Preschool Personnel

The Board of Education recognizes that qualified, competent, and appropriately trained staff are essential to providing a safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate preschool program. The Board shall employ preschool personnel who meet all requirements established by the Ohio Revised Code, the Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY), the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW), and applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Ohio Administrative Code Rule 5180:2-20-07

A. All preschool staff members shall be recruited, employed, assigned, evaluated, and provided in-service education in accordance with adopted governing board policies and without discrimination on the basis of age, color, national origin, race, sex, or handicap.

B. All preschool staff members assigned in each preschool class shall be of good character, possess adequate physical and emotional health, be equipped by education, training, and/or experience for the work they are to perform, and meet the requirements as prescribed in division (B) of section 3301.54 of the Revised Code.

C. The director shall be onsite at the preschool program at least half of the program's operating hours and responsible for the following:

1. Ensuring that the health and safety of the children are safeguarded by an organized program of school health services designed to identify child health problems and to coordinate school community health resources for children as evidenced by, but not limited to, the following:

    a. Requiring immunizations and compliance with emergency medical authorization requirements under section 3313.712 of the Revised Code;
    b. Providing procedures for emergency situations, including fire drills, rapid dismissals, tornado drills, and school safety drills in accordance with section 3737.73 of the Revised Code, and keeping records of such drills or dismissals;
    c. Posting emergency procedures in preschool rooms and making them available to school personnel, children, and parents;
    d. Posting emergency numbers by each telephone;
    e. Supervising grounds, play areas, and other facilities when scheduled for use by children; and
    f. Providing first-aid facilities and materials.

2. Maintaining cumulative records for each child;

3. Supervising each child's admission, placement, and withdrawal according to established procedures;
4. Preparing a roster of children enrolled annually;
5. Ensuring that clerical and custodial services are provided for the program;
6. Supervising the instructional program and daily operation of the program; and
7. Supervising preschool staff members.

D. The director of the preschool program shall:

1. Hold a valid educator license designated as appropriate for teaching or being an administrator in a preschool setting issued pursuant to section 3319.22 of the Revised Code and have completed at least four courses in child development or early childhood education from an accredited college, university, or technical college;
2. Meet the appropriate qualifications pursuant to section 3301.54 of the Revised Code; and
3. Be responsible for the duties outlined in section 3301.56 of the Revised Code.
4. A director employed to direct a program operated by an eligible, nontax-supported, nonpublic school shall be considered to meet the requirements of this rule if they hold a valid teaching certificate issued in accordance with section 3301.071 of the Revised Code.

E. The director is responsible for completing training on relevant state and federal licensing rules Page 3 as prescribed by the department.

F. Each class/group in a preschool program shall have assigned a lead teacher in accordance with the following:

1. A public school preschool general education class as defined in rule 3301-51-11 of the Administrative Code shall have a lead teacher that meets one of the following during instructional time:

    a. Valid prekindergarten teaching certificate issued undersection 3319.22 of the Revised Code; or
    b. Valid prekindergarten associate license issued under section 3319.22 of the Revised Code; or
    c. Valid kindergarten-primary certificate issued under section 3319.22 of the Revised Code and have completed at least four courses in child development or early childhood education from an accredited college, university, or technical college; or
    d. A bachelor's degree in child development or early childhood education earned from an accredited college or university with a minimum of thirty quarter or twenty semester hours in child development/preschool program planning and methods including a supervised practicum with preschool children; or
    e. An early childhood license pursuant to section 3319.22 of the Revised Code.

f. The lead teacher cannot serve as the intervention specialist of record for children with a disability.

2. A public school preschool special education class as defined in rule 3301-51-11 of the Administrative Code, operated by a public school or a county board of developmental disabilities shall have an intervention specialist classroom teacher that meets one of the following during instructional time:

   a. A valid license or education of the handicapped certificate with an endorsement in prekindergarten special needs or early education of the handicapped issued pursuant to section 3319.22 of the Revised Code;
   b. A valid early childhood intervention or primary intervention specialist license issued pursuant to section 3319.22 of the Revised Code;
   c. A valid supplemental or intervention teaching license in the area of pre-kindergarten special needs, early childhood intervention specialist, or intervention specialist in the areas of visually impaired or hearing impaired, if the children are visually impaired or hearing impaired ;or
   d. A valid K-12 intervention specialist license issued pursuant to section 3319.22 or 3319.26 of the Revised Code and meets one qualification of a general education preschool lead teacher.

3. A preschool program operated by an eligible nontax-supported, nonpublic school, shall have a lead teacher who is at least eighteen years of age who has a high school diploma or certification of high school equivalency issued by the state board of education or comparable agency or holds a valid teaching certificate issued in accordance with section 3301.071 of the Revised Code.

G. Any individual who may have an assigned schedule with a preschool child (or group) or may be used to count in the ratio is obligated to have the following on file:

1. Evidence that they are at least eighteen years of age or meet the requirements of section 3301.54 of the Revised Code;
2. A high school diploma, GED or high school equivalency or applicable certification/licensure;
3. Orientation training as prescribed by the department, completed within thirty days of the individual's start date;
4. A signed non-guilty non-conviction statement on a prescribed form that is signed annually;
5. A criminal record check that meets the following:

   a. The requirements as prescribed in section 3301.541 of the Revised Code and if applicable, Page 5 rehabilitation criteria as described in rules3301-20-01 and 3301-20-03 of the Administrative Code; or

b. The background check requirements as prescribed in rule5101:2-12-09 of the Administrative Code and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, 42 U.S.C. 9858 (CCDBG Act of 2014) for programs contracted to provide publicly funded child care services and department licensed head start programs; and

6. A medical statement signed by a licensed physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, or a certified nurse practitioner that documents that they are free of communicable disease and fit to work with children dated on or before the first day of employment.

H. Annual in-service training for preschool staff members is to be in one or more of the following areas:

1. Child development or early childhood education;
2. Ohio approved professional development training; or
3. Health and safety.
4. Annual refers to the school year, from July first to June thirtieth, or every twelve months from the date of hire for staff employed after the school year begins.

I. It is the program's responsibility to ensure the following:

1. Each staff member has completed and is current with an approved course for age-appropriate first aid and CPR in accordance with rule 5101:2-12-10 of the Administrative Code.
2. A person who has completed and is current with an approved course to recognize the common signs of communicable disease or other illness will observe each child daily as they enter the group and be readily available at all times.
3. In each building, to have readily available at all times at least one preschool staff member who has completed and is current with a child abuse recognition and prevention course based on an approved curriculum. The child abuse recognition and prevention curriculum used in the course may be consistent with requirements as established by section 3319.073 of the Revised Code or appear on the approved curriculum list posted on the department's website. Consistent with requirements as established by section 3319.073 of the Revised Code, such staff shall complete at least four hours of in-service training in child abuse recognition and prevention within two years of employment and every five years thereafter.
4. Each class/group in a preschool program is to have at least one assigned lead teacher who meets the applicable requirements.

J. Substitutes shall meet the following requirements:

1. Evidence that they are at least eighteen years of age.

2. Have at least a high school diploma or certification of high school equivalency issued by the state board of education or comparable agency.
3. A medical statement signed by a licensed physician, physician's assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, or certified nurse practitioner that documents they are free of communicable disease and fit to work with children.
4. Evidence of criminal record checks and five-year updates as follows:

    a. Evidence that meets the requirements as prescribed in section3301.541 of the Revised Code and if applicable, rehabilitation criteria as described in rules 3301-20-01 and 3301-20-03 of the Administrative Code; and
    b. Evidence that meets the background check requirements as prescribed in rule 5101:2-12-09 of the Administrative Code and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, 42 U.S.C. 9858 (CCDBG Act of 2014) for programs contracted to provide publicly funded child care services and department licensed head start programs.

5. Evidence on file that individuals in public school districts, county board of developmental disabilities, educational service centers and community schools have an appropriate substitute license as prescribed in section 3319.226 of the Revised Code.
6. Evidence on file that staff listed on an IEP providing services for children with disabilities are qualified personnel as required in rule 3301-51-11 of the Administrative Code.
7. Minimum requirements for the position for which they are substituting in accordance with section 3319.226 of the Revised Code.
8. Orientation training as prescribed by the department, completed within thirty days of the individual's start date; and
9. A signed non-guilty non-conviction statement on a prescribed form updated annually.

K. Preschool staff employed part-time shall complete the in-service requirement based upon the percentage of time or full-time equivalency of their preschool assignment pursuant to section 3301.54 of the Revised Code.

L. Preschool staff members licensed by the department shall complete ten annual clock hours, which may be part of the professional development plan in accordance with Chapter 3301-24 of the Administrative Code. Annual completion refers to the school year, from July first to June thirtieth.

M. The training specified in paragraph (M) of this rule shall be provided by an approved trainer who shall have at least two years of experience specific to the subject area and possess one of the following:

1. An associate or higher degree in child development or early childhood education, education, special education, speech language pathologist, home economics, nursing,

nutrition, psychology, dental hygiene, or social work. Evidence of an associate or higher degree shall be a copy of a diploma, a transcript, or other written evidence accepted by the director as evidence of completion of at least ninety quarter credit hours or sixty semester credit hours from an accredited college, Page 8 university, or technical college. The coursework shall include at least thirty-six quarter credit hours or twenty-four semester credit hours in courses in any of the subject areas listed in paragraph (J) of this rule; or

2. A prekindergarten certificate or endorsement or early childhood license issued by the state board of education; or
3. A license as a physician or registered nurse.

N. A director and preschool staff member shall provide evidence of criminal record checks and five-year updates that meet:

1. The requirements as prescribed in section 3301.541 of the Revised Code and if applicable, rehabilitation criteria as described in rules 3301-20-01 and 3301-20-03 of the Administrative Code; or
2. The background check requirements as prescribed in rule 5101:2-12-09 of the Administrative Code and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, 42 U.S.C. 9858 (CCDBG Act of 2014) for programs contracted to provide publicly funded child care services and department licensed head start programs. Documentation that reports and five-year updates are sent to the district or the department's office of educator licensure as required by section 3319.391 of the Revised Code shall be kept on file.

O. The preschool staff member/child ratio must be maintained at all times.

1. Sufficient individuals must always be physically present with the children to meet staff member/child ratio requirements in accordance with section 3301.56 of the Revised Code.
2. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised.
3. In each program the maximum number of children per preschool staff member and the maximum group size by age category of children shall be as follows:

    a. General education and co-taught classrooms

Age Group	Staff Member/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
Birth to less than12 months	1:5 or 2:12 if two preschool staff members are in the room	12

12months to less than 18 months	1:6	12
18months to less than 30 months	1:7	14
30months to less than 3 years	1:8	16
3years	1:12	24
4 year olds and 5 year olds not in kindergarten or school	1:14	28

b. Special education classrooms

Age Group	Staff Member/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
3 year old, 4 year old and 5 year old children not in kindergarten or school	In accordance with section 3323.022 of the Revised Code	15 children (max of 8 children with a disability)

c. Integrated classroom

Age Group	Staff Member/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
3 year old, 4 year old and 5 year old children not in kindergarten or school	In accordance with section 3323.022 of the Revised Code	16 children (max of 8 children with a disability)

4. Preschool special education programs shall meet the child/staff ratio requirements of section 3323.022 of the Revised Code and rule 3301-51-11 of the Administrative Code.
5. An intervention specialist classroom teacher will have a caseload of no more than eight preschool children with disabilities in any one class session. If a teacher is responsible for

two half-day class sessions, no more than sixteen children with disabilities will be served by the teacher.

P. Volunteers may be counted in the staff/child ratio if a BCII investigation is kept on file; however, a program shall ensure that such practice does not become routine.

Q. A second adult shall be readily available at all times when seven or more children are present in the program. The second adult shall: Age Group Staff Member/Child Ratio Maximum Group Size Birth to less than 12 months 1:5 or 2:12 if two preschool staff members are in the room 12 12 months to less than 18 months 1:6 12 18 months to less than 30 months 1:7 14 30 months to less than 3 years 1:8 16 3 years 1:12 24 4 year olds and 5 year olds not in kindergarten or school 1:14 28 Age Group Staff Member/Child Ratio Maximum Group Size 3 year old, 4 year old and 5 year old children not in kindergarten or school In accordance with section 3323.022 of the Revised Code 15 children (max of 8 children with a disability) Age Group Staff Member/Child Ratio Maximum Group Size 3 year old, 4 year old and 5 year old children not in kindergarten or school In accordance with section 3323.022 of the Revised Code 16 children (max of 8 children with a disability)

1. Be available within the building used for the preschool program or in an adjacent outdoor area;
2. Be able to be summoned by the preschool staff member without leaving the group alone or unsupervised;
3. Be able to react in response to such summons so as to reduce risk to children during an emergency circumstance;
4. Meet background check requirements as prescribed in rule 5101:2-12-09 of the Administrative Code and the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (42 USC 9858) for programs contracted to provide publicly funded childcare services and department licensed head start programs.

R. When age groups are combined for programming purposes the following requirements must be met:

1. When age groups are combined, the maximum number of children per preschool staff member shall be determined by the age of the youngest child in the group, except that when no more than one child, thirty months of age or older, receives care in a group in which all the other children are in the next older age group, the maximum number of children per preschool staff member and maximum group size requirements of the older age group established in this rule shall apply.
2. Any accredited program that uses the Montessori method endorsed by the American Montessori society (www.amshq.org) or the association Montessori internationale (www.montessori-ami.org) as its primary method of instruction may combine preschool children of ages three to five years of age with children enrolled in kindergarten.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in division (B)(2) of section 3301.56 of the Revised Code, when such age groups are combined, the maximum number of children per preschool staff member shall be twelve and the maximum group size shall be twenty four children.

3. Preschool and school age groups may be combined at the beginning of the day or at the end of the day, when the total is twelve or fewer children.

S. In a room where children are napping or resting, if all children are at least eighteen months of age, the maximum number of children per preschool staff member shall, for a period not to exceed one and one-half hours in any twenty-four-hour day, be twice the maximum number of children per preschool staff member established in paragraph (N) of this rule if all the following criteria are met:

1. At least one preschool staff member shall be physically present in the room at all times during nap/rest time;
2. The preschool staff member(s) assigned to a room where children are napping shall be responsible for the care and supervision of the children in the room and shall be able to summon other child-care staff members without leaving the room;
3. There shall be enough preschool staff members readily accessible within the building in which the program is located to ensure that the maximum number of children per preschool staff member as required by paragraph (N) of this rule is met at all times; and
4. Nap/rest-time preparation shall have been completed and all napping children shall be resting or sleeping on cots or mats.

[Adoption date: August 19, 2026]

LEGAL REF:

Ohio Revised Code 3301.52–3301.59
Ohio Revised Code 3319.39
Ohio Revised Code 2151.421
Ohio Administrative Code 5180:2-20-04
Ohio Administrative Code Rule 5180:2-20-07

CROSS REFERNCE

- Ohio Administrative Code Rule 5180:2-20-07
- Applicable Ohio Revised Code provisions
- District Preschool Handbook