



Grow NJ Kids

Center and
School-Based
Standards



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Category

1

Safe, Healthy Learning Environments

A high quality learning experience can only be facilitated in a safe and healthy environment. An enriching environment must use appropriate classroom furnishings, maintain sanitary conditions, promote a healthy lifestyle, and have a teaching/caregiving team that works from a meaningful plan based on the developmental abilities and capacities of the children.

In this section, the standards focus on quality components in a safe, healthy learning environment. Alignment with this section means:

- Program has a current NJ Child Care License.
- Program's indoor and outdoor environment is healthy, safe, and clean.
- Program utilizes a health expert to ensure that appropriate health and safety practices are being used.
- Program provides nutritious food and/or snacks or, at the very least, provides information to parents that promote healthy food choices.
- Program accommodates children with special diets and food preferences.
- Teaching/Caregiving staff, considered as part of the adult: child ratio, are certified in the Red Cross Infant/Child CPR and First Aid.
- Program provides and maintains current information on necessary child health screenings.



		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 1	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a Department of Children and Families (DCF) License for one year. School-based sites have appropriate Department of Education (DOE) plan approval.			License in good standing or program meets EEC Licensing Standards (for non-licensable and license exempt programs).	1304.53(a)(6)	NAEYC: Leadership & Management NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations
Level 2	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a quality improvement plan based on findings from their Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment. Program demonstrates healthy, safe and clean indoor and outdoor learning environments.	ITERS-R and /or ECERS-R self assessed score average of 3 with no single item below 2. Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment using the results to develop a program improvement plan describing how the program plans to move to the next QRIS level.	CLASS self assessed score of 2 or higher on the dimensions of Positive Climate and Teacher Sensitivity, and a score of 2 or lower on the dimension of Negative Climate. Let's Move! Child Care Checklist Quiz.	Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment And Quality Improvement Plan Formal Professional Development as indicated by Registry		
Level 3	Must meet all Step 2 criteria. Program conducts daily health and safety checks on playgrounds and has a system to identify/address health and safety concerns in and around the building. Programs serving infants and toddlers must have a policy that supports breastfeeding friendly principles, including accepting and storing breast milk and providing a comfortable place for lactating mothers.	ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 4 with no single item below 3. CLASS reliable rater score of 3 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.		ITERS-R/ECERS-R Protocol And/Or CLASS Protocol Program health/safety checklist Breastfeeding Policy Formal professional development as indicated by Registry	1304.53(a)(10)(viii) 1304.40(C)(3) 1304.23(e)(2)	NECPA: School/Center Building, Supplies, Equipment & Transportation NECPA:Health Protection & Promotion NAEYC: Health

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	<p>Program has a written policy ensuring nutritious meals and snacks are promoted and/or provided as defined by United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines and is respectful of religious and dietary restrictions.</p> <p>Staff are trained to work with children with special diets, allergies and specialized feeding issues.</p> <p>The program provides family health and safety workshops and/or resources annually in topics that include: preventive health care, mental/behavioral health issues, nutrition and obesity, medication administration policies and procedures, oral health practices, communicable disease prevention.</p>			<p>Written policy on food service. Including program adherence to religious and dietary restrictions.</p> <p>Sample Menus</p> <p>List of trainings provided to staff on dietary preferences and requirements for children. Including training content and resume and/or credentials of trainer.</p> <p>List of trainings provided to parents with sign in sheets. Information on training content. Resume or credentials of trainer.</p>	<p>1304.23(b)(1)</p> <p>1304.23(a)(2) 1304.23(C)(6)</p> <p>1304.23(d) 1304.40(f)(2)(i),(ii) & (iii)</p> <p>Head Start Act Section: 648(3)(B)(xiv)</p>	<p>NAEYC: Health</p> <p>NAEYC: Health</p> <p>NECPA:Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships</p> <p>NECPA:Health Protection & Promotion</p>
Level 4	<p>Must meet all Step 3 criteria.</p> <p>The program utilizes a health consultant annually to conduct a file audit on children's immunizations, Well Baby Visits, etc.</p> <p>The program has a system for daily age-appropriate oral health care for all children.</p>	<p>ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 5 with no single item below 4.</p> <p>CLASS reliable rater score of 4 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension</p>		<p>ITERS-R/ECERS-R Protocol</p> <p>CLASS Protocol</p> <p>Report/Communication to parents by program about health and wellness checks.</p> <p>Daily schedule and/or program plan</p> <p>Evidence that playgrounds and equipment are inspected annually.</p>	<p>1304(a)(1)(ii) 1304.20(a)(1)(ii)(A), (B) & (C) 1304.52(d)(2)</p> <p>1304.23(b)(3) 1304.20(c)(3)(i) & (ii)</p> <p>1304.53(a)(10)</p>	<p>NECPA:Health Protection & Promotion</p> <p>NAEYC 9.B.07</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 4	<p>Program maintains one teacher or teacher assistant in each room has a pediatric First Aid & CPR Certificate.</p> <p>The program demonstrates that playgrounds are inspected annually by a qualified professional to assure that play equipment is safe and accommodates abilities, needs and interest of each age group served.</p>	<p>of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.</p> <p>Curriculum Implementation Checklist/ Fidelity Assessment.</p>		<p>Including appropriateness of equipment for age group.</p>		<p>NECPA:Health Protection & Promotion</p>
Level 5	<p>Must meet all Step 4 criteria.</p> <p>Program, with parental consent, provides (directly or through collaboration) vision, hearing and dental screenings, and shares results with families.</p> <p>All teaching staff, identified as part of the adult:child ratio, have a Certificate of Completion in Pediatric First Aid and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).</p>	<p>ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 6 with no single item below 5.</p>	<p>CLASS reliable rater score of 5 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom.</p> <p>Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.</p>	<p>ITERS-R/ECERS-R Protocol</p> <p>CLASS Protocol</p> <p>Copy of Consent Form</p> <p>Evidence of health screenings provided to parents/program.</p> <p>Pediatric First Aid and CPR Certificates</p> <p>Head Start programs meet all Performance Standards without any deficiencies. State-based preschool programs meet the Elements of High Quality Preschool Programs – New Jersey Administrative Code NJAC 6A:13A. Center-based programs have achieved accreditation from the NAEYC National Accreditation of Programs for Young Children or received</p>	<p>1304.20(b)(1)</p> <p>1304.22(d)(1) & (2)</p>	<p>NAEYC:Health NECPA:Health Protection & Promotion</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 5				<p>Curriculum Site-level Certification/Endorsement from the chosen curriculum developer/trainer.</p> <p>Signed document that the program uses outside consultants with expertise in children's behavior and mental health to provide support and assistance to staff in implementing strategies that support positive relationships/interactions and prevention/intervention techniques.</p>		

Category

2

Curriculum & Learning Environment

A research-based curriculum, when used with fidelity, provides a road map for teachers/caregivers to use in their classrooms. Teachers/Caregivers need to be formally trained in the program's chosen curriculum to ensure that the components are effectively being used. Training teachers/caregivers in appropriate assessment, whether through observation or using an assessment tool, is equally as important. Quality programs that implement a chosen curriculum with fidelity typically have the child outcome data to support it.

In this section, the standards focus on quality components in curriculum implementation. Alignment with this section means:

- Teachers/Caregivers have been formally trained in the curriculum used by the program.
- Teachers/Caregivers use a science-based assessment tool that is aligned with the chosen curriculum.
- Teachers/Caregivers use a state approved and/or research-based developmental screening.
- Teachers/Caregivers use information from the environmental rating tool and developmental assessment tool to plan learning experiences, choose materials, and modify the environment in ways that are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate.
- Teachers/Caregivers use a formal observation tool.



Level	Standard	Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
		Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 1	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a Department of Children and Families (DCF) License for one year. School-based sites have appropriate Department of Education (DOE) plan approval.			License in good standing or program meets EEC Licensing Standards (for non-licensable and license exempt programs).	1304.53(a)(6)	NAEYC: Leadership & Management NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations
Level 2	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a quality improvement plan based on findings from their Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment. Directors/Managers/Teachers demonstrate completion of formal professional development in curricula, screening tools, and formative assessment.	ITERS-R and /or ECERS-R self assessed score average of 3 with no single item below 2.	CLASS self assessed score of 2 or higher on the dimensions of Positive Climate and Teacher Sensitivity, and a score of 2 or lower on the dimension of Negative Climate. Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment using the results to develop a program improvement plan describing how the program plans to move to the next QRIS level.	Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment And Quality Improvement Plan Formal Professional Development as indicated by Registry		
Level 3	Must meet all Step 2 criteria. Individual activity plans and/or lesson plans reflect the NJ Birth to Three Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards based on children's individual differences. Programs use structured observation tools to focus on curricular areas. The program uses a research-based assessment tool that	ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 4 with no single item below 3. CLASS reliable rater score of 3 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension		Director submits a brief description of: a) how curriculum aligns with the NJ Birth to Three Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards; b)how curriculum is adapted to meet needs of children in the program. (1 – 3 pages, maximum). Program Lesson Plans Formal Program Training Plan Structured Observation tools	Head Start Act Section: 641A(g)(2)(A) Head Start Act Section: 641A(b)(2) 642(f)	

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	<p>addresses all developmental domains. NOTE: Developmental assessment must be aligned with program's curriculum. A state approved developmental screening is used to identify children who may need further evaluation or intervention strategies.</p> <p>Staff make appropriate modifications and /or accommodations based on findings from screening tools, research-based assessments, and information gathered through observation to address children's specific needs when necessary.</p> <p>Research-based assessment results are shared with parents/families and used by staff to plan and individualize learning opportunities.</p>	of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.		<p>Formative Assessment Protocol</p> <p>The ESI-R/Brigance/ASQ is used in preschool programs. ASQ or BDI is used in infant and toddler programs.</p> <p>Description of the type of progress report used and how program and/or teacher share progress reports with parents, at least, 2 times in a 10 month period.</p> <p>And Description of screening tools, formative assessments, and observation data. Description of how these are used to address children's needs.</p> <p>And Formal professional development as indicated by Registry</p>	<p>1304.21(c)(2) ACF-PI-HS-11-04 1304.21(a)(2)(ii)</p> <p>1304.20(e)(2)</p> <p>Head Start Act Section: 642(f)</p>	<p>NAEYC: Assessment of Child Progress</p> <p>NAEYC: Assessment of Child Progress (Does not specify research-based tool)</p> <p>NECPA:Curriculum (Does not specify research-based tool)</p>
Level 4	<p>Must meet all Step 3 criteria.</p> <p>A state approved and/or research-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum is fully implemented.</p> <p>Early learning programs use an additional State approved and/or standardized program observation</p>	<p>ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 5 with no single item below 4.</p> <p>CLASS reliable rater score of 4 or higher across all domains:</p>		<p>ITERS-R/ECERS-R Protocol</p> <p>CLASS Protocol</p> <p>Program Plans, formal training plans or other evidence of program's use of child data</p>	<p>Head Start Act Section: 642(f)</p> <p>ACF-PI-HS-11-04</p> <p>1304.21(a)(2)(ii)</p>	

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 4	<p>instrument to focus on specific instructional supports and interactions and further inform the improvement plan.</p> <p>Data from developmental screenings, developmental assessments and environmental measures are used to inform program practices, student progress, and professional developmental plans.</p> <p>Staff use research-based assessment data to inform instruction and determine overall trends in children’s development and learning.</p> <p>The program has documentation of a transition plan for all children. For children who exhibit particular challenges or changes, these are addressed in their individual plans. This information should be shared with the child’s next placement.</p> <p>Program staff demonstrate partnerships and professional relationships with parents/families, agencies, consultants and organizations in the community that further the program’s capacity to meet the needs and interests of the children and parents/families that they serve (i.e., advisory council).</p>	<p>Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.</p> <p>Curriculum Implementation Check-list/ Fidelity Assessment.</p>		<p>And</p> <p>Formal professional development as indicated by Registry.</p> <p>Transition Plan</p> <p>CSEFEL Assessment Protocol</p> <p>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</p> <p>Partnership Agreements</p>	<p>ACF-PI-HS-11-041307.3(b)(2)(i) & (i) 1304.21(c)(2)</p> <p>Head Start Act Section: 642(f)</p> <p>1307.3(b)(2)(i) & (i)</p> <p>1308.4(g)</p> <p>Head Start Act Section: 642A</p> <p>1304.41(C)(1)</p> <p>1304(a)(4) 1304.40(a)(2) 1304.41(c)(1)(ii)</p>	<p>NAEYC: Assessment of Child Progress</p> <p>NECPA:Curriculum (assessment only)</p> <p>NAEYC: Assessment of Child Progress</p> <p>NECPA:Curriculum (No research-based tool)</p> <p>NAEYC:Community Relationship</p> <p>NECPA: Staff –Parent-Community Partnerships</p> <p>NAEYC:Community Relations Standard</p> <p>NECPA:Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 5	<p>Must meet all Step 4 criteria.</p> <p>Program provides high quality service delivery.</p> <p>Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have received federal, national, or state endorsement as a quality early learning and development program.</p> <p>All staff received orientation and ongoing formal professional development and supervision in how to support positive relationships and interactions through warm and nurturing interactions.</p> <p>Staff engage children in meaningful conversations, use open-ended questions and provided opportunities throughout the day to scaffold their language to support the development of more complex receptive and expressive language, support children’s use of language to share ideas, problem solve and have positive peer interactions.</p> <p>Staff utilize teaching strategies that ensure a positive classroom environment, engage children in learning and promote critical thinking skills.</p>	<p>ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 6 with no single item below 5.</p> <p>CLASS reliable rater score of 5 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support.</p> <p>Note: In the dimension of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.</p>		<p>ITERS-R/ECERS-R Protocol</p> <p>CLASS Protocol</p> <p>Head Start programs meet all Performance Standards without any deficiencies. State-based preschool programs meet the Elements of High Quality Preschool Programs – New Jersey Administrative Code NJAC 6A:13A. Center-based programs have achieved accreditation from the NAEYC National Accreditation of Programs for Young Children or received Curriculum Site-level Certification/Endorsement from the chosen curriculum developer/trainer.</p> <p>Program utilizes staff and/or consultants and/or access to community resources with expertise in children’s behavior and mental health to provide support and assistance to staff in implementing strategies that support positive relationships/interactions and prevention/intervention techniques.</p>	<p>Head Start Act Section: 642(f)</p> <p>Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework</p> <p>Head Start Act Section: 657B</p> <p>1304.52(k)(1)-(3)</p> <p>Head Start Act Section: 641A(a)(1)(B)(i) 7 (ii)</p> <p>CLASS: Instructional Support 1304.21(b)(2)(ii) 1304.21(a)(4)(iii)</p> <p>1304.21(a)(1)(iii)</p> <p>1304.21(a)(3)(i)(D) 1304.21(b)(2)(i) 1304.21(c)(1)(iv)</p>	<p>NAEYC Accreditation NECPA Accreditation</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management Standard</p> <p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p> <p>NAEYC: Teaching Standard</p> <p>NECPA: Developmental Program</p> <p>NAEYC: Teaching Standard</p> <p>NECPA: Developmental Program</p>

Category

3

Family and Community Engagement

Children develop in the context of their families. For some children, the term “family” includes a large number of people and for other children, family consists of a much smaller group. In either scenario, family and community have significant influences on young children through cultural background and local values. Each community is unique and filled with many different cultures, religions, and languages. In order to support children to the fullest extent, their family and community need to be involved in the program design and implementation. Programs can provide children with quality learning experiences by connecting local values in their program design. The supports that families rely upon must be considered as a vital piece in the effort to provide quality experiences to young children.

In this section, the standards focus on family and community engagement. Alignment with this section means:

- Program utilizes parents/families to provide feedback on recruitment strategies, enrollment practices, curriculum selection, cultural and linguistic practices, etc.
- Program allows parents/families to ascertain topics for parent meetings, trainings, events, etc.
- Program provides opportunities for parents to have input in meaningful decision making of the program.
- Program provides leadership and advocacy training to parents.
- Program provides an environment that is warm and inviting to parents.



Level	Standard	Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
		Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 1	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a Department of Children and Families (DCF) License for one year. School-based sites have appropriate Department of Education (DOE) plan approval.			License in good standing or program meets EEC Licensing Standards (for non-licensable and license exempt programs).	1304.53(a)(6)	NAEYC: Leadership & Management NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations
Level 2	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites use the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment to inform their improvement plan in the area of family and community engagement.	Strengthening Families Self Assessment tool.		Quality Improvement Plan Formal Professional Development as indicated by Registry		
Level 3	Must meet all Step 2 criteria. Program asks all newly enrolled families to complete the Strengthening Families Protective Factor Survey--survey results are tallied, summarized, and aggregated to inform program policies and procedures regarding parents/families. Program establishes a parent/family group to engage enrolled families and support their participation in the education of their children. The group meets at least two times per year, and provides input and advise on the center's SF Improvement Plan; reviews center policies, procedures and practices; strengthens parent-staff communication, and the like.			Strengthening Families Protective Factor Survey Strengthening Families Improvement Plan Parent/Family Group Rooster and/or Group Sign -in sheet	1304.50(b)(1) – (b)(7) 1304.50(e)(1),(2) & (3)	

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	<p>Program promotes multicultural learning opportunities by requesting that participating parents/family members share examples of their cultural practices (books, food, music, clothing, etc.) in parent meetings, as well as in their child's classroom.</p> <p>Program holds at least two family education workshops per year on topics such as: early literacy, positive parent-child interactions, cultural awareness, developmental issues, and/or other topics that address the needs and interests of families. Whenever possible, sessions are delivered in the languages of the participants or translators/interpreters are available.</p> <p>The program encourages parents/families to visit and participate in center activities during the school day and/or for special after hours meetings and events.</p> <p>Program offers a home visit to all enrolled families and completes visits for at least 25% of families. Home visits are conducted using standard guidelines and provide an opportunity to observe the child in his/her natural environment; and provide follow-up about parent-child interaction, child development, play and learning activities, early literacy, etc.</p>			<p>Parent Handbook, fliers, pictures, lesson plans</p> <p>Parent Handbook, Fliers, Attendance sign-in sheet, Pictures, Video</p> <p>Parent Handbook</p> <p>Parent Handbook Home Visit Report Letter to parent explaining/scheduling home visit</p> <p>Parent Handbook Membership List</p>	<p>Head Start Multicultural Principles 1304.40(a)(5)</p> <p>1304.40(d)(1) 1304.40(e)(3)</p> <p>1304.40(d)(2)</p> <p>1304.40(e)(5) 1306.32(b)(8)</p>	<p>NECPA: Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships</p> <p>NAEYC: Families Standard</p> <p>NECPA: Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	Program identifies at least one parent to participate in and represent the center on a local or regional community advisory council (i.e. this could be the County Council for Young Children).				1304.50(a)(1)	
Level 4	<p>Must meet all Step 3 criteria.</p> <p>Program reviews and updates the SF Self-Assessment and SF Improvement Plan annually, and continues to demonstrate success in integrating the seven core strategies into the work of the center.</p> <p>Program has an active parent/family group that meets at least three times per year, and provides input and advise on the center's SF Improvement Plan; reviews center policies, procedures and practices; strengthens parent-staff communication, and the like.</p> <p>Through this council, parents/families have opportunities to participate in leadership development, decision making and are supported to become advocates for their children's early learning and development.</p> <p>Program staff use a variety of methods to communicate with parents/families about the curriculum objectives, including</p>			<p>Director submits a brief description of continuous improvement process with Strengthening Families documents.</p> <p>Parent Handbook Meeting Minutes</p> <p>List of members Parent Handbook</p> <p>Program Plans Parent Handbook Other evidence of communications: fliers, letters, etc.</p>	<p>1304.51(i)(1)</p> <p>1304.50(a)(1)</p> <p>1304.50(a)(1)</p> <p>Head Start National Parent, Family & Community Engagement Framework</p>	<p>NAEYC: Families Standard</p> <p>NECPA: Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 4	<p>educational goals and effective strategies that can be used by parents/families to promote their children’s learning. FES, EDLS Comment: Communication between teacher and family will help develop school readiness goals. Individual children should have school readiness goals developed by parents and teachers.</p> <p>Program offers at least two home visits to all enrolled families and completes two visits for at least 60% of families. Similar to Level 3, home visits follow standard guidelines and provide an opportunity to observe the child in his/her natural environment; and provide follow-up about parent-child interaction, child development, play and learning activities, early literacy, etc.</p> <p>Program identifies at least two parents to participate in and represent the center on a local or regional community advisory council (i.e. this could be the County Council for Young Children).</p>			<p>Parent Handbook Membership List</p>	<p>1304.21(a)(2)(iii)</p> <p>1306.32(b)(8)</p> <p>1304.50(a)(1)</p>	
Level 5	<p>Must meet all Step 4 criteria.</p> <p>Programs are fully integrating the SF principles and seven core strategies into the work of the center.</p>			<p>Programs have several options for meeting the standards for this level: a) Head Start programs meet all Performance Indicators without any deficiencies. b) State-based preschool programs meet the Elements of High Quality Preschool Programs–NJ.</p>		

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 5	Program staff, families and leadership are fully collaborating with community partners to create a supportive system that responds to parent/family needs, culture, and goals.			Administrative Code NJAC 6A:13A. c) Center-based programs have achieved accreditation from the NAEYC (National Accreditation of Programs for Young Children or NECPA (National Early Childhood Programs Accreditation National Accreditation or received Curriculum Site-level Certification/Endorsement from the chosen curriculum developer/trainer.	1304.50(a)(1)	

Category

4

Workforce/ Professional Development

In order to provide quality learning experiences to young children, a knowledgeable and skillful workforce is essential. Teachers/Caregivers must thoroughly understand child development and developmentally appropriate practices with young children, including culturally and linguistically appropriate practices. For example, teachers/caregivers must know how to use findings from an assessment tool to create lesson plans that directly support developmental needs and build upon developmental strengths of the children. Teachers/Caregivers must be able to take an individualistic approach to instruction to fully support children's learning experiences.

Effective professional development must provide staff with quality learning opportunities, similar to the quality learning that is provided for children. Training plans and In-Service opportunities should be created using the identified needs and strengths of the staff coupled with the goals of the program/agency. Typically, staff who participate in designing their own training plans are more effective. A competent and prepared workforce is critical to quality programs.

In this section, the standards focus on the early childhood workforce and professional development including supervision, training and technical assistance. Alignment with this section means:

- Employees are members of NJ's Workforce registry for early childhood professionals.
- Employees receive training in the program's curriculum of choice.
- Employees receive training in the aligned developmental assessment and screening tool.
- Teachers/Caregivers plan using information from child observations, developmental assessment findings, and parent input.
- Supervisors of teachers/caregivers, including Mentor Teachers and Coaches, receive training to build on the skills needed to provide quality teaching and learning experiences.
- Teachers/Caregivers receive annual performance evaluations that require input from the staff.
- Teachers/Caregivers, especially those teaching/providing care for the same age group, have the opportunity to plan together.



		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 1	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a Department of Children and Families (DCF) License for one year. School-based sites have appropriate Department of Education (DOE) plan approval.			License in good standing or program meets EEC Licensing Standards (for non-licensable and license exempt programs).	1304.53(a)(6)	NAEYC: Leadership & Management NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations
Level 2	Must meet all Step 1 criteria. Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a quality improvement plan based on findings from their Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment.	ITERS-R and /or ECERS-R self assessed score average of 3 with no single item below 3. Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment using the results to develop a program improvement plan describing how the program plans to move to the next QRIS level.	CLASS self assessed score of 2 or higher on the dimensions of Positive Climate and Teacher Sensitivity, and a score of 2 or lower on the dimension of Negative Climate.	Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment And Quality Improvement Plan Formal Professional Development as indicated by Registry		
Level 3	Must meet all Step 2 criteria. All Early Head Start, Head Start, Center and School-based program staff are enrolled in the Workforce Registry. All teaching staff and administrators/directors have received training from the curriculum developer/trainer in the selected curriculum. Teaching staff have received professional development in the selected formative assessment, including child observation skills, developmental benchmarks and recording information.	ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 4 with no single item below 3. CLASS reliable rater score of 3 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.		Registry membership certificate. Formal professional development as indicated by Registry And/or Program Professional Development Plan	1304.52(k)(2)-(3) 1304.52(k)(2)-(3)	

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	<p>Directors/Supervisors have received training in evaluating and observing teachers both formally and informally.</p> <p>All teaching staff receive an annual written performance evaluation, conducted by their supervisor, which includes a self-assessment and an individualized professional improvement plan.</p>			<p>List of program trainings including training content and trainer resume/professional background.</p> <p>Letter from director explaining process for developing the professional development plan.</p> <p>Formal professional development as indicated by Registry</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Or</p> <p>Letter from Director identifying training date, content and trainer. Including, trainer resume/formal professional background, if not in the Registry.</p> <p>Sample performance evaluation and individual professional improvement plan.</p>	1304.52(i)	<p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p>
Level 4	<p>Must meet all Step 3 criteria.</p> <p>Programs provide and/or make the following trainings available to staff: supporting children with special needs, supporting English language learners, cultural competence and transitions.</p> <p>Differentiated training is provided based on the experience and needs of the educational staff (i.e., new teachers and assistants are provided with initial curriculum training).</p>	<p>ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 5 with no single item below 4.</p> <p>CLASS reliable rater score of 4 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension</p>		<p>ITERS-R/ECERS-R Protocol</p> <p>Certificate of Completion from The Pyramid Model (CSEFEL) and the Strengthening Families Protective Factors training.</p> <p>CLASS Protocol</p> <p>Formal professional development as indicated by Registry</p> <p>Individual Professional Development Plan</p>	Head Start Act Section 648	<p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 4	<p>The professional development plan includes the use of a curriculum implementation or fidelity checklist/instrument to ensure implementation of the curriculum.</p> <p>Teachers have planned opportunities to share collected child anecdotes and work samples with each other to improve and maintain their reliable use of the adaptive formative assessment.</p> <p>Administrator/Director analyze data generated from staff's professional development needs surveys, and child and classroom data to inform the professional development plan.</p> <p>The program has an advisory group that includes community stakeholders who provide input and feedback for the purpose of continuous program improvement.</p> <p>Administrators/directors participate in professional development activities based on identified areas of professional growth.</p> <p>The administrator/director demonstrates membership in, at least, one early childhood professional organization.</p> <p>Directors/Supervisors provide aggregated classroom and child data to teachers to collaboratively</p>	<p>of Negative Climate, a score of 2 or less.</p> <p>Curriculum Implementation Check-list/ Fidelity Assessment.</p>		<p>Copy of curriculum implementation/fidelity checklist/instrument.</p> <p>Schedule of structured planning times.</p> <p>Program Professional Development Plan.</p> <p>Agenda from curriculum planning meetings.</p> <p>Administrator/Director meeting agendas.</p> <p>List of advisory group members and their community association.</p> <p>Program Plan</p> <p>Administrator/Director Individual Professional Development Plan</p> <p>Membership card or certificate</p>	<p>Head Start Act Section: 642(f)</p> <p>1304.41(b)</p> <p>1304.52(i)</p> <p>Head Start School Readiness Plan</p>	<p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NECPA: Leadership & Management</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
	<p>develop a plan to improve program quality in specific areas.</p> <p>Based on trends reflected in child and classroom data (i.e., missing or low performance areas), the professional development plan is adjusted to strengthen teaching practices in those areas.</p> <p>Non-instructional staff, such as lunch assistants, bus drivers, and specialists, receive information about developmentally appropriate practices, diversity and receive an overview of the age-appropriate standards, and adult-child interactions.</p>			<p>Letter from director explaining their process for developing the program professional development plan.</p> <p>Training Agenda with content and trainer resume/formal professional background.</p>	1304.23(b)(4) Head Start Transportation Regulations	
Level 5	<p>Must meet all Step 4 criteria.</p> <p>The administrator/director is an active participant in, at least, one professional early childhood association (e.g., attends conferences, conducts presentations, or participates in advocacy activities within the past two years).</p>	<p>ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 6 with no single item below 5.</p> <p>CLASS reliable rater score of 5 or higher across all domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. Note: In the dimension of Negative Climate, a score of 1.</p>		<p>ITERS-R/ECERS-R Protocol</p> <p>CLASS Protocol</p> <p>Professional organization membership card/certificate</p> <p>Early Head Start and Head Start programs meet all Performance Standards without any deficiencies. State-based preschool programs meet the Elements of High Quality Preschool Programs – New Jersey Administrative Code NJAC 6A:13A. Center-based programs have achieved accreditation from the NAEYC National Accreditation of Programs for Young Children or received Curriculum Site-level Certification/Endorsement from the chosen curriculum developer/ trainer.</p>		

Category

5

Administration and Management

Quality administrators and managers are needed to provide the necessary structure for a program to be effective. A purposeful program design will allow the staff and children to reach their full potential. Quality administrators design the program to provide appropriate training opportunities to staff, promote joint planning sessions, effectively involve families and the local community in program activities, and create a welcoming environment for all.

In this section, the standards focus on the administration and management of quality programs. Alignment with this section means:

- Program utilizes the input of community stakeholders to make decisions about program operations.
- Program has a governance body/bodies that is reflective of the community, both inside the program and outside.
- Program has effective business systems that are fully implemented.
- Program has a written program operations plan.
- Program provides some form of benefit plan to staff.
- Program provides an annual report to its constituency and funders.



Level	Standard	Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
		Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 1	Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a Department of Children and Families (DCF) License for one year. School-based sites have appropriate Department of Education (DOE) plan approval.			License in good standing or program meets EEC Licensing Standards (for non-licensable and license exempt programs).		NAEYC: Leadership & Management NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations
Level 2	Must meet all Step 1 criteria. Early Head Start, Head Start and Center-based sites have a quality improvement plan based on findings from their Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment.	ITERS-R and /or ECERS-R self assessed score average of 3 with no single item below 3. Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment using the results to develop a program improvement plan describing how the program plans to move to the next QRIS level. Written business plan that includes an annual operating budget that is used to guide planning, set goals, and make decisions. Copy of admissions policy that clearly states the program's non-discrimination policy (e.g., a statement that the program recruits and encourages the enrollment of children and families who: represent diverse backgrounds, Multi-lingual children and families and children with special needs and their families.)	Program Administration Scale (PAS) minimum self-assessed score of 3. Document signed by program administrator that program updates are provided at least quarterly to staff and families in their primary, or preferred, language to the extent appropriate and possible. Description of program policies that support teacher retention.	Grow NJ Kids Self Assessment And Quality Improvement Plan Formal Professional Development as indicated by Registry.	1304.51(a)(1)(i)-(iii) 1304.52(h)(1) 1304.52(h)(1)	NAEYC: Leadership & Management NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	<p>Must meet all Step 2 criteria.</p> <p><u>Governance</u> Programs led or governed by a board of directors, board of education, advisory council or other similar group, have written policies defining their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p><u>Fiscal Operations</u> Financial policies procedures are established based on professional accounting standards.</p> <p><u>Program Operations</u> The program has a marketing plan to maximize full enrollment.</p> <p>The program has a projected one-year operating budget, including a statement of income and expenditures.</p> <p>The program analyzes and uses the data from the feedback surveys to continuously inform the program improvement plan and annual budget.</p> <p>The program tracks and monitors absences of individual children and contacts families when children are absent more than 20% in a month.</p> <p>The program has a quarterly review conducted of the accounting records by an independent party who has accounting or bookkeeping expertise.</p>		<p>Program Administration Scale (PAS) minimum self-assessed score of 4 or higher.</p>	<p>Bylaws Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)</p> <p>Program Plans SOPs Document that states program's financial operations procedures.</p> <p>Marketing Plan</p> <p>Budget and statement</p> <p>Document signed by Director indicating continuous improvement process.</p> <p>Program Plans Parent Handbook or Description of how program addresses absences.</p>	<p>1304.50(a)(1)</p> <p>1304.52(d)(8) 1301.12 1301.13 1304.51(h)(1) 1304.51(h)(2)</p> <p>1304.50 Governance and Management Responsibilities Chart</p> <p>Head Start Act Section: 647 Records & Audits</p> <p>Head Start School Readiness Process</p> <p>1304.51(i)(2) 1304.51(h)(1)-(2)</p> <p>1304.51(g)</p> <p>1304.51(d)</p>	<p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management (Program Improvement)</p> <p>NECPA: Program Evaluation (Program Improvement)</p>

Level	Standard	Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
		Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	<p>The program director, staff and family input is solicited on an annual basis to evaluate the program.</p> <p>Results from annual staff and family input are used to develop/inform a comprehensive written program improvement plan.</p> <p>The program tracks and monitors teacher turn over and has a plan for addressing turn over.</p> <p><u>Supervision</u> Program uses at least 3 types of internal communication to inform staff of program activities, policies, etc.</p> <p>Staff receive at least one benefit (paid vacation time, sick time, health insurance, tuition/PD reimbursement or retirement plan option).</p> <p>Staff are given feedback that provide examples of best practice at least monthly.</p> <p>The program has a system to support the career development of staff through a career ladder (e.g., regularly scheduled time to meet with a supervisor or mentor to monitor progress towards career goals).</p> <p>Staff salary scales reflect the educational levels, experience</p>			<p>Document signed by program administrator indicating that provider consults with an independent third party who has expertise in accounting or bookkeeping expertise.</p> <p>Results from tallied input and Program Plan</p> <p>Description of system for tracking teacher turn-over and plan for addressing teacher turnover.</p> <p>Notices Newsletters Emails</p> <p>Employee Handbook</p> <p>Minutes Supervisor Notes</p> <p>Individual Professional Development Plan Minutes</p>	<p>1304.51(i)(1)</p> <p>1304.50(d)(1)(viii)</p> <p>1304.51(a)(1)(i)-(iii) 1304.50(d)(1)(iii)</p> <p>1304.51(e)</p> <p>1304.52(a)(2)(i)</p>	<p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NECPA: Program Evaluation</p> <p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p>

		Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
Level	Standard	Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 3	and performance levels, as determined by the annual evaluation of the staff members, and is comparable with the current wage level of others in the community with the same levels of education. The program has established an advisory council which includes appropriate and diverse community representatives who meet regularly to assist with program improvement, quality, and fiscal soundness.			Salary Survey Minutes Roster of Advisory Members with associations	Head Start Act Section: 653 Comparability of Wages 1304.50(c)&(d) 1304.50(d)(1)(ii)	
Level 4	<p>Must meet all Step 3 criteria.</p> <p><u>Governance</u> The program has established an advisory council which includes appropriate and diverse community representatives who meet regularly to assist with program improvement, quality, and fiscal soundness.</p> <p>The program has a strategic or business plan that is reviewed and updated, at a minimum, every 3 years.</p> <p><u>Program Operations</u> The program staff and governing board are involved in the development of the business plan.</p> <p>Program has a system of technology that allows for data</p>	ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 6 with no single item below 5.	Program Administration Scale (PAS) score self-assessed of 5.	<p>Bylaws Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Roster of members with affiliations</p> <p>Generated report</p> <p>Business Plan</p>	<p>1304.50(b)(1)-(b)(7) 1304.50(g)(1)&(2)</p> <p>1304.51(a)(1)(i)-(iii)</p> <p>1304.51(a)(2) 1304.51(d) 1304.51(h)(1)</p>	<p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management (No timeframe)</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p>

Level	Standard	Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
		Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 4	<p>collection and tracking program information.</p> <p>Program shares the results of the program quality rating with the families, staff, governing board and funders.</p> <p><u>Fiscal Operations</u> The program's financial system includes an annual budget and an annual report that is disseminated to parents/families, community partners, and funders.</p> <p>The program's fiscal specialist or designee analyzes financial statements and creates quarterly reports to ensure fiscal integrity and inform the business plan.</p> <p>The program has an internal and external annual audit.</p> <p>An outside audit is conducted annually by a certified public accountant.</p> <p><u>Supervision</u> The program offers a benefit package that includes vacation, sick time, and health insurance.</p> <p>The program provides staff with ongoing mentoring that includes demonstration of best practices</p>			<p>Automated reports on: children's Well Baby Check ups/Annual Physicals absenteeism, results from developmental screenings, results from health screenings, staff qualifications, professional development and financial record keeping.</p> <p>Annual Report</p> <p>Quarterly reports</p> <p>Audit Report Annual Report</p> <p>Signed contract with outside CPA</p> <p>Employee Handbook</p> <p>Employee Handbook</p> <p>Mentor's Report Program Plan</p>	<p>1304.51(h)(1)</p> <p>1304.51(h)(2)</p> <p>1304.51(h)(1)</p> <p>1301.12</p> <p>1304.51(h)(2)</p> <p>1301.12</p>	<p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NAEYC: Leadership & Management</p> <p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p>

Level	Standard	Measures		Documentation	Accreditation	
		Required Observation Measure	Additional Tools for Program Development	Required Documentation	Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act(2007)	Accrditation Standards NAEYC NECPA
Level 4	<p>on a monthly basis.</p> <p>The program demonstrates systematic opportunities for teachers to engage in reflective teaching practices through the use of peer groups, coaches and/or mentors.</p> <p>The program has an incentive program that rewards each educator that achieves the next step on the NJ Registry Career Ladder.</p>			<p>Description of opportunities for teaching staff to engage in reflective teaching practices, peer group coaching and mentoring and Minutes.</p> <p>Employee Handbook</p>		<p>NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations</p>
Level 5	<p>Must meet all Step 4 criteria.</p> <p>Early Head Start and Head Start programs meet all Performance Standards without any deficiencies. State-based preschool programs meet the Elements of High Quality Preschool Programs – New Jersey Administrative Code NJAC 6A:13A. Center-based programs have achieved accreditation from the NAEYC National Accreditation of Programs for Young Children or received Curriculum Site-level Certification/Endorsement from the chosen curriculum developer/trainer.</p>	<p>ITERS-R and/or ECERS-R reliable rater score average of 6 with no single item below 5.</p>	<p>Program Administration Scale (PAS) score self-assessed of 6.</p>			



New Jersey Department of Children & Families
New Jersey Department of Human Services
New Jersey Department of Education
New Jersey Department of Health
New Jersey Head Start Collaboration Office

