NYC Department of Education

Pre-K Program Assessments

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R) and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Release

PRE-K FOR ALL

NYC Department of Education

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The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale– Revised (ECERS-R) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and are nationally recognized tools for measuring quality connected with student outcomes and are related to the Pre-K Program Quality Standards

- Both ECERS-R and CLASS are observation-based instruments that are valid and reliable at levels that are above what is considered acceptable for assessment tools.
- Both ECERS-R and CLASS are used nationally and internationally in quality assessment and improvement efforts, to monitor programs, evaluate programs to reward those with higher quality, evaluate the quality of programs to inform families, and to guide practitioners towards creating higher quality programs for the children they serve.
- Both tools measure what children directly experience in their programs that has an impact on their learning and development.

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale - Revised

- The DOE has been administering ECERS-R since 2010-11 in NYCEECs and DOE District schools
- ECERS-R assessments are conducted by Pre-K Program Evaluators, who undergo a standardized training, and must pass a rigorous certification test by the tools' authors each year in order to use each of the tools.
- These ECERS-R reliable assessors conduct observations in one classroom chosen randomly at the start of the assessment. The observation lasts for 3.5 hours while the assessor observes across the following six quality indicators:

Space & Furnishings	Personal Care Routines	Language-Reasoning	Activities	Interaction	Program Structure
Factors related to the physical indoor and outdoor spaces	*Practices and provisions to meet health and safety, nap, and toileting needs*	*Materials and practices that support language development*	*Kinds of materials and amount of time that children have to access them (play)*	*Practices regarding formal and informal interactions and supervision*	*Factors related to the daily schedule, and provisions for students with disabilities*
Examples of what the observer looks for:					
•Space is clean and well maintained •Sufficient and child-sized furniture •The room is arranged for play and good visual supervision •Displayed work is done by children	•Meals/snacks are well-balanced •Appropriate nap provisions and time •Hand-washing procedures •No safety hazards •Children taught to manage health practices independently	•Wide selection of books are available and read informally •Children encouraged to explain their reasoning when solving problems	•Many and varied materials are available (e.g., art, music, blocks, sand/water, dramatic play) •Use of computers is limited •Time children can play with materials is 1/3 of program time	•Children are appropriately supervised throughout the day •Non-punitive disciplinary strategies •Many opportunities for children to talk	•Outdoor play occurs daily •Waiting between daily events is brief •Whole-group gatherings are limited •Parents and classroom staff are involved in setting IEP goals

NYC scores on ECERS-R have increased in the last school year in all indicators

- Research shows that ECERS-R scores at a 3.4 are correlated with improved student outcomes. 84% of programs assessed between 2013-14 and 2015-16 scored at or above 3.4, up from 77% of the assessed programs between 2012-13 and 2014-15.*
- While there is no public national score for ECERS-R, the DOE's scores are similar to that of New Jersey's Abbott School District pre-K at a similar stage of implementation:

ECERS-R Score*	**2014-15 DOE Average Score+**	**2015-16 DOE Average Score+**	***Change from SY 2015 to SY 2016***	**Abbott Average in 2002-03**	**Abbott Average in 2007-08**	**Abbott Average in 2014-15**
#(%) Programs assessed in the last three years	1,114 (82%)	1,538 (85%)	+424 (+4 pts)	~ 300 (representative sample)	~ 300 (representative sample)	~ 300 (representative sample)
Overall ECERS-R Score	3.9	4.2	+0.3	4.0	5.2	5.4
Space and Furnishings	3.8	3.9	+0.1	3.8	5.0	5.2
Personal Care Routines	2.6	2.7	+0.1	3.7	4.3	4.4
Language - Reasoning	4.6	5.0	+0.4	4.3	5.5	5.1
Activities	4.3	4.5	+0.2	3.4	4.9	5.1
Interaction	4.7	5.1	+0.4	4.9	6.4	6.3
Program Structure	3.5	3.9	+0.4	4.0	5.4	6.1

*Le, Vi-Nhuan, etal. "Identifying Baseline and Ceiling Thresholds within the Qualistar Early Learning Quality Rating and Improvement System." *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 30 (2015) 215-226.

+ Averages reflect the average score of three school years. The 2014-15 average score reflects the average score of all programs assessed between the 2012-13 and 2014-15 school years. The 2015-16 average score reflects the average of all programs assessed between 2013-14 and 2015-16.

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Classroom Assessment Scoring System

- The DOE has been administering CLASS since 2012-13 in NYCEECs and District schools were assessed for the first time in the 2015-16 school year.
- CLASS assessments are conducted by Pre-K Program Evaluators, who undergo a standardized training, and must pass an extensive yearly certification test that is required by the purveyor of the tool, Teachstone, in order to conduct observations.
- Evaluators conduct observations in every classroom in cycles of 20 minutes. During this time, assessors note the observed interactions between children and teachers across three Domains:

CLASS Domains		
Emotional Support	**Classroom Organization**	**Instructional Support**
Are teacher interactions with children emotionally supportive and promote a positive classroom climate? This includes assessing teacher sensitivity and responsiveness to children and teacher regard for student perspectives.	Is children's behavior effectively managed in a consistent way? This includes the stability of schedules and routines and the quality of guidance.	Do teachers promote children's cognitive and language development by supporting children's analytical and conversational skills and providing feedback?
Examples of what the observer looks for:		
• Smiling, laughter, enthusiasm • Verbal and physical affection • Social conversation • Support for autonomy and leadership	• Clear behavior expectations • Monitoring room • Efficient redirection or misbehavior • Little to no aggression and defiance in students	• Frequent conversation • Teacher involvements and effective questioning • Hands-on opportunities • Open-ended questions and back-and-forth exchanges

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NYC results increased in most Domains, and are higher than national pre-K programs

- Research shows that CLASS scores at a 5.0 in Emotional Support and Classroom Organization and at a 3.3 in Instructional Support are correlated with improved student outcomes.*
- The 2015-16 school year is the first year that the CLASS assessments were conducted in District schools. The DOE is on track to be on a complete three year CLASS cycle by the end of the 2017-18 school year.
- Many model pre-K programs across the country use CLASS to assess sites, like the National Head Start Program. The DOE's results are higher than National Head Start average:

CLASS Domains	2014-15 DOE Average Score of Assessed Programs+	2015-16 DOE Average Score of Assessed Programs+	National Head Start Average for 2015
# (%) of Programs assessed in passed three years	555 (41%)	1,134 (63%)	227 (representative sample)
Emotional Support	6.0	6.2	6.0
Classroom Organization	5.8	6.1	5.8
Instructional Support	3.6	3.3	2.9

*Burchinal, Margaret, et al. "Threshold analysis of association between child care quality and child outcomes for low-income children in pre-kindergarten programs." *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 25 (2010) 166-176.

+ Averages reflect the average score of three school years. The 2014-15 average score reflects the average score of all programs assessed between the 2012-13 and 2014-15 school years. The 2015-16 average score reflects the average of all programs assessed between 2013-14 and 2015-16.

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The DOE uses ECERS-R and CLASS as one of many data points to consider when differentiating support and holding programs accountable

- Analysis of the City's ECERS-R and CLASS results, along with other data, help DECE prioritize the supports that are currently provided to pre-K programs and determine what additional supports will be needed in the future.

- Differentiated supports and resources for sites are aligned to the Pre-k for All Program Quality Standards and include:

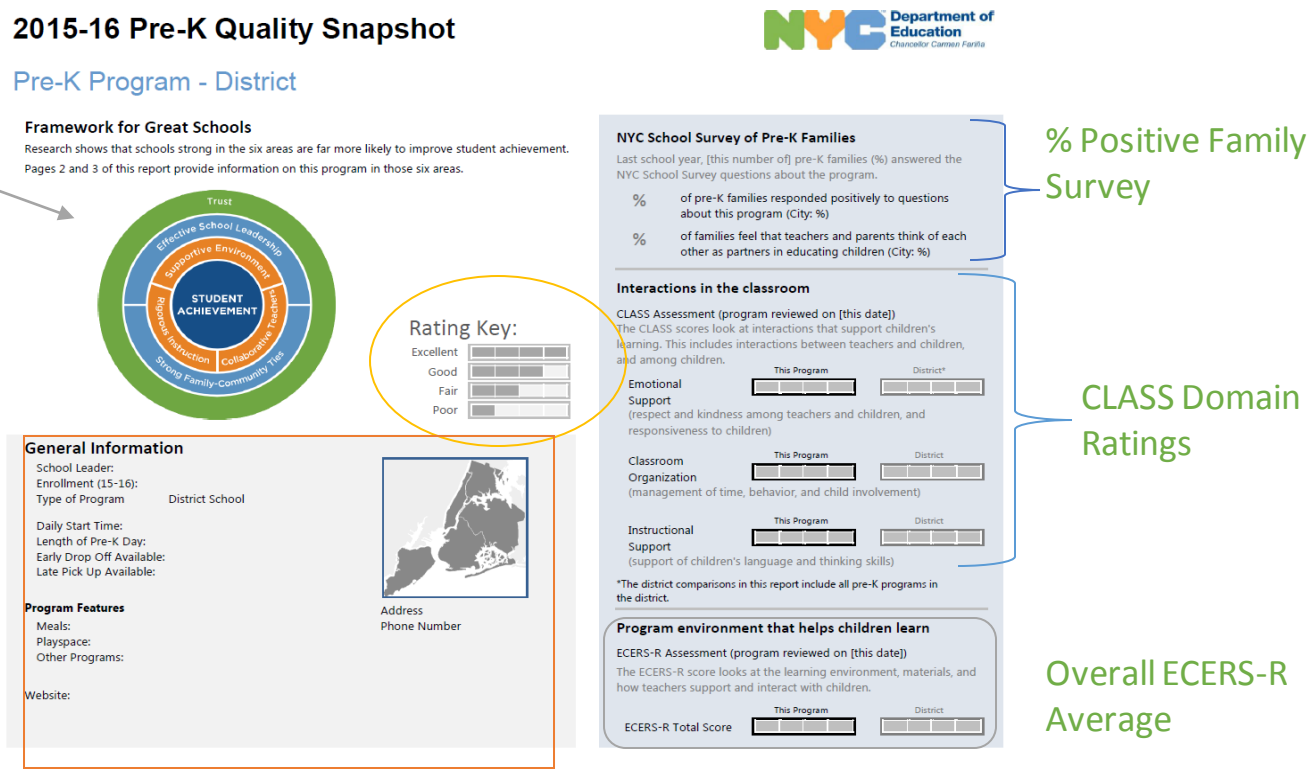
    - In-person professional learning sessions for leaders and teachers across instructional tracks and lanes
    - On-site support visits provided by 100 Instructional Coordinators and 125 Social Workers
    - Interdisciplinary Instructional Units grounded in the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core available online
    - Family Engagement supports, including resources on social-emotional development, extending learning into the home, and successful transitions into and out of pre-K

In January the DOE released the Pre-K Quality Snapshot to provide a concise overview of program quality for each pre-K for All program

- Information in the report is based on nationally validated program assessments by trained observers as well as feedback from families and teachers from the ECERS-R, CLASS, NYC School Survey, and the Quality Review
- Organized according to the *Framework for Great Schools* and the *Pre-K for All Program Quality Standards*

Grounded in the *Framework for Great Schools*

General program info



% Positive Family Survey

CLASS Domain Ratings

Overall ECERS-R Average