

CHAPTER 9 - CHILD CARE RULES**Effective May 1, 2013****SECTION .3000 NC PRE-KINDERGARTEN SERVICES****10A NCAC 09 .3001 SCOPE**

The rules in this Section apply to all licensed programs that serve children in the North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) program. The NC Pre-K program is intended to provide high-quality educational experiences to enhance school readiness for at-risk-four-year olds. All rules in this Chapter shall apply except as provided in this Section.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a)-(f);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3002 FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

(a) Programs serving NC Pre-K children shall maintain a four or five star rated license.

(b) All NC Pre-K licensed programs shall have an assessment completed every three years using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised Edition assessment tool as a part of the rated license reassessment process. Classrooms that score below the "good level," as defined by the tool, shall be reassessed the following year and a minimum "good level" must be achieved in order to continue to be approved as a NC Pre-K site. At least one NC Pre-K classroom will be chosen for an assessment during the reassessment process.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3003 PROGRAM ATTENDANCE POLICY

When a child is absent for more than three consecutive days, the site-level administrator shall contact the family and determine the child's participation status. The site-level administrator must document attempts to contact the family and any specified decisions regarding the child's continued participation in the program. The site-level administrator shall contact the local NC Pre-K contractor to share information related to the child's absence and to determine what further actions may be necessary to maintain the child's attendance in the program.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3005 CHILD HEALTH ASSESSMENTS

(a) A health assessment is required to be on file at the NC Pre-K site within 30 days after a child enters the NC Pre-K program and the assessment may be no more than 12 months old at the time of program entry. The health assessment must include the following:

- (1) Physical examination;
- (2) Updated immunizations;
- (3) Vision screening;
- (4) Hearing screening; and

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- (5) Dental screening.

(b) Site-level administrators shall review all health assessment results and shall share results with families.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3006 DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

(a) All children enrolled in the NC Pre-K program must receive a developmental screening, unless the child has an existing Individualized Education Program (IEP). The developmental screening shall be conducted by a person trained in administering the screening. Children must be screened within 90 days after the first day of attendance in the program or within six months prior to the first day of attendance. The screenings shall be used solely for the purpose of identifying children who should be referred for further evaluation and testing based on concerns in one or more developmental domains.

(b) Site-level administrators shall review all developmental screening results and shall share results with families.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

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10A NCAC 09 .3007 EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS AND CURRICULA

(a) NC Pre-K programs shall use North Carolina's Early Learning and Development Standards (and subsequent editions), as developed by a group of state and national early childhood experts. The Early Learning and Development Standards can be found on the Division of Child Development and Early Education's website at <http://www.ncchildcare.net>.

(b) Each NC Pre-K classroom shall use a curriculum as defined in 10A NCAC 09 .0102.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. January 1, 2013.

10A NCAC 09 .3008 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Classroom staff are required to conduct formative assessments to gather information about each child's growth and skill development, as well as inform instruction. All formative assessments used by the NC Pre-K program shall be approved by the NC Child Care Commission based on the assessment tool's ability to collect information on children's behaviors, development, skills, knowledge, strengths, needs and interests across all domains of development.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a), (b);

Eff. March 1, 2013.

10A NCAC 09 .3009 STAFF-TO-CHILD RATIO AND CLASS SIZE

The classroom shall not exceed a maximum staff-to-child ratio of one to nine with a maximum class size of 18 children, with at least one teacher and one assistant teacher per classroom.

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History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3010 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

NC Pre-Kindergarten programs shall develop a comprehensive plan for family engagement consisting of strategies designed to develop partnerships with families and build reciprocal relationships that promote shared decision-making. Examples of meaningful opportunities for families to be engaged in their child's education include, but are not limited to:

(1) Allowing Pre-K program teachers the opportunity for home visits;

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- (2) Formal and informal parent/teacher conferences;
- (3) Classroom visits and options for parents and families to participate in classroom activities;
- (4) Parent education;
- (5) Allowing family members the opportunity for involvement in decision making about their own child and about their child's early childhood program; and
- (6) Opportunities to engage families outside of the regular service day.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3011 NC PRE-K SITE-LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR QUALIFICATIONS

(a) Administrators of NC Pre-K sites must have either:

(1) A NC Principal License, or

(2) A North Carolina Early Childhood Administrator Credential (NCECAC) Level III. If the site-level administrator has not yet earned the NCECAC Level III, the following shall apply:

(A) Provisional approval shall be given for four years from the time the site began participation with the NC Pre-K program for the administrator with NCECAC I or II to obtain the NCECAC Level III; and

(B) Progress toward NCECAC Level III shall be considered a minimum of six documented semester hours per year.

(b) Administrators of NC Pre-K sites shall not serve as the NC Pre-K teacher or teacher assistant.

(c) Long term vacancies shall not exceed 12 weeks.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3012 NC PRE-K TEACHER EDUCATION, LICENSURE AND CREDENTIALS

(a) All teachers shall hold, or be working toward a North Carolina (NC) Birth through Kindergarten (B-K) Standard Professional II or Preschool Add-on licensures. Teachers working

toward the required education and license shall hold a minimum of a BA/BS degree and the following requirements:

- (1) NC Initial Provisional Lateral Entry B-K License, or
 - (2) A North Carolina K-6 license and a provisional Preschool Add-on license, or
 - (3) Another North Carolina or other state's license and an NC Provisional B-K license, or
 - (4) A BA/BS degree in early childhood education, child development, or a related field, and be eligible for a NC Initial Provisional Lateral Entry B-K License.
- (b) All Pre-K teachers must be enrolled with the Early Educator Support, Licensure & Professional Development Unit of the Division of Child Development and Early Education.
- (c) Pre-K teachers with a BA/BS degree shall make progress toward B-K licensure by completing a minimum of six documented semester hours per year, and achieve the B-K license within three years. The site-level administrator shall maintain documentation available for review by the Division, of the progress toward the required standard.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3013 NC PRE-K TEACHER ASSISTANT EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

All teacher assistants shall:

- (1) have a high school diploma or GED and shall hold, or be working toward, a minimum of an Associate Degree in early childhood education or child development (ECE/CD) or a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Teacher assistants working toward the Associate Degree or CDA shall make progress by completing a minimum of six documented semester hours per year; or
- (2) meet the employment requirements outlined by the federal "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) legislation, and have one of the following:
 - (a) Six documented semester hours of coursework in early childhood education, or
 - (b) Two years of work experience in an early childhood setting.

The site-level administrator shall maintain documentation available for review by the Division of the progress toward the required standard.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

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10A NCAC 09 .3014 NC PRE-K SUBSTITUTE STAFF

(a) When a member of the NC Pre-K teaching staff is unable to work, a substitute staff person must be provided to maintain the staff-to-child ratio as specified in Rule .3009 of this Section and must be able to implement the program in accordance with this Section. Substitute staff must be at least 18 years of age and meet the following minimum qualifications:

(1) Requirements for short-term vacancies, when teachers are absent from the Pre-K classroom for 15 or fewer days, include the following:

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(A) Nonpublic Schools (Private Child Care/Pre-K Settings): Substitutes in private settings must have at least a high school diploma or a GED, and completed at least one course in early childhood education or child development, such as the North Carolina Early Childhood Credential; or

(B) Public School Settings: Substitutes must meet the requirements of the substitute policy consistent with the local education agency (LEA).

(2) Requirements for long-term vacancies, when teachers are absent from the Pre-K classroom for 16 or more attendance days, are for substitute staff to hold at least an Associate's Degree in early childhood education/child development or a four year degree in a related field.

(b) Substitutes for teacher assistants must be at least 18 years of age and have a minimum of a high school diploma or a GED.

(c) Long term vacancies shall not exceed 12 weeks.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3015 INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF STANDARDS

Instructional staff shall work in direct contact with children in the Pre-K program for at least a 32.5 hour work week. In addition to these direct, day-to-day instructional experiences, the Pre-K program must provide adequate additional time for the instructional staff for related instructional activities, including time for planning, scheduling and conducting home visits, meeting with children's families, or attending required professional development activities.

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These related activities shall take place outside of the six and a half hour day of direct teacher-child contact.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.

10A NCAC 09 .3016 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

(a) Licensed Administrators, Teachers, and Teacher Assistants in non-public and public schools shall participate in professional development consistent with the NC State Board of Education policy. The policy can be found on the Department of Public Instruction's website at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/licensure>.

(b) Administrators, Teachers, and Teacher Assistants in non-public school settings, working toward Pre-K qualifications shall participate in a minimum of six documented semester hours per year.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88; S.L. 2011-145, s. 10.7(a);

Eff. November 1, 2012.