Appendix A
Durham PreK Program Requirements and Guidance

Administration

- Durham PreK is administered by Early Years.
- Durham PreK is funded through the Durham County Government Board of Commissioners.
- Payment rates are set by Durham PreK Governance Committee as approved by the County of Durham.
- Early Years will coordinate and collaborate with Durham's Partnership for Children (DPfC), Durham Public Schools (DPS) and Head Start.

The Durham PreK Governance Committee

- Early Years will report on the list of implementation and operational requirements to the County of Durham.
- Site selection requirements will use the Durham PreK selection rubric and Early Years will make site selections in coordination with the Durham PreK Governance Committee.
- Early Years and Durham County Manager's Office created a Durham PreK Governance Committee for ongoing input, discussion, and creation of policies and standards with regard to Durham PreK implementation and operation.
- Durham PreK Policies and Standards are subject to change by Governance Committee decisions or changes by the County of Durham.

The Durham PreK Child

- The goal for Durham PreK is to serve all 4 year-old children in the county regardless of income. Children in families below 450% of the federal poverty level (FPL) will attend Durham PreK at no charge. Families at or above 450% FPL will have a 2% parent fee calculated as a flat percent of each family's gross monthly income. The parent fee is capped at the maximum reimbursement rate of $1,514.
- Early Years will coordinate with DPS and DPfC through the universal application process and Child Find with regard to a coordinated support plan for children with special needs.

The Durham PreK Site

- Durham PreK funding will follow a per-child allocation for a 10-month school year (36 weeks) and 6.5 hour school day. Any parent fees for families that qualify for the Durham PreK sliding scale must be collected from families by the provider. The provider must set their own policies regarding when parent fees are due and how parent fees must be paid and inform parents of these policies at the start of the school year.
    - In the partial months of August and June, the provider can do one of the following:
        - Prorate both August and June based on the daily rate (parent fee divided by 21.67 times the number of school days in the month)
        - Charge the parent a full month fee for August **or** June (but not both)
- Upon completion of contracting, but no sooner than August, and provided the contract is fully completed by September 30, Durham PreK providers will receive a preservice payment by direct deposit. The preservice payment will be calculated as 15% of the site's maximum annual payment based on allocated seats and current teacher BK status.
- Durham PreK providers will receive reimbursement payments monthly over a 10-month period. Payments are made September through June and are based on enrollment and attendance.
- Child attendance and instructional tracking must be taken daily and submitted to Early Years monthly.
- Excused absences will follow NC Pre-K rules, however, every effort will be made to ensure that parents understand the importance of child attendance.
- All Durham PreK providers must be active with Early Years' Child Care Scholarship Program.
- It is not allowable to fill publicly funded Durham PreK seats with private-pay participants. Durham PreK seats need to be relinquished in order to allocate them as private seats.

Transportation fees

- Families cannot be charged a fee for transportation.
- The transportation needs of families are under review by the Durham PreK Governance Committee.

The Durham PreK Classroom

- Durham PreK classrooms must be fully staffed in ratio with seat allocations prior to the opening of the classroom. Seat allocations may be changed for sites not meeting staffing ratios. Accepted Durham PreK ratios are 1:9 with a maximum of 18 students per classroom.
- Durham PreK follows NC Pre-K rules and guidance, however, center administrators and classroom teaching staff must participate in Technical Assistance (TA) services that may include but are not limited to the Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®) assessment and related coaching to support high-quality interactions between staff and children to promote school readiness among Durham PreK children.
- The Creative Curriculum will be used in Durham PreK classrooms and teaching staff will use SmartTeach™ for ongoing child assessments 3 times per year according to the teacher calendar schedule. Inter-rater reliability with SmartTeach™ will be tracked.
- Sites must be in compliance with the North Carolina Quality Rating License System Family Engagement Standards for 5-star centers.
- The Durham PreK Governance Committee reserves the right to review, update or add quality standards for Durham PreK classrooms.

Durham PreK Staff

- Durham PreK lead teachers and instructional assistants must be compensated for a 40-hour work week and are generally not to exceed working 40 hours per week. If necessary to work more than 40 hours, compensation must be provided. All 40 hours worked per week must be focused on the Durham PreK classroom that the lead teacher and instructional assistant are assigned to at the Durham PreK site. 32.5 hours each week are for direct contact with children in the classroom or outdoor learning environment. The remaining 7.5 hours each week are for instructional staff to complete related instructional activities such as planning and professional development. Durham PreK Staff Schedule forms that document a teacher's schedule must be completed for all Durham PreK lead teachers and instructional assistants.
- Durham PreK will offer professional development opportunities related to curriculum, ongoing child assessments, and effective interactions between classroom staff and children. All classroom staff (lead teachers and instructional assistants, including any long-term substitute staff) will be required to participate. Site administrators, directors, and coordinators will also be scheduled to participate in required professional development.
- Site administrators, directors, coordinators and classroom staff (both the lead teacher and instructional assistant) must follow professional development plans created in partnership with the Quality Enhancement Coach.
- Classroom staff (as a team) will be assessed through the Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®) with related professional development and coaching provided as needed.
- Licensed Durham PreK lead teachers hold a BK Initial License, BK Continuing License, Residency BK License, Initial BK Add-on License, Continuing BK Add-on License, or Provisional BK Add-on License, and must be compensated according to Durham Public Schools' certified teacher salary schedule. Unlicensed Durham PreK lead teachers hold a bachelor's degree or higher in early childhood or a related field recognized and accepted by the NC Pre-K Program Requirements (see NC Pre-K rules for guidance on related fields) *and* are working toward a BK License, or hold an Emergency BK License, or a Temporary Permit, and must be compensated at 0 years of experience according to the NC Department of Public Instruction's salary schedule.
- Lead teachers who are not qualified must be working toward the qualifications for their position. They must make progress by successfully completing a minimum of six documented semester hours per contract school year with a grade of "C" or better. For details, see NC Pre-K education requirements outlined by DCDEE in rule 10A NCAC 09.3013.
- Durham PreK instructional assistants must have one of the following:
    - An associate's degree in early childhood, OR,
    - Be enrolled and actively taking courses toward the completion of an associate's degree in early childhood, defined as successfully completing a minimum of six documented semester hours per contract school year with a grade of "C" or better, OR,

    - Hold or be working toward an associate's degree or higher in a related field recognized and accepted by the NC Pre-K Program Requirements. See NC Pre-K rules for guidance on related fields.
- Supporting documentation to verify the qualifications of all Durham PreK teaching staff are required in order to complete contracting. Accepted documentation is outlined below:
    - Lead teachers with a BK license must provide –
        1. A copy of their BK license. The years of experience on the license provided must match the lead teacher information form.
    - Lead teachers without a BK license must provide –
        1. A copy of their current DCDEE WORKS Letter, degree OR an unofficial transcript that states the degree they were issued, AND,
        2. An acceptance letter or course schedule as proof of enrollment in a BK licensure program.
    - Instructional assistants with an associate's degree in early childhood must provide –
        1. A copy of their current DCDEE WORKS Letter, degree OR an unofficial transcript that states the degree they were issued.
    - Instructional assistants without an associate's degree in early childhood must provide –
        1. A copy of their current DCDEE WORKS Letter that indicates a degree type of "Degree/Field – EC/CD" or "Degree/Field – EC/CD & SA", OR,
        2. A copy of a degree or an unofficial transcript that states the degree earned in a related field recognized/accepted by NC Pre-K, OR,
        3. Proof of enrollment (such as an acceptance letter or current course schedule) in an associate's degree program recognized/accepted by NC Pre-K.
    - Note - For lead teachers or instructional assistants needing to translate records from another country or language, prompt translation is suggested.
- Durham PreK instructional assistants must be compensated according to the rate set by the Durham PreK Governance Committee.
- Benefits should be included in addition to these salary requirements, but cannot be counted as part of the minimum salary requirements for lead teachers and instructional assistants.
- Changes in the NC DPI and DPS teacher salary scales due to cost of living increases must be matched and back pay issued as appropriate.

Payment Rates by Site Type

- Payment rates per child are determined by the Durham PreK Governance Committee with approval by the County of Durham.
- The maximum rates for 2026-2027 are $1,514 per child per month for classrooms with a lead teacher with a bachelor's degree or higher with a BK Initial License, BK Continuing License, Initial BK Add-on License, Continuing BK Add-on License, Provisional BK Add-on License, or Residency BK License.
- The maximum rates for 2026-2027 for classrooms with a lead teacher with a bachelor's degree or higher, but who holds no license and is working towards BK licensure, or has an Emergency BK License, or a Temporary Permit is $1,460 per child per month.

Teacher Compensation Support Payments

- Teacher Compensation Support Payments are in place to help offset the cost of paying lead teachers and instructional assistants according to Durham PreK requirements. These payments come in two types:
    - Base Payment - Non-public school providers will receive a monthly Base Teacher Compensation Support Payment for all lead teachers and instructional assistants. The Base Payment amounts are as follows: $312 per instructional assistant, $800 per unlicensed lead teacher and $1,248 per licensed lead teacher.
    - Experience Payment - Providers with licensed lead teachers required to be paid on the Durham Public Schools' salary schedule will receive a monthly Experience Teacher Compensation Support Payment. The Experience Payment is based on a graduated scale which takes into account the monthly salary and teacher years of experience.

- Durham PreK providers must follow Durham PreK's Teacher Compensation Support Payment Policy (Appendix C).

Evaluation and Monitoring

- Durham PreK classrooms must participate in data collection efforts to support a county-wide program evaluation to measure program quality and child gains.

Program and Fiscal Monitoring of Durham PreK Programs

- Early Years is required to monitor for program/policy and fiscal/contract compliance with oversight by the County of Durham.
- Early Years will coordinate with NCDCDEE Child Care Consultants for compliance with NC Child Care Rules.