

	<p><b>New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department</b></p> <p><b>Notice of Funding Opportunity: New Mexico PreK</b></p> <p><b>Fiscal Year: 2027</b></p> <p><b>Funding Availability:</b> Pending appropriation</p>
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**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) administers the New Mexico Prekindergarten (NM PreK) program, a high-quality program that is available to all families residing in New Mexico with eligible 3- and 4-year-old children, regardless of income. The NM PreK program provides voluntary, quality PreK to support children’s development and school readiness. PreK program funding is awarded to eligible providers, including tribal providers, licensed child care centers, licensed child care homes, Head Start programs, school districts, and/or charter schools through this competitive grant opportunity. ECECD monitors the eligible providers granted awards for compliance with the NM PreK Standards.

Pursuant to NMSA 1978, § 9-29-8(B), ECECD is mandated to “coordinate and align an early childhood education and care system to: (1) include child care, pre-kindergarten, early pre-kindergarten, home visitation, Early Head Start, Head Start, early childhood special education and early intervention and family support; and (2) provide New Mexico families with consistent access to appropriate care and education services.” The NM PreK program is a key part of the state’s early childhood education and care system, providing high-quality, voluntary PreK experiences to preschool-aged children regardless of income. **ECECD is seeking applications from eligible providers to renew, expand, or create new PreK slots and classrooms statewide, especially in areas of the state where there is a lack of high-quality PreK for children and families.**

ECECD awards PreK Grants for up to three years contingent upon available funding and the grantee's continued compliance with the NM PreK Standards. If an eligible applicant applies for and is awarded an expansion grant, its existing award will be amended, and the expansion will have the same terms as the eligible applicant's existing award.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) outlines requirements for the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) NM PreK Application. ECECD will consider all complete and timely applications for funding and awards will be made based on the criteria below, contingent upon available funding. ECECD may adjust the number of slots awarded based on funding availability, saturation, mixed delivery, diversity, geographic needs, existing NM PreK providers in good standing, and other considerations.

"Saturation" refers to the ratio of Head Start and New Mexico PreK slots available within the geographic boundaries of a school district compared to the number of 3- and 4-year-old children residing in that school district. For example, a school district with 100 eligible children residing in its geographic boundary and 80 funded PreK slots for 4-year-olds (NM PreK and Head Start combined) would have an 80 percent saturation rate for 4-year-olds. Saturation rates are calculated for both 3- and 4-year-olds.

Applications will be categorized by school district area from the highest scoring application to the lowest scoring application. Applications for each district will be considered by score. Additionally, the following considerations may inform awards regardless of score:

- Program type
- Saturation rates by age group
- Location of program
- Mixed delivery system
- Status of existing NM PreK provider (Corrective Action Plan/Conditions of Operation/Vacancies)
- Geographic proximity to an existing NM PreK program
- Community distribution of 3- and 4-year-old full time child care assistance contracts

The highest scoring applications within each school district geographic boundary will be selected for funding until saturation capacity has been met based on descending order of application scores or funding is exhausted.

- **Priority 1:** NM School district areas with saturation rates of 80% or less for 4-year-old children
- **Priority 2:** NM School district areas with saturation rates of 50% or less for 3-year-old children
- **Priority 3:** NM School district areas with saturation rates between 51% and 80% for 3-year-old children
- **Priority 4:** NM School district areas with saturation rates between 81% and 100% for 4-year-old children

## **SECTION I – ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible applicants for the FY27 NM PreK Grant include the following:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs) or state charter schools;
- Child care (center and home-based) programs currently licensed by ECECD pursuant to 8.9.4 NMAC;
- Tribal early childhood education programs;
- Head Start programs (Region 11 (Tribal) and Region 6); and
- Schools operated by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).

FY27 NM PreK eligible applicants must be seeking funding to create a new PreK program, renew an existing PreK contract or grant award, or expand the number of children served in an existing NM PreK program. All eligible applicants must be in good standing with its respective regulatory authority, which is ECECD, the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED), or the applicable federal agency for tribes and Head Start. Programs must disclose as part of their application if they are currently on a Condition of Operation (COO) or Corrective Action Plan (CAP).

Programs eligible for NM PreK funding in FY27 must first enroll all age eligible 3- and 4-year-olds children in a state funded NM PreK classroom before serving them through an ECECD Child Care Assistance contract. Programs must also ensure that NM PreK funds are used whenever applicable before relying on Child Care Assistance funding.

All PreK providers are required to enroll eligible children on a continuous, year-round basis, without exception, regardless of the proximity to the end of the program year.

## **SECTION II – NEW MEXICO PREK PROGRAM OPTIONS AND PER-CHILD REIMBURSEMENT RATES**

Each NM PreK program must choose from the options in the following tables which type of program will be implemented per classroom or home-based program. Each applicant must select their program options in the online application and demonstrate how they will meet the requirements of each program option. Each applicant must also ensure that it plans to pay educators implementing the NM PreK program per the salary parity requirements as part of its application (see the definitions section below for more information). All program options, aside from the Head Start-specific options, are available to all Community and School-Based PreK applicants. ECECD may not fund a request in its entirety based on the criteria outlined in the “Background and Purpose” section of this NOFO.

NM PreK Half Day Program Option			
Requirement	4-Year-Olds	3-Year-Olds	Mixed Age (no less than 50% 3-year-olds)
Services	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)
Age Eligibility	Children must turn 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten	Children must turn 3 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten	Children must turn 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten
Instructional Hours Required	Provide 540 hours of instruction and 45 hours of family engagement – 585 hours total	Provide 540 hours of instruction and 45 hours of family engagement – 585 hours total	Provide 540 hours of instruction and 45 hours of family engagement – 585 hours total
Service Hours per day	Minimum 3 hours per day, maximum 4 hours per day	Minimum 3 hours per day, maximum 4 hours per day	Minimum 3 hours per day, maximum 4 hours per day
Maximum Group Size	20 Children	16 Children	16 Children
Ratios	1:10 adult to child ratio	1:8 adult to child ratio	1:8 adult to child ratio
Reimbursement Rate Per PreK Slot	\$5,460 reimbursement per student per fiscal year	\$6,494 reimbursement per student per fiscal year	\$6,494 reimbursement per student per fiscal year

NM PreK Full Day Program Option			
Requirement	4-Year-Olds	3-Year-Olds	Mixed Age (no less than 50% 3-year-olds)
Services	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)
Age Eligibility	Children must turn 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten	Children must turn 3 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten	Children must turn 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten
Instructional Hours Required	Provide 1080 hours of instruction and 90 hours of family engagement – 1170 hours total	Provide 1080 hours of instruction and 90 hours of family engagement – 1170 hours total	Provide 1080 hours of instructional and 90 hours of family engagement – 1170 hours total
Service Hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 7 hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 7 hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 7 hours per day
Maximum Group Size	20 Children	16 Children	16 Children
Ratios	1:10 adult to child ratio	1:8 adult to child ratio	1:8 adult to child ratio
Reimbursement Rate Per PreK Slot	\$10,920 reimbursement per student per fiscal year	\$12,988 reimbursement per student per fiscal year	\$12,988 reimbursement per student per fiscal year

NM PreK Full Day <u>Plus</u> Program Option			
Requirement	4-Year-Olds	3-Year-Olds	Mixed Age (no less than 50% 3-year-olds)
Services	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)	Must be provided Monday through Friday (request for exceptions must be clearly explained in the application)
Age Eligibility	Children must turn 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten	Children must turn 3 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten	Children must turn 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten
Instructional Hours Required	Provide 1380 hours of instruction and 90 hours of family engagement –1470 hours total	Provide 1380 hours of instruction and 90 hours of family engagement –1470 hours total	Provide 1380 hours of instruction and 90 hours of family engagement – 1470 hours total
Service Hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 8 hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 8 hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 8 hours per day
Max. Group Size	20 Children	16 Children	16 Children
Ratios	1:10 adult to child ratio	1:8 adult to child ratio	1:8 adult to child ratio
Reimbursement Rate Per PreK Slot	\$15,055 reimbursement per student per fiscal year	\$16,556 reimbursement per student per fiscal year	\$16,556 reimbursement per student per fiscal year

#### Head Start Recipients ONLY:

*In addition to the program options above, the following options are available only to existing Region 11 (Tribal) and Region 6 Head Start Recipients.*

Dual Enrollment Full Day Option	
Services	This option is for Head Start programs to extend to or maintain <b>1080 instructional hours</b> annually and for children to be dually enrolled in both Head Start and NM PreK
Age Eligibility	Children must turn 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten
Instructional Hours Required	Provide 1080 Instructional hours and 90 hours of family engagement – 1170 hours total
Service Hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 7 hours per day
Maximum Group Size	16 Children
Ratios	1:8 adult to child ratio
Reimbursement Rate Per PreK Slot	\$2,730 reimbursement per student per fiscal year

Dual Enrollment Full Day Plus Option	
Services	This option is for Head Start programs to extend to or maintain <b>1380 instructional hours</b> annually and for children to be dually enrolled in both Head Start and NM PreK
Age Eligibility	Children must turn 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten
Instructional Hours Required	Provide 1380 hours of instruction and 90 hours of family engagement – 1470 hours total
Service Hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 8 hours per day
Maximum Group Size	16 Children
Ratios	1:8 adult to child ratio
Reimbursement Rate Per PreK Slot	\$3,247 reimbursement per student per fiscal year

Blended Enrollment Full Day Option	
Services	This option is for Head Start programs to serve non-Head Start NM PreK-only children who are being served within the same classroom with Head Start or dually enrolled children for 1080 instructional hours annually
Age Eligibility	Children must turn 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten
Instructional Hours Required	Provide 1080 Instructional hours and 90 hours of family engagement– 1170 hours total
Service Hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 7 hours per day
Max. Group Size	16 Children
Ratios	1:8 adult to child ratio
Reimbursement Rate Per PreK Slot	Each NM PreK-only student will receive the full 3-Year-Old/Mixed-Age Full Day rate (\$12,998) per fiscal year.

Blended Enrollment Full Day Plus Option	
Services	This option is for Head Start programs to serve non-Head Start NM PreK-only children who are being served within the same classroom with Head Start or dually enrolled children for 1380 instructional hours annually
Age Eligibility	Children must turn 3 or 4 years old before September 1, 2026, and not be age-eligible for kindergarten
Instructional Hours Required	Provide 1080 Instructional hours and 90 hours of family engagement – 1170 hours total
Service Hours per day	Minimum 6.5 hours per day, maximum 7 hours per day
Maximum Group Size	16 Children
Ratios	1:8 adult to child ratio
Reimbursement Rate Per PreK Slot	Each NM PreK-only student will receive the full 3-Year-Old/Mixed-Age Full Day Plus rate (\$16,556) per fiscal year

### SECTION III – FUNDING

**FUNDING IS SUBJECT TO CURRENT AND FUTURE APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATURE FOR THE PERIOD OF THE GRANT AWARD.** No guarantee is made or implied by the state of New Mexico or ECECD as to the amount allocated to this grant of award. This grant process will result in multiple awards. The funding available through the grant is for state-funded PreK and early PreK services. Ececd reserves the right to fund partial requests.

ECECD will reimburse for NM PreK services in accordance with the per-child reimbursement rates set forth above. Rates are non- negotiable and subject to change. Final rates for FY27 may increase depending on appropriations but will not decrease from the rates posted in this NOFO. ECECD will calculate the total compensation available during the grant period by the number of children served per eligible applicant type and then multiplied by the appropriate rate. Depending on the size of the award, programs may be subject to an annual audit requirement. Depending upon available funding, ECECD may adjust the per child rate in future years and any such changes will be implemented through an award letter amendment as needed.

ECECD will set aside a limited amount of funding for:

- **Transportation – \$1,000 per child, per fiscal year.** ECECD may award this funding if the program has the capacity to transport children enrolled in NM PreK to and from the program and, for community-based providers, obtain licensing approval from ECECD pursuant to 8.9.4 NMAC to do so.
- **Start-Up and Safety – Up to \$25,000 per classroom for supplies and equipment, and an additional \$5,000 per classroom for curriculum materials to equip a new PreK classroom.**

## SECTION IV – APPLICATION TIMELINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

Action	Responsible Party	Due Date
Grant Application Period Opens	ECECD	Monday, February 9, 2026
PreK Application Office Hours: (presentation includes review of application process, timeline and question and answer session) <u>via Zoom</u> . Spanish interpretation will be available <a href="https://nmececdorg.zoom.us/j/87327957162">https://nmececdorg.zoom.us/j/87327957162</a>	ECECD	Thursday February 12, 2026, 6 p.m. Friday, February 13, 2026, 12 p.m. Tuesday, February 17, 2026 2 p.m.
Tribal Office Hours: <a href="https://nmececdorg.zoom.us/j/81665384364">https://nmececdorg.zoom.us/j/81665384364</a>	ECECD	Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 11 a.m.
Home Provider Office hours: <a href="https://nmececdorg.zoom.us/j/87327957162">https://nmececdorg.zoom.us/j/87327957162</a>	ECECD	Wednesday, February 11, 2026, 6 p.m. Saturday, February 21, 2026, 10 a.m.
Deadline to Submit Written Questions	Eligible Applicants	Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 11:59 p.m. (MDT)
Response to Written Questions	ECECD	Tuesday, March 3, 2026, by 11:59 p.m.
Deadline to Submit FY27 Grant Application	Eligible Applicants	Monday, March 16, 2026, by 3 p.m. (MDT)
Grant Award Denial Letters Issued	ECECD	No later than Friday, April 24, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.
Deadline to submit protest of denial	Eligible Applicants	Friday, May 1, 2026, by 5 p.m.
ECECD denial protest response deadline	ECECD	Friday May 8, 2026, by 11:59 p.m.
Grant Awards Issued	ECECD	Friday, May 15, 2026, by 11:59 p.m.

ECECD will make every effort to adhere to the timeline outlined in Section IV of this NOFO. These dates are subject to change at the discretion of ECECD. Scheduled dates may be extended but ECECD will not shorten any timelines.

### Written Questions

Questions about the NOFO must be submitted via email to ECECD at [ECECD-PreKGrant@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:ECECD-PreKGrant@ececd.nm.gov). Questions must be submitted prior to 11:59 p.m. (MDT) on Wednesday, February 18, 2026.

### Application Submission Requirements and Due Date

*Only completed applications with all requested attachments that are submitted by the deadline will be considered by ECECD for funding in FY27.*

Eligible applicants MUST submit an application under the following circumstances:

- New program
- Renewal request
- Expansion request

Eligible applicants should NOT submit an application under the following circumstances:

- Current programs requesting conversion (changes of program option or program type)



**Please read these instructions carefully:**

- The application is accessible in English and in Spanish via the ECECD website at <https://www.nmececd.org/prekgrant/>
- Please email questions about this NOFO or application to [ECECD-PreKGrant@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:ECECD-PreKGrant@ececd.nm.gov).
- All applications must be submitted no later than **3 p.m. (MDT) on Thursday, March 16, 2026**.
- Applications will only be accepted online and must be submitted through the FY27 PreK application portal available at: <https://nmececd-ecen.submittable.com/submit>
- LATE OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED, REVIEWED, OR CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.

Each applicant will receive a notification of receipt. In addition, applicants will receive a summary of their funding request, which is NOT an actual award notice, within 48 hours of submission.

## **SECTION V– SCORING METHODOLOGY**

Each eligible proposal will be reviewed by a panel of at least three reviewers. Each reviewer will score the proposal according to the indicated point criteria in the NOFO. Scores from each reviewer will be averaged to compute the final score. If there is a difference of more than 15 points between the reviewers' scores, the two closest scores will be averaged to compute the final score. Awards will be made starting with the highest scoring proposal in rank order for each school district area. In the event of tied scores, proposals with the highest combined score on "Define the Need for High Quality NM PreK Services" (Section 3A) will be ranked higher. If a tie remains, the proposal with the highest combined score on "Collaborative Efforts to Ensure the Full Participation of Each Child" (Section 3D) will be ranked higher.

## **SECTION VI – GRANT AWARD PROTEST PROCEDURE**

Applicants who receive a notice of non-award may protest the ECECD award decision subject to the following:

1. The protest must be in writing and must contain specific factual and/or legal allegations setting forth the basis on which the protesting party challenges the non-award by ECECD.
2. The protest must be submitted in writing via email to [ECECD-PreKGrant@ececd.nm.gov](mailto:ECECD-PreKGrant@ececd.nm.gov) on or before Friday, May 1, 2026, at 5 p.m.
3. ECECD will convene a review team that will include at least one staff member from ECECD's Office of General Counsel, NM PreK Program, and the Deputy Secretary. The review team will review and consider the merits of the protest and will decide whether the protest is approved or denied.
4. NM PreK Program Office will provide the applicant with written notification via email of the review team's decision within seven (7) calendar days of the receipt of the protest. ECECD may summarily deny a protest that fails to contain specific factual or legal allegations, or where the protest only raises issues of law that have already been decided by the courts.



## SECTION VII – DEFINITIONS

**Annual Audit:** An annual audit as required by the State of New Mexico law conducted by an independent auditor. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-F> and <https://nmonesource.com/nmos/nmsa/en/item/4423/index.do#!b/57-22-6>.

**Child Care Desert:** A Census Tract with one or less child care slots per every three children age 0-12.

**Community-Based Applicants:** A licensed child care center, licensed family child care facility, or Head Start program applying for a NM PreK grant.

**Existing Program:** A program/provider that currently has a NM PreK grant or agreement with ECECD.

**Family Income Eligibility:** There is no income requirement for NM PreK families.

**Invoicing:** Programs may be required to invoice ECECD monthly to be reimbursed for NM PreK services.

**Micro School District:** A school district with fewer than 200 students enrolled.

**Mixed PreK Classroom/Program:** A classroom or program that serves children who have attained their third or fourth birthday prior to September 1 of the applicable school year.

**New Mexico PreK Program Standards:** The program standards that all NM PreK programs must follow. The text of the standards are available here: [New Mexico PreK | Early Childhood Education & Care Department](#).

**New Program:** An eligible applicant that has never received NM PreK funding and wishes to convert a NM PreK classroom currently in operation or open a new NM PreK classroom.

**NM Child Care Licensing Regulations:** The New Mexico child care licensing regulations can be found at [8.9.4 NMAC](#).

**Pay Parity:** At minimum, all teachers with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education must be paid at least \$55,000 a year and educational assistants must be paid a minimum of \$15/hour. The New Mexico PreK program anticipates increasing the per-slot reimbursement rates in the upcoming fiscal year. ECECD encourages all providers to leverage this additional funding to strengthen compensation for their educational assistants and teachers. This investment is intended to support progress toward compensation that incentivizes the enhanced credentials and educational practices required by NM PreK.

**PreK Classroom/Program:** A classroom or program that serves children who have attained their fourth birthday prior to September 1 of the applicable school year.

**Renewal Request:** A renewal request is a request submitted by an existing PreK provider that has a contract for NM PreK services that will expire June 30, 2026. A renewal request is considered a new application and must be fully completed.

**Rural District:** A district with at least 40% of its population in a rural area as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

**School Based Applicants:** School-Based eligible applicants may apply for all program options. To support an equitable mixed-delivery PreK system that supports parent choice, both Community and School-Based programs are eligible to apply to serve 3- and 4-year-old children.

**School District Area:** The geographic boundaries of a school district that an applicant falls within.

**Tribal Programs:** Tribal early childhood programs operated by a Tribal government located in New Mexico.

## SECTION VIII – PRIORITY DISTRICTS

Funding priority criteria will be determined as listed below. If a School District Area is not listed, it does not meet ECECD's funding priority criteria.

**Priority 1: Eligible applicants proposing to serve four-year-olds residing in the geographic boundaries of the following NM School District Areas:** Alamogordo Public Schools, Albuquerque Public Schools, Animas Public Schools, Artesia Public Schools, Belen Public Schools, Bloomfield Schools, Carlsbad Municipal Schools, Carrizozo Municipal Schools, Central Consolidated Schools, Cimarron Municipal Schools, Clayton Municipal Schools, Clovis Municipal Schools, Cobre Consolidated Schools, Corona Public Schools, Deming Public Schools, Dexter Consolidated Schools, Dora Consolidated Schools, Dulce Independent Schools, Elida Municipal Schools, Estancia Municipal Schools, Eunice Public Schools, Gallup-McKinley County Schools, Grady Municipal Schools, Hobbs Municipal Schools, Hondo Valley Public Schools, Lake Arthur Municipal Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, Las Vegas City Public Schools, Lordsburg Municipal Schools, Logan Municipal Schools, Los Alamos Public Schools, Loving Municipal Schools, Lovington Municipal Schools, Maxwell Municipal Schools, Magdalena Municipal Schools, Pecos Independent Schools, Pojoaque Valley Schools, Portales Municipal Schools, Quemado Schools, Raton Public Schools, Reserve Independent Schools, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Ruidoso Municipal Schools, San Jon Municipal Schools, Socorro Consolidated Schools, Springer Municipal Schools, Tatum Municipal Schools, Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools, Tucumcari Public Schools, Tularosa Municipal Schools, Vaughn Municipal Schools, Zuni Public Schools.

**Priority 2: Eligible applicants proposing to serve three-year-olds residing in the geographic boundaries of the following NM School District Areas:** Alamogordo Public Schools, Albuquerque Public Schools, Belen Public Schools, Bloomfield Schools, Capitan Municipal Schools, Carlsbad Municipal Schools, Carrizozo Municipal Schools, Central Consolidated Schools, Clayton Municipal Schools, Cloudcroft Public Schools, Clovis Municipal Schools, Cobre Consolidated Schools, Corona Public Schools, Cuba Independent Schools, Deming Public Schools, Des Moines Municipal Schools, Dexter Consolidated Schools, Dulce Independent School District, Estancia Municipal Schools, Eunice Public Schools, Floyd Municipal Schools, Gallup-McKinley County Schools, Hagerman Municipal Schools, Hatch Valley Public Schools, Hobbs Municipal Schools, Jal Public Schools, Las Vegas City Public Schools, Logan Municipal Schools, Los Alamos Public Schools, Los Lunas Public Schools, Loving Municipal Schools, Lovington Municipal Schools, Maxwell Municipal Schools, Magdalena Municipal Schools, Melrose Public Schools, Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools, Moriarty-Edgewood School District, Pecos Independent Schools, Pojoaque Valley Schools, Portales Municipal Schools, Quemado Schools, Questa Independent School District, Raton Public Schools, Red River, Reserve Independent Schools, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Santa Fe Public Schools, Springer Municipal Schools, Tatum Municipal Schools, Texico Municipal Schools, Tucumcari Public Schools, Vaughn Municipal Schools, Zuni Public Schools.

**Priority 3: Eligible applicants proposing to serve three-year-olds residing in the geographic boundaries of the following NM School District Areas:** Animas Public Schools, Artesia Public Schools, Aztec Public Schools, Chama Valley Independent Schools, Cimarron Municipal Schools, Dora Consolidated Schools, Elida Municipal Schools, Espanola Public Schools, Farmington Municipal Schools, Fort Sumner Municipal Schools, Gadsden Independent School District, Grady Municipal Schools, Hondo Valley Public Schools, Lake Arthur Municipal Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, Lordsburg Municipal Schools, Roswell Independent Schools, Ruidoso Municipal Schools, San Jon Municipal Schools, Socorro

Consolidated Schools, Taos Municipal Schools, Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools, Tularosa Municipal Schools, West Las Vegas Schools.

**Priority 4: Eligible applicants that are proposing to serve four-year-olds residing in the geographic boundaries of the following NM School District Areas:** Capitan Municipal Schools, Chama Valley Independent Schools, Cloudcroft Municipal Schools, Cuba Independent Schools, Des Moines Municipal Schools, Espanola Public Schools, Farmington Municipal Schools, Fort Sumner Municipal Schools, Gadsden Independent Schools, Hagerman Municipal Schools, Hatch Valley Public Schools, Jal Public Schools, Los Lunas Public Schools, Melrose Public Schools, Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools, Mora Independent Schools, Moriarty-Edgewood School District, Penasco Independent Schools, Questa Independent School District, Red River, Roswell Independent Schools, Santa Fe Public Schools, Taos Municipal Schools, Texico Municipal Schools, Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools, Vaughn Municipal Schools, Wagon Mound, West Las Vegas Schools.

## **SECTION IX – APPLICATION NARRATIVE QUESTIONS**

**Total Point Value = 130**

**1. Describe the unmet need for PreK services in the community or geographic region to be served, including:**

- (a) Describe how unmet need was determined. The description must include:
- Demographic description of the community or geographic region. (5 points)
  - Description of unmet need for NM PreK for 3- and/or 4-year-olds including: (8 points)
    - A description of current preschool providers, including child care centers, Head Start, child care homes, and school districts and how the applicant will collaborate with other programs to ensure that families of eligible PreK students are aware of the NM PreK programs available through the mixed delivery system;
    - Describe how the current saturation of 3- and/or 4-year olds has been considered in the planning process for providing PreK services in the designated geographical area; and
    - Describe what collaboration has occurred within the geographic area between providers or any community agreements related to applying for NM PreK services.
    - If applicable, describe whether your program has PreK-eligible children on full-time Child Care Assistance contracts, and whether continuing or expanded funding would support you in serving those children through PreK.
- (b) Describe the program's plan to implement the NM PreK program within the identified geographical region. The description should include:
- Description of program option(s), number, ages of children the program proposes to serve, and the number of classrooms and sites. (3 points)
  - Proposed days and hours of service including any before/after care or summer care available for families. (3 points)
  - How the applicant will staff the NM PreK classrooms with educators who meet the credential requirements. (3 points)
  - How the applicant will support PreK educators in completing the required NM PreK training and how the applicant will meet the required number of instructional hours for the program option(s) proposed to serve. (3 points)

**2. Facilities. Describe in specific detail the program's facility(ies), including:**

- (a) Physical location, including how the program serves the unique needs of the community. (3 points)
- (b) Layout of existing and proposed PreK classroom(s), including: (3 points)
  - i. Learning centers,
  - ii. What age-appropriate materials support learning outcomes,
  - iii. Parent information center,
  - iv. Where children will store personal belongings,
  - v. Bathroom/toileting facilities (number of toilets, changing tables and sinks),
  - vi. Playground, and
  - vii. Other such facilities.

**3. Compliance with the New Mexico PreK standards: Please describe the applicant's plan to ensure compliance with NM PreK program standards, including:**

- (a) Data entry requirements (enrollment, child assessment, educator credentials, etc.), (2 points)
- (b) Budget and finance responsibilities, including additional sources of funding (ex. Head Start funding, foundation funding, grants, etc.), (2 points)
- (c) Health and safety guidelines, (2 points)
- (d) Social-emotional and developmentally appropriate best practices, (2 points)
- (e) Requirements for developmental and health screenings, (2 points)
- (f) Requirements to provide a fully inclusive environment (including procedures and practices), (2 points)
- (g) Requirements to provide a culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum, and (2 points)
- (h) Identify what research-based curriculum the program will use. (2 points)

**4. Full Funded Enrollment:**

- (a) Describe how the eligible applicant will meet and maintain full funded enrollment, including: (4 points)
  - i. Recruitment plan, and
  - ii. Enrollment plan
- (b) Please state how (including strategies and action plans) the program will prioritize enrollments of: (2 points)
  - i. Children experiencing homelessness,
  - ii. Children in foster care, and
  - iii. Children who live in Title 1 school boundaries.

**5. PreK Compliance for Existing Programs (if Applicable):**

- (a) Describe any current programmatic findings of non-compliance and program deficiencies on current contracts/agreements/grants (including serious audit exceptions relating to fiscal procedures). Indicate if the program is on a current PreK corrective action plan. (2 points)

**6. Please describe the program's plan to implement continuous quality improvement including:**

- (a) Ongoing professional development that includes accountability and tracking of required education and training, (2 points)
- (b) Goals for family engagement and family education, (3 points)
- (c) Policies or procedures that demonstrates a reflective and responsive approach to the family satisfaction survey including language and culture to support dual language learners, (3 points)

- (d) Process for assessing the PreK environment (e.g., classroom set up, materials, routines) to support a high-quality program, (3 points)
- (e) Supporting educators to implement a research-based curriculum and adjust curriculum as needed, (3 points)
- (f) Child Assessment Process and Documentation using NM Early Learning Guidelines including ongoing support, accountability, and a quality assurance review of this process and documentation, (3 points)
- (g) Participation in Practice-Based Coaching and/or consultation, including required release time for teachers to meet with Practice-Based Coach and/or consultant and CLASS observations through the model defined by ECECD, and (3 points)
- (h) Data analysis process with a focus on improving child outcomes. (5 points)

**7. Please state the program's plan to collaborate with other early care and education programs in the community and school district, including:**

- (a) How the program plans to measure, track, and demonstrate that collaboration:
  - i. Description of regular meetings with other early care and education programs in the community such as public schools, community providers, Head Start, Tribal programs, and Family Infant Toddler (FIT) programs, (3 points)
  - ii. Description of how meetings are documented and efforts to ensure participation among all community partners, and (3 points)
  - iii. Description of process to share waitlists to ensure access equity and parent choice. (3 points)
- (b) How that collaboration will strengthen early childhood partnerships to ensure families have access to needed resources that meet their needs:
  - i. Description of how program ensures families are aware of community resources, (2 points)
  - ii. Description of how program collaborates with community to ensure each PreK participant has current vision, dental, and hearing screenings, (2 points)
  - iii. Description of how program collaborates with Local Education Agency (LEA) including referral and evaluation process, (2 points)
  - iv. Description of how the program collaborates with LEA to integrate ancillary services (e.g., occupational, speech/language, and physical therapies) within regular program activities, and (2 points)
  - iv. Description of how program ensures linguistically equitable access for families. (3 points)

**8. Please describe how the program supports full inclusion to include the following:**

- (a) Ensuring students with IEPs are receiving services (4 points)
- (b) Collaboration with the Local Education Agency (LEA) (3 points)
- (c) Incorporating lesson planning and modifying classroom environment (3 points)

**9. Please describe how the eligible applicant will use NM PreK funding, including:**

- (a) How will NM PreK funding be used to support quality program operations and compliance with the NM PreK Standards (i.e. salaries, educational materials, a description of any expenses that will be cost allocated, and other funding sources used to support NM PreK operations)? (10 points)
- (b) What will the program do to ensure age eligible children are enrolled in NM PreK classrooms before using child care assistance funding for full-day programming? (10 points)

## TERMS

All applicants that receive a grant must agree to the following terms:

### 1. Termination

- A. Grounds. ECECD may terminate this Grant of Award for convenience or cause. The Awardee may only terminate this Grant of Award based upon ECECD's uncured, material breach of this Agreement.
- B. Notice. ECECD Opportunity to Cure.
  - 1. ECECD shall give Awardee written notice of termination at least thirty (30) days prior to the intended date of termination.
  - 2. The Awardee shall give ECECD written notice of termination at least thirty (30) days prior to the intended date of termination, which notice shall (i) identify all the Department's material breaches of this Grant of Award upon which the termination is based and (ii) state what ECECD must do to cure such material breaches. Awardee's notice of termination shall only be effective (i) if ECECD does not cure all material breaches within the thirty (30) day notice period or (ii) in the case of material breaches that cannot be cured within thirty (30) days, ECECD does not, within the thirty (30) day notice period, notify the Awardee of its intent to cure and begin with due diligence to cure the material breach.
  - 3. The Grant of Award may be terminated immediately upon written notice to the Awardee (i) if the Awardee becomes unable to perform the services contracted for, as determined by ECECD; (ii) if, during the term of this Grant of Award, the Awardee is suspended or debarred by the State Purchasing Agent; or (iii) the Grant of Award is terminated pursuant to Article 14 - Appropriations of this document.
- C. Liability. Except as otherwise expressly allowed or provided under this Grant of Award, ECECD's sole liability upon termination shall be to pay for acceptable work performed prior to the Awardee's receipt or issuance of a notice of termination; provided, however, that a notice of termination shall not nullify or otherwise affect either party's liability for pre-termination defaults under or breaches of this Grant of Award. The Awardee shall submit an invoice for such work within thirty (30) days of receiving or sending the notice of termination. THIS PROVISION IS NOT EXCLUSIVE AND DOES NOT WAIVE ECECD'S OTHER LEGAL RIGHTS AND REMEDIES CAUSED BY THE AWARDEE'S DEFAULT/BREACH OF THIS GRANT OF AWARD.
- D. Termination Management. Immediately upon receipt by either ECECD or the Awardee of notice of termination of this Grant of Award, the Awardee shall: 1) not incur any further obligations for salaries, services or any other expenditure of funds under this Grant of Award without the written approval of ECECD; 2) comply with all directives issued by ECECD in the notice of termination as to the performance of work under this Grant of Award; and 3) take such action as ECECD shall direct for the protection, preservation, retention or transfer of all property titled to the Department and records generated under this Grant of Award. Any non-expendable personal property or equipment provided to or purchased by the Awardee with contract funds shall become the property of ECECD upon termination and shall be submitted to the Department as soon as practicable.

## **2. Fund Accountability**

The parties shall provide strict accountability of all monies made subject to the Grant of Award. The awardee shall maintain fiscal records, follow generally accepted accounting principles, and account for all receipts and disbursements of funds transferred to the awardee pursuant to this grant of award. The awardee will include all monies made subject to this grant of award in an annual audit if required by federal or state of New Mexico law, to be completed by an outside auditing agency. The awardee will provide ECECD with a copy of the annual audit.

## **3. Maintenance of Records**

The awardee shall maintain detailed time and expenditure records that indicate the date; time, nature, and cost of services rendered during the Grant of Award's term and effect and retain them for a period of three (3) years from the date of final payment under this Grant of Award. The records shall be subject to inspection by ECECD, the general services department/state purchasing division and the state auditor. ECECD shall have the right to audit billings both before and after payment. Payment under this Grant of Award shall not foreclose the right of ECECD to recover excessive or illegal payments.

## **4. Confidentiality**

Any confidential information provided to or developed by the awardee in the performance of this Grant of Award shall be kept confidential and shall not be made available to any individual or organization by the awardee without the prior written approval of ECECD.

## **5. Amendment**

- A. This Grant of Award shall not be altered, changed, or amended except by instrument in writing executed by the parties hereto and all other required signatories.
- B. If ECECD proposes an amendment to the Grant of Award to unilaterally reduce funding due to budget or other considerations, the Awardee shall, within thirty (30) days of receipt of the proposed Amendment, have the option to terminate the Grant of Award, pursuant to the termination provisions as set forth in Article 1 – Termination of this document, or to agree to the reduced funding.

## **6. Assignment**

The Awardee shall not assign or transfer any interest in this Grant of Award or assign any claims for money due or to become due under this Grant of Award without the prior written approval of ECECD.

## **7. Applicable Law**

The laws of the State of New Mexico shall govern this Grant of Award, without giving effect to its choice of law provisions. Venue shall be proper only in a New Mexico court of competent jurisdiction in accordance with NMSA 1978, § 38-3-1 (G). By execution of this Grant of Award, Awardee acknowledges and agrees to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of New Mexico over any and all lawsuits arising under or out of any term of this Grant of Award.



**8. Liability**

Each party shall be solely responsible for fiscal or other sanctions occasioned as a result of its own violation or alleged violation of requirements applicable to the performance of the Grant of Award, or any other requirement related to this Grant of Award. ECECD shall be liable for its actions according to this Grant of Award subject to the immunities and limitations of the New Mexico Tort Claims Act, NMSA 1978, § 41-4-1, et. seq., as amended.

**9. Execution of Documents**

ECECD and the Awardee agree to execute any document(s) necessary to implement the terms of this Grant of Award.

**10. Equal Opportunity Compliance**

The Awardee agrees to abide by all federal and state laws and rules and regulations, and executive orders of the Governor of the State of New Mexico, pertaining to equal employment opportunity. In accordance with all such laws of the State of New Mexico, the Awardee assures that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, physical or mental handicap, or serious medical condition, spousal affiliation, sexual orientation or gender identity, be excluded from employment with or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any eligible applicant or activity performed under this Grant of Award. If Awardee is found not to be in compliance with these requirements during the life of this Grant of Award, Awardee agrees to take appropriate steps to correct these deficiencies.

**11. Workers Compensation**

The Awardee agrees to comply with state laws and rules applicable to workers compensation benefits for its employees. If the Awardee fails to comply with the Workers Compensation Act and applicable rules when required to do so, this Grant of Award may be terminated by ECECD.

**12. New Mexico Employees Health Coverage (Governmental entities are excluded from this provision)**

- A. If Awardee has, or grows to, six (6) or more employees who work, or who are expected to work, an average of at least 20 hours per week over a six (6) month period during the term of the Grant of Award, Awardee certifies, by signing this award, to have in place, and agrees to maintain for the term of the Grant of Award, health insurance for those employees if the expected annual value in the aggregate of any and all Grant of Awards between Awardee and the State exceed \$250,000 dollars.
- B. Awardee agrees to maintain a record of the number of employees who have (a) accepted health insurance; (b) declined health insurance due to other health insurance coverage already in place; or (c) declined health insurance for other reasons. These records are subject to review and audit by a representative of the State of New Mexico.
- C. Awardee agrees to advise all employees of the availability of State publicly financed health care coverage.

### **13. Background Checks**

- A. Community-Based Programs: Awardees that have or could have primary custody of children for at least twenty (20) hours per week are required under NMSA 1978, § 32A-15-1, et seq.; NMSA 1978 § 9- 29-8 (H); NMAC 8.9.6, et seq. and other applicable regulations to have background checks completed on all operators, employees, staff members, volunteers, or student interns. All Information Technology (IT) Awardees are also required to undergo a background check. The Awardee must comply with the fingerprint-based criminal background investigation process, as per current ECECD policy. The applicant for the background check is required to pay all related fees. Nationwide as well as state abuse and neglect background checks on required individuals will be conducted in accordance with NMAC 8.9.6 and all other applicable state and federal regulations and standards. An eligibility letter must be in the IT Awardee, Awardee operator, employee, staff member, volunteer, or student intern's personnel file prior to that individual having access to data or having any direct contact with children participating in eligible applicants delivered by ECECD or any Awardee providing services for the Department.
- B. School-Based Programs: NMSA 1978, § 22-10A-5. governs background checks for all licensed school employees, including contracted employees (i.e., instructional support programs). Licensure Background Information – New Mexico Public Education Department (state.nm.us).
- C. Tribal Programs: Awardees shall follow the local tribal regulatory authority procedures to receive a federal background check.

### **14. Appropriations**

The terms of this Grant of Award are contingent upon sufficient appropriations and authorization by the Legislature of New Mexico for the performance of this Grant of Award. If sufficient appropriations and authorization are not made by the Legislature, this Grant of Award shall terminate immediately upon written notice being given by ECECD to the Awardee. ECECD's decision as to whether sufficient appropriations are available shall be accepted by the Awardee and shall be final.

### **15. Sub-Contracts**

The awardee shall not subcontract any portion of the services to be performed under this Grant of Award without the prior written approval by the Procuring Agency Secretary or Designee. No such subcontract shall relieve the primary awardee from any obligations and liabilities under this Grant of Award, nor shall subcontract obligate direct payment from the Procuring Agency. Grant Awardee must notify subcontractors that they are subject to Article 3 - Maintenance of Records of this document.

### **16. Performance Measures**

- A. PreK programs must achieve and maintain 95% of funded enrollment within the first 30 days.
- B. PreK programs must provide a minimum of 90 hours of family engagement and education activities annually.
- C. PreK programs will demonstrate support of families to ensure their child attends regularly (at least 85% of time).

- D. PreK programs must ensure each PreK participant has current health screenings completed within 90 days from the date of enrollment
- E. PreK programs must ensure each PreK participant has a current developmental screening completed within 45 days from the date of enrollment.
- F. PreK programs must complete required assessments for enrolled children unless a parent chooses to opt out. Staff observe each child's development and learning across multiple settings to understand their progress and support individualized instruction. Programs use two assessment tools: a developmental assessment (Early Childhood Observation Tool – ECOT) conducted three times per program year and an executive-function assessment (Minnesota Executive Function Scale- MEFS) conducted twice per year. These assessments help educators track growth and plan appropriate learning experiences.
- G. PreK personnel must meet degree requirements or must be enrolled in six (6) credits per semester in a college degree program that will lead to meeting the required degree requirements.
- H. PreK programs must comply with all requirements outlined in the NM PreK Program Standards.
- I. At minimum, all teachers with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education must be paid at least \$55,000 a year and educational assistants must be paid a minimum of \$15/hour. The New Mexico PreK program anticipates increasing the per-slot reimbursement rates in the upcoming fiscal year. The Department encourages all providers to leverage this additional funding to strengthen compensation for their educational assistants and teachers. This investment is intended to support progress toward compensation that incentivizes the enhanced credentials and educational practices required by NM PreK.
- J. PreK programs must participate in the designated Professional Development Information System mandated by ECECD within 30 days of implementation.
- K. PreK programs must ensure that all coaches/consultants employed by a school district adhere to the policies, procedures, and coaching model designated by the ECECD to ensure objectivity as defined in the NM PreK Program Standards.
- L. Programs eligible for NM PreK funding in FY27 must first enroll all age-eligible 3- and 4-year-old children in a state-funded NM PreK classroom before serving them through an ECECD Child Care Assistance contract. Programs must also ensure that NM PreK funds are used whenever applicable before relying on Child Care Assistance funding.
- M. All PreK providers are required to enroll eligible children on a continuous, year round basis, without exception, regardless of the proximity to the end of the program year.

**APPENDIX A – 2026-2027 SATURATION PERCENTAGES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

School Districts/Charters	3-Year-Old Saturation Percentage	4-Year-Old Saturation Percentage
Alamogordo Public Schools	25%	64%
Albuquerque Public Schools	44%	63%
Animas Public Schools	71%	71%
Artesia Public Schools	62%	62%
Aztec Public Schools	62%	104%
Belen Consolidated Schools	31%	45%
Bernalillo Public Schools	96%	111%
Bloomfield Schools	37%	72%
Capitan Municipal Schools	44%	93%
Carlsbad Municipal Schools	38%	36%
Carrizozo Municipal Schools	0%	0%
Central Consolidated Schools	36%	66%
Chama Valley Independent Schools	67%	100%
Cimarron Municipal Schools	55%	55%
Clayton Municipal Schools	0%	68%
Cloudcroft Municipal Schools	0%	95%
Clovis Municipal Schools	20%	69%
Cobre Consolidated Schools	50%	50%
Corona Public Schools	0%	0%
Cuba Independent Schools	40%	81%
Deming Public Schools	41%	70%
Des Moines Municipal Schools	0%	100%
Dexter Consolidated Schools	36%	74%
Dora Consolidated Schools	57%	57%
Dulce Independent Schools	0%	30%
Elida Municipal Schools	62%	62%
Espanola Public Schools	56%	92%
Estancia Municipal Schools	35%	35%
Eunice Public Schools	0%	66%
Farmington Municipal Schools	53%	76%
Floyd Municipal Schools	0%	125%
Fort Sumner Municipal Schools	53%	100%
Gadsden Independent Schools	65%	83%
Gallup-Mckinley County Schools	34%	64%
Grady Municipal Schools	73%	73%
Grants-Cibola County Schools	87%	106%
Hagerman Municipal Schools	29%	100%
Hatch Valley Public Schools	44%	92%
Hobbs Municipal Schools	31%	73%
Hondo Valley Public Schools	63%	63%
House Municipal Schools	250%	250%
Jal Public Schools	0%	90%
Jemez Mountain Public Schools	111%	111%
Jemez Valley Public Schools	106%	169%
Lake Arthur Municipal Schools	60%	60%

School Districts/Charters	3-Year-Old Saturation Percentage	4-Year-Old Saturation Percentage
Las Cruces Public Schools	64%	73%
Las Vegas City Public Schools	22%	22%
Lordsburg Municipal Schools	60%	67%
Logan Municipal Schools	0%	0%
Los Alamos Public Schools	10%	67%
Los Lunas Public Schools	49%	79%
Loving Municipal Schools	0%	56%
Lovington Municipal Schools	0%	0%
Maxwell Municipal Schools	0%	0%
Magdalena Municipal Schools	44%	44%
Melrose Public Schools	26%	89%
Mesa Vista Consolidated Schools	0%	100%
Mescalero Apache School	123%	123%
Mora Independent Schools	96%	96%
Moriarty-Edgewood School District	44%	92%
Mosquero Municipal Schools	167%	167%
Mountainair Public Schools	121%	121%
Pecos Independent Schools	20%	20%
Penasco Independent Schools	91%	91%
Pojoaque Valley Schools	42%	42%
Portales Municipal Schools	13%	68%
Quemado Schools	40%	40%
Questa Independent Schools	30%	81%
Raton Municipal Schools	4%	4%
Red River Valley Charter School	0%	100%
Reserve Independent Schools	42%	42%
Rio Rancho Public Schools	16%	60%
Roswell Independent Schools	64%	89%
Roy Municipal Schools	250%	250%
Ruidoso Municipal Schools	53%	71%
San Jon Municipal Schools	56%	56%
Santa Fe Public Schools	42%	82%
Santa Rosa Consolidated Schools	93%	144%
Silver Consolidated Schools	95%	115%
Socorro Consolidated Schools	67%	63%
Springer Municipal Schools	0%	0%
Taos Municipal Schools	75%	84%
Tatum Municipal Schools	44%	44%
Texico Municipal Schools	27%	86%
Truth Or Consequences Municipal Schools	72%	79%
Tucumcari Public Schools	36%	64%
Tularosa Municipal Schools	52%	58%
Vaughn Municipal Schools	0%	77%
Wagon Mound Elementary	83%	83%
West Las Vegas Schools	54%	92%
Zuni Public Schools	0%	22%