

Please insert the following information:

District Name:
County:
Date of Submission:

Self-Assessment Validation System (SAVS)
for school districts formerly known as Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA)
districts and Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI) districts
2012-2013

New Jersey Department of Education
Division of Early Childhood Education
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David C. Hespe, Commissioner of Education

Division of Early Childhood Education

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This document continues in its tradition of collaboration by including input from stakeholders chosen for their diversity and expertise in the field of early childhood education and their unwavering commitment to the children of the state of New Jersey.

Prior to the inception of the Self-Assessment Validation System (SAVS) in its inaugural year of 2003-04, the following groups and individuals met and contributed to the development of this document:

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Ellen Frede conceptualized, designed and edited the system. Robin Wilkins served as the lead coordinator of the process, guiding districts since the 2003-04 inaugural year and overseeing revisions made for the 2004-05 system. Tonia Davis has coordinated the system over the last four years. Minor revisions to the document and to the 2006-07 versions were made by the following members of the office: Tonya Hall-Coston, David Joye, Susan Bruder, Tonia Davis, Karin Garver, Karen Nemeth, Eric Rodney, Rosanne Hansel, Jessica Peters, Elizabeth Vaughan, Ellen Wolock, and Renee Whelan. In addition to the staff of the Office of Preschool Education, the following individuals were part of a task force that reviewed and made revisions to the document in order to streamline the validation process for districts and validations teams for the 2007-08 year: Nancee Bleistine-Vineland school district, Barbara Diaz-Passaic school district, Amy Goerl-Keansburg school district, Beatrix Mendez-Garfield school district, Celeste Merriweather-Bridgeton school district, Colleen Molleo-Passaic school district, Denise Sanders-New Brunswick school district and Rainie Roncoroni-Phillipsburg school district. Finally, the Office of Preschool Education also wishes to acknowledge Patricia Demarco-Rowe for her extensive involvement in the 2003-04 and 2004-05 SAVS process as well as Jeanette Byrd, Lisa Cuff, Patricia McMillan, Kathleen Priestley, Diane Shoener and Wei-min Wang for their contributions.

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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 is rated by placing a check mark in only one of the boxes. Explanations of ratings are 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: Program Planning and Administration

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. When relevant, the fiscal specialist should help private providers develop their program budgets, monitor compliance with the contract, and collect and report teacher tracking and certification information.

Criterion 1: Administrators overseeing the preschool program facilitate the development, articulation, and implementation of the DOE approved program plan that is shared and supported by the school community.

Indicators:

- A.** All dedicated in-district early childhood administrators (directors, supervisors, principals etc.) hold the appropriate New Jersey Supervisor’s Certificate or New Jersey Principal’s Certificate, have experience in preschool education and participate in annual training specific to preschool program planning and implementation and the school district’s comprehensive preschool curriculum , pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.1.
“All dedicated administrators” means administrators that appear on the budget in full or in part.
- B.** 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).

Sources of Information:

- Copies of Credentials for early childhood administrators
- Evidence/examples of issues identified and addressed through ongoing communications with district departments
- Written plans, policies, systems developed as outcomes
- Data analyses
- E-mails, logs and meeting agendas and minutes

- Evidence of attendance by administrators, community provider directors, staff, teachers at various early childhood meetings, trainings.

Admin Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validate ___</p> <p>Not Validate ___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Criterion 2: Administrators overseeing the preschool program ensure implementation of professional development opportunities for teachers, staff, community provider directors (as applicable), and other administrators to support professional growth.

Indicators:

- A.** Administrators from other district department(s)/office(s) participate in relevant preschool meetings and training to enhance their knowledge base.
“Fully met” would require more than one district department/office to participate in on-going early childhood meetings or training.
“In progress” would require one district department/office to participate in on-going early childhood meetings or training.
- B.** Individual and collective planning with staff by early childhood administrators results in delivery of a professional development program.
- C.** Teacher evaluations completed by community provider directors (as applicable) and principals support the professional growth of teachers and reflect the measurement of best practice in teaching young children.
- D.** Early childhood supervisors/contacts attend DOE-sponsored workshops and meetings.
- E.** Early childhood administrators provide feedback to teachers specific to curriculum implementation and classroom quality.

Sources of Information:

- Electronic professional development database
- Written examples of attendance to professional development trainings/meetings
- Workshop evaluations completed by district administrators

- Memos
- Action plans
- Professional Development Plan

Admin Criterion 2 Ratings

District Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validate ____ Not Validate ____
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

The following criteria are relevant for districts that contract with preschool providers. 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 (e.g. business administrator)

Criterion 3: 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:

- A.** The fiscal specialist provides examples of analyses performed on private provider quarterly expenditure reports and annual external audits from the Office of Fiscal Accountability and Compliance. These analyses compare actual spending to budgeted appropriations to ensure that monies are spent as intended.
- B.** The fiscal specialist conducts analyses on all submitted preschool budgets to ensure conformity with DOE regulations (FTE/salary analysis, indirect costs, materials/supplies, etc).
- D.** The fiscal specialist provides training and assistance to providers on budget development, accounting, and expense reporting.
- E.** Analyses of quarterly expenditure reports are completed shortly after submission, allowing for the timely recoupment of funds based on actual expenditures.
- F.** Provider budget transfers are reviewed and tracked by the school district.

Sources of Information:

- Quarterly financial reports
- Evidence of meetings with providers
- Completed budget transfer forms and correspondence
- Examples of provider budget analysis

Admin Criterion 3 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Recruitment and Outreach:

Rationale: All three- and four-year-old children, including children with disabilities residing in districts that receive state funding for preschool, are eligible for services. Issues such as toilet training, immigration status, and other individual circumstances cannot prevent a child from receiving services. 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 the most effective public information strategies for its community.

Criterion 1: Multiple recruitment strategies are being used.

Indicators:

- A.** 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. .
- B.** 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 (must contain Child Find information).
- C.** Research has been conducted to determine which recruitment method(s) 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:

- Samples of strategies/materials used for outreach and recruitment
- Child Find outreach activities
- Data to show that research of recruitment methods has been conducted

Recruit. & Outreach Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validate ___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate ___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

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

Indicators:

- A.** A preschool enrollment form is used during registration. Age and residency are the primary factors used to determine a child’s eligibility.
- B.** Translators or forms are available in the home languages for families whose first language is not English.

Sources of Information:

- Enrollment forms/registration packets
- Residency verification
- Sign-in sheets for translators

Recruit. & Outreach Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Criterion 1: Facilities meet the needs of preschool children.

Indicators:

- A. Preschool classrooms are not higher than the second floor of a facility or in basements.
- B. The majority of classrooms meet the space requirement of 750 square feet of usable space, 150 square feet of storage and equipment or furnishings that are either built in or not easily movable and 50 square feet for a bathroom.
- C. All preschool classrooms have bathrooms that are in or just outside of the classroom.
- D. Classrooms are equipped with sinks and child-height amenities (paper towel holders, toilets, etc.).
- E. Preschool children have access to a developmentally appropriate playground at all locations.

Sources of Information:

- Facilities assessment based on a needs assessment (Indicators and Standards for Improving Schools-ISIS) conducted by the district board of education
- Survey results
- ECERS-R evaluations

Facilities Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validate ___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate ___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Section II: Curriculum and Classroom Practices

Curriculum:

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 curriculum.

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

Indicator:

- A.** The preschool curriculum is research based Please list curriculum in the following space

_____.
Fully-met" would require districts to have implemented High Scope, Creative Curriculum, and Tools of the Mind, t or Curiosity Corner or as indicated in January 2009 program and budget approval letter

Curriculum & Program Criterion 1 Ratings

District Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validate ____ Not Validate ____
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

Criterion 2: The curriculum is being implemented as intended.

Indicators:

- A.** Lesson plans show that the 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.
- B.** 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.
- C.** Teachers/master teachers receive professional development from both the curriculum developer and other district staff that enable them to implement the curriculum as intended.

Sources of Information:

- Lesson plans
- Curriculum developer reports
- Master teachers logs if applicable
- Professional development plan
- Aggregated data reports showing the results from in-district classroom observations conducted using a structured classroom instrument

Curriculum & Program Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Supporting English Language Learners:

Rationale: Best practice and research dictate that both English and the child’s home language should be actively supported to facilitate language and literacy development during the crucial preschool years (August, Diane & Shanahan, Timothy (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.). 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.

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

Indicators:

- A.** Classrooms are equipped with literacy materials in the home languages of the children in the class.
- B.** Administrative support ensures that all directors, building principals and classroom teachers receive results of the home language survey.
- C.** 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
- Structured program observation instruments
- Classroom inventory lists
- Photographs
- Classroom materials (purchased, hand-made or borrowed) and supply orders
- Child portfolios
- Home language survey or results

ELL Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__</p>	<p>Validate____</p> <p>Not Validate____</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Criterion 2: Teachers receive appropriate supports to meet the needs of dual language learners.

Indicators:

- A.** 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.
- B.** The master teacher/coach or designee specializing in bilingual education models, coaches and provides feedback to teachers in how to facilitate language acquisition, and to promote oral language in the preschool setting. In smaller districts, this may be a function of a coach that has received specialized training to provide support for teachers in this area.
- C.** Teachers receive professional development in general language development, individual differences in second-language learning, best practices for scaffolding to English, as well as sensitivity to cultural backgrounds.

Sources of Information:

- Written feedback to teachers
- Professional development via workshops or meetings
- Samples of resources provided to teachers
- Lesson plans

ELL Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validate ___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate ___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Criterion 3: Families of dual language learners receive adequate support in the preschool program.

Indicators:

- A.** Families are made aware of the importance of maintaining both English and home languages.
- B.** District staff as well as parent or community volunteers, provide home language translation, explain cultural issues to program staff and assist with outreach to families as needed.
“Fully met” would require districts to support the predominant language of all families.

Sources of Information:

- Samples of parent communication (ex. newsletter)
- Parent workshops/classes
- Translator sign-up sheets

ELL Criterion 3 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validate ___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate ___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

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 address potential learning difficulties and challenging behaviors of preschool children early on. Specific support from preschool intervention specialists in strategies and interventions to reduce these issues will allow more preschoolers to successfully participate in a general education preschool program.

Criterion 1: A preschool intervention and referral team (PIRT) is fully staffed and functioning according to the *New Jersey Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines*. Small districts have designated staff that fulfills the function of the team.

Indicators:

- A.** An established protocol requesting assistance from the intervention team staff clearly outlines who can request assistance, 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.
- B.** Preschool intervention team collaborates with the general education teachers and master teachers/coaches, supervisors, and other professionals (special education, nurses, school based social worker etc).
- C.** Intervention team meets with families and caregivers to obtain necessary support, information and documentation to support intervention and positive behavior supports plans (PBS) at home and school.
- D.** The intervention team specialists assist with transitions from one program/grade to another for students that required assistance.
- E.** The district board of education collects data on the number of children served by the intervention team and the number of children referred to the child study team for formal evaluation.
- F.** All intervention team members have early childhood experience or education and have received training in a developmentally-appropriate, research-based curriculum model approved by the DOE such as the Positive Behavior Supports (PBS).

Sources of Information:

- Written protocol to request the assistance of PIRT, including timelines
- Tracking system for each PIRT member's caseload and subsequent referrals to CST
- PIRT Logs
- Parent meeting, interview and phone logs
- Meeting minutes and agendas
- Sign-in sheets and the agendas for professional development (ex. PBS)
- Professional development plan showing the professional development PIRT receives and delivers
- PIRT team resumes/credentials

Intervention & Support Criterion 1 Ratings

District Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validate ___ Not Validate ___
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

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

Indicators:

- A.** Observes, consults, provides feedback and models appropriate strategies and interventions to teachers and master teachers or designee.
- B.** Writes clear intervention plans that are followed by the teacher and modifies the intervention plans as needed throughout the year.
- C.** Coordinates and provides yearly professional development to all preschool staff and parents on the district’s social and emotional curriculum, the four levels of the pyramid model and Positive Behavior Supports as needed and in accordance with the early childhood professional development plan.

Sources of Information:

- Weekly schedules, logs
- Meeting notes
- Professional development plan showing professional development PIRT receives and delivers
- Positive Behavior Support Implementation Plan samples
- Intervention plans samples
- Case file samples

Intervention & Support Criterion 2 Ratings

District Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validate ___ Not Validate ___
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

Inclusion:

Rationale: Inclusion for young children with disabilities and typically developing children has been based on a three-part rationale (Bricker, 1978): First is that the regular education curriculum and access to a typically developing peer group will provide learning opportunities that do not exist in special education classes containing only children with disabilities (Bricker, 1995). Second, public law recommends that, to the extent possible, children with disabilities receive a free, appropriate education in settings that are typical and that include same-aged peers. This "least restrictive environment" provision appeared in the original law that ensured educational services for children with disabilities (P. L. 94-142) and the subsequent reenactments of the law (PL. 99-457, P. L. 102-119). Third, many individuals see the inclusion of a child in a center or class in his or her community or neighborhood as the most appropriate and ethical placement, given that it meets the child's and family's needs. (Odom, Peck, Hanson, Beckman, & Schwartz)

Criterion 1: Children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are included in general education classrooms and receive appropriate supports and services within the activities and routines of the preschool day

Indicators:

- A.** Once a child is referred to the Child Study Team for evaluation, the classroom teacher participates in all meetings during the IEP process and if the child is found eligible for special education and related services has ongoing access to the written IEP.
- B.** A review of the preschool day is comprehensive in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance section of the IEP as mandated by NJAC 6A:14-3.7 (11) and supports and services for the child are clearly listed in the IEP to assist the teacher to support the child's participation in the general education classroom routines and activities..
- C.** The option for placement of a child with an IEP in a general education classroom is available during the entire school year, specifically for children transitioning from the NJ Early Intervention System.
- D.** Related services and supports for the child that are listed in the IEP are primarily implemented during the routines and activities of the general education preschool day.
- E.** All teachers are trained to adapt curriculum, materials and activities to meet the needs of children with IEPs in their classrooms.

Sources of Information:

- October 15th count from Early Childhood
- October 15th count from Special Education placement data
- Current district placement data (to demonstrate program availability throughout the year)
- 3 Preschool Student IEPs (with student and family names removed) including one of the most recent IEPs completed by the Child Study Team.

Inclusion, Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Criterion 2: Administrative supports are in place to facilitate inclusion.

Indicators:

- A. Meetings between the early childhood and special education lead administrators occur at least 4 times per year. At least one of these meetings must include the Chief School Administrator. These meetings should focus on program implementation and long range needs of the districts and the evaluation of available data for developing district improvement and action plans.
- B. Meetings between the early childhood and special education department staff (supervisors, CST, PIRT, and Inclusion Specialists) occur monthly. These meetings should focus on issues of implementation of curriculum and specialized programs (PBS, LEAP etc.) as well as the collection and sharing of classroom evaluative data.
- C. Opportunities for collaboration and consultation among teachers, therapists, and child study teams are built into the program schedule.

Sources of Information:

- Meeting agendas, sign-in sheets and minutes for all meetings of the lead administrators
- Meeting agendas, sign-in sheets and minutes for three of the meetings of the department staff
- Program Schedule
- Professional development agenda and sign-in sheets specifically noting participation by CST, related service providers and special education teachers.

Inclusion, Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA___</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA___</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

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.

Criterion 1: Transition activities are planned for children entering the preschool program including early intervention and other settings.

Indicators:

- A.** Flexible scheduling and planning provide different opportunities for families to learn about the preschool program, such as open houses, and individual meetings with families.
- B.** Meeting minutes and/or correspondence show that early intervention, preschool and special education staff collaborate to meet the needs of children with disabilities entering the preschool program from early intervention and to place children in the least restrictive environment.
- C.** Families are informed about the district registration requirements, options for placement including general education classrooms and request forms inviting the Part C service coordinator from early intervention to the initial IEP meeting for children after the determination of eligibility.

Sources of Information:

- Parent Handbook
- Transition planning conferences meeting dates
- Meetings dates and minutes with special education, early intervention, bilingual, preschool supervisors, and kindergarten administrators.
- Examples of transition materials (performance-based assessments/ELAS portfolios)
- Copies of schedules and/or other written correspondences reflecting transition activities for families

Transition, Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Criterion 2: A plan has been developed for transition of children from the preschool program into kindergarten.

Indicators:

- A.** There is on-going communication between the preschool and kindergarten programs.
- B.** Results of performance-based assessments along with other information about the child are shared with the kindergarten teacher.
- C.** 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.

Sources of Information:

- Parent Handbook
- Copy of transition plan and updates and analysis of parent and teacher surveys.
- Meetings dates and minutes with transition committee, special education, early intervention, bilingual, preschool supervisors, and kindergarten administrators.
- Examples of transition materials (performance-based assessments/ELAS portfolios)

Transition, Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA ___</p>	<p>Validate ___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate ___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Section III: Professional Development

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.

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

Indicators:

- A.** A structured observation instrument or set of instruments is used to measure quality practices in preschool classrooms.
- B.** The aggregated data from the structured observations, along with results of performance based assessments are analyzed and used to plan for professional development.

Sources of Information:

- Aggregated data from structured observations (i.e. ECERS- R, PQA, SELA, PCMI, Classroom Implementation Checklist)
- Curriculum implementation reports (i.e. cc.net)
- Results from curriculum developer visits

Professional Development, Criterion 1 Ratings

District Rating	Validator Rating	Validate ___
Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___	Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___	Not
NA__	NA__	Validate ___
District Comments:	Validator Findings:	

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

Indicators:

- A.** The focus for professional development is to improve implementation of the district’s curriculum.
- B.** An electronic database is used to document teacher professional development for both in-district and provider teachers (as applicable).
- C.** Administrators, including early childhood supervisors, center directors and building principals, receive annual professional development in topics such as the district’s chosen curriculum, the Standards, performance-based assessment, evaluating and observing preschool teachers both formally and informally, and adult-child interaction.
- D.** Support staff, such as lunch assistants and specialists, receive information about developmentally appropriate practices and are given an overview of the curriculum.

Sources of Information:

- Copy of professional development plan and scheduled trainings
- Agendas/sign-in sheets from trainings
- Electronic professional development tracking system

Professional development, Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

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.

Criterion 1: All teachers must have appropriate credentials and appropriate certification pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.3.

Indicator:

- A.** An electronic database is used to track teacher credentials, consistent enrollment and adequate progress for P-3 candidates, and indicates that certification requirements are met. *“Fully met” would require districts to have an electronic data base.*

Sources of Information:

- Electronic database

Staff Qualifications, Criterion 1 Ratings

District Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validate ____ Not Validate ____
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

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

Indicators:

- A.** Steps and procedures to evaluate teacher and teacher assistant performance in-district and in the provider setting (if applicable) are in place and are clearly defined.
- B.** Steps and procedures for removal from a position in-district and in the provider setting (if provider settings are used) are in place and are clearly defined.

Sources of Information:

- Evaluation form, in-district and community providers

- Procedures for removal, in-district and community providers
- Employee handbooks, in-district and community providers

Staff Qualifications, Criterion 2 Ratings

District Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validate ___ Not Validate ___
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

Criterion 3: All assistant teachers have appropriate credentials as per district requirements and participate in on-going professional development.

Indicator:

- A.** An electronic database is used to document the credentials of assistant teachers and any professional development training received, and indicates appropriate credentials.
“Fully met” would require districts to have an electronic database.

Sources of Information:

- Electronic database

Staff Qualifications, Criterion 3 Ratings

District Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validate ___ Not Validate ___
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

Section IV: Program and Child Evaluation

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 high quality 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 assessment is used to identify those who may need further diagnostic assessment. Upon entry into the program, it is required that all three- and four-year-old children 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.

Criterion 1: A Department-approved performance-based system is used appropriately and regularly to support each child's unique learning and development growth.

Indicators:

- A.** 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.
- B.** Observations of children are intentional and use some of the following techniques while documenting progress across domains: work samples, photography, narrative description, anecdotes, videotaping, and tape recording.
- C.** 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.*
- D.** 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.*
- E.** 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/coach logs, and examine whether aggregated data has informed professional development and in-class support.*
- F.** Items in children's portfolios are clearly aligned with the New Jersey *Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards*.
- G.** 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
- Performance-based Assessments (e.g., Developmental Continuum, Work Sampling System, Child Observation Record)
- Procedures to ensure reliability

Child Assessment and Screening, Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ____ In Progress ____ Fully Met ____</p> <p>NA ____</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ____ In Progress ____ Fully Met ____</p> <p>NA ____</p>	<p>Validate ____</p> <p>Not Validate ____</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

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

Indicators:

- A.** Screening instruments are administered by classroom teachers upon entry to the program or within the first few weeks of school.
- B.** Only research based screening instruments that follow developmentally appropriate practice are used (e.g. ESI-R).
- C.** Screening is not used as a pre-test/post-test measure for child or program evaluation.
- D.** Families are advised as to the purpose and results of the screening, and notified both before and after the screening takes place.
- E.** Screening instruments are given in a child’s primary language.
- F.** Districts maintain an electronic database showing: students screened, students passing, students scoring within re-screen range, follow through for re-screen, students scoring referred, referrals to CST and outcomes of referral.

Sources of Information:

-
- Sample of written referral and follow-up form
- Samples of family communications informing them of screening purpose and results
- Copy of screening instruments
- Electronic database of screening information (number of re-screens and referrals to CST)

Child Assessment and Screening, Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate ___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate ___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

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.

Criterion 1: The preschool program is evaluated annually.

Indicators:

- A.** The advisory council participates and assists in the analyzing of collected data (e.g. Community Needs Assessment, and district classroom evaluations).
- B.** Results of classroom observations, parent surveys and teacher surveys are used in an annual evaluation of the district program.

Sources of Information:

- Aggregated data from classroom observations and family and teacher surveys
- Minutes of staff and advisory council meetings
- Evaluation report

Program Evaluation, Criterion 1 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Section V: Community Collaboration

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.

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:

- A.** 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.
- B.** The community and parent involvement specialist or other designee staffs the advisory council.
- C.** Minutes are taken at every meeting and distributed for review.

Sources of Information:

- Advisory council membership roster
- Agendas
- Minutes
- Sign-In sheets

Collaboration, Criterion 1 Ratings

District Rating	Validator Rating	Validate ___
Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___	Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___	Not
NA___	NA___	Validate ___
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

Criterion 2: There are regularly scheduled meetings with contracted providers and Head Start (as applicable).

Indicators:

- A.** Minutes are taken at each meeting and distributed for review.
- B.** Professional development is provided for directors of centers.
- C.** Providers meet regularly with district staff to discuss fiscal and program updates.

Sources of Information:

- Minutes
- Sign-In Sheets
- Agendas

Collaboration, Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet ___ In Progress ___ Fully Met ___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

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

Indicator:

- A.** A community needs assessment and/or family survey is conducted annually.

Sources of Evidence:

- Community needs assessment
- Aggregated data from various surveys (e.g. family, teacher, ECAC etc.)

Collaboration, Criterion 3 Ratings

District Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA___	Validator Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA___	Validate ___ Not Validate ___
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

Family 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 families work together, children have a greater chance of reaching their maximum potential.

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

Indicators:

- A.** District-wide family involvement activities are coordinated by the Community/Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS), or other staff member, in conjunction with the social workers and family workers if applicable.
- B.** Family meetings and workshops are designed to accommodate the individual languages and cultures of the families in the community.
- C.** There are numerous ways for families to be involved, from family-teacher conferences, and volunteer opportunities to family workshops and participation on the advisory council.
- D.** Family meetings are offered at various times of the day, helping to ensure that all families have the opportunity to attend.

Sources of Information:

- CPIS/family worker/social worker family meeting logs/reports
- Family volunteer schedule/sign-in sheet
- Family workshop agendas
- Minutes from collaborative planning meetings between family services staff

Parent Involvement, Criterion 1 Ratings

District Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validate ___ Not Validate ___
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

Criterion 2: Direct communication with families takes place regularly.

Indicators:

- A. Flexible scheduling is available for family-teacher conferences.
- B. Families receive a procedure and policy handbook.
- C. Written communication related to the child is presented in the home language as necessary.
- D. Information about the child and feedback about the program is solicited from the family at school entry and throughout the year.
- E. Families are offered at least three annual home/personal/center visits by the family worker in provider sites.

Sources of Information:

- Parent/family handbook
- Parent/family teacher conference records
- Registration/enrollment form
- CPIS/family worker/social worker logs documenting family contacts

Parent Involvement, Criterion 2 Ratings

District Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___ NA__	Validate ___ Not Validate ___
District Comments	Validation Findings:	

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

Indicators:

- A.** An organized system is in place for family workers and/or social workers to collaborate and share information.
- B.** There is a written system in place for families to request the services of family workers and/or social workers as needed.

Sources of Information:

- Family request form(s) for social service assistance
- Log/schedule documenting collaborative planning meetings between family services staff
- Family referrals for community services

Parent Involvement, Criterion 3 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate____</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate____</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Section VI: Support Services

Health, Safety, and Food Services:

Rationale: “The provision of a safe and healthy environment is essential. No amount of curriculum planning or positive adult-child interaction can compensate for an environment that is dangerous for children. Safe and healthy early childhood programs prevent illness and accidents, 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.

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

Indicators:

- A.** Individual child health records are up-to-date and allergies or other health issues are clearly stated.
- B.** Nurses are available and maintain up to date health records.
- C.** Families and teachers receive a written policy related to child illness and school attendance.
- D.** Health screenings are conducted for each preschool child (e.g. blood pressure, vision, hearing, dental, height, and weight screenings).
- E.** Families 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 family handbook
- Evidence of referrals and correspondence to families
- Nursing log showing screenings conducted for children

Health, Criterion 1 Ratings

District Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validator Rating Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____ NA__	Validate ____ Not Validate ____
District Comments:	Validation Findings:	

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

Indicators:

- A. Emergency procedures are written, and appropriate training has been provided to staff and/or children, as needed.
- B. Nutrition and health workshops are offered.
- C. Written information on health, safety and nutrition is distributed to families.

Sources of Information:

- Policy handbook or family handbook
- Evidence of referrals and correspondence to families
- Agendas of nutrition and health workshops offered to families

Health, Criterion 2 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet____ In Progress____ Fully Met____</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate____</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate____</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Criterion 3: Children receive adequate nutrition.

Indicators:

- A. 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.
- B. Weekly/monthly menus are available for families.

Sources of Information:

- Copies of menus weekly menus

Health, Criterion 3 Ratings

<p>District Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validator Rating</p> <p>Not yet___ In Progress___ Fully Met___</p> <p>NA__</p>	<p>Validate___</p> <p>Not</p> <p>Validate___</p>
<p>District Comments:</p>	<p>Validation Findings:</p>	

Supporting References

Office of Early Childhood Education – New Jersey Department of Education (2008). *Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines*. Trenton, NJ: New Jersey Department of Education.

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Bricker, D. (1978). A rationale for the integration of handicapped and nonhandicapped preschool children. In M. Guralnick (Ed.), *Early intervention and the integration of handicapped and nonhandicapped children* (pp. 326). Baltimore: University Park Press.

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