

281—16.9(256C) Accountability. An approved local program meets the minimum program specifications in this chapter. The department encourages approved local programs to exceed the minimum standards as programs work toward ongoing improvement. The department monitors each local program's compliance with this rule.

16.9(1) *Annual reports.* Each approved local program provides, on forms provided by the department, an annual report to the department regarding program specifications. Failure to submit an annual report by the date specified therein results in suspension of financial payments to the applicant until such time as the report is received by the department.

16.9(2) *Performance measures.* The approved local program collects data on all of the following:

- a. The number of eligible children participating in the preschool program.
- b. The number of eligible children participating in a program that meets the criteria of NAEYC, Head Start, or QPPS Standards and Criteria.
- c. The curriculum.
- d. The assessment as defined in rule 281—16.1(256C).
- e. The number of teachers.
- f. The kindergarten literacy assessment as defined in Iowa Code section 279.60.

16.9(3) *Noncompliance with program specifications.* If the department determines that a participating district does not meet one or more of the accountability specifications provided in rule 281—16.2(256C), the department informs the school district of appropriate actions to be taken by the school district. The school district submits an action plan that is approved by the department and contains reasonable timelines for coming into compliance. The department will facilitate technical assistance when requested. If the department determines that the school district is not taking the necessary actions in a timely manner, the director removes approval and terminates the school district's contract as provided in subrule 16.6(2). Until such time as the school district's contract is terminated, the school district may continue to participate in the statewide voluntary preschool program.

16.9(4) *Monitoring.* The department develops a monitoring system based on the annual reporting and performance measures described in this rule to be implemented no later than one year after funding is first provided under this chapter. The monitoring system ensures that programs meet the provisions herein requiring a properly licensed teacher and adoption of program standards and is designed to follow the academic progress of children who voluntarily participate in the statewide preschool program as the children progress through elementary and secondary grade levels. If feasible, it is the intent of the department to include postsecondary monitoring of such children.

[ARC 7421C, IAB 12/27/23, effective 1/31/24]