Preschool Frequently Asked Questions 2023-2024

Updated December 2023





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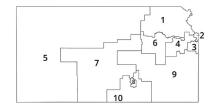
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900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 600 Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212 (785) 296-3203 www.ksde.org/board



DISTRICT 1



Danny Zeck dzeck@ksde.org



Melanie Haas Chair mhaas@ksde.org

DISTRICT 7



Michelle Dombrosky mdombrosky@ksde.org



Ann E. Mah Legislative Liaison amah@ksde.org



Cathy Hopkins chopkins@ksde.org

DISTRICT 6



Dr. Deena Horst Legislative Liaison dhorst@ksde.org



Dennis Hershberger dhershberger@ksde.org



Betty Arnold barnold@ksde.org



Jim Porter Vice Chair jporter@ksde.org



Jim McNiece jmcniece@ksde.org



900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102 Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212 (785) 296-3201

www.ksde.org

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DEPUTY COMMISSIONER Division of Fiscal and Administrative Service



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PRESCHOOL FAQS 2023-2024

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PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

1. 3- and 4-year-old children who qualify for Preschool-Aged At-Risk and preschool students with disabilities will generate .5 FTE in state enrollment aid. How much is the BASE?

In districts operating approved programs, 3- and 4-year-old students who meet an atrisk criterion for Preschool-Aged At-Risk students and who are enrolled and attending on September 20th will automatically count as a ½ student (0.5 FTE) in calculating a district's enrollment and accompanying weightings. Each 3- and 4-year-old student enrolled and attending special education and related services for preschool-aged exceptional children provided for by the school district is also counted as ½ student (0.5 FTE) in calculating a district's enrollment and additional weightings. The Base Aid for Student Excellence (BASE) is as follows:

School Year	BASE	BASE*0.5
2023-2024	\$5,088	\$2,544

Preschool-Aged At-Risk students and preschool-aged students with IEPs may also qualify for additional weightings in the school finance formula. For example, the at-risk student weighting of a school district is calculated by first determining the number of students who are eligible for free meals under the National School Lunch Act included in the enrollment of the school district and then multiplying that number by 0.484. That means that each student who is eligible for free meals under the National School Lunch Act generates the following:

School Year	BASE	BASE*0.484
2023-2024	\$5,088	\$2,513

Beginning in school year 2023-2024, the BASE will be adjusted by the average percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers (CPI-U) in the Midwest region during the three immediately preceding school years. The BASE for the following school year will be available following April Consensus Estimates each year.

Preschool program administrators should connect with district school finance staff to understand the amount of funding generated from preschool students' weightings (for example, bilingual, transportation, high-density at-risk). Students

who are not included in a district's enrollment to determine state aid are also not included when calculating weightings.

2. Our district qualifies to participate in the 2/20 MILT count. How does that affect our preschool enrollment counts?

Districts that meet the qualifications to participate in the 2/20 MILT count will include preschool-aged at-risk, Kansas Preschool Pilot, Kansas Parents as Teachers, and other preschool students in their MILT ENRL records. Preschool-Aged At-Risk students will be included in districts' enrollment counts when calculating enrollment and accompanying weightings, and Kansas Preschool Pilot students will be included when determining grantees' Kansas Preschool Pilot enrollment.

3. How can we verify income eligibility for students who attend half-day and do not eat lunch?

Please keep in mind programs must provide at least one meal or snack per classroom session to all children attending the program. Schools can earn reimbursement for providing nutritious meals and snacks by participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program or the School Lunch Program. Learn more at view the KSDE Achieve Good Nutrition with Preschoolers resource or contact the KSDE Child Nutrition and Wellness Team (785-296-2276) for additional information.

Programs that participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program can use the income eligibility forms available on the KSDE CACFP webpage. Other programs can use the Household Economic Survey form available on the KSDE Fiscal Auditing webpage.

- 4. Are children who have been recently adopted considered at-risk?

 Adoption is not an at-risk criterion. However, the child may qualify under other criteria.
- 5. If a child qualified as at-risk as a 3-year-old, do they need to requalify for their 4-year-old preschool year?

Yes. Students must requalify during the enrollment time for their second year of preschool by meeting one of the at-risk criteria.

- 6. Do students need to live in a district to qualify for Preschool-Aged At-Risk funding?

 No. However, if students live out-of-district they do not qualify for transportation funding. Districts should ensure that multiple districts are not claiming the same student for funding. Of course, districts have the option to serve preschool students whether they reside within or outside the district and not receive funding.
- 7. Is the Kansas Preschool Pilot Audit Guide the exact same as the Preschool-Aged At-Risk Audit Guide?

No, two separate audit guides are located on the KSDE Fiscal Auditing webpage.

8. What other funding is available for early childhood education programs?

Potential funding sources to support preschool programming could include, but are not limited to:

- At-Risk Education Funding may be used to serve qualified preschool students
- School District General Fund
- Preschool-Aged At-Risk Fund
- Preschool-Aged student with disability base state aid
- Early Childhood Block Grant (Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund)
- Kansas Special Education Categorical Aid
- Head Start (federal Administration for Children and Families)
- Child Care Development Block Grant (Child Care Subsidy) (Kansas Department for Children and Families)
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- McKinney-Vento
- ESEA Title I
- ESEA Title II to support early educators' professional development and to provide programs and activities to increase the knowledge and ability of principals or other school leaders to support teachers, teacher leaders, early childhood educators, and other professionals to meet the needs of students through age 8, which may include providing joint professional learning and planning activities for school staff and educators in preschool programs that address the transition to elementary school.
- IDFA Part B
- Parent fees/tuition
- Kansas Parents as Teachers
- Local Grants/Funding (private funders)
- Kansas Preschool Pilot: The Kansas Preschool Pilot program requires at least 50% of the students served by the grant meet one of the at-risk qualifiers. This could be an avenue to fund general education students who do not meet at-risk qualifiers.

9. What are allowable Kansas Preschool Pilot expenditures? What indirect cost rate is allowed?

In 2023-2024, the following are Allowable Uses of Grant Funds (from the 2023-2024 Kansas Preschool Pilot (KPP) Grant Requirements):

1000 Instruction

1000 - 100 Salary

1000 - 200 Employee Benefits

1000 - 300 Purchased Professional & Tech. Serv.

1000 - 400 Purchased Property Services

1000 - 500 Other Purchased Services

1000 - 600 Supplies & Materials

1000 - 700 Property

2000 Support Services

2100 - Student Support Services

2200 - Instructional Staff Support Services

2000 - Travel & Subsistence

2700 - Student Transportation Services

3000 Operation of Non-Instructional Services

3100 - Food Service Operations

3400 - Student Activities

CIF Only - Indirect costs (cannot exceed 8% of total grant costs)

In 2023-2024, the following are Allowable Uses of Grant Funds (from the 2023-2024 Kansas Preschool Pilot (KPP) Grant Requirements):

1000 Instruction

1000 - 100 Salary

1000 - 200 Employee Benefits

1000 - 300 Purchased Professional & Tech. Serv.

1000 - 400 Purchased Property Services

1000 - 500 Other Purchased Services

1000 - 600 Supplies & Materials

1000 - 700 Property

2000 Support Services

2100 - Student Support Services

2200 - Instructional Staff Support Services

2400 - Support Services - School Administration

2700 - Student Transportation Services

3000 Operation of Non-Instructional Services

3100 - Food Service Operations

CIF Only - Indirect costs (cannot exceed 8% of total grant costs)

See the KSDE Accounting Handbook available on the KSDE School Finance Guidelines and Manuals webpage for additional detail regarding each of these allowable uses of funds.

Grantees may spend up to 8% of the Children's Initiatives Fund portion of the grant on Indirect Costs. TANF Funds may not be used to reimburse administrative expenses. See the Administrative Cost Guidance on the KSDE Preschool Programming Web Page.

10. Can we include 3- and 4-year-old preschool-aged at-risk students in our Kansas Preschool Pilot Roster?

Yes. Districts should claim all eligible 3-and 4-year-old preschool-aged at-risk students for Preschool-aged At-Risk funding. Grantees can also include these students as part of their Kansas Preschool Pilot roster. It will be essential for programs to maintain clear records identifying how separate funding sources were utilized.

11. Can programs report students with IEPs who do not meet at-risk criteria as part of their Kansas Preschool Pilot roster?

Yes. Programs can report students with IEPs as part of their Kansas Preschool Pilot roster. At least 50% of students served by the Kansas Preschool Pilot must meet at least one Kansas Preschool Pilot at-risk criteria.

12. Regarding the Preschool-Aged At-Risk and the Kansas Preschool Pilot: Is there a benefit to one versus the other? Can we use both at the same time?

There are several differences between Preschool-Aged At-Risk and the Kansas Preschool Pilot. Requirements are intentionally similar to allow programs to utilize both funding sources to support early learning programming, and districts are allowed to receive both funding sources.

If programs are not including students who are supported by Preschool-Aged At-Risk funding in their Kansas Preschool Pilot count, they can certainly mix children supported by either Preschool-Aged At-Risk funding or Kansas Preschool Pilot funding in the same classrooms. It will be essential for programs to maintain clear records identifying how separate funding sources were utilized.

At-A-Glance Differences between Preschool-Aged At-Risk and Kansas Preschool Pilot			
Category	Preschool-Aged At-Risk	Kansas Preschool Pilot (KPP)	
Funds	Each enrolled student receiving Preschool- Aged At-Risk is calculated as 0.5 FTE as part of the school finance formula. Weightings apply.	KPP funding is not determined on a per student basis.	
Funds	Funded by the Kansas State General Fund	Funded by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Children's Initiatives Fund (CIF)	
Funds	Payment dates follow the General State Aid calendar	CIF paid quarterly (25%) TANF paid on a monthly reimbursement basis	

At-Risk Criteria	Each student must meet at least one of the at-risk eligibility criteria Students enrolled using the criterion for	At least 50% of the children served by the Kansas Preschool Pilot funds must meet at least one of the at-risk criteria Students enrolled using the
At-Risk Criteria	poverty must qualify for free meals on Count Day.	criterion for poverty must qualify for either free program or reduced-price meals on Count Day.
At-Risk Criteria	Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) referral. A reason for referral must describe the need for the child to attend the PreK program and be documented and signed by the DCF agent.	Children in foster care, custodial grandparents/kinship care, or out of-home placement, or children who have been referred by the Department for Children and Families.
At-Risk Criteria	N/A	Children lacking health insurance.
Assurances	N/A	21: Maintain classroom rosters for all children enrolled in the Kansas Preschool Pilot
Assurances	N/A	22: Ensure that on Count Day at least 50% of the children served by Kansas Preschool Pilot funding meet at least one of the at-risk criteria.

13. Can a program charge tuition and fees to students who are also supported by Preschool-Aged At-Risk or Kansas Preschool Pilot funding?

K.S.A. 72-3215 authorizes school districts to prescribe and collect fees for providing preschool programs. Fees for providing preschool programs shall be prescribed and collected only to recover the costs incurred as a result of and directly attributable to the establishment, operation and maintenance of the preschool programs.

K.S.A. 72-3353 authorizes school districts to prescribe, assess and collect fees and supplemental charges for:

- (1) The use, rental or purchase by pupils of any of the items designated in K.S.A. 72-3352, and amendments thereto, to offset, in part or in total, the expense of purchasing such items:
 - a) Workbooks and materials which are supplemental to textbooks used in specific courses;
 - (b) specialized clothing and towels for use in physical education, shop, and science courses;
 - (c) musical instruments for use in band or orchestra;

- (d) instructional materials for the use of technology in specific courses; and
- (e) materials or supplies which are consumed in specific courses or projects or in which the pupil may retain ownership upon completion of such courses or projects.
- (2) participation in activities, or the use of facilities, materials and equipment, which participation or use is not mandatory, but optional to pupils, whether incidental to curricular, extracurricular or other school-related activities.
- (b) Moneys received by a board of education under this section shall be deposited in the textbook and student materials revolving fund of the school district.

Districts and programs should consider several issues when determining whether they will charge fees and tuition to preschool students benefiting from Preschool-Aged At-Risk and Kansas Preschool Pilot funding:

- Districts should not charge tuition for services supported by state aid via the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program or by Kansas Preschool Pilot grant funds. If children are attending full-day programs, districts may charge tuition for the portion of the day that is not supported by state funds.
- Districts should not charge tuition or fees to students with IEPs. Students with disabilities must have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).
- Districts should consider the processes in place to waive tuition and fees for families experiencing financial hardship.
- Taxpayers may claim the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit for prekindergarten expenses. Providing a district's taxpayer identification number and expense statement for the amount of fees paid by a family in each calendar year can help ensure families claim this credit.
- The Kansas Department for Children and Families administers the child care assistance (child care subsidy) program to help families pay for child care costs.

Districts may operate classrooms that consist of both children whose families pay tuition and children whose preschool is supported by other funding sources.

- 14. Can programs require students participating in the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program to bring supplies?
 - No. Programs can request participating students to bring supplies, but they cannot require it.
- 15. Can students who meet Preschool-Aged At-Risk criteria and who are receiving Head Start services also generate Preschool-Aged At-Risk funding? Yes. All students enrolled as Preschool-Aged At-Risk should be in classrooms that meet Preschool-Aged At-Risk program requirements. It will be essential for programs to maintain clear records identifying how separate funding sources were utilized.

16. What are requirements for a district to partner with a private organization to deliver preschool services when the students receiving services at that private setting will <u>not</u> be generating Preschool-Aged At-Risk or Kansas Preschool Pilot funding?

A district can partner with a private entity that hosts a district preschool program at the private location. K.S.A. 72-3215 authorizes schools district to contract with private, nonprofit corporations or associations or with any public or private agency or institution, whether located within or outside the state, for the establishment, operation and maintenance of preschool programs.

When districts are not receiving state funding for students' preschool services they have quite a bit of flexibility when it comes to program structure for those students, regardless of whether those services are delivered by the district or a partner. Accredited school districts should keep the following requirements in mind:

- For preschool students who are not generating state aid, there is not a minimum number of instructional hours per year.
- State law requires LEAs when filling positions for which the state board issues a license, to fill that position with a person who holds a license with an endorsement appropriate for the position/assignment.
- Districts should obtain a Kansas Individual Data on Students Identification number (KIDS SSID) for each child participating in a district preschool program and participate in all required KSDE Data Collections, including entry in the KIDS Collection System.

KSDE strongly recommends that districts use the Kansas Early Learning Standards, the Kansas Prekindergarten Guide, and the Kansas Family Engagement and Partnership Standards for Early Childhood as resources while they develop these relationships. These are available on the KSDE Early Childhood webpage.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment is responsible for licensing child care facilities. You can visit the KDHE Child Care Licensing webpage to see their homepage, which includes information about "How to Open a Licensed Child Care Facility" along with your county's licensing contact information. Programs should contact their local child care licensing specialist to determine whether licensure is required.

17. What are the requirements for a district that wants to partner with a private organization to deliver preschool services when the students receiving services at that private setting will be generating Preschool-Aged At-Risk funding?

K.S.A. 72-3215 authorizes school districts to contract with private, nonprofit corporations or associations or with any public or private agency or institution, whether located within or outside the state, for the establishment, operation and maintenance of preschool programs. Signature of the Preschool-Aged At-Risk assurances by the Superintendent certifies the district's agreement to the program assurances for the

duration of the school year, regardless of whether services are delivered by the district or by a contracted partner.

Students must be enrolled as students in a district and reported in the KIDS collection system in order for that district to claim them for preschool-aged at-risk funding.

18. Where is the list located for approved evidence-based literacy, math, and social-emotional curricula?

KSDE does not recommend or endorse specific curricula, but we would be glad to support you in your work to select high-quality instructional materials. We encourage districts to consider what will best meet their needs and align with their curriculum for kindergarten and older students. Working with the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports and Alignment team is often a good option to complement the district's use of data and other educational strategies.

Here is the relevant section from the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program requirements (available on the KSDE Preschool Programming webpage):

Programs must implement an evidence-based preschool curriculum that includes literacy, math, and social-emotional components. These curricula must be approved by KSDE and align to the Kansas Early Learning Standards. When selecting curricula, programs should consider:

- the plan for monitoring ongoing progress, including additional assessments
- any supplemental curriculum/materials used to address literacy, math and social-emotional development
- the training plan (should include teachers, assistants, paraprofessionals, and related services staff). It is highly recommended that the director/program administrator also receive training.

Additional information regarding evidence-based curriculum may be found at:

- The What Works Clearinghouse: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/
- Evidence for ESSA: https://www.evidenceforessa.org/
- Ed Reports: https://www.edreports.org/
- KSDE Approved Evidence-Based Practices:
- Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum

If you are considering adopting a new curriculum and currently have separate programs for different groups of children (ex. Preschool-Aged At-Risk and Early Childhood Special Education), you may consider aligning to streamline future opportunities to integrate programs.

If a district or program has questions about whether KSDE would approve a particular curriculum and would like to connect in advance of making a final determination, feel very welcome to do so. We're also happy to share what other districts are using and help connect programs to their peers.

19. Are preschool classrooms required to administer the ASQ-3 and the ASQ:SE-2? Preschool programs receiving funding from the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program and the Kansas Preschool Pilot are required to ensure that each child receives a developmental screening using an evidence-based screening tool while they participate in the preschool program. The program must share results with the child's family.

Preschool programs may determine whether children receive screenings during enrollment prior to the start of the school year, at the beginning of the school year, or upon enrollment of students who enroll after the beginning of the school year.

KSDE recommends but does not require that the preschool program select the ASQ:3 and ASQ:SE-2 developmental and social-emotional screenings for preschool-aged students. Preschool programs that utilize the ASQ are not required to enter the results of the screenings in ASQ Online or report the results to KSDE.

As of July 2020, all accredited schools can use their building ASQ Online account for any child they serve in that building, birth through kindergarten entry, at any point during the year. Please visit https://agesandstages.com/ks/ for more information about the Kansas Kindergarten Readiness Snapshot (ASQ) initiative.

20. Regarding the requirement that each child receives a developmental screening: We do this for every child entering the program, with the exception if the child is transitioning from Part C. We do a play-based assessment with these children. Do we need to go back and screen these children?

No, a program does not need to rescreen a child who has already been identified as needing services, or do additional screenings if the program is already assessing the child's development.

21. Can progress monitoring and benchmark tools be used separately or does the curriculum have to have the tool?

Programs may use either a tool issued with the curriculum or select a different monitoring and benchmark tool.

22. Does research show a significant difference in student learning in half-day versus full-day preschool programs?

The quality of programming, dosage of programming, and holistic supports available for young children enrolled are important. For example, a child enrolled in a part-day program may also be receiving quality home visitation/parent education programs to enhance stimulating early learning environments while children are not in school. Here are several resources:

• Untangling the Evidence on Preschool Effectiveness: Insights for Policymakers (Learning Tree Institute, 2019). In short, yes, sufficient learning time matters – but it's challenging to isolate the individual variables connected to a program's

overall effectiveness.

• Is More Better? The Effects of Full-Day vs Half-Day Preschool on Early School Achievement (The National Institute for Early Education Research, 2006)

Ultimately, we'd encourage you to engage your community to understand what families need and what resources/services are already available in the community.

- 23. We have given all parents a choice of either a full day or a half-day in our preenrollment forms. If a parent chooses to have their child attend half day, are we still meeting the equal opportunity requirement for access to preschool? Equal opportunity for access is met so long as all children have access to both full-day or half-day preschool. Programs may not limit the opportunities available to particular groups of students. See the "Inclusion of all children" section in the application's additional information and resources regarding program requirements for more information.
- 24. Can students bring in their own snacks or meals if they don't want to pay for school lunches?

Students who generate Preschool-Aged At-Risk funding or who are served by Kansas Preschool Pilot grant funds must be provided at least one meal or snack per classroom session by the school/program. Schools can earn reimbursement for providing nutritious meals and snacks by participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Learn more by viewing the KSDE Achieve Good Nutrition with Preschoolers resource or contact the KSDE Child Nutrition and Wellness Team (785-296-2276) for additional information.

- 25. Do family activities and home visits count toward instructional hours?

 Please refer to the School Term Audit Guide posted on the KSDE Fiscal Auditing webpage, which notes that Parent-Teacher Conferences are allowable to count toward instructional hours. Dedicated days or half-days when teachers are visiting with families at home would count toward instructional hours; individual home visits conducted in the normal course of the school year would not.
- 26. For the Preschool- Aged At-Risk and Kansas Preschool Pilot, the adult to child ratio must be no more than 1:10 at all times, with a classroom size not to exceed 20 students. This applies to ALL children in the classroom regardless of funding streams. Is this a teacher to child ratio or an adult to child ratio? Do paras count?

Assistant teachers and teacher aides who meet the requirements laid out in the "Teacher Requirements" section are considered the secondary teachers in the classroom and count toward the 1:10 ratio.

27. Can an individual teach if they have received a waiver from the Kansas State Board of Education or if they are pursuing an alternative pathway to licensure? Programs should think of meeting the requirement "all staff are qualified and hold the licensure as their position dictates" in the same way they think of licensure in grades K-12. Regulations requires LEAs when filling positions for which the state board issues a license, to fill that position with a person who holds a license with an endorsement appropriate for the position/assignment.

A preschool teacher who has (1) received a waiver or (2) is pursuing an alternative pathway to licensure that qualifies them to teach, fulfills the requirements of the Preschool-Aged At-Risk program and/or Kansas Preschool Pilot grant. For answers to additional questions regarding alternative pathways to teacher licensure, please contact the KSDE Teacher Licensure Team.

28. Is it appropriate to send preschool students to specials as part of their day if the specials teacher is not specifically licensed for three- and four-year-olds? Districts often hire licensed music teachers to provide the music instruction to all grade levels covered by their license, just as they would hire an art teacher or a PE teacher to provide the instruction in those subject areas. Any teacher completing an approved music/art/physical education program after July 1, 2003 will have an endorsement that is "all-level", meaning grades PreK-12. The same is true if they add any of those endorsements to an existing license after July 1, 2003.

Therefore, it is possible that the music/art/PE teacher may be appropriately licensed for Pre-K if they have the all-level endorsement, as it would cover the Pre-K level (3- and 4-year-olds). Elementary and ECU teachers can also teach music/art/PE at the appropriate grade level, as their teacher prep programs include standards for these in addition to the core content areas. Because elementary education has been approved as an appropriate endorsement for teaching preschool, either the elementary education (K-6, K-9) **OR** the ECU (B-K, B-3) licensed teachers are therefore appropriately licensed.

- 29. Where can we access required abuse and neglect training? Several options include:
 - Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities, Inc. www.kccto.org
 - Kansas Children's Service League, www.kcsl.org
 - The Kansas Department for Children and Families regularly offers Mandated Reporter Training. Click here to register for notification of DCF Mandated Reporter Trainings.
 - KSDE TASN Summer Leadership Conference 2020, ("Mandated Reporter Training" and "A Guide to Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect") KSDE TASN 2020 Summer Leadership Conference webpage.
 - Also, KSDE has developed an online resource site to assist in providing quality

professional development for several required training topics. This site provides access to a list of training resources clustered around three themes – Leadership Training, Prevention and Responsive Culture, and Student Safety and Wellness. Under "Prevention and Responsive Culture" are included resources on *Mandated Reporting* and *Child Sexual Abuse Awareness and Prevention*. Access these resources at the KSDE Student Staff Training webpage.

30. Are preschool programs required to be licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)?

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment is responsible for licensing child care facilities. You can visit the KDHE Child Care Licensing webpage to see their homepage, which includes information about "How to Open a Licensed Child Care Facility" along with your county's licensing contact information. Programs should contact their local child care licensing specialist to determine whether licensure is required.

Your local child care licensing specialist will be able to gather information and connect with partners at KDHE if additional clarification is needed. Two of the resources they may use:

- On KDHE's "Child Care Licensing Forms & Applications" page, CCL 309 Inquiry Regarding Licensure CCC Mother's Day Out (PDF) is a form that can be submitted to KDHE to determine whether a program should be licensed.
- KDHE's "Child Care Licensing Regulations & Policy Exceptions" page includes the Policy Exception Non-Public 4 year old Pre-K Classroom (PDF).

Note that programs must be licensed by KDHE in order to receive funding via the Child Care Assistance (Child Care Subsidy) program administered by the Kansas Department for Children and Families. This program helps families pay for child care costs.

31. Are there any requirements stating that there will be a bathroom directly in a Preschool-Aged At-Risk classroom?

Grantees must provide a safe and developmentally appropriate environment for all children. KSDE does not set additional requirements concerning facilities beyond what is required for building safety locally.

For more information, contact:

Natalie McClane Kansas State Department of Education Early Childhood (785) 296-5081 earlylearning@ksde.org



Kansas State Department of Education 900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102 Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212 www.ksde.org