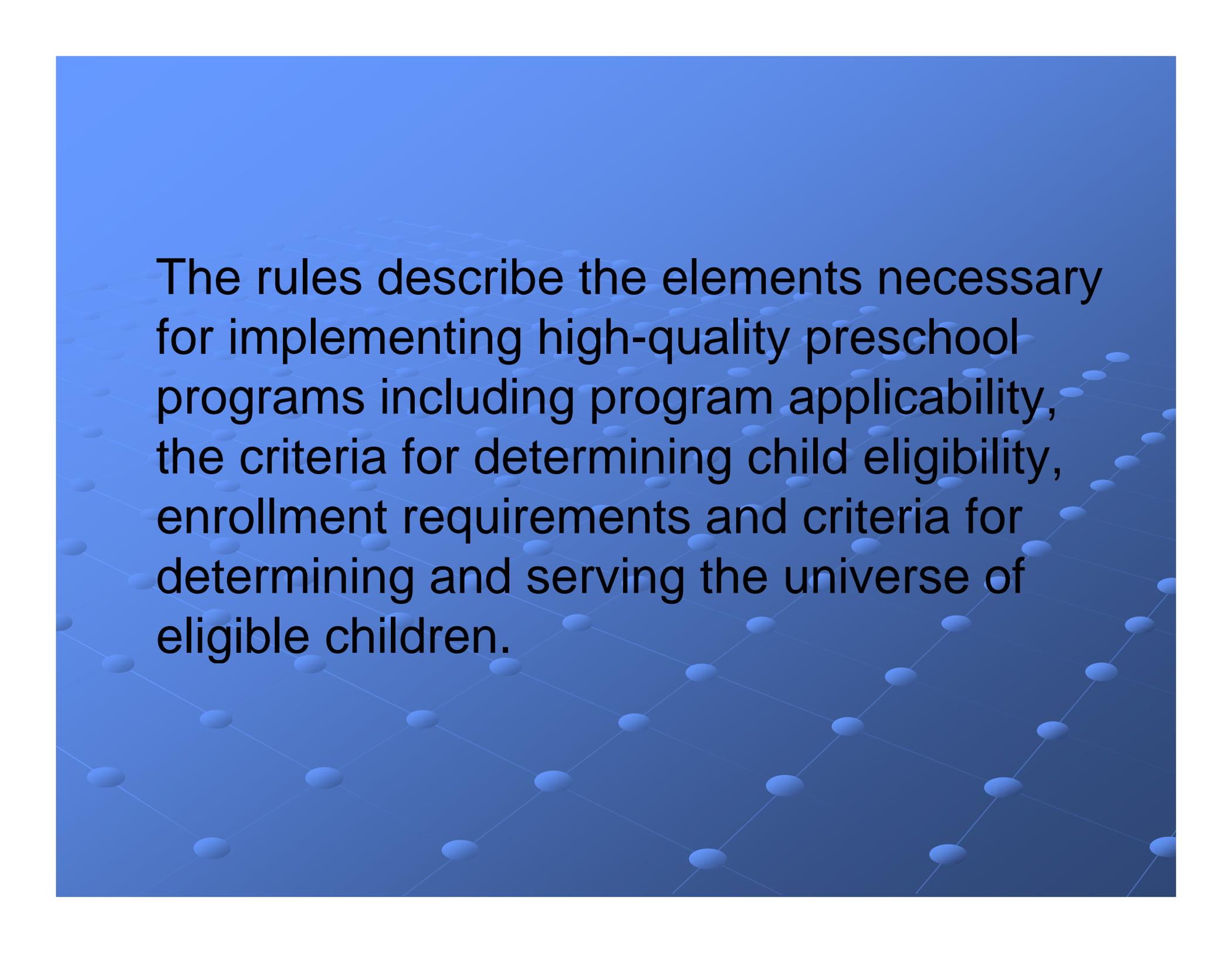


Elements of High Quality Preschool Programs

New Jersey Administrative Code

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A



The rules describe the elements necessary for implementing high-quality preschool programs including program applicability, the criteria for determining child eligibility, enrollment requirements and criteria for determining and serving the universe of eligible children.

Subchapter Headings

- **General Provisions for a High-Quality Preschool Program**
- **Eligibility, Enrollment and the Universe**
- **Preschool Program Plan and Annual Updates**
- **Program Staffing**
- **Curriculum and Assessment**



- **Transition**

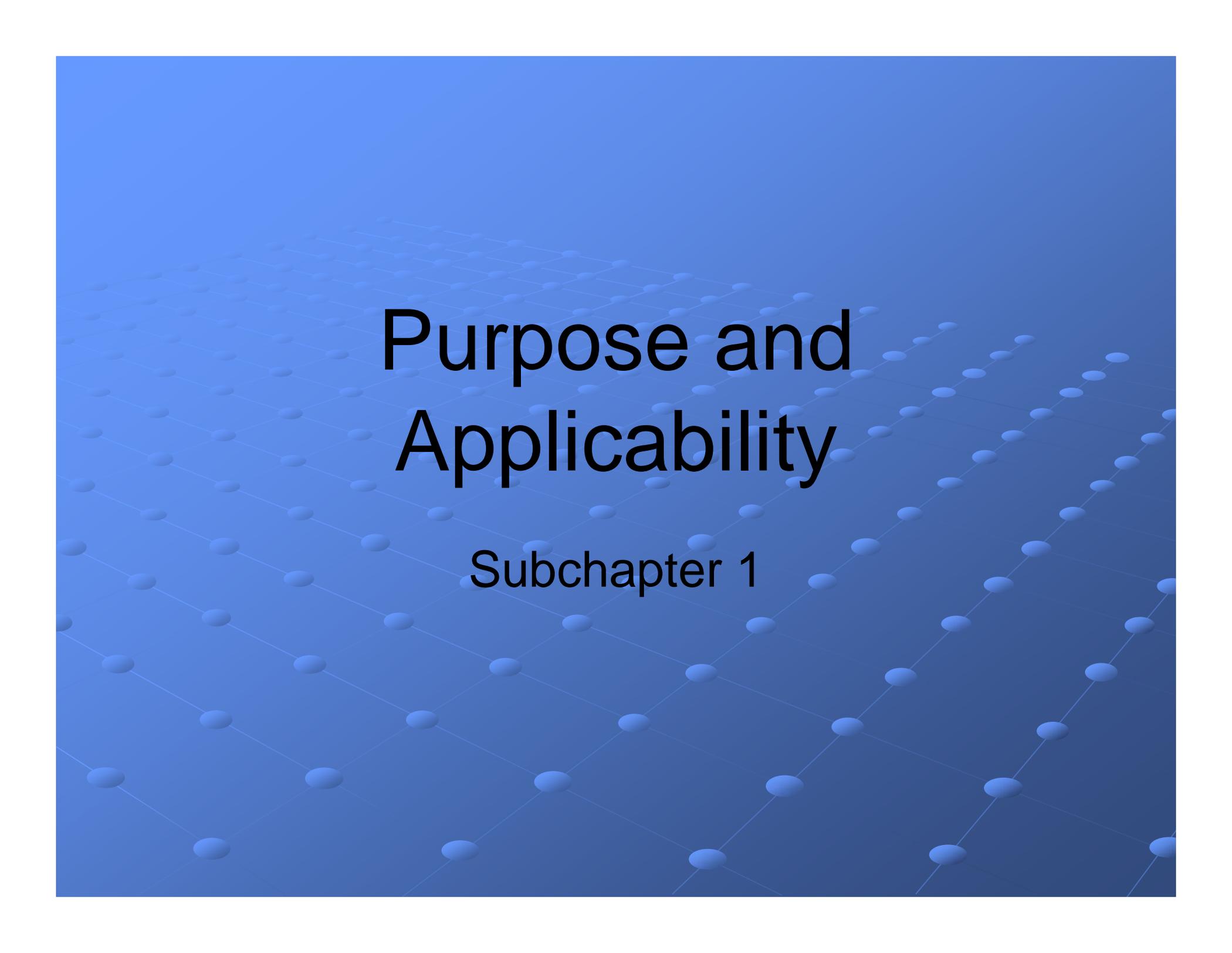
- **Facilities**

- **Program Evaluation**

- **School District Contracts**

- **Fiscal Oversight**

- **Appeals**



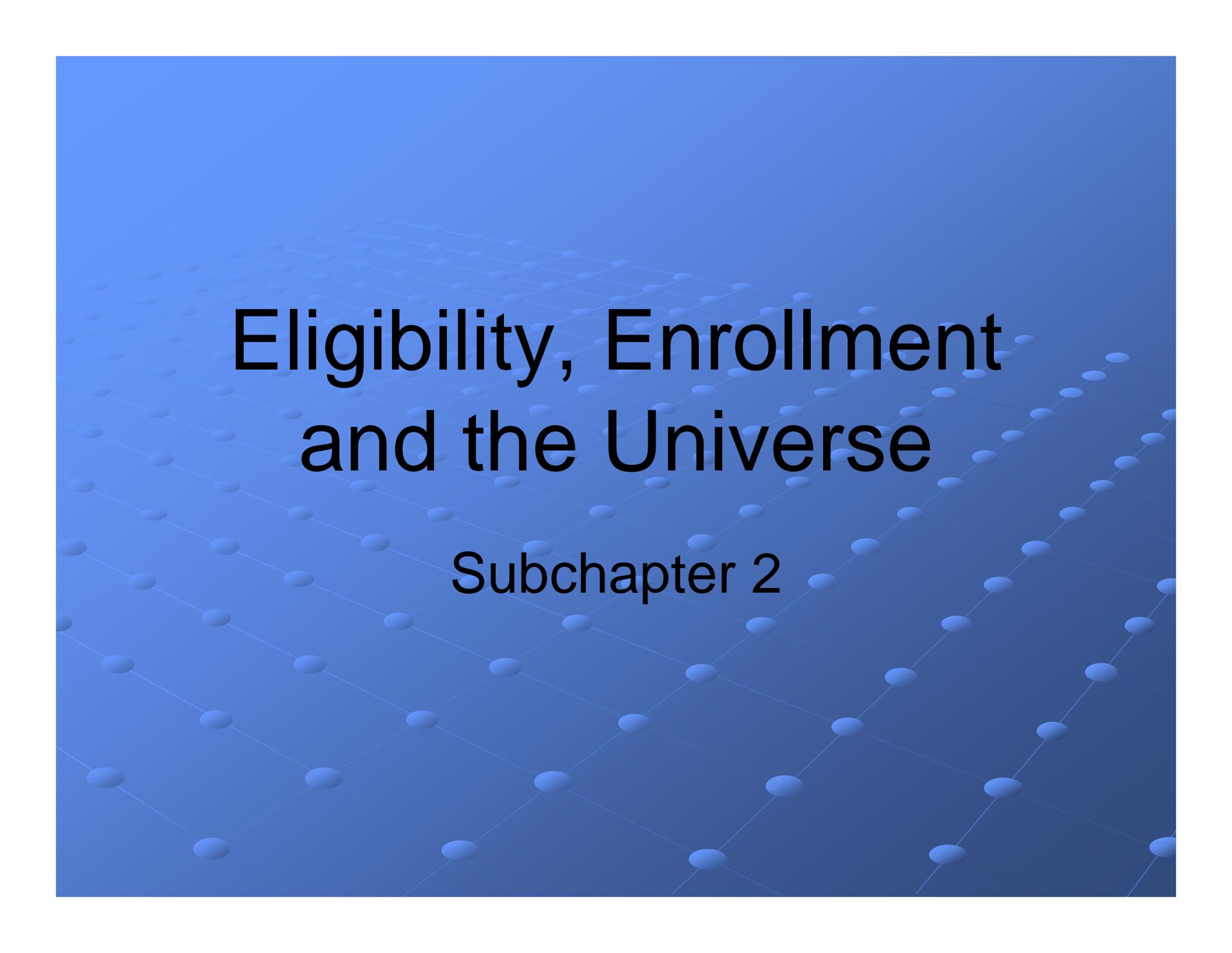
Purpose and Applicability

Subchapter 1

General Provisions for a High Quality Preschool Program

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-1, page 5

All preschool programs offered in-district and by contracted private providers and local Head Start agencies receiving preschool funding must meet all of the requirements including the inclusion of preschool children with disabilities in general education settings to the maximum extent possible.



Eligibility, Enrollment and the Universe

Subchapter 2

Eligibility

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-2.1, page 11-13

School districts required to provide *universal* preschool must provide free access to full-day preschool for **all** three- and four-year-old children.

Eligibility

Any district that is not a *universal* district is a *targeted* district and is required to provide free access to full-day preschool for **at-risk** three- and four-year-old children.

Eligibility

- The rules at 2.1(b), (c) and (d) describe options for serving children in districts required to provide *universal* preschool.
- The rules at 2.1(e), (f), (g), (h) and (i) describe options for serving children in districts required to provide *targeted* preschool.

Enrollment and Universe

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-2.3(d), pages 14-15

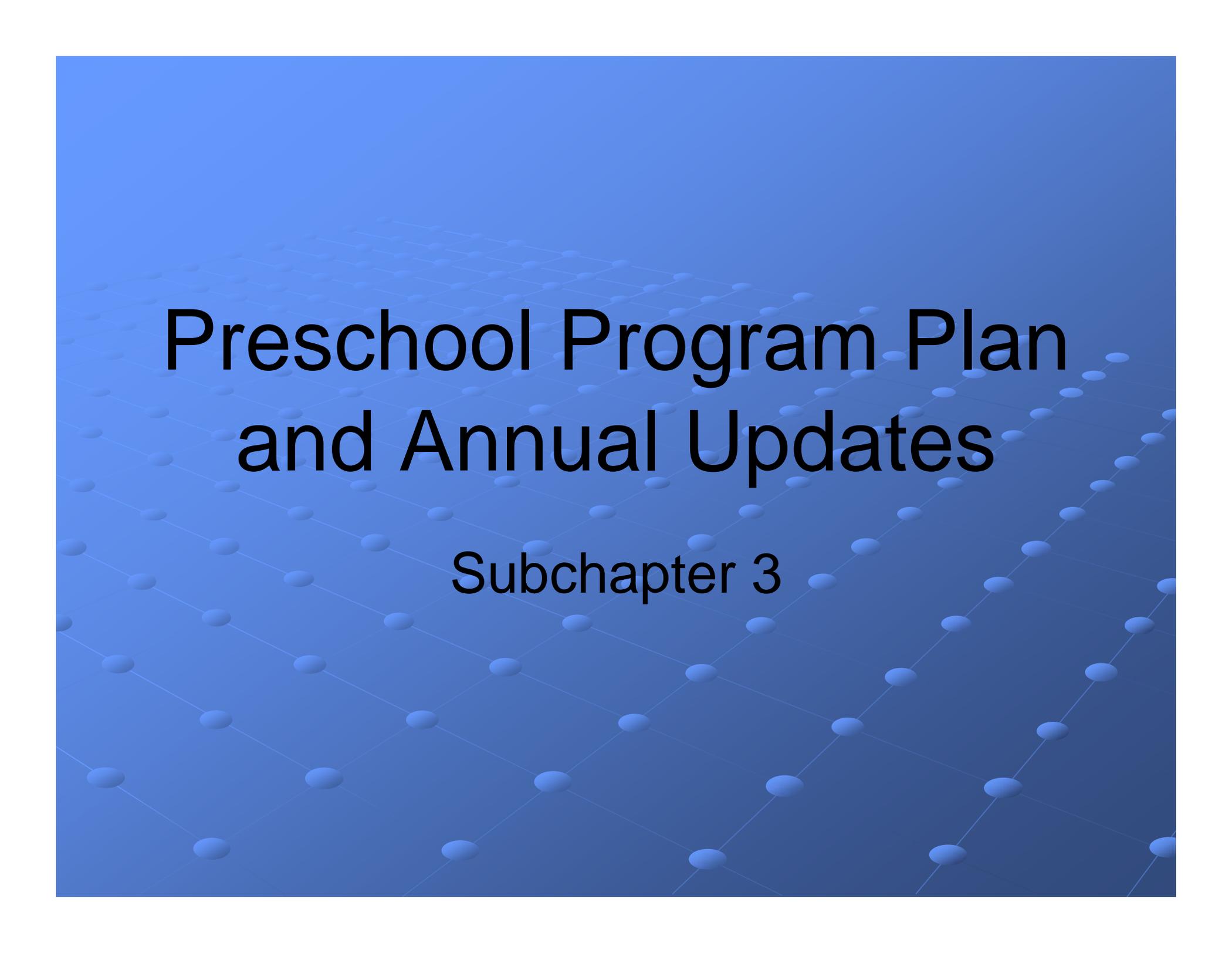
- Districts must plan to serve at least 90 percent of the universe of eligible general education children by 2013-2014.
- The district must establish procedures for the recruitment, enrollment and placement of all eligible resident preschool children.

Enrollment and Universe

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-2.3(e), page 15

Districts may request approval by the Commissioner to budget preschool aid:

- **To subsidize preschool programs for resident preschool-aged children who are not eligible based on this chapter; and/or**
- **Support kindergarten to grade 12 only if full implementation, high-quality elements and universe requirements are met.**



Preschool Program Plan and Annual Updates

Subchapter 3

Preschool Program Plan and Annual Updates

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-3.1, page 16

For school districts that did not receive any form of preschool aid in 2007-2008 school year, the 2008-2009 school year shall be a planning year, except for the Abbott school districts and the 5 ECPA school districts* approved to expand in 2008-2009.

*(preschool expansion aid or education opportunity aid)

Following Code

- **All school districts that receive preschool education aid in 2008-2009 must adhere to *N.J.A.C. 6A:13A* for the 2008-2009 school year. This includes the districts that received funding under *N.J.A.C. 6A:10A* and the 5 ECPA districts approved to begin using preschool education aid in 2008-2009.**
- **All other ECPA districts must adhere to *N.J.A.C. 6A:8* for the 2008-2009 school year.**

Following Code

In 2009-2010 every school district in New Jersey receiving preschool education aid must adhere to *N.J.A.C. 6A:13A*.

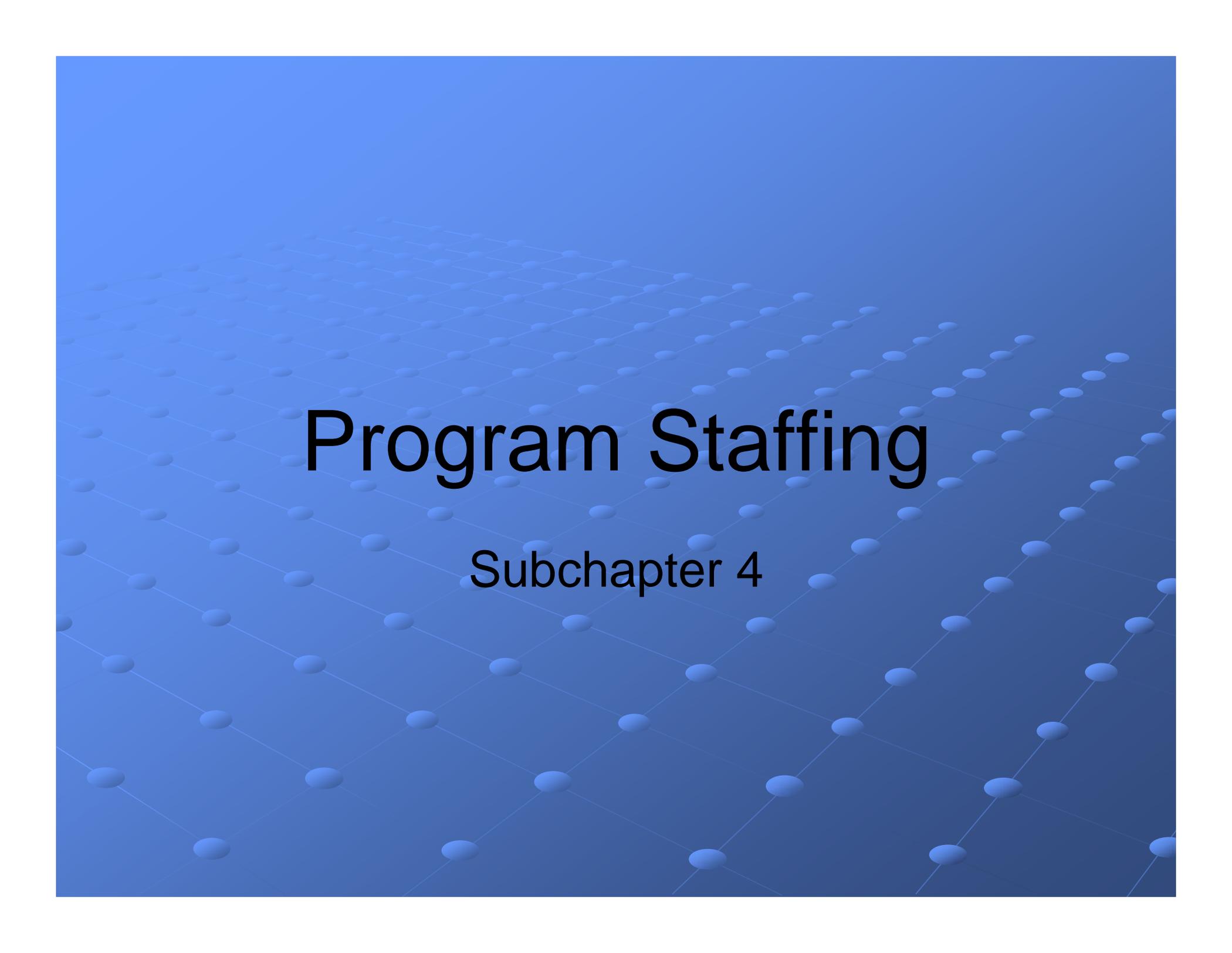
Mixed Delivery

Each district receiving preschool education aid can implement preschool using a mixed delivery system. Mixed delivery means a combination of:

- In-district
- Private provider and
- Local Head Start agency settings

The Plan

- **Universal school districts**
 - **Enrollment information**
 - **Plan and supporting documentation-
November 14, 2008**
- **Targeted school districts**
 - **Enrollment information-November 14, 2008**
 - **Plan and supporting documentation-
December 15, 2008**
- **The department will issue plan determinations to the districts no later than April 1, 2009.**



Program Staffing

Subchapter 4

Administrative Oversight

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.1, page 17

Each district will designate an in-district administrative position to oversee the preschool program.

Contracting Agency staff requirements

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.1, page 19

Each private provider and local Head Start agency must have a director, as outlined in the Department of Human Services Manual of Requirements for Childcare Centers.

Master Teachers – Coaching

N.J.A.C 6A:13A-4.2, pages 19-22

Each school district will provide master teachers to ensure coaching and classroom support for classroom teachers.

Instructional Staff

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.3, pages 22-24

Each district must have an appropriately certified teacher and teacher assistant in each preschool classroom with a maximum of 15 children.

Teacher Certification

- In-district classroom teachers must meet the certification requirements described at *N.J.A.C. 6A:9*.
- Private provider and Head Start classroom teachers in school districts receiving aid* in 2007-2008 must meet the certification requirements described at *N.J.A.C. 6A:9*.

*(preschool expansion aid or education opportunity aid)

Requirements for Teachers in Private Provider and Local Head Start Classrooms

- **Must complete the degree and P-3 certification by September 2012**
- **Is a student in good standing**
- **Has a minimum GPA of 2.75 when 4.0 equals an A**
- **Has a detailed and feasible plan to complete the degree and the P-3 certification by September 2012**

Teacher Assistants

- In-district teacher assistants in districts or schools supported by Title 1 funding must follow NCLB requirements.
- All other teacher assistants, both new hires and existing staff, in all preschool program settings must have a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Intervention and Support Services

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.4, pages 24-25

- **Each school district must have a preschool intervention and referral team (PIRT).**
- **The goal of PIRT services is to decrease referrals to special education and maximize general education classroom teachers' ability to support all students.**
- **The PIRT works within a consultation model with district, provider and Head Start staff and administrators.**

Suspension and Expulsion

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.4(g), page 25

School districts must ensure that no preschool student is suspended or expelled under any circumstances.

Health

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.5, pages 25-26

- Nurses must be provided for all preschool students in all settings.
- Child health services must include vision, hearing, dental, height and weight screenings.

Nutrition

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.5, pages 26-27

Districts offering *universal* preschool must ensure that each enrolled preschool child is offered breakfast, lunch and one snack per day.

Nutrition

Districts offering *targeted* preschool must ensure that all at-risk children in all settings are offered breakfast, lunch and one snack per day conforming to the 2005 USDA dietary guidelines.

Family and Community Involvement

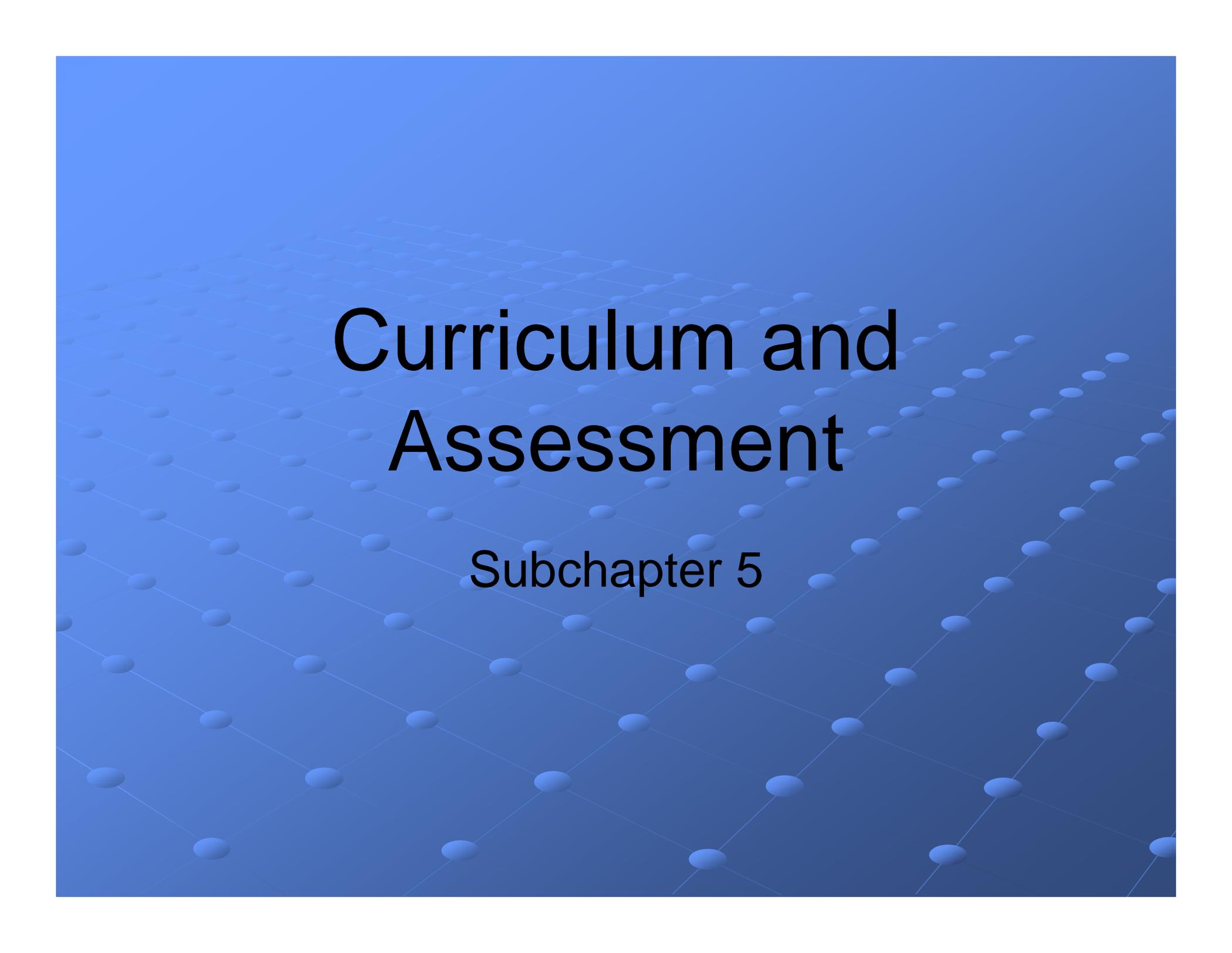
N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.6, pages 27-29

The district must ensure that a coordinated system of social services is provided to families of enrolled preschool children.

Fiscal Accountability and Integrity

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.7, pages 29-30

Districts with eight or more private providers (including Head Start) may employ a preschool fiscal specialist or combine the position with another in-district position so long as the qualifications and responsibilities required by code are met.



Curriculum and Assessment

Subchapter 5

Curriculum

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-5.1, pages 30-31

Each district must implement a comprehensive preschool curriculum approved by the department as part of their five-year preschool program plan and annual updates.

Assessment

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-5.2, pages 31-33

Districts must ensure ongoing assessment to:

- **Plan for individual and group instruction**
- **Identify children for health and special services**
- **Monitor trends and evaluate programs**
- **Provide program accountability data**

Types of Assessment

- Screening
- Ongoing Performance-Based Assessment
- Classroom Quality Assessment

Using Classroom Quality Assessments

- For continuous program improvements
- For contracting purposes



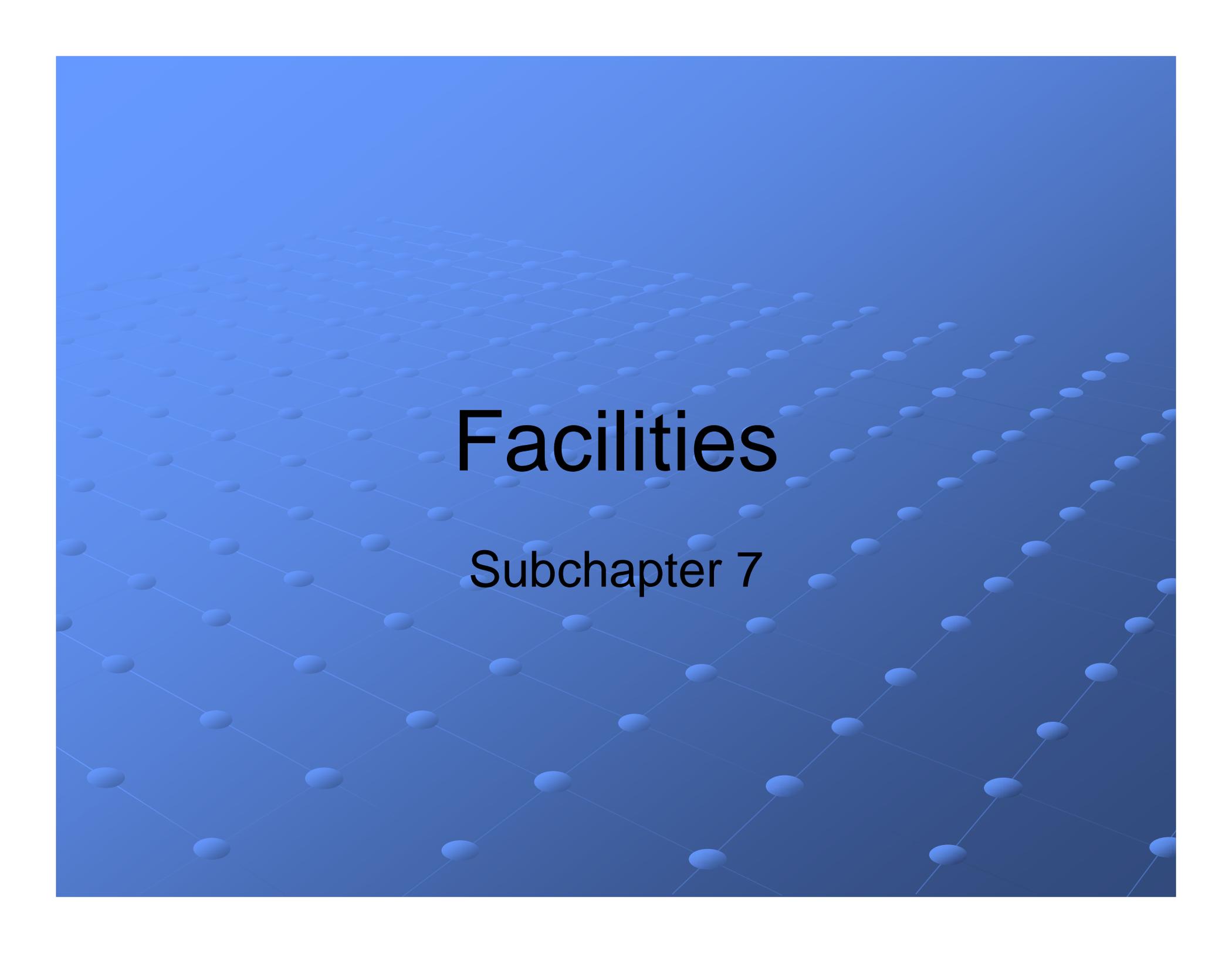
Transition

Subchapter 6

Preschool through Grade Three Transition Initiatives

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-6.1, pages 33-34

The transition initiative extends from preschool program entry to kindergarten through grade three.



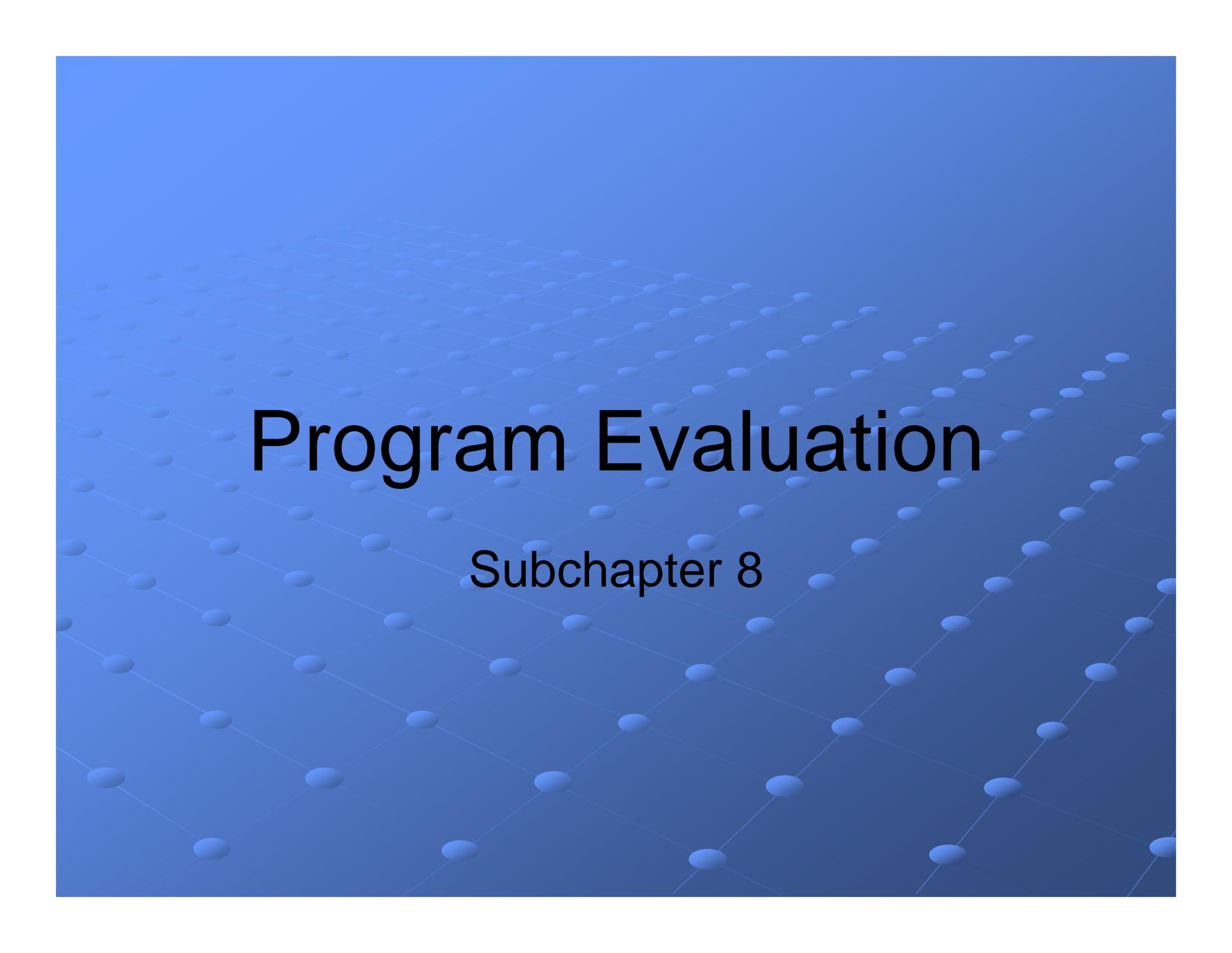
Facilities

Subchapter 7

Space Requirements

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-7.1, page 34

Each newly contracted classroom in every private provider and local Head Start agency setting must be a minimum of 950 square feet.



Program Evaluation

Subchapter 8

Self-Assessment and Validation

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-8.1, page 35

Each district must annually participate in a self-assessment and validation (SAVS) of its preschool program.

Contracts with Private Providers and Local Head Start Agencies

Subchapter 9

Contract

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-9.1, pages 35-41

The department provides a model contract for use with DCF-licensed private providers and/or local Head Start agencies and procedures for districts to follow when modifying and/or executing the contract.



Fiscal Oversight

Subchapter 10

School District Fiscal Responsibilities

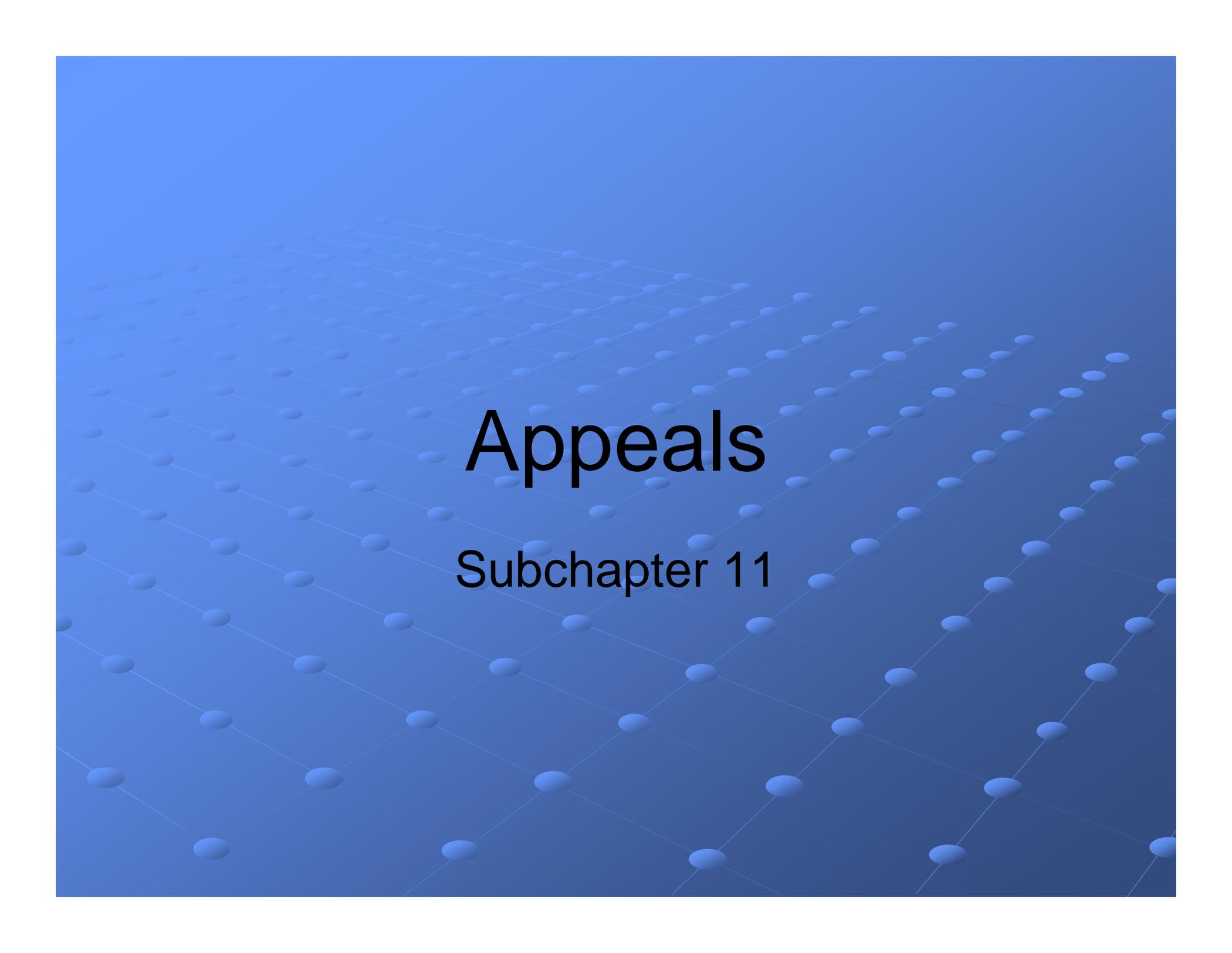
N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-10.1, page 42

In addition to monitoring in-district expenses, school districts must ensure that funding from each private provider and Head Start agency budget be used to support the needs of the preschool children and the preschool program.

Private Provider and Local Head Start Agency Fiscal Responsibilities

N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-10.2, pages 43-44

Contracted private providers and local Head Start agencies are responsible for implementing sound fiscal practices.



Appeals

Subchapter 11

Preschool Program Appeals
Review of Pleadings
Commissioner Review and Decision
N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-11.1, pages 44-46

The department will issue program and budget decisions to school districts on or before the first of April. A district is entitled to file an appeal of the decision with the Commissioner of Education pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:3 Controversies and Disputes.*



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These Commissioner regulations for preschool were filed with the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) on June 13, 2008 and include technical changes as a result of the review by OAL. The regulations will be published in the July 21, 2008 issue of the New Jersey Register.

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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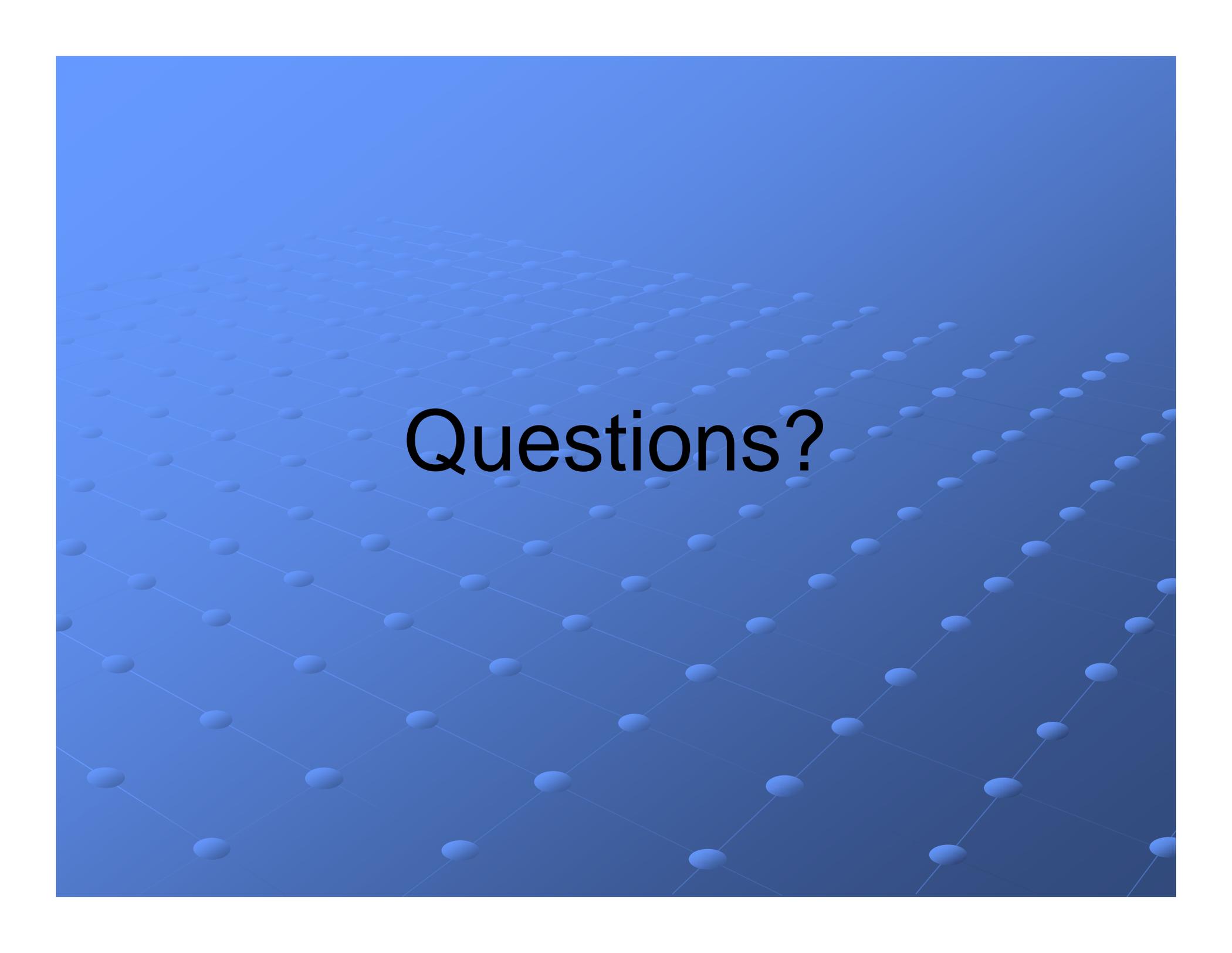
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