

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) Assurances Review Checklist

The Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) Assurances require all participating programs to meet the existing SWVPP expectations and approved preschool program standards as outlined in Iowa Code [256C](#), [279.60](#), and Iowa Administrative Code 281 chapter 16. Program leaders must annually commit to these requirements through a process completed in the Consolidated Accountability & Support Application (CASA).

This tool is designed to help SWVPP program providers self-assess and monitor their implementation of program assurances and requirements, which are applicable in all district and community partner program locations. Supporting resources are also provided.

✓	Program Assurance	Key Points	Supporting Resources
	Preschool Program Standards & Accountability	<p>Each SWVPP classroom must follow one of three state approved sets of preschool program standards. Options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) ● Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards (IQPPS) ● National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Learning Program Accreditation + (Plus). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IQPPS Criterion and Location of Evidence ● Head Start Preschool Performance Standards ● National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Learning Program Accreditation + (Plus)
	Teacher Licensure	<p>Teachers working in a SWVPP must hold a valid practitioner's license issued by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) under Iowa Code chapter 272 and hold an endorsement from the BOEE that includes prekindergarten. Teaching Assistant qualifications are defined by the program standards selected by the SWVPP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SWVPP FAQ -Teacher Requirements ● Educator Licensure ● Qualifications for Preschool Teacher Assistants
	Iowa Early Learning Standards	<p>The preschool program demonstrates how the curriculum, assessment and instructional strategies are aligned to the Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS). Additionally, the teacher will provide instruction on the skills and knowledge included in the IELS. Staff development and classroom practices focus on the importance of child development and best practices supporting inclusion aligned to the IELS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Iowa Early Learning Standards ● Iowa Early Learning Standards webpage
	Ratio & Classroom Size	<p>There is a maximum group size of 20 children in a classroom with adequate space available (a minimum of 35 square feet of ADA compliant usable space per child) in each classroom. Children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are included in the total group size for the classroom. Programs are encouraged to plan for children with IEPs who may be integrated in the classroom at a later date. The teaching staff-child ratio is identified as 1 teacher per 10 students. A minimum of one appropriately licensed teacher and one staff member shall be present when 11 to 20 four-year-old children are present. Programs should refer to their locally selected preschool program standards for further guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SWVPP FAQ - Maximum Number of Children and Adult to Child Ratio ● Preschool Ratio and Class Size Maximum by Program Standards

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	Instructional Time	A minimum of 10 hours per week of instructional time is required to be provided by an appropriately licensed teacher. The teacher provides instruction on the skills and knowledge represented in the Iowa Early Learning Standards. Instruction is also guided by the program's locally determined curriculum and assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWVPP FAQ - Instructional Time
	Curriculum	The program adopts a research-based or evidenced-based curriculum aligned with all areas of the Iowa Early Learning Standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWVPP FAQ - Curriculum • NIEER Curriculum Policy Brief • Curriculum Consumer Report
	Assessment	As a subscriber under the Iowa State Umbrella Agreement, the program administrator will ensure the assessment is implemented across all classrooms, including community partner locations. Programs are encouraged to complete three checkpoints as part of a systematic routine for obtaining valid and reliable data for decision making. Spring checkpoint data will be used in IDEA/DA activities and determinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa GOLD® Assessment Procedures • Iowa GOLD® Online Application Form • Iowa GOLD® Renewal Application Form • Teaching Strategies in Iowa Website
	Staff Development	Teachers and assistant teachers receive a minimum of 15 hours of early childhood-focused professional development annually. Topics include but are not limited to: curriculum, assessment, instructional strategies, early childhood special education supports, early literacy and numeracy, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWVPP FAQ - Staff Development
	Family Involvement	The preschool program involves families through at least one home visit by the licensed teacher, one family night and at least two family-teacher conferences per year. Family involvement may include volunteering in the classroom, completing an orientation to the preschool program, joining parent education opportunities or participating in program evaluation activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWVPP FAQ - Families
	Integration of Other Programs	Programs will work with other state and federally funded programs (i.e. Shared Visions, Head Start, Early Childhood Iowa, etc.) to ensure all learners have access and participate in varied opportunities within the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWVPP Finance FAQ • Preschool Funding in Iowa • Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices
	Comprehensive Services	Programs prioritize and demonstrate collaboration with other agencies and services outside of the preschool program to provide additional support to families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iowa Department of Health and Human Services • Early Childhood Special Education Services in Iowa

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	Collaboration with Community Stakeholders	Programs collaborate with community stakeholders to identify and strengthen partnerships in the community to implement the preschool program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWVPP FAQ - Collaborating with Community Partners • Iowa Area Education Agencies • Childcare Resource and Referral • Local Early Childhood Iowa Programs • Head Start Agencies
	Data and Reporting	All SWVPPs are required to participate in state data collection and reporting processes. Reporting processes are completed by districts throughout the year for all program locations including community partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Information Update • Instructions for CASA Access • Preschool Desk Audit Instructions • Certified Enrollment • ACHIEVE
	Fiscal Accountability	The district is considered the fiscal agent for all SWVPP programming. Preschool funds are categorical and may only be used within Statewide Voluntary Preschool Programs. Districts may use up to 5% of funding for administrative costs; community partners may use up to 10% for this purpose. Remaining funding is used for programming purposes to benefit learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWVPP Finance FAQ • Preschool Funding in Iowa

Additional Considerations for SWVPPs

	Key Points	Support Resources
Discipline Option After Problem Solving	<p>Early childhood programs must ensure child safety, while also using alternatives to effectively support and respond to learner behaviors. Both district and community partner locations should be involved with families in problem solving and decisions regarding effective classroom management and discipline policies and practices.</p> <p>Removals such as suspension and expulsion are infrequent or not practiced. Suspension and expulsion should only be considered when there is a serious safety concern that cannot be reduced or eliminated with reasonable modifications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension and Expulsion Policies in Early Childhood Classrooms • Establishing Policies and Procedures to Eliminate the Use of Exclusionary Discipline Practices in Early Childhood Programs

<p>Diapering and Toileting Procedures</p>	<p>Each of the three-state approved preschool program standards (NAEYC Plus, IQPPS and Head Start standards) require programs to establish and implement a diapering and toileting policy. Policies should be inclusive and provide scaffolding and teaching opportunities within routines rather than exclusionary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SWVPP FAQ: Enrollment and Eligibility Criteria Section ● NAEYC Early Learning Program and Accreditation Standards ● Head Start: Toileting Independence in Preschool-age Children
<p>Compulsory Attendance for SWVPPS</p>	<p>According to Iowa law, children enrolled in SWVPPs are considered learners of compulsory attendance age. Attendance data for all district and community partner locations is collected and reported using the district student information system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Iowa Code 256C.3.1.a ● IDOE Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism Site ● SF2435: Chronic Absenteeism FAQ

For further information regarding SWVPP - Email: iowadepreschools@iowa.gov [Link to SWVPP Webpage](#)