# 3-K for All & Pre-K for All Handbook
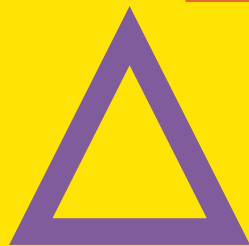*for District Schools and Pre-K Centers*

**NYC**
**Department of Education**
Chancellor Richard A. Carranza

PRE-K FOR ALL

3-K FOR ALL

Since the *Pre-K for All* expansion launched in 2014, New York City has tripled the number of children in free, full-day, high-quality pre-K. Approximately 70,000 four-year-olds are enrolled. Through your efforts, enrollment is high across every community, with strong participation among low-income families. Building on the success of *Pre-K for All*, the City has launched *3-K for All* — free, full-day, high-quality early education for every three-year-old. By 2020, *3-K for All* will expand to a total of 12 school districts. The *3-K for All* initiative is part of a broader effort to strengthen a continuum of early care and education programs for New York City children.

The *3-K for All* & *Pre-K for All* Handbook for District Schools and Pre-K Centers is a compilation of those policies included in the NYCDOE Chancellor's Regulations, policies of the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE), as well as the policies of other NYCDOE divisions (e.g. Office of School Health). In some cases, policies may only be applicable to your 3-K and pre-K classrooms. The Handbook is intended to assist District Schools and Pre-K Centers by (1) clearly articulating pertinent policies specific to *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All*, (2) re-enforcing key New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) policies that apply to 3-K and pre-K students, and (3) highlighting operational guidance and promoting promising practices on a variety of topics. A distinction is made in cases where Pre-K Center policy or procedure differs from District Schools.

Please note that the *3-K for All* & *Pre-K for All* Handbook is inclusive of all content and replaces the *Pre-K for All* Handbook and 3-K Addendum. The general guidance provided throughout this Handbook is applicable to both *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* programs. In instances where additional guidance may be provided for *3-K for All* programs, a section will appear at the end of the chapter, entitled, "Additional Guidance for *3-K for All*."

We hope the Handbook will serve as an important resource for operating high-quality 3-K and pre-K classrooms by providing District Schools and Pre-K Centers with a structured resource for accessing key policy requirements of the NYCDOE and the DECE.

**NYC Department of Education**
Chancellor Richard A. Carranza

**PRE-K FOR ALL**    **3-K FOR ALL**

# How to Use:

- In this Handbook, you will find policy information on health and safety, staffing, general program oversight, instructional programming, and special populations.

- Each chapter is structured in the following way:

**Introductory Statement**

**Policy Overview**

**Policy Details**

**Call Out Box**

**Additional Guidance for *3-K for All***

**Frequently Asked Questions**

## Enrollment

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must actively participate in the *Pre-K for All* admissions process and welcome families who have received offers.

*3-K for All classrooms should refer to the Additional Guidance for 3-K for All on Enrollment portion of this chapter.*

💡 What You Need to Know

### Overview

Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-101, students who live in New York City are eligible to apply for and enroll in pre-K in the calendar year they turn four years old. This includes students with disabilities and students whose home language is a language other than English. Families may apply to full-day programs at District Schools, New York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs), and Pre-K Centers using the same application via the pre-K admissions process operated centrally by the Office of Student Enrollment (OSE).

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to follow all processes outlined by OSE. Staff should be familiar with all aspects of the application, admissions, and enrollment processes and assist families as necessary.

*3-K for All classrooms should refer to the Additional Guidance for 3-K for All on Enrollment portion of this chapter.*

### Outreach

To develop interest and maintain enrollment in their pre-K program, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for recruiting families and informing them of the services offered at their site. There is no dedicated outreach period; District School and Pre-K Center staff should continuously communicate with families in their community about the benefits and features of their pre-K program.

> **Enrollment Resources for Families**
>
> Pre-K Finder: Families can use the Pre-K Finder map tool for the most up to date information on pre-K programs.
>
> Pre-K Directory: Families can use the Pre-K Directory for detailed information on all *Pre-K for All* programs. The Pre-K Directory is available online and in print in English and nine other languages. The Directory is posted online and hard copies are available at Family Welcome Centers, schools, and libraries.
>
> Pre-K Quality Snapshot: The Pre-K Quality Snapshot is one tool that provides families with information about program quality. By providing a concise overview of different elements of each pre-K program's quality, families now have more information about pre-K programs in an even more accessible format to help them make informed decisions for their children.

### Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Enrollment

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must actively participate in the centralized admissions process and welcome families who have received offers.

#### Eligibility

Families with children born in 2016 are eligible to begin *3-K for All* in September 2019. While families from all New York City districts and boroughs are eligible to apply, children living in School Districts 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 16, 19, 23, 27, and 31, or with a sibling in the program, will have priority at most programs.

### Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Is the 3-K for All and Pre-K for All application available in multiple languages?*

Yes, the online application is available in ten languages: English, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. Interpretation services are available in 200+ languages when families apply over the phone or in person at a Family Welcome Center.

*2. Can District School and Pre-K Center staff assist families in completing their application?*

Yes, family members, District School or Pre-K Center staff, and other community organizations are welcome to help parents and guardians create email accounts and walk them through completion of the online application, as long as the parent or guardian is submitting his or her own information and using his or her own email account.

Finally, it is important to note that this document does not constitute the administration's interpretation of a particular contractual or legal provision and does not constitute a policy or directive of the Chancellor or the NYCDOE without limitation. The NYCDOE reserves the right to change this document at any point.

We want to thank you for your partnership. Delivering free, full-day, high-quality early childhood education to children across the City would not have been possible without our ongoing collaboration. We value your input and feedback and want this to be an effective resource. If you have feedback or questions, please email EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov.

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# Health Services

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must comply with all applicable regulations, as set forth below, with respect to meeting the medical needs of students.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

## Overview

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must comply with all policies outlined by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) Office of School Health (OSH)[1]. OSH provides health and preventive services to students in District Schools and Pre-K Centers. District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to work with OSH, their Field Support Center (FSC) health director, and their assigned School Nurse (RN)[2], as applicable, to ensure the medical needs of students are met.

*Please note that this section is being updated to reflect recent changes.*

## Immunizations

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must adhere to New York State and local public health laws, including those regarding mandatory vaccination of students. As such, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must understand and enforce all policies regarding student immunizations. All students must be immunized in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-701, New York Public Health Law §2164 and the requirements of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOHMH).

### Immunization Requirements

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for ensuring that all students have:

    — Obtained all required immunizations; or

    — Obtained, at a minimum, the provisional immunizations to enroll; or

    — Received an exemption for any missing immunizations.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for collecting immunization records at pre-registration and prior to the start of the school year.

- All families should be provided with the Immunization Requirements for Parents and the Immunization Exemption Requirements.

- Families may provide immunization information to District Schools or Pre-K Centers by using one of the following:

    — A completed new entrant examination form (CH-205); or

    — A printed record from the DOHMH Citywide Immunization Registry signed by a licensed medical provider (should include the official physician stamp); or

    — A print out of an electronic medical record signed by a physician or nurse practitioner;

    or

    — A signed yellow immunization card.

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[1] OSH is a joint program of the NYCDOE and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH).
[2] District School students may have access to a School Based Health Center (SBHC) rather than a School Nurse.

- If a family is unable to locate their child's immunization records, please inform them that their licensed medical provider can obtain the child's immunization record from the DOHMH's Citywide Immunization Registry. Families may also request immunization records by completing the Immunization Record Request Application.

- Families are able to provide immunization documentation during the pre-registration period or in advance of the first day of school.

## Provisional Immunization Requirements

- Students who have not yet received all required immunizations may attend school if documentation shows the student at least meets the Provisional Immunization Requirements.

- Once the student starts school, subsequent vaccines must be administered in accordance with the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) "catch up" schedule for the student to be considered "in process" and remain in attendance.

- The District School or Pre-K Center's administrative staff is responsible for ensuring that students who have not yet received all required immunizations meet the Provisional Immunization Requirements and receive subsequent vaccines in accordance with the "catch up" schedule.

- Students who are not immunized in accordance with the Provisional Immunization Requirements must be excluded from school until they comply with the requirements.

## Exclusion of Students

- If a student's immunization records are not provided prior to the first day of school, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must:

  — Provide families with the Warning Letter to Parents stating that that their child will be excluded from school if the family does not present documentation of additional required immunizations within 14 days of notification.

  — If documentation is not received in the required 14 day time period, the Principal or Early Childhood Director (ECD) must send the parent a Notice of Exclusion from School Due To Incomplete Immunization.

  — If the student is excluded, Attendance Code 17 should be entered as a reason code for non-attendance. *Students may return to school immediately upon submission of required documentation.*

  — Students must complete the full series of immunizations to be in compliance with the requirements of New York Public Health Law §2164.

## Immunization Exemptions

- Section 2164 of the New York Public Health Law permits the following two exemptions to the mandatory immunization requirements:

  — Religious

    - If the parent/legal guardian objects to the immunization because the parent/legal guardian holds genuine and sincere religious beliefs which are contrary to the requirement that the child be immunized:

      - The parent/legal guardian must submit a personally written letter stating the basis for the request. Additional information can be found in the Parent Letter Regarding Immunization Exemption Requirements.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must forward the letter and any supporting documentation to their FSC health director. The request will then be reviewed by OSH and the District School or Pre-K Center will be notified of its approval or denial.

- OSH will notify the parent/legal guardian, in writing, of the approval or denial of the request. Copies of the written decision will be sent to the Principal or ECD and FSC health director.

- If a student is not offered an exemption, the parent/legal guardian may appeal the denial by arranging an interview with the FSC health director within ten school days of receipt of written notification. During this appeal process, the student is permitted to remain in school.

The New York Public Health Law does not authorize the granting of exemptions based upon personal, moral, secular, scientific or philosophical beliefs.

— Medical

• If a New York State licensed physician certifies that such immunizations may be detrimental to the student's health:

- Parents/legal guardians must submit a Medical Request for Immunization Exemption Form signed by a New York State licensed physician or nurse practitioner indicating a valid medical contraindication to specific vaccine(s).

- The District School or Pre-K Center must forward the request to their FSC health director.

- An OSH school physician will review and approve or deny requests for medical exemptions.

- OSH will notify the parent/legal guardian, in writing, of the approval or denial of the request. Copies of the written decision will be sent to the Principal or ECD and FSC health director.

If an immunization exemption request is denied, families may appeal the decision. If a family requests information on how to submit an appeal, please contact your FSC health director.

## Students in Temporary Housing

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, a student living in temporary housing may not be denied admission or enrollment because he/she lacks documentation verifying that immunizations have been received. If a student living in temporary housing does not have the documentation, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must assist the parent/legal guardian to obtain documents and/or obtain the necessary immunizations. If documentation is not received or the student has not received all required immunizations within 30 school days, staff should contact their FSC health director. *For assistance, please contact a STH Content Expert. Please see the Students in Temporary Housing chapter of the Handbook for more information.*

## Students Transferring From another State or Country

If there is some evidence of immunizations, a Principal or ECD may permit a student transferring from another state or country to attend school for up to 30 school days (this includes the 14-day time period referred to in the Warning Letter to Parents referenced above). Written confirmation of immunizations from a licensed medical provider must be received within the 30 days or the student must then be excluded from school.

# Child & Adolescent Health Examination Form (CH-205)

Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-701, all students must provide documentation of a comprehensive medical examination that has been conducted by a licensed medical provider (physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant with physician signoff) within one year of school entry. New entrants in *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* must submit a CH-205 that has been completed by their medical provider. This form must be returned prior to or as soon after enrollment as possible.

CH-205 forms are provided as part of the registration packet that a family receives when they come to a District School or Pre-K Center to accept their enrollment offer. At registration, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should request that families have their child's medical provider complete the form prior to the start of the school year.

A student may not be excluded from school for lack of a medical evaluation.

If the family has not submitted a completed CH-205 form prior to the start of the school year, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must provide families with the "New Admission Exam Notice: First notice requesting CH-205" on the first day of school.

## Pre-K Centers: CH-205 Submission

*Content in the following paragraph is intended for Pre-K Centers only.*

Site Coordinators are responsible for arranging the submission of CH-205 forms to OSH in accordance with guidance from the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE). Site Coordinators should maintain a copy of each student's CH-205 form. Prior to submitting CH-205 forms, the assigned school nurse or the Site Coordinator should review all forms to ensure they are completed appropriately.

# Accommodations for Qualified Students with Disabilities: §504 Compliance

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects students with disabilities against discrimination by requiring public schools to provide eligible students reasonable and appropriate accommodations so they may participate fully in school. Consistent with Chancellors Regulation A-710, students who may be in need of such accommodations are evaluated by a school-based §504 team and, when appropriate and approved by the parent/ legal guardian, are provided accommodations pursuant to a written §504 Accommodation Plan (§504 Plan) that outlines the accommodations the student will receive. A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities is eligible to receive accommodations under §504.

Examples of §504 accommodations/services for students may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical barrier removal (e.g., clearing aisles and hallways)
- Provision of health paraprofessional assistance (e.g., monitoring of student with seizures)
- Adjusted daily schedule (e.g., provision of indoor play in place of outdoor play)
- Use of modified books (e.g., larger print)

## District Schools

Students must be included in the school's §504 evaluation and accommodation procedures as outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-710. The school-based §504 coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the §504 process is implemented for students for whom a reasonable accommodation may be appropriate.

## Pre-K Centers

Pre-K Centers are responsible for implementing all §504 evaluation and accommodation procedures outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-710.

- Pre-K Center Site Coordinators

  — Site Coordinators at Pre-K Centers are the designated §504 coordinator for the site.

  — As such, Site Coordinators are responsible for fulfilling the obligations outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-710, including:

    - Overseeing the provision of forms for referrals and evaluations

    - Convening §504 teams

    - Overseeing the provision of accommodations

    - Maintaining documentation and written records

  — Site Coordinators must participate in any §504 training provided by the NYCDOE.

  — If Site Coordinators have any questions regarding the role of a §504 coordinator, they should reach out to their FSC health director.

- Pre-K Center Staff

  — Pre-K Center staff shall initiate a request for an evaluation by the §504 team for any student who is reasonably believed to be disabled and in need of accommodations within the meaning of §504 in order to enable the student to attend and participate in school activities on an equal basis with his or her non-disabled peers.

  — Pre-K Center staff should not encourage parents/legal guardians to make §504 requests in lieu of staff-initiated requests.

  — Staff initiate a request by contacting the §504 coordinator, which is the Pre-K Center's Site Coordinator.

  — Pre-K Center staff must participate on §504 teams when requested to by the §504 coordinator. Section 504 teams are responsible for determining whether §504 accommodations are required and drafting §504 plans, outlining the accommodations to be provided.

## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)/Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Compliance

All District Schools and Pre-K Centers must have and maintain at least one AED as indicated in Chancellor's Regulation A-701.

### District Schools

Follow the current processes and procedures outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-701.

### Pre-K Centers

- Site Coordinators are responsible for ensuring the presence of personnel trained to use the AED and administer CPR during school hours and at all Pre-K Center-sponsored or Pre-K Center-approved activities, which take place outside of school hours. Site Coordinators should establish a system to identify which staff requires re-certification.

- Pre-K Center staff are considered "public access defibrillation providers" and are subject to the requirements, limitations, and liability as defined in New York Public Health Law §3000 (a), (b), and (c).

- Site Coordinators should contact their AED Program Manager at OSH for a list of trained staff members and information on training additional staff.

## Provision of Medical Services

Medication may be administered in District Schools or Pre-K Centers if it is needed to permit the student to participate in his/her educational program pursuant to the policies below.

### District Schools

The School Nurse (RN) is responsible for ensuring that all students receive the necessary medical assistance while in attendance. RNs are the primary medical provider in schools without a School-Based Health Center.[3] RNs are available to provide quality health services, which include but may not be limited to, preventive health teaching, health education, case management, and direct services to students. Additionally, in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-715, RNs are responsible for providing trainings to non-medical personnel designated by administrative staff for the provision of epinephrine.

### Pre-K Centers

Assignment of Nursing Staff

Consistent with applicable regulations and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and NYCDOE bargaining agreements, OSH will assign a full-time RN or an Itinerant Nurse to a Pre-K Center site based on information collected during registration and enrollment.

Assignment of a Full-Time Nurse

Pre-K Center sites with 200 or more students in attendance: A RN will be assigned to sites regardless of the need for skilled nursing services.

Pre-K Center sites with less than 200 students in attendance: A RN will be assigned to a site if there is a student who requires skilled nursing services (e.g., a student requires the ongoing administration of non-emergency medication) and/or prescribed treatment.

Students requiring skilled nursing services must submit the applicable forms, completed and signed by the child's parent/legal guardian and medical provider. All forms are made available on the OSH website. Pre-K Center staff should fax completed forms to OSH.

Full-time RNs will be available on-site five days a week consistent with the Pre-K Center site's schedule.

Assignment of an Itinerant Nurse:

OSH will assign Itinerant Nurses to sites with less than 200 students in attendance and where there is no skilled nursing need. Itinerant Nurses are responsible for multiple sites and provide services to students on an as-needed basis. The supervising nurse determines their schedules. Itinerant Nurses are responsible for:

- Collecting and reviewing CH-205 forms

- Providing preventive health teaching

- Providing health education

- Case management

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[3]  School-based Health Centers (SBHCs) are primarily located in areas with limited access to health care services. A SBHC is similar to a doctor's office within a school. Students whose parents/legal guardians register their child with the SBHC can receive comprehensive medical services.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. May students self-administer medication?**

Students may not self-administer medications.

**2. Are pre-K students offered vision services?**

All students enrolled in *Pre-K for All* will receive a vision screening from OSH. The Principal or ECD is responsible for ensuring that all students receive a vision screening and that the results are accurately entered into ATS.

*For more information on vision services, please see the Vision and Hearing Screening website.*

**3. Do students receive a hearing screening?**

No, OSH does not provide hearing screenings to *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* students.

*For more information on hearing screenings, please see the Vision and Hearing Screening website.*

**4. Do students have to submit a new Child and Adolescent Health Examination Form (CH-205) in Kindergarten?**

Yes, all students entering New York City public or private schools, or childcare (including *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* classes) for the first time must submit a report of a physical examination performed within one year of school entry. Because students develop and grow so quickly at these early ages, if this initial examination is performed before the student is five years old, a second examination, performed between the student's fifth and sixth birthday, is also required.

**5. Do Medical Immunization Exemptions require renewal?**

Medical Immunization Exemptions must be renewed one year from the date of issue unless it is determined that the immunization is detrimental to the student's health for the duration of the child's life. Requests for renewals are submitted and reviewed following the same procedure as the initial immunization exemption request.

Principals and ECDs are responsible for notifying parents when an exemption is up for renewal. In accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-701, Principals and ECDs have the authority to issue a warning letter to parents, and if necessary an exclusion letter, if the parent/legal guardian fails to renew the request for exemption one year from the date of issue.

# Safety Plans and Protocols: District Schools

District Schools must ensure a safe learning environment that supports positive experiences for students, families, and staff.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

## Overview

District Schools are required to follow all safety policies of the New York City Department of Education Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD) as well as all policies outlined in the Chancellor's Regulations, including but not limited to Chancellor's Regulation A-414. District Schools must consider the safety and well-being of students in their school-wide safety plan, emergency procedures, and all other safety policies, procedures, and reporting.

If District Schools have any questions about how to meet the safety needs of 3-K and pre-K students, they should contact their Borough Safety Director.

# Safety Plans and Protocols: Pre-K Centers

Pre-K Centers must ensure a safe learning environment that supports positive experiences for students, families, and staff.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

## Overview

Pre-K Centers are required to follow all safety policies of the New York City Department of Education Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD) as well as all policies outlined in the Chancellor's Regulations, including but not limited to Chancellor's Regulation A-414. Pre-K Centers must consider the safety and well-being of students in their safety plan, emergency procedures, and all other safety policies, procedures, and reporting.

Some safety policies and procedures may vary depending on where a Pre-K Center site is located. There are three types of Pre-K Center sites:

- Standalone Pre-K Centers (sites not located within a school building)

- Pre-K Center sites located within District Schools

- Pre-K Center sites located within Private or Parochial Schools

*ECDs and Site Coordinators should contact prekcentersupport@schools.nyc.gov if they are unsure whether the Pre-K Center site is classified as a standalone site or as part of an existing District, Private, or Parochial school.*

*If ECDs or Site Coordinators have any questions about how to meet the safety needs of students, they should contact their Borough Safety Director.*

## School Safety Committees

The School Safety Committee is responsible for:

- Developing a comprehensive safety plan *(see the "Safety Plans" section below for more information)*;

- Addressing safety matters on an ongoing basis; and

- Making appropriate recommendations to the ECD or building leader when it identifies the need for additional security measures, intervention, training, etc.

### School Safety Committee Requirements by Pre-K Center Site Location

- Standalone Pre-K Center sites: Each site must have its own School Safety Committee

- Pre-K Center sites located within District Schools: Sites operate under the building's existing School Safety Committee

- Pre-K Center sites located within Private or Parochial Schools: Sites operate under the building's existing School Safety Committee

The School Safety Committee should be comprised of the individuals outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-414.

In cases where Standalone Pre-K Center sites have limited staff capacity, the ECD or Site Coordinator should consult with their Borough Safety Director about how to remain in compliance with this regulation.

*For more information on the School Safety Committee, please see Chancellor's Regulation A-414.*

## School Safety Agents

School Safety Agents (SSAs) ensure the safety of students and staff. As members of the New York Police Department (NYPD), SSAs consult and work cooperatively with ECDs and Site Coordinators on matters pertaining to school security. This includes being responsible for monitoring and signing in school visitors at Pre-K Center sites.

Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-412, SSAs must promptly notify the ECD (if on site) or the Site Coordinator and other staff of incidents that occur on school property.

OSYD and the NYPD work collaboratively to provide SSAs to Pre-K Center sites. If a site is not assigned a SSA, they should contact their Borough Safety Director for more information.

*For more information on SSAs (e.g., the role of SSAs, SSA space allocation, safety at Pre-K Centers housed within Private or Parochial Schools), please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

## Safety Plans

Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-414, every Pre-K Center site must develop a safety plan that defines the normal operations of the site and what procedures are in place in the event of an emergency. ECDs in collaboration with the school safety committee are responsible for developing or contributing to the development of safety plans for each Pre-K Center site. *See the "Safety Plan Requirements" section below for more information.*

### Safety Plan Differences by Pre-K Center Site Location

- Standalone Pre-K Center sites: Each site must develop a safety plan specific to their site.

- Pre-K Center sites located within District Schools: Sites must follow the policies and procedures indicated in the District School building's existing safety plan. The ECD should work collaboratively with District School leadership to ensure the plan encompasses the Pre-K Center.

- Pre-K Center sites located within a Private or Parochial School: The ECD must develop a site-specific safety plan in conjunction with the administrative staff of the Private or Parochial School.

### Safety Plan Requirements

- The ECD must submit a completed site-specific safety plan annually to Borough Safety Directors for approval.

- The plan must be consistent with the prescribed safety plan shell, which is made available online via the web-based School Safety Plan Portal. Plans must be submitted via the Portal by the end of the third week of September of each school year.

- The emergency response information of each site-specific safety plan must be confidential and may not be posted online or disclosed in any fashion.

- A hard copy of the approved plan (printed from the web-based School Safety Plan Portal) must be maintained in a secure location at each site.

- Pre-K Center staff and families must be trained on the aspects of the safety plan relevant to them, including the role of the Building Response Team (BRT) and the General Response Protocol (GRP).

- Borough Safety Directors are available to provide ongoing technical assistance to the School Safety Committee in developing the safety plan and in addressing ongoing safety related matters.

*For more information on safety plan requirements, procedures for submitting and receiving approval for the safety plan and technical assistance, please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

## Arrival and Dismissal

Pre-K Center sites must develop arrival and dismissal protocols that ensure the safety of students. Arrival and dismissal serve as important opportunities for staff to interact and engage with families outside of regularly scheduled family engagement activities.

It is beneficial to allow families to drop off and pick up their child in the classroom. Pre-K Centers should work with their Borough Safety Director to determine if this is possible at their site and, if so, develop the appropriate policies and procedures.

During arrival and dismissal, Pre-K Center staff must:

- Maintain line-of-sight supervision of students at all times.

- Develop a tracking system to verify that students are only released to an adult that is listed on the student's Emergency Contact Card (Blue Card).

    — Emergency contact information must be maintained in each student's Automate The Schools (ATS) file and as a hard copy emergency home contact card (Blue Card).

    — The Blue Card must be completed as students enter school.

## Emergency Preparedness

ECDs in collaboration with the school safety committee, as appropriate, are responsible for developing and implementing all required safety policies, procedures, and drills as well as ensuring that these protocols are developmentally appropriate for students.

During emergencies, both ECDs and Site Coordinators are responsible for activating components of the site-specific safety plan, initiating appropriate emergency procedures (e.g., the General Response Protocol), and coordinating the system-wide chain of command as appropriate.

### General Response Protocol

The General Response Protocol (GRP) is the primary resource designed to provide all Pre-K Center sites with specific directions that staff and students will follow in an emergency that results in an evacuation, shelter-in, or lockdown. The ECD (if on site) or the Site Coordinator is responsible for assessing the unique circumstances of an event and determining if and how the GRP is implemented.

*For additional resources, please see the General Response Protocol page.*

### Building Response Teams

Building Response Teams (BRTs) are emergency information and action management teams responsible for responding to emergency incidents, prior to the arrival of first responders.

BRT members are trained to collect and provide accurate information to the ECD, Site Coordinator, and BRT leader in the command post.

Please note: BRT members are not first responders. Not all BRT members will be activated for every incident. It is important to remember that BRT members may not self-activate; it is the responsibility of the ECD or Site Coordinator to make the decision to activate the BRT.

ECDs are responsible for identifying staff to take on the following roles at each Pre-K Center site:

- BRT Leader

- Emergency Officer (EO)

- Recorder

- Incident Assessor (IA)

- Assembly Point Coordinator (PAC)

- Special Needs Coordinator (SNC)

In cases where Pre-K Center sites have limited staff members, the ECD may need to designate more than one role to a staff member on the BRT.

## BRT Differences by Pre-K Center Site Location

- Standalone Pre-K Center sites: Each site must establish a BRT.

- Pre-K Center sites located within District Schools: The ECD and Site Coordinator should work collaboratively with District School leadership to ensure pre-K staff are included in the BRT.

- Pre-K Center sites located within a Private or Parochial school: Each site must establish a BRT. The ECD and Site Coordinator should work collaboratively with the Private or Parochial school to determine if any members of their school should be included on the BRT.

*For more information on Building Response Teams and guidance on training staff on their roles, please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

## Evacuation Protocols

Pre-K Center sites are required to develop and maintain on-site evacuation procedures (detailed in the site-specific safety plan) to ensure that staff and students are aware of their roles during an evacuation and the designated relocation site, in the event there is a hazard to students and staff inside or outside of the building (e.g., building fire).

- Evacuation is always initiated by the fire alarm or specific direction from the ECD or Site Coordinator, and is used to move students and staff from one location to a different location out of the building.

- Relocation sites must provide shelter to students and staff and allow for easy communication with Borough Safety Directors and other external supports.

*For additional information on how to develop evacuation protocols, please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

## Lockdown Protocols

Lockdown emergency procedures take effect if a dangerous incident occurs <u>inside</u> of a building (e.g., intruder). Pre-K Center sites must develop a lockdown plan to ensure staff and students are aware of safe places to go inside classrooms or in common spaces should a situation arise where this may be required.

There are two types of lockdown procedures:

- Soft lockdown (i.e. implies there is no imminent danger and the BRT and the SSA will address the incident)

- Hard lockdown (i.e. implies that imminent danger is known and no one will engage in any building sweep activity)

*For additional information on how to develop lockdown protocols, please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

## Shelter-In Protocols

Shelter-in emergency procedures take effect if a dangerous incident occurs <u>outside</u> of a building (e.g., severe storms, release of hazardous materials). During a shelter-in, students and staff remain inside the building. Pre-K Center sites must develop a shelter-in plan to ensure staff and students are aware of the steps to take should a situation arise where this may be required. This is outlined in the site-specific safety plan.

- Shelter-in plans must ensure no one (other than emergency personnel) is able to enter or exit the facility should a situation arise where this may be required.

- In the event that students and staff are unable to enter or return to the building during a shelter-in, staff must follow evacuation protocols.

*For additional information on how to develop shelter-in protocols, please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

## Drills

Pre-K Center sites are required to conduct 12 drills during the school year. The 12 drills are a combination of evacuation and lockdown drills. Pre-K Center sites are strongly encouraged but not required to conduct shelter-in drills during the school year.

- 8 of the 12 drills must be conducted before December 31.

- The remaining 4 drills must be conducted before the last day of classes for the school year.

- Of the 12 required drills, 8 must be evacuation drills and 4 must be lockdown drills. Of the 4 lockdown drills, the NYCDOE requires that 1 lockdown drill be held between the first day of classes and October 31, and another lockdown drill be conducted between February 1 and March 14. The remaining 2 lockdown drills can be held at a time determined by the school administrators.

- All drills must be entered in the OSYD Portal within 48 hours of the commencement of the drill.

- Pre-K Center sites must follow the evacuation protocols and conduct drills as outlined in the site-specific safety plan.

  — Pre-K Center sites located within a Private or Parochial School: Sites will conduct drills in accordance with the site-specific safety plan developed in conjunction with the administrative staff of the school.

In all cases, drills must be age-appropriate and take into consideration the emotional response of students.

*For assistance on how to report evacuation drills in the OSYD portal, please review the Data Entry Guide for Evacuation Drills. For information on preparing students for evacuation drills, see the GRP Lesson Plan for Early Childhood on the Principals' Portal.*

*For assistance on how to report lockdown drills in the OSYD portal, please review the Data Entry Guide for Lockdown Drills. For information on preparing students for lockdown drills, see the GRP Lesson Plan for Early Childhood on the Principals' Portal.*

*For information on preparing students for shelter-in drills, see the GRP Lesson Plan for Early Childhood on the Principals' Portal.*

## Developmentally Appropriate Evacuation, Shelter-In, and Lockdown Training and Drills

The best time to plan for an emergency response is before it occurs. This is particularly important for students as they are developmentally and emotionally sensitive. When students understand what is expected of them, responding to an emergency becomes second nature and automatic. Preparedness reduces stress and can result in a quicker, more coordinated emergency response. Below are strategies for preparing students for emergencies.

- Prepare students for drills ahead of time so they know what to expect during a safety drill.

    — Practice the safety drill with a classroom bell and have a discussion with the students to prepare them for the "very loud bell."

    — When practicing for a safety drill, break the safety drill down into small steps and explain each step one at a time. Once they have mastered a step, add the next step.

- Integrate discussions, activities, and lessons before and after safety drills to help students understand safety protocols. Some examples include:

    — Have on-going conversations with students about what it means to be safe. Use examples from their own experiences (e.g., "I wear a seat belt when I ride in a car", or "I wait for the signal to cross the street").

    — Develop a story narrative that students can understand using picture prompts to teach safety drills.

    — After a drill occurs, allow children the opportunity to talk about the experience and express their feelings through group discussion, drawings, or in center activities.

    — Read emotionally responsive books about being safe.

        - Booklist suggestions:

            - *I Will Keep You Safe and Sound*, by Lori Haskins Houran

            - *Safe, Warm and Snug*, by Stephen Swinburne

            - *Bear Feels Scared*, by Karma Wilson

## Staff Training

OSYD offers trainings and resources for staff to ensure the effective implementation of the GRP, BRTs, drills and emergency response protocols.

### ECDS and Site Coordinators

New ECDs and Site Coordinators are required to complete a mandatory Emergency Readiness Training, which is valid for two years. Site Coordinators are given time to complete the training during their regular work hours. Trainings are exclusive to new ECDs and Site Coordinators; a designee may not attend as a substitute.

The Emergency Readiness Training will provide ECDs and Site Coordinators with a comprehensive review of the GRP and BRT Teams' roles and responsibilities and procedures for establishing a command post. ECDs and Site Coordinators may work with their Borough Safety Director to answer any early childhood specific questions not covered in the Emergency Readiness Training.

- ECDs and Site Coordinators hired prior to September may attend the Emergency Readiness Training in July and August. To register for a session in July or August, staff may register via the:

    — Principals' Portal here; or

    — OSYD Help Desk at (718) 935-5004

- ECDs and Site Coordinators who will begin their position after September 1st may attend a training session during the school year.

    — Borough Safety Directors are responsible for scheduling these trainings

**All Staff**

All staff must review and become familiar with all emergency protocols and procedures. Training resources can be found on Principals' Portal.

- ECDs must utilize the Principal's Checklist for Emergency Readiness to ensure that Building Response Teams are adequately trained to implement the General Response Protocol at the start of the school year.

All staff must be familiar with the Pre-K Center's District Building Number (DBN) and unique Site ID to accurately identify the location where an incident has occurred.

*For more information or for assistance in Emergency Readiness, please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

## Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS)

ECDs and Site Coordinators are responsible for utilizing the OORS system. This includes reporting all school-related crimes and incidents in OORS within 24 hours of the incident.

*For more information on utilizing OORS, please see the Pupil Accounting & Data Management Systems in Pre-K Centers chapter of the Handbook.*

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Safety and Security: Plans and Procedures

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must ensure a safe learning environment for all *3-K for All* students and staff by having comprehensive safety and security policies, procedures, and staff trainings.

## Safety Plans

Safety plans establish policies and procedures for the safe operation of your *3-K for All* classrooms. When developing your safety plan, you must take into consideration the safety needs of *3-K for All* students and staff.

## Arrival and Dismissal

*3-K for All* families must be allowed to drop off and pick up their child in the classroom. While this is a strong recommendation for *Pre-K for All* classrooms, it is a requirement for *3-K for All* students due to safety considerations and the positive benefits *3-K for All* students receive from the in-person transition.

You must develop a monitoring system that allows families to drop off and pick up their child in the classroom while ensuring that any direct access to other students is under the supervision of a staff member who has been cleared by the State Central Registry (SCR) and the Personnel Eligibility Tracking System (PETS), as applicable.

In developing arrival and dismissal policy and procedures, you should keep in mind that the NYCDOE strongly recommends that your program require families to sign in and out every day. You should also consider:

- Whether families will enter your program via the main entrance or a separate designated entrance.

- The proximity of your *3-K for All* classroom(s) to the main entrance or designated entrance.

- Whether families need to be escorted by a cleared (PETS and SCR) staff member to ensure that they do not have unsupervised contact with other students.

### Student Escort Cards

Schools and Pre-K Centers that allow parents or authorized adults to drop off and pick up their child in the classroom without the consistent supervision of a cleared staff member, must create a Student Escort Card for parents to wear while walking their children to the classroom using the *3-K for All* Student Escort Card template. The escort card must include:

- The name of the school or Pre-K Center

- Parent or guardian name

- Student name

- Room #

- Expiration date (last day of the school year)

- A photograph of the parent or guardian

*Schools and Pre-K Centers must consult their Borough Safety Director and the School Safety agent if they choose to utilize a Student Escort Card. Please e-mail* earlychildhoodpolicy@schools.nyc.gov *for access to the Student Escort Card template.*

### Separate Entrance

Schools may choose to establish a "*3-K for All* Only" entrance to accommodate the different arrival and dismissal policy. If you are utilizing a "*3-K for All* Only" entrance, you should establish a policy that provides a time-frame in which families may use that entrance to drop off and pick up their child. If families arrive to the building after the designated drop-off period or before the designed pick-up period, families must utilize the main entrance. Please keep in mind visitor protocols when establishing this policy. If you consider this approach, you must meet with your Borough Safety Director and NYPD School Safety Supervisor to develop an appropriate plan.

Things to consider:

- If utilizing a "*3-K for All* Only" entrance, the door must be supervised at all times that it is in use.

- Schools should limit the number of escort cards provided to each family to two. Principals may provide additional escort cards on a case-by-case basis.

- Families must be informed that while they may have multiple escort cards, every effort should be made to ensure only one escort enters the building during pick-up and drop-off.

- Staff should immediately notify the main security desk and the main office if there is an unsupervised adult without an escort card in the building.

- Families should be made aware of the procedures when an adult without an escort card needs to pick up or drop off a child.

## Emergency Preparedness

You are required to develop evacuation, lockdown, and shelter-in protocols to ensure the safety of *Pre-K for All* students, *3-K for All* students, and staff. In developing these procedures, you must take into consideration the age and developmental level of students in *3-K for All* classrooms.

In developing your evacuation plans, you should consider how to evacuate *3-K for All* students in an expedient manner. Strategies to consider include:

- An adult-to-child ratio of 1:4 during an evacuation

- Locating *3-K for All* classrooms near an easily accessible exit

- Locating *3-K for All* classrooms on the 1st floor

### Training

You must ensure all *3-K for All* staff attend the annual, state mandated Opening Faculty Conference Safety Training at the start of the school year. The *Opening Faculty Conference Safety Training* deck is available on the Principals' Portal and can be offered by your school or Pre-k Center's administration.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Are there any resources Pre-K Center sites can share with families on emergency preparedness?*

Pre-K Centers may adapt and utilize the following resources to familiarize families with developmentally appropriate emergency readiness protocols.

- Parent Letter on General Response Protocol

# Toileting

*3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* staff must ensure a safe and healthy learning environment that supports positive experiences for students. All children who meet the age and residency requirements for *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* must be welcomed in the classroom, regardless of their mastery of toileting and self-care skills. Additionally, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to practice and demonstrate proper sanitary practices.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

Students enter 3-K and pre-K with varying toileting skills. Assisting students in meeting their toileting needs and developing the capacity to use the bathroom independently supports their emotional and physical growth. Under no circumstances can District Schools or Pre-K Centers deny enrollment to or dismiss any student because he or she has not yet mastered all of his or her developmental milestones, including his or her ability to use the toilet independently.

It is important to have frequent, open communication with families about toileting progress. Toileting routines at home and school should be as similar as possible.

Additionally, toilets and handwashing sinks should meet all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and be installed at a height and position that allows students to use them without assistance. If adult-sized toilets and hand wash sinks are in place, platforms should be securely installed to assist students.

## Supervision

Students who have shown the capability to use the bathroom independently and who request privacy when using the bathroom should be given permission to do so. However, staff should ensure the following when supervising students who can toilet independently:

- Doors are left unlocked

- Toilet paper is used, toilets are flushed and hands are washed

- Students are using the toileting area appropriately (e.g. playing in the toilet, etc.)

Staff should provide closer, more helpful supervision if students do not complete the toileting procedures (including handwashing) correctly and responsibly.

A student should never be allowed to leave the classroom alone or be left unsupervised at any time, even if the student can follow the proper toileting procedures.

If a staff member leaves the classroom to take a student to the bathroom the remaining staff members must be able to adequately supervise the remaining students in the classroom. Staff should not have their back to students and should position themselves to maintain line of sight supervision at all times.

# Handwashing Practices

Staff and students must wash hands immediately after toileting or diapering.

- All students should be taught how to correctly wash their hands after using the bathroom. Visual (e.g., pictures) and verbal (e.g., songs) prompts should be used to assist students.

- Handwashing signs should be prominently posted in each restroom and by each sink at students' eye-level.

If the same sink is used for both toileting and other handwashing routines (e.g., art activities, food-related routines, etc.), it must be disinfected in between the types of use with a bleach solution or a solution approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

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### Recommended Handwashing Procedures

In accordance with the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale - Revised (ECERS-R), the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) recommends that staff and students utilize the following handwashing procedure:

1. Moisten hands with water and apply liquid soap to hands.

2. Rub hands together vigorously, away from the water stream, until a soapy lather appears. Continue for 20 seconds (students can sing "Row, row, row your boat", twice).

3. Rinse hands and dry with individual paper towels that are not shared.

4. Turn off the faucet using the same paper towel when done drying hands.

5. Throw paper towel in the wastebasket.

Sanitizers should not be used as a substitute for handwashing after toileting and diapering as sanitizers are not as effective at eliminating pathogens.

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# Staff Responsibilities

All staff members should be involved in helping students learn how to use the bathroom. Toileting accidents should be treated as teachable moments for students and signals to staff that they need to increase the frequency of reminders and trips to the bathroom. **Students should <u>never</u> be reprimanded if they are not successful in using the toilet.**

Volunteers may not assist children in the bathroom or change children's diapers or clothes.

### Communication to Families

Staff should inform families about toileting policies and procedures at the beginning of the school year. The policy should clearly indicate:

- Where and how students will be assisted with diapering, toileting and/or changed after accidents

- Supplies required for students who are not toilet trained (e.g., diapers, wipes, an extra set of clothing)

- How families can communicate concerns about staff assistance with toileting and diapering (e.g., scheduling a private meeting)

### Assisting Students with Toileting Accidents & Diapering

For students who require help, paraprofessionals are responsible for providing hands-on assistance to remove student clothing, clean their body after toileting, and assist students with getting dressed. Other students may be able to perform these tasks with verbal reminders. *It is strongly recommended that two adults always be present when assisting students with toileting and diapering.*

Staff must take precautions and ensure that a student's privacy is not compromised. Before assisting students, paraprofessionals should designate an appropriate space for changing where staff can adequately maintain line of sight supervision and students' privacy.

All teachers and paraprofessionals must receive the NYCDOE Blood borne Pathogens Training and be offered the opportunity to receive the Hepatitis B vaccine. If a staff member does not intend to receive the vaccine at the time it is offered, he or she must complete the Employee Hepatitis B Vaccination Declination Form. *For more information on receiving training and the Hepatitis B vaccination, please see the NYCDOE Occupational Safety and Health (OOSH) Website*.

In accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Blood borne Pathogens Standard, the NYCDOE requires District Schools and Pre-K Centers to institute the Exposure Control Plan (ECP) as an effort to minimize employees' risk from blood borne pathogens. The following sanitary practices must be followed to facilitate proper hygiene and to protect the health and safety of staff and students:

- Utilize appropriate supplies (e.g., disposable gloves, non-scented/non-allergenic wipes, mild soap, etc.)

- Wear disposable gloves when changing students' clothes or diapers and wash hands after cleaning up

- Utilize mild soap and water or non-scented wipes to clean the student

- Utilize an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved disinfectant or bleach/water solution to disinfect soiled surfaces

Paraprofessionals must assist students to put on a clean set of clothes, including underpants.

- Staff should request that families provide a seasonal change of clothes (e.g., pants, underpants, etc.) for their child in the event of an accident.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers should always have a clean set of unisex clothes available on site in case of an emergency.

- Paraprofessionals must assist the student in putting on clean underpants, as needed.

- Staff must demonstrate and help the student wash their hands, as described above.

- Staff must inform families about toileting accidents.

**Guidance on Assisting Students after Toileting Accidents and Diapering**

1. Paraprofessionals should be sensitive to the privacy needs of students and ensure privacy is not compromised. Clean-up and diapering should take place away from other students.

2. Prepare the changing area *before* bringing the student over for clean-up. You should have:

   a. Non-absorbent changing table paper to cover the surface, from the student's shoulders to heels. *Disinfect the surface if paper is not used.*

   b. Clean wipes, clean underpants or diapers, and plastic bags for soiled clothing, wipes, and/or diapers.

   c. Non-porous gloves.

   d. If applying diaper cream, have disposable paper or tissue available for application.

3. If the student's clothing is soiled, place soiled clothing into a plastic bag for the student's family to take home for laundering.

4. Use wipes to clean the student's bottom from front to back.

   a. If assisting with a toileting accident, place soiled underpants into a plastic bag for the student's family to take home for laundering.

   b. If changing a soiled diaper, the diaper should be left under the child while the child is being cleaned. Once the child is cleaned, place the soiled diaper and wipes into a plastic bag and into a lined, hands-free trash container.

5. Paraprofessionals should use wipes to remove soil from their hands as well as the student's hands, as necessary.

6. Spray changing surface with an EPA-approved disinfectant or bleach/water solution, and wait more than 10 seconds before wiping the area with disposable towel or allow to air dry. *Do not immediately wipe the surface after spraying.*

7. The paraprofessional and student must wash hands immediately, using the handwashing procedure described above in the *"Handwashing Practices"* section.

*If a sink is used by students or staff for diapering and/or toileting and food-related routines or other purposes, it must be sanitized after toileting/diapering use, by spraying sinks and faucets with an EPA-approved disinfectant solution or bleach/water solution following the disinfecting procedure mentioned above.*

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Toileting

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must ensure a safe and healthy learning environment that supports the learning and developmental progress of *3-K for All* students. Progress towards independent toileting is an important element of the developmental growth that *3-K for All* students will make over the course of the school year. To that end, staff must assist all students with toileting regardless of a student's acquired toileting skills.

## Communication with Families

It is normal for *3-K for All* students to enter the school year with a wide range of toileting abilities. To best support students' learning, toileting and self-care routines at home and school should be as similar as possible. To that end, it is critical that staff have on-going, two-way communications with families about progress and strategies.

Teachers and paraprofessionals should meet individually with families at the beginning of the year and on an ongoing basis to discuss each child's development and needs, including support for toileting or other self-care skills. Staff should be sensitive to differing cultural expectations and practices that families may have.

When discussing toileting and self-care routines with families, please use the following questions to guide your conversation.

- Is your child able to use the toilet independently, or what kind of support do they need?

- What strategies do you use at home to help your child learn to toilet independently?

- How often does your child usually need to go to the bathroom? Are there specific times of day that help your child be successful?

- What toileting or diapering materials do you use at home to assist your child (e.g. diapers, pull-ups, changes of clothes)?

- What is most helpful to your child if they have an accident?

## Staff Responsibilities

While paraprofessionals must be available to change soiled diapers or clothes promptly, teachers are responsible for the health and safety of the classroom environment and should take any steps necessary to maintain a safe and clean environment. This includes ensuring the classroom is set up with a designated changing area and incorporating routines for toileting into the daily schedule.

Volunteers may not assist children in the bathroom or change children's diapers or clothes.

## Toileting Routines

Teaching staff should plan daily routines that incorporate frequent opportunities for *3-K for All* students to visit the bathroom. Three-year-olds are developing bladder and bowel control and cannot wait long periods of time before using the bathroom. Additionally, *3-K for All* students require a variety of physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills to master toileting routines, and may need prompts and reminders.

Whenever possible, staff should offer students the opportunity to visit the bathroom individually or in small groups. This will reduce the transitional waiting times and maximize children's learning time in the classroom.

## Assisting Students with Toileting Accidents & Diapering

Paraprofessionals are responsible for changing soiled diapers and/or clothing immediately for *3-K for All* students. These moments should be handled in a patient and encouraging way.

## Supervision

*3-K for All* students who have shown the capability to use the bathroom independently should be encouraged to do so. However, line of sight supervision of students must be maintained during toileting and handwashing. Paraprofessionals are responsible for offering step-by-step guidance during these routines.

## Facilities

*3-K for All* students require frequent trips to the bathroom. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that *3-K for All* classes be located in classrooms that have a bathroom and sink. *In cases where* 3-K for All *classrooms do not have bathrooms located within them, it is important that an adult always accompanies a child to the bathroom and provides consistent line-of-sight supervision.*

## Equipment Needs

To assist with toileting needs, *3-K for All* classrooms should contain the following equipment:

- Changing Area: Classrooms should have an area to change children's clothes and diapers without leaving the classroom. It is recommended that this area include:

  — A toddler changing table that provides an elevated, sanitary surface and does not require lifting a student physically off the floor.

  — A source of running water.

  — A lined trash receptacle with a closed lid, in or near this space.

- In the Bathroom:

  — Safe step aids and modified toilet seats (if necessary) to allow children to safely access sinks and toilets.

- In the Classroom:

  — A portable sink is recommended in classrooms that do not have a sink installed; classrooms with portable sinks may require additional custodial support.

## Materials

Classrooms should have the following materials available to *3-K for All* teaching staff to support toileting and diapering:

- Supply of diapers/pull-ups

- Wipes

- Extra clothes (at least one full set of clean clothes per child should be available)

- Plastic bags (for sending soiled clothing home)

- Table paper (for the surface of the changing table)

- Latex gloves

- Sanitizing spray and towels to disinfect surfaces

*Note: Families may be asked to provide items for their child (e.g. diapers, extra clothes). However, programs are responsible for supplying these items if they are not provided by the family and should have additional supplies on hand at all times.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Should students who require support with toileting receive special education services?*

Not all students who need support with toileting are students who require special education services.

- A referral to special education is only appropriate when families and teachers believe the student has a disability or developmental delay that impacts the student's ability to learn. Before making a referral, a variety of developmental and academic interventions should be put into place to support the student.

- Some students who receive special education services will require assistance with toileting. The student's needs, goals, and special education services regarding toileting will be outlined in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

*2. What are instructional strategies that support toilet learning?*

- Use visual and verbal cues in the classroom environment to reinforce proper toileting and handwashing routines (e.g. pictures, posted schedules, songs).

- Include children's books about toileting in your classroom library. Suggested books include:

  — *Everyone Poops* by Taro Gomi (Kane/Miller 2001)

  — *On Your Potty* by Virginia Miller (Candlewick Press 1998)

  — *PJ and Puppy* by Cathryn Falwell (Clarion Books 1997)

  — *Potty* by Leslie Patricelli (Candlewick Press 2010)

  — *No More Diapers for Ducky* by Bernette Ford and Sam Williams (Boxer Books 2007)

  — *Polar Bear's Underwear* by Tupera Tupera (Chronicle Books 2015)

  — *Potty Animals: What to Know When You've Gotta Go!* by Hope Vestergaard (Sterling 2010)

  — *Time to Pee* by Mo Willems (Hyperion Books 2003)

- Provide appropriate facilitation when children express interest in discussing toileting. Offer factual information (e.g. words for body parts, urine, and bowel movements) and respond positively to children's curiosity.

- Plan toileting routines that complement the strategies that families are using at home.

*3. What instructional strategies are not recommended when supporting toilet learning?*

- **Potty Chairs:** The use of "potty chairs" is not recommended. Potty chairs are not practical to use in a pre-K environment, as they must be sanitized after each use.

- **Extrinsic Rewards:** The use of rewards such as stickers to encourage toilet learning is not recommended. While this strategy may be effective to promote short-term progress in toilet learning, it could also lead to feelings of anxiety or failure for some students if they are not as successful as their peers.

# II. Staffing

a. Staff Qualifications, Hiring & Substitutes

b. Classroom Staffing and Supervision

c. Teacher Evaluations

# Staff Qualifications, Hiring, and Substitutes

Highly qualified educators are critical to the success of a 3-K and pre-K program. Sites that recruit, hire, and retain strong educators—whether they come from within a school, transfer from another school within the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), or come from outside the NYCDOE—are better able to provide classroom instruction and family engagement that make the most of the year.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

Principals and Early Childhood Directors (ECDs) should aim to hire staff that meet the needs of students and families from all backgrounds and that foster ongoing peer support, professional learning, and collaboration. All staff must be appropriately qualified in accordance with New York State Education Department (NYSED) regulations. Ideal candidates:

- Possess genuine joy in leading an early childhood classroom;

- Create an enriching classroom environment that fosters learning using a broad spectrum of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences;

- Build strong relationships with children and adults, actively engaging families from diverse backgrounds, colleagues, and members of the community; and

- Believe all students are capable of learning, achieving, and making developmental progress regardless of economic, linguistic, and cultural differences or physical, learning, and emotional challenges.

## Teacher Qualifications

All teachers in District Schools and Pre-K Centers must be certified in the Early Childhood Grades in accordance with NYSED regulations. To be certified to teach 3-K or pre-K in a general classroom setting, a teacher must hold one of the following certificates:

- Early Childhood (Birth–Grade 2);

- Nursery, Kindergarten and Grades 1–6 (N–6);

- Prekindergarten–Grade 6 certification (PK–6)

In addition, all staff must be cleared through the NYCDOE Office of Personnel Investigation (OPI).

*For additional guidance regarding teacher certification, contact your Field Support Center Human Resources (HR) Director.*

## Specialty Licenses

Teachers with specialty licenses may work in one classroom or across multiple classrooms to provide instruction in a specialty content area. Teachers with specialty licenses must hold certification that allows them to teach in their certified subject area at the 3-K or pre-K grade level. Teachers with the following certificates are eligible to teach content specialty classes at the 3-K or pre-K level:

- Arts—Dance, Music, Visual Arts, Theatre (all grades)

- Physical Education (all grades)

- Library Media Specialist (all grades)

- Early Childhood—Students with Disabilities (Birth–Grade 2)

*For additional guidance on specialty licenses, contact your Field Support Center HR Director.*

## Paraprofessional Qualifications

In order to provide direct instructional services to 3-K and pre-K students under the general supervision of a certified teacher, pre-K paraprofessionals in District Schools and Pre-K Centers must hold a Teaching Assistant certificate and have previously served as a substitute paraprofessional.

In addition, all staff must be cleared through the NYCDOE OPI.

*For additional guidance on staffing paraprofessionals, contact your Field Support Center HR Director. For additional information regarding certification, please review the NYCDOE Paraprofessional Certification website.*

## Hiring

The expansion of *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* has led to a growing demand for early childhood educators. The Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality (TRQ) helps recruit a diverse pool of early childhood teacher candidates and provides hiring resources for District Schools and Pre-K Centers.

Principals and ECDs should proactively search for and contact early childhood teaching candidates using the following tools:

- For internal NYCDOE teachers: Open Market Transfer (OMT)

- For new, external teachers: New Teacher Finder (NTF)

Hiring managers can post positions, search for candidates, and contact candidates using OMT & NTF. Managers should post in both systems as soon as possible if there is an anticipated early childhood opening.

All teacher candidates that are hired must have either registered in OMT (internal candidate) or applied through NTF (external candidate).

After the Open Market has closed, hiring managers should utilize the Excess Staff Selection System (ESSS) to find potential candidates.

*Principals and ECDs should contact hiringsupport@schools.nyc.gov for support on all vacancies.*

## Substitute Teachers and Paraprofessionals

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must have a substitute teacher plan in place to ensure that 3-K and pre-K classrooms always meet required staff-to-student ratios. Similar to K-12 classrooms, in the event a teacher or paraprofessional is absent, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must arrange for qualified substitutes to come into the classroom.

*For more information, please review the NYCDOE Substitute Teacher website and the NYCDOE Substitute Paraprofessional website.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Can a teacher who holds a certificate in Childhood Education (Grades 1-6) teach 3-K or pre-K?**

Teachers who hold only certification in Childhood Education (Grades 1–6) are not qualified to teach 3-K or pre-K. In some cases, teachers may be certified both in Childhood Education and in the Early Childhood Grades. A teacher who is appointed under a Childhood Education license and holds appropriate certification for 3-K or pre-K can serve in 3-K or pre-K without changing his or her appointment. Contact your HR Director with any questions regarding a teacher's certification or license.

**2. Does 3-K or pre-K teaching experience outside of the NYCDOE count towards the teacher's projected starting salary?**

Teachers who have outside experience, including teaching at the 3-K or pre-K level, may be eligible for a salary step for previous, full-time experience or a salary differential for additional education.

*For more information about eligibility, please see NYCDOE Salary Step website.*

**3. What are some additional resources for best practices in staffing and hiring?**

The Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality regularly updates the InfoHub with resources and links.

Principals and ECDs also can access the Teacher Hiring Toolkit, a collection of resources about how to prepare a hiring team, connect with candidates, interview and select, welcome new hires, and retain talent.

**4. What additional resources can help Principals and ECDs understand what to look for in 3-K or pre-K teacher and paraprofessional candidates?**

In addition to TRQ's Teacher Hiring Toolkit, Principals and ECDs may utilize the Prekindergarten Foundation of the Common Core (PKFCC)'s guiding principles, the *Pre-K for All* Quality Standards, the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B), the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R), and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to understand what quality practice looks like.

*For more information on ECERS-R and CLASS, please see the Programmatic Assessments chapter of the Handbook.*

# Classroom Staffing and Supervision

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must maintain required staff-to-student ratios throughout the day and maintain sufficient supervision of students to ensure safe and enriching environments in classrooms.

## What You Need to Know

### Overview

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for ensuring a safe learning environment that supports positive experiences for students, families, and program staff. Required staff-to-student ratios must always be maintained to ensure there are enough staff members present to provide line of sight supervision of all 3-K and pre-K students. Principals and ECDs should train staff on how to appropriately supervise 3-K and pre-K students.

### *Pre-K for All* Staff-to-Student Ratios

Consistent with New York State Department of Education (NYSED) §151-1.1 pre-K requirements, the following staff-to-student ratios must be maintained in classrooms serving *Pre-K for All* students:

- The maximum class size is 18 students.

- In classes of 18 students or less, one certified teacher and one certified paraprofessional are required.

- In some cases, with prior approval from the DECE, pre-K classes may have 19 or 20 students.

  — In classes with 19 or 20 students, one certified teacher and two certified paraprofessionals are required.

*For more information on certification requirements, please see the Staffing, Hiring & Substitutes chapter of the Handbook.*

### Line of Sight Supervision

3-K and Pre-K students require constant supervision to ensure that students' health and safety needs are being met. As such, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must ensure that line of sight (within view) supervision of all 3-K and pre-K students is maintained by a staff member cleared through the background investigation process outlined in Chancellor's Regulation C-105 at all times. *For more information on how to maintain line of sight supervision, please contact your Borough Safety Director.*

A student should never be allowed to leave the classroom alone or be left unsupervised at any time.

If a staff member leaves the classroom to take a student to the bathroom the remaining staff members must be able to adequately supervise the remaining students in the classroom. Staff should not have their back to students and should position themselves to maintain line of sight supervision at all times.

**Guidance on Adequate Supervision**

In accordance with the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R), adequate supervision to protect student's safety requires that staff strategically position themselves to observe students during both routines and play. Staff should be positioned to:

- See all areas where students may be located

- Move around as needed to keep a close eye on students

- Remain attentive to student's basic safety needs

Staff should be sensitive to students' need to play independently and in their own way, while recognizing that adult interactions with students during play are beneficial to extending students' knowledge and understanding.

## Classroom Coverage of Teacher Prep Time and Teacher and Paraprofessional Lunch Periods

Classrooms serving *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* students must adhere to the NYSED mandated staff-to-student ratio requirements at all times. This includes when the regularly assigned teacher or paraprofessional is not present in the classroom due to their regularly scheduled lunch break or prep-time (teachers only).

During teacher prep time and teacher and paraprofessional lunch periods it is not required that the regularly assigned teacher or paraprofessional be present in the classroom.

- It is strongly recommended that teacher and paraprofessional prep and/or lunch periods be staggered so that both are not out of the classroom at the same time. This helps to ensure that a staff member with strong relationships with 3-K and pre-K students is always with the class.

- Staff members assigned to cover teacher prep time and teacher and paraprofessional lunch periods must meet all required qualifications. *See the Staff Qualifications, Hiring, and Substitutes chapter of the Handbook for more information.*

- Staff members assigned to cover teacher prep time and teacher and paraprofessional lunch periods should be familiar with students and their families, familiar with student and classroom routines, and trained on safety plan and emergency procedures pertaining to the 3-K and pre-K classroom.

- Staffing of teacher prep time and teacher and paraprofessional lunch periods should be consistent throughout the year so that staff members are able to develop relationships with students and become familiar with daily classroom routines.

Staff overseeing multiple classrooms/grade-levels may not count toward meeting the staff-to-student ratio requirements (e.g., staff overseeing multiple tables of students in the cafeteria).

District Schools and Pre-K Centers may not require that teachers or paraprofessionals skip their lunch period or miss prep time (teachers only).[4]

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[4] Teachers and Paraprofessionals may be required to take a lunch break with students while on field trips only.

## Volunteers in the Classroom

Utilizing volunteers in the classroom, especially family members of students, can provide enhanced opportunities for students. In addition, providing family members with this opportunity to volunteer in the classroom can support their involvement in their child's learning.

Under no circumstances can a volunteer count towards fulfilling the NYSED-mandated staff-to-student ratio requirements, be responsible for providing instruction to students, or supplant the work of a classroom-based paraprofessional.

## Security Clearances

All staff and volunteers that have direct unsupervised contact with students must be cleared through the background investigation process outlined in Chancellor's Regulation C-105.

The HR Connect Walk-In Center and the Office of Personnel Investigation (OPI) are responsible for screening all new staff hired by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. NYSED education laws and Chancellor's Regulation C-105 mandate the taking of fingerprints as a prerequisite for licensure and/or employment. Once nominated for a position, staff will receive an email with instructions to log into the Applicant Gateway to start the clearance process.

### Families in the Classroom

Family members are not generally required to be cleared in order to work in the classroom under the supervision of a teacher and/or paraprofessional, as long as their child is enrolled at a Pre-K Center or District School, and they will not have direct unsupervised contact with students. However, if a student graduates or switches District Schools or Pre-K Centers, his or her family members may not continue to work at the former District School or Pre-K Center without clearance.

*For more information on the fingerprinting and clearance process, please see the NYCDOE's Human Resources' website.*

## Blended Pre-K and Kindergarten in District Schools

District Schools may combine pre-K and Kindergarten students in the same classroom. Prior to implementing a blended pre-K and Kindergarten classroom, District Schools must contact the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov for further guidance.

Should a school choose to implement a blended pre-K and Kindergarten classroom, it must meet all requirements for operating a *Pre-K for All* classroom as set forth by NYSED and the NYCDOE. In addition, all *Pre-K for All* programs must meet all NYCDOE expectations for a high-quality pre-K program as set forth in the Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ), including meeting the developmental and instructional needs of students of different ages within the same classroom.

In addition, all NYCDOE requirements for serving Kindergarten students, including those provided in the NYCDOE Elementary School Academic Policy Guide, must be adhered to for Kindergarten students enrolled in blended pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms.

The following are key pre-K policy requirements that a school should consider when serving pre-K and Kindergarten students in the same classroom:

- Hours of operation
- Daily schedules, including:
  - Snack and meal time
  - Nap and rest time
  - Gross motor time
  - Center time
  - Meeting/circle time
- Instructional staff certification

- Staff-to-student ratios (Class sizes must meet *Pre-K for All* requirements. *See above for more details.*)

- NYCDOE Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (See Appendix B)

- Toileting and sanitation practices

- Calendar/professional learning

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Classroom Staffing and Supervision

It is mandatory that *3-K for All* classrooms have consistent and sufficient supervision of students throughout the day to ensure a safe and enriching environment.

### Class Size and Staffing Ratio Requirements

To ensure *3-K for All* classrooms are appropriately staffed and students are appropriately supervised, the staff-to-student ratio requirements are as follows.

- The maximum class size is 15 students

- One lead teacher and one paraprofessional are required

### Line-of-Sight Supervision

Direct, "line of sight," visual supervision must be maintained for every *3-K for All* student at all times. At no time may a child be left unattended. *3-K for All* teachers and paraprofessionals are advised to position themselves in the classroom so that they can maintain continuous supervision of children and the exits/entrances.

### Meal and Rest Time Staffing Requirements

You must adhere to the required staff-to-student ratio requirements during meal and rest times in *3-K for All* classrooms.

*Please see the Classroom Staffing and Supervision chapter of the Handbook for more information.*

### Mixed-Aged Classrooms

In certain situations, the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) may allow you to combine *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* students in the same classroom. Mixed-age classrooms are only allowed upon approval of the DECE. Mixed-aged classrooms must meet all requirements for operating both a *3-K for All* and a *Pre-K for All* classroom as set forth by the NYCDOE.

Within mixed-age classrooms, staff-to-student ratio requirements should be based on the predominant age of children in the classroom.

- If the number of *Pre-K for All* students is greater than the number of *3-K for All* students, the maximum class size is 18 students with one lead teacher and one paraprofessional.

- If the number of *3-K for All* students is greater than the number of *Pre-K for All* students, the maximum class size is 15 students with one lead teacher and one paraprofessional.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Can District Schools use funding from their non-3-K/pre-K budget to cover staffing of teacher and paraprofessional lunch and/or prep-times?**

Yes, District Schools are encouraged to utilize funding from their non-3-K/pre-K budget to fund coverage of teacher and paraprofessional lunch and/or prep-times. This includes the use of cluster teachers in pre-K classrooms.

*For more information on cluster teachers who meet staff qualification requirements please see the Staff Qualifications, Hiring, and Substitutes chapter of the Handbook.*

**2. Does a certified teacher need to be in the classroom during nap and rest time and meals?**

Yes, staff members assigned to cover teacher prep time and teacher and paraprofessional lunch periods during nap and rest or meal times must meet all required qualifications for the staff member they are replacing.

*For more information, please see the Staff Qualifications, Hiring, and Substitutes chapter of the Handbook.*

# Teacher Evaluations

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) is committed to ensuring that all students leave pre-K with the foundation they need for Kindergarten and a lifetime of learning. A part of this commitment is ensuring that pre-K teachers receive support to improve teaching and learning in District Schools and Pre-K Centers.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

### Overview

3-K and pre-K teachers are evaluated using the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory rating system. They <u>are not rated</u> using the *Advance* system, which is the NYCDOE's teacher development and evaluation system for certain K-12 teachers.

3-K and pre-K teachers will continue to be evaluated the same way as in previous years, under the teacher evaluation plan outlined in the contract between the United Federation of Teacher (UFT) and NYCDOE and explained in the document "Teaching for the 21st Century." Paraprofessionals are not rated.

As noted in the "Teaching for the 21st Century" document, a broad-based framework for assessing good teaching and providing professional development activities in the New York City public schools is dependent upon mutually agreed on characteristics of good teaching. Characteristics of good teaching include:

- Demonstrates Classroom Management Skills
- Engages Students in Learning
- Encourages Family Involvement
- Fosters Professional Collegiality
- Maintains an Ongoing Commitment to Learning
- Possesses Knowledge of Subject Matter
- Promotes Positive Student Learning Outcomes
- Recognizes the Importance of Students' Diverse Cultural Backgrounds
- Responds to Different Student Learning Behaviors
- Supports an Atmosphere of Mutual Respect

The rating should be based on observations (formal and informal) and disciplinary letters (if any exist). Where appropriate, the performance review should include clear and specific recommendations for professional growth.

Please note that Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* or another rubric may not be used as a tool for a formal evaluation that will be placed in a teacher or paraprofessionals file, however these rubrics may be used for formative purposes. *Please see the "Instructional Frameworks" section below for more information.*

### Instructional Frameworks

Leaders of District Schools and Pre-K Centers may use an instructional framework that includes Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* or another rubric in addition to the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory rating system for formative purposes.

Instructional frameworks can be utilized to:

- Record data from formative/supportive observations

- Identify growth areas

- Target professional development

- Provide support

*District Schools and Pre-K Centers with questions should email* [EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov).

## Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Can programmatic assessment observations and/or reports be utilized for evaluating 3-K and pre-K teachers or leaders?**

The observations conducted and/or the reports prepared as part of the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R), Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), or any other assessment of the program, must be used only for purposes of assessing the quality of the program generally and must not be placed in any teacher's official file or used in any action or employment-related decision involving an individual NYCDOE employee (including, but not limited to, any letter to file, rating or tenure determination). Additionally, they must not be introduced in any disciplinary proceeding, grievance or arbitration, case or action.

The results of the ECERS-R and CLASS assessments will not be used in any evaluation of any Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA) member nor will the reports about ECERS-R and CLASS assessments identify specific CSA members by name in any way.

*For more information on ECERS-R and CLASS assessments, please see the Program Assessments chapter of the Handbook.*

**2. How should I use the results of an ECERS-R or CLASS assessment?**

Programs are encouraged to consider information from ECERS-R and CLASS reports, in conjunction with other data, to help inform and modify program goals. The information in the reports should be used to shape professional learning conversations that happen with teaching staff (including paraprofessionals and others that interact with 3-K and pre-K students) to improve the quality of instruction in the program. Furthermore, the information in the reports, particularly the ECERS-R, can show where there may not be enough materials, correctly sized furniture, or adequate equipment for 3-K and pre-K aged children, and should help inform future purchases.

**3. Does the DECE have guidance on what to look for when supporting 3-K and Pre-K teachers for formative purposes?**

The DECE has the following resources available to help Principals and ECDs understand what quality practices look like as well as the skills and knowledge students develop over the course of the school year:

- Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ)

- Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC)

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

   — *For more information on ECERS-R and CLASS, please see the Program Assessments chapter of the Handbook.*

# III. General Program Oversight

a. Enrollment

b. Calendar and Daily Hours

c. Meal Services

d. Attendance

e. Family Engagement

f.  Field Trips and Neighborhood Walks

g. Student Behavior

h. Pupil Accounting Data Management Systems

i.  Program Assessments

# Enrollment

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must actively participate in the *Pre-K for All* admissions process and welcome families who have received offers.

3-K for All *classrooms should refer to the Additional Guidance for* 3-K for All *on Enrollment portion of this chapter.*

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-101, students who live in New York City are eligible to apply for and enroll in pre-K in the calendar year they turn four years old. This includes students with disabilities and students whose home language is a language other than English. Families may apply to full-day programs at District Schools, New York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs), and Pre-K Centers using the same application via the pre-K admissions process operated centrally by the Office of Student Enrollment (OSE).

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to follow all processes outlined by OSE. Staff should be familiar with all aspects of the application, admissions, and enrollment processes and assist families as necessary.

3-K for All *classrooms should refer to the Additional Guidance for* 3-K for All *on Enrollment portion of this chapter.*

## Outreach

To develop interest and maintain enrollment in their pre-K program, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for recruiting families and informing them of the services offered at their site. There is no dedicated outreach period; District School and Pre-K Center staff should continuously communicate with families in their community about the benefits and features of their pre-K program.

District School and Pre-K Center staff are responsible for:

- Collaborating with the Outreach Team, the NYCDOE Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE), and OSE, as necessary throughout the outreach period.

- Sharing information with families to help them navigate the *Pre-K for All* admissions process. Families should be provided with information on how to access the New York City Pre-K Directory and the Pre-K Finder.

- At a minimum, sharing the following information with families to assist them make an educated enrollment decision:

    — Pre-K curriculum and instructional approach

    — Pre-K schedule and daily activities

    — Languages spoken by staff

    — Family engagement opportunities

**Enrollment Resources for Families**

Pre-K Finder: Families can use the Pre-K Finder map tool for the most up to date information on pre-K programs.

Pre-K Directory: Families can use the Pre-K Directory for detailed information on all *Pre-K for All* programs. The Pre-K Directory is available online and in print in English and nine other languages. The Directory is posted online and hard copies are available at Family Welcome Centers, schools, and libraries.

Pre-K Quality Snapshot: The Pre-K Quality Snapshot is one tool that provides families with information about program quality. By providing a concise overview of different elements of each pre-K program's quality, families now have more information about pre-K programs in an even more accessible format to help them make informed decisions for their children.

All outreach practices should be objectively fair and transparent to families and must align to the information in the NYCDOE outreach and enrollment materials, including the Pre-K Directory. District Schools and Pre-K Centers must not:

- Require an interview or implement a screening process before giving families information about how to apply to *Pre-K for All*.

- Discourage families from applying to other pre-K programs.

- Implement any outreach practices that discriminates against a child or family on the basis of actual or perceived: income, race, creed, color, sex, gender, national origin, citizenship status, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, or political belief.

- Implement practices that discourage families with special needs from applying or enrolling.

- Offer financial incentives to encourage families to apply for a seat.

- Make the delivery of a giveaway or raffle conditional on a family applying.

**Outreach Strategies**

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are encouraged to utilize multiple outreach strategies to respond to the needs of the community.

- Increase visibility throughout the community (e.g., post a *Pre-K for All* sign or banner on the outside of the site).

- Develop and implement a marketing strategy.

- Offer opportunities for families to visit the site to learn more about *Pre-K for All*, ask questions, and tour the facility.

- Provide materials (e.g., signs, flyers, brochures) in multiple languages spoken by families in the community.

- Build relationships (e.g., send representatives to talk with families at events in the community; connect with local organizations).

- Utilize social media (e.g., create a website, post updates on Facebook).

# Application

The *Pre-K for All* admissions process allows families to apply to full-day *Pre-K for All* programs at District Schools, Pre-K Centers, and NYCEECs utilizing the same application. Families may rank up to 12 programs on the application in order of preference.

District School and Pre-K Center staff should be prepared to assist families to complete their *Pre-K for All* application. Staff should review the guidance provided in the Pre-K Directory and become familiar with the application process to provide the necessary guidance to families.

Families may apply to pre-K in one of three ways:

- Online

- Over the Phone

- In Person

*For more details on the application, please review the* Pre-K Directory.

# Admissions Priorities and Offers

## Admissions Priorities

The NYCDOE works to make pre-K available to every eligible child, but the number of applicants may exceed the number of seats available in some programs. Placement in a particular pre-K program is not guaranteed.

Students are considered for placement at each pre-K program on their application based on a priority order. Students who fall in the first priority group will be considered for placement first; students in the second priority group will be considered next; and so on, until all seats have been filled. If there are more applicants than seats available within a given priority group, seats will be assigned by random selection among applicants at the same priority level.

OSE requires that District Schools and Pre-K Centers verify the admissions priorities indicated by families. Staff must follow all requirements outlined by OSE pertaining to the verification of admissions priorities.

Admissions priorities differ among program types. *Please see the* Pre-K Directory *for a list of Pre-K Center and District School admissions priorities.*

## Offers

Each family that submits an application during the Main Application round will receive an offer to a *Pre-K for All* program.

- Each family will receive a single offer letter from the NYCDOE.

- In some cases, no seats may be available at the sites listed on a family's application. To ensure that all students receive a placement, families may receive an offer to a site to which they did not apply.

- District School and Pre-K Center staff should review OSE guidance on how to view the list of students receiving an offer to their site via the Student Enrollment Management System (SEMS) or ATS.

# Pre-Registration

After offer letters are distributed to families, District School and Pre-K Center staff are expected to contact all families with offers, invite families to ask any questions they have, and encourage families to accept the offer and pre-register.

To accept an offer to a *Pre-K for All* program at a District School or Pre-k Center, families are required to visit the site and provide the required documentation. For a list of all required documentation, please review the Pre-K Directory.[5]

District School and Pre-K Center staff are responsible for completing the pre-registration process for students who have been offered a seat at their site. This process is completed in ATS and includes the entry of student biographical data and other information.

*For detailed information on the pre-registration process, please review the OSE pre-registration guide for District Schools and Pre-K Centers. These guides will be provided before pre-registration begins.*

If a family has concerns about providing any of the required information, District School and Pre-K Center staff should welcome the family and contact the DECE at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov.

## Waitlist Management

Families are automatically placed on the waitlist(s) for any program(s) that was listed higher on their application than the program where they were offered a seat. Students are placed on each program's waitlist in order of priority group. Within each priority group, families are sorted randomly. District Schools and Pre-K Centers must make offers to families in the order of the waitlist in the Student Enrollment Management System (SEMS) application tool. SEMS is a system designed to support schools in managing enrollment processes.

Families who want to be on additional waitlists may contact pre-K program(s) of interest to have their children placed on the waitlist(s), after waitlists open. If District Schools and Pre-K Centers have collected information from interested families before the waitlist opens, they must add those students to the SEMS waitlist once it is available.

A step-by-step guide to managing waitlists in SEMS will be shared in advance of waitlists being made available.

## Special Student Populations

### Overview

Every family with an offer must be welcomed and allowed to pre-register. A student with an offer may not be turned away, regardless if:

- The student has a disability (stated or perceived)

- The student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), regardless of IEP recommendation

- The student's or family's home language is a language other than English

- The student does or does not have a permanent residence

If District School or Pre-K Center staff have questions about whether their site has the ability, setting, and/or resources to support a particular student based on disability, language, or any other status, they should welcome the family, allow them to register, contact the Division of Early Childhood Education at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov, and prepare to serve the student while the issue is resolved.

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[5] In accordance with the *McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act)* and Chancellor's Regulation A-101, students in temporary housing cannot be prevented from pre-registering or enrolling due to lack of documentation. *See the Students in Temporary Housing chapter of the Handbook.*

## Students whose Home Language is a Language other than English

The NYCDOE provides a range of pre-K program options to ensure that all children gain foundational language, cognitive, and social emotional skills, including students whose home language is a language other than English. Some District Schools and Pre-K Centers offer Dual Language (DL) programs to support children who speak the target language as well as English speaking children who are interested in learning a second language.

If a program offers both a Dual Language option and a general education option, and families wish to apply to both options, they must list the program twice on their application.

District schools and Pre-K Centers may have other pre-K program features to support students who speak languages other than English at home. Pre-K programs should provide information about services and programs that meet the specific linguistic needs of a child to all families expressing interest in enrolling at the site.

## Pre-K Students with Disabilities

Preschool special education services are available for children ages 3–5 who have disabilities or developmental delays that impact their ability to learn; these services are provided free of charge by the NYCDOE. Pre-K special education services include:

- Related services (e.g., physical therapy, speech-language therapy, etc.) – serves students in any District School, Pre-K Center, or NYCEEC pre-K program

- Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) – serves students in any District School, Pre-K Center, or NYCEEC pre-K program

- Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS) – serves general education and special education students in the same classroom

- Special Class (SC) – serves solely special education students

## District Schools and Pre-K Centers with SCIS Programs

Only seats for general education students in a SCIS program will be offered through the pre-K admissions process. The Committees on Preschool Special Education (CPSEs) will assign students with an IEP recommendation for a SCIS class seat throughout the school year. Please do not make offers for seats reserved for students with an IEP recommendation for a SCIS class, even if all seats are not filled by the first day of school.

If a student with an IEP recommendation for SCIS receives an offer for a seat for a general education student, please welcome the family and contact the appropriate CPSE (based on district of residence). It will then be determined whether the student can be reassigned to a seat in the same program. Students with an IEP recommendation for a special education seat are not included in the general education seat count.

## District Schools and Pre-K Centers without SCIS Programs

If a student with an IEP that recommends SC or SCIS receives an offer to a District School or Pre-K Center that does not have the program recommended on the IEP, staff should welcome the family first, and then contact the appropriate CPSE for the child's district of residence.

## Pre-K Students who have Limited Mobility and/or Require Medical Accommodations

Under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act, some students have a disability and/or health condition that does not impact their ability to learn, but requires an accommodation, such as medical administration and/or a building that is accessible.

All District Schools and Pre-K Centers are able to serve students' medical administration and accommodation needs. If a student has medical administration needs, follow the procedures on the Office of School Health website.

If a student with an offer to your program has limited mobility and you do not believe your site is accessible, do not turn the family away. Please welcome the family, allow them to pre-register, contact the OSE at ESEnrollment@schools.nyc.gov, and prepare to serve the student while the issue is resolved.

**Students in Temporary Housing**

Students living in temporary housing are provided with additional flexibility in certain aspects of the admissions, registration, and enrollment processes.

*For more information, please see the Students in Temporary Housing chapter of the Handbook.*

*Please contact a STH Content Expert with any questions on the enrollment of students in temporary housing.*

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Enrollment

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must actively participate in the centralized admissions process and welcome families who have received offers.

**Eligibility**

Families with children born in 2016 are eligible to begin *3-K for All* in September 2019. While families from all New York City districts and boroughs are eligible to apply, children living in School Districts 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 16, 19, 23, 27, and 31, or with a sibling in the program, will have priority at most programs.

**Outreach**

The enrollment resources for families are different for *3-K for All* programs. Families interested in applying to *3-K for All* should utilize the enrollment resources below.

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**Enrollment Resources For Families**

*3-K for All* Finder: Families can use the *3-K for All* Finder map tool for the most up to date information on 3-K programs.

*3-K for All* Program List: Families can use the *3-K for All* Program List for detailed information on all *3-K for All* programs. The *3-K for All* Program list is available online in English and nine other languages. The Program List is posted online and hard copies are available at Family Welcome Centers, schools, and libraries.

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Note: The Pre-K Finder and Pre-K Directory should be utilized by families interested in attending *Pre-K for All* classrooms only.

## Application and Admission Process

Similar to *Pre-K for All*, the *3-K for All* admission process allows families to apply to full-day *3-K for All* programs at District Schools, Pre-K Centers, and New York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs) utilizing the same application. Although the process by which students are matched to a *3-K for All* program remains the same, the admission priorities have changed for some programs. Please see the 3-K Program List for a list of Pre-K Center, District School, and NYCEEC admissions priorities.

*Please note that the* 3-K for All *application is separate from the Pre-K for All application.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. *Is the* 3-K for All *and* Pre-K for All *application available in multiple languages?***

Yes, the online application is available in ten languages: English, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. Interpretation services are available in 200+ languages when families apply over the phone or in person at a Family Welcome Center.

**2. *Can District School and Pre-K Center staff assist families in completing their application?***

Yes, family members, District School or Pre-K Center staff, and other community organizations are welcome to help parents and guardians create email accounts and walk them through completion of the online application, as long as the parent or guardian is submitting his or her own information and using his or her own email account.

Only the legal parent or legal guardian of the child may create an account and submit an application on his or her behalf.

If staff assist a family in completing an application, they must ensure that:

- All account information is that of the legal parent/guardian.

- All applications submitted under a single account have the same legal parent/guardian.

**3. *Are District Schools and Pre-K Centers responsible for verifying sibling priority?***

Yes, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for verifying sibling status before placements are made. Siblings of District School applicants must be pre-registered or enrolled in another grade at the school at the time of application submission AND must plan to remain in the school the following September.

**4. *Are zoned siblings guaranteed to get a seat in a District School?***

No, while zoned students and siblings have high priority for admission to a District School, they are not guaranteed a seat in the District School. Some schools may not have enough pre-K seats to accommodate all interested applicants.

Please note that zoned non-siblings have higher priority than out-of-zone siblings.

**5. *What should District Schools and Pre-K Centers do if a family cannot pre-register by the deadline but wants to accept their offer?***

If a family is unable to pre-register by the deadline, but has contacted the District School or Pre-K Center to indicate that they would like to accept their offer, please make alternate arrangements to pre-register the family on another date as soon as possible.

**6. *Can a student repeat* 3-K for All *or* Pre-K for All*?***

Admissions and enrollment for *3-K for All*, *Pre-K for All*, and kindergarten is based on year of birth.

- Children are only eligible to apply to and enroll in *3-K for All* during the calendar year in which they turn 3 years old.

- Children are only eligible to apply to and enroll in *Pre-K for All* during the calendar year in which they turn 4 years old.

- Children are only eligible to apply to and enroll in kindergarten during the calendar year in which they turn 5 years old.

Therefore, children born in 2014 are only eligible for kindergarten (not public pre-K) in the 2019–2020 school year. Enrollment in kindergarten is not mandatory, but is strongly encouraged so that children have the time and supports needed to develop and adjust to learning in a more structured environment.

For the 2019–2020 school year, if a family wishes to withdraw their child born in 2014 from kindergarten and enroll in a private preschool program at their own expense, they may do so. Grade level placement, in this case, would be an agreement between a family and a private school. Children born in 2014 are not eligible to enroll in public pre-K during the 2019–2020 school year.

If a family wishes to re-enroll their 2014-born child in kindergarten during the 2019–2020 school year, they may do so at any time.

# Calendar and Daily Hours

*3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* offers free, full-day, high-quality 3-K and pre-K, in accordance with the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) school year calendar, New York State Education Department (NYSED) regulations, and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and NYCDOE collective bargaining agreements.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

### Overview

3-K and Pre-K classrooms in District Schools and Pre-K Centers operate on the NYCDOE School Year Calendar.

Prior to the start of the school year, families should be provided with an annual calendar and the 3-K and pre-K classroom's hours of operation. The 3-K and pre-K calendar must be adhered to without exception, unless notifications from the NYCDOE of subsequent changes are received.

### *Pre-K for All* Days and Hours of Operation

#### School Calendar

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must operate in accordance with the NYCDOE School Year Calendar

  — The school year calendar for 2018-19 meets the NYSED requirement that 3-K and pre-K operates for a minimum of 180 days, including at least 176 days of instruction and 4 days of professional development for teachers.

- Staff will attend up to four *Pre-K for All* citywide professional learning sessions provided by the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) and additional sessions provided by their Principal or Early Childhood Director (ECD).

  — The DECE provided *Pre-K for All* citywide professional learning sessions will take place on:

    - Pre-K Non-Attendance Days, and

    - Chancellor's Conference Days

  — District School and Pre-K Center leaders are responsible for providing professional learning on the remaining Pre-K Non-Attendance days or Chancellor's Conference Days so that all teachers receive a minimum of four days of professional learning days (DECE or non-DECE provided).

  — Principals and ECDs must notify families of all professional learning days at the beginning of the school year.

  — Students do not need to be in attendance during professional learning days, however if a Principal or ECD chooses to hold classes, they must arrange for a qualified substitute teacher and paraprofessional to come into the classroom. *For more information on substitute teacher requirements, see the Staff Qualifications, Hiring, and Substitutes chapter of the Handbook.*

*Please see the Curriculum and Professional Learning chapter of the Handbook for additional information on professional learning.*

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must operate for a minimum of 6 hours and 20 minutes per day unless otherwise noted on the NYCDOE's School Year Calendar and in accordance with the UFT-NYCDOE collective bargaining agreements.

*Please see the Calendar Change Request Principal's Reference Guide for more information on how to request shortened sessions.*

### Beginning of School Year

Smooth transitions into your program lay the foundation for a successful year. Programs should be prepared to assist children and families with the transition to early childhood services. For additional guidance on supporting transitions, please refer to the section, "Supporting Families Transitioning into the Public School System," on page 68.

**Staggered Schedule**
- All programs must begin the school year with full days of school (no staggered schedules) to support working families and others.
- If a family/guardian specifically requests a staggered or transition schedule for their child, a program can work with the individual family/guardian to implement this schedule on a short-term basis, not exceeding three weeks.
- Families cannot decide to attend 3K or Pre-K programs on a shortened schedule for the full year without a medically or developmentally documented reason. Please contact earlychildhoodpolicy@schools.nyc.gov before agreeing to any alternative schedule.
- For further assistance related to staggered schedules, programs should contact the DECE at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov.

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**Welcoming Families at the Beginning of the School Year**

Providing a Welcome Orientation can be a great way to set a warm tone with families and share key information about your policies, expectations, and goals.

- The DECE strongly recommends that District Schools and Pre-K Centers hold a Welcome Orientation event for families before school begins or within the first two weeks of the school year and compensate teachers in accordance with UFT and NYCDOE collective bargaining agreements.

- District Schools and Pre-K Center should develop the format of these events and outreach to families in ways that meet the needs of their communities.

*Please see the Family Engagement section of the Handbook for additional information on Welcome Orientations for families.*

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## Extended Learning Time (ELT) Programs

At pre-approved District Schools (e.g., Renewal and PROSE), an additional hour of learning time is provided to students. Participation in extended learning time must be optional for students; families must be provided with the opportunity to opt-out and have their child attend for only 6 hours and 20 minutes.

District Schools providing extended learning time to students must ensure that all staffing policies adhere to collective bargaining agreements, Chancellor's Regulations, and NYCDOE policy. For example:

- 3-K and pre-K staff-to-student ratio requirements must be maintained during extended learning time.

- 3-K and pre-K staff qualification requirements must be maintained during extended learning time.

- Staff must maintain line of sight supervision of students during extended learning time.

*For more information on staff-to-student ratio requirements and line of sight supervision, please see the Classroom Staffing and Supervision section of the Handbook. For more information on staff qualifications, please see the Staff Qualifications, Hiring, and Substitutes section of the Handbook.*

To ensure that students benefit from the extended learning time, ELT programs should:

- Base the focus of the lessons and activities offered during the extended time on skills and knowledge described in the *Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC)*

- Use instruction about student progress from their authentic assessments to design targeted small group instructions and to scaffold learning

- Start the extra hour with a different activity than the activity used to close out the regular school day

- Limit screen time to no longer than fifteen minutes per student, inclusive of screen time allocated during the 6 hours and 20 minutes

- Provide students with a place for relaxation as needed

- Provide students with additional center time and gross motor time

    — *For more information on classroom activities, please see the Daily Schedule section of the Handbook.*

*Please contact your Field Support Center with any questions on the policies pertaining to extended learning time. For guidance on the instructional activities to provide during extended learning time, please contact the DECE at* [prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov).

## Frequently Asked Questions

***1. Is there any guidance on suggested approaches to ELT in classrooms?***

The following are some suggested activities to implement in classrooms during ELT:

- Learning Centers- intentional centers and small groups facilitated by a qualified teacher and paraprofessional(s) during this time.

- Read Alouds and Extension Activities- read aloud, move into an extension activity that is differentiated, and perhaps end with a movement exercise.

- Music and Movement activities in combination with gross motor activities.

- A combination of these activities. Some examples include:

    — 50 minutes for center time, 10 minutes for transitions (e.g., choosing centers, clean-up, post-center reflections, debrief, etc.)

    — 35 minutes for center time, 15 minutes for circle time, 10 minutes for transitions

    — 10 minutes for read aloud or an extension activity, 30 minutes for center time, 10 minutes for music and movement activity, 10 minutes for transitions

*2. What are the dates of Non-Attendance Days?*

The professional learning dates vary by school district and Instructional Track, in order to provide more convenient professional learning locations throughout the school year. District School and Pre-K Center leaders receive the professional learning dates for their program via email from prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov.

*Please email prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov with any questions.*

*3. Is there any guidance or resources on how Principals or ECDs should provide professional learning on the two days not provided by the DECE?*

When planning for the additional two days of professional learning, consider the aspects of the PKFCC and Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ) where teachers could use more support.

*Please email prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov if additional guidance is needed regarding professional learning.*

# Meal Services

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for providing students with nutritious meals and promoting meaningful learning during meal times and related routines.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

## Overview

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must provide students with a minimum of breakfast and lunch to ensure their nutritional needs are met and they are ready to learn. The New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Office of SchoolFood is responsible for providing meals to students attending District Schools and Pre-K Centers.

## Provision of Meals

Breakfast and lunchtime should be thoughtfully incorporated into students' daily schedules, so that meals and associated routines provide minimal disruption to students' engagement in classroom activities.

### Breakfast

Consistent with the Breakfast in the Classroom Initiative (BIC), all students must be provided with breakfast in the classroom. Any student who does not want to eat or has already eaten breakfast is not required to eat breakfast in the classroom. The number of breakfasts delivered to the classroom is based on the number of students who are actually eating each day.

### Lunch

Lunch must be made available to all students free of charge. Principals or Early Childhood Directors (ECDs) must determine the location and manner in which students are served lunch.

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) strongly recommends that meals be served family-style and in the classroom.

In determining the best meal service model for students, the DECE recommends considering the following:

- Student safety

- Staff-to-student ratio and supervision requirements

- The ability to provide students with instructional meals *(see the "Promoting Learning During MealTime" section below)*

## Promoting Learning during Meal Time

Meal time is an opportunity for staff members to promote students' progress in approaches to learning, social-emotional development, physical development and healthy habits, fine motor skills, cognition and knowledge of the world, and language development. To facilitate this learning, it is strongly recommended that meals are served family-style and provided in an environment conducive to interaction between staff and students.

During meal time, staff are encouraged to:

- Sit with students

- Model healthy eating habits, such as showing enthusiasm for trying new healthy food

- Promote positive social interactions; students should be encouraged to talk during meal times

- Support students, as needed, to develop skills to feed and serve themselves independently

Students can also have a role in managing meal time and can participate in distributing supplies, serving themselves, and cleaning up after the meal is finished.

## Menus and Nutrition

SchoolFood provides early childhood specific breakfast and lunch menus on a monthly basis. All SchoolFood meals provided for students meet and exceed the USDA Nutrition Standards for School Meals.

It is important that families understand what meals are served to their children. The DECE recommends that District Schools and Pre-K Centers inform families on how they can access menus online and through the School Food mobile app. In addition, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to print menus monthly and provide them directly to families.

Please also direct families to the nutritional information on the School Food Menu Nutrition Information page.

## Providing Meals to Students with Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

Managing food allergies in District Schools and Pre-K Centers is a team effort. The risk of exposure to allergens for a student is reduced when the District School or Pre-K Center, medical provider and family work together to develop a management plan for the student. SchoolFood staff work closely with School Nurses to ensure that the needs of students with food allergies are met.[6] On a daily basis, SchoolFood menus offer more than one option for students to enjoy. For all menu options, please review the breakfast and lunch menus.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must work closely with families and school nurses to determine which foods students with food allergies and dietary restrictions can eat. Students with food allergies, medical concerns, and/or dietary restrictions must receive assistance from staff to ensure they receive appropriate food during meal times.

In accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-715, arrangements must be made to reduce the risk of exposure for identified students with severe food allergies. As such, families and staff can be asked to refrain from bringing allergen-containing foods from home. However, District Schools and Pre-K Centers cannot make a commitment that the allergen at issue will never be present.

Due to allergy concerns and other dietary restrictions, staff members may not share food brought from home with students. *For more information on School Food's Food Allergy Policy, see School Food's website.*

## Providing Meals to Students with Disabilities

SchoolFood recognizes the importance of ensuring that students with disabilities have the same opportunity to enjoy school meals so that they can achieve academic success. A monthly breakfast and lunch Special Needs Menu is published to accommodate students who qualify for Section 504 accommodations.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must work collaboratively with their School Nurse and the Office of School Health to provide the necessary menus to students who qualify for accommodations.

*For more information on the process for receiving Section 504 accommodations, please see the Office of School Health's Section 504 Accommodations website.*

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[6]  Pre-K Centers without an on-site school nurse should work with their assigned itinerant nurse to ensure the needs of students with food allergies are met.

# Food Safety and Sanitation

The NYCDOE strongly recommends District Schools and Pre-K Centers adhere to the following food safety and sanitation policies that are in accordance with New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) policies and guidelines defined by the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R).[7] Food safety and sanitation is an important part of a District School and Pre-K Center's safety plan. Failure to prepare, store, and serve food in a safe and sanitary manner may lead to harmful health consequences for students. The following requirements are applicable to all program staff (e.g., kitchen staff and teaching staff):

## Food Storage

- All food must be stored at the proper temperatures in a clean and sanitary environment.

- Shelf-stable/dry food is to be stored in insect and rodent-proof containers with tight lids.

- Keep food out of the danger zone, 40°F–140°F.

- Expiration dates are to be monitored and food must not be served or kept beyond the expiration date.

## Meal Service

- Hands must be thoroughly washed before wearing new gloves and after handling food.

- To prevent the contamination of food, food handlers must be provided with and use single-use disposable gloves.

- Proper serving utensils are to be rust-free, clean and sanitized.

- Food that leaves the kitchen or food storage areas should be covered and maintained at proper temperatures when transported.

- Food moved to serving areas should be discarded after meal service and may not be re-served.

## Clean-up and Sanitation

- All food contact surfaces must be properly cleaned and sanitized before and after meal service.

- To sanitize tables or soiled surfaces:

  — Use a spray bottle containing sanitizing solution made up of one capful of bleach per one gallon of water to wash tables and food spills.

  — The bleach-water solution should be allowed to sit for at least 10 seconds before being wiped dry.

    - Please note that allowing the solution to sit for at least 2 minutes and allowing the table to air dry is preferable.

  — Sponges cannot be used for sanitizing tables because they soak bacteria away from the surface of the sponge, which then cannot easily be reached by a sanitizing agent.

  — A separate rag is required for each table. Soiled rags are to be rinsed before returning to sanitizing solution and cannot be returned to soak in the bleach-water solution.

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[7] The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R) is an observational tool used to assess early childhood learning environments. The assessor observes the pre-K classroom and looks for specific indicators of quality across the following areas: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language-Reasoning, Activities, Interaction, and Program Structure.

### Handwashing Practices after Meal Time

In accordance with the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale - Revised (ECERS-R), the following handwashing practices must be followed by students and staff after meal times:

1. Moisten hands with water and apply liquid soap to hands.

2. Rub hands together, away from the water stream, vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for 20 seconds (students can sing "Row, row, row your boat," twice).

3. Rinse hands, and dry with individual paper towels that are not shared.

4. The paper towel should be used to turn off the faucet when done.

5. Throw paper towel in waste basket.

Sanitizers should not be used as a substitute for hand washing, as sanitizers are not as effective at eliminating pathogens. If sanitizers are used, hands should be washed as soon as possible thereafter using soap and water.

## Family Payment for Meals

### District Schools

- Breakfast is provided free of cost to all 3-K and pre-K students.

- Lunch is provided free of charge for 3-K and pre-K students.

### Pre-K Centers

- Breakfast is provided free of cost to all 3-K and pre-K students via the NYCDOE Breakfast in the Classroom Program.

- Lunch is also provided free of cost to all students attending Pre-K Centers.

## Meal Tracking and Accountability

### District Schools

- Weekly rosters must be distributed to each teacher on Friday afternoon for the following week's meal service.

  — Each day, the teacher must check off the appropriate date indicating that the student was served a complete breakfast or lunch.

  — Recording attendance is not a sufficient indicator of meals served.

- At the end of the week, rosters must be submitted to the school designee who is responsible for compiling a list of meals served to students by meal eligibility and generating meal payment letters for families who are required to pay for lunches served.

### Pre-K Centers

- On a daily basis, the ECD's classroom designee must count the number of complete breakfast and lunch meals served to students in each classroom.

- A separation of student eligibility is not necessary.

- Attendance, food portions, or deduction methods are not acceptable methods of counting meals.

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Meal Services

*3-K for All* programs must follow food standards to ensure that every student is provided nutritious meals.

### Meal Requirements

*3-K for All* programs must offer one of the following approved meal patterns to *3-K for All* students to ensure that their nutritional needs are met:

- Breakfast and lunch or
- Lunch and a nutritious snack

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Are District Schools and Pre-K Centers able to maintain "peanut free" environments?

No, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are not able to maintain a "peanut free" environment. Prohibiting foods containing a specific ingredient, such as peanuts, does not eliminate the possibility of student exposure to that ingredient. However, in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-715, arrangements must be made to reduce the risk of exposure for identified students with severe food allergies.

### 2. What are some additional recommended best practices to implement during meal times?

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has developed a Nutrition and Physical Activity Best Practices document that can be referred to for recommendations on meal time best practices.

### 3. Are families allowed to bring in meals for their children?

Yes, families may always provide meals for their child. If a family prefers to provide meals for their child, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for ensuring that the student's food is properly refrigerated, and that the family is informed of age-appropriate nutritional guidelines.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers should work with families to develop an understanding as to when the family plans to provide meals from home. Meals provided by families for their child must not be shared with other students.

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#### Guidance on Family Provision of Meals

The DECE recommends that District Schools and Pre-K Centers encourage families not to send food with their child for the following reasons:

- Students may expand their food preferences by trying different foods.
- If the meals are served family style, the student can choose how much and what he or she wants to eat.
- Meal time is more cohesive when all students are eating the same meal. If one student brings in food, others may request to do the same, increasing the difficulty of serving a family style meal.

# Attendance

To ensure students gain the maximum benefit from 3-K and pre-K, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should stress the importance of regular attendance to families.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

Research has shown that students in regular attendance benefit most from the services offered in 3-K and pre-K.[8] A student's year in 3-K and pre-K is a unique opportunity for learning—early childhood education is truly an irreplaceable time for students' growth and development. Studies clearly demonstrate that high-quality 3-K and pre-K provides students with stronger math, reading, language, and social-emotional skills going into elementary school. To ensure students receive this foundation to succeed in Kindergarten and beyond, attendance is critical.

By collecting attendance data, developing strategies for improving attendance, and proactively building a welcoming and engaging environment for families and students, District Schools and Pre-K Centers have the ability to maximize student attendance in their 3-K and pre-K classrooms.

Consistent with Chancellors Regulation A-210 District Schools and Pre-K Centers must:

- Develop, communicate, and implement policies for:

    — Recording and maintaining accurate records of student attendance;

    — Monitoring patterns of student lateness and absence;

    — Using effective intervention strategies to improve school attendance.

- Define the types of absences and lateness that will be excused or not excused and the supporting documentation to be collected and maintained.

- Submit an annual Attendance Plan that is a component of the Office of Student and Youth Development's Consolidated Plan (District Schools only). 3-K and pre-K students must be included in the plan.

    — *For more information, please see the How to Complete the Attendance Plan of the OSYD Consolidated Plan document.*

- Communicate with families during welcome events, Family-Teacher Conferences, and via written/online communications to clearly articulate the expectation that students attend 3-K and pre-K on a full-time daily basis. Work with families to understand reasons for low attendance, develop strategies to address those reasons and, where necessary, discuss the impact of low attendance on their children's experience.

## Attendance Expectations at the Beginning of the Year

Smooth transitions into your program lay the foundation for a successful year. Programs should be prepared to assist children and families with the transition to early childhood services. For additional guidance on supporting transitions, please refer to the section, "Supporting Families Transitioning into the Public School System," on page 68.

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[8]  Mapping the Early Attendance Gap: Charting a Course for Student Success. Attendance Works & Healthy Schools Campaign, September 2015.

**Staggered Schedule**
- All programs must begin the school year with full days of school (no staggered schedules) to support working families and others.
- If a family/guardian specifically requests a staggered or transition schedule for their child, a program can work with the individual family/guardian to implement this schedule on a short-term basis, not exceeding three weeks.
- Families cannot decide to attend 3K or Pre-K programs on a shortened schedule for the full year without a medically or developmentally documented reason. Please contact earlychildhoodpolicy@schools.nyc.gov before agreeing to any alternative schedule.
- For further assistance related to staggered schedules, programs should contact the DECE at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov.

## Temporarily Modified Schedule

District Schools and Pre-K Centers may not shorten the school day of any student unless the program receives approval from the DECE and written consent of the student's parent/legal guardian. Prior to initiating the process for Temporary Schedule Modification, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should utilize the proactive measures, positive reinforcements, and responsive strategies from The Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B) to address a student's behaviors. Staff must document the supports and interventions that have been put in place, and their outcomes, as part of an evidence-based approach to behavior guidance, instruction, and professional reflection.

For students that require additional assistance transitioning into a full-day 3-K or pre-K program and for whom alternative strategies have been unsuccessful in promoting positive behaviors and participation:

- The daily schedule of a 3-K or pre-K student may be temporarily modified, with parent/legal guardian consent and advance approval from the DECE, for a maximum of three weeks on a one-time-only basis, after which time the student will return to a full schedule.

- The process for temporarily modifying a student's schedule requires DECE approval and the voluntary, written consent of the student's parent/legal guardian.

- Principals or ECDs should contact the DECE Policy Team for support and information on how to request approval for a temporarily modified schedule by emailing EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov with the subject line: "Request for Modified Schedule at (insert program name)."

- When entering the reason code for a student absence due to a modified schedule, code 54 "P Authorized to Leave School Building" should be utilized on the attendance sheet.

# Maintaining Records of Student Attendance

Student attendance must be recorded by instructional staff on printed scan (bubble) sheets and recorded in ATS every day. Teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that accurate records of attendance are taken every day for each student enrolled.

- Attendance should be taken in either the morning, or both in the morning and afternoon (recommended), in accordance with the District School's or Pre-K Center's Attendance Plan.

  — If attendance is only taken in the morning, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must develop a protocol for recording late arrivals.

- Teachers must sign scan (bubble) sheets and changes to scan sheets can only be made and initiated by the teacher.

- All other changes of attendance must be documented on the Change of Attendance Form or similar record and entered into the ATS system.

  — If a student is admitted to a District School or Pre-K Center after attendance scan (bubble) sheets are printed, the student's attendance must be manually entered in ATS using the CIND function.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must keep scan (bubble) sheets and other forms of attendance documentation on file for six years.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must keep records of late arrivals and early departures.

  — A student who is marked late is considered present for the school day. No number of late arrivals constitutes an absence.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must take attendance in adherence to the NYCDOE and UFT Standards on Paperwork Reduction.

*For more information on taking daily attendance, see "[How to Take Daily and Period Attendance.](#)"*

## Responding to Student Absenteeism

When a student is absent, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must make every effort to communicate with the family on the day of the absence to understand the reason for the absence and determine if the student and/or family require additional supports or services.

If a student is absent with no advance notice from the family, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must:

- Make every effort to call the family on the first day of the student's absence.

  — Automated calling systems can be used to <u>supplement</u> the individual outreach efforts of the District School or Pre-K Center.

  — District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for maintaining up-to-date family contact information (address and phone numbers) in ATS.

- All communications made to families must be documented and kept on file at the District School or Pre-K Center site.

- Outreach and intervention efforts must be entered into the ILOG system in ATS.

  — *For more information on the ILOG function in ATS, see "[Present and Accounted For.](#)"*

Frequent or unexcused lateness or early departure requires the same follow-up and intervention procedures as absences.

### Family Outreach

Regular participation in 3-K and pre-K enables students to get the most out of daily learning opportunities. If a student accumulates a high number of absences due to illness, family emergencies, etc., District Schools and Pre-K Centers should work with the family to determine if additional supports are required to enable the student to attend on a regular basis. Supports may include assisting the family to:

- Access health care including counseling services

- Find a more reliable source of transportation

- Access community resources

Positive outreach to families in a proactive and positive manner is the best way to ensure regular attendance and strong two-way communication between families and program staff. You may wish to encourage families to communicate absences in advance.

In instances where regular or sustained efforts to engage families are unsuccessful at improving a student's regular attendance, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should contact the DECE Family Engagement team at prekfamilyengagement@schools.nyc.gov to request assistance from a Social Worker.

### Form 407 Attendance Follow-Up and Outreach (District Schools Only)

The Form 407 Process is designed to ensure the safety and welfare of students. In alignment with Chancellors Regulation A-210, District Schools are required to follow the Form 407 process included in their Safety and Youth Development Consolidated Plan.

A Form 407 is automatically generated when a student misses:

- 10 *consecutive days*
- 20 aggregate days over 4 months
- 8 consecutive days (if there has been a previous 407)

*Additional information on the Form 407 process for District Schools can be found on the NYCDOE website and in Chancellors Regulation A-210. Additional information on the Form 407 process for Pre-K Centers is forthcoming.*

### Discharge Review Conferences

If a student is absent for 10 consecutive days or 20 aggregate days over 4 months, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should request that the family come in for a Discharge Review Conference to determine if the student should be removed from the classroom in order to permit a student on a waiting list to be enrolled in his or her place.

If a discharge is approved, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must send a registered letter documenting the discharge to the family. The letter must state that it is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to enroll their child for the next school year in Kindergarten.

No student will be discharged before the family is given an opportunity to explain the recurring absenteeism and the NYCDOE has granted approval.

*Contact prekfamilyengagement@schools.nyc.gov if you need assistance engaging a family for a discharge review conference or support planning a conference.*

*For more information on discharge procedures, please see FAQs #4, 5, and 6.*

## Strategies for Improving Student Attendance

District Schools and Pre-K Centers should monitor student attendance data with the goal of maximizing regular attendance through practices that build a welcoming and engaging environment and, when necessary, develop interventions and strategies toward improving student attendance in the classroom. Both long-term and short-term analyses of student attendance data can guide attendance strategies.

### Analysis

District Schools and Pre-K Centers should have a system in place that ensure staff are able to identify:

- Cases where a student is approaching chronic absenteeism
- Classrooms with low and high attendance rates
- Other attendance patterns

*Contact prekfamilyengagement@schools.nyc.gov if further guidance is needed.*

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Attendance

To ensure students get the most out of *3-K for All*, school leaders must stress the importance of regular attendance and stress to families that their involvement creates lasting habits to support school success.

### Attendance Expectations at the Beginning of the Year

Smooth transitions into your program lay the foundation for a successful year. Your program should be prepared to assist children and families with their transition to early childhood services.  For additional guidance on supporting transitions, please refer to the following section, "Supporting Families Transitioning into the Public School System," on page 68.

**Staggered Schedule**

- All programs must begin the school year with full days of school (no staggered schedules) to support working families and others.
- If a family or guardian specifically requests a staggered or transition schedule for their child, a program can work with the individual family/guardian to implement this schedule on a short-term basis, not exceeding three weeks.
- Families cannot decide to attend 3K or Pre-K programs on a shortened schedule for the full year without a medically or developmentally documented reason. Please contact earlychildhoodpolicy@schools.nyc.gov before agreeing to any alternative schedule.
- For further assistance related to staggered schedules, programs should contact the DECE at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. When should students with illnesses stay home from school?**

Students with a fever, diarrhea, or who are vomiting should not attend school until the symptoms are gone or until a doctor indicates that it is okay for the student to return. Students who develop respiratory problems should stay home until their symptoms are gone. District Schools and Pre-K Centers must communicate this policy with families at the beginning of the school year.

**2. Can a student be excluded from a District School or Pre-K Center due to lice?**

To avoid the spread of lice in District Schools and Pre-K Centers, students who have lice must be excluded from the classroom until they are lice free. Staff at the District School or Pre-K Center should check the student's head to ensure that the student is lice free before readmission to school. Additionally, the school nurse or the designee of the Principal/ECD should check the student's head 14 days after readmission to ensure they are still lice free. A note from a physician is not required for a student who has lice to return to his or her program. For more information, please see the NYCDOE's lice policy.

**3. Can a student be excluded from a District School or Pre-K Center due to bed bugs?**

No, students should not be excluded from attending 3-K or pre-K or sent home if they have bed bugs. Bed bugs are not known to cause or transmit disease and the risk of person-to-person transference in school is very low.

**4. If a student is absent for a significant number of consecutive days without explanation, can they be discharged?**

Students who are absent for 20 consecutive days without explanation may be discharged after the District School or Pre-K Center follows appropriate investigation and notification procedures detailed in the Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation Guidelines.

*5. What transfer code should be used to discharge a pre-K student?*

If necessary, students should be discharged using Code 04 in the *Transfer, Discharge, and Graduation* Guidelines. The following documentation is required for a Code 04 discharge:

- Record of parent/legal guardian's request for withdrawal

    — If the discharge follows 20 consecutive days of absences, documentation must include a record of an interview with the parent/legal guardian and child as well as a copy/receipt of the registered letter informing the parent/legal guardian of discharge.

- Completed Student Discharge Form

*6. What procedures should be followed if a family informs a District School or Pre-K Center ahead of time that the student will be missing a period of time due to a family vacation?*

If a family informs a District School or Pre-K Center ahead of time that the student will be missing a period of time greater than 10 consecutive days due to a family vacation, international travel, etc. appropriate staff should meet with the family prior to the student's absence.

- At this meeting, the District School or Pre-K Center should determine if/when the student will be returning to the program.

- If possible, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should request documentation from the family providing confirmation of their return date and their contact information while they are away.

    — If the District School or Pre-K Center does not have a waitlist, the student should not be discharged and should be allowed to return to the program at a future date.

    — If the District School or Pre-K Center does have a waitlist, the Principal or Early Childhood Director should make a determination whether to allow the student to remain enrolled. In making this decision, the following should be considered:

        - How long the student will be absent

        - The preference of the family

        - How the student might benefit from the program upon his or her return and the number of days remaining in the school year upon his or her return (i.e., if the student will return late in the school year and have only a few weeks back before school ends, the transition may not work well)

        - Potential benefit to a student on the waitlist

*Contact prekfamilyengagement@schools.nyc.gov for assistance in supporting smooth transitions for both the student absent for an extended period of time and the students' classmates.*

# Family Engagement

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must provide families with a warm and respectful environment. Proactive partnerships between families and staff establish a solid foundation for students' success in early childhood education and beyond.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

District Schools and Pre-K Centers support families in building their capacity to act as their child's primary teacher and advocate. Engaging families early on, through two-way communication, lays the foundation for ongoing family-teacher partnerships throughout the child's pre-K-12 experience and supports a student's well-being, academic success, and developmental progress. The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) requires that District Schools and Pre-K Centers provide information to families. All policies, communications and services must be sensitive to the linguistic, cultural, and social-emotional needs of families.

## Communication with Families

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to communicate with families at the beginning of the school year and on an ongoing basis. Teachers and staff should orient families to policies, goals, and content so that they understand what their child is learning and how this learning aligns to the Pre-Kindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC).

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**Supporting Families Transitioning into the Public School System**

3-K and pre-K may be a family's first time as part of the public school system. Transitioning students from their typical home environment to a structured school environment can be both exciting and overwhelming for many. Below are some suggestions on how to best support students and families during their transition into 3-K and pre-K:

- Ask families questions to help staff understand how best to serve the needs of their child. Examples may include:

    — "Are there any special circumstances or important background information we should know in order to best serve your child and family?"

- Work with District School or Pre-K Center leadership and Parent Coordinators (if available) to:

    — Develop a plan for engaging and supporting families that leverages best practices and tailored to their needs.

    — Promote professional learning opportunities for teaching staff and other family-facing staff as it relates to family engagement.

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### Communication at the Beginning of the School Year

Please share the information below with families at the beginning of the school year. Information should be disseminated using various channels, which may include but is not limited to welcome orientations, electronic methods, postal mail, and backpacking letters home. Additionally, written materials should be shared in the preferred language of each family. *See the "Translation Requirements" section below for more information.*

Forms

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must provide the following forms and documents to families at the beginning of the school year to complete and return:

- The Emergency Home Contact Card (Blue Card)

- Health Information

    — Child & Adolescent Health Examination Form (CH-205)

    — Guidelines for the Provision of Health Services and/or Section 504 Accommodations for Students in NYC Public Schools

    — Additional medical forms (as applicable). *For more information, please see the Pre-K Health Services chapter of the Handbook.*

- Meal Services Information

    — School Meals Application (SD1041) *(Not applicable to Pre-K Centers)*

Information to Share

Additionally, it is important that families are provided with the following information about services in your District School or Pre-K Center:

- General Operational Information

    — District School or Pre-K Center calendar and hours including site-specific and citywide professional learning days

    — 3-K or pre-K daily schedule

    — Contact information for District School and Pre-K Center leadership and instructional staff, including information on:

        - How the District School or Pre-K Center will communicate with families

        - How families can best communicate with the District School or Pre-K Center

    — A copy of the *Pre-K for All* Commitment to Families (See appendix C)

    — A copy of A Parent's Guide to Universal Pre-Kindergarten

    — Notifications to families to submit required medical documentation

        - Immunization Compliance Requirements

        - Physical Examination Requirements

    — School safety information

        - Notice about School Safety Committee meeting(s)

        - Parent Letter on General Response Protocol

- Program Instruction

    — Information on the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC) and how the curriculum your site utilizes advances and supports the PKFCC

    — Information on the curriculum utilized

- School Policies

    — Uniform policy and the [Uniform Exemption Request](#) Form (page 6) (if applicable)

    — Meals and menu information

        - *For more information on meals and menu information, please see the Meals Services chapter of the Handbook.*

    — Arrival and dismissal policy

    — Behavior guidance policy (must align to the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance in Appendix B)

    — Attendance policy

        - *For more information on attendance policies, please see the Attendance chapter of the Handbook.*

    — Other school specific policies

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### Welcome Orientation

It is strongly recommended that District Schools and Pre-K Centers hold a Welcome Orientation at the beginning of the school year or before school starts. Orientations are a great way to set a warm tone with families, establish two-way communication channels and share key information about policies, expectations and goals. In addition, families may be interested in the following:

- Information on the transition into 3-K or pre-K

- Methods on coping with separation

- Strategies for partnering with teachers

- Information on the curriculum being utilized

- Information on appropriate developmental expectations for three and four-year-olds

- Strategies for families to support their child's learning at home

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### On-Going Communication

District Schools and Pre-K Centers should maintain communications with families throughout the school year to develop families' capacity to enrich students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral skills that are foundational to learning. To that end, it is important that the following information be provided to families during the school year:

- Updates on Student's Developmental Progress and Learning

    — Authentic Assessments

        - *For more information, please see the Authentic Assessments chapter of the Handbook.*

- Extended Learning Opportunities

    — *For more information, please see the Extended Learning Opportunities chapter of the Handbook.*

- Health & Safety Incidents

    — Where serious medical or safety incidents occur, Principals or ECDs and/or Site Coordinators are responsible for immediately notifying families

- Meal Services

  — Families should be provided with food menus on a regular basis

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### Strategies for Utilizing Allocated Family Engagement Time Block

On Tuesdays, teachers are allocated a 75-minute block of time immediately following the school day.

Teachers shall use 40 of the 75 minutes to engage in one or more family engagement activities. Such activities may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Conducting face-to-face meetings

- Making phone calls

- Developing written correspondence including email, newsletters, and content for a school or class website

- Preparing and reviewing authentic assessment reports

All communication should support the linguistic, cultural, and social-emotional needs of families. Staff should encourage families to ask questions and share information about their child on a regular basis.

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## Language Access Requirements

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must determine the written and oral language preferences of the parent/legal guardian within 30 days of the student's enrollment.

- Principals and ECDs are responsible for providing translation and interpretation services to families with limited English proficiency.

- All critical written communications must be translated into the preferred language of the parent/guardian. This includes communication containing student-specific information regarding, but not limited to:

  — Health

  — Safety

  — Legal or disciplinary matters and

  — Entitlement to public education or placement in any Special Education; English Language Learner, or non-standard academic program

- *Information on T&I services can be found at: Translation & Interpretation Unit*

## Family-Teacher Conferences

Family-teacher conferences are a time for deepening your relationships with families. These conversations provide an opportunity for teachers to collaborate with families and to discuss together how they can support their child's learning and development. Conferences are a great time to discuss student progress and a child's individual needs that build on the shorter casual conversations that you have with families daily.

Families should be offered at least three opportunities for family-teacher conferences throughout the school-year. You should strongly encourage families to participate in family-teacher conferences, as it is an important way to have conversations about their student's learning and developmental progress.

When scheduling conferences you should consider the following:

- Your program should use authentic assessment data, including student observations, work samples, and Developmental Summary Reports, to plan family-teacher conferences.

- Your program should allow approximately 20 minutes with each family to talk about their child's progress.

- Family-teacher conferences should be scheduled at times that are convenient for families. Conferences may be held before, during, or after regular program hours.

Consistent with the NYCDOE School Calendar, Family-Teacher Conferences are to be held four times a year.

- Teachers should use Authentic Assessment data including observations, work samples, and Developmental Summary Reports to plan for the Family-Teacher Conferences.

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### Guidance for a Successful Family-Teacher Conference

Strategies for planning a successful Family-Teacher Conference include:

- Coordinating with other staff in the building such as Principals and parent coordinators on early outreach and hosting family activities

- Utilizing A Teacher Guide to Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Advertising the Family-Teacher Conferences by sending home invitations at least 10 days in advance, disseminating flyers via local businesses, electronic mailing lists, the school website, and newspapers. Multilingual flyers can be found on the Family-Teacher Conference website.

- Providing families with the following resources along with the invitation to the Family-Teacher Conference:

  — A Parent Guide to Parent-Teacher Conferences

  — Questions to Consider Asking Your Child's Teacher

  — Parent Guide to Authentic Assessments Letter

  — School Calendar of Upcoming Events

- Setting up a greeting station for incoming families near the main entrance

- Providing families with a map of the District School or Pre-K Center

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### Parent Leadership Groups

Parent leadership groups (e.g., Parent Associations, Parent-Teacher Associations, etc.) create opportunities for families to develop their capacity to advocate for their child's needs and drive program improvement. Families can contribute directly to program governance and exercise leadership to create effective opportunities to provide feedback on various aspects of the District School or Pre-K Center's quality. These groups are both autonomous and self-governing in order to serve as the liaison between students, families, and administrative staff (e.g., Principals, Early Childhood Directors, etc.).

## District Schools

All schools must have a Parent Association (PA) or Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) that meets all requirements of Chancellor's Regulation A-660. The parents of students enrolled in a 3-K or pre-K classroom are eligible to participate in the school's PA or PTA. School staff and Parent Coordinators should encourage parents to become members of the PA/PTA and attend general meetings.

*Please contact the NYCDOE Division of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) at FACE@schools.nyc.gov with any questions.*

## Pre-K Centers – Parent Advisory Committee

A Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is an organization of the parents of children attending the DOE's Pre-K Centers. Pre-K Centers are those programs which fall directly under the supervision of the district's Early Childhood Director. Each Pre-K Center will develop one district-wide PAC, and all parents/legal guardians of children currently enrolled in the DOE's Pre-K Centers are members of the PAC and eligible to be elected to the PAC Executive Committee. For Pre-K Centers serving both 3-K and pre-K, all parents/legal guardians of 3-K and pre-K students are members of the PAC and eligible to be elected to the PAC Executive Committee. **The purpose of these parent groups is to create a vehicle for communication among parents, Pre-K Center staff, the Early Childhood Director (ECD), and district leadership. Their primary role is to provide a voice for the interests, ideas, questions, and concerns of Pre-K Center parents, and a means to communicate these to the Early Childhood Director through the Executive Committee.** PACs may also choose to conduct fundraising activities. In addition, parents from the PACs will serve on C-30 committees to select assistant principals for Pre-K Center sites, where applicable.

*This is a great introduction for parents into the world of parent leadership within the DOE.*

Since pre-K (and 3-K in some Pre-K Centers) is the only program offered at Pre-K Centers, the membership of these parent bodies will turn over each year. Given this, ECDs will be responsible for planning and chairing first-of-the-year meetings to vote in the executive committee, creating bylaws, and meeting with the Executive Committee once a month. The ECD will encourage parental participation year-to-year. Following each PAC's first-of-the-year meetings, all planning and execution of PAC meetings and related events will be managed by the elected members of the PAC. Parent Advisory Committees have more flexibility in their governance structures and bylaws than PAs and PTAs, which are subject to the parameters of Title I. Although PAC members will not be eligible for election into the Community Education Council (CEC), members will have the opportunity to be introduced to community leadership and engage with other parents on issues of importance to Pre-K Center families.

*For more information on PACs or if you have any other questions, please contact the Pre-K Center Support Team at PKCSupport@schools.nyc.gov.*

# Field Trips and Neighborhood Walks

Field trips and neighborhood walks are an instructional strategy used to provide students with hands-on opportunities to apply and deepen learning outside of the classroom.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

It is important that all New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) field trip and neighborhood walk policies are followed to ensure that students are safe and gain the most from any off-site experience. District Schools and Pre-K Centers must follow all requirements outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-670 regarding field trips. As such, all field trips and neighborhood walks require written parent/legal guardian consent. Neighborhood walks are defined as routine local activities, such as walking daily to the public playground nearby or taking a walk around the neighborhood regularly. Both field trips and neighborhood walks should be planned to ensure the health, safety, and adequate supervision of all students at all times.

All field trips and neighborhood walks must:

- Contain an educational component supporting the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC), align to the current unit of study, and be developmentally appropriate. Examples of appropriate field trips include:

    — Identifying and sorting different plants at the Botanical Garden.

    — Learning about community careers at the local police station, post office, or fire station.

- Fit within the scope of the District School's or Pre-K Center's budget.

    — District Schools and Pre-K Centers must identify all required funding in advance of a field trip.

    — District Schools and Pre-K Centers may make a broad appeal to families for voluntary donations to offset the cost of a trip, but may not solicit donations from any single family.

    — No student may be excluded from a field trip if their family cannot make a donation.

- Be approved by the Principal or ECD.

Students requiring assistance may not be excluded from field trips or neighborhood walks. District Schools and Pre-K Centers must plan to support students with disabilities to participate in all activities.

## Field Trips Involving Transportation

In some cases, District Schools and Pre-K Centers may need to provide students with vehicular transportation (e.g., a bus) to take them to an off-site location. If District Schools or Pre-K Centers choose to transport students as a part of any trip, NYCDOE's Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT)'s policies must be adhered to, including:

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for securing a bus vendor for field trips.

    — District Schools and Pre-K Centers are not entitled to use NYCDOE OPT contracted buses for pre-K field trips.

- All students under five years old or weighing 50 pounds or less at the time of the trip must ride in Child Safety Restraint Systems (car seats).

    — Families may not be asked to provide car seats to use on private buses.

— District Schools or Pre-K Centers may not purchase car seats to use. Car seats must be provided and installed by the private bus operator.

- Under no circumstances may students utilize public transportation to get to or from an off-site location during the school day.

- Field trips must be within the five boroughs.

- Field trips must be scheduled between 9:30 am and 1:30 pm.

The NYCDOE recognizes that there may be logistical and funding challenges in arranging bus transportation for field trips. The DECE strongly encourages District Schools and Pre-K Centers to utilize neighborhood walks and push-in visitors as an alternative to field trips requiring transportation. For more information on push-in visitors see FAQ #3 below.

*Questions about transportation for field trips can be directed to the NYCDOE OPT at pupiltransportationteam@ schools.nyc.gov.*

## Neighborhood Walks

The NYCDOE strongly encourages District Schools and Pre-K Centers to utilize neighborhood walks to provide enriching opportunities for students.

Neighborhood walks are a valuable instructional strategy for deepening students' connections to the curriculum and the community. Teaching staff can use these opportunities to engage students in noticing details of, or changes in, their environment. Examples of neighborhood walks include excursions to:

- Observe local buildings and landmarks, collect natural artifacts, or study transportation

- Visit helpers in the community, such as a local grocery store, fire station, or doctor's office

- Visit nearby museums, theaters, and libraries

### Safety Considerations

- The distance of a walk should not exceed ½ mile (about 10 blocks) from the District School or Pre-K Center location.

- Plan a walking route that avoids large avenues, busy streets, or throughways.

- Ensure that students are accompanied at all times during a walk. District Schools and Pre-K Centers are strongly encouraged to provide a minimum adult-to-student ratio of one adult to four students.

## Parent/Legal Guardian Notice and Approval

Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-670 regarding school trips, prior to taking students on a field trip or neighborhood walk, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must:

- Notify students' parents/legal guardians in advance of any planned field trip or neighborhood walk

- Obtain written permission from parents/legal guardians on the NYCDOE Parent Notification/Consent Form (see pg. 10–11)

- If neighborhood walks are to take place on a regular basis (e.g., trips to an off-site playground), one NYCDOE Parent Notification/Consent Form may be used for multiple neighborhood walks to that location.

  — Indicate the proposed schedule of neighborhood walks on the consent form

## Student Supervision

Students must be accompanied at all times during field trips and neighborhood walks. No student may be left unsupervised during any part of a field trip or neighborhood walk. Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-670, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must adhere to the following policies:

- Principals and ECDs must designate one teacher or other supervisor as the individual with overall responsibility for the field trip or neighborhood walk.

- The exact number of chaperones needed for each field trip or neighborhood walk will vary depending the type of trip, but there must be, at minimum, the same ratio of adults to students as required in the classroom. Principals and ECDs must recommend and approve the adult-to-student ratio based on requirements for field trips and neighborhood walks.

  — The DECE strongly recommends a minimum adult-to-student ratio of one adult to four students is maintained on all field trips and neighborhood walks.

## Emergency Preparedness

Consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-670, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must develop emergency and contingency plans to follow when taking students on trips. Teaching staff must be informed of emergency and contingency plans through appropriate staff/volunteer orientations.

- Staff should travel with first aid kits, telephone numbers for local emergency services, and students' emergency contacts on trips.

### Lost Child Emergencies

Upon report that a student is missing while on a field trip or neighborhood walk, the teacher or other supervisor that the Principal or ECD has designated with responsibility for the trip will:

- Immediately contact the authorities (e.g., site security guard) with jurisdiction over the trip site and organize a search.

- Call local police, the student's parents/legal guardians, and the Principal or ECD if the student cannot be found following the initial search.

- Notify the Borough Safety Director of the incident.

- Ensure that a staff member remains at the site until all students are accounted for.

- Determine in consultation with the Principal or ECD if other students and adults should leave the site.

### Medical Emergencies

If a student becomes ill or injured while on a field trip or neighborhood walk and is in need of assistance, the teacher or other supervisor that the Principal or ECD designated with responsibility for the trip will:

- Notify health officials (e.g., school nurse or a licensed medical professional) immediately. The determination must be made by health officials regarding the severity of the illness or injury, and if hospitalization is required, a staff member must accompany the student.

- Contact the student's parent/legal guardian immediately and advise them of the whereabouts of their child and the nature of the injury or illness.

  — Parents/legal guardians must be informed about their child's condition if they are not able to travel to the site.

- Ensure a staff member remains with the student until he or she is able to leave.

- Determine in consultation with the Principal or ECD if other students and adults should leave the site.

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Field Trips & Neighborhood Walks

Field trips and neighborhood walks are instructional strategies used to provide children with hands-on opportunities to apply and deepen learning outside of the classroom. District Schools and Pre-K Centers may offer field trips and neighborhood walks for *3-K for All* classes in alignment with DECE policy and as approved by parents/legal guardians.

### Supervision

To ensure their safety, *3-K for All* students require attentive supervision when attending an off-site field trip or neighborhood walk. Please note that the policies below are more stringent than those for *Pre-K for All*.

- A ratio of one adult chaperone for every three *3-K for All* students is required on all field trips and neighborhood walks.

- Children should never be left unsupervised with an adult chaperone (e.g. a parent volunteer) who has not received all required background checks.

Teachers must submit a trip plan and a detailed itinerary to their principal or early childhood director (ECD)/ site coordinator for approval, prior to the trip. The trip plan should indicate the trip destination, its purpose, and the number of students and adults attending the trip.

When determining adequate adult-to-student ratios, principals and ECDs should consider the following:

- Nature of the field trip

- Type of activities in which the students will be engaging

- Ability of the number of adults to maintain constant supervision of every student

- Mode of transportation (i.e. neighborhood walk vs. bus transportation)

### Toileting

Three-year-olds cannot wait long periods of time before using the bathroom. To that end, principals and ECDs must develop a plan for addressing the toileting needs of students while on an off-site field trip or neighborhood walk. This plan should include:

- When students will be provided opportunities to use the toilet

- How students will be assisted with diapering/toileting while off-site

- A list of toileting supplies to be brought on the trip (e.g. diapers, wipes, extra clothes) While off-site, toileting procedures must meet all sanitary requirements.

### Transportation

*3-K for All* classrooms may utilize vehicular transportation (e.g. a bus) to take students and staff to an off-site location. If students are transported as a part of any trip, principals and ECDs/ site coordinators are required to adhere to the following NYCDOE Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) policies:

- All children under five years old or weighing 50 pounds or less at the time of the trip must ride in the appropriate Child Safety Restraint Systems (i.e. car seats).

  — Please note that the weight and size of three-year-olds can vary substantially, resulting in significantly different Child Safety Restraint Systems (i.e. car seat) requirements.

- Bus companies utilized must ensure compliance with all applicable State and Federal rules and regulations regarding the transportation of children.

The maximum allotted travel time for *3-K for All* trips is limited to 45 minutes in each direction; *Pre-K for All* field trips are limited to one hour in each direction.

Please note that *3-K for All* classrooms are not entitled to use NYCDOE Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) buses for field trips. The DECE encourages *3-K for All* classrooms to utilize neighborhood walks and push-in visitors as an alternative to field trips requiring transportation.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Are field trips required in 3-K and pre-K?*

While field trips are encouraged because they provide students with hands-on opportunities to apply and deepen learning outside of the classroom, they are not required.

*2. Can a District School or Pre-K Center forgo the use of a private bus and have parents/legal guardians take their own child to a field trip destination?*

No, a District School or Pre-K Center may not have parents/legal guardians take their own child to a field trip destination.

*3. Are push-in visitors an alternative learning experience to neighborhood walks or field trips?*

Yes, push-in visitors enhance the curriculum through in-depth explorations on-site at a District School's or Pre-K Center's location with role models from the community. All push-in visitors must remain under direct supervision of a teaching staff member at all times. Examples of push-in visitors include:

- Families (e.g., sharing cultural traditions)

- Community helpers (e.g., representatives from your local fire or police department)

- Theater companies or children's museums

# Student Behavior

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for using positive behavior guidance strategies and the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B) to empower students to develop a positive self-concept and intentionally guide students to interact respectfully and constructively with peers and adults in their community, and their environment.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

A student engaged in active learning who feels secure, supported, and valued, is more likely to demonstrate respectful and constructive behaviors and engage in positive interactions. District Schools and Pre-K Centers should structure an environment and approach interactions in ways that build positive relationships with students and families. Students' behavior should be guided in a strengths-based way as part of the developmentally appropriate instruction taking place throughout the classroom.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must implement positive behavior guidance and behavior management policies that align with the New York City Department of Education's (NYCDOE) Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B) which is the guiding document on behavior management and discipline for students.

The NYCDOE's Discipline Code refers to the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance for handling any situations that arise pertaining to students.

3-K and pre-K students may not be expelled or suspended. In addition, students may not be sent home early as a form of punishment or as a strategy to manage disruptive behavior in the classroom.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must develop and implement strategies for responding to behavior that is disruptive to other students or unsafe for the student and/or others. Staff are responsible for documenting the supports and interventions that are put in place as part of an evidence-based approach to behavior guidance, instruction, and professional reflection.

## Positive Behavior Guidance Strategies

District School and Pre-K Center staff must utilize the following practices and strategies throughout the school year in order to provide a rigorous and developmentally appropriate education:

1. Proactive Measures to Promote Positive Behavior

    Prior to and in the beginning of the school year, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must develop and implement the following proactive and developmentally appropriate strategies:

    • Establishing respectful, caring relationships

    • Being flexible and responsive to students when planning the curriculum

    • Arranging and supervising the physical environment to support students

    • Communicating clear expectations for students

    • Using developmentally appropriate instructional strategies to establish a positive classroom culture

    • Planning for successful management of transitions

**2.** Positive Reinforcement to Promote Positive Behavior

Positive reinforcement acknowledges and motivates further positive behavior. It is important to let students know that they are making progress toward a desirable new skill to encourage their effort.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must <u>not</u> use food or other material rewards for students exhibiting positive behaviors.

Examples of developmentally appropriate ways to reinforce positive behaviors include:

- Using <u>social reinforcements</u> such as praise and encouragement that provide meaningful and relevant feedback.

    — Praise should be specific and provide meaningful feedback, especially when the behavior is relatively new to the student (e.g., "You were very thoughtful to share the toys with your friend. He seems really happy that you included him in the game"). Avoid more general feedback (e.g., "Good job").

    — A high-five or thumbs up are appropriate non-verbal reinforcements for behaviors that are clearly encouraged (e.g., the student has been working on sharing and you notice them share their toys from across the room. You catch their eye and give them thumbs up immediately following the positive behavior).

- Using <u>activity reinforcements</u> as a reward for desired positive behaviors, such as being able to choose a song or activity for the group or during center time.

    — There should already be room in the curriculum for following student's interests or ideas for learning. These reinforcements are therefore a logical way to incorporate positive reinforcement into the program.

**3.** Responsive Strategies to Promote Positive Behavior

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to develop and implement strategies for responding to behavior that is disruptive to other students or unsafe for the student and/or others.

*This does not apply to behaviors of intentional risk-taking necessary for learning new skills, such as walking on a balance beam or climbing a rope ladder during gross motor activities, which are appropriate with adult support and supervision.*

<u>All strategies for guiding students to appropriate behaviors should be implemented in a calm, consistent, and non-punitive way to support students' social and emotional development and learning.</u>

Teaching staff should collaborate with a student's family to help the student develop solutions to challenging situations and practice appropriate alternative behaviors, consistently and in various contexts. District Schools and Pre-K Centers should communicate with families throughout the process of positive behavior guidance to exchange information about strategies and progress.

Possible responsive strategies include:

- Understanding contributing factors
- Offering choices
- Redirecting or providing acceptable substitutes
- Supporting the child's sense of security, self-regulation and self-soothing skills
- Limiting negative attention
- Logical consequences
- Replacement/alternative behaviors
- Modifications to program structures

- Additional special education support

More detailed information about these proactive measures, positive reinforcement strategies, and responsive strategies is available in the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B).

*In situations where District Schools or Pre-K Centers need more support to interpret or implement positive behavior guidance strategies, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should contact prekfamilyengagement@schools.nyc.gov.*

## Schedule Modifications

Teaching staff should implement strategies such as those outlined in the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B) to support a student in developing positive behaviors prior to considering any temporary schedule modification. A 3-K or pre-K student's schedule may be modified on a temporary basis only if all three of the following requirements are met:

- The use of a temporarily modified schedule must be in the student's best interest, as part of a comprehensive approach to assisting him or her in developing positive behavior

- The Principal or ECD must receive advance written approval from the DECE

- The Principal or ECD must receive voluntary written consent from the student's parent/legal guardian

*See FAQ #3 below for more information.*

## Required Documentation for Disruptive or Unsafe Behavior

Through intentional observation and documentation of such behaviors, teaching staff may identify the situations that trigger disruptive or unsafe behaviors and should adjust their practices accordingly to mitigate against those triggers.

District School and Pre-K Center staff must document instances of disruptive or unsafe behavior, including data that may identify the contributing factors to such behavior, and the responsive supports or interventions put in place by teaching staff, including the duration and outcomes of those interventions.

Examples of disruptive or unsafe behavior that should be documented may include:

- Consistently responding to transitions with crying, yelling, or resistance

- Running out of the classroom or building

- Consistently aggressive behaviors directed towards staff members or other students (e.g., kicking, hitting, biting)

Teaching staff should also work together with families to understand any additional factors contributing to a student's behavior and to provide consistent behavior guidance strategies.

Documentation of student behavior and intervention strategies may include:

- Low inference notes

- Authentic assessment data

- Meeting notes from family interviews to discuss concerns

- A functional behavior assessment developed by a trained staff member

These and other types of documentation may be reviewed by the DECE to identify and provide extra support to District Schools and Pre-K Centers in interpreting or implementing positive behavior guidance strategies.

# Behavioral Crisis De-Escalation and Intervention

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must establish behavioral crisis de-escalation policies and procedures that comply with the requirements outlined in Chancellor's Regulation A-411.

As stated in Chancellor's Regulation A-411, every effort must be made to safely de-escalate the behavior where possible using: 1) strategies and interventions for addressing behavioral crises, and 2) resources identified in the school's crisis de-escalation plan.

## Behavioral Crisis De-Escalation Plans

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must develop a crisis de-escalation plan that includes:

- Strategies for de-escalating behavioral crisis situations

- Locations in the school building in which students in crisis may be safely isolated from others

- School staff trained in de-escalation techniques

- In-school and community resources available to the school and parents/guardians

- Details for how crisis de-escalation and response protocols are communicated to school staff

School-wide behavioral crisis de-escalation plans must include all relevant information regarding strategies to support students experiencing behavioral crisis.

## Considerations For 3-K and Pre-K Students

When considering 3-K and pre-K students, behavioral crisis de-escalation plans should align to the responsive strategies of the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B), as well as any crisis de-escalation frameworks included in the school's approach to creating a safe and supportive environment.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are encouraged to develop individual behavioral crisis intervention plans for students who often engage in unsafe behaviors. When doing so, District Schools and Pre-K Center staff must take into consideration the unique developmental level of the student and the student's familiarity or relationship with responding staff when developing the strategies specifically for him or her.

*For more information, please see Appendix B for the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance.*

## Training For Staff

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must include pre-K staff in Crisis Intervention Orientation sessions, and are encouraged to include a 3-K and/or pre-K representative on their Crisis Intervention Team.

Principals and ECDs should consider proactive training for staff in behavior crisis de-escalation techniques to proactively promote the developmentally appropriate instruction of students' social-emotional learning and development of positive behaviors.

*For more information on available trainings please contact the DECE at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov.*

# Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Student Behavior

*3-K for All* programs are responsible for using positive behavior guidance strategies to empower students to develop a positive self-concept, and intentionally guide students to interact respectfully and constructively with peers and adults in their community, and their environment.

*3-K for All* classrooms must implement positive behavior guidance and behavior management policies that align with the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) and Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B), which is the guiding document on behavior management and discipline for *3-K for All* students.

In addition, *3-K for All* students may not be expelled or suspended. Students may not be sent home early as a form of discipline or as a strategy to manage disruptive behavior in the classroom.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Who should District Schools or Pre-K Centers contact if they need help implementing positive behavior guidance strategies or have specific questions about 3-K and pre-K students?**

In situations where District Schools or Pre-K Centers need more support to implement positive behavior guidance strategies, programs should contact the DECE Family Engagement Team by emailing prekfamilyengagement@schools.nyc.gov.

**2. What are some additional resources District Schools and Pre-K Centers can utilize when developing positive behavior guidance strategies?**

The Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B) provides additional information on implementing positive behavior management strategies.

Additionally, the DECE uses the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) tool as one of two programmatic assessment tools. The CLASS tool provides resources and strategies to understand the kinds of interactions that happen in classrooms. The CLASS tool provides a common language around effective, positive interactions in classrooms, and is a strong tool to provide professional development to teachers who need support with effective interactions that are aligned to the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see Appendix B). For more information about the CLASS tool, including regional trainings that are offered in New York City, please visit the Teachstones website.

**3. Can the schedule for an individual student be temporarily modified to support their development of positive behavior?**

District Schools and Pre-K Centers may not temporarily shorten the school day or otherwise modify the daily schedule of any student unless doing so is in the student's best interest and unless they have received approval from DECE and the voluntary, written consent from the student's parent/legal guardian.

As a pre-requisite for the DECE's approval, a DECE Social Worker, DECE Instructional Coordinator, program leader, and the student's parent/legal guardian must agree that temporarily shortening the length of the student's program day is in the student's best interest and will help him or her develop positive behaviors.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers will also be required to provide documentation of the student's behaviors, potential antecedents, and intervention strategies that have been put in place by staff, and the outcomes of those interventions, if seeking approval to temporarily shorten a student's school day.

Principals or ECDs who consider using this strategy should contact the DECE Policy Team for more information by emailing EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov with the following subject "Request for modified schedule at (insert program name)."

**4. Is the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance available in other languages?**

Yes, the Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance (see appendix B) is available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu.

# Pupil Accounting & Data Management Systems in Pre-K Centers

💡 What You Need to Know

## Overview

Pre-K Centers are responsible for utilizing the appropriate New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) data systems for enrollment, pupil accounting, budgeting, and reporting purposes. The following chapter provides an overview of the data systems utilized by Pre-K Centers and links to additional resources. Early Childhood Directors (ECDs) are responsible for ensuring staff are properly trained on and have access to the applicable data systems.

## Automate the Schools (ATS)

ATS is a school-based administrative system that standardizes and automates the collection and reporting of data for all students. Data that must be entered into ATS includes, but are not limited to:

- Enrollment information (e.g., registration, discharges, transfers)

- Student biographical information

    — If a family informs Pre-K Center staff of a change in student information (e.g., change of address), the pupil accounting secretary must make the change as necessary immediately upon notice.

- Attendance data (teachers complete the ATS attendance sheet; Attendance sheets are then scanned into ATS by the secretary)

- Health information

## Data Systems Linked to ATS

- Students Enrollment Management System (SEMS)

- Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR)

    — DOHMH immunization records are automatically entered into ATS. *Please note that there may be a delay in the automatic transfer of CIR records into ATS.*

- Human Resources Administration (HRA)

    — Student data for free and reduced-price lunch is automatically entered into ATS ECDs may designate staff, such as the school secretary, to enter information in ATS.

*For detailed guidance on using ATS, please visit the ATSWiki.*

## Student Enrollment Management System (SEMS)

SEMS is a system designed to support schools in managing enrollment processes. Additionally, SEMS is the application tool through which families apply to *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All*.

Within Pre-K Centers, the school secretary is responsible for completing the following tasks in SEMS:

- Verifying admissions priorities

- Tracking student offers

- Managing student waitlists

*For detailed information on SEMS guidance, please utilize the SEMS website or contact the Office of Student Enrollment (OSE) by emailing ESEnrollment@schools.nyc.gov.*

## Special Education Student Information System (SESIS)

The goal of SESIS is to support users in managing the special education process from referrals to the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Student IEPs and other relevant information associated with students who have IEPs are stored within SESIS. Designated Pre-K Center staff may print an individual student's IEP. However, these staff members cannot make any changes to IEPs through SESIS. A CPSE Administrator must make all changes to the IEP.

ECDs may designate staff members to receive access to SESIS by completing the following steps:

1. Login to Galaxy at https://mygalaxy.nycenet.edu/ and select the staff member you would like to provide with viewing access.

2. Click on the "bobblehead" (icon with the blue/green), go to "Assign Role" and select "SESIS."

3. Scroll down to "Assign Role."

4. Once within the "Role Access Assignment" screen, select the role you wish to assign to each individual.

*For information on SESIS login help and training resources utilize the SESISWiki.*

## Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS)

OORS is a system utilized to report school-related crimes and incidents, which occur on or near school property. In accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-412, Pre-K Centers are required to report any school-related crime or incident within 24 hours of the incident occurring in OORS. The complete and accurate reporting of school-related crimes, incidents, and injuries, which result from such incidents, are necessary steps in maintaining safety and order in the schools.

The ECD, Site Coordinator or designee must enter ALL occurrences into the OORS system either on the intranet via the OSYD Portal or by phone by contacting the Emergency Information Center (EIC) at (718) 935- 3210 if the incident involved NYPD or EMS responded.

- If the incident occurs at a Pre-K Center site that is housed within a District School or Parochial School, the ECD, Site Coordinator, or designee must indicate if the District or Parochial School was involved.

- Pre-K Centers must use their DBN as well as their Z-code to identify specific sites in OORS.

- When entering the incident into OORS, Pre-K Centers must refer to the Discipline Code to ensure accuracy in the coding of the incident.

Incident Reports

- The ECD, Site Coordinator, or designee is required to file an incident report for all school-related crimes and incidents within 24 hours of the incident. Incident reports shall be prepared and signed by the ECD, Site Coordinator, or designee.

- The incident should be described in sufficient detail to provide a full, factual description of what transpired; the ECD, Site Coordinator or designee must seek to obtain signed handwritten statements

from the parties involved and from witnesses, specifying the time, date, and place of the occurrence with an account detailing the nature and sequence of events.

## Suicide/Suicide Ideation

- All staff members must report any deaths by suicide, attempted suicides, and expressions of suicidal intentions occurring in and out of school to the NYCDOE through the OORS.

- The ECD, Site Coordinator, or designee must submit an updated entry with follow-up details within ten days of the initial reporting of the incident.

## EMS notification

- Please ensure that all EMS calls (date, time, disposition, etc.) are documented in OORS for students and staff when EMS is contacted or responds to an incident.

## Missing Student Reporting

- As per the Missing Student Protocol, when a student has left the Pre-K Center site premises or has been deemed missing, the incident must be entered into OORS immediately. The incident must be updated within 48 hours regarding the current status of the student.

## Guidance and Intervention

- Please ensure that all Guidance and Intervention measures are documented in the OORS for student misconduct that leads to an occurrence report.

Every ECD and Site Coordinator is provided with OORS login credentials. ECDs can request access for a designee by calling the OORS Help Desk at (718) 935-5004 or through the OORS system.

*For detailed information on documenting incidents in the OORS system, utilize the OORSWiki.*

# Galaxy

Galaxy is the budget tool utilized by ECDs to track *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* funds. Within Galaxy, the budget is structured into a table of organization that helps ECDs track where and how funds are utilized. The tool separates the information into the following categories:

- School budget

- Salary

- Per diem funds

- Per session funds

- Purchasing funds

- Other monies

The movement of funds from one funding stream to another requires prior approval from the Pre-K Center's designated FSC Director.

Every ECD must contact the designated FSC to obtain myGalaxy login credentials for Galaxy access. It is the responsibility of the ECD to request Galaxy access for additional staff members by completing the Systems Access Request Form (SARF) and submitting the form to the systems access inbox at SystemsAccess@ schools.nyc.gov.

*For more information on specific Galaxy budget policies and functionality, based on fiscal year, utilize the Galaxy Intranet.*

## Financial Accounting Management Information System (FAMIS)

The FAMIS portal, developed by Contracts & Purchasing and Financial Operations, is the NYCDOE's procurement system of record utilized to purchase goods and services. FAMIS is designed to link all financial accounting transactions, from budget initiation to procurement and payment of final invoices. Additionally, the system simplifies the process by which vendors and contracts are found.

To procure goods and services, users must create a Purchase Order (PO) in ShopDOE and upload the PO into FAMIS for approval.

*For more information on FAMIS login, procedures, and related resources refer to the FAMIS Security Unit.*

## Payroll Portal

The NYCDOE utilizes the Payroll Portal to effectively manage employee payroll. The Payroll Portal enables employees to access payroll related functions and serves as the main site for all payroll related information. Through Payroll Portal, employees can:

- Access payroll news
- Access published payroll documents and guides
- View payroll stubs
- View payroll calendars for upcoming events
- Enroll in various employee self-service options (e.g., EFT, College Savings Program)

Additionally, ECDs can utilize the following systems, available through Payroll Portal, to manage school aides' and paraprofessionals' salaries, substitute teacher needs, and per diem and per session tracking.

### Employee Information System

The Employee Information System (EIS) is the system by which timekeepers submit hours worked for staff members (hourly non-competitive and salary-based employees). Additionally, the following information should be entered for salary-based employees:

- Leave time
- Lateness
- Absences

### PDPS Per Diem System

The PDPS Per Diem system is utilized to manage substitute teachers. Using this system, secretaries can:

- Enter substitute teacher hours worked
- Identify pending investigations for substitute teachers and verify substitute teacher eligibility
    — If a substitute teacher has a pending investigation, they will be unable to provide services until the investigation has been closed and the substitute teacher is found eligible for employment.
- Request a substitute teacher
    — To request a substitute teacher, the secretary must call the Substitute Central System and report a teacher absence. The Substitute Central System will automatically call substitute teachers available in your district for employment.

*For assistance with the PDPS Per Diem system, please call (718) 935-2236/2229 or visit Payroll Portal.*

## Per Session System

The Per Session system is utilized to track overtime hours (e.g., hours worked before and after school hours and weekends). In order to be granted overtime hours, the ECD must put in a request to their FSC for approval. Additionally, ECDs must request a procession waiver for employees that have submitted overtime hours, which exceed that of the allotted hours available for overtime.

*For assistance with the PDPS Per Diem system, please call (718) 935-2236/2229 or visit Payroll Portal.*

# Program Assessments

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) utilizes nationally recognized, valid and reliable program assessment tools in conjunction with other information to monitor and understand program quality and inform various support efforts.  ECERS-R and CLASS are the assessment tools currently used in both *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* programs.

## What You Need to Know

### Overview

The DECE utilizes the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to measure the extent to which programs are successful at implementing certain elements of the Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ). ECERS-R measures the extent to which programs are successful at reaching the PQS as it relates to aspects of a supportive environment and rigorous instruction. CLASS measures the extent to which programs are successfully implementing the practices outlined in the EFQ related to interactions between teachers and students.

ECERS-R and CLASS are widely used in early childhood settings across the country. Data shows that there is a consistent relationship between ECERS-R and CLASS scores and child development and learning outcomes.

### Notification & Scheduling Procedures

#### Notification and Initial Scheduling

The DECE will notify you via email when your program has been selected to participate in an ECERS-R and/or CLASS assessment.

- Assessments must take place on a typical day of school for all students. This means that the usual daily schedule should be roughly followed and that the program operations take place as normal.

  — A typical day **does not** include:

    - School days where some students have been asked to stay home from school, or moved to different classrooms for behavior reasons

    - Walking field trips (neighborhood walks) that do not take place on a regular basis

    - Special assemblies

    - Extra-curricular events

    - School days when fewer than 50% of children are in attendance

  — A typical day **does** include:

    - School days as defined by the DOE or school calendar, including school days on before or after holidays

    - School days that include regular schedule changes for children (such as one day of the week that is consistently shortened)

    - Regularly scheduled specials and cluster classes

    - Small schedule fluctuations, such as a late meal delivery, that could feasibly happen any school day

- In most cases, you will be contacted by an ECERS-R or CLASS evaluator with the assessment date at least two weeks in advance.
    - You are requested to reply within two business days of notification, confirming that the projected assessment date is a typical day at your program.

- You should inform staff of the scheduled date and time of the assessment. In most cases, a confirmation email will be sent two to seven days before the date of the assessment.

- As part of the DECE's procedures to ensure and maintain consistent calibration and quality implementation, more than one evaluator may be sent to your site and observe in the classroom at the same time.

## Preparing for the Assessment

- Prior to the assessment date, you will be asked to provide the following information to DECE staff:
    - Number of *3-K for All* and/or *Pre-K for All* classrooms
    - *3-K for All* and/or *Pre-K for All* hours
    - Languages other than English spoken during instruction
    - *3-K for All* and/or *Pre-K for All* classroom daily schedule
    - Name of the staff member who will meet and greet the evaluator (e.g. lead teacher, Education Director)
    - Any other program information requested by the evaluator

Preparing materials such as lesson plans or curriculum maps are not required on the day of the assessment as these additional materials are not factored into scoring.

Introductory trainings are offered for the ECERS-R and CLASS tools are available on an ongoing basis. The exact training dates and locations are advertised in Principals' Weekly.

*You will be sent a copy of the All about the ECERS-R book or CLASS Dimensions Guide in the year of your assessment if you have not received one recently. A spiral bound ECERS-R scale can be requested by emailing [programassessment@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:programassessment@schools.nyc.gov).*

## Rescheduling an Assessment

If an assessment needs to be rescheduled for any reason (e.g., major facility issue, lead teacher absence; less than 50% of students in attendance; etc.), you should contact the evaluator as soon as possible via email or phone. The evaluator will work with you to reschedule the assessment as soon as possible, based on the reason given.

In the event of an unexpected school closure, the evaluator will not visit your program. He or she will contact you to reschedule the assessment.

In most cases, assessments rescheduled for any reason will take place within a month of the originally scheduled date.

# Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R)

The ECERS-R tool is an observational tool used to assess early childhood learning environments. ECERS-R measures the quality of the learning environment across six subscales: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language Reasoning, Activities, Interaction, and Program Structure.

**Assessment Details**

- One *3-K for All* and/or *Pre-K for All* classroom will be assessed. On the morning of the assessment, the evaluator will randomly choose which specific classroom will be assessed.

- Assessments take three-and-a-half (3.5) to four (4) hours and consists of:

  — A 3–3.5 hour classroom observation

  — A 30 minute interview with the lead teacher following the observation. Program administration is responsible for ensuring the lead teacher is available during the time of the assessment.

*For more information on the ECERS-R assessment tool, including a webinar series and frequently asked questions, please see the Program Assessment section of the DECE's website.*

## Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

The CLASS is an observational tool that provides a common lens and language focused on classroom interactions that research shows support student learning. CLASS measures classroom interactions across three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support.

**Assessment Details**

- Most or all of your *3K for All* and/or *Pre-K for All* classrooms will be observed.

- Assessments take anywhere from two to eight hours. The assessment may take place over more than one day, or more than one evaluator may be sent to your program depending on the number of classrooms at your program.

- Assessments will consist of at least two 20-minute observation cycles in each observed classroom. In most cases, the number of cycles that will take place in each classroom will depend on the number of classrooms in the program as outlined in the chart below.

| Number of Classrooms | Number of observation cycles per classroom | Amount of time in each classroom (approximately) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4 | 80 minutes |
| 2 | 2 in one class, 3 in the other | 40 minutes & 60 minutes |
| 3 or more | 2 cycles per classroom[2] | 40 minutes |
| 7 or more | 75% or more of classrooms will be observed | 40 minutes |

*For more information on the CLASS assessment tool, please see the Program Assessment section of the DECE's website. For more information on specific subscales and CLASS topics, please see the Teachstone website.*

## Results & Reports

Program staff are expected to use ECERS-R and CLASS results to inform program goals. Evaluators will not be able to provide any feedback to your program on the assessment day unless it requires the immediate attention of the program leader. Feedback will be sent in the form of a detailed report. Scores from the ECERS-R and CLASS assessments will be made publicly available on an annual basis and through the Pre-K Quality Snapshot.

### ECERS-R

Results will come in the form of an ECERS-R report, which includes:

- An overall average ECERS-R score;

- Average scores for each of the subscales;

- Areas of strength (where applicable)

- Detailed observation notes for lower scoring items; and

- General recommendations for next steps.

### CLASS

CLASS scores are the averages of observations collected across all *3-K for All* and/or *Pre-K for All* classrooms. Results will come in the form of a CLASS report, which includes:

- Average scores for each of the three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support.

- Average scores for each of the 10 dimensions

- Interpretation guidance for each of the CLASS domains and dimensions;

- Observation notes for each of the 10 dimensions; and

- General recommendations for next steps.

Since the DECE uses the CLASS tool to collect program level data, the scores on the CLASS report will show an average of all of the 15-20 minute observation cycles that are conducted in all *3-K for All* and/or *Pre-K for All* classrooms.

*For more information regarding results and reports, or with any other ECERS-R and CLASS questions, please contact programassessment@schools.nyc.gov.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Can ECERS-R and CLASS assessments be utilized to evaluate teacher performance?*

The observations conducted and reports prepared as part of the ECERS-R and CLASS assessments shall not be placed in any teacher's official file or used in any action or employment-related decision involving an individual New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) employee, including, but not limited to, any letter to file, rating, or tenure determination. In addition, DOE shall not introduce reports in any disciplinary proceeding, grievance, or arbitration, case or action. ECERS-R and CLASS results will not be used in any evaluation of any CSA member nor will the reports about ECERS-R assessments identify specific CSA members by name in any way.

*For more detailed information, please see the ECERS-R FAQs and CLASS FAQs.*

# IV. Instructional Programming

a. Developmental Screenings

b. Authentic Assessments

c. Curriculum and Professional Learning

d. Daily Pre-K Student Schedule

e. Nap and Rest

f.  Extending Learning to Home

g. Report Cards

h. Classroom Furniture and Instructional Materials

# Developmental Screenings

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must use a valid and reliable developmental screening tool, along with authentic assessment data, to identify students with potential developmental delays and language support needs.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

## Overview

Developmental screening is a key part of a student's transition into a 3-K and pre-K classroom. District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to use a valid and reliable developmental screening tool to identify potential developmental delays and language support needs. Screening tools assist educators in learning about the various aspects of a student's development, such as language cognition, perception, and motor development.

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) has approved three developmental screening tools:

- Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R)

- Brigance Early Childhood Screens System III

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Third Edition (ASQ-3)

The DECE provides materials and training for the ESI-R tool; see the DECE's Developmental Screening website for more information. If District Schools and Pre-K Centers would like to use a tool not on this list, this must be approved in advance in writing by the DECE. These requests should be sent to prekassessment@schools.nyc.gov.

## Key Requirements

- Teachers are required to administer a developmental screening to all students within 45 calendar days of enrollment.

- Staff administering the developmental screenings should take into consideration the needs and backgrounds of the students that they are serving and ensure that screenings are implemented using culturally, linguistically, and developmentally responsive methods.

  — You do not have to administer developmental screenings to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or students who were screened with an approved tool in a prior year to pre-K.

  — If a student's screening results indicate that they need to be rescreened for any reason, you are required to rescreen the student within 8-10 weeks.

  — If a student is unable to complete the screening in one of the offered languages (for the ESI-R tool, these languages include Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Russian). *See the "Screenings Results" section below for more information.*

## Developmental Screening Implementation

| Dates | Expectation |
| --- | --- |
| **First Day of School** | Send the Introduction to Developmental Screening Letter to families.<br><br>Begin screening enrolled students. |
| **45 Calendar Days from Enrollment** | All students must be screened within 45 calendar days of enrollment. |
| **21 Calendar Days from Screening** | Screening outcomes are to be submitted via the Payroll Portal within 21 days of each student's screening. |
| **Between 8–10 weeks from Screening (56 and 70 Calendar Days)** | All students who were screened with an outcome indicating a need for rescreening must be rescreened in this two-week period. |
| **After December 1st** | All students enrolled after December 1st must be screened within 15 calendar days of enrollment.<br><br>Screening outcomes for these students must be submitted within 21 calendar days of screening.<br><br>If applicable, rescreening for these students must occur 8 to 10 weeks from the initial screening. |

## Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R)

**ESI-R Examiner Qualifications**

Principals and Early Childhood Directors (ECD) are responsible for ensuring that staff administering the developmental screening meet the following minimum requirements:

- Must have an understanding of basic principles of standardized tests, including:

    — Knowledge of methods to ensure objectivity in administration of the tool

    — Importance of following standard procedures for administration and scoring

- Must be a District School or Pre-K Center leader, teacher, paraprofessional, or other staff member experienced in early childhood education, with an understanding of early childhood behavior and development.

- Must complete training to include observation of an examiner administering the tool (through WeTeachNYC.org or in-person training).

- Must be fluent and proficient in the language(s) used to administer the developmental screening tool (including Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Russian if using ESI-R).

Self-paced training for ESI-R is available at WeTeachNYC.org. *If a District School or Pre-K Center experiences technical trouble, such as logging into their account, they should email WeTeachNYC@schools.nyc.gov or call 212-374-6646, for immediate support.*

## ESI-R Materials

The DECE provides ESI-R materials by request. To submit a request for ESI-R materials, please see the [Developmental Screening website](#).

If a classroom received a kit in a prior school year, it must be reused. ESI-R kits include:

- An Examiner's Manual
  - — Four shape and six picture cards
  - — 10 blocks
  - — A button
  - — A rubber ball
  - — A toy car
  - — Reusable 8-foot measuring tape
  - — A tote bag
- Parent Questionnaires
- Scoring Sheets

Classrooms will need to provide the following additional materials:

- Cardboard/manila file folder (to be used as a screen)
- 2 sheets of construction paper, 8 ½" x 11" ( building surface)
- Plain white paper, 8 ½" x 11"
- Pencil without an eraser

Please note that materials must be standardized to the above requirements to maintain the validity of the screening.

## Screening Results

### Submitting Screening Outcomes

- All screening outcomes must be submitted via the Payroll Portal within 21 days of the screening.
- Developmental screening outcomes must also be communicated to families in a timely manner.
  - — The Principal or ECD should determine the method of communication to best meet the needs of families.

### Language Exception

- If the screening is not available in a child's home language, indicate the language exception in Pre-KIDS. For more information, see the [DECE Developmental Screening](#) website.
- You must use authentic assessment to monitor ongoing developmental progression and to provide the student with language support, as well as send the [Language Exception](#) letter to families.

### Referrals

- If a student scores below the "Refer" cutoff on the ESI-R, or below the referral cutoff on a comparable developmental screening, the lead teacher should continue to monitor ongoing developmental progression through the use of an approved authentic assessment system to inform possible referral to the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) for information about evaluation services.

- Referral cutoffs are available in the ESI-R manual and are differentiated by age. Methods of referrals are at the discretion of the education director at your program.

## Communicating with Families

### Prior to Screening

- All families must receive the Introduction to Developmental Screening letter prior to any screening beginning in a 3-K and pre-K classroom.

  — Translated letters in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu can be found on the DECE's Developmental Screening website.

- IEP Exemption letters must be sent to families of students with IEPs.

- Language Exception letters must be sent to families of students who do not speak Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Russian or who are unable to complete the screening in one of the offered languages.

### After Screening

- Methods of communicating screening and rescreening results are at the discretion of the Principal or ECD to best meet the needs of families.

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Developmental Screenings

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must use a valid and reliable developmental screening tool, along with authentic assessment data, to identify *3-K for All* students with potential developmental delays and language support needs.

### Developmental Screening Tools

Developmental screening is a key part of a student's transition into *3-K for All*. Teaching staff must use a valid and reliable developmental screening tool to identify potential developmental delays and language support needs.

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) has approved three developmental screening tools for *3-K for All*. Please note that these are the same approved tools as those utilized for *Pre-K for All*.

- Early Screening Inventory–Revised (ESI-R)

- Brigance Early Childhood Screens System III

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire–Third Edition (ASQ-3)

## Child Screening Timeline

Generally, *3-K for All* students must be screened within the same timelines as *Pre-K for All* students.
In summary:

| Date | Requirement |
|---|---|
| **First Day of School** | Send the Introduction to Developmental Screening letter to families. |
| | Begin screening enrolled students. |
| **45 Calendar Days from Enrollment** | All students must be screened within 45 days of enrollment. |
| | *The ESI-R screening tool may not be utilized to screen 3-K for All students until they are three-years-old. If your program utilizes the ESI-R screening tool, any child who is not yet three-years-old upon enrollment into 3-K for All must be screened between the date of their third birthday and February 14th of the school year. The 45 day screening requirement does not apply in these instances.* |
| **21 Calendar Days from Enrollment** | Screening outcomes are to be submitted via Pre-KIDS within 21 days of each student's screening. |
| **Between 8–10 weeks from Screening (56 and 70 Calendar Days)** | All students who were screened with an outcome indicating a need for rescreening must be rescreened in this two-week period. |
| **After December 1st** | All students enrolled after December 1st must be screened within 15 calendar days of enrollment. |
| | Screening outcomes for these students must be submitted within 21 calendar days of screening. |
| | If applicable, rescreening for these students must occur 8 to 10 weeks from the initial screening. |
| **February 14th** | If your program utilizes the ESI-R screening tool, any child who is not yet three years old upon enrollment into *3-K for All* must be screened between the date of their third birthday and February 14th of the school year. |

## Frequently Asked Questions

***1. No one on staff meets the qualifications to administer the ESI-R developmental screening in a student's primary home language. How should District Schools and Pre-K Centers proceed?***

If District Schools and Pre-K Centers do not have a qualified staff member who is fluent and proficient in the student's primary home language, they should mark a language exception for this student in the Payroll Portal and send the family a language exception letter, as detailed in the sections above. Family members may not be asked to translate for the student.

***2. What is the difference between developmental screening and authentic assessments?***

Developmental screening (ESI-R, Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Brigance Early Childhood Screens System III) is different and separate from authentic assessments (Work Sampling System, Teaching Strategies GOLD, and HighScope COR Advantage). Developmental screening is a brief process conducted once early in the year to identify potential developmental delays and/or language support needs in conjunction with authentic assessments. Authentic assessments are conducted throughout the year to monitor a student's progress and aid teachers in individualized instruction and family engagement.

***3. What is the difference between developmental screening and environmental/ programmatic assessments?***

Developmental screening (ESI-R, Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Brigance III) is different from environmental/programmatic assessments (ECERS-R and CLASS). Developmental screening is a brief process conducted once early in the year to identify potential developmental delays and/or language support needs in conjunction with authentic assessments. Environmental/programmatic assessments are designed to measure program quality by assessing various interactions that go on in a classroom, as well as the features that support these interactions, such as space, schedule, materials, etc.

# Authentic Assessments

Authentic assessments provide educators a system to monitor students' developmental progress across all domains of learning, to inform instruction.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

*3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* are required to use a developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable authentic assessment system to monitor developmental progress, plan instruction, and inform family engagement. Authentic assessment systems include a formative collection of qualitative student data (i.e. student observations and work samples) consistent with New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) and United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Standards on Paperwork Reduction. By utilizing authentic assessments, teaching staff deepen their shared understanding of students' development and learning across the domains of the PKFCC to inform instruction and family engagement.

Authentic assessment systems support teachers to:

- Strategically collect observational data and student work samples.

- Analyze that information along a developmental continuum.

- Plan instruction that is responsive to the needs of individual students and groups of students.

- Inform family engagement practices.

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) provides online subscriptions and resources to assist teachers in authentic assessment work.

The DECE approved authentic assessment systems include:

- Work Sampling System (WSS)

- Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG)

- High Scope Child Observation Record (COR) Advantage

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must use the same authentic assessment system across all classrooms. District Schools and Pre-K Centers must get approval (in writing) from the DECE to use an authentic assessment system that is not currently on the list of DECE approved assessment systems. To get approval, requests should be sent to prekassessment@schools.nyc.gov.

## DECE Approved Authentic Assessment Systems

Three authentic assessment options have been approved by DECE for District Schools and Pre-K Centers to utilize throughout the school year.

### Work Sampling System

The Work Sampling System (WSS) is an authentic assessment system that informs educators about their students' skills, behaviors, and academic achievement across seven domains:

1. Personal & Social Development

2. Language & Literacy

3. Mathematical Thinking

4. Scientific Thinking

5. Social Studies

6. The Arts

7. Physical Development, Health & Safety

Teachers develop student portfolios by collecting student observations and work samples throughout the year for three Citywide Checkpoint periods: Fall, Winter, and Spring. *For more information, please see* *Work Sampling System/Online*.

## Teaching Strategies GOLD

Teaching Strategies GOLD is an authentic assessment system that tracks students' development across ten domains:

1. Social-emotional

2. Physical

3. Language

4. Cognitive

5. Literacy

6. Mathematics

7. Science & Technology

8. Social Studies

9. The Arts

10. English Language Acquisition

Teachers collect evidence of student learning through student observations and work samples throughout the year for three Citywide Checkpoint periods: Fall, Winter, and Spring. *For more information, please see* *TeachingStrategies GOLD*.

## High Scope Child Observation Record Advantage

The High Scope Child Observation Record Advantage (COR) is an authentic assessment system that tracks students' development across nine domains:

1. Approaches to Learning

2. Social and Emotional Development

3. Physical Development and Health

4. Language, Literacy, and Communication

5. Mathematics

6. Creative Arts

7. Science and Technology

8. Social Studies

9. English Language Learning (ELL)

Teachers collect evidence of student learning through the collection of student observations and work samples throughout the year for three Citywide Checkpoint periods: Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Please note all approved online authentic assessment systems align to the PKFCC and can be used with any developmentally appropriate curriculum. Teaching staff should use an approved authentic assessment system to actively solicit students' understandings and ideas of their own learning to be incorporated into instructional practices.

## Assessment Requirements

Authentic assessment data consists of annotated student observations and work samples. Data must be collected throughout the school year and aggregated at least three times per school year in the form of Developmental Summary Reports. Authentic assessment data must be used to develop:

- Student Portfolios
    - Teachers must:
    - Take low-inference notes and collect work samples regularly throughout the school year.
        - Align student portfolio items to the authentic assessment system domains and indicators
    - Student portfolio items are entered online and hard copies can be stored within the classroom
- Developmental Summary Reports
    - Teachers must:
        - Complete Developmental Summary Reports by using student portfolio items to assess each student's progress along a developmental continuum, across the domains of learning
        - Complete Developmental Summary Reports three times per school year during the Fall, Winter, and Spring Citywide Checkpoints
        - Use the data to individualize practice and set goals that address the needs of each student
    - Developmental Summary Reports are stored online and in the student's cumulative folder

The DECE recommends that Principals (or a Principal's designee) and ECDs (or ECD's designee) meet regularly with teaching staff to:

- Review student portfolio items and developmental progressions
- Use developmental progressions to inform ongoing instruction and support

Additionally, teachers should communicate developmental progressions to families regularly and during Family-Teacher Conferences.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers should refer families to the Parent Guide to Understanding Authentic Assessments for Young Children letter for additional information on authentic assessments

*See FAQ #1 for more information on how paraprofessionals can support authentic assessments.*

# Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Authentic Assessments

Authentic assessments provide *3-K for All* educators with a system to monitor students' developmental progress across all domains of learning, informing curriculum development and instruction.

## Authentic Assessment Systems

*3-K for All* classrooms are required to use the same developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable authentic assessment systems to monitor developmental progress, plan instruction, and inform family engagement as are used in *Pre-K for All* classrooms. As a reminder, the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) approved authentic assessment systems include:

- • Work Sampling System (WSS)
- • Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG)
- • High Scope Child Observation Record (COR) Advantage

Your program must use the same authentic assessment system across all *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* classrooms.

## Work Sampling System

*3-K for All* classrooms utilizing the Work Sampling System must use the Work Sampling System Preschool-3 (P3) developmental guidelines, which are appropriate for children in *3-K for All*. The Work Sampling System Preschool-4 (P4) developmental guidelines are not appropriate for children in *3-K for All*.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. How should paraprofessionals support authentic assessment?**

Teachers are responsible for inputting the authentic assessment data. Paraprofessionals can assist with collecting student work samples and observations as well as with the uploading of most authentic student portfolio items under the direction of the teacher and through the teacher account.

**2. Can teaching staff use personal cell phones to take pictures/document student work?**

No, teaching staff may not use personal cell phones or other personal devices to document student observations and work samples. Your program should provide appropriate technology for each classroom to support teaching staff to photograph student activities and student work.

**3. Can teachers utilize standardized tests to assess students?**

No, traditional standardized tests must never be administered to students. Students should only be assessed utilizing approved authentic assessment systems and approved developmental screenings. *For more information on developmental screenings, see the Developmental Screenings chapter of the Handbook.*

**4. How can District Schools and Pre-K Centers communicate authentic assessments with families?**

*For a guide on how to introduce authentic assessments to families, please refer to the Parent Guide to Understanding Authentic Assessments for Young Children and the Family Engagement chapter in the Handbook.*

# Curriculum and Professional Learning

Classrooms are required to implement a curriculum that supports and advances the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC) guiding principles and learning standards. The curriculum must support all students to have rich and varied early learning experiences that prepare them for success in K-12 and beyond.

*3-K for All* classrooms should refer to the Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Curriculum portion of this chapter.

## What You Need to Know

## Curriculum Requirements

Principals and Early Childhood Directors (ECDs) will provide teachers with a curriculum in a manner consistent with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) collective bargaining agreements. This curriculum will be developed and used to:

1. Advance students' learning and development across all domains of the PKFCC.

2. Support and advance the guiding principles of the PKFCC and draws on research-based practices about how young children develop and learn.

3. Integrates information regarding students' learning and developmental progress collected with one of three authentic assessment systems approved by the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE). *Please see the Authentic Assessments section of the Handbook for more information.*

4. Support and advance all elements of the Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ) including:

   • Adopt culturally responsive instruction and family engagement practices, and encourage children to engage with culturally and linguistically diverse learning materials.

   • 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.

   • Facilitate play-based learning and inquiry.

   • Use an age-appropriate research-based curriculum to support children's learning across all areas of development.

   • Extend children's thinking and communication skills through intentional interactions.

### NYC Pre-K Explore

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) is working with a select number of District Schools and Pre-K Centers to implement NYC Pre-K Explore, which is the Buildings Blocks math curriculum in combination with the Interdisciplinary Units of Study (see below for more information). In all other cases, if the curriculum has not been pre-approved, the DECE will determine the extent to which the chosen or designed curriculum meets the expectations outlined above.

If the DECE determines that the expectations are not met, District Schools and Pre-K Centers may be required to implement supplemental curriculum and activities and receive additional professional learning and support.

## Interdisciplinary Units of Study

The Interdisciplinary Units of Study were developed by the DECE in collaboration with researchers to support student learning in all domains using research-based developmentally appropriate practice. The interdisciplinary units, grounded in the PKFCC, follow a progression of interdisciplinary learning throughout the year. For more information on how to utilize the Units of Study, please review the Pre-K Scope and Sequence.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers who are not working with the DECE to implement the Building Blocks math curriculum in combination with the Interdisciplinary Units of Study are encouraged, but not required, to utilize the Units of Study.

There are two versions of the Units of Study.

1. For sites in NYC Pre-K Explore that are utilizing the Building Blocks math curriculum together with the *Pre-K for All* Interdisciplinary Units of Study and are receiving professional learning provided by the DECE to support the integration of the tools.

2. For sites that are not utilizing the Building Blocks math curriculum together with the *Pre-K for All* Units of Study.

*Additional resources to support teachers and school leaders in using the Units of Study can be found on the DECE website.*

*For more information or to provide feedback on the Interdisciplinary Units of Study please email prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov. The DECE will continue to revise and refine the units based on pre-K teacher and leader feedback.*

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Curriculum & Instruction

*3-K for All* classrooms are required to implement a curriculum that supports and advances child outcomes, as outlined in the "Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five." The *3-K for All* curriculum must support the delivery of rich and varied early learning experiences that prepare *3-K for All* students for success in school and beyond.

## *3-K for All* and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five

*3-K for All* programs must use the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) to understand and facilitate children's learning and development. The New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core ("PKFCC"), as referenced in the *Pre-K for All* Handbook and the Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ), is not applicable to *3-K for All* students.

The HSELOF presents age-appropriate outcomes across five broad areas of early learning, referred to as central domains. The HSELOF emphasizes the key skills, behaviors, and knowledge that District Schools and Pre-K Centers must foster in children from ages birth to 5, and outlines the expected developmental progress in each central domain. These domains are aligned to the holistic domains of learning and development in the PKFCC, which programs must use in their *Pre-K for All* classrooms.

## Instructional Supports

Grounded in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Explorations provide instructional opportunities for program staff, children, and families to connect, explore materials, and learn together. These instructional guidance documents are ECERS-R aligned and offer guidance for teaching staff in interacting with, creating a classroom environment, and selecting materials for three-year-olds. The Interdisciplinary Units of Study developed by the DECE to support *Pre-K for All* student learning are not applicable to *3-K for All* classrooms.

## *Pre-K for All* Professional Learning

Ongoing professional learning is an opportunity to cultivate professional practice and leadership and improve the quality of instruction in the classroom.

To assist leaders and teachers in building upon evidence-based practices, as well as the innovative and promising work already being done in New York City classrooms, each program is assigned to a professional learning instructional track. Each instructional track supports the implementation of the PKFCC and allows staff to delve deeper into content alongside expert facilitators and their colleagues. *Pre-K for All* programs will be assigned to one instructional track based on interest, need, capacity, and other factors.

*For more information on the Pre-K for All Instructional Tracks, see the DECE's website.*

Pre-K leaders and teaching staff have the opportunity to participate in professional learning sessions citywide, focusing on their pre-K program's instructional track focus. Pre-K leaders and teaching staff will have the opportunity to collaborate and engage with other leaders and teachers at each of these professional learning sessions.

During the school year, the DECE will provide 4 days of professional learning, through a combination of in-person sessions and online resources, varied by instructional track. Your program must provide **at least 180 days** of *Pre-K for All* services, including **at least 176 days** of instruction and 4 days of professional development for teachers. Your program may choose to offer *Pre-K for All* instruction on professional learning days, with substitute teachers. If your program opts to offer instruction on these days, the education director must develop a plan for substitutes. *Please contact prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov with any questions.*

Pre-K leaders and teaching staff are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire duration of professional learning sessions.

*Pre-K for All* leaders will be offered professional learning provided by the DECE, either alongside teaching staff or on separate days. *Please contact prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov with any questions.*

*For more information on the school year calendar, please see the Calendar and Daily Program Hours chapter of the Handbook.*

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Professional Learning

Professional learning supports *3-K for All* leaders and teachers in meeting the expectations outlined in the Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ) for operating a high-quality program. *3-K for All* staff are expected to attend and participate in ongoing professional learning and mandated trainings to be prepared to meet the needs of *3-K for All* students and families.

## *3-K for All* Professional Learning

Ongoing professional learning is an opportunity to cultivate professional practice and leadership and improve the quality of the classroom.

- *3-K for All* professional learning will not be associated with a *Pre-K for All* professional learning instructional tracks (Create, Explore, Inspire, and Thrive). If your program also serves *Pre-K for All* students, please do not send your *3-K for All* teaching teams to *Pre-K for All* trainings.

  — The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) will provide a combination of in-person professional learning sessions and online resources for *3-K for All* teaching staff and leaders. For the 2018-19 school year, the DECE will provide the following in-person professional learning opportunities:

    - 1 day of in-person professional learning in late August 2018 (Optional)

    - 1 day of in-person professional learning during the school-year (Spring 2019)

**For the most up-to-date information on *3-K for All* professional learning policy and opportunities please refer to e-mail and *3-K for All* Bulletin communications.**

Principals and early childhood directors (ECDs) should consider the professional learning needs of *3-K for All* staff on *Chancellor's Conference Days for staff development.* Please consult *3-K for All* communications for ideas on training topics and developmentally appropriate trainings.

Please consult your instructional coordinator and/or social worker for how to best assist *3-K for All* teachers with their strengths and areas of growth.

You can also contact the DECE at 3kforallinstruction@schools.nyc.gov with any questions.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Can a District School or Pre-K Center change their assigned Instructional Track?*

A District School or Pre-K Center interested in changing their Instructional Track should express interest in the 2019-20 survey, to be distributed by late spring of 2019. An Instructional Track may not be changed during the school year.

# Daily Student Schedule

Daily student schedules should include a variety of both student- and adult-initiated activities that advance student learning and development across all domains of the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC).

*3-K for All* classrooms should refer to the Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on 3-K Student Schedule portion of this chapter.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must offer activities that are appropriate to the age-level and individual needs of students as well as build on students' interests, backgrounds, and ideas for learning. Activities provided should support the development of skills and knowledge described in the PKFCC standards and adhere to the PKFCC Guiding Principles.

Students learn best when they have opportunities to work independently and in a variety of group settings facilitated by teachers. Pre-K classrooms' daily schedules should provide students with opportunities for individual, small, and whole group learning through a balance of student- and adult-initiated activities.

*The following daily schedule requirements and recommendations are intended for pre-K students and not for teachers and paraprofessionals.*

## Daily Schedule Components

While the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) does not mandate that pre-K classrooms follow a specific schedule, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must offer each of the underlined required daily activities.

The pre-K classroom's daily schedule must be displayed prominently in the classroom at student eye level, using both words and pictures to describe activities.

All daily activities represented below should advance student learning and development described in the PKFCC standards. The following activities should be included in the daily schedule:

| Activity | Requirements | Recommended Length (Including transitions) |
|---|---|---|
| Snack and Meal Time | • To facilitate learning, meals should be served family-style and provided in an environment conducive to interaction between staff and children.<br>• *For more information on snack and meal time (e.g., sanitary practices) see the Meal Services chapter of the Handbook.* | • Approximately 30 minutes for meals and 15 minutes for snacks (unless meals are integrated into other activities) |
| Nap and Rest Time | • Provide an environment conducive for students to nap and rest.<br> — Quiet activities should be provided for students who do not nap.<br>• Length of nap and rest time can be adjusted throughout the year depending on students' needs.<br>• *For more information on nap and rest time see the Nap and Rest Time chapter of the Handbook.* | • Approximately 30–45 minutes allowing for individual differences |
| Gross Motor Time | • If outdoor space is available, weather permitting, students should be provided with time to be outdoors where they are able to move around freely and select gross motor activities such as running, jumping, climbing, throwing, catching, etc.<br> — If no outdoor space is available and in cases of inclement weather, students should be provided with adequate indoor space for freedom of movement, where they run, jump, or move in ways that are necessary for students' appropriate physical learning and development, purposeful play, and self-expression. | • Minimum of 60 minutes per day<br><br>• Two 30 minute periods can be provided |
| Center Time | • Provide students with the opportunity to self-select a variety of activities, materials, and companions, while being supported by teachers who facilitate their learning within the centers.<br> — Materials in centers should be offered for the range of skills, interests, backgrounds, gender, and abilities of students in the classroom.<br> — Teaching staff should arrange the physical environment so that all students can successfully and independently access resources in response to their natural curiosity, to engage with group activity or find space for privacy and relaxation, and with enough space to work independently and collaboratively throughout the classroom. | • Minimum of 2 hours and 20 minutes required per day<br><br>• *Reminder: This is inclusive of 10 minutes for transition time* |
| Whole Group (Meeting/ Circle Time) | • Provide students with group activities where they can engage in active learning opportunities by participating in conversation and exchanging ideas.<br>• Meeting/Circle Time can include, but is not limited to:<br> — Time to talk about the day's activities and choices for Center Time<br> — Read Alouds<br> — Music and Movement activities<br> — Discussion | • At least two meetings per day lasting a maximum of 15 minutes each |

## Sample Schedule

The following sample schedule is based on a 6 hour and 20 minute day. The schedule is a recommendation and is <u>not</u> intended to be a mandated schedule.

| Time | Activity |
|------|----------|
| 20 minutes | Arrival Activities/Greeting Routine/Breakfast* |
| 20 minutes | Large Group Meeting |
| 75 minutes | Center Time/Small Group* |
| 10 minutes | Clean-up/Hand Washing* |
| 20 minutes | Lunch (Family Style strongly recommended)* |
| 10 minutes | Toileting and Hand Washing* |
| 35 minutes | Nap/Rest Time* |
| 20 minutes | Large Group Meeting |
| 75 minutes | Center Time* |
| 20 minutes | Clean-up/Hand Washing/Snack* (Optional) |
| 60 minutes | Gross Motor Play* |
| 15 minutes | Closing Meeting |

\* Denotes key Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale- Revised (ECERS-R) requirements.
  *For more information on how to align pre-K daily schedules with ECERS-R, please email*
  *prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov.*

### General Notes on Developing a Schedule

- Transition time will vary depending on the space and number of students.

- When creating a daily schedule, consider alternating active and less active times.

# Center Time Activities

During Center Time, students should have daily opportunities to experience different content areas.

*For additional information on instructional materials that must be provided during these activities, please see the Instructional Materials and Classroom Furniture section of the Handbook.*

| Content Area | Examples of Recommended Activities |
|---|---|
| **Art** | • Painting/drawing<br><br>• Using three dimensional materials<br><br>• Making collages<br><br>• Modeling with clay/Play Dough<br><br>*Staff should provide materials that students can use for creative expression through various artistic media and representations.* |
| **Music and Movement** | • Experimenting with instruments<br><br>• Dancing<br><br>• Exercising to music (e.g., yoga, Zumba)<br><br>• Acting out the content of songs |
| **Nature, Science & Discovery** | • Using magnifying glasses to investigate the properties of natural materials<br><br>• Sorting natural materials (e.g., rocks, leaves, shells) according to various characteristics<br><br>• Planting a garden and caring for it |
| **Math and Manipulatives** | • Offering puzzles of varying shapes and difficulties for manipulation, reasoning, and problem-solving<br><br>• Offering open-ended resource sets with items representing a range of shapes, colors, sizes, and weights, for comparing, sorting, weighing, or for use in games or making patterns<br><br>• Providing small connecting toys for manipulating and building fine-motor skills<br><br>• Using tape measures, rulers, abaci, or other resources, along with items of various sizes to encourage measurement and comparison (e.g., bigger, smaller, more, less, etc.) |
| **Block Play** | • Building structures related to the current unit<br><br>• Encouraging students to build structures that reflect their neighborhood<br><br>• Talking with students about the spaces they created<br><br>• Supporting scientific and mathematical thinking: balance, symmetry, patterns |

| Content Area | Examples of Recommended Activities |
|---|---|
| Computer | • Using technology to do research, gather information, or play developmentally appropriate learning games on:<br><br>    — Computers<br><br>    — Tablets<br><br>    — iPads<br><br>    — Smartboards |
| Sand and Water | • Digging and pouring<br><br>• Conducting sink and float experiments<br><br>• Having students observe how many teaspoons of sand or water are needed to fill various measuring cups<br><br>• Encouraging students to make patterns in the sand |
| Literacy Centers | • Utilizing the library with books for students to read or read aloud<br><br>• Listening to books and music<br><br>• Making books from student work<br><br>• Providing materials to support language and literacy: writing utensils, flannel/magnetic story boards, puppets<br><br>*Literacy Centers are inclusive of library and listening centers, which may be separate or combined depending on classroom size and set up. Writing materials should be integrated within centers.* |
| Relaxation and Comfort | • Using a cozy corner for a student's private time<br><br>• Lounging on soft toys or furnishings<br><br>• Reading on bean bags<br><br>• Conducting quiet activities in a comfortable space |
| Dramatic Play | • Pretending with child-size kitchens<br><br>• Dressing up with costumes<br><br>• Playing with a pretend register and/or store supplies<br><br>*Students can incorporate themes from the unit of study into the dramatic play area (e.g., dramatic play area can include a grocery store, garden, spaceship, castle, hospital etc.)* |

## Transitions

Transitions occur when students switch from one activity period to another or a change in staff occurs. Staff should establish routines yet remain flexible, maximizing students' engagement in their learning and creating smooth transitions between portions of the day.

- Instructional staff should handle transitions between activities in a developmentally appropriate way.

- Suggestions include:

  — Reviewing norms and routines prior to each transition.

  — Giving students reminders before major transitions so they have time to finish what they are doing and prepare for the next activity.

  — Using instructional supports during transitions such as visual schedules, songs, or other strategies to actively involve students.

  — Scheduling transitions so that only a few students transition at a time.

  — Ensuring students remain consistently engaged during transitions and keep waiting times to 1–2 minutes.

## Inclusion of Cluster Teachers

If students receive instruction from cluster teachers, the instruction provided should be incorporated into the daily schedule in a manner appropriate for students. Cluster teachers should support the daily schedule and accommodate the regular routines of the students.

During these times, teaching staff must continue to provide appropriate opportunities for individual, small, and whole group learning through a balance of student- and teacher-initiated activities. Teaching staff must also effectively facilitate students' involvement in the program, increasing participation in a variety of activities and supporting learning across the domains of the PKFCC.

## Use of Technology Tools

Students' interdisciplinary learning and higher-order thinking can be supported through the appropriate exposure and use of technology. When used intentionally and in a developmentally appropriate manner, technology can enhance students' learning experiences. Technology may be used to extend students' knowledge of curricular content through interactive activities.

- The ECERS-R programmatic assessment tool recommends that students' use of technology tools should be limited to no more than 15 minutes per day and no more than 30 minutes per week.

  — Exceptions to this limit may be made for students with disabilities who require assistive computer technology as outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

- Technology tools allowed in the classroom include:

  — Computers

  — Tablets

  — Interactive whiteboards

  — Mobile devices

  — Cameras and recording devices

- Technology in the classroom should support students' hands-on learning and creative expression. District Schools and Pre-K Centers may consider the unit of study and the strengths, preferences, experiences, linguistic diversity, and needs of the students when selecting a technology tool or interactive media activity to include in the classroom.

- Technology should be used in classrooms to support social interactions between students, their peers, and teachers. Students should not be isolated from peers or teachers while using technology or interactive media.

- Teachers should support and monitor students when they are utilizing technology tools.

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Daily Schedule

*3-K for All* daily program schedules must include a variety of both student and adult-initiated activities that are appropriate for the age-level and individual needs of students and advance student learning and development.

### *3-K for All* Daily Schedule Requirements

While the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) does not mandate that District Schools and Pre-K Centers follow a specific schedule, your school or Pre-K Center must offer each of the required *3-K for All* daily activities. The list of required activities for *3-K for All* is consistent with *Pre-K for All*. However, the recommended length of these activities has changed based on the developmental needs of *3-K for All* students. Please review the information below to ensure your school or Pre-K Center provides the appropriate activity lengths.

| Activity | *Pre-K for All* Recommended Length | *3-K for All* Recommended Length |
|---|---|---|
| Snack and Meal Time | Approximately 30 minutes for meals and 15 minutes for snacks | |
| Nap and Rest Time | Approximately 30–45 minutes allowing for individual differences | Approximately 60 minutes allowing for individual differences |
| Gross Motor Time | Minimum of 60 minutes per day (Two 30 minute periods can be provided) | |
| Center Time | Minimum of 2 hours and 20 minutes required per day. *This is inclusive of transition time.* | |
| Whole Group (Meeting/ Circle Time) | At least two meetings per day lasting a maximum of 15 minutes each | A maximum of two meetings per day lasting a maximum of 10 minutes each |

## Sample Schedule

While the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) does not mandate that your school or Pre-K Center follow a specific schedule, the sample schedule below can be utilized to guide the development of your *3-K for All* schedule. Similar to *Pre-K for All*, the following sample *3-K for All* schedule is based on a 6 hour and 20 minute day. The schedule is a recommendation and is <u>not</u> intended to be a mandated schedule.

### *3-K for All* Sample Schedule

| Time | Activity |
|------|----------|
| 20 minutes | Arrival Activities/Greeting Routine/Breakfast |
| 10 minutes | Large Group Meeting (Including transitions in and out of the activity) |
| 70 minutes | Center Time/Small Group |
| 10 minutes | Clean-Up/ Handwashing |
| 40 minutes | Lunch (family style)/Toileting/Handwashing |
| 60 minutes | Nap/Rest Time |
| 10 minutes | Story Time |
| 70 minutes | Center Time/Small Group |
| 20 minutes | Clean-up/Handwashing/Snack |
| 60 minutes | Gross Motor Play (with age-appropriate equipment) |
| 10 minutes | Closing Meeting/Dismissal |

# Center Time Activities

During Center Time, *3-K for All* students should have daily opportunities to explore materials and interact with peers and adults. Please review the Center Time activities below as they are different from those recommended for *Pre-K for All* students.

| Content Area | Examples of Recommended Activities |
|---|---|
| Art | • Painting/drawing<br><br>• Using three dimensional materials<br><br>• Making collages<br><br>• Modeling with Play-Doh<br><br>*Staff should provide materials that students can use for creative expression through various artistic media and representations.* |
| Music and Movement | • Experimenting with instruments<br><br>• Dancing<br><br>• Exercising to music (e.g., yoga, Zumba)<br><br>• Acting out the content of songs |
| Nature, Science & Discovery | • Using magnifying glasses to investigate the properties of natural materials<br><br>• Exploring natural materials (e.g., rocks, leaves, shells) according to various characteristics (be mindful of choking hazards)<br><br>• Explore vocabulary and information through senses (i.e., soft/hard, wet/dry)<br><br>• Planting a garden and caring for it |
| Math and Manipulatives | • Opportunities to use puzzles of varying shapes and difficulties for manipulation, reasoning, and problem solving<br><br>• Opportunities to use open-ended resource sets with items representing a range of shapes, colors, sizes, and weights, for comparing, sorting, weighing, or for use in games or making patterns<br><br>• Opportunities to use connecting toys for manipulating and building fine-motor skills |
| Block Play | • Opportunities to explore and create three-dimensional structures, experiencing the effects of physical forces like gravity and weight<br><br>• Opportunities to use materials to support block play (i.e., trucks, cars, signs, etc.)<br><br>• Opportunities to have conversation about the structures they created, including the relevance to their lived experiences, and any related mathematical and physical concepts |

| Content Area | Examples of Recommended Activities |
|---|---|
| Computer | • Using technology to do research, gather information, or play developmentally appropriate learning games on:<br><br>— Computers<br><br>— Tablets<br><br>— iPads<br><br>— Smartboards |
| Sand and Water | • Explore properties of sand and water<br><br>• Dig and pour with various size containers and tools |
| Literacy Centers | • Utilizing the library independently and with teachers<br><br>• Listen to books and explore music<br><br>• Explore class made books on shared experiences<br><br>• Explore materials to support language and literacy: writing utensils, flannel/magnetic story boards, puppets<br><br>*Literacy Centers are inclusive of library and listening centers, which may be separate or combined depending on classroom size and set up. Drawing/writing activities should be integrated within centers.* |
| Relaxation and Comfort | • Using a cozy corner for a student's private time<br><br>• Relaxing on soft toys or furnishings with transitional objects, as needed<br><br>• Looking through books on bean bags<br><br>• Conducting quiet activities in a comfortable space |
| Dramatic Play | • Exploring with child-size kitchens, dishes, and other items related to homes and care-taking<br><br>• Dressing up with clothing and materials that can be used to reflect a variety of professions and genders<br><br>• Playing with a pretend register and/or store supplies |

## Transitions

Transitions occur when students switch from one activity period to another. As compared with *Pre-K for All* students, *3-K for All* students may take longer to transition and staff should consider strategies to limit wait time. You must ensure that your *3-K for All* staff handles transitions between activities in a developmentally appropriate way. Suggestions for how to specifically meet the needs of *3-K for All* students include:

- Adjust transition times to reflect the needs of individual children

- Engage students with a developmentally appropriate, short activity if students prepare to transition at different paces

- Allow for students to transition in smaller groups, rather than having the whole group wait for everyone else

- Use staff in a coordinated way so that one helps children through transitions, while the other moves those who are finished to the next activity

- Have students participate in getting things ready for the next activity

## Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Do families have to be informed of the daily schedule?*

Yes, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should publicize the classroom's daily schedule with times in materials made available during the application and enrollment period so that families may make informed choices during enrollment.

In addition, the DECE recommends that the classroom's daily schedule is shared with families during family orientation or welcome events and is prominently posted in the classroom for reference.

*2. Should the classroom's written daily schedule be posted in the classroom?*

Yes, the written daily schedule should be posted in the classroom where it can be easily seen by staff, substitutes, and families.

*3. When do we need to take students outside?*

Daily; Student should participate in activities outside as long as **weather permits**. Weather permitting does not include:

- A weather advisory;

- When there is ice on the playground where students mostly play (Small patches of ice alone in areas where there is low-traffic should not prevent the class from outdoor play);

- When there is snow or debris left within two business days of a major storm (i.e. there is a 2-day grace period to clear the outdoor space or provide a safe alternative, including the path to the space);

- Effective temperature (wind chill + actual temperature) is 25 degrees or lower during the gross motor time.

# Nap and Rest

Regularly scheduled nap and rest time is important to ensure students are able to relax, rest, and replenish their energy.

## What You Need to Know

### Overview

Mid-day nap and rest time plays a crucial role in enhancing the memory, alertness as well as the cognitive and physical development of students. Classrooms must have a regularly scheduled nap or rest time during which instructional staff must provide an environment conducive for students to nap or rest. Quiet activities must be provided for students who do not wish to nap or rest.

### Scheduling of Nap and Rest Time

The daily schedule must include time for students to nap and rest. It is recommended that nap and rest be scheduled (with some flexibility and discretion):

- At a consistent time each day

- At a time that meets the needs of students in the class (i.e., at a time when most students are tired enough to want nap or rest)

- To allow for students to nap and rest for 45 minutes (inclusive of transition time)

  — The length of nap and rest time may vary depending on the changing needs of students over the course of the school year and the length of the school day.

  — If there are students in the class who do not nap or rest, a designated space with sufficient lighting to enable reading or other quiet activities should be provided.

  — If most students do not nap or rest and are not tired during the school day, a shorter rest period or supervised accommodation in a designated space for quiet activities may be appropriate.

- Alternatively, if most students are not ready to wake up at the end of nap and rest time, this period may need to be extended up to 15 minutes. Classrooms with longer nap and rest periods should periodically consider whether it would be appropriate to decrease this length of time.

### Equipment and Furnishings

During nap and rest time, the following should be made available to students to relax comfortably:

- A firm sanitary cot or mat

  — A separate cot should be provided for each student.

  — Cots and mats should be cleaned and sanitized if soiled or contaminated.

- A clean sheet and blanket

  — Families may be asked to provide sheets and blankets.

  — Each student should be provided with a clean sheet and blanket for his or her exclusive use if families are not able to provide sheets and blankets.

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**Guidance on Storing and Cleaning Nap and Rest Equipment**

- To ensure a sanitary environment for students, sheets and blankets should be:

    — Provided for each student's exclusive use and labeled with the student's name.

    — Stored separately to minimize spread of illness.

        • Storage accommodations should be arranged to ensure that students' personal items and bedding are not touching each other, and that sleeping surfaces (i.e. the side of a mat that a student sleeps on) do not touch the floor.

    — Sent home to be washed weekly.

- When not in use, all nap and rest equipment, furnishings, and materials should be stored separately and in a sanitary manner to minimize the spread of illness.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Who can supervise students during nap and rest time?**

Please see the Classroom Staffing and Supervision of Pre-K Students chapter of the Handbook for information on the supervision of pre-K students during nap and rest time.

**2. Where can District Schools and Pre-K Centers purchase nap and rest time equipment?**

District Schools and Pre-K Centers have accounts with ShopDOE where they can purchase necessary nap and rest time equipment, such as mats/cots.

**3. How can instructional staff help students relax during nap and rest time?**

It is important to create a classroom environment that helps students to relax, rest, and replenish their energy. The following provisions can be implemented to help students rest well:

- Help students relax at the beginning of nap time by:

    — Playing soft music or singing a lullaby at a low volume.

    — Telling or reading a short story in a calm, gentle voice.

- Offer students access to a transitional object from home (e.g., family picture, special blanket, etc.) that they can use during nap and rest time.

- Lights may be turned down and/or blinds closed to dim the room. However, the room must remain light enough to permit appropriate supervision and safe egress in the event of an emergency.

- Cots or mats are put in the same place every day so students can go to the same spot as part of their routine.

    — The room is quiet with the exception of soft music at a low volume if you choose to implement that strategy.

    — Staff handle any disruptions that come up calmly and gently.

    — Calmly and gently wake students at the end of nap and rest time.

*4. How can instructional staff make accommodations for students that are having trouble dealing with the nap and rest schedule that is appropriate for all others in the group?*

Nap and rest schedules should be flexible enough to meet the varying needs of individual students.

Instructional staff should accommodate individual needs by, for example, letting one student go to sleep earlier than others or allowing a student who does not wish to rest participate in an alternate activity. Flexibility can also be provided as your staff gives attention to a particular student for a longer period of time than is needed by others to help the student relax.

## Guidance on Early Risers or Non-Nappers

Early risers and non-nappers are those students who sleep less than others and who are ready to get up and engage in an activity while others sleep. These students should not have to stay quietly on their cots or mats with nothing to do. You should provide ways for these students to be appropriately engaged and supervised while others are sleeping.

The following provisions can be taken:

- Students can be encouraged to quietly read books or play quietly with soft toys on their mats or cots.

- Students can read or play quietly in a separate part of the room that is away from sleeping students.

- Students can go to another room where non-nappers or early risers can participate in interesting activities with appropriate supervision.

# Extending Learning to Home

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are encouraged to offer meaningful extended learning opportunities that support and encourage families to partner in their child's education.

## What You Need to Know

### Overview

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) is committed to ensuring that every student gains a foundation to support his or her success in Kindergarten and beyond. District Schools and Pre-K Centers are expected to provide opportunities for families to contribute to and participate in their child's learning experiences beyond the classroom.

- The DECE encourages District Schools and Pre-K Centers to offer extended learning activities that build on learning happening in the classroom. These activities are an opportunity for instructional staff to partner with families in supporting their child's learning and development.

- Extended learning opportunities should provide a variety of ways for families to engage with their child using developmentally appropriate practices and supportive adult-child interactions grounded in the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC) guiding principles and standards.

- Any extended learning opportunities offered to families and students must be based around recommended authentic learning activities and not based on worksheets.

- Students and families <u>must not</u> be required to complete extended learning opportunities. Additionally, family participation in extended learning opportunities must not be used as a condition of enrollment or participation in classroom or school-wide activities.

*Please note District Schools and Pre-K Centers enrolled in the Pre-K Explore Professional Learning Track should also utilize the specific extended learning activities from the Building Blocks math curriculum.*

## Developmentally Appropriate Practice when Extending Learning to Home

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are encouraged to design activities for families and students that extend learning beyond the classroom.

Appropriately designed extended learning opportunities should:

- Be grounded in research about how students benefit from active learning and interactions with others

- Allow for differences in students' individual characteristics, abilities, and needs

- Build on students' interests and curiosities

- Build on families' strengths and interests

- Relate to Units of Study and themes being covered in the classroom

- Be used in a positive way to provide support to students

Extended learning opportunities should be communicated with families as optional and enriching experiences that can help students extend their learning outside the classroom. A benefit of providing extended learning opportunities for home is building the capacity of families as their child's primary teacher and advocate for their learning.

Some examples of meaningful extended learning opportunities that align to the five domains in the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC) are:

| Focus Skills | Learning Activity |
|---|---|
| Identifying letters and numbers (Communication, Language, and Literacy) | Ask students and families to look for letters and numbers on the vehicles (e.g., buses, trains, cars) they see outside. |
| Using a variety of tools and materials to test predictions through active experimentation (Cognition and Knowledge of the World-Scientific Thinking) | Invite families to try a "sink and float" experiment. They can gather an assortment of small items, predict which items will sink and which will float and test their theories by placing each item in a container of water. |
| Counting and analyzing objects (Cognition and Knowledge of the World- Mathematical Practices) | Invite families to count the number of squares they can find at home. Repeat with other shapes. |
| Finding and observing different plants (Physical Development and Health; Cognition and Knowledge of the World- Scientific Thinking) | Invite families to go on a plant scavenger hunt together. Provide a list of things for them to look for such as a patch of grass, a tree taller than they are, something with petals, or other plant parts or types that can be found in the program's neighborhood. |
| Developing an understanding of emotional competence (Social and Emotional Development) | Send home a page with the pictures used for the class feelings chart. Families can display it at home and discuss the way they feel and what they can do when they experience these emotions. |
| Develop an understanding of how people and things change over time and how to relate past events to present and future activities (Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development) | Ask families to talk about important milestones in the child's life and create a timeline that reflects a few of these experiences. Ask families to think of two to four noteworthy events in the child's past such as when a child was born or took his or her first steps or an important family event such as a new home or sibling, etc. If desired, families can also draw or include pictures on the timeline. For children who are with different families now than when they were babies, this activity can be focused on more recent events. |

The DECE's research-based interdisciplinary Units of Study include ideas for inviting families to share their experience and knowledge in the classroom, as well as ideas for extending learning outside the classroom. It is recommended that District Schools and Pre-K Centers utilize these recommended activities.

*District Schools and Pre-K Centers with questions should contact the DECE by emailing prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

*1. What are examples of extended learning activities that are not appropriate for 3-K or pre-K?*

Extended learning activities that are not developmentally appropriate for 3-K or pre-K students include having students work alone to:

- Circle items on a worksheet

- Trace letters by connecting the dots

- Draw lines to connect pictures of things that start with the letter "H"

*2. Are teachers permitted to send home worksheets with students?*

The DECE requires that District Schools and Pre-K Centers offer extended learning opportunities to students that are based around developmentally appropriate activities grounded in the PKFCC, rather than worksheets.

*District Schools and Pre-K Centers with questions should contact the DECE by emailing prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov.*

# Report Cards

District Schools and Pre-K Centers should promote two-way communication between staff and families, in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner, to support students' well-being, academic success, and developmental progress. As such, students and their families must <u>not</u> be administered written report cards.

## What You Need to Know

## Overview

In order to ensure that families receive developmentally appropriate summaries of their child's progress in 3-K and pre-K, students and their families <u>must not</u> be administered written report cards.

Instead, in order to understand students' progress, instructional staff should prioritize personal meetings with families and use authentic assessment and student work to provide a comprehensive overview of how students are progressing in all developmental domains.

*Please see the Family Engagement chapter of the Handbook for more information on Family-Teacher Conferences.*

# Classroom Furniture and Instructional Materials

Furniture and instructional materials available in classrooms should support staff and students in conducting daily learning activities.

*3-K for All* classrooms should refer to the Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Classroom Furniture and Instructional Materials portion of this chapter.

## What You Need to Know

## Classroom Furniture

With the appropriate quantity and quality of furniture and equipment, 3-K and pre-K classrooms should provide a learning environment that is student-centered to support students' learning and development across domains. Furniture in the classroom should support students' growing independence in meeting their routine care needs and in conducting their daily activities.

### Recommended Furniture

Classrooms should have adequate furniture to provide opportunities for students to work independently and with their peers in a variety of small and large groups.

The following furniture should be available in all pre-K classrooms. Available furniture in the classrooms must meet the needs of the total number of students enrolled and the instructional staff supporting each class.

- Tables and chairs for meals/snacks and learning centers
    - Tables and chairs should be child-size
        - Chairs allow for most students' feet to touch the floor while they are seated (seat height should be approximately 12 inches)
        - Tables are an appropriate height so that most students can rest their elbows on the top of the table (table height should be approximately 20 inches)
- Cubbies for storage of students' personal items and creative work
    - If possible, students should have individual cubbies with their own hooks, so that their personal belongings do not touch
    - If possible, these cubbies should be within the pre-K classroom, so that students can access their belongings without leaving the teacher's supervision
    - Cubbies should be secured in place
- Storage shelves
    - Storage shelves should be set up to provide materials for centers including, but not limited to, block play, art, manipulatives, and science
    - Storage shelves used by students should be easily accessible, neatly organized, and labeled with developmentally appropriate words or words and pictures
    - Placement and arrangement of the storage shelves in the pre-K classroom should provide definition of space for learning centers
        - When possible, the art and sensory centers should have easy-to-clean floors, and be placed near a sink

— Some storage shelves not accessible to students should be utilized for storage of instructional materials not currently in rotation in the classroom

- Furnishings for whole group learning

  — Carpet for whole group meetings

  — An adult-size chair for each instructional staff member (as classroom space allows)

    - The DECE recommends instructional staff members sit at student level whenever possible

  — Teacher's easel (as classroom space allows)

- Furnishings for relaxation

  — A clearly defined space containing soft materials that allows students to relax or play quietly

  — Individual cots or mats for rest or nap

    - Mats or cots be stored in or near the pre-K classroom for easy access by staff. If cots or mats are located in the pre-K classroom, it is easier to prepare for nap and to provide a smooth transition

    - Mats or cots should be labeled with students' names

- Furnishings to facilitate play and learning during center time including, but not limited to:

  — Furniture for sensory play (e.g., sand and water tables)

  — Display library bookcase and additional storage for books

  — Play kitchen set (including a small table and chairs) and furniture to display and store dramatic play props

  — Early Literacy Center

  — Painting easel

  — Computer station at appropriate height for developmentally appropriate activities

## Furniture Safety

It is important that classroom furniture is maintained, sturdy, and in good condition at all times.

- All furniture should be:

  — Finished with non-toxic surface coverings

  — Cleaned and sanitized after meals, activities, and as needed

  — At a height low enough that staff can see and monitor an entire classroom free of obstruction

  — Free of sharp edges that can cause a safety hazard for students

  — Secured to safeguard against heavy furniture falling on students if you have large (height and length) bookcases, shelves, space dividers, etc.

## Instructional Materials

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must contain adequate instructional materials, in accordance with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) collective bargaining agreements, to implement the pre-K curriculum that meets the *Pre-K for All* Quality Standards

and to enable students to select from a range of developmentally appropriate activities during center time. Instructional materials should be arranged throughout the classroom so that all students can engage with materials in groups or individually. In addition, materials should be arranged to provide students with enough space to work independently and collaboratively throughout the classroom. Materials should be plentiful enough to allow students to play cooperatively without competing over resources. Instructional materials should be complete, intact, and in good condition for students' use.

Students should have access to these materials for a substantial portion of the day as defined by the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale- Revised (ECERS-R) (2 hours and 7 minutes daily for programs operating 6 hours and 20 minutes per day).

All instructional materials should:

1. <u>Rotate</u> throughout the year, according to individual and group skill levels, needs, and units of interest or study.

2. <u>Reflect</u> the cultural and linguistic diversity of families.

3. <u>Support</u> meaningful independent and cooperative play in learning centers and be developmentally appropriate for students in the 3–5 year old age group.

For each classroom, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must strive to contain the majority of the following instructional materials, in accordance with the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) collective bargaining agreements, to support learners based on the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC) in each of the categories below:

- A wide selection and quantity of books, including:

    — Books with songs, poetry, and/or rhymes

    — Books that represent various cultures and languages spoken by families

    — Books that show people with different abilities

    — Fiction and informational texts to support current topics of exploration and discussion

- Early literacy materials, including:

    — Puppets and/or magnetic/flannel story board

    — Magnets (e.g., symbols including upper and lower case letters, numbers, and mathematic symbols and magnet write and wipe boards)

    — Writing materials (e.g., letter stamps and washable stamp pads, child-size pencils, crayons, washable markers, paper)

- Manipulative materials, including:

    — Small building toys (e.g., bristle blocks, magnetic blocks, interlocking cubes/blocks, Lincoln Logs)

    — Toys that promote fine motor development (e.g., beads and strings of different sizes, toys that snap or link together, pegs with peg boards, tangram puzzle shapes)

    — Toys allowing students to make comparisons related to attributes such as size, shape, and color (e.g., attribute blocks, pattern games, geoboards, sets of objects with varying characteristics, color paddles)

    — Toys to support students' exploration of quantity, measurement, and numerals (e.g., counting games, abacus, balance scale, tape measure, play money)

    — Puzzles with varying levels of difficulty

- Art materials, including:

  — Crayons, washable markers

  — Paint materials (e.g., tempera paint, brushes, "dot art" painters, finger paint)

  — Paper (various sizes, colors, textures)

  — Collage materials (e.g., yarn, fabric, cotton balls, sequins, foam shapes, glitter, etc.)

  — Child-safe scissors

  — Glue and/or paste

  — Play dough or clay

  — A place for drying paintings and art projects

- Music and movement materials, including:

  — CD player (preferably with MP3 output)

  — Music CDs and books on CDs

  — Child-sized instruments

  — Headsets

- Blocks and accessories, including:

  — Classroom set of hardwood unit blocks

  — Vehicles, traffic signs, buildings

  — Play people and animals

- Dramatic play materials, including:

  — Dress up clothing (e.g., clothing for various careers, clothing representing various cultures, traditional gender specific clothing for men and women and clothing for fantasy play)

  — Toys to support students' exploration of careers and community helpers
  (e.g., doctor's office kit, tool kit, classroom mailbox, cash register)

  — Toys to explore daily home activities (e.g., materials for play food, dishes and utensils, housecleaning set, dolls and doll clothing, toy phone, mirror)

- Nature/science materials, including:

  — Collections of natural objects (e.g., sets of leaves, rocks, seashells)

  — Sand/water toys (e.g., scoops, funnels and containers of different sizes, shapes, objects that sink and float, sponges, shovels, rakes, sifters, sand/water wheels)

  — Tools to support students' scientific observations (e.g., magnifying glasses, magnets, color mixers, simple microscope)

  — Nature games, toys, and books

  — Living things, if appropriate for your setting (e.g., plants, a class pet, window bird feeder)

## Technology Tools

When used intentionally and in a developmentally appropriate manner, technology can enhance students' learning experiences. Technology may be used to extend students' knowledge of curricular content through interactive activities.

- Technology tools allowed in the classroom include:

    — Computers

    — Tablets

    — Interactive whiteboards

    — Mobile devices

    — Cameras and recording devices

- District School and Pre-K Center staff may not use personal cell phones or other personal devices to document student observations and work samples.

*For more information on the use of technology tools, please see the Daily Schedule chapter of the Handbook.*

## Additional Guidance for *3-K for All* on Classroom Furniture and Instructional Materials

Furniture and Instructional materials available in *3-K for All* classrooms should support staff and students in conducting daily learning activities.

### Classroom Furniture

Generally, furniture requirements for *3-K for All* classrooms are consistent with *Pre-K for All* classrooms. However, when choosing furniture, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should take into consideration the height and weight of *3-K for All* students and how to support their learning and developmental needs.

The following furniture policies apply specifically to *3-K for All* classrooms:

- Chairs should allow for most students' feet to touch the floor while they are seated (seat height should be approximately **10 inches for *3-K for All* students** compared with 12 inches for *Pre-K for All* students).

- Tables should be an appropriate height so that most students can rest their elbows on the top of the table (table height should be approximately **18 inches for *3-K for All* students** compared with 20 inches for *Pre-K for All* students).

In addition, the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) recommends that rugs have solid/one color designs, rather than excessive print, to avoid overstimulating *3-K for All* students or limiting play.

### Instructional Materials

*3-K for All* staff must be careful not to provide students with instructional materials that may pose a choking hazard. Toys and/or objects with the following characteristics must not be provided:

- Removable parts with a diameter less than 1 ¾ inches and a length between 1 and 2 ¼ inches.

- Balls and toys with spherical, ovoid, or elliptical parts that are smaller than 1 ¾ inches in diameter, such as marbles or coins.

• Other examples of hazardous materials include:

— Plastic bags, balloons, and rubber or latex gloves

— Objects that can break apart and become choking hazards (e.g. Styrofoam blocks)
Staff should use extra caution when students use toys or objects with sharp points or edges.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Where can District Schools and Pre-K Centers purchase instructional materials and furniture?*

District Schools and Pre-K Centers have accounts with ShopDOE where they can purchase necessary instructional materials and furniture.

*Please see the Pupil Accounting and Data Management Systems chapter of the Handbook for information on how to use FAMIS to procure instructional materials and furniture.*
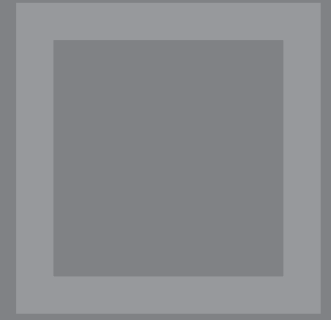
# V. Special Populations

a. Special Education Services

b. Language Services

c. Students in Temporary Housing

# Special Education Services

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must provide supports for families throughout the year regarding the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) process, including the special education referral and evaluation process.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

### Overview

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) is committed to supporting and serving all students, including those who may require special education services. Special education services are available for 3-K and pre-K students who have disabilities or developmental delays that impact their ability to learn. The CPSE is responsible for coordinating and carrying out the special education process for 3-K and pre-K students.

Regional CPSE offices serve families in the district in which the family resides, regardless of where their child attends school. For CPSE contact information, please see the CPSE website.

### CPSE Process

District Schools and Pre-K Centers are required to follow all policies outlined by the CPSE and support families in navigating the CPSE process.

The CPSE process consists of five steps:

1. Referral

2. Evaluation

3. CPSE Meeting

4. Implementation of IEP

5. Annual Review

Details on the CPSE process can be found in the Preschool Special Education Guidance document in Appendix A of this chapter.

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Before making a referral to the CPSE, how can District Schools and Pre-K Centers work with students?**

Before making a referral to the CPSE, families and District Schools or Pre-K Centers should work together to collect information, support the student, and determine next steps. During this time, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should take the following steps:

- Implement a variety of developmental and academic interventions to support a student;

- Consult with DECE Social Workers and Instructional Coordinators;

- Collect ongoing, authentic assessments such as classroom work, and observation notes;

- Analyze authentic assessments to determine the student's developmental progress and to inform planning and supports; and

- Share authentic assessments, as well as the decisions that are made after considering the data collected, with families.

**2. Can District School and Pre-K Center staff make requests for students to receive a CPSE evaluation?**

When a student is suspected of having a disability, a written referral for evaluation must be made to the Chairperson of the Committee on Preschool Special Education Office in the family's home district. A referral must come from a parent/legal guardian, Principal of a District School, or CPSE administrator.

In addition, someone else may initiate a referral by submitting a request for a referral. Requests for referrals may or may not lead to a referral. A request for referral must come from a professional staff member at the District School or Pre-K Center the student attends or is eligible to attend, a physician, a judicial officer, or a professional staff member of a public agency with responsibility for the welfare, health, or education of the student.

For more information, including the specific requirements that a written request for referral must meet, please review the Preschool Special Education Guidance document immediately following this chapter on page 121.

**3. How can District Schools and Pre-K Centers support families as they undergo the referral process?**

District Schools and Pre-K Centers can support families in many ways as they undergo the referral process:

- Continue to support the student in the classroom by collecting and analyzing authentic assessments, and using this information to inform classroom supports;

- Meet with family members to learn more about the student's needs and home life, and share how the student is responding to targeted interventions;

- Build the family's skills so they can support learning and social-emotional development at home;

- Connect the family to additional resources and community organizations to support the student's needs and answer the family's questions;

- Assist the family in writing a referral letter; and

- Support the family in arranging a special education evaluation.

### 4. Do teachers and other program staff participate in the CPSE meeting?

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must support the participation of teachers and other staff (as deemed necessary) in the CPSE meeting. Teachers are part of the CPSE team and play a very important role at CPSE meetings. The CPSE team must include at least one of the student's general education teachers (unless the student is not participating in a general education classroom), and at all times during the CPSE meeting, there must be at least one of the student's general education teachers present. The CPSE team must also include at least one of the student's special education teachers (unless the student is receiving related services only), and at all times during the CPSE meeting, there must be at least one of the student's special education teachers present.

Often, teachers spend the most time with students and get to observe their academic, social, and behavioral strengths and needs regularly. The rich amount of knowledge teachers have about the student and his or her development, general education curriculum and interventions, and day-to-day workings of the classroom provide a unique and valuable perspective to the CPSE team.

At CPSE meetings, teachers can share knowledge of how:

- The student is currently performing in the general education environment including strengths, weaknesses, and needs;
- Student interacts with peers;
- The classroom operates in terms of approach, pace, and dynamics;
- Classroom interventions and supports were put into place and how the student responded;
- The student is progressing or could progress toward IEP goals in the classroom; and
- Teacher(s) works with special education providers to integrate services in the classroom, if appropriate.

Additionally, CPSE meetings are an opportunity for teachers to learn more about the student and collaborate with special education professionals and the family on how to holistically meet the student's needs.

### 5. Can three-year-olds be enrolled in a SCIS classroom?

Yes, in accordance with New York State Education Department (NYSED) regulations, Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS) classes must be available to students ages three and four with IEPs; this includes students who are currently in the "Turning 5" process.

### 6. How can District Schools and Pre-K Centers access a student's IEPs?

Principals and ECDs can provide teaching staff access to a student's IEP by assigning a staff member with an educational reason to view the IEP access to the IEP in Galaxy. Designated teaching staff will then be able to view the student's IEP in the Special Education Student Information System (SESIS). Teaching staff will be given access to computers. *For more information on Galaxy and SESIS, see the Pupil Accounting and Data Management Systems chapter of the Handbook.*

## Preschool Special Education

Preschool special education services are available for children ages three to five years old who have disabilities or delays in development that affect learning. These services are provided free of charge to eligible children by the NYC Department of Education (DOE). The Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) is responsible for coordinating the special education process for preschool children. There are 10 CPSE offices in different areas of the city that work with families in the district where the family lives. For CPSE contact information, please visit https://infohub.nyced.org/nyc-doe-topics/specialized-areas/special-education-overview/special-education-related-services.

| 1. Referral | 2. Evaluation | 3. CPSE Meeting | 4. Services |

## Referral

Prior to making a referral to the CPSE, families and teachers should work together to implement a variety of developmental and academic interventions to support the child. A referral must:

- Be made **in writing** to the CPSE that serves the family's home district; and

- Come from a parent, principal of a DOE school, or CPSE administrator.

In a referral, a parent should:

- Request a preschool special education evaluation;

- Provide their child's full, legal name and date of birth;

- Describe any specific areas of concerns about their child's development;

- List any services their child received in the past;

- Provide full contact information to reach the family; and

- State their preferred language, if it is not English.

A referral packed includes a:

- Notice of Referral form

- List of NYS approved evaluation sites

- Consent for Initial Preschool Evaluation form

- Child and Adolescent Health Examination form

- NYSED Procedural Safeguards Notice

Once a referral has been made, the CPSE will mail the family a **referral packet** for preschool special education services. After the family receives the packet, they should schedule an evaluation with an approved evaluation site.

The referral process can also start if someone else submits a written request for initial referral to special education to the CPSE. A request to refer a student for special education must:

- Be made in writing to the CPSE that serves the family's home district;

- Come from a professional staff member of the school district in which the child resides, professional staff member of the school the child attends or is eligible to attend, licensed physician, judicial officer, or professional staff member of a public agency with responsibility for welfare, health or education of children;

- State the reasons for the request for referral and include any test results, records, or reports upon which the request for referral is based;

- Describe interventions used to remediate the child's performance prior to the request for referral; and

- Describe the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to the request for referral.

When the CPSE receives a request for referral, the CPSE will, within 10 school days, either initiate the referral process and agree to refer the child for evaluation, **or** provide the parent with a copy of the request for referral, inform the parent of his/her right to refer the child for an initial evaluation, and offer the parent an opportunity to meet.

## Evaluation

The parent should review the list of approved evaluation sites and choose an agency from the list. The CPSE can support as needed. While most of the evaluation sites are private agencies, the DOE also has preschool evaluators in CPSE offices. The evaluation site will:

- Schedule a meeting with the family to explain the evaluation process, answer any questions, share due process rights, and obtain **written consent** to evaluate their child;

- Notify the CPSE that they obtained consent to evaluate the child;

- Conduct appropriate evaluations;

- Complete the Preschool Student Evaluation Summary Report in the parent's preferred language; and

- Provide copies of the evaluation reports, including the summary report, to the parent and CPSE.

An initial preschool evaluation will consist of:

- A psychological evaluation;

- A social history interview;

- A physical evaluation;

- An observation of the child; and

- Other appropriate assessments as necessary to ascertain the physical, mental, behavioral, and emotional factors that contribute to the child's suspected disability.

> Some children require a **bilingual evaluation**, which is conducted in both English and the child's home or native language. Agencies that offer bilingual evaluations are identified on the evaluation agency list in the referral packet, along with the specific languages (other than English) that they offer.

## CPSE Meeting

Once evaluations are complete, a CPSE meeting will be held. The initial CPSE meeting must take place within 60 calendar days of the date the parent signed consent to evaluate, unless extended by mutual agreement. At the CPSE meeting, the team will review the evaluation results, share and learn more about the child, and determine if the child is eligible for preschool special education services. A child will be found eligible if his or her disability impacts participation in age appropriate activities and there is a significant delay in cognitive, language and communication, adaptive, socio-emotional, or motor functional areas or the child meets other criteria set forth in the regulations.

> CPSE meeting participants include the parent, **a general education teacher whenever the child is or may be in general education**, a special education teacher and/or provider (if applicable), a district representative (the CPSE administrator), and others with knowledge about the child or special expertise (evaluator, doctor, additional parent member, etc.). At a CPSE meeting, teachers can share knowledge of the child and his or her development, curriculum and interventions used, and day-to-day workings of the classroom.

If found eligible, the CPSE will develop an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**. An IEP is a plan that discusses a child's abilities and outlines the services the DOE will provide to meet the child's educational needs. The IEP will include present levels of performance, measurable annual goals, recommended special education programs and services, and accommodations and modifications.

After a child has been identified as a preschool student with a disability, the child's IEP will be reviewed at least once per year in additional CPSE meetings. These are called "annual reviews." In addition to this annual review, a parent may ask for an additional CPSE meeting. This is often called a "requested review." At any time, a parent may also ask for a reevaluation.

## Services

There is a range of education and related services available to support preschool students with IEPs. Special education services fall along a continuum from less restrictive to more restrictive. Less restrictive programs allow children to receive services alongside students without IEPs. More restrictive programs are available for children who require more specialized supports and services. The CPSE will always consider a child's **least restrictive environment (LRE)**.

| Programs and Services | Description |
|---|---|
| Related Services | Physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language therapy, counseling, orientation and mobility services, hearing, vision, and health services |
| Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) | Certified special educator to work closely with a student on academic, emotional and social skills; can be delivered in small groups or one-on-one |
| Special Class in an Integrated Setting (Half and Full Day) | Classroom where students with and without IEPs are educated together; a general and special education teacher work together throughout the day to ensure all students have access to the general education curriculum |
| Special Class (Half and Full Day) | Classroom that only serves students with IEPs whose needs cannot be met within the general education setting or integrated classroom; led by a special education teacher and generally has 6-12 students in a special class |
| Residential Placement | Provided for a minimum of five hours per day, five days per week by a state-approved program at a site where children receive care 24 hours per day |

Additional supports and services could include a paraprofessional, assistive technology, bilingual services, behavioral supports, and transportation.

All services on students' IEPs are provided free of cost to families. Written consent from the parent is required for services to start. Services should begin no later than 60 school days from the date the parent provided consent to evaluate or 30 school days from the date of the initial CPSE meeting, whichever is first.

## Contacts

Always first contact a child's CPSE administrator with questions about preschool special education services. CPSE contact information can be found at https://infohub.nyced.org/nyc-doe-topics/specialized-areas/special-education-overview/special-education-related-services. The following **DOE contacts** are also available:

| Topic | Contact |
|---|---|
| Special Education | SpecialEducation@schools.nyc.gov |
| Related Services | RelatedServices@schools.nyc.gov |
| Transitioning to Kindergarten | Turning5@schools.nyc.gov |
| *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* Enrollment | ESEnrollment@schools.nyc.gov |
| *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All* Programs | EarlyChildhood@schools.nyc.gov |
| DOE Special Education Hotline | (718) 935-2007 |
| Students in Temporary Housing | (718) 391-6845 MPonzio@schools.nyc.gov |

If a **foster parent** wants to know if they have educational decision-making rights, they can contact the child's foster care agency caseworker or the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Office of Education Support and Policy Planning at 212-453-9918 or education.unit@acs.nyc.gov

The Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs), funded by the New York State Education Department, provide free confidential information for families and professionals about services for young children with suspected or diagnosed developmental delays or disabilities. You can contact your borough's ECDC to talk about early intervention, preschool special education services, early childhood programs, and the transition to kindergarten and school-age special education services.

| Borough | Phone | Email | Website |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bronx | (347) 271-8159 | maura@bils.org | http://www.ecdcbronx.org |
| Brooklyn | (718) 437-3794 | ksamet@adaptcommunitynetwork.org | www.adaptcommunitynetwork.org |
| Manhattan | (212) 746-6175 | ecdc@nyp.org | http://nyp.org/ecdc |
| Queens | (718) 215-1299 | cwarkala@queenscp.org | http://www.ecdcqueens.org/ |
| Staten Island | (718) 226-6670 | lkennedy30@northwell.edu | http://www.siuh.edu/childhood |

# Language Services

As a part of the Division of Early Childhood Education's (DECE) effort to ensure all students, including those from diverse language and cultural backgrounds benefit from *3-K for All* and *Pre-K for All*, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must be responsive to the needs of students and families whose home language is a language other than English.

## What You Need to Know

### Overview

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must embrace and support the cultural and linguistic diversity of all students and families, working with families to appropriately tailor practices and resources at both the classroom and school-wide level. District Schools and Pre-K Centers must assist all students, including those whose home language is a language other than English, in developing the skills and knowledge reflected in the Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC).

During registration, families are asked to complete the Language Needs Survey. Survey results and other authentic assessment data sources will help staff members in all pre-K classrooms meet the needs of their diverse students.

*For additional guidance on serving students whose home language is a language other than English, please email* prekinstruction@schools.nyc.gov.

The Dual Language model is available as an option for families to select during the application process in some District Schools and Pre-K Centers.

### Dual Language Classrooms

Dual Language (DL) classrooms are designed for a student whose home language is a language other than English to continue developing the student's home language, as well as English language skills. In addition, English-proficient students are given the opportunity to learn a new language. Both groups provide good linguistic role models for each other and, through their interactions, support language development in both languages.

DL classrooms provide instruction in two languages: English and the target language. The target language is the language other than English most commonly spoken by students and families. DL classrooms support students whose:

1. Home language is a language other than English

2. Families are interested in their child learning a second language

DL classrooms should consist of a balance of students whose home language is English and students whose home language is the target language.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers that are approved by the DECE to offer DL must have a minimum of one pre-K classroom that follows the DL model. There are three common options for DL instructional models in pre-K:

1. Two classrooms are utilized for pre-K instruction and students switch classrooms each day. One classroom is designated only for instruction in English and the other classroom is designated only for instruction in the target language.

2. One classroom is utilized for pre-K instruction. Instruction in English occurs on one day and instruction in the target language occurs on the next day.

3. One classroom is utilized for pre-K instruction. Instruction in one language occurs in the morning and instruction in the other language occurs in the afternoon.

Information on how to apply to provide a DL classroom will be provided in *Principals' Weekly* to District Schools and Pre-K Centers. *If a District School or Pre-K Center has questions about providing DL, they should contact* [prekduallanguage@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:prekduallanguage@schools.nyc.gov).

## Staff Qualifications

• At least one teacher in DL classes must possess and maintain a current New York State certification in the Early Childhood grades, be fluent in the target language and English, and have or be in the process of obtaining a Bilingual Extension.

— If in the process of obtaining a Bilingual Extension, teachers must be able to provide proper documentation.

## Enrollment

The DECE aims to place students appropriately based on a number of different factors and priorities, including a student's home language.

During the pre-K application process, families may select a DL pre-K classroom for their child. If they choose a District School or Pre-K Center providing DL, they are asked the following three questions about their child's home language:

1. What is your child's home language?

2. How well does your child speak and understand English?

3. How well does your child speak and understand [the target language]?

This information, along with the additional admissions priorities, is considered when placing students in a DL classroom.

*Additional information on DL admissions priorities can be found in the Enrollment chapter of the Handbook.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Who determines the language in which services for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are delivered?**

The Committee of Preschool Special Education (CPSE) in accordance with an IEP team determine a student's eligibility for special education services and the language in which special education programs and services are delivered.

*For more information on Special Education Services and programs available to pre-K students, please see the Special Education Services chapter of the Handbook.*

**2. Can 3-K and pre-K students be officially designated as English Language Learners?**

No, 3-K and pre-K students cannot be officially designated as English Language Learners. Upon enrollment in a District School in Kindergarten, families will be given a Home Language Identification Survey that lets the school staff know what language the student speaks at home. If the survey indicates the student speaks a home language other than English, he or she may be given the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners. If the test shows the student needs support learning English, he or she will be designated as an English Language Learner.

**3. How should District Schools and Pre-K Centers engage families whose home language is a language other than English?**

Strong partnerships with families in 3-K and pre-K lays the foundation for ongoing engagement in their child's K-12 education. District Schools and Pre-K Centers should provide families with a warm and respectful environment that supports families whose home language is a language other than English. Principals and ECDs are responsible for working with the Translation & Interpretation (T&I) Unit to ensure the provision of translation services to limited English speaking families free of charge. All District School and Pre-K Center policies, communications, and services should be sensitive, respectful, and responsive to the linguistic and cultural needs of families. All critical communications must be translated in the primary home language of the family.

*For additional information on translation requirements, please see the Family Engagement chapter of the Handbook.*

# Students in Temporary Housing

Students living in temporary housing must have equal access to the same *Pre-K for All* services provided to students permanently housed in the community.

## 💡 What You Need to Know

## Overview

Students living in temporary housing have several important rights related to education. These include:

- A right to immediate enrollment in a *3-K for All* or *Pre-K for All* program, even without enrollment documents;

- A right to receive transportation to and from their program; and

- A right to either remain in their program or transfer to a different program should students become homeless or move between temporary housing locations.

These rights help promote school stability and provide additional access to school-based services. The goal of these rights is to ensure that students living in temporary housing can succeed academically. In the sections that follow, each of these rights will be explained in greater detail.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Chancellor's Regulation A-780 require that the necessary steps are taken to ensure students residing in temporary living situations have access to the services that are available to permanently housed students.

Students in temporary housing lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes a student who:

- Is living with a friend, relative, or someone else because his or her family lost their housing due to economic hardship, or a similar reason, or is living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or camping ground due to a lack of alternative accommodations

- Is living in a subsidized publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including commercial hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing)

- Is awaiting foster care placement[9]

- Is living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation

- Is living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, or substandard housing

The NYCDOE Students in Temporary Housing (STH) unit within the Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD) is available to answer questions on the rights of students residing in temporary housing situations. The STH unit has multiple staff available to assist District Schools and Pre-K Centers including:

- Borough-Based STH Content Experts

    — A current list of Content Experts can be found on the NYCDOE's Students in Temporary Housing website.

- Shelter-Based STH Family Assistants

- School-Based STH Liaisons

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[9] Effective until December 2016.

## Application, Pre-Registration, and Enrollment

Students living in temporary housing are provided with additional flexibility in certain aspects of the admissions, registration, and enrollment processes.

### Application

Families living in temporary housing should apply for 3-K or pre-K via the *3-K for All* or *Pre-K for All* single application process.

- If living in a shelter, families should enter the shelter address as the address on their application.

- If living in a Domestic Violence shelter, the family should enter the P.O. Box assigned to the shelter on their application. Once the family pre-registers, the District School or Pre-K Center must insert the P.O. Box number into ATS, formatted in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101.

- If a family is living in another temporary housing situation (e.g., a doubled up housing situation), families should use their temporary address on their application.

*For more information on the* 3-K for All *or* Pre-K for All *single application process, please see the Enrollment chapter of the Handbook.*

### Pre-Registration and Initial Enrollment

All families may accept their offer to a District School or Pre-K Center by pre-registering at the site in person and presenting the required documentation.

As outlined in the Enrollment chapter of the Handbook, District Schools and Pre-K Centers must pre-register and enroll students in temporary housing even if the family is unable to provide the following documentation at pre-registration:

- Proof of Age

- Proof of Residency

- Immunization Records

After enrolling a student living in temporary housing, District Schools and Pre-K Centers shall work with the STH Family Assistant or Content Expert to obtain any necessary documentation to complete registration and enrollment. Students must not be prevented from enrolling in school while staff obtain documentation, in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101 and Chancellor's Regulation A-780.

All families must also complete a Residency Questionnaire Form during registration or upon enrollment at a District School or Pre-K Center. Staff must assist families in filling out the form as needed. The information provided on the form can be used to help determine if a student is living in temporary housing.

### Immunization Requirements for Attendance

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must allow students in temporary housing to provisionally enroll in pre-K even if they have not yet received all required immunizations. District School and Pre-K Center staff must assist families to obtain immunizations, including recommending walk-in clinics that can assist. *For more information, please see the Health Services chapter of the Handbook.*

### Mid-Year Enrollment

A student who becomes homeless after the start of the school year has a right either to remain enrolled in his or her current program or to transfer to and enroll in another program for which he or she meets the eligibility criteria and according to the DOE regulations. If a family living in temporary housing who is not currently enrolled at your District School or Pre-K Center informs you after the start of the school year that they would like to enroll their child, you should:

- Enroll the student.

- If there are no open seats at the District School or Pre-K Center, immediately contact the Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov.

### Students with an IEP

If a student living in temporary housing has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that recommends a Special Class (SC) or Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS) and requests mid-year enrollment at a program, staff should refer the family to their Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) and immediately contact EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov providing the student's name and date of birth. CPSE arranges placement for all students with IEPs recommending SC or SCIS settings enrolling mid-year, including homeless students.

## Address Changes

Students in temporary housing whose living situation or address changes (e.g., move to a different shelter) and their family would like them to enroll in or transfer to a District School or Pre-K Center must be provided with the necessary assistance to do so.

District Schools and Pre-K Centers must have families complete a new Residency Questionnaire Form every time a family's address changes or a new family enrolls their child in a District School or Pre-K Center.

### Eligibility to Remain at Current District School or Pre-K Center

In all cases, students in temporary housing have the right to stay in their District School or Pre-K Center of origin for the remainder of the school year if they:

- Lose their permanent residence during the school year or

- Move during the school year

Students who move after the start of the school year and choose to stay in their original District School or Pre-K Center must be provided with assistance to maintain continuity of education. Families should be informed that they should contact a STH Family Assistant located in shelters or a Content Expert to arrange transportation assistance. *Please see the "Transportation" section below for more information.*

If a family living in temporary housing who has a child that is currently enrolled at a District School or Pre-K Center informs a staff member at that program that they are moving and wish to enroll their child at a different pre-K program, staff must direct the family to their Borough Content Expert and immediately e-mail the DECE at EarlyChildhoodPolicy@schools.nyc.gov. Within the e-mail, please include the following information:

- Student name

- Date of Birth

- OSIS #

- Family contact information

- Previous address

- Current address

- Any additional contact information

- New program preference

Families will receive assistance in enrolling in a program if they move from:

- Permanent housing to temporary housing,

- Temporary housing to another temporary housing situation, and

- Temporary housing to permanent housing.

The DECE will work with the Office of Student Enrollment (OSE) to place the student in a program close to his or her new residence in accordance with NYCDOE policy. Families are not required to demonstrate a travel or other hardship before requesting to transfer to and enroll their child in another program due to changes in residence.

The choice about whether a student living in temporary housing will remain in his or her program of origin or change schools must be made in coordination with the family and in the "best interest" of the student.It is presumed to be in the best interest of the child to stay in the same pre-K program, unless this is contrary to the wishes of the student's parent/legal guardian.

## Transportation

Parents/legal guardians of students in temporary housing are entitled to free MetroCards to get their children to and from 3-K and pre-K. District Schools and Pre-K Centers should contact the STH Content Expert to get a free MetroCard for the parent/legal guardian. Parents/legal guardians are also entitled to free Metro Cards to get their child to and from pre-K for the remainder of the school year in which the child becomes permanently housed.

*If a student living in temporary housing has an IEP that recommends special transportation, the District School or Pre-K Center should contact their local Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) who will assist in arranging transportation.*

## Automate the Schools (ATS)

A student's Residency Questionnaire Form (page 8), must be completed by families at registration or whenever a student enrolls at a District School or Pre-K Center. If this form indicates the student is living in temporary housing, District Schools and Pre-K Centers are responsible for entering the applicable housing status code and address into ATS.

- District Schools and Pre-K Centers must enter the proper housing status code from the form in the student's bio page (BIOU) and update changes as appropriate.

- If a student has a different address, but remains in the same District School or Pre-K Center, the District School or Pre-K Center is responsible for updating the student's address in ATS.

If a student is living in a domestic violence shelter, his or her physical address must not be entered into ATS. Instead, staff must enter the post office address provided by the parent/legal guardian or create a new address using the two-digit district number, followed by the letters "DV" and by the county, borough, state and zip code, in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101. For example, District 1 = Box 01DV, New York, New York 10002.

## Title I Funding (District Schools Only)

Federal Title I, Part A funds must be set aside to serve students in temporary housing. District Schools should use the Title I Part A set aside funds to assist students living in temporary housing.

- Principals at schools that receive Title I funding must set aside a minimum of $100 for each student in temporary housing.

- Principals at non-Title I schools must set aside a per pupil amount based on the Title I Funds Summary of School Allocation Memorandum.

Title I Part A set aside funds should be used primarily for educational services. However due to different needs of the students in temporary housing population, Title I Part A funds can also be used to purchase items such as uniforms or glasses.

*For additional information, District Schools and Pre-K Centers should contact their School Based STH Liaison or STH Content Expert.*

# VI. Appendix A: Early Childhood Framework for Quality (EFQ)

# Appendix A: 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).
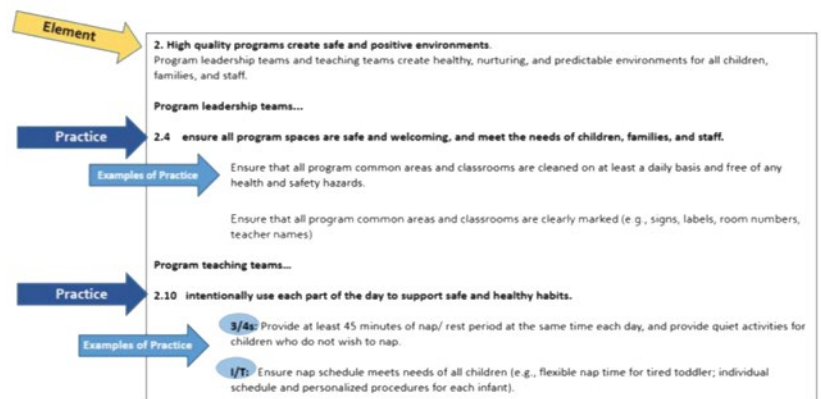


# The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) believes that high-quality 0–5 programs…

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: Directors, education directors, program directors, executive directors, board of directors, coordinators, family service coordinators*

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}

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**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.

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**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.

# VII. Appendix B: Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance

# Appendix B:
# Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance

**Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance in *Pre-K for All* and EarlyLearn NYC Programs**
*NYC Department of Education & Administration for Children's Services*

## Position

The NYC Department of Education (DOE) and Administration for Children's Services (ACS) are committed to ensuring all *Pre-K for All* programs prepare children and families with the skills and knowledge needed to enter Kindergarten prepared to succeed. With *Pre-K for All*, children will gain a strong foundation in all domains of development and families will be prepared to support their child's learning and growth.

*Pre-K for All* and EarlyLearn NYC programs are responsible for structuring an environment and approaching interactions in ways that build positive relationships with children and families. In our pre-K programs, children and families should feel secure, supported, and recognized as important members of a program's community. A child engaged in active learning who feels secure, supported, and valued, is more likely to demonstrate respectful and constructive behaviors and engage in positive interactions. Children's behavior should be guided in a positive way as part of the developmentally appropriate instruction taking place throughout the program.

## Children in *Pre-K for All* and EarlyLearn NYC programs may not be expelled or suspended.

*Pre-K for All* Programs are expected to implement positive behavior guidance strategies that are grounded in the following practices:

- Teaching staff build nurturing learning environments through the use of developmentally appropriate strategies that advance children's social and emotional development and approaches to learning. For more detail on these domains of development and learning, refer to the NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework.

- Successful positive behavior guidance is built upon strong relationships that are grounded in trust and respect. Programs collaborate with families to ensure the program meets the needs of all learners. Teaching staff and administrators develop strategies to build each child's social, emotional, and behavioral skills based on shared understandings with each family. Establishing regular and ongoing two-way communication with families will create strong relationships that allow for effective collaborations.

## Overview of Guidance and Support for Pre-K Programs

The following pages outline additional guidance on positive behavior guidance strategies to support programs in meeting the expectations described above. Behavior guidance approaches, strategies, policies and procedures implemented in programs must align to this guidance. Our guidance currently includes sections on:

1. Proactive Measures

2. Positive Reinforcement

3. Responsive Strategies

In situations where programs need more support to interpret or implement positive behavior guidance strategies, programs should contact DOE or ACS.

- *Pre-K for All* programs (including district schools, NYC Early Education Centers, EarlyLearn NYC providers, and DOE Pre-K Centers) with questions should contact the DOE Early Childhood Social Worker Team by emailing prekfamilyengagement@schools.nyc.gov.

- EarlyLearn NYC providers should utilize their partnerships with mental health consultants who can provide observation, guidance, and support to teachers in developing a plan to meet a child's individualized social and emotional needs.

# Positive Behavior Guidance Strategies

## 1. Proactive Measures to Promote Positive Behavior

Children enter early childhood programs at varying developmental levels. There is a wide range in the behaviors and skills that are considered "typical" for children in this age group. Each child is unique and requires individualization that may be based on personality, ability, etc. These important considerations must be taken into account as programs advance children's learning and development across all domains. To support each child's growth in social-emotional and other skills that affect children's ability to engage with curriculum and program as a whole, *Pre-K for All* and EarlyLearn NYC programs are required to develop and implement proactive, developmentally appropriate behavior guidance strategies such as those described below.

- Respectful, caring relationships

- Flexible and responsive teaching

- Physical environment and activities

- Clear expectations

- Developmentally appropriate instructional strategies

- Transitions

- Establish **respectful, caring relationships** among staff, children, and families.

  — Communicate and act on the principle that all children are capable of learning and making developmental progress.

  — Consistently use welcoming and positive language and tone, and ensure adults in the program interact positively with each other as well as with children.

  — Acknowledge children's emotions and provide comfort and assistance when necessary.

  — Explicitly welcome families into the classroom environment and foster daily two-way communications between families and teaching staff.

  — Deepen knowledge of each child's skills, interests and needs through implementation of an authentic assessment system and regular conversation with families.

  — Acknowledge and respect children's rich backgrounds, cultures, and linguistic diversity and tailor your practices appropriately to meet these needs.

- Be **flexible and responsive** to children's skills, interests and developmental needs when planning the curriculum.

  — The flow of the day/daily schedule should include ample time for child-initiated and teacher-facilitated activities.

  — During child-initiated times of the day, empower children to self-select and engage with a variety of classroom centers, learning materials, and companions, encouraging purposeful play.

  — Use information gathered from authentic assessments to develop lessons and activities that build on children's strengths and interests while addressing their needs.

  — Support children's active participation by incorporating children's ideas into instructional activities and encourage children to talk and share their ideas for learning.

  — Encourage children to have freedom of movement by allowing them to choose how and where they sit, stand, or move within small-group and whole-group learning experiences, as long as this does not interfere with other children's learning or feelings of belonging. Limit the amount of time children are expected to remain sitting during an activity to short periods of about 10-15 minutes at a time.

  — If students do not appear to be engaged during periods of whole-group instruction, consider:

    - Including additional whole-group movement.

    - Increasing student participation.

    - Shortening or changing the activity.

    - Reducing the frequency of whole-group activities.

- Arrange and supervise the **physical environment and activities** in ways that promote children's development of approaches to learning, social and emotional skills, and positive behaviors.

  — Arrange the environment to allow children to utilize shared space collaboratively.

    - Stock classroom centers with diverse materials that are suitable for the range of skills, interests, and abilities of children in the classroom. Ensure there is an appropriate amount of resources and that children can access those resources independently. All children should have opportunities to participate without competing for classroom resources or adult assistance.

    - Ensure that each area of the classroom has sufficient space to allow for the number of children that will utilize the space at a given time.

  — Use visual displays (e.g. Tools of Autonomy) that support children in understanding expectations of their behavior during the day, with others, and with the resources in their environment.

    - Tools of Autonomy are the supports in the classroom that support prekindergarten students to develop independence and self-sufficiency. They include center systems or choice charts (that children use to choose their interest area), flow of the day displays (that establish a predictable sequence of events in pictures and words), interactive attendance charts, and job charts (that support children to take turns with routine jobs with modelling and support from the teacher).

    - Other examples of visual displays include using labels for center and resource organization (to assist children in choosing or returning materials after their use), or pictures that remind children of specific behavior expectations (such as a mouth that can remind children to use soft voices indoors).

  — Establish a cozy area reserved for quiet activity, or a way for children to find space for privacy and relaxation.

  — Offer extra support, attention, and modelling when children are engaging in a new activity and gradually introduce new materials and manage resource access to keep children from being overwhelmed.

  — Anticipate problematic behavior by frequently monitoring, or "scanning," the classroom, and proactively intervene to avoid escalation.

- **Communicate clear expectations** for children that help them develop independence and self-regulation skills, and engage in respectful interactions with peers and adults.

  — At the beginning of the year, encourage children to participate in creating a set of expectations for behavior in the classroom.

    - Use positive language to clearly establish and define the desired behavior (e.g. "We share toys with friends" rather than "Don't grab toys from other children").

    - In general, negative language should be avoided when setting or reinforcing behavior expectations. *Very rarely*, using negative language like "no" or "stop" may be appropriate to keep a child safe in an emergency.

— Explicitly teach children how to use and move through the classroom space/centers, treat their resources and environment with respect, and remind children of classroom expectations frequently, especially at the beginning of the year or before a transition to another activity.

— Throughout the year, guide children's peer interactions in a clear and consistent manner, so that children come to understand behavioral expectations, the impact of their choices, and have an opportunity to practice conflict resolution strategies.

• Use **developmentally appropriate instructional strategies** to establish a positive classroom culture, help children make meaningful connections, and feel excited and motivated to engage in meaningful activities as well as with adults and other children.

— Help children develop self-regulation skills and positive relationships by modelling respectful and caring behaviors.

— When modelling such behaviors, teaching staff should use self- and parallel talk by narrating or describing their actions and children's actions:

• To explain considerate ways of thinking and acting (e.g. "I notice you don't have a magnifying glass but you look like you want to join the science activity. Would you like some help finding an extra one?")

• To explain emotional regulation (e.g. "Hmm, you just took the markers from me and I'm getting upset...I wonder, what should I do now? Should I grab for them or ask you to give them back?")

— Use story-telling, literature, puppetry, etc. to engage children in thinking about the impacts of certain behaviors, and to extend children's empathy and understanding of emotions.

— Engage children in problem-solving discussion regularly and establish the expectations that children talk with each other to resolve conflicts.

• Plan for successful management of **transitions** at the beginning and end of the day, between activities, into and out of the program, and when starting or ending special education services or specialist activities (when applicable).

— Give children reminders before major transitions so they have time to finish what they are doing and prepare for the next activity.

— Make transitions or wait times fun and educational by singing songs, rhyming words or names, or going over the expected behaviors of the next setting. This will keep children engaged in learning and prepared for the next event.

— Minimize wait times during transitions in order to maximize children's active engagement throughout all times of day.

• For example, during bathroom routines, rotate small groups of children so that all children can engage in productive learning activities for as much time as possible rather than waiting in line.

## 2. Positive Reinforcement to Promote Positive Behavior

Positive reinforcement acknowledges and motivates further positive behavior. It is important to let children know that they are making progress toward a desirable new skill to encourage their effort. Positive reinforcement can be done in many ways, and may need to be tailored for individual children. Children demonstrating new and more complicated behaviors may need additional reinforcements.

Examples of developmentally appropriate ways to reinforce positive behaviors include:

- Using **social reinforcements** such as praise, smiles, encouragement, or even a well-timed high-five or a thumbs up.

  — Praise should be specific and provide meaningful feedback, especially when the behavior is relatively new to the child (e.g. "You were very thoughtful to share the toys with your friend. He seems really happy that you included him in the game"). Avoid more general feedback (e.g. "good job").

  — A high-five or thumbs up are appropriate non-verbal reinforcements for behaviors that are clearly encouraged (e.g. the child has been working on sharing and you notice them share their toys from across the room. You catch their eye and give them a thumbs up immediately following the positive behavior).

- Using **activity reinforcements** as a reward for desired positive behaviors, such as being able to choose a song or activity for the group or during center time.

  — There should already be room in the curriculum for following children's interests or ideas for learning. These reinforcements are therefore a logical way to incorporate positive reinforcement into the program.

## 3. Responsive Strategies to Promote Positive Behavior

*Pre-K for All* and EarlyLearn NYC programs are required to develop and implement strategies for responding to behavior that is disruptive to other children or unsafe for the child and/or others. This does not apply to behaviors of intentional risk-taking appropriate for learning new physical skills, such as walking on a balance beam or climbing a rope ladder during gross-motor activities, with adult support and supervision. Teaching staff should collaborate with a child's family to help the child develop solutions to demonstrate positive behavior or practice appropriate alternative behaviors, consistently and in various contexts. Programs should communicate with families throughout the process of positive behavior guidance to exchange information about strategies and progress. All strategies for guiding children to appropriate behaviors should be implemented in a calm, consistent, and non-punitive way to support children's social and emotional development and approaches to learning.

- Understand contributing factors

- Offering choices

- Redirecting or providing acceptable substitutes

- Supporting the child's sense of security, self-regulation and self-soothing skills

- Limiting negative attention

- Logical consequences

- Replacement/alternative behaviors

- Modifications to program structures

- Additional support

- Program staff members should **work together with families and others to better understand the factors contributing to a child's behavior**. Ask the question: "What is this child trying to communicate when they demonstrate this behavior?" Factors contributing to a child's behavior may include:

  — Programmatic structures or conditions such as the flow of the day/daily schedule, arrangement of the classroom, noise level, etc.

  — The child's feeling of security within the classroom or the condition of their relationships with adults or peers.

  — The child's unique circumstances. For example:

    - The child has not yet learned appropriate behaviors for social interactions and may be grabbing toys instead of asking or hitting when upset.

    - The child is going through a transition at home and experiencing emotional distress as a result (e.g. a new baby in the family) or has experienced trauma.

  — By consistently observing and documenting children's behavior, teaching staff may identify the situations that trigger disruptive or unsafe behaviors and help determine the factors that contribute to such behavior.

    - A cycle of *observation* (collect and annotate evidence), *planning* (analyze the evidence and use it to inform your practice), *implementation* (make planned changes to your practice or program), *reflection* (observe the effect), and *adjustment* (make improvements if needed) should be used in any response plan for behavior guidance.

    - Cycles of assessment and planning are already in use within programs through the implementation of authentic assessment systems, and can be leveraged to plan for positive behavior guidance.

Depending on the contributing factors, some strategies to respond to unsafe or disruptive behaviors include:

- **Offering choices** to allow children control over their own behavior, such as choosing which toys to put away or where to sit at the lunch table.

- **Redirecting** or **providing acceptable substitutes** to help children identify options for their behavior, such as when a teacher may notice there are too many people at an activity table and suggest a child engage with a different activity while they wait for a turn.

- **Supporting the child's sense of security** and development of **self-regulation or self-soothing skills**.

  — Staff may collaborate with the child and family to strengthen the child's relationships with children and adults in the program.

  — The child may be encouraged to bring a "security object" (e.g. blanket, teddy bear) to help feel more comfortable in the classroom.

— The child may be encouraged to utilize the quiet space or create a space for privacy in the classroom where children can calm down from feelings of anger or frustration.

— The child can be encouraged to practice breathing techniques, getting a drink of water, or other strategies that assist in processing strong emotions or related negative physiological responses.

— The child may be encouraged to self-soothe using sensory materials or objects, such as sand or water play, or any other activity calming to the child's senses.

• **Limiting the amount of negative attention given to children** by ignoring non-disruptive inappropriate behavior and focusing on the positive.

— Staff may choose to ignore non-disruptive behavior and continue to focus children on another learning activity. Positive behaviors should be reinforced with positive attention.

— A strategy of actively ignoring a child's behavior should not be utilized in isolation or to the extent where it becomes a detriment to a child's well-being. This strategy does not replace the expectation that teachers and program staff actively engage all children in the curriculum and encourage their participation in the program.

• **Implementing logical consequences**, where a child's access to an activity or resource is restricted in direct response to an unsafe or disruptive behavior.

— The severity of the consequence should be appropriate and relevant (e.g. not being able to stay at the water table because they continue to pour water on other children).

— This strategy may be used along with redirecting or providing acceptable alternatives.

— This strategy may be used along with encouraging a child to utilize a quiet space for a limited period of time.

• Helping the child develop **appropriate replacement or alternative behaviors**.

— Staff may use different strategies depending on the program's philosophy and the unique needs of the child and family. One possible strategy for programs and families is outlined below:

1. Identify the inappropriate behavior in a non-judgmental, factual way.

2. Calmly communicate with the child about the impact of the behavior on him/herself and others.

3. Help the child identify contributing factors and identify an appropriate alternative behavior or way to address the situation.

4. With the child, develop strategies for demonstrating the appropriate alternative behavior, along with any supports the child may need (for example, a phrase or visual cue that the teacher and student agree on to help remind the student to use the alternative behavior).

5. Collaborate with the child's family throughout the process.

6. Celebrate with the child when he/she makes progress over time.

- Modifying programmatic structures as appropriate.

  — Staff may make **modifications to daily schedules** (such as scheduling center-time to take place earlier in the day) **or the physical environment** (such as moving the quiet and noisy centers further apart in the classroom) to accommodate the needs of children and minimize their frustration throughout the day. This can be an effective support for a group of children or individual children.

  — Programs may not shorten the school day of any child unless the program receives approval from the DOE's Division of Early Childhood Education and written consent of the child's parent or guardian. In particular, any proposed changes that would modify a child's access to the program by temporarily shortening the length of a child's day <u>must</u> be planned with the support of your program's assigned Early Childhood Social Worker or Program Specialist, in collaboration with the child's family. These changes can be implemented <u>only with voluntary written consent of the child's parent or legal guardian</u> on a form provided by the Social Worker or Program Specialist informing the family of the option of continuing with a full-time program. This written plan must outline the strategies that the program will use to aid the child to return to full access and program participation within a specified timeline (not to exceed three weeks). Programs may only place children on shortened schedules if they follow these procedures and if the child's parent or legal guardian consents. Parents' written consent to a shortened schedule must be kept on file and be made available upon request. Programs may not shorten the school day of a child as an alternative to suspension.

  — Any changes to programmatic structures must not discriminate against any child or family, where a child or family's right to successfully engage in a full day of high-quality pre-K is limited due to any characteristic or perceived characteristic of that child or family.

- After implementing these positive behavior guidance strategies with the support of an assigned Social Worker or Program Specialist, the program and family may need **additional support from an outside agency**.

  — These supports include, but are not limited to, parenting or family support classes, professional learning opportunities for program staff, psychological evaluation or collaboration with the [Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE)](#).

  — In some cases, the outside agencies may not be able to provide services to the child or family immediately. In these cases, the child may require more direct supervision for a period of time. This will help ensure a safe, nurturing environment for the child and his/her peers.

  — For a child who already has an IEP, contact the child's parent or legal guardian and the [CPSE](#) to discuss scheduling a new IEP meeting to consider whether any changes to the IEP are needed to support the child's development.

  — For a child without an IEP, the behavior can most often be addressed using the positive behavior guidance strategies described above. However, a referral for preschool special education evaluations may be appropriate if a child is not making meaningful progress even with the interventions that the pre-k program has implemented. In these cases, speak with the parent about making a referral to the [CPSE](#) for preschool special education evaluations.

## Additional Resources for Programs

1. The NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (PKFCC) and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework describe outcomes and goals for children within the domains of learning and development. The benchmarks and guiding principles provide the basis for developmentally appropriate expectations for young children's learning and the underlying principles of practice for Pre-K programs.

2. The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) provides a common language around effective, positive interactions in pre-K classrooms, and is a strong tool to support teachers with guidance on effective interactions that are aligned to this *Statement on Positive Behavior Guidance in* Pre-K for All *and EarlyLearn NYC Programs*.

   • For more information about the CLASS tool, including regional trainings that are offered in New York City, please visit Teachstone's website.

3. An authentic assessment system is a formative collection of qualitative student data (i.e. student observations and work samples) that measures student progress across developmental domains to inform instruction. Authentic assessment systems support teachers to:

   • Strategically collect observational data and student work samples.

   • Analyze that information along a developmental continuum.

   • Consider next steps for planning instruction that is responsive to the needs of individual children and groups of children.

   *Pre-K for All* programs are required to use a developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable authentic assessment system to monitor developmental progression and plan instruction. The Division of Early Childhood Education provides online subscriptions and resources to assist teachers in authentic assessment work. For more information about the DOE-approved authentic assessment systems, please email prekassessment@schools.nyc.gov and/or visit the following links.

   • Work Sampling System (WSS)

   • Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD)

   • High Scope Child Observation Record Advantage (COR Advantage)

4. The following websites have useful resources that Pre-K and EarlyLearn NYC programs can use to understand and support children's social, emotional and behavioral development:

   • Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

   • Technical Assistance Center for Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children

     — Toolkit

     — Resources

- Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

  — Teaching Tools for Young Children with Challenging Behaviors

- Collaborative Problem Solving

  — Materials

- Center on the Developing Child

- Trauma Smart

- Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative

5. The following books can be used to support social-emotional learning and to understand behavioral expectations:

- *Will I Have a Friend?*, by M. Cohen.

- *Llama Llama Misses Mama*, by A. Dewdney.

- *Wemberly Worried*, by K. Henkes.

- *The Kissing Hand*, by Audrey Penn.

- *When I Feel Good about Myself*, by Cornelia Maude Spleman (and others in the series)

- *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*, by M. Willems.

- *How Do Dinosaurs Go to School?*, by Yolen & Teague.

- *Me I Am!*, by J. Prelutsky.

# VIII. Appendix C: *Pre-K for All* Commitment to Families

# Appendix C: *Pre-K for All* Commitment to Families

## *Pre-K for All* Commitment to Families

Your child and family deserve **access to a free**, full-day, high-quality *Pre-K for All* program. *Pre-K for All* programs are committed to **partner with you** to support your child's learning. Each *Pre-K for All* program is held to rigorous quality standards and policies by the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE). You can expect your *Pre-K for All* program to support your family by...

### Offering your child free, full-day, high-quality pre-K

- Your child is eligible to attend a *Pre-K for All* program if you live in New York City, and he or she was born in 2012.

- Your child will receive a free instructional full-day of 6 hours and 20 minutes (or a weekly equivalent).

- Your family cannot be charged a fee to pre-register or enroll in pre-K.

- Your family cannot be required to participate in any other program offered by the provider. *For example, a program may not require you to enroll in their extended hours or afterschool services.*

- Your child's progress towards meeting developmental milestones (behaviors or abilities that are generally demonstrated by children of a certain age) is not used to determine eligibility for pre-K. *For example, a program may not deny your child entry if he or she does not yet use the bathroom independently or if your child does not yet dress him or herself independently.*[1]

### Providing a safe and healthy learning environment for your child

- Your child's pre-K program will be in a secure and clean facility.

- Your child will be appropriately supervised at all times by staff members who have passed mandatory security and medical clearance.

- Your child will be served nutritious meals and snacks.

- Your child will receive any necessary health or medical accommodations to allow for their participation in *Pre-K for All*.

### Creating a learning environment to support your child's development

- Your child will receive a full-day of instruction focused on developing the foundational knowledge and skills outlined in the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core standards.

- The standards include five key areas of development: Approaches to Learning, Physical Development and Health, Social and Emotional Growth, Communication and Language Skills, and Knowledge of the World.

- Your child's teachers and program administrators will have the appropriate qualifications for their positions.

- Your child's teachers and assistants will support and encourage him or her to learn and try new things, actively explore with his or her peers, adjust to routines, solve problems, and use new vocabulary throughout the day.

- Your child will have opportunities to participate in whole group, small group and independent classroom experiences and physical activities, using a wide variety of learning materials.

## Our approach to partnership with families

Each child's maximum potential can be best achieved through a proactive partnership between families and the educational community.

## To promote this partnership, *Pre-K for All* programs will:

- Provide a warm and welcoming environment that respects your family's language and culture.

- Plan with you for your child's transition into and out of pre-K.

- Communicate regularly with you to share important information about your child's learning and the program's policies and activities.

- Join you in making decisions about your child's learning experience.

- Provide activities and opportunities to extend your child's learning outside the classroom.

## Families are encouraged to:

- Ensure that your child attends pre-K regularly, and notify your program when your child will be absent.

- Observe important procedures, including arranging for a responsible adult to drop off and pick up your child on time each day, and follow safety rules identified by your child's program.

- Provide required documents for enrollment and important information that will help teachers and program administrators learn about your child's needs.

- Participate in ongoing communication with program staff to support your child's learning and development, including attending meetings requested by your child's program.

- Participate in hands-on home activities and other opportunities to help extend your child's learning outside the classroom.

- Discuss any changes you may notice in your child's behavior or learning needs with your child's teacher.

*If you believe that your child may have a disability or developmental delay that impacts his or her ability to learn, you should first talk to your child's program to find out if there are developmental and academic interventions to support your child within the general education setting. If strategies have been implemented and you feel your child may require special education services, your program can assist you in submitting an initial referral for an evaluation to the NYCDOE Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) to receive free special education services.*

**Families are encouraged to use the guidance below in directing inquiries or concerns:**

Families are encouraged to speak with your children's teachers, program support staff, or program administrators as a first step to address a question or concern.

If program staff members are unable to address a question or concern, families may reach out to the Division of Early Childhood Education at the NYC Department of Education at (212) 374-0351 or at EarlyChildhood@schools.nyc.gov.

Confirm publishing date

Department of
Education
Chancellor Richard A. Carranza

PRE-K
FOR ALL

3-K
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ALL

# Accessibility Report

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