



2024-2025
Maryland Prekindergarten
Programs Operating Manual



The Maryland Prekindergarten Programs 2024 - 2025 School Year Operating Manual is effective July 1, 2024. Key program components are listed in the Table of Contents for easy reference.

PURPOSE

This document outlines the requirements and regulations for operating a Maryland Prekindergarten Grant Program. To ensure program compliance and quality service, all Pre-K providers must be familiar with and implement these operating guidelines. This document is intended to provide clarity and to offer guidance to current and new Prekindergarten providers.

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1.0 Prekindergarten Program Types and Information

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs are educational programs designed to provide high quality learning experiences for children in Prekindergarten (See Appendix B - Definition of High-Quality Prekindergarten). These educational programs are led by highly qualified teaching staff and include: curriculum that is evidence-based and aligned with the Maryland Birth-3 years Early Learning Standards and Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, implementation of formative and summative assessments, and developmentally appropriate lesson plans aligned to the Standards. Maryland Prekindergarten Programs must have developmentally appropriate classrooms that are well equipped to address the needs of ALL children including those with disabilities, multilingual learners, and students experiencing homelessness. Programs are committed to ongoing program evaluation to ensure continuous quality improvement for the children and families they serve.

There are two program types that are grant funded by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE):

- The Prekindergarten Expansion Grant
- The Blueprint Formula Funding Grant

1.1 PREKINDERGARTEN EXPANSION GRANT DESCRIPTION

The Prekindergarten Expansion Grant is a competitive grant program administered by the Division of Early Childhood at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). It provides funding for local education agencies (LEAs) and private providers to administer high-quality prekindergarten. Grant funds must be used to serve three- and four- year-old children from families with income at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines in full-day settings and meet the definition of high-quality prekindergarten programs. Furthermore, the grant extends eligibility to students with disabilities regardless of income, students experiencing homelessness and multilingual learners.

1.2 BLUEPRINT PREKINDERGARTEN GRANT DESCRIPTION

The Blueprint Prekindergarten Grant is a formula grant administered by the Division of Early Childhood at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). It provides funding for local education agencies (LEAs) private providers to administer high-quality prekindergarten. Grant funds must be used to serve three- and four- year-old children from families with income at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines (Tier I) in full- day settings and meet the definition of high-quality prekindergarten programs.

1.3 GRANT PERIOD

The grant period for Maryland Prekindergarten Programs is July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

1.4 DAYS OF SERVICE

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs require a minimum of 180-days instructional program. Full-day attendance is for a minimum of 6.5 hours of instruction per day for all grant-funded programs. Religious-based programs may not provide religious activities during the 6.5-hour Pre-K day. Programs should encourage and support regular attendance and address chronic absenteeism when necessary.

2.0 Child/Family Eligibility

2.1 AGE REQUIREMENT

Children must be three years-old or four years-old by September 1st of the current school year for which they are enrolling. Acceptable age documentation could include the following:

- Birth Certificate
- Valid Unexpired Passport
- Physician certificate
- Hospital Certificate (proof of live birth) with name of child and parent
- Parents' notarized affidavit (if birth certificate is not available)
- Baptismal or church certification
- Birth Registration, or other legal or notarized identification for child's identity and date of birth verification

Proof of age eligibility should be on file the day the child begins the Pre-K program.

Please note: Age verification documents are required for children experiencing homelessness as well.

2.2 RECRUITMENT PLAN

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs shall provide a recruitment plan that will outline how programs will go about recruiting eligible children and families. Partnering with LEAs is also encouraged. Programs are expected to be fully enrolled by December 31st of each year. Programs not meeting at least 85% of their target enrollment by the deadline may have grant funds reduced by the number of slots under enrolled. They will only be able to apply for the number of slots filled for the current year in the next grant application. Throughout the program year, the grantee must implement strategies that will maintain the enrollment of eligible three- and four-year old children. MSDE will provide recruitment support to help with outreach to families meeting the income eligibility criteria. Enrollment data will be sent to MSDE three times a year.

2.3 INCOME ELIGIBILITY

Documentation of income eligibility must be verified and kept on file for all children in Pre-K grant funded classrooms. (Please refer to the current Federal Poverty Guidelines on MSDE's website). Families of children experiencing homelessness **are not** required to submit income eligibility documentation (McKinney Vento Act)

[Maryland Pre-K Grant Programs | Division of Early Childhood](#)

Pre-K programs must use the Prekindergarten Enrollment Eligibility Form provided by the LEAs.

Income Eligibility Document Examples include:

- Current Tax return -1040, W2s, Schedule C/1099
- One month of consecutive pay stubs (most recent)
- Medical Assistance (MA) document

- Notarized Employment Letter
- Notarized letter of no income
- Military Income (excludes Basic Allowance for Housing benefit)
- Proof of additional income (TCA letter, child support, rental income, unemployment verification, etc.)

If a parent/guardian states they have no income, ask if they had income in the prior tax year and check documents relevant to that tax year. If they have no income for both tax years, have them state in writing that they have no income, sign, date, and have it notarized.

For children in foster care or kinship care, the income the child received from the State/Foster Care Agency is used to determine eligibility. The Foster Parents' income is not used to determine eligibility.

For a grandparent/guardian who is caring for the child and receiving no financial help from the Department of Social Services, use the parent/guardian's income. If the parent/guardian is not able to supply income documentation, have the grandparent/guardian state in writing they receive no financial help from the parent/guardian sign, date, and have it notarized. It is the program's responsibility to attempt to collect accurate information.

Income redetermination should be conducted annually based on the school year. Copies of documentation or income verification documents should be retained for 4 years or until audit requirements are fulfilled. Note: Income for all individuals in the household must be considered.

Children experiencing homelessness

Although determination of income is required for children who meet the definition of homelessness as described in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (<https://nche.ed.gov/mckinney-vento-definition/>), meeting the income eligibility is **not** required. Income verification is also **not** required.

Children with Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Extended IFSP:

Although determination of income is required for children with IEPs/ extended IFSPs, meeting the income eligibility is not required for the Pre-K Grant programs. Programs should also collect a current copy of the child's IEP/extended IFSP for both Maryland Prekindergarten Programs.

Multilingual Learners:

Although determination of income is required for multilingual learners, meeting the income eligibility is not required for the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant.

The Home Language Survey used in LEAs when students are enrolled, should also be provided to the participating private providers. The documentation should indicate two or more responses that list a language other than English. The LEA and the participating private provider will meet to determine what supports may be needed for those children and families.

3.0 Enrollment

3.1 OPEN ENROLLMENT

Enrollment for the program must be open and nondiscriminatory. Children cannot be denied participation in educational programs based on race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Title II of the Vocational Education Amendment of 1976); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990).

The Maryland Prekindergarten Programs' purpose is to broaden availability and expand access to high-quality prekindergarten and school readiness services for three-year-old and four-year-old students from families with household incomes up to 300 percent of Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG).

Please note: the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant Program allows students with disabilities, multilingual learners and children experiencing homelessness regardless of income.

3.2 CHILDREN EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

MSDE recognizes that children and their families who experience homelessness deal with challenges. Prekindergarten providers are encouraged to examine their existing enrollment policies to address families experiencing homelessness seeking to enroll a child in Maryland Prekindergarten Programs.

Children experiencing homelessness (as defined by McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in emergency or transitional shelters, motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations. This also applies to those that have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; like cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings. This also applies to migratory children living in circumstances described in the above situations.

3.3 PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Programs are required to have a school year calendar and classroom daily schedule. The schedule must include consistent arrival and dismissal times. Children should attend the program regularly and arrive and leave according to its daily schedule. The calendar and daily schedule must be provided to families as part of family orientation or upon enrollment.

Daily attendance records must be maintained on site.

Chronic Absenteeism

If a student **misses more than 10% of the total enrollment days (180)** for any reason (excused and unexcused), and the program has addressed concerns with the family with no improvement in attendance, the program may place another child in that slot. MSDE approval is not needed. However, the program is

responsible for reporting student end dates on the data file. The end date is defined as the last day the child physically attended the program.

A student whose parent or legal guardian is in military service in the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent or legal guardian has been called to duty or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences. Families should provide a written statement for the child's file to document the absence.

Addressing Chronic Absenteeism Issues

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs must develop written procedures for addressing chronic attendance issues. The goal of the written procedures is to assist families in establishing and maintaining regular school attendance patterns. The procedures should include specific actions to be taken by the provider and how the program will work with families to resolve ongoing attendance concerns. Procedures should be shared with families.

For example, the procedures could require a phone call to parents after three absences; a letter to parents from the director after five absences; and a family meeting after six absences to determine the reason(s) for the absences and recommendations to improve attendance.

Programs are encouraged to document their efforts assisting families to resolve attendance issues. A meeting with the parent/guardian should occur to determine the reason(s) for the problem and identify ways to resolve the problem. Programs will be required to submit the written procedures to MSDE.

3.4 STUDENT ENROLLMENT DATA FILES

Programs will submit the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Student Enrollment Data File to report student data. MSDE will provide this data file to programs. The submission of student enrollment data contains areas such as student demographics, enrollment and income eligibility. The description of each field is located above the field. Programs are required to maintain income eligibility documentation for each student enrolled. This data file will be collected three times per year. Data fields should be completed by program and/or data managers. Student data is confidential and legally protected. It may not be shared with others unless a legally sufficient agreement defines any data sharing. All data files must be submitted to MSDE securely following the submission instructions.

3.5 ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNDING

Programs are expected to be fully enrolled by December 31st of each year. Programs not meeting at least 85% of their target enrollment by the deadline may have grant funds reduced by the number of slots under enrolled; and they will only be granted the number of slots filled for the current year when determining awards for future applications. Throughout the program year, the grantee must implement strategies that will maintain the enrollment of eligible three- and four-year old children. MSDE will provide recruitment support to help with outreach to families meeting the income eligibility criteria. Enrollment data will be sent to MSDE three times a year.

3.6 STUDENT FILE REVIEW

The Student File Review form is designed to support programs with ensuring eligibility documentation is obtained for all enrolled children. Programs complete the form in the fall for review by the MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialists and provide updates to the form as needed. For additional information, please refer to the Student File Review Form. (See Appendix C)

4.0 Educational Program Requirements

4.1 EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULA

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recently introduced new Early Learning Standards aligned with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future to be implemented by those working with or caring for children from birth – 48 months of age. MSDE is developing a tool to help guide users in the selection of curriculum.

Curricula resources for programs participating in the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs must be evidence-based and aligned with the [Maryland Early Learning Standards](#). For further curricula information please visit [Early Childhood Curriculum](#).

Programs seeking Maryland EXCELS Quality Rating 5 and Maryland Accreditation must use curricula that meet the criteria.

4.2 RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

No part of the Prekindergarten instructional day may be religious in nature and reasonable efforts should be made to ensure areas where children spend time during the Prekindergarten school day are as nonsectarian as possible. If an approved curriculum has both a secular and religious version, the secular version must be utilized in the Prekindergarten program. No Prekindergarten funding may be utilized for religious instruction. Prekindergarten programs may not engage in explicitly religious activities during school hours. Programs may choose to offer religious instruction outside of the Prekindergarten 6.5-hour instructional day.

4.3 LESSON PLANS

Weekly written lesson plans containing specific instructional activities are required for a minimum of 6.5-hours per day. Weekly lesson plans should be kept organized and easily accessible for the Pre-K Support Specialist review.

The lesson plans must align with the [Maryland Early Learning Standards](#) and/or Maryland College and Career Standards and include enough detail so that someone else (a substitute, your supervisor or director) can identify the purpose of your lesson. The Maryland Early Learning Standards should be documented for all instructional activities. Teachers should also have a plan for transitions throughout the day.

Lesson plans should reflect differentiated instruction based on the individual needs of each child in the class, including children with disabilities and multilingual learners. Goals and objectives from a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or extended IFSP should be used when planning instruction.

Programs should refer to the Instructional Quality Review (IQR) Form and the corresponding Clarifications document for additional clarifications, information, and guidance in instructional planning. (See Appendix D)

4.4 ASSESSMENT

Teachers should use formative and summative assessments in the natural learning environment. Assessment helps to identify the support children need to be successful in school and this data can be used to inform teachers, families, schools as they work together to meet every child's needs.

Formative assessment is a planned process for teachers to gather information, analyze and reflect on the information, and use it to help plan the child's next steps in learning. One example of a formative assessment tool is the Maryland Early Learning Assessment (ELA). No matter which tool is used, supporting documentation is needed as evidence to support ratings. Some evidence that a tool may require includes work samples, observation notes, portfolios, and others.

Summative assessment is intended to evaluate student learning by comparing performance to a standard or benchmark (goal) and is administered at the end of a defined instructional period. Examples of summative assessments include curriculum embedded assessments and benchmark assessments.

The MSDE Pre-K Support Specialists will look for evidence of ongoing assessment during onsite visits as indicated on the Instructional Quality Review (IQR) Form (See Appendix D).

4.5 CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND MATERIALS

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs should feature busy, active, well-equipped classrooms where teachers work together to foster learning. The most powerful motivator for young children to learn is the natural joy that comes from learning and exploring. Prekindergarten classrooms should be organized around clearly defined learning centers and interest areas that allow children to experience high quality materials and activities both indoors and outdoors. These materials and activities should be changed frequently to meet children's growing developmental needs and reflect children's changing interests. Young children are active learners and need to touch, feel, experiment, and create.

Prekindergarten providers must maintain adequate and appropriate equipment, materials, and supplies for each Prekindergarten classroom. All equipment must be in good repair.

Programs should refer to the Instructional Quality Review (IQR) Form and the corresponding Clarifications document for additional clarifications, information, and guidance in providing a high-quality learning environment for prekindergarten. (See Appendix D)

5.0 Delivery of Services

5.1 KEY PERSONNEL AND OVERSIGHT

Each Maryland Prekindergarten Program must have administrative key personnel responsible for the successful implementation and monitoring of the grant requirements. This includes personnel responsible for instructional oversight of the educational program (i.e., supporting the teachers' instruction). The designated instructional oversight person must be qualified to carry out duties such as supporting teachers with curriculum implementation, lesson planning, etc. Frequency of instructional oversight may be determined by the program however there should be a minimum of 8-10 hours per month.

For private providers, the Director cannot be regarded as the teacher unless he or she is working in the classroom full time for the 6.5-hour instructional day. A classroom teacher or Director teaching in the classroom full-time cannot serve as an instructional oversight person. The instructional oversight person

must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education or related field and early childhood experience.

5.2 CLASSROOM REQUIREMENTS

Each Maryland Prekindergarten Program classroom must meet the following:

- A maximum class size of 20 with a teacher/child ratio of 1:10. For prekindergarten classrooms with more than 10 students, there must be a Teacher Assistant assigned to that classroom.
- Three- and four-year-olds can be served in the same classroom (mixed age grouping).
- Teachers/teaching assistants must remain actively involved with children during the entire 6.5 hours of instructional time each day of operation, with the exception of rest time.
- Programs should address racial and socioeconomic integration in the prekindergarten classroom.
- If a program has more than one prekindergarten classroom, the children who qualify for the Maryland Prekindergarten Program can be served across multiple classrooms, provided each classroom meets the grant requirements.

5.3 PROGRAM DELIVERY

The Maryland Prekindergarten Programs will provide 6.5-hours of instructional time (which includes lunch time) and a minimum of 180 days per year for eligible children. Prekindergarten programs must develop a school year calendar for 180 days of instruction. In addition to the instructional days, programs must plan to include Prekindergarten related activities/duties for teachers (pre- and post-planning, staff development, Prekindergarten Training, in-service days).

5.4 DAILY SCHEDULE

A consistent daily schedule and routine provides preschoolers with a sense of security and predictability. It helps them feel control over their environment. Each Maryland Prekindergarten Program must create and post a daily schedule to be implemented throughout the day. Programs must submit the classroom daily schedule as part of the initial Check-in visit.

Programs should refer to the Instructional Quality Review (IQR) Clarifications document for additional clarifications, information, and guidance for daily schedule requirements. (See Appendix D)

5.5 LICENSING (FOR PRIVATE PROVIDERS)

Private Providers must maintain good licensure status to retain a grant with the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs and maintain the required Maryland EXCELS levels (See Section 21.0). For additional information, please visit: <https://marylandchild.org/>. Programs must notify MSDE of any change in license or Maryland EXCELS status immediately.

5.6 SUBSTITUTES

The Prekindergarten program must ensure that a substitute lead teacher and/or substitute teacher assistant is present and working in the Prekindergarten classroom for each day that a lead teacher and/or teaching assistant is absent due to illness, required training, personal leave, etc. (See Section 12.0)

5.7 REST TIME

To maximize instructional activities, rest time should not exceed one hour per day except when necessary to address specific needs of individual children. Rest time is not included in the 6.5-hour instructional day.

Children who do not rest shall be given quiet activities such as books and puzzles. All children must have a covering (sheet) on their individual rest equipment (mat or cot) and a covering (blanket or sheet) for themselves. These items may be purchased with Prekindergarten funds or families may choose to supply them.

5.8 EXTENDED DAY (BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE)

The Maryland Prekindergarten Programs are not required to provide extended day services for children in grant funded classrooms. Extended day services may be provided using funds provided via other means. (See Section 15.1)

6.0 Student Support

Children grow and develop at their own rate. Although there is a general predictable sequence of milestones, they may not proceed through these stages in the same way or at the same time. A child's development is influenced by many factors including the child's environment and experiences. Once children acclimate to the Prekindergarten classroom environment, differences in skills and behavior may become apparent. A child may exhibit significant developmental, behavioral, or health concerns that require special considerations. Private providers should collaborate with the local education agency (LEA) as outlined in their MOU to ensure support services are provided to children and their families.

6.1 CHILDREN WITH IDENTIFIED DISABILITIES

A child who is age-eligible for the Maryland Prekindergarten Program and is identified as eligible for special education and/or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) shall not be denied access to the Prekindergarten program. If a child is assessed and determined eligible for special education services, implementing services in the least restrictive environment (LRE) to the maximum extent appropriate is a must and is found to produce the best possible child outcomes. ([COMAR Sec 13a.05.01](#))

6.2 CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS

Programs with concerns about a child's development, may discuss their concerns with the child's family and recommend they contact their local Child Find (See Appendix E).

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) support services are available to families/providers/teachers with concerns about a child's behavior. A list of IECMH consultants can be found in the resource guide on their website: [Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health \(IECMH\) Support Services](#)

Programs must ensure appropriate instructional activities are planned to meet the needs of the individual children. Classroom practices and individual support should be implemented within the program to help the child be successful before requesting more intensive interventions, such as a referral to an outside agency. An effective system of support should include the child, family, and teacher to ensure the child's success in the classroom environment. Private providers should also consult with their LEA for support.

6.3 STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Maryland’s Blueprint 7-1A-04 (c5) states that an eligible prekindergarten program may not suspend or expel a child who is enrolled in a prekindergarten program except as provided in 7-305.1. Additionally, the MSDE Office of Child Care provides guidance on preventing suspension and expulsion in early care and education programs. To review this guidance, please refer to the Preventing Suspension and Expulsion Policy Statement (Appendix F).

School staff are encouraged to alternatively seek support from Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health services. [Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health \(IECMH\) Support Services](#) (See Section 6.2).

Additional resources are available at [Maryland SEFEL Pyramid Model](#).

7.0 Family Engagement

7.1 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT/ SUPPORT

Family engagement is a shared responsibility of families, schools, and communities for student learning and achievement. The Prekindergarten program should provide opportunities for families to participate in their child’s educational experience. Families should be encouraged to volunteer their time, talents, and experiences in the classroom. The Prekindergarten program and families should maintain open communication throughout the school year and conduct parent meetings as needed.

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs must have a robust parental engagement plan that incorporates educational activities beyond the classroom into the program. Programs should utilize strategies in accordance with the Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework. [The Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework](#)

Given the importance of family engagement for children’s school readiness (and life readiness), it’s essential that Maryland’s entire early childhood community works not only to promote family engagement in early care and education settings, but also to improve a child’s home environment when necessary.

8.0 Grant Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Grant monitoring and on-going technical assistance for instructional quality are provided to support programs throughout the year. Monitoring will consist of a review of grant requirements, instructional quality review, review of expenditures, completing a risk assessment, a file audit to verify income eligibility, and an annual review. Annual Reviews are conducted between March and May.

Programs will receive the form and instructions prior to the annual review (Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Annual Review form - Appendix G).

8.1 PRE-K SUPPORT SPECIALIST

The MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialists work closely with providers throughout the year and are available for consultation regarding onsite technical assistance, questions about the program, challenges with maintaining enrollment, professional learning needs, etc. An initial check-in with your MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialist will occur in the beginning of the school year (September-October). Technical assistance and support will be provided throughout the school year and the Annual Review will take place in the second part of the school year (March-May). Additionally, programs will continuously

engage in self-reflection to evaluate progress toward grant goals throughout the entire grant cycle.

An Instructional Quality Rating (IQR) is completed by MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialists during classroom observations at least twice a year. The classroom teachers and program administrative staff are also expected to complete the Instructional Quality Review twice a year (October and February), prior to the MSDE Pre-K Support Specialist's visits. (See Appendix D)

On-Site Visits

MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialists will make announced and unannounced visits throughout the school year to monitor and evaluate program progress.

Maryland Prekindergarten Grant programs will be required to use these specific forms designed to help raise program quality across the state.

- Instructional Quality Review Form (IQR) (Appendix D): This form is utilized by both teachers and administrative staff to ensure each Prekindergarten classroom is properly equipped with quality materials, to ensure each classroom's daily schedule meets Prekindergarten guidelines and to ensure that curriculum, lesson planning and assessment requirements are being met.
- Student File Review Form: This form is designed to support programs with ensuring eligibility documentation is obtained for all enrolled children. Pre-K Support Specialists will review all files of enrolled children for completion of required documentation and accuracy. (See Appendix C)
- Annual Review Form: This form is used to assess the effective implementation of the grant. Programs complete the form as a self-assessment, and it is finalized during the annual review with the Prekindergarten Support Specialist. (See Appendix G).

8.2 EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION PLAN

Applicants must have a program evaluation in place to ensure continuous program improvement. The evaluation plan must identify the data and instruments used to monitor the program's quality and how this information will be used to support continuous quality improvement. The plan must include how parents will be informed about student progress and areas of concern.

9.0 General Personnel Information

All Pre-K Grant program personnel are employees of the Prekindergarten program for whom they work, not the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs or the State of Maryland.

10.0 Lead Teachers

10.1 TEACHER QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Prekindergarten teacher must hold at least a bachelor's degree. Lead teachers who have a state teaching certificate must be paid a salary commensurate with the LEA in the respective county. Teachers in a public school may have a conditional teaching certification, following the policies of the Local Education Agency.

10.2 SALARY REQUIREMENTS

For Private Providers, state certified teachers must be paid an entry-level salary commensurate with the LEA salary scale. Instructional staff salaries and benefits should be comparable to the salaries and benefits of the local LEA. For a list of minimum teacher salaries for local systems in Maryland, see the [Professional Salary Schedule](#)

Note: Private Providers should pay a commensurate salary with the LEA if the teacher has **like** qualifications.

Private providers should pay teachers who do not have a state certification based on education, experience, and current local market rate.

10.3 STAFF CHANGES

If a teacher leaves or is terminated, the program must complete the Prekindergarten Staff Change Form (See Appendix J).

11.0 Teaching Assistants

11.1 ASSISTANT QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Teaching assistants must hold a minimum of a high school diploma.

11.2 SALARY REQUIREMENTS

MSDE does not require a minimum salary for teaching assistants. Teaching assistants may be paid at the rate the program/school pays for other teaching assistants.

11.3 TEACHING ASSISTANT CHANGES

If a teaching assistant leaves or is terminated, the program is required to complete the Prekindergarten Staff Change Form (See Appendix J).

12.0 Substitute Teachers

12.1 SHORT TERM SUBSTITUTE

A short-term substitute is a substitute who serves in the Prekindergarten classroom while a lead teacher or a teaching assistant is out of the classroom due to illness, personal leave, or professional development training. A short-term substitute may serve in the classroom anywhere from a few hours up to three weeks. No prior approval from MSDE is needed for a short-term substitute. If a lead teacher or teaching assistant will be out for more than three consecutive weeks and is returning to their position, then a long-term substitute must be requested.

12.2 LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE/CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

A long-term substitute is a substitute for the lead teacher or teaching assistant who will be in the Prekindergarten classroom for longer than three weeks. Programs must submit a Long-Term Substitute Notification Form (Appendix K) to the MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialist before the requested leave starts if possible. Some acceptable instances for using a long-term substitute include extended medical leave, parental leave, military service, student teaching program, or other unexpected occurrences.

Programs must hire long-term substitutes with a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Similarly, programs must hire long-term substitutes with a minimum of a high school diploma.

The program is responsible for informing the Prekindergarten Support Specialist of any changes such as a modification in the return date for the teacher/teaching assistant or a change in substitute teachers.

13.0 Professional Learning

13.1 PURPOSE OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR TEACHERS

Professional learning is intended to enhance the skills and knowledge of teaching staff already prepared to teach in the Prekindergarten program. Each program is responsible for ensuring that all teaching staff (lead teacher and teaching assistant) are qualified and able to deliver quality instruction on the date they are hired.

13.2 REQUIREMENTS OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

To maintain quality standards and support school readiness, lead teachers and teaching assistants must complete 15 hours of professional learning each grant year. Professional learning content should be aligned with the Maryland Early Learning Standards. Priority of topics should be given to early language and literacy supported by the science of reading, early mathematics, and social foundations.

To meet the requirements, programs are required to obtain and submit documentation to indicate the completion of 15 hours. This documentation should be submitted to the MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialist during the Annual Review visit. For additional information please reference the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Annual Review form (See Appendix G).

13.3 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES

For private providers, MSDE can support teachers in maintaining their credentialing. Please see links below for additional information.

Teachers may be able to obtain COK (core of knowledge) hours or CPD credits (continuing professional development) for training taken in their programs. Please contact the MSDE Training Approval Coordinator for more information. (See Appendix A) or the Division of Educator Effectiveness.

As outlined in your MOU, private providers and Head Start should partner with their LEA to access professional learning opportunities.

The Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund (CCCPDF) is a tuition assistance program for childcare providers to obtain a college education at participating colleges/universities in Maryland. Click on the following link for more information:

[Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund \(CCCPDF\) | Division of Early Childhood](#)

14.0 Notification of Grant Award and Amendments

14.1 GRANT AWARD

Notification of awards will be sent by email in the spring. Processing of the official Notice of Grant Awards (NOGA) will begin on July 1st; this process can take 6-8 weeks. An invoice template for billing will be sent following the official NOGA.

Grants may be renewed annually (pending a successful application) based on the program's ability to meet the grant criteria and the availability of funds.

Grant renewal will also depend on past performance. A future grant may not be awarded if there are one or more risk assessment indicator issues and/or issues with performance during the grant year, even if all other grant requirements are met. (See Section 17.1) Continued grant funding is contingent upon renewal of state grant funds to MSDE.

Compliance and good standing with other MSDE divisions are also considered before awarding a grant agreement. MSDE will enter into grant agreements with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and private providers for Prekindergarten services.

14.2 GRANT CHANGE/AMENDMENTS

Grant change requests can be submitted any time during the grant period, but no later than 45 days before the grant period ends. Requests for amendments must be submitted using the C-1-25, C-1-25 A, and C-1-25 B.

These forms can be found in the Grant Budget Forms Workbook on the MSDE grants webpage, [Grants Budget Information](#).

A grant change request can consist of the following:

- To extend the grant period (pending approval)
- To reallocate funds (budgetary realignment of \$1000 or 15% of total object or category, whichever is greater)
- To increase/decrease funds
- To make a programmatic change
- To make an administrative change

Note: Any request for an amendment must be submitted to your assigned Pre-K Support Specialist for approval prior to the program's implementation of the changes. See Recipient Assurances Terms and Conditions #8 [recipient assurances](#)

15.0 Expenditure Guidelines and Allowable Use of Funds

15.1 PROGRAM FEES

All children must receive the same instructional opportunities during the 6.5-hour instructional program day. Fees cannot be charged to any child/family for services needed to operate the instructional program such as application or registration fees, tuition, curriculum fees, classroom supplies, field trips and other activity fees, etc. Parents can be charged for wrap-around or Before/After Care costs and families may apply for a Child Care Scholarship to help subsidize those costs.

15.2 FIELD TRIP/ SPECIAL EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS

Costs for academic field trips are allowable. Field trips off-site or on-site give students educational experiences that are different from their regular classroom environment. They broaden instructional activities and make a teaching topic more relevant. Field trips and/or special activities are highly encouraged but not required and are considered part of the instructional program. Feel free to consult with your Pre-K Specialist when planning field trips if aligned with instruction is questionable. Grant funds can be used for family members to serve as chaperones. To invoice for chaperones or parent volunteers, a sign in sheet must be submitted with the payment request.

15.3 MEALS

Programs must provide at least one meal per day. Meals served must meet the [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) meal plan requirements.

15.4 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

MSDE encourages Prekindergarten programs to plan family activities that focus on celebrating children's learning and participation in the Maryland Prekindergarten Grant Programs. Examples include activities such as a field day, an open house, a family/child picnic, or a luncheon following a learning activity. All children should be included in these activities. For all family engagement activities, a sign in sheet is required to document family participation. **Note: Costs associated with family engagement activities must be reasonable, allowable and necessary, and must support instructional activities.**

15.5 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING/ TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT TO STAFF

Prekindergarten funds can be used to cover salaries for staff attending Prekindergarten professional learning/training and to pay for substitutes who serve in the classroom while a lead or a teaching assistant attends a training. (See Section 12.1)

Costs associated with Prekindergarten training such as travel (lodging and meals with overnight travel, mileage, parking, etc.) must be reasonable, allowable and necessary.

15.6 ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS/EXPENDITURE GUIDELINES

Funds may be used for:

- direct services of student,
- instructional supplies & materials

- instructional staff salaries for the prekindergarten classroom
- costs associated with maintaining Maryland or national accreditation status, or Maryland EXCELS rating
- costs for contracts to administer screening and intervention services for prekindergarten students
- costs associated with the evaluation and monitoring of the project (not to exceed 5% of total grant request), costs associated with the provision of staff and professional learning activities for qualified teaching staff and support teacher assistants in meeting the grant requirements.
- family engagement activities (See Section 15.4)
- indirect costs (not to exceed 10% of the total grant fund request)

Reasonable rental and utility costs are allowable and should be reviewed periodically. Contact the MSDE Fiscal Specialist for specific conditions and requirements if property rental costs are included in the budget. If invoicing for rental costs, please submit a copy of the fully executed lease agreement signed by two parties (Landlord and Tenant). For mixed income classrooms, food, rent, utilities and field trips will need to be prorated. Please contact the MSDE Fiscal Specialist for guidance if needed. Costs of classroom materials do not need to be prorated and can be funded by the Grant.

Funds may not be used for:

- Supplanting existing services
- Capital Improvements
- Transportation expenses not related to field trips
- Staff bonuses
- Gift cards
- Non-instructional gifts for families and students
- Ceremonial attire, gifts, or decor (caps, gowns, tassels, etc.)
- Cost(s) incurred prior to the approval of the grant
- Purchasing service animals

15.7 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Reasonable technology requests for items such as computers, laptops, iPads etc. require MSDE approval. These instructional technology costs may not exceed 10% of the total budget request.

15.8 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Capital improvements are costs related to improvements that extend the useful life of property, improves the quality of a product, or adds value to capital assets such as buildings and vehicles. Capital assets are assets that have a useful life longer than one year and are not intended for sale during the normal course of business.

For Prekindergarten related purposes, capital improvements are not an allowable expenditure. Examples of non-allowable capital expenditures include:

- playgrounds
- buying transportation vehicles
- awning (shading),
- fencing, etc.

Please contact the MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialists for further guidance.

15.9 INVOICING

Detailed invoicing is required to draw down funds from this grant. MSDE will provide an invoice template that will preload each line item as submitted in the program's budget narrative. Invoices may not be altered in any way. Invoices can be submitted monthly or quarterly at the program's discretion. Payments will be made as invoices are received and will be based on actual expenditures as reported by the program to MSDE Accounting Department. Invoices must be accompanied by supporting documentation which can include general ledger summaries and receipts. MSDE reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation at any time. Invoices should only be sent to the following email address decagencygrants.specialistsmsde@maryland.gov. Also, please copy/cc your Prekindergarten Support Specialist on all invoice submissions. No payments shall be made to the grantee if reporting requirements are not met. All payments will be made via R*STARs transfer or electronic payment. Programs must always be aware of grant balances to ensure all funds are completely spent by the end of the grant period.

Note: Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends. All payments are subject to state data processing and bank processing delays.

15.10 RECORD KEEPING

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs shall maintain full and complete program funding and expense records pertaining to the grant agreement for a period of three years beyond the ending date, or until all litigation, claims, or audit/review findings involving the records have been resolved if such claim or audit/review is started before the expiration date of the four-year period.

Misuse of funds may result in denial of current and future participation in the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs and/or in prosecution. See Section 16.0 for more details on audits and accounting requirements.

Examples of such records include, but are not limited to:

- canceled check copies (front and back)
- bank statements
- credit and Debit Card Statements
- paid invoices
- federal and state payroll records
- EFTPS or other evidence of taxes remitted to regulatory agencies
- timesheets/payroll
- Prekindergarten Grant Agreement
- original receipts for equipment, materials, and supplies for Pre-K classrooms
- documentation of Prekindergarten's portion of operating expenses

- documentation for long-term substitutes

16.0 Accounting Requirements

MSDE/Division of Early Childhood (DEC) reserves the right of access to any documents, papers, or other records of the Prekindergarten Program in order to make audits and examinations.

Programs agree to cooperate fully with MSDE auditors/reviewers providing audit review services. Programs will coordinate with auditors/reviewers to have appropriate staff available during the scheduled audit/review period. Programs will make advanced preparations for scheduled audits/reviews to make available for auditors or reviewers all identified documents, records, and entity related materials requested by the auditors/reviewers for the current school year, as well as for prior school years in which programs participated in Maryland's Prekindergarten Program as requested by MSDE. Program's failure to substantially prepare for a scheduled audit engagement or provide requested documentation or information to an auditor/reviewer during the scheduled audit period may result in the withholding of grant payments. The failure of MSDE to review and/or inspect the services provided or to discover a breach of this Grant or any amendment thereto shall not subsequently operate as a waiver of any remedies available to MSDE.

If there are negative findings during an audit review, the provider may be scheduled for an additional audit review for the subsequent school year at the discretion of DEC.

16.1 RANDOM REVIEWS

All Prekindergarten programs are subject to random, unannounced expenditure reviews by the Division of Early Childhood during the program year. All records (programmatic and financial) must be retained for a minimum of four (4) years or until audit requirements are fulfilled.

16.2 LOST, STOLEN, OR DESTROYED RECORDS

In the event of natural or manufactured disasters, i.e., flooding, fire, hurricane, tornado, theft, etc., the Prekindergarten program is responsible for providing third party verification to substantiate the disaster. Verification includes police reports, insurance company claims, photos, or other proof that support the disaster and must also include detail of the property impacted. Claims related to manufactured disasters must be made and filed within 30 calendar days of the incident. Claims related to natural disasters must be filed as soon as possible in accordance with insurance company regulations.

Lost, stolen, or destroyed records will not exclude a program from an audit or from undergoing the scheduled review. MSDE reserves the right to request other supplementary documentation in lieu of supporting records that have been lost, stolen, or destroyed.

16.3 FRAUDULENT/INAPPROPRIATE USE OF FUNDS

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs shall ensure that expenses charged to the Prekindergarten funding source are not concurrently charged to another program funding source.

The Prekindergarten program must ensure that no Prekindergarten funds are used to pay penalties associated with adverse actions imposed by licensing or governmental agencies. Prekindergarten program expenditures should be identifiable as separate from federal expenditures (e.g., Head Start, Child Care Stabilization Grant). Misuse of funds shall result in repayment of funds and denial of current and future

participation in Maryland's Prekindergarten Program and/or in prosecution. Programs that participate in any federal programs operated by the DEC and who are terminated from a federal program because of fraudulent or misrepresentative submission of records and/or inappropriate use of funds as determined by the federal program, shall also be terminated from the Prekindergarten program.

17.0 Other Considerations

17.1 RISK ASSESSMENT

MSDE will continuously determine the appropriate level of monitoring for each grantee via a risk-based assessment approach that considers such items as the grantees' financial stability, management systems, and history of performance. It is the goal of MSDE to use monitoring supports such as training and technical assistance, on-site reviews, and any agreed-upon-procedures, to assist the grantee with attaining accountability and compliance with program requirements and achieving their performance goals.

Programs will be reviewed annually. Grant renewal will also depend on past performance. A grant may not be renewed if there are one or more risk assessment indicator issues during the grant year even if all other grant requirements are met. For additional information, please refer to the MSDE Sub-recipient Risk Assessment. (See Appendix L)

Corrective action will be taken if programs demonstrate:

- Inability to meet or exceed the definition of High-Quality Prekindergarten (Appendix B);
- Inability to maintain State or national accreditation standards;
- Inability to maintain standards required to publish at a check Level 5 in Maryland EXCELS;
- Inefficient instructional quality, per the Instructional Quality Review;
- Frequent invoicing errors, lack of supporting documentation, and/or unallowable expenditures; or
- A Risk Assessment score of 3 or above

Corrective actions can include, but are not limited to:

- Additional monitoring
- A reduction in grant funds
- Loss of grant funding
- Development of an improvement plan to correct the deficiency

Note: A Risk Assessment score of 2 will require additional monitoring.

Below are some of the risk indicators that may trigger an increase in the level of grant monitoring for an organization:

General Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Indicators

- Missing, weak, or inadequate internal controls
- Management override of key internal controls
- Lack of written policies and procedures
- Overly complex organizational structure
- High turnover rate
- Reassignment of personnel
- Termination of key personnel
- “Missing” files, reports, data, and invoices (both electronic and paper)
- Altered records or photocopies of documents where it is difficult to detect alterations
- Missing approval signatures
- Lack of separation of duties
- Discrepancies in handwriting
- Delays in production of requested documentation
- Inaccurate, inflated or incorrect application information
- Repetitive and frequent non-compliance with laws, rules and policies
- Operating with cash
- Undocumented transactions or missing invoices

The MSDE should be notified as soon as possible, but no less than 120 days before the end of the grant period, of any anticipated changes that will lead to a program’s inability to meet grant requirements.

17.2 REQUEST TO MOVE A PRE-K CLASS

Classes in existing Maryland Prekindergarten Programs can be moved only to sites under the same ownership, meeting the grant requirements and only with approval from MSDE. To request permission to move a class, the Prekindergarten program must complete the Request to Move a Prekindergarten Class Form (Appendix M) and submit the form to their Prekindergarten Support Specialist. Programs must receive written approval before moving a classroom.

18.0 Reporting Requirements and Timeline

FY2023 MARYLAND PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grantees must comply with the following reporting requirements:

Date	Reporting requirement
Ongoing	Fiscal and program monitoring; all invoices must be accompanied with supporting documentation
Sep 30, 2024	Signed MOU is due to the Program Manager. The LEA will meet with each private provider and share the MOU to be signed.

Sep - Oct 2024	Initial Check-in and classroom visits conducted. An Instructional Quality Review (IQR) form is completed.
Oct 15, 2024	Submission of student enrollment data (student demographics, enrollment and income eligibility) from first day of school through Sept 30
Jan 30, 2025	1st interim report due (the C-1-25-C form can be found on the MSDE grants webpage)
	Submission of student enrollment data (student demographics, enrollment and income eligibility) from Oct 1 through Dec 31
	Collaboration check-in form due
Mar - May 2025	Annual review and classroom visit will be conducted Collaboration Form due (second completion)
Apr 30, 2025	2nd interim report due (the C-1-25-C form can be found on the MSDE grants webpage)
Jun 30, 2025	Submission of student enrollment data (student demographics, enrollment and income eligibility) from Jan 1 through end of school year
Jul 31, 2025 <i>(or 30 days after grant period ends for extended grants)</i>	Final report due covering the grant period (the C-125-D form can be found on the MSDE grants webpage)
Oct 30, 2025	Annual financial report (AFR) due within 120 days after the grant period ends (LEAs only- submit in accordance with the MSDE Financial Reporting Manual)

Notes: All requests for programmatic amendments must be submitted at least 45 days before the grant period ends, and must be submitted using the C-1-25-B form found in the [Grant Budget Forms Workbook](#) on the [MSDE grants webpage](#).

Final invoices must be submitted no later than 60 days after the grant period ends.

19.0 Collaboration and Sustainability

Research has shown that when there are school-family-community partnerships, students earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school and are more motivated. (Taken from National Center on Safe, Supportive Learning Environments). Collaborative partnerships also provide students access to social, health, and academic support. Some schools have partnerships with businesses in the community that provide financial support. Most importantly, these collaborative resources can offer hope to underserved populations. When these partnerships are sustained, student outcomes are improved.

Maryland Prekindergarten Programs are expected to develop a long-term plan for collaboration and sustainability including community and business partnerships and matching funds to the extent possible. Examples of collaborating partnerships can include libraries, business partnerships, Department of Social Services, mental health care organizations, Judy Center Early Learning Hub, Early Childhood Advisory Council, etc.

Programs are required to submit the Collaboration Check-in form twice per year documenting their efforts in working with community partners. (See Appendix N)

19.1 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Local Education Agencies (LEA) must submit a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the LEA, MSDE, and the private provider(s). The MOU must outline the roles and responsibilities between the MSDE and the local education agency, and between the LEA and each eligible private provider who is a grantee in the school system catchment area. Local education agencies and private providers are expected to collaborate on developing the implementation of the MOU plan.

MSDE will provide the MOU that must be signed by each entity.

The MOU will provide for:

- A plan for providing services for children with disabilities, regardless of family enrollment preference.
- A process by which a parent is able to indicate a preference for eligible prekindergarten providers.
- A plan to centralize prekindergarten enrollment across the county regardless of family enrollment preference.
- The manner for processing the payment of the State share, local share, and family share for each child who is enrolled with an eligible prekindergarten provider.
- Any agreed upon administrative costs to be retained by an agency that is party to this agreement.
- A plan to address racial and socioeconomic integration in prekindergarten classrooms.
- A plan to avoid, to the extent practicable, a disproportionate concentration of students of the same race, ethnicity, disability status, and income within an eligible provider; and
- Any other provisions necessary to meet the goals of the program.

Each county board must submit an implementation plan of the MOU to the Accountability and Implementation Board that was written jointly with any participating private providers. (For LEAs only.)

20.0 Accreditation and MD EXCELS

Accreditation is a part of the broader Maryland EXCELS system, in which programs earn quality ratings in targeted areas and commit to continuous quality improvement for the children they serve. Programs may seek accreditation from MSDE, or any accrediting body recognized by MSDE. The list can be found on the Maryland Accreditation page. [Maryland Accreditation | Division of Early Childhood](#)

Once achieved, programs must maintain accreditation.

Documentation of Maryland EXCELS level and accreditation status will be reviewed by the Prekindergarten Support Specialist during the grant year. **Programs must notify the Prekindergarten Support Specialist when a change in status occurs.**

The expectation for the Prekindergarten Expansion Grant:

- A program that is published at Level 5 with a plan to maintain this level.
- A program at Level 4 with a plan to publish at Level 5 by the end of the grant period.
- A program published at Level 3 with a plan approved by the MSDE to achieve Level 5 within five years.

The expectation for the Maryland State Prekindergarten Grant:

- A program published at Level 3 with a plan approved by the MSDE to achieve Level 5 within five years.

Maryland EXCELS will rate program quality. If you have a question on that process, please contact the Quality Assurance Specialist assigned to your jurisdiction. (See Appendix O)

Note: Of a program drops below Quality Rating 3 during the grant year, the program will be placed on the highest risk assessment rating and will enter into a corrective action plan.

Appendices

Download all appendices at <https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/prek-manual>.

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APPENDIX A - PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS CONTACT LIST

Contact Name	Title	Phone Number	Email
Dr. Nakeisha Savage	Director, Early Learning & Instruction	410-767-6549	Nakiesha.savage@maryland.gov
Dr. Nykia Washington	Pre-K and Mixed-delivery Program Manager	410-767-0088	nykia.washington@maryland.gov
Shelley Downs	Pre-K Support Specialist	410-767-7835	shelley.downs@maryland.gov
Kaniesha Thomas	Pre-K Support Specialist	410-767-0297	kaniesha.thomas@maryland.gov
Emily Kenyon	Pre-K Support Specialist	410-767-8221	emily.kenyon@maryland.gov
Desiree Taylor	Pre-K Support Specialist	410-767-0286	desiree.taylor@maryland.gov
Eunice Lee	Finance Director	410-767-7591	eunice.lee1@maryland.gov Invoices: decagencygrantsspecialist.msde@maryland.gov
Jena Smith	Director Quality Improvement Initiatives	410-767-0580	jena.Smith@maryland.gov
Nicole Johnson	Accreditation Specialist	410-767-1250	nicole.johnson1@maryland.gov
Deborah Langer	Training Approval Coordinator	410-767-7852	deborah.langer@maryland.gov

APPENDIX B - DEFINITION OF A HIGH-QUALITY PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

High-Quality Preschool Program means an early learning program that includes structural elements that are evidence-based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality, including at a minimum¹:

- a) High staff qualifications, including a teacher holding a state certification for teaching in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in any field pursuing residency through a State- approved alternate pathway, which includes coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood; as well as a teacher assistant with an AA in Early Childhood, CDA, or enrolled in a program to obtain these credentials.
- b) High-quality professional development for all staff (must be 15 hours of early childhood PD).
- c) A child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1.
- d) A class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher in each classroom with high staff qualifications as outlined in paragraph (a) of this definition.
- e) A Full-Day program (6.5 hours).
- f) Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities.
- g) Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry.
- h) Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities.
- i) Instructional staff salaries are commensurate with the salaries and benefits of local Pre-K-12 instructional staff.
- j) Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement.
- k) On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development; and
- l) Evidence-based health and safety standards.

¹ Adapted from the PDG TA State Technical Assistance Report: Curriculum policies and guidelines of the Preschool Development and Expansion Grant Programs <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED583132.pdf>

APPENDIX C - FY25 STUDENT FILE REVIEW FORM

Program Name _____ **Classroom** _____

This form must be completed and kept on site. The MSDE Pre-K Support Specialists will review the completed form along with the supporting documentation during the initial Check-in visit during the fall. Please update the chart as new students enroll or leave the program and the updated information will be reviewed in the spring.

(Note: Please refer to the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual- Sections 2.1 and 2.3, for examples of acceptable age and income eligibility documents.)

Child' Name	Date of Birth	Proof of Income Eligibility				Income Level up to 300%	*For Expansion grant only Income Level over 300%	*For Expansion grant only Please use codes below: I - IEP/Ext IFSP E - English Learner H - Experiencing Homelessness	Program Notes:
		Tax Return	Pay stubs	Notarized Letter	Other				
	3's- 9/2/2020 to 9/1/2021 4's- 9/2/2019 to 9/1/2020								
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APPENDIX D - MARYLAND PREKINDERGARTEN GRANT PROGRAMS CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY REVIEW FORM AND THE CLARIFICATIONS DOCUMENT

Program/School Name: _____ Teacher Name: _____

This form is to be completed and signed by the teacher and then should be submitted to the Pre-K grant administrator for completion in the specified 'admin' column.

The grant administrator or designee should complete the document while in the classroom, compare results and provide feedback to the teacher.

A completed and signed copy of the Prekindergarten Classroom Instructional Quality Review should be kept on site in the classroom for the MSDE Pre-K Support Specialist to review during the classroom visit.

This document should be completed in the Fall and again in the Spring.

IP = in progress

N.O. = not observed

Teacher			Lesson Planning	Admin			
Yes	IP	No		Yes	IP	No	N.O.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Activities are appropriate for the developmental levels of the children in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individualization for specific children is documented as needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Current and complete lesson plans are on site, organized, accessible and implemented.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maryland Early Learning Standards (Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and/or Healthy Beginnings Framework) are documented for all teacher-planned instructional activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	IP	No	Assessment	Yes	IP	No	N.O.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evidence of assessment implementation and data collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	IP	No	Instructional Activities				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Instruction is free of worksheets and dittos.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Open-ended activities are planned.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large Group/Opening Activities are purposeful, vary and are planned daily .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher has materials at varying levels to meet the needs of individual learning styles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music with gross motor movement is planned daily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transitions are quick and efficient; students know what is expected, do not need to be re-engaged, and quickly move from activity to activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers actively engage with children during outdoor play time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	IP	No	Small Group Instruction	Yes	IP	No	N.O.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Developmentally appropriate and purposeful small group activities are planned daily . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of groupings • Differentiated activities 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	IP	No	Environment	Yes	IP	No	N.O.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The classroom is inviting, clean, organized and visually appealing to children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Majority of items (more than 50%) on display in the classroom are child-initiated, at children’s eye level, and displayed no longer than six weeks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photos of children and their families are included in the classroom environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dictations from children are on display in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photos and chart stories from recent activities are on display in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom rules are developed and posted at children’s eye level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers consistently model positive behavior and prompt students to model such behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The classroom is safe and free from hazards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quiet and active centers are placed to not interfere with one another.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning centers are organized for independent use by students. (e.g., Labeled open shelves; labeled containers for toys and materials)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	At least five different learning centers are clearly defined and accessible to all students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers adapt learning centers/classroom environments to reflect the current topic(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	IP	No	Daily Schedule	Yes	IP	No	N.O.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	A schedule for children is posted at children’s eye level and is manipulated by children to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

			facilitate knowledge of the daily routine and time/sequence concepts. This schedule must include pictures.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rest time does not exceed one hour per day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	IP	No	Instructional Support	Yes	IP	No	N.O.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher models the use of materials and calls attention to how students use materials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher clearly states what the students will be learning using rich language and age-appropriate vocabulary, clarifying the concepts and content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers are aware of students who need extra support, assistance or attention and provide support in a timely manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers facilitate students' involvement through open-ended questions and factual questions that allow students to get involved in the activity or lesson and assist in their understanding or participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Questions asked and activities provided are open-ended and facilitate students' use of analysis and reasoning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher promotes analysis and reasoning by focusing on problem solving, experimentation and prediction, comparison and classification, and evaluating/summarizing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher regularly asks students to explain their thinking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Students are allowed to select centers based on their interests.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers do not rigidly adhere to an agenda at the expense of learning opportunities and student interest in activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers provide many opportunities to stimulate students' creativity and ability to generate new ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teacher Signature: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

Pre-K Grant Administrator Signature: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

***Principal/Asst. Principal Signature:** _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

(Signature indicates review of document) **for Public Schools*

Feedback and Follow-up:

Maryland Pre-K Grant Programs Instructional Quality Review Clarifications

This is a companion document to the Instructional Quality Review form and includes information to support programs in understanding expectations.

Lesson Planning

Activities are appropriate for the developmental levels of the children in the classroom.
Appropriate activities support all domains of learning and emphasize active exploration, interaction with materials, teachers, and other children. Open-ended activities allow children to explore, create solutions, and problem solve. Use strategies which allow students to work in their own interest areas, use their own learning styles, and work at their own ability level. Rote/drill activities with memorization, letter of the week, worksheets and dittos are inappropriate.
Individualization for specific children is documented as needed.
Lesson plans will identify specific groups by use of names, initials, symbols, or a number assigned to each child, and identify differentiated activities to support each group's needs/skill levels. Teachers should be aware of children’s skill levels and plan activities and materials accordingly. Knowledge of early childhood development and assessment data is used to plan individual, whole group, and flexible small group instruction. Flexible small groups should change regularly to meet the individual and specific needs of children across content areas. Teachers know that not all children are alike, nor do they learn alike; therefore, children need multiple opportunities for taking in new information and making sense of new concepts. Scaffolding instruction and materials require teachers to be mindful of differentiated instruction.
Current and complete lesson plans are on site, organized, accessible and implemented.
Lesson plans should be organized chronologically and kept accessible. Electronic lesson plans are accessible. Instruction in the classroom should be based on the needs of the children. Standards (MCCRS) should reflect the intent/purpose being targeted by that activity. Clock times on lesson plans should correspond with the clock times on the daily schedule. Lesson plans should include enough detail so that someone else (a substitute, your supervisor or director) can identify the purpose of your lesson, the materials you are using, the standard (MCCRS) and the children who are involved. However, detailed, step-by-step directions are time consuming and not necessary.
Maryland Early Learning Standards (Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and/or Healthy Beginnings Framework) are documented for all teacher-planned instructional activities.
Maryland’s Early Learning Standards (MCCRS) for Pre-K should be documented for all instructional activities.

Assessment

Evidence of assessment implementation and data collection.
<p>Teachers should use formative and summative assessments in the natural learning environment. Assessment helps to identify the support children need to be successful in school and this data can be used to inform teachers, families, schools as they work together to meet every child’s needs.</p> <p>Formative assessment is a planned process for teachers to gather information, analyze and reflect on the information, and use it to help plan the child’s next steps in learning. One example of a formative assessment tool is the Maryland Early Learning Assessment (ELA). No matter which tool is used, supporting documentation is needed as evidence to support ratings. Some evidence that a tool may require includes work samples, observation notes, portfolios, and others.</p> <p>Summative assessment is intended to evaluate student learning by comparing performance to a standard or benchmark (goal) and is administered at the end of a defined instructional period. Examples of summative assessments include curriculum embedded assessments and benchmark assessments.</p>

Instructional Activities

Instruction is free of worksheets and dittos.
<p>Worksheets and dittos are inappropriate. A common characteristic of inappropriate dittos or worksheets is that there is a very narrow focus – only one right answer, for example. Typical examples of this kind of worksheet require children to circle or color or draw a line to indicate the correct answer.</p>
Open-ended activities are planned.
<p>Providing a good balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities is important because it allows teachers to ensure they are covering key skills in a more structured way while also recognizing children’s interests and using that information for skill-building as well. Activities are planned throughout the day that allow children to experiment and create with different materials.</p>
Large Group/Opening Activities are purposeful, vary and are planned daily.
<p>Group opening and closing activities are included on the daily schedule and are implemented. Activities for opening and closing should be documented in lesson plans and should vary throughout the year. Group opening and closing activities should be made available to all children. These activities should include a welcome and prepare children for the day. Teachers may introduce new topics and/or materials and explain other changes made to the environment and learning areas. Special visitors, experiments, cooking activities and field trips should also be addressed.</p>

Teachers have materials at varying levels to meet the needs of individual learning styles.

Teachers know that not all children are alike, nor do they learn alike. Therefore, children need multiple opportunities for taking in new information and making sense of new concepts. Scaffolding instruction and materials require teachers to be mindful of differentiated instruction techniques. These models require teachers to be flexible in their approach to teaching and to adjust the materials, curriculum, and presentation of information to the learners.

Music with gross motor movement is planned daily.

Opportunities for children to participate in music with gross (large) motor movement should occur daily. Music with movement can occur during a specifically planned time, but can also be incorporated into other blocks of time (Large Group, Closing, and transitions). It is required that at least one planned opportunity for children to interact with music along with a gross motor *activity* be documented in lesson plans; however music and movement is important for young children and should be used throughout the day.

The length of time will vary based on the attention span of children, the time of day and time of year. Be flexible in your planning of music and movement by watching the children’s reactions and involvement. Children naturally enjoy and respond to music so remember to use music as a way to smoothly move through transitions during the day.

Transitions are quick and efficient; students know what is expected, do not need to be re-engaged, and quickly move from activity to activity.

The teacher provides advanced warning for most upcoming transitions. (e.g., During center time the teacher states, “In five minutes I’ll play our clean up song.”)

Students move smoothly between group activities.

Students respond to established attention signals (e.g., Raising hand or clap).

The teacher regularly refers to and incorporates the posted visual schedule.

“Downtime” is eliminated as students move to alternative activities when appropriate. (e.g., when students complete a small group activity they move on to another activity.)

Small Group Instruction

Developmentally appropriate and purposeful small group activities are planned daily.

Activities during small group time will maintain the practice of planning developmentally appropriate experiences to meet the different levels of student development. These small group lessons should offer learning and practice opportunities to support children’s acquisition of skills or areas of interest. The activities planned for groups of students working independently should also be purposeful with standards documented. Lesson plans will identify specific groups by use of names, initials, symbols, or a number assigned to each child, and identify differentiated activities to support each group's progress towards mastering early learning standards.

The length of a small group activity should vary with the age, interests and attention span of the children. Small groups should be formed and will change frequently based on the developmental needs and skills of children.

Environment

The classroom is inviting, clean, organized and visually appealing to children.

Appropriate learning areas should be established, and the setting should promote and motivate children’s learning and be welcoming, inviting and inspiring. The classroom should have adequate space for children to move freely, but without large empty spaces that could cause children to run or tumble. The shelving and materials should be clean and free from dust. The classroom furnishings, carpets, rugs and materials should be cleaned on a regular basis and materials should be organized and stored neatly. Materials and shelves should be labeled appropriately.

Majority of items (more than 50%) on display in the classroom are child-initiated, at children’s eye level, and displayed no longer than six weeks.

Unique, child-created work should be included in the classroom display. Majority means more than 50% of what is included in the displayed work in the classroom should be unique and child initiated. The children should have selected the subject and materials and completed the work in their own creative way without teacher direction or teacher choice in the materials. Dittos, worksheets, coloring pages or teacher-directed work and patterned artwork are not considered child-initiated.

Photos of children and their families are included in the classroom environment.

When teachers display photos of children’s families in and around our classroom, they are making a public gesture that families matter. Children are reminded about their family each time they enter the classroom. They know that their parents are invested in their education just as much as their teachers are.

Dictations from children are on display in the classroom.

The environment includes children’s dictation: Teachers record what children say on individual artwork, on chart stories, in journals or in class-made books. The connection between spoken communication and written language is demonstrated in multiple ways. Ways to connect spoken and written language include language experience charts, recording the children’s dictation, class-made books and stories, quotes in class newsletters, messages to and from children, or writing the Daily News. As children progress in writing development, shared and interactive writing should be present.

Photos and chart stories from recent activities are on display in the classroom.

The purpose of these charts is to support literacy development. They can include stories that the children create as a class, recalling events of a recent field trip, special event, or special visitor that occurred during the Pre-K day. Charts, graphs, and stories included in the display should include pictures and symbols, as well as print. The majority of charts, graphs and stories included in the display should include pictures and symbols as well as print. As children progress in writing development, shared and interactive writing should be present.

Classroom rules are developed and posted at children’s eye level.

Age-appropriate classroom rules are developed and posted: Establish no more than four or five classroom rules. Rules should be written out using simple words and symbols/pictures and posted at the children’s eye level. The rules should be concrete and include only what the children “can” do (e.g., “walk inside” rather than “don’t run inside”). Teachers should refer back to the rules often, as many times this may be a child’s first formal learning experience. The classroom rules should be posted at children’s eye level and be visible to the children from the large group meeting area.

Teachers consistently model positive behavior and prompt students to model such behavior.

Teachers model and encourage children to focus on the positive behavior of others. Teachers can recognize children’s accomplishments by commenting specifically on what the child has done, asking questions to learn more about a child’s thoughts, repeating a child’s idea, imitating an action/behavior, or referring children to one another for information or assistance. Other ways to focus on the positive behavior of others might include compliment boards or friendship jars. Teachers talk to and listen to individual children with attention and respect throughout the day. Children feel secure and successful when teachers interact positively with them. Teachers should interact both verbally (listening, conversing with interest and respect) and nonverbally (smiling, hugging, nodding, making eye contact when appropriate, and getting down on children’s eye level when appropriate).

The classroom is safe and free from hazards.

Space must be available to store hazardous materials out of children’s reach. Please note teacher’s backpacks and purses must be kept out of the reach of children. Safety hazards include accessible toxic substances, dangling electrical cords, exposed electrical outlets, and broken toys or equipment.

Quiet and active centers are placed to not interfere with one another.

(Self-explanatory)
Learning centers are organized for independent use by students. (e.g., Labeled open shelves; labeled containers for toys and materials)
<p>Materials in the learning centers are clearly labeled. Children are able to see materials in the center areas and can make choices for their play independently. Shelves should be low, and materials organized. Learning materials and shelves should be labeled appropriately. Learning areas and equipment should be set up and ready for use (lid is removed from sensory table, tape player for listening area has a power source and is ready for children to use, art easel is supplied and lids from paint cups removed, and brushes placed in paint cups). Centers that are open should be accessible for use; children should not have to ask adults for permission to use materials or to hand materials to them.</p> <p>The storage and organization of materials is crucial in helping children take care of and use them appropriately. Labels (photos, pictures cut from catalogs, drawings or tracings) and words show where materials belong, promote children’s familiarity and responsibility for their environment, and help children begin to recognize symbols and words.</p>
At least five different learning centers are clearly defined and accessible to all students.
<p>At a minimum, five appropriate learning centers should be established, and the setting should promote and motivate children’s learning and be welcoming, inviting, and inspiring.</p> <p>Boundaries are established for each learning area: Boundaries should be established by using clear signage, shelving, rugs, tables, or other visible barriers. Considerations should be taken when setting up quiet versus noisy areas to allow children to utilize centers appropriately without disturbing other children.</p>
Teachers adapt learning centers/classroom environments to reflect the current topic/theme.
<p>While a variety of materials must be present each day to encourage in-depth exploration, some of these materials should be rotated at least monthly to expand children’s learning, prevent boredom, address interests and to facilitate the scaffolding of children’s learning. Changes to materials in the environment must occur in a minimum of 5 centers once a month (reading, language, math, science, art, dramatic play, writing, blocks). When one walks into the classroom, it should be evident what the current topic or children’s interest is. NOTE: Not ALL learning areas have to change with each topic. Topics of study will vary in length.</p>

Daily Schedule

A schedule for children is posted at children’s eye level and is manipulated by children to facilitate knowledge of the daily routine and time/sequence concepts. This schedule must include pictures.

A schedule for children (readers and non-readers) is posted at children’s eye level in the classroom and is used to help children understand the daily routine: The schedule should include words (for readers) and photos, pictures, or symbols (for non-readers). Evidence that children are currently able to use and manipulate the schedule must be present. Some suggestions are to have a clothespin, magnet, or other type of marker to move along the side of the schedule as you progress throughout the day or use Velcro pieces on the schedule so children can manipulate and put the routine in the proper order.

Rest time does not exceed one hour per day.

To maximize instructional activities, rest time should not exceed one hour per day except when necessary to address specific needs of individual children. Children who do not rest shall be given quiet activities such as books and puzzles.

Instructional Support

Teacher models the use of materials and calls attention to how students use materials.

When appropriate, the teacher models the use of materials and calls attention to how students use materials. (e.g., During a small group lesson the teacher uses the materials along with the students and says “I am arranging the red teddy bears in size order. The smallest one is first. OR “We will be working with shapes today; I can make different pictures with the shapes. I can turn them upside down or sideways. I wonder how you can arrange your shapes on your paper”)

Teacher clearly states what the students will be learning using rich language and age-appropriate vocabulary, clarifying the concepts and content.

Teachers should introduce each lesson/activity by explaining what the children will learn and be able to do, utilizing the Early Learning Standards’ language. (Example-Today we will compare and contrast the different types of transportation we read about).

Teachers are aware of students who need extra support, assistance or attention and provide support in a timely manner.

Most times, the teacher is aware of students who need extra support, assistance, or attention. The teacher notices when students are struggling to understand a lesson, are disengaged, or appear sad or anxious. The teacher responds when students make a comment, ask a question, or send behavioral signals indicating a need for help or attention. Even when working with a small group of students, the teacher indicates awareness of students' activities and needs in other parts of the classroom.

Teacher facilitates students' involvement through open-ended questions and factual questions that allow students to get involved in the activity or lesson and assist in their understanding or participation.

Teachers should be purposeful in involving children in conversations, discussions and interpretations. Teachers should listen and extend conversations into more descriptive, grammatically mature statements. Instruction should include teaching rare and new vocabulary, cognitively challenging content, and listening to and responding to what children have to say. There should be intentional opportunities for children to use and develop their language skills, both with adults and with each other.

Questions asked and activities provided are open-ended and facilitate students' use of analysis and reasoning.

Teachers ask engaging and open-ended questions and provide time for children to reflect and respond. Open-ended questions encourage thinking and reasoning and encourage children to express their thoughts. There is no right or wrong answer. Teachers should pose questions to get insight into what children are thinking and to stimulate their thought processes.

Reference the following documents:

Open-Ended Questions to Help Children Think

Questions to Post with centers

Teacher promotes analysis and reasoning by focusing on problem solving, experimentation and prediction, comparison and classification, and evaluating/summarizing.

Instructional plans should include opportunities for children to extend their learning with higher level thinking opportunities. Children can identify a problem and solution, make predictions and experiment to see if their predictions are correct, compare and classify items, make evaluations, summarize events and key details, etc.

Teachers regularly ask students to explain their thinking.

The teacher allows students to explain their reasoning when solving problems and makes lesson adjustments. (E.g., Teacher asks, “Tell me why you think that ball will float?”)

Question starters can prompt children to explain their thinking. Examples of question starters can be: Tell me more, Tell me how you know, Why do you think that, How did you figure that out? What do you think will happen if..., why?)

Strategies such as Turn and talk, think/pair/share, whisper to a partner could all be used to support children sharing their thinking.

Students are allowed to select centers based on their interests.

“Letting young children make choices is one of the benefits of centers. Children who are given a choice of the center they use will become more involved in the play, follow their interest and maintain their activity longer. Each day children should have an opportunity to choose the center where they will work. Early childhood teachers use various approaches to manage centers and children's choices. Some teachers use a self-managing system for operating centers.” Rebecca Isbell, Director, Child Study Center, East Tennessee State University.

Examples of center management: use of clothespins, popsicle sticks, necklaces, etc. to manage the capacity of the centers.

Teachers do not rigidly adhere to an agenda at the expense of learning opportunities and student interest in activities.

The teacher is flexible with planning, goes along with student ideas, or organizes instruction around student interests and needs.

Teachers provide many opportunities to stimulate students’ creativity and ability to generate new ideas.

The teacher is not focused on having students do things in one particular way, rather helping them to explore a variety of ways to approach learning.

APPENDIX E – INFANT TODDLER PROGRAM/CHILD FIND CONTACTS

Jurisdiction	Age Birth - 3 MD Infants & Toddlers “Single Point of Entry”	Age 3 - 21 MD Public Schools “Maryland Child Find”
Allegany County	301-759-2415	301-759-2065
Anne Arundel County	410-424-3260	410-424-3280
Baltimore City	410-396-1666	443-984-1011
Baltimore County	443-809-2169	443-809-3017
Calvert County	443-550-8405	443-550-8373
Caroline County	410-479-3246	410-479-3246
Carroll County	410-876-4437	410-751-3033
Cecil County	410-996-5444	410-996-5450
Charles County	301-609-6808	301-753-1745
Dorchester County	410-228-4747 ext. 1023	410-228-4747 ext. 1024
Frederick County	301-600-1612	301-664-5003
Garrett County	301-533-0240	301-334-7658
Harford County	410-638-3823	410-638-4386
Howard County	410-313-7017	410-313-7046
Kent County	410-778-7164	410-778-7164
Montgomery County	240-777-3997	240-740-2170
Prince George’s County	301-925-6627	301-925-6600
Queen Anne’s County	410-556-6103	410-758-2403 ext. 185

Somerset County	410-651-1616 ext. 10253	410-623-2037 ext. 10256
St. Mary's County	301-475-5511 ext. 32223	301-475-5511 ext. 32223
Talbot County	410-822-0686	410-822-0330 ext. 141
Washington County	301-766-8217	301-766-8509
Wicomico County	410-677-5250	410-667-5250
Worcester County	410-632-5121	410-632-5033

APPENDIX F - PREVENTING SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS POLICY STATEMENT

The experiences and opportunities of children (birth to age 13) are critical for building the foundation of learning, health, and wellness needed for success in school and life. Access to high-quality, inclusive early learning programs has important benefits for children’s development and learning. Expulsion and suspension from such programs can have detrimental effects, particularly on children’s social and emotional development and learning outcomes.

Sometimes there are challenging situations that must be addressed in the context of a comprehensive approach that is designed to teach, nurture and encourage positive outcomes. Expulsion and suspension are stressful and negative experiences on all involved (children, their families, and their teachers/providers) and can negatively affect a child’s development and outcomes.

Preventing expulsion and suspension requires a strong partnership with families. Families should be recognized and treated as the foremost experts on their children. Families and programs should exchange information about the child that is relevant to culture, strengths, concerns, disability, special health care needs, approaches to learning, and strategies that work at home and in the program.

Early care and education programs, including child care programs for all ages, should:

- Not expel or suspend a child from care, unless it is the last resort where there are extraordinary circumstances based on a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. Additionally, Child Care Programs must ensure that discipline policies comply with Federal civil rights laws.²
- Not limit the amount of services provided to a child (including denying outdoor time, withholding food, using food as a reward/punishment, or limiting the hours or days of availability of care).
- Have a comprehensive policy that includes:
 - An explicit description of alternatives to suspension and expulsion.
 - Policies on positive guidance and behavior supports that create positive climates, focus on prevention, describe clear and appropriate expectations, address behavior, ensure fairness, equity, and continuous improvement, and are age and program appropriate.
 - How the program will pursue options for supportive services, including available internal supports, consultation services and educator training.

² ED’s Office for Civil Rights and HHS’ Office for Civil Rights enforce several Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in early childhood programs receiving Federal financial assistance from their respective departments, including: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d - 2000d-7 (prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, or national origin by recipients of Federal financial assistance); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688 (prohibiting discrimination based on sex by recipients of Federal financial assistance); and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), 29 U.S.C. § 794 (prohibiting discrimination based on disability by recipients of Federal financial assistance. ED, HHS, and the Department of Justice share authority to enforce Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131 – 12134, which prohibits discrimination based on disability by state and local governments, regardless of whether they received Federal financial assistance. In addition, the Department of Justice enforces Title III of the American with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12181 – 12189, which prohibits disability discrimination in most private early childhood programs.

-
- Written and clearly articulated procedures that are provided and communicated with families/guardians, staff, and others.
 - Expectations for sharing information between families/guardians and the care provider to be used in decision-making processes to support the child.
 - Have access to training on a proactive and as-needed basis on how to:
 - Reduce the likelihood for suspension or expulsion.
 - Build positive guidance and behavior supports that create positive climates, focus on prevention, describe clear and appropriate expectations, and address behavior.
 - Access resources and consultation to assist in addressing children’s health conditions in collaboration with families/guardians and the child’s primary care provider.

Additional guidance and resources may be found at:

<https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/office-child-care>

APPENDIX G – MARYLAND PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS ANNUAL REVIEW

Please use this form to prepare for your FY 25 Annual Review. The School System/Program should complete all sections with a white background. The sections in gray and marked “for office use only” are to be completed by the MSDE Pre-K Support Specialist. Please complete this cover page with the information requested and move on to page three (3) of the form.

***Note:** *Please refer to the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual and provide supporting documentation for review during the annual review visit.*

School System/Program Name: _____

Name of Primary Contact: _____

(Page to be completed by MSDE Pre-K Support Specialist)

Local Education Agency (LEA)/Private Provider Name: _____

Pre-K Support Specialist: _____

Local Education Agency (LEA)/Private Provider Representative: _____

Date of Meeting: _____

Site Visit Summary

Commendations:

Recommendations (including risk assessment):

Documentation provided after visit:

<p style="text-align: center;">Program Management and Key Personnel (Section 5.1 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">For Office Use Only (Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>
<p>Key administrative personnel for successful implementation and monitoring of grant requirements are listed. This includes the person responsible for instructional oversight. THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE TEACHING STAFF. Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated list of key personnel (if different from initial application) 	
<p><u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u></p>	
<p><u>Pre-K Support Specialist's Notes:</u></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Collaboration and Sustainability (Section 19.0 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)</p>	
<p>Effective collaboration is maintained with community and business partners.</p> <p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration Check-in Form (required) 	<p style="text-align: center;">For Office Use Only (Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>
<p><u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u></p>	
<p><u>Pre-K Support Specialist's Notes:</u></p>	

<p>Eligibility Documentation</p> <p>(Section 2.3 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)</p>	
<p>Accurate records are maintained to ensure enrollment of eligible families (age eligibility and income). Refer to the Prekindergarten Enrollment Eligibility Form.</p> <p>Eligibility: up to 300% FPG</p> <p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • *Updated Student File Review form (if applicable) • Recruitment plan that outlines ongoing plan to recruit eligible families <p>*MSDE Pre-K Support Specialist will review files for any new students enrolled after the initial audit.</p>	<p>For Office Use Only</p> <p>(Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>
<p><u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u></p>	
<p><u>Pre-K Support Specialist’s Notes:</u></p>	
<p>Accreditation</p> <p>(Section 20.0 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)</p>	

<p>Accreditation has been achieved by an MSDE approved accrediting agency:</p> <p>Name of Accrediting Agency:</p> <p>Provide any updated documentation (if applicable): (List accreditation by school or site if multiple sites.)</p>	<p>For Office Use Only (Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>
<p><u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u></p>	
<p><u>Pre-K Support Specialist's Notes:</u></p>	

<p style="text-align: center;">MD EXCELS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Section 20.0 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)</p>	
<p>LEA/Private Provider has a Maryland EXCELS rating of Level 3 or higher.</p> <p>Please describe the strategies and plan that has been put in place to meet or maintain Level 5 quality standards.</p> <p>Provide any updated documentation (if applicable): (List EXCELS level by school or site if multiple sites.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">For Office Use Only (Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>
<p><u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u></p>	
<p><u>Pre-K Support Specialist's Notes:</u></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Staffing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Sections 10 and 11 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)</p>	
<p>If there are staff changes, provide <i>updated</i> documentation.</p> <p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prekindergarten Staff Change Form • Updated Certification Status Form • CDA updates for teaching assistants 	<p style="text-align: center;">For Office Use Only (Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>

<u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u>	
<u>Pre-K Support Specialist’s Notes:</u>	
Professional Learning (Section 13.0 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)	
Professional Learning: Instructional staff, which includes teachers <u>and</u> teaching assistants, must attend at least a total of 15 hours of professional learning that supports school readiness; including alignment with the Maryland Early Learning Standards in early language and literacy, the science of reading, early mathematics and social foundations.	
Describe the Professional Learning activities completed by instructional staff this grant year. Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Sign-in sheet(s) • Certificate of participation 	For Office Use Only (Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u>	
<u>Pre-K Support Specialist’s Notes:</u>	
Evaluation Plan (Section 8.2 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)	

<p>There is a clear plan in place to ensure continuous program improvement.</p> <p>Refer to your grant application to complete this section.</p> <p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling of completed tool(s) or other instruments used • Evidence of how information was used to support continuous program improvement 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>STATE</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">For Office Use Only</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>
<p><u>LEA/Private Provider Notes:</u></p> <p>What type of data/tools were used to monitor on-going program quality?</p> <p>How was information from the data /tools used to support continuous quality improvement?</p> <p>How were parents informed about student progress and areas of concern?</p>	
<p><u>Pre-K Support Specialist’s Notes</u></p>	
<p>Instructional Quality Review</p> <p>(Section 8.1 Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)</p>	
<p>Program administrative staff and lead teachers should have completed the Instructional Quality review form at least twice this grant year (October 31 and February 28).</p>	
<p>Documentation:</p> <p>Updated and signed IQR</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>STATE</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">For Office Use Only</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Check One)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>

Pre-K Support Specialist's Notes:

Note: These programmatic and expenditure sections are to be completed by the Pre-K Support Specialist and agency fiscal grant specialist. Additional documentation may be requested.

I. Programmatic Requirements	For Office Use Only (Check One)
1. Program has submitted all required reports (Interim, Final, Enrollment reports, ad hoc reports, etc.) on time and met all deliverables	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
2. Program follows approval process when requesting budget amendments and invoice revisions	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
3. Lead Teacher salaries are commensurate with the local school system (Private Providers only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
II. Expenditure Requirements	For Office Use Only (Check One)

<p>4. Program consistently follows instructions concerning invoice submission, (including supporting documentation), and only requests reimbursement for reasonable, allowable, and necessary expenditures</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<p>5. Expenditures and encumbrances are consistent with the approved budget</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<p>6. Expenditures charged to proper object codes/budget categories</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met
<p>7. Expenditures are properly documented and disclosed. Supporting documentation is included with all invoices.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met

Pre-K Support Specialist’s Notes: Did the Program have one or more risk assessment indicator issues during the grant year? Please explain and note if the Program had a corrective action plan related to this issue(s)?

A future grant may not be awarded if there are one or more risk assessment indicator issues and/or issues with performance during this grant year, even if all other grant requirements are met.

I have reviewed the attached report and have no further questions regarding next steps or program progress.

School System/Program Representative: _____ **Date:** _____

Printed Name Here: _____ **Title:** _____

MSDE Pre-K Support Specialist: _____ **Date:** _____

MSDE Agency Grant Specialist (Fiscal): _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX H - PREKINDERGARTEN STAFF CHANGE FORM

Pre-K Program Administrators should complete this form in its entirety and submit to the MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialist to notify when there is a change in either the lead or assistant teacher in your Prekindergarten classrooms. Please plan to submit within *two weeks* of the staffing change. (Refer to sections 10.3 and 11.3 in the Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual)

This form does not need to be submitted for long term Substitute Teachers. (See Long Term Substitute Notification form)

Pre-K Program Administrator Name: _____ Date: _____

Program/School Name: _____

Former Staff:

Director Name: _____

Teacher Name: _____

Assistant Teacher Name: _____

Last date of employment in the grant funded classroom: _____

New Director Name (attach resume): _____

New Lead Teacher Information:

New Lead Teacher Name:

Does teacher hold a P-3 certification? Yes No (Please provide copy of certification)

Is the teacher enrolled in an approved alternative preparation program or approved traditional program?

Yes No (Please provide proof of enrollment)

New Teacher Assistant Information:

New Teacher Assistant Name: _____

Does the teacher assistant hold a Preschool CDA or an AA? Yes No (Please provide copy of certification)

Is the teacher assistant enrolled in a program or has a plan to obtain a Preschool CDA or AA?

Yes No

(Please provide proof of enrollment or a plan)

APPENDIX I – MARYLAND PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE NOTIFICATION FORM

Today’s Date: _____

Programs are required to submit a Long-Term Substitute Notification Form to the MSDE Prekindergarten Support Specialist prior to the start of the requested leave if possible. The Pre-K Program Administrator should review Section 12.2 of the current Maryland Prekindergarten Programs Operating Manual for Long-Term Substitute requirements before submitting this form.

Lead Teacher

Teaching Assistant

Pre-K Grant Administrator: _____

Program Name: _____

Site Name (if applicable): _____

Long-Term Substitute’s Name	Certification Status/ Credential Level	Start Date	Expected End Date

Existing Teacher’s Name	Reason for Leave	Date Leave Starts	Expected Return Date
	<input type="checkbox"/> Extended Medical Leave: Parental Leave <input type="checkbox"/> Student Teaching <input type="checkbox"/> Military Service <input type="checkbox"/> Other		

APPENDIX J - MSDE SUBRECIPIENT RISK ASSESSMENT

General Overview: As the State Educational Agency and pass through for federal grant funds, MSDE is under obligation to proactively monitor subawards to ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations governing the programs to be administered in accordance with the new Federal Uniform Administrative Requirements 2 CFR §200.331 (d) and (e). An accurate risk assessment of each subaward provides critical information to help ensure the effective delivery of program services. A general risk assessment template was established to provide positive and clear direction for the management of subawards, provide adequate internal controls, and fulfill our responsibilities for the funds entrusted to the Maryland State Department of Education.

Risk Assessment Indicators: The definition for each risk factor depends upon a thorough review of programmatic reports, comparison with other aspects of the subaward, and good judgment on the part of the Program Manager. The guidelines provided in the matrix are risk assessment indicators for general grant management and subrecipient risk level classification. Departments may use this matrix, a version of this matrix, or their own unique matrix to identify risk classifications; however, all subrecipients must be classified on the MSDE risk assessment scale of 1-5, with Risk Level 1 being the lowest risk and Risk Level 5 being the highest risk.

There is a strong need to document all subrecipient classifications regardless of which risk assessment matrix departments choose. This explanation needs to be preserved in writing as a defense against adverse audit findings. Risk Level classifications can be changed at any time during grant management or at pre-selected review periods but must be documented accordingly. If you choose to include a subrecipient's risk level as identified by another MSDE department, you must indicate the grant number where the assessment was made in the documentation. The risk level may be used as a part of the matrix when determining awards, but it is not mandatory that it be used as pre-award risk assessment. It is mandatory that risk assessment be used and documented as part of the grant monitoring process.

Risk Level 1: The subrecipient follows procedures and regulations with little to no trouble. Standard program management is recommended with no increase in grant monitoring or site visits. (Site visit for New Grantee prior to award, Report Review)

Risk Level 2: The subrecipient follows procedures and regulations with only minor infractions. Increased monitoring of the higher risk procedure is recommended.

Risk Level 3: The subrecipient follows procedures and regulations with difficulty. Increased monitoring of the subrecipient is recommended.

Risk Level 4: The subrecipient does not follow procedures and regulations in many categories. Increased monitoring of the subrecipient is recommended. Special technical assistance and training sessions are recommended. Quarterly risk assessment is recommended. Consider imposing Special Conditions (2 CFR Part 200.207)

Risk Level 5: The subrecipient does not follow procedures and regulations in most categories and/or has a documented history of troubled grant management. High level of subrecipient monitoring, special technical assistance, training sessions, and site visits are recommended. Monthly risk assessment is recommended. Consider imposing Special Conditions (2 CFR Part 200.207)

Instructions

After rating the risk level in each category, add the total risk points. Divide the sum by the number of risk indicators that you used to identify the subrecipient’s overall risk assessment rating. If the total risk assessment is not a whole number, round to the nearest risk assessment level.

INDICATOR	RISK LEVEL 1	RISK LEVEL 2	RISK LEVEL 3	RISK LEVEL 4	RISK LEVEL 5	Score
New Agency	Organization has prior experience with similar grant program and adhere to all terms and condition of prior grant awards	Organization has prior experience with similar grant program but is still having difficulty and training is needed.	Organization has prior experience with similar grant program but is having difficulty to adhere terms and condition of prior grant awards even after training	Organization is new to grants management system, “on-boarding” training is needed	Organization is new to grants management and is having difficulty with start-up procedures even after training	
High level of complexity in administering the grant	No administrative challenges &/or documented history of complex grants	Minimal administrative challenges &/or documented history of successful management of complex grants	Multiple administrative challenges with the grant funding (e.g., complex allowable activities, cost principles, or accounting requirements)	Multiple administrative challenges with grant funding & documented concern for enough personnel &/or internal controls to carry out the project	Multiple administrative challenges with the grant funding and/or documented history of difficulty understanding administrative requirements	
Application and Award Required Documents	Signed documents are submitted on time	Signed documents are more than 15 days late	Signed documents are more than 30 days late	Signed documents are more than 60 days late	Signed documents are more than 90 days late	
Delayed Implementation	Delay of program activity is less than 30 days	Delay of program activity is more than 30 days	Delay of program activity is more than 45 days	Delay of program activity is more than 60 days	Delay of program activity is more than 90 days Note:	

					challenged by first in/first out & multi-amendments	
Unallowable Actions and Expenditures	No unallowable actions and expenditures			Unallowable expenditures are discovered on invoices. (Including overstated expenditures on invoices and/or fraudulent supporting documentation)	Unallowable actions (including changes in key personnel w/o approval) may result in disallowed grant funds & closing of subaward	

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

INDICATOR	RISK LEVEL 1	RISK LEVEL 2	RISK LEVEL 3	RISK LEVEL 4	RISK LEVEL 5	Score
Late Reporting	Reports are submitted within due date	Reports are up to 5 days late	Reports are more than 10 days late	Reports are more than 30 days late	Reports are more than 60 days late	
Low Spend-down Rate	No low spend-down rate	Spend-down rate is less than 20% with justification at ½ of grant period	Spend-down rate is less than 35% with justification at ½ of grant period	Spend-down rate is less than 35% without justification at ½ of grant period	Spend-down rate is less than 60% without justification at end of grant period * Varies by grant but appears to be an issue	
Use of Subcontractors Vendors	None	1-3 subcontractors	4-6 subcontractors	7-9 subcontractors	10 or more subcontractors	
Audit Findings	No audit findings or corrective action requested				One or more audit findings or corrective action requested	
Programmatic Change Requests	No request for a change in objectives		One request for a change in objectives	More than one request for a change in	Any request for a change in Scope of	

(change in scope of project or objectives)	and/or measurable outcomes		and/or measurable outcomes	objectives and/or measurable outcomes	Project * Numerous change requests budgetary changes with minimal changes to performance outcomes - alignment may be a stretch	
Program Deliverables (i.e., goals, objectives, and outcomes)	Program goals, objectives, and outcomes are attained	Program goals, objectives, and outcomes are mostly attained	Program goals, objectives, and outcomes are partially attained	Program goals, objectives, and outcomes consistently are delayed without communication	Program goals, objectives, and outcomes consistently are not met	
Change in Management	Stable, experienced key personnel		One request for change in key personnel within the grant cycle		More than one request for change in key personnel within the grant cycle	

INDICATOR	RISK LEVEL 1	RISK LEVEL 2	RISK LEVEL 3	RISK LEVEL 4	RISK LEVEL 5	Score
Management with Previous MSDE Experience	Stable, experienced key personnel in good standing with MSDE		Experienced key personnel with one verified and valid complaint with MSDE departments		Experienced key personnel with more than one verified and valid complaint with MSDE departments	

Risk Indicator Score =

Risk Level 1: The subrecipient follows procedures and regulations with little to no trouble. Standard program management is recommended with no increase in grant monitoring or site visits. (Site visit for New Grantee prior to award, Report Review)

Risk Level 2: The subrecipient follows procedures and regulations with only minor infractions. Increased monitoring of the higher risk procedure is recommended.

Risk Level 3: The subrecipient follows procedures and regulations with difficulty. Increased monitoring of the subrecipient is recommended.

Risk Level 4: The subrecipient does not follow procedures and regulations in many categories. Increased monitoring of the subrecipient is recommended. Special technical assistance and training sessions are recommended. Quarterly risk assessment is recommended. Consider imposing Special Conditions (2 CFR Part 200.207)

Risk Level 5: The subrecipient does not follow procedures and regulations in most categories and/or has a documented history of troubled grant management. High level of subrecipient monitoring, special technical assistance, training sessions, and site visits are recommended. Monthly risk assessment is recommended. Consider imposing Special Conditions (2 CFR Part 200.207)

APPENDIX L – FY 2023-24 COLLABORATION CHECK IN

Program Name: _____ Submitted - January 30, 2024

Submitted - March-May 2024

Person Completing Form: _____

DATE(S)	COLLABORATION PARTNER	PURPOSE & OUTCOME	ATTENDEES:

DATE(S)	COLLABORATION PARTNER	PURPOSE & OUTCOME	ATTENDEES:

APPENDIX M – MARYLAND EXCELS CONTACT LIST

Take advantage of virtual Maryland EXCELS Training (sign up through monthly emails sent to Maryland EXCELS programs), Work Groups, and technical assistance. Your Quality Assurance Specialist (QAS) is here to help you reach higher ratings.

Contact your QAS today!

Name	County/Region	Email	Phone
Lisa B. J. Smith	Baltimore County	lisa.smith1@maryland.gov	410-583-6213
Patty Aburn	Baltimore City	Patricia.aburn@maryland.gov	443-377-3966
Audrey Cupe Green	Baltimore City	audreyc.green@maryland.gov	443-380-3118
Rosemary Lober	Cecil & Harford	rosemary.lober@maryland.gov	410-569-2879 Ext. 302
Monique Dawkins	Carroll & Howard	monique.dawkins@maryland.gov	410-750-8635
Yvonne F. Bell	Montgomery	yvonne.bell@maryland.gov	240-314-1422
Petrea Hicks	Frederick & Washington	petrea.hicks@maryland.gov	301-696-9766 Ext. 8
Mary Beth Johnson	Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's & Talbot	maryb.johnson@maryland.gov	410-819-5801 Ext. 108
Dianna C. Aguirre	Somerset, Wicomico & Worcester	dianna.aguirre@maryland.gov	410-713-3430
Thea Quible	Anne Arundel	theadora.quible@maryland.gov	410-573-9523
Urceal Cook	Prince George's	urceal.cook@maryland.gov	443-837-5778
Stacie Burch	Calvert, Charles & St. Mary's	stacie.burch@maryland.gov	301-659-1905 301-475-3770
Vickie DiSanto Quality Assurance Coordinator	Baltimore County, Cecil/Harford, Lower Eastern Shore, Upper Eastern Shore	vickie.disanto@maryland.gov	240-314-1408

Meghan Leach- Gwynn Quality Assurance Coordinator	Baltimore City, Carroll/Frederick, Howard, Western Maryland	meghan.leach@maryland.gov	410-549-6494
L'Ornya Bowie Quality Assurance Coordinator	Anne Arundel, Montgomery, Prince George's, Southern Maryland	lornya.bowie@maryland.gov	240-314-1426