2025-2026
Early Childhood Education
Industry Accreditation

STANDARDS & CRITERIA
FOR
INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION

The ECE Industry Certification Review is conducted by the Georgia Early Childhood Education Foundation (GECEF). GECEF is comprised of Early Childhood Education professionals from business/industry, post-secondary institutions/secondary institutions, representatives from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Georgia Department of Education and Georgia FCCLA. Many of these professionals are members of GAYC.

PROCEDURES FOR SEEKING ECE INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION

1. **CERTIFICATION INQUIRIES**

   Contact should be made with the GECEF Director-Early Childhood Education (ECE) Evaluation Team Leader (ETL) indicating interest in applying for ECE Industry Certification. Refer to the Early Childhood Education Standards on the GaDOE (Georgia Department of Education) website for further information.

2. **CERTIFICATION INFORMATION**

   a. Schools with an existing Early Childhood Education program that has been in existence for three consecutive years can pursue ECE Industry Certification. Programs are eligible if they have an on-site or off-site lab(s).

   b. The school is responsible for the team members' cost and reimbursement for travel. The grant money can be used to cover these expenses of approximately $1,200 to $1,500 total.

   c. If chosen to receive the grant, there are two components to the Industry Certification process:
      1) The high school program will be evaluated using the standards included in this packet, and this material may be compiled in folders/crates for easy review. ***NEW THIS YEAR – Online documentation available***

      2. If the school operates a lab school for infants, toddlers or preschool children, the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-3, Birth-35 months) and/or the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3, 36 months-five years) will be used to assess the children's programs. These rating scales are available through most educational vendors. We strongly advise purchasing the books *All About the ECERS-3* or *All About the ITERS- 3* depending on the age of children served in the program.

   d. MANDATORY TRAINING - Prior to going through industry certification, the high school teacher should attend an industry certification professional learning workshop covering the ECE Industry Certification procedures and expectations, standards, evaluation tools, and the Site Review. ECERS-3 books will be given to all attendees with on-site labs pursuing initial Industry Certification.

3. **INSTRUCTION FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT**

   The self-assessment is a process whereby the program compares itself to the standards. The process includes a review of the standards by the local school's self-assessment team which should ensure the school will be ready for the Industry Certification site visit by the GECEF and ECERS evaluation team. The following steps are recommended:

   a. Review the standards and criteria for the high school program classroom. See Appendix A.

   b. Form a local self-assessment certification team using school administrators, faculty members, advisory committee members, and business/industry members from the community, or use a sub-set of your advisory committee as the self-assessment team. The goal is to solicit help from individuals with expertise in early childhood, the ITERS-3/ECERS-3 Rating Scales and in the nine GECEF standards.

   d. Generate detailed documentation for each standard in the order in which they appear. Under each criterion provide documentation (pictures, emails, lesson plans with supporting ***assessed/graded*** student work, flyers, student portfolios, forms, etc.) and recommend improvements that still need to be made. **Describing what you have done or giving examples does not count as evidence. Pictures, student work, budgets, displays, etc. are acceptable documentation of evidence. All documentation needs to be labeled. Two to three years (a history) of documentation is required.** Early collecting of evidence is suggested to document each Standard. Some teachers begin with a file folder labeled for each of the nine standards to collect evidence prior to compiling the folders that will be examined during the site visit. Folders or electronic compilations are acceptable for review.

   e. Onsite Programs - As part of your local self-assessment prior to your Site Visit, an individual well-versed in ECERS should assess the infant, toddler, or preschool using the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-3, Birth-35 months) and/or the Early Childhood Environment Rating (ECERS-3, 36 months-five years) applicable. It is

strongly recommended that schools with children's programs also purchase a copy of *All About the ECERS-3* or *All About the ITERS-3* depending on the age of children served in the program. The *All About* books are very detailed and easy to read. They explain the rating scales and how your program will be rated, describe how excellent early childhood learning environments function, what they contain, and provide many illustrations.

f. Set realistic time schedules for completion of the program self-assessment and for group sessions to summarize team members' findings/documentation and their recommendations for improvement. Keep in mind deadlines: apply for grants in Spring prior to going through industry certification, set a date for a team visit prior to April 1st for Site Review, spend grant money, schedule an onsite visit, allow for GECEF Review Team decision making, and closure of grant ending June 30th.

g. The team can use the evaluation form to document self-assessment ratings and identify and make recommendations for criteria needing additional work.

h. Adjustments or corrections to the program, after the self-evaluation, should be completed before the formal Site Review by the Georgia Early Childhood Education Foundation Review Team.

i. After all reviews and observations are completed and improvements made, the local self-assessment team should assist in compiling the documentation for the Site Visit by the GECEF Review Team.

4. SCHEDULING SITE REVIEW

During the Fall Industry Certification Training, the GECEF Director will work with ECE Teachers to determine a date for the Pre-Visit and the GECEF Team Visit. Pre-Visits should be scheduled in the Fall. Site visits should be scheduled before April 1st.

a. During the Pre-Visit, the ECE Teacher should have at least one piece of documentation for each standard. The GECEF Director will review the documentation to provide feedback and guidance for the Team Visit.

b. The GECEF review team may consist of university or technical college faculty, GAEYC Board members, current or previous Bright from the Start consultants, or other local early childcare industry individuals with expertise in early childhood education programs for children.

5. REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION FOR CERTIFICATION

The ECE Industry Certification Site Review Team will spend approximately one day reviewing the program in terms of the ECE Industry Standards. The children's programs will be reviewed prior to the official site visit. It typically lasts three to five hours depending on the size and schedule for the children's program.

a. The GECEF Review Team will review the high school/program documentation, observe and visit the facilities and the children's programs, if applicable, and interview the teacher, high school students, FCCLA officer team, WBL coordinator and advisory committee members.

b. The GECEF Review Team will use the same standards as set forth in Appendix A.

c. The review team will discuss general findings in an exit interview with the high school teacher and the administration team. The final recommendations, ratings and detailed findings of the team; however, will not be discussed during the exit interview.

d. The findings of the Review Team will be forwarded to GECEF Director-ECE ETL for processing based on the recommendation of the review team.

e. On the basis of the review ratings, the team's recommendation and final review by the GECEF Director-ECE ETL, the program will be awarded either certification, conditional certification pending further documentation or denial of certification. The decision will be accompanied by written identification of the areas needing improvement and an explanation of what improvements are needed to earn certification, if applicable.

f. A banner and plaque will be awarded to those programs meeting ECE Industry Certification Standards by the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) at the Winter GATFACS Conference or at the GACTE Summer Conference.

6. MINIMUM STANDARD REQUIRED

a. The Industry Certification Instructional Program must include at least 180 hours of classroom and/or laboratory instruction per the state-recommended curriculum guide.

b. **For the High School Standards I-IX,** each standard must be met. If the standard is not met for some reason, there will be an opportunity to correct and/or resubmit evidence for further review. Any review items must be resubmitted by May 1st of the year in which the review takes place.

c. **If a children's program is offered,** an overall average score of five (5) on the ITERS-3 and/or ECERS-3 is required to meet ECE Industry Certification with a minimum score requirement of 4 on each subscale. The ITERS-3 has 6 subscales. The ECERS-3 also has 6 subscales. On each of the subscales a score of 1 = Inadequate, 3 = Minimal, 5 = Good, 6 = Excellent. For minimum scores required, see the "Criteria Summary Sheet, Part II: Preschool Programs".

d. **If the school operates a lab school for infants, toddlers or preschool children**, the Infant/Toddler Rating Scale (ITERS-3, Birth -35 months) and/or the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3, 36 months-five years) will be used to assess the children's programs. The rating scales are available through most educational vendors. It is strongly advised to purchase the books "All About the ECERS-3" or "All About the ITERS-3" depending on the age of children served in the program.

7. ANNUAL REPORTS AND RECERTIFICATION

a. An Annual Report Form should be completed each year by **May 1st**. The Annual Report document can be found at www.gecef.org.

b. Major changes in the program (e.g., hiring a high school teacher who does not meet the required qualifications, the elimination of the lab/project-based setting) may require additional follow-up.

c. Recertification is required every 5 years for all certified programs and requires the same Site Visit procedures as the initial certification – review of the high school program, and observation with the ITERS-3/ ECERS-3 (on-site labs).

d. Annual report document can be found at www.gecef.org. Due by **May 1st each year** after certification year.

8. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE GEORGIA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

GECEF Director-Early Childhood Education (ECE) Evaluation Team Leader (ETL) –
Wynn Pollock – wynnpollock@gmail.com or 912-978-2160

List of Attached Documents:

Appendix A

Georgia Early Childhood Education Foundation (GECEF)

PROGRAM OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

The following are the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Industry Certification Standards and Criteria for the high school program classroom. Every program pursuing industry certification will be evaluated on these standards and criteria. **Two to three years of documentation (a history) is required. The current year can be included as one of the years.**

Additionally, for schools/ programs with onsite labs, the revised editions of the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R) for children birth through thirty-five months and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R) for children thirty-six months through five years will also be used as an evaluation tool.

I. Program Information

Standard Statement:
Instruction must be systematic and reflect the program goals. Specific performance standards will ensure that students will meet their education goals in the ECE Program. The instructional program must reflect the principles of sound instruction for a career and technical education program.

A. Curriculum

	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION REVIEW of DOCUMENTATION	COMMENTS
1.	The program is using the GaDOE Standards. A scope and sequence are provided for each course indicating the Georgia ECE Standards with lecture and lab hours. *Lab Hours Required:* ECE I (0-5 hours), ECE II (5-15 hours), and ECE III (15-30 hours supervised by the ECE teacher); OR ECE Practicum (30 plus hours supervised by the ECE teacher).	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed**: For each course include the scope & sequence, GaDOE standards; curriculum maps and/or pacing guides; Include lab schedule, concepts (content) covered and hours. Documentation should include what students are specifically doing during the lab hours.

2.	Courses are aligned so students can complete all the requirements for a career pathway in ECE within three years.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Dated master schedule for 3 years
3.	A minimum of three teacher-created lesson plans that focus on current educational theories, child guidance, special needs, or observational methods. Plans are supported with at least one example of assessed student work relating to each lesson plan.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>**: Minimum of 3 lesson plans with **<u>assessed</u>** student work for each plan ***<u>Special Note</u>****: In all instances throughout the GECEF Standards, lesson plans should be original and teacher-created. If lesson plans are from TPT, CTAERN, DECAL etc.,, they MUST be modified to address local student needs.*
4.	A minimum of three teacher-created lesson plans that focus on developmentally appropriate practices and experiences from the following age groups: infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. Plans are supported with at least one example of assessed student work relating to each lesson plan.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>**: A minimum of 3 teacher-created lesson plans with **<u>assessed</u>** student work for each plan
5.	A minimum of one teacher-created lesson plan in each child development domain and learning areas as aligned to GELDS: 1. Physical Development and Motor Skills 2. Social and Emotional Development 3. Approaches to Play and Learning 4. Communications, Language, and Literacy 5. Cognitive Development and General Knowledge.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** A minimum of 5 teacher-created lesson plans with assessed student work for each plan addressing each GELDS learning area. Please label and identify GELDS used in lesson plans. Each lesson plan is supported with at least one example of ***<u>assessed</u>*** student work**)**

6.	One teacher-created lesson plan that effectively demonstrates the concept of teaching during free play. Show evidence of utilizing best practices with teachers joining the children engaged in free play for individualized and intentional teaching using purposeful open-ended questions and conversations to extend children's learning.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** A teacher-created lesson plan that emphasize teaching concepts of asking open-ended questions with lesson plans related to conversation starters for different interest centers (fine motor, dramatic play, books, nature/science, etc.) to extend learning related to that type of play to promote intentional teaching conversations ***For on-site labs***: The revised editions of the Infant/Toddler Environment (ITERS) for childbirth through thirty-five months and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-3) for children thirty-six months through five years will also be used as an evaluation tool.
7	Supplies and equipment are available to support hands-on laboratory experiences that promote developmentally appropriate activities and experiences for young children.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Samples of projects or activities where the students are using the equipment and supplies for hands-on activities. Projects and activities are age appropriate.
8	One teacher-created lesson plan that shows career awareness and employability skills are being taught in the ECE curriculum.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** A teacher-created lesson plan with **assessed** student work

B. Methodology

9.	A current course syllabus is provided for each course.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Current course syllabus provided for each course taught.

10.	The program utilizes on-site or off-site lab-based instruction. ● On-Site Labs: Lab has been evaluated using either the ITERS-3 or ECERS-3. ● Off-Site Labs: Licensed by the State. (Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning/Bright from the Start – Quality Rating of Two Stars or above is preferred and/or is nationally accredited.)	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Written explanation of how the lab-based instruction is used throughout the year. Provide photos of high schoolers teaching in a lab setting, name of school/on-site lab, and teachers or mentors for observations. Revised editions of the (ITERS-3) and the (ECERS-3). ***The Pre-K teacher(s) and high school teacher(s) should work together to contact Bright from the Start to initiate the process*** Quality Rating Documentation could include printed pictures of rating stars from the center OR from www.DECAL.gov.ga
11.	High school students are given the opportunity to explore history, trends, and current issues of the ECE Industry during lab and classroom experiences.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Samples of history, trends, and current issues of the ECE industry through assignments that are utilized in the classroom (timelines, projects, magazine articles, products from technology-based projects, etc.)
12.	A minimum of three high school student-developed lesson plans that demonstrate students are using GELDS in three different GELDS areas.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** A minimum of three high school student-developed assessed lesson plans addressing three different GELDS areas. Please include a graded rubric for the assessed work.
13.	Local resource people/stakeholders speak and work with high school students regarding the profession/issues relating to early childhood education.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures of guest speakers – add topics discussed and dates of presentations.

C. Preparation Time

14.	The high school teacher's daily schedule provides adequate time for: - planning and course development - student organization activities and hours of activities (*Extended Day*) - supervision of off-site observations	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Daily and weekly schedule with all required details from the standard.
15.	The high school teacher and on-site/off-site preschool/elementary school teacher meet regularly for planning.		**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Emails, meeting dates, and any notes or correspondence between the high school teacher and on-site/off-site preschool/elementary school teacher

D. Provisions for Individual Differences

16.	Individual differentiated materials/ activities/projects are used to accommodate the needs of high school students as outlined in student's IEPs and/or 504 plans.	☐ **YES,** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Three complete IEPs and/or 504 plans and how the individual accommodations are met. *(blackout personal information)* Include how you modified the alternative materials, instructional strategies, lesson plans, etc.
17.	The instructor is aware of different learning styles and utilizes the results in the instruction. The high school teacher provides instruction using different modalities including lecturing, demonstration, simulation, etc.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Learning style inventory and results; Include three lesson plans that show the different modalities used in instruction (*label the modalities*).
18.	The instructor utilizes a variety of curriculum materials and activities to encourage the acceptance of gender, age, language, ability, race, religion, family structure, background, and culture.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Examples of lesson plans and assignments students completed to encourage the acceptance of societal issues. Displays, pictures, books, and other materials will be observed during the site visit. Refer to NAEYC website at www.naeyc.org

E. Academic Integration

19.	One example of language arts, math, and science have been integrated into the ECE I, II, III, and/or Practicum ECE Standards by the teacher using activities and/or projects.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** One example of each of the following (language arts, math, and science) activities and/or lesson plans that show how the core subject is integrated; the examples need to come from the different courses in the pathway. Label plans, activities, and projects as to ECE I, II, III or Practicum Standards.
20.	Language arts, math and/or science are embedded in FCCLA and CTSO activities, projects, and/or competitions. Documentation should include three examples.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Include 3 examples of how the core subjects are embedded in FCCLA through CTSO activities, projects, and/or competitions
21.	The instructor provides learning experiences, group work, and projects that require higher-order academic skills including: 1. Application 2. Analysis 3. Synthesis 4. Evaluation.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Include one lesson plan of each domain supported with *assessed* student work**.** (TOTAL: 4 lesson plans)

F. Student Learning

22.	Students have mastered proficiencies in the pathway. Provide the number of students taking and passing the End of Pathway Assessment.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** List number of students who have taken the EOPA and the number of students who passed for the past three years. Include EOPA report.

II. Equipment & Facilities

Standard Statement:
Equipment used in the training program must be of the type and quality found to provide training to meet the program goals and performance objectives. The facilities must be appropriate for the variety of learning activities which occur in the ECE classrooms.

A. Standard Equipment

23.	The ECE lab and/or classroom are equipped with updated and functional equipment as reflected on the inventory that includes date purchased and date to replace.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** List of equipment that includes purchase dates and replacement dates. Use ECERS-3 list and Appendix D for list of equipment. See www.GECEF.org for a sample of long-range equipment replacement plan.
24.	The teacher shows instructions on how to utilize all ECE program equipment - such as laminating, die-cut machines, copy equipment, etc., as needed in the workplace to demonstrate that students know how to use ECE program equipment.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures of the teacher showing the students how to use the equipment OR digital presentation of how to use the equipment.

B. Funding

25.	Consumable supply funds have been spent on quality instructional materials for the last three years. Specify the year at the top of the report.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Reports from the last 3 years with dates on top; copies of Purchase Orders, invoices, and/or packing slips from equipment ordered within the last 3 years
26.	Industry certification funds were spent according to the guidelines.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** List of items purchased with grant funds; invoices and/or packing slips of items received Observed during site visit.

C. Storage

27.	Adequate storage area is available to support activities outlined in the program goals. The storage area is used for the intended purposes and can be locked when needed.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures of storage area. Observed during site visit.

D. Layout/Floor Plan/Space

28.	The classroom is clean, orderly, and reflective of an efficient environment for learning.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures of the classroom. Observed during site visit.
29.	The layout of the ECE classroom is suitable for large/small group, team, and individual high school student work.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures of the classroom and pictures of students in the room working in teams, groups, and individually; Observed during site visit.
30.	The square footage of the classroom meets or exceeds state recommendations. (1895 sq. ft. total)	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Floor plan or blueprint to document square footage or written statement of square footage from school plant engineer
31.	An area is available and convenient for the ECE teacher to use for planning and clerical duties.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures of the entire room. Observed during site visit.

III. Learning Resources

Standard Statement:
Support material consistent with both program goals and performance objectives must be available to staff and students.

A. Instructional Resources

32.	Textbooks or digital resources that are up to date (*dated within the last seven years*) are available for classroom use. Teachers should have current teacher editions and/or resources for all three courses.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures and a list of textbooks, teacher editions, and/or resources with dates. Observed during site visit.
33.	Current software packages, audio-visual materials, and/or web-based resources (*dated within the last five years*) are available to facilitate effective learning.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures and a list of resources with dates included in the documentation.
34.	Updated assorted specialized workbooks, manuals, and/or resource books (*hardcopy or digital, dated within five years*) are available to support the program goals.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Workbooks or manuals for ECE, Curriculum, Health and Safety, Learning Environment, CPR, Fire Safety, etc.) Pictures, hardcopy or digital copies of workbooks, manuals, and/or resource books dated within five years. Dates are included in the documentation. Observed during site visit.
35.	Current (hard copy or digital) general education and ECE professional magazines related to the instructional program are	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Curent ECE professional magazines (ex. *Teaching Young Children, Child Care Exchange, Young Exceptional Children, SECA Dimensions, Young Children*) with dates available

	available and accessible for student and instructor use.		

B. Multi-Media Resources

36.	A variety of appropriate, up-to-date multi-media equipment and hardware, such as projectors, Smart/Interactive Boards, Chromebooks, tablets, and other appropriate equipment are readily available for use in the classroom.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures and inventory list documented and provided. Observed during site visit.
37.	A computer, tablet, or iPad is available in the ECE/FACS classroom, with one for every two high school students, and is utilized by students to complete program objectives.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures, statements about one-on-one devices, observation, and student work samples**.**

IV. Instructional Staff

Standard Statement:
The instructional staff must have technical competency and meet all state and local requirements for certification in ECE.

A. Professional Competency/Development

38.	The high school ECE classroom teacher (s) holds an applicable certificate to teach this pathway.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Copy of teacher (s) license/certification **Include documentation for all ECE teachers* ***If the teacher(s) is "new", have certificate requirements accomplished by the time of on site visit***
39.	*For On-Site Labs Only:* The instructor in that lab holds a paraprofessional certificate or associate degree.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Copy of paraprofessional certificate or associate degree **Include documentation for all paraprofessionals or teachers in the on-site lab.*
40.	The high school ECE teacher(s) is an active member of ACTE/GACTE/GATFACS. **Optional but also recommended– NAEYC/ GAEYC Membership*	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Pictures of membership cards, or screenshot of ACTE membership or a list of professional organizations with membership numbers
41.	The high school ECE classroom teacher completes 15 clock hours of professional development relating to Early Childhood Education within the last three years, not including Fire Safety or CPR/First Aid workshops.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Professional Development Certificates/Certifications or list of Professional Development with dates and hours, or CTAERN Certificates. . **Include documentation for all ECE teachers.*

42.	*For On-site Labs Only:* The on-site preschool instructor completes at least 10 hours/year of Early Childhood Education training from a Bright from the Start approved source or other appropriate professional learning source.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Professional Development Certificates/Certifications or list of Professional Development with dates and hours. **Include documentation for all on-site lab instructors.*

V. CTSO's

Standard Statement:
The program will provide student leadership opportunities through a career technical student organization (CTSO).

A. Affiliation and Co-Curricular Instruction

43.	Students are affiliated with Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) at the state and national level. *20% of the total number of ECE students are members of FCCLA.*	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Student Roster from the National FCCLA Portal for the last 3 years and class roster for the last 3 years. Include: Total Class Enrollment of ECE _____ Number of FCCLA Members ___ Percentage of ECE Students ____
44.	FCCLA is an integral part of the ECE pathway and should be co-curricular.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Documentation of lesson plans, pacing guide, unit plans that shows FCCLA is a part of your curriculum. Please label if awards and archives are on display at site visit (portfolio, scrapbooks, Honor Roll documentation, etc.)
45.	The program promotes interest in Early Childhood Education through community service activities and state and national projects.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** List of community service activities and state and national projects completed to include description and dates of the events/projects or National FCCLA Award Applications.
46.	Records are kept documenting internal and external promotion of the FCCLA chapter for the last three years.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Documentation of FCCLA involvement for the last 3 years, including minutes, scrapbooks, digital records, Honor Roll documentation, CTAE newsletter, social media posts, etc.
47.	Long-term partnerships and professional relationships have been	☐ **YES**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Documentation of members from local businesses, industries, institutions, civic groups or

	formed with local businesses, industries, institutions, civic groups or agencies that support and enhance your FCCLA activities.	☐ **NO**	agencies that assisted with your FCCLA chapter. Include contact information and how they have supported FCCLA members.
48.	Students compete in FCCLA Competitive Events related to Early Childhood Education and/or related to Early Childhood Education Pathway Standards.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Documentation of 3 years of competition registration provided for State Events, Online Proficiency, and/or STAR Events to document competitions students have competed in at the following conferences: Fall Rally, Fall Leadership Conference, and Region, State, and National Conferences
49.	The chapter has attended FCCLA region, state and /or national events for the past 3 years.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Provide documentation of region, state, or national invoices, pictures, and/or registrations.
50.	FCCLA Officer Team will provide a presentation documenting FCCLA events, activities, and involvement from the past 3 years.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** FCCLA Officer Team will present at the on-site visit regarding FCCLA involvement

VI. Program Promotion

Standard Statement:
The program is promoted within the school, school system, and community.

A. Program Promotion

51.	The ECE program is promoted by conducting a variety of in-school promotional activities.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Photos documenting how the ECE program has been promoted over the last 3 years, to include in-school promotional activities such as exhibits, bulletin boards, posters, brochures, school announcements, school websites, etc.
52.	The ECE program is promoted by a career-related activity to promote the education profession by sharing material at least twice a semester.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed**: Photos documenting Educator Recruitment being used OR lesson plan/unit plans documenting teacher recruitment strategies.
53.	The ECE program is promoted by conducting a variety of out-of-school activities.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Photos with dates documenting how ECE program is promoted in out-of-school activities such as newspaper/website articles, radio/television/local school appearances, social media contacts, billboards, marquees, county fairs, exhibits in the community, and community service for the past 3 years
54.	The ECE program is promoted by participating in Educator's Signing Day.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Provide photos with narrative explanation and dates to document participation in Educator's Signing Day
55.	Written literature and information sessions on the ECE program are available to high school students prior to enrollment.	☐ **YES**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** CTAE brochures, ECE brochures, counselor's office planning sheets, master schedule, photos of recruitment fairs, advisement, etc.

		☐ **NO**	
56.	A collaboration is consistent between the program and post-secondary schools and programs.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Articulation agreements, postsecondary presentations, college field trips, guest speakers, etc.
57.	*For On-Site Labs Only*: The preschool families are informed of early learning and family community events that would meet their needs.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Information about community events from the Childcare Centers, Extension Services, Department of Family and Child Services, churches, health department, county parks and recreation, library, Head Start, etc. are shared with preschool families.

VII. Participatory Advisory Committees

Standard Statement: A participatory advisory committee consisting of a majority of childcare professionals (GAYC members, business and childcare leaders, educators and parents) is in place for the ECE program in this specific school.

A. Participatory Advisory Committee & Impact

58.	The program has an active advisory committee whose ethnic make-up is representative of the school population. The committee is ECE specific, meets twice a year, and has an active chairperson and secretary.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Provide documentation exhibiting active ECE-specific advisory committee, meeting at least twice a year; evidence of 3 years of agendas *AND* minutes. Include a member list with business or industry noted and member's ethnicity. Include school ethnic make-up. *Recommendations: To have members from local childcare and related services industry inside and outside the school system, and include a former or current student, an FCCLA member, and former or current parents.* School Reporting from DOE (Include a printout of school ethnic make-up) and documentation of Advisory Committee make-up.

59.	The advisory committee is actively involved with the FCCLA chapter through fundraising activities, volunteering to judge, helping prepare for competitions, etc.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Document presentations to class by PAC members**,** help prepare FCCLA members for competitive events**,** participation with FCCLA community service projects, help with FCCLA fundraising**,** involvement in recognition for local officer installation, and recognition for STATE and STAR FCCLA Events winners**,** and/or participation in ECE job shadowing opportunities **Documentation should include the dates of participation.*
60.	The Georgia ECE Standards are divided and sent to PAC members to review at least once a year with suggestions for improvement. The reviews are forwarded to the PAC chairperson, discussed at the meeting, and recorded in the minutes.	☐ **YES,** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Provide documentation of minutes or emails which reflect a review of ECE Georgia Standards and suggestions made for improvement. Include dates for each year.

VIII. Career Guidance

Standard Statement: Systematic pre-admission testing, interviews, counseling services, school placement and follow-up procedures must be used.

A. Career Guidance Opportunities

61.	Contact is made with middle school students and/or underclassmen about the ECE program available at the high school.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Provide 3 years of dated emails or other documentation where contact has been made with teachers of middle school students and/or underclassmen about the ECE program at the high school.
62.	Secure the Counseling Department's plan for providing students with Early Childhood career guidance information.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Counseling Plan for CTAE Guidance
63.	Information is provided to students regarding opportunities for students to participate in work-based learning experiences in high school.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Local or state Work Based Learning guidelines; information or flyers presented to students regarding WBL opportunities **Arrange an Informal interview with WBL Coordinator*
64.	The ECE teacher has an established system to follow up with former students who have completed the pathway.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** List of where former students are working in ECE field or college student majoring in Education, etc. Use Google search, Facebook, etc. A sample survey can be found on www.gecef.org. Summarize information on a spreadsheet.

65.	Students are informed about Early Childhood Education Dual Enrollment and/or College Articulation Credit.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Presentations from counselors and/or post-secondary guest speakers; field trips to post-secondary institutions**,** Articulation Agreements with TCSG and/or USG.
66.	Teachers use a variety of strategies to ensure students are made aware of the local job markets related to Early Childhood Education.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed**: Pictures of Job Boards, examples of research projects, Department of Labor information, screen shots of social media post, etc.
67.	Documentation of ECE Pathway Completion – Must include three student transcripts showing completion per year.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Provide a TOTAL OF ***9*** (3 per year) transcripts that show pathway completion. (*Blackout* personal information)

B. Internships/WBL (If Applicable) ***Internships are defined as the experience associated with Work-Based Learning, not a course-embedded (e.g., ECE I, ECE II, or ECE III)***. The student works the equivalent number of hours as they would have sat for seat time in class to earn the credit in a face-to-face class. In 1-hour schedules, this will be 5 hours per week per period the student is away from school assigned to the internship. For 90-minute block schedules this would be 7.5 hours per week per block that the student is released from school for the internship placement/credit earned. Internship can be paid or unpaid. This does not include field experiences which are embedded in the first three courses (ECE I, ECE II, or ECE III).

68.	Documentation of the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures between the school and the student's internship or work-based learning worksite are available and used by students. ECE student training agreements, training plans, and work evaluations are used to support student progress in internships or work-based learning.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Must include local or state WBL guidelines and/or contracts; student training agreements, training plans, and work evaluations.

69.	The instructor or Work Based Learning Coordinator uses C-Net or similar software to report student data and work experiences.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** C-Net report from last three years
70.	Students have mastered proficiencies in employability skills related to their pathway (portfolio, workplace readiness certificate, GA BEST certificate, etc.).	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Documentation should include portfolio, workplace, readiness certificate, GA BEST certificate, etc. from the last 3 years with 3 students each for a ***<u>total of nine</u>***
71.	Number of students enrolled in an Early Childhood Education (ECE) WBL experience for the past three years.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Documentation from WBL Coordinator including names of student, places of employment, and positions over past 3 years
72.	Students in WBL are placed in childcare centers that are quality-rated or elementary schools that are accredited.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** List student and job placement for the past 3 years. Include Quality Rating or documentation from DECAL website.
73.	ECE teacher and WBL Coordinator collaborate face-to-face, by text, or by email concerning WBL opportunities, student placement and progress in WBL.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Notes to document collaboration that includes dates of meeting, name of student, placement, what was discussed

IX. Health & Safety

Standard Statement: Health and safety rules must be observed by teachers and students at all times in the ECE Program.

A. Health & Safety

74.	Students are familiar with emergency procedures (fire, tornado, bomb, etc.) in the school and lab setting.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Document participation with photos of practice drills and School Emergency Plan; photos of the exit plans/signage in the classroom
75.	Students are administered a Safety Test that assesses their knowledge of safety issues in the ECE lab. Students are expected to pass with 80% accuracy before being allowed in the lab or classroom to work with children.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Class rosters with student safety test scores for the past three years for ECE II and III or ECE Practicum
76.	Handwashing procedures are taught and practiced prior to experiences with children following the steps required by the ECERS-3 for health practices, meals/snacks, and toileting.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Pictures of classroom handwashing station along with posted handwashing steps/procedures posters. Observed during site visit.
77.	Classroom exits are clearly marked and free of obstruction.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Pictures of classroom exits. Observed during site visit.
78.	Fire alarms are available and working.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**<u>Documentation/Exhibits Needed</u>:** Pictures of classroom with evidence of fire alarms; dates of school fire drills documented to reflect fire alarms are in working condition. Observed during site visit.

79.	Fire extinguishers are available, mounted in appropriate places; the inspection date is current.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pictures of classroom with evidence of fire extinguishers and dates of inspections and to document where fire extinguishers are mounted in the classroom. Observed during site visit.
80.	High school ECE teachers hold current Pediatric First Aid, Infant/Child/Adult CPR Instructor Certification and Fire Safety Instructor Certification. (Documentation is provided for all ECE teachers.)	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pediatric First Aid, Infant/Child/Adult CPR Instructor Certification and Fire Safety Instructor Certification card copies are provided
81.	(For on-site lab) The preschool teacher holds current Pediatric First Aid and Infant/Child/Adult CPR Certification and proof of Fire Safety Certification. (Documentation is provided for all on-site lab teachers.)	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Pediatric First Aid, Infant/Child/Adult CPR Certification and Fire Safety Instructor Certification card copies are provided for on-site lab teachers
82.	Fire Safety Education for students prior to working with children in the lab. **Optional for students to complete Fire Safety Certification**.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Student roster documenting names/number of students receiving Fire Safety Certification along with date of certification; pacing guide and/or Fire Safety Education lesson plans
83.	Students in ECE II have earned Infant/Child/Adult CPR & First Aid Certification.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Student roster documenting names/number of students receiving Infant/Child/Adult CPR & First Aid Certification along with date(s) of certification; photos of students completing CPR & First Aid training; and/or copies of student certification cards
84.	Document that ALL students have had a background check to participate in an early child care and education facility that is licensed or exempt by the GA Department of Early Learning and Care (DECAL). Students working in an elementary school are exempt.	☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**	**Documentation/Exhibits Needed:** Documentation of student roster provided

Appendix B

ECE Industry Certification – ECERS SUMMARY SHEET
(Used for All Onsite Labs)

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised Edition (ECERS-3) **Subscales**	Maximum Possible Average	Minimum Average Needed	ECE Lab Score Average
Space & Furnishings	6	4	
Personal Care Routines	6	4	
Language and Literacy	6	4	
Learning Activities	6	4	
Interaction	6	4	
Program Structure	6	4	
Overall Average Based on 35 of 35 Item Scores		5**	

Please Note: On the ECERS-3 a score of 1 = Inadequate, 3 = Minimal, 5 = Good, 6 = Excellent

****An overall average of 5 is required to meet ECE Industry Certification with a minimum score requirement of 4 on each subscale.****

Appendix C

Sample Agenda for Industry Certification Site-Visit

Insert SCHOOL'S LETTER HEAD here

***Revise the agenda to accommodate local school schedule.
Due to GECEF Director 2 weeks BEFORE final site-visit***

8:30 a.m. - 9:15 a.m.	Breakfast and Informal Interview w/ Advisory Board including System Administrators, Parents, and Students*
9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	FCCLA Member Presentation to include a 2 to 3 Year Overview
9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Tour of ECE Department
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	Lab Observation by ECERS-3 Team Member**
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	Review Industry Certification Documentation
12:00 noon - 12:30 p.m.	Working Lunch
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Informal Student Interview (3-*6 Students TOTAL on Different Levels*)
1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Review Industry Certification Documentation
2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Exit Interview with ECE High School Teacher(s), Preschool Teacher (if applicable), and Administrators

ECE Teacher's Schedule and Location for Day of Site Visit:
List Below

Sample Information about Preschool Labs (identify age level, teachers' names, and room location for each lab)
**Lab 1: GA Pre-K (Teacher is Ms. _____ and paraprofessional is Ms._____) Room # _____
Lab 2: Tuition-based 3 year old Preschool (Ms._____) Room # _____

*Continental Breakfast with ECE Certification Team and Advisory Committee Members
Suggested Attendees:

- Advisory Committee Members
- High School Administrators
- System Administrators
- FCS Department Teachers
- School Partnership Members
- FCCLA Officers
- Parents

Appendix D

Equipment & Material Check List

The following types of equipment or materials are RECOMMENDED for ECE Labs with OFF-SITE LABS:

- **Computers, 12 (latest technology) - classroom**
- **Teacher Computer**
- **Color Printer - classroom, latest technology**
- **Die-cut Machine and assorted dies: upper/lower case alphabet, numbers, assorted shapes and sizes**
- **Precision Cutting Machine (ex. Cricut)**
- **Digital Camera/Video**
- **Smart Board or similar in classroom**
- **Paper Cutter – 24”**
- **Banner Paper Roll Dispenser w/ Cutter (8 rolls recommended)**
- **Thermal Roll Laminating Machine (27” recommended)**
- ***Handwashing Station if sink is not available in the classroom***
- ***MOCK PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM – Play Centers (Dramatic Play, Reading/Literacy, Science/STEM, Art, Music, etc.)***

The following types of materials and supplies are REQUIRED in Onsite Lab Classrooms:

□ **Dramatic Play**
□ **Fine Motor**
□ **Books**
□ **Art**
□ **Music and Movement**
□ **Blocks and Accessories**
□ **Nature/Science**
□ **Math/Number**
□ **Diversity**

- **For more information and specific requirements for each type, please use the following resource - Materials Guide: ITERS-3 and ECERS-3**
  - **https://qualityrated.decal.ga.gov/Content/Documents/ITERS3-ECERS3_Materials_Guide-%208-2020.pdf**
    - **Only materials listed in the Preschool column of this document are needed for ECERS-3 classrooms.**
    - **Only materials listed in the Infant/Toddler columns of this document are needed for ITERS-3 classrooms.**

Appendix E

Playground Information to Use with the Environment Rating Scales

Based on information from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC),* Public Playground Safety Handbook, Pub. No. 325 *and information from the American Society for Testing and Materials Standards (ASTM),* Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Public Use Playground Equipment for Children 6 Months through 23 Months, F 2373-05. *These guidelines are a basic overview of areas to review when scoring playground and safety items in the ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R, or SACERS. This list is not to be used as a comprehenstve guide for playground assessment.

Fall Zones – A fall zone is the area around and under gross motor climbing, sliding, or swinging equipment where protective surfacing is required to prevent injury from falls. The fall zone should be cleared of items that children may fall onto or run into.

Protective Surfacing – Protective surfacing is intended to cushion falls and prevent serious injuries from any equipment used indoors and outdoors. The amount of a consistent type of surfacing required is based on the fall height of the equipment, which is the height of the highest designated play surface on the equipment. Equipment having a fall height of 18" or less is not required to have protective surfacing; however, no equipment should be placed over concrete, asphalt, stone, ceramic tile, or similar hard surfaces. The surfaces under and around play equipment should be soft enough to cushion falls, which are the most frequent causes of injuries on playgrounds. Common indoor surfaces (such as rugs, tumbling mates, or carpet) and common outdoor surfaces (such as grass or dirt) are not adequate cushioning for gross motor equipment with a fall height greater than 18" even when the equipment is not anchored. For specifics on surfacing depth for different loose-fill materials, see the chart below. When the surfacing in much-used areas becomes displaced (e.g., under swings, at slide exits), it should be raked back or replaced to maintain correct depth.

Minimum compressed loose-fill surfacing depths:

Inches	Of	Loose-Fill Material	Protects To	Fall Height (feet)
9		Shredded/recycled rubber		10
9		Sand		4
9		Pea gravel		5
9		Wood mulch		7
9		Wood chips		10

For poured or installed foam or rubber surfaces, the materials must meet the ASTM F1292 requirements, which can be verified through a written statement from the manufacturer.

Equipment Spacing – Spacing must allow children to circulate around or fall from play structures without striking another structure, and permit adults to have easy access to the children who are using the equipment. For preschoolers (2 – 5 years) and school-agers (5 – 12 years), adjacent play structures, with a play surface over 30" high, should be spaced at least 9 ft. apart. If the play surfaces of both structures are 30" high or less, the equipment may be located a minimum of 6 ft. apart. For infants and toddlers (6 months – 2 years), play structures with surfaces between 18" and 32" high must be spaced at least 3 ft. apart. Moving pieces of equipment (e.g., swings, merry-go-rounds) should be located in an area away from other play structures so children have adequate room to pass from one play area to another without being struck by moving equipment, and their fall zones should not overlap the fall zone of other equipment.

Age-appropriate equipment provides children with opportunities to safely practice gross motor skills without putting them at risk for unnecessary injury. Appropriate equipment for each age group is listed below:

Infant/Toddler: 6 months – 2 years	Preschool: Ages 2 – 5	School-age: Ages 5 – 12
Climbing equipment up to 32" high	Climbing equipment up to 60" high	Climbing equipment up to 84" high
Ramps	Horizontal ladders and overhead rings 60" high or less for 4-5 year-olds	Arch climbers
		Free standing flexible climbers
Single file step ladders	Merry-go-rounds	Stairways
Slides	Ramps	Chain or cable walks
Spiral slides less than 360°	Rung ladders	Fulcrum seesaws
Spring rockers	Single file step ladders	Ladders- horizontal (84" high), rung, and step
Stairways	Slides	Overhead rings up to 84" high
Swings with full bucket seats	Spiral slides up to 360°	Merry-go-rounds
Ramps	Spring rockers	Ring treks
Single file step ladders	Stairways	Slides
	Swings- belt, full bucket (2-4 yrs.), and rotating tire	Spiral slides more than one 360° turn
		Vertical sliding poles
	Balance beams up to 12" high	Swings- belt and rotating tire
		Track rides
		Balance beams up to 16" high

The following equipment is *not appropriate* for any age group: trampolines, swinging gates, giant strides, climbing ropes not secured at both ends, animal figure swings, multiple occupancy swings, rope swings, and swinging dual exercise rings and trapeze bars.
In addition to equipment listed above, the following equipment is *not appropriate* for preschool children (ages 2-5): freestanding arch climbers, freestanding flexible climbers, fulcrum seesaws, log rolls, track rides, spiral slides more than one 360° turn, parallel bars, and vertical sliding poles. Horizontal ladders and overhead rings are not appropriate for children 3 years and younger.
In addition to the equipment listed above, the following equipment is *not appropriate* for infants and toddlers (6 months – 2 years): rung ladders, merry-go-rounds, rotating tire swings, spiral slides with a full 360° turn, balance beams.

Requirements for slides:

For preschool and school-age: The exit region of slides should be at least 11" long. The exit height of slides up to 4 ft. high should be 11" or less, and the exit height of slides over 4 ft. high should be at least 7" but not more than 15". The fall zone around slides should be at least 6 ft on all sides, except at the slide's exit. For slides up to 6 ft. high, the fall zone at the exit should be at least 6 ft. For slides greater than 6 ft., the fall zone at the exit should be at least as long as the slide is high up to 8 ft. max. The fall zone at a slide's exit should not overlap the fall zone of any other equipment.

For infants and toddlers: The exit region of slides should be 7" – 10" long, and the exit height should be 6" or less. The fall zone around slides should be at least 3 ft., except at the slide's exit, which should be at least 6 ft. The fall zone at a slide's exit should not overlap the fall zone of any other equipment.

Requirements for swings:

For preschool and school-age: **Single-axis swings** should have a pivot point of 8 ft. or less. There should be no more than 2 swings located within a single swing bay. The distance between swings at rest within a single bay should be at least 24", and the distance between a swing at rest and its support structure should be at least 30" (measured 5 ft. from the ground). The seat of swings for preschool-age children should rest at least 12" inches from the ground, and the seat of swings for school-age children should rest at least 16" from the ground. The fall zone for single-axis swings is 2 times the distance from the pivot point to the ground, both in front and back of swings, and cannot overlap the fall zone of any other equipment. A 6 ft. fall zone is required from the perimeter of the supporting structure. **Tire swings** should not be attached to composite structures and should not be suspended from a structure with other swings in the same bay. The bottom of the seat of the tire swing should rest at least 12" from the ground. The clearance between the seat and the sides of the support structure should be 30" when the tire is held in its closest position to the support structure. The fall zone for tire swings is the distance from the pivot point to the top of the tire plus 6 ft. in all directions, and should not overlap the fall zone of any other equipment. A 6 ft. fall zone is required from the perimeter of the tire swing's supporting structure.

For infants and toddlers: **Single-axis swings** should have a pivot point of 47" or less, and the seat should rest at least 6" from the ground. The fall zone for single-axis swings is 2 times the distance from the pivot point to the ground, both in front and back of swings and cannot overlap with the fall zone of any other equipment. A 3 ft. fall zone is required from the perimeter of the supporting structure. **Bucket swings** should have a pivot point between 47" and 95", and the seat should rest at least 24" from the ground. The fall zone for bucket swings is 2 times the distance from the pivot point to the bottom of the swing seat, both in front and back of swings and cannot overlap the fall zone of any other equipment. For both types of swings, there should be no more than 2 swings located within a single swing bay, and the distance between swings at rest within a single bay or between a swing at rest and its support structure should be at least 20" (measured 5 ft. from the ground).

Entanglement Hazards – There should be no dangerous pieces of hardware, such as protruding bolts or open S-hooks on swings that could entangle children's clothing, particularly drawstrings on the hoods of jackets or sweatshirts, and cause strangulation. An S-hook is considered closed if there is no gap or space greater than .04" (about the thickness of a dime).

Entrapment Hazards – Children can get trapped and strangle in openings where they can fit their bodies but not their heads through the space. Therefore, openings in guardrails and spaces between platforms, ladder rungs, and uprights in protective barriers, should measure 3.5" or less or 9" or greater. Any completely bounded opening that is not bounded by the ground is an entrapment hazard. Even openings that are low enough for children's feet to touch the ground still present a strangulation risk because young children may not have the cognitive ability or motor skills to free themselves. Children can also become entrapped by angles (less than 55°) formed between 2 sides of playground parts, for instance at the top of a wooden picket fence or fort.

Pinch, Crush, and Shearing Hazards – Moving pieces of equipment, such as suspension bridges, track rides, merry-go-rounds, or seesaws, should not have accessible moving parts that might pinch or crush a child's finger or other body part.

Sharp Points, Corners, and Edges – There should be no sharp points, corners, or edges (either wooden or metal) on play equipment or other objects in the space (e.g., fences, gates) that could cut or puncture a child's skin.

Guardrails – A guardrail is an enclosing device around an elevated platform that is intended to prevent inadvertent falls from the platform. A child might be able to climb over, under, or through the guardrail. For preschoolers, guardrails are required for platforms higher than 20", and up to 30" above the ground. For preschoolers, the top edge of the guardrails should be at least 29" from the platform, and the lower edge should be between 9" and 23" from the platform. For equipment used *only* by school-aged children, any platform more than 30" above the ground (but not over 48" above the ground) will need guardrails at least 38" above the platform, with the lower edge between 9" and 28" from the platform.

Protective Barriers – A protective barrier is an enclosing device around an elevated platform that is intended to prevent both inadvertent falls from the platform and deliberate attempts to pass through the barrier. No child should be able to climb over, under, or through the barrier. For infants and toddlers, protective barriers are required for all equipment with play surfaces over 18", and the top surface of the barrier should be at least 24". For preschoolers, protective barriers are required for platforms that are over 30" above the ground, and the top surface of the barrier should be at least 29" above the platform. For equipment used *only* by school-aged children, any platform more than 48" above the ground requires protective barriers, and the top surface of the protective barrier must be at least 38" high. Guardrail and barrier recommendations do not apply if they would interfere with the intended use of the equipment, such as stepping up to the next level. For example, platforms that are layered on equipment, (e.g., one platform leading up to another in a step-like manner), do not need guardrails or barriers if the fall height between levels is 7" or less for toddlers, 20" or less for preschoolers, and 30" or less for school-agers.