

# Georgia's Pre-K Program Grant Requirement Checklist Definitions and Clarifications 2016-2017

*Refer to these definitions and clarifications as you complete the Grant Requirement Checklist. Checklist items are listed by section in the order they appear.*

## **Section #1 – Program Level Responsibilities**

### **Item One:**

All lead teachers working in Georgia's Pre-K classrooms must complete the required annual training, including Montessori and inclusion teachers. Failure of providers and their staff to participate in required training during the school year will place their program in noncompliance and may jeopardize future funding. Bright from the Start sponsored training is provided free of charge. Refer to the Bright from the Start Professional Development Training Schedule 2016-2017 found on the Bright from the Start website for details on training. Training confirmation along with certificates to document attendance and completion of training must be kept on file at the Pre-K site.

### **Item Two:**

All assistant teachers working in Georgia's Pre-K classrooms must complete the required annual training, including those in a Montessori classroom. Failure of providers and their staff to participate in required training during the school year will place their program in noncompliance and may jeopardize future funding. Refer to the Bright from the Start Professional Development Training Schedule 2016-2017 found on the Bright from the Start website for details on training. Training confirmations for assistant teachers along with certificates to document attendance and completion of training must be kept on file at the Pre-K site.

### **Item Three:**

To maintain quality standards, annual training is developed and available for returning Project and Site Directors, through webinars and face to face training. When participating in Pre-K Webinars, it is recommended that Project and Site Directors keep a list of dates and names of webinars to show completion. Certificates can be printed from the Georgia Professional Development Registry (GaPDS).

### **Item Four:**

All Pre-K Staff are required to enroll in the Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS). The Professional Development System can be found at <https://gapds.decal.ga.gov> . Project Directors should maintain documentation reflecting teacher's enrollment in GaPDS.

### **Item Five:**

Once a child has been enrolled, he/she cannot be disenrolled from the Pre-K program without prior approval from Bright from the Start. If a student is disenrolled without prior approval, the program will be automatically placed on probation.

## Section #2 – Site Level Responsibilities

### Item One:

Each family must receive an orientation to the Pre-K Program. Those families who cannot attend the scheduled orientation(s) should be provided with the information shared at orientation and if possible a conference should be scheduled to discuss program policies and information. A copy of all information given to parents must be kept on site for review. Documentation of orientation can include an agenda or minutes of the meeting. A sign-in sheet with parents' signatures should be included with GRC documentation. All families who enter the program after the beginning of the year orientation should receive orientation and orientation materials, and the program should obtain signatures of parents on orientation sign-in sheets.

### Item Two:

Programs should ensure student records are maintained and updated throughout the year. A process for tracking and collecting expiring Immunization/Vision, Hearing, Dental, and Nutrition Screening Forms, and changes to Category One/Two status will ensure all forms are kept current. The Pre-K Checklist for Student Files and supporting documentation must be kept at each site for review. (The Pre-K Checklist for Student Files is located on the Bright from the Start website under Pre-K Project Director Section/Grant Requirement Checklist.)

### Item Three:

Individual student files are maintained on site and include Georgia's Pre-K Registration Form and Roster Information Form, Category One documentation, age documentation, proof of residency, health forms, and, if applicable, the five-year-old child Parent Acknowledgement Form.

- **Bright from the Start forms:** A copy of the completed **Pre-K Registration Form**, signed by the child's parent/legal guardian, must be included in each student's file. Providers may access the Registration Form on the Bright from the Start website ([www.decal.ga.gov](http://www.decal.ga.gov)). A **Roster Information Form** must be completed, signed and kept on site for review for each child. This form should be collected after a child's enrollment into the Pre-K program and prior to Roster One. Should a student be identified as **Category One**, the provider should request and maintain copies of documentation in individual student's files. If documentation is not received, the child should be entered as Category Two.
- **Proof of age eligibility:** Birth documentation must be on file the day the child begins the Pre-K Program. Children must be four years of age on September 1, 2016, based upon acceptable documentation such as a birth certificate, passport, official medical documentation, legal documents, or official documents from other countries. Only children whose birthdates are from September 2, 2011 through September 1, 2012 are eligible for participation for the 2016-2017 school year.
- **Proof of residency:** The child must be a Georgia resident. For purposes of this program, Georgia resident is defined as a child who resides in the state of Georgia. Proof of residency must be part of a child's file prior to or on the first day of Pre-K. Examples of acceptable documents for proof of residency may be found in the *Pre-K Operating Guidelines*.
- **Health Forms:** All children enrolled must have a current **Certificate of Immunization (Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3231)** in their file for review within 30 calendar days of entrance into Georgia's Pre-K Program. Form 3231 must have either a date of expiration or "school attendance" block checked. Children who attend Georgia's Pre-K must be up to date on all immunizations required for school entry plus Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib) vaccine. Children who do not provide a completed 3231 after the 30-day period may not return to the program until the certificate is provided. Expired 3231 certificates must be updated and on site

within 30 calendar days of the expiration date. Children who do not provide an updated 3231 within 30 days of expiration must be asked not to return to the program until a current 3231 form is provided with a new expiration date.

- All children enrolled must have a **Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental, and Nutrition Examinations (Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3300-Revised 2013)** in their file for review within 90 calendar days of entrance into Georgia's Pre-K Program. The program should attempt to help the family obtain a completed 3300 form. However, if a child does not have all sections of the 3300 completed within 90 days of beginning the program, the child may not return until the completed 3300 form is provided. A family who provides an appointment card to have the 3300 form completed may remain in the program. A current 3300 form will be expected to be on site the day after the appointment. Pre-K providers shall provide evidence of documentation of follow-ups on "untestable" or Provisional status of 3300. If a box is marked Needs Further Professional Attention, it is expected that the Pre-K site shall have documentation of the follow-up that is occurring (doctor's notes, scheduled appointments, information from parents) on file for consultant review. When children enter the program later in the year, the Pre-K provider shall make every effort to obtain form 3300 as soon as possible to identify any follow-up needed.

**Item Four:**

All attendance documentation must be maintained on site and monitored by directors to ensure students are attending according to the Operating Guidelines. Documentation must be accessible for review with times noted when children arrive late or leave before the end of the instructional day.

**Item Five:**

Children who do not attend on a regular basis, are routinely late, or routinely leave the program early should be referred to the Pre-K Project Director and/or Site Director. Providers are required to document efforts to assist parents/guardians in improving absenteeism or tardiness. Inability to resolve the problem after documented interventions should be referred in writing to Bright from the Start for assistance/guidance using the Chronic Absenteeism or Tardiness Report for disenrollment consideration. All copies of this documentation must be maintained on site for review.

**Section #3 – Program Level and Site Level Shared Responsibilities**

**Item One:**

An on-site Pre-K orientation for all teaching and administrative staff shall be provided within the first 20 working days of commencement of Pre-K services to children. Pre-K orientation should be provided for new staff as part of the hiring process. Documentation of original staff orientation and new hire orientation must be kept on site for review. Documentation can include an agenda or minutes from the meeting and a sign-in sheet.

The instructional tools listed in the suggested orientation topics should be provided to teachers during Staff Orientation. It is important for teachers to understand and be ready to implement the classroom/program expectations within the first 30 days of school. It is expected that all teachers have a copy of the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) to be used for planning classroom instruction. The GELDS can be found on the Bright from the Start website.

**Item Two:**

Immediate suspension for up to two days and a maximum of three times can be made at any time the Pre-K provider determines a child is causing harm to himself/herself or others. Bright from the Start

prior approval is not needed for an immediate suspension; however, Bright from the Start must be notified in writing that such action has been taken. Programs should use the Suspension Notification Form for immediate suspension. An extended suspension (more than two days or more than three incidents of immediate suspension) requires prior approval from Bright from the Start. Contact your Pre-K consultant to discuss the process for requesting extended suspension.

**Item Three:**

Programs should create and implement a plan reflecting the person(s) responsible for lesson plan checks using the *Instructional Quality Guide for Planning Instruction*. Reviewed lesson plans and feedback must be kept on site for consultant review. Lesson plans and posted schedule should reflect the same clock times for planned activities. If the teacher is using the 12 week lesson plan “Off to a Good Start”, the IQ guide should be completed after the teacher has begun writing his or her own lesson plans.

**Current lesson plans are complete, on site, and are implemented:**

Teachers can utilize the first 12 weeks of lesson plans, “Off to a Good Start”, provided on the BftS website. This is encouraged for brand new teachers, as well as returning lead teachers. Lesson plans must be current, on site and complete for the entire week. Teachers should be planning using what they know about the interests and needs of the children and incorporating connections with the topic of study. Daily planning or incomplete lesson plans do not meet this expectation. Lesson plans for all of the current school year must be kept on site and accessible. Bright from the Start has five lesson plan templates. These templates are not required, but recommended because they meet the criteria for Georgia’s Pre-K instructional program.

- **Lesson plans and classroom activities reflect appropriate instructional practices:** The teacher has plans to introduce subject matter and sequence children’s learning. Instruction guides the class toward meeting defined standards, but teachers remain open to pursuing related topics that arise and capture children’s interests. Instruction does not include worksheets/dittos, letter of the week, teaching letters in isolation, rote memorization/drills or introduction of skills above the developmental or age-appropriate level of the children enrolled.
- **Instruction is based on the Georgia’s Pre-K GELDS:** There must be evidence in lesson plans that teachers are using GELDS to plan their instructional activities. Standards and the indicator should be linked with each instructional activity included in the lesson plans (example CLL1-1a). Lesson plans that include pre-printed standards for the majority of instructional activities will not meet this expectation. Teachers should know the subject matter covered in their program curriculum and the standards.
- **Instruction is modified to meet varying readiness levels, learning preferences and interests of children:** It must be evident in lesson plans that activities have been planned that are open ended, hands-on and active. Teachers should be aware of young children’s learning styles, abilities and skill levels, gender-specific learning styles and preferences, and multiple intelligences in regard to four-year-old children. Classroom instruction should blend whole-class, small group and individual instruction.
- **Instructional activities are planned to build upon children’s participation in field trips or other special experiences:** It must be evident in lesson plans that there are pre-and post-activities and changes to the learning areas relating to field trips, special visitors or other special experiences. Changes to the learning environment should be made and documented as follow-up to field trips, special visitors or other special experiences (for example, adding pizza-making materials, aprons, cash register and menus to the dramatic play area after visiting a pizza parlor). Special visitors might include community workers or parents discussing hobbies or

careers. Other special experiences might include participating in drama or musical performances. Changes do not need to occur in every learning area, but they do need to be made where applicable. It is suggested that special experiences, special visitors and/or field trips to take place throughout the school year.

- **Activities for small group instruction are developmentally appropriate and purposeful:** Small groups have been defined as two to eight children. The length of a small group activity should vary with the age, interests and attention span of the children. Small groups should be formed and changed frequently based on the developmental needs and skills of children. GELDS should be used in planning small group instruction. Teachers should plan activities based on what they know or need to know about the children in their class. The activities planned for small groups of students working independently should also be purposeful and standards documented. Small group instruction should not include patterned art projects.

**Item Four:**

It is required that two adults be in the classroom during the 6.5 hour instructional day. The 6.5 hours of instructional time shall begin no earlier than 7:30 a.m. with hours of operation as delineated in the original approved application. Lead teachers and assistant teachers should have time during their Pre-K day for program activities such as parent conferences, instructional planning, etc. Using Pre-K staff during the Pre-K day to supervise children not enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K Program is unacceptable. Using Pre-K staff (during the Pre-K day) to supervise children whose parents pay private fees or for whom the provider receives subsidies is an inappropriate use of Pre-K funds. During the optional one-half to one hour scheduled rest or sleeping period, a ratio of one adult providing direct supervision to 22 children is acceptable. Rest time with reduced adult ratios cannot exceed one hour. The Pre-K provider shall ensure that a substitute lead teacher and/or substitute assistant teacher is present and working in the Pre-K classroom for each day that a lead teacher and/or assistant teacher is late, leaves early, or is absent, whether due to illness, required training or personal leave.

**Item Five:**

Programs should create and implement a plan reflecting the person(s) responsible for completing the *Instructional Quality Guide for the Learning Environment*. Copies of the completed *IQ Guide for the Learning Environment* and feedback should be maintained on site for consultant review. Programs should create a monitoring plan for the learning environment/materials and providing feedback throughout the year. The written plan should be included with the GRC documentation.

**Item Six:**

Programs should develop a monitoring plan reflecting the person(s) responsible for completing the *Instructional Quality Guide for Assessment for Teachers* with continued monitoring of the assessment process throughout the year. The written plan should be included with the GRC documentation.