

Nebraska Criteria for National Accreditation Systems Included in the Accreditation Project

The Nebraska Accreditation Project provides financial assistance to home-, center-, and school-based child care and early childhood programs in Nebraska to become nationally accredited. As allowable within budgetary constraints, this assistance pays a portion of the costs associated with becoming accredited for providers making application using national accrediting systems currently approved by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), Office of Early Childhood.

National accreditation systems currently approved by NDE include:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

Criteria in Nebraska

To be approved for inclusion in the Nebraska Accreditation Project, NDE requires that accreditation systems meet the following criteria:

1. An established system is in place, with a history of granting accreditation to early childhood and/or school age programs across the country.
2. Program standards are based on research to reflect what is known about best practice.
3. Extensive field testing has been conducted to assure the reliability and validity of the criteria and the observation instruments.
4. A systematic evaluation of the process and revision of the criteria, as appropriate, occurs on a regular basis.
5. The accreditation process includes self-study by the program, including administrators, teachers, and families, and an onsite visit to validate that the quality criteria is met.
6. A standardized and rigorous training process is used to train the persons making the onsite visits to programs. Procedures are in place to assure the reliability of onsite visitors. Procedures are also in place for continued evaluation and retraining of the onsite visitors.
7. All public preschools, child care centers, school age programs, family child care homes, and any other early childhood program in Nebraska can utilize the selected accreditation system as appropriate regardless of religious affiliation, program sponsor, funding sources, etc.
8. There is a state professional organization to provide support to local programs. State level staff have expertise with each accreditation process and are knowledgeable about the quality criteria for each.

For information about becoming approved for inclusion in the Accreditation Project as an accrediting body, please contact:

Tammi Hicken
Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
Phone: 402-471-3184
E-mail: tammi.hicken@nebraska.gov