



Standards for Center/School-based Early Learning and Development Programs

Revised January 10, 2012

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
<p><i>Research Rationale: There is substantial evidence that classroom environment features are central to program quality and there is limited evidence that varied and appropriate classroom materials support children’s development. There is substantial evidence that the quality of teacher-child interactions contributes to quality in early care and education settings and substantial evidence that children with involved and responsive caregivers fare better on a wide variety of child development measures. There is a substantial amount of evidence that developmentally appropriate curriculum is related to other measures of program quality and substantial evidence that a developmentally appropriate curriculum is related to child outcomes. There is a moderate amount of evidence that developmentally-appropriate assessment is associated with improved child development outcomes.</i></p>

Classroom Environment (CE)	
CE 1	Program ¹ staff attend training on the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) ² .
CE 2	Program completes an ERS self-assessment using the appropriate scale(s) and writes an improvement plan to address subscale scores below 3.25.
CE 3	Program has an <u>independent</u> ERS ³ assessment and achieves an overall score of 4.25 – 4.9. Written improvement plan for subscale scores below 3.5.
CE 4	Program has <u>independent</u> ERS assessment using the appropriate scale(s) and achieves an overall score of 5.0 – 5.4. Written improvement plan for subscale scores below 4.0.
CE 5	Program has <u>independent</u> ERS assessment using the appropriate scale(s) and achieves an overall score of 5.5 or higher. Written improvement plan for subscale scores

¹ *Program* means all types of early learning and development settings such as child care centers, prekindergarten in public or private schools, nursery schools, Head Start and Early Head Start centers, and special education preschools (4410 schools).

² The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) are a family of tools to measure program quality. These include the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, revised (ECERS-R); the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, revised (ITERS-R); the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale, revised (FCCERS-R) and the School Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS). **NOTE: no-cost training will be offered on introduction to the ERS and introduction to QUALITYstarsNY.**

	below 4.5.
Child Observation & Assessment (COA)	
COA 1	Program has in place a child observation and assessment policy that includes the collection and protection of assessment results and sharing assessment results with families.
COA 2	Program collects information at enrollment on children’s development including social emotional concerns, dominant language, preferences and any special needs.
COA 3	The developmental screening of each child is documented within 45 days of entering the program using a child development screening tool.
COA 4	The developmental screening tool is valid and reliable.
COA 5	The developmental progress of each child is documented at least quarterly using a child development assessment tool(s).
COA 6	The developmental assessment tool is research based.
COA 7	Program has a plan to ensure that child screenings and assessments are done in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, including in the appropriate language.
COA 8	All teaching staff receives annual training in child observation and assessment that include recognition of developmental milestones and identifying possible developmental delays and linking child observation and assessment to curriculum implementation.
COA 9	Assessment results are used to inform instruction that addresses the needs of individual children.
COA 10	Assessment results are used to inform program practice.
Curriculum⁴ Planning & Implementation⁵(CPI)	
CPI 1	Program has a written education philosophy or statement.
CPI 2	Program uses a written curriculum(s) or curriculum framework(s) that is developmentally appropriate and addresses the key domains of child development.
CPI 3	The curriculum/curriculum framework is evidence-based, meaning it is grounded in science and is shown to improve child outcomes.
CPI 4	The curriculum/curriculum framework aligns with the NYS Early Learning Guidelines and Pre-K Foundation to the Common Core. ⁶

⁴ *Curriculum* means the goals for knowledge and skills to be acquired by children and the plans for learning opportunities through which such knowledge and skills will be achieved

⁵ Guidance on choosing curricula and assessment systems is contained in the Joint Position Statement from NAEYC and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education, Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation: Building an Effective, Accountable System in Programs for Children Birth through Age 8. It is available at <http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/cape>

CPI 5	The curriculum/curriculum framework is adapted to be culturally competent by incorporating into the classroom curriculum culturally sensitive, books, themes and projects.
CPI 6	Program implements appropriate modifications and provide additional supports to enable children with special needs more effective inclusion in the full range of the program's activities.
CPI 7	All teaching staff receives annual training to implement the curriculum and supervision support is provided to staff to assist with curriculum implementation.
Physical Well-being & Health (PH)	
Program enrolls children up to 18 months of age: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, continue <input type="checkbox"/> No, go to PH2.	
PH 1	Program provides infants daily opportunities to move freely under adult supervision to explore indoor and outdoor environments, including tummy time when awake.
Program enrolls toddlers or preschoolers: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, continue <input type="checkbox"/> No, go to PH3.	
PH 2	Program provides opportunities for toddlers and/or preschoolers to have at least 15 minutes of developmentally appropriate, structured and unstructured, moderate to vigorous physical activity (both inside and outside) for every hour they are in care. For example, in a 3 hour program, children should have at least 45 minutes of physical activity in total, not necessarily continuously.
PH 3	Program has a policy that details the use of TV/video for children, including that TV/video is never used during nap and meal time or for children birth to age 2, if applicable there is no TV/video time. For children ages 2 to 5 there is no more than 30 minutes once a week of high quality educational or movement-based commercial-free programming.
PH 4	Meals and snacks served or consumed in the program meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern for the ages served.
PH 5	Program implements an obesity prevention program.
PH 6	Staff attends training regarding implementation of the obesity prevention program.

⁶ NYS Early Learning Standards for Children from Birth to Five/Kindergarten Entry Age are the Prekindergarten Foundation to the Common Core (by SED) and Early Learning Standards for Children from Birth through Age Three/PreK Entry Age (by Council on Children and Families). More info can be at www.earlychildhood.org. Training on the NYS Early Learning Standards will be offered.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Research Rationale: There is substantial evidence that parent involvement and parent-provider communication is important for high quality early childhood education. There is substantial evidence that parent-involvement is related to child development outcomes. Parent-provider communication in the parent's dominant language is necessary for optimum results.

Communication (C)

Program enrolls children under 19 months of age: Yes, continue No, go to C2

C 1	Program communicates with parents of infants in writing on a daily basis about care giving routines such as feeding, sleeping, and diapering/toileting.
C 2	Program communicates with families in a comprehensive, written format about the program's history, philosophy, admissions policies, other policies and procedures, applicable regulations, and parent involvement opportunities.
C 3	Program periodically communicates in writing with families about program and child activities and other pertinent information including educational topics.
C 4	Program communicates with parents about their individual child's developments at least twice a year.
C 5	Program communicates with families, in a written manner, about staff member's educational qualifications and professional experience.
C 6	Program communicates with families about program activities and policies in a group setting.
C 7	Program provides information about family resources and supports, such as information on child development, oral health, child health insurance, tax credits, child care financial assistance.

Family Involvement & Support (FIS)

Program enrolls children under 19 months of age: Yes, continue No, go to FIS 2

FIS 1	Program supports breastfeeding.
FIS 2	Program offers family social gatherings that intentionally include other family members, in addition to parents.
FIS 3	Program provides families with information on educational topics.
FIS 4	Program has a policy that includes offering volunteering opportunities for families.
FIS 5	Program provides regular opportunities for parents to have input in program decisions.
FIS 6	Families complete a program evaluation or survey annually and results are used for program improvement.

FIS 7	Program conducts a program assessment using a tool on family responsive practices ⁷ and results are used for program improvement.
FIS 8	Teaching staff and administrative staff use a self-assessment tool to measure and improve cultural competence. ⁸
Program enrolls children whose home language is not English: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, continue <input type="checkbox"/> No, go to Transitions.	
FIS 9	Program staff greets children and parents in the home languages of the children and parents.
FIS 10	Program staff is trained to address the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs).
The home language of 50% or more of the children is a specific language other than English: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, list language _____ and continue <input type="checkbox"/> No, go to Transitions	
FIS 11	Program employs at least one staff member who speaks that language.
Transitions(T)	
T 1	Program has a written policy for transitioning children into the program, which includes providing information on separation and attachment to families.
T 2	Program has a written policy and procedures to support children and families during transitions within the program i.e. moving from the threes class to the fours class or when a teacher leaves and a new one is hired.
T 3	Program supports children and families transitioning out of the program.
T 4	If program enrolls infants and toddlers, program has a policy that addresses both daily and annual continuity of care from the child's perspective and ensures no more than one transition within child's first two years. OR If program does <u>not</u> enroll infants and toddlers, program promotes the quality and continuity of teacher-child relationships through teacher training and scheduling.

⁷ The Center for the Study of Social Policy's Family Strengthening Self-Assessment tool is one example.

⁸ One example includes the checklist for Promoting Cultural & Linguistic Competency for ECE Personnel from the National Center on Cultural Competence. This tool is available at <http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc/documents/Checklist.EIEC.doc.pdf>

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP⁹

Research Rationale: There is some evidence that the implementation of program policies and procedures is related to other measures of quality and child development outcomes.

Note: For multi-site organizations, this section may need to be completed by staff in the central office. Documentation must apply to the applicant site.

Administrative Self-Assessment (ASA)	
ASA 1	Program conducts a program management self-assessment using a tool, such as the Program Administration Scale, the NAEYC self-study or Head Start Monitoring Protocol or another administrative/management assessment tool.
ASA 2	Program demonstrates progress on a plan aligned to the administrative/management self-assessment.
Financial Accountability & Sustainability (FAS)	
FAS 1	Payroll and payroll taxes are paid on time.
FAS 2	Liability insurance is current to date.
FAS 3	State and federal taxes are paid or IRS Form 990 is filed on time.
FAS 4	Program has a current-year operating budget related to the early care and education program showing revenues and expenses.
FAS 5	Program generates at least quarterly income and expense statements, comparing actual revenues and expenses to budget.
FAS 6	Program has written fiscal policies and procedures that detail the management of funds and payroll.
FAS 7	There is an independent review ¹⁰ of accounting records (reconciliation of bank statements to the general ledger) by someone with accounting or bookkeeping expertise who is not an employee of the organization.
FAS 8	Program has established procedures to market and fill open child slots/vacancies.

⁹ NOTE: For multi-site organizations and for multiple school programs in a single school district, some of these criteria may be met overall by reference to sections of a union contract or the organizational personnel policies.

¹⁰ Independent review means that the reviewer is not an employee of the organization. A board member or parent can conduct an independent review.

Policies and Procedures (PP)	
PP 1	Program has written job descriptions for all positions.
PP 2	Employees are given access to an employee handbook when hired.
PP 3	Program provides new employees with an orientation that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of job description • Discussion/Review of regulations applicable to the program • Review of evacuation and emergency procedures • Review of educational plan/curricula
PP 4	Program has a written employee confidentiality policy that dictates how employee information is kept confidential.
PP 5	All program staff participates in at least 4 staff meetings during operational months.
PP 6	Written notes are taken at each all program staff meetings and then shared with staff.
PP 7	Program philosophy and staff recruitment strategies demonstrate commitment to diversity and having staff reflect its community.
PP 8	All employees have formal, written performance assessments annually.
PP 9	Teaching staff have individual professional development plans that match the <u>NYS Core Body of Knowledge for Early Education</u> professionals competency areas. ¹¹
PP 10	Performance assessment, including observations and feedback, informs individual professional development plans.
Staff Compensation and Benefits (SCB)	
SCB 1	Program has an up-to-date written wage scale that is based on position, education, training, and years of relevant experience.

¹¹ <http://www.earlychildhood.org/pdfs/CoreBody.pdf>

SCB 2	<p>Program offers full-time staff a compensation package with benefit options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> paid holidays <input type="checkbox"/> paid time off (sick, vacation, personal); <input type="checkbox"/> health insurance <input type="checkbox"/> family and medical leave <input type="checkbox"/> flexible scheduling <input type="checkbox"/> retirement <input type="checkbox"/> life insurance <input type="checkbox"/> flexible spending account <input type="checkbox"/> dependent care assistance plan <input type="checkbox"/> tuition discounts for employee's children <input type="checkbox"/> tuition reimbursement for education <input type="checkbox"/> employee assistance program <input type="checkbox"/> dental insurance
SCB 3	Program offers part-time staff a pro-rated compensation package that includes at a minimum paid time off.
Staff Planning (SP)	
SP 1	Program has a written general plan to cover planned and unplanned absences.
SP 2	Teaching staff is provided with space to plan during the day, at least once a week.
SP 3	Staff has access to computers and the Internet during planning time.
SP 4	Program provides at least 1 hour every other week of paid planning time for classroom staff to plan together (away from children). (e.g., team planning)

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE¹²

Research Rationale: There is a substantial amount of evidence that teacher education and training are related to other measures of program quality and to child outcomes. There is substantial evidence that director professional development is related to other measures of program quality and limited evidence that director professional development is related to child outcomes. While there is limited and conflicting evidence that experience of staff is related to other measures of program quality or child development outcomes, consumers value experience

Note: A program can earn points in both the administrator and the teaching staff categories. Points are earned for the highest degree completed AND for each of several credentials AND for experience. Teaching staff points are weighted by percent of time worked and averaged (to account for programs with different numbers of staff). Teaching staff and Administrator qualification and experience will be entered into the Workforce Registry. The Registry will verify this information and send it to QUALITYstarsNY.

Administrator¹³ Qualifications (AQ)	
AQ 1	Associate degree ¹⁴ in ECE/CD, or an Associate degree in a related field including at least 9 credits in ECE/CD, or any Associate degree including at least 24 credits in ECE/CD. OR
AQ 2	Bachelors degree in ECE/CD, or a Bachelors degree in a related field including at least 9 credits in ECE/CD, or any Bachelors degree including at least 24 credits in ECE/CD. OR
AQ 3	Masters degree or higher in ECE/CD, or a Masters degree or higher in a related field including at least 9 credits in ECE/CD, or any Masters degree or higher including at least 24 credits in ECE/CD.

¹² NOTE: college credits and CEUs appear throughout this section. Life and work experience can be translated into credit by contacting Empire State College or another institution that offers a way to gain credit through life experience.

¹³ Administrator means the person(s) responsible for program supervision functions as noted on the program's license (e.g. Director).

¹⁴ Degree means from regionally accredited institutions of higher education that may have been earned through online course work, distance learning, degree completion programs or some combination that offer credit as part of a formal assessment of prior learning.

Credits in management, supervision, leadership, and/or administration means in school administration, business management, communication, technology, personnel supervision, early childhood management or administration, or some combination of these areas.

Credits in ECE/CD means specialized college-level course work in early childhood education, child development, elementary education, or early childhood special education that encompasses child development and children's learning from birth through kindergarten; family and community relationships; the practices of observing, documenting, and assessing young children; teaching and learning processes; and professional practices and development.

AQ 4	A t least 3 college credits ¹⁵ in management, supervision, leadership, and/or administration. OR
AQ 5	At least 9 college credits (13.5 CEUs) in management, supervision, leadership, and/or administration
AQ 6	Children’s Program Administrator Credential (CPAC) ¹⁶
AQ 7	NYS School Administrator certificate ¹⁷
Administrator Experience (AE)	
AE 1	At least 3 years experience in supervision or management in an early care and education program ¹⁸
Teaching Staff Qualifications (TSQ)	
TSQ 1	First Aid/CPR training
TSQ 2	Child Development Associate (CDA) credential with Preschool specialization
TSQ 3	Child Development Associate (CDA) credential with Infant-Toddler specialization
TSQ 4	NYS Infant-Toddler Credential
TSQ 5	18 college credits in ECE/CD OR
TSQ 6	Associates degree in ECE/CD, or Associates degree in a related field and 9 ECE/CD credits, or any Associates degree including at least 24 credits in ECE/CD OR
TSQ 7	Bachelors degree in ECE/CD, or Bachelors degree in a related field and 9 ECE/CD credits, or any Bachelors degree including at least 24 credits in ECE/CD. OR
TSQ 8	Masters degree or higher in ECE/CD, or Masters degree in a related field and 9 ECE/CD credits or any Masters degree or higher including at least 24 credits in ECE/CD.
TSQ 9	NYS Early Childhood Teacher (Birth-Grade 2) Certificate or NYS Early Childhood Special Education Teacher Certificate

¹⁵ Equivalent to a 45 credit hours or 4.5 Continuing Education Units OCFS (CEUs)

¹⁶ The CPAC credential requires the applicant to hold at least an associate's degree (or sixty credits) in early childhood or a related field, complete 18 college credits of specific coursework, and prepare a professional portfolio demonstrating competency in five content areas. The credential can be earned at three levels based on the level of degree the applicant holds: associate, bachelor or masters. Thus points can be earned for both the CPAC and the degree.

¹⁷ *School administrator certificates* include the current School Building Leader (SBL), School District Leader (SDL), School District Business Leader (SDBL) or the former School Administration and Supervision (SAS).

¹⁸ *Early care and education program* means ANY center, school or home-based program for children birth to five.

Teaching Staff Experience (TSE)	
TSE 1	At least 3 years experience teaching in an early care and education program
Retention (R)	
R 1	The overall retention rate for teaching staff ¹⁹ is 80% or above.

¹⁹ *Teaching staff* means all classroom staff including aides and assistants. *Retention rate* is the percent of current teaching staff in a given position title (e.g., teacher or assistant teacher), who were employed one year ago.