Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) Requirements Review Checklist

The Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) requires program assurances to ensure that all preschool programs meet the minimum expectations for delivering high-quality early childhood education. To verify compliance, each session within a program site will be certified through CASA (Compliance and Accountability System for Iowa) to confirm ongoing adherence to these assurances, as outlined in Iowa Code 256C; 281 IAC 16; Iowa Code 279.60; and Iowa Code 284.60.

The items detailed in this document are requirements in all SWVPP settings, including district, district/partner and independent community-based providers. This recommended tool is designed to help programs monitor program requirements and assurances effectively as specified in Iowa Administrative Code.

✓	SWVPP Program Assurance	Key Points for Participating Programs	Support Resources
	Teacher Licensure	Teachers working in a SWVPP must have a valid Iowa practitioner's license issued by the BOEE under Iowa Code chapter 272 and hold an endorsement including prekindergarten. Teaching Assistant qualifications are determined by the program standards selected by the SWVPP.	• Educator Licensure • SWVPP FAQ - Pg. 5 & 6 (G) Teacher Requirements • Qualifications for Preschool Teacher Assistants
	Preschool Program Standards & Accountability	Each SWVPP classroom must follow one of the three Iowa approved sets of preschool program standards. Options include: • 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+	• 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+
	Iowa Early Learning Standards	The preschool program demonstrates how the curriculum, assessment and instructional strategies are aligned to the Iowa Early learning Standards. Additionally, the teacher will provide instruction on the knowledge and skills included in the Iowa Early Learning Standards. Staff development focuses on the importance of child development and practices aligned to the Iowa Early Learning Standards.	• Iowa Early Learning Standards • Early Childhood Standards webpage

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	Ratio & Classroom Size	There is a maximum group size of 20 children in a classroom with a minimum of 35 square feet of usable space per child. Children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are included in the total group size for the classroom. Programs are encouraged to plan for children with IEPs who may join the classroom at a later date. Teaching staff-child ratio is identified as 1 teacher per 10 children for SWVPPs. When 11 to 20 children are present a minimum of two staff members are required. An appropriately licensed teacher is required to be present at all times. Programs should refer to their locally selected preschool program standards for further guidance.	• Preschool Ratio and Class Size Maximum by Program Standards • SWVPP FAQ - Pg. 4 & 5 (C) Maximum Number of Children and Adult to Child Ratio
	Instructional Time	A minimum of 10 hours per week of instructional time is required by an appropriately licensed teacher. The teacher provides instruction on the knowledge and skills represented in the Iowa Early Learning Standards. Instruction is also guided by the program's locally determined curriculum and completed assessments.	• SWVPP FAQ - Pg. 5 (E) Instructional Time
	Curriculum	The program adopts a research-based or evidenced-based curriculum aligned with all areas within the Iowa Early Learning Standards.	• NIEER Curriculum Policy Brief • Curriculum Resources on SWVPP Webpage • SWVPP FAQ - Pg. 7 (I) Curriculum
	Assessment	Teachers are required to assess all children using the SmartTeach GOLD® Online Assessment System. As a subscriber under the State of Iowa GOLD® Agreement, the program administrator/director will ensure the assessment is implemented across all classrooms. Programs are encouraged to complete three checkpoints: fall, winter and spring in order to implement a systematic, ongoing procedure for obtaining assessment information.	• Teaching Strategies in Iowa Website • Teaching Strategies GOLD® Assessment • Iowa GOLD® Assessment Procedures • Iowa GOLD® Online Application Form • Iowa GOLD® Renewal Application Form
	Staff Development	Preschool Teachers and Teacher Assistants receive at least 15 hours of early childhood-focused professional development annually. Topics could include (but not limited to): curriculum, assessment, instructional strategies, early childhood special education supports, etc. Programs are encouraged to consider joint and collaborative training opportunities with neighboring early childhood programs and other community service agencies.	• SWVPP FAQ - Pg. 7 (H) Staff Development

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	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, parent education opportunities and program evaluation activities.	• SWVPP FAQ - Pg. 8 & 9 (K) 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 children have access to and participate in early childhood education opportunities.	• Preschool Funding in Iowa • SWVPP Finance FAQ • Early Childhood Special Education in Iowa
	Comprehensive Services	Programs consider collaboration with other agencies and services outside of the program in an effort to provide additional support to families.	• Early Childhood Special Education Services in Iowa • Iowa Department of Health and Human Services • Finding Childcare in Iowa
	Collaboration with Community Stakeholders	Collaboration between the program and community stakeholders is encouraged to utilize partnerships in the implementation of the preschool program.	• **District Programs:** SWVPP FAQ - Pg.1 (A) Collaborating with Community Partners • Iowa Area Education Agencies • Childcare Resource and Referral • Local Early Childhood Iowa Programs • Head Start Agencies
	Data Collection	All SWVPPs are required to participate in state data collection processes. These processes require a SWVPP to have a Student Information System from an approved vendor. Programs will also need to create accounts for the Iowa EdPortal to access reporting systems. Data collection efforts are completed throughout the school year: • Preschool Desk Audit (CASA): Part 1 - September 15 • Program Assurances and Requirements (CASA) • Certified Enrollment Report: October	• School Information Update • How to Create an A&A Account To Access EdPortal • Instructions for CASA Access • Preschool Desk Audit Instructions • Iowa GOLD Assessment Procedures • Certified Enrollment • ACHIEVE

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	Fiscal Accountability	Preschool funds are categorical and must only be used for SWVPP expenses, unless otherwise approved. ● 5% administrative costs ● 95% programming purposes For district/partner programming, the district is the fiscal agent for all partners. Programs should refer to the SWVPP Finance FAQ for additional information.	● SWVPP Finance FAQ ● Preschool Funding in Iowa

Additional Considerations for Districts/Partners and Community-Based Providers

	Key Points	Support Resources
Discipline Option After Problem Solving	Early childhood programs must ensure child safety, while also using alternatives to effectively support and respond to problem behaviors. Removals such as expulsion and suspension are infrequent or unnecessary. Expulsion and suspension should only be used when there is a serious safety concern which cannot be reduced or eliminated with reasonable modifications.	• Suspension and Expulsion Policies in Early Childhood Classrooms • Establishing Policies and Procedures to Eliminate the Use of Exclusionary Discipline Practices in Early Childhood Programs
Toileting and Diapering Procedures	Iowa's three sets of preschool program standards (NAEYC, IQPPS and Head Start) require programs to establish and implement a toileting and diapering policy. Toileting and diapering policies should not be exclusionary of children.	• NAEYC Early Learning Program and Accreditation Standards • SWVPP FAQ: Enrollment and Eligibility Criteria Section • Head Start: Toileting Independence in Preschool-age Children
Compulsory Attendance for SWVPPs	Children enrolled in SWVPPs are subject to compulsory attendance requirements. Iowa Code 256C.3.1.a states *"A child who is a resident of Iowa and is four years of age on or before September 15 of a school year shall be eligible to enroll in the preschool program under this chapter. If such a child is enrolled under this chapter, the child shall be considered to be of compulsory attendance age as provided in section 299.1A, subsection 3."*	• Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism Department Webpage • SF2435: Chronic Absenteeism FAQ