

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program Community-Based Provider Application (SWVPP CBP) Technical Assistance

Table of Contents

- [Application/Timeline](#)
- [Funding](#)
- [General](#)
- [Partnerships with Districts](#)
- [Program Implementation Requirements](#)
- [Reporting Requirements](#)

Application/Timeline

1. When will the application be released?

The [FY27 Community-Based Provider \(CBP\) Application](#) was released in IowaGrants and posted to the [Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program \(SWVPP\) webpage](#) on **July 22, 2026**. Applications are expected to open each **February** for the following program year.

2. What is the timeline for agreements and funding?

Applications for fall 2026 must be submitted prior to 4:30 p.m. on August 21, 2026. Reviews will occur as applications are submitted and no later than August 28, 2026. Applicants will be notified of the funding decision by September 4, 2026. Approved applicants will receive monthly payments September 2026 through June 2027.

3. Will applications be reviewed as they are submitted or not until the August 28 timeframe?

Reviews will occur as applications are submitted and no later than August 28, 2026.

4. May a program apply this year and then add more classrooms as it grows?

Approved programs will receive funding for the year in which they initially apply. Funding for program classroom expansion will be based upon funding available from previous year's count provided in arrear.

5. When will the FY28 application be available, and should families register with the district or directly with the provider?

The FY28 application is anticipated to be available in February 2027. An approved program would be responsible for the registration process within their own system given they are operating independently from a school district's preschool program.

6. May an organization apply for multiple locations within one application, or is a separate application required for each location?

Programs may apply for multiple locations or buildings within one application.

7. May applicants apply this year, in fall 2026, and move forward to offer the program in 2027-28?

Applications will be available annually. The current application should be completed by those interested in providing a SWVPP in the 2026-2027 program year. Programs interested in becoming an approved provider of the SWVPP in future years would apply when the application for the desired year is released. New applications are not applicable for preschool expansion efforts in existing approved CBPs. See #4.

8. Should a location be included in the application if services are not planned to begin until 2027-28?

Applications submitted by August 21, 2026 will represent preschool programming occurring in the 2026-27 school year.

Funding

9. When does funding begin for an approved CBP, and how is funding determined in subsequent years?

Approved CBPs will receive funding during their first year of operation based on preliminary and certified enrollment counts, with payments made monthly. In subsequent years, funding will be based on the previous year's enrollment count, consistent with the funding-in-arrears process used for district-operated SWVPPs and their community partners.

10. Is funding for playground-related expenses allowable under SWVPP?

Allowable funding uses are described in the technical assistance resources posted on the Department's [SWVPP webpage](#).

11. May more than one provider receive SWVPP funding for the same child if the child attends multiple preschool sessions?

No. State funding is available for one SWVPP session per eligible child. Only one provider may receive funding for the child. The provider offering the first SWVPP session the child attends during the week will receive the state funding. Alternative funding sources are needed for any additional preschool sessions.

12. If a program is approved for the first time in FY 2027–28, when will it begin receiving funding?

Approved programs will receive funding during their initial year of participation. In subsequent years, funding will be based on the previous year's enrollment count and provided after the service period. Funding received may be used for classroom expansion.

13. How long will monthly payments be provided during the program year?

Monthly payments to approved providers will be made from September through June.

14. May a CBP charge families tuition for additional preschool sessions beyond the SWVPP-funded session?

State funding supports one SWVPP session per eligible child. Alternative funding sources, such as tuition, may be used for additional hours or sessions not funded through SWVPP.

15. If an existing SWVPP community partner becomes an independent CBP, how will funding be determined?

Funding is made available to new SWVPP CBPs through the established application process in IowaGrants.

General

16. How is student registration handled for an independent CBP?

Registration practices and timelines are determined at the local level by the provider.

17. Are local public school districts required to provide transportation for students attending an independent CBP?

Independent CBPs are responsible for program operations, including transportation. Allowable uses of SWVPP funding are outlined in the technical assistance resources available on the Department's [SWVPP webpage](#).

18. What are the age requirements for children to qualify for SWVPP?

Children must be Iowa residents and 4 years old on or before September 15 of the current school year to generate SWVPP funding. **This answer is valid until June 30, 2027.**

For school years beginning on or after July 1, 2027, a child is eligible for SWVPP if the child is

is a resident of Iowa and who is either four years of age on or before September 15 of a school year or who reaches five years of age on or after March 15 but on or before September 15 of the calendar year during which the school year begins shall be eligible to enroll in the preschool program under this chapter. ... If a child enrolled in the preschool program pursuant to this paragraph has been counted for state funding purposes under this chapter for a prior school year, the child shall not be counted for state funding purposes.

Iowa Code § 256C.3(1)(a) (effective July 1, 2027).

19. May a SWVPP classroom include both 4- and 5-year-old children, including children participating in transitional kindergarten?

SWVPP CBPs are defined as preschool programming which is supported by state funding for four-year-old children. These classrooms must maintain requirements and assurances as detailed in the SWVPP CBP funding opportunity.

Education Savings Account (ESA) funding is specified for grades K-12 in Iowa law; it may not be used for preschool participation. Programs utilizing ESA funding for kindergarten are required to maintain the requirements of kindergarten programming including those for curriculum, instruction, grade level assessments, etc.

Programs offering a transitional kindergarten option must define the intent of the program and the age/grade level programming it provides, either preschool or kindergarten.

While multi-age classrooms are allowable, there are requirements for each age/grade level provided which must be maintained. In a preschool/kindergarten multi-age classroom, teaching staff would need to adhere to both preschool and kindergarten program design and accountability requirements concurrently throughout the day.

Note that age eligibility expands effective July 1, 2027, as indicated in question 19. Only children who meet the age requirements of question 19 may be counted for state funding purposes.

Partnerships with Districts

20. What should an existing community partner consider if it wants to become an independent CBP after families have already begun registering through the school district?

The decision to apply is the responsibility of the CBP. Providers with existing district partnerships are encouraged to review their current agreements and communicate with the district. All parties should consider options that minimize disruption for participating children and families.

21. If a CBP is not approved by the Department, may it continue an existing partnership with a school district?

Continuation of an existing partnership is determined at the local level based on the current agreement between the CBP and the school district. Providers and districts are encouraged to consider options that minimize disruption for participating children and families.

22. What happens to materials and resources provided by a school district if a community partner becomes an independent CBP?

Ownership and continued use of materials and resources provided by the school district should be addressed at the local level in accordance with the existing partnership agreement.

23. What steps should an existing community partner take to become an independent SWVPP CBP?

Community providers interested in becoming independent SWVPP CBPs should review the Department's eligibility requirements and application materials, communicate with their partnering school district, and submit an application by the established deadline.

24. Is a school district required to partner with a community partner for SWVPP?

Yes. Under SF 2231, upon the request of a community preschool, a school district must enter into an agreement under Iowa Code chapter 28E with the provider to allow the provider to offer high-quality instruction as part of the district's approved local SWVPP.

Program Implementation Requirements

25. May SWVPP providers use an assessment other than GOLD®?

All SWVPP providers, including CBPs, are required to administer GOLD® as outlined in Iowa Code section 279.60. Programs may also choose to administer additional assessments.

26. What is the annual cost per child for GOLD®?

The GOLD® child portfolio cost is \$13.07 per child for the 2026–27 school year. Unlimited archived portfolios are included at no additional cost.

27. Does a CBP need to establish a GOLD® account before the start of the SWVPP year?

No. A Teaching Strategies GOLD® account does not need to be established before the start of the SWVPP year. To establish an account, SWVPP CBPs may contact the vendor for SmartTeach GOLD® upon notification of approval from the Department. Providers must begin implementing GOLD® during their initial year of participation to meet state assessment requirements and complete required checkpoints. All children enrolled in SWVPP must be assessed using GOLD®.

28. May reduced GOLD® pricing be used for children in classrooms that are not part of SWVPP?

The Iowa Department of Education negotiates GOLD® child portfolio pricing for Iowa subscribers to support providers in meeting the assessment requirements of Iowa Code section 279.60. Pricing for additional child portfolios or other vendor products is determined directly between the provider and the vendor.

29. What training and support are available for new users of SMART Teach GOLD®?

The vendor provides onboarding resources and on-demand professional learning through its website. Programs must have an established account to access these materials. Any associated costs are the responsibility of the local program.

30. What preschool program standards are required for SWVPP classrooms?

Each SWVPP classroom, including those operated by CBPs, must follow one of the three Iowa approved sets of preschool program standards. The three options are:

- 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+

31. Does IQPPS need to be fully implemented before a CBP applies for SWVPP?

No. Interested community providers do not need to have IQPPS fully implemented before applying. However, programs must meet the Department's established requirements and timelines for their selected preschool program standards and participate in required training and verification activities.

32. How is the number of SWVPP classrooms determined?

The number of classrooms is based on enrolled children and must comply with [applicable group size, staff-to-child ratio, and square footage requirements](#). Applicants will report a preliminary enrollment count for initial funding.

33. Are on-site visits required for approved CBPs?

Approved Community-Based Providers are subject to monitoring requirements. The type and frequency of on-site visits will depend on the program standards selected by the provider.

34. What curriculum requirements must CBPs meet?

CBPs are to select a research-based curriculum that aligns with the Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS) and supports high-quality preschool learning experiences. Programs are responsible for ensuring the selected curriculum meets SWVPP assurances and the requirements of their chosen preschool program standards. Additional guidance and resources are available on the [Department's SWVPP webpage](#).

35. May one administrator oversee multiple SWVPP locations?

Yes, provided the administrator can effectively support program implementation, staff, children, and families and ensure compliance with applicable program standards at each location.

36. Do SWVPP facilities need to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

Yes. All facilities used to provide SWVPP services must comply with applicable accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as parallel requirements under the Iowa Civil Rights Act.

37. What licensure requirements must teachers meet to work in a SWVPP CBP classroom?

Teachers must hold a valid practitioner's license issued by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) under Iowa Code chapter 272 and an endorsement that includes prekindergarten. Appropriate endorsements include #100, #103, #106, and #1001. Please direct questions about an individual teacher's licensure to the BOEE.

38. Must appropriately licensed teachers already be employed when a CBP applies for SWVPP?

No; however, a CPB must employ appropriately licensed teachers by the time it begins providing SWVPP services.

39. What qualifications are required for assistant teachers in SWVPP CBP classrooms?

Assistant teachers must meet the qualifications established in the preschool program standards selected by the approved SWVPP CBP.

Reporting Requirements

40. Are SWVPP providers required to use a Department-approved Student Information System (SIS)?

Yes. SWVPP providers must use a Student Information System (SIS) from one of the Department-approved vendors:

- JMC
- Infinite Campus
- PowerSchool
- Alma