

## Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children

### Technical Assistance Document: Frequently Asked Questions June 18, 2007

#### *School District Application and Planning*

**39. May the district combine with a neighboring district to submit an application and provide a preschool program?**

Yes. School districts may form a consortium with one of the districts acting as the fiscal agent.

**NOTE:** The district submitting the application will be identified as the applicant and be responsible for ensuring that all of the preschool requirements are addressed, including collecting and reporting performance measure data and fiscal accountability. The district submitting the application will be responsible for assigning the unique student identifier; therefore, when the student enrolls in the resident district for kindergarten, the identifier will already be assigned to the student in order to track data long-term.

**40. Can a private provider contract or enter into a partnership with a public school other than the one they are located in?**

No, a district cannot contract with a preschool provider outside of the district's boundaries unless both districts are partnering and submitting a combined application. (See prior Question #39 for additional information.)

**41. Does a school district need to enter into a 28E agreement when contracting with a private preschool?**

Yes. A district may develop a 28E agreement, contract, or Memorandum of Agreement. The agreement may highlight the collaborative plan developed by community stakeholders regarding selection of curriculum, hiring of teacher(s), child assessment(s) and reporting requirements. This agreement would need to account for consideration of hiring other preschool staff for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children. The preschool program must meet the requirements of subrule 16.3 and the district must also meet the financial, reporting, and monitoring requirements of subrule 16.13.

**42. If the school district is not a successful applicant, will they need to complete a new application next year?**

Yes. If the district is not a successful applicant they will need to apply again in a subsequent year. An applicant may request to receive a summary of the readers' comments from the DE. Ongoing monthly or quarterly meetings with community partners may strengthen the application for the next year and facilitate implementation of a plan to meet the required preschool program standards, curriculum, and assessment requirements.

***Application Forms***

43. **Does a district need to leave the Iowa Department of Education June 2007 as the header for each page?**

The header may be changed to reflect the name of the district applying.

44. **It is my understanding the footer for each page is district number and page number?**

The footer should have a page number however the district number is optional.

***Site Information Form Completion***

45. **Does the request for “total number of children estimated to be served at this site” refer only to children funded through the Voluntary Preschool program?**

Yes. On the "Site Information Form," the request for the "Total number of children estimated to be served at this site" refers to the number of eligible children estimated to be counted in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children therefore, report the total number of eligible children to be served at this site (include all classrooms at this site) who will counted to generate the preschool program funds. Eligible children are children who are residents of Iowa and four (4) years of age on or before September 15 of the school year.

46. **Does the request for “Total number of classrooms at this site,” refer only to children funded through the Voluntary Preschool program?**

Yes. On the "Site Information Form," the request for the "Total number of classrooms at this site," provide the total number of classrooms that will be participating in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children. For example, a separate "Classroom Information Form" needs to be completed for preschool programs that have a morning and afternoon section of preschool.

***Collaboration: Community Partners and Relationships***

47. **When addressing the criteria, may school districts use the same evidence when answering Question 2: “What evidence is provided documenting letters of support from the applicable community partners?” and Question 3: “What evidence is provided that the applicant has had existing relationships with community partners to provide quality preschool programming?”**

School districts should refer to the Rubric for Scoring Criteria, Collaboration: Community Partnerships and Relationships to determine how to provide the most clear and compelling evidence of community support and existing relationships.

48. **May school districts add additional rows for more than one name in each category?**

Yes, districts may add rows to accommodate additional partners' names on this form; however, the list of community partners represented on the form cannot be altered.

49. **On the Analysis of Preschool Provider Data form (Application Technical Assistance Packet page 16 of 39), should we estimate the number of eligible children for each of the programs listed in the last column?**

No, the analysis is to assist the district in identifying the number of children served in programs during the 2006-2007 school year. Use the Analysis of Four-Year-Old Child Data Estimated (07-08) form (See Application Technical Assistance Packet page 18 of 39).

**50. What are the criteria for selecting school districts that will receive preschool program funds?**

School districts will submit an application and supporting documents to the DE in a timely manner, following all stipulations in the Instructions for Application guidance document. Applications will be reviewed and scored for content in the sections “Community Assets and Needs for Providing a Quality Preschool Program” and “Collaboration: Community Partners and Relationships.” See application for scoring rubric.

**NOTE:** If the number of requests received exceeds the available funds the DE will utilize the following criteria to determine successful applicants:

- Priority given to districts with a high percentage of children in poverty at the elementary level and the intent to serve children in poverty;
- Priority given to districts without an existing preschool program;
- Consideration given to school districts seeking to expand preschool access through established, high quality, community partnerships; and
- Consideration given to the size of school districts to promote equitable statewide distribution of preschool program services.

For further details about the criteria for selecting school districts as well as the assurances please see the NOI Rules Packet, subrule 16.9 located at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/content/view/940/1103/1/1/>.

***Use of Four-Year-Old Preschool Funds*****51. Can younger or older children participate in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children?**

Yes. If space and funding are available, a school district approved to participate in the preschool program may enroll a child who is younger or older than four years of age in the preschool program; however, the child shall not be counted for state funding purposes.

**52. If the application is approved, will this be a permanent funding source?**

Yes. Successful applicants will not reapply once their application is approved and funding awarded. Each subsequent year will be funded based on the district's preschool program's enrollment count as of October 1 of the previous year. For example, South Grand CSD was a successful applicant and awarded funding based on 40 four-year-old children. Their preschool program started by October 1, 2007, and 40 four-year-old children were enrolled. The next school year, 2008-2009, South Grand CSD will receive funding for 40 slots for a new group of preschoolers based on the preschool foundation aid formula (\$5,333 x .60 per child). If the preschool has enrolled more four-year-old children in the preschool program, such as 45 children, funding will not be generated for the additional 5 four-year-old children for 2008-2009. It would be generated for 2009 - 2010, the next school year. The opposite would be true if there was a reduction in enrollment to 36 four-year-old children. Funding would be reduced for the 2009-2010 school year.

**53. Can the allocation for the voluntary preschool program fund a preschool coordinator position?**

Yes. Administrative expenses are allowable expenditures under the voluntary preschool program. These funds must be used for the Voluntary Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children.

**54. If a school district contracts with a nonpublic school for the services of a qualified teacher 1) may the funds be used for the qualified teacher or other staff such as a teacher associate, and, 2) are there additional items that may be funded?**

Funds may be allocated for instructional services, administrative or operational expenditures. Additional items that can be funded through the voluntary preschool application include, but are not limited to: instructional, employee, travel, supplies and materials, equipment, transportation, contracted services, etc. Funds shall not be used for the costs of constructing a facility in connection with the preschool program.

**55. May the District negotiate transportation cost if the district is transporting preschool students to the private preschool location?**

Yes. As indicated in subrule 16.12, districts may provide transportation but are not required to transport children to/from the preschool program.

**56. Can PPEL funds be expended to provide supplies, materials, or etc for a private preschool?**

No. The Property, Plant, and Equipment Levy (PPEL) is a capital improvements fund. It would not be appropriate to use these dollars to purchase supplies and materials.

**57. Can a public school utilize collected sales tax dollars to construct, expand, or remodel preschool facilities?**

Yes, if the district owns the preschool facility and if voters have authorized the use of these funds for the purpose of infrastructure.

***Preschool Teacher for the Preschool Program for Four-Year-Old Children***

**58. May a district use funds to contract with a teacher in another agency?**

Yes. A district may develop a 28E agreement, contract, or Memorandum of Agreement with another agency to provide the teacher.

***Program Requirements***

**59. What are the adult child ratios? REVISED ANSWER BASED ON RULES**

There must be at least one teacher present for every 10 children in a classroom during the instructional time described in subrule 16.3(4). A minimum of one staff member and one teacher shall be present when 11 to 20 children are present. Staff members and teachers shall have reasonable line-of-sight supervision of all children.