

Gold Seal Quality Care Program: A Side-by-Side Comparison of Florida Approved Accreditation Associations

Gold Seal Quality Care Program Legislation Section 402.281, Florida Statutes, Gold Seal Quality Care Program

The Gold Seal Quality Care Program, created by the Florida Legislature in 1996, acknowledges child care facilities and family child care homes that are accredited by a nationally recognized association and whose standards reflect quality child care. Section 402.281, Florida Statutes, stipulates that child care programs that are accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting association whose standards substantially meet or exceed the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC), and the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation Commission (NECPA) shall receive a separate “Gold Seal Quality Care” designation to operate as a gold seal child care facility, large family child care home, or family day care home.

In developing the Gold Seal Quality Care program standards, the department shall consult with the Department of Education, the Florida Head Start Directors Association, the Florida Association of Child Care Management, the Florida Family Child Care Home Association, the Florida Children’s Forum, the Florida Association for the Education of the Young Child, the Child Development Education Alliance, the Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools, the Association of Early Learning Coalitions, providers receiving exemptions under s. 402.316, and parents, for the purpose of approving the accrediting associations.

This side-by-side comparison of Florida Gold Seal Quality Care approved accreditation associations provides the public with an abridged version of the accreditation standards, which guide early childhood programs that choose to participate in the Gold Seal Quality Care Program.*

**This side-by-side comparison is not comprehensive and does not contain every standard of the accrediting association. To receive comprehensive documentation of an accreditation association’s standards, please contact the accrediting association directly.*

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Florida Approved Gold Seal Quality Care Accreditation Associations

Gold Seal Quality Care Association	Address	Phone Number	Website	Current Accreditation Period
American Association of Christian Schools (AACCS)	6170 Shallowford Road, Suite 103 Chattanooga, TN 37421	1-423-629-4280	www.aacs.org	December 2020 - December 2025
Association of Christian Teachers and Schools (ACTS)	P. O. Box 8437 Rockford, IL 61126	1-815-977-5806	www.actsschools.org	October 2016 - October 2021
Association of Independent Schools of Florida (AISF)	1200 Brickell Ave, Suite 800 Miami, FL 33131	1-954-267-9496	www.aisfl.com	May 2020 - May 2025
Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE) National APPLE Accreditation Office	4840 Dairy Road, Suite 101 Melbourne, FL 32904	1-800-322-2603	http://www.faccm.org/apple.asp	January 2019 - January 2024
(APPLE) - School Age Aftercare Uniform Commitment (SAUCE)				November 2016 - November 2021
Cognia (Formerly AdvancED)	9115 Westside Parkway Alpharetta, GA 30009	1-888-413-3669	www.cognia.org	February 2019 -February 2024
Council on Accreditation (COA)	45 Broadway, 29th Floor New York, NY 1006	1-212-797-3000	www.coanet.com	July 2019 - July 2024 (Private Organization)
				January 2020 - January 2025 (Programmatic Accreditation)
Florida Catholic Conference (FCC)	201 W. Park Ave Tallahassee, FL 32301	850-224-7906	www.eas-ed.org	August 2020 - August 2025
Florida Coalition of Christian Private Schools (FCCPSA)	P.O. Box 5100 Deltona, FL 32728	1-386-218-531	www.fccpsa.org	May 2019 - May 2024

Gold Seal Quality Care Association	Address	Phone Number	Website	Current Accreditation Period
Florida League of Christian Schools (FLOCS)	1437 E. Memorial Boulevard Lakeland, FL 33801	1-863-683-5726 Ext. 251	www.flocs.org	July 2019 - July 2024
Green Apple Accreditation of Children's Services (GAACS)	2255 Dunn Avenue Bldg. 200 Suite 201 Jacksonville, FL 32218	1-904-293-1357	www.gaacs.org info@gaacs.org	December 2018 - December 2023 (B-5, B-5/ SA)
				March 2020 - March 2025 (Standalone SA)
National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Program (NAC)	P.O. Box 90723 Austin, TX 78709-0723	1-800-537-1118 (512) 301-5557	info@earlylearningleaders.org	March 2020 - March 2025
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)	1509 16th Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036-1426	(202) 232-8777 (800) 424-2460	www.naeyc.org info@earlylearningleaders.org	Not Applicable
National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)	1743 West Alexander Street Salt Lake City, Utah 84119	1-801-886-2322	www.nafcc.org	Not Applicable
National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)	P.O. Box 2948 Merrifield, VA 22116	1-855-706-3272	www.necpa.net	Not Applicable
National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA)	5850 T. G. Lee Blvd. #500 Orlando, FL 32822	1-407-857-5556 Ext. 3	www.flgadistrict.org/accreditationlsa	March 2020 - March 2025
North American Christian School Accrediting Agency (NACSAA)	615 Saint Andrews Road Columbia, SC 29210	1-803-798-7558	www.nacsaa.org	December 2020 - December 2025
United Methodist Association of Preschools, Florida Chapter of (UMAP)	P.O. Box 3767 Lakeland, FL 33802	1-800-282-8011 1-941-408-1480	www.umapfl.com	November 2019 - November 2024

American Association of Christian Schools (AACCS)

Licensure and Regulation

Licensed programs must include a copy of the program's current license and last inspection report. Programs exempt from licensure will be expected to validate how all minimal state licensing requirements are met or exceeded, regardless of exemption.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child.
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child.

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	1:4
13-24	8	1:4
25-35	10	1:5
3s	18	1:9
4s	20	1:10
5s	24	1:12

Teacher and Staff

- Teachers are required to have a minimum of either an associate's degree in ECE / child development or any associate's degree with at least 12 credit hours in ECE / child development.
- Assistant teachers are required to have a minimum of a state / nationally recognized competency credential (e.g. CDA) or 2 years of experience in the field with at least 12 clock hours of ECE. Child development training.
- Age requirement:
 - Programs must be in compliance with the requirements of civil authorities.

Director Requirements

The director of the early education program has professional training as evidenced by having obtained a minimum of a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent (1) in early childhood education/ child development, (2) in elementary education with twelve credit hours in early childhood education/ child development, or (3) in any other subject with twenty-four credit hours in early childhood education/ child development – all from an accredited institution. The director also has a working understanding of business practices as evidenced by twelve credit hours of college course work or the equivalent of documented one year of on-the-job training in an administrative position under the supervision of a mentor.

Pre-Service Training

- The program must be in compliance with requirements of civil authorities.
- New staff must be provided with a thorough orientation.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

All staff responsible for the care and education of the children in the program participate annually in a minimum of twelve documented clock hours of continuing education or professional development relating to child growth and development in the areas of cognitive learning and social, emotional, and physical development, safety and health issues for your children; family and community relation; classroom and program management.

Curriculum Implementation

A published curriculum guide is required with scope and sequence for each age group along with written goals and objectives. The curriculum must address all areas of development (i.e., physical, social/emotional, core knowledge, language and literacy, mathematical awareness, science, social studies, and fine art) and be developmentally appropriate.

Literacy support

Language and literacy are required elements of curriculum. Programs must provide much print, listening, and speaking experiences and activities; provide a print-rich environment; and address vocabulary, comprehension, phonemic awareness, and the alphabet.

Health and Safety

- The early education program has a responsibility for the health, safety, and general welfare of each child in attendance.
- The staff should have continuing and required training in emergency first aid and in special medical needs in order to be alert and prepared for emergencies.
- Staff members need to be safety conscious with a view toward prevention.

Teacher Child- Interactions

Instructional staff initiates interaction with children who are not engaged in order to stimulate and expand the involvement of these children in the classroom offerings.

Staff Interactions

Staff who are sharing the responsibility of a group of children communicate with one another to ensure the smooth operation of the program.

Family Interactions

Programs are required to develop and implement family involvement policies, including regular opportunities for informal and formal communication, conferences at least twice a year, parent education opportunities at least quarterly, and provision of information regarding community resources and services as needed.

Self- Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- On-site visits are completed by trained validators who meet education and experience requirements.
- Validators complete classroom and facility observations, conduct interviews, and review documents.
- A commission makes the final decision.

Association of Christian Teachers and Schools (ACTS)

Licensure and Regulation

Programs must maintain religious exemption status as described by Florida Statute.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	1:4
13-24	8	1:4
25-35	10	1:5
3s	18	1:9
4s	20	1:10
5s	24	1:12

Teacher and Staff

- Teaching staff have obtained a minimum of either an associate's degree in early childhood/ child development from an accredited institution or any associate's degree with 12 credit hours in early childhood education/ child development from an accredited institution.
- Age requirement:
 - The operator of a child care facility must be at least 21 years old, and in the absence of the operator, there must be a person at least 21 years old in charge of the facility and on the premises at all times.
 - Staff must be at least 21 years old.

Director Requirements

The director of the early education program is a minimum of 21 years of age and has professional training as evidenced by having obtained a minimum of a bachelor's degree (or documentation as listed below) from an accredited institution. The director also obtained a minimum of 9 credit hours of college work in administration, leadership, or management and a minimum of 24 credit hours of specialized college course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education or early childhood special education.

Pre-Service Training

A preschool shall publish an employee handbook which shall include the following philosophy of the preschool, dress code, rules and regulations, discipline procedures, and personnel evaluation policies.

Staff Training /Continued Professional Development

The teaching staff obtains a minimum of 30 clock hours during the first year of employment especially as it relates to State requirements. In addition, a minimum of 24 documented clock hours of continuing education or professional development. Whenever possible, continuing education should be validated by college credit.

Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum used by an early education program consists of proven successful resources with a consistent scope and sequence for each age group. Written goals and objectives drawn from researched-based developmental benchmarks and scientifically based research is included and reviewed on an annual basis.

Literacy Support

Language development is addressed in the standards. Receptive and expressive language experiences, appropriate to the development of the child, must be provided throughout the day.

Health and Safety

- Programs must verify complaints with local health requirements for nutrition and food service.
- The program has a written policy specifying limitations on attendance of sick children's and staff.
- Preschools provide an area where sick children are isolated while awaiting someone to take them home.
- At least one staff member who is certified in CPR and First Aid is present at all times.
- A plan exists for dealing with medical emergencies and adequate first aid supplies are readily available.

Teacher - Child Interactions

- Staff members demonstrate love and respect for each child and interact often with children showing interest, warmth, consideration and affection.
- Staff speak to children in a loving, friendly, and courteous tone.
- Staff are available to individual children and responsive to their needs.
- Staff encourage self-help skills in children.
- Through words and actions, staff members serve as Christian role models.

Staff Interactions

- All members of the preschool staff shall be Christian and shall exhibit Christian character in all areas of life.
- All staff have a professional development plan on file with evidence that it is being implemented.

Family Interactions

- Family involvement is not addressed explicitly as a standard; however, parent involvement activities are discussed throughout the standards.
- A variety of events must be pre-planned and arranged according to the school calendar, posted and given to the parents.
- Notes and daily comments to parents are also discussed.

Self-Study

Accreditation requires completion of a self-study process with input from administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- A validation team visits the program to review documents and observe classrooms and the facility.
- Validators must be experienced and receive initial training and refresher training the first morning of every visit.
- A commission makes the final accreditation decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual Report.
- Accreditation is required every 5 years.



Association of Independent Schools of Florida (AISF)

Licensure and Regulation

Licensed programs must include a copy of the program's current license and last inspection report. Programs exempt from licensure will be expected to validate how all minimal state licensing requirements are met or exceeded, regardless of exemption.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	1:4
13-24	10	1:5
25-35	10	1:5
3s	18	1:9
4s	20	1:10
5s-8s	24	1:12
9s-12s	30	1:15

Teacher and Staff

- Teachers are required to have a minimum of either an associate's degree in ECE / child development or any associate's degree with at least 12 credit hours in ECE / child development.
- Assistant teachers are required to have a minimum of a state / nationally recognized competency credential (e.g. CDA) or 2 years of experience in the field with at least 12 clock hours of ECE. Child development training.
- Age requirement:
 - Programs must be in compliance with the requirements of civil authorities.

Director Requirements

The director of the early education program has professional training as evidenced by having obtained a minimum of a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent (1) in early childhood education/ child development, (2) in elementary education with twelve credit hours in early childhood education/ child development, or (3) in any other subject with twenty-four credit hours in early childhood education/ child development – all from an accredited institution. The director also has a working understanding of business practices as evidenced by twelve credit hours of college course work or the equivalent of documented one year of on-the-job training in an administrative position under the supervision of a mentor.

Pre-Service Training

- The program must be in compliance with requirements of civil authorities.
- New staff must be provided with a thorough orientation.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

All staff responsible for the care and education of the children in the program participate annually in a minimum of twelve documented clock hours of continuing education or professional development relating to child growth and development in the areas of cognitive learning and social, emotional, and physical development, safety and health issues for your children; family and community relation; classroom and program management.

Curriculum Implementation

A published curriculum guide is required with scope and sequence for each age group along with written goals and objectives. The curriculum must address all areas of development (i.e., physical, social/emotional, core knowledge, language and literacy, mathematical awareness, science, social studies, and fine art) and be developmentally appropriate.

Literacy Support

Language and literacy are required elements of curriculum. Programs must provide much print, listening, and speaking experiences and activities; provide a print-rich environment; and address vocabulary, comprehension, phonemic awareness, and the alphabet.

Health and Safety

- The early education program has a responsibility for the health, safety, and general welfare of each child in attendance.
- The staff should have continuing and required training in emergency first aid and in special medical needs in order to be alert and prepared for emergencies.
- Staff members need to be safety conscious with a view toward prevention.

Teacher – Child Interactions

Instructional staff initiates interaction with children who are not engaged in order to stimulate and expand the involvement of these children in the classroom offerings.

Staff Interactions

Staff who are sharing the responsibility of a group of children communicate with one another to ensure the smooth operation of the program.

Family Interactions

Programs are required to develop and implement family involvement policies, including regular opportunities for informal and formal communication, conferences at least twice a year, parent education opportunities at least quarterly, and provision of information regarding community resources and services as needed.

Self-Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- On-site visits are completed by trained Validators who meet educational and experience requirements.
- Validators complete classroom and facility observations, conduct interviews, and review documents.
- A commission makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual Report.
- 3.5 year interim accreditation visit and full reaccreditation at year 7.



Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE) National APPLE Accreditation Office

Licensure and Regulation

- Programs must be licensed by the state or local agency in whose jurisdiction the program is located.
- Program must provide documentation that it has been licensed (or in operation if exempt) for a period of a year before verification be scheduled.
- Exempt facilities standards must be at least equal to those required by the licensing authority.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
Infants	6-8	1:3-4
1's	6-10	1:3-5
2s	12-14	1:6-7
3s	14-18	1:7-9
4s-5s	18-22	1:9-11

Teacher and Staff

- An associate's degree, or higher, in Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Social Work, Nursing, or other child-related field of study.
- An Associate's degree, or higher, in a subject area not listed above – “out of field” – with 3 college level courses (9 credits) in Early Childhood / Child Dev.
- A current FCCPC (Florida Child Care Professional Credential).
- A current National CDA (Child Development Associate) credential or a current equivalency based credential.
- A combination of coursework and experience including a high school diploma or GED, a minimum of four (4) college level courses in Early Childhood Education or Child Development, and a minimum of three (3) years' experience working in a child care program serving children ages 0-5.
- Age Requirement:
 - Teaching Staff Must be at least 21 years old.

Director Requirements

- An Associate's degree, or higher, in Education, Youth Development, Social Work, Nursing or other Child related field of study.
- An Associate's degree, or higher, in a subject area not listed above (“out of field”) with 3 college level courses (9 credits) in Education/Youth development.
- An FCCPC (Florida Child Care Professional Credential).
- A School Age Credential or A National CDA (Youth development Associate) credential.
- An equivalency based credential or a combination of college education, professional training, and join experience relevant to the program's focus.

Pre-Service Training

- Orientation for new employees should be provided, addressing policies and procedures, the importance of appropriate teacher-child interaction, staff expectations, and state or local training requirements.
- New employees receive training specific to the age group with whom they will be working.
- Job descriptions are discussed

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- Documentation of continuing professional development.
- There must be evidence of training within July 1st to June 30th of prior year at least 2.4 CEU's (Continuing Education Units).
- Training is chosen to meet individual teacher's professional goals.
- Employees are provided information on available training and professional development opportunities.
- The program assists staff in the development of a professional development plan.

Curriculum Implementation

The Curriculum defines not only the goals for learning and development in every domain for each particular age group, but also the instructional strategies, activities, and materials that are planned to meet those goals. Curriculum choice and components may be regulated by local, regional, or state requirements.

Literacy Support

Opportunities for literacy, language development, and cognitive development that are integrated into the program day through songs, stories books and games, not taught in isolation or by drill.

Health and Safety

- The program presents valid certification that it is in compliance with all legal requirements for protection of the health and safety of children in group settings, such as building codes, sanitation, water quality, and fire protection. Compliance is demonstrated by a record of an inspection by a qualified building and fire inspector and sanitarian.
- A current, written record is maintained for each child, including the results of a complete health evaluation by an approved health care resource within six months prior to enrollment, record of immunizations, emergency contact information, names of people authorized to pick up the child, and pertinent health issues.
- At least 90% staff member, who has certification in emergency pediatric first-aid treatment including CPR/First Aid for infants and children, and at least one person with current training is onsite at all times and accompanies.

Teacher – Child Interactions

Reasonable efforts are made to maintain continuity of teacher assignments throughout the school day as well as the school year in order to promote healthy levels of bonding and attachment between the children and their teachers.

Staff Interactions

- The program conducts monthly staff meetings.
- Staff members are encouraged to work cooperatively and to plan together for lessons and special activities.
- The program has a plan for staff retention and performance reviews

Family Interactions

There is a positive correlation between family involvement in their child's education and achievement. It nurtures cognitive and emotional resilience. Respect for family traditions and cultures is essential to assure that parents caregivers, and their extended families feel welcome and honored by all program staff. Strong two-way communication fosters family partnerships that provide opportunities for networking.

Self-Study

Programs seeking accreditation are required to complete a self-study process involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- Standardized documents and observations must be completed.
- On-site visits are completed by trained verifiers who meet educational and/or experience requirements. In addition to initial training, verifiers must participate in annual update training.
- Verifiers conduct classroom and facility observations, conduct interviews, and review documents.
- A commission makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Initial reaccreditation is required within 3 years with subsequent reaccreditations every 5 years.

APPLE – School Age Aftercare Uniform Commitment (SAUCE)

Licensure and Regulation – School- Age Aftercare Uniform Commitment (SAUCE)

- Licensing
 - The program is licensed by the state or local agency in whose jurisdiction the Program is located and has been in operation for a period of one year or more. Documentation of said inspections for a period of at least one year.
 - The license is posted.
 - The license is not suspended, restricted, or has other serious violations.
 - All other violations have been corrected.
 - If the program is exempt from licensing, to be eligible for accreditation, the program has been in operation for a period of one year or more.
 - The program exhibits that its standards are at least equal to those required by the licensing authority.
- Regulatory Inspections
 - All relevant inspections from any regulatory agency that requires compliance with its standards are up-to-date. If regulatory inspections are not required, the Program demonstrates that it conducts periodic self-inspections for assurance of quality, health, and safety and maintains written documentation of said inspections for a period of at least one year.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Ratio
5-6	1:18-22
6-8	1:20-40
8-12	1:24-30

Teachers and Staff

- An Associate's degree, or higher, in Education Youth development, Social Work, Nursing or other child related field of study.
- An Associate's degree, or higher, in a subject area not listed above ("out of field") with 3 college level courses (9 credits) in Education/ Youth development.
- An FCCPC (Florida Child Care Professional Credential).
- A School Age Credential or A National CDA (Youth Development Associate) credential.
- An equivalency based credential or a combination of college education, professional training, and job experience relevant to the program's focus.
- Age requirement:
 - The minimum age requirement for lead staff members is 21 years of age.

Director Requirements

- An undergraduate degree in Education, Youth development, Social Work, Nursing or other child related field of study.
- An undergraduate degree out of filed with 4 college level courses (12 credits) in Education/Youth development.
- An Associate's degree with at least 4 college level courses (12 credits) in Education/ Youth development.
- A current National CDA (Youth Development Associate) credential, or an equivalent, current competency based credential.
- Two years' of experience in working with young children in a similar setting.
- Age requirement:
 - 21 years of age or older.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

The Program has a formal staff orientation program in place, which can be in any format such as a mentoring program. As part of the orientation, new employees are provided with the following: A copy of the job description, The employee handbook, information and training explaining all relevant policies and procedures in place including, but not limited to: Universal Precautions: including Hand washing/Toileting, Toxins, Emergency Drills and other situations, Abuse and Neglect Reporting, Program duties

Curriculum Implementation

The Enrollment Package/Parent Handbook provides parents/caregivers with information about the program and must state its policies regarding each of the required topics, a statement of the program's philosophy and how it is reflected in the environment.

Literacy Support

Books are available and accessible, if applicable to the program's.

Health and Safety

- All relevant inspections from any regulatory agency that requires compliance with its standards are up-to-date.
- If regulatory inspections are not required, the program demonstrates that it conducts periodic self-inspections for assurance of quality, health, and safety and maintains written documentation of said inspections for a period of at least one year.

Teacher – Child Interactions

Each staff member is assigned to a group of children for whom he/she serves as the primary group leader. Reasonable efforts are made to maintain continuity of assignments throughout the program year.

Family Interactions

The Enrollment Package/Parent Handbook provides parents/caregivers with information about the Program and must state its policies regarding each of the required topics listed below. Whenever possible, this information is available in languages the families use and understand and is reviewed and/or updated annually. (Relevant excerpts below)

- An explanation of the new student/ parent orientation.
- Information on hours and days of operation, fees, holidays, closings.
- The method/s in which the program allows for the ongoing communication between staff and parents for the sharing of goals, expectations and also for problem solving.
- Staff members are sensitive to cultural differences and often share the languages and cultures of the communities they serve.
- The program is aware of the languages spoken by parents and provide all brochures, if available, in other languages.

Self-Study

Programs seeking accreditation are required to complete a self-study process involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- Standardized documents and observations must be completed.
- On-site visits are completed by trained verifiers who meet educational and/or experience requirements. In addition to initial training, verifiers must participate in annual update training.
- Verifiers conduct classroom and facility observations, conduct interviews, and review documents.
- A commission makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Initial reaccreditation is required within 3 years with subsequent reaccreditations every 5 years.

Cognia (Formerly AdvancED)

Licensure and Regulation

The school must operate in accordance with all applicable state, district, and local regulations.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

Schools must meet state class size requirements.

Teacher and Staff

- Teachers must be qualified based on state certificate rules.
- Teachers must have earned at least:
 - A Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution with a major or a minimum of 24 semester hours in the assigned area of teaching, and 18 semester hours in professional education as part of it, or in addition to the degree, or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed.
 - The standard is also met by teachers who:
 - Hold a valid certification from another state.
 - Hold a Baccalaureate degree and are earning at least 6 semester hours each year in a program leading to valid certification.

Director Requirements

- Administrators must meet the certification/ licensure requirements established by the state.
- School district/system administrators must have earned:
 - A graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution with 18 hours in administration or meets the legal qualifications of the state in which employed.

Pre-Service Training

The program must comply with state and local training regulations.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

Six semester hours of credit or the equivalent for each five-year period of employment are required.

Curriculum Implementation

The school's program of learning must be based on and aligned with clearly defined desired results for student learning that facilitate achievement for all students. Although no curriculum is specified, there are 5 curriculum goals that must be met. These goals relate to developmentally appropriate experiences across all areas of development. The curriculum must challenge each student to excel, must reflect a commitment to equity, and must demonstrate an appreciation of diversity.

Literacy Support

Language development and literacy standards are included in a research based curriculum in which instructional and assessment methods facilitate achievement for all students.

Programs promote active involvement of students in the learning process, including opportunities for them to explore application of higher-order thinking skills and investigate new approaches to applying their learning, providing many opportunities and activities related to speaking, listening, engaging in conversations, dictating, reading, and writing.

Health and Safety

- Maintains a secure, accurate, and complete student record system in accordance with state and federal regulations.
- Maintains the site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide an environment that is safe and orderly for all occupants.
- Possesses a written security and crisis management plan with appropriate training for stakeholders.

Teacher - Child Interactions

- Teachers give students feedback to improve their performance.
- Provides appropriate support for students with special needs.
- Ensures that each student has access to guidance services that include, but are not limited to, counseling, appraisal, mentoring, staff consulting, referral, and educational and career planning.

Staff Interactions

Staff come together regularly for learning, decision making, problem solving and celebration.

Family Interactions

- Family involvement standards are addressed.
- Programs must develop, implement and communicate an effective school-community interaction plan.
- Partnerships with parents, regular home-school communications, active family involvement activities, parent education and training, and assistance with coordinating interagency services for children and families are required.

Self- Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey

Validation Process

- On-site visits are completed by trained Quality Assurance Review (QAR) teams who meet educational and experience requirements.
- The Florida SACS CASI Council makes a recommendation regarding accreditation.
- The Cognia Commission takes final action.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 5 years.



Cognia (Formerly AdvancED)- School- Age

Licensure and Regulations

The program and facility meet all applicable national, state and/or local regulatory requirements and maintain documentation related to these requirements including certificates, licenses, and record of violations or deficiencies and appropriate resolution of these.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

Age	Ratio
< 6	1:10-15
> 6	1:8-12

Teacher and Staff

- The program employs qualified teachers/ group leaders for each teaching positions to support the program’s purpose, direction and educational program.
 - All lead teachers/group leaders have a minimum of:
 - A baccalaureate degree in a related field
 - A baccalaureate degree in an unrelated field, with at least three months of related experience and three credits in child and youth development or related areas;
 - An associate’s degree or two years of college in a related field, with at least six months of related experience
 - An associate’s degree or two years of college in an unrelated field, with at least nine months of related experience and three credits in child and youth development or related areas;
 - A recognized state or national school-age care or youth worker credential, with at least six months of related experience and six credits in child and youth development or other areas.
 - For International countries, governmental documentation showing the equivalency of credentials is acceptable.
- Assistant teachers / assistant group leaders must have a high school diploma or GED and be at least 18 years old.

Director Requirements

The program administrator/director has the appropriate educational qualifications and professional commitment to lead the extended learning program. This includes:

- A minimum of a baccalaureate degree in a related field, with at least one year of related experience and six credits in administration and/or child and youth development ;
- A baccalaureate degree in an unrelated field , with at least two years of related experience and twelve credits in administration and / or child and youth development.

Pre- Service Training

- The program has a professional development plan that addresses the development of the knowledge and skills of all staff, including orientation for new staff.
- New staff receive specified training in program operations prior to working independently with children and youth.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- Ongoing training is provided for all staff following the initial orientation.
- All staff have training relevant to their teaching assignments.

Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum is evidence-based, identifies a research-based developmentally appropriate philosophy, includes curriculum frameworks aligned with the identified philosophy and addresses the social, emotional, developmental and academic needs of all children and youth.

Literacy Support

Children and youth engage in multiple and varied activities focused on literacy experiences (e.g., reading for pleasure or school work, having stories read to them, reading scripts for upcoming performances, creative writing, journaling, language games).

Health and Safety

- Staff design and provide a safe and healthy environment for all children and youth in all program environments. The program meets all applicable laws, regulations, and codes, including those related to health and safety.
- The program implements a health and hygiene protocol based on guidelines from governmental or health authorities.
- At least one staff member on duty shall hold current certification in basic first aid and Pediatric / Adult Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) from a certifying organization recognized by governmental or health agencies.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- Staff provide recognition and encouragement of children’s and youth’s accomplishments and contributions, using specific, non-evaluative language.
- Staff demonstrate caring, warm, supportive and approachable behaviors.

Staff Interactions

- Program staff continuously collect, analyze and apply learning from multiple data sources, including comprehensive trend data about the learning, development and engagement of children and youth as well as instruction, program evaluation and organizational conditions.
- Assessment results are analyzed and interpreted to determine whether the program is achieving curriculum goals and learning outcomes for children and youth.

Family Interactions

- All children, youth and families experience of reciprocal respect, trust and open communication in a fair and just way, respecting the needs and characteristics of each individual and promoting a sense of community, belonging, ownership and pride.
- An established communication system that includes formal and informal strategies is established to create a warm, respectful and welcoming program environment to learn about and understand families; is flexible in accommodating parents/guardians and families; and provides a variety of resources for parents/guardians to support their child’s learning, development and engagement.

Self- Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

The final status of accreditation is granted by Cognia.

Renewal Process

Reaccreditation is required every five years.



Council on Accreditation (COA) Youth Development Services/ Early Childhood Education - Private Organization Accreditation

Licensure and Regulation

Programs must possess relevant licenses and comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-15	6-8	1:3-4
12-28	6-12	1:3-4
21-36	8-12	1:4-6
30-48	12-18	1:6-9
4-5s	16-20	1:8-10
6-8s	20-30	1:10-15

Teacher and Staff

- Teachers must have at least a CDA or CCP credential or a relevant associate's degree in ECE/child development.
- Assistant teachers and aides must have at least a high school diploma or GED and a minimum of 30 hours of related training within the first year of employment.
- Age Requirement:
 - Providers must be at least 18 years old.

Director Requirements

- Administrators must have at least a Bachelor's degree in ECE, child development, or social work and related field experience in ECE or elementary education.
- Age Requirement:
 - Administrator must be at least 21 years old.

Pre-Service Training

New personnel are oriented within the first three months of hire to:

- The programs' mission, philosophy, and goals.
- Service population.
- Place within the community.
- Personnel manual.
- Program's structure.

Staff Training/ Continued Professional Development

- Programs must implement a structured professional development program.
- Professional development and training must be based on personnel needs.
- The program may determine to implement tuition reimbursement or financial assistance opportunities if the assessment determines that as a defined need among its staff.

Curriculum Implementation

- A variety of activities and lessons afford choice and promote social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth.
- Daily activities demonstrate well planned, flexible, and responsive care in a group setting that is appropriate to the age, development, family situation, interpersonal characteristics, and special needs of the children in the program.

Literacy Support

Literacy is promoted through daily storytelling, reading, and other activities and materials that promote early literacy skills.

Health and Safety

- The child care service promotes and protects the health of children and caregivers.
- A health record is maintained for each child and all parents receive a written health protocol.
- Caregivers model good health habits and provide age-appropriate instruction on health and hygiene practices.
- Caregivers are flexible in meeting each child's eating, toileting, and sleeping needs.
- A safe environment is maintained, including the physical facility, buildings, and the grounds of the childcare center.
- Toys and other materials are child proof, non-toxic, and maintained in good repair. The toys are disinfected at least weekly and immediately after use if items are placed in a child's mouth.
- The program plans for and coordinates emergency response preparedness.
- The program is prepared to treat injuries and respond to medical emergencies.
- All personnel are trained on how to respond to medical threats and emergencies.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- Children experience quality and stability in relationships with caregivers and peers. Each child establishes and maintains an ongoing relationship with a primary caregiver who provides frequent expressive and verbal interaction in a warm, friendly manner.
- The program encourages positive approaches to guide group interaction and individual behavior.
- The program prohibits:
 - Corporal punishment, withholding food, isolation, ignoring the child, and labeling a child “good” or “bad”.

Staff Interactions

- A team approach is used in service planning, care provision, and transition planning.
- The program promotes open communication and collaboration among disciplines and staff levels.
- The program encourages initiative, creativity, and innovation and rewards and recognizes the contributions of personnel.

Family Interactions

Programs are required to ensure that parents are active participants and partners by providing pre-enrollment and orientation materials, involving them in decision-making regarding their child and the program, conducting semi-annual parent-teacher conferences, providing multiple means of communicating, providing information on community services, and making parent education opportunities available.

Self- Study

Programs are required to complete a self-study process for accreditation involving administrators, staff, board members, and consumers; however, there is flexibility in how the self-study is completed.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- The site visit follows the self-study.
- A group of 2 or more professional peer reviewers who meet COA predetermined qualifications conduct the visit.
- A commission makes the final accreditation decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 3 or 4 years.



Council on Accreditation (COA) Youth Development Services / Early Childhood Education Programmatic Accreditation – School Age

Licensure and Regulation

- The program possesses relevant licenses, if applicable, and displays documents in an area visible to the public.
- The program meets applicable laws, regulations, guidelines, and codes, including those related to health and safety.

Ratio / Group Size

Age	Size	Ratio
< 6	Max 30	1:10-15
> 6	Max 30	1:8-12

Teacher and Staff

- Senior group leaders must have a Bachelor's Degree in related field, OR a Bachelor's Degree in an unrelated field + 3 credit hrs. of child and youth development and 3 credit hrs. of other areas related to sac programming field and three months experience OR an AA degree in related field or two years of college in related field or equivalent+ 3 credit hrs. of child and youth development and 3 credit hrs. of other areas related to sac programming and six months experience OR an AA Degree in unrelated field or two years of college in related field or equivalent+ 3 credit hrs. of child and youth development and 3 credit hrs. of other areas related to sac programming and one year experience.
- Requirements for Group Leaders are similar but also include an option for having a high school diploma or GED coupled with specified experience and training. Assistant Group Leaders may have no experience, but must have a comprehensive orientation and in-service training.
- Age Requirement:
 - The assistant group leader must be at least 16 years old.
 - No additional age requirements are listed.

Director Requirements

The program administrator must have:

- 1 year experience, a Bachelor's degree in related field with 3 credit hours in child/youth development and 3 hours in administration.
- Degrees in unrelated fields are recognized with additional years of experience and training.
- The Site Director must have:
 - 6 months experience, Bachelor's degree in related field with (3) credit hours in child/youth development and SAC related areas.
 - Degrees in unrelated fields are recognized with additional years of experience and training.

Pre- Service Training

- The program's training and professional development program provides personnel with skills and information needed to perform their jobs.
- Before working with children and youth, new personnel are given an orientation.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- Professional development promotes learning, skill enhancement, and advancement, by providing personnel with skills and information needed to perform their jobs.
- Assistant group leaders should receive 15 hours of training annually, group leaders should receive 18 hrs. of training annually, senior group leader should receive 21 hrs. of training annually, Site directors should receive 24 hrs. of training annually, and program administrators should receive at least 30 hrs. of training annually.

Curriculum Implementation

- Program activities provide opportunities to build skills, explore interest, experience a sense of self-efficacy and belonging, and contribute to the community.
- A variety of activities and lessons afford choice and promote social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth.
- Daily activities demonstrate well planned, flexible, and responsive care in a group setting that is appropriate to the age, developmental-level, family situation, interpersonal characteristics, and special needs of children in the program.

Literacy Support

- Children and youth have opportunities to participate in a wide and challenging variety of engaging activities.
- Programs that are designed to work with schools collaborate with school personnel.

Health and Safety

- The after school service promotes and protects the health of children and caregivers.
- A health record is maintained for each child and all parents receive a written health protocol.
- Caregivers model good health habits and provide age appropriate instruction on health and hygiene practices.
- A safe environment is maintained, including the physical facility, buildings, and the grounds of the center.
- The program plans for and coordinates emergency response preparedness.
- The program is also prepared to treat injuries and respond to medical emergencies.
- All personnel are trained on how to respond to medical threats and emergencies.

Teacher – Child Interactions

Children should experience quality and stability in relationships with caregivers and peers. Each child should be helped to establish and maintain ongoing relationships with caregivers who provide frequent expressive and verbal interaction in a warm, friendly manor.

Staff Interactions

- The program provides a positive work environment and promotes a high level of personnel satisfaction and retention.
- The program promotes open communication and collaboration.

Family Interactions

- Family members are treated with respect, and helped to feel welcome and comfortable.
- Personnel support families' involvement in the program by offering orientation, developing and distributing handbooks, keeping families informed about program activities, and events, and encouraging families to give input and become involved with the program.
- Personnel and family members share information to support the well-being of children and youth.

Self- Study

- Accreditation requires a self-study process that requires the participation and involvement of the program's staff, stakeholders, and consumers.
- The self-study also serves as the orientation to the program for endorsers prior to the site visit.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- The site visit follows the self-study.
- A group of 2 or more professional peer reviewers who meet COA predetermined qualifications conduct the visit.
- A commission makes the final accreditation decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 3 or 4 years.



Florida Catholic Conference (FCC)

Licensure and Regulation

- The early education program is in compliance with provincial and diocesan safe environmental policies. All volunteers and staff members undergo Level II background screening, fingerprinting and training.
- Both VECHS, completed for the diocese, and the DCF Clearing house are used for background screening. References are checked prior to hiring.
- Volunteers work under the supervision of qualified staff members.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	1:4
12-23	8	1:4
24-35	12	1:6
36-47	18	1:9
48-59	20	1:10
5 yr. & Older	24	1:12

Teacher and Staff

- The teachers meet diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for early education program employment, preparation, and credentials. Each teacher:
 - Is at least 21 years of age.
 - Has a minimum of a CDA or a Florida Child Care Professional Credential.
 - Has appropriate training and experience to carry out his/her role in the early education program.
 - Maintains at least the minimum number of required clock hours of continuing education or professional development in areas approved by the diocese (including the DCF 40 hour introductory course in child care, 5 hours of early literacy and language development, 10 hours annually, and 8 hours of training in serving children with disabilities within 5 years of employment) - 24 hours annually for programs seeking Gold Seal Accreditation.
 - Joins local, state, and/or national early education associations and attends early education conferences when available.
- The support staff meets diocesan, state, and/or national requirements for early education program employment, preparation, and credentials. Each staff member:
 - Is at least 18 years of age.
 - Has at least a high school diploma or a GED

Director Requirements

- The Director is on site and meets state and diocesan requirements for early education program leadership preparation and licensing. The Director:
 - Is a minimum of 21 years of age.
 - Holds a director's credential form Florida DCF.
 - Has obtained a minimum of 9 credit hours of college course work in administration, leadership or management.
 - Has obtained a minimum of 24 credit hours of specialized college course work in early education, child development, elementary education or special education.
 - Has experience working directly with children whose ages are represented in the early education program for which the director has oversight.
- The director assumes responsibility of the day to day operations of the program, maintains program policies, and monitors the program's compliance with applicable requirements, including health and safety, consulting with the diocese and experts.
- The director takes responsibility for the development and oversight of personnel, including hiring, professional growth, faith formation and format assessment of staff in compliance with diocesan policy. The format assessment takes place annually. The director assists the teachers in creating individual professional development plans.
- The director has plans in place for the use of qualified substitute teachers to ensure the integrity of the program.
- The director designates a qualified person to assume leadership and responsibility of the early education program in the event of the Director's absence. The person shall be at least 21 years of age.
- The director holds regular staff meetings to support the professional development plan, to build strong relationships, to promote communication, and for the operational vitality of the program.
- The director engages in ongoing training and self-evaluation to ensure the continued execution of his or her responsibilities:
 - Obtains a minimum of 45 clock hours during the first year of employment, especially as it relates to Florida requirements.
 - Obtains an additional 10 clock hours per year of continuing professional development, provided by a qualified entity in such areas as approved by the diocese.

Pre- Service Training

- New staff members are provided with an orientation.
- All staff members receive a copy of the employee handbook and written policies. Receipt of these by staff members has been documented.
- The staff members are instructed at least annually on employee policies.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- Maintains at least the minimum number of required clock hours of continuing education or professional development in areas approved by the diocese (including the DCF 40 hour introductory course in child care, 5 hours of early literacy and language development, 10 hours annually, and 8 hours of training in serving children with disabilities within 5 years of employment) - 24 hours annually for programs seeking Gold Seal Accreditation.
- Joins local, state, and/or national early education associations and attends early education conferences when available.

Curriculum Implementation

- The curriculum, instruction, and materials meets diocesan requirements and follows the standards in the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards from the Office of Early Learning, addressing physical development, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific inquiry, social studies, and creative expression through the arts.
- The curriculum and the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards guide the development of a lesson plans and a daily schedule that provides time and support for transitions, includes both indoor and outdoor experiences and is responsive to child's need to rest or be active. All age groups have a schedule. Activities are age appropriate and include choice when appropriate.

Literacy Support

Instruction and activities include social-emotional development opportunities (development of sense of self, feelings, and self-regulation; staff is responsive to all children; families are invited to the classrooms) and literacy development opportunities (staff read to children, sing to children, etc.).

Health and Safety

- The program has developed policies and procedures to protect the staff and children from blood-borne pathogens by developing a blood-borne exposure control plan and by providing annual in-service to the staff regarding protective procedures. As a result, the staff use universal precautions when encountering children's body fluids.
- All teachers have first aid certification—and infant/child CPR certification.
- The early education program is in compliance with provincial and diocesan safe environmental policies. All volunteers and staff members undergo Level II background screening, fingerprinting and training. Both VECHS, completed for the diocese, and the DCF Clearing house are used for background screening. References are checked prior to hiring. Volunteers work under the supervision of qualified staff members.

Teacher – Child Interactions

To maintain continuity and build relationships, one main teacher is assigned to each classroom/group of children. The program has a policy for when children are moved to the next level. Part of that policy is to keep children with the same teacher for at least 9 months, especially the infants and toddlers. Transitions are kept to a minimum.

Staff Interactions

The director holds regular staff meetings to support the professional development plan, to build strong relationships, to promote communication, and for the operational vitality of the program.

Family Interactions

The program has an open-door policy regarding visits by parents on the program's premises including in their child's classroom. Policies concerning parent involvement (e.g., visiting, observing, and volunteering) are in place to ensure the partnership between home and program is maintained. Visitation must be in compliance with diocesan security policies for schools. Parents always have telephone access to the program.

Self- Study

A member school must complete and submit an annual accreditation report at the time specified by the FCC Accreditation Committee, except during years six and seven of the accreditation cycle. This annual report shall include information regarding the school's compliance with the accreditation standards and benchmarks, an update on the implementation of the school's action plan, and other pertinent information as determined by the Committee.

Teacher Assessment

A school seeking initial or continued accreditation must complete a self-evaluation/CIPA according to the procedures of the Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program. The process is interactive and involves input and consensus building from the entire school community. This assessment of mission and Catholic identity, governance and leadership, academic excellence, and operational vitality will give the program / school community a clear picture of the current state of the program/school, as well as direction for the future.

Administrative Assessment

A school seeking initial or continued accreditation must complete a self-evaluation/CIPA according to the procedures of the Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program. The process is interactive and involves input and consensus building from the entire school community. This assessment of mission and Catholic identity, governance and leadership, academic excellence, and operational vitality will give the program/school community a clear picture of the current state of the program/school, as well as direction for the future.

Family Assessment

A school seeking initial or continued accreditation must complete a self-evaluation/CIPA according to the procedures of the Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program. The process is interactive and involves input and consensus building from the entire school community. This assessment of mission and Catholic identity, governance and leadership, academic excellence, and operational vitality will give the program/school community a clear picture of the current state of the program/school, as well as direction for the future.

Validation Process

- The visitation team makes an official on-site visit to the school to assess the educational program of the school, to validate and assess the school's compliance with accreditation standards and benchmarks, to review the action plan, and to make recommendations for the school's improvement and its initial or continued accreditation.
- The Committee grants accreditation to a school and monitors the school's continued compliance with the accreditation standards, benchmarks, policies, and procedures.

Renewal Process

In order to validate compliance with standards, each program/school in the Florida Catholic Conference Accreditation Program hosts an on-site accreditation visitation once every seven years. In addition to the visitation every seven years, each early education program hosts an annual one-day health, safety, and accreditation update visitation. A third year review is conducted with each school or early education program, mid-way through the seven-year accreditation cycle.

Florida Coalition of Christian Private Schools (FCCPSA)

Licensure and Regulation

Programs that hold a license in good standing with the state agency responsible for licensing child care centers and early childhood programs must obtain and maintain religious exemption status as described by Florida Statutes. Must comply with all state and local regulations with all applicable laws, regulations, guidelines, and codes, including those related to health and safety.

Ratio/ Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	1:4
1 yr.	10	1:5
2 yrs.	12	1:6
3 yrs.	16	1:8
4 yrs.	20	1:10
5 yrs.	24	1:12
K	28	1:14

Teacher and Staff

Primary Teachers must have one of the following qualifications:

- Active National Child Development Associate (CDA) or other early childhood credential that meets or exceeds the requirements of the National CDA.
- B.A., B.S. or advanced degree in ONE of the following areas: Early Childhood Education/Child Development, Pre-Kindergarten or Primary Education, Preschool Education, Family and Consumer Sciences (formerly Home Economics/Child Development), Exceptional Student Education, Special Education, Mental Disabilities, Specific Learning Disabilities, Physically Impaired, Varying Exceptionalities, Emotional Disabilities, Visually Impaired, Hearing Impaired, Speech-Language Pathology or Elementary Education with certification to teach any age birth through 6th grade.
- A.S., A.A. degree or higher in Early Childhood Education/Child Development. Associate's degree or higher WITH at least six (6) college credit hours in early childhood education/child development AND at least 480 hours experience in a child care setting serving children ages birth through eight.
- Active Birth through Five Child Care Credential (Formerly the Florida Child Development Associate Equivalency Credential (CDAE)).
- Active School-Age Child Care Credential.
- Age Requirement:
 - 21 years of age.

Director Requirements

Program Administrators must have a minimum of:

- An Associate's degree or higher.
- 9 credit hours in administration, leadership, or management.
- 15 credit hours in early childhood, child development, elementary education, or special early childhood special education that addresses child development and learning from birth through kindergarten.
- Two years of experience as a teacher of children in the age group(s) they oversee.
- A minimum of eight (8) hours of basic training in serving children with disabilities within five years after employment
- Age Requirement:
 - Program Administrators must be at least 21 years of age.

Pre-Service Training

All personnel, including volunteers and substitutes, must have on file the appropriate screening and background checks and be adequately oriented about the program.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- All child care personnel must have continuing education and professional development training that relates to topics specific to early education. The majority of which is provided by an outside source relating to: child growth and development in the areas of cognitive learning and social, emotional, and physical development; safety and health issues for young children; family and community relations; classroom and program management; and professional development which may include special needs. Training may also include related language development, discipline, and technology. Whenever possible, continuing education should be validated by college credit.
- Annual training minimums:
 - Administrators -24 hours.
 - Primary Teachers -20 hours.
 - Associate Teachers and Teacher Aides -12 hours.

Curriculum Implementation

- Each classroom or age group has a written schedule and a written curriculum outline that defines the expectations for learning and development for that age group.
- The instructional program meets the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of each child, including those with special needs where applicable.
- The curriculum acknowledges differences in children, and the daily schedule includes a balance and variety of curriculum activities.
- The curriculum may be purchased or self-developed, providing it is appropriate to the age and developmental level of the group.

Literacy Support

- The standards require teachers to be aware of the importance of early literacy instruction and plan for experiences which give children exposure to language development, print and book knowledge, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, written expression, motivation to read, vocabulary, and time for discussions and questions.
- Lesson plans will include storytelling, reading, and other activities utilizing materials that promote early literacy skills.

Health and Safety

- The program will provide an environment that is safe, sanitary, and secure.
- A Safe Environment is validated by proof of compliance with all legal requirements for the protection and health and safety of children in group settings.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- Staff members demonstrate love by being patient, kind, and respectful to each child.
- The staff endeavors to provide an environment that promotes a positive emotional climate where children feel safe to participate in all aspects of classroom activities.
- The teaching staff is consistent and predictable in their physical and emotional care of all children.
- Staff encourages an age appropriate degree of independence in children.

Staff Interactions

- The teaching staff is expected to work as a team, fostering an environment of support and mutual respect.
- Staff meetings are held at least once a month to discuss program planning, implementing and attaining goals, plans for individual children and to discuss the program and working conditions.

Family Interactions

- Programs are required to provide opportunities for parents to be active participants and partners by providing pre-enrollment materials and handbooks, involving them in decision-making regarding their child and the program, scheduling regular parent-teacher conferences, and providing multiple means of communication such as newsletters, emails, and website resources.
- Family involvement is encouraged by welcoming parents to participate through volunteering, and ensuring frequent parent/staff interactions.

Self-Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

Trained inspectors visit the program to review the documents submitted in the Self-Study and records. Committee who will make the final accreditation decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Re-accreditation every 3 years.

Florida League of Christian Schools (FLOCS)

Licensure and Regulation

Legal Authority to operate. Any educational institution pursuing accreditation must demonstrate that they are established under the respective laws governing the operation of schools and preschools with their jurisdiction. This may include:

- Business Licensure.
- Articles of incorporation
- Required health, fire, safety inspections.
- Preschool licensure, if required.
- Religious exemption from licensure. If recognized by the state or local governing authority, religious exempt centers must comply with basic regulations concerning health, safety and sanitation, as well as, background screening.

Ration/ Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	4:1
13-24	8	5:1
25-30	10	6:1
30-36	12	7:1
3 yrs.	18	10:1
4 yrs.	18	10:1
5 yrs.	18	10:1

Teacher and Staff

- All owners and child care personnel, except volunteers or substitutes who work less than forty (40) hours a month, must take a Children & Families' approved 45 clock-hour introductory course in child care , and of the following: A certificate in "Child Guidance, Care and Management Services" from an approved educational agency.
- A recognized Montessori certificate acceptable to FLOCS. A four-year degree from an accredited university or a transcript evidencing course work toward a two-year degree or higher in Early Childhood Education, child psychology, elementary education, home economics or two (2) years of college with six (6) or more semester hours in Early Childhood/Child Development.
- Certification from a Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FLOCS) with a Staff Credential. Verification of previous child care work experience
- Age Requirement:
 - Any individual 16 years of age or older may be employed in a child care facility. Individuals 15 years of age may also be employed by a facility; however, such individuals must be under direct supervision of child care personnel and may not be counted in the child-to-staff ratio. No individual under the age of 18 may be solely in charge of a group of children.

Director Requirements

The director/ operator of a child care facility needs to have the following qualifications before assuming the position as a Director:

- A high school diploma or GED, Directors Credential, Child care experience or direct contact with children in childcare center, school, or church environment. Department of Children & Families 45 hour training certification or a CF 5211 documenting an educational waiver. If the director has one of the following recommended credentials but has not completed the 45 hour Children & Families training, she/he has 90 days after employment to enroll/register and must be completed no more than one year. If training is unavailable FLOCS should be notified, and also needs one of the following: A training certificate in "Child Guidance, Care and Management Services" from an approved educational agency.
- A recognized Montessori teaching certificate acceptable to the Division. A four-year degree from an accredited university or a transcript evidencing course work toward a two-year degree or higher in Early Childhood Education, child psychology, elementary education, home economics or two (2) years of college of six (6) or more semester hours in Child Development, Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC).

Pre-Service Training

- The center shall, prior to employment and annually, instruct the staff and faculty regarding the center's employee policies as well as other center policies (parent, financial, etc...) to ensure an efficiently run program.
- The center must have a signed statement that faculty and staff acknowledge receipt of, understand, and agree to the center's policy and procedures.
- The center shall provide other training prior to employment and annually as required or established by state or local government.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

All child care personnel must have a continual professional development plan written and filed. All child care personnel, except volunteers and substitutes who work or assist less than 40 hours a month, must complete 15 in-service hours or 1.5 CEU's of annual training. There are no exemptions from the annual in-service training for child care personnel. The annual training of 15 in service hours or 1.5 CEU's should include any of the following areas: literacy, guidance, technology training. Other areas of training may include: health and safety; CPR; nutrition; child development; child transportation and safety; behavior management; working with parents; design and use of child oriented space; program curriculum and activities for children; community, health and social service resources; child abuse; day care for multilingual children; working with handicapped children in day care; owner or operators training program; annual FLOCS Conference and other appropriate course areas. CPR and First Aid training may be used for annual in-service once every three (3) years.

Curriculum Implementation

The program implements a written curriculum across all age levels served that is developmentally appropriate, and addresses cognitive, emotional, physical, and spiritual development.

Lesson Plans

- Instructional staff develops lesson plans for each class/age group that have goals and objectives that reflect developmentally appropriate practices.
- Instructional plans should include varied learning activities, learning centers, and other group and individual opportunities throughout the classroom.
- Lesson plans must address the following standards:
 - Physical development.
 - Approaches to learning.
 - Social and emotional development.
 - Language and communication.
 - Emergent literacy.
 - Mathematical and scientific thinking.
 - Social studies and the arts.
 - Gross and fine motor development.

Literacy Support

Lesson plans must address the following standards:

- Language and communication
- Emergent literacy

Health and Safety

- The center provides a plan and process that ensures the proper maintenance of all buildings, grounds, and equipment.
- The center is inspected by city/state agencies as applicable for licensing or exemption under state or federal law (i.e., fire department, health department, food services, etc.).
- Children are supervised at all times, and the child-adult ratio is maintained while the children are on the playground.
- At least one staff member with first aid certification—and infant/child CPR certification will be present on the premises at all times.
- Disaster plans are established and included in parent handbook/manual. Plans should include emergency procedures for disasters that require evacuation of property i.e. fire, sink hole, flooding, bomb threat, or occurrence of violent intruder.

Teacher – Child Interactions

The center develops a distinct Christian culture based upon brotherly love and mutual respect, and maintains positive and professional relationships and interactions among children, parents, stakeholders, peers, superiors, the community, and other teaching staff. Evident in employee to student policy and interaction.

Staff Interactions

- Leadership and staff should work collaboratively in planning to ensure rigor and fidelity across age levels and in classes of the same age level, and reviewing the effectiveness of the academic and developmental programs.
- Teachers should work collaboratively in planning, engaging in discussions about best practices, student achievement, and school improvement.
- School staff should work collaboratively with parents and other stakeholders in reviewing the schools purpose and mission, assessing the effectiveness of the school's program, and working toward school improvement.

Family Interactions

- The program encourages family involvement in center activities and in each child's education.
- The center hosts an annual parent orientation that addresses policies and procedures to insure the effective flow for communication exists between school and home.
- The center has a venue to communicate with the parents about upcoming activities, events, and opportunities for parental involvement.
- Teachers and staff members communicate daily with parents about observed child needs and concerns.
- An open-door policy exists that allows parental access to visit the center during operational hours.
- Parent-teacher conferences take place regularly to encourage parent involvement, address and plan for areas of developmental concern, and provide community resource information for further assessment.
- An annual survey is provided by the center to obtain parental feedback and address concerns.

Self- Study

To become accredited, a school will complete a self-study evaluation and open their school to an on-site visit by a qualified team of educators who will visit a school and examine its program to determine whether it is being operated within the published guidelines of the accrediting agency.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

After a school submits its initial application for accreditation, a chairperson will be appointed. An initial on-site visit to the school may take place by the chairperson if the last two inspections accumulated more than 15 points in violations. The purpose of this initial visit is to verify that the applicant school has met all of the initial requirements listed in the Eligibility Checklist. At the time of this visit, the applicant school must be prepared to provide documentation that will verify that all eligibility requirements have been met.

Renewal Process

Initial and fifth-year re-evaluation accreditation is for a maximum period of five (5) years.



Green Apple Accreditation of Children’s Services (GAACS)

Licensure and Regulation

- The child care center must hold a valid license issued by the department or local licensing agency unless the center is verified exempt from licensure.
- The child care center license/license exemption must be in good standing.
- License exempt child care centers must comply with their state licensing requirements.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-24	6-8	1:3-4
25-34	8-12	1:4-6
3s	12-18	1:6-9
4-5	16-20	18-:10
K	18-24	1:9-12
6-8	20-24	1:10-12
9-12	24-30	1:12-15

Teacher and Staff

- Experience: three months; Education: BA in related field.
- Experience: three months; Education: BA in unrelated field; Professional Preparation: six credits -- child and youth development (3), other areas related to after school programming (3)
- Experience: six months; Education: AA or two years of college in related field or equivalent; Professional Preparation: six credits -- child and youth development (3), other areas related to after school programming (3).
- Experience: one year; Education: AA or two years of college in unrelated field; Professional Preparation: six credits -- child and youth development (3), other areas related to after school programming (3)

Director Requirements

- The Director must meet one of the following:
 - An undergraduate degree in one (1) of the following: Early Childhood Education, Child Development, Social Work, Early Childhood Special Education, Nursing, Child Care Management, or other child-related field, OR A combination of coursework and experience that includes a minimum of four (4) college level courses in Early Childhood Education and Child Development, Elementary Education, Early Childhood Special Education, Child Care Management; and two (2) years of experience as a lead teacher or director serving the children of the age groups in care.
- Age requirement:
 - 21 years of age or older.

Pre-Service Training

- The center shall, prior to employment and annually, instruct the staff and faculty regarding the center's employee policies as well as other center policies (parent, financial, etc...) to ensure an efficiently run program.
- The center must have a signed statement that faculty and staff acknowledge receipt of, understand, and agree to the center's policy and procedures.
- The center shall provide other training prior to employment and annually as required or established by state or local government.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

All teaching staff (including lead teachers, assistants and volunteers) must complete at least 30 clock hours of job-related continuing education in the first year of employment and 24 clock hour of job-related professional development annually, following the first year of employment.

Curriculum Implementation

The program has a written implementation plan for curriculum selection, training instructional staff on how to implement the curriculum, stake holders (director / parents/ teachers) are included in the review of the implementation plan.

Literacy Support

The curriculum standard addresses the provision of appropriate receptive and expressive language experiences throughout the day through interest centers, listening to stories read aloud, exploring books, and response to conversations about elements of the story to predict outcomes, to retell the sequence of the story, to connect happening to the story with prior experiences , and develops phonological awareness.

Health and Safety

- The early education program has a responsibility for the health, safety and general welfare of each child in attendance.
- The staff should have continuing and required training in emergency first aid and in special medical needs in order to be alert and prepared for emergencies.
- Staff members need to be safety conscious with a view toward prevention (Caring for Our Children 2002).

Teacher - Child Interactions

Staff members intentionally prepare and maintain an emotionally healthy environment that include the following:

- Staff who share the primary responsibility of a group of children communicate with one another to ensure smooth operation of the program.

Staff Interactions

Staff members intentionally prepare and maintain an emotionally healthy environment that includes the following:

- Personal and peer respect
- Expressions of emotion with words (both positive and negative)

Family Interactions

- Family involvement standards include provision of a written handbooks of program policies, objectives, and goals.
- Regular means of communication; conferences at least once a year and at other times as needed; and goal-setting opportunities for their child.

Self-Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes input from administrators, staff and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- A consultant is assigned to assist each program during the accreditation process.
- On site visits are completed by trained review team members who are directors and teachers of other Christian Education programs.
- A commission makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual Report
- Reaccreditation every 3 years.



Green Apple Accreditation of Children's Services (GAACS) School – Age

Licensure and Regulation

- The program complies with applicable laws and regulations.
- The program possesses relevant licenses, if applicable, and displays documents including license and inspection reports in an area visible to the public.
- The program meets applicable laws, regulations, guidelines, and codes, including those related to health and safety.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

Age	Ratio
< 6	1:10-15
> 6	1:8-12

Teacher and Staff

- Experience: three months; Education: BA in related field
- Experience: three months; Education: BA in unrelated field; Professional Preparation: six credits -- child and youth development (3), other areas related to after school programming (3).
- Experience: six months; Education: AA or two years of college in related field or equivalent; Professional Preparation: six credits -- child and youth development (3), other areas related to after school programming (3).
- Experience: one year; Education: AA or two years of college in unrelated field; Professional Preparation: six credits -- child and youth development (3), other areas related to after school programming (3).

Director Requirements

- Experience: one year; Education: BA in related field; Professional Preparation: six credits -- child and youth development (3), administration (3).
- Experience: two years; Education: BA in unrelated field; Professional Preparation: twelve credits -- child and youth development (3), administration (3), other areas related to after school programming (6).

Pre-Service Training

Before working with children and youth, new personnel are given an orientation that includes a review of:

1. The program's mission, philosophy, goals, routines, practices, and schedule;
2. Their job descriptions, including their responsibilities to children and youth, families, and the program;
3. The needs and other relevant characteristics of program participants, including cultural and socioeconomic characteristics;
4. Program policies and procedures, including policies and procedures related to health and safety, emergencies, and confidentiality;
5. Personnel policies and procedures; and
6. Lines of accountability and authority within the program.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

Training for after school and youth development personnel includes:

1. 15 hours annually for Assistant Group Leaders;
2. 18 hours annually for Group Leaders;
3. 21 hours annually for Senior Group Leaders;
4. 24 hours annually for Site Directors; and
5. 30 hours annually for Program Administrators.

Curriculum Implementation

- Program activities provide opportunities to build skills, explore interests, experience a sense of self efficacy and belonging, and contribute to the community.
- Children and youth are engaged in high-quality academic activities that:
 1. Are focused on achieving clear and specific learning goals and objectives that are aligned with state and local academic standards;
 2. provide active learning experiences;
 3. are based on a curriculum that reflects current research on promoting learning in the academic field in question; and
 4. build upon one another to facilitate a step-by-step approach to learning, when possible.

Literacy Support

The program offers activities that are designed to promote learning in at least one of the following academic areas:

- literacy and language arts;
- Math; science; and/or social studies.

Health and Safety

- The program meets applicable laws, regulations, guidelines, and codes, including those related to health and safety.
- The program conducts fire drills according to legal requirements, and at least monthly; and documents fire drills when they are held.
- Personnel directly involved in medication control and administration receive training and demonstrate competence in medication control and administration, and knowledge of applicable legal requirements.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- Children and youth develop positive, supportive relationships with personnel.
- Personnel are actively engaged with children and youth, and relate to them in positive ways by:
 1. helping them feel welcome, comfortable, and supported;
 2. recognizing their positive accomplishments;
 3. treating them with respect;
 4. listening to what they say;
 5. responding to them with interest, acceptance, and appreciation; and
 6. being consistent and following through on what they say they will do.

Staff Interactions

- The program provides a positive work environment and promotes a high level of personnel satisfaction and retention.
- Personnel work well together, and: cooperate with each other; .are respectful of each other; provide role models of positive adult relationships; and .communicate with each other while the program is in session to ensure that the program flows smoothly.

Family Interactions

- Family members are treated with respect, and helped to feel welcome and comfortable. For example: Personnel and family members greet one another by name;
- Personnel use friendly voices, expressions, and gestures; Personnel and family members are relaxed and not abrupt with each other;
- Personnel and family members show interest in each other's lives; Respect is shown to all without bias;
- Personnel communicate with families in a variety of ways;
- Personnel recognize that some cultures like direct communication, while others prefer indirect;
- Personnel do not talk about confidential matters in front of children and youth or other adults.

Self- Study

The Candidate Member organization completes Self-Study Evaluation and gathers supporting documentation for submission to the My GAACS Account including surveys for parent, teacher and administrators.

Teacher Assessment

- Teacher survey is included and a required element of the Self-Study evaluation.
- The teacher survey includes: Staff Issues, Administration, Program Implementation, etc.

Administrative Assessment

Administrative Assessment Survey is included and a required element in the Self-Study Evaluation and includes: Evaluation of the administration program, salary, standards, etc.

Family Assessment

- Family Assessment Survey is included and a required element of the Self-Study Evaluation.
- The family survey includes: program quality, interactions between staff and family, etc.

Validation Process

- Upon receipt of the accreditation application, a consultant is assigned to the organization. An accreditation orientation is conducted and a courtesy walk thru upon request.
- On-site validation inspections are completed Validators are trained prior to participating on the visiting committee and annually.
- Validators must have 3 years of experience working in a child care, school age, nonpublic/private, or public/charter school setting.
- The validation process includes: Entrance Interview, Walk-thru, Document Review, Classroom Observations, Interviews, and an Exit Interview.

Renewal Process

- Annual Report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 3 years.

National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC)

Licensure and Regulation

Programs must be licensed or legally operating. Programs with full and partial exemptions from regulation must provide certification of exemption status.

Ratio/ Group Size & Square Footage

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	6-8	1:3-4
1s	8-10	1:4-5
2s	10-12	1:5-6
3s	16-18	1:8-9
4s	20-22	1:10-12
5s	20-24	1:10-12
k-2	24-26	1:12-15
3-6 grades	28-30	1:15-18

Teacher and Staff

The majority of staff members responsible for the instruction of children will have:

- A minimum of two years of childcare experience and Associate's Degree or higher with 12 credits in ECE/ CD.
- The majority if assistant teachers are expected to have a CDA or above.
- Age requirement:
 - All staff counted in the staff-to-child ratio must be at least 18 years old.
 - Staff under the age of 18 must work under direct supervision.

Director Requirements

Directors / Administrators must hold:

- A Baccalaureate degree or higher in ECE / Child Development or related field.
- Business administration / program management Education / training.
- One-year experience in administration of an early childhood program and two years' experience working in an early care and education classroom.

Pre-Service Training

Standards include a comprehensive orientation plan. The orientation requires that programs comply with state licensing pre-service training requirements. Additionally, the plan includes training on program policies, procedures, curriculum, and observation in the classroom.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- Programs provide written procedures for ongoing staff training plans for professional development (PD).
- The staff evaluation process is utilized in determining staff training needs and developing individualized training plans.
- Administrator/Directors are required to have 30 hours of PD training annually.
- The annual training plan for staff includes topics related to the age group of children with whom they are working.
- Staff are required to have 20 hours of PD training annually.

Curriculum Implementation

- Each teacher has a written lesson plan that is appropriate to the developmental stage of children, and the planned daily schedule includes a balance of activities that respect children's age appropriate needs and interests.
- Materials, activities, and classroom arrangement encourage children to participate in a variety of age appropriate activities.

Literacy Support

Promoting of language skills is addressed in the standards through the provision of classroom activities, use open-ended questions opportunities to talk and engage in conversations, teacher descriptions of objects and events, reading of books and poems and pre-writing of opportunities to talk and engage in conversations, teacher description of objects and events, reading of books and poems, and pre-writing opportunities.

Health and Safety

- The center maintains compliance with licensing standards and state and local regulations for the safety and health of children in group settings.
- All staff members received training in Standard Precautions in handling exposure to blood and potential blood containing body fluids and injury dischargers.
- All staff members have training in recognizing symptoms of child abuse and their responsibility for reporting.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- Teachers demonstrate behaviors that encourage the children's development of trust.
- Teachers have frequent, positive interactions with children.
- Teachers are responsive to children.
- Children are generally comfortable, happy, relaxed, and engaged in activities.
- Teachers use positive guidance techniques that help children learn to make wise choices and control their own behavior.
- Teachers promote cooperative and positive social behavior among children.
- Teachers ensure that snack/mealtimes are pleasant and social learning experiences for children.
- Respect is displayed for cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity and ability or disability.
- Teachers encourage children to develop self-help skills that are appropriate to their age.

Staff Interactions

- The center has an on-going procedure to receive and review staff suggestions and recommendations.
- Administrators and staff meet periodically for program planning, training, information sharing, and goal setting.
- A record is kept of topics and attendance.

Family Interactions

Family involvement standards include opportunities for parents and staff to evaluate the program's strengths and weaknesses annually, provision of written policies and program goals and objectives, and encouragement of parents to participate in the center's program.

Self-Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

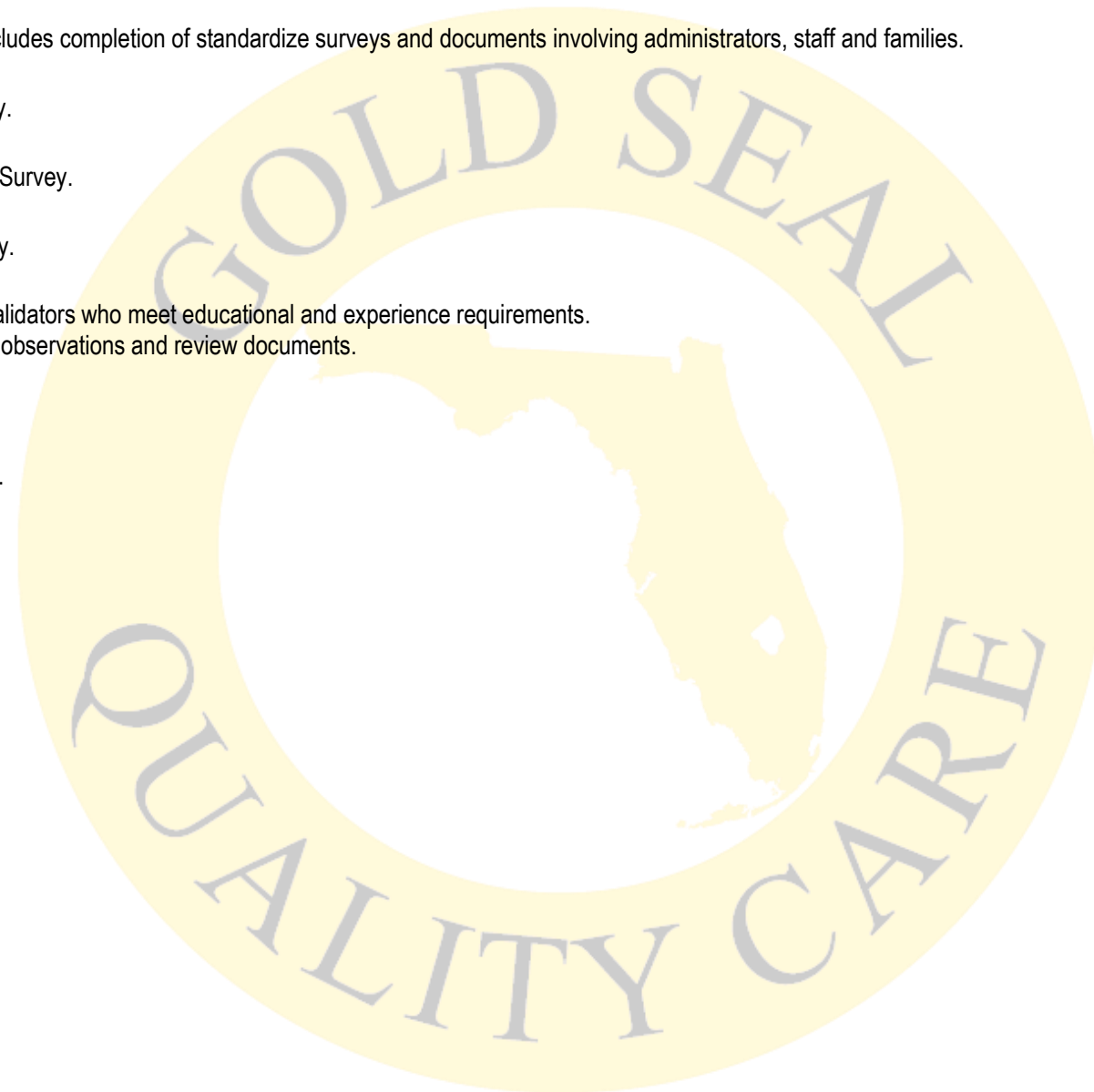
Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- On-site visits are completed by trained Validators who meet educational and experience requirements.
- Validators conduct classroom and facility observations and review documents.
- A commission makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual Report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 3 years.



National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Licensure and Regulation

- Programs must be licensed or regulated and in good standing for the past 12 months, unless exempt.
- Exempt programs that are eligible for licensure or regulation are required to be licensed or regulated. If not permitted to be licensed or regulated by the state, programs must document compliance with criteria specially created for this purpose by NAEYC.

Ratio/ Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-15	6-8	1:3-4
12-28	6-12	1:3-4
21-36	8-12	1:4-6
30-48	12-18	1:6-9
4s/5s	16-20	1:8-10
K	20-24	1:10-12

Teacher and Staff

A time line from 2006 – 2020 that changes the expected qualification from the current minimum has been developed. If these guidelines cannot be met the program must document how it is going to attain these qualifications. The most current-2010 requirements are included here:

- Current requirement:
 - Teacher has a minimum of a CDA or equivalent (Equivalence to CDA = A minimum of 12 college credits)
 - The teacher has or is working toward an associate's or Baccalaureate degree or equivalent.
- By 2010:
 - Teacher must have a minimum of an Associate's degree or equivalent (Equivalence is defined as 60 college credits with 30 of those in child development/early childhood education, elementary education, or early childhood special education.
- Age Requirement:
 - Staff who work directly with children must be 18 years of age or older (except vehicle drivers, who must be at least 21).

Director Requirements

Program administrators must have at least a Baccalaureate degree with at least 9 credit hours in administration, leadership, or management and at least 24 credit hours in early childhood, child development, elementary education, or special early childhood special education that addresses child development and learning from birth through kindergarten or document that a plan is in place to meet these requirements within 5 years, OR documents meeting an appropriate combination of relevant education and work experience.

Pre-Service Training

New staff, volunteers, and substitutes are adequately oriented about the program. Orientation includes knowledge regarding the goals and philosophy of the program; emergency, health and safety procedures; guidance and classroom management techniques; child abuse and neglect reporting procedures; curriculum & planned daily activities; individual needs of children; regulatory requirements; and expectations for ethical conduct.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

All staff evaluates and improves their performance based on ongoing reflection and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. Annual individualized professional development plans are developed and guide continuous professional development and training.

Curriculum Implementation

The curriculum includes the goals of the program, planned activities, the daily schedule, and the availability and use of developmentally appropriate materials. Curriculum is respectful of family values and language, guides, responsive interactions, supports engagement through play, guides, assessment and integration of assessment results into classroom experiences, and supports aesthetic, cognitive, emotional, language physical and social development.

Literacy Support

Language development and early literacy is addressed in the curriculum standards and include consideration of family & community perspectives, value and support, support for verbal/nonverbal communication, alternative communication strategies, vocabulary, time for discussions & questions, varied opportunities with books & stories, phonological awareness, and support for written expression.

Health and Safety

- The program has and implements a written agreement with a health consultant who is either a licensed pediatric health professional or a health professional with specific training in health consultation for early childhood programs.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate showing satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children.
- The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:
 - Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
 - Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing would reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
 - Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task. Children wash either independently or with staff assistance.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- Teaching staff foster children's emotional well-being by demonstrating respect for children and creating a positive emotional climate as reflected in behaviors such as frequent social conversations, joint laughter, and affection.
- Teaching staff express warmth through behaviors such as physical affection, eye contact, tone of voice, and smiles.
- Teaching staff are consistent and predictable in their physical and emotional care of all children.
- Teaching staff function as secure bases for children. They respond promptly in developmentally appropriate ways to children's positive initiations, negative emotions, and feelings of hurt and fear by providing comfort, support, and assistance.

Staff Interactions

In classrooms and groups that include teacher assistants or teacher aides and specialized teaching and support staff, the expectation is that this teaching staffs work as a team. Whether one teacher works alone or whether a team works together, the instructional approach creates a teaching environment, which supports children's positive learning and development across all areas.

Family Interactions

Family support is addressed in standards that address understanding and knowing families, sharing information with families, and nurturing families as advocates for their children. Requirements include providing program information; a process for orienting children and families; maintaining ongoing, two-way communication in many forms; encouraging parents to be involved in the program; and joint decision-making opportunities to support children's development and learning

Self- Study

- Programs use the self-assessment process to gather evidence of their performance on the criteria and, therefore on each standard.
- When a majority of its families, staff, and administration believe that program meets each of the 10 standards the program submits documentation that can be used by the NAEYC Academy to assess its readiness for on-site assessment.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete and Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete and assessment survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete and assessment survey.

Validation Process

- The self-study is validated by an on-site visit from trained (initial and update), independent professional(s), meeting educational and experience requirements.
- Assessors review documents, conduct classroom observations, conduct interviews, and observe the environment.
- A commission makes the final accreditation decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Reaccreditation every 5 years.

National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC)

Licensure and Regulation

- Programs must have a current license, registration, or certificate – the highest level of regulation available for family child care in their state.
- Programs must comply with NAFCC Accreditation standards even if they are higher than state standards. If state standards are higher, compliance with those standards is also required.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

Programs must comply with state regulations.

Teacher and Staff

- The provider must have:
 - A high school diploma or GED
 - Current Pediatric First Aid and CPR certificates.
 - The substitute must hold current Pediatric First Aid and CPR certificates.
- Age Requirement:
 - Teachers, Assistant Teachers and Associate Teachers must be at least 18 years old.

Director Requirements

The provider must hold a high school diploma or GED.

Pre- Service Training

The program must comply with state and local training regulations.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- The Provider:
 - Seeks continuing training and education, and is open to new ideas about family child care.
 - Keeps up-to-date with topics related to program quality.
 - Consults with experts to gain specific information, such as how to work with children and families with special needs.
 - Is actively involved with other providers or a related professional group, if available.

Curriculum Implementation

A curriculum is not specified; however, developmental learning goals are addressed in the areas of social and self-development, physical development, cognition and language and creative development. In addition, child directed activities and provider activities are addressed and suggested materials lists are included.

Literacy Support

The standards require providers to read to children at least once a day; make some books accessible to children every day; encourage children to look at or read books on their own; teach children to take care of books; build on children's emerging interest in print and writing; encourage children to scribble, to write their names and stories, to label their drawings, make books, or keep journals in the context of ongoing activities.

Health and Safety

- A TB screening completed and signed by a health care professional using the NAFCC Family Child Care TB Screening Form. TB screening must be dated within 2 years of when the request for observation visit documentation is complete.
- Current First Aid and Pediatric CPR certificates must be present.
- A favorable review of state and FBI fingerprint records concerning child abuse and criminal background status is present.
- The home has adequate ventilation and room temperature between 68-90 degrees (F). If the temperature is over 90 degrees (F), air conditioning or safe fans are used.
- The provider brings a first aid kit, emergency telephone numbers, emergency treatment permission forms, coins for a pay phone, calling card number, or cellular phone, not paper and pen, diapers and wipes, if needed. Children carry the provider's name and telephone number and their own name, where it is not visible, in case they do become lost.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- The provider cares about, respects and is committed to helping each child develop to his or her full potential.
- The provider seems to like children and to enjoy being with them.
- The provider observes children's behavior, verbal and body language, and abilities. The provider uses this information to respond to each child. For example, the provider responds to a baby's crying as promptly and effectively as possible.

Staff Interactions

- The provider and the assistant share observations of children and families and plan some activities together.
- The provider offers the assistant helpful, consistent, and constructive feedback, and encourages the assistant's professional growth.

Family Interactions

Family involvement standards include open visitation policies; respect for family diversity; responsiveness to parent requests, preferences, and values; frequent opportunities for sharing day-to-day happenings; conferences at least annually; and joint goal-setting and decision-making for children.

Self-Study

- Accreditation requires completion of a self-study workbook.
- Family surveys are required.

Teacher Assessment

Accreditation requires completion of a self-study workbook.

Administrative Assessment

Accreditation requires completion of a self-study workbook.

Family Assessment

Family surveys are required.

Validation Process

- A trained observer visits the program to review records, interview the provider, and document the information submitted in the self-study.
- Observers, who must have experience in family child care homes and early education training, complete a 2-day training program.
- A commission makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 3 years.



National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)

Licensure and Regulation

- The program must hold a license in good standing with the state agency responsible for licensing child care centers and early childhood programs.
- License-exempt programs must provide a copy of the rules and regulations for licensed programs and demonstrate their compliance with these rules and regulations and proof of oversight and regular monitoring visits.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	6-8	1:3-4
13-24	6-10	1:3-5
25-30	8	1:4
31-34	8-12	1:4-6
3s	14-20	1:7-10
4s/5s	16-20	1:8-10
6-8 yrs	10:1	20
9-12yrs	12.:1	24

Teacher and Staff

- All teachers in charge of a group are licensed/ certified/ credentialed, qualified as lead teachers, teachers, or associate teachers, with education in child development and early childhood education specific to this age group, as well as supervised experience with preschool children.
- Age Requirement:
 - Teachers, Assistant Teachers and Associate Teachers must be at least 18 years old.

Director Requirements

- Must have an undergraduate degree in early childhood education, child development, social work, nursing, or other child-related field, or must have a minimum of four college-level courses in child development and early childhood education and two years' experience as a teacher of children of the age group(s) in care, or must have a national competency based credential such as the CCP or the CDA and two years' experience as a teacher of children of the age group(s) in care.
- A Director must have either the National Administrator Credential (or equivalent), or a course in business administration, or at least one year experience as the administrator of an early childhood program.

Pre-Service Training

The program provides staff with a complete orientation to the program.

Staff Training / Continuing Professional Development

- Staff is offered regular training in administration, behavior management, health, safety, child development, nutrition, evaluation, whole language, curriculum, parent involvement, and communication skills.
- Staff is offered regular training in administration, behavior management, health, safety, child development, nutrition, evaluation, whole language, curriculum, parent involvement, and communication skills.

Curriculum Implementation

- The program has written curriculum plans based on knowledge of child development and appropriate practice; assessment of individual needs and interests; input from teachers, cultural sensitivity; progress reports; and the social, emotional, cognitive, physical and language development of individual children.
- The curriculum plan is reviewed annually, plans are developed for children with special needs, and a variety of developmentally appropriate materials and activities are provided.

Literacy Support

Promotion of children's language development through a variety of songs, stories, books and games, including some from their culture and language and frequent conversations with children.

Health and Safety

- The program has policies in writing on the routine of health care of children, and the health practices of the program.
- CPR for infants and children, and emergency management of choking from a licensed health professional, is always present.
- 50% of the staff involved in the provision of direct child care are certified in first-aid treatment.
- 90% of the staff involved in the provision of direct child care are certified in pediatric first aid.
- Universal precautions are practiced at all times.
- All staff have training in health and safety.
- The program provides regular vision, speech and language, hearing, and developmental screenings for children either on-site or through referral to a community health agency.
- The program documents annual screenings for each child.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- Teachers provide warm and loving physical contact with children to reassure them that they are cared for and respected.
- Teachers speak to each child frequently, making eye contact and using clear, correct language patterns, and affectionate, supportive words.

Staff Interactions

Regular staff communication is fostered through weekly staff meetings, a staff newsletter, and ample opportunity for individual staff / administrative meetings, written memoranda, suggestion boxes, and opportunities to address the management, the governing board or parent advisory board.

Family Interactions

Family involvement includes providing program information, welcoming parents at all times, encouraging family members to be involved in the program in various ways, informing parents about all aspects of the program in writing, holding parent teacher conferences at least twice annually, communicating daily with each child's parents, providing parent education opportunities in the primary language of the family, and giving families information regarding social services.

Self-Study

Programs seeking accreditation are required to complete a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff, families, and children.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

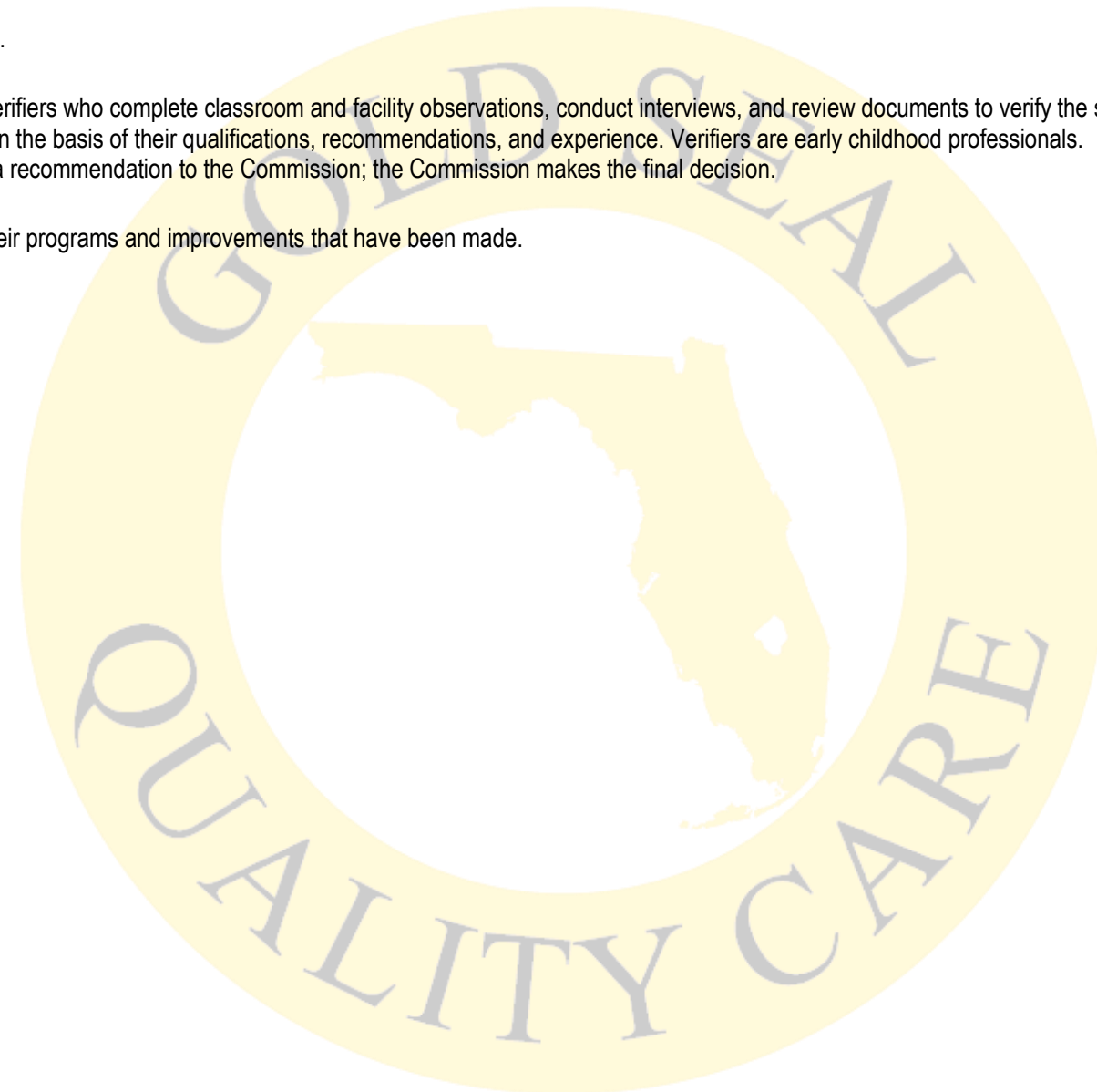
Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- On-site visits are completed by trained verifiers who complete classroom and facility observations, conduct interviews, and review documents to verify the self-study materials.
- NECPA reviews and approves verifiers on the basis of their qualifications, recommendations, and experience. Verifiers are early childhood professionals.
- A National Accreditation Council makes a recommendation to the Commission; the Commission makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual Reports describing changes in their programs and improvements that have been made.
- Reaccreditation every 3 years.



National Lutheran School Accreditation / FL-GA District (NLSA)

Licensure and Regulation

The early learning institution is licensed and in good standing with the state agency responsible for licensing child care centers and early childhood programs. (Attach the state license for Child Care.)

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	1:4
12-24	12	1:4
2 yrs-30mos	12	1:6
2-1/2 36mos	14	1:7
3 yrs.	20	1:10
4 yrs.	20	1:10
5 yrs.	20	1:10

Teacher and Staff

- All Lead Teachers must have a minimum of CDA or state recognized equivalent (Equivalency to CDA = a minimum of 12 college credits in ECE, and the teacher has or is working toward an Associate or Bachelor's Degree in ECE.)
- Age Requirement:
 - Be at least 18 years of age.

Director Requirements

- The director's personal profile and qualifications fulfill the job description requirements, which includes a minimum age of 21.
- The director has at least a bachelor's degree, with no less than 18 semester hours in early childhood education, or is actively working toward accomplishing this requirement.

Pre-Service Training

- The director provides adequate orientation and training for new staff and substitutes.
- All staff members comply with the state's health and safety requirements such as certificates in first aid and pediatric CPR.
- All adults interacting with children have met the state's requirements regarding criminal record checks and are free from any history of substantiated child abuse, neglect, or physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect a child's health.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- Directors and all staff must have at least 30 clock hours of job-related continuing education in the first year of employment.
- All staff meet all applicable local and state regulatory requirements and maintain documentation related to these requirements including in-service training.
- All staff meet all applicable local and state regulatory requirements and maintain documentation related to these requirements including in-service training.

Curriculum Implementation

- The curriculum of the Lutheran early childhood program reflects its philosophy and consists of appropriate learning experiences. Through these experiences each child is led to growing relationships with God, family, teachers, children and others.
- The curriculum enhances growth and development of the young child through the use of age appropriate materials and activities. The early childhood program involves young children in many and varied learning experiences.
- Play is the avenue for these learning experiences to occur. Spiritual, social, emotional, physical and cognitive development is a continuous process important to the early childhood curriculum.

Literacy Support

The curriculum fosters language and literacy skills by:

- Reading and telling stories, talking about pictures, asking open ended questions, listening to children, helping them write their own stories, finger plays, labeling, providing phonemic awareness (rhythms and repetition), opposites, story sequencing, story comprehension.

Health and Safety

- The Center Maintains a Safe and Healthy Environment that Supports Student Learning.
- The center complies with all federal, state, local building, health, safety, and disaster preparedness requirements.
- The building, grounds and equipment provide a developmentally appropriate environment in which young children work, play, explore and learn.
- These contribute important ways of optimum quality teaching and learning.
- If the early childhood facility is shared with other congregational programs, it is important that guidelines are carefully developed between the various users of the building.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- The program promotes positive Christ-centered relationships among all children and adults.
- The staff recognizes and provides opportunities for young children to develop an understanding of self and others. These interactions are characterized by warmth, personal respect, individuality, positive support and responsiveness.

Staff Interactions

- Staff members seek out and acknowledge each other's ideas and opinions.
- Staff members provide appropriate support for each other skills and accomplishments.
- Staff members provide appropriate support for each other dealing with stress.
- Staff members respect each other's right to confidentiality.
- Staff members communicate with each other to ensure smooth operations.

Family Interactions

- Teachers and parents form a partnership to establish and maintain two-way communication to ensure that children's needs are met throughout the day.
- Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. The goal of the early childhood program has strategies for working with the family through effective communication, active parent involvement and parent education.

Self-Study

A self-study is conducted by the administration, faculty, pastor (single congregation schools), board members, parents, and other constituents of the school. This step usually requires nine to 12 months. The procedure is described in detail in the section, "Conducting the Self-Study." To help the school in this step, a consultant is assigned at the time of application.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete a School Climate Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete a school climate survey (assessment) evaluating the effectiveness of the school.

Family Assessment

Parents are encouraged to complete a school climate survey.

Validation Process

- The site visit follows the self-study.
- The visiting team consists of 3 or more professional peer reviewers who conduct the visit.
- The District Accreditation Commission makes the final decision.
- Accreditation requires application, completion of the Self-Study Instrument, a successful team visit (by three or more peer professional reviewers) and a positive recommendation from the Florida-Georgia District Accreditation Commission before the expiration date.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 5 years.

North American Christian School Accrediting Agency (NACCSAA)

Licensure and Regulations

Licensed programs must include a copy of the program's current license and last inspection report. Programs exempt from licensure will be expected to validate how all minimal state licensing requirements are met or exceeded, regardless of exemption.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
0-12	8	1:4
13-24	8	1:4
25-35	10	1:5
3s	18	1:9
4s	20	1:10
5s	24	1:12

Teacher and Staff

- Teachers are required to have a minimum of either an associate's degree in ECE / child development or any associate's degree with at least 12 credit hours in ECE / child development.
- Assistant teachers are required to have a minimum of a state / nationally recognized competency credential (e.g. CDA) or 2 years of experience in the field with at least 12 clock hours of ECE. Child development training.
- Age requirement:
 - Programs must be in compliance with the requirements of civil authorities.

Director Requirements

The director of the early education program has professional training as evidenced by having obtained a minimum of a Bachelor's degree or its equivalent (1) in early childhood education/ child development, (2) in elementary education with twelve credit hours in early childhood education/ child development, or (3) in any other subject with twenty-four credit hours in early childhood education/ child development – all from an accredited institution. The director also has a working understanding of business practices as evidenced by twelve credit hours of college course work or the equivalent of documented one year of on-the-job training in an administrative position under the supervision of a mentor.

Pre-Service Training

- The program must be in compliance with requirements of civil authorities.
- New staff must be provided with through orientation.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

All staff responsible for the care and education of the children in the program participate annually in a minimum of twelve documented clock hours of continuing education or professional development relating to child growth and development in the areas of cognitive learning and social, emotional, and physical development, safety and health issues for your children; family and community relation; classroom and program management.

Curriculum Implementation

A published curriculum guide is required with scope and sequence for each age group along with written goals and objectives. The curriculum must address all areas of development (i.e., physical, social/emotional, core knowledge, language and literacy, mathematical awareness, science, social studies, and fine art) and be developmentally appropriate.

Literacy Support

Language and literacy are required elements of curriculum. Programs must provide much print, listening, and speaking experiences and activities; provide a print-rich environment; and address vocabulary, comprehension, phonemic awareness, and the alphabet.

Health and Safety

- The early education program has a responsibility for the health, safety, and general welfare of each child in attendance.
- The staff should have continuing and required training in emergency first aid and in special medical needs in order to be alert and prepared for emergencies.
- Staff members need to be safety conscious with a view toward prevention.

Teacher- Child Interactions

Instructional staff initiates interaction with children who are not engaged in order to stimulate and expand the involvement of these children in the classroom offerings.

Staff Interactions

Staff who are sharing the responsibility of a group of children communicate with one another to ensure the smooth operation of the program.

Family Interactions

Programs are required to develop and implement family involvement policies, including regular opportunities for informal and formal communication, conferences at least twice a year, parent education opportunities at least quarterly, and provision of information regarding community resources and services as needed.

Self-Study

Accreditation requires a self-study process that includes completion of standardized surveys and documents involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- On-site visits are completed by trained Validators who meet educational and experience requirements.
- Validators complete classroom and facility observations, conduct interviews, and review documents.
- A commission makes the final decision.

United Methodist Association of Preschools, Florida Chapter of (UMAP)

Licensure and Regulation

The program must be licensed by the governing body of their state as well as any other local licensing agency.

Ratio / Group Size & Square Footage

- **Square ft. Inside:** 35 Sq. Ft. Per Child
- **Square ft. Outside:** 75 Sq. Ft. Per Child

Age	Size	Ratio
Infants	< 8	1:4
Toddlers	< 10	1:5
2s	< 12	1:6
3s	< 18	1:8
4/5's	< 20	1:10

Teacher and Staff

- A Lead Teacher must have one of the following educational credentials:
 - Bachelor's degree in ECE, Child Development, or a related field.
 - A 2 year degree or higher from an accredited college or university with at least 6 credit hours in ECE or Child Development.
 - A current National CDA or state recognized equivalent.
 - Must successfully complete training in Emergent Literacy.
- Age Requirement:
 - Teachers and teacher-aides must be at least 18 years old.

Director Requirements

- Administrators must have one of the following:
 - A Bachelor's degree in ECE, Child Development, or a related field.
 - A Bachelor's degree in another field with an additional 12 credit hours in ECE.
- Age Requirement:
 - Must be at least 21.
 - Have at least 1 year of experience as a director.
 - Must successfully complete training in Emergent Literacy.

Pre- Service Training

- The program provides staff with a complete orientation of the program.
- Substitutes and volunteers are given orientation to the program and policies and receive ongoing training.

Staff Training / Continued Professional Development

- Program provides staff with opportunities to participate in ongoing professional development.
- Professional development provides continuing education and opportunities for staff to keep abreast of latest developments in the field.
- Professional development should be credit bearing whenever possible.
- Continuing education is encouraged through tuition reimbursement or financial assistance.

Curriculum Implementation

- Lesson plans and goals shall be age appropriate and must address the following domains:
 - Social and Emotional; Fine Motor; Gross Motor; Cognitive; Creative; Spiritual; Discovery; Language and Literacy.
 - Centers are clearly defined and organized.
 - Every classroom has a library area with adequate and age appropriate books for each child.
 - Playground is safe and includes opportunities for pushing, pulling, climbing, crawling, pedaling, throwing, catching, sand play, balancing, running, and a quiet place.

Literacy Support

- Children are given opportunities to listen to spoken word, through storytelling, audio books, etc.
- Children are encouraged to use language to express their wants and needs.
- Children are exposed to a print rich environment.
- Children have an opportunity to see that pictures represent objects and events.

Health and Safety

- Incorporate appropriate health practices by using universal precautions to prevent the spread of disease while caring for children.
- Choose appropriate toys (including duplicates) and room equipment.
- Involve children in appropriate safety routines and cleanliness such as hand-washing.
- Teach children the importance of healthy food; including water, exercise, rest, and suitable clothing.
- Importance of proper food and suitable clothing.
- Importance of exercising, resting, and cleanliness.
- Safety habits.
- Developing sound mental health practices, so child may feel good about themselves and others.

Teacher – Child Interactions

- The teacher provides time, space, and opportunity for children to learn through play. She/He functions as the supportive adult, who mediates to maximize the learning opportunities for the children by:
 - Understanding the variations in the attention span of different children at different stages.
 - Recognizing the differences among children in their abilities and needs being aware of the individuality of each child and making an effort to teach to the individual needs of the children in the class.
 - Children need to feel secure and loved by the adults in their lives.
 - Teachers/caregivers need to be attentive, as well as responsive, to the needs of children.
 - The interactions between adult and child should be personal, warm, and loving.

Staff Interactions

- The program shall provide time for administration and staff to plan and consult together frequently about the program, children and families.
- Staff meetings are held at least once a month to discuss program planning, implementing and attaining goals, plans for individual children and to discuss the program and working conditions.
- The work environment for staff is comfortable, well organized and in good repair.

Family Interactions

- Staff and parents work together to support children's development and learning.
- Families are informed about the program and the curriculum, policy changes and other issues that may affect the program.
- The program staff connects families with needed resources.

Self-Study

Accreditation requires completion of a self-study process involving administrators, staff, and families.

Teacher Assessment

Teachers have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Administrative Assessment

Administrators have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Family Assessment

Families have to complete an Assessment Survey.

Validation Process

- Validators, with experience in the field, visit the program to interview administrators and staff and observe the facility and classrooms.
- A Council makes the final decision.

Renewal Process

- Annual report.
- Reaccreditation is required every 3 years