

7. Establish work groups as needed that include SMT members and non-SMT members to maximize participation by non-SMT members.

(c) Annually, each SMT of a WSR school shall be authorized to undertake the responsibilities under (c)1 and 2 below after a majority vote of its members and upon approval of the SRI Team. The SRI Team shall not approve the SMT to undertake these responsibilities unless and until the SMT has had specific training in these areas. In accordance with this subsection, each SMT of a WSR school shall:

1. Approve a school-based budget in accordance with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:24-4.4; and

2. Make recommendations for the appointment of a building principal, of teaching staff members, and of instructional aides for early childhood programs providing not less than three candidates to the Chief School Administrator, who may select one of the three candidates for recommendation to the board pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:27-4.1. The Chief School Administrator may request additional candidates from the SMT. The Chief School Administrator shall not recommend to the board any such candidates for appointment unless the SMT has recommended that candidate to the Chief School Administrator.

(d) If the SMT in a WSR school does not exercise its option pursuant to (c) above to be included in the decision making on the identified areas, the SMT shall be advised of the actions to be taken and given an opportunity to provide input and the principal shall be responsible for making decisions and/or recommendations in those areas.

Amended by R.2000 d.278, effective July 3, 2000.
See: 32 N.J.R. 1329(a), 32 N.J.R. 2470(a)

In (b), rewrote 4, and in 6 substituted "Implement" for "Develop"; in (c), inserted "Annually," preceding "each SMT"; deleted a former (e); and amended N.J.A.C. references throughout.

6A:24-2.3 Training of School Management Team members

(a) Each new member of an SMT shall obtain training pursuant to this subchapter.

(b) The district shall provide training to SMT members in all WSR schools in consultation with the SRI Team.

1. The training shall include, but not be limited to, instruction regarding the roles, relationships and responsibilities of the SMT, development and implementation of the WSR implementation plan, needs assessment, particularized need, curriculum and instruction, teamwork, and consensus building.

2. The training, if necessary, shall also include personnel and school-based budgeting.

3. The training shall provide support for continued implementation of a WSR model or design.

(c) The Chief School Administrator shall notify the SRI Team in writing when an SMT member has attended a training program that satisfies the training requirement.

(d) The Chief School Administrator shall remove an SMT member who has not fulfilled the training requirement. Any member so removed may appeal by filing a petition with the Commissioner pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:3.

1. The Chief School Administrator shall notify the SRI Team in writing when SMT members have been removed pursuant to this provision.

Amended by R.2000 d.278, effective July 3, 2000.
See: 32 N.J.R. 1329(a), 32 N.J.R. 2470(a)

In (a), substituted a reference to new members for a reference to members, and deleted "prior to June 30, 2000 of their first year" at the end; in (b), deleted "during the 1999-2000 school year" following "schools" in the introductory paragraph, and added 3; and in (d), amended N.J.A.C. reference.

SUBCHAPTER 3. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

6A:24-3.1 Early childhood education general provisions

These rules will assist the Department in reaching its goal to ensure that all children in Abbott districts enter kindergarten ready to learn. The purpose of these rules is to ensure that quality early childhood education programs are established in New Jersey. There is overwhelming evidence that an early childhood education will have long-term benefits for children, especially in disadvantaged districts.

Amended by R.2000 d.278, effective July 3, 2000.
See: 32 N.J.R. 1329(a), 32 N.J.R. 2470(a)

Inserted "education" following "early childhood" in the second sentence, and deleted a former fourth sentence.

6A:24-3.2 Full-day kindergarten

The board shall offer a full-day kindergarten program to all five-year-old children, and shall provide one teacher and one teacher aide for every 21 children. Class size shall not exceed 21 children.

Amended by R.2000 d.278, effective July 3, 2000.
See: 32 N.J.R. 1329(a), 32 N.J.R. 2470(a)

Rewrote section.

6A:24-3.3 Early childhood education programs

(a) The board shall offer a half-day early childhood education program to all three and four-year-old children. The board shall also implement a plan to provide a full-day, full-year early childhood education program by the 2001-2002 school year.

1. The board shall determine age eligibility for enrollment in early childhood education programs provided pursuant to this subchapter using the same date it uses in determining age eligibility for kindergarten programs.

2. The board shall offer early childhood education programs, once implemented, for the duration of the school year.

3. The board shall provide one teacher and one aide for every 15 children. Class size shall not exceed 15 children.

4. The board shall provide programs that meet the Department's Early Childhood Education Program Expectations that are linked to the Core Curriculum Content Standards and are to be integrated by the board with the WSR model(s) or the whole school reform alternative program design(s) utilized in that district.

5. Any board which establishes an early childhood education program and employs a new teacher shall require the new teacher, by September 1, 2001, to hold the new teacher of Preschool through Grade 3 endorsement.

6. The board shall provide master teachers at a recommended ratio of one to every 20 early childhood education classrooms. Master teachers shall coordinate and facilitate early childhood education programs and assist in the provision of early childhood education professional development.

7. The board shall ensure that family referral services are available for district-operated early childhood education programs and that family workers are provided by all DHS-licensed child care programs with which the board contracts.

8. On forms provided by the Department, the board shall use the following uniform regulatory method for calculating the universe of eligible three-year-old and four-year-old children:

i. The board shall determine the number of children attending first grade by adding together the first grade enrollment data from the Application for State School Aid (ASSA) report. The Department will collect the first grade enrollment data from the non-public schools in each Abbott school district and forward this enrollment data to each Abbott school district. The board shall add the non-public first grade enrollment data to the total first grade ASSA enrollment data to determine the potential universe of first grade children in the district;

ii. The board shall determine the number of children attending kindergarten by adding together the kindergarten data from the ASSA report. The Department will collect the kindergarten enrollment data from the non-public schools in each Abbott school district and forward this enrollment data to each Abbott school district. The board shall add the non-public school kindergarten enrollment data to the total kindergarten ASSA data to determine the universe of eligible kindergarten children in the district; and

iii. The board shall average the total of (a)8i and ii above to determine the universe of the three-year-old children and the universe of four-year-old children to be served in the next school year.

9. The board shall use the following uniform regulatory method to calculate the minimum number of preschool children to be served in the next school year:

i. The board shall make appropriate adjustments to the universe of three-year-olds and to the universe of four-year-olds to determine enrollment projections for each age group based upon the documented history of the actual enrollments in the three and four-year-old programs over the last three years and provide that documentation to the Department;

ii. The board shall make appropriate adjustments to the universe of three-year-olds and to the universe of four-year-olds to identify any factors in the community that might affect the growth rate in the three- and four-year-old populations, such as a large employer moving in or out of the district, or a new housing development, and provide this documentation to the Department;

iii. Using the data identified in (a)9i and ii above, the board of education shall determine the minimum projected number of three-year-old and four-year-old children that must be served in the next school year; and

iv. The board shall also use the number in (a)9iii above as the minimum projected number of three and four-year-old children for planning purposes in the development of the one-year early childhood education operational plan for the following school year.

(b) The board is required to meet and maximize enrollment above this minimum projected number of three-year-olds and four-year-olds to be served each school year as identified in (a)8 and 9 above through continued outreach and recruitment efforts.

1. If enrollments in the preschool programs do not exceed the expected percentage of the minimum projected number of children to be served set forth in (b)1i through iii below, the board shall develop, in consultation with the Department, a corrective action plan which shall be approved by the Commissioner and implemented by the board to maximize participation in the early childhood education program.

i. Seventy percent in the 2001–2002 school year;

ii. Eighty percent in the 2002–2003 school year; and

iii. Ninety percent in the 2003–2004 school year and each school year beyond.

2. The board shall submit a corrective action plan, on forms provided by the Department, that shall include, but not be limited to:

- i. Objectives and strategies for outreach and recruitment including resources needed to obtain the objectives; and
- ii. The time frame within which the corrective action plan will be implemented.

(c) The board shall cooperate with or utilize a DHS-licensed child care provider whenever practical to implement required early childhood education programs and shall not duplicate programs or services otherwise available in the community. When the board enters into a contract with a DHS-licensed child care provider, the contract shall be in a form provided by or approved by the Department and shall include clear expectations, necessary supports and accountability measures. The board shall contract with a DHS-licensed child care provider to provide services to preschool children when that provider is able and willing to comply with the following requirements:

1. Provide one teacher and one aide for every 15 children. Class size shall not exceed 15 children;
2. In consultation with a master teacher, provide programs that meet the Department's Early Childhood Education Program Expectations that are linked to the Core Curriculum Content Standards and are integrated with the WSR model(s) or the whole school alternative program design(s) utilized in the district;
3. Require existing teachers who have experience working with young children but who otherwise lack academic credentials to make annual progress toward obtaining a bachelor's degree and a teacher of Preschool through Grade 3 endorsement and to obtain that endorsement by September 2004.
4. Require any newly hired teachers to:
 - i. Have a bachelor's degree, enroll in the Department's provisional teacher program and obtain appropriate early childhood education courses, and obtain a teacher of Preschool through Grade 3 endorsement by September 2001; or
 - ii. Have a K-8 teacher's certificate, enroll in early childhood courses now, and obtain the proposed preschool-3 certificate no later than September 2001.
5. Encourage all teacher aides, both new hires and existing staff to:
 - i. Pursue an associate's degree in early childhood education, if they already have Child Development Associate/Certified Childcare Professional (CDA/CCP) credentials; and
 - ii. Pursue either the CDA or the CCP credential if they do not have CDA/CCP credentials; and
6. Provide one family worker for every 40 children and their families being served by the center. The family worker shall work with the center and the parents to ensure that the parents and their children obtain necessary health and social services.

(d) The board may receive a waiver on an annual basis from the Department to contract with a DHS-licensed child care provider that cannot meet the requirements of (c)4 above. The DHS provider shall document its inability to hire an appropriately credentialed teacher and agree to hire a teacher for the school year who holds, at a minimum, the CDA or CCP credential.

1. The board's request for a waiver shall include the following information on a form provided by the Department:
 - i. Explanation of the circumstances that require the employment of a person who does not meet the requirements of (c)4 above;
 - ii. Demonstration of the process used in attempting to secure the services of an individual with standard certification to fill the vacancy;
 - iii. Documentation of communication notices and recruitment efforts (for example, advertisements placed, colleges that were contacted, etc.) to employ a qualified individual;
 - iv. Identification of all appropriately certified individuals who applied for this position, if any; and
 - v. Provision of a reason/justification, if applicable, why the certified applicant(s) is(are) not suitable for employment in the position.
2. The board shall receive a waiver only upon the approval of the Commissioner.

(e) The board shall ensure that DHS-licensed child care providers comply with the contract requirements including the requirements of (c) above and shall conduct ongoing, on site monitoring to assess compliance.

Amended by R.2000 d.278, effective July 3, 2000.
See: 32 N.J.R. 1329(a), 32 N.J.R. 2470(a)

Rewrote section.

Amended by R.2002 d.40, effective February 4, 2002.

See: 33 N.J.R. 3716(a), 34 N.J.R. 733(b).

Rewrote the section.

6A:24-3.4 Early childhood education program operational plan

(a) The board shall operate its early childhood education program consistent with its early childhood education plan approved by the Department, which was developed pursuant to requirements specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:24-3.3. The board shall amend its plan so that all four-year-olds and all three-year-olds are offered full-day, full-year early childhood education programs by the 2001-2002 school year. The district shall provide any necessary information to the Department to ensure that the program implementation is consistent with that plan.

1. Upon offering full day, full year early childhood education programs, the district may request a waiver of this requirement under N.J.A.C. 6A:5, as applicable, to provide families with options to enroll their children in a half-day program and/or a program that follows the school year calendar, providing that program meets all of the requirements of this subchapter.

2. If, prior to a district's initial implementation of a full-day, full-year early childhood education program, the Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Facilities and Transportation and the Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Early Childhood Education determine that it is impossible for the district to meet the deadline specified in (a) above, they shall jointly recommend to the Commissioner that he or she waive that district's obligation to comply with that deadline. The joint recommendation of the assistant commissioners shall be supported by their joint certification, which shall demonstrate the impossibility of the district meeting the deadline by attesting that all of the following circumstances exist: existing school facilities in the district lack the required functional capacity; additional permanent school facilities in the district will not be available by the deadline; there is insufficient land available to the district on which to situate temporary classroom units; there are insufficient properties to lease; and there is insufficient community provider capacity, as defined in section 3 of P.L. 2000, c.72 (N.J.S.A 18A:7G-3). If the Commissioner grants the waiver, the Commissioner shall establish the scope of full-day, full-year early childhood education programs that must be provided at that time and shall, after consultation with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and the district, establish a plan addressing the capacity shortfall with time lines as to when full-day, full-year early childhood education programs for all three-year-olds and for all four-year-olds will be provided. When the Commissioner establishes the scope and the plan, the district's early childhood education program operational plan shall be deemed amended accordingly.

(b) No additional early childhood education programs or services shall be approved unless a particularized need is demonstrated pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:24-5.

Amended by R.2000 d.278, effective July 3, 2000.

See: 32 N.J.R. 1329(a), 32 N.J.R. 2470(a)

Rewrote section.

Amended by R.2001 d.463, effective December 17, 2001.

See: 33 N.J.R. 2789(a), 33 N.J.R. 3280(a), 33 N.J.R. 4330(b).

Added (a)2.

Amended by R.2002 d.40, effective February 4, 2002.

See: 33 N.J.R. 3716(a), 34 N.J.R. 733(b).

In (a), amended N.J.A.C. reference.

(b) By January 30, 2001, all secondary schools shall submit to the Department an application for implementation of whole school reform for the 2001-2002 school year. The application shall be for:

1. A research-based WSR model; or
2. A whole school alternative program design.

(c) In addition to the requirements in (a) and (b) above, a high school shall identify its assessed needs and consider its unique characteristics by incorporating an effective combination of the following research-based strategies for high schools:

1. Create small learning communities so that schools are organized into small units of students and use a variety of instructional strategies that engage students and accommodate individual learning styles;
2. Utilize flexible time for teaching and learning so that schools may organize the day, week and month to lengthen blocks of instructional time;
3. Develop instructional content so that the schools are able to structure learning around careers and student interest and link out-of-school experiences to classroom instruction;
4. Develop student assessment so that schools assess student progress by what they are capable of doing and use rich assessments that include portfolios, performance tasks and examples of student accomplishments to measure progress in meeting HSPA and other State assessments;
5. Establish community partnerships so that schools work collaboratively with parents, community and business for the purpose of enabling students to achieve the Core Content Curriculum Standards; and
6. Establish partnerships with institutions of higher education so that the schools establish an articulation agreement with institutions of higher education to implement a WSR model or the whole school alternative program design, use a variety of assessments and evaluations to measure the effectiveness of WSR implementation and improve the transition between high school and post-secondary education.

(d) Upon selection of a model, secondary schools shall incorporate the required programs for secondary schools pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:24-6.1 into that model.

(e) The Commissioner shall assign an intervention team to work with any elementary school that has not selected a WSR model or alternative program design by June 1, 2000 and any secondary school that has not selected a WSR model or alternative program design by January 30, 2001. The Commissioner shall direct the team to:

1. Identify barriers which are affecting the school's ability to implement comprehensive school reform; and

SUBCHAPTER 4. WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM

6A:24-4.1 Implementation of whole school reform model

(a) To be an approved whole school reform (WSR) model developer, a WSR model developer must align all instructional materials and all instructional processes in the model with the Core Curriculum Content Standards. The Department shall provide an analysis of that alignment for use by schools implementing the model. All schools that are WSR schools shall continue to implement the WSR model selected, except as provided in N.J.A.C. 6A:24-4.5.

2. Make recommendations for corrective action.

(f) Based on the team’s recommendation, the Commissioner may direct the following actions to occur at the school site under the supervision of designated Department staff:

1. Restructuring of curriculum and all school based services and programs;
2. Redirection of all building allocations and expenditures to support comprehensive school reform which will result in student attainment of the Core Curriculum Content Standards;
3. Assessment of the roles and responsibilities of all school personnel;
4. Reallocation of staff, including reallocation to other schools in the district, to support school reform; and
5. Development and implementation of a comprehensive professional development plan for all staff, which will ensure increased student achievement as demonstrated by the results of the State assessments and other assessment tools.

(g) The SRI shall work with the building principal, SMT, central office and local board of education to ensure the effective implementation of site-based management and comprehensive school reform. If, after the intervention, the school fails to select a model or have a design approved, the Commissioner shall direct the school to implement a whole school reform model during the 2000-2001 school year that meets the particular needs of the school.

(h) Any elementary or secondary school that opens after (the effective date of this amendment) shall, within 90 days, consult with the Department to develop a plan for submitting an application to participate in the implementation of WSR.

(i) Each of the following elements of whole school reform shall be addressed in a WSR model adopted by a school in an Abbott district:

1. Improved Student Performance: The model shall lead to improved student achievement focused on the Core Curriculum Content Standards, as measured by the State assessment program (Elementary School Proficiency Assessment, Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment, and High School Proficiency Test/High School Proficiency Assessment).
2. Research-Based Program: Each school shall provide a research-based program of curriculum and instruction supported by, and integrated with, an appropriate array of research-proven supplemental strategies (for example, SFA/R&W).
3. School-Based Leadership and Decision-Making: The school shall maintain its own planning and decision-

making structure, including establishment of an SMT pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:24-2, and shall be led by a strong, effective principal. The principal shall involve parents and teaching staff members in setting annual student achievement targets. School staff and members of the community shall be committed to working together in a comprehensive, concerted effort to ensure that each child achieves success and maintains his or her self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

4. Integration and Alignment of School Functions: The school shall use a comprehensive approach, rather than a piecemeal one, to assure effective school-level implementation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:24-4.3. All school functions shall collectively support student attainment of the Core Curriculum Content Standards. The school shall have an effective and compatible program of curriculum and instruction, supported systematically by a well-planned school budget pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:24-4.4.

5. Educational Technology: Educational technology shall be infused in all aspects of curriculum and instruction, throughout the entire WSR model, to support achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:24-1.4(f) and 6A:24-2.2(b)4. Educational technology includes acquisition and maintenance of necessary equipment and infrastructure, provision of appropriate professional development activities and designation of appropriate staff to implement plans and activities.

6. Professional Development: All staff of the school shall be engaged in an organized, continuous program of staff training, focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills directly related to the achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the implementation of the selected WSR model.

7. Safe School Environment Conducive to Learning: The school climate must be safe and conducive to learning. There shall be a code of conduct that clearly defines acceptable and unacceptable student behaviors and the consequences for them. The district shall provide required security staff and other necessary protective devices as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:24-1.5(h).

8. Student and Family Services/Coordination of Resources: Each elementary school shall maintain a Family Support Team or other comparable entity that encourages parent involvement in the school and in students’ learning; trains parents for volunteer roles; intervenes to resolve behavioral, nutritional, attendance and other issues; receives teacher referrals of students who are not making progress; and makes referrals to appropriate health and human services agencies, including KidCare and Medicaid. Each middle and secondary school shall provide health and social services in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:24-1.4(i) and 6A:24-6.