

10A NCAC 09 .3219 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

(a) The rule shall apply to child care centers that have earned a two through five-star rated license using the program assessment licensure pathway or the classroom and instructional quality licensure pathway in Rules .3203 and .3205 of this Section. A child care center that has earned a two through five-star rated license using the accreditation and Head Start licensure pathway in Rule .3207 of this Section shall comply with standards set forth by those organizations for family and community engagement.

(b) For a child care center to meet family and community engagement standards at the two-star level, the center administrator shall implement the following foundational practices:

- (1) Provide communication from the center to families regarding program activities in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the families served, such as via text, email, and electronic applications, and considering language comprehension.
- (2) Offer an annual family conference with teaching staff for the purpose of providing information to the family about their child. During the conference, families are offered an opportunity to set a goal(s) for their child. Conferences shall be conducted in a manner that is convenient for the family such as by telephone, virtually or in person.
- (3) Offer annual opportunities for families to share cultural heritage in their child's classroom.
- (4) Offer annual volunteer opportunities for families.
- (5) Communicate with families regarding community resources and services that are available, upon request from the family or when a need is identified by a child's lead teacher.

(c) For a child care center to meet family and community engagement standards at the three-star level, the center administrator shall ensure that the child care facility meets the foundational practices as set forth in Paragraph (b) of this Rule plus two additional family and community engagement options from separate categories set forth in Subparagraphs (f)(1), (f)(2) and (f)(3) of this Rule. A single activity shall not be used to meet multiple requirements or categories of engagement.

(d) For a child care center to meet family and community engagement standards at the four-star level, the center administrator shall ensure that the child care facility meets the foundational practices set forth in Paragraphs (b) of this Rule plus three additional family and community engagement options, one from each category set forth in Subparagraphs (f)(1), (f)(2) and (f)(3) of this Rule. A single activity shall not be used to meet multiple requirements or categories of engagement.

(e) For a child care center to meet family and community engagement standards at the five-star level, the center administrator shall ensure that the child care facility meets the foundational practices set forth in Paragraph (b) of this Rule plus four additional family and community engagement options, with at least one from each category set forth in Subparagraphs (f)(1), (f)(2) and (f)(3) of this Rule. A single activity shall not be used to meet multiple requirements or categories of engagement.

(f) Categories of family and community engagement shall include the following:

- (1) Communications Options:
 - (A) Two-way communication with families. "Two-way communication" means that the child care center shares information with families about their child(ren) and that families may share information with the child care center about their child(ren) in a manner that is available and accessible to the family.
 - (B) A family resource area is accessible in the child care center that includes information regarding community resources and services that assist families with knowledge, support, and advocacy for their child in the languages of the children and families being served by the child care center.
 - (C) Family and teacher conferences are offered at least twice annually to discuss child needs and progress towards individual goals and to receive feedback from families regarding their child(ren)'s experiences at home and at the child care facility. During each conference, families are offered an opportunity to set a goal(s) for their child. Conferences shall be conducted in a manner that is convenient for the family such as by telephone, virtually or in person.
 - (D) The child care center offers families connection to local community services and resources on at least a quarterly basis, such as via newsletters, email, text, electronic applications, community resource websites, and in-person opportunities with local community services.
- (2) Engagement and Leadership Options:

- (A) The child care center has a structured, ongoing process to receive and review suggestions and recommendations from families, including anonymously. The center administrator considers these suggestions and recommendations for planning within the child care center.
 - (B) The child care center offers an enrollment orientation that includes an opportunity for families and child(ren) to visit the assigned classroom and lead teacher prior to the first day of enrollment.
 - (C) The child care center offers at least two family events annually.
 - (D) The child care center offers a family event that is culturally responsive to the heritage and practices of enrolled families at least once annually.
 - (E) The center administrator, the lead teacher, families and service providers shall collaboratively plan to ensure children's needs and goals are being addressed in the classroom, not only during scheduled time with the service provider. Service providers include, but are not limited to, speech therapists, occupational therapists, behavior specialists, physical therapists, and intervention service specialists.
 - (F) The center administrator offers an annual evaluation or survey of the child care center to families, including the option to reply anonymously. The center administrator considers these evaluations or surveys for planning within the child care center.
 - (G) The center administrator has a plan for children's transitions that is shared with families at the time of enrollment. The transition plan shall include the child's transition from home to enrollment in the child care center, a child's transition to a new classroom within the child care center, and a child's transition to another program, including Kindergarten. The center administrator provides families the opportunity to provide feedback on transition plans to address the individual needs of their child(ren).
 - (H) The child care center offers a family council, advisory board, or family representative role to act as a liaison to the center administrator for responsive and reciprocal planning within the child care center.
- (3) Educational Opportunity Options:
- (A) The center administrator offers at least one family event annually that includes an educational opportunity for staff and families to learn together.
 - (B) The center administrator offers at least one educational opportunity annually for staff and families that addresses a topic identified as a need for the program based on family feedback.
 - (C) The center administrator offers at least one educational opportunity annually for staff and families that includes the participation of a local community resource.
 - (D) The center administrator offers at least one educational opportunity annually for staff and families regarding one of the following topics: social emotional health; challenging behaviors; or culturally responsive practices.
 - (E) The center administrator provides supports that anticipate and remove barriers for families and enable family involvement, at the child care facility, such as but not limited to, virtual options with technology support, interpreter services, child appropriate activities, care for children during the event, meals or snacks during events or providing materials for families to take home related to the event.
 - (F) The center administrator provides paid planning time for lead teachers to prepare information for family and teacher conferences, time to conduct the conferences and supports needed to conduct conferences by telephone, virtually or in-person.
- (g) Options set forth in Subparagraphs (f)(1)(C), (f)(2)(B), (f)(2)(C), and (f)(3)(A) of this Rule shall be used to meet requirements set forth in Rule .3010 of this Chapter regarding family engagement for NC Pre-K Programs.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85(3); 110-88(7); 110-90(4); 143B-168.3; S.L. 2024-34; 42 U.S.C. 9858c; 45 CFR 98.1; 45 CFR 98.16;
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