

RFP Preview: DOE Birth-to-Five Early Care and Education Services

Department of Education Response to Commentary

February 1, 2019



Introduction

On November 26, 2018, the Department of Education (DOE) released an [RFP Preview](#) outlining the values, service options, supports, and standards that are expected to be part of the DOE's early childhood system in 2020 and beyond. The RFP Preview was designed to provide information and solicit feedback in advance of three Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that the DOE will release in 2019 for all contracted birth-to-five early care and education services to begin in July or September 2020.

Since releasing the RFP Preview, the DOE has held round-table meetings and information sessions with hundreds of early childhood providers, as well as briefings with advisory groups, advocates, elected officials, and other key stakeholders. The DOE also solicited and processed written questions and comments over a 30-day period. The robust commentary from the early childhood community provided invaluable expertise and raised helpful questions to inform the DOE's RFP planning and design process.

The program design decisions for the future early care and education system were made in order to fulfill a set of core values:

- Provide children from birth to five years old with access to a high-quality early childhood program that is held accountable and supported to meet high expectations of program quality.
- Ensure a sustainable early care and education system that accurately reflects need across the City and sets up all programs for successful enrollment.
- Value the expertise of program leaders, educators, staff, and families, and work together to meet community needs.
- Promote socioeconomic and racial integration in early childhood classrooms. Provide extended day, extended year services, and robust family supports to the families that need them most.
- Ensure leadership and teaching teams have the knowledge and skills they need to provide quality instruction to all children, and help programs continuously improve.

In this memo, the DOE will provide clarifications and responses to questions and feedback received during the RFP Preview comment period. All information in this paper is subject to revision and to approvals by and funding appropriation from City, State, and Federal entities including the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, the Federal and regional Offices of Head Start, the New York State Education Department, the New York City Law Department, and the New York City Office of Management and Budget. Nothing contained in this paper should therefore be construed as creating any rights or entitlements for prospective participants in the RFPs, and the information contained herein may be changed in the RFPs. Additional information will be provided in the forthcoming RFPs; all providers are strongly encouraged to read the RFPs in full to understand requirements, guidelines, expectations and overall process.





Clarifying Information

The following section provides clarifying information on aspects of the RFP Preview that invited a significant number of questions and comments throughout the meetings and in the written responses.

1. Services for 3-year-olds

Programs located in any school district may apply to serve 3-year-old children who are eligible for Extended Day/Year services (Child Care-eligible children) and/or Head Start services (Head Start-eligible children).

Programs located in the following school districts may also apply to provide free 3-K for All services to 3-year-old children during the DOE school day and year (School Day/Year slots) beginning in fall 2020: districts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 16, 19, 23, 27, 29, 31, and 32. Children are eligible for 3-K if they meet age and New York City residency requirements. Proposers should note that School Districts 8 (Throgs Neck, Country Club, Pelham Bay, Castle Hill, Soundview, Hunts Point) and 32 (Bushwick) are newly-announced 3-K for All districts (as of January 10, 2019) and were not listed in the RFP Preview paper.

2. RFP Submission Process

The DOE encourages all providers who may be interested in applying to this winter’s RFPs to begin their preparations now by utilizing the Sample Proposal Submission Elements chart below. The DOE is committed to allowing providers adequate time to complete and submit proposals, attend a pre-proposal conference, and ask questions related to proposal submission.

Sample Proposal Submission Elements*

Proposal Element	Vendor or Site Level	Availability	What Proposers Can Do Now
Prequalification in HHS Accelerator	Complete once per vendor	Today	Complete prequalification today at nyc.gov/hhsaccelerator
PASSPort Filing	Complete once per vendor	Today	Complete filing today at nyc.gov/passport
Doing Business Data Form	Fill out one form per vendor, upload for each site	Today	Print and fill out your form today at tinyurl.com/NYCDBDForm
Proposal Detail Questions	Complete for each site; includes short-response questions on topics such as provider contact, selected competition pool, and permitting information.	RFP release; must be submitted as a part of proposal through HHS Accelerator	All proposers to these RFPs will be required to identify a proposed program site that is physically located in New York City. As one part of the Proposal Details section, proposers will be asked to verify the address of their proposed site, and to select the competition pool that corresponds to the zip code for their proposed location. All providers are



			<p>encouraged to verify their address and zip code today by visiting the City’s Geographic Online Address Translator (GOAT) at nyc.gov/goat.</p> <p>Providers who are considering proposing a location that is already permitted can visit tinyurl.com/ChildCareConnect to verify the affiliated address, permit number, and organization name.</p> <p>Providers who are considering proposing a location that is not permitted are encouraged to visit the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) website at tinyurl.com/NYHealthChildCare for an overview of the permitting process and other helpful resources.</p>
Structured Proposal Form (SPF)	The SPF is expected to have approximately 15 questions. Some of these questions will need to be individualized by site, some may be answered commonly across multiple proposals submitted by the same vendor.	RFP release; must be submitted as a part of proposal through HHS Accelerator	<p>The SPF will give providers the opportunity to describe their demonstrated quality and effectiveness, and their capacity to provide high-quality early childhood care and education if awarded through this RFP.</p> <p>All awarded programs will be held to a consistent set of quality expectations set forth in the DOE Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ), and questions in the SPF will be aligned to these expectations. Proposers are encouraged to begin familiarizing themselves with the EFQ today by reviewing question 5 below, as well as the full EFQ in the appendix.</p>
Budget Form	Complete for each site	RFP release; must be submitted as a part of proposal through HHS Accelerator	All proposers to these RFPs will be required to submit a budget form, including information on which services you are interested in providing.

**This chart represents sample proposal elements that the DOE anticipates will be required for all proposers. These elements may change in the RFPs, there may be additional requirements at the time of RFP release, and there may be elements that apply to only certain proposers.*

Additional Considerations for Multi-Sited Vendors

Providers will be asked to submit a separate proposal for each site they are proposing. Separate proposals for each site by geographic pool keeps competition for contracts localized to specific communities, allowing





the DOE to consider how proposers will meet the unique needs of their individual communities. This design also allows for faster award recommendations, and in turn creates more time for program readiness, ensuring that awarded contractors can open in time for the first day of services.

As some vendors operate multiple sites and will need to submit multiple proposals, the DOE is working to streamline the proposal submission process to minimize duplicative work for providers. Please see the chart above, which outlines the elements that the DOE anticipates will only need to be completed once per vendor and the elements that the DOE anticipates will need to be completed for each individual site.

3. Direct Federal Head Start Grantees

The DOE deeply values the unique strengths of the Head Start model and all the providers who offer these services to children and families. Direct Head Start/Early Head Start grantees (sites operating under a contract directly with the Federal Office of Head Start) play an integral role in providing early childhood services to the most vulnerable families in New York City, and the DOE is committed to providing opportunities for direct Head Start grantees to enhance their services.

All community-based organizations eligible for an Article 47 day care center license in New York City are eligible to apply to the DOE's forthcoming Head Start/Early Head Start RFP. This includes all current DOE programs, current ACS-contracted programs, direct Head Start grantees who wish to serve additional children, and programs who do not currently receive DOE, ACS, or Head Start funding (e.g. private child care programs and 4410 Special Education programs). Direct Head Start grantees can apply to the Head Start/Early Head Start RFP to provide City-contracted Head Start services as a delegate agency of the DOE. Direct Head Start grantees can also apply to the DOE's Birth-to-Five RFP if they wish to offer 3-K for All, Pre-K for All, or Child Care Block Grant-funded services to additional children. These RFPs are not intended to fund services for children already served through an organization's direct Head Start grant.

The DOE also plans to offer Direct Head Start grantees the opportunity to apply for funding to supplement the grant they receive from the Federal Office of Head Start (OHS). The supplemental funding is intended to help awarded direct grantees meet the requirements and standards of a DOE program, and provide additional services to Head Start families. Services awarded in this procurement will begin on July 1, 2020, consistent with the contract start dates of the DOE's other upcoming procurements. The DOE will release this procurement later in 2019 and is committed to giving providers adequate time to consider and apply to this RFP. Direct Head Start programs that currently receive enhancement funding from the DOE will continue to receive those funds through the 2019-2020 school year.

The DOE and OHS issued a joint memorandum on January 31, 2019 to provide the above clarification to Head Start and Early Head Start grantees and delegates in New York City. Read this memo on DECE's Provide Early Childhood Care & Education webpage [here](#). To navigate to this page on the DOE website, visit infohub.nyced.org. Select the Partners & Providers tab, and then select Provide Early Childhood Care & Education from the dropdown menu.

4. Socioeconomic and Racial Integration

The DOE believes all students benefit from diverse and inclusive schools and classrooms. Accordingly, the DOE's new early childhood program models seek to promote and foster greater socioeconomic and racial

integration at the classroom level. The current EarlyLearn system primarily serves income-eligible families; the current DOE early childhood system also serves large numbers of low-income children, as well as middle- and higher-income families, by offering universal access to programs. By merging these systems, the DOE has a unique opportunity to further the goal of creating a greater number of socioeconomically integrated classrooms across the City.

The DOE anticipates that sites awarded both Extended Day/Year slots (for Child Care-eligible children) and School Day/Year slots (for universally-eligible children) via the Birth-to-Five RFP will be required to enroll children from both service models in the same classrooms. For sites currently offering both EarlyLearn Child Care services and DOE pre-K services, being awarded both service models would mean that children may not be separated into different classrooms based on income eligibility. For providers who currently offer only EarlyLearn Child Care services or only DOE pre-K services, this provides a new opportunity to meet the needs of diverse communities.

In addition, programs awarded both Head Start slots and Extended Day/Year slots, or both Head Start slots and School Day/Year slots, are encouraged to apply to enroll children from both services models in the same classroom. The DOE anticipates approving this model for programs who demonstrate that they can provide a high-quality classroom experience for children and families and can develop a budget model that appropriately allocates costs across City, State, and Federal funding sources. If awarded both service models, sites will be supported to create socioeconomically integrated classrooms.

5. Expectations of Quality

All programs will be held to a consistent set of quality expectations as set forth in the DECE Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ). The EFQ describes the DECE’s vision for high-quality birth-to-five programs in New York City. This framework will replace the DECE Program Quality Standards (PQS). The EFQ is comprised of six research-based “Elements” of quality, outlined below, and are aligned with the DOE’s Framework for Great Schools and the Head Start Program Performance Standards. The full text of the EFQ is available in the appendix.

- **High-quality programs respect and value differences.**
Program leadership teams and teaching teams build trust by creating a community in which all children, families, and staff feel welcome and included, embracing diversity in many forms – including, but not limited to: race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, home language, country of origin, immigration status, ability, special needs, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, housing status, and cultural background and experience.
- **High-quality programs create safe and positive environments.**
Program leadership teams and teaching teams create healthy, nurturing, and predictable environments for all children, families, and staff.
- **High-quality programs advance play-based learning and responsive instruction.**
Program leadership teams and teaching teams engage children in a variety of play-based and developmentally appropriate learning experiences, and ensure that instruction is based on children’s individual strengths, interests, and needs.



- **High-quality programs promote families' roles as primary caregivers, teachers, and advocates.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams build relationships with families and communities in order to provide meaningful opportunities and resources that support children's development and the whole family's well-being.
- **High-quality programs work collaboratively towards continuous quality improvement.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams use data to improve program and classroom quality in partnership with families and communities.
- **High-quality programs demonstrate strategic leadership.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams build and use organizational culture, structure, and resources to promote and execute a shared vision for quality.



6. Special Education Programs

The three procurements outlined in the RFP Preview are not intended to affect existing 4410 contracts with the DOE's Special Education Office. 4410 center-based providers may apply to one or more of these RFPs if they are interested in providing the specified services for their general education programs, including the general education seats in Preschool Special Classes in an Integrated Setting (SCIS).

Following the transition of EarlyLearn programs to management by the DOE, children with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that recommend Special Education Itinerant Services (SEIS) and/or Related Services only will continue to receive these services at the location identified on the child's IEP (early childhood program or childcare program), which is the program in which the family chooses to enroll their child. For children with IEPs who are recommended for Special Class or SCIS, the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) will continue to arrange for an appropriate placement in a preschool special education program approved by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The DOE is exploring opportunities to both work with the State to support 4410 center-based programs and expand preschool special education programming.

In preparation for serving children ranging from six weeks to five years old, the DOE is partnering with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) to improve the transition from Early Intervention to preschool. The DOE is piloting a model of support for families in School District 7 in the South Bronx, where Transition Coordinators assist families through the transition process. DOHMH will continue to administer the City's Early Intervention program.

7. Eligible Setting Types

Winter 2019 RFPs (Birth-to-Five and Head Start/Early Head Start)

The following information summarizes the appropriate operating permits and licenses that programs must possess in order to offer the service models available through these RFPs. Please note that programs do not need to be permitted or licensed at the time of proposal, but must be permitted and licensed before they begin providing services.

Article 47 programs will be eligible to apply to provide:

- School Day/Year services for 3- and 4-year-olds



- Extended Day/Year services for infants, toddlers, 3- and 4-year-olds
- Early Head Start/Head Start services for infants, toddlers, 3- and 4-year-olds



Article 43 programs will be eligible to apply to provide the School Day/Year model for 3- and 4-year-old children.

Group Family Day Care programs will be eligible to apply to provide:

- School Day/Year services for 3- and 4-year-olds
- Extended Day/Year services for 3- and 4-year-olds

Group Family Day Care programs may also be able to provide services by affiliating with Family Child Care Networks; these Network services will be procured through a separate RFP as described below.



School/Day Year services for 3- and 4-year-olds will also be offered in DOE public schools. Public schools may apply to add seats through a separate process outside of this procurement.

Additional 2019 RFPs

Charter Schools: Charter schools are not eligible to apply to the Birth-to-Five or Head Start/Early Head Start RFPs. However, a procurement has been made available in 2019 to charter schools who wish to offer pre-K services starting in the 2019-20 school year. DECE will continue to share information about upcoming charter procurement opportunities.

Family Child Care Networks: All organizations with the capacity to support high-quality family child care networks will be eligible to apply for the Family Child Care Network RFP, planned for release later in 2019. Organizations applying through this procurement will be able to propose School Day/Year services for 3-year-olds, Extended Day/Year services for infants, toddlers, and 3-year-olds, and Early Head Start/Head Start services for infants, toddlers, and 3-year-olds. Proposers for the Family Child Care Network RFP do not need to offer center-based early childhood services to be eligible to apply.

Direct Head Start Supplemental Services: Organizations that have a direct Head Start grant from the Federal Office of Head Start will have an opportunity to apply for a DOE contract to provide supplemental services to Head Start children in order for their program to meet the requirements and standards of a DOE program, and provide additional services to Head Start families. Services awarded in this procurement will begin on July 1, 2020, consistent with the contract start dates of the DOE's other upcoming procurements.

8. Number of Service Days

The DOE heard from the provider community both a desire to have flexibility in the yearly calendar, and to ensure that families who need it have access to year-round care. Accordingly, as detailed in the RFP Preview, the DOE anticipates that sites awarded Extended Day/Year slots or Head Start/Early Head Start slots will have the option to choose to provide 225 or 260 service days.

Consistent with current requirements, the DOE anticipates that programs offering the School Day/Year model will be required to offer a minimum of 180 service days, which must include at least 176 program days and 4 days of professional learning for teaching staff. In this model, service days are 6 hours and 20 minutes in length.



Sites selecting the 225 service day option must offer:

- A minimum of 217 program days, not including holidays. On these days, the program offers care and instruction to enrolled children. We recommend that programs use the days that are not program days to take a summer break.
- A minimum of 4 days of professional learning for teaching staff (up to a maximum of 8). Programs are not required to provide care and instruction to children on professional learning days. Programs may choose to schedule up to 4 clerical days to fulfill their 225 service day requirement in lieu of offering additional professional learning days.

Sites selecting the 260 service day option must offer:

- A minimum of 238 program days. On these days, the program offers care and instruction to enrolled children.
- A minimum of 4 days of professional learning for teaching staff (up to a maximum of 12). Programs may choose to schedule up to 8 clerical days to fulfill their 260 service day requirement in lieu of offering additional professional learning days.
- Programs may choose to close for a maximum of 10 holidays each year, which will be credited towards the 260 service day requirement.

Additional information about scheduling the program calendar will be provided by the DOE before services begin in Summer 2020.

9. Additional Critical Topics

Other themes consistently appeared in the commentary, including:

- Compensation equity: the DOE greatly values our early educators and the important work they do, and remains committed to helping all providers recruit, retain, and grow a talented workforce. The DOE will continue to offer our community-based partners access to lead teacher retention incentives and support in certified teacher recruitment and hiring.
- New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) facilities: the DOE is collaborating with NYCHA, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), the Department of Buildings, and the NYC Fire Department to address the needed repairs at NYCHA facilities. The DOE is committed to providing high-quality early childhood services in different types of settings that are safe and appropriate for young children. Proposers should note that NYCHA facilities will not be procured via this RFP process.
- Violations incurred by DOHMH: the DOE is working closely with DOHMH to support programs in resolving DOHMH violations, including understanding the nature of these violations, clarifying the steps programs must take to clear them, and providing resources that promote quality learning environments.
- Labor: the DOE is in conversations with the unions whose memberships are impacted by these new service models. Providers should note that employees at community-based organizations that contract with the DOE will remain employees of their community-based organization and will not become employees of the DOE.





Additional Details Forthcoming

Many respondents requested more information on the following topics, which **the DOE is committed to addressing in greater detail in the forthcoming RFPs** released in early 2019:

- **Budget**
 - Information on the funding that will be made available for key program design elements, including lead teacher pay;
 - Information on the payment model and the portion of a site's contract that is guaranteed;
 - Information on the payment schedule including the advanced payment; and
 - Information on the type and availability of start-up funding.
- **Policy and Quality Expectations**
 - Class size requirements;
 - Age definitions;
 - Teacher and director qualifications; and
 - Meal requirements and information regarding the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- **Eligibility and Enrollment**
 - Additional detail on eligibility determination processes for Extended Day/Year (CCBG-funded) and Head Start slots;
 - The enrollment process for all slot types; and
 - CCBG and Head Start eligibility requirements.

Not all of the questions received by the DOE will be answered in the forthcoming RFPs; additional details will be shared with potential providers throughout the RFP, readiness, and contracting processes.

Opportunities to Learn More

The DOE will continue to provide all potential proposers with resources and information throughout the RFP process. The DOE is holding at least 12 RFP Information Sessions that will run through the month of February for providers interested in learning more about these RFPs, and will continue to add additional dates and locations as needed.

Interested proposers can access updated information -- including this document, the RFP Preview, and RFP Information Session dates -- on DECE's [Provide Early Childhood Care & Education webpage](#). To navigate to this page on the DOE website, visit infohub.nyced.org. Select the Partners & Providers tab, and then select Provide Early Childhood Care & Education from the dropdown menu. The DOE is also updating potential proposers on RFP Information sessions via email; if you are not already receiving email notifications and would like to, please email PreKRFP@schools.nyc.gov.



Appendix: Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ)

What is the EFQ?

The mission of the DOE Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) is to create the best early care and education system in the country so that every New York City child has a fair shot at living up to her full potential. To support this mission, the DECE has developed the Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ), which describes our shared vision for high-quality early childhood programming in New York City.

Programs use the EFQ to guide their practice in a way that advances positive outcomes for all children and families. DECE staff use the EFQ as the foundation for the quality supports provided to programs, including on-site support and professional learning. This resource ensures that all DOE early childhood programs, regardless of setting or location, are held accountable to the same standards and supported to meet the same expectations of quality.

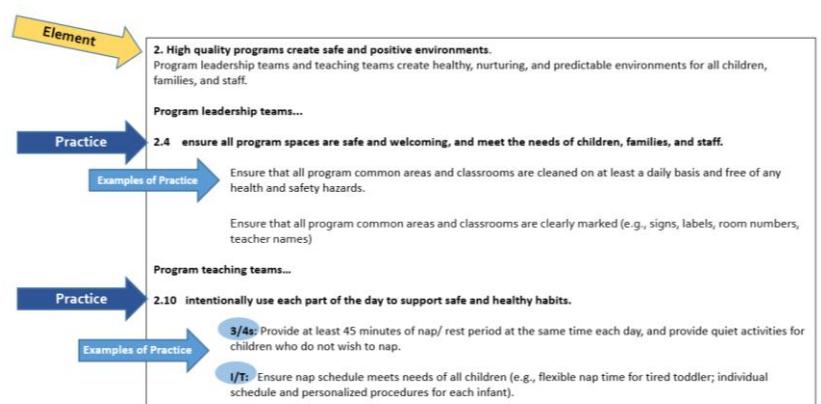
Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the DOE early childhood system will include programs serving children from 6 weeks to 5 years old. In order to account for all ages and program types, this Framework will replace the existing Program Quality Standards (PQS) in fall 2019. The EFQ is closely aligned to the following:

- The Framework for Great Schools, which is the DOE's vision for school improvement across the pre-K to 12 continuum;
- The DOE's commitment to Equity and Excellence for All;
- The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), which are the requirements for all federally-funded Head Start and Early Head Start programs;
- The leading national research on early childhood quality; and
- The expertise and experience of DECE staff, programs, and community partners.

How is the EFQ organized?

The EFQ is comprised of 6 **Elements**, which are high-level, research-based principles of early childhood quality. Each Element identifies several **Practices**, or actions that can be taken by program leadership and teaching teams to demonstrate these principles. The Elements and Practices are applicable to all early childhood age groups and settings.

To support programs in implementing the EFQ, each Practice will include a supplementary set of Examples of Practice, which are concrete ways to implement the Practices for specific age groups and settings (e.g. infants and toddlers, 3- and 4-year-olds, mixed-age family child care).





The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) believes that high-quality 0-5 programs...

- 1. Respect and value differences.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams build trust by creating a community in which all children, families, and staff feel welcome and included, embracing diversity in many forms – including, but not limited to: race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, home language, country of origin, immigration status, ability, special needs, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, housing status, and cultural background and experience. [{trust}](#)
- 2. Create safe and positive environments.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams create healthy, nurturing, and predictable environments for all children, families, and staff. [{supportive environment}](#)
- 3. Advance play-based learning and responsive instruction.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams engage children in a variety of play-based and developmentally appropriate learning experiences, and ensure that instruction is based on children’s individual strengths, interests, and needs. [{rigorous instruction}](#)
- 4. Promote families’ roles as primary caregivers, teachers, and advocates.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams build relationships with families and communities in order to provide meaningful opportunities and resources that support children’s development and the whole family’s well-being. [{strong family-community ties}](#)
- 5. Work collaboratively towards continuous quality improvement.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams use data to improve program and classroom quality in partnership with families and communities. [{collaborative teachers}](#)
- 6. Demonstrate strategic leadership.** Program leadership teams and teaching teams build and use organizational culture, structure, and resources to promote and execute a shared vision for quality. [{effective school leadership}](#)





1. High quality programs respect and value differences.

Program leadership teams and teaching teams build trust by creating a community in which all children, families, and staff feel welcome and included, embracing diversity in many forms – including, but not limited to: race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, home language, country of origin, immigration status, ability, special needs, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, housing status, and cultural background and experience. {trust}

Program leadership teams...

(Examples: Directors, education directors, program directors, executive directors, board of directors, owners, principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, mental health professionals, parent coordinators, family service coordinators)

- 1.1 foster a climate of trust, belonging, and collaboration in which all children, families, and staff feel welcome and included in the program.
- 1.2 provide training and resources to support culturally responsive instruction and family engagement, and equip classrooms with culturally and linguistically diverse learning materials.
- 1.3 model and support staff in reflecting on and addressing the impacts of structural racism and implicit bias in the program and community.
- 1.4 recruit children, families, and staff who reflect the identities and experiences of the communities they serve.
- 1.5 allocate program resources to promote inclusive and equitable opportunities and outcomes for all children and families.
- 1.6 work with DOE, other agencies, and community partners to ensure all children and families have access to the services, resources, and support they need.

Program teaching teams...

(Examples: Lead teachers, special education teachers, itinerant teachers, family workers/educators/advocates, co-teachers, assistant teachers, paraprofessionals)

- 1.7 foster a climate of trust, belonging, and collaboration in which all children, families, and other staff feel welcome and included in the classroom.
- 1.8 adopt culturally responsive instruction and family engagement practices, and encourage children to engage with culturally and linguistically diverse learning materials.
- 1.9 continually reflect on and seek to address the impacts of structural racism and implicit bias in the classroom.
- 1.10 differentiate strategies and activities to meet the individualized needs of all children in the classroom, and provide opportunities for children to demonstrate learning in multiple ways.
- 1.11 collaborate with the program leadership team to connect all children and families to the services, resources, and support they need.





2. High quality programs create safe and positive environments.

Program leadership teams and teaching teams create healthy, nurturing, and predictable environments for all children, families, and staff. {supportive environment}



Program leadership teams...

(Examples: Directors, education directors, program directors, executive directors, board of directors, owners, principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, mental health professionals, parent coordinators, family service coordinators)

- 2.1 establish, model, and reinforce expectations for respectful interactions and trusting relationships among children, families, and all staff.
- 2.2 provide all staff with appropriate training, resources, and ongoing support to develop children’s social-emotional learning and promote positive behavior.
- 2.3 coordinate schedules to effectively meet the needs of children, families, and staff.
- 2.4 ensure all program spaces are safe and welcoming, and meet the needs of children, families, and staff.
- 2.5 equip program spaces with the appropriate quantity of high quality materials.
- 2.6 ensure successful monitoring and management of children’s health, safety, and special education requirements in partnership with families.

Program teaching teams...

(Examples: Lead teachers, special education teachers, itinerant teachers, family workers/educators/advocates, co-teachers, assistant teachers, paraprofessionals)

- 2.7 model and build trusting relationships among children, families, and all staff.
- 2.8 build a foundation for children’s social-emotional learning and use developmentally-appropriate strategies to promote positive behavior.
- 2.9 implement a consistent yet flexible schedule that meets young children’s needs.
- 2.10 intentionally use each part of the day to support safe and healthy habits.
- 2.11 arrange classroom environment so that children have opportunities to interact with others and engage in independent activities.
- 2.12 partner with families and other staff to support monitoring and management of children’s health, safety, and special education requirements.





3. High quality programs advance play-based learning and responsive instruction.

Program leadership teams and teaching teams engage children in a variety of play-based and developmentally appropriate learning experiences, and ensure that instruction is based on children’s individual strengths, interests, and needs. {rigorous instruction}



Program leadership teams...

(Examples: Directors, education directors, program directors, executive directors, board of directors, owners, principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, mental health professionals, parent coordinators, family service coordinators)

- 3.1 establish, model, and reinforce a play-based approach to learning and inquiry.
- 3.2 provide teaching teams with appropriate training, resources, and ongoing support to implement age-appropriate research-based curricula.
- 3.3 ensure teaching teams have appropriate training, materials, and time to implement valid and reliable screening and assessment tools to inform instruction.
- 3.4 support teaching teams in a continuous cycle of collecting and analyzing data, including authentic assessment data, to inform practice.
- 3.5 ensure teaching teams have consistent and intentional opportunities to reflect and plan collaboratively within and across classrooms.

Program teaching teams...

(Examples: Lead teachers, special education teachers, itinerant teachers, family workers/educators/advocates, co-teachers, assistant teachers, paraprofessionals)

- 3.6 facilitate play-based learning and inquiry.
- 3.7 use an age-appropriate research-based curriculum to support children’s learning across all areas of development.
- 3.8 extend children’s thinking and communication skills through intentional interactions.
- 3.9 implement a continuous cycle of collecting, analyzing, and using data:
 - **collect data** about children’s knowledge, skills, and interests through observations of and interactions with children and families
 - **analyze data** to understand how children are developing and learning along a continuum, using a research-based authentic assessment system
 - **use data to inform** practice that supports all children’s growth along a continuum
- 3.10 regularly collaborate with other staff within and across classrooms to reflect and plan for instruction.





4. High quality programs promote families’ roles as primary caregivers, teachers, and advocates.

Program leadership teams and teaching teams build relationships with families and communities in order to provide meaningful opportunities and resources that support children’s development and the whole family’s well-being. [{strong family-community ties}](#)



Program leadership teams...

(Examples: Directors, education directors, program directors, executive directors, board of directors, owners, principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, mental health professionals, parent coordinators, family service coordinators)

- 4.1 provide all staff with relevant and culturally responsive training, resources, and ongoing support related to family engagement.
- 4.2 model and support ongoing, two-way communication with families about the strengths, needs, interests, and goals of families and their children, as well as families' and children's progress toward these goals.
- 4.3 develop relationships with community members and organizations that support families’ interests, needs, and goals.
- 4.4 provide opportunities for families to connect with other families in the program and community so that they can learn from and support each other.
- 4.5 create an environment that affirms and empowers families as partners, leaders and advocates in the classroom, program, and community.
- 4.6 support and coordinate services for children and families transitioning to and from different early care and educational settings.

Program teaching teams...

(Examples: Lead teachers, special education teachers, itinerant teachers, family workers/educators/advocates, co-teachers, assistant teachers, paraprofessionals)

- 4.7 engage in ongoing, two-way communication with families about the strengths, needs, interests, and goals of families and their children, as well as families' and children's progress toward these goals.
- 4.8 invite families to observe in their children’s classroom and participate in their children’s everyday learning.
- 4.9 provide opportunities for families to build skills that support their children’s learning and development.
- 4.10 connect families to appropriate resources in support of their needs and goals for themselves and their children.
- 4.11 provide opportunities for families to serve as partners, leaders and advocates in the classroom and the program.
- 4.12 provide families with information and connections to support the transition to and from different educational settings.





5. High quality programs work collaboratively towards continuous quality improvement.

Program leadership teams and teaching teams use data to improve program and classroom quality in partnership with families and communities. {collaborative teachers}



Program leadership teams...

(Examples: Directors, education directors, program directors, executive directors, board of directors, owners, principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, mental health professionals, parent coordinators, family service coordinators)

- 5.1 actively solicit feedback from staff and families on program strengths and areas for growth.
- 5.2 model reflective practice, set professional goals, and engage in learning experiences with other leaders.
- 5.3 regularly provide staff with formative, evidence-based feedback on individual strengths and areas for growth, with actionable next steps.
- 5.4 identify or provide differentiated opportunities for staff professional learning that are aligned to individual staff goals and the goals of the program.
- 5.5 collaborate with the DOE, other agencies, and community partners to improve program quality.
- 5.6 engage in a continuous cycle of collecting, analyzing, and using data about program quality, in collaboration with staff, families, and communities:
 - **collect data** from a variety of sources and at multiple levels (child, teacher, classroom, family, community, program)
 - **analyze data** to identify program strengths and areas for growth
 - **use data to plan** program goals and inform continuous quality improvement

Program teaching teams...

(Examples: Lead teachers, special education teachers, itinerant teachers, family workers/educators/advocates, co-teachers, assistant teachers, paraprofessionals)

- 5.7 actively solicit feedback from families on classroom strengths and areas for growth.
- 5.8 regularly reflect on their own individual strengths and areas for growth in order to set professional goals and improve classroom practice.
- 5.9 identify and engage in professional learning experiences that are aligned to their own goals and the goals of the program, and seek opportunities to learn from other early childhood professionals.
- 5.10 provide feedback to the program leadership team on strengths, challenges, and opportunities for quality improvement.
- 5.11 actively engage with support staff from the DOE, other agencies, and community partners to improve classroom quality.
- 5.12 collaborate with the program leadership team, other staff, families, and communities to set goals and inform continuous quality improvement.



6. High quality programs demonstrate strategic leadership.

Program leadership teams and teaching teams build and use organizational culture, structure, and resources to promote and execute a shared vision for quality. [{effective school leadership}](#)

Program leadership teams...

(Examples: Directors, education directors, program directors, executive directors, board of directors, owners, principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches, mental health professionals, parent coordinators, family service coordinators)

- 6.1 create and communicate a compelling vision for long-term program quality in partnership with staff, families, and communities.
- 6.2 recruit, hire, and retain qualified staff, and provide meaningful staff leadership opportunities.
- 6.3 build and maintain an organizational culture that motivates staff, families, and communities to work toward a shared program vision.
- 6.4 establish and communicate clear roles and responsibilities within the program, and adopt fair and consistent processes for accountability.
- 6.5 develop and implement systems that facilitate efficient and sustainable program operations.
- 6.6 use responsible budgeting and financial management practices to strategically align resources to the program vision.

Program teaching teams...

(Examples: Lead teachers, special education teachers, itinerant teachers, family workers/educators/advocates, co-teachers, assistant teachers, paraprofessionals)

- 6.7 collaborate with the program leadership team, families, and communities to create and communicate a shared program vision.
- 6.8 contribute to an organizational culture that supports the shared program vision.
- 6.9 build a classroom community that reflects and drives forward the shared program vision.
- 6.10 adopt, refine, and implement systems to support all aspects of classroom quality.
- 6.11 proactively identify and communicate staffing and material needs, and effectively use resources to enhance their classroom community.

