

Date: March 5, 2013
To: MSHS Program Directors
From: Tony Jordan, EC Program Coordinator (MSHS)
RE: Framework for Preschool Placement Based on Child's Age

Background: Currently, different methodologies and practices are used when placing children who could be served as preschoolers based on their 3rd birthday occurring prior to the age cut-off date. This memorandum serves to clarify grantee expectations and the flexibility available as some MSHS children are experiencing too many transitions/transfers between classrooms as a result of placement based on actual age versus their age based on the cut-off date, which causes a lack of continuity of care.

Framework: Beginning with the 13/14 program year, children may be served in a preschool classroom setting and system as early as 2 years 9 months of age so long as:

- The placement is developmentally appropriate
- Licensing regulations are followed and the licensed capacity supports the placement (e.g. 2-5 or 2-6 year old classroom versus 3-5 year old classroom)
- Head Start performance standards for preschool class-size and predominant age are followed (1306.20 and 1306.32)

Additional Information: Attached is additional, supplementary information that supports this framework.

Thank you. Should you have any questions or need clarification, please contact me at (209) 238-6300 or ajordan@stancoe.org.

Framework for Preschool Placement Based on Child's Age Supplemental Information

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| Purpose: | To clarify, foster consistency, and provide supplemental information regarding the framework. |
| Guiding Questions: | How are children who are not yet 3 enrolled in RHS preschool classrooms, but not in MSHS preschool classrooms? How are children who are not yet 3 allowed to be in settings that are not, staffed for 1:4 teacher-child ratios and group sizes of 8? |
| Framework: | Children may be served as early as 2 years 9 months in a preschool setting. This aligns to the earliest possible entry age as of July 1 during an RHS program year as the entry cut-off date becomes September 1, per California Ed Code 2808. |
| Supplemental Information: | <p>Below is supplemental information that supports or further clarifies this framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Performance Standards</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1305.4: To be eligible for Head Start services, a child must be at least three years old by the date used to determine eligibility for public school in the community in which the Head Start program is located, except in cases where the Head Start program's approved grant provides specific authority to serve younger children. Examples of such exceptions are programs serving children of migrant family and Early Head Start programs. – 1304.52(g)(3): For center-based programs, the class size requirements specified in 45 CFR 1306.32 must be maintained. – 1304.52(g)(4): Grantee and delegate agencies must ensure that each teacher working exclusively with infants and toddlers has responsibility for no more than four infants and toddlers and that no more than eight infants and toddlers are placed in any one group. – 1306.32: (a) Class size. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Head Start classes must be staffed by a teacher an aide or two teachers and, whenever possible, a volunteer. (2) Grantees must determine their class size based on the predominant age of the children who will participate in the class and whether or not a center based double session variation is being implemented. (3) For classes serving predominantly four or five year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 17 and 20 children, with no more than 20 children enrolled in any one class. (4) When double session classes serve predominantly four or five year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 15 and 17 children. A double session class for four or five year old children may have no more than 17 children |

enrolled. (See paragraph (c) of this section for other requirements regarding the double session variation.)

(5) For classes serving predominantly three year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 15 and 17 children, with no more than 17 children enrolled in any one class.

(6) When double session classes serve predominantly three year old children, the average class size of that group of classes must be between 13 and 15 children. A double session class for three year old children may have no more than 15 children enrolled. (See paragraph (c) of this section for other requirements regarding the double session variation.)

(7) It is recommended that at least 13 children be enrolled in each center based option class where feasible.

(8) A class is considered to serve predominantly four or five year old children if more than half of the children in the class will be four or five years old by whatever date is used by the State or local jurisdiction in which Head Start program is located to determine eligibility for public school.

(9) A class is considered to serve predominantly three year old children if more than half of the children in the class will be three years old by whatever date is used by the State or local jurisdiction in which h Head Start is located to determine eligibility for public school.

(10) Head Start grantees must determine the predominant age of children in the class at the start of the year. There is no need to change that determination during the year.

(11) In some cases, State or local licensing requirements may be more stringent than these class requirements, preventing the required minimum numbers of children from being enrolled in the facility used by Head Start. Where this is the case, Head Start grantees must try to find alternative facilities that satisfy licensing requirements for the number of children cited above. If no alternative facilities are available, the responsible HHS official has the discretion to approve enrollment of fewer children than required above.

- Title 22

- Title 22 considers infants as children birth to 24 months, toddlers as children 18-36 months, and preschool as over 24 months.

- (a) There shall be a ratio of one teacher visually observing and supervising no more than 12 children in attendance, except as specified in (b) and (c) below. (1) The number of children in attendance shall not exceed licensed capacity. (2) Whenever children are engaged in activities away from the center, no teacher shall be in charge of a group of more than 12 children. (A) Activities outside the perimeter of the licensed child care center pose additional hazards to children. An effort should be made to gain an adult-child ratio of at least 1:6 through the use of adult volunteer.

- (b) The licensee may use teacher aides in a teacher-child ratio of one teacher and one aide for every 15 children in attendance.

- (1) A ratio of one fully qualified teacher (as specified in Section 101216.1(c)) and one aide for every 18 children in attendance in a preschool program is allowed when the aide meets the qualifications specified in Section 101216.2(d).

- (A) This ratio does not apply to children enrolled in an infant care center or a school-age child care center.

- (c) Child development programs funded by the California Department of Education and operating under Title 5 of the California Code of Regulation are not required to meet the teacher-child ratios specified in (a) and (b) above.

- Title 5
 - (1) Section 18290 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations provides: Contractors shall maintain at least the following minimum ratios in all centers:
 - (A) Infants (birth to 18 months old) – 1:3 adult-child ratio, 1:18 teacher-child ratio.
 - (B) Toddlers (18 months to 36 months old) – 1:4 adult-child ratio, 1:16 teacher-child ratio.
 - (C) Preschool (36 months to enrollment in kindergarten) – 1:8 adult-child ratio, 1:24 teacher-child ratio.
 - (D) Children enrolled in kindergarten through 14 years old – 1:14 adult-child ratio, 1:28 teacher-child ratio.
 - (E) Compliance with these ratios shall be determined based on actual attendance.
 - (2) Section 18291 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations provides:
 - (A) Whenever groups of children of two (2) age categories are commingled and the younger age group exceeds fifty percent (50%) of the total number of children present, the ratios for the entire group must meet the ratios required for the younger age group.
 - (B) If the younger age group does not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total number of the children present, the teacher-child and adult-child ratios shall be computed separately for each group.
 - (3) Section 18292 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations provides: Except as otherwise provided in this Division or Title 22 California Code of Regulations, Community Care Licensing Standards the program may exceed teacher-child and adult-child ratios prescribed by Section 18290 by fifteen percent (15%) for a period of time not to exceed one hundred twenty (12) minutes in any one day.
- NAEYC
 - The National association for the Education of Young Children (1991) lists the criteria devised by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs for determining adequate numbers of staff in early childhood programs:
 - F-2. Sufficient staff with primary responsibility for children are available to provide frequent personal contact; meaningful learning activities; supervision; and to offer immediate care as needed. The ratio of staff to children will vary depending on the age of the children, the type of program activity, the inclusion of children with special needs, the time of day, and other factors. Staffing patterns should provide for adult supervision of children at all times and the availability of an additional adult to assume responsibility if one adult takes a break or must respond to an emergency. Staff-child ratios are maintained in relation to size of group. Multi-age grouping is both permissible and desirable. When no infants are included the staff-child ratio and group size requirements shall be based on the age of the majority of the children in the group. When infants are included, ratios and group size for infants must be maintained.
 - Staff-child ratios are maintained through provision of substitutes when regular staff members are absent. Substitutes for infants and toddlers are familiar with the children and oriented to children's schedules and individual differences in a systematic way before assignment. When volunteers are used to meet the staff-child ratios, they must also meet the appropriate staff qualifications unless they are parents (or guardians) of the children. Volunteers who work with children complete pre-assignment orientation and participate in ongoing training.
 - Both group size and staff-child ratio are determined on the basis of number and ages of children enrolled.

- Smaller group sizes and lower staff-child ratios have been found to be strong predictors of compliance with indicators of quality such as positive interactions among staff and children and developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- 3 year olds – 14 children 1:7 or 16 children 1:8
- 4 – 5 year olds – 16 children 1:8 or 18 children 1:9 or 20 children 1:10
- Program Area Plans
 1. Ratios will be maintained based on program staffing patterns. A ratio of one (1) teacher and 4 (four) infants/toddlers will be maintained with group sizes of 8.
 2. Separate schedules (including individualized meals and naptimes for young infants 6 weeks to 12 months) and classroom layout (division) will support group sizes of 8.
 3. Ratios will be maintained based on program staffing patterns. Ongoing Observation Staffing Rosters (a) Classes serving predominantly four or five year old children, the average class size of that group will be between 17 and 20 children. (b) Classes serving predominantly three year old children, the average class size of that group will be between 15 and 17 children.
 4. Monitoring will be conducted to ensure appropriate ratios are maintained.
- Desired Results
 - California Department of Education, Child Development Division and West Ed
 1. Desired Results Development Profile – Preschool (DRDP-PS) is for children who are three years of age until Kindergarten and may also be used for children who are at least two years and seven months entering a preschool classroom who will turn three by the date used for compulsory school entry.