



Pre-kindergarten Approval Guidance

Updated July 1, 2016

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI), Office of Academic Support, follows the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) Chapter 15.1-37-01, that any person or school district operating an early childhood program may request approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The NDDPI has created guidance to assist programs in completing this process.

What to Submit:

- 1) [Form SFN 60869](#) must be submitted annually by September 2 of each school year.
- 2) New pre-kindergarten programs: Please submit a copy of the school board minutes approving the grade reconfiguration and school board approval of the new program.
- 3) Pre-kindergarten program renewal: There is no need to submit board minutes as NDDPI keeps them on file.
- 4) If your program is located outside of your school building, a new fire marshal report must be submitted. If your program resides in the school building, please submit the most recent fire marshal report.

Form Guidance:

- **Highly Qualified Teacher:** The NDDPI requires that school districts employ highly qualified staff. The Education Standards & Practices Board (ESPB) requires that in order to be highly qualified, the teacher must have one or more of the following:
 - B3 license.
 - Elementary education major and a kindergarten endorsement. A plan of study may be granted for the kindergarten endorsement which will allow a teacher two years to complete the required coursework for the endorsement.
 - Elementary education major and an early childhood endorsement.
 - Elementary education major and a minor in early childhood education.
 - K-8 and K-6 licenses (both K-8 and K-6 licenses are no longer issued by ESPB, however those who already have a K-8 license may teach pre-kindergarten).
 - If you have held a valid North Dakota teaching license for at least two years and would like to teach in a content area that you are not currently highly qualified for, you may be able to take the Praxis test to become highly qualified. Please contact ESPB at (701) 328-9641 for further information.
- **Program Hours:** The NDDPI requires programs operate at a minimum of 400 hours over the course of 32 weeks to meet state requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 2151, a pre-kindergarten funding bill passed by the 64th Legislative Assembly.
- **Parental Involvement:** Of the 400 hours required to operate a program, SB2151 requires 10 hours of research-based parental involvement to be incorporated. Activities such as Gearing Up for Kindergarten, in-class parent reading participation, parent workshops, or field trip involvement are strongly suggested. Parent/Teacher conferences, parent meetings, PTO, assessment meetings, or open houses do not demonstrate the NDDPI's approved research-based parental involvement.
- **Data Collection:** The NDDPI collects program enrollment data to meet the requirements of SB 2151. Enrollment data is additionally collected to report to various North Dakota Legislative committees. The State Automated Reporting System (STARS) is an electronic reporting system utilized by the state to collect and generate reports. To obtain access to STARS, please contact Angie Thomas at afthomas@nd.gov.
- **Enrollment:** The NDCC Chapter 15.1-37(d) limits the enrollment to children who have reached the age of four before August 1st in the year of enrollment.
- **Funding:** The NDDPI voluntarily collects this information for the North Dakota Legislature as they inquire how school districts and other early learning entities financially support their programs. Please answer this question to the best of your knowledge.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [Tara Bitz](#) at (701) 328-4646 or [Angie Thomas](#) at (701) 328-2317.