

(b) The master teacher shall have the following qualifications and experience:

1. A bachelor's degree and teacher certification;
2. Three to five years experience teaching in general education preschool programs;
3. Experience in implementing developmentally appropriate preschool curricula;
4. Experience with a range of appropriate early childhood assessments including performance-based assessment instruments and classroom quality assessment instruments; and
5. Experience providing professional development to classroom teachers.

(c) A master teacher appointed prior to September 1, 2007 shall, at a minimum, hold a preschool through grade three standard instructional certificate or an N-8 standard instructional certificate.

(d) A master teacher appointed on or after September 1, 2007 shall, at a minimum, hold a preschool through grade three or equivalent preschool certification, as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9.

(e) In addition to the requirements above, depending on the population served by the district board of education, the master teacher(s) shall demonstrate one or more of the following:

1. Certification that includes an endorsement for bilingual education or English as a second language;
2. Certification that includes an endorsement for teacher of students with disabilities or teacher of the handicapped;
3. A graduate degree in early childhood education with an emphasis on early literacy and/or early mathematics;
4. A graduate degree in educational supervision and/or leadership; and/or
5. Preschool Professional Development Fellow status.

(f) The responsibilities of the master teacher shall, at a minimum, include:

1. Modeling, coaching, informally observing, using structured observation instruments and providing feedback to teachers in preschool programs to assist with the implementation of the comprehensive curriculum and the Preschool Standards;
2. Providing staff development, based on systematic classroom observations consistent with a classroom quality assessment instrument, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-5.5;
3. Making recommendations to administrators or supervisors of preschool programs to provide additional professional development as needed;

4. Ensuring that systematic early childhood assessment occurs in the preschool program;

5. Ensuring implementation of the comprehensive performance-based assessment system that is connected to the comprehensive preschool curriculum as part of the five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update as required and approved by the Department;

6. Participating in parent involvement programs with district board of education and private provider staff; and

7. Supporting transition activities, programs and services between and among preschool through grade three programs.

Amended by R.2009 d.334, effective November 2, 2009.

See: 41 N.J.R. 2530(a), 41 N.J.R. 4077(a).

Section was "Master teachers—coaching". In the introductory paragraph of (a), inserted ", described in the school district's five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update, as required, and approved by the Department,"; in (b)2, inserted "general education"; in (f)1, substituted "Preschool Standards" for "Expectations"; in (f)3, deleted "early childhood" preceding "preschool"; and in (f)5, deleted "and approved by the Department" following "curriculum" and substituted "and/or annual update as required and approved by the Department" for "and annual updates".

6A:13A-4.3 Instructional staff

(a) The district board of education shall ensure that one appropriately certified teacher and one appropriately qualified teacher assistant, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.3(f) and (g), are provided for every preschool class of 15 children. Class size shall not be greater than 15 children.

1. The district board of education may have fewer than 15 children in a class, if the services can be provided at the school district's per pupil amount, and the essential elements for the implementation of a high-quality preschool program, as set forth in this chapter, are maintained.

2. In-district preschool classroom teachers shall hold a bachelor's degree and, at a minimum, a certificate of eligibility or certificate of eligibility with advanced standing for preschool through grade three or other equivalent preschool certification as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9.

(b) Private provider and local Head Start agency preschool teachers teaching in classrooms contracted with school districts that received preschool expansion aid or education opportunity aid in 2007-2008, shall hold a bachelor's degree and, at a minimum, a certificate of eligibility or certificate of eligibility with advanced standing for preschool through grade three or other equivalent preschool certification, as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9.

(c) All private provider and local Head Start agency preschool teachers, teaching in classrooms contracted with school districts that did not receive preschool expansion aid or educational opportunity aid in 2007-2008, who do not hold the appropriate degree and certification shall submit an initial application and annual updates documenting progress toward timely completion of following requirements to the school district verified and signed by the teacher's college advisor:

1. Is working toward completing the preschool through grade three certification by September 2012;
2. Is a student in good standing;
3. Has a minimum GPA of 2.75 when 4.0 equals an A; and
4. Has a detailed and feasible plan for attaining preschool through grade three certification within the time-frame described in (c)1 above.

(d) To ensure that teachers hold the appropriate credentials/certification, pursuant to (c) above, the district board of education shall be responsible for:

1. Reviewing each initial application and subsequent revisions for accuracy and completeness by the start of the school year;
2. Approving or denying each individual application; and
3. Ensuring that only teachers who have completed the requirements listed in (c) above remain as a classroom teacher beyond the start of the 2012 school year.

(e) All preschool classroom teachers hired in private provider and Head Start agencies subsequent to the initial year of the school district's implementation of a preschool program shall hold a bachelor's degree and, at a minimum, a certificate of eligibility or certificate of eligibility with advanced standing for preschool through grade three certification or other equivalent preschool certification, as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:9.

(f) The district board of education teacher assistants in districts or schools supported by Title 1 funding, as applicable, shall meet the requirements pursuant to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, P.L. 107-110.

(g) The district board of education shall require all other teacher assistants, both new hires and existing staff, in all preschool program settings to have a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Amended by R.2009 d.334, effective November 2, 2009.
See: 41 N.J.R. 2530(a), 41 N.J.R. 4077(a).

In the introductory paragraph of (a), inserted "appropriately qualified" and ", pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:13A-4.3(f) and (g)."; in (a)1, substituted "essential elements for the implementation of a high-quality preschool program" for "preschool quality standards"; in (b), inserted "and local Head Start agency" and "classrooms contracted with" and substituted "teachers teaching" for "classroom teachers," and "that received" for "receiving"; rewrote the introductory paragraph of (c); and in (c)4, substituted "(c)1" for "(c)1i".

Case Notes

Department's determination to limit funding to 55 lunch assistants for preschool program was neither an arbitrary application of "numbers crunching" nor a mistake based on incorrect factual assumptions; rather, it was a fully informed judgment against State subsidization of an inefficient and ineffective operational arrangement (Initial Decision adopted in part, rejected in part, 2008 N.J. AGEN LEXIS 206). Bd. of Educ. of Elizabeth v. N.J. State Dept. of Educ., OAL Dkt. No. EDU 03055-08, 2008 N.J. AGEN LEXIS 659, Commissioner's Decision (April 21, 2008).

6A:13A-4.4 Intervention and support services

(a) The district board of education shall establish one preschool intervention and referral team (PIRT) for every 750 enrolled preschool students. In school districts with fewer than 750 enrolled preschool children, the services funded by the school district's preschool budget and described in the school district's five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update, as required and approved by the Department:

1. May be combined with the school district's existing intervention and referral services, required by N.J.A.C. 6A:16; or

2. May be fulfilled by contracting with a county or regional educational services commission for PIRT services where the county or regional educational services commission is approved by the State Board to do so.

(b) The PIRT shall be supervised by the early childhood school district administrator and shall work within a consultation model with relevant school district, private provider and local Head Start agency staff and administrators to deliver preschool age-appropriate services designed to decrease referrals to special education and to maximize general education classroom teachers' ability to support all students.

(c) The PIRT shall include a combination of psychologists, learning disabilities teacher consultants, school social workers and speech and language specialists.

(d) The PIRT shall, at a minimum:

1. Consult with master teachers and preschool classroom teachers to adapt and modify teaching practices to help preschool children meet the Preschool Standards;

2. Conduct regular visits to classrooms to observe, model, provide feedback and make recommendations about appropriate strategies, classroom modifications and the selection of adaptive materials to address the needs of children with challenging behaviors or potential learning difficulties;

3. Provide professional development for instructional staff and administrators to facilitate preschool inclusion;

4. Coordinate with school district special services departments and child study team members, when appropriate, to ensure seamless preschool programming;

5. Refer children, when all other efforts have failed, to the school district child study team as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:14, Special Education; and

6. Bring professionals across disciplines together with families, as appropriate.

(e) The district board of education shall annually report the number of children served by the PIRT and the number of children referred to the child study team for formal evaluation in its five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update as required and approved by the Department.

(f) The PIRT shall provide support to general education classroom teachers to address the needs of children with challenging behaviors or learning difficulties.

(g) The district board of education shall ensure that preschool students are not suspended, long-term or short-term, and are not expelled from school.

Amended by R.2009 d.334, effective November 2, 2009.
See: 41 N.J.R. 2530(a), 41 N.J.R. 4077(a).

In the introductory paragraph of (a), inserted "and described in the school district's five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update, as required and approved by the Department"; in (d)1, substituted "Preschool Standards" for "Expectations"; and in (e), deleted "to the Department" following "report" and substituted "and/or annual update as required and approved by the Department" for "and annual updates".

6A:13A-4.5 Health and nutrition

(a) The district board of education shall employ nurses at a ratio of one for every 300 preschool students, including those students in contracted private provider and local Head Start programs. In school districts with fewer than 300 enrolled preschool children, the services funded by the school district's preschool budget and described in the school district's five-year preschool program plan as required and approved by the Department may be:

1. Provided within the school district's existing health services, required by N.J.A.C. 6A:16; or

2. Fulfilled by contracting with a county or regional educational services commission for health services where the county or regional educational services commission is approved by the State Board to do so.

(b) The district board of education shall ensure that basic child health services are provided to all enrolled preschool children. Child health services shall include:

1. At a minimum, vision, hearing, dental, height and weight screenings of each eligible child upon enrollment in preschool;

2. The maintenance of records pertaining to immunizations, physical examinations and other records necessary for transition to kindergarten; and

3. Parent education and communication designed to meet the health and social service needs of children enrolled in the program.

(c) District boards of education offering universal preschool shall apply to the National School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program and may charge families of eligible preschool program children for reduced- and above-scale meals. District boards of education shall also ensure that contracted private provider and local Head Start settings apply to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), in order to offer breakfast, lunch and one snack per day for each enrolled preschool child.

1. If accepted into one or more of these programs, the district board of education, contracted private provider or local Head Start agency must participate for all preschool children.

2. If not accepted into one or more of these programs, for any reason, the district board of education shall ensure that the dietary requirements listed in (d) below are followed.

(d) District boards of education offering targeted preschool shall ensure that all at-risk children in all settings are offered breakfast, lunch and one snack per day conforming to the 2005 United States Department of Agriculture dietary guidelines for Americans located at <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/default.htm> regarding meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards.

Administrative correction.

See: 40 N.J.R. 4790(a).

Amended by R.2009 d.334, effective November 2, 2009.

See: 41 N.J.R. 2530(a), 41 N.J.R. 4077(a).

In the introductory paragraph of (a), inserted "contracted" and "and described in the school district's five-year preschool program plan as required and approved by the Department"; rewrote the introductory paragraph of (c); in (c)1, deleted ", as applicable" from the end; and in (d), substituted "<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/default.htm>" for "www.nal.usda.gov/childcare/Cacfp/index.html".

6A:13A-4.6 Family and community involvement

(a) The district board of education shall ensure that a coordinated system of social services is provided to families of enrolled preschool children and shall describe the system in its five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update, as required and approved by the Department. These services may be offered by:

1. Coordinating the social services and/or social services functions described in this section among the school district, contracting private providers and local Head Start agencies; or

2. Contracting with a county or regional educational services commission for the social services functions described in this section where the county or regional educational services commission is approved by the State Board to do so.

(b) The services shall be provided by a combination of social worker(s), family worker(s) and community parent involvement specialist(s) (CPIS) as part of the school district's five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update as required and approved by the Department.

1. A social worker holding the appropriate credentials, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9-13.5, in social work shall be provided for every 250 to 300 preschool children enrolled at in-district settings. In school districts with fewer than 250 preschool children enrolled at in-district settings, the social worker position may be combined with another

position with the same qualifications. The social worker shall, at a minimum:

- i. Collaborate with all relevant preschool instructional staff, administrators and support personnel to support the school district family services program;
- ii. Coordinate with other available school district resource staff to reach out to families, determine individual family needs, advocate and obtain appropriate community services;
- iii. Provide follow-up, including a review of child needs, when necessary;
- iv. Facilitate access to community social services, when appropriate;
- v. Collaborate with assigned school district personnel to design and provide a parent involvement program based on identified needs and parent survey responses; and
- vi. Help parents learn about child development, nutrition, safety and how to support their child's learning.

2. For a contracting private provider or local Head Start agency, a family worker shall be provided for every 45 children. In a private provider or local Head Start agency with fewer than 45 preschool children, this position may be combined with another position. The family worker shall, at a minimum:

- i. Collaborate with the school district staff to ensure family involvement and social services activities occur;
- ii. Coordinate participation in health and social services designated by the school district to serve the needs of the children and their families;
- iii. Provide all requested data to the school district; and
- iv. Report to the center director and coordinate social services activities with appropriate district social services staff.

3. For every school district, one CPIS with a minimum of a bachelor's degree in social work or a related field, such as sociology, psychology or education, shall be provided. School districts with fewer than 750 enrolled preschool children may combine this position with another position as described in the school district's five-year preschool program plan and/or annual update, as required and approved by the Department. The CPIS shall, at a minimum:

- i. Coordinate the early childhood advisory council;
- ii. Evaluate the needs of families;

- iii. Coordinate systematic parent involvement plans and activities;
- iv. Coordinate work with other community agencies; and
- v. Coordinate work with other social service personnel.

(c) The district board of education shall establish a preschool through grade three early childhood advisory council (ECAC) to review preschool program implementation and to support transition as children move from preschool through grade three.

1. The membership of the council shall consist of stakeholders in the community, as well as parents, contracting private providers and the local Head Start agency, if applicable, with new representation added as needed; and
2. Elected co-chairs shall preside at quarterly council meetings.

Amended by R.2009 d.334, effective November 2, 2009.
See: 41 N.J.R. 2530(a), 41 N.J.R. 4077(a).

In the introductory paragraph of (a), substituted "update, as required and approved by the Department" for "updates,"; in (a)1, deleted "sharing and/or provision of" following "Coordinating the", and inserted "and/or social services functions described in this section" and "contracting"; in (a)2, substituted "in this section" for "below"; in the introductory paragraph of (b), deleted "as approved by the Department" following "(CPIS)", inserted "or" following "plan and" and substituted "update as required and approved by the Department" for "updates"; rewrote the introductory paragraph of (b)1 and the introductory paragraph of (b)3; in the introductory paragraph of (b)2, inserted "contracting"; and in (c)1, inserted "parents," and substituted "and" for a comma following "providers" and "if applicable," for "and parents".

6A:13A-4.7 District board of education—fiscal accountability and integrity of preschool program

(a) The district board of education shall ensure the fiscal accountability and integrity of the preschool program.

1. In school districts with eight or more contracting private providers including the local Head Start agency, the district board of education may employ a preschool fiscal specialist.
2. The preschool fiscal specialist shall have auditing, budgeting, and accounting experience and shall report to the early childhood administrator or the supervisor of early childhood programs, and work with the school district business administrator's office.
3. In school districts where a dedicated preschool fiscal specialist is not provided, this position may be combined with another in-district position, when described in the five-year preschool program plan and/or annual updates, as required and approved by the Department, provided the qualifications and responsibilities established in this chapter are met.