can still be served if those children have other identified risk-factors (*as described in Section F*)
- c) Income verification must be documented and calculated for all applicants

Families must submit sufficient income documentation **at the time** of the application process in order for the Contracting Agency to verify the child’s eligibility. If a family cannot provide any acceptable proof of income, they **may submit written statements from employers detailing the amount and frequency of pay received for the most recent pay periods.** (*See the Income Verification/Documentation section below*)

Contracting Agency staff must calculate the average income earned using the documentation submitted and **use the multipliers below to generate an estimated annual income.** Income calculated must be based on documentation that accurately reflects the family's yearly earnings for the applicable year or their **current** situation at the time of application.

Income Multipliers (REVISED)	
Frequency of Pay	Calculation Guidance
Weekly	Multiply by 52
Bi-weekly	Multiply by 26
Semi-monthly	Multiply by 24
Monthly	Multiply by 12

❖ **Income Verification/Documentation (REVISED)**

a) Tax Records

- W-2's
- 1040-Adjusted Gross line 7

b) Pay Stubs (most recent pay periods)

- Weekly – submit 4 consecutive pay stubs
- Bi-weekly - submit 2 consecutive pay stubs
- Semi-monthly - submit 2 consecutive pay stubs
- Monthly - submit at least 1 full month's pay stub

c) Award letters from the Social Security Administration

d) Award letters from the Employment Security Commission

e) Employer written statements

- Must reflect the employee's most recent pay periods
- Must include the amount **and** frequency of pay (*including overtime*)
- Must be signed by the employer
- Documented on letterhead (*if available*)

f) Signed statements when the individual claims to have no verifiable countable income

- Includes the ***No Income/No Documentation Income Template*** as described below and found in the appendices section of this manual.

g) Self-employed individuals

- 1040-Adjusted Gross line 7 **or**
- 1099 or Bank statements for business minus 20% from total income if no tax documentation is provided **or**
- 1099 or Bank statements for business minus itemized expense receipts

❖ **No Income/No Documentation of Income (NEW)**

If a family states that they **do not have any income to report or do not have documentation of income**, and Contracting Agency staff have made the effort to verify the family’s income, the Contracting Agency may choose one of the following options:

- a) Accept the family’s **signed written statement** or **signed child application** indicating employment and income status
- b) Complete a **Statement of No Income** form
- c) Complete a **Statement of No Documentation of Income** form

Questions about income? (NEW)

Contact your NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant for eligibility scenarios that are not included in this section.

B. NC Pre-K Program Eligibility Scorecard (REVISED)

The purpose of the NC Pre-K Program Eligibility Scorecard is to determine eligibility for NC Pre-K services using information from the child’s application and supporting documentation submitted by the family.

C. Eligibility for Families at or below 75% of State Median Income

Income eligibility for NC Pre-K is determined by family size and gross income

Table 1. 75% STATE MEDIAN INCOME	
Family Size	75 Percent State Median Income
1	\$ 29,922
2	\$ 39,129
3	\$ 48,335
4	\$ 57,542
5	\$ 66,749
6	\$ 75,956
7	\$ 77,682
8	\$ 79,408
9	\$ 81,135
10	\$ 82,861
11	\$ 84,587
12	\$ 86,313

Effective: January 1, 2019
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2017)

D. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families/Maintenance of Effort

Percent of Poverty Category: When a child is determined eligible for NC Pre-K services, a percentage of the poverty category must be determined using Table 2 and entered on the **NC Pre-K Program Eligibility Scorecard** and in NC Pre-K Kids and APP databases.

NOTE: This information will be used for the purposes of meeting TANF/MOE requirements and **will not affect** eligibility determination for NC Pre-K.

Family Size	Federal Poverty	130%	150%	185%	200%	250%	300%
1	\$12,490	\$16,237	\$18,735	\$23,107	\$24,980	\$31,225	\$37,470
2	\$16,910	\$21,983	\$25,365	\$31,284	\$33,820	\$42,275	\$50,730
3	\$21,330	\$27,729	\$31,995	\$39,461	\$42,660	\$53,325	\$63,990
4	\$25,750	\$33,475	\$38,625	\$47,638	\$51,500	\$64,375	\$77,250
5	\$30,170	\$39,221	\$45,255	\$55,815	\$60,340	\$75,425	\$90,510
6	\$34,590	\$44,967	\$51,885	\$63,992	\$69,180	\$86,475	\$103,770
7	\$39,010	\$50,713	\$58,515	\$72,169	\$78,020	\$97,525	\$117,030
8	\$43,430	\$56,459	\$65,145	\$80,346	\$86,860	\$108,575	\$130,290
9	\$47,850	\$62,205	\$71,775	\$88,523	\$95,700	\$119,625	\$143,550
10	\$52,270	\$67,951	\$78,405	\$96,700	\$104,540	\$130,675	\$156,810
11	\$56,690	\$73,697	\$85,035	\$104,877	\$113,380	\$141,725	\$170,070
12	\$61,110	\$79,443	\$91,665	\$113,054	\$122,220	\$152,775	\$183,330
Effective: January 1, 2019							
Source: Based on 2019 Federal Poverty Levels							

E. Family and Income Definitions & Guidance (**REVISED**)

FAMILY and INCOME DEFINITIONS & GUIDANCE (REVISED)	
FAMILY (REVISED)	<p>Family size includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The NC Pre-K child 2. Parents and stepparents living in the same household 3. All of the NC Pre-K child’s minor brothers and sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters living in the same household <p style="padding-left: 40px;">NOTE: Minor siblings include anyone up to age 18 and still attending high school at the time the child’s application is submitted.</p> <p>Additional Clarification:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If a child is living with legal guardian(s) or legal custodian(s) then the family size consists of the NC Pre-K child, plus all of the child’s minor brothers and sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters living in the same household. The adults and children of these adults are also included. (REVISED) 2. If a child is living with foster parent(s) or kinship provider(s) then the family size consists of the NC Pre-K child plus all of the child’s minor brothers and sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters living in the same household. The adults and children of these adults are NOT included. (REVISED) 3. Incarcerated or institutionalized individuals are not included in family size.
Legal Guardian and Legal Custodian (NEW)	<p>Legal Guardianship is awarded by the courts when the biological parent or step-parent no longer has parental rights of the child or the biological parent or step-parent is deceased. Legal Custodianship rights are set by the courts and may be as extensive or less extensive as the rights of a legal guardian.</p> <p>Family size includes the NC Pre-K child plus all of the child’s minor siblings living in the same household. The legal guardian(s)/custodian(s) and their minor children are also included. The income of the legal guardian(s)/custodian(s) and any income received by the child, such as Social Security benefits, would be counted.</p>
Foster Parent	<p>Foster parents do not have legal guardianship. Guardianship remains with the Department of Social Services.</p> <p>For a child in the custody of DSS family size includes the NC Pre-K child plus all of the child’s minor siblings living in the same household. Any income received by the child, such as Social Security benefits, would be counted. The income of the foster parents would not be counted.</p>

<p>Kinship Provider (NEW)</p>	<p>Kinship is the self-defined relationship between two or more people and is based on biological, legal, and/or strong family-like ties. (DSS 1201 Child Placement Services)</p> <p>https://www2.ncdhhs.gov/info/olm/manuals/dss/csm-10/man/CSs1201c4-05.htm</p> <p>For the purposes of NC Pre-K, kinship is established when the child lives with and is cared for by an adult who is not the child’s parent, legal guardian, legal custodian, or foster parent.</p> <p>For a child living with a kinship provider family size includes the NC Pre-K child plus all of the child’s minor siblings living in the same household. Any income received by the child, such as Social Security benefits, would be counted. The income of the kinship provider would not be counted.</p>
<p>Social Security (NEW)</p>	<p>SSI - Supplemental Security Income is a needs-based program that provides monthly payments to people who are blind, elderly, or have a disability. [This income IS NOT counted]</p> <p>SSA - Social Security Benefits are payments made to qualified retirees and disabled people, and to their spouses, children, and survivors. [This income IS counted]</p> <p>SSDI - Social Security Disability Insurance is a program that provides monthly Social Security Disability payments to people under age 65 who have qualifying disabilities and sufficient work credits. [This income IS counted]</p>
<p>Family Income (REVISED)</p>	<p>Count parent, stepparent or guardian’s regular gross income (documentation required).</p> <p>Regular gross income may include regular employment (including overtime pay), income earned through sales commissions averaged over several months, regular employment through a temporary employment agency, temporary unemployment pay, child support payments, alimony payments, workman’s compensation and retirement/disability benefit income. (REVISED)</p> <p>Excluded from regular gross income are parent, stepparent and child Supplemental Security Income, adoptive assistance, foster care payments, Pell grants/scholarships and irregular income (e.g., Work First, Food Stamps, student loans). (REVISED)</p> <p>If legal guardian or legal custodian, count the adult’s income and child’s income including Social Security Income and Child Support Payments. Do not count Supplemental Security Income. (REVISED)</p>

F. Additional Enrollment Eligibility Criteria (**REVISED**)

1) Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness

NC Pre-K Programs are **strongly encouraged** to serve any age eligible child whose family is experiencing homelessness.

What is Homelessness?

In January of 2002, Congress authorized the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to help people experiencing homelessness. The federal law includes the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program that entitles children who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence to a free, appropriate education and requires schools to remove barriers to their enrollment, attendance and success in school.

Examples of living situations that may qualify under the McKinney-Vento Act include, but are not limited to:

- Living with a friend, relative or other person/family because of a loss of housing
- Staying in a motel or hotel because of a loss of housing or fleeing domestic violence
- Living in an emergency shelter, transitional housing or domestic violence shelter
- Living in a car, park or public place, an abandoned building or bus station
- Living temporarily in substandard housing
- Living in a campground or an inadequate trailer home
- Living in a runaway or homeless youth shelter
- Youth who are living on their own, even if their families want them to come home

Income documentation should be used when **prioritizing children** of families experiencing homelessness.

It is important to be consistent and handle all applicants experiencing homelessness the same in your county.

Guidance

The Division of Child Development and Early Education has partnered with NC State Coordinators of Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY), local liaisons and our partner agencies to ensure that information on the full range of child care services is available for families experiencing homelessness.

Barriers that Limit Access to Early Childhood Programs

- Lack of documents needed to enroll in early care programs
- Lack of transportation to early care and education programs
- Lack of awareness regarding homelessness situations among early care and education providers
- Lack of flexibility in policies for required documentation families must provide for enrollment

DCDEE Next Steps to Increase Access to Services for Homeless Children and their Families:

- Partner with [\(EHCY\)](#) State Coordinator, [Local Liaisons](#) and Head Start Collaboration Director
- Collaborate with [Yay Babies](#) to convene a Homeless Focus Group Meeting for partner agencies to develop a statewide action plan
- Provide training and technical assistance for early care and educators on early identification of homeless children and families, trauma-informed care and community resources
- Provide outreach to families at shelters, motels and food banks
- Provide training to staff who assist homeless families in applying for child care subsidy and consumer education to ensure that they have a basic understanding of homelessness
- Develop a residency questionnaire or integrating questions about housing into existing forms, data systems or family interviews that prompt families to answer key questions about their living situation
- Raise awareness of this issue among partner agencies and develop priorities for serving homeless families
- Priority access for child care

Click [here](#) for more information on Supporting Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness.

Source: [DCDEE Website, Child Care and Development Fund, Supporting Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness.](#)

2) Children of Eligible Military Families **(REVISED)**

Any age-eligible child who is a child of either of the following shall be eligible for the program:

1. An active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the North Carolina National Guard, State military forces, or a reserve component of the Armed Forces who was ordered to active duty by the proper authority within the last 18 months or is expected to be ordered within the next 18 months or
2. A member of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the North Carolina National Guard, State military forces, or a reserve component of the Armed Forces who was injured or killed while serving on active duty

The military member's Leave and Earnings statement should be used when **prioritizing children** of eligible military families. The statement will identify base pay as well as additional categories such as housing allowances and/or hazardous duty pay.

Most counties in North Carolina with military installations only use the base pay amount when prioritizing children of military applicants.

It is important to be consistent and handle all military applicants the same in your county.

3) Additional Risk Factors (Families over 75% SMI) **(REVISED)**

In addition, up to 20% of age eligible children enrolled may have family incomes more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the state median income if the child has one of the risk factors identified below.

*These children should only be considered if there are any remaining placements **after** all age and income eligible children have been placed.*

- 1) **Educational needs** are indicated by the child’s performance results on an NC Pre-K approved developmental screening or in an existing Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- 2) **Developmental disabilities** are identified through evaluations followed by targeted tests and measures administered by education and/or health professionals. They may include but are not limited to cerebral palsy, sight or vision impairment, orthopedic impairment or autism.
- 3) **Chronic health conditions** must be diagnosed and documented by a professional health care provider. Chronic health conditions are considered as having the potential to interfere with a child’s development and learning, as determined by a health care professional. This determination must include a signed and dated written statement, describing how the child would benefit from participating in a high-quality childhood program such as NC Pre-K
- 4) **Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** is identified by the child speaking limited or no English in the home as indicated by the family on the child’s application and/or during the child’s developmental screening.

Approved developmental screening instruments must be administered by appropriately trained screening professionals (*e.g., teachers, preschool coordinators*) and must be scored, signed/dated and indicate the specific delay. Developmental screenings are utilized to alert educators, families and administrators that there could be a potential delay in any category measured by the developmental screening.

Developmental evaluations must be administered by a trained specialist (*e.g., doctor, child psychologist, speech-language pathologist*) as required by NC Child Care Rule .3006.

Children with an IEP have already received an initial developmental screening and evaluation and do not need to be re-screened or re-evaluated. Families must provide a copy of the child’s current IEP.

See also NC Child Care Rule – 10A NCAC 09 .3006 Developmental Screenings

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. October 1, 2017

G. Children with Unique Needs/Challenging Behaviors

Challenging behavior shall mean any repeated pattern of behavior, or perception of behavior, that interferes with, or is at risk of interfering with, optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults. It is behavior that interferes with children's learning, development, success at play or is harmful to the child, other children or adults, that puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure. (<http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>)

When a child demonstrates challenging behaviors that prevent his or her progress in any developmental domain, as referenced in the [North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development](#), that impede the child's access to and participation in the assigned NC Pre-K classroom learning activities, the following shall apply:

- (1) The Site Administrator shall notify the NC Pre-K Contract Administrator and the local school system's Preschool Exceptional Children Program for assistance if a child's cognitive, language and communication, emotional, social, health and physical needs exceed the program's capacity to address as indicated by one or more of the following:
 - (A) developmental needs assessments;
 - (B) home visits;
 - (C) consultations with the family members;
 - (D) daily recorded classroom teacher observations; and/or
 - (E) modified instructional plans and differentiated lessons based on the child's individual goals.
- (2) The NC Pre-K Contract Administrator, Site Administrator, teacher and family members in consultation with the school system's Preschool Exceptional Children Program and other available community and state resources, such as Birth-through-Kindergarten licensed mentors and evaluators, Healthy Social Behavioral specialists, child care health consultants, mental health specialists, social workers and other local child developmental experts, shall develop a coordinated support plan to support the NC Pre-K child's placement and participation in the NC Pre-K Program.
- (3) The Division of Child Development and Early Education shall be notified when support plans recommended by the local school system's Exceptional Children Program require an alternative placement and support services for a child.
- (4) A site administrator shall not suspend or expel a child from a NC Pre-K Program until the site administrator has completed the requirements of Subparagraphs (1), (2), and (3) of this Paragraph.

- (5) Unless the operator determines the child poses a risk of harm to himself or herself or others and has completed the requirements of Subparagraphs (1), (2), and (3) of this Paragraph, no child shall receive less than the 6.5-hour NC Pre-K day. Risk of harm to oneself or others includes:
- (A) physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, throwing objects, pinching, pushing and biting;
 - (B) destroying property;
 - (C) tantrum behaviors that might include behaviors such as kicking, screaming, pushing an object or person, stomping feet or head banging;
 - (D) verbal aggression including yelling, threats and screaming;
 - (E) persistent or prolonged crying that is loud or disruptive or crying that interferes with the child’s engagement in activities; and/or
 - (F) touching other children’s private areas and removing clothing from themselves or others.

See also NC Child Care Rule

10A NCAC 09 .3017 Children With Unique Needs And Challenging Behaviors

***History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);
Eff. October 1, 2017***

Guidance

If efforts to access the consultation needed to develop a coordinated plan of support prove unsuccessful, the NC Pre-K Contract Administrator shall contact their NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant for guidance.

Teachers shall observe the child to identify what may be triggering the behavior, plan/record instructional modifications/differentiated strategies and document daily progress made by the child. Teachers shall document additional modifications needed based on daily observations along with any other resources that may be identified to support the NC Pre-K child.

Teachers should plan and implement appropriate strategies to include, but not be limited to, the assistance of local Behavioral Specialists through the CCR&R and Smart Start Network. These and other strategies to support the child should be documented including the child’s progress for at least six to eight weeks before contacting the local school system’s Preschool Exceptional Children Program. The documentation will be shared with the Preschool Exceptional Children Program during consultation.

Teachers, Site Administrators and NC Pre-K Contract Administrators shall document and keep on file every effort made to support the child so they can remain in the NC Pre-K Program. The NC Pre-K teacher must complete the Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement and Developmental Needs Report or another form which documents the child's behavior and strategies implemented by the teacher. The Site Administrator must submit the report to the NC Pre-K Contract Administrator for review of what has been implemented and provide further guidance to support the child, family and teacher.

See *Appendix E* for the Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement and Developmental Needs Report. You may also [click here](#) to access the report on the DCDEE website to complete the form electronically.

Teachers shall **maintain continuous collaboration** with the specialist(s) working with the child to discuss strategies implemented in the classroom and seek additional research based on effective practices to support the child with or without an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

RESOURCES

Growing Up Well: Supporting Young Children's Social-Emotional Development and Mental Health in North Carolina (July 2012). [Click here](#) to download the report.

Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Setting, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S Department of Education (2014). [Click here](#) to download the Policy Statement.

Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), Social-Emotional and Behavioral Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (September 2015). [Click here](#) to download the Information Memorandum.

[Click here](#) for the North Carolina Early Childhood Suspension and Expulsion Policy Statement Summary.

[Click here](#) for the Division of Child Development and Early Education Suspension and Expulsion Policy Statement

[Click here](#) for additional federal resources.

Implementing Policies to Reduce the Likelihood of Preschool Expulsion – Examines factors associated with expulsion from Pre-K. [Click here](#) to download this resource from the *NC Early Learning Network – EC Preschool Coordinator Resources: Quality Practices*.

H. Other Required Data Collection (Non-NC Pre-K) **(NEW)**

1) Child Ethnicity and Race **(REVISED)**

The NC Pre-K Statewide Evaluation requires the collection of demographic characteristics for children receiving services, which includes ethnicity and race. The following descriptions should be used to help programs **document accurate information on the child's application**:

Ethnicity refers to cultural factors, including nationality, regional culture, ancestry and language. The **family must indicate** either “Yes” or “No” for whether the child is “Hispanic or Latino.” This information determines the child's ethnicity.

Race refers to a person's physical characteristics, such as bone structure, skin, hair and eye color. The **family must choose** one or more options listed for race (e.g. American Indian, Black or African American, Asian, White, etc.). More than one option for race may be chosen from the list if the child is multi-racial.

NC Pre-K Contracting Agency staff must check this information for accuracy during the application and eligibility process.

2) Child's US Citizenship

A child's citizenship status is determined by the parent or guardian indicating “yes” or “no” on the signed NC Pre-K Child Application.

NOTE: US citizenship is **not required** for NC Pre-K eligibility – Data is used by DCDEE for TANF determination.