TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHAPTER 11 - REGULATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED BY SCHOOL BOARDS OR EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS AND FOR THE ISSUANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ~~PROGRAMS~~ GRANTS

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001 General Provisions

001.01 Statutory Authority. This Chapter is adopted pursuant to Sections 79-1101 to 1104 and 79-318 of the Revised Statutes of Nebraska (R.R.S.).

001.02 Scope and Application of this Rule. This Chapter governs the approval of prekindergarten programs established by school boards or educational service units for children ages birth to kindergarten entrance age under the provisions of 79-1104 R.R.S. This Chapter also governs the ~~administration~~ issuance of the Early Childhood Education Grants ~~Programs~~ to school districts for programs serving children ages three to kindergarten entrance age under the provisions of Sections 79-1101 to ~~1104~~1103 R.R.S.

~~001.03 Intent. This Chapter provides for the approval of any early childhood education program that is established by a school board or educational service unit. This Chapter also provides for the distribution of grant funds to early childhood education programs.~~

001.043 Related Regulations. In addition to the requirements of this Chapter, public school districts are also governed by regulations contained in Title 92 Nebraska Administrative Code (NAC), Chapter 10, dealing with the accreditation of schools; 92 NAC Chapters 21 and 24 dealing with teacher certification and endorsement; and 92 NAC Chapter 51 dealing with special education programs.

002 Definitions

002.01 At risk when used with reference to a child means the child is experiencing conditions or factors which could have a negative impact on his or her development or learning, including low birth weight, poverty, being a child of teen parents or parents who did not graduate from high school, or living in a home whose occupants have limited ability to speak and understand English.

002.02~~1~~ Board means the State Board of Education.

002.03 Center-based program means a prekindergarten program serving a group or groups of children in a classroom.

002.04 Class means a group of children who are receiving early childhood services in a classroom for a specific time period established by the school district or educational service unit. Each class shall meet instructional hour requirements for center-based programs indicated in Section 005 of this Chapter.

002.0~~5~~2 Commissioner means the State Commissioner of Education.

002.063 Comprehensive services means ~~the~~ services ~~available in addition to~~ other than the educational and family development and support components of the prekindergarten ~~early childhood education~~ programs that are accessible to program participants including, but not limited to, ~~family development, involvement and support and access to~~ nutritional, medical, dental, social, and mental health services.

002.07 Curriculum means an intentional design to enhance children's learning that is appropriate for the age and development of the children and is designed and implemented to promote positive outcomes in the areas of social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical, and aesthetic development, for all children served in the prekindergarten program.

002.084 Department means the State Department of Education, which is comprised of the Board and the Commissioner.

002.059 Developmentally appropriate means that the learning environment and teaching strategies are based on widely accepted theories and research about the typical and atypical growth, development, and learning of children.

~~002.06 Early childhood education program means any prekindergarten part-day or full-dayprogram or in-home family support program with a stated purpose of promoting social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical,and aesthetic development and learning for children from birth to kindergarten entrance age and family development and support.~~

002.10 Established, when used with reference to prekindergarten programs established by a school board or educational service unit, shall mean a prekindergarten program that is operated by a school district or educational service unit directly; or by contract with another entity; or in coordination, cooperation, collaboration or partnership agreement with another entity.

002.0713 Family development and support means those components of ~~an early childhood education~~ a prekindergarten program which recognize the central role of the family ~~parents~~ in their children's development. Family development and support includes, but is not limited to, home visitation, parent resources and information, conferences, and referrals for additional services for children and families. ~~with the goal of helping to create productive members of society. Family development and support components enhance parenting skills and the family's ability to gain access to and benefit from community resources.~~

002.0814 Family literacy means education and related activities ~~such as the federal Even Start Family Literacy program,~~ which involve ~~parents and~~ children and their families in interactive literacy experiences. ~~activities; training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children; parent literacy; and an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.~~

002.15 Full-day program means a prekindergarten center-based program that provides instruction, programming, and services for 6 or more hours per day in a class setting.

002.16 Home visiting services means a method of service delivery for child and family development and support where guidance, information, and child development services are offered in partnership with the family. Services may be provided in the family home or at another location determined by the family and the home visiting specialist or teacher. This definition does not apply to or include special education services in the home under Rule 51 and Rule 52 (92 NAC 51 and 52).

002.17 Home visitor means a person who provides family development and support services under the supervision of a home visiting specialist or a teacher.

002.18 Home visitor specialist means a person who develops, supervises, and provides home visiting services.

002.19 Infant means a child age birth to 18 months.

002.20 In-home family support program means a prekindergarten program that specifically provides home visiting services. In-home family support programs are referred to as "home-based programs" in these regulations.

002.21 Instructional hour when used in connection with center-based programs means a period of time, at least sixty (60) minutes long, which is used for teaching in the following areas of children's growth and learning: social-emotional development, cognitive learning in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics, science, and problem solving; creative arts, health and nutrition; and physical and motor development. Meal or snack time is part of the program curriculum and provides opportunities for learning and social development, as well as nutrition, and therefore, is included as part of the instruction time. Outdoor and gross motor time will be included as part of the instruction time. Time spent transporting, conducting parent/teacher conferences or home visits will not count as instructional time. Instructional hour when used in connection with home-based programs means contact hours.

002.22 Kindergarten entrance age means age five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year.

002.~~09~~23 Paraeducator means an individual who serves in a non-teaching role under the supervision of a teacher certificated to teach pursuant to 92 NAC 21.

002.~~10~~24 Parent means parent or legal guardian.

002.25 Part-day program means a prekindergarten center-based program that provides instruction, programming, and services for less than 6 hours each day in a class setting.

002.26 Partnership agreement means a formal written agreement that describes the level and nature of commitment of each party to the prekindergarten program. The partnership agreement should describe the following: resources contributed by each partner; rights and responsibilities of each partner; and any other relevant information agreed upon by all parties.

002.~~11~~27 Prekindergarten programs means all early childhood part-day or full-day center-based programs or in-home family support (home-based) programs provided for children who have not reached the age of five on or before July 31 ~~by October 15~~ of the current school year.

002.28 Preschooler means a child age 3 years to kindergarten entrance age.

002.~~12~~29 Teach means and includes, but is not limited to, the following responsibilities: (a) the organization and management of the classroom or the physical area in which the learning experience of prekindergarten age children takes place; (b) the assessment and diagnosis of the individual educational needs of the children; (c) the planning, selecting, organizing, prescribing, and directing of the learning experiences of the children; (d) the planning of teaching strategies and the selection of available materials and equipment to be used; ~~and~~ (e) the evaluation and reporting of children's progress; and (f) the provision of a learning environment and opportunities for positive relationships with children and families.

002.~~13~~30 Teacher means a person who is certificated pursuant to 92 NAC 21 to teach.

002.31 Toddler means a child age 18 months to 3 years.

003 Prekindergarten ~~Early Childhood Education~~ Program Approval Process

003.01 Intent to Operate Statement: Any public school district or educational service unit intending to establish a prekindergarten program shall provide the following information to the Department at least 60 days prior to providing any such program:

003.01A A written statement indicating the intent to establish a prekindergarten program meeting the requirements of this Chapter and a description of the prekindergarten program to be provided. The description shall include the type of service to be provided, the planned number of instructional hours for a center-based program or contact hours for a home-based program, and the ages of children in the program. This statement shall be signed by the school district superintendent or the educational service unit (ESU) administrator.

003.01B Written verification that the district or educational service unit staff member who coordinates the prekindergarten program holds a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and has at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education.

003.01C When known, name of the certificated teacher or teachers who will assume teaching responsibilities.

003.02~~1~~ Approval Requirements. ~~Early childhood education~~ Prekindergarten programs established by school boards or educational service units shall be approved by the Board pursuant to this Chapter upon the recommendation of the Commissioner. Approval requires compliance with the ~~program~~ requirements identified in ~~Section 004 of~~ this Chapter.

003.03~~2~~ Duration and Continuation of Program Approval. Program approval is granted for one year from each July 1 through the following June 30. Renewal is based on the program's compliance with this Chapter during the prior school year.

003.04 ~~004.13~~ Approval For the Purpose of Early Childhood Education Continuation Grants or the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA). ~~In order for early childhood education programs to receive funds under the Tax, Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) or expansion grants and continuation grants under this Chapter, the program shall submit annually:~~ Prekindergarten programs established by school districts may be approved annually for purposes of TEEOSA or for Early Childhood Education continuation grants under this Chapter on the annual submission of the following by the establishing district: *(THIS SECTION MOVED FROM 004.13)*

003.04A~~004.13A~~ An ~~continuation plan~~ Early Childhood Program report demonstrating that the program will continue to meet the requirements of ~~Section 004 of~~ this Chapter, and, for programs receiving grants, a continuation plan demonstrating that the program will continue to meet grant requirements.

003.04B~~004.13B~~ ~~A~~ For programs receiving grants, a proposed operating budget demonstrating that the program will receive resources from other funding sources equal to or greater than the sum of any grant received pursuant to ~~Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1103~~ this Chapter for the prior school year plus any calculated state aid as calculated pursuant to subsection (1) of Neb. Rev.Stat. 79-1103 for the prior school year. ~~for the prior school year. Calculated state aid shall be calculated by multiplying the cost grouping cost per student for the school district's local system cost grouping by the adjusted formula students attributed to the approved early childhood prekindergarten program.~~

003.0~~3~~5 General Reports. The head administrator of each school district or educational service unit establishing a prekindergarten ~~an early childhood education~~ program shall include information about such programs in the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS) and the Consolidated Data Collection (CDC). All early childhood data is due as specified by the NSSRS and CDC calendar. ~~on the Fall Personnel Report due September 15, the Curriculum Report due annually in February, the Fall Membership Report due October 15, and the Annual Statistical Summary due June 30.~~

003.0~~4~~6 Early Childhood Program Report. An Early Childhood Program Report Form shall be submitted annually by October 15, and on the form provided by the Department. The report form is contained in Appendix A of this Chapter. When the report reflects failure to comply with the requirements of this Chapter, it shall be accompanied by a written plan for correcting the violation(s). ~~before the beginning of the following school year~~. The plan is subject to approval by the Commissioner or his or her designee. The Commissioner or his or her designee may approve the plan if in his or her judgment it is reasonably calculated to correct the violation prior to the beginning of the next school year.

~~003.05 Loss of Approval. An early childhood education program not in compliance with the requirements of this Chapter may be subject to loss of program approval and/or loss of grant funding. The Commissioner may, at his or her discretion, make recommendations to the State Board to end or deny program approval and/or grant funding.~~ *(THIS SECTION MOVED TO 008.01)*

004 Requirements For All Prekindergarten ~~Early Childhood Education~~ Programs (Center-based and Home-based) Established By School Boards or Educational Service Units

004.01 Stated Purpose. Each program shall have a stated purpose of promoting social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical, and aesthetic development and learning for the children served and of promoting family development and support.

004.0~~1~~2 Planning. Each program shall have a planning period. The planning period shall include activities associated with:

004.0~~1~~2A Determining the community's unmet needs for early childhood education for prekindergarten children in terms of the number of such children in the community, an estimate of the number of children at risk ~~according to the categories specified in Sections 005.01B1 through 005.01B4~~, kinds of programs available, numbers of children birth to kindergarten entrance age who are not currently receiving services, and barriers to the provision of services.

004.0~~1~~2B Developing cooperative relationships with public and nonpublic providers of early childhood programs, including the development of cooperative agreements and contracts, as needed to carry out the proposed program.

004.0~~1~~2C Recruiting and training staff.

004.0~~1~~2D Identifying and listing existing school-community resources available to provide comprehensive services to ~~for~~ the program participants. ~~, including nutritional, medical, dental, social services, mental health services and their respective eligibility requirements.~~

004.0~~5~~3 Advisory Committee. A local Early Childhood Advisory Committee shall be established with membership representing families and community members.

004.0~~5~~3A An existing advisory committee such as that required for services to children below age five (5) with disabilities in Title 92 NAC Chapter 51, a Head Start Policy Council, or a Title I Advisory Committee, may serve this purpose if the representation conforms with this section and the mission is expanded to encompass the purpose of this ~~e~~Chapter.

004.03B Advisory Committee meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act as described in Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-1407 to 84-1414.

~~004.04 Hours. The program shall operate a minimum of twelve (12) instructional hours per week during the school year. Programs receiving grant funds pursuant to Section 005 of this Chapter or receiving Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) funds shall operate a minimum of four hundred and fifty (450) instructional hours per school year.~~

~~004.04A Instructional hour means a period of time, at least sixty (60) minutes, which is used for teaching in the following areas of children's growth and learning: social-emotional development; cognitive learning in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics, science, and problem solving; creative arts; health and nutrition; and,~~

~~physical and motor development. Meal or snack time is part of the program curriculum and provides opportunities for learning and social development, as well as nutrition, and therefore is included as part of the instructional time.~~ (MOVED TO 005)

004.0~~2~~4 Coordination with Existing Programs and Funding Sources. Each program shall develop, and keep on file, a written ~~budget~~ plan to show that the program will be coordinated or contracted with existing programs ~~and funding sources~~, including those listed in Subsection 004.04A and nonpublic programs which meet the requirements of this Chapter. Each program shall develop and keep on file a written ~~The budget~~ plan to coordinate and use a combination of local, state, and federal funding sources including, but not limited to, those listed in Subsection 004.04A ~~shall include a locally-developed sliding scale formula for parent fees~~ in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups of children and to ensure that participating children and families have access to knowledge of comprehensive services that may be available. ~~Existing programs and funding sources include, but are not limited to:~~

004.04A For the purposes of Subsection 004.04, existing programs and funding sources are as follows:

004.0~~2~~4A1 Grants provided through the Early Childhood Education Grant Program for children ages three to kindergarten entrance age under Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1103 and the Early Childhood Grant Program for children ages birth to three (Sixpence Grants) under Neb. Rev Stat. 79-1104.02

004.0~~2~~4~~B~~A2 Programs for ~~Funds provided for~~ children with disabilities below five years of age funded through the Special Education Act, the Early Intervention Act, and funds available through the flexible funding provisions under the Special Education Act.

004.0~~2~~4~~C~~A3 The federal Head Start or Early Head Start program.

~~004.02D The federal Even Start Family Literacy Program.~~

004.0~~2~~4~~E~~A4 Title I of the federal funds provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and subsequent reauthorizations or other appropriate federal legislation.

004.0~~2~~4~~F~~A5 Child care assistance through the Department of Health and Human Services ~~System~~.

004.0~~2~~4~~G~~A6 Local district funds.

004.0~~2~~4~~H~~A7 Funds obtained through contracts with other school districts, such as contracts to provide services to children below age five with disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51.

004.0~~2~~4~~I~~A8 Private grants and gifts.

004.0~~2~~4~~J~~A9 Parent fees from the program's locally-developed sliding scale.

004.024KA10 Nonpublic ~~early childhood education~~ prekindergarten programs which meet the requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1104(2) and this Chapter.

004.05 Fees. Fees if charged shall not exceed the actual cost for providing prekindergarten programs. Programs charging fees shall have a plan to use a sliding fee scale in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups. Programs may waive fees on the basis of need. This Subsection does not allow any school district to fail to meet its responsibilities under the Special Education Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1110 to 79-1167).

~~004.06 Family Development and Support. Each program shall provide a strong family development and support component which recognizes the central role of parents in their children's development and establishes a working partnership with each parent. The family development and support component shall include, as a minimum:~~ (MOVED TO 005.02)

~~004.06A Written information for parents about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.~~

~~004.06B An orientation to the program for children and parents.~~

~~004.06C At least two home visits per year between the parent(s) and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning. These visits may occur in locations other than the home as determined by the parent(s) and teacher.~~

~~004.06D Specified opportunities for program staff to dialogue with parents through such activities as parent conferences, participation on advisory committees, needs assessments, participation as classroom volunteers, and flexible scheduling of meetings and events.~~

~~004.06E Family development, support, and services based on the family's needs and interests including but not limited to their economic and logistical needs.~~

004.06 Program Coordinator. Prekindergarten programs shall be coordinated by a staff member who holds a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education.

004.07 Program and Staff Requirements. All teachers and administrators in prekindergarten programs established by school district or educational service units shall hold a valid certificate or permit to teach issued by the Department pursuant to 92 NAC 21. Each center-based part- day or full- day program shall also meet program and staff requirements in Section 005 of this Chapter. Each home-based program shall also meet the program and staff requirements in Section 006 of this Chapter.

004.038 Participation and Inclusion. Participation of children and ~~parents~~ families in any program under this Chapter shall be voluntary. Programs shall ~~include~~ not exclude children verified as having disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51 or 52. Programs shall ~~integrate~~ include to the extent possible children of diverse social and economic characteristics.

(THE FOLLOWING HAS ALL BEEN MOVED TO SECTION 005)

004.08 Program Staff. The program shall hire, utilize, and provide staff development for qualified staff as set forth below.

004.08A Teacher. Any teacher in an early childhood education program shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Preschool Disabilities, or Early Childhood Education Unified. A program may employ a teacher without such an endorsement if the teacher files a plan to complete the endorsement with the Department as part of the annual Early Childhood Program Report. The plan will require the teacher to receive at least three (3) semester hours of credit annually toward completion of the endorsement. When fifty percent (50%) of the required courses have been completed, the teacher is eligible for a provisional endorsement pursuant to 92 NAC 24 which is valid for three (3) years and can be renewed upon completion of at least fifteen (15) credit hours.

004.08B Paraeducator. A paraeducator assigned to work as a member of a classroom team shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following:

004.08B1 Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

004.08B2 Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

004.08B3 Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. This experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

004.08B4 Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour.

004.08B5 The program may employ a paraeducator who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the paraeducator completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

004.08C Language Resource. If the majority of children enrolled in the program use a common language other than spoken English, at least one staff member who uses such language shall be available as an active participant to communicate with such children in classroom or group experiences. Where less than a majority of the children enrolled in the

program speak a language different from the rest, one staff member or a community resource person or parent shall be identified to serve as a resource to the program.

004.08D Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all staff working in the program who have regular contact with children and their families.

004.08E Staff Development Hours. Teachers and paraeducators who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate in at least twelve (12) clock hours annually of staff development related to early childhood education or child development.

004.08F Background checks. Program staff who are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry before being hired.

004.09 Child/Staff Ratio and Group Size. Child/staff ratios and group sizes shall be maintained as indicated below with staff assigned who meet the qualifications described in Section 004.08. When age groups are mixed, the lower ratio shall prevail.

004.09A If the program serves children, age six (6) weeks to eighteen (18) months, one (1) staff member in the classroom shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each four (4) children with a maximum group size of eight (8).

004.09B If the program serves children, age eighteen (18) months to three (3) years, one (1) staff member in the classroom shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each six (6) children with a maximum group size of twelve (12).

004.09C If the program serves children, age three (3) years to kindergarten entrance age, one (1) staff member in the classroom shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate for each group of twenty (20) children. A paraeducator or additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each ten (10) children with a maximum group size of twenty (20).

004.10 Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment. The early childhood education program shall provide a play-oriented learning environment, which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials.

004.10A A written plan shall be developed to explain the program. The written program plan shall include a description of how the program curriculum, practices and assessment provide a variety of developmentally appropriate, experiential activities which:

004.10A1 Promote a positive self-concept in each child.

~~004.10A2 Develop social skills in each child.~~

~~004.10A3 Encourage each child to think, reason, question, and experiment.~~

~~004.10A4 Foster both receptive and expressive language development and provide early literacy experiences.~~

~~004.10A5 Incorporate family literacy experiences.~~

~~004.10A6 Develop an understanding of quantities of things, of time, and of space.~~

~~004.10A7 Enhance each child's physical development and skills.~~

~~004.10A8 Encourage sound safety, health, and nutritional practices, including avoidance of controlled substances.~~

~~004.10A9 Stimulate each child in creative expression and appreciation of the arts.~~

~~004.10A10 Include exploratory play in a language and literacy-rich environment during a majority of the daily schedule.~~

~~004.10A11 Reflect and respect the diversity of races, national origins, gender, and physical and mental abilities in the larger society and with particular emphasis on the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children enrolled through planned activities, use of materials, and use of equipment.~~

~~004.10A12 Use positive, age-appropriate techniques of child guidance including redirection, anticipation, and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement.~~

~~004.10A13 Use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning. The assessment data is used to plan activities to meet the individual needs of children. Any formal assessment tools used must meet accepted standards of reliability and validity.~~

~~004.10A14 Link the Early Childhood Education Program to the district's kindergarten/primary program through a written transition plan insuring continuity, identification, and implementation of processes necessary to facilitate the transition of children. The early childhood program shall be included in the district school improvement plan.~~

~~004.10A15 Include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of parents in family literacy activities.~~

004.11 Facilities, Equipment, Health, and Safety

004.11A Classrooms shall provide at least thirty-five (35) square feet per child of space usable by the children.

004.11B An outdoor play area that is protected by fences or physical barriers shall be available which provides at least seventy-five (75) square feet per child of play space.

004.11C Each classroom and outdoor play area shall be equipped with safe, durable, age-appropriate equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor activities.

004.11D If needed, modifications of the equipment, materials, and activities shall be made to assure maximum participation in the ongoing activities of the program for children with disabilities attending the program.

004.11E Equipment and materials shall be organized into clearly defined areas of interest which are arranged to encourage independent choice; cooperative activity; and alteration between quiet and active exploration and teacher-and child-initiated activities.

004.11F Each early childhood education program shall maintain safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the facilities used for the program and on the outdoor playground and meet applicable fire, safety, and health codes.

004.11G At least one (1) staff member per classroom who has received first aid and CPR training specifically designed for children shall be on duty at all times. Written verification of current training shall be available.

004.12 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. The program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department and will include, but not be limited to the following:

004.12A An assessment of program quality.

004.12B A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress.

004.12C A plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.

004.13 Approval for the Purpose of Grants or the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act. In order for early childhood education programs to receive funds under the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) or expansion grants and continuation grants under this Chapter, the program shall submit annually:

004.13A A continuation plan demonstrating that the program will continue to meet the requirements of Section 004 of this Chapter, and

004.13B A proposed operating budget demonstrating the program will continue to receive resources from other funding sources equal to or greater than the sum of any

grant received pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1103 plus any calculated state aid for the prior school year. Calculated state aid shall be calculated by multiplying the cost grouping cost per student for the school district's local system cost grouping by the adjusted formula students attributed to the approved early childhood education program.

005 Early Childhood Education Grants. School districts, individually or in cooperation with other school districts or educational service units, working in cooperation with existing nonpublic programs that operate early childhood education programs meeting the requirements found in Section 004 may submit an application for an Early Childhood Education Grant. Administrative authority for grant programs for children from birth to age three (3) resides with the Early Childhood Education Endowment Board of Trustees. The grant requirements contained throughout Section 005 of this Chapter do not apply to programs for children from birth to age three (3). *(MOVED TO SECTION 007)*

005.01 Children Who May Be Served With Grant Funds.

005.01A All prekindergarten-age children, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or the social, linguistic, or economic diversity of the children's families are eligible to be served with grant funds.

005.01B Grant funds shall be targeted toward serving the following prekindergarten-age children ages three to kindergarten entrance age.

005.01B1 Children whose family income qualifies them for participation in the federal free or reduced lunch program.

005.01B2 Children who reside in a home where a language other than spoken English is used as the primary means of communication.

005.01B3 Children whose parents are younger than eighteen or who have not completed high school.

005.01B4 Children who were born prematurely or at low birth weight as verified by a physician.

005.01C Up to thirty percent of the funds granted to each early childhood education program under this Chapter may be used to offset program costs for children who are not identified in Sections 0075.01B1 through 0075.01B4 or who are not supported through any of the funding sources listed in Subsection 004.02b through 004.02k, in order to maximize the participation of children from diverse groups.

005.01D Early Childhood Education Program Grant funds shall not be used to support the participation of children who are eligible by age to enroll in kindergarten (those who reach age five by October 15 of the current year).

~~005.02 Grant Application Process.~~

~~005.02A Request For Proposals. For years in which grant funds are available, the Department shall issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for early childhood education grants.~~

~~005.02B Forms. Each district, cooperative or educational service unit applying forgrant funding under this Chapter, individually or in cooperation with other school districts or educational service units, shall submit applications on forms supplied by the Department.~~

~~The application form for new, or expansion grants is contained in Appendix B of this Chapter for use by applicants until the process is established online by the Department of Education on January 31, 2008. The continuation grant application process is established online and requires electronic submission of information identified in Appendix C of this Chapter.~~

~~005.02C Applications. Applications shall be rated on the basis of conformance with the requirements of this Chapter.~~

~~005.02D Panel. The Commissioner or his or her designee shall appoint a panel ofpersons knowledgeable in early childhood education to evaluate the applications and to recommend proposals for funding to the Commissioner.~~

~~005.02E Commissioner's Recommendation. Application funding recommendations by the Commissioner shall be made at a meeting of the State Board of Education. Upon action by the Board, all applicants shall be notified of the outcome.~~

~~005.02F Funding Distribution. The Department shall make an effort to fund programs across the state in both rural and urban areas.~~

~~005.03 Grant Funding.~~

~~005.03A Each prekindergarten early childhood education program approved under the provisions of Section 0075.02 shall be eligible for grant funding of up to fifty percent of the total approved budget of the program, subject to the following:~~

~~005.03A1 Appropriation of the funds by the Legislature.~~

~~005.03A2 An annual review of compliance with this Chapter.~~

005 Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Center-Based Program

005.01 Instructional Hours. Each class in the program shall operate a minimum of twelve (12) instructional hours per week during the school year. Programs receiving grant funds pursuant this Chapter or receiving Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) funds shall operate a minimum of four hundred and fifty (450) instructional hours per school year.
(*MOVED FROM 004.04*)

005.02 Family Development and Support. Each center-based part- day or full- day prekindergarten program shall provide a strong family development and support component which recognizes the central role of parents in their children's development and establishes a working partnership with each parent. The family development and support component shall include, as a minimum: *(MOVED FROM 004.06)*

005.02A Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.

005.02B An orientation to the program for children and families.

005.02C At least two (2) home visits per year between the parent(s) and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning. If the family decides to have the visit at another location other than the home, it must be conducted at a location determined jointly by the family and teacher.

005.02D Specified opportunities for program staff to dialogue with families through such activities as parent conferences, participation on advisory committees, needs assessments, participation as classroom volunteers, and flexible scheduling of meetings and events.

005.02E Services based on the family's needs and interests that include but are not limited to, components that will enhance parent skills and the family's ability to access community resources.

005.03 Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment. The part- day or full- day center- based prekindergarten program shall provide a play-oriented learning environment, which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials. (*MOVED FROM 004.10*)

005.03A A written program plan shall be developed to explain and implement the program. The written program plan shall include a description of how the program curriculum, practices and assessment provide a variety of developmentally appropriate, experiential activities which:

005.03A1 Promote a positive self-concept in each child.

005.03A2 Foster attachments for all children by ensuring they have consistent teachers and paraeducators daily.

005.03A3 Develop social skills in each child.

005.03A4 Encourage each child to think, reason, question, and experiment.

005.03A5 Foster both receptive and expressive language development and provide early literacy experiences.

005.03A6 Incorporate family literacy experiences.

005.03A7 Develop an understanding of quantities of things, of time, and of space.

005.03A8 Enhance each child's physical development and skills.

005.03A9 Encourage sound safety, health, and nutritional practices, including avoidance of controlled substances.

005.03A10 Stimulate each child in creative expression and appreciation of the arts.

005.03A11 Include exploratory play in a language and literacy-rich environment during a majority of the daily schedule.

005.03A12 Reflect and respect the diversity of races, national origins, gender, and physical and mental abilities in the larger society and with particular emphasis on the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children enrolled through planned activities, use of materials, and use of equipment.

005.03A13 Use positive, age-appropriate techniques of child guidance including redirection, anticipation, and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement.

005.03A14 Use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning. The assessment data is used to plan activities to meet the individual needs of children. Any formal assessment tools used shall meet accepted standards of reliability and validity.

005.03A15 Link the prekindergarten to the district's kindergarten/primary program through a written transition plan insuring continuity, identification, and implementation of processes necessary to facilitate the transition of children. The prekindergarten program shall be included in the district school improvement plan.

005.03A16 Include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of parents in family literacy activities.

005.03A17 Provide at least one outdoor play period (weather permitting) daily.

005.04 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. The program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department and will include, but not be limited to the following: *(MOVED FROM 004.12)*

005.04A An assessment of program quality.

005.04B A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress.

005.04C A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.

005.05 Program Staff. The prekindergarten program shall use qualified staff as set forth below. *(MOVED FROM 004.08)*

005.05A Teacher. Any teacher in a prekindergarten program shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education (age 3 through Grade 3), Early Childhood Special Education (Birth through Kindergarten), or Early Childhood Inclusive (Birth through Grade 3). A program may use a teacher without such an endorsement if the teacher files with the Department, as part of the annual Early Childhood Program Report, a plan developed by the teacher and the cooperating college or university to complete the endorsement. The plan will require the teacher to receive at least six (6) semester hours of credit annually toward completion of the endorsement. When fifty percent (50%) of the required courses have been completed, the teacher is eligible for a provisional endorsement pursuant to 92 NAC 24.

005.05B Paraeducator. A paraeducator assigned to work as a member of a team in a classroom setting shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following:

005.05B1 Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05B2 Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05B3 Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. This experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05B4 Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour.

005.05B5 The program may employ a paraeducator who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the paraeducator completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

005.05C The prekindergarten program may employ a home visitor in a center- based program who provides family development and support services under the direction of a teacher. The home visitor shall have at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas:

005.05C1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education;

005.05C2 Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development;

005.05C3 Child Development;

005.05C4 Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; or

005.05C5 Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.

005.05D Orientation. All staff working in the prekindergarten program shall be provided with an orientation prior to having direct responsibility for the care and teaching of children or for providing family and development services. The orientation shall include job duties and responsibilities, building safety procedures, information about the state law regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect, child assessment information, and daily routines and schedules.

005.05E Language Resource. If the majority of children enrolled in the program use a common language other than spoken English, at least one staff member who uses such language shall be available as an active participant to communicate with such children in classroom and group experiences. Where less than a majority of the children enrolled in the program speak a language different from the rest, one staff member or a community resource person or parent shall be identified to serve as a resource to the program. (*MOVED FROM 004.08C*)

005.05F Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all staff working in the program who have regular contact with children and their families. (*MOVED FROM 004.08D*)

005.05G Staff Development Hours. Teachers and paraeducators who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate in at least twelve (12) clock hours annually of staff development related to prekindergarten or child development. (*MOVED FROM 004.08E*)

005.05H Background checks. Program staff who are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry before being hired. *(MOVED FROM 004.08F)*

005.06 Child/Staff Ratio and Group Size. Child/staff ratios and group sizes shall be maintained as indicated below with staff assigned who meet the qualifications described in Section 005.06. When age groups are mixed, the lower ratio shall prevail. (*MOVED FROM 004.09*)

005.06A If the program serves infants, at least one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional certificated teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each four (4) children with a maximum group size of eight (8).

005.06B If the program serves toddlers, at least one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional certificated teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each six (6) children with a maximum group size of twelve (12).

005.06C If the program serves preschoolers, at least one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate for each group of twenty (20) children. A paraeducator or an additional certificated teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each ten (10) children with a maximum group size of twenty (20).

005.06D In full- day programs where children nap, the certified teacher may be out of the classroom during the nap period as long as the children are adequately supervised by other staff and the teacher is readily available.

005.07 Facilities, Equipment, Health and Safety

005.07A Classroom settings shall provide at least thirty-five (35) square feet per child of space usable by the children.

005.07B An outdoor play area that is protected by fences or physical barriers shall be available which provides at least seventy-five (75) square feet per child of play space.

005.07B1 The fence or physical barrier shall be of a type of structure that is a continuous barrier and is at least 36 inches in height, flush with the ground, and without any gaps that would allow a child to exit the protected area.

005.07C Each classroom setting and outdoor play area shall be equipped with safe, durable, age-appropriate equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor activities.

005.07D If needed, modifications of the equipment, materials, and activities shall be made to assure maximum participation in the ongoing activities of the program for children with disabilities attending the program.

005.07E Equipment and materials shall be organized into clearly defined areas of interest that are arranged to encourage independent choice; cooperative activity; and alteration between quiet and active exploration and teacher-and child-initiated activities.

005.07F Each prekindergarten program shall maintain safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the facilities used for the program and on the outdoor playground and meet applicable fire, safety, and health codes.

005.07G At least one (1) staff member per class who has received first aid and CPR training specifically designed for children shall be on duty at all times. Written verification of current training shall be available.

005.08 Meals and/or Snacks. The program shall provide each class at least one meal and/or snack that meets USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines each day. All tables used for meals and snack shall be properly sanitized. *(MOVED FROM 004.07)*

005.09 Immunizations. The school district shall comply with all state statutes and regulations regarding the immunization status of all enrolled children.

005.10 Supervision. Adequate and appropriate supervision shall be provided at all times children are in attendance, including during outdoor play and field trips. Adequate and appropriate supervision includes, but is not limited to, knowing the whereabouts and being within sight or sound of children at all times.

005.11 Toileting. The program shall ensure the toileting needs of all children are met immediately. The program shall ensure wet and/or soiled clothing is changed immediately.

005.12 Infants and Toddlers. Programs serving children birth to age 3 shall meet the following requirements:

005.12A The physical, emotional and social needs of infants and toddlers shall be met consistently and promptly;

005.12B Formula and feeding schedules shall be obtained from parents;

005.12C Infants shall not sleep with bottles;

005.12D Bottles shall not be propped;

005.12E If formula is used, it shall be a commercially made product;

005.12F All breast milk and prepared formula shall be refrigerated and clearly labeled with the child's name and discard date; and unused prepared formula shall be discarded as indicated by the label;

005.12G Unfrozen breast milk shall be discarded 48 hours after being expressed; and frozen breastmilk shall be discarded three months after being expressed;

005.12H Only highchairs with three point safety straps shall be used;

005.12I Infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep except in cases where there is a medical reason the child shall not sleep on its back; and written verification of the medical reason from the child's physician shall be available;

005.12J Wet or soiled diapers shall be changed immediately and disposed of in a sanitary manner;

005.12K Individual cleaning cloths shall be used for diapering;

005.12L Diaper changing surfaces shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use and staff shall use proper hand washing techniques after each diaper change;

005.12M Toileting shall be done in a manner agreed upon with the parent;

005.12N Potty chairs shall be cleaned, disinfected, and properly stored away from play areas;

005.12O All cribs and playpens shall meet federal safety standards as indicated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission; and

005.12P All cribs and playpens shall not contain any soft objects, bumper pads, toys or loose bedding.

005.13 Sixpence Programs. School districts that receive Early Childhood Endowment birth to three grants, also referred to as Sixpence programs, may be required to meet additional grant-related program requirements established by the Endowment Board of Trustees.

~~006 Appeals and Provisions for Notice and Hearing~~

~~006.01 Recommendations from the Commissioner to the Board to either end or deny program approval pursuant to Sections 004, or to end grant funding pursuant to Section 005 may be appealed under 92 NAC 61. All hearings arising under this Chapter shall be conducted in accordance with the hearing procedures of 92 NAC 61, including provisions of that Chapter relating to evidence.~~

~~006.02 When the Commissioner makes a recommendation to the Board to end or deny program approval or end grant funding, notice of the recommendation and of the right to request a hearing shall be given by certified mail sent at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date of the Board meeting at which the recommendation is to be considered. Copies will be sent to the head administrator of the school district educational service unit and to the presiding officer of the governing body, if known. The notice shall specify the basis for the recommendation.~~

~~006.03 Upon review of the Commissioner's recommendation and following any hearing, the Board shall make a determination regarding the program's approval or grant funding and shall inform the head administrator of the school district or educational service unit and the presiding officer of the governing body, if known, of the Board's decision. Notice shall be given in writing by certified mail.~~ *(MOVED TO 008)*

006 Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Home -Based Program

006.01 Contact Hours in Home-Based Programs. Program staff shall have contact with each enrolled family at least three (3) times each month for a minimum total of 180 minutes per month. A minimum of 120 minutes shall be face- to- face contact with the family. Contact may be completed by the home visiting specialist or the home visitor. If a school district or educational

service unit contracts with another organization to provide early childhood services, the district or ESU shall ensure the adequate number of hours are provided as required in this Subsection.

006.02 Family Development and Support. Each home-base prekindergarten program shall include the following, as a minimum:

006.02A Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures;

006.02B An orientation to the program for families; and

006.02C Delivery of services that are based on family needs and interests and that focus on the child's development and positive family outcomes. Services shall be provided year round following a curriculum that meets the requirements of Subsection 006.03 of this Chapter.

006.03 Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment in Home-Based Prekindergarten Programs. Each home-based prekindergarten program shall provide curricula that are researched-based and designed to work with families that facilitate the optimal growth and development of children, and that are culturally appropriate for all families served. The program shall also include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of families in literacy activities.

006.03A Each program shall have a written program plan that shall include a description of program curriculum, practices and assessments used. This plan must be provided to all parents and be available to the Department upon request.

006.04 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. Each home-based program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department's Office of Early Childhood and will include, but not be limited to the following:

006.04A An assessment of program quality;

006.04B A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress; and

006.04C A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.

006.05 Program Staff. In order to provide home visiting services, each home-based program shall use one or more home visitor specialists and may in addition use one or more home visitors who meet the qualifications below:

006.05A Home Visiting Specialist. Any home visitor specialist in a home-based program shall have a bachelor's degree or higher in one of the following areas:

006.05A1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education,

006.05A2 Nursing including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family-centered practices or child and youth development,

006.05A3 Child Development,

006.05A4 Sociology or Psychology including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any area of family-centered practices or child and youth development, or

006.05A5 Social Work including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family- centered practices or child and youth development.

006.05B Home Visitor. Any home visitor assigned to work as a member of the program team shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee:

006.05B1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education,

006.05B2 Nursing with additional coursework in Sociology/Psychology and in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development,

006.05B3 Child Development,

006.05B4 Sociology or Psychology with additional coursework in the area of family-centered practices or child and youth development, or

006.05B5 Social Work with additional coursework in the area of family-centered practices or child and youth development.

006.05C The program may use a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets a full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

007 Early Childhood Education Grants for Prekindergarten Programs for Children Ages Three to Kindergarten Entrance Age. Any school district, individually or in cooperation with other school districts or educational service units, working in cooperation with existing nonpublic programs meeting the requirements for approval in this Chapter may submit an application for an Early Childhood Education Grant for a prekindergarten program for children ages three (3) to kindergarten entrance age that is established by the district and is approved by the Department pursuant to this Chapter. Administrative authority for Early Childhood Education Grants for prekindergarten programs for children from birth to age three (3) (Sixpence Grants) resides with the Early Childhood Education Endowment Board of Trustees.

007.01 Children Who May Be Served With Grant Funds.

007.01A All prekindergarten-age children, ages three (3) to kindergarten entrance age, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or the social, linguistic, or economic diversity of the children's families are eligible to be served with grant funds awarded as provided in this Chapter.

007.01B Up to thirty percent of the funds granted for each prekindergarten program under this Chapter may be used to offset program costs for children who are not identified in the priorities specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1103(1)(b),(c),and (d) or who are not supported through any of the funding sources listed in Subsection 004.04 of this Chapter, in order to maximize the participation of children from diverse groups.

007.01C Early Childhood Education Grant funds shall not be used to support the participation of children who are below age three or who are eligible by age to enroll in kindergarten (those who reach age five by July 31 of the current year).

007.02 Grant Application Process.

007.02A Request For Proposals. For years in which grant funds are available, the Department shall issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for new or expansion grants for programs for children ages three to kindergarten entrance age.

007.02B Forms. Each school district applying for new or expansion grant funding under this Chapter, individually or in cooperation with other school districts or educational service units, shall submit an application on the forms in Appendix B of this Chapter. The application process for continuation grants is established online and requires electronic submission of information identified in Appendix C of this Chapter.

007.02C Applications. Applications shall be rated on the basis of conformance with the requirements of this Chapter.

007.02D Panel. The Commissioner or his or her designee shall appoint a panel of persons knowledgeable in early childhood education to evaluate the applications and to recommend proposals for funding to the Commissioner.

007.02E Commissioner's Recommendation. Application funding recommendations by the Commissioner shall be made at a meeting of the State Board of Education. Upon action by the Board, all applicants shall be notified of the outcome.

007.02F Funding Distribution. Grant funds shall be distributed by the Department using the priorities and limitations specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-1103(1)(b), (c), and (d). The Department shall make an effort to fund programs across the state in both rural and urban areas.

007.03 Grant Funding.

007.03A Each prekindergarten program approved under the provisions of this Chapter shall be eligible to apply for grant funding subject to the following:

007.03A1 Appropriation of the funds by the Legislature.

007.03A2 An annual review of compliance with the requirements of this Chapter.

008 Violations, Probation, or Loss of Program Approval and/or Loss of Grant Funds

008.01 Violations. When the Commissioner or his or her designee determines that the prekindergarten program is in violation of any requirement specified in this Chapter, written notice shall be given to the school district or educational service unit. Any prekindergarten program in violation of any requirements specified in this Chapter shall submit a written plan to the Commissioner or his or her designee describing how violations will be corrected prior to the beginning of the next school year.

008.02 Continued violation of any requirements indicated in this Chapter may result in probation, loss of approval and/or loss of grant funding as described in this Chapter. The Commissioner may, at his or her discretion, make recommendations to the State Board to end or deny program approval and/or grant funding or place a program on probation.

008.03 Recommendations from the Commissioner to the Board to either end or deny program approval pursuant to Sections 004, 005 and 006 or to end grant funding pursuant to Section 007 may be appealed by filing a petition and request for hearing with the State Board of Education pursuant to 92 NAC 61 no later than 15 calendar days after the date of receipt of written notice of the recommendation from the Commissioner or his or her designee. All hearings arising under this Chapter shall be conducted in accordance with the hearing procedures of 92 NAC 61, including provisions of that Chapter relating to evidence.

008.04 When the Commissioner makes a recommendation to the Board to end or deny program approval or end grant funding, notice of the recommendation and of the right to request a hearing shall be given by certified mail returned receipt requested sent at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date of the Board meeting at which the recommendation is to be considered. The notice will be sent to the superintendent of the school district or head administrator of the educational service unit responsible for the program. The notice shall specify the basis for the recommendation.

008.05 Upon review of the Commissioner's recommendation and following any hearing, the Board shall make a determination regarding the program's approval or grant funding and shall inform the superintendent of the school district or the head administrator of the educational service unit of the Board's decision in writing by certified mail.

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM REPORT
For _____ School Year

District Name/ESU Number:		County District Number:
_____		_____
Address:	**City:**	**Zip Code:**
_____	_____	_____
Program Contact:	**Title:**	
_____	_____	
Telephone Number:	**FAX Number:**	**E-mail Address:**
_____	_____	_____

PROGRAM OPERATION

☐ **Yes**, this public school district/ESU **does** operate an early childhood program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **yes**, please complete the following pages, sign the last page and return to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address below.*

☐ **No**, this public school district/ESU **does not** operate an early childhood program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **no**, please sign and return this page to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address below.*

Signature of District Superintendent/ESU Administrator:	Date:
	_____

REQUIREMENTS for EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Yes	No	
☐	☐	004.01 Each program has a planning period prior to the initiation of the program. The planning period includes activities associated with:
☐	☐	A Determining the community's unmet needs for early childhood education for prekindergarten children.
☐	☐	B Developing cooperative relationships with public and nonpublic providers of early childhood programs, including the development of cooperative agreements and contracts.
☐	☐	C Recruiting and training staff.
☐	☐	D Identifying and listing existing school-community resources necessary to provide comprehensive services, including nutritional, medical, dental, social services, mental health services.
☐	☐	004.02 Each program has a written budget on file which shows that the program is coordinated or contracted with existing programs and funding sources, and includes a sliding scale formula for parent fees that maximizes the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups of children and ensures that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services. Existing programs and funding sources include (check all that apply A – L below):
☐	☐	A Grants provided through the Early Childhood Education Grant Program
☐	☐	B Funds provided for children with disabilities below five years of age through the Special Education Act, the Early Intervention Act, and funds available through the flexible funding provisions under the Special Education Act.
☐	☐	C The federal Head Start program.
☐	☐	D The federal Even Start Family Literacy Program.
☐	☐	E Federal funds provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and subsequent reauthorizations or other appropriate federal legislation.
☐	☐	F Child care assistance through the Health and Human Services System.
☐	☐	G Local district funds.
☐	☐	H Funds obtained through contracts with other districts, such as contracts to provide services to children below age five with disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51.
☐	☐	I Private grants and gifts.
☐	☐	J Parent fees from the program's sliding scale formula
☐	☐	K Nonpublic early childhood education programs
☐	☐	L Other
☐	☐	004.03 Participation of children and parents in the program is voluntary and includes children verified as having disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51 and children of diverse social and economic characteristics.
☐	☐	004.04 The program operates a minimum of 12 instructional hours per week during the school year. Programs receiving grant funds or TEEOSA funds operate a minimum of 450 instructional hours per school year.

Indicate the total number of hours per week and per year for each classroom group of children. A classroom is defined as a distinct group of children; it is not the physical classroom space.

____	004.04 Total number of instructional hours per **week** for each part-day (less than 6 hours) classroom group of children
____	004.04 Total number of instructional hours per **week** for each full-day (6 hours or more) classroom group of children
____	004.04 Total number of instructional hours per **year** for each part-day (less than 6 hours) classroom group of children
____	004.04 Total number of instructional hours per **year** for each full-day (6 hours or more) classroom group of children

Yes	No	
☐	☐	004.05 A local Early Childhood Advisory Committee is established with membership representing families and community members.
☐	☐	004.06 Each program provides a strong family development and support component which recognizes the central role of parents in their children's development and establishes a working partnership with each parent. The family development and support component includes, as a minimum:
☐	☐	A Written information for parents about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.

☐	☐	B An orientation to the program for children and parents.
☐	☐	C At least two home visits per year between the parents and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning.
☐	☐	D Specified opportunities for program staff to dialogue with parents through such activities as parent conferences, participation on advisory committees, needs assessments, participation as classroom volunteers, and flexible scheduling of meetings and events.
☐	☐	E Family development, support and services based on the family's needs and interests, including but not limited to their economic and logistical needs.
☐	☐	004.07 The program provides at least one meal or snack that meets USDA guidelines.
☐	☐	004.08A All teachers in the program hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Preschool Disabilities, or Early Childhood Education Unified. A program employing a teacher without such endorsement must submit a plan for the teacher to complete the endorsement.

Indicate the name and teaching endorsement of each teacher in the program. Check all that apply. Attach additional pages as needed. ***For any program employing a teacher not having an early childhood education endorsement, the teacher's plan for and progress toward completion of the endorsement must be attached.***

Name (as listed on teaching certificate)	**Early Childhood Education**	**Preschool Disabilities/Early Childhood Special Education**	**Early Childhood Education Unified**	**Does not hold an Early Childhood endorsement. Plan is attached.**
____	☐	☐	☐	☐
____	☐	☐	☐	☐
____	☐	☐	☐	☐
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____	☐	☐	☐	☐

Yes	No	
☐	☐	004.08B All paraeducators assigned to work as a member of a classroom team have received at least 12 semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training and experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee. Written verification of credit hours or the equivalent is available.

Indicate the total number of paraeducators in the program and indicate how many meet the specified Rule 11 requirement.

____	Total **Number** of paraeducators in the early childhood program
____	004.08B5 **Number** that have completed 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	004.08B5 **Number** that are in year 1 of employment completing 6 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	004.08B5 **Number** that are in year 2 of employment completing 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent

Yes	No	
☐	☐	004.08C If the majority of children enrolled in the program use a common language other than spoken English, at least one staff member who uses such language is available as an active participant to communicate with such children in classroom or group experiences. Where less than a majority of the children enrolled in the program speak a language different from the rest, one staff member or a community resource person or parent is identified to serve as a resource to the program.
☐	☐	004.08D There is a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all staff working in the program who have regular contact with children and their families.
☐	☐	004.08E Teachers and paraeducators who have regular contact with children in the program participate in at least 12 clock hours annually of staff development related to early childhood education or child development.
☐	☐	004.08F Program staff who are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children are checked by the program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry before being hired.
☐	☐	004.09A If the program serves children, age 6 weeks to 18 months, one staff member shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher is assigned to assure a ratio of at least one adult for each four children with a maximum group size of eight.
☐	☐	004.09B If the program serves children, age 18 months to 3 years one staff member shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher is assigned to assure a ratio of at least one adult for each six children with a maximum group size of twelve.
☐	☐	004.09C If the program serves children, age 3 years to kindergarten entrance age, one staff member shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate for each group of 20 children. A paraeducator or an additional teacher is assigned to assure a ratio of at least one adult for each ten children with a maximum group size of twenty.
☐	☐	004.010 The program provides developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculum, practices, and assessment in a play-oriented learning environment, which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials.
☐	☐	004.010A A written plan explains the program. The written program plan includes a description of how the program curriculum, practices and assessment provide a variety of developmentally appropriate, experiential activities which:
☐	☐	A1 Promote a positive self-concept in each child.
☐	☐	A2 Develop social skills in each child.
☐	☐	A3 Encourage each child to think, reason, question, and experiment.
☐	☐	A4 Foster both receptive and expressive language development and provide early literacy experiences.
☐	☐	A5 Incorporate family literacy experiences.
☐	☐	A6 Develop an understanding of quantities of things, of time, and of space.
☐	☐	A7 Enhance each child's physical development and skills.
☐	☐	A8 Encourage sound safety, health, and nutritional practices, including avoidance of controlled substances.

☐	☐	**A9** Stimulate each child in creative expression and appreciation of the arts.
☐	☐	**A10** Include exploratory play in a language and literacy- rich environment during a majority of the daily schedule.
☐	☐	**A11** Reflect and respect the diversity of races, national origins, gender, and physical and mental abilities in the larger society and with particular emphasis on the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children enrolled through planned activities, use of materials, and use of equipment.
☐	☐	**A12** Use positive, age-appropriate techniques of child guidance including redirection, anticipation, and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement.
☐	☐	**A13** The program's child assessment (evaluation) practices are based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning. The assessment data is used to plan activities to meet the individual needs of children. Any formal assessment tools used meet accepted standards of reliability and validity.
☐	☐	**A14** Link to the district's kindergarten/primary program through a written transition plan insuring continuity, identification, and implementation of processes necessary to facilitate the transition of children. The early childhood program shall be included in the district school improvement plan.
☐	☐	**A15** Include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of parents in family literacy activities.
☐	☐	**004.11A** Classrooms provide at least 35 square feet per child of space usable by the children.
☐	☐	**004.11B** An outdoor play area that is protected by fences or physical barriers is available which provides at least 75 square feet per child of play space.
☐	☐	**004.11C** Each classroom and outdoor play area is equipped with safe, durable, age-appropriate equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor activities.
☐	☐	**004.11D** If needed, modifications of the equipment, materials, and activities are made to assure maximum participation in the ongoing activities of the program for children with disabilities attending the program.
☐	☐	**004.11E** Equipment and materials are organized into clearly defined areas of interest which are arranged to encourage independent choice; cooperative activity; and alteration between quiet and active exploration and teacher-and child-initiated activities.
☐	☐	**004.11F** Each program maintains safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the facilities used for the program and on the outdoor playground and meet applicable fire, safety, and health codes.
☐	☐	**004.11G** At least one staff member per classroom who has received first aid and CPR training specifically designed for children is on duty at all times. Written verification of current training is available.
☐	☐	**004.12** The program participates in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process includes:
☐	☐	**A** An assessment of program quality.
☐	☐	**B** A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress.
☐	☐	**C** A plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.

For any regulation checked no, describe the plan for correcting the Rule 11 violations and making the necessary changes to be in compliance with Rule 11 requirements before the beginning of the next school year.

Regulation Number	Areas of noncompliance and plan for making corrections in progress

Enrollment Information

The following data is used for state aid calculations.

	Under Age 1	Age 1	Age 2	Age 3	Age 4	Total Enrolled
Total Number of Children Enrolled (unduplicated count)						
Total Number of 4-year-old Children Enrolled (as of last Friday in September)						
Number of Children in Each Age Group (age as of October 15)						
Number of Children in the Following Categories (may be a duplicated count)						
Eligible for Free Lunch						
Eligible for Reduced Lunch						
With a Primary Home Language other than English (ELL)						
With an IEP						
Total Number of Children Enrolled by Ethnicity (for statistical purposes only)						
White, not Hispanic						
Hispanic						
American Indian/Alaskan Native						
Black, not Hispanic						
Asian/Pacific Islanders						
Other						

Yes	No	
☐	☐	All children enrolled in the program are below the age of kindergarten entrance eligibility.

Signature of District Superintendent/ESU Administrator:	Date:

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
APPLICATION for NEW or EXPANSION GRANTS

District Name/ESU Number:			U.S. Congressional District (check one) ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3
Address:	City:		Zip Code:
Grant Application Category: ☐ Option 1(11-20 children per classroom) ☐ Option 2 (7-10 children pre classroom)	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Operating Budget:	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Start-up Budget:	Amount of Local Share to be Provided:

Authorized Representative (NDE considers the Superintendent/ESU Administrator to be the Authorized Representative): Signature		
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Program Contact/Coordinator:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Fiscal Contact:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT of COMMITMENT

Directions: This form should be completed by each local partner (agency, organization, etc.), including the applicant district/ESU. Please make copies of this form for each partner to complete and submit with the application.

Partner Name:		
Address:	**City:**	**Zip Code:**
Contact Person:	**Title:**	
Telephone Number:	**Email Address:**	

As a partner in the program, this agency will commit the following resources, time, ongoing representation, etc. to assure that the program provides a high quality early childhood experience:

The partner's signature on this form verifies participation in the development of the grant application, a full awareness of the content of the grant application, and agreement to participate in the development of a written partnership agreement.

Signature of Partner:	**Date:**

Application

(PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the application template may be expanded to include all necessary information.)

Grant Applications will be scored on a 100 point scale.

Program Planning (Maximum 10 points)

1) Current Status: Provide information regarding the current status of preschool age children in the proposed service area.

_____ Number of licensed child care centers
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of licensed preschools
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of licensed family child care homes
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of Head Start classrooms
_____ Total funded capacity
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Head Start
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, with a verified disability
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part A services
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part B (Even Start) services
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part C (Migrant services)
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Homeless services
_____ District-wide percentage of free & reduced lunch eligibility
_____ District-wide percentage of English Language Learners
_____ Total number of 3-year-old children
_____ Total number of 4-year-old children
_____ Expected kindergarten enrollment for 2007-08
_____ Anticipated kindergarten enrollment for 2008-09

Kindergarten is offered:

☐ All-Day Every-Day
_____ Total number of hours per year
☐ Half-Day Every-Day
_____ Total number of hours per year

Define the proposed service area.

2) Need: Provide a justification of the need for an early childhood education program grant in the proposed service area. Describe the unmet needs for three- and four-year-old children. Describe the barriers to services.

3) Community Characteristics: Describe any significant characteristics of the community and/or changes in the community demographics (i.e., immigrant population, economic status).

Partnerships (Maximum 25 points)

1) Partners: Identify the partners with whom you have, or will have, a formal written partnership agreement. Check all that apply and include the name of the partner program as appropriate.

- ☐ Programs for Children with Disabilities below 5 years of age funded through the Special Education Act
- ☐ Early Intervention
- ☐ Head Start _____
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Even Start Family Literacy (Title 1, Part B)
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)
- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Center _____
- ☐ Family Child Care Home _____
- ☐ Community Preschool _____
- ☐ Local School District _____
- ☐ Educational Service Unit _____
- ☐ Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership or Regional Training Coalition _____
- ☐ Health & Human Services
- ☐ Other _____

List the partners participating in the program planning process and each partner submitting an attached Partnership Statement of Commitment.

Describe how the partners are actively involved in the program planning process and in the operation and/or implementation of the early childhood education program.

Describe the plan for development of local written partnership agreements.

2) Advisory Committee: Describe the plan for establishing the local early childhood advisory committee.

Program Description (Maximum 50 points)

1) Start-up Plan: Identify the anticipated activities and timeline for implementing the early childhood program. Describe the role of the classroom teacher in the start-up activities. Include the projected date the program will begin serving children.

2) Program Design: Identify the elements of the early childhood education program. Check all that apply.

Length of the Day
- ☐ Part Day (less than 6 hours per session)
  - _____ Number of hours per day
- ☐ Full Day (6 hours or more per session)
  - _____ Number of hours per day

Days of programming
- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday

☐ Wednesday
☐ Thursday
☐ Friday

Length of program year
☐ School-Year (9 months)
_____ Total number of hours per year
☐ Full-Year (12 months)
_____ Total number of hours per year

Classroom Ratios
_____ Number of groups of children
_____ Number of children per classroom
_____ Number of staff per classroom

Program Facility
☐ Existing site _____
☐ New site _____
☐ Type of facility _____

Describe how the program meets the applicable fire, safety and health codes.

Describe how the program will provide adequate space and appropriate equipment both indoors and outdoors.

Meals and/or Snacks Meeting USDA Guidelines
☐ Breakfast provided
☐ Morning snack provided
☐ Lunch provided
☐ Afternoon snack provided
☐ Participate in School Lunch Program
☐ Participate in Child and Adult Care Food Program

Transportation
☐ Provided for all enrolled children
☐ Provided for some enrolled children
☐ Not provided

Describe the family development and support activities, including family literacy activities. Describe how the program will meet the economic and logistical needs and circumstances of families.

Describe the plan for supporting children's transition to kindergarten. Describe how developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculum, practices, and assessment will support the transition and continuity between the program and the kindergarten and elementary grades. Include information about how staff will communicate and work together.

Describe how the early childhood education program will be part of the district NCLB and school improvement process.

3) Student Population: Identify the population of children who will be served in the early childhood education program. Check all that apply.

☐ Children whose family income qualifies them for participation in the federal free or reduced lunch program.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who reside in a home where a language other than spoken English is used as the primary means of communication.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who were born prematurely or at low birth weight as verified by a physician.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children whose parents are younger than eighteen or who have not completed high school.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who have been verified with a disability.
☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in the federal Head Start program.
☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in Title I.

☐ Children who do not qualify for one of the above.

_____ Estimated number of children who will participate in year 1 of the early childhood education program grant.
_____ Estimated total number of four-year-olds to be served (age as of October 15).
_____ Estimated number of three-year-olds to be served (age as of October 15).

4) Staff: Describe how the program will recruit and assure that all teachers and paraeducators will meet the requirements of Rule 11.

If staff (teacher and/or paraeducator) for the early childhood education program has been identified, provide the name, position, and teaching endorsement or qualifications, as applicable.

Describe the governance structure. Specifically identify who is responsible for supervising and evaluating staff in the early childhood education program.

5) Curriculum Framework: Identify the curriculum framework selected for use in the early childhood education program.

☐ High/Scope
☐ Creative Curriculum
☐ Locally Designed (describe)

☐ Other (describe)

Describe how the selected curriculum provides a research-based and play-oriented learning environment which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials. Include a description of how language development and early literacy are supported.

Describe how the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 – 5 will be used to support the curriculum.

6) Child Assessment and Program Evaluation: Identify the evaluation measure(s) to be used to assess child outcomes. Check all that apply.

- ☐ High/Scope Child Observation Record – Preschool (COR)
- ☐ Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum
- ☐ Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System (AEPS)

Check the box below to indicate applicant's agreement to participate in a program evaluation process:

- ☐ The program agrees to participate in periodic evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes as part of the evaluation process designed by the Department of Education.

7) Professional Development: Describe how individual staff and program professional development needs will be determined.

Identify the training needed to implement the selected curriculum framework and child assessment. Identify the training resources available within the partnership and the timeline for providing the training.

Describe how the early childhood education program will coordinate with the area Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership or Regional Training Coalition to provide professional development opportunities.

Coordinate and Use a Combination of Local, State, and Federal Funding Sources (Maximum 15 points)

Identify the program's plan to use multiple funding sources to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services. Check all funding sources that will be used in the program:

- ☐ Early Childhood Special Education
- ☐ Special Education Flexible Funding
- ☐ Federal Head Start
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Federal Even Start Family Literacy (Title 1, Part B)
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)
- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Assistance through Health and Human Services
- ☐ Local School District
- ☐ Parent Fees Based on Sliding Fee Scales
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____

Identify the program's plan related to use of sliding fee scales to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services.

Operating Budget with Multiple Funding Sources

All state funds should be specified on a line item basis, as applicable. Cells with XXXX indicate categories which cannot be supported by a particular funding source. Any of the funding sources listed in 79-1103(2) R.R.S. can be used to support the Early Childhood Program.

FUNDING SOURCE / BUDGET CATEGORIES	State Early Childhood Grant	IDEA Part B Base	IDEA Part B Enrollment/ Poverty	Special Education Act Flex Funding (State)	Head Start	Title 1 Part A	Title 1 Part B (Even Start)	Title 1 Part C (Migrant)	Local District Funds	HHSS Child Care Assistance	Parent Fees (Sliding Fee Scale)	Other
SHARE (indicate % of TOTAL BUDGET)												
Personnel (100)												
Fringe Benefits (200)												
Facility/Operating Costs (300)				XXXXXX								
Child Transportation (300)				XXXXXX								
Contractual Services (300)												
Classroom Materials/Supplies (400)												
Child Food (400)		XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX								
Classroom Equipment (500)												
Minor Facility Modifications (500)		XXXXXX		XXXXXX		XXXXXX						
Family Involvement (600)												
Evaluation (600)				XXXXXX								
Staff Development (600												
Staff Travel (600)												
Other (specify) (600)				XXXXXX								
Administrative/ Indirect Costs							XXXXXX					
TOTAL												

Budget Narrative

PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the budget template may be expanded to include all necessary information. *All anticipated costs necessary to operate the program must be explained. The budget must relate directly to the activities and staff identified in the application and should provide a rationale for the projected costs (e.g., how employee benefits are derived). The budget should clearly indicate the portions to be supported through grant funds as well as the matching funding or services provided by the applicant or partner agencies.*

Personnel:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Fringe Benefits:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Facility/Operating Costs:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Child Transportation:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Contractual Services:

Grant Funds

Match Funds

Classroom Materials/Supplies:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Child Food:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Classroom Equipment:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Minor Facility Modifications:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Family Involvement:

Grant Funds

Match Funds

Evaluation:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Staff Development:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Staff Travel:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Other:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Administrative/Indirect Costs:

Grant Funds

Match Funds

Start-up Budget

PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes with the budget template may be expanded to include all necessary information. *This form supplements the operating budget form and is intended to clarify the request for start-up funds separate from ongoing operating costs. Start-up funds may be requested in an amount up to 50% of the total state funds requested for the grant year. Complete all line items as applicable. A detailed budget narrative for the planning period must also be included on this form.*

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Start-up Request	Budget Narrative
Personnel (100)		
Fringe Benefits (200)		
Contractual Services (300)		
Classroom Materials/Supplies (400)		
Classroom Equipment (500)		
Minor Facility Modifications (500)		
Staff Development (600)		
Staff Travel (600)		
Other (specify) (600)		
Administrative/Indirect Costs		
TOTAL		

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
REQUIRED INFORMATION for CONTINUATION GRANTS

Contact Information
- Authorized representative
- Program contact
- Fiscal contact

Summary of previous year activities, including successes and challenges

Planning for next year

Program Design
- Hours, days and term of operation
- Classroom ratios and group size
- Indoor and outdoor space and equipment
- Health and safety standards
- Enrollment data on participating children
- Meals and snacks
- Transportation
- Family development and support activities
- Program integration with district school improvement process

Staff
- Identification of program coordinator/administrator (including endorsement qualifications)
- Identification of classroom teacher(s) (including endorsement qualifications)
- Identification of paraeducator(s) (including qualifications)

Partners
- Identification of local partners
- Date of partnership agreements
- Description of local advisory committee

Curriculum Framework
- Identification of curricula being used
- Description of challenges in implementing curriculum framework

Evaluation Measures
- Identification of child assessment measures being used
- Description of challenges in implementing assessment and evaluation measures
- Agreement to participate in evaluation process

Professional Development
- Plan for professional development for teachers and paraeducators
- Information regarding participation in Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership or Regional Training Coalition

Budget
- Identification of local, state and federal funding sources
- Operating budget detail with matching sources of funding equal to or greater than the grant plus any calculated state aid
- Operating budget summary
- Use of sliding fee scale

Return to: Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
PO Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509

NDE 24-012
Revised 2/15
Date Due: October 15

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM REPORT
For _____ School Year

District Name/ESU Number:			**County District Number:**
Address:		**City:**	**Zip Code:**
Program Contact:		**Title:**	
Telephone Number:	**FAX Number:**	**E-mail Address:**	

PROGRAM OPERATION

☐ **Yes**, this public school district/ESU **does** operate a prekindergarten program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **yes**, please complete pages 2-10, sign below and return to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address above.*

☐ **No**, this public school district/ESU **does not** operate a prekindergarten program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **no**, please sign below and return this page to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address above.*

Signature of District Superintendent/ESU Administrator:	**Date:**
By signing this you are confirming that this form is completed accurately and to your best knowledge.	

REGULATIONS for PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

004.00
Requirements For All Prekindergarten (Center-based and Home-based) Established By School Boards or Educational Service Units

Yes	No		
☐	☐	004.01	Stated Purpose. Each program shall have a stated purpose of promoting social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical, and aesthetic development and learning for the children served and of promoting family development and support.
		004.02	Planning. Each program shall have a planning period. The planning period shall include activities associated with:
☐	☐		**A** Determining the community's unmet needs for early childhood education for prekindergarten children in terms of the number of such children in the community, an estimate of the number of children at risk, kinds of programs available, numbers of children birth to kindergarten entrance age who are not currently receiving services, and barriers to the provision of services.
☐	☐		**B** Developing cooperative relationships with public and nonpublic providers of early childhood programs, including the development of cooperative agreements and contracts, as needed to carry out the proposed program.
☐	☐		**C** Recruiting and training staff.
☐	☐		**D** Identifying and listing existing school-community resources available to provide comprehensive services to the program participants.
☐	☐	004.03	Advisory Committee. A local Early Childhood Advisory Committee shall be established with membership representing families and community members.
☐	☐	N/A ☐	**A** An existing advisory committee such as that required for services to children below age five (5) with disabilities in Title 92 NAC Chapter 51, a Head Start Policy Council, or a Title I Advisory Committee, may serve this purpose if the representation conforms with this section and the mission is expanded to encompass the purpose of this Chapter.
☐	☐		**B** Advisory Committee meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act as described in Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-1407 to 84-1414. (Advisory Committee meetings follow the requirements of the Open Meetings Act)
		004.04	Coordination with Existing Programs and Funding Sources. Each program shall develop, and keep on file, a written plan to show that the program will be coordinated or contracted with existing programs and, including those listed in Subsection 004.04A and nonpublic programs which meet the requirements of this Chapter. Each program shall develop and keep on file a written plan to coordinate and use a combination of local, state, and federal funding sources including, but not limited to, those listed in Subsection 004.04A in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups of children and to ensure that participating children and families have access to knowledge of comprehensive services that may be available.
			A For the purposes of Subsection 004.04, existing programs and funding sources are as follows:
☐	☐		**A1** Grants provided through the Early Childhood Education Grant Program for children ages three to kindergarten entrance age under Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1103 and the Early Childhood Grant Program for children ages birth to three (Sixpence Grants) under Neb. Rev Stat. 79-1104.02
☐	☐		**A2** Programs for children with disabilities below five years of age funded through the Special Education Act, the Early Intervention Act, and funds available through the flexible funding provisions under the Special Education Act.
☐	☐		**A3** The federal Head Start or Early Head Start program.
☐	☐		**A4** Title I of the federal funds provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and subsequent reauthorizations or other appropriate federal legislation.
☐	☐		**A5** Child care assistance through the Department of Health and Human Services.
☐	☐		**A6** Local district funds.
☐	☐		**A7** Funds obtained through contracts with other school districts, such as contracts to provide services to children below age five with disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51.
☐	☐		**A8** Private grants and gifts.
☐	☐		**A9** Parent fees from the program's locally-developed sliding scale.
☐	☐		**A10** Nonpublic prekindergarten programs which meet the requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1104(2) and this Chapter.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	**004.05**	Fees. Fees charged shall not exceed the actual cost for providing prekindergarten programs. Programs charging fees shall have a plan to use a sliding fee scale in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups. Programs may waive fees on the basis of need. This Subsection does not allow any school district to fail to meet its responsibilities under the Special Education Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1110 to 79-1167).
☐	☐	**004.06**	Program Coordinator. Prekindergarten programs shall be coordinated by a staff member who holds a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education.
☐	☐	**004.07**	Program and Staff Requirements. Each center-based part- day or full- day program shall meet program and staff requirements in Section 005 of this Chapter. Each home-based program shall meet the program and staff requirements in Section 006 of this Chapter.
☐	☐	**004.08**	Participation and Inclusion. Participation of children and families in any program under this Chapter shall be voluntary. Programs shall not exclude children verified as having disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51 or 52. Programs shall include to the extent possible children of diverse social and economic characteristics.

005.00
Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Center-Based Program

☐	**District does not operate a Center-Based Program. Do not complete 005.01 – 005.13**

Yes	No		
☐	☐	**005.01**	Instructional Hours. Each class in the program shall operate a minimum of twelve (12) instructional hours per week during the school year. Programs receiving grant funds pursuant this Chapter or receiving Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) funds shall operate a minimum of four hundred and fifty (450) instructional hours per school year.

Early Childhood (Pre-Kindergarten) instructional program hours are being collected through the Consolidated Data Collection (CDC). Districts must indicate the total number of hours per week and per year for each classroom group of children.

Yes	No		
		005.02	Family Development and Support. Each center-based part- day or full- day prekindergarten program shall provide a strong family development and support component which recognizes the central role of parents in their children's development and establishes a working partnership with each parent. The family development and support component shall include, as a minimum:
☐	☐		**A** Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.
☐	☐		**B** An orientation to the program for children and families.
☐	☐		**C** At least two (2) home visits per year between the parent(s) and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning. If the family decides to have the visit at another location other than the home, it must be conducted at a location determined jointly by the family and teacher.
☐	☐		**D** Specified opportunities for program staff to dialogue with families through such activities as parent conferences, participation on advisory committees, needs assessments, participation as classroom volunteers, and flexible scheduling of meetings and events.
☐	☐		**E** Services based on the family's needs and interests that include but are not limited to, components that will enhance parent skills and the family's ability to access community resources.
☐	☐	**005.03**	Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment. The part- day or full- day center- based prekindergarten program shall provide a play-oriented learning environment, which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials.
☐	☐		**A** A written program plan shall be developed to explain and implement the program. The written program plan shall include a description of how the program curriculum, practices, and assessment provide a variety of developmentally appropriate, experiential activities which:
☐	☐		**A1** Promote a positive self-concept in each child.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.03	**A2** Foster attachments for all children by ensuring they have consistent teachers and paraeducators daily.
☐	☐		**A3** Develop social skills in each child.
☐	☐		**A4** Encourage each child to think, reason, question, and experiment.
☐	☐		**A5** Foster both receptive and expressive language development and provide early literacy experiences.
☐	☐		**A6** Incorporate family literacy experiences.
☐	☐		**A7** Develop an understanding of quantities of things, of time, and of space.
☐	☐		**A8** Enhance each child's physical development and skills.
☐	☐		**A9** Encourage sound safety, health, and nutritional practices, including avoidance of controlled substances.
☐	☐		**A10** Stimulate each child in creative expression and appreciation of the arts.
☐	☐		**A11** Include exploratory play in a language and literacy-rich environment during a majority of the daily schedule.
☐	☐		**A12** Reflect and respect the diversity of races, national origins, gender, and physical and mental abilities in the larger society and with particular emphasis on the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children enrolled through planned activities, use of materials, and use of equipment.
☐	☐		**A13** Use positive, age-appropriate techniques of child guidance including redirection, anticipation, and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement.
☐	☐		**A14** Use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning. The assessment data is used to plan activities to meet the individual needs of children. Any formal assessment tools used shall meet accepted standards of reliability and validity.
☐	☐		**A15** Link the prekindergarten to the district's kindergarten/primary program through a written transition plan insuring continuity, identification, and implementation of processes necessary to facilitate the transition of children. The prekindergarten program shall be included in the district school improvement plan.
☐	☐		**A16** Include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of parents in family literacy activities.
☐	☐		**A17** Provide at least one outdoor play period (weather permitting) daily.
		005.04	Evaluation and Quality Assurance. The program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department and will include, but not be limited to the following:
☐	☐		**A** An assessment of program quality.
☐	☐		**B** A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress.
☐	☐		**C** A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.
		005.05	Program Staff. The prekindergarten program shall use qualified staff as set forth below.
☐	☐		**A** Teacher. Any teacher in a prekindergarten program shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education (age 3 through Grade 3), Early Childhood Special Education (Birth through Kindergarten), or Early Childhood Inclusive (Birth through Grade 3). A program may employ a teacher without such an endorsement if the teacher files with the Department a plan developed by the teacher and the cooperating college or university to complete the endorsement as part of the annual Early Childhood Program Report. The plan will require the teacher to receive at least six (6) semester hours of credit annually toward completion of the endorsement. When fifty percent (50%) of the required courses have been completed, the teacher is eligible for a provisional endorsement pursuant to 92 NAC 24.

Teacher qualification information is being collected through the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS). Districts must complete a Staff Template and Staff Assignment Template for each teacher. All early childhood teachers must be reported as prekindergarten. For any program employing a teacher not having an early childhood education endorsement, the teacher's plan for and progress toward completion of the endorsement must be submitted yearly to NDE, Office of Early Childhood.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.05 N/A ☐	**B** Paraeducator. A paraeducator assigned to work as a member of a team in a classroom setting shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following: **1** Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. **2** Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. **3** Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. This experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. **4** Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour. **5** The program may employ a paraeducator who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the paraeducator completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

Indicate the total number of paraeducators in the program and indicate how many meet the specified Rule 11 requirement.

	005.05B5 **How many paras** are in year 1 of employment and are completing 6 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	005.05B5 **How many paras** that are in year 2 of employment and are completing 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	005.05B5 **How many paras** have completed 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	Total **Number** (add boxes above) of paraeducators that are in year 1, year 2 and have completed 12 hours are in the district's early childhood program

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.05 N/A ☐	**C** The prekindergarten program may employ a home visitor in a center- based program who provides family development and support services under the direction of a teacher. The home visitor shall have at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas: **1** Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education; **2** Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development; **3** Child Development; **4** Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; or **5** Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.
☐	☐		**D** Orientation. All staff working in the prekindergarten program shall be provided with an orientation prior to having direct responsibility for the care and teaching of children or for providing family and development services. The orientation shall include job duties and responsibilities, building safety procedures, information about the state law regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect, child assessment information, and daily routines and schedules.
☐	☐	N/A ☐	**E** Language Resource. If the majority of children enrolled in the program use a common language other than spoken English, at least one staff member who uses such language shall be available as an active participant to communicate with such children in classroom and group experiences. Where less than a majority of the children enrolled in the program speak a language different from the rest, one staff member or a community resource person or parent shall be identified to serve as a resource to the program.

Yes	No			
☐	☐	005.05	F	Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all staff working in the program who have regular contact with children and their families.
☐	☐		G	Staff Development Hours. Teachers and paraeducators who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate in at least twelve (12) clock hours annually of staff development related to prekindergarten or child development.
☐	☐		H	Background checks. Program staff who are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry before being hired.
		005.06		Child/Staff Ratio and Group Size. Child/staff ratios and group sizes shall be maintained as indicated below with staff assigned who meet the qualifications described in Section 005.06. When age groups are mixed, the lower ratio shall prevail.
☐	☐	N/A ☐	A	If the program serves infants, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each four (4) children with a maximum group size of eight (8). (See definition of infant)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	B	If the program serves toddlers, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each six (6) children with a maximum group size of twelve (12). (See definition of toddler)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	C	If the program serves preschoolers, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate for each group of twenty (20) children. A paraeducator or additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each ten (10) children with a maximum group size of twenty (20). (See definition of preschooler)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	D	In full- day programs where children nap, the certified teacher may be out of the classroom during the nap period as long as the children are adequately supervised by other staff and the teacher is readily available.
		005.07		Facilities, Equipment, Health and Safety.
☐	☐		A	Classroom settings shall provide at least thirty-five (35) square feet per child of space usable by the children.
☐	☐		B	An outdoor play area that is protected by fences or physical barriers shall be available which provides at least seventy-five (75) square feet per child of play space.
☐	☐		B1	The fence or physical barrier shall be of a type of structure that is a continuous barrier and is at least 36 inches in height, flush with the ground, and without any gaps that would allow a child to exit the protected area.
☐	☐		C	Each classroom setting and outdoor play area shall be equipped with safe, durable, age-appropriate equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor activities.
☐	☐		D	If needed, modifications of the equipment, materials, and activities shall be made to assure maximum participation in the ongoing activities of the program for children with disabilities attending the program.
☐	☐		E	Equipment and materials shall be organized into clearly defined areas of interest that are arranged to encourage independent choice; cooperative activity; and alteration between quiet and active exploration and teacher-and child-initiated activities.
☐	☐		F	Each prekindergarten program shall maintain safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the facilities used for the program and on the outdoor playground and meet applicable fire, safety, and health codes.
☐	☐		G	At least one (1) staff member per class who has received first aid and CPR training specifically designed for children shall be on duty at all times. Written verification of current training shall be available.
☐	☐	005.08		Meals and/or Snacks. The program shall provide each class at least one meal and/or snack that meets USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines each day. All tables used for meals and snack shall be properly sanitized.
☐	☐	005.09		Immunizations. The school district shall comply with all state statutes and regulations regarding the immunization status of all enrolled children.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.10	Supervision. Adequate and appropriate supervision shall be provided at all times children are in

			attendance, including during outdoor play and field trips. Adequate and appropriate supervision includes, but is not limited to, knowing the whereabouts and being within sight or sound of children at all times.
☐	☐	**005.11**	Toileting. The program shall ensure the toileting needs of all children are met immediately. The program shall ensure wet and/or soiled clothing is changed immediately.

	☐		**District does not operate an infant and toddler program. Do not complete 005.12 – 005.12P**
Yes	**No**		
		005.12	Infants and Toddlers. Programs serving children birth to age 3 shall meet the following requirements:
☐	☐		**A** The physical, emotional and social needs of infants and toddlers shall be met consistently and promptly;
☐	☐		**B** Formula and feeding schedules shall be obtained from parents;
☐	☐		**C** Infants shall not sleep with bottles;
☐	☐		**D** Bottles shall not be propped;
☐	☐		**E** If formula is used, it shall be a commercially made product;
☐	☐		**F** All breast milk and prepared formula shall be refrigerated and clearly labeled with the child's name; and unused prepared formula shall be discarded as indicated by the label;
☐	☐		**G** Unfrozen breast milk shall be discarded after 48 hours; and frozen breastmilk shall be discarded after three months;
☐	☐		**H** Only highchairs with three point safety straps shall be used;
☐	☐		**I** Infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep except in cases where there is a medical reason the child shall not sleep on its back; and written verification of the medical reason from the child's physician shall be available;
☐	☐		**J** Wet or soiled diapers shall be changed immediately and disposed of in a sanitary manner;
☐	☐		**K** Individual cleaning cloths shall be used for diapering;
☐	☐		**L** Diaper changing surfaces shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use and staff shall use proper hand washing techniques after each diaper change;
☐	☐		**M** Toileting shall be done in a manner agreed upon with the parent;
☐	☐		**N** Potty chairs shall be cleaned, disinfected, and properly stored away from play areas;
☐	☐		**O** All cribs and playpens shall meet federal safety standards as indicated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission; and
☐	☐		**P** All cribs and playpens shall not contain any soft objects, bumper pads, toys or loose bedding.

	☐		**District does not operate a Sixpence program. Do not complete 005.13**
Yes	**No**		
☐	☐	**005.13**	Sixpence Programs. School districts that receive Early Childhood Endowment birth to three grants, also referred to as Sixpence programs, may be required to meet additional grant-related program requirements established by the Endowment Board of Trustees. (District meets Sixpence Requirements)

006.00
Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Home-Based Program
(Do not complete for Home-Based Early Childhood Special Education)

☐			**District does not operate a Home-Based Program. Do not complete 006.00 – 006.05C**
Yes	**No**		
☐	☐	**006.01**	Contact Hours in Home-Based Programs. Program staff shall have contact with each enrolled family at least three (3) times each month for a minimum total of 180 minutes. A minimum of 120 minutes shall be face- to- face contact with the family. Contact may be completed by the home visiting specialist or the home visitor. If a school district or educational service unit contracts with another organization to provide early childhood services, the district or ESU shall ensure the adequate number of hours are provided as required in this subsection.
		006.02	Family Development and Support. Each home-based prekindergarten program shall include the following, as a minimum:
☐	☐		**A** Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures;
☐	☐		**B** An orientation to the program for families; and
☐	☐		**C** Delivery of services that are based on family needs and interests and that focus on the child's development and positive family outcomes. Services shall be provided year round following a curriculum that meets the requirements of subsection 006.05.
☐	☐	**006.03**	Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment in Home-Based Prekindergarten Programs. Each home-based prekindergarten program shall provide curricula that are researched-based and designed to work with families that facilitate the optimal growth and development of children and that are culturally appropriate for all families served. The program shall also include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of families in literacy activities.
☐	☐		**A** Each program shall have a written program plan that shall include a description of program curriculum, practices and assessments used. This plan must be provided to all parents and be available to the Department upon request.
		006.04	Evaluation and Quality Assurance. Each home- based program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department's Office of Early Childhood and will include, but not be limited to the following:
☐	☐		**A** An assessment of program quality;
☐	☐		**B** A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress; and
☐	☐		**C** A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.
		006.05	Program Staff. In order to provide home-based services, each home-based program shall use one or more home visitor specialists and may in addition use one or more home visitors who meet the qualifications below:
☐	☐		**A** Home Visiting Specialist. Any home visitor specialist in a home-based program shall have a bachelor's degree or higher in one of the following areas: **1** Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education, **2** Nursing including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development, **3** Child Development, **4** Sociology or Psychology including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any area of family- centered practices or child and youth development, or **5** Social Work including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family- centered practices, or child and youth development.

☐	☐	N/A ☐	**B** Home Visitor. Any home visitor assigned to work as a member of the program team shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee: **1** Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education, **2** Nursing with additional coursework in Sociology/Psychology and in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development, **3** Child Development, **4** Sociology or Psychology with additional coursework in the area of family- centered practices or child and youth development, or **5** Social Work with additional coursework in the area of family-centered practices or child and youth development.
			C The program may employ a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets a full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

Indicate the total number of home visitor in the program and indicate how many meet the specified Rule 11 requirement.

	006.05C	**How many home visitors** are in year 1 of employment and are completing 6 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	006.05C	**How many home visitors** that are in year 2 of employment and are completing 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	006.05C	**How many home visitors** have completed 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	Total **Number** (add boxes above) of home visitors that are in year 1, year 2 and have completed 12 hours are in the district's early childhood program	

Enrollment Information

This data is used for state aid calculations.

Child enrollment information is being collected through the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS). Districts must complete a Student Template and Program Fact Template for each student participating in an early childhood program.

All children birth to kindergarten entrance age served by the district must be included in NSSRS.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	All children enrolled in the program are below the age of kindergarten entrance eligibility.
If no, please explain		

How many classes of children does your district serve?	**Part-Day (Less than 6 hours)**	**Full-Day (6 hours or more)**

Class means a group of children who are receiving early childhood services in a classroom for a specific time period established by the school district or educational service unit.

Note: <u>For any regulation checked no</u>, please provide information below that describes in detail the plan for correcting the Rule 11 violations and making the necessary changes. Attach documentation as necessary.

Regulation Number	Areas of noncompliance and plan for making corrections in progress

Return to: Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
PO Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509

NDE 24-006
Revised: 2/15
Date Due: As Required

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
APPLICATION for NEW or EXPANSION GRANTS

District Name/ESU Number:			U.S. Congressional District (check one) ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3
Address:	City:		Zip Code:
Grant Application Category: ☐ Option 1(11-20 children per classroom) ☐ Option 2 (7-10 children pre classroom)	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Operating Budget:	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Start-up Budget:	Amount of Local Share to be Provided:

Authorized Representative (NDE considers the Superintendent/ESU Administrator to be the Authorized Representative):	Signature of Authorized Representative:	
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Program Contact/Coordinator:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Fiscal Contact:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT of COMMITMENT

Directions: This form should be completed by each local partner (agency, organization, etc.), including the applicant district/ESU. Please make copies of this form for each partner to complete and submit with the application.

Partner Name:		
Address:	**City:**	**Zip Code:**
Contact Person:	**Title:**	
Telephone Number:	**Email Address:**	

As a partner in the program, this agency will commit the following resources, time, ongoing representation, etc. to assure that the program provides a high quality early childhood experience:

The partner's signature on this form verifies participation in the development of the grant application, a full awareness of the content of the grant application, and agreement to participate in the development of a written partnership agreement.

Signature of Partner:	Date:

APPLICATION NARRATIVE

(PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the application template will automatically expand to include all necessary information.)

Grant Applications will be scored on a 100 point scale.

Application Summary

In one or two sentences, identify how the grant funds will be used (i.e., number of groups of children, number of children, number of days and hours).

Program Planning (Maximum 10 points)

1) Current Status: Provide information regarding the current status of preschool age children in the proposed service area.

_____Number of licensed child care centers
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of licensed preschools
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of licensed family child care homes
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of Head Start classrooms
_____ Total funded capacity
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Head Start
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, with a verified disability
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part A services
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part C (Migrant services)
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Homeless services
_____ District-wide percentage of free & reduced lunch eligibility
_____ District-wide percentage of English Language Learners
_____ Total number of 3 year-old children
_____ Total number of 4 year-old children
_____ Kindergarten enrollment for the current school year
_____ Anticipated kindergarten enrollment for the next school year

Kindergarten is offered:

☐ All-Day Every-Day
_____ Total number of hours per year
☐ Half-Day Every-Day
_____ Total number of hours per year

Define the proposed service area.

2) Need: Provide a justification of the need for an early childhood education program grant in the proposed service area. Describe the community's unmet needs for three- and four-year-old children. Describe the needs of working families and how the proposed program will impact these families. Describe the barriers to services.

3) Community Characteristics: Describe any significant characteristics of the community and/or changes in the community demographics (i.e., immigrant population, economic status).

Partnerships (Maximum 25 points)

1) Partners: Identify the partners with whom you have, or will have, a formal written partnership agreement. Check all that apply and include the name of the partner program as appropriate. **A Partnership Statement of Commitment form must be included for each partner that is checked.**

- ☐ Programs for Children with Disabilities below 5 years of age funded through the Special Education Act
- ☐ Early Intervention
- ☐ Head Start _____
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)
- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Center _____
- ☐ Family Child Care Home _____
- ☐ Community Preschool _____
- ☐ Local School District _____
- ☐ Educational Service Unit _____
- ☐ Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership or Regional Training Coalition _____
- ☐ Health & Human Services
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____

Describe the efforts to include community partners. If community partners declined to participate, identify the partner and cite the reason(s) for not participating. List the partners that participated in the program planning process and those partners submitting an attached Partnership Statement of Commitment.

Describe the participation of the partners in the program planning process. Describe how the partners will be involved in the start-up process and in the implementation of the early childhood education program.

Describe the plan for development of local written partnership agreements.

2) Advisory Committee: Describe the plan for establishing the local early childhood advisory committee. Include a purpose statement and identify the roles and/or individuals to be represented. Describe the responsibilities of the committee members.

Program Description (Maximum 50 points)

1) Start-up Plan: Identify the anticipated activities and timeline for implementing the early childhood program. Describe the role of the classroom teacher in the start-up activities. Include the projected date the program will begin serving children.

2) Program Design: Identify the elements of the early childhood education program. Check all that apply.

Length of the Day
- ☐ Part Day (less than 6 hours per session)
  _____ Number of hours per day
- ☐ Full Day (6 hours or more per session)
  _____ Number of hours per day

Days of programming
- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday

Length of program year
- ☐ School-Year (9 months)
  _____ Total number of hours per year
- ☐ Full-Year (12 months)
  _____ Total number of hours per year

Classroom Ratios
- _____ Number of classroom groups of children
- _____ Number of children per classroom group
- _____ Number of staff per classroom group

Program Facility
- ☐ Existing site _____
- ☐ New site _____

☐ Type of facility _____

Describe how the program meets the applicable fire, safety and health codes.

Describe how the program will provide adequate space and appropriate equipment both indoors and outdoors.

Meals and/or Snacks Meeting USDA Guidelines

- ☐ Breakfast provided
- ☐ Morning snack provided
- ☐ Lunch provided
- ☐ Afternoon snack provided
- ☐ Participate in School Lunch Program
- ☐ Participate in Child and Adult Care Food Program

Transportation

- ☐ Provided for all enrolled children
- ☐ Provided for some enrolled children
- ☐ Not provided

Describe the family development and support activities, including family literacy activities. Identify a plan for conducting home visits. Describe how the program will meet the economic and logistical needs and circumstances of families.

Describe the plan for supporting children's transition to kindergarten. Describe how developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculum, practices, and assessment will support the transition and continuity between the program and the kindergarten and elementary grades. Include information about how staff will communicate and work together.

Describe how the early childhood education program will be part of the district school continuous improvement process.

3) Student Population: Identify the population of children who will be served in the early childhood education program. Check all that apply and add estimated numbers as appropriate.

☐ Children whose family income qualifies them for participation in the federal free or reduced lunch program.
_____Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who reside in a home where a language other than spoken English is used as the primary means of communication.
_____Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who were born prematurely or at low birth weight as verified by a physician.
_____Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children whose parents are younger than eighteen or who have not completed high school.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who have been verified with a disability.
☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in the federal Head Start program.
☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in Title I.
☐ Children who do not qualify for one of the above.

_____ Estimated number of children who will participate in year 1 of the early childhood education program grant.
_____ Estimated total number of four-year-olds to be served (age as of July 31).
_____ Estimated number of three-year-olds to be served (age as of July 31).

4) Staff: Describe how the program will recruit and assure that all teachers and paraeducators will meet the requirements of ***Rule 11 – Regulations for Early Childhood Education Programs***.

If staff (teacher and/or paraeducator) for the early childhood education program has been identified, provide the name, position, and teaching endorsement or qualifications, as applicable.

Describe how the early childhood staff will be supported to provide time for the teacher(s) and para(s) to plan together for curriculum/instruction and assessment.

Describe the governance structure. Specifically identify who is responsible for supervising and evaluating staff in the early childhood education program. Identify the program coordinator/administrator and the number of early childhood credits earned by that person.

5) Curriculum Framework: Identify the curriculum framework selected for use in the early childhood education program.

Describe how the selected curriculum provides a research-based and play-oriented learning environment which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials. Include a description of how language development and early literacy are supported.

Describe how the ***Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 – 5*** will be used to support the curriculum.

If applicable, describe how technology and interactive media will be integrated into the curriculum and will support the learning and development of the children.

6) Child Assessment and Program Evaluation: Describe how data from child assessments and program quality assessments will be used to connect assessment, curriculum, teaching strategies, and classroom practices to meet the group and individual needs of the children.

Check the box below to indicate the applicant's agreement to participate in a program evaluation process:

☐ The program agrees to participate in periodic evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes as part of the evaluation process designed by the Department of Education.

7) Professional Development: Describe how individual staff and program professional development needs will be determined.

Identify the training needed to implement the selected curriculum framework and child assessment. Identify the training resources available within the partnership and the timeline for providing the training.

Describe how the early childhood education program will coordinate with the regional *Early Learning Connection* to provide professional development opportunities. If known, identify the person(s) who will serve as a member of the *Early Learning Connection* regional partnership.

Coordinate and Use a Combination of Local, State, and Federal Funding Sources (Maximum 15 points)

Identify the program's plan to use multiple funding sources to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services. Check all funding sources that will be used in the program:

- ☐ Early Childhood Special Education
- ☐ Special Education Flexible Funding
- ☐ Federal Head Start
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)
- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Assistance through Health and Human Services
- ☐ Local School District
- ☐ Parent Fees Based on a Sliding Fee Scale
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____

Identify the program's plan to use a sliding fee scale to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services.

OPERATING BUDGET with MULTIPLE FUNDING SOURCES

All state funds should be specified on a line item basis, as applicable. Cells with **XXXXXX** indicate categories which cannot be supported by a pa funding sources listed in 79-1103(2) R.R.S. can be used to support the Early Childhood Program.

FUNDING SOURCE / BUDGET CATEGORIES	State Early Childhood Grant	IDEA Part B Base	IDEA Part B Enrollment/ Poverty	Special Education Act Flex Funding (State)	Head Start	Title 1 Part A	Title 1 Part C (Migrant)	Local District Funds	HHSS Chi Assistanc
SHARE (indicate % of TOTAL BUDGET)									
Personnel (100)									
Fringe Benefits (200)									
Facility/Operating Costs (300)				XXXXXX					
Child Transportation (300)				XXXXXX					
Contractual Services (300)									
Classroom Materials/Supplies (400)									
Child Food (400)		XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX					
Classroom Equipment (500)									
Minor Facility Modifications (500)		XXXXXX		XXXXXX		XXXXXX			
Family Involvement (600)									

Evaluation (600)				XXXXXX							
Staff Development (600)											
Staff Travel (600)											
Other (specify) (600)				XXXXXX							
Administrative/ Indirect Costs											
TOTAL											

BUDGET NARRATIVE

PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the budget template will expand to include all necessary information. *All anticipated costs necessary to operate the program must be explained. The budget must relate directly to the activities and staff identified in the application and should provide a rationale for the projected costs (e.g., how employee benefits are derived). The budget should clearly indicate the portions to be supported through grant funds as well as the matching funding or services provided by the applicant or partner agencies.*

Personnel:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Fringe Benefits:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Facility/Operating Costs:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Child Transportation:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Contractual Services:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Classroom Materials/Supplies:

Grant Funds

Match Funds

Child Food:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Classroom Equipment:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Minor Facility Modifications:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Family Involvement:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Evaluation:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Staff Development:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Staff Travel:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Other:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Administrative/Indirect Costs:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

START-UP BUDGET

PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the budget template will expand to include all necessary information. *This form supplements the operating budget form and is intended to clarify the request for start-up funds separate from ongoing operating costs. Start-up funds may be requested in an amount up to $25,000. Complete all line items as applicable. A detailed budget narrative for use of the start-up funds must also be included on this form.*

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Start-up Request	Budget Narrative
Personnel (100)		
Fringe Benefits (200)		
Contractual Services (300)		
Classroom Materials/Supplies (400)		
Classroom Equipment (500)		
Minor Facility Modifications (500)		
Staff Development (600)		
Staff Travel (600)		
Other (specify) (600)		
Administrative/Indirect Costs		
TOTAL		

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
REQUIRED INFORMATION for CONTINUATION GRANTS

Allocations

Program Information
- Contact Information
  - Authorized representative
  - Program contact
  - Fiscal contact
- Summary
  - Summary of previous year activities, including successes and challenges
  - Planning for next year
- Program Design
  - Hours, days and term of operation
  - Classroom ratios and group size
  - Indoor and outdoor space and equipment
  - Health and safety standards
  - Meals and snacks
  - Transportation
  - Family development and support activities
  - Program integration with district school improvement process
- Student Populations
  - Enrollment data on participating children
- Staff
  - Identification of program coordinator/administrator (including endorsement qualifications)
  - Identification of classroom teacher(s) (including endorsement qualifications)
  - Identification of paraeducator(s) (including qualifications)

Program Framework
- Partners
  - Identification of inter-agency and intra-agency partners
  - Date of partnership agreements
- Advisory Committee
  - Description of local advisory committee
- Professional Development
  - Plan for professional development for teachers and paraeducators
- Curriculum Framework
  - Identification of curricula being used
  - Description of Early Learning Guidelines as support to curriculum
- Evaluation Measures
  - Identification of child assessment measures being used other than GOLD
  - Agreement to participate in evaluation process

Budget

Identification of local, state and federal funding sources
Operating budget detail with matching sources of funding equal to or greater than the grant plus any calculated state aid
Operating budget summary
Use of sliding fee scale

Assurances