Memorandum for West Virginia

Date: February 14, 2011
To: Clayton Burch
CC: Rob Muller, REL Appalachia
From: Linda Cavalluzzo and Kelly Vosters, CNA
Marty Zaslow, Kristen Darling-Churchill, and Shannon Moodie, Child Trends
Re: Overview and Summary of the Structuring of Pre-Kindergarten Collaborations in the Four REL Appalachia States

This memorandum responds to a request by the REL Appalachia states of Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia to help them understand how collaborations between public school pre-kindergarten (pre-K) programs and other types of early care and education may be structured. Collaboration is a prevalent strategy for expanding access to state pre-K programs, but little guidance or documentation exists on how to structure collaborations in the face of funding and other administrative challenges. To provide information on collaborations, we first searched online and other public sources for policy documents relating to the state pre-K programs and collaboration in each of the four REL Appalachia states. From these documents, we created a profile for each state, summarizing the legislative requirements and regulatory guidance for structuring pre-K collaborations. We then spoke with one or two representatives from each state’s Department of Education (DOE) to confirm that we had used the most recent information available, to verify the accuracy of the information collected, and to fill in remaining information gaps.

To share these findings, we have provided three attachments. Attachment A is a table illustrating the key elements of the pre-K programs and collaboration in the four REL Appalachia states. Attachment B synthesizes our findings across the four states, describing in more detail the similarities and differences in how collaborations have been structured to accommodate differing requirements (e.g., for funding or eligibility) while providing higher-quality pre-K to a larger population. Attachment C reviews policy documents for each state, with more detailed information on each state’s pre-K programs, including the information obtained in our review and discussions, and the source of each finding.

In this document, we use the term "state pre-K program” to refer to all pre-K classrooms in the state that are either housed in a public school or in a collaborative partner site (and are under a contract with an LEA to provide pre-K services). Collaborative partners may include Head Start (a federally-funded early childhood program) or private community-based child care or early education providers. The term

* Representatives from Virginia were not available for discussion, so information related to Virginia’s pre-K program is based solely on the review of publicly available documents.
“collaboration” refers to arrangements where resources (e.g., funding, facilities, equipment, staff) to provide the pre-K services are contributed by both the state and the collaborative partner under a contract to provide pre-K as part of the state program.

This document describes the different facets of pre-K collaboration that we identified and the differing administrative structures developed in the four states to oversee the functioning of the state pre-K programs. We identify areas of greatest consistency and of greatest variation across the states’ versions of these administrative structures, as well as note specific challenges or strategies highlighted during the discussions with state education representatives. In particular, we found the following in key areas of collaboration.

**Oversight and Monitoring:**

- State pre-K programs are nested in the Department of Education in each state, but several agencies and organizations make important contributions to the oversight, monitoring, and guidance for collaborations. One state, in fact, assigns certain pre-K-collaboration oversight responsibilities to state agencies other than their DOE.
- To assess quality, all four states use similar observational instruments but for different purposes, such as determining provider eligibility, self-study, or monitoring existing pre-K classrooms.

**Funding Coordination:**

- Each state uses multiple financial inputs in addition to state funds to finance collaborative pre-K classrooms, and use the strategies of blending and braiding to exhaust all funding sources while accommodating different stipulations associated with the different funding streams.
- The specific funding sources and approach to coordination strategies vary among states.

**Participant Eligibility:**

- For the targeted pre-K programs in Tennessee and Kentucky, the participant eligibility criteria are developed at the state level, while for West Virginia’s universal program, counties that are not yet able to offer full universal enrollment determine eligibility criteria beyond the state’s age benchmark to prioritize enrollment.

**Specific Program Features:**

- One state reported that higher compensation for teachers employed by the school system compared to those employed by collaborating providers can create higher turnover among the lower-paid staff, serving as one obstacle to maintaining qualified pre-K teaching staff.
- All states require lead teachers to be state licensed, which is a staffing obstacle; the states cited arrangements whereby the school provides the lead teacher and collaborative partners provide assistants, but people with whom we spoke desired additional flexibility on teacher credentials.

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The following table summarizes the four state pre-K programs, highlighting key elements relating to oversight and monitoring, funding, participant eligibility, and program design standards.

### Oversight and Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall oversight and monitoring of collaborative programs</th>
<th>Kentucky</th>
<th>Tennessee</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>West Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education (KDE)</td>
<td>Kentucky Department of Education (TDOE) and, through Memorandum of Agreement, Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS)</td>
<td>Information not available</td>
<td>West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) with Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection of collaborative partners</td>
<td>Local Education Agency (LEA) applications submitted to KDE</td>
<td>LEA applications submitted to TDOE</td>
<td>State Board of Education (BOE)</td>
<td>County plans submitted to DHHR, but reviewed by WVDE committee and Head Start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required use of classroom observations</td>
<td>Program self-assessment through Kentucky Early Childhood Quality Self-Study; piloting ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised) review for selected districts</td>
<td>Self-administered ELLCO (Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Tool) and ECERS-R; required for annual program improvement plans</td>
<td>Classroom observation required as part of Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) application; information about ongoing observations not available</td>
<td>Annual ECERS-R review; areas identified for improvement included in subsequent year’s county plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
<td>Regional Training Centers (RTCs)</td>
<td>TDOE educational consultants; TN CCR&amp;R Child Care Providers Training network (TN-CCPT) Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA); Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) grant; Head Start collaborating program staff</td>
<td>VDOE and DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Development</td>
<td>Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs); Pre-K Steering Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>Program supervised at the district level by the preschool coordinator</td>
<td>Joint effort by supervisors at the program level; minimum 2 site visits per year, plus fire &amp; health inspection</td>
<td>No information available</td>
<td>No information available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting requirements</td>
<td>KDE creates reports using data entered by districts in the Infinite Campus state data system</td>
<td>TDOE requires annual monitoring report; programs meet individual reporting requirements independently</td>
<td>No information available</td>
<td>WVDE requires annual reporting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding sources (Federal, State, Local, Private)</th>
<th>Kentucky</th>
<th>Tennessee</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>West Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding sources</td>
<td>State, Head Start, Title I, IDEA-B, IDEA-B 619, tuition</td>
<td>2005-09: State revenues + lottery funds + local match 2010: State portion is all general funds (uses school funding formula) + local match or in-kind contributions.</td>
<td>State; Title I, Head Start, Early Reading First, child care subsidies (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families [TANF]) + local match</td>
<td>State (uses school funding formula), Head Start, child-care subsidies (Child Care and Development Fund [CCDF] &amp; TANF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocations are per classroom (not per child)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a local match required?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes. Approximately 80% state, 20% local match depending on the Basic Education Program (BEP) formula</td>
<td>Yes. It is based on a composite index measure of local ability to pay.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding strategies (coordinating/braiding, pooling/blending, decategorization)</td>
<td>Coordinating/braiding, pooling/blending</td>
<td>Coordinating/braiding</td>
<td>Coordinating/braiding</td>
<td>Coordinating/braiding, pooling/blending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability and reporting systems</td>
<td>Online documentation of funding sources</td>
<td>TDOE requires quarterly financial reports</td>
<td>No information available</td>
<td>Online documentation of funding sources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Participant Eligibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment and eligibility requirements</th>
<th>Kentucky</th>
<th>Tennessee</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>West Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrollment and eligibility requirements</strong></td>
<td>State law governs enrollment criteria: 4-year-olds whose family income does not exceed 150% of poverty level and 3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities; enrollment process carefully coordinated between LEA and Head Start</td>
<td>State law governs enrollment criteria: Priority given to at-risk 4-year-olds who live in LEA</td>
<td>State law governs enrollment criteria: Serves at-risk 4-year-olds not served by Head Start and at-risk 5-year-olds not eligible to attend kindergarten</td>
<td>State law governs general enrollment criteria: 4-years-old by September 1st; Counties unable to provide universal enrollment determine additional criteria to prioritize enrollment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Dual-language learners (DLL) | LEAs may use funding to support DLL children as space is available | English language learners are eligible to enroll if space is available; TDOE provides services | No information available | DOE currently working with Title III on outreach to DLL families |

* “At-risk” is defined as “eligible for free or reduced priced lunch.”
† No definition was available for Virginia children who are “at-risk.”
| Children with disabilities | LEAs required to provide pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds with disabilities; Head Start or LEA provides interventions | Pre-K programs may include special-needs children; Pre-K funds slot; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds services | No information available | LEAs may include children with disabilities, with assistance from WVDE Office of Special Programs |

### Specific Program Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kentucky</th>
<th>Tennessee</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>West Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Teacher qualifications

**Kentucky:**
- Lead teachers hold interdisciplinary early childhood education certification or interim approval

**Tennessee:**
- Outlined by TN Teacher Frameworks for Evaluation;
- Early Childhood endorsement required

**Virginia:**
- Lead teachers hold VA BOE–approved licensure;
- Teachers in private settings meet child-care regulations or more stringent local requirement

**West Virginia:**
- Lead teachers hold WVDE licensure or full-time permit valid for 1 year

#### Instructional content

**Kentucky:**
- Determined by LEA

**Tennessee:**
- List of approved curricula issued by TDOE

**Virginia:**
- Programs select curricula which must be aligned with early learning standards

**West Virginia:**
- List of approved curricula issued by WVDE

#### Early learning standards

**Kentucky:**
- KY Early Childhood Standards

**Tennessee:**
- TN Early Learning Developmental Standards

**Virginia:**
- VA Foundation Blocks for Early Learning

**West Virginia:**
- WV Early Learning Standards Framework

#### Requirements for space and facilities

**Kentucky:**
- Established in regulation and facilities management guidelines

**Tennessee:**
- Outlined by TDOE guidelines that are parallel to DHS child-care rules and LEA Pre-K Advisory Council guidance

**Virginia:**
- Information not available

**West Virginia:**
- WVDE–established core set of common health and safety standards
| Days and hours of operation                                                                 | Minimum of 2.5 hours, 4–5 days a week (5th day may be for services outside the classroom); LEAs and Head Start coordinate program delivery to provide full-day schedule | 5.5 hours per day, 5 days per week minimum; school year is 180 days | Minimum of 3 hours per day for half-day, or 5.5 hours per day for full day, for 180 days per year | Minimum of 12 hours per week; 108 days per year (4-5 days per week) |
| Wrap-around services                                                                        | LEAs and Head Start can coordinate to provide wraparound care | Private providers help facilitate wraparound and extended-day services | Programs in pilot study extended program hours to offer wraparound services | Collaborating programs coordinate to provide wraparound care |
| Family involvement                                                                            | KDE outlines family involvement requirements | TDOE Office of Early Learning (OEL) outlines family engagement requirements | Localities must include family involvement in written pre-K program plan | WVDE outlines family involvement requirements |
Overview of the Structuring of Pre-Kindergarten Collaborations in the Four REL Appalachia States

Collaborations in early care and education at the state and local levels are becoming more common, and their scope is becoming increasingly complex. States foster collaboration to expand pre-K access to more children and also to improve the quality and breadth of services provided. Structuring of collaborations may specify how services will be expanded and how quality will be improved (Wat and Gayl 2009). For example, a collaboration could allow a publicly funded, half-day pre-K program to offer a longer day to accommodate working parents, provide more comprehensive services (e.g., health screenings or family involvement activities), or serve a more economically diverse group of children (Wat and Gayl 2009). A comprehensive descriptive profile of the nature and scope of pre-K collaborations in the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia may provide guidance to one another as well as for others looking to increase pre-K program capacity or improve the quality of services.

Specifically, we identify different aspects of collaboration and administrative structures developed in each state. First, we introduce terminology used to describe the collaborative structures. Next, we provide an overview of the structuring of oversight, selection, and monitoring of collaborations. We then discuss approaches used to coordinate funding. We then turn to how states structure decision-making and oversight for specific program features, such as curriculum and professional development (PD).

The Structuring of Collaboration: Fiscal and Administrative Aspects

Pre-K collaborations, like those operating in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia, are structured according to the resources available and the needs of the state. Our review of state policy documents revealed that the challenges associated with collaborations tend to fall into two main categories: fiscal and administrative.

Sandfort and Selden (2001) developed this terminology through their work on the I-PIECE (Investigating Partnerships in Early Childhood Education) study. They determined that collaborating early childhood programs were using what they call fiscal integration and administrative integration. Fiscal integration refers to the use of multiple funding streams received by the collaborating entities. Administrative integration describes when two or more entities enter into a formal partnership to deliver services collaboratively in a classroom and determine pre-K policy (as, for example, when a school district that operates a pre-K program partners with a child-care center to offer “wraparound” child care before and after the part-day preschool curriculum). Two particular administrative integration issues emerged as key in our review:

I-PIECE assessed local sites and examined collaborations between Head Start, preschool programs, and childcare providers receiving public subsidies. I-PIECE studied 20 early childcare collaborations --10 in New York and 10 in Virginia. For more information, see Selden, Sowa, and Sandfort (2006).
**Balance of Decision-Making:** whether collaboration involves joint oversight by two agencies, oversight by one agency with input of another, or oversight by one agency while adhering to the rules of another; and

**Locus of Decision-Making:** whether decisions are made at the state, district/county, or classroom level.

In the sections that follow, we identify multiple ways that programs are combining these three approaches to the balance and locus of decision-making for specific features of collaborations, such as setting standards for teacher collaborations, determining hours of operation and wraparound care, or providing technical assistance to districts.

Fiscal integration has more specific terminology, outlined by Flynn and Hayes (2003) to describe the mechanisms by which states fund pre-K collaborations: blending, braiding, and decategorization. These terms denote the ways in which classroom-, county-, or state-level entities combine funding from local, state, and federal sources to provide early education services for young children.

**Blending**, most often used at the state or county level, blends monies from multiple agencies or funding programs into one pool to support collaborations. Funds in the pool typically include state general funds and federal block-grant funds which are handed down to counties and communities as local “block grants.” Communities can then conduct needs assessments and use their discretion to determine how to allocate the funds.

**Braiding** involves separate funding streams which can be used in combination to support individual components of comprehensive service initiatives.

**Decategorization** is a state-level strategy that goes beyond blending and braiding by changing the regulations to remove restrictive eligibility requirements and allocation restrictions. Funds from more than one source may be “blended” into a single funding stream with fewer barriers to effective utilization.

We found that the REL Appalachia states use two of these types of funding integration: blending and braiding. Decategorization is a more complex coordination strategy, which may be why it is less commonly used.

**Overall Structures for Oversight, Selection, and Monitoring of Collaborations**

**Oversight of pre-K programs**

A starting point for understanding collaborations within states is a look at each state’s structure for oversight of their pre-K program. Pre-K was introduced into the four REL Appalachia states between 1990 and 2005 and is generally overseen by the Department of Education (DOE) in each state. In Kentucky and Tennessee, oversight responsibilities are held only by the DOE. In Virginia and West Virginia, however, oversight responsibilities are shared by multiple agencies. Virginia’s program is
overseen by the VDOE together with state child-care agencies, while in West Virginia, the WVDE shares oversight with both the state Board of Education (BOE) and Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR). Specifically, the BOE and DHHR share responsibility for granting approval to county school systems which then coordinate the collaborative pre-K classrooms. So while the general oversight of the four states’ pre-K programs is nested in the DOEs, other agencies can also be involved in overall regulation and guidance as well as that specific to collaborations; this concept of agency coordination is evident in several aspects of the pre-K collaboration discussions that follow.

Oversight of pre-K collaborations

These states have somewhat different structures for executive-branch oversight of pre-K collaborations with Head Start or other child-care providers. Generally, joint oversight between different state agencies is evident, although roles vary depending on the processes involved; different agencies take the lead in specific areas. In Tennessee, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) exists within TDOE and works through Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to monitor collaborations. Similarly, the West Virginia DOE and DHHR have joint oversight in granting approval for county pre-kindergarten collaboration plans. In Kentucky, the state avoids supplanting federal Head Start funds or duplicating these services by requiring that Head Start capacity be fully utilized before enrolling children in pre-K. Once a LEA determines the need for pre-K seats beyond Head Start’s capacity, it may subcontract with other child-care providers, and KDE takes on oversight responsibility. For Virginia, very few collaborative relationships existed until 2007–08, when the state funded a pilot initiative explicitly to facilitate collaborations between pre-K, Head Start, and child-care providers. Details about current collaborations were not available.

Selection of collaborative partners

Formal structures governing the selection of eligible partners (Head Start or other child-care providers) to participate in collaborations are similar across the REL Appalachia states insofar as each LEA must submit some form of application to obtain state approval for proposed collaborative arrangements. While the specific review channels vary by state, in most cases a standing body has the authority to select partners. This standing body comprises representation from multiple agencies, though in differing forms. For example, in West Virginia, county plans are submitted to DHHR but are reviewed by a WVDE committee and Head Start; partner selection is influenced by the requirement that 50 percent of classrooms must be in a child-care or Head Start facility. In Tennessee, applications by local school boards must reflect the input of mandatory, established community pre-K Advisory Councils; the applications are submitted to TDOE for review and then the competitive grants are awarded to LEAs. Pre-kindergarten collaborations in Kentucky are selected in one of two ways: school districts and local Head Start programs deliver pre-K programming as outlined by their Local Agreement for Cooperation of Head Start Full Utilization, which is developed annually; or child-care agencies and programs contract through the Kentucky DOE to provide pre-kindergarten. Specifically, the KDE approves the applications for child-care subcontracts and endorses the local agreements, but the local agreements are actually completed by the school district and the Head Start grantees. In Virginia, the state BOE has sole discretion for partner selection.

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Ongoing oversight and monitoring of collaborations

For ongoing oversight and monitoring of collaborations, the states' structures vary depending on the specific aspect or stage of program implementation. While state-level entities generally oversee application and selection processes, the tendency is for both state and local entities to monitor the service delivery. In Kentucky, the KDE Commissioner determines an LEA's compliance with the Head Start utilization agreement, but the LEA monitors services provided by the school and child-care subcontracts. Similarly, in West Virginia, state guidance comes from the WVDE and secretary of DHHR, but county school districts oversee classrooms in their county and then report to the state. West Virginia has found confirming the compliance of child-care collaborations with proper pre-K policies is more challenging than with Head Start collaborations, so more monitoring and accountability are needed for child-care collaborations. When a collaboration contract is signed, a plan for ongoing monitoring of the collaboration must be provided to the pre-K county coordinators. In Tennessee, monitoring occurs primarily at the state level, and TDOE must parallel DHS health and safety standards. The TDOE's Office of School-Based Support Services sends evaluators to visit pre-K sites and validate the classrooms; TDOE then issues validated programs a Certificate of Approval, which is similar to a DHS license.

Classroom observation

The REL Appalachia states vary about requiring observational measures as a prerequisite of collaboration, for self-study, or for monitoring. In Virginia, an observational measure is a prerequisite for participating programs. In other states, observational measures are used to support ongoing improvement and linked to plans for collaborations. West Virginia requires annual observations using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, Revised edition (ECERS-R) to evaluate the program's success in meeting the children's needs. The results are submitted to WVDE and areas needing improvement are addressed in the following year's collaboration plan. In Kentucky, each collaborating program conducts a Quality Self Study, and KDE is currently piloting the addition of the ECERS-R to their tools for oversight. In Tennessee, during Year 1 a collaborating program conducts a self-assessment using Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO) tool or ECERS-R. During Year 2, the Plan of Action from the Year 1 assessment guides programming, and a state consultant is available to support the program's effort to meet the identified goals. ELLCO and ECERS-R are common assessment tools for pre-K classrooms, but Tennessee expressed interest in finding another instrument that might be more appropriate in an educational setting; they want to look beyond overall quality of the program to the quality of the teacher, the teacher-student interactions, and the teaching that occurs.

Technical assistance

All four REL Appalachia states are using existing technical assistance (TA) infrastructures, but the particular network and funding sources vary. Tennessee has several channels of TA support, including the Tennessee Child Care Providers Training network (TN-CCPT), located in and operated out of the state Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) offices. This network provides training for child-care workers on how to use the early learning standards; school system staff can also attend. The Kentucky DOE is split into five regions, each with a Regional Training Center (RTC) devoted to pre-K; three state-level consultants support the five RTCs. Similarly, the West Virginia Regional Education Services Agencies (RESAs) offer TA to the regional audience while the West Virginia Pre-K Steering Team
provides TA to collaborating programs at the local level. In Virginia, the HHS child-care administration provides TA to programs and localities.

**Staff supervision**

Little information was available regarding staff supervision. Tennessee reported that trained TDOE personnel near the local or classroom level, such as principals or consultants, evaluate staff using the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation. In Kentucky, programs are supervised at the district level by the preschool coordinator. Documentation from the other states did not provide information about supervision of staff.

**Reporting requirements**

Collaborating programs in the four states report annually to state-level agencies. One emerging state strategy is to require detailed online reporting that includes the components for different reports. In Kentucky, programs enter their data on the state’s online data system, called “Infinite Campus,” and the KDE Office of School Readiness pulls down the data to generate various reports.

**Summary of the structures for oversight, selection, and monitoring**

The balance and locus for decision-making vary not only between states, but also within states. In the four REL Appalachia states, the structures for the broad oversight, selection, and monitoring exhibit the three major approaches for the balance of decision-making between multiple agencies: fully joint decision-making, one agency accepting input from another but still having authority, or one agency honoring the requirements of another but retaining authority. Joint decision-making is manifest in Tennessee where TDOE and DHS work in partnership to oversee pre-K collaborations. One agency having authority but working with the input of another is exemplified in West Virginia, where WVDE reviews county plans for collaboration but DHHR approves the plans. One agency having authority but respecting the guidelines of another is demonstrated in Kentucky, where the local school districts work in partnership with Head Start programs to serve eligible four-year-olds.

The states’ structures also vary in the locus of decision-making (state, community, or classroom) for different processes. For example, state-level decision-making occurs in Virginia, where BOE has sole discretion over selecting collaborative partners. In Kentucky, on the other hand, LEA and classroom-level decision-making are embodied in Kentucky’s *Local Agreement for Cooperation of Head Start Full Utilization*, as LEAs determine the need for pre-K seats in addition to those provided by Head Start.

**Structures for Collaborating on Funding**

A major incentive to fostering collaborations is the challenge of finding adequate, reliable, and sustainable state funding for pre-K (Holcomb 2006). States are examining their available resources and making efforts to align, coordinate, and integrate discrete, categorical funding streams.
Funding sources

One way states fund their programs is to require a local match to the state funds provided. Requirements for local matching funds vary among the four REL Appalachia states. Kentucky and West Virginia do not require local matches, but Virginia and Tennessee do. Tennessee calculates the amount with an education program formula, while Virginia bases the local match amount on a composite index measure of local ability to pay. All four states reported using multiple financial inputs for pre-K other than state funds, but the sources vary somewhat, as illustrated in table 1.

Table 1. Pre-K Funding Sources in Addition to State Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Kentucky</th>
<th>Tennessee</th>
<th>Virginia</th>
<th>West Virginia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head Start</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title I</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Special Ed/IDEA*</td>
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<td>TANF*</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCDF*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Reading First</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Tuition</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Way</td>
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<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Private Funds</td>
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<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* IDEA is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; TANF is Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; CCDF is Child Care Development Fund.

Funding Strategies

Our review of pre-kindergarten collaboration policies in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia shows that all four states use two of the funding strategies discussed previously — blending or braiding — and use them at the classroom, district, or state level. In general, all four states reported using braiding, whereby multiple sources of funding — each of which is restricted to specific purposes — are used in a single program to provide children with a full spectrum of services. The Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), for example, uses braiding: VPI and Head Start funds may be used to cover instructional expenses, while federal early-childhood special-education funds cover IEP services, and federal child-care subsidy funds cover wraparound services. Similarly, in Tennessee, pre-K general fund money pays for the 5.5-hour mandatory instructional day and a collaborating Head Start program will fund additional services. If special education students are in the class, pre-K pays for the 5.5 hours, and the special education program pays for additional services or an additional staff member, if needed. Kentucky reported the use of blending strategies through the transferability of their Flexible Focus Funds. West Virginia also reported the use of blending: its pre-K classrooms are often supported by blending state funding with funding from Head Start, TANF, or Title I.

* Of note, Tennessee initially funded its pre-K using a portion of lottery funds but recently committed to a general-fund-only state portion.
**Funding Documentation and Tracking**

Three states use electronic data systems for detailed documentation of funding utilization and allocation. Tennessee uses an electronic system that allows self-reporting at the local level and requires either monthly or, at minimum, quarterly financial reports. West Virginia and Kentucky also use self-reporting online documentation systems. Self-reporting, however, can result in extraneous data. West Virginia addresses this issue by training both county finance officers and pre-K coordinators on what information is desired in these reports.

**Structures for Collaboration on Participant Eligibility**

**Enrollment and eligibility requirements**

We identified two basic approaches to eligibility requirements for pre-K participants. In the first, state legislation or regulation establishes eligibility according to income and this criterion applies across the state. For example, Tennessee enrolls children who are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL), and Kentucky enrolls children whose family income is at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. Eligibility criteria also accommodate special cases, such as in Kentucky, where children with special needs qualify regardless of income status, a policy similar to Head Start enrollment practices. The second basic approach is to leave decisions about eligibility to the local level. In West Virginia, counties unable to provide universal enrollment determine additional criteria to prioritize enrollment. In addition to income level, another common criterion for eligibility is age: all four states generally focus on serving four-year-olds.

**Dual-language learners**

Policies that address serving this special population might differ among the collaborating programs, but the issue of dual-language learners is still handled in the same manner at the state level. Most states refer to their DOE English Language Learning (ELL) specialist as a primary resource for supporting ELL needs, when funding is available to provide additional assistance to these children. In Tennessee, where dual-language learners are qualified to enroll as an eligible “at-risk” population (following in priority those enrolled based on income eligibility), an ELL specialist is available through the schools, but services are not required to be provided in the collaborative classrooms. Kentucky allows use of its Flexible Focus Funds, or tuition income, to support dual-language learners. A concern among states is that ELL families are not aware of the state pre-K programs. The KDE and WVDE are working with Title III on this issue, by developing a handbook or building awareness of the pre-K services available to all families.

**Children with disabilities**

Requirements addressing the needs of children with disabilities in collaborative programs vary among the states, but only information about state-level policies and practices was available. West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee all support incorporating children with disabilities into their pre-K programs. In accordance with West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2525, the WVDE Office of School Readiness supports pre-K placement for all children, regardless of ability. In Kentucky, LEAs are required to provide preschool to all three- and four-year-olds with disabilities, and the Local Agreement for
Cooperation of Head Start Full Utilization provides intervention guidance. Tennessee children with disabilities are eligible to be served as "educationally at risk," and IDEA funding supports their enrollment.

Structures for Collaboration on Specific Program Features

States promote local collaborations with Head Start and other child-care providers to expand pre-K access to more children and also to improve the quality and breadth of services provided. Entities engaged in collaboration often have differing requirements for specific program features and generally must adhere to the strictest requirements.

Qualifications and salaries for teachers and assistant teachers

In each of the four REL Appalachia states, the state Departments of Education enumerate the credentialing requirements for pre-K teachers as well as assistant teachers. These requirements are generally more stringent than those set by Head Start and other child-care providers, leading some difficulties when establishing collaborative arrangements. Lead teachers must be state-certified, a criterion quite consistent across the states, but requirements for assistant teachers vary. In Kentucky assistant teachers must be qualified as "instructional aides." In Tennessee, it is preferred that assistant teachers hold a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, though all pre-K teachers employed by the school system are held to the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation, which is used with all K–12 teachers. In Kentucky and West Virginia reported a contingency plan for making exceptions or allowing temporary permits for staff who are in the process of fulfilling required qualifications. In Kentucky, the pre-K teacher-qualification requirements can be challenging with Head Start collaborations, so the contingency for exceptions allows qualified—or soon-to-be qualified—teachers to be present in all pre-K classrooms. Additionally, with the significant role that Head Start collaborations play in West Virginia, changes to federal authorizations or teacher-qualification requirements have a substantial impact on the state pre-K program.

The pay rates for teachers can vary widely between school district and collaborating partner staffs. In all four states, the entity that employs the staff determines pay rates. While many teachers are employed by the district, in cases where the teacher is employed by the collaborating partner, there is potential for pay disparity. For instance, in Tennessee, similarly qualified teachers may be paid different salaries depending on whether they are hired by the school or by the collaborating partner. Tennessee reports that this can sometimes lead to higher turnover among teachers employed by the partner.

Instructional content

The states use two different approaches to coordinating curricula. The first requires collaborating programs to use curricula approved by the DOE. The second allows collaborating programs to use curricula that are approved locally. In either scenario, the curricula may have to be aligned with standards. For example, Virginia and Kentucky allow local school districts to review and approve curricula selected by collaborating pre-K programs, while Tennessee and West Virginia both have a list of approved curricula that are aligned with each state's early learning standards. Virginia also requires the locally-selected curricula to be aligned with their state's early learning standards.
Early learning standards

All four states have established early learning standards that apply to all pre-K programs, including collaborations. However, the states differ in the extent to which their early learning standards are aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework or with the state standards for K–12 education. Kentucky Early Childhood Standards are aligned with the standards and guidance for K–12 education (Kentucky Program of Studies and Core Content for Assessment). The Virginia Foundation Blocks for Early Learning cover all developmental areas, must be linked to selected curricula, and are also linked to kindergarten standards. The West Virginia Early Learning Standards Framework is aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework as well as state kindergarten standards and objectives. The Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards includes a crosswalk to kindergarten standards. One challenge associated with early learning standards for pre-K, as experienced in Tennessee, is that child-care workers and classroom teachers exhibit differing aptitudes for implementing the standards; thus, the state now offers more professional development options in this area to all pre-K staff. Tennessee provides educational consultants who offer professional development on the use of the standards as well as online training tools that support teachers in their understanding and use of the standards and help them embed their content in the lesson plans.

Requirements for space and facilities

We identified several approaches to addressing differences in collaborating program requirements regarding facilities. In Tennessee, TDOE has established rules that are parallel to the Tennessee Department of Human Services’ child-care program licensing standards, while West Virginia has established a set of common health and safety standards that collaborating programs must adhere to in addition to any applicable individual program regulations. In Kentucky, standards are established in regulation and facilities management guidelines; if there is a discrepancy between the standards of collaborating programs, the higher standard must be followed.

Hours of operation

All four states set service minimums for collaborating programs, but localities determine whether and how to extend a program beyond that. For example, Tennessee requires 5.5 program hours per day but leaves it to collaborations to address wraparound care. Virginia requires 3 hours per day for half-day programs and 5.5 hours for full-day programs, with wraparound services coordinated as needed by local programs. In Kentucky, the Local Head Start Utilization Cooperation Agreement outlines the requirements, with the options including 5 days per week with 2.5 hours per day; 4 days per week with 2.5 hours per day and the fifth day for other services/home visits; or other options designed locally. Kentucky reported that Head Start’s regional and national offices are encouraging programs to expand the length of their care day. However, an expanded day undermines Head Start’s previous practice of optimizing expenditures by operating 2 half-day sessions, thus creating some tension to be dealt with. West Virginia, as of 2008, revised its funding approach to provide incentives to operate full-day programs. Prior to this funding change, West Virginia required 12 hours of programming per week, and had programs operating approximately 3 days per week with 4 hour days. Its current funding is based on the number of instructional hours provided; programs are shifting toward full-day service, with most now operating 4 days per week and the rest operating 5 days per week.
Family involvement

All four REL Appalachia states have state-level policies explicitly focused on parent/family involvement that apply to all pre-K programs, including collaborations. Specifics vary, however. Kentucky requires two home visits per year, opportunities for parent volunteering and other participation, parent/family education activities, two-way communication systems between programs and families, and parent participation in program evaluation. Tennessee requires pre-K programs to provide a family-engagement component that includes, but is not limited to, family consultation, parenting-skills training, home visits, and opportunities for parents/family members to volunteer in the program. In Virginia, written local plans must include family involvement. West Virginia requires two conferences per year, communication, transition supports, support for families speaking English as a second language, IEP supports, opportunities to participate in decision-making, and maintenance of an open-door policy.

Capacity Issues and Influence of Pre-Kindergarten Collaborations

Features intended to increase pre-K capacity

All four states clearly intend collaborations to reach children not served by other early childhood programs. We examined whether any elements of collaboration were specifically designed to increase a state’s pre-kindergarten capacity. In Kentucky, the purpose of the state pre-K program is to serve children not served by Head Start. Collaboration helps to ensure that Head Start and existing pre-K programs are not duplicating services and to maximize the use of Head Start funds to serve as many four-year-olds as possible. Tennessee pre-K started as a pilot, which resulted in the 2005 Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) legislation. The program was intended to expand the number of children served and used collaborations as a vehicle to accomplish this goal. In addition, Tennessee recognized that many LEAs had insufficient space to serve all children in their districts and that collaborations with existing child-care programs could fill that gap. The goal of the Virginia Preschool Initiative is to serve 60 percent of unserved four-year-olds. Its 2007–08 pilot programs used collaborations to expand pre-K services into community-based programs and create mixed classrooms, rather than the income-eligible-only classrooms that previously constituted the state program. West Virginia is using collaborations to meet its goal of achieving universal pre-kindergarten by 2012–13. In an effort to achieve this and to maximize resources, collaborations are required by WVDE: at least 50 percent of programs must be in non-school settings.

Results of forming collaborations

Specific elements of collaborations were identified by the states as resulting from the process of forming collaborations, or were designed to sustain collaborations. Tennessee reported that collaborations motivated TDOE to institute pre-K program licensure requirements and a commitment to high quality standards. A specific type of collaboration, namely those partnering with Head Start, had a notable influence in two states. West Virginia cited Head Start’s health and immunization requirements and increased attention to family involvement as models used to shape state policy. In addition, Tennessee reported that Head Start standards served as the basis for its pre-K program standards.
Other Lessons

During discussions of collaboration, the state DOE representatives noted some useful lessons learned through collaboration experiences thus far:

Territoriality: Issues of territory may arise among collaborating entities, until school and community providers recognize that no single program can serve all children. States have found that after working through these issues, a collaborative state program is much stronger than the entities were separately. Together the collaborating entities have their resources and efforts aligned to provide high quality care to more children and have eliminated duplication of services.

Identifying federal requirements: Identifying the sources of requirements is very important in order to maximize the use of resources. States have reported that a policy is sometimes assumed to be federal (and viewed as more difficult to change), when it was actually a local decision that may be easily altered to accommodate the evolving pre-K structures. As state pre-K programs expand to include more children and more collaborative partners, state policies may be flexible to adapt to the changes.

Benefits of open communication: The structures of collaboration can facilitate open conversations with all parties, and can also greatly reduce duplication of efforts and wasted funding. For example, when a public school is offering early childhood professional development, the school can invite Head Start or child-care staff to participate. This avoids the need for additional resources to be expended by the Head Start or child-care on offering separate professional development programs.

Conclusion

The review of structures for specific program features of pre-K collaborations shows that the REL Appalachia states employ all three approaches for balancing authority between multiple agencies and that decision-making occurs at multiple levels for different elements. Structuring collaborations entails attention to two particular issues: the balance and locus of decision-making between collaborating agencies, and how these translate into fiscal and administrative collaboration practices. These issues apply to multiple, specific program aspects, so that we find not one structure but a composite of structures within each of the four REL Appalachia states.
Attachment C

State Profiles

This attachment presents document reviews that provide more detail on the pre-K programs of the four REL Appalachia states (Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia). For each state profile, we list the documents reviewed and the specific questions addressed, as well as provide information obtained, with source citations.

Kentucky State Document Review

PART 1: Document Review Information

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**Document Titles:**


- **State of Kentucky Administrative Regulation 704 KAR 3:410. Preschool education program for four (4) year old children.** [http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/kar/704/003/410.htm](http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/kar/704/003/410.htm) — 4


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Not verified as meeting IES standards; not for distribution
PART 2: Information Obtained from Document Review

Sources are cited in boldface, in parentheses, with the following information: document number from the above key, page number, or section of legislative code. For example: (2, pp.10–11) or (1, 49-6-106).

2A. Issues of interest regarding the overall structuring of collaborations in each state

1. Executive or legislative branch oversight of pre-kindergarten programs

The 1990 Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) passed by the Kentucky General Assembly included provisions for preschool. This public program, with voluntary participation, is available in every county and is open to all four-year-old children whose family incomes do not exceed 150 percent of the federal poverty level as well as three- and four-year-old children who have a disability. The Kentucky Department of Education was authorized to oversee the administrative regulations necessary to establish program guidelines, standards for personnel, and eligibility criteria for the state’s public preschools. (5, p. 8; KRS 157.3175, as cited in 4, Section 1)

2. Executive or legislative branch oversight of pre-kindergarten collaborations

Kentucky Regulatory Statute (KRS) 157.3175, passed in 1996, requires local school districts to collaborate with Head Start “to avoid duplication of services and supplanting of federal funds to maximize...”
the use of Head Start funds to serve as many 4-year-old children as possible.” The statute also requires school districts to obtain certification from the local Head Start director that the Head Start program is fully utilized. (7, p. 1)

When school districts need additional capacity to provide pre-K services to eligible children, they may subcontract with child-care providers. To do this, the district submits an annual application to the Kentucky Department of Education. A school district may not disburse funds for a contract until the child-care agency or program has received approval through the Department of Education. (10, p. 5)

3. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation for selecting collaborative partners

Pre-kindergarten collaborations in Kentucky occur either through Head Start or through child-care:

a) Every year local school districts and Head Start programs complete a Local Agreement for Cooperation of Head Start Full Utilization, generally based on the planned-growth criteria set by the Kentucky Board of Education in conjunction with Head Start in January 1994 regarding local school district requirements for full utilization of Head Start in Kentucky. (8) The Local Agreement specifies the ways that Head Start and the local school district may “blend” to ensure that Head Start and other existing preschool programs are not duplicating services, and to maximize the use of Head Start funds to serve as many four-year-olds as possible. (8)

b) Child-care agencies or programs are authorized to contract through the Kentucky Department of Education to provide pre-kindergarten. These programs must follow the requirements for preschool education services found in Kentucky administrative regulations of the Kentucky Board of Education. These requirements include:

- Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) (birth to primary) certification or exemption for teachers.
- Appropriate adult:child ratios and professional development.
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum, activities, and materials.
- Adherence to program requirements for children with disabilities.
- Participation in the STARS for KIDS NOW quality rating system with at least three (3) stars.
- Parent outreach.
- Coordination of health and social services.
- Adherence to regulations regarding facilities, transportation, and food services.

In the proposed contract between the child-care agency/program and the school district, the district must ensure that the contracted services meet the preschool education standards; the contents of each contract will vary depending on the services contracted. (10, pp. 5-6)

4. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation to provide ongoing oversight and monitoring

Kentucky House Bill (HB) 1 stipulates that the Commissioner of the Department of Education determines the local school district’s compliance with the full utilization of Head Start requirement and has the authority to withhold funds. HB 1 requires that a local school district failing to comply with the full utilization requirements will have funds withheld “equal to the number of Head Start eligible children
served in the district who would have been eligible to be served by Head Start under the required full utilization certification." (9)

In the case of subcontracts between local school districts and child-care agencies or programs, the school district is responsible for monitoring the services provided by the contracted program to assure that regulations are met and that services are provided in accordance with the contract. (10, p. 5) At this time no formal structure monitors these partnerships at the state level. (13)

2B. Issues of interest regarding more specific elements of collaboration

1. Funding
   a. Local match requirements

Local matches are not required.

   b. Funding sources (besides state funds)

Other funding sources include Head Start, Title I, IDEA-B, IDEA-B 619, and parent tuition. (1, p. 5; 13) At this time the state does not track additional sources of funding. (13)

   c. Funding strategies used at the state, district, or program levels (e.g., coordinating/braiding, pooling/blending, decategorization)

Pre-K in Kentucky is funded by a combination of blending and braiding. Flexible Focus Funds allow Kentucky school districts to move funds from one of four other programs (Professional Development, Extended School Services, Textbooks, and Safe Schools) to supplement the pre-K program. (9)

Blended Head Start programs use either cost-sharing (i.e., Head Start covers all costs for one staff person while the school district covers all costs for another staff person), or cost-allocation (i.e., Head Start funds are allocated into appropriate parts of the budget). (13)

   d. Funding documentation requirements (e.g., delineating budgets and audit trails)

In classrooms where children are financially supported through several funding sources and agencies (state, Head Start, Title I, tuition, other), separate audit trails must be maintained for each funding source. (1, p. 5)

Documentation of funding for programs engaged in collaborations is done online; programs receive reimbursement through the MUNIS system, a financial software package used in all Kentucky school districts. (13)

2. Qualifications for teachers and assistant teachers

Kentucky’s guidelines for pre-K programs regarding teacher qualifications indicate that pre-kindergarten programs must include the following types of personnel:
A lead teacher who meets the following qualifications:

Beginning with the 2002/03 school year, a person who holds a certificate in interdisciplinary early childhood education, or has been exempted by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board from additional certification in order to continue teaching in an early childhood position.

If a person meeting the qualifications outlined above is not available, interim approval can be issued for personnel with:

- A bachelor's degree or higher in child development, early childhood education, or early childhood special education.
- Kindergarten certification.
- Special education certification valid for primary grades.
- A master's degree, bachelor's degree, or licensure in communication disorders, speech and language, or speech pathology.

If a person who meets the qualifications outlined above is not available, a local school board may develop a training plan in early childhood education and request approval for an individual with a minimum of one year of early childhood training or experience and a degree in family studies, social work, psychology, nursing, or other related area.

A teaching assistant who is an instructional aide. (4, Section 7)

In a blended Head Start/pre-K program, the more stringent requirement prevails. For example, the state requires a certified lead teacher in a pre-K classroom. In a blended Head Start/pre-K classroom, with both Head Start and state-funded children in the classroom, a certified lead teacher would be required. (13)

3. Instructional content

While the state does not prescribe any given curriculum, all Kentucky pre-K programs are required to use curricula that include developmentally appropriate experiences in cognition, communication, social, physical, and emotional development as well as creative expression. According to Kentucky preschool regulations, the process of determining a local preschool curriculum should include not only consideration of the domains listed above but also an understanding of social and cultural values and parental input. The curriculum is then approved, in most cases, by the school council and district administration in coordination with the preschool coordinator for the local school district, teachers, and other early childhood professionals. (1, p. 2-3)

Blended Head Start/pre-K programs determine what curriculum to use through the process of completing the Local Agreement for Cooperation of Head Start Full Utilization form. (13)

4. Early learning standards
Kentucky Early Childhood Standards are aligned to the Kentucky Program of Studies and Core Content for Assessment. These standards outline critical knowledge and skills for children from birth to five. The state does not require use of a specific curriculum, but suggests that LEAs consider using multiple sources, including the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards, in the development of the local preschool curriculum. (1, p. 3) The KDE makes training and professional development available to help programs align their classroom practice with the Early Childhood Standards. (13) The GPS to a Child’s Success: Field Guide to the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards is designed as a daily implementation aid to assist parents, early care, intervention and education professionals, administrators, and others in incorporating the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards across various settings. These guides are designed to accompany Kentucky’s Early Childhood Standards for both the birth-to-three and three- and-four-year-old age groups and provide a variety of resource information.

5. Enrollment and eligibility requirements

To be eligible for enrollment in the Kentucky preschool program, a child must be:

- A resident of the district;
- Four years old by October 1 of the school year; and
- Approved for free lunch based on federal free-lunch criteria in effect as of the child’s initial day of attendance in preschool.

Preschool eligibility may be determined up to four months prior to the start of school. Once free-lunch eligibility has been approved, the child will remain eligible for enrollment for the remainder of the school year.

Prior to attendance, each child must have a copy of a legal birth certificate, a Kentucky Certificate of Immunization, and documentation of a medical examination. (4, Section 2; 4, Section 5)

As part of the Local Agreement for Cooperation of Head Start Full Utilization, the local school district and Head Start program set a mutually agreed-upon target number of four-year-olds to enroll. After the school year starts (around September 1st), the school systems certify whether they have reached the target number, at which point the school district is free to enroll any four-year-old. Some districts fill up the Head Start program first, and then enroll four-year-olds in pre-K, but enrollment can be done simultaneously as long as the target number is met. (13)

6. Requirements for space and facilities

Requirements are established in regulation and facilities management guidelines. Discrepancies between requirements for collaborative program facilities are resolved at the local level. The guidance the state gives to communities is to adhere to the higher of the two standards when there is a definable difference. (13)

7. Hours of operation

The LEA can select one of the following program scheduling options:
- Standard half-day, five-day–a-week program (single session).
- Half-day, four-day–a-week program in single or double session (i.e., a program that operates with a teacher who works with one group of children in the morning session and a different group of children in the afternoon session), with the fifth day reserved for services to children and families outside the classroom setting such as home visits, parent involvement activities, and coordination of services to families.
- A locally designed program approved by the chief state school officer.

The hours of operation of the half-day program may vary but a minimum of two and one-half hours of classroom time per day is required. *(4, Section 6)*

Guidelines state that the school district will work with Head Start to provide additional services to meet the needs of working parents. For example, LEAs can work with Head Start to coordinate program delivery in order to provide a full-day schedule, rather than double sessions, to allow wraparound child-care. *(8, p. 8)*

Agreements between the local school district and Head Start regarding hours of operation are outlined in the *Local Agreement for Cooperation of Head Start Full Utilization*. *(13)*

8. Classroom observations

Each Kentucky preschool program is required to involve parents, staff, and other professionals in an annual evaluation of the program’s effectiveness. Together, they review the rate of participation of children, parental satisfaction, successes of children as they progress through the program, and adherence to program requirements. The *Kentucky Quality Early Childhood Self Study* is available to help programs set local goals toward providing the highest-quality programs by identifying areas for improvement in adult behaviors, environment characteristics, program structural features, and personnel considerations. *Kentucky’s Early Childhood Continuous Assessment Guide* provides recommended guidelines and practices in all areas of assessment: screening, diagnostic, classroom/instructional, program evaluation, and professional development. Results of the program evaluation and outcomes for children are part of the needs assessment for the Comprehensive Improvement Plan* at the school and district level. *(1, p. 5)*

In addition, Kentucky has recently developed a more formal pre-K monitoring program that is being piloted in seven districts. The state has been divided into five cohorts, so that when monitoring is fully launched, every district will be visited once every five years. During their cohort year, all cohort classrooms will receive an Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) review. In addition, the Regional Training Centers (RTCs) will visit 30 percent of the cohort’s classrooms, randomly selected, as validation. The state will review all the ECERS data to determine which districts within the cohort will

* Comprehensive Improvement Planning in Kentucky is used to determine how schools and districts will plan to ensure that students reach proficiency and beyond by 2014. The process focuses district improvement efforts on student needs by bringing together all stakeholders to plan for improvement, focusing planning efforts on priority needs, building on school and district capacity for high-quality planning, and by making connections between how the funds that flow into the district address priority needs in schools. Retrieved March 30, 2010, from http://www.jefferson.k12.ky.us/departments/Planning/DistrictPlanningSite/DistrictPlanning.htm

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receive site visits. The overall goal is for all classrooms to receive a 5.0 on the ECERS. Information about how ECERS evaluations will affect participation in the pre-kindergarten program is not yet available.

9. Technical assistance and supervision

Kentucky is divided into five regions, each with a Regional Training Center (RTC) devoted to pre-K programs. Each RTC has a director and a consultant and provides guidance and technical assistance to all districts in their region. If an issue needs to be addressed they may schedule a visit to observe and provide more in-depth guidance. There are three state-level consultants who provide state-level support to one or more regions on issues identified by the RTCs or the school districts themselves.

10. Reporting requirements

Local school districts enter student-level data into the state data system called Infinite Campus. The Kentucky Department of Education Division of Early Childhood Development is currently working on pulling the necessary reports from the Infinite Campus system.

Head Start programs submit both a Program Information Report (PIR) and individual reports that are required by their regional office. Some items included in the state pre-K data are similar to Head Start’s, but there is currently no agreement with the regional office to streamline the major reporting systems.

11. Dual-language learners

The Kentucky Department of Education Division of Early Childhood Development and Title III program staff have developed an ELL handbook for pre-K and kindergarten that identifies best practices, policies, and legislation that address the needs of English Language Learners (ELL). The handbook also includes guidance for Head Start and other early education programs. Currently, no state funding is available for English Language Learners (ELL); however, districts may use general funds, Flexible Focus Funds, or tuition to support ELL children as space is available.

12. Children with disabilities

Kentucky statute requires Local Education Agencies to provide a free, appropriate preschool education and related services to all three- and four-year-olds with disabilities. LEAs are responsible for a Child Find system that locates and identifies each child who may be in need of special education or related services. Through the Local Agreement for Cooperation of Full Utilization of Head Start, LEAs include Head Start in the local Child Find effort. If a Head Start child is referred to the district for special education eligibility determination, and the evaluation team determines there is a need for intervention, this instruction can be provided by either the Head Start or district staff.

Districts also explore the programming offered at child-care centers to ensure they meet the regulatory standards of Child Find. Here again, if a district determines that a child is in need of instruction/intervention, either the child-care staff or district staff implements the instruction/intervention (and the district provides the necessary training and support).
13. Family involvement

Kentucky preschool programs are required to allow for active parent/family involvement and to consider different types of family structure and needs. At minimum the following types of opportunities are to be made available to families (1, p. 4):

- Periodic home visits (minimum of two per child per year) by the child’s teacher
- Participation in all activities as observers or volunteers
- Parent/family education activities which the parent/families helped design or develop
- Two-way communication systems developed with parent/families
- Participation in the program evaluation

Kentucky has clarified its policy on how the Head Start local policy councils (the main avenues for family involvement) relate to the school and site-based councils that exist within the school systems and perform administrative duties such as hiring and firing. These relationships are often determined at the local level. For example, only the Head Start policy council can fire a Head Start employee. These decisions are usually handled at the building and personnel level. (13)

Additional inquiries

14. Specific elements of collaborations intended to increase state pre-kindergarten capacity

While Head Start funds serve as many four-year-olds as possible, the purpose of the Kentucky Preschool Program is to enroll additional children not served by Head Start. (7, p. 1)

15. Specific elements of collaborations: results of the process of forming collaborations or designed in an effort to sustain collaborations

Many elements of collaboration described above were designed to maximize resources and provide early childhood services for as many eligible four-year-olds as possible. They are in place as a result of collaborative agreements between local school districts and Head Start programs and are amended as needed in order to sustain these collaborations. The formation of Kentucky’s Early Childhood Advisory Council may result in more formal and productive collaborative relationships with Kentucky’s child-care community, but this remains to be seen.
# Tennessee State Document Review

## PART 1: Document Review Information

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<td>Early Childhood Education Policy for Local School Systems. Tennessee Board of Education. (Provided by Tennessee Department of Education Office of Early Learning representatives)</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summary of Child Care Approval Requirements (a summary of the State Board of Education School Administered Child Care Rules, Chapter 0520-12-1).</strong> Tennessee Department of Education. (Provided by Tennessee Department of Education Office of Early Learning representatives) Note: The unabridged School Administered Child Care Rules are available on the Tennessee Secretary of State website, <a href="http://www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/0520/0520-12/0520-12-01.pdf">www.state.tn.us/sos/rules/0520/0520-12/0520-12-01.pdf</a>.</td>
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PART 2: Information Obtained from Document Review

Sources are cited in boldface, in parentheses, with the following information: document number from the above key, page number, or section of legislative code. For example: (2, pp.10-11) or (1, 49-6-106).

2A. Issues of interest regarding the overall structuring of collaborations in each state

1. Executive branch oversight of pre-kindergarten programs

In 2005, Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen proposed legislation to expand the state’s existing pilot pre-kindergarten program. Known as the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005, the bill sought to make Voluntary Pre-K an option for at-risk four-year-olds across the state. (2, p. 1)

2. Executive or legislative branch oversight of pre-kindergarten collaborations

The Voluntary Pre-K program allows state-funded pre-K programs to be integrated into existing community child-care programs. The State Board of Education has adopted rules and standards governing the educationally approved pre-K program; the school approval process calls such programs Category VII programs. (12) Local public school systems and related community agencies are encouraged to develop interagency agreements at the local level which focus on the delivery of essential services to all children and families eligible for enrollment in the early childhood education and family involvement program. (9, p.3) Local school systems that are awarded pre-K funds by the Tennessee Department of Education may contract and enter into collaborative agreements for operation of these programs with non-school-system organizations in the geographical area served by the local school system. The Office of Early Learning, established within the Department of Education in 2005 to administer the pre-kindergarten program, monitors pre-K programs for accountability, oversees the application process, consults with local communities/school systems about new programs, works closely with child-care providers and Head Start programs, and serves as a clearinghouse of information about early education in Tennessee. The office works in close partnership with the Department of Human Services Child Care programs. (2, p. 3)

3. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation for selecting collaborative partners

A competitive grant process has been established to allocate funds to Local Education Agencies for pre-K classrooms. (2, p. 3) Legislative requirements for selection of programs include both the competitive
grant process overseen by the Office of Early Learning (1, 49-6-105) and the establishment of a community pre-K Advisory Council that must be permitted to provide input on applications made by local school boards (1, 49-6-106). Advisory Councils are required to include members from a broad spectrum of early childhood stakeholders, including potential collaboration partners. The process gives preference to applications that target establishing programs for at-risk children not served by an existing program. Documentation of local financial support is also considered as a factor in the application process. LEAs are encouraged to collaborate with non-school-system entities where such collaboration provides an efficient means for expansion of pre-kindergarten capacity.

4. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation to provide ongoing oversight and monitoring

The Office of Early Learning must provide an annual report to the governor and the general assembly on the status of pre-kindergarten programs, which shall include, at a minimum, the number, location, and types of providers of pre-kindergarten classrooms and the number of at-risk students served. (1, 49-6-108[6])

Tennessee DOE must parallel the Department of Human Services (DHS) for monitoring of health and safety. Tennessee has an Office of School-Based Support Services which employs child-care program evaluators who monitor pre-K in both non-public and public schools, for over 2,000 sites, using a parallel form to the one the DHS uses for child-care sites. Child-care centers are inspected by the Department of Education and must meet the requirements as defined by the rules in Chapter 0520-12-1 to receive a TDOE Certificate of Approval. (10, p.1) A minimum of two visits per site are made per year, plus a fire and health inspection.

Oversight and monitoring also occur indirectly through the requirement that community-based programs be rated at the highest level by the state quality-rating system. Three-star (on a scale of one to three) child-care providers are the only community-based providers eligible to participate in the state pre-K program. This ensures that high quality standards are maintained in every pre-K classroom in the state. (1, 49-6-101[f][3] and 2, pp. 10–11)

In addition, legislation mandates a study of the long- and short-term effectiveness of the programs on student achievement. (1, 49-6-109). While this evaluation is intended to focus on the effectiveness of the pre-K program overall, it can be anticipated that findings could provide results for collaborative programs and contrast these with pre-K programs that do not involve collaborations. A grant-funded, randomized control trial evaluation is currently under way.

2B. Issues of interest regarding more specific elements of collaboration

1. Funding

   a. Local match requirements

Tennessee’s pre-K model allocates a portion of the total classroom funding to each school system based on the Basic Education Program (BEP) formula. (2, p. 1) The BEP, Tennessee’s funding mechanism for
K–12 education, was crafted in response to a lawsuit by smaller school systems that began in 1988 and has just recently been resolved. Several court rulings established the principle that all students, regardless of their county of residence, have the right to substantially equal education opportunity. The court ruled that neither a limited local revenue base nor the unwillingness of local government officials to raise revenue could absolve the state of its constitutional responsibility to provide educational opportunity for all students.

The BEP provides a funding formula that generates the costs for the resources needed to run each school system (e.g., teacher salaries, textbook costs, materials and supplies, capital outlay costs, etc.) Once that cost is determined, the school system’s ability to raise revenue, its “fiscal capacity,” is applied to the formula. In essence, school systems with lower revenue capacity draw down more state dollars than richer school systems. All school districts must provide some local matching funds.

While pre-K funding is not technically part of the BEP, pre-K funding is similarly structured, with the hope that pre-K funding will become part of the BEP. (13) As a condition of receiving state funds, each local school system is accountable for providing a matching amount of funds for pre-K based on its BEP formula state/local match requirement. (2, p. 3) Counties with a higher accrual of business and property taxes are required to provide a greater “local” share. The average ratio of state funding to local funding for pre-K is 80 percent state to 20 percent local. (7, p. 2) Local school districts may use federal funds, private dollars, or in-kind resources as part of their local match. In-kind resources include contributions such as non-school-district-owned facilities, instructional materials, equipment and supplies, food and nutrition services, and transportation services. (2, p. 3)

b. Other funding sources (besides state funds)

While the pilot pre-K program was funded with $10 million in state revenue, the expanded program was initially funded by a combination of recurring state lottery funds and general funds totaling $80 million. Beginning in 2010–2011, pre-K will be entirely state funded at an estimated $86 million. (2, p. 3 and 13)

c. Funding strategies used at the state, district, or program levels (e.g., coordinating/braiding, pooling/blending, decategorization)

Generally, funds from different sources are braided. For example, pre-K general fund money pays for the 5.5 hours mandatory instructional day and a Head Start program would fund additional services. If special education students are in the class, pre-K pays for the 5.5 hours, and the special education program pays for additional services or additional staff if needed. General funds for pre-K classrooms are distributed to school systems through a competitive grant process and allocated on a “per classroom” basis. The cost to operate a classroom during the 2009/10 school year was $111,871. The BEP formula is applied for each school system, by county, which determines the state share and local match. Awards ranges from a low of $65,525 per classroom to a high of $105,000 per classroom. (13)

d. Funding documentation requirements (e.g., delineating budgets and audit trails)

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All funds flow directly to the LEA, which then subcontracts with other providers. As outlined in the pre-K program application, LEAs must submit monthly or, at minimum, quarterly financial reports. LEAs draw down money for salaries, etc., through an electronic system called “FACTS.” (13)

2. Qualifications for teachers and assistant teachers

Teachers and assistants all have the same credentialing and professional development requirements as K–12 teachers, and teachers hired by an LEA are paid on the same scale as K–12 teachers. In some collaborations, the partner hires the teacher, who must meet state credentialing requirements, but the pay scale is determined by the community partner. Two or three school systems allow the partner to help hire the teacher, but in general teachers are public school employees. The School Board of Education requires staff to go through the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation, and by doing that, staff will get credit for all years of service. Many school systems have found ways to overcome differences in educational requirements for staff in Head Start and pre-K classrooms. (2, p. 18) For example, one collaboration involves community-based programs (CBP) in the process of hiring teachers and assistants and the CBP are allowed to select their staff. (2, p.16-17) Another school system was able to slightly increase the amount of its grant and provide funds upfront to pay the salaries. (2, p.13) The Voluntary Pre-K Program law requires the pre-K class to be taught by a licensed teacher with an early childhood education endorsement and an assistant, preferably with a Child Development Associate credential. In many partnerships the school systems hire the licensed pre-K teacher for the partner agencies and provide the teacher evaluation, required of all licensed teachers. If the child-care center’s contract with the LEA states that the partner child-care center hires the licensed teacher, the child-care center must already have on staff or must hire a qualified professional who has successfully completed training in the Tennessee Teacher Frameworks for Evaluation.* (7)

3. Instructional content

Tennessee pre-K legislation requires 1) use of an educational, age-appropriate curriculum that is aligned with the state Department of Education–approved early learning standards and that includes, but is not limited to, literacy, writing, math and science skills; and 2) a developmental learning program that addresses the cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and communication areas of child development. (1, 49-6-104[b][5,6]) In one county, “all of the pre-K staff are trained on the same curriculum and assessments and are trained together as a group. There are no distinctions between programs; they are all treated equitably.” (2, p. 17) Tennessee’s Voluntary pre-K and Head Start programs choose a curriculum from a list of approved curricula that are research-based, reliable, age-appropriate, and aligned with the TN Early Learning Developmental Standards. The list of approved curricula for the TN Voluntary Pre-k can be found at http://www.tennessee.gov/education/Pre-k. (6, p. 4)

* In 1997 the State Board of Education approved a teacher evaluation process that became effective statewide in July 2000. In 2004, the original model was revised to improve both the rigor and structure of the model by substantially increasing its specificity and aligning it with the highly qualified provision of NCLB. The Framework for Evaluation and Professional Growth meets requirements for evaluation and encourages teachers to move beyond their current level of performance by focusing on student growth, self-reflection on areas for their own growth, and school improvement. For more information, see http://www.state.tn.us/education/frameval/
4. Early learning standards

Tennessee pre-K legislation requires the use of an educational, age-appropriate curriculum that is aligned with the state Department of Education–approved early learning standards and that includes, but is not limited to, literacy, writing, math and science skills. (1, 49-6-104[b][5]) The TDOE has created a crosswalk between the approved state early learning standards and the Tennessee Kindergarten Curriculum Standards and Head Start Performance Standards. (4, all sections) Note: The early learning standards are expected to be realigned in 2010–11 to match the revised Head Start performance standards, as well as to link to the Tennessee K–12 realignment process occurring right now.

In addition, to support consistent implementation of the standards, consultants are available to provide professional development to child-care workers and classroom teachers. For child care, the Tennessee Child Care Providers Training network (TN-CCPT) offers training for child-care workers on how to use the standards. There is also an online training tool (http://www.tnelds-training.com/tnelds-training/) which shows teachers how to teach to the standards and embed the content in lesson plans. DHS now requires three hours of training on the standards linked to their Star-Quality report cards, and teachers can meet this requirement through the website. Further, the Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) supports teachers and other child-care staff with funding for professional development as well as offering a 30-clock-hour orientation program required before receiving financial support (scholarships) for early childhood.

5. Enrollment and eligibility requirements

Enrollment in the Voluntary Pre-K program is based upon a child’s eligibility as identified in TCA 49-6-101-104. The pre-K state statute specifies that each LEA is authorized to and may enroll any at-risk child who is four years old by September 30 and resides in the geographic area served by the LEA in the following order of priority:

- Children who are eligible for the free/reduced lunch program.
- If space remains in a specific classroom the LEA may enroll children who meet the following criteria:
  - Students with disabilities, students identified as ELL, in state custody, or those identified as educationally at-risk for failure due to circumstances of abuse or neglect;
  - Students identified with other at-risk factors as determined by the local school board and the pre-K advisory council such as, but not limited to: children with a parent(s) in the military deployed to active duty, teen parents, or parents with limited education;
  - Students who meet no at-risk criteria but are considered unserved or underserved.

(1, 49-6-104[a] and 11).

In addition, some partnerships exist between pre-K and Title I. The Title I program enrolls children based on academic screening. For partnering programs, the child with the lowest screen score and who meets income eligibility is accepted into the program first.

6. Requirements for space and facilities
Child-care rules require a minimum of 30 square feet per child. (10, p. 3) Each community pre-K Advisory Council includes in its goals the development of a plan for accessing adequate facilities, staff, and equipment (including playgrounds). "Collaborative partnerships often result in facilities, resources, recruitment, funding, and community support for the pre-K program." (2, p. 14–15) "Community organizations and businesses that would like to be involved or make donations can contact either the Director of Schools or the Pre-K Coordinator of a school system to find out what the district's specific needs are." (2, p. 20)

7. Hours of operation

Tennessee pre-K legislation requires a daily minimum of five and one half (5.5) hours of quality instructional time. (1, 49-6-104[b][4]) Collaborative partnerships with private providers offer many advantages to working parents such as wraparound and extended services. (2, p. 10) Each community pre-K Advisory Council includes in its goals the development of a plan for the provision of wraparound and summer child-care services for children in need of full-day/full-year care. (2, p. 15) Programs are permitted to charge fees for care outside of the core instructional time. (1, 49-6-107[d]) Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K is not intended to serve as a drop-in program; enrolled children are expected to attend for the full duration of the instructional day. (6, p. 3) Additional details about handling hours of operation are not available in the documents we reviewed.

8. Classroom observations

During the first year of operation a TDOE pre-K classroom completes a self-assessment using the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO) and the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R), and then develops a plan of action for improvement. In the following year it works from the plan of action. Plans are shared with a state consultant who acts in a technical assistance/support role and works with the school system to help identify pathways to meeting the identified goals. (7) The assessments are a reporting and training requirement, used for ongoing improvement, but are not a prerequisite for participation. (7 and 13)

9. Technical assistance and supervision

Technical assistance: These requirements are in alignment in Tennessee, and strong relationships cultivated over time help promote a culture of collaboration among all stakeholders. TDOE has six educational consultants that are located in regional service centers across the state, providing ongoing training and assistance to the pre-K classrooms and partnerships in their respective regions. For child care, the Tennessee Child Care Providers Training network (TN-CCPT), located in and operated out of the CCR&R (Child Care Resource and Referral), conducts training for child-care workers on how to use the early learning standards; school system staff can also attend. Head Start also has its own technical assistance staff available as resources in collaborating programs. In addition, Tennessee (Team TN) is one of eight states that was awarded a grant with the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL), a national resource center funded by the Office Head Start and Child Care Bureau. The grant was used to develop training on social-emotional development for early childhood programs. Tennessee now offers professional development across different domains, and the state is offering training in different modules to all early childhood programs (Head Start, pre-K, child-care, etc.) located and operated by a variety of organizations. There are seven demonstration sites representing

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Head Start, community child-care, VPK, and a combination of these programs, which are fully implementing the CSEFEL practices. The Division of Special Education has contracted with Team TN and has recently received training on the CSEFEL practices and will implement a few demonstration sites during the 2010/11 school year. TDOE early childhood consultants, as well as representatives from TECTA and institutions of higher education, are also trained as coaches for CSEFEL and provide technical assistance to school systems and other programs about children with social/emotional or challenging behavior concerns. (13)

Supervision: A licensed teacher employed in a Category VII pre-K program is evaluated by trained personnel (public school supervisory staff or educational consultants) using the Tennessee Framework for Evaluation. (12) The majority of pre-K teachers are school employees and supervised by school system administrators.

10. Reporting requirements

Grantees file an annual monitoring report to the state including information about the population served, eligibility validation, curriculum and assessments used, hours of program operation and the number of days the program served children, staffing information, type and amount of training provided for staff, transportation arrangements, parent involvement activities, a list of collaborative/partnership activities with any state departments or other departments and/or agencies, the results of the Family Survey, ECERS, and ELLCO assessments, the Plan of Action which addresses the needs identified by the assessment tools, and an inventory list of any equipment purchased with grant funds during the current school year. (8)

For interim reporting, school programs and Head Start have separate and extensive reporting requirements. The general practice is that the school employee will typically do all the reporting required by the school system, and the Head Start employee will do all the Head Start reporting required by Head Start. (13)

11. Dual-language learners

“If space is available after enrolling children who qualify for free or reduced lunch (as determined pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1771), the program may enroll children who have disabilities, are English Language Learners, are in state custody, or who are at-risk due to abuse or neglect, regardless of income.” (1, 6, p. 1) For children in need of language support, pre-K staff can make a referral and the TDOE ELL specialist can offer assistance to support the child and his/her family. (13)

12. Children with disabilities

The programs shall serve, subject to availability of space and resources: “Children . . . who are screened and identified as educationally at-risk, determined pursuant to 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.” (1, 49-6-101.(f)(1)(B)(i)) Applications that target establishing programs for at-risk children not served by an existing program shall be given preference in the application process. As with any K–12 student, IDEA

* See note 2, earlier in document summary.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act funding ensures that TDOE is providing services for special-education-eligible children, regardless of where they live in the state.

13. Family involvement

Minimum requirements for family engagement in the Tennessee VPK program include providing family consultation, parenting-skills training, home visits, and opportunities for parents/family members to volunteer in the program component. These services may be provided through a collaborative effort with other local agencies serving children and families. In addition, programs must conduct parent/teacher or family/teacher conferences at least twice a year, and assist families of children in the pre-K program needing extended-day/extended-year services outside the 5.5-hour/180-day school year to obtain quality care. The partner agency or the LEA may provide the extended services, or they may collaborate with another agency to provide the extended services. (8, Section J) Also, the Tennessee Star-Quality rating systems include family involvement, and all Tennessee pre-K providers must be rated at the highest level by the state quality-rating system in order to participate. (2, pp.10–11) Annual reporting requirements for LEAs to TDOE include a request for a list of family involvement activities. (8, p. 3)

Additional inquiries

14. Specific elements of collaborations intended to increase state pre-kindergarten capacity

The 2005 Voluntary Pre-K legislation was intended to expand the state’s existing pilot pre-kindergarten program. Known as the Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005, the bill sought to make voluntary pre-K an option for at-risk four-year-olds across the state. (2, p. 1) “To expand the number and type of pre-K providers, the legislation also allows for collaborations with community partners and private providers (e.g., Head Start, for profit and not-for-profit child-care providers, and higher education settings).” (3, p. 3, as it refers to 2, p. 4) Another reason for collaboration was the state’s recognition that many LEAs may have insufficient space to serve all the children in their districts while the existing child-care programs might be able to fill that need. A further concern was whether extended hours of care for working families could be offered in the same facility, which would provide continuity for both child and family. (13)

15. Specific elements of collaborations: results of the process of forming collaborations or designed in an effort to sustain collaborations

The pilot pre-K program provided favorable data that influenced the enactment of the 2005 program. The fact that TDOE initially collaborated directly with child-care and Head Start — i.e., programs other than the school system — enabled the pilot’s success and led to expansion of the VPK program. The pilot was very child-focused (using National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC] and DAP/DEP [Effective] standards); that focus, plus the requirement that teachers be licensed, put high quality standards in place which continue today. (13)

The Tennessee Alliance for Early Education report, Voluntary Pre-K in Tennessee: Understanding the Collaboration Model (2008), includes both conventional and unusual adaptations that select programs made in order to collaborate successfully. Whether any elements were designed to sustain collaborations,
the document communicates that the entire process of engaging stakeholders and connecting various entities as partners is central to sustaining the collaborations.
PART 1: Document Review Information


PART 2: Information Obtained from Document Review*

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* Virginia representatives were unavailable for review or comment on this document; information about Virginia is based upon independent interpretation of policy documents.
2A. Issues of interest regarding the overall structuring of collaborations in each state

1. Executive or legislative branch oversight pre-kindergarten programs

In 1995, the Virginia General Assembly authorized the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI). (1) As enacted in legislation, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and any state agencies that oversee child care or early childhood programs are responsible for establishing quality program guidelines and criteria for service components. Funds are disbursed by the VDOE to schools and community-based organizations to provide quality preschool programs for at-risk four-year-olds not served by Head Start program funding. (6, Section 13.a.1.)

Information about policies or practices governing the oversight of established pre-kindergarten programs was not found in the documents that we reviewed.

2. Executive or legislative branch oversight of pre-kindergarten collaborations

Very few collaborative relationships existed between the inception of the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) in 1995 and 2007 when a pilot initiative was funded explicitly to facilitate collaborative ventures between pre-K, Head Start, and child care. Now any locality desiring to participate in the VPI grant program submits a proposal, through its chief administrator (county administrator or city manager), to the VDOE by May 15 of each year. The chief administrator, in conjunction with the school superintendent, identifies a lead agency for this program within the locality. The lead agency is responsible for developing a local plan to deliver quality preschool services to at-risk children which demonstrates the coordination of resources and the combination of funding streams in an effort to serve the greatest number of at-risk four-year-old children. (4, Chapter 2)

Information about policies or practices governing the oversight of pre-kindergarten collaborations, once they are established, was not found in the documents we reviewed.

3. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation for selecting collaborative partners

Virginia legislation states that the Board of Education will award grants for pre-K programs. (1, section C) There is no explicit reference to procedures for selecting programs to engage in collaborations. However, all programs applying must complete the VPI Application in accordance with detailed guidance outlined in the document Virginia Preschool Initiative: Guidelines for the Virginia Preschool Initiative Application. Localities must develop a written local plan for programs that includes five services (3, p. 2):

1. Quality preschool education;
2. Parental involvement including activities to promote family literacy;
3. Comprehensive child health services;
4. Comprehensive social services; and

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5. Transportation.

As part of the application process, a VPI consultant conducts a site visit, documenting 14 measures of compliance with VPI requirements, including a classroom observation component. (3, p. 9–11) VPI programs apply for funds from the VDOE and certify compliance with VPI requirements annually. (5, p. 4)

Additional details about criteria and procedures for selection related to collaborating programs were not found in the documents we reviewed.

4. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation for providing ongoing oversight and monitoring

VPI was enacted in 1995 to fill a gap by serving four-year-olds not served by Head Start. During the 2007/08 school year, the VA Preschool Pilot Initiative Study, a one-year, experimental expansion of the VPI, was funded to extend VPI into more diverse school settings, strengthen ties among Head Start and local child-care providers, and test the feasibility of combining varied public and private funding streams in single classrooms. (5, p. 1) The language of subsequent appropriations for the years 2010–12 encourages collaboration: “The proposal [for grant funds] must demonstrate coordination with all parties necessary for the successful delivery of comprehensive services, including the schools, child care providers, local social services agency, Head Start, local health department, and other groups identified by the lead agency.” (6, Section 13.b.2.)

Additional details about formal structures used to monitor collaborations beyond those executed as part of the pilot study were not found in the documents that were reviewed.

2B. Issues of interest regarding more specific elements of collaboration

1. Funding

   a. Local match requirements

   The state provides $6,000 per child (for 2009–10) for all the estimated unserved, at-risk four-year-olds (as projected by VDOE). (3, p. 2 and pp. 4–5) A pro-rated amount of $3,000 per child is funded for half-day programs. (6, Section 13.a.4.a) A local match is required and the amount is based on a composite index measure* of local ability-to-pay. The local match can include cash contributions and in-kind contributions, but the latter may constitute no more than 25 percent of the local match. (3, p. 4)

   b. Other funding sources (besides state funds)

   * The composite index is a measure used by the state to distribute most education funding for kindergarten through grade 12; the index measures locality real property values, income, and taxable sales relative to locality student membership and population. (4, p. 20)
Other funding sources that can be part of the local match include Title I, Head Start, Early Reading First, and child-care subsidies. (3, pp. 4–5)

c. **Funding strategies are used at the state, district, or program levels (e.g., coordinating/braiding, pooling/blending, decategorization)**

Localities are expected to develop plans to coordinate resources and funding streams in an effort to serve the greatest number of four-year-old children. (3, pp. 3 and 5; 6, Section 13.b.1) VPI initiatives primarily use a braiding strategy, whereby multiple sources of funding, each restricted to certain purposes, are used in a single program to provide children with a full spectrum of services. For example, VPI and Head Start funds may be used to cover instructional expenses, while federal early childhood special education (ECSE) funds cover IEP services and federal child-care subsidy funds cover wraparound services. (5, p. 39)

d. **Funding documentation requirements (e.g., delineating budgets and audit trails)**

Information about requirements for funding documentation was not found in the documents we reviewed.

2. Qualifications for teachers and assistant teachers

VPI lead teachers in public schools and/or those who are paid by state funds are required to hold licensure approved by the Virginia Board of Education. Assistant teacher qualifications are not specified. Minimum qualifications for teachers in private settings not paid for by state funds are based on child-care regulation standards or more stringent local requirements. (5, p. 12) There is no statewide salary scale for the compensation of VPI teachers and teacher aides. There also is no required minimum or maximum permissible salary level. Teacher compensation levels are within the control of the entities providing the services. It appears that all school divisions choose to compensate pre-K staff based on the same salary scale used for other teachers in the division. Teacher experience levels are recognized in these local scales. However, in localities that contract VPI out to entities other than the school division, the school division’s salary scale does not apply. (4, p. 38)

Information about differences in requirements for credentialing and professional development was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

3. Instructional content

All VPI programs must align their curricula with *Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning*. (3, p. 3) To do so, programs undertake an independent evaluation of their curriculum and child assessment procedures. Support during this process is available through local collaborative groups, including collaboration coordinators and other program directors, in communities that are participating in collaborative programming. (5, p. 37) Local school divisions ultimately endorse curricula for VPI that meet program requirements, including comprehensiveness and alignment with the *Foundation Blocks for Early Learning*. (5, pp. 64-65) Additionally, programs are required to screen children with the

*“Division” is the term Virginia uses for what other states call districts.*
Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening instrument for Pre-Kindergarten students (PALS- PreK) in fall and spring and submit scores to the PALS office. (3, p. 3) Results of the assessment are linked with suggestions for classroom instruction and activities.

Information about fulfilling differing partner program requirements was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

4. Early learning standards

Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds set minimum standards for children’s learning experiences in the areas of literacy, mathematics, science, history and social science, physical and motor-skill development, and personal and social development. Use of these standards helps educators develop curriculum and classroom activities, and also build toward the VA Kindergarten Standards of Learning. (2, p. 7) As mentioned above, all VPI programs are required to align the curricula they select with the Foundation Blocks.

Information about aligning different standards held by partnering programs was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

5. Enrollment and eligibility requirements

VPI serves at-risk four-year-olds not served by Head Start and at-risk five-year-olds not eligible to attend kindergarten. (1, section C)

Information about fulfilling differing eligibility was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

6. Requirements for space and facilities

Information about differences in program requirements for facilities was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

7. Hours of operation

Programs are required to provide at least half-day services (a minimum of 3 hours) for the length of the school year. Full-day services must operate for a minimum of 5.5 instructional hours. The school year is defined as 180 days. (6, 13.a.4.) Collaborating programs participating in the Virginia Preschool Pilot Initiative Study did extend program hours to accommodate working families who normally could not enroll in VPI without onsite wraparound services. (5, p. 7)

8. Classroom observations

* The PALS-PreK instrument assesses rhyme awareness, upper- and lower-case alphabet knowledge, beginning sound, verbal memory, print knowledge, concept of word, and name writing. For more information see http://pals.virginia.edu.
As part of the initial application process, VPI consultants conduct a classroom observation. (3, p. 9) It is not specified which observational tools are to be used, but VPI has used the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R) as observational measures of quality. They were administered during the Virginia Preschool Pilot Initiative Study (5) by two raters who visited all 44 pilot study classrooms. (5, pp. 14-22) Findings from this study were used to develop recommendations that VPI encourage the use of a system that monitors classroom quality in addition to structural program features.

Information about systemic or required use of classroom observations to inform on-going improvements or collaboration plans is was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

9. Technical assistance and supervision

The VDOE and the Child Day Care Council (CDCC)* are charged with providing technical assistance to programs, and to provide assistance to localities in developing a comprehensive, coordinated, quality preschool program to serve at-risk four-year-old children. (6, Section 13.d.1.)

Information about differing requirements for technical assistance and supervision among collaborating programs was not found in the documents that we reviewed.

10. Reporting requirements

Information about dual-reporting requirements was not found in the documents that we reviewed.

11. Dual-language learners

*The CDCC, which is part of the Virginia Department of Social Services, is authorized by the Code of Virginia to adopt regulatory standards for licensure and operation of child day care centers in Virginia. The council comprises a minimum of 28 members, appointed by the Governor, who represent a variety of interests from around the state. For more information see http://www.dss.virginia.gov/geninfo/cdc_council/.

Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds discusses briefly the dual-language-learner population. Participating localities, through their definitions of “at-risk” and approval of learning formats to be used in classrooms, have the potential to influence how the needs of this special population are addressed. (4, p. 17)

Information about specific program policies that address the needs of children learning English was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

12. Children with disabilities

Information about addressing the needs of children with disabilities was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

13. Family involvement
While localities must develop a written plan for programs that includes family involvement, details about specific aspects of parental involvement were not found in the documents that were reviewed.

**Additional inquiries**

14. Specific elements of collaborations intended to increase state pre-kindergarten capacity

The original 1995 VPI legislation was intended to serve 60 percent or more of unserved, at-risk four- and five- year-olds not yet eligible for kindergarten. It was found that the great majority of original, non-pilot VPI students were served in classrooms constituted entirely of VPI students in public schools. *(5, p. 3)*

The Virginia Preschool Pilot Initiative study specifically facilitated collaborations with the intention of using community-based resources to increase state pre-kindergarten capacity even further. *(5, p. 1).*

15. Specific elements of collaborations a result of the process of forming collaborations, or were they designed in an effort to sustain collaborations

Information about the design elements or the process of forming collaborations was not found in the documents that were reviewed.

**2C. Additional key elements identified during document review**

The VPI requires that the maximum class size be no more than 18 students, with a 1:9 teacher:student ratio. *(1, section C)*

Funding plans must provide clear methods of service coordination for the purpose of reducing the per-child cost for the service, increasing the number of at-risk children served, and/or extending services for the entire year. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- **Wraparound services** which combine funds such as child-care subsidy dollars, administered by local social service agencies, with dollars for quality preschool education programs.
- **Wrapout services** which use grant funds to purchase quality preschool services to at-risk four-year-old children by purchasing comprehensive services within an existing child-care setting which currently provides quality preschool education.
- **Expansion of services** where grant funds are used to purchase slots within existing programs, such as Head Start, which provide comprehensive services to at-risk four-year-old children.
## Part 1: Document Review Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Titles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>WV Pre-K Impact on Community Partners: An Issue Brief</em> Presented by the State Pre-K Team: West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, West Virginia Department of Education, West Virginia Head Start Collaboration Office, December 2006.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART 2: Information Obtained from Document Review

Sources are cited in boldface, in parentheses, with the following information: document number from the above key, page number, or section of legislative code. For example: (2, pp.10–11) or (1, 49-6-106).

2A. Issues of interest regarding the overall structuring of collaborations in each state

1. Executive or legislative branch oversight of pre-kindergarten programs

In 2002, the West Virginia legislature passed a bill that included a provision for all four-year-olds in West Virginia to have access to pre-kindergarten by the 2012/13 school year. The law folds pre-K into the state school funding formula for public schools and requires county school systems to coordinate pre-K programs and contracts. (8)

2. Executive or legislative branch oversight of pre-kindergarten collaborations

The West Virginia State Board of Education (WVBE) and West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) provide oversight at the state level by granting approval for county pre-kindergarten collaboration plans. (2, 126-28-6)

3. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation for selecting collaborative partners

The West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525 requires that at least 50 percent of classrooms providing pre-kindergarten must be in private child-care, preschool, or Head Start programs operating under contract with a county school district. All counties must submit a pre-kindergarten collaboration plan for approval to the Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources. The plan is developed by a team that includes representatives from public school preschool, public school preschools for children with special needs, licensed child-care centers, Head Start, the local DHHR, and a parent. The county plans are reviewed by a West Virginia Pre-K Steering Team made up of members from the West Virginia Department of Education, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, and the West Virginia Head Start Collaboration Office. Once the Secretary signs the county plans, a list of the plans and the recommendations of the steering committee is submitted to the WVBE for approval. (2, 126-28-6, 10)

4. Formal structures established through legislation or regulation for providing ongoing oversight and monitoring
The county school districts, also called Local Education Agencies (LEAs), have direct responsibility for public school classrooms in their county. Local program oversight for contracted community programs must be defined in the contracts between the community program and the LEA. The WVBE or its designee and the Secretary of the WVDHHR or his/her designee maintain state oversight. (2, 126-28-14)

2B. Issues of interest regarding more specific elements of collaboration

1. Funding
   a. Local match requirement

   West Virginia’s pre-K model does not require a local match. However, a formalized contract is required and must include a separate budget for each individual classroom. (5, pp. 5–7)

   b. Other funding sources (besides state funds)

   Sources of funding for West Virginia’s pre-K program can include Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) subsidy, Head Start funding, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the school-funding formula, and other public or private funds. In 2008–09, $69,147,853 of the $119,015,061 total funding for West Virginia pre-K came from the state school funding formula, $4,497,027 came from IDEA funds, $7,954,458 came from Title I, $28,359,500 came from Head Start, $2,430,963 came from TANF/subsidies, and $2,445,506 came from non-required local sources. (5, p. 3, 11)

   c. Funding strategies used at the state, district, or program levels (blending, braiding, decategorization)

   Both blending and braiding are used to fund West Virginia pre-K programs. While most pre-K funding comes from the state school funding formula, funds from the other sources listed above can contribute to a county’s general funding “pool” for pre-K or can be used to support specific aspects of the pre-K program. Individual counties are required to submit an online report annually documenting all funding sources for their comprehensive pre-K system, and this report is formally audited. (14)

   d. Funding documentation requirements (delineating budgets and audit trails)

   The budgets required for each collaborative pre-K classroom must be exhaustive with respect to available and needed resources, containing specific itemization, such as the number of instructional hours/week, employment of teachers/aides, classroom supplies, meals, delivery of professional development, supervisory protocol, and payment schedules. For each of these items, the budget must identify which party provides the resource, or if it is a shared responsibility, what portion each provides. (5, pp. 5–7)

2. Qualifications for teachers and assistant teachers

   Teachers employed in a West Virginia pre-K classroom and hired by the LEA must hold the appropriate license issued by the WVDE. Teachers employed in a West Virginia pre-K classroom operated by a community program may apply for Permanent Authorization or Initial Temporary Authorization through the
Department of Education. Permanent Authorization is an alternative certification issued to teachers without WVDE licensure but who hold at least a two-year degree in early childhood education. This degree must include coursework in the following six subjects: preschool special education, child development, preschool curriculum, early language and literacy, assessment of young children, and family and community involvement. Initial Temporary Authorization is issued to teachers with at least a two-year degree who agree to complete coursework in these six subjects. Temporary Authorization must be renewed each year until the required coursework is completed. *(2, 126-28-7, 13)*

The Head Start Reauthorization of 2007 includes new requirements for assistant teachers. In response, West Virginia is revising its requisite qualifications for assistant teachers in pre-K classrooms in the fall of 2010. *(14)*

The pay structure for West Virginia pre-K teachers depends on the employer (the LEA, Head Start, or other community partners). *(14)*

3. Instructional content

Per West Virginia Board of Education Procedural Rule 126, only comprehensive curricula systems and comprehensive assessment systems that are included on the approved list can be used by West Virginia pre-K classrooms. *(9)* For a list of approved curricula, see [http://www.wvdhhr.org/oss/pieces/ta/documents/ComprehensiveCurriculaAssessmentSystemsList_2.pdf](http://www.wvdhhr.org/oss/pieces/ta/documents/ComprehensiveCurriculaAssessmentSystemsList_2.pdf)

4. Early learning standards

The West Virginia Early Learning Standards Framework (WVELSF) provides the content standards for all pre-K classrooms. The WVELSF is aligned with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and the kindergarten content standards and objectives. *(2, 126-28-9)*

5. Enrollment and eligibility criteria

In cases where the county is not yet able to provide universal enrollment to all 4-year-olds, additional eligibility criteria for collaborating programs are determined at the county level to prioritize enrollment. Counties submit an annual application plan to the WVBE that indicates the eligibility criteria that all collaborating partners agree to use. *(14)*

6. Requirements for space and facilities

All West Virginia pre-K programs including collaborative classrooms (whether located at public schools or another location), public school pre-K classrooms, and pre-K special-needs programs are required to adhere to a core set of common health and safety standards in addition to any existing rules and regulations based on funding sources for individual programs. *(2, 126-28-8)* For a complete list of the health and safety standards, see [https://sites.google.com/a/wvd.e.k12.wv.us/wvbe-policy2525/Home/-126-28-8-health-and-safety-requirements](https://sites.google.com/a/wvd.e.k12.wv.us/wvbe-policy2525/Home/-126-28-8-health-and-safety-requirements)

7. Hours of operation
West Virginia Universal Pre-K policy caps the hours of operation supported by state funding at 30 hours per week. Collaborative pre-K programs may provide services to children and families beyond these 30 hours, but these services must be supported by other funding sources. (14)

8. Classroom observations

All pre-K classrooms must use the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) to evaluate the program's success in meeting the children's needs. The evaluations are carried out by collaborative teams that include at least one program/county administrator or outside evaluators. The results are submitted annually using the ECERS-R Annual Development Form to the WVDE Early Childhood Coordinator. Areas identified for improvement are addressed in the subsequent year's county collaborative plan. (2, 126-28-17)

9. Technical assistance and supervision

Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) also provide technical assistance for collaborating programs. West Virginia has eight RESAs, each with an early childhood/pre-K point person within the agency. WVDE/RESAs offer half-day early childhood workshops for school administrators implementing West Virginia Universal Pre-K. The workshops introduce Universal Pre-K to school administrators, as well as provide an overview of requirements, assessments, curriculum and instruction, and developmentally appropriate practices. The Head Start training and technical assistance program also works in partnership with the RESAs to provide resources for programs partnering with Head Start. (12, 14) In addition, the West Virginia Pre-K Steering Team, a collaborative team from WVDE, WVDHHR, and the West Virginia Head Start Association, offers technical assistance for collaboration issues at the local level. (10, 14)

10. Reporting requirements

By August 1st of each year, each county must submit to the state any addendums to the county plan, a list of the signed contracts, and comprehensive budgets. Every pre-K classroom in West Virginia also completes the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) as a self-assessment and submits its scores to the state. The WVDE's Office of School Readiness is currently developing an annual report to capture the items currently collected in the county collaborative plans. This annual report will be compiled into an online database. (14)

The West Virginia Head Start Association and Child Care Centers United invite representatives from the WVDE and the RESAs to meet with program directors to ensure that all programs are aware of reporting requirements for partnering programs. (12)

11. Dual-language learners

West Virginia Policy 2525 was designed to reflect the West Virginia pre-K population. The WVDE Office of School Readiness works directly with the state office for Title III on translating enrollment or public announcement information as samples for counties to use to ensure that families of dual-language learners are aware of West Virginia's Universal Pre-K program. (14)
12. Children with disabilities

In accordance with WVBE Policy 2525, the WVDE Office of School Readiness and the Office of Special Programs work to advocate and ensure that children with special needs are placed in the least restrictive environment, and that these placements meet WVBE Policy 2419 (Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities) requirements. Children with special needs may be served in the Universal Pre-K program or a preschool special-needs program. West Virginia currently has approximately 100 preschool special-needs classrooms. (14)

13. Family involvement

West Virginia policy outlines requirements for parent/guardian involvement and family support in collaborative programs. These include:

- A minimum of two documented face-to-face conferences annually with each child’s parent/family (home visits are recommended for these conferences).
- Documented methods of communicating with parents/guardians.
- Services to children and their families necessary to support the children in their transition into, participation in, and transition out the program.
- Support services for children living in homes where languages other than English are spoken, including communication that is comprehensible and supportive of both the native language and English-language development.
- Support services provided in accordance with needs specified in Individualized Education Plans for preschool children with disabilities.
- Opportunities for parents/guardians/family to participate in decision-making about their child’s education.
- Classrooms that are open to parents/guardians/families and where parents/guardians/families are encouraged to observe children in the classrooms and participate in classroom activities. (2,126-28-4)

Additional inquiries

14. Specific elements of collaborations intended to increase state pre-kindergarten capacity

West Virginia aims to increase pre-kindergarten capacity in order to provide Universal Pre-K to all four-year-olds by 2012–13. To maximize existing resources by the date of full implementation, the law requires that at least 50 percent of the programs be in private child-care, preschool, or Head Start programs. Not all public schools, child-care, and Head Start programs have a sufficient number of certified early childhood teachers to fully implement West Virginia pre-K, so the policy allows teaching permits to be issued in order to build capacity and support collaboration with other early childhood programs. (2)

15. Specific elements of collaborations: results of the process of forming collaborations or designed in an effort to sustain collaborations
State pre-K policy has been revised based on the effects of local implementation. For instance, health and immunization requirements have been adopted by the WVDE because Head Start partners already had these requirements in place. Head Start’s emphasis on family involvement has also led to increased attention on family involvement in West Virginia pre-K policy. (14)
References

http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/FP%20Blending%20Funds%201_24.pdf


http://www.aphsa.org/Publications/PolicyPractice.asp?ppid=60#1
