

AOE UPK 101

Vermont Agency of Education

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Meeting Norms

- We will pause for questions roughly every 15th slide so please hold your questions until the “Time for Questions” slide appears.
- If we don’t get to your question or you stump us, please send us an email at AOE.UPK@vermont.gov.
- Please raise your virtual hand if you have a question. Please be kind and patient with each other.
- We will not be reviewing the chat feature during the presentation instead please email your questions to AOE.UPK@vermont.gov.

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EARLY EDUCATION

Each and every young child and their family are diverse in culture, language, geography, values, beliefs and circumstances. To support individual growth, development and continuous learning over their lifetime, the AOE is committed to fully including each and every child in a continuum of high quality, evidence-based early learning experiences, from birth through grade 3.



Assessment



Early Childhood Special Ed

AOE Early Education Webpage

Early Education

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ASSESSMENT



EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL ED



UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN



UPK CAFE

Universal Prekindergarten: Act 166

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UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN: ACT 166

Welcome! The Act 166 Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK) webpage is for prekindergarten education programs and the families of prekindergarten students. It contains information needed to operate, apply or access UPK in Vermont.

What is Act 166?

[Act 166 of 2014](#) provides access to [publicly-funded](#) prekindergarten education for Vermont students. All prekindergarten education programs, including Head Start and public school-operated programs, must meet specific requirements to operate in Vermont. The State Board of Vermont created administrative rules to guide

UPK Mission Statement

What defines Vermont Universal Prekindergarten Education (UPK) is the implementation of high-quality, effective instruction by licensed educators who use evidence-based practices within intentionally designed early learning environments.

Early educators align curriculum with the Vermont Early Learning Standards while adapting experiences to support the full participation of each and every child to realize their full potential and promote positive outcomes.

Vermont Guiding Principles

Supporting Each and Every Young Child and Family's Full and Equitable Participation

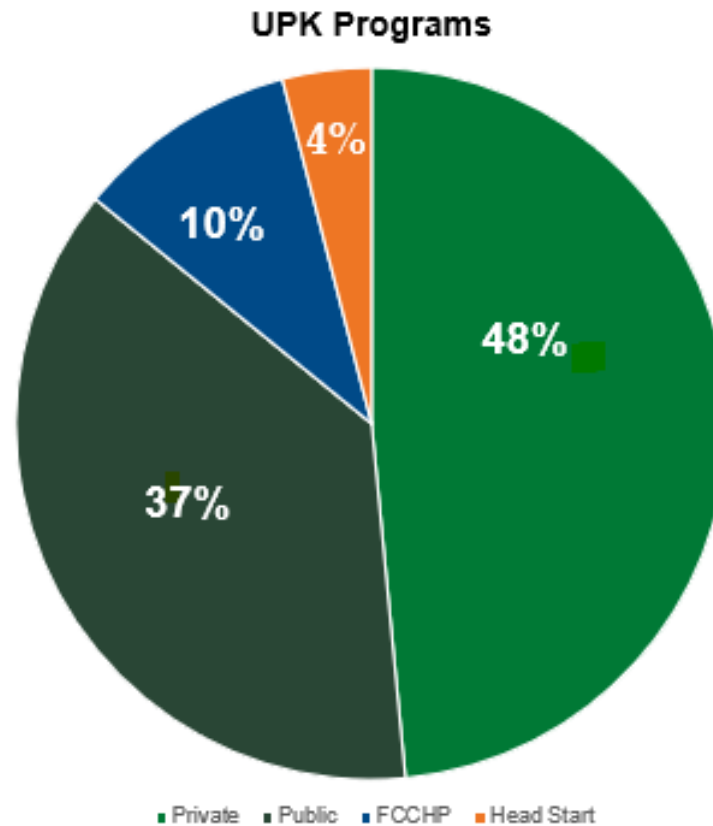
We believe that each and every child...

Learns within the context of secure and authentic relationships, play, and interactions within their environments.

Deserves equitable access to experiences that acknowledge and build on their uniqueness.

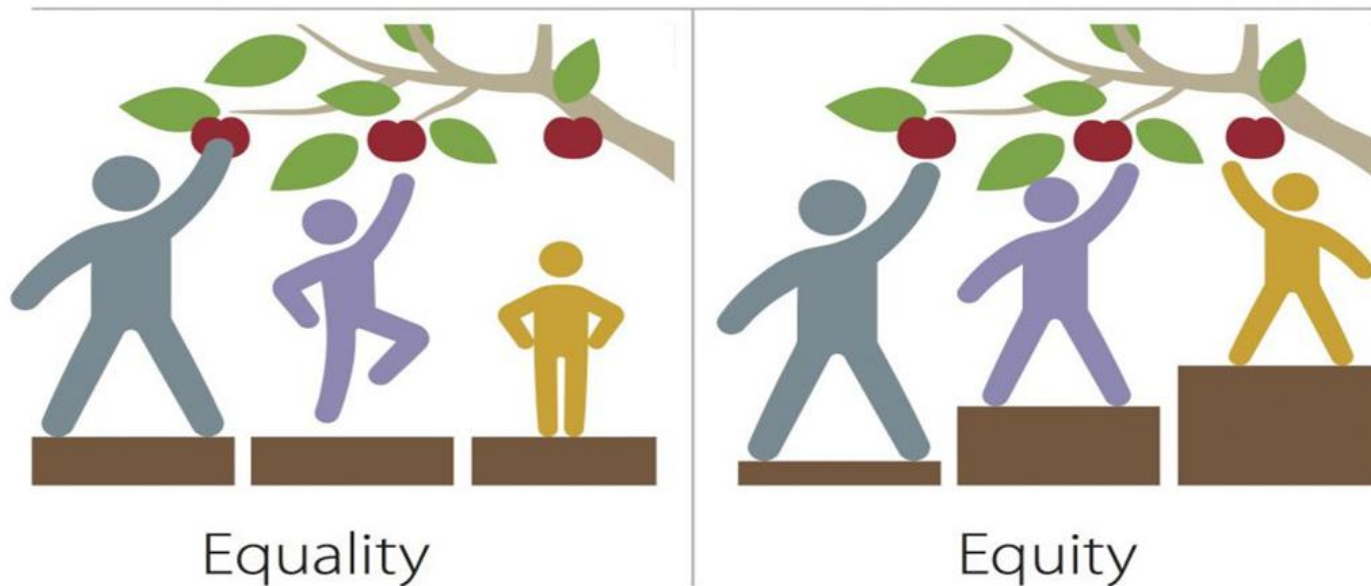
Deserves opportunities to deeply learn and develop to their full potential through joyful interactions in safe, accepting environments.

UPK Statistics



Equity and Inclusion

All children have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society.



Policy Statement on Inclusion

It is well documented that the beginning years of all children's lives are critical for building the early foundations of learning and wellness needed for success in school and later in life. During these years, children's brains develop rapidly, influenced by the experiences they share with their families, teachers, peers, and in their communities. Like all children, it is critical for children with disabilities to be exposed to a variety of rich experiences where they can learn in the context of play and everyday interactions and engage with their peers with and without disabilities.

U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education (2015). *Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs*

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a teacher practice framework for increasing access to education environments and opportunities. Learning environments, materials, and activities are planned ahead of time, with the aim of welcoming all learners.

UDL promotes:

- **Universal** supports for all learners.
- Creating **inclusive** learning environments.
- **Equity** in access to education opportunities for positive learning outcomes for each and every child.

Options for Recruiting Interest

Options for Sustaining Effort & Persistence

Options for Self-regulation

Options for Perception

Options for Expression & Communication

Options for Physical Action

Options for Comprehension

Principle I: Provide Multiple Means of Representation - the "WHAT" of learning - Learners differ in the ways that they perceive and comprehend information that is presented to them.

Principle II: Provide Multiple Means of Expression - the "HOW" of learning - Learners differ in the ways that they can navigate a learning environment and express what they know.

Principle III: Provide Multiple Means of Engagement - the "WHY" of learning - Learners differ markedly in the ways in which they can be engaged or motivated to learn. Some learners are highly engaged by spontaneity and novelty while others are disengaged, even frightened, by those aspects, preferring strict routine.

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

These UDL Guidelines and checkpoints can assist educators in designing flexible lessons and curricula that reduce barriers to learning and provide innovative and supportive learning to meet the needs of all learners. They can also help educators evaluate existing curricula goals, materials, methods and assessments.

Courtesy: Don Hays/The Special Technology Center
University of Washington
<http://www.udlguidelines.org>

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CENTER FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

CC BY NC



For more detail, examples, and research, visit the National Center on Universal Design at <http://www.udcenter.org/>

Early Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Early MTSS is a tiered framework of universal promotion, prevention and intervention is the model for delivering a comprehensive range of evidence-based practices, strategies and resources to families and early childhood practitioners with the goal of improving early learning, social and emotional well-being, and competence for Vermont's young children birth thru age 8. Free self-paced, online training modules available until June 30, 2024. For more information contact, Amy Murphy, Inclusion/Early MTSS Coordinator, Amy.Murphy@vermont.gov



UPK Administrative Rules

- AOE/AHS
 - UPK application approval process
 - ACIS monitoring co-investigation
 - Meet bi-monthly
- 11 UPK requirements including:
 - Licensed ECE/ECSE
 - Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS)
 - Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG)
 - Child Care Regulations and STARS
- [Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices – Prekindergarten Education](#)

UPK Online Application Process

- **Initial** UPK application submission for initial approval and/or change of childcare license number.
- UPK prequalified program **renewal** application submission every 3 years expiring on June 30th, XXXX.
- [UPK program applications](#)



Application Checklist

Universal PreK Prequalified Education Program Application Checklist	Yes, I have this information.	No, I still must gather this information.
Organization Type: For Profit/Non-Profit/Head Start/Public School.		
Application Type: Renewal or New Application		
Program Physical and Mailing Addresses: Verify all contact information with Bright Futures BFIS . Please note it is critical that the program name, location, address, director's name, email etc. that is entered on the prequalification application matches exactly to your program information as listed in BFIS.		
Program Director Name and Contact Information: Name/ Position/Email/Phone. Remember to verify in BFIS .		
Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELS): Developing Self:		

Example of Certificate



UPK Application and Required Reporting Chart

UPK Program Requirement	Program Action	Compliance Review
UPK prequalified program renewal application submission	Every three years expiring on June 30th, XXXX.	Online application reviewed and approved by AOE and CDD.
Initial UPK application submission	Initial UPK prequalification approval status and required when there is a change of childcare license number.	Online application reviewed and approved by AOE and CDD.
Submit a UPK Program Change Form	Each time there is a change in a program (program closures or voluntary withdrawal from UPK, director changes, loss of licensed ECE/ECSE, STARS changes, etc.).	Reviewed by AOE Early Education Team.
ACIS Desk Monitoring Reporting	Annually for programs that are not renewing and/or not being monitored through ACIS.	Reviewed by AOE Early Childhood Education Team.

UPK Program Change Form

Director changes.

Licensed ECE loss of/change/ECE renewal dates.

STARS level changes/renewal dates.

Program expires childcare license [UPK Approved Change Form](#).



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Pause for Questions



11 UPK Requirements

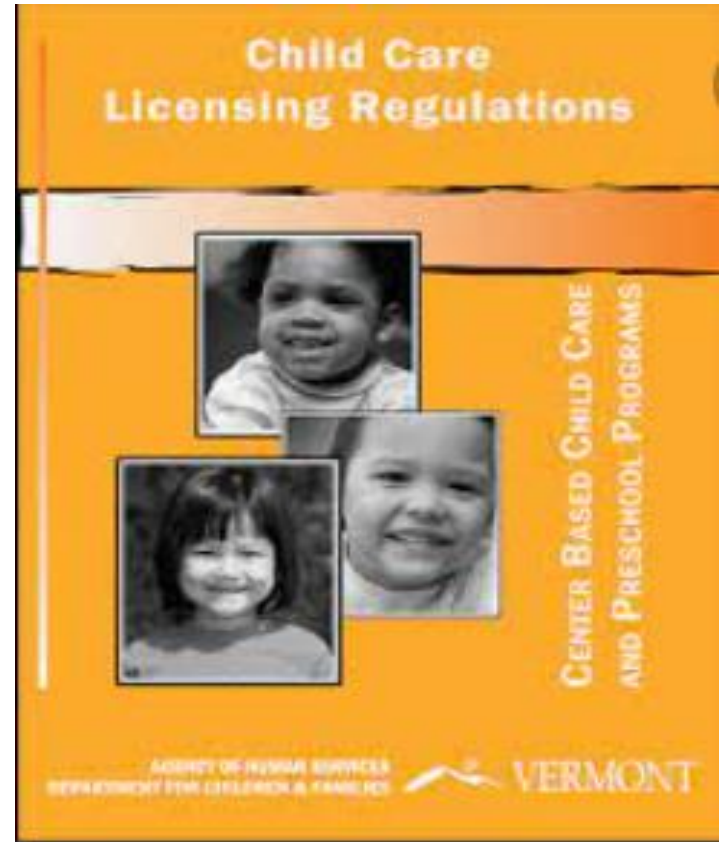
Since 2016, Vermont's Act 166 provides 10 hours of publicly-funded prekindergarten education for 35 weeks for 3, 4, and 5-year-old children not enrolled in kindergarten, through a mixed delivery system (public, private and family childcare home providers).



UPK Requirement 1. Child Care Licensing Regulations (AHS/CDD)

Requirement 1. [Child Care Licensing Regulations](#) - The public or private program is currently licensed or registered, as applicable, by the Department for Children and Families, and is in good regulatory standing.

Please contact your Licensing Specialist with any questions you may have.



UPK Requirement 2. STARS (AHS/CDD)



Requirement 2. QRIS/[STARS](#) - The public or private program receives and maintains at least one of the following quality program recognition standards:

- AEYC accreditation, Level 5 or Level 4 STARS rating or a minimum of 3 stars and approved 2-year plan to reach 4 stars.

Please contact CDD STARS specialist with any questions you may have.

UPK Requirement 3. VELs (AOE)



Requirement 3. VELs (AOE)



UPK Requirement 3. (AOE)

VELS Developing Self

Approaches to Learning:

- Element 1: Play and Explorations
- Element 2: Initiative
- Element 3: Problem Solving

Social and Emotional Learning and Development:

- Element 1: Emotional and Self Regulation
- Element 2: Self-Awareness
- Element 3: Relationships with Adults and Peers

Growing, Moving and Being Healthy:

- Element 1: Motor Development and Coordination
- Element 2: Health and Safety Practices

VELS Communication and Expression

Language Development:

- Element 3: Writing
- Element 4: Dual Language Learners-Literacy in English

Creative Arts and Expression:

- Element 1: Visual Arts
- Element 2: Music
- Element 3: Theatre (Dramatic Play)
- Element 4: Dance

VELS Communication and Expression (cont.)

Language Development:

- Element 1: Receptive Language (Listening)
- Element 2: Expressive Language (Speaking)
- Element 3: Speaking and Listening
- Element 4: Social Rules of Language
- Element 5: Language
- Element 6: Dual Language Learners

Literacy Development:

- Element 1: Foundational Reading Skills
- Element 2a: Engagement with Literature and Informational Text (0-5)
- Element 2b: Reading Literature
- Element 2c. Reading Informational Texts

VELS Learning About the World

Mathematics:

- Elements 1-2d: Number Sense/Relationships
- Elements 3-3b: Measurement and Classification
- Elements 4-4b: Geometry and Spatial Reasoning

Science:

- Element 1: Physical Sciences
- Element 2: Life Sciences
- Element 3: Physical and Cultural Geography
- Element 4: Engineering Design

Social Studies:

- Element 1: Inquiry
- Element 2: Family/Community/Civics/Gov./Society
- Element 3: History
- Element 4: Economics

UPK Requirement 7 TSG (AOE)

- **Requirement 7. Assessment (Teaching Strategies GOLD-TSG) TSG** is the Vermont UPK assessment and child developmental progress monitoring tool. Act 166 requires:
 - Rule 2606 (d) conduct child development assessments of each child enrolled using the assessment tool approved by the AOE at **least two times a year, (December 15th and June 15th)** and report the results of those assessments to the AOE by July 31.



VELS Plus TSG Equals Intentional Teaching

Domains of Learning

Domains are broad areas of growth, development and learning that focus on all that happens in the years from birth through grade 3. The domains are presented across the following three sections:



Developing Self

Includes the domains:
Approaches to Learning;
Social and Emotional
Learning and Development;
and Growth, Moving and
Being Healthy

Developing Self



Communication and Expression

Includes the domains:
Language Development;
Literacy Development;
Creative Arts
and Expression

Communication and
Expression

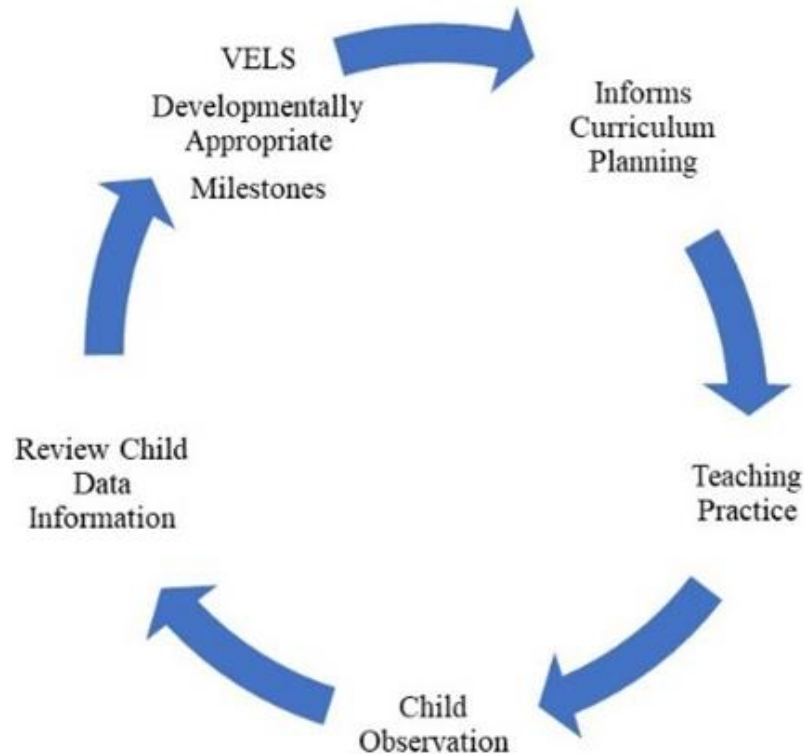


Learning About the World

Includes the domains:
Mathematics; Science;
and Social Studies

Learning About the
World

Intentional Teaching Feedback Loop and TSG



TSG and VELS Intentional Teaching Links

- [Teaching Strategies Support](#)
- TSG E-book free resource from NAEYC. [An Early Childhood Educator's Guide to a Whole-Child Approach.](#)
- [Teaching Strategies: Alignment With Vermont Early Learning Standards - Birth Through Third Grade](#)
- Access the [GOLD Teacher User Guide](#) for yearly guidance and support for teachers.
- Access the [GOLD Administrator User Guide](#) for yearly guidance and support for teachers.

TSG Interrater Reliability (IRR)

IRR certification is required for UPK compliance:

- Teaching staff should be recertified every 3 years.
- Must demonstrate a reliability score of at least 80%.
- Onboarding of teaching staff should include IRR.
- Each school district and/or program administrator should verify that all designated school district staff and contractual partners achieve interrater reliability and certification by Teaching Strategies™.

TSG Information Links

[Adding Children in MyTeachingStrategies](#)

[Editing Children in MyTeachingStrategies](#)

[What is Interrater Reliability Certification?](#)

[How do I complete the Interrater Reliability Certification process in MyTeachingStrategies®?](#)

Pause for Questions



UPK Requirement 4.

Licensed ECE/ECSE (AOE)

UPK prequalification requires each program to have a licensed early childhood educator (ECE) or early childhood special educator (ECSE) as defined by Act 166.



UPK Requirement 4. Licensed ECE/ECSE (AOE) cont.

Public Schools:

- A licensed ECE or ECSE direct PreK instruction in each PreK classroom.

UPK Requirement 4. Licensed ECE/ECSE (AOE) cont.

Private Programs:

- A licensed ECE or ECSE on site during 10 hours of UPK instruction per week.

UPK Requirement 4. Licensed ECE/ECSE (AOE) cont.

FCCH Providers:

- Be a licensed ECE/ECSE direct instruction for 10 hours per week.
- Contract with a licensed ECE/ECSE for direct instruction for 10 hours per week.
- Be mentored for at least 3 hours/week by licensed ECE/ECSE.

UPK Requirement 4. Licensed ECE/ECSE (AOE) cont.

AOE Temporary Licenses:

- ECE/ECSE provisional license (SU/AOE waiver)
- Emergency license (SD/SU only)

AOE ECE/ECSE Provisional License Waiver for Private Programs

The Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators (VSBPE) has approved an Agency of Education (AOE) Early Childhood Educator or Early Childhood Special Educator (ECE/ECSE) provisional license specifically for qualifying individuals who are employed or contract with **private prekindergarten education programs** and have been denied an ECE/ECSE provisional license from a supervisory union (superintendent).

AOE ECE/ECSE Provisional License Qualifying Criteria

- More than one staff member may apply.
- Applicants must hold, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree.
- Applicants need to identify a licensed ECE or ECSE mentor.
- Applicants must have a written provisional plan with an identified pathway to educator licensing.

[AOE Early Childhood Educator Provisional License Qualifications](#)

Loss of ECE/ECSE (AOE)

Step 1: Notify the AOE UPK Program Change Form (5 days).

Step 2: Notify your partnering SD/SU's (5 days).

Step 3: 30 school day substitute notification from AOE.

Step 4: Work with UPK State Coordinator on options.



Loss of ECE/ECSE Options

- Hire new licensed ECE/ECSE.
- School provides licensed ECE/ECSE through alternate partnership agreement (UPK Administrative Rule 2607).
- Superintendent Provisional License
- AOE ECE/ECSE Provisional License

Extended Substitute Leave

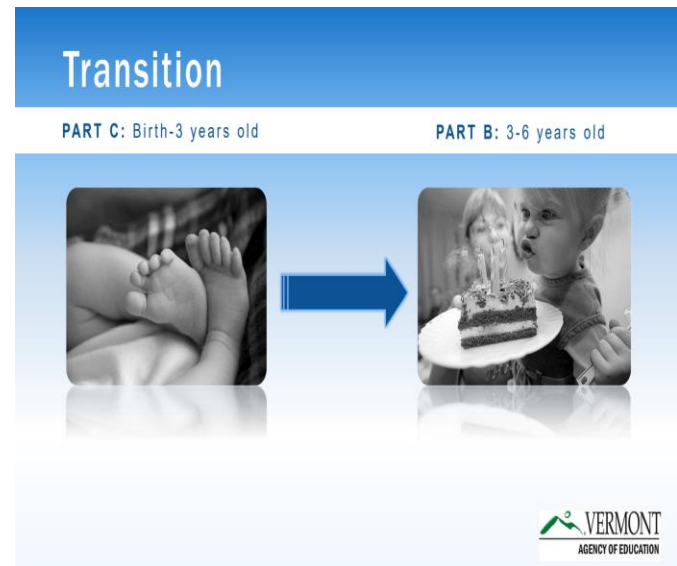
In the event a licensed early childhood educator or early childhood special educator needs extended leave but is not leaving employment from a public or private prequalified education program, a long-term substitute may be used beyond the 30 school days substitute ACIS Loss of Educator policy (**60 school days**).

Pause for Questions



UPK Requirements 5. IDEA (AOE)

Requirement 5. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Adhere to all applicable federal and state laws including, but not limited to, Part B of IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Rule 4500 Restraint, and Seclusion, the ADA and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and, for children receiving early childhood special education services who are enrolled in a program.



Early Childhood Special Education Services (ECSES) (AOE)

- Supports children ages 3 up to 6 years.
- ECSES is administered through local school districts to ensure access and participation in early childhood programs for each and every child who is determined eligible for services.
- ECSES enables young children with disabilities to be full participants in everyday routines and activities across a variety of settings (in their homes with their families, in child care, preschool or school programs, and in the community) throughout the early childhood years.

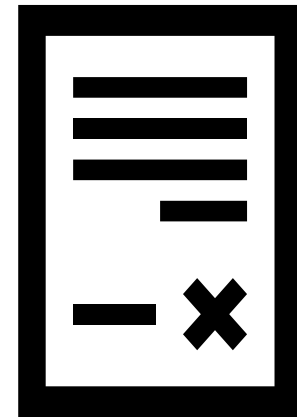
AOE ECSE Learning Modules

[Creating High-Quality Inclusive Environments](#): Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and high-quality practices that support the right of each and every young child and their family in Vermont. The purpose of this webinar is to assist LEAs, administrators, educators, special educators, service providers, and early childhood programs and community partners in identifying, developing, and sustaining high-quality inclusive opportunities and environments for each and every child with and without disabilities.

More information can be found on [AOE Early Education web page](#).

UPK Requirement 6. Ten Hours of UPK (AOE)

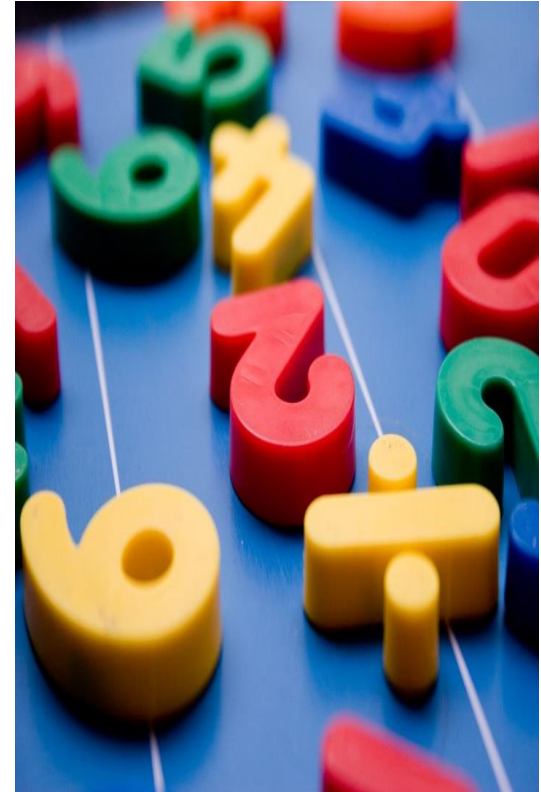
Requirement 6. Minimum 10 Hours of Universal Prekindergarten (UPK)
Instruction Rule 2603. Access to Prekindergarten Education 10 Hours per week for 35 weeks academic year. Each prekindergarten child whose parent or guardian enrolls the child at the child's district of residence is entitled to no less than **ten hours per week for 35 weeks annually** of publicly funded prekindergarten education at an available prequalified prekindergarten education program operated by a public school or private program.



UPK Tuition Funding (AOE)

Prekindergarten education is publicly funded by resident school districts. The cost of prekindergarten is part of a school district's budget as approved by district voters.

The statewide annual school year, per enrolled child, Prekindergarten Tuition Rate is set by the AOE using a national formula.



UPK Tuition Funding (AOE)

Programs are allowed to charge beyond the 10 hours of UPK education. For example:

- for prekindergarten education in excess of the 10 hours paid for by the district,
- or for childcare services,
- or both prekindergarten education and childcare.

UPK Memo: [Allowable Use of Publicly-Funded Prekindergarten Education Dollars](#) (February 2020)

Costs NOT Paid by UPK Funding (AOE)

1. Enrollment and registration fees
2. Field trip and activity fees
3. Administrative fees
4. TS GOLD student profile fees

UPK Guidance: [Additional Costs](#) (March 2019)



Partnership Agreements

A written agreement as referred to in Rule 2607(1) is a legally binding contract. This contract is between two entities such as a school district and a private prequalified program. This contract can also be referred to as a written agreement or partnership agreement.



PreK Versus Kindergarten Enrollment

A family who decides to not enroll their five-year-old in Kindergarten but keep their child enrolled in PreK is eligible to receive UPK tuition until the child's 6th birthday.

UPK Memo: [Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Eligibility and Enrollment](#)
(September 2020)



Families of PreK Students Information (AOE)

From the AOE Webpage: FAQ for Families

How old does my child need to be to qualify for UPK?

Your child must be three, four or five years old and not enrolled in kindergarten in their district of residence. Contact your school district to find out what date the district uses to determine a child's age for eligibility.

Where can I find a UPK program for my child?

[UPK Prequalified Program List](#) (AOE website) or BFIS.

How do I enroll my child in UPK?

Through your school district of residence.

[AOE UPK Families of Prekindergarten Students webpage](#)

UPK Requirement 10.

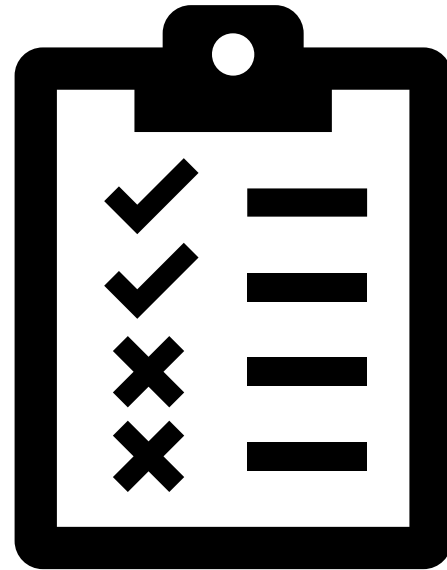
Onsite Monitoring

Permit on-site monitoring visits, announced and unannounced, by representatives from AOE, DCF, CDD, and the School District.



UPK Requirement 11. ACIS Monitoring

Participate in the state approved prekindergarten education monitoring system (Act 166 law and UPK Administrative Rules Section 2612).



AOE UPK Listserv and Newsletter

The AOE Early Education Team List Serv and e-newsletter (UPK Café) shares a variety of research and evidence-based resources, hot topics, news items and professional development opportunities relevant to your daily work and practice as a prekindergarten education program.

To sign up for the listserv and e-newsletter, please contact Leslie Freedman, ACIS and TSG Coordinator
Leslie.Freedman@vermont.gov.

Pause for Questions



Thank You!

Thank you for your time. Tammy and Wendy

Contact Information: AOE.UPK@vermont.gov

