

Self-Assessment Validation System
for
Abbott Preschool Programs- Revised
2006-2007

New Jersey Department of Education
Division of Early Childhood Education
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Scoring Procedures

Key Terms:

Criterion: Standard by which the components of the program will be rated.

Indicator: Important points to consider when rating a criterion.

Preschool Program: All preschool classrooms in-district and in community providers.

Teacher: All teachers in preschool classrooms in-district and in community providers.

Scoring:

The following scoring protocol is adapted from the Accreditation Criteria & Procedures of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1998

Not Yet [1]	In Progress [2]	Fully Met [3]
This criterion is not met. There is little evidence that this statement accurately describes the program but plans may have been developed.	The criterion is partially met. There is some evidence that this statement accurately describes the program. Plans have been developed and initiated but full realization is not yet accomplished.	The criterion is completely met. There is a great deal of evidence that this statement accurately describes the program. For a criterion to rate a [3], all indicators related to the criterion must be present. (It also is possible for all indicators to be present without rating the criterion a [3]).

Each criterion will be rated by placing a check mark in only one of the boxes. Explanations of ratings will be given in the blank space provided beside each criterion.

- the criterion is rated not yet [1]
- the criterion is in progress [2]
- the criterion is fully met [3]—no explanation is needed for this rating.

Section I: Administration

Program Area: *Administration*

Rationale: Key to the success of any program is educational leadership and administrative oversight. To effectively operate high-quality preschool programs, school administrators must play an integral role in planning, execution, oversight, and evaluation of the preschool agenda. Individuals filling administrative positions should serve as educational leaders rather than simply managers. The role of the fiscal specialist should be to help private providers develop their program budgets, to monitor compliance with the contract, and to be responsible for collecting and reporting teacher tracking and certification information.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Educational Leadership

Criterion 1: Administrators overseeing the preschool program possess the proper qualifications and training specific to early childhood education.

Indicators:

- All dedicated early childhood administrators (directors, supervisors, principals etc.) possess early childhood credentials or pursue in-district or out-of-district professional development in early childhood programming and practices.
“All dedicated administrators” means administrators that appear on budget in full or in part.
- All dedicated early childhood administrator(s) are trained in the district chosen, DOE-approved preschool curriculum.
“All dedicated administrators” means administrators that appear on budget in full or in part.
- Early childhood administrator(s) attend DOE-sponsored workshops and meetings designated as appropriate for preschool administrators.
To be “fully met” administrator needs to have attended at least three DOE supervisor meetings.

Sources of Information:

- Resumes
- Professional development agendas/sign-in sheets
- Certificates
- Continuing education credits

Program Area:
Educational Leadership continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Administrators overseeing the preschool program facilitate the development, articulation, implementation of a vision of preschool learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

Indicators:

- Early childhood administrators facilitated consensus and a shared preschool vision by regularly engaging district administrators, preschool program staff, teachers, community provider directors, and families.
- There is evidence of ongoing collaboration with district departments including, but not limited to, curriculum and instruction, special education, and bilingual education that informs decision-making, and results in continuous preschool program improvement.
"Fully met" would require evidence of collaboration with the district offices of curriculum, special education or bilingual education (if district has such offices)
- Early childhood administrators access, analyze and use data from a variety of sources to meet reporting requirements and to inform program, curriculum and staffing decisions resulting in continuous preschool program improvement.
*"Fully met" would require districts to have accessed, analyzed and used data from more than one source.
"In progress" would require districts to have collected data (not necessarily aggregated and/or analyzed the data)*

Sources of Information:

- Resumes
- Credentials
- Evidence of ongoing early childhood professional development attendance
- Evidence/examples of issues identified and in process or resolved through ongoing communications with members of the school community
- Evidence/examples of consensus building in collaborative settings
- Written plans, policies, systems developed as outcomes
- Surveys
- Data analyses
- Evidence/examples of engagement with community provider directors
- Evidence/examples of comprehensive professional development opportunities resulting from individual and collective planning
- Evidence of attendance by administrators, community provider directors, staff, teachers at various early childhood meetings, trainings
- Meeting agendas and minutes

Program Area:
Educational Leadership continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: Administrators overseeing the preschool program ensure implementation of professional growth and development opportunities for teachers, staff, community provider directors, and other administrators.

Indicators:

1. Administrators from other departments participate in relevant preschool meetings and training to enhance their knowledge base.
“Fully met” would require more than one office to participate in meetings or training.
“In progress” would require one office.
2. Individual and collective planning with staff by early childhood administrators results in delivery of a professional development program.
3. Community provider directors have input regarding their professional and technical needs relative to the preschool program resulting in district initiated opportunities for growth.
4. Early childhood administrators ensure that professional development is relevant to the specific needs of classroom teaching staff from both in-district and community provider settings, and ensure attendance at trainings.

Sources of Information:

- Databases
- Written and verbal examples
- Workshop evaluations
- Director Surveys
- Also see criterion 2

Fiscal Accountability

The criteria listed within this section should be the responsibility of the fiscal specialist or designee assigned to such tasks (e.g. business administrator). In the event that the district does not have a fiscal specialist, this section should be filled out based on the person fulfilling the responsibilities of this position.

Not Yet In Progress Fully Met NA

Criterion 4: The fiscal specialist has a working knowledge of the preschool program.

Indicators:

- The fiscal specialist is familiar with the requirements of the program, including the Abbott decisions, administrative code, program implementation and budget guidelines, and the preschool contract.
- The fiscal specialist or designee attends DOE and district meetings regarding fiscal matters and receives regular ongoing training.
“Fully met” would require attendance at DOE and district meetings

Sources of Information:

- Evidence of meetings with DOE, etc.
- Correspondence to providers

Not Yet In Progress Fully Met NA

Criterion 5: The fiscal specialist has a working familiarity with professional accounting standards, and the proper training and skills to perform rigorous analyses of preschool provider budgets and required financial statements.

Indicators:

- The fiscal specialist has prior experience with professional accounting standards, or in analyzing public school, or nonprofit budgets and financial statements.
- The fiscal specialist has professional certification in budgeting and/or accounting (CPA, CFE, etc) or has engaged in rigorous professional development activities to strengthen his/her knowledge and skills in these areas.
- The fiscal specialist demonstrates the requisite computer/technology skills to perform complex spreadsheet analyses or to assist preschool providers in the selection and/or implementation of accounting software (e.g. QuickBooks, Excel).
- The fiscal specialist provides training and assistance to providers on budget development, accounting, and expense reporting (e.g., template for quarterly reports & formatting).

Program Area:
Fiscal Accountability Continued

Sources of Information:

- Resume
- Evidence of meetings with providers
- Evidence of analyses performed

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

NA

Criterion 6: The fiscal specialist regularly collects and analyzes budgets and financial reports from private providers to ensure that their expenditures conform to approved budgets; fiscal practices conform to district contractual terms; and general fiscal integrity is maintained.

Indicators:

- The fiscal specialist provides examples of analyses performed on private provider quarterly expenditure reports and annual external audits from the Office of Compliance Investigations. These analyses compare actual spending to budgeted appropriations to ensure that monies are spent as intended.
- The fiscal specialist can provide examples of analyses performed on submitted preschool budgets to ensure conformity with DOE regulations (FTE/salary analysis, indirect costs, materials/supplies, etc).
- The fiscal specialist provides examples of appropriate and timely action once financial, legal, or contractual discrepancies have been discovered during the regular course of monitoring (e.g. provide formal notification to supervise, seek additional information/documentation, alert appropriate DOE/DHS authorities, develop and monitor progress of corrective action plans as a result of an audit or limited review examination).
“Fully met” would require documentation of follow-up to CAP and quarterly reports.
“In progress” would require evidence of CAPS.
- The fiscal specialist provides technical assistance to providers.

Sources of Information:

- Quarterly financial reports
- Evidence of meetings with providers
- District-developed corrective action plans
- Evidence of follow-up/monitoring of corrective action plans

Program Area:
Fiscal Accountability Continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 7: The fiscal specialist or other designee maintains certification information.

Indicator:

- An up-to-date database containing teacher certification is accessible.
“Fully met” would require an electronic database.

Sources of Information:

- Database

Program Area:
Recruitment and Outreach

Rationale: All three- and four-year-old children, including children with disabilities residing in the Abbott districts, are eligible for services. Issues such as toilet training, immigration status, and other individual circumstances cannot prevent a child from receiving services. In fact, the mandate is to serve all eligible children. Individual districts are unique and, therefore, no single recruitment strategy will work across districts. Rather, given the socio-economic status, as well as the location of a specific school district, certain approaches may be more effective than others. The school district, along with the Early Childhood Advisory Council, should take the time to research and analyze most effective public information strategies for its community.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: Multiple recruitment strategies are being used.

Indicators:

- Public awareness strategies such as fliers, phone information services, cable television, and public service announcements via the radio in appropriate languages are used. Depending on community needs, neighborhood visitors or other person-to-person outreach strategies may be needed to reach under-served populations. Various community resources are involved in suggesting recruitment methods, including the Early Childhood Advisory Council.
“Fully met” would require documentation of multiple strategies and the involvement of the ECAC (district can be “fully met” if serving less than 90% of universe)
- Public awareness strategies and materials in languages relevant to service populations clearly indicate to the community that early childhood programs are available to children with special needs.
“Fully Met” would require districts to have Child Find information on materials

Sources of Information:

- Samples of strategies/materials used for outreach and recruitment
- Early Childhood Advisory Council minutes
- Enrollment forms/registration packets
- Child Find outreach activities
- Recruitment and outreach section of the Two-Year Report on Instructional Priorities and Budget Narrative for 2006-2007

Program Area:
Recruitment and Outreach continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Accurate enrollment data is collected, maintained, and updated as needed.

Indicators:

- A uniform preschool enrollment form is used during registration. If the district uses its own form, it must include all information requested on the uniform preschool enrollment form.
- Assistance is available for parents who are unable to read and/or write.
- Translators or forms in native language are available (for at least 2 predominate languages other than English) for those whose first language is not English.
- Residency is verified as per code requirements.
- District enrollment process is coordinated by the district to maximize placement.
“Fully Met” would require districts to have procedures to identify and eliminate multiple enrollment at the provider level.
- Only age and residency status are used to determine eligibility to enroll in the Abbott preschool program.
- Useful research has been conducted to determine which recruitment method has been most effective in reaching hard-to-reach populations and/or under-served groups.
“Fully Met” would require districts to demonstrate how research is conducted to inform the recruitment and enrollment process.

Sources of Information:

- Early Childhood Advisory Council minutes
- Parent surveys and handbooks
- Enrollment forms/registration packets
- Residency verification
- Recruitment and outreach section of the Two-Year Report on Instructional Priorities and Budget Narrative for 2006-2007

Program Area:
Facilities

Rationale: Facilities that provide safe and healthy learning environments are educationally adequate, and meet the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality*, and the *Abbott Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines* are essential to the realization of the New Jersey Supreme Court mandate that the children in the Abbott districts receive a high-quality, thorough and efficient preschool education. The physical environmental affects both the behavior and development of children, and the adults working in that environment.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: An amended long-range facility plan (LRFP) that is based on an assessment of the preschool universe, demographic trends, housing patterns and community needs has been submitted by the district.

Indicators:

- The district has conducted a local needs assessment to develop program plans that meet the specific needs of their children
- The Early Childhood Advisory Council has been involved in the development of the amended LRFP.
- The district plan does not supplant currently contracted child care providers who meet the provisions of high-quality preschool education and related services.
- The LRFP provides for full inclusion of children served by federally funded Head Start programs (who are willing and able).

Sources of Information:

- Facilities assessment based on a needs assessment (Indicators and Standards for Improving Schools-ISIS) conducted by the district board of education.
- LRFP (relevant sections pertaining to preschool)
- Local needs assessment
- ECAC minutes

Program Area:
Facilities Continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: ECERS- R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- Revised) results and other facilities evaluations are used to assess the adequacy of school facilities, and as a basis for improvements.

Sources of Information:

- ECERS- R results
- ELIC reports
- Structured observation plans
- Curriculum based structured observation results (ex. High Scope's PQA)
- ECAC meeting minutes

Section II: Curriculum and Classroom Practices

Program Area:

Curriculum and Program

Rationale: Curriculum broadly speaking, is what schools teach. This includes all that is planned for children in the classroom, such as learning centers, morning circle, or a teacher-initiated small-group activity. Curriculum also includes the unplanned- those experiences a child has while building a bridge with paper towel tubes, string and popsicle sticks, waiting for the bus, eating at the snack table, or fighting over a toy. Curriculum is the entire range of experiences that children have at school. Creative arts, health, safety, and physical education, language arts literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, and social/emotional development are all important components of a preschool program.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: The preschool curriculum is effective in helping children learn and develop.

Indicators:

- The preschool curriculum is research-based and New Jersey Department of Education approved. *“Fully met” would require districts to have implemented High-Scope, Creative Curriculum, Tools of the Mind, Bank Street or Curiosity Corner or as indicated in January approval letter.*
- The preschool curriculum meets the specific needs of the children in the district. For example, children with special needs and English language learners are naturally supported in the learning environment with adaptations and supports, as necessary.
- The program structure is designed specifically to address the unique needs of preschoolers. Practices designed for older children like ‘specials’ and cafeteria-style meals are not used.

Sources of Information:

- Approved curriculum
- Professional development activities that target specific curriculum areas and that embed practices for ELL and children w/ special needs
- Lesson plans
- Child portfolios/child assessments
- Photos

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: The curriculum is being implemented as intended.

Indicators:

- Teachers are provided with in-class support by the master teacher to implement the curriculum.
- Teachers/master teachers receive professional development from both the curriculum developer and district staff that enables them to implement the curriculum as intended.

Program Area:

Curriculum and Program continued

- Results of structured classroom observations show that curriculum implementation is of high quality.

Sources of Information:

- Aggregated results of structured program observation instruments such as Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS), Supports for Early Literacy Assessment (SELA), Preschool Classroom Mathematics Inventory (PCMI), Tools of the Mind Fidelity Checklist, Preschool Quality Assessment (PQA), or the Creative Curriculum Implementation Checklist
- Lesson plans
- Curriculum developer reports
- Professional development plan, agendas and/or evaluations
- Purchase orders
- Master Teacher reflective cycle logs demonstrating evidence of modeling, discussion and observation
- Indication that master teachers are visiting classrooms with curriculum developers

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: Curriculum efficacy is fostered by meeting basic Court mandates.

Indicators:

- Each class has an appropriately certified teacher and an assistant.
- The maximum number of students in a class is 15.
- Classroom facilities and other areas used by the children meet program standards.

Sources of Information:

- Database containing teacher credentials
- Class roster outlining numbers of children per classroom
- DHS square footage requirements
- Results of facilities surveys
- Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- Revised Space and Furnishing scores

Program Area:
Supporting English Language Learners

Rationale: Best practice and research dictates that both English and the child's home language should be actively supported to facilitate language and literacy development during the crucial preschool years (McLaughlin, 1995; Snow, 1993; TESOL Standards). In order to be successful in US schools, and ultimately in the workplace, children need to be fluent in English, but not at the expense of losing their first languages. Teachers need extra guidance and support to effectively create learning opportunities in the context of meaningful interactions and materials that focus on first-language development as well as English proficiency.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: All English language learners receive systematic support for home and English language acquisition in their natural preschool environment.

Indicators:

- Recommended strategies/techniques to support English language learners are followed as discussed in the *Abbott Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines* (New Jersey Department of Education, 2003).
- Teachers receive professional development in techniques and materials needed for creating a language-rich environment that facilitates learning of the child's home or primary language, as well as English.
- Teachers receive professional development in language development, individual differences in second-language learning, best practices for scaffolding to English, as well as sensitivity to cultural backgrounds.
- Structured classroom observations, such as the SELLCA, are used as planning tools to support English language learners in the classroom.
- Administrative support ensures that all directors, building principals and classroom teachers receive information about the languages in each classroom based on the results of the home language survey.
- Administrative supports are provided to the maximum extent possible to address the needs of children from every language background, including the provision of classroom materials, resources, professional networking and support, and assistance with developing general strategies and lesson plans.

Sources of Information:

- Lesson plans and observations
- Professional development agendas and evaluations
- Structured program observation instruments
- Child portfolios
- SAVS Improvement Plan for 2005-2006
- Home language survey or results

Program Area:
Supporting English Language Learners continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Support the maintenance and development of each child’s home language is provided at school and encouraged at home.

Indicators:

- Opportunities for every child to utilize his/her primary language in oral and written form are made available on a daily basis.
- Parents are made aware of the importance of maintaining both languages and are provided with examples of tools and techniques to extend this learning at home.
- District staff as well as parent or community volunteers, provide home language support, explain cultural issues to program staff and assist with outreach to families.
“Fully met” would require districts to support the home languages of all families.
- Every classroom is equipped with literacy materials in the home languages of the children in the class, including fiction and non-fiction books, rhymes and poetry, linguistically appropriate alphabets, diverse music, and authentic props such as menus, magazines and food containers.

Sources of Information:

- Structured program observation instruments
- Samples of parent communication (ex. newsletter)
- Parent workshops/classes
- Classroom inventory lists
- Photographs
- Classroom materials (purchased, hand-made or borrowed) and supply orders
- Lesson plans
- Written anecdotes

Program Area:
Supporting English Language Learners continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: The bilingual specialist master teacher fulfills the roles and responsibilities outlined in the *Abbott Preschool Implementation Guidelines*.

Indicators:

- The bilingual specialist master teacher models, coaches and provides feedback to master teachers and teachers in how to facilitate language acquisition, and to promote oral language in the preschool setting. In smaller districts, this may be a function for a regular master teacher who has received specialized training to provide support for teachers in this area.

Sources of Information:

- Written feedback to teachers
- Teacher logs
- Professional development via workshops or meetings
- Samples of resources provided to teachers

Program Area:
Intervention and Support

Rationale: Working with classroom teachers, paraprofessionals and family members, early childhood administrators and dedicated early childhood intervention professionals have a unique opportunity to successfully identify preschoolers at risk, and work with their teachers and families, which will help to decrease referrals for special education. In addition, as more children are enrolled in preschool, teachers are reporting an increase in challenging behaviors exhibited by children. Specific support from preschool intervention specialists in strategies and interventions to reduce these behaviors will allow more preschoolers to successfully participate in a regular education preschool program.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: A preschool intervention and referral team is fully staffed and functioning according to the Abbott Preschool Implementation Guidelines.

Indicators:

- An established protocol for referral to the intervention team clearly outlines who can refer children, under what conditions, and what appropriate response will follow. All early childhood staff including teachers, center directors, master teachers, and administrators, are familiar with and adhere to, the protocol to ensure effective communication and follow-up.
- The preschool intervention and referral team's role and responsibilities are clearly articulated, and do not entail direct therapeutic services to children.
- Preschool intervention and referral specialists confer regularly with the general education teachers and master teachers, supervisors, and other professionals (special education, nurses, etc).
- The preschool intervention and referral specialists assist with transitions from one program to another.
- All preschool intervention and referral specialists have early childhood experience or education and have received training in a developmentally-appropriate, research-based model approved by the DOE (e.g. Positive Behavior Support).
- The preschool intervention and referral team is fully staffed according to the DOE-approved budget.

Sources of Information:

- Written protocol for referral to PIRT including timelines
- Tracking system for number of referrals to PIRT and subsequent referrals to CST
- PIRT Logs
- Meeting minutes and agendas
- Sign-in sheets for training (ex. PBS)
- Professional development plan
- PIRT team resumes/credentials

Program Area:

Intervention and Support continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: The intervention and support from the team meets the needs of the early childhood staff.

Indicators:

- Observes, provides feedback and models appropriate strategies and interventions to teachers and master teachers.
- Plans and implements professional development for preschool teachers, master teachers, assistants and/or administrators to facilitate preschool inclusion.
- Assist with planning strategies, modifying teaching practices or adapting environment and/or materials that will assist preschoolers in meeting the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations Standards of Quality*.

Sources of Information:

- Schedules of classroom consultation times
- Meeting notes
- Professional development plan
- Positive Behavior Support Implementation Plan
- PIRT team logs

Program Area:
Inclusion

Rationale: According to the *Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)*, every child who is eligible for special education services is entitled to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Therefore, preschool children with disabilities should be afforded the opportunity to participate and interact with their peers who do not have disabilities in natural settings. Such settings include, but are not limited to, home and family, play groups, child care, nursery schools, Head Start programs, kindergarten and neighborhood school classrooms (CEC-DEC). Many positive outcomes have been reported that support these practices, including increased performance of children with disabilities and improved classroom behavior, as well as, positive effects on the attitudes of typically developing students concerning children with disabilities.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: Children with disabilities are included in general education classrooms to the maximum extent possible.

Indicators:

- Children with disabilities are placed in general education classes in the proportion that they are found in the district's general population.
"Fully met" would require the placement of approximately 1-2 children with special needs in a general education classroom.
- Master teacher inclusion specialists are employed and have specialized knowledge in inclusion practices and provisions.
- The master teacher inclusion specialist provides appropriate guidance and information to general education teachers regarding inclusion strategies.
- The general educators are trained to adapt curriculum and materials to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
- Support services are in place to support individual student needs (e.g. occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech, preschool intervention and referral specialists).
- The classroom teacher collaborates with the parents, master teacher, preschool intervention and referral specialist, and child study team.
- The classroom teacher participates in all meetings of the IEP process (Identification meeting, Eligibility meeting, IEP Planning and Development meeting, and the Annual Review meeting).

Sources of Information:

- Professional development plans
- Master teacher schedule and anecdotes
- Planning schedules
- Meeting schedules
- Database

Program Area:

Inclusion continued

- Two-Year Instructional Priorities Report
- List of attendees of IEP meeting
- Meeting minutes

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Integrated therapies are offered within the general education class.

Indicators:

- Therapies are carried out within the regular activities of the classroom.
- Therapists work directly within the classroom, modeling for the classroom teacher and providing consultation.

Sources of Information:

- Schedules of therapies
- Planning and consultation time
- Classroom observations
- Contracts with outside consultants

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: Administrative supports are in place that facilitate inclusion.

Indicators:

- Meetings between early childhood and special education departments are regularly scheduled.
- Opportunities for collaboration and consultation among teachers, therapists, child study teams and preschool intervention and referral teams are built into school schedule.
- Horizontal articulation that facilitates inclusion takes place regularly between district-operated programs and provider programs.
- Classroom teachers use and have ongoing access to the written IEP.

Sources of Information:

- Schedule of meetings
- Minutes
- Lesson Plans

Program Area:
Transition

Rationale: Transition is an ongoing process that should facilitate and maintain continuity between programs. Preparing families for the transition process helps to orient them to the program, anticipate services based on each child's needs and provides valuable insight to information about the child and family.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: A plan has been developed for transition of children from the preschool program into kindergarten.

Indicators:

- There is on-going communication between the preschool and kindergarten programs.
- Results of the ELAS (Early Learning Assessment System) or other performance-based assessments along with other information about the child are shared with the kindergarten teacher (e.g., medical records).
- Specific transition activities are conducted for families, such as visits to the kindergarten classrooms, distributing home learning activities for the summer months, and dissemination of information to parents about kindergarten through meetings, workshops, written correspondence, etc.
- The plan is evaluated for effectiveness.

Sources of Information:

- Two-Year Report on Instructional Reports
- Parent Handbook
- Parent surveys, teacher surveys and analysis of those surveys.
- Written correspondence
- Meetings dates and minutes with special education, early intervention, bilingual, preschool supervisors, and kindergarten administrators.
- Examples of transition materials (performance-based assessments/ELAS portfolios)

Program Area:
Transition Continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Transition activities are planned for children entering the preschool program from early intervention and other settings.

Indicators:

- Flexible scheduling and planning provide different opportunities for families to learn about the preschool program, such as open houses, spring orientation, and individual meetings with families.
- Early intervention, preschool and special education staff collaborate to meet the needs of children with disabilities entering the preschool program from early intervention.
- Access to general education classes is available to students who are transitioning from early intervention during the school year.

Sources of Information:

- Two-Year Report on Instructional Reports
- Parent Handbook
- Meeting dates
- Written correspondence
- Meetings dates and minutes with special education, early intervention, bilingual, preschool supervisors, and kindergarten administrators.
- Examples of transition materials (performance-based assessments/ELAS portfolios)
- Early intervention reports

Section III: Professional Development

Program Area: *Professional Development*

Rationale: The preschool program should carry out a professional development plan directly related to the district’s mission and chosen curriculum. It should include provisions for systematic ongoing training and be based on research on adult learning and children’s development. It should be based on a professional development needs assessment using classroom observation instruments. Staff development geared specifically to the findings should be an integral part of the overall plan. Professional development should be focused on helping children meet the standards outlined in the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* and should be available for districts and provider teachers alike. Aspects of the professional development plan should be specifically designed for instructional, non-instructional, and administrative staff.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: Structured classroom observation instruments are used to determine areas for professional development.

Indicators:

- A structured observation instrument or set of instruments is used to measure quality practices in preschool classrooms.
- The aggregated data from the structured observations is used to plan for professional development.
- Specific areas of strength and weakness are identified and communicated to the entire early childhood program.

Sources of Information:

- Early Learning Improvement Consortium (ELIC) reports (aggregated from structured observations)
- Master teachers’ aggregated data from structured observations (i.e. ECERS- R, PQA, SELA, PCMI, Classroom Implementation Checklist)
- Curriculum implementation reports
- Agendas or correspondence to ECAC (ex: newsletter) to show planning

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: A cohesive professional development system is implemented for instructional, non-instructional, and administrative staff.

Indicators:

- The focus for professional development is to improve implementation of the district’s curriculum.

Program Area:

Professional Development continued

- The 100 hours of professional development, over a five-year period for all certified district and provider teachers, are based on participants' identified needs and are integrated into the district's professional development plan.
- A database is used to document teacher professional development.
- Appropriate district and provider administrators, including early childhood supervisors and building principals, receive annual training in topics including the district's chosen curriculum, the Expectations, ELAS, evaluating and observing preschool teachers both formally and informally, and adult-child interaction.
- Supervisors offer professional development to their principals and directors (i.e. study groups, focused learning walks, training sessions, team-building, action research).
- Preschool intervention and referral teams, social workers, and their administrators, are aware of, and implement appropriate assessments and intervention methods for young children.
- Specialists (music, art, physical education, etc), if employed by the district, receive training in the specific expectations in their areas for working with young children and developmentally appropriate practices are reflected in their lesson plans.
- Support staff, including lunch assistants, custodians, and , receive information about interacting with young children, and are given an overview of the curriculum.

Sources of Information:

- Professional development plan
- Agendas/Sign-in sheets
- Supervisors, principals, and directors' observations/evaluations
- PIPs
- Database
- Certificates
- Visits to other districts implementing the same curriculum

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: Master teachers fulfill the roles and responsibilities outlined in the *Abbott Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines* (New Jersey Department of Education, 2003).

Indicators:

- Master teachers provide direct professional development training/workshops for teachers and paraprofessionals.

Program Area:

Professional Development continued

- Master teachers model, coach, provide feedback and follow-up to teachers in preschool programs regarding developmentally appropriate practice and the district's chosen curriculum. Peer coaching is the master teacher's primary responsibility.
- Master teachers provide individualized follow-up and support for concepts presented in workshops.
- Master teachers systematically plan and document interactions with teaching staff, directors, and principals.
- Master teachers with specific expertise (e.g. inclusion, bilingual education, math curriculum) provide consultation to other master teachers, and to teachers district-wide when appropriate.

Sources of Information

- Professional development via workshops and meetings with teachers
- Daily or weekly logs
- Master teacher credentials and/or resumes
- Written feedback with indication of follow-up visits

Program Area:
Staff Qualifications

Rationale: “The quality of the staff is the most important determinant of the quality of an early childhood program,” (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1998). Not only is it important for preschool classrooms to be staffed with individuals that have experience with young children, but also staff should have certification specific to early childhood. It is vital that all assistant teachers have at least at minimum, a high school diploma or the equivalent.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: All teachers must have appropriate credentials and appropriate certification (Standard Certificate; Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, or Certificate of Eligibility).

Indicators:

- A database is used to document teacher credentials, consistent enrollment, adequate performance in college courses and mentoring plans.
“Fully met” would require districts to have an electronic data base.

Sources of Information:

- Database
- Updated resumes of all teaching staff
- Certificates
- Mentoring plans

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: In-district and community provider teachers and assistants receive on-going evaluations and reviews.

Indicator:

- Steps and procedures to assess practice and facilitate professional development are in place and are clearly defined.
- Steps and procedures for removal from a position are in place and are clearly defined.

Sources of Information:

- Evaluation form
- Procedures for removal

Program Area:
Staff Qualifications continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: All assistant teachers have a high school diploma or equivalent, and have or are working towards a CDA or associate degree where applicable.

Indicators:

- The district encourages assistant teaches to further their professional development and training.
- Assistant teachers working in a school-wide Title 1 school must meet No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements.
- A database is used to document the credentials of assistant teachers and any professional development training received.
“Fully met” would require districts to have an electronic database.
- Assistant teachers are able to communicate with teachers, children, and parents using English.

Sources of Information:

- Database
- On-site training opportunities
- Tuition reimbursement policies
- Assistant teacher salary scale

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

NA

Criterion 4: All existing and new directors of private providers, at a minimum, have completed the DHS-required Director’s Academy and have, or are pursuing, higher education in early childhood and business/accounting principles.

Indicator:

- Database is used to track participation in the Director’s Academy sponsored by DHS, directors experience and education attainment.
“Fully met” would require districts to have an electronic database.
- All Directors have completed the Director’s Academy

Sources of Information:

- Database
- Director certificate
- Diplomas and transcripts
- Years of experience documentation

Program Area:
Staff Qualifications continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 5: Master teachers meet recommended qualifications.

Indicators:

- Master teachers have received or are working towards becoming an Early Childhood Professional Development fellow.
- Within the group of master teachers, there is expertise in bilingual education, special education, diverse learners, and cross-curricular education.
- All master teachers have an appropriate instructional certificate and accompanying experience as prescribed in NJAC 6A:10A 2.2-14.

Sources of Information:

- Master teacher qualifications/resumes
- Rosters of attendance at master teacher seminar

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

NA

Criterion 6: All family workers have a high school diploma or equivalent, and have or are working toward the Family Development Credential (FDC).

Indicators:

- A database is used to track the credentials of family workers.
“Fully met” would require districts to have an electronic database.

Sources of Information:

- Database

Section IV: Program and Child Evaluation

Program Area:

Child Assessment and Screening

Rationale: Developmentally appropriate assessment of young children includes multiple types of assessment that serve different functions. (NAEYC Position Statement 2004.) In Abbott Preschool Programs, two types of assessment are required. The first is an on-going, authentic assessment of the child's development in the context of the classroom environment. This evidence may include records of children's conversations, their drawings, constructions, photographs, and anecdotal notes indicative of their development. This performance-based assessment is used to help educators determine appropriate activities and interactions. The second type of required assessment is used to identify those who may need further diagnostic assessment. It is required that all three- and four-year-old children in an Abbott preschool program be administered a developmental screening. This information is never used to determine or deny placement. Rather, it is used to determine if a child requires further evaluation. No other type of assessment is appropriate in preschool except those used for program evaluation. For that purpose, only randomly selected samples of children should be tested and rigorous research design must be followed.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: The Early Learning Assessment System (or other Department approved performance based system) is used appropriately and regularly to support each child's unique learning and development growth.

Indicators:

- Portfolios of children's work are kept on a regular basis for every child and clearly illustrate and document children's development over a period of time.
- Observations of children are intentional and use some of the following techniques while documenting progress across domains: work samples, photography (with permission), narrative description, anecdotes, videotaping, and tape recording.
- Information gathered about children is used when planning instruction and daily activities. *Lesson plans should be evaluated for the connection between assessment and instruction. Look at examples of professional development that target how to inform instruction. Look for logs that show in-class support.*
- The collections and observations are used in communications with both parents and staff (e.g., child study team, special educators, and therapists). *Look at documentation from parent/teacher conferences, communication with therapists and/or child study team members.*
- The results of the performance-based assessment are considered when planning professional development activities to further enhance teaching practices (e.g. information on supporting English language learners' language arts/literacy skills). *Look at master teacher logs, and examine whether aggregated data has informed professional development and in-class support.*

Program Area:

Child Assessment and Screening continued

- Items in children’s portfolios are clearly aligned with the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality*.
- Procedures are in place to ensure reliable collection of child information through portfolio review meetings and professional development.

Sources of Information:

- Portfolios/folios
- Written observations
- Other Performance-based Assessments (e.g., Developmental Continuum, Work Sampling System, Child Observation Record)
- Written communications and plan
- ELAS training plans
- Procedures to ensure reliability
- National Association for the Education of Young Children “Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 through 8” (NAEYC Position Statement, November 2003)

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: A system of screening is in place. Screening instruments are carefully selected and used appropriately.

Indicators:

- Screening instruments are administered upon entry or within the first few weeks of school.
- Appropriate classroom staff are trained in administering the screening instrument and adhere to the screening protocol.
- Only screening instruments with the following characteristics are used (Meisels & Atkins-Burnett, 1994).
 1. They sample development tasks rather than academic readiness skills.
 2. They focus on performance in a wide range of language, cognition, perception, affect (social-emotional), gross, and fine motor skills.
 3. They include information about how the test was developed, the sample population, and its validity and reliability.
- Screening is used to determine if further evaluation is necessary; it is never used as a sole means of identifying children needing special services.
- Screening is not used as a pre-test/post-test measure for child or program evaluation.

Program Area:

Child Assessment and Screening continued

- The protocol for the screening instrument is carefully followed. Children who fall below the predetermined cutoff, after parental consent, are referred to the preschool intervention and referral team or child study team (via written referral) for further, more in-depth evaluation.
- Parents are advised as to the purpose and results of the screening, and notified both before and after the screening takes place.
- Screening instruments are given in a child's primary language.

Sources of Information:

- Spreadsheet or table with data (number of re-screens and referrals to CST)
- Sample of written referral and follow-up form
- Samples of parent communications
- Samples of Child Study Team communications
- Screening instruments
- SAVS Improvement Plan 2005-2006
- National Association for the Education of Young Children "Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 through 8" (NAEYC Position Statement, November 2004)

Program Area:
Program Evaluation

Rationale: Program evaluation should be on-going and include the input of the Early Childhood Advisory Council, administrators, provider and district teachers, aides, parents, and other support staff. All forms of program evaluation should be set up in a manner that allows honest and anonymous input. Information gathered from program evaluations should be used to improve the quality of the program, as well as, identify and building upon strengths.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: A self-study is completed with guidance provided by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Indicators:

- The goals and objectives recommended in the SAVS Improvement Plan have been implemented.

Sources of Information:

- 2006 SAVS Improvement Plan
- Lesson plans
- Logs
- Professional development
- Any evidence/information relevant to implementation of SAVS Improvement Plan goals and objectives.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: The preschool program is evaluated annually.

Indicators:

- Early Childhood Advisory Council, administrators, provider and district teachers, aides, parents, and other support staff, are an integral part of the evaluation process.
- The advisory council assists when analyzing collected data and makes program adjustments as necessary.
- Data from the Early Learning Improvement Consortium (ELIC) Report, district formal evaluations and other information is analyzed to identify programmatic strengths and areas in need of improvement.
- Performance-based assessment data is used to inform professional development plans.

Program Area:
Program Evaluation

Sources of Information:

- Surveys
- Minutes of staff and advisory council meetings
- SAVS Improvement Plans 2005-2006
- Evaluation report
- ELIC report

Section V: Community Collaboration

Program Area:

Community Collaboration

Rationale: It is considerably easier for children to develop and learn with the support of strong families who, in turn, enjoy the support of individuals and institutions in their surrounding communities. When families, schools, and community institutions (e.g. local businesses, community colleges, and health agencies) collectively agree upon their goals and decide how to reach them, everyone benefits. Effective collaborative relationships require communication that values and respects the opinion, perspectives, and rights of each partner. Ultimately, everyone in the district and community should understand that he/she is part of the same program.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: The Early Childhood Advisory Council includes appropriate and diverse community representatives, meets regularly, and is integrally involved in advising on the preschool program.

Indicators:

- The advisory council is representative of the community and may include, but is not limited to the following groups: private providers, higher education, mental health agencies, private sector, kindergarten/first grade teachers, NAACP, social service providers, Head Start agencies, and child and family advocates.
- The advisory council includes a representative of the DOE, Office of Early Childhood Education as an ex-officio member.
- The community and parent involvement specialist staffs the advisory council and oversees/facilitates the community needs assessment.

Sources of Information:

- Advisory council membership roster
- Advisory council action plan (designated responsibilities)
- Advisory council bylaws
- Agendas
- Minutes
- Sign-In Sheets
- Job description

Program Area:
Community Collaboration continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: There are regularly scheduled meetings with providers, including Head Start.

Indicators:

- Meetings include provider directors, Head Start directors, and when appropriate, principals and vice principals.
- There is a system in place to make certain that minutes are taken at each meeting and distributed for review.
- Provide professional development for educational leaders of centers.

Sources of Information:

- Meeting dates
- Minutes
- Sign-In Sheets
- Agendas

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: The needs and goals of the community are being met.

Indicators:

- A community assessment has taken place and identifies community needs.
- Records that document how the program utilizes resources in the community are available.

Sources of Information:

- Community needs assessment summary
- Referrals to community resources
- Collaboration agreements/joint initiatives with community agencies/organizations

Program Area:
Parent Involvement

Rationale: Supportive partnerships around the child provide the type of environment in which families, schools, and the community work together to achieve and sustain shared goals for children. On-going communication and interaction encourages appropriate and effective learning opportunities for children. A well-defined plan is required for incorporating a wide range of family involvement and educational opportunities into the preschool program. With systematic coordination between home and school, we can more meaningfully support all aspects of the child's life. If educators and parents work together, children have a greater chance of reaching their maximum potential.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: There are multiple opportunities for parents to be involved.

Indicators:

- District-wide parent involvement activities are coordinated by the Community/Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) in conjunction with the family workers and social workers.
- Parents volunteer in the classroom as helpers or by contributing and participating in other ways.
- Parent meetings and workshops are offered at convenient times in order to allow for greater participation.
- Parent activities are culturally diverse and multilingual.
- Parents are represented in the Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Sources of Information:

- Family worker/social worker weekly logs/reports
- Parent involvement plan
- Parent volunteer schedule/sign-in sheet
- Parent workshop agendas
- ECAC sign in sheets/minutes

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Direct two-way communication with parents takes place regularly.

Indicators:

- Flexible scheduling is available for parent-teacher conferences.
- Parents receive a procedure and policy handbook.
- Written communication related to the child is presented in the home language used as necessary.

Program Area:

Parent Involvement continued

- Information about the child and feedback about the program is solicited from the parents at school entry and throughout the year.
- Families are offered at least three annual home/personal/center visits by the family worker in provider sites.

Sources of Information:

- Parent handbook
- Parent/teacher conference records
- Teacher log of parent contacts
- Registration/enrollment form
- Attendance records
- Family worker logs

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: Family workers and/or social workers are active participants in the preschool program.

Indicators:

- The Community/Parent Involvement Specialist has organized a system to communicate regularly with family workers and social workers to ensure that information is shared and collaboration occurs.
- Family workers, social workers, and Community/Parent Involvement Specialists work together to assist parents with obtaining services within the school district and the community.
- There is an organized system in place for families to request the services of family workers and social workers as needed.

Sources of Information:

- Weekly log/schedule
- Parent survey
- Parent visitor logs
- Community needs assessment
- Meeting minutes
- Community resources and parent referrals

Section VI: Support Services

Program Area: *Head Start*

Rationale: In Abbott VIII (February 2002), the New Jersey Supreme Court made clear its mandate to fully include in Abbott preschool those children served in federally-funded Head Start programs. To avoid “duplicate[ing] programs or services otherwise available in the community,” as required by *N.J.A.C. 6A:24-3.3(b)*, districts should utilize Head Start providers unless they are not “able and willing to comply” with Abbott preschool standards, or unless the cost of doing so is demonstrably more expensive than other high-quality alternatives. The DOE need not offer additional funding for services designed to meet federal regulations unless there is a need to improve those services to meet state standards.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

NA

Criterion 1: All Abbott-eligible children served by Head Start are included in the district program.

Indicators:

- The number of children served by the district contract is the full Abbott-eligible number of Head Start children residing in the district.
- Accurate enrollment data is collected, maintained, and updated as needed.

Sources of Information:

- Attendance records

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Administrative supports are in place that facilitate collaboration practices.

Indicators:

- Joint pre-service and professional development sessions are held to address curriculum issues.
- Joint discussions are held to determine who will lead teacher training, and topics to be covered are a shared decision.
- All staff members are aware of the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* and use for lesson planning.
- Head Start/Abbott teaching staff attends district-sponsored training.
- The district has verified that current teachers and teacher assistants are properly credentialed
- The district has been provided a copy of classroom inventory in Head Start/Abbott classrooms.

Sources of Information:

- Education service plan
- Minutes
- Sign-in sheets
- Attendance records
- Classroom inventories (materials and supplies)
- Teacher database

Program Area:
Health, Safety, and Food Services

Rationale: “The provision of a safe and healthy environment is essential. No amount of good curriculum planning or positive adult-child interaction can compensate for an environment that is dangerous for children. Good-quality early childhood programs act to prevent illness and accidents, are prepared to deal with emergencies should they occur, and also educate children concerning safe and healthy practices” (NAEYC, 1998). Children must also receive proper nutrition and learn safety procedures and healthy eating habits within and outside of the classroom environment.

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 1: The educational process is strengthened and facilitated by improving and protecting the health status of children.

Indicators:

- The program is designed to help children reach and maintain the *Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality* for health, safety, and physical education..
- Individual child health records are up-to-date and allergies or other health issues are clearly stated.
- Nurses are available at a ratio of 1:300 students and serve district and provider children.
- Parents and teachers receive a written policy related to child illness and school attendance.
- Health examinations are conducted for each Abbott child entering preschool: blood pressure, vision, hearing, dental, height, and weight screenings.
- Parents are notified when documented health concerns are identified with their child. A follow-up referral is recommended and parents are assisted in locating medical and health resources.

Sources of Information:

- Policy handbook or parent handbook
- ECERS- R
- Current license/inspection: DCF
- Evidence of referrals and correspondence to parents
- Health training for staff (CPR, fire safety, emergency evacuation)
- Needs assessment
- A comparison of ECERS-R, curriculum-specific and performance-based instrument data to the relevant Expectations

Program Area:

Health, Safety, and Food Services continued

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 2: Supports and practices facilitate health, safety, and food services.

Indicators:

- Parent education includes regular health education topics designed to meet the unique needs of families enrolled in the program.
- Information identified through a community needs assessment is incorporated in planning the health education process for children, families, and staff.
- All adults who work in the classroom are required to have a full health appraisal including tuberculosis screening prior to beginning employment.
- Emergency procedures are written, and appropriate training has been provided to staff and/or children, as needed.

Sources of Information:

- Policy handbook or parent handbook
- ECERS- R
- Current license/inspection: DCF
- Evidence of referrals and correspondence to parents
- Health training for staff (CPR, fire safety, emergency evacuation)
- Needs assessment

Not Yet

In Progress

Fully Met

Criterion 3: Children receive adequate nutrition.

Indicators:

- Weekly/monthly menu outlining both meals and snacks meet the nutritional requirements recommended by the Child Care Food Program of the United States Department of Agriculture.
- Weekly/monthly menus are available for parents.
- Parents are given guidelines and policies related to nutrition.
- Evidence that menus have been reviewed by school nurses.
- Nutrition workshops are provided.

Program Area:

Health, Safety, and Food Services continued

Sources of Information:

- ECERS- R, if available
- Weekly menus indicating breakfast, lunch, snacks are offered
- Review log of menus
- Needs assessments
- Newsletters
- Menu reviews by nurses

Supporting References

Office of Early Childhood Education – New Jersey Department of Education (2003). *Abbott Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines*. Trenton, NJ: New Jersey Department of Education.

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