

More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements

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More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction..... 1-1

Section 2: The County/Region More at Four Committee

- A. Purpose of the More at Four Committee 2-1
- B. Committee Structure and Meetings 2-1
- C. Committee Authority 2-3
- D. Additional Functions-Committee and Contractor 2-4
- E. Reporting Program Progress 2-4

Section 3: The More at Four Child

- A. More at Four Child Enrollment Eligibility 3-1
- B. Service Priority Status 3-3
 - Eligibility/Enrollment Scorecard..... 3-4
- C. Definitions and Recommended Documentation for Verification..... 3-5
- D. Children with Unique Needs 3-6

Section 4: The More at Four Site

- A. Facility Requirements..... 4-1
- B. Official More at Four Day and Year 4-1
- C. Program Attendance Policy 4-1
- D. Nutrition 4-1
- E. Fees..... 4-1
- F. Religious Activities 4-1

Section 5: The More at Four Classroom

- A. Child Health Assessments 5-1
- B. Developmental Screening..... 5-1
- C. Early Learning Standards 5-2
- D. Curricula..... 5-2
- E. Instructional Assessment 5-2
- F. Staff-to-Child Ratio and Class Size..... 5-3
- G. Rest Time 5-3
- H. Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environments 5-3
- I. Family Engagement..... 5-3

Section 6: The More at Four Staff

A. Administrator Licensure and Credentials	6-1
B. Teacher Education, Licensure and Credentials	6-1
C. Teacher Assistant Education and Credentials	6-2
D. Substitute Staff	6-3
E. Instructional Staff Standards	6-4
F. Compensation for Instructional Staff	6-4

Section 7: Evaluation and Monitoring

A. ECERS-R Assessments	7-1
B. Reported Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations.....	7-1
C. Program and Fiscal Monitoring of Local More at Four Pre-K.....	7-1
Monitoring Timeline	7-2
D. Monitoring Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Maintenance of Effort (MOE).....	7-3

Section 1: Introduction

The More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program is a program of the North Carolina Office of School Readiness in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

The More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program is designed to provide high-quality educational experiences to enhance school readiness for at-risk four-year-olds. The program requirements are built on the premise that to be successful academically in school, children need to be prepared in all five of the developmental domains outlined by the National Education Goals Panel. Each of these domains is critical to children's well being, in particular for their success in reading and math as they come to school. The five domains, as reflected in *Foundations: Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success*, are:

http://www.osr.nc.gov/ProfDevandResources/foundationsEarly_learning.asp

- Approaches to learning
- Emotional and social development
- Health and physical development
- Language development and communication
- Cognitive development

The requirements are designed to ensure that a high-quality pre-kindergarten classroom experience is provided for at-risk four-year-olds in each local More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program and that, to the extent possible, uniformity exists across the state.

All More at Four programs must comply with these requirements. Requests for exceptions to the requirements as specified in this document must be made in writing by the More at Four local contractor to the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten State Program, Office of School Readiness.

There are seven sections of the Requirements: (1) Introduction, (2) The County/Region More at Four Committee, (3) The More at Four Child, (4) The More at Four Site, (5) The More at Four Classroom, (6) The More at Four Staff, and (7) Evaluation and Monitoring.

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The *More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements*, the *More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Guidance*, and the *More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Fiscal and Contract Manual* may be downloaded from the Office of School Readiness website: <http://www.osr.nc.gov/MoreFour/manuals.asp>

Section 2: The County/Region More at Four Committee

A. Purpose of the More at Four Committee

The authorizing legislation for the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program requires: “a system built upon existing local school boards and systems, private child care providers, and other entities that demonstrate the ability to establish or expand pre-kindergarten capacity.”

To comply with this legislative mandate, the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program requires every county (or region) that chooses to participate in More at Four to establish and maintain a County/Region More at Four Committee. The purpose of the committee is to:

1. Select a contractor agency;
2. Develop operational policies and procedures;
3. Ensure collaboration and shared responsibility for developing, approving, and implementing the local plan for delivering More at Four Pre-Kindergarten services at the community level;
4. Ensure that services are built on the existing early childhood service delivery system, and that service providers in the community with the ability to provide More at Four Pre-Kindergarten services have the opportunity to express interest and be considered;
5. Provide ongoing, collaborative advice about local policies and procedures in the implementation of More at Four Pre-Kindergarten services; and
6. Provide oversight for the local program (both program and fiscal).

B. Committee Structure and Meetings

Co-Chairs

The County/Region More at Four Committee must be co-chaired by the school superintendent (or designee) for the local education agency (LEA) and the board chair (or designee) for the local Smart Start partnership. If a designee is assigned, it must be done in writing and the designee must have the same decision-making authority as the school superintendent or local partnership board chair. The contract administrator (person named in the Plan) shall not serve as the chair of the More at Four Committee.

If there is more than one LEA or local Smart Start partnership in a county or region, one superintendent and one local Smart Start board chair may be designated to serve as the co-chairs. All superintendents (or designees) and local Smart Start board chairs (or designees) in a county or region must be members of the committee.

Membership

The co-chairs are responsible for appointing the committee members and convening the committee according to these *More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Requirements*. Appointments shall be made annually. The co-chairs should create an independent County/Region More at Four Committee. However, they may designate another functioning early childhood committee or board in the county/region that has the appropriate membership to serve in this capacity. If an existing early childhood committee is designated to serve in this capacity, the existing early childhood committee must officially adjourn from its meeting and requirements, then officially reconvene as the More at Four Committee operating under More at Four requirements, with the required co-chairs and membership to perform More at Four functions.

Committee membership must be kept current in the online plan, and shall consist of the following:

1. In addition to the co-chairs, representatives to the local More at Four Committee must include:
 - a. Licensed child care center (4- or 5-star license preferred) representative,
 - b. Head Start program representative,
 - c. Parent of preschool-age children (especially at-risk children) representative,
 - d. Child care resource and referral agency or another child-serving agency representative,
 - e. Department of social services or other child care subsidy funding agency representative, and
 - f. Public schools exceptional children's preschool program representative(s) (effective 2010-2011).

(see *Guidance, Sec. 2B, pg. 2*)

Committee Meetings

The Committee is a public body subject to Open Meeting Law (G.S. Chapter 143, Article 33C) and Public Records Law (G.S. Chapter 132) and must operate in accordance with their obligations under those statutes.

http://ncga.state.nc.us/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/ByArticle/Chapter_143/Article_33C.html

http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/html/bychapter/chapter_132.html

The committee, under the direction of the co-chairs, should set a meeting schedule and establish protocol that allows the committee to fulfill its functions. The committee must maintain minutes of all meetings that document: 1) meeting attendees; 2) items discussed; and 3) actions taken or decisions made. In addition to regular meetings, the Committee must meet prior to May 31 to advise planning and document approval of the More at Four plan for the following year.

C. Committee Authority

Actions Requiring Full Committee Approval

The County/Region More at Four Committee is the decision-making body for the local More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program and is authorized to do the following (items 1-14):

1. Conduct annual planning for More at Four and approve an implementation plan. All committee members must read and agree to the Assurances and Requirements, and sign Section 1, which must be submitted, along with a copy of the minutes of the meeting, to the State Office by May 31.
2. Select or change the contract administrative agency (the Contractor).

Minutes and signatures of all committee members must be submitted to the state office for items 1 and 2.

3. Approve distribution of start-up funding.
4. Review and approve the provider reimbursement strategy (i.e., payment rates to providers and other related costs).
5. Approve provider transportation fees to/from the More at Four program.
6. Approve fees that may be charged to cover the full/partial costs of meals when children do not qualify for free/reduced priced lunch.
7. Approve the release of allocated slots back to the state office.
8. Approve adding new sites or non-voluntary termination of sites in the County/Region Plan.
9. Approve requests to increase or decrease the budget involving More at Four funds.
10. Determine the use of unspent More at Four operating funds.

Items 3 through 10 require committee approval but do not require the signature of all committee members. The minutes of the Committee meetings shall be kept on file and shall indicate members present, decisions made, and results of votes.

Actions Not Requiring the Full Committee

In cases where decisions must be made before the Committee can be convened, the contract administrator and/or committee co-chairs may do the following on behalf of the committee:

11. Approve moving slots across sites.
12. Approve requests for slots (**requires committee chairs' signatures**).
13. Approve the voluntary termination of sites.
14. Approve increases or decreases in the budget involving other resources accessed (but not state More at Four funds).

For **action 12**, signatures of the committee co-chairs are required. A report of all actions must be reported back to the Committee.

D. Additional Functions – Committee and Contractor

The committee serves in an advisory role to the Contractor in the development and implementation of local policies and procedures for implementing More at Four, including the following:

1. Developing and implementing a coordinated process for recruiting, identifying, and placing at-risk four-year-old children;
2. Participating in collaborative efforts to offer professional development services to early childhood programs in the community;
3. Demonstrating and documenting how programs are accessing resources other than those provided by More at Four;
4. Documenting agreements with other community agencies regarding the provision of services to young children with disabilities;
5. Developing and implementing a written transportation plan showing how the transportation needs of participating children will be met (*see Guidance, Sec. 2D, pg. 2*);
6. Developing and implementing a written transition plan showing how the needs of participating children will be met as they transition into pre-kindergarten and then into kindergarten (*see Guidance, Sec. 2D, pg. 2*);
7. Providing all families of participating children with information about access to health insurance (Health Check and NC Health Choice) and the importance of a medical home for their children (*see Guidance, Sec. 2D, pg. 2-3*);
8. Identifying and using community resources to develop a plan for obtaining child health assessments within the required timeframe (*see Guidance, Sec. 2D, pg. 3*); and
9. Developing a plan for consultation services from a qualified health consultant for all sites (*see Guidance, Sec. 2D, pg. 3*).

E. Reporting Program Progress

The Contractor must report to the County/Region More at Four Committee throughout the year on implementation of the County/Region Plan including:

1. Program progress (recruiting, child identification and eligibility, enrollment, and attendance);
2. Site updates (slot allotment and use; star licensure progress);
3. Staff education levels and progress (administrators, teachers, assistants);
4. Professional development activities;
5. Efforts to collaborate with other agencies;
6. Strengths and barriers to service delivery;

7. Efforts to implement plans related to transportation, transitions, helping families access health insurance and a medical home, helping ensure child health assessments, and consultation from a qualified health professional; and
8. Fiscal and budget reports: funds received, funds paid to subcontractor(s), and any unspent funds in the More at Four contract, including a plan for use of unspent funds.

In addition to reporting at regular meetings, the Contractor must report to the Committee prior to May 31 to inform the Committee as it advises planning and approves the More at Four plan for the following year.

Section 3: The More at Four Child

A. More at Four Child Enrollment Eligibility

Children served in a More at Four slot must meet age requirements, income eligibility or eligibility for children in military families, **and** service priority criteria as defined in this section.

Age Requirements

1. Children to be enrolled must be four years of age on or before **August 31st** of the program year.
2. Children age eligible for kindergarten cannot be served with More at Four funds.

Eligibility for Families at or below 75% of State Median Income (SMI)

Eligibility for More at Four is determined by family size and gross income. **Children in families with annual incomes at or below 75% of the State Median Income (SMI) level are eligible for More at Four services** (see Table 1).

Table 1. 75 PERCENT STATE MEDIAN INCOME*	
Family Size	75 Percent State Median Income
1	\$23,198
2	\$30,335
3	\$37,473
4	\$44,611
5	\$51,748
6	\$58,886
7	\$60,225
8	\$61,563
9	\$62,901
10	\$64,239
11	\$65,578
12	\$66,916

*Based on **August 1, 2009** North Carolina Subsidized Child Care Eligibility Limits (in press)

Eligibility for Families above 75% of State Median Income (SMI)

When a family's gross income exceeds 75% of the State Median Income (SMI) the child is deemed eligible if he/she meets at least one of the criteria listed below:

- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as indicated by the family and/or child speaking limited or no English in the home;
- Identified Disability as indicated by the child having a current Individualized Education Program (IEP);

- Chronic Health Condition as indicated by a health care provider diagnosis (e.g., asthma, childhood obesity, sickle cell anemia, cancer, HIV);
- Developmental/Educational Need as indicated by the child's performance results on a developmental screening.

Up to 20% of a county's/region's More at Four slots may be filled by children above 75% of the State Median Income level who meet at least one of the criteria listed above.

Eligibility for Children in Military Families

A child is eligible for More at Four if at least one parent or legal guardian of this child is an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard) or the North Carolina National Guard or other state military force, or a Reserve Unit of the armed forces who is ordered to active duty by the proper authority within the last 18 months, or expected to be ordered within the next 18 months. A child whose parent or legal guardian has been seriously injured or killed while on active duty is also eligible.

Military eligible children are not counted in the county's allowable 20% of slots serving children over 75% of State Median Income.

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Maintenance of Effort (TANF MOE)

When a child is determined eligible for services, a % of poverty category must be determined (see Table 2), entered on the **Eligibility/Enrollment Scorecard** sheet, and in MAFKids. **This information will be used to determine TANF MOE.**

Table 2. INCOME ELIGIBILITY LEVELS*					
<i>(More at Four, 2009-2010)</i>					
Family Size	130%	185%	200%	250%	300%
1	\$14,079	\$20,036	\$21,660	\$27,075	\$32,490
2	\$18,941	\$26,955	\$29,140	\$36,425	\$43,710
3	\$23,803	\$33,874	\$36,620	\$45,775	\$54,930
4	\$28,665	\$40,793	\$44,100	\$55,125	\$66,150
5	\$33,527	\$47,712	\$51,580	\$64,475	\$77,370
6	\$38,389	\$54,631	\$59,060	\$73,825	\$88,590
7	\$43,251	\$61,550	\$66,540	\$83,175	\$99,810
8	\$48,113	\$68,469	\$74,020	\$92,525	\$111,030
9	\$52,975	\$75,388	\$81,500	\$101,875	\$122,250
10	\$57,837	\$82,307	\$88,980	\$111,225	\$133,470
11	\$62,699	\$89,226	\$96,460	\$120,575	\$144,690
12	\$67,561	\$96,145	\$103,940	\$129,925	\$155,910

*Based on **2009 Federal Poverty Levels (rev. 03-31-09)**

B. Service Priority Status

After a pool of eligible children is determined, service priority status should be used to prioritize those children for More at Four services.

Priority 1. Unserved Children

- a. Children who have never been served in any preschool or child care setting.
- b. Children who are currently unserved (previously in preschool or child care setting).
- c. Children served for 5 months or less in the year prior to service in the More at Four program in any preschool or child care setting.

Priority 2. Underserved Children

- a. Children who are in unregulated child care that does not meet the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten standards.
- b. Children who are in a regulated preschool or child care setting, but are not receiving subsidy.
- c. Other children, including those in pre-kindergartens or child care settings that do not meet More at Four program standards. This is the last resort and documentation that children who fit the unserved category were diligently recruited should be available.

Exception: More at Four Pre-Kindergarten slots designated to a site can be used to serve that site's three-year-old children when they become age eligible for More at Four and meet More at Four eligibility requirements. However, the total number of slots used to maintain services for previously served three-year-old children may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of a county's slots.

More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Eligibility/Enrollment Scorecard
 (REVISED: Effective June 1, 2009)

Date Completed: _____
 Child's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: () _____

STEP ONE: Eligibility Factors

- 1) Will the child be four years of age on or before **August 31st** of the program year?
 ___ No (Child not eligible; discontinue scorecard.)
 ___ Yes (Move to question 2.)
- 2) What is the annual family gross income? _____ What is the family size? _____
- 3) Does the family's income fall at or below 75% of the State Median Income (SMI)?
 ___ No (Complete table A and B and move to question 4.)
 ___ Yes (Child is eligible; complete tables A and B; THEN determine priority.)

TABLE A		
Check one box for each:	Yes	No
Child of eligible military family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limited English Proficiency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identified Disability (IEP)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic Health Condition(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developmental/Educational Need	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TABLE B (TANF/MOE only)	Check one
130% of poverty and below	
131 - 185% of poverty	
186 - 200% of poverty	
201 - 250% of poverty	
251 - 300% of poverty	
Above 300% of poverty	

- 4) a) Is there one or more yes boxes checked in Table A ?
 ___ No (Child not eligible; discontinue scorecard.)
 ___ Yes (Child is eligible; determine priority.)
 - No more than 20% of a county's/region's More at Four slots may be filled with children from families with incomes above 75% of State Median Income level if a child meets at least one of the criteria listed in Table A.
 - Children meeting military eligibility are excluded from the 20% percentage.

STEP TWO: Service Priority Status (Circle only one.)

UNSERVED	UNDERSERVED
1a. Child has never been served in any preschool or child care setting.	2a. Child in unregulated care ; does not meet More at Four standards .
1b. Child currently unserved .	2b. Child in regulated preschool or child care, not receiving subsidy.
1c. Child served for 5 months or less in the year prior to service in the More at Four program in any preschool or child care setting.	2c. Child currently being served in settings that do <u>not</u> meet More at Four program standards.
	Exception: Eligible 3-year-old child moving up to fill a MAF slot.; 50% county limit.

C. Definitions and Recommended Documentation for Verification

During the application process, at a minimum, the items and documentation identified in the chart below must be collected for each child and family. This information will serve two purposes: (1) to determine More at Four eligibility, and (2) to determine TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) for the state to determine TANF Maintenance of Effort (MOE) contributions.

Element	Parent, guardian or caregiver statement substantiated by parent, guardian or caregiver signature is required for income, military status, family size, kinship.
Child's Name	Parent, guardian or caregiver statement.
Birth Date	Child's birth certificate, or medical records, or recorded in Family Bible
Child's SS #	Verification of child's social security number, if applicable
County	County of child's residence as documented on child's application.
Military Status	Parent, guardian or caregiver statement (signature required).
Kinship (signature required)	<p>Kinship is established when the child in care lives with an adult blood relative or with a non-relative who has legal custody or guardianship. If child is living with non-relatives or other adults that have legal custody or guardianship, guardian must present a <u>legal document</u> verifying they have <u>legal custody</u> or <u>guardianship</u>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A parent - This includes a natural mother or father, a legal mother or father, or adoptive parent(s) after issuance of the final order of adoption. 2. An alleged mother or father or other alleged maternal or paternal relative. 3. A blood or half-blood relative or adoptive relative limited to: brother, sister, grandparent, great-grandparent, great-great-grandparent, uncle or aunt, great-uncle or aunt, great-great-uncle or aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin. 4. A step relative limited to: stepparent, stepbrother, and stepsister. 5. Spouses of anyone in the above groups, even after the marriage has been terminated by death or divorce. 6. Other adults who have legal custody or guardianship of a child. Foster parents do not have legal custody or guardianship; custody remains with the Department of Social Services.
Family Size (signature required) (Number in Family: parents, stepparents, all siblings)	<p>Include the following individuals living in the child's home:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The More at Four child plus all minor brothers and sisters, half brothers, half sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters. 2. Parents and stepparents of these children. 3. Incarcerated or institutionalized individuals are <u>not</u> included. 4. If a child is living with a relative like a grandparent, aunt, uncle, etc., or an individual who has <u>legal custody</u> or <u>legal guardianship</u>, then the family size consists of the More at Four child, plus all minor brothers and sisters, half brothers, half sisters, stepbrothers and stepsisters living in the same household. The adults are <u>not</u> included, nor are the children of these adults counted.
Family Income (To convert weekly income to annual, multiply weekly by 4.3 to obtain monthly, then by 12 for annual.)	<p>Count parent or stepparent's regular gross income (signature required). Regular gross income may include income earned through sales commissions averaged over several months, regular employment through a temporary employment agency, child support, alimony payments, and workman's compensation. Excluded from regular gross income are parent, stepparent and child Supplemental Security Income, adoptive assistance, foster care payments, and irregular income (e.g., over-time, temporary unemployment pay, Work First, Food Stamps, student loans). If legal guardian, legal custodian, or other caregiver, only count the child's income, including Social Security Income and Child Support Payments. Do not count Supplemental Security Income. Count income from any <u>minor</u> siblings living in the home.</p>

D. Children with Unique Needs

When a teacher, parent, or other involved person has significant developmental, sensory, or behavioral concerns about a More at Four child, he/she shall notify the local school system for assistance. The following steps shall be followed:

1. If, as a result of information gathered through the screening process, or from experience working with a particular More at Four child, a More at Four program has significant concerns about that child and the program's ability to address his/her needs, the program shall notify the local school system's Preschool Exceptional Children Program for assistance.
2. The More at Four administrator, teacher, and parent, in consultation with the school system's Preschool Exceptional Children Program and other available resources, shall work together to develop a coordinated plan to support the More at Four child's placement in the More at Four program. Every effort shall be made to maintain the child's enrollment and participation.
3. If efforts to access the consultation needed to develop a coordinated plan of support prove unsuccessful, the More at Four program shall contact the Office of School Readiness for assistance.
4. The Office of School Readiness must be notified if the More at Four child's continued enrollment and participation becomes impossible due to chronic disruptions or concerns for the safety of that child or others, and it becomes necessary to find another placement for that child.

Section 4: The More at Four Site

A. Facility Requirements

Public school Pre-K programs and Head Start programs operated by the public schools must meet public school regulatory standards.

Head Start programs operated by nonprofit organizations and all private non-profit and for profit centers must meet North Carolina Division of Child Development regulatory standards and maintain a 4 or 5 star license. Under certain conditions, provisional approval may be granted to a 3 star program.

B. Official More at Four Day and Year

More at Four sites must provide a Pre-K program for a regular school day (6 or 6.5 hrs.) for 180 instructional days per school calendar year (*see Guidance, Sec. 4B, pg. 6*).

C. Program Attendance Policy

Child attendance must be taken daily and submitted monthly for reimbursement (*see Guidance, Sec. 4C, pg. 6*).

(*See More At Four Pre-Kindergarten Program Fiscal and Contract Manual, pg 5-1 for payment information.*)

D. Nutrition

Sites must provide breakfast and/or snacks and lunch meeting USDA requirements during the regular school day.

E. Fees

When all other options have been exhausted, families with children participating in More at Four may be charged nominal fees for transportation to/from the More at Four site and the partial/full cost of meals when families do not qualify for free/reduced price meals. However, eligible children should not be denied services based on the family's inability to pay.

Families may also be charged for the cost of wraparound services provided before or after the regular school day, during holidays, or during summer months. More at Four dollars may not be used for such costs (*see Guidance, Sec. 4E, pg. 7*).

F. Religious Activities

Activities, instruction, or communications which promote religious beliefs shall not be directed toward children participating in More at Four during the More at Four school day.

Section 5: The More at Four Classroom

A. Child Health Assessments

A health assessment is required before a child can enter the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program and must have been conducted within 12 months of program entry. The health assessment must include:

1. Physical examination
2. Up-dated immunizations
3. Vision screening
4. Hearing screening
5. Dental screening

(see Guidance, Sec. 5A, pg. 8)

B. Developmental Screening

All children enrolled in More at Four must receive a developmental screening using an approved screening instrument, unless the child has an existing Individualized Education Program (IEP). Children must be screened within 90 days after the first day of attendance in the program or within 6 months prior to the first day of attendance.

The More at Four program requires that screening be used solely for the purpose of identifying children who should be referred for further evaluation and testing based on concerns in one or more developmental domains.

Children shall be screened using one of the screening instruments listed below:

- 1. The following approved instruments screen in four developmental domains:**
 - a. Developmental Indicators of Assessment of Learning-3 (DIAL-3)
 - b. Brigance® Preschool Screen-II (for children 3 years, 0 months – 3 years, 11 months and 4 years, 0 months – 4 years, 11 months) (revised 2005)
 - c. Brigance® K & 1 Screen II (for children 5 years, 0 months – 5 years, 11 months) (revised 2005)
 - d. Learning Accomplishment Profile Diagnostic Screens (LAP-D Normed Screens – versions in English and Spanish for children 3, 4, and 5 years)
- 2. The following approved instruments do not screen behavioral and social skills, and should be supplemented by one instrument listed below to do so:**
 - a. Kaufman Survey of Early Academic & Language Skills (K-SEAL)
 - b. Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-P) (Preschool ages 3 – 4 1/2 years)
 - c. Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-K) (Kindergarten ages 4 1/2 – 6 years)
- 3. The following are supplemental to the instruments in item 2 above:**
 - a. Devereux Early Childhood Assessment Program (DECA)
 - b. Social Skills Rating System (SSRS)

(see Guidance, Sec. 5B, pg. 9)

C. Early Learning Standards

More at Four programs must be knowledgeable about *Foundations: Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success*, and use these early learning standards to guide their planning of developmentally appropriate, high-quality prekindergarten experiences for children. *Foundations* is available at <http://www.osr.nc.gov/>

(see *Guidance, Sec. 5C, pg. 9*)

D. Curricula

Classrooms are required to use a comprehensive curriculum selected from the following list of preschool curricula approved by the State Board of Education:

1. The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, 4th Edition, Teaching Strategies, Copyright 2002
2. The Empowered Child™, Childtime, 2nd Edition, Copyright 2007 (Approved for use in Childtime programs.)
3. Explorations with Young Children: A Curriculum Guide from the Bank Street College of Education, Gryphon House, Copyright 1992
4. HighScope Preschool Curriculum HighScope Press, Copyright 2002
5. Opening the World of Learning™ (OWL), Pearson Early Learning, Copyright 2005 (Approved with the stipulation that full-year programs have a plan to supplement or extend the curriculum since OWL is designed to cover a school year.)
6. Passports: Experiences for Pre-K Success, HighReach Learning, Copyright 2007 (Approved with the stipulation that programs purchase the *Compass* and at least one set of study/theme materials.)
7. Tutor Time LifeSmart™, Copyright 2005 (Approved for use in Tutor Time programs.)

(see *Guidance, Sec. 5D, pg. 9*)

E. Instructional Assessment

Classrooms are required to conduct ongoing assessment to gather information about each child's growth and skill development, as well as inform instruction. The following instruments meet this requirement.

1. HighScope Preschool Child Observation Record (COR) (second edition)
2. Work Sampling System (Meisels)
3. Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum, Ages 3-5
4. Galileo On-line Assessment System
5. Learning Accomplishment Profile – Third Edition (LAP-3)

6. Learning Care System (for use with Tutor Time LifeSmart™ and The Empowered Child™ Childtime)

(see Guidance, Sec. 5E, pg. 9)

F. Staff-to-Child Ratio and Class Size

The classroom will not exceed a maximum staff-to-child ratio of 1 to 9 with a maximum class size of 18 children, with one teacher and one assistant teacher per classroom. Classrooms that provide for inclusive settings for children with disabilities may require an adult to child ratio smaller than 1 to 9. For LEA-administered public school exceptional children's preschool classrooms, ratios must be in compliance with the North Carolina Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities, Section 1508-2, (Appendix B). <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ec/>

During rest time, the classrooms will be considered in compliance with the required 1 to 9 staff-to-child ratio if at least one staff is in the classroom with children while resting and that person is visually supervising all children. The second person needed to meet the 1 to 9 ratio must be on the premises, within calling distance of the classroom to remain in compliance.

(see Guidance, Sec. 5F, pg. 10)

G. Rest Time

A rest/quiet period is required for each child every day, the length of which shall be determined according to the individual needs of each child.

H. Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environments

Classrooms shall provide high-quality indoor and outdoor learning environments that support the implementation of *Foundations: Early Learning Standards for North Carolina's Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success*, as well as the chosen curriculum. The outdoor classroom is considered an extension of the learning environment. Both indoor and outdoor environments shall address curricular objectives by encouraging child-initiated, teacher-supported, active learning experiences. Teachers shall arrange for children to be outdoors each and every day.

I. Family Engagement

More at Four classrooms shall provide meaningful opportunities for families to be engaged in their child's education.

(see Guidance, Sec. 5I, pg. 10)

Section 6: The More at Four Staff

A. Administrator Licensure and Credentials

Public Schools

Principal licensure is required.

(see Guidance, Sec. 6A, pg. 12)

Nonpublic Schools (Private Child Care/Pre-Kindergarten Settings)

Directors/administrators of nonpublic schools must have, or be working toward a North Carolina Early Childhood Administrative Credential (NCECAC) Level III. For the director/administrator working toward the required NCECAC Level III, the following will apply:

1. Provisional approval will be given for four years for the director/administrator with NCECAC I or II to obtain the NCECAC Level III.
2. Progress toward NCECAC Level III will be considered a minimum of six documented semester hours per year. The local More at Four contractor will maintain documentation of the progress toward the required standard.
3. Under certain conditions, administrators showing good faith effort toward meeting the credential requirement may be granted an extension to the four-year timeline. Local contractors must submit a request for an extension in writing to the Office of School Readiness.

Administrators of More at Four sites shall not serve as the More at Four teacher or teacher assistant.

B. Teacher Education, Licensure and Credentials

All teachers will hold, or be working toward a North Carolina (NC) Birth-through-Kindergarten (B-K) Standard Professional II or Preschool Add-on licensure. For teachers working toward the required education and license, the following requirements apply:

Public Schools

Teachers will hold a minimum of a BA/BS degree **and**:

1. NC Initial Provisional Lateral Entry B-K License
or
2. A North Carolina K-6 license and a provisional Preschool Add-on license
or
3. Another North Carolina or other state's license and a NC Provisional B-K license.

Nonpublic Schools (Private Child Care/Pre-Kindergarten Settings)

Teachers will hold a minimum of a/an:

1. Early Childhood Education/Child Development (ECE/CD) associate degree
or
2. BA/BS degree in early childhood, child development, or a related field (human development and family studies, elementary education, and psychology), and be eligible for a NC Initial Provisional Lateral Entry B-K License.
or
3. A North Carolina K-6 license and provisional Preschool Add-on license
or
4. Another North Carolina or other state's license and a NC Provisional B-K license.

Time Limit for Classroom to have B-K Licensed Teacher

1. Programs will be given up to four years from the time the classroom becomes a More at Four classroom to have a B-K or Preschool Add-On licensed teacher in place.
2. Progress toward B-K or Pre-school Add-on licensure will be considered a minimum of six documented semester hours per year. The local More at Four Contractor will maintain documentation of the progress towards the required standard.
3. Under certain conditions, teachers showing good faith effort toward meeting the education and licensure requirement may be granted an extension to the four-year timeline. Local contractors must submit a request for an extension in writing the Office of School Readiness. If the extension is denied, the State Office reserves the right to remove the associated slots from the contract.

(see Guidance, Sec. 6B, pg. 12)

C. Teacher Assistant Education and Credentials

All assistants will hold, or be working toward an Early Childhood Education/Child Development (ECE/CD) associate degree or a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. For teacher assistants working toward an ECE/CD associate degree or CDA, the following requirements apply:

Nonpublic Schools (Private Child Care/Pre-Kindergarten Settings)

1. Assistants will hold a high school diploma or GED equivalent and be working toward the ECE/CD associate degree or CDA (minimum).
2. Progress toward the ECE/CD associate degree or CDA will be considered a minimum of six documented semester hours per year.

Exceptions for Public Schools

1. Teacher assistants employed by public schools are exempt from this requirement to hold an ECE/CD associate degree or CDA if they meet the following:
 - a. Employment requirements outlined by the federal “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) legislation, and have one of the following:
 - b. Six documented semester hours of coursework in early childhood education,
 - or
 - c. Two years of work experience in an early childhood setting.

Exceptions for Nonpublic Schools

Teacher assistants working in private settings with a BS/BA degree in early childhood, child development or a related field (human development and family studies, elementary education, and psychology) meet the education requirement.

D. Substitute Staff

When a member of the More at Four teaching staff is unable to work, a substitute staff person must be provided to maintain the staff-to-child ratio (1:9 and 2:18), and to implement the program in accordance with More at Four requirements. Substitute staff must be at least 18 years of age and meet the following minimum qualifications:

Teacher Substitutes for Short-term Vacancies

Requirements for short-term vacancies, when teachers are absent from the More at Four classroom for 15 or fewer days, include the following:

1. **Nonpublic Schools (Private Child Care/Pre-Kindergarten Settings):** Substitutes in private settings must have at least a high school diploma or a GED, and some course work in early childhood education or child development, such as the North Carolina Early Childhood Credentials I and II.
2. **Public School Settings:** Substitutes must meet the requirements of the substitute policy consistent with the local education agency (LEA).

Teacher Substitutes for Long-term Vacancies

Requirements for long-term vacancies, when teachers are absent from the More at Four classroom for 16 or more attendance days, include the following:

Regardless of the program setting, long-term substitutes must have at least an associate’s degree in early childhood education/child development or 4-year degree in a related field (child development, early childhood education, elementary education, human development and family studies, or psychology).

Teacher Assistant Substitutes

Substitutes for teacher assistants must be at least 18 years of age and have a minimum of a high school diploma or a GED.

E. Instructional Staff Standards

Staff Time

Instructional staff shall work in direct contact with children in the More at Four program for at least a 30-hour work week. In addition to these direct, day-to-day instructional experiences, instructional staff will require additional time for related instructional activities, including time for planning, scheduling and conducting home visits, meeting with children's families, and/or attending required professional development activities. These related activities shall take place outside of the 6 – 6 ½ hour day of direct teacher-child contact, and are not to exceed 40 hours per week.

(see Guidance, Sec. 6E, pg. 12)

Professional Development Requirements

Licensed Personnel: Licensed Principals, Teachers, and Teacher Assistants will participate in professional development at a rate of 15 CEUs (150 clock hours) in five years, for an average of 3 CEUs (30 clock hours) per year consistent with the State Board of Education policy.

Administrators, Teachers, and Teacher Assistants working toward More at Four qualifications will participate in a minimum of 6 documented semester hours per year.

(see Guidance, Sec. 6E, pg. 13-14)

F. Compensation for Instructional Staff

Compensation includes all salary, wages, health and/or retirement benefits paid to eligible More at Four teachers and teacher assistants working in public and nonpublic school More at Four Pre-Kindergarten programs as defined in this Section.

Teacher Eligibility

1. Teachers who work in **public school** More at Four Pre-Kindergarten programs will receive salaries based on the NC Public School Salary Schedule for Certified Staff and receive health and retirement benefits offered through the NC State Health Plan and NC State Retirement System.
2. Teachers who work in **nonpublic school** More at Four Pre-Kindergarten programs and currently hold a NC Birth-Kindergarten (B-K), Preschool Add-On, Provisional B-K, Preschool Add-on, or Lateral Entry B-K license are eligible to receive a compensation package as defined in **Table 3**.

Teacher Assistant Eligibility

1. Teacher assistants working in **public school** More at Four Pre-K programs will receive salaries based on the NC Public School Salary Schedule for Non-Certified Staff and receive health and retirement benefits offered through the NC State Health Plan and NC State Retirement System.
2. Teacher assistants who work in **nonpublic school** More at Four Pre-K programs and exceed More at Four education requirements (currently hold AA/AAS in ECE) are eligible to receive a compensation package as defined in **Table 4**.

Compensation Packages for Nonpublic School Programs

1. Compensation packages must be equivalent to at least the **minimum compensation level** for eligible teachers and teacher assistants, as defined in **Tables 3 and 4**. The package may consist of a, b, or c and equal to the package amount.
 - a. Salary **only**, or
 - b. Salary **plus** health **or** retirement plans, **or**
 - c. Salary **plus** health **and** retirement plans.
2. Local nonpublic school More at Four programs have until the 2010-2011 school year to move eligible teachers and teacher assistants from the **minimum to the target compensation level**, based on available state and local fiscal resources.
3. Teachers with less than the required education and experience, and teacher assistants with less than an associate's degree in early childhood education, who work in nonpublic school More at Four programs, should be compensated based on salary and benefit targets defined by the site administrator.

**Table 3. Compensation Packages for Eligible Teachers Working in Nonpublic School Programs
B-K Licensure, Pre-school Add-on Licensure, Provisional B-K Licensure, or Initial Provisional Lateral Entry B-K License**

Experience	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Minimum Compensation	\$26,260	\$26,680	\$27,120	\$28,680	\$30,080	\$31,420	\$32,710	\$33,750	\$34,230	\$34,720	\$35,220	\$35,710	\$36,220	\$36,730	\$37,260	\$37,800
Compensation Target	\$30,900	\$31,322	\$31,786	\$33,392	\$34,834	\$36,215	\$37,543	\$38,615	\$39,109	\$39,614	\$40,129	\$40,633	\$41,159	\$41,684	\$42,230	\$42,786

Notes

- Minimum and Maximum Compensation Target (Salary and Benefits) Packages** based on North Carolina Public School Salary Schedules for Certified Employees - Bachelor’s Degree Certified Teacher Salary **Schedule 5th Pay Period 2005-2006**. For Minimum Compensation Tables for more than 15 years of service, see: <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/fbs/finance/salary/schedules/2005-06schedulespayperiod5.pdf>
- Health benefit calculation based on 2005-2006 NC State Health Plan rate **\$321 per month** (12 months of employment).
- Retirement benefit calculation based on **3% of annual salary**.
- Compensation scale assumes a 40-hour work week for 36 weeks (10-month school year) (1,440 hours: includes 6-6 ½ hours direct child contact, plus related instructional planning, home visits, family conferences, professional development activities – See Section 6. b).
- Employer and employee state and federal taxes are not included in these figures.
- County supplements are determined by the Local MAF Committee.
- Initial Provisional Lateral Entry B-K License** – Granted to a teacher with a BA/BS degree in child development, early childhood or a related field (human development and family studies, and psychology), and at least a 2.5 GPA. Upon completion of B-K requirements teacher recommended for a B-K Standard Professional I or II license.
- Provisional B-K Licensure** – Granted to a teacher with another North Carolina license. Ex: Teacher with K-6 license approved for a provisional B-K or Preschool Add-on. Upon completion of B-K requirements teacher recommended for a B-K Standard Professional I or II license and/or Preschool Add-on License.
- Teaching Experience** – One year of full time (at least 30 hours/week) teaching experience in a public or nonpublic setting is given for each increment (step) on the state salary schedule. Experience is determined by the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) at the time the license is issued. Teachers should be placed at the “0” level of experience until the DPI Licensure Section computes “years of experience,” which are denoted on the license document mailed to the teacher. Teacher’s salary would move to the appropriate step of **Table 3** upon receipt of license.

**Table 4. Compensation Packages for Teacher Assistants Working in Nonpublic School Programs
AA/AAS Degree in Early Childhood Education**

Experience	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Minimum Compensation	\$15,810	\$16,063	\$16,328	\$17,267	\$18,110	\$18,917	\$19,693	\$20,319	\$20,608	\$20,903	\$21,204	\$21,499	\$21,806	\$22,114	\$22,433	\$22,758
Compensation Target	\$20,136	\$20,397	\$20,670	\$21,637	\$22,505	\$23,337	\$24,136	\$24,781	\$25,078	\$25,382	\$25,692	\$25,996	\$26,312	\$26,629	\$26,958	\$27,293

Revised September 13, 2006 – Minimum Compensation and Compensation Target (based on a 10-month school year)

Notes

1. **Minimum and Maximum Compensation Target (Salary & Benefits) Packages** based on Fiscal Year **2005-2006** North Carolina Public Schools Salary Schedules - Curriculum Support Personnel Salary Grades for Teacher Assistants with at least AA/AAS degree.
2. Health benefit calculation based on **2005-2006** NC State Health Plan rate **\$321 per month** (12 months of employment).
3. Retirement benefit calculation based on 3% of annual salary.
4. Compensation scale assumes a 40-hour work week for 36 weeks (10-month school year). More at Four teacher assistants work 37.5-40 hours a week for 36 weeks.
5. Employer and employee state and federal taxes are not included in these figures.
6. Teaching Experience – One year of full time teaching assistant experience (at least 30 hours/week) in a public or nonpublic setting is given for each step in **Table 4**.

Section 7: Evaluation and Monitoring

A. ECERS-R Assessments

Assessments of More at Four Pre-Kindergarten classrooms occur periodically using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) on a schedule arranged by the Office of School Readiness.

Classrooms must score **a minimum of 5.0**. Classrooms that receive less than 5.0 will be contacted by the Office of School Readiness and are required to submit a plan demonstrating how the minimum rating will be accomplished by the following year of operation. Classrooms have one year to improve quality.

(see Guidance, Sec. 7A, pg. 15)

B. Reported Child Abuse and Neglect Investigations

The NC Division of Child Development will notify the NC Office of School Readiness of an open abuse and neglect investigation occurring in a More at Four site.

The More at Four Pre-Kindergarten site in question may continue operating the More at Four classroom until the investigation and resolution are complete. If the allegation of abuse and/or neglect is substantiated, More at Four funds may be terminated where there is substantiation of abuse and neglect that jeopardize the health and safety of children enrolled in the program. In such cases, the termination of More at Four Program payments will continue through any appeals process and will not resume until a final determination has been made in the matter.

More at Four funds will be terminated when the participating More at Four site child care facility license has been suspended or revoked, and may be suspended when there is a pending administrative action that would change its license.

C. Program and Fiscal Monitoring of Local More at Four Pre-K Programs

The NC Office of School Readiness, local contractors, and site administrators are required to monitor for compliance with the More at Four program and fiscal and contract requirements.

1. **Monitoring Tools:** Monitoring tools developed by the Office of School Readiness must be used at the local level for self-review and verification of compliance with the operating requirements.

a. More at Four Site Monitoring Tool (Site Tool), completed by the site administrator (or designee), is designed to provide checklists of those components of the program that must be reviewed for compliance annually at the site and classroom level.

b. More at Four Contractor Monitoring Tool (Contractor Tool), completed by the local contractor (or designee), is designed to provide checklists of those components of the program (both programmatic and fiscal) that must be reviewed for compliance annually at the local contractor level.

(see Guidance, Sec. 7C, pg. 15-18)

Monitoring Timeline

Monitoring activities shall begin with the start of each program year and continue throughout the year to ensure that program requirements are met.

When	What	Who
By November 30	An original copy of the Site Tool is completed, and plans for items that require an Action Plan must be submitted to the Local Contractor. (Site or classroom new after October 1, should complete and submit within 90 days of the first attendance day.)	Site administrator or designee (site director or public school principal)
November - February	Complete Sections A through D on the Contractor Tool , including Action Plans and Timelines, as applicable. Conduct site visits to review and discuss Site Tool and results.	Local Contractor (or designee) Local Contractor (or designee)
By February 28	Complete site visits to all More at Four sites to review and discuss Site Tool results. Schedule follow-up visits as needed.	Local Contractor (or designee)
February - April	Office of School Readiness (OSR) personnel monitors to review Site Tools and Contractor Tool results with local contractor administrator.	OSR Personnel
By May 15	Complete Contractor Tool (Sections E and F) , including Action Plans (timeline/who completes each task) for items that do not meet the Program Requirements and/or Fiscal Guidelines, sign, date, and mail to state office.	Local Contractor (or designee)
By May 31	OSR personnel complete Section G and mail copy of Contractor Tool to the local Contractor. (Original copy filed in the state office.) Monitoring results reported to the Local More at Four Committee.	OSR Personnel Local Contractor

D. Monitoring Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

State Responsibility

Local More at Four administrative programs are subject to monitoring visits by the DHHS Division of Budget and Analysis Office to verify children's eligibility for the TANF/MOE match. Criteria to be monitored are collected in the More at Four Reporting System (MAFKids) database, which are entered and updated monthly by the local More at Four program contract administrator. MAFKids determines if a child is TANF eligible.

Procedures include:

1. The DHHS Division of Budget and Analysis and the Office of School Readiness will work together to select a random sample of local More at Four programs and individual sites to be monitored.
2. The DHHS Division of Budget and Analysis, in consultation with the Office of School Readiness, will send a notification letter of a pending site visit with information about how the visit will be scheduled and conducted.
3. Each local program will receive a list of clients' files to be monitored.
4. Each local program may request a copy of the TANF/MOE Record Review Form and Record Review Guide as needed.

Only the state is impacted by the monitoring results. Local programs are not impacted fiscally by a finding of an ineligible TANF/MOE child.

(see Guidance, Sec. 7D, pg. 18)

Local Responsibility

Periodically, local programs must verify and update child information in MAFKids. (MAFKids automatically determines TANF eligible children based on the data entered in the system.)

(see Guidance, Sec. 7D, pg. 19)