

Title of Regulation:

HALF-DAY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Regulation No.: 43-264.1

Effective Date: 06/27/03

Constitutional and Statutory Provisions:

Section(s):

59-5-60.

General powers of [State] Board.

59-5-65.

Minimum standards for student conduct, attendance, and scholastic achievement; enforcement.

59-20-40(7).

Determination of annual allocations.

59-63-20(6).

Age of attendance.

59-139-05, et seq.

Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance

Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

State Board Regulation:

Half-Day Child Development Programs.

I. Legislation

In order to comply with the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984 and the Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act of 1993 school districts may establish and provide for the education of three-and four-year-old children who have predicted significant readiness deficiencies. The legislation requires that each district will provide for at least a half-day early childhood development program for four-year-old children. Districts have the option of serving three-year-old children.

Each district shall provide at least one program for four-year-old children and may serve identified three-year-old children who have significant readiness deficiencies.

Districts and schools shall integrate the planning and direction of the half-day program with the Early Childhood Initiative.

II. Plan for Enrollment

A. Public Notification of Program Availability

School districts shall attempt to contact parents or guardians of children who will reach age three or four on or before September 1 and who have potential for later school failure. The district shall make substantial efforts to publicize the availability of the program for four-year-olds, and for three-year-olds if appropriate.

B. Criteria for Enrollment

Each district shall develop criteria for the enrollment of children who have predicted significant readiness deficiencies. These criteria shall include the following:

1. A screening instrument approved by the State Department of Education for use in determining each child's developmental level,
2. An entrance age requirement which specifies a child must be three if the program serves three-year-olds, or four years of age on or before September 1 of the applicable school year,
3. Legal birth certificate issued by the Department of Health and Environmental Control or other appropriate authorized agency,
4. South Carolina Certificate of Immunization,
5. Comprehensive Health Appraisal if deemed necessary or appropriate.

III. Coordination

In the event that a local advisory committee exists in a community to coordinate early childhood education and development, school districts shall consult with the committee in planning and developing services to make maximum use of resources and avoid duplication of effort. When a local advisory committee does not exist, the school district shall identify available early childhood development and education resources in order to avoid duplication of public services. This may include Headstart and other Child Development Block Grant Programs.

IV. Program Description

A. Organization

A developmental educational program in a classroom setting shall be the major component of the program.

B. Program Length

The classroom program shall operate five days a week (or the equivalent) for at least 2 1/2 hours of instructional time, exclusive of breakfast, lunch and transportation. Program year will include 190 days of operation for staff (180 days service to children) subject to the same conditions for waiver of make-up days as prescribed by state law.

C. Staff Ratio and Group Size

Each classroom shall be staffed with one appropriately certified teacher and one teaching assistant for a maximum of 20 children per each half-day session. Teaching assistants shall have at least a high school diploma or the equivalent.

V. Funding

Child development funds will be allocated on an annual basis effective July 1 through June 30. Unobligated funds which become available during the fiscal year will be redistributed to serve additional eligible children.

A. District Allocation and Distribution of Funds

1. District Allocation

The State Department of Education will annually calculate each district allocation based on the number of kindergarten children who are eligible for free and reduced lunch.

2. Distribution of Funds

School districts will be authorized to expend allocated funds on students meeting the eligibility criteria and being served in approved programs.

B. Extended Day

Any extension of the child development program beyond 2 1/2 hours using funds from other sources such as Chapter 1, Social Services Block Grant funds shall be in compliance with regulations and guidelines governing the half-day program. Before or after school services may be provided by other state or federal programs designed for three-and-four-year-olds if consistent with federal regulations for eligibility.

C. Subcontracting

School districts may contract with appropriate groups and/or agencies to provide part or all of the program. In such cases, the school district is charged with the responsibility of maintaining compliance with the regulations governing this program. An exception to the regulation governing indirect costs may be made when state or federal regulations require the subcontractor to utilize an indirect cost rate. Subcontracting may be based on a fixed cost rate.

D. Fees

Eligible children may not be charged fees for the 2 1/2 -hour instructional program outlined in these regulations.

VI. Fiscal Requirements

A. Allowable Expenditures

Expenditures must adhere to definitions and guidelines established by the Office of Finance, State Department of Education, or the State Procurement Code.

B. A minimum of 10 percent of the total budget shall be utilized in the following categories:

1. Supplies and Materials

- a. Instructional
- b. Parent information materials
- c. Nutritional supplement

d. Evaluation materials

2 Equipment for Instructional Purposes

VII. Staff Development

Appropriate ongoing staff development activities shall be described and incorporated in the school or district's comprehensive plan as required by the Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act of 1993 (Act 135), State Board of Education Regulations and guidelines.

VIII. Evaluation

Districts shall participate in evaluation efforts coordinated by State Department of Education. This will include tracking child development program participants through kindergarten and at least the third grade to determine the program's impact on school success.

IX. Additional information relating to the implementation of this regulation, including but not limited to:

1. Educational program
2. Reporting requirements
3. Staffing
4. Health and Safety Standards

is contained in the "Guidelines for Half Day Child Development Programs" available at the State Department of Education. The State Board of Education will review and update, "Guidelines" as needed.