

Georgia's Pre-K Program
2019 -2020 School Year
Pre-K Providers' Operating Guidelines Addendum
April 21, 2020

This Addendum was created to provide guidance to Pre-K Providers due to the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency. This is not a full set of new, comprehensive Guidelines. It is for the purpose of providing additional information in specific sections of the Guidelines. Unless waived or changed in the Addendum, all existing Guidelines are valid. For additional guidance or specific questions, providers should email prek@dec.al.ga.gov.

1.2 Dates of Service

Due to the public health emergency, onsite program attendance for Georgia's Pre-K Program ended April 1, 2020. Programs may choose to offer supports to children and families through online learning, take-home packets, and other distance learning strategies.

1.3 Days of Service

Due to the Declaration of a Public Health Emergency by the Governor, Pre-K Programs are not required to make up school days due to COVID-19 closures. **To have an accurate account of days of service, Pre-K Programs must modify their school year calendar in PANDA. Directions for modifying calendars will be sent through PANDA email.**

Individual Pre-K Programs are able to determine if teachers are required to work remotely by providing appropriate distance learning activities, completing child assessment and family conferences, and participating in distance professional learning. Additionally, it is appropriate to have teachers complete end of the school year tasks including packing up Pre-K classroom materials or completing student files. Appropriate shelter in place requirements must be followed in all activities.

2.0 Child/Family Eligibility

2.6 Requests for Children to Repeat Pre-K

The date to receive requests for a child to repeat Pre-K has been extended to Friday, May 1, 2020. Requests due to the shortened school year with no additional documentation will not be considered.

3.13 Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening

To the extent reasonable, programs should contact parents regarding an expired or incomplete Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening (Form 3300). This will support families in registration for kindergarten.

3.14 Certificate of Immunization

To the extent reasonable, programs should contact parents regarding an expired or incomplete for school attendance Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231). This will support families in registration for kindergarten.

4.0 Classroom Requirements

4.1 Approved Curricula

A review of comprehensive curricula was conducted in fall 2019. The list of approved curricula for the 2020 – 2021 school year is below.

The following list of curricula are approved for use in Georgia’s Pre-K Programs.	The programs below are proprietary curricula and are only approved for use by those programs under the legal entity which owns the curriculum.
Alpha Skills, Inc. - AlphaSkills Pre-K	Childcare Network - Curriculum for Pre-K: A Passports Program
Benchmark Education Company, LLC - Ready to Advance Early Learning Program	Children's Courtyard, Inc. - Young Achievers
Frog Street Press, LLC - EXCEL Pre-K	KinderCare Education - Early Foundation Prekindergarten
Frog Street Press, LLC - Frog Street Pre-K	Childcare Network - Passports: Experiences for Pre-K Success
HighScope Educational Research Foundation - HighScope Preschool Curriculum	Childtime - Empowered Child
Kaplan Early Learning Company - Beyond Centers and Circle Time Curriculum	Kids 'R' Kids International, Inc. - Kids 'R' Kids Fast Track - Four Year Old Curriculum
Kaplan Early Learning Company - Connect4Learning: The Pre-K Curriculum	LaPetite Academy - Early Innovators
Robert-Leslie Publishing, LLC - The InvestiGator Club: Prekindergarten Learning System	Tutor Time - LifeSmart
Teaching Strategies, LLC - The Creative Curriculum for Preschool	
Voyager Sopris Learning, Inc. - We Can Early Learning Curriculum	
WINGS Curriculum LLC - WINGS: The Ideal Curriculum for Children in Preschool	

Please note that the following curricula which were previously on the approved list were not submitted for review and will no longer be on the approved list. If your program currently uses one of these curricula, you must choose a new curriculum from the updated approved list and submit a Curriculum Selection Form (Appendix G of the Pre-K Providers’ Operating Guidelines) to your Pre-K Specialist by June 1, 2020.

- Big Day for Pre-K Curriculum – Scholastic
- Core Knowledge Curriculum – Core Knowledge Foundation
- Dig: Develop. Inspire. Grow. – Abrams Learning Trends
- Galileo Pre-K Curriculum – Imagine Learning, Inc.
- Learn Every Day Curriculum – Kaplan
- Opening the World of Learning - Pearson
- Splash into Pre-K Curriculum – Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

DECAL is pleased to announce that all programs will receive a \$2,000 credit per classroom towards the purchase of curriculum and/or curriculum support materials. The non-profit organization, Communities 4 Children, has worked with the approved curriculum vendors to create curriculum packages that will be available for selection on the Georgia's Pre-K Curriculum E-Store. You will receive an email with additional information about the Curriculum E-Store and directions for accessing it to make your curriculum selections in May. This funding is only available as a \$2,000 credit in the e-store. Programs will not receive the funding directly and it cannot be used for other purchases or costs. Because this is a credit, funds will not be included in the 2019 – 2020 Pre-K Year End Reconciliation Report. These funds will not require reconciliation with the Department.

4.7 Child Assessment

It is important to complete child assessment information and provide families information regarding their child's progress. This guidance is intended for programs with teachers that have completed WSO training and have the materials necessary for implementing WSO (computer, connectivity to high speed internet and student assessment data). If the shelter in place order is lifted, it would be appropriate for teachers to come on-site to complete assessment duties; however, that is not necessary if teachers are able to complete from home.

The following tasks should be completed by June 30th. If you have concerns with your teachers' ability to complete these tasks, contact your Pre-K Specialist to discuss potential solutions.

WSO Developmental Checklist

Teachers should review assessment data already gathered and enter ratings. It may not be possible for teachers to rate all the indicators due to early closure of Georgia's Pre-K. Any items without a rating should be marked DNO (Did not Observe). Period 2 checklist ratings should be finalized.

WSO Narrative Summary Report

Teachers should review finalized checklist ratings and complete the Narrative Summary Report. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on student attendance, teachers should not enter attendance information on the Narrative Summary.

Family Conferences/Sharing Assessment Information with Families

Information on each child's performance including the WSO Narrative Summary should be shared with parents or guardians by June 30, 2020. Family conferences which are normally held in person may be done via a web-based platform (i.e. Skype, Zoom, etc.) or by phone. If programs and/or families are unable to arrange remote meetings, Narrative Summary reports can be distributed to families electronically or through the mail. Teachers are not required to obtain parent signatures on the Narrative Summary Report.

Each Pre-K program is responsible for developing a written process for how children's performance will be shared with families. The process should include the method for providing information to parents (remote meeting, email, mail, etc.), when the information will be provided, and how family conferences/sharing of information will be documented. Pre-K project directors should share their written process with teachers and provide teachers the contact information for parents. The written process for spring conferences should be archived as part of Record Keeping requirements outlined in Section 4.10.

Programs should maintain a copy of their written process for review by DECAL staff.

Printing Copies of Narrative Summary Reports and Developmental Checklists

Programs should not require teachers to print copies of the 2019-2020 Development Checklist and Narrative Summary Report for students in their class.

Pre-K programs are not required to retain the following 2019-2020 student assessment data for a minimum of three years as specified in section 4.7 of the *Pre-K Providers' Operating Guidelines*:

- The Work Sampling System P-4 Developmental Checklist
- Work Sampling Online Narrative Summary

Additional Information

Teachers should NOT archive their entire class in WSO. Students should remain active in the WSO System.

4.10 Record Keeping

Current records must be maintained at the Pre-K site. The Pre-K provider must retain the following records for a minimum of three years as specified in their grant agreement for Pre-K services.

- Pre-K Child Registration forms for enrolled students
- Student Roster information form for enrolled students
- Daily child attendance records- Please note last day of Pre-K onsite service on records
- Class enrollment rosters
- Age documentation
- Residency documentation
- ~~Assessment information~~—*This requirement is waived.*
- Documentation regarding student suspension or disenrollment
- Parent orientation and conference documentation- *Documentation regarding spring conferences can be included as part of the assessment plan described in Section 4.7.*

5.0 Delivery of Services

5.2 Classroom Delivery

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, onsite instruction for Pre-K classes ended on April 1, 2020. Programs have the option to provide support to children and families through virtual learning, take home learning packets and other distance learning strategies.

5.3 Program Delivery

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, onsite instruction for Pre-K classes ended on April 1, 2020; therefore, programs are not required to operate for 180 instructional days for students and 10 additional days for teachers. (See Section 1.3 regarding modification of Pre-K school calendar.) DECAL will continue to make Georgia's Pre-K payments as scheduled.

If a parent of an enrolled Georgia's Pre-K student requests continued child care, the program is required to provide child care for the 6 ½ hour instructional day. Pre-K funds can be used to pay for the child's

care during the 6 ½ hour instructional day. Tuition for the 6 ½ hour instructional day may not be charged. Tuition may be charged for services outside of the Pre-K 6 ½ hour instructional day and any scheduled school breaks (i.e. spring break). These children could be served in mixed-age classrooms.

5.6 Substitutes

Pre-K funds may be utilized to pay costs related to existing child care staff or substitute staff to provide care for Pre-K students during the Pre-K closure until the end of the school year based on the program's school calendar.

5.11 ~~Incident Weather Closures and Make-up Days~~ School Closures and Make-up Days

Due to the Declaration of a Public Health Emergency by the Governor, Pre-K Programs are not required to make up school days due to COVID-19 closures.

Teacher Salaries

Pre-K payments are not adjusted for closures due to a State of Emergency declared by the Governor; therefore, salary must be paid to Pre-K Lead and Assistant Teachers. Providers must pay according to the established salary agreement between employer and employee.

12.0 Lead Teachers

12.1 Days of Service

All lead teacher positions are funded for 190 days of service- 180 days of classroom instruction to Pre-K students (or the equivalent if a modified calendar is approved) and 10 days of Pre-K related activities/duties (pre/post planning, professional development, Pre-K training, in-service days, etc.) Due to the COVID-19 closure, the 190 days of service is waived. However, individual Pre-K Programs may determine if teachers will be required to work remotely by providing appropriate distance learning activities, completing child assessment and family conferences, and participating in distance professional learning. Additionally, it is appropriate to have teachers complete end of the school year tasks including packing up Pre-K classroom materials or completing student files. Appropriate shelter in place requirements must be followed in all activities.

12.7 Lead Teachers Salary Components

Lead teachers are required to be paid a minimum of 90% of base salary and 100% of supplemental compensation. During the COVID-19 closures, regardless of the days reported on-site, lead teachers should be paid according to the established salary agreement between employer and employee (see Section 5.11). If a teacher was terminated or resigned prior to the COVID-19 closure, then the individual would not be eligible for the salary. Teachers reported on Roster 4 should be paid. If you have questions regarding salary, email panda.teachers@decal.ga.gov.

13.0 Assistant Teachers

13.1 Days of Service

All assistant teacher positions are funded for 190 days of service- 180 days of classroom instruction to Pre-K students and 10 days of Pre-K related activities/duties (pre/ post planning, professional

development, Pre-K training, in-service days). Due to the COVID-19 closure, the 190 days of service is waived. However, individual Pre-K Programs may determine if teachers will be required to work remotely by providing appropriate distance learning activities, supporting child assessment and family conferences, and participating in distance professional learning. Additionally, it is appropriate to have teachers complete essential end of the year school tasks including packing up Pre-K classroom materials. Appropriate shelter in place requirements must be followed in all activities.

13.4 Salaries- Assistant Teachers

All credentials for an assistant teacher will be paid at the minimum rate of \$16,190.35. Providers are required to pay 100% of the total salary funded by the Department for assistant teacher salary. During the COVID-19 closures, regardless of the days reported on-site, assistant teachers should be paid according to the established salary agreement between employer and employee (see Section 5.11). If a teacher was terminated or resigned prior to the COVID-19 closure, then the individual would not be eligible for the salary. Teachers reported on Roster 4 should be paid. If you have questions regarding salary, email panda.teachers@dec.al.ga.gov.

16.0 Grant Award Notification and Budgets

16.6 Funding Calculation

March, April and May payments will not be adjusted based on a reduction in the number of days offering service due to COVID-19 Pre-K closures.

16.7 Grant Award Notifications for School 2020 – 2021 Year

Due to the public health emergency, the 2021 State Budget has not been appropriated. Pre-K grant agreements will be delayed. Additional information on the processing of grant agreements will be provided in May.

17.0 Expenditure Requirements

17.1 Expenditure Requirements

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and Pre-K closures, additional flexibility will be given regarding Pre-K expenditure requirements. The following expenditure requirements will be applied. (However, programs must reconcile funding to all funding categories in the Pre-K Year- End Reconciliation Report.)

- All programs are required to pay lead teachers a minimum of 90% of the base salary funded by DECAL. This includes the time period that a program was closed. Additionally, programs must follow their salary agreement between employer and employee.
- All programs are required to pay lead teachers 100% of the supplemental salary funded by DECAL. This includes the time period that a program was closed.
- All programs must pay 100% of assistant teacher salary. This includes the time period that a program was closed.
- The Pre-K provider may use no more than six percent of the budget for administrative expenses (i.e. office supplies, account and/ or clerical costs, Pre-K's portion of the director's salary and benefits).

17.2 Operating Costs

Programs may use Pre-K funds to pay the Pre-K Program's prorated share of allowable operating costs regardless of any program closures during March- June 2020. Operating expenses occurring during the 2021 school year may not be paid by 2020 Pre-K funds.

17.5 Expenditure Waivers

Lead and Assistant Teacher Salary Waiver

Providers must meet the salary requirements for lead and assistant teachers as listed in Section 12.3, 12.7 and 13.4. In the case where a lead teacher or assistant teacher is absent frequently during the year and the substitute for that teacher is paid at a lower rate, the program can request a waiver to use the unused portion of salary on other allowable Pre-K expenses. Additionally, if the program did not have a permanent lead or assistant teacher prior to the closure, the program can request a waiver to use the unused portion of salary on other allowable Pre-K expenses. The Project Director should contact their assigned Pre-K Specialist who will facilitate the approval of the waiver request. The waiver is approved for one school year only and should be kept on site.

17.7 Record Keeping

Additional documentation required for the 2019 – 2020 school year:

- Documentation of substitute pay utilized during the closure to care for enrolled Pre-K students. This documentation should be kept by classroom and include timesheets for substitutes, pay stubs and attendance records for Pre-K students.

18.0 Reimbursement Process

18.3 Payments

Pre-K payments for April and May will be based on the 4th roster. Payments will not be reduced based on the program closure. The final Pre-K payment for the year will be the May 2020 payment.

Prorated Teacher Salary

If the teachers' salary is prorated over 12 months, programs **must** pay personnel salaries from the 2019-2020 school year funds. If salary is prorated, the program must pay any remaining salary over the summer period according to the salary agreement between the employer and employee.

Final salary payment must be in accordance with the normal pay cycle and funds expended by June 30, 2020.

18.5 Calculation of Payments

Payments will not be reduced due to COVID-19 closures.

20.0 Audit and Accounting Requirements

20.1 Reconciliation Report

Pre-K providers must provide DECAL with a reconciliation report spanning the dates of the grant agreement. The purpose of the reconciliation report is to provide an actual accounting of the providers'

expenditures related to Pre-K. This report demonstrates that funds were spent in appropriate categories for their intended uses. Supporting documentation must be maintained and provided upon request from DECAL.

Funds paid by DECAL for Pre-K services can only be used to cover costs of the Pre-K Program and the Pre-K program's prorated share of other allowable costs expensed through normal operation of the facility. However, during the COVID-19 closure, funds could be used to support substitute salary to provide child care for enrolled Pre-K students during the closure. Pre-K funds could also support other allowable costs necessary to continue normal operation of the facility during the COVID-19 Pre-K closure.

Due to the COVID-19 closure, DECAL is allowing for 2019 -2020 Pre-K funding to be carried over until September 30, 2020. This will provide additional time for programs to expend any remaining funds on allowable expenses. **All Pre-K funding must be expended by September 30, 2020.** Note that Operating expenses occurring during the 2021 school year may not be paid by 2020 Pre-K funds.

Closeout procedures regarding the 2019-2020 school year will be emailed to Pre-K providers during August 2020. Private providers must submit reconciliation reports by October 31, 2020. Local school systems must submit their reconciliation report by November 15, 2020. Providers must submit reconciliation reports electronically via PANDA.

20.5 Record Keeping Findings and Adverse Findings

Due to the COVID- 19 public health emergency, a balance of funds will be due back to DECAL in the following Adverse Findings:

- Failing to meet lead teacher base salary and supplemental compensation requirements
- Failing to meet assistant teacher salary requirements
- Failing to support that payroll taxes were forwarded to the relevant taxing authorities
- Failing to meet the 6% cap on administrative costs
- Failing to support that the use of all funds received from DECAL were used in accordance with applicable regulations and guidelines (including Start-Up funds).