Definition of a High-Quality Prekindergarten Program

*High-Quality Preschool Program* means an early learning program that includes structural elements that are evidence-based and nationally recognized as important for ensuring program quality, including at a minimum \(^1\)

a. High staff qualifications, including a teacher holding a state certification for teaching in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in any field pursuing residency through a State-approved alternate pathway, which includes coursework, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood; as well as a teacher assistant with an AA in Early Childhood, CDA, or enrolled in a program to obtain these credentials

b. High-quality professional development for all staff (must be 15 hours of early childhood PD).

c. A child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1.

d. A class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher in each classroom with high staff qualifications as outlined in paragraph (a) of this definition.

e. A Full-Day program (6.5 hours).

f. Inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities.

g. Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry.

h. Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities

i. Instructional staff salaries are commensurate with the salaries and benefits of local PreK-12 instructional staff.

j. Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement.

k. On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development; and

l. Evidence-based health and safety standards.

\(^{1}\) Adapted from the PDG TA State Technical Assistance Report: Curriculum policies and guidelines of the Preschool Development and Expansion Grant Programs [https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED583132.pdf](https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED583132.pdf)