

Title 13A

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Subtitle 15 FAMILY CHILD CARE

Notice of Proposed Action

[25-200-P]

The State Board of Education proposes to:

- (1) Amend Regulation .02 under **COMAR 13A.15.01 Scope and Definitions**;
- (2) Amend Regulation .03 under **COMAR 13A.15.04 Operational Requirements**; and
- (3) Adopt new Regulations .01—.10 under a new chapter, **COMAR 13A.15.16 Educational Programs in Nonpublic Nursery Schools**.

At this time, the State Board of Education is withdrawing a previously proposed action to this chapter which was published in 51:25 Md. R. 1154—1157 (December 13, 2024).

This action was considered by the State Board of Education at their July 29, 2025 meeting.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this action is to allow family child care programs to operate as a nonpublic nursery school. As a result, family child care providers would also be eligible to participate in an approved preparation program and therefore in public pre-kindergarten.

Estimate of Economic Impact

I. Summary of Economic Impact. The purpose of the amendments to the family child care regulations found in COMAR 13A.15 is to add a nonpublic nursery school component similar to what already exists in the Child Care Center, Letter of Compliance, and Large Family Child Care Home regulations. The economic impact of this change may include added costs to MSDE for processing applications and added costs to family child care providers who choose to add an education program to their business. Giving this option to family child care providers may make them more competitive with the other types of child care facilities, because now parents will have the option to keep their child in a small home-like setting while also having access to an education program for school readiness. To the extent operating a nonpublic nursery school is more expensive (e.g., curriculum, additional staff), a secondary impact could be increased tuition at family child care homes that choose to participate.

II. Types of Economic Impact.

Impacted Entity	Revenue (R+/R-) Expenditure (E+/E-)	Magnitude
A. On issuing agency:		
Maryland State Department of Education	(E+)	\$520,000
B. On other State agencies:		
C. On local governments:		
Benefit (+) Cost (-)		
D. On regulated industries or trade groups:		
Nonpublic Nursery Schools	(+)	\$3,280,000
E. On other industries or trade groups:		
F. Direct and indirect effects on public:		

III. Assumptions. (Identified by Impact Letter and Number from Section II.)

A. Application review and approval: an aggregate cost of \$520,000 – each application takes 40 hours to process, including binder review and site visit, at \$26 an hour for licensing staff (estimate of \$1,040 per application for 500 nursery schools estimated to apply).

D. Child care homes up-front cost of curriculum, instructional materials and equipment: an aggregate cost of \$3,280,000 (estimate of \$6,560 per nursery school for 500 nursery schools estimated to apply).

Economic Impact on Small Businesses

The proposed action has a meaningful economic impact on small businesses. An analysis of this economic impact follows:

If a family child care home chooses to operate as a nonpublic nursery school, the provider will be required to meet both the educational program administrator requirements and teacher requirements. The provider would also need to purchase curriculum, instructional materials, and equipment at an estimated cost of \$5,000 to \$6,560 per nursery school.

Impact on Individuals with Disabilities

The proposed action has no impact on individuals with disabilities.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Comments may be sent to Keisha Maxwell, Administrator of Policy and Special Projects, Division of Early Childhood, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, or call 410-767-7852, or email to earlychildhoodregs.msde@maryland.gov. Comments will be accepted through December 15, 2025. A public hearing has not been scheduled.

Open Meeting

Final action on the proposal will be considered by the State Board of Education during a public meeting to be held on January 27, 2026 at 9:00 am, at 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201.

13A.15.01 Scope and Definitions

Authority: Education Article, §§9.5-301—9.5-308, 9.5-310—9.5-312, 9.5-320, 9.5-321 and 9.5-414; Family Law Article, §§5-550—5-558; General Provisions Article, §4-333; Human Services Article, §1-202; Annotated Code of Maryland

Agency Note: Federal Statutory Reference — Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.); Pro-Children Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. §6081 et seq.); Child Care Development Block Grant (45 CFR Parts 98 and 99 and 42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.); Social Security Act §418 (42 U.S.C. 618)

.02 Definitions.

A. (text unchanged)

B. Terms Defined.

(1)—(22) (text unchanged)

(23) “Nursery school” means an educational program:

(a) For children who are 2 years old, 3 years old, 4 years old, or any sequence of these ages; and

(b) That, unless approved by the Department before July 1, 2007, to operate for more than 6 hours per day, may not operate in excess of 6 hours per day.

[(23)](24)—[(26)](27) (text unchanged)

(28) “Preschooler” means a child who:

(a) Is 2 years old or older; and

(b) Does not attend kindergarten or a higher grade.

[(27)](29)—[(31)](33) (text unchanged)

(34) “School age child” means a child younger than 13 years old who attends a public or nonpublic school in grades kindergarten or above.

[(32)](35)—[(36)](39) (text unchanged)

13A.15.04 Operational Requirements

Authority: Education Article, §§9.5-301—9.5-308, 9.5-310—9.5-312, 9.5-320, and 9.5-321; General Provisions Article, §4-333; Human Services Article, §1-202; Annotated Code of Maryland

Agency Note: Federal Statutory Reference—Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.); Pro-Children Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. §6081 et seq.); Child Care Development Block Grant (45 CFR Parts 98 and 99 and 42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.); Social Security Act §418 (42 U.S.C. 618)

.03 Child Capacity.

A.—C. (text unchanged)

D. [The] *Except as provided in §E of this regulation, the maximum total capacity of a family child care home may not exceed eight children, of whom not more than four may be younger than 2 years old.*

E. *The maximum total capacity of a family child care home in which the provider also operates an educational program may not exceed eight children, of whom not more than two may be younger than 2 years old.*

[E.] F. (text unchanged)

13A.15.16 Educational Programs in Nonpublic Nursery Schools

Authority: Education Article, §§9.5-301—9.5-308, 9.5-310—9.5-312, 9.5-320, 9.5-321 and 9.5-414; Family Law Article, §§5-550—5-558; General Provisions Article, §4-333; Human Services Article, §1-202; Annotated Code of Maryland

Agency Note: Federal Statutory Reference—Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.); Pro-Children Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. §6081 et seq.); Child Care Development Block Grant (45 CFR Parts 98 and 99 and 42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.); Social Security Act §418 (42 U.S.C. 618)

.01 Purpose and Scope.

This chapter establishes requirements for approval to operate an educational program in a nonpublic nursery school located in a residence that is registered as a family child care home.

.02 Definitions.

A. In this chapter, the following terms have the meanings indicated.

B. Terms Defined.

(1) “Certificate of approval” means the document issued by the State Board to the legal authority responsible for governing and operating a school if the school has met the requirements of this chapter.

(2) “Child care home registration” means the document issued by the Department pursuant to this subtitle that authorizes the recipient to operate a family child care home.

(3) “Class” means a group of students scheduled to report regularly to a teacher at a particular time and place for the implementation of an educational program.

(4) “Department” means the State Department of Education.

(5) “Department representative” means an individual designated by the Department to determine compliance with this chapter.

(6) “Educational program” means an organized program of instruction that:

(a) Is provided by a teacher; and

(b) Meets the requirements of Regulation .07 of this chapter.

(7) "Institution of higher education (IHE)" means a college or university that is accredited by an accrediting commission of one of the regional associations of colleges and schools.

(8) "Montessori program" means an educational program based on the pedagogical philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, as reflected in the program's teacher qualifications, curriculum, instructional methods, and materials and equipment.

(9) "Nursery school" means an educational program for children who are 2 years old, 3 years old, 4 years old, or any consecutive sequence of these ages.

(10) "Office" means the central office or a regional office of the Department's Division of Early Childhood, Office of Child Care.

(11) "State Board" means the Maryland State Board of Education.

(12) "Teacher" means a family child care provider:

(a) Provides instruction to children enrolled in an educational program; and

(b) Meets the requirements of Regulation .06B of this chapter.

.03 Approval to Operate an Educational Program—General Requirements.

A. A family child care provider may be approved to operate an educational program in a nonpublic nursery school only if:

(1) The provider holds a valid registration to operate a family child care home; and

(2) The educational program would not be operated in the living space of the residence where the child care home is located.

B. Unless a provider chooses to cease operating an educational program, approval to operate the program, once granted, shall continue as long as the:

(1) Child care home registration remains in effect;

(2) Educational program is operated according to the terms under which approval to operate was granted; and

(3) Provider remains in full compliance with all applicable requirements of this chapter.

C. Approval to operate an educational program in a nonpublic nursery school becomes void if the nonpublic nursery school's approval is suspended or revoked, or the child care home registration is suspended or revoked and the provider:

(1) Does not appeal the suspension or revocation action; or

(2) Appeals the suspension or revocation action and the action is upheld through the administrative hearing process or notice of deficiencies hearing before the State Board in accordance with Education Article, §2-206, Annotated Code of Maryland.

D. A provider who has ceased operating an educational program subject to the requirements of this chapter shall promptly return to the office the child care home registration that certifies approval to operate the educational program.

E. A certificate of approval to operate an educational program that was issued to the provider prior to January 1, 2012, shall remain in effect.

.04 Approval to Operate an Educational Program—Specific Requirements.

A. Application for Approval.

(1) Application for approval shall be made in a manner and form and according to timelines established by the office.

(2) The applicant shall submit all information that the office considers necessary in order to ascertain compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

(3) A provider who is already approved to operate an educational program may not apply for approval to operate another educational program if the educational program for which the provider is currently approved is not in full compliance with all applicable requirements of this chapter.

B. When the office is satisfied that the requirements of this chapter have been met, the office shall issue to the applicant a child care home registration that certifies approval to operate an educational program.

C. The child care home registration shall specify the terms under which approval to operate an educational program has been granted, including the:

(1) Hours, days, and months of approved operation; and

(2) Ages of children who may be enrolled in the program.

D. If the provider intends to change the terms under which approval has been granted, the provider shall:

(1) Notify the office in writing at least 60 days before the occurrence of any change or changes; and

(2) Furnish any information the office considers necessary to approve the change or changes planned by the provider.

E. A provider may not seek approval of a change in the terms of the approval under any one or combination of the following circumstances:

(1) The educational program demonstrates an area or areas of noncompliance;

(2) The office has received and is investigating a complaint alleging that the educational program is in violation of one or more regulations under this chapter;

(3) The office is implementing a sanction or an enforcement action against the child care home registration; or

(4) A deficiency hearing is pending before the State Board in accordance with Education Article, §2-206, Annotated Code of Maryland.

F. Notwithstanding the requirement established in §E of this regulation, a provider may seek approval of a change in the terms of the approval if approval of the change is the means for the provider to demonstrate compliance with this chapter.

G. A provider may not implement a change in the terms of approval until the office has issued a revised child care home registration that reflects the change.

H. A provider shall inform the office in writing at least 30 days before the provider ceases operating an educational program.

.05 Compliance and Inspections.

A. Continued approval to operate an educational program is conditioned on the provider's maintaining compliance with this chapter.

B. To evaluate compliance with this chapter, the office may inspect the educational program, with or without prior notice to the provider, at any time during the approved hours of operation of the program.

C. During an inspection, the provider shall permit the Department representative access to any activity, person, material, document, or other information or source of information connected with the educational program that is considered necessary by the Department representative for the purpose of the inspection.

D. Following each inspection of the educational program, the office shall provide the provider with a written report of all findings of the inspection.

E. If the educational program fails to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of this chapter, the office shall notify the provider in writing of the:

- (1) Regulation or regulations with which the program does not demonstrate compliance;
- (2) Fact or facts that demonstrate the program's noncompliance with each regulation;
- (3) Action or actions the provider is required to take to demonstrate compliance with each regulation; and
- (4) Date by which the program is required to demonstrate compliance with each regulation.

F. Sanctions.

(1) Failure to maintain compliance with applicable requirements of this chapter may result in a sanction by the office, including restriction, suspension, or revocation of the approval to operate the educational program.

(2) Sanctions against an educational program located in a child care home may be severable.

.06 Personnel Qualifications.

A. Educational Program Administrator.

(1) The family child care provider shall serve as the educational program administrator who is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the educational program.

(2) The educational program administrator at a minimum shall meet the standards established in §B(3) of this regulation.

(3) The provider shall have a written position description that states the duties and responsibilities of the educational program administrator.

(4) The educational program administrator shall have sufficient time during each educational program day to carry out the duties and responsibilities stated in the written position description of the educational program administrator.

B. Teachers.

(1) The family child care provider shall serve as the teacher to implement the educational program in each class.

(2) A teacher, shall meet the requirements of §B(3) of this regulation.

(3) A teacher who provides instruction in language and literacy development, mathematical and scientific thinking, or social studies shall hold or have completed:

(a) A bachelor's degree from an IHE;

(b) 120 semester hours of college credit from an IHE; or

(c) A foreign credential that is determined by the Department to be equivalent to a bachelor's degree from an IHE; and

(4) In addition to meeting the requirements of §B(3) of this regulation, a teacher employed in a Montessori program shall also hold a Montessori diploma for the level of the individual's assignment.

(5) If the degree, college credit, or foreign credential required under §B(3) of this regulation does not include at least 6 semester hours of approved early childhood coursework, the teacher shall, in addition:

(a) Hold or have completed:

(i) The Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Child Development Associate National Credentialing Program; or

(ii) Six semester hours, 90 clock hours or their equivalent of approved preservice training; or

(b) Be certified by the Department as a teacher for early childhood in nursery through third grade.

(6) An individual approved as a teacher by the Department before July 1, 2010, shall remain qualified for that position as long as the individual is continuously employed as a teacher.

(7) A teacher in an educational program shall complete at least 12 clock hours of approved continued training per full year of employment, measured from date of hire, in that position.

C. An individual who provides assistance to a teacher in a class is not required to meet the requirements of §B(3) or (7) of this regulation.

D. Written Statement of Teacher Qualifications. A provider shall:

(1) Maintain a written statement of their qualifications; and

(2) On request by a parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled, or being considered for enrollment, in the educational program, give to the parent or legal guardian a written statement of the family child care provider's qualifications.

.07 Educational Program.

A. Program. The provider shall implement and maintain at the nonpublic nursery school a written curriculum of the nonpublic nursery school's educational program for the development of skills for each approved nursery school age in the following areas:

(1) Personal and social development;

(2) Language and literacy development;

(3) Mathematical and scientific thinking;

(4) Social studies;

(5) The arts; and

(6) Physical development and health.

B. Instructional Materials and Equipment. The provider shall own and maintain the nonpublic nursery school instructional materials and equipment required to implement the written curriculum of the educational program specified in §A of this regulation.

.08 Child Records.

A. The provider shall maintain a cumulative record for each child enrolled in the educational program.

B. Each child's record shall include the:

(1) Nonpublic nursery school's name;

(2) Nonpublic nursery school's address;

(3) Nonpublic nursery school's telephone number;

(4) Child's first, middle, and last names;

- (5) Child's month, day, and year of birth;
- (6) Child's home address;
- (7) Month, day, and year the child initially entered the educational program;
- (8) Age on enrollment in the educational program;
- (9) Month, day, and year the child withdrew from the educational program, if applicable;
- (10) Child's performance information in each curricular area;
- (11) Code for the meaning of performance information; and
- (12) Number of days the child attended in each school year.

C. The requirements of §B(1)-(8) of this regulation are met by compliance with child record requirements set forth at COMAR 13A.15.03.04C.

D. Age of Admission.

(1) Except as provided by §D(2) of this regulation, a child shall be 2 years old, 3 years old, or 4 years old on or before September 1 of a school year to be age-eligible for admission during that school year to a nonpublic nursery school program approved under this chapter.

(2) A nonpublic nursery school may adopt policies and procedures permitting, on request by a child's parent or guardian, and if a nonpublic nursery school determines that a child demonstrates capabilities warranting early admission, a:

- (a) Two-year-old child to be admitted to a 3-year-old nursery school program; or
- (b) Three-year-old child to be admitted to a 4-year-old nursery school program.

.09 Health, Fire Safety, and Zoning.

A. A provider shall obtain and maintain documentation verifying current compliance with health, fire safety, and zoning regulations applicable to a nonpublic nursery school.

B. The requirements of §A of this regulation are met by complying with pertinent health, fire safety, and zoning requirements set forth under this subtitle.

.10 Procedures and Sanctions for Noncompliance—Educational Programs.

If the Department believes that a nonpublic nursery school does not meet the conditions or standards on which the certificate of approval of the school was based, the Department shall implement procedures and sanctions for noncompliance approved by the State Board.

CAREY M. WRIGHT, ED.D.
State Superintendent of Schools