Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ)

NYC
Department of Education
Chancellor Richard A. Carranza

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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:
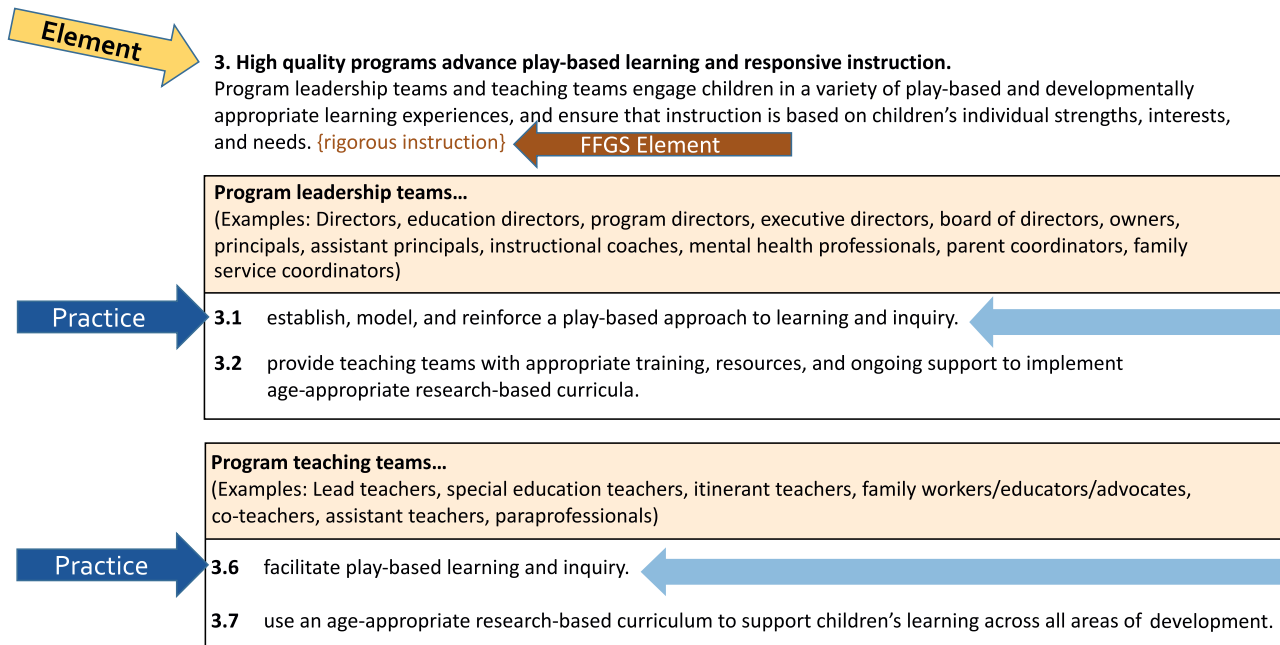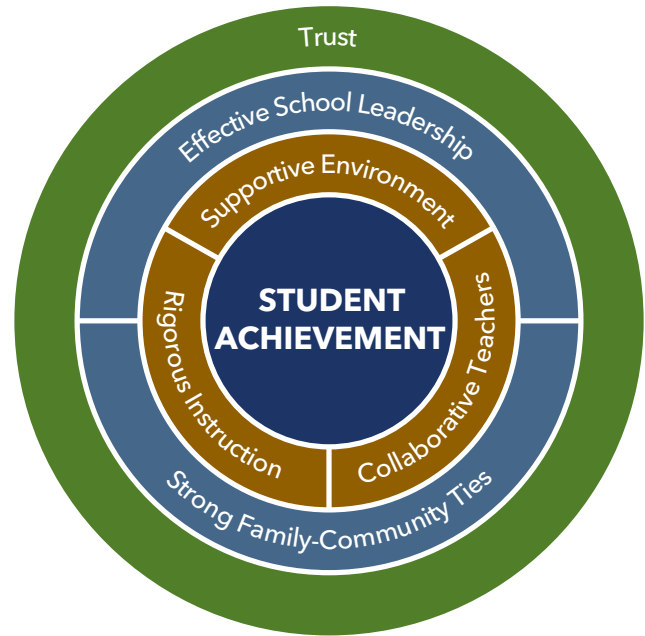
- The Framework for Great Schools, which is the DOE's vision for school improvement across the pre-K to 12 continuum;

- 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 aligned to the Framework for Great Schools (FFGS). 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.

The Practices under each Element are not listed in order of importance, nor are they intended to indicate that one Practice should be prioritized over another. Instead, they are interconnected and, when combined, help us better understand the actions, behaviors, and skills encompassed by each Element. As indicated in the visual, most Practices listed under program leadership teams have parallel Practices under program teaching teams.

Trust

Effective School Leadership

Supportive Environment

Rigorous Instruction

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Collaborative Teachers

Strong Family-Community Ties

Element

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} **FFGS Element**

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)

Practice

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.

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

Practice

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.

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 NYCDOE, 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 NYCDOE, 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 NYCDOE, 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.