

**NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child Development and Early Education**

**NC Pre-K Standardized Site Selection Process
Revised March 2016**

FAQ

SITE APPLICATION PROCESS

- 1. What requires our local Pre-K Committee to reopen the process each year? Do we have to open up the application process (recruit new sites) if there is no additional funding and no monitoring findings in among the currently funded programs?**

Answer: You do not need to open the application process, but the following may be reasons your local Pre-K Committee may reopen the site selection process each year:

- If currently funded programs decided to stop providing Pre-K services or elect to close, etc., your committee would need to have a process in place to reallocate slots equitably.

Other conditions that may require an annual process include, if determined by your local committee:

- End of two/multiple year contract
- Expansion and/or Reduction in local and state funding or other resources
- Changes in your community's needs (increase in homeless population, high poverty areas, change in other aspects of the economy, laws and rules)
- Site monitoring issues, particularly areas that relate to staff qualifications, attainment of the BK license, enrolling in EESLPD
- High staff turnover
- Repeated substantiated, non-compliance with any of the NC Child Care Rules, including the NC Pre-K Section .3000, documented by the DCDEE Regulatory Section
- Conflicts of Interest in selecting sites
- No additional resources from local provider to help sustain the quality (pay teachers, offer benefits, replace materials)

2. Does a site apply once or every two years? The site application says 2014-2016. What happens for 2016-2018 and beyond? (See Q: 1)

Answer: In future fiscal years, only new sites and sites that have not maintained compliance with the NC Pre-K Standards that want to be considered for participation in NC Pre-K would need to apply. There may be additional reasons and conditions for conducting the Site Selection annually, particularly if there is a funding expansion, site closure (voluntary or otherwise), new sites/schools, community needs shift to different geographic areas of the county/region, then the committee and contractor would need to reallocate such slots to existing or new sites.

3. Can the NC Pre-K Site Application be modified?

Answer: No, none of the materials, including the application, may be modified. Only one section of the Rubric may include additional locally determined indicators (up to 8 points), which must be applied across all sites. **No additional measures or subscales of the ECERS-R or CLASS or similar tools may be used in addition to the indicators included in the Rubric, except as part of the 8 additional points.** Additional information gathered through routine monitoring visits and other information during an onsite visit to verify staff education and/or licensure, Plans of Study, a facility's license, etc., may be included in the decision-making process.

4. What if at the time of submitting a site application a site does not have at least a temporary license but expects to prior to July 1, 2014. Should that program site apply? If so, will the site indicate this on the application and provide updates to the contractor? What about exceptions? Will there be any exceptions granted to those who do not have at least a temporary license in place by July 1, 2014?

Answer: A site must have at least a DCDEE 4- or 5-star license in order to be considered for participation in the NC Pre-K Program. In some cases a program may have been issued a Temporary Licensure (e.g., change of ownership), which is allowable as stipulated in the NC Pre-K Program Requirements, Section 4.A. for more information. In such cases, the local contracting agency should request additional documentation from the site administrator/owner about the provisions of the Temporary License and Timeline for the site to achieve a 4- or 5-star license.

5. How is a site with a Temporary License to be scored on the Rubric, if that site has a legitimate reason for holding a Temporary License per the Requirements?

Answer: A public or private site that holds a Temporary License may be given "1 point" on the Rubric.

- 6. If a site, at any time, does not meet the requirements and is no longer eligible to serve as an NC Pre-K site, what will be the application process if there are no approved sites in waiting?**

Answer: If no approved sites are “waiting” then the NC Pre-K Committee must open the application process and recruit new programs to apply for consideration, or consult with the state office on next steps for the NC Pre-K allocation (e.g., reversion) when no eligible sites are available in the county/region.

- 7. Is the new requirement for the school year 180 days or 36 weeks?**

Answer: NC Pre-K sites must provide a Pre-K program for a minimum of 6.5 hours per day for 10 months (36 weeks) of instructional days per school calendar year. This equates to 180 days or 36 weeks x 32.5 hours/week = 1,170 total instructional hours. $1,170/6.5 \text{ hours/day} = 180 \text{ days}$.

- 8. If a school system is the local NC Pre-K contracting agency with the state office and all sites are within schools (i.e., no subcontracts), does each site need to complete the application?**

Answer: Yes. Each individual school location is a site. Each site must apply separately.

- 9. Will all 4- and 5-star sites, including existing, licensed public school sites, be required to apply using this new application process? Even if a small county, with no sites other than those that are existing?**

Answer: Yes. All sites must apply for SFY 2014-2015.

- 10. If a county participated in the piloting of the Site Selection materials and process (spring 2013) and included all eligible private and public sites at that time, is the Site Selection process still required for SFY 2014-2015?**

Answer: Per NC Pre-K legislation [S.L. 2012-142, SECTION 10.1.(f) and S.L. 2013-360, SECTION 12B.1.(d)], The Division of Child Development and Early Education shall establish a standard decision-making process to be used by local NC Pre-K committees in awarding NC Pre-K classroom slots and student selection.

To address this provision, a pilot was implemented during spring 2013. Thirteen counties/regions volunteered to use the process and the materials to conduct the NC Pre-K Site Selection Process in preparation for the SFY 13-14. These counties/regions may request a waiver to the current mandated process. To request a waiver, please submit a written request for a waiver to the current process required of local committees for the upcoming SFY 14-15 year.

- List of the materials used for the process.

- Description of the process including the selection of a non-conflicted sub-committee to carry out the selection process.

11. As a new contractor, I didn't know we could not use the forms that I received from DCDEE last year (2013). We used a non-conflicted process like the one that DCDEE just disseminated. Our process ended in January 2014, prior to the training. Is this okay?

Answer: If your local NC Pre-K Committee conducted the Site Selection Process, prior to receiving the training in late January 2014, for the 2014-2015 SFY, your process will be accepted by the state office and deemed as meeting the intent of the legislative mandate required by all local NC Pre-K contracting agencies. Please document the process that was used by the local NC Pre-K Committee's Site Selection Committee and keep this information on file for monitoring purposes. Please refer to the previous response for additional guidance.

12. How long do applications have to be kept active?

Answer: Applications should be kept on file for a least a funding cycle or unless information needs to be updated, changed (e. g, new owner; program moves from a temporary to a 4- or 5-star license; staff education increases; other facility licensure/compliance action or changes to the record; new ERS). This practice may also be informed by audit regulations, the Public Records Law and the Open Meeting Law for each entity and monitoring purposes to support the process was open and transparent to the public.

13. Is each classroom considered a site? If a public school or Head Start site has 2 classrooms, is an application done per classroom or per school?

Answer: Applications should be considered per school or site. Multiple classrooms located within one physical facility or one public school site should be included in one application. For example, if a Head Start agency operates multiple classrooms that are not located in the same physical facility, across town or the county, or multiple counties, each Head Start classroom would be considered a site and need to apply under a separate application.

14. How does monitoring effect the application for existing sites?

Answer: Monitoring—both fiscal, contract, site, and regulatory program results must be used in the selection process decision-making for currently funded or previously funded NC Pre-K classrooms/sites.

15. Under, Quality Enhancement Indicators, What does "dedicated" mean?

Answer: "Dedicated" means the area, space and/or equipment are available for a specified group of children and not shared with another program or classroom during the same part of the instructional day.

16. The Site Application requires a hearing, vision and dental screening. In Program Guidelines, 5-1, it says this should be included in the health assessment. Which one do we follow?

Answer: The application is a tool used to collect information about the program's operations. The health assessment that is required for non-participating licensed programs may not require all of the assessments that are required of an NC Pre-K program. A new site under consideration for participation in NC Pre-K may offer some or none of these screenings. The application is not a monitoring tool or a list of all of the NC Pre-K requirements. These screenings are required under the NC Child Care Rule .3000 NC Pre-Kindergarten Services.

17. What is the process if there are problems with a site that has been approved?

Answer: NC Pre-K contract administrative agencies are required to conduct ongoing site monitoring visits of all funded sites and classrooms. This would include all types of monitoring results (e.g., ECERS, teachers' education/Plans of Study towards the BK license and/or performance to meet BK licensure standards, Administrators' annual progress towards the Level III NCECAC, fiscal, attendance, etc.). Positive and negative findings should always be reviewed with a site administrator or principal and a corrective action plan developed with clear timelines to ensure the program is in compliance. Program administrators and principals should be fully informed of areas of concern, and if any areas of concern are related to the NC Child Care Rules, they are required to be reported to the Regulatory Section, NC Division of Child Development and Early Education. If findings dictate an unsafe environment due to NC Child Care Rules violations, the contract administrative agency may have to remove and relocate children to an approved site, as approved sites are available or a new site can be approved for such action. Please contact your NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant for guidance and format for an action plan.

18. If a site transports to afterschool care facilities and/or a separate licensed program comes to your site and offers afterschool care, does that count for the site applying as providing wrap-around?

Answer: Yes. Wrap-around care in both of these examples is augmenting or extending the day of the NC Pre-K children, regardless of whether the care is "onsite" or "off-site." Best practice would be where children and families have access to an "onsite before and/or afterschool program," but the other examples of extended care may also be counted as meeting the "wraparound" indicator on the site application.

19. Do we decide on sites prior to qualifying children? How do we know how many children are eligible in a particular radius?

Answer: The NC Pre-K Standardized Site Selection process allows the local NC Pre-K Planning Committee through the work of the Site Selection Sub-Committee to identify sites that *may* be considered for NC Pre-K placement, based on need and the other factors identified in the Rubric. You may/may not know the actual number of children in a geographic area until registration of children has been conducted. Each county/region approaches this differently; some have an open enrollment so they may have some data to direct and inform such decisions. Others may not know until late August. Your census data may also be helpful, as well as your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, , local DSS, local public schools, Health Departments, and other agencies that track population and economic conditions of your county/region.

20. With a public school site, which normally places kids once eligibility is determined, would it now be up to the county Smart Start to place and develop class rosters?

Answer: The Local NC Pre-K contract administrative agency in consultation with the local NC Pre-K Committee has the responsibility to manage all aspects of the child enrollment and placement process, as determined by the NC Pre-K APP tool.

21. Under Site Classification, how should a Headstart center be categorized?

Answer: The application document has a category designated for Head Start programs operated by public schools and those operated under a private, not-for-profit entity.

22. Can sites that were not selected for slots (e.g., did not meet geographical and need requirements) be awarded slots if NC Pre-K receives expansion funding?

Answer: This would be a decision of the local NC Pre-K Committee based on recommendations from the local NC Pre-K Standardized Site Selection Sub-Committee.

23. Can additional information be collected by the sub-committee (e.g., onsite visits to proposed classrooms, review of classroom and center budgets for requested funding, evidence that teachers will be hired or hold a plan of study toward the BK license, detailed plan for how the program will hire and ensure qualified staff will be employed and compensated according to the salary stipulated in the requirements, staff will be trained on conducting developmental screenings using a required tool, assurance statements and responsibility statements related to monitoring and onsite visits that will made by the local contracting agency)?

Answer: Yes, but these additional items must be consistently collected and applied in the decision-making process across all sites applying to participate in NC Pre-K.

24. What documentation do we need to verify that Geographic Access and Affordability have been met?

Answer: Evidence that families live within the geographic area/vicinity and have requested access to a specific site through the child enrollment process may be verified through the child enrollment process, the local Child Care Resource and Referral agency, the local DSS (if child/family on subsidy waiting list), the local Health Department, other the local site administrator's current center or public school or Head Start enrollment records, (NC Pre-K APP is expected to address this component), or other community Child Find strategy that works to identify needs and match services. Budget documents may provide documentation to address "affordability indicators."

25. Could adequate progress for administrators be considered or added?

Answer: While the local NC Pre-K Standardized Site Selection Sub-Committee may add this under Additional Locally Determined Indicators on the Rubric, assign a value and apply across the review and decision-making process, local NC Pre-K sites are required to have a qualified administrator at the time children are placed for services. The rules allows an administrator up to four years from the first year of a program's funding to attain the Level III NCECAC. Progress must be verified through the submission of unofficial transcripts to the contractor and typically reviewed during ongoing site monitoring visits by the local contracting agency. A minimum of 6 semester credit hours must be verified annually towards the Level III or the program may lose funding. The program site administrator that does not meet the Level III NCECAC must be informed that no exceptions to any of NC Child Care Rules are permitted.

26. Is there a standard budget form for collecting such information from sites during the application process or any time thereafter for monitoring purposes?

Answer: No, not at this time. Local NC Pre-K Committees are encouraged to work with the local NC Pre-K contract administrator to develop a template for local programs so information is submitted and reviewed consistently across programs.

27. If current NC Pre-K teaching staff (where English is their second language) have not completed course work to get the BK license because ESL barriers have not been worked out at the college/university where they are studying, will exceptions be issued for these teachers in the next year?

Answer: No. Exceptions for education and NC Educator's Licensure requirements are no longer issued.

28. Do private sites have to compensate teachers with the proper, complete credentials (BK Licensure) according to the NC Public School Salary Schedule?

Answer: Private sites should be strongly encouraged to compensate NC Pre-K teachers who hold NC BK licensure according to the Public School Salary Schedule, but it is not required. If, however, a local community is providing additional resources, such as Smart Start or local County Commission funding, to private programs for the purpose of compensating teachers at the same level as public schools, then the local committee can set additional conditions that must be met in order for the site to continue to participate in NC Pre-K. For example, the state's base rate is \$650/child/slot for a BK licensed teacher and the local contractor decides to add an additional \$150 on top of the \$650, resulting in \$800/slot. In this case, the local committee would specify what conditions the site has to meet in order to get this enhanced rate—funded by sources other than NC Pre-K. Refer to Section 6 of the NC Pre-K Requirements, Section6, for additional information.

29. How are teacher and administrator experience verified for the Site Application and the Teacher and Teacher Assistant Education Worksheet?

Answer: Please refer to the DCDEE website, NC Pre-K tab, Compliance Monitoring section, **NC Pre-K Site Monitoring Tool** - http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/general/mb_ncprek.asp. Examples of the types of documentation needed to verify teacher and administrator experience are given in this tool.

30. If a county's sites are only in the public schools does the application process need to be advertised for any/all other sites in the county?

Answer: Yes. All eligible DCDEE 4- and 5- star licensed programs—private and public—are required to be notified and invited to apply to participate in the NC Pre-K Program.

31. Will the application need to be sent to all licensed childcare locations within the county?

Answer: Best practice dictates that local NC Pre-K contracting agencies and local NC Pre-K Planning Committees notify all eligible programs about the process to apply for participation in the NC Pre-Kindergarten Program, which should include all eligibility and funding requirements, as well as availability of funding. Sites may be deemed as "eligible" for funding should the county/region receive additional funds to expand Pre-K services.

32. Could plans for working with ESL families be shared? Family Engagement plans? What do these look like?

Answer: The state office is in the process of gathering such plans from selected programs across the state. Look for a **Resources Sub-Section** under the NC Pre-K Site Selection Process for these materials. If you have materials to share with other counties across the state, please notify your NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant so we can obtain and post these plans for other county programs. Also, you may want to review the **NC Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements**, Section 5, item I:

I. Family Engagement

NC Pre-K classrooms shall provide meaningful opportunities for families to be engaged in their child's education. NC Pre-Kindergarten Contractors shall develop a comprehensive plan for family engagement to implement strategies designed to develop partnerships with families and build reciprocal relationships that promote shared decision-making. The following are examples of meaningful opportunities for families to be engaged in their child's education

- (1) Home visits;
- (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) Family 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. A log of activities, opportunities, or communications made for family engagement must be on file at the NC Pre-K site.

Additional guidance for supporting dual language learners may be found in the *NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development*, subsection: Supporting Dual Language Learners and The Importance of Families (http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/pdf_forms/NC_foundations.pdf).

33. Can we add an additional indicator for sites serving children with IEPs (Individual Education Plans/Programs)?

Answer: Yes. Any indicators added under the "Additional Locally Determined Indicators" section must be applied across all programs in a county/region.

34. Does each public school—current NC Pre-K classrooms and new public school classrooms applying to participate—have to have a 4- or 5-star license or can a public school or private site be considered with a Temporary License?

Answer: Per the NC Child Care Rule .3002 and the NC Pre-K Program Requirements, Section 4.A.:

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

For new centers, a temporary license will be issued for six months with the expectation of the program achieving a 4- or 5- star license at the end of the temporary time period.

Please see Section 4.A. of the NC Pre-K Program Requirements for additional guidance for considering programs/schools with Temporary Licenses.

35. How much responsibility should the local NC Pre-K contracting agency assume to assist sites with completing the application?

Answer: The responsibilities will vary for each county/region and community, based on a number of factors (number of programs applying, local community's understanding of the process, funding availability, time line, etc.). It is suggested that a general technical assistance session be provided and open to all applicants.

36. What are the *NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development*?

Answer: The *North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development* document addresses the developmental continuum of children from birth through age 5 and their families. The document explains what children should typically know and be able to do at each stage of the developmental continuum. The document includes goals, developmental indicators, and strategies in five developmental domains:

- Approaches to Play and Learning
- Emotional and Social Development
- Health and Physical Development
- Language Development and Communication
- Cognitive Development

Teachers in both public and private programs are required to be trained in the *NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development* and required to use this information as they implement an approved curriculum and formative assessment system (all DCDEE 4- and 5-star licensed public and private programs).

The document may be downloaded from the following site:

http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/providers/pv_foundations.asp

RUBRIC INSTRUMENT

37. Is there a minimum point range for NC Pre-K Site Selection?

Answer: This will be locally determined based on the needs of each community. The Sub-Committee may decide not to include “Additionally Determined Indicators” (up to 8 points), which means the total available points would remain at 80 versus 100 that a program could score during the review process. In addition, the committee

38. Who decides the “within miles distance” of the site?

Answer: This indicator has been revised. It is now rated using “High-Mid-Low” Need, which may include a discussion about “distance to/from sites based on where the child lives. Additional Points for “distance” could be assigned under the “Additionally Determined Indicators.”

39. Can the rubric add points for an area of the county that currently does not have NC Pre-K sites?

Answer: The Rubric has been revised to rate sites/schools in areas based on “High-Mid-Low” Need areas to account for changes in need over time.

40. Can the Pre-K Coordinator complete the Rubric and provide the non-conflicted NC Pre-K Sub-Committee with the rubrics and site applications to verify?

Answer: The Pre-K Contracting Agency staff should provide coordination and administrative support to the Sub-Committee as noted in the chart below. It is expected that local NC Pre-K contracting agency staff **works in collaboration** with the local NC Pre-K Non-Conflicted Sub-Committee to carry out the provisions of the Standardized Site Selection Process in accordance with these instructions, tools and policies. Staff should screen Site Applications and not complete Rubrics for all Applications.

The process must remain non-conflicted and completed by Sub-Committee with support from the Contracting Agency staff. The Sub-Committee’s responsibility is to rank and recommend sites for potential funding. Staff may support this process (photo copying materials, screening applications for completeness, attaching additional monitoring results, providing other evidence). This process must be transparent, fair, and non-conflicted. In addition, following the selection process, all applications, rubrics, and other documents (with PII or personal identification information redacted or removed) must be made available to the public as requested (See Public Records Law).

NC Pre-K Site Selection Roles/Responsibilities

Contract Administrator <i>Supports Process</i>	Local Pre-K Advisory Committee <i>Oversees the Process</i>	Non-Conflicted Site Selection Sub- Committee <i>Conducts Process</i>
Inform and update Local Pre-K Advisory Committee about Site Selection Process	Review materials, policy and procedures, timeline	Complete orientation/training session (provided by local Pre-K contractor) Selects chair Reviews guiding principles Sets review dates
Prepare materials: Application, Decision Tree, Instructions, Rubric, supporting documentation (monitoring results), Pre-K Program Requirements (Summary Docs), NC Child Care Rules, contract and budget, reimbursement requirements	Review and discuss Conflict of Interest Policy to ensure members selected do not have any conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest Select members for Non-Conflicted Pre-K Site Selection Sub-Committee (min. 3; may include Advisory Committee members, if non-conflicted)	Chair convenes the sub-committee Score Rubrics using Applications, supporting documents, Rubric, Teacher-Teacher Assistant Worksheet, Decision Tree, Instructions <i>Refer to Decision Tree and Instructions for step-by-step procedures.</i>
Prepare public notices and invite all 4- and 5-star programs to information/application session	Arrange to have Conflict of Interest Statements signed by any member not on Local Advisory Committee	Score Rubrics after review each application. Each committee member independently completes a Rubric for each site applicant. In counties/regions with large numbers of applicants, Site Applications may be divided and reviewed, then results shared with committee.
Conduct information session for eligible public and private 4- and 5-star programs: include Rules and Pre-K Program Requirements, review Application Packets,	Review Time Line and Expectations for Process and Sub-Committee Roles, Functions Clarify how Local Advisory Committee and Contract	After scoring Rubrics, determine what additional action is needed to determine Site Rankings (e.g., site visits to verify classroom; additional reports from staff about

required documentation, Time Line, Review and Notification Process, Funding expectations, Public Records Law	Administrative Agency staff will support process	monitoring findings, DCDEE reports, teacher education/licensure process; geographic need; other contract/fiscal compliance)
Collect site application materials from eligible sites/schools	Determines funding/slot placement once Sub-Committee submits/reports Site Selection Results	Final recommendations, rational and rankings prepared and presented to the NC Pre-K Committee
Orient and train Local Sub-Committee	Works with contracting agency to review child enrollment, rules for assigning children to slots; adjust slot placements	Notification letters signed. Letters include areas for improvement and available technical assistance to improve program operations for future application opportunity
Screen submitted Site Applications for completeness, required documentation, monitoring results, teacher education progress, other documentation, prepare packets for review	Review site rankings in preparation for future budget/slot adjustments to new or existing sites	Sub-Committee is suspended until next funding cycle or conditions require new recruitment cycle
Does not participate in direct scoring of Rubric; may conduct preliminary review of all submitted materials and prepares packets for each Sub-Committee member	Determines need for annual Site Selection Process in collaboration with Contracting Agency	
Supports Non-Conflicted Committee as requested		

Other information that may be included during an informational session and Non-Conflicted Site Committee Training:

- State funding and local allocations (currently funded programs)
- Structure and responsibility of the NC Pre-K Program in your county/region and state levels, decision-making, including how sites will be awarded funds/slots and child placements
- Monitoring requirements – site administrators and local contracting agencies
- Monitoring by NC’s DCDEE regulatory child care consultants
- EESLPD Office enrollment and participation of teachers, site administrators who are employed in nonpublic schools (private sites

only); public schools administer own teacher licensure/evaluation services.

- Other relevant information or speakers who are current NC Pre-K providers to help inform new applicants about the process, experience of providing NC Pre-K services
- Time for Questions/Answers

Sample materials provided by the Gaston County NC Pre-K Program are included with the FAQ.

41. Do the Locally Determined Indicators have to be approved by the DCDEE State NC Pre-K Program?

Answer: No. But the “Locally Determined Indicators” must be applied across all sites and locations. Also, the examples given in the instructions are just that – **examples only**. Each Committee must determine what’s most important to consider and measure based on needs and resources. Please consult with you state NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant for guidance with this area of Rubric as needed.

42. It appears the Rubric weighs against public schools for wraparound care and subsidy and free lunch. Why?

Answer: Families may need before and afterschool care to meet their employment responsibilities. Families may also have other (preschool and/or school age) children who are in a private child care center or public school that offers a before and afterschool option. In some cases, a committee may want to award more points for a school and local private program collaborating to meet “wraparound care needs for the families they serve.”

43. Should there be a “0” points option for sites that provide no wraparound care?

Answer: There would not be any points noted on the Rubric for such a site. A notation may be entered on the Rubric for such situations.

44. How do we know the number of NC Pre-K eligible children who live around a particular site?

Answer: Local NC Pre-K staff, family/parent requests, child enrollment data (historical and current), input from site administrators, public and private school personnel, surveys, census data, DSS files, Child Care Resource and Referral staff and databases, other shared files or use of NC Pre-K APP as children enroll, historical data about previous NC Pre-K site locations/child placement and/or current operations may be useful in projecting potential site locations.

45. Are we allowed to leave off sections (like teacher education) for existing sites where staff is not in place and calculate rubric score based on new total?

Answer: No. All sections of the Rubric must be scored for each site applying for participation in NC Pre-K.

46. If there is an extra assistant in the classroom, could the teacher with the highest credentials be counted, instead of the average?

Answer: Only if the teacher assistant with the highest credentials is in fact the teacher assistant, and designated as such for DCDEE's star-rated licensure compliance, and not the "extra" staff on site to provide itinerant services (e.g., speech therapy or other IEP support).

47. What if the teacher assistant has been a teacher assistant within the school system, previously with school age children, but is now a teacher assistant in Pre-K and hasn't worked with 4 year olds, does that teacher now not qualify?

Answer: The decision about whether this particular individual would qualify would be based on verified education and experience presented on an application with appropriate credentials, transcripts and experience submitted for review by the principal, site administrator and verified by local NC Pre-K contracting agency staff in consultation with the Sub-Committee, and submitted through the NC Pre-K Plan process for DCDEE approval.

48. If more sites are approved than what is needed, how are sites "ranked"?

Answer: Each local NC Pre-K Non-Conflicted Site Selection Sub-Committee would determine rankings based on the Rubric scores. Other ranking variables may be applied if scores are the same (e.g., 10 sites meet same criteria; may need to factor in child/family needs, compliance history, site visit history, child enrollment), new versus existing site).

49. Would Additional Locally Determined Indicators include child-centered indicators?

Answer: Each local NC Pre-K Non-Conflicted Site Selection Sub-Committee would make this determination. Any Additional Locally Determined Indicators must be consistently applied across all NC Pre-K site applicants.

TEACHER AND TEACHER ASSISTANT EDUCATION WORKSHEET

50. Can education and experience be separate point values?

Answer: The Teacher Education Worksheet has been revised to consider education and licensure for teachers, education only for teacher assistants in

private settings, and education and experience for public school teacher assistants (No Child Left Behind Law).

51. How many points would a Lateral and Provisional license receive?

Answer: Two points are listed on the *revised* Teacher and Teacher Assistant Education Worksheet.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

52. Can we use our existing NC Pre-K Planning Committee to serve as the subcommittee since conflicted individuals must recuse themselves?

Answer: Only non-conflicted individuals may serve on the Sub-Committee.

53. What if the NC Pre-K Committee does not have three non-conflicted members for a sub-committee that can take on this work?

Answer: The process requires that the local NC Pre-K Committee reach out to community members and recruit members who do not have a vested interest (e.g., receive funding for services) from participating in the non-conflicted committee process.

54. Should co-chairs of the local NC Pre-K Committee serve on the NC Pre-K Site Selection Sub-Committee?

Answer: The NC Pre-K Standardized Site Selection Process requires that only non-conflicted members serve on the Sub-Committee. A co-chair without a conflict of interest could serve on the Sub-Committee.

55. Can the Partnership for Children Board approved Conflict of Interest Policy be used instead of the one that was developed by DCDEE?

Answer: The current DCDEE Conflict of Interest Policy is a requirement to address the 2012 and 2013 legislative mandate. All documents and materials were developed to ensure the site selection decisions are consistently implemented statewide and across all eligible programs applying to participate in the NC Pre-Kindergarten Program.

56. Can the Conflict of Interest Statement be more restrictive?

Answer: Yes.

57. Can the Partnership for Children's Board approved conflict of interest be used instead of the NC Pre-K Program Statement?

Answer: The local NC Pre-K Committee is expected to follow instructions for using this Standardized process, which includes having all members who are

selected and/or invited to participate on the NC Pre-K Non-Conflicted Site Selection Sub-Committee review and sign the NC Pre-K Conflict of Interest Statement. A local Committee may include an additional statement or checklist to further restrict and define “conflicts of interest.”

NON-CONFLICTED SUB-COMMITTEE

58. Should NC Pre-K Committee chairs serve on the Sub-Committee?

Answer: Members may not include current or applying providers (public or private) or their representatives. Various stakeholders in the community as well as subject matter experts in the field of child development and early education should be included. Please refer to the Non-Conflicted Site Selection Statement.

59. Should the Sub-Committee have to meet separately from the rest of the NC Pre-K Committee?

Answer: The NC Pre-K Site Selection Sub-Committee should meet separately from the NC Pre-K Committee.

DECISION TREE

60. Is back-up documentation (e.g., experience, teacher’s license, facility license, W-2’s) needed for the Sub-Committee to score the Rubric? What is required to verify staff experience? (Please answer for all types- Admin, LT, and TA.)

Answer: Please refer to the NC Pre-K Contractor Monitoring Tool and the NC Pre-K Site Monitoring Tool (http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/general/mb_ncprek.asp) for guidance on the types of documentation that you would expect to see to verify experience, DCDEE facility licensure (copy of the center/school’s 4, 5-star or Temporary License), teacher credentials (NC State Board of Education Educator’s License with documented experience listed on the license), NCECAC validation from DCDEE, CDA or other public school documentation verifying teacher assistant credentials are met.

61. Do non-conflicted members have to conduct site visits? Can the visit be done by the contractor administrative agency’s staff?

Answer: At least one member of the Non-Conflicted Sub-Committee should participate in site visits with local NC Pre-K contracting agency staff.

62. Can the Site Selection Sub-Committee take into consideration existing site standing during the selection process?

Answer: Yes. Current and historical information gathered from ongoing monitoring visits and other routine work with locally funded programs should be used in determining a site's rank order.

- 63. A concern is a public school classroom has a 5- star license prior to July deadline, but after contracts are signed, a principal moves the NC Pre-K classroom to another classroom and then goes back to initial license and has to be reassessed. Does this site get to continue to participate?**

Answer: All NC Pre-K sites must have a 4- or 5-star license. Sites may operate under a Temporary License and move toward the 4- or 5- star license within the designated time period, as required by the DCDEE Temporary Licensure provisions. **See Question/Answer: 33.** A local NC Pre-K Planning Committee would need to weigh the extenuating circumstances that resulted in a public school's administration moving children from one approved facility to another temporary approved facility, including consulting with the assigned DCDEE regulatory child care consultant, regulatory supervisor and/or regional manager, and/or the Early Education Unit-NC Pre-K Program Policy staff to ensure plans are coordinated and the appropriate DCDEE facility license has been issued.

- 64. What if local policy states that only DCDEE 4- and 5- star programs are permitted to have an NC Pre-K program? Are we allowed to have tighter regulations?**

Answer: The intent of the legislative provision is to provide any 4- and 5-star program the opportunity to learn about how to participate in NC Pre-K.

Although a local NC Pre-K Planning Committee may set the minimum standard at the 5-star level for sites, local NC Pre-K Planning Committees are advised to open this process for all eligible sites. A local Committee may not drop below any minimum standard as stipulated in the NC Child Care Rules and NC Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements.

CONTRACTS

- 65. We understand that all sites may be issued multi-year contracts, that public schools no longer have to operate under a one-year contract but can be issued a two-year contract as private sites.**

Answer: The legislation that requires the two-year contracts for private sites is from Session Law 2013-360 SECTION 12B.1. (b) Multiyear Contracts. – The Division of Child Development and Early Education shall require the NC Pre-K contractor to issue multiyear contracts for licensed private child care centers providing NC Pre-K classrooms. There is no stipulation in the law that prohibits public schools or Head Start programs from receiving two-year contracts, so all programs/sites may be issued a multi-year contract.

66. We issued multi-year contracts in the 2012-2014 contracting period, as allowed by the 2012 legislation. Do these sites have to compete for slots and children? We also had a few new sites in 2013 that received a two-year contract for 2013-2015 period. How do we apply the Site Selection Process in these situations?

Answer: Per NC Pre-K legislation [S.L. 2012-142, SECTION 10.1.(a) and S.L. 2013-360 SECTION 12B.1(b)] The Division of Child Development and Early Education shall require the NC Pre-K contractor to issue multiple-year contracts for licensed private child care centers providing NC Pre-K classrooms. Per the 2012 and the 2013 legislation, DCDEE implemented 2-year subcontracts first in SFY 12-13 and later piloted the site selection process in SFY 13-14 before fully implementing the Site Selection Process for SFY 14-15.

If your agency issued a multi-year subcontract to a private site starting in SFY 13-14, the second year of the subcontract will begin in SFY 14-15.

For subcontracts that fall into this category, the NC Pre-K non-conflicted Site Selection Subcommittee must include these NC Pre-K subcontractors for child placements for SFY 14-15 provided that:

1. Subcontractor completes and submits a Site Application.
2. Subcommittee completes a Rubric for each continuing site. Rubric results for continuing sites will not be used for child placements for SFY 14-15; however, the site must be in compliance with:
 - NC Pre-K Program Requirements
 - NC Pre-K fiscal and contract monitoring requirements and
 - DCDEE NC Child Care Rules, including SECTION .3000 NC Pre-Kindergarten Services.
3. The basis for the assignment of child placements to approved sites includes but is not limited to fund availability, parent/family choices and geographic and accessibility factors (e.g., transportation to/from Pre-K site, wrap-around care for before and/or after school, and other factors).
4. Sites that were issued a 2-year contract for the 2012-2014 contracting period will follow the Site Selection process as outlined in the current policy and procedures. (These contracts end effective June 30, 2014, and therefore require the site administrator to reapply to be considered with other applicants.)

67. With a two-year contract cycle, is there a provision for site applications to be accepted in the off year?

Answer: Site applications can be accepted at any time.

68. Are all sites funded for two years, including public schools?

Answer: Multiyear contracts may be issued for all sites/schools and not limited to private sites. Since funding is subject to legislative approval annually, contract language will stipulate funding amounts by per fiscal year.

69. Do public school sites have to apply for selection every year, since they are on an annual funding contract?

Answer: No. A public school site would not have to reapply, as long as monitoring results support the reissuance of a new contract. If monitoring results for any private or public site indicate the NC Pre-K Program standards, including the NC Child Care Rules, are not being maintained, the site would be required to submit a new application.

70. Local site administrators have concerns about signing a contract that shows no funding for the second year of the contract year. Their signatures attest they will maintain the program requirements and if they are not guaranteed funding for year two of contract cycle how should this be handled?

Answer: DCDEE has advised local NC Pre-K contractors not to subcontract for more funding than what is in their contract with DCDEE.

71. Is a Head Start center considered a public (single-year contract) or private (2-year contract) site?

Answer: The 2013 Session Law 2013-360 SECTION 12B.1. does not prevent a local NC Pre-K Committee from issuing two-year contracts to all approved and funded public and private sites.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

72. Do existing sites get priority for the initial implementation year (2014-2015)?

Answer: All sites, existing and potential new sites, must apply. For subsequent years, monitoring results and other evidence will determine which currently funded sites would need to reapply.

Each local NC Pre-K Non-Conflicted Sub-Committee may implement a tiered, rank-order system by category of new and existing applicants to guide child placements, based on geographic need, monitoring results (currently funded sites), and other performance indicators and evidence provided by existing and new sites.

73. What do we do when staff changes during the year? Do we request a new application or amend current application?

Answer: The site administrator/school principal must submit an addendum to the application that would be reviewed by the local NC Pre-K contracting agency staff, and presented for approval to the local NC Pre-K Committee, and then entered into the NC Pre-K Plan for final state approval, once the NC Pre-K contract is in place.

74. What type of communication or notification should be in place to the community regarding the site selection processes?

Answer: A public announcement should be disseminated through local media, mailings and websites to all early childhood programs (child care centers, public school preschools, Head Start programs, Developmental Day programs) inviting interested administrators to an informational and application meeting. The announcement should, at a minimum, include information about the selection process, facility/program requirements, staffing and education qualifications, curricula and assessment requirements, available funding, contracting and monitoring requirements.

75. Will rates change in future years? Subcontractors need money for staff that has attained the BK license and gained more experience?

Answer: DCDEE is aware of the funding needs to meet the NC Pre-K Program requirements (e.g., BK licensed staff, transportation stipends) and has begun the work to better understand the funding needs of local programs.

76. Is it ok for child care providers to receive Head Start and NC Pre-K funding for the same children?

Answer: Yes. Head Start incurs additional costs for meeting NC Pre-K's lower staff/child ratios, lower group size, and longer school year requirements. The NC Pre-K rate paid to Head Start is intended to cover these additional costs.

77. A site has hired staff to increase their score but the site was not selected. How can this inequity be accounted for consistently without local communities developing criteria that may differ from other counties? This may impact owners who have sites in multiple counties.

Answer: The Rubric allows for up to 8 points to be designated by each local NC Pre-K Non-Conflicted Site Selection Sub-Committee and applied consistently across all sites. Different indicators may not be established for each site under the "Locally Determined Indicators."

78. Who do we contact for additional information and clarification?

Answer: Contact your regional NC Pre-K Program Policy Consultant. For county assignments and contact information, click [here](#).