

Pre-K Program Standards and Requirements 2012-2013

GUIDELINES

OUTCOME: Children will enter school ready to succeed.

The Kansas **Pre-K Program** is based upon the theory that high quality early learning environments improve child skills and knowledge, and therefore better support school readiness and school success for young children as they enter Kindergarten. High quality programs require teachers who are trained and knowledgeable, the implementation of evidence-based practices and curriculum, and the use of intentional teaching which includes developmentally appropriate instruction and assessments that are also reliable and valid. Evidence-based practice is defined as a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom and values (Buysse & Wesley, 2006). Programs are required to meet high standards so that the children participating in the learning environments will be successful when they enter Kindergarten. Collaboration with community partners provides a stronger program that better meets the needs of families and their young children. School districts and community child care professionals must work together and with other community early childhood partners to best utilize current programs that are high quality -- those programs that meet the program standards described in this application.

Funds will be awarded through an application process. Program descriptions must include evidence-based practices. Please review the Assurances Page for specified requirements.

Kansas Preschool Program--Pre-K Program: Program Standards

Program standards and components required for participation in the Kansas Preschool Program: Pre-K Program are described below.

1. Teacher Requirements

Lead Teacher Qualifications:

a. Pre-K Program Requirement:

For 2012-2013 year: Lead teachers must hold an AA in early childhood education or a closely related field; lead teachers must agree to achieve a BA within 5 years of becoming a **Pre-K Program Site** and must have a plan on file to show how this will be achieved. **NOTE: Programs must provide a plan WITH THIS APPLICATION describing how the BA will be achieved for teachers who do not have a BA.** See application for further requirements. *See Application for notes regarding potential changes for 2013-14.*

Assistant Teacher/Teacher Aide Qualifications:

b. Assistant teachers must hold a CDA or equivalent.

Having the 'highly qualified Paraprofessional' status for QPA is acceptable as an equivalent. It is strongly recommended that school districts employ paraprofessionals or aides who have at least a Child Development Associate (CDA certificate) or an A.A. in early childhood education or a related field. *See Application for notes regarding potential changes for 2013-14.*

2. Curriculum & Assessment requirements

Child Outcomes:

All Kansas Pre-K Programs are required to develop local child outcomes and collect ongoing data on the child outcomes. Upon request, local programs will participate in KSDE evaluation and assessment processes—and send annual results to KSDE as requested.

Curriculum and Assessment requirements

The core curriculum used in each program may be locally determined or developed. All must be aligned with the Kansas Early Learning Standards and must be evidenced-based. Evidence-based practice is defined as a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom and values (Buyse & Wesley, 2006). An evidence-based curriculum should be based upon the best research available.

Programs must use developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable assessments, aligned with Kansas Early Learning Standards and the core curriculum of the program to determine growth over the year.

3. Family Services Worker

In past years, Pre-K Programs were required to have at least one family services worker (similar to the family advocate role in Head Start) who provided referrals and additional supports to families as needed. This professional was to hold either a MSW or a minimum of a BA in social work or a closely related field with 5 years of closely related experience of working with parents and families. For 2012-13: this requirement will be maintained as current implemented in each program.

4. The teacher: child ratio will be no higher than 1: 10. Head Start classrooms may have a ratio of 2:17.
5. The class size will not exceed 20 children (with 2 adults—teacher, assistant teacher/paraprofessional/teacher aide).
6. Teachers and assistant teachers/paraprofessionals/teacher aides must participate in at least 15 hours of in-service training annually.
7. Pre-K Programs that choose to extend the current half day experience must provide the rationale for the extension and add 465 hours to their current classroom time for a total of 930 hours across the year.
8. Collaboration among community early childhood partners is required to meet application assurances and must be described in the application.
9. **At least** 50% of children in the program must meet one or more of the at-risk criteria listed in the table below.

Criteria for Pre-K Program

Criteria	Clarification
1. Poverty (4 year old at-risk)	1. Qualifies for free lunch program <u>or</u> reduced lunch program on September 20, 2012
2. Single parent families	2. At the time of enrollment, the custodial parent is unmarried.
3. SRS referral	3. The reason for referral must describe the need for the child to attend the pre-K program and be documented and signed by the SRS agent.
4. Teen parents	4. At least one parent was a teen when the child was born.
5. Either parent is lacking a high school diploma or GED.	5. At the time of enrollment, either parent lacks a high diploma or a GED.
6. Limited English Proficiency	6. LEP status must be documented. Forms must be in child's file. Process and criteria are found at www.ksde.org under Early Learning. NOTE: ESOL services must be provided by qualified teachers.
7. Lower than expected developmental progress in at least one of the following areas: Cognitive development; physical development; communication/literacy; social-emotional/behavior; adaptive behavior/self-help skills	7. Based on appropriate and valid assessment results, the developmental progress of the child has been determined by a trained professional to be lower than typically expected for his/her chronological age, yet above what would be considered eligible for special education services (based on the procedural manual and guidance materials of specific assessment instruments). Scores that fall at or below the 40 th percentile indicate 'at-risk'.
8. Children of active duty military	8. Family member who is active duty must have paperwork showing active status.
9. EC Referral	9. The reason for the referral must describe the need for the child to attend the Pre-K Program. Documentation should include a written referral with rationale and any necessary supporting evidence.

Note: **Participants must be four years of age on or before August 31, 2012.** (*Children turning 5 years old on or before August 31, 2012 cannot generate funds for this program.*)

Meeting the site- based criteria

The Pre-K Program requires that 50% of the child spaces are in public school programs (typically Four Year Old At-Risk) and 50% are in community programs that **already** exist. Describe in the application the number of spaces (children) which are in the public schools and the number of spaces (children) which are in existing community child care (centers, preschools, faith-based preschools) and Head Start programs. Include the percentage of the total number of

spaces for both school-based and community center/preschool. For example, if there are 25 children in four year old at-risk programs and 32 in community centers and preschools, 44% are in public school settings and 56% are in community-based settings. This would not meet current criteria, so a rationale and explanation will need to be included in the application. If there are plans for changing the current situation, please provide a description of the plan.

Implementation Information

1. **For 2012-2013:** If a grantee chooses to allow communities to use an existing Four Year Old At-Risk program as a participant in the Pre-K Program part of the Kansas Preschool Program, the Four Year Old At-Risk classroom is allowed to use the Pre-K funds to either (1) add more slots while maintaining the approved teacher-child ratio (1:10); or (2) to extend the four year old at-risk half-day class to a full day experience by adding an additional 465 hours over the year (for a total of 930 hours over the year).
2. **For 2012-2013:** If a grantee chooses to allow communities to use an existing Head Start program as a participant in the Pre-K Program part of the Kansas Preschool Program, the Head Start classroom is allowed to use the Pre-K funds to either (1) add more slots for four year old children while maintaining the approved teacher-child ratio (1:10); or (2) to extend the Head Start half-day class to a full day experience by adding an additional 465 hours over the year (for a total of 930 hours over the year).
3. All classrooms must meet the Pre-K program standards. If a grantee chooses to use a child-care classroom as a Pre-K classroom, that classroom must meet the standards.
4. **Classrooms that are located in school buildings that choose to extend their Pre-K or Four Year Old At-Risk day beyond the 3 hours must contact Gayle Stuber at 785-296-5352 or gstuber@ksde.org to discuss KDHE licensing requirements and the need for meeting high quality standards.**
5. If a grantee chooses to allow children who do not meet the age or at-risk criteria into the Pre-K Program classroom, this is allowed with the following caveat: **the funding from this grant can ONLY be used to support the education for 4 year old children** who meet the criteria. Other children may physically be in the classroom, but grantees must demonstrate that funds are to be used only for the grant-eligible children. For example, a teacher in such a classroom may have to have her salary be pro-rated according to the number of eligible and non-eligible children in the classroom.

Other Policies:

Meal or Snack: At least one a classroom period	Programs must provide at least one snack per classroom session to all the children attending their program. By participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program schools can earn reimbursement for providing nutritious snacks. For further information, contact MarSue Mackey of Child Nutrition & Wellness at the Kansas State Department of Education (785-296-2276 or mmackey@ksde.org). As with kindergarten programs, teachers can request parents to provide nutritious snacks.
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NOTE: The following information is on file from 2010-2011 \$ 2011-2012. If you have had changes that are reflected in the following documents, you will need to send updated documents in to Gayle Stuber at KSDE along with your grant application.

1. Organizational Description
2. Organizational chart(s) that demonstrates how the Pre-K Program will be administered.
3. List of board members and a board member Conflict of Interest Statement.
4. Letter of Compliance with Assurances
This letter should state the funds received for this grant year will not be used to supplant current federal, state, or local funds. The letter should also address compliance with debarment, compliance with laws and regulations, nondiscrimination and workplace safety, and ADA compliance.
5. 501 (c) (3) verification
6. Transmittal letter for audit, form 990, or most recent year-end financial statement
7. Licensing/accreditation/certification documentation

Application Deadline

Applications are due March 9, 2012. Applications will be reviewed by KSDE staff. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Kansas State Board of Education for action at the April 2011 meeting.

One original (emailed or mailed) of the application is to be submitted to Gayle Stuber, Kansas Preschool Program: Pre-K Pilot Program, Kansas State Department of Education, 120 SE 10th Ave., Topeka, KS, 66612-1182. **The application must be received by Gayle M. Stuber either on email at gstuber@ksde.org or by mail by 5:00 p.m. on March 9, 2012. A signed assurances page Must be FAXED to 785-296-6715 ATTN: GAYLE STUBER or mailed to Gayle Stuber at the above address.**

[QUESTIONS? Contact Gayle Stuber at 785-296-5352 or \[gstuber@ksde.org\]\(mailto:gstuber@ksde.org\)](#)