



# **Early Care and Education Programs Quality Rating Improvement System Standards Guidance Document**

*Note: This document is intended to provide clarity around the standards but is not meant to be prescriptive. Grow NJ Kids Rating will review submitted documentation to determine the extent to which standards are met.*

# Category 1: Safe, Healthy Learning Environment

## Level 2 Safe, Healthy Learning Environment

### 1.2.1 Standard

Demonstrates healthy, safe and clean indoor and outdoor environments through a formal assessment.

#### Intent of Standard

The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) are used to assess the classroom environment, program environment, and teacher interactions. The program must earn a self-assessed ERS average score of 4 with no subscale below a 3. There is an addendum regarding threshold scores for the ERSs. Please visit [www.GrowNJKids.com](http://www.GrowNJKids.com) for the latest information.

#### Measurement

Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) self-assessed score average of 4 with no subscale below 3

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1304.53(a)

1304.53(b)

Child Health & Safety

Key Indicator #3

Safe Physical Environments

#### Accreditation Standards NAEYC

NECPA Self-Assessment Tool

NAEYC Self-Assessment Tool

#### Rating Documentation

Self-Assessed ECERS-3/ITERS-R for each classroom – Verified by QIS or TA

### 1.2.2 Standard

The program implements national health and safety standards and embeds practices into the daily routine.

#### Intent of Standard

Daily health checks seek to identify potential concerns about a child's health including recent illness or injury in the child and the family. Health checks may serve to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases in early learning settings by identifying children who should be excluded, and enable the caregivers/teachers to plan for necessary care while the child is in the care at the facility.

National health and safety standards refer to current practices as mentioned in Let's Move and Caring for Our Children Basic. Practices may include but are not limited to physical activity, nutrition, screen time, and emergency preparedness.

### **Measurement**

Healthy and Safety Policies & Procedures

#### **And**

Let's Move Child Care Checklist

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.53 (a)(b) 1306.35(b)(2)(i-ix)

Child Health & Safety

Key Indicator #3

Safe Physical Environments

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA II-50

### **Rating Documentation**

Policy and Procedure that reflect national health and safety standards and completed Let's Move Child Care Checklist - Verified by QIS or TA

## **1.2.3 Standard**

Parents are educated on the importance of having a medical home.

### **Intent of Standard**

Medical home is a primary care physician who can consistently manage all aspects of pediatric care, well child visits; immunizations; screenings and assessments; patient and parent counseling about health, nutrition, safety, and mental health; and supervision of care.

### **Measurement**

Healthy and Safety Policies & Procedures

### **Rating Documentation**

Copies of Universal Health Record and evidence of correspondence with parents/families. - Verified by QIS or TA

## Level 3 Safe, Healthy Learning Environment

### 1.3.1 Standard

Program has health and safety checks for outdoor areas and has a system to identify/address health and safety concerns.

#### Intent of Standard

In order to prevent or minimize the risk of injury and keep outdoor play areas safe high quality programs conduct regular health and safety checks. This is done to limit your organizations liability by showing an effort to maintain your playground area and identify hazards to maintain the health and safety of the children. If there are any concerns such as items in poor repair, insufficient mulch or playground surfacing under the swings or slide, broken glass or vandalism it can be identified early on and corrected so that the children are not impacted. If any unfortunate events occur in the outdoor area the program will have an inspection report on file to prove that they were not negligent in maintaining the health and safety standards of the playground or outdoor play area.

#### Measurement

Safety policy and procedure related to standard

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1304.53(a)(10)(viii)

Child Health & Safety

Key Indicator #3

Safe Physical Environments

#### Accreditation Standards NAEYC

NECPA: School/Center Building, Supplies, Equipment & Transportation

#### Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Outdoor Play Area Inspection Logs for each playground from prior 3 months (Submit electronically)

### 1.3.2 Standard

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 breastfeeding.

#### Intent of Standard

Early care and education programs must value all families' decisions about infant feeding. Furthermore, children who are breastfed have 22% lower risk of becoming obese. Guidelines established for handling foods brought from home should be followed when

storing breast milk.

### **Measurement**

Breastfeeding Policy

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

45 CFR 1304.40© (3)

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #4 – Child Health & Safety Indicator #4 – Healthy Practices and Routines

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Copy of breastfeeding policy and Documentation of Staff Orientation to the Breastfeeding Policy (I/T Programs Only)  
(Submit electronically or can be reviewed in an Employee Handbook)

### **1.3.3 Standard**

Nutritious meals and snacks are encouraged and/or provided and are respectful of religious and dietary restrictions.

### **Intent of Standard**

The early childhood education setting is a critical place for obesity prevention efforts. When eating healthy and being physically active is a part of daily routines of infants to preschoolers, the habits can last a lifetime. Meals and snacks are essential for young children's optimal growth and development. Healthy foods help to ensure that children will be ready to fully participate in learning opportunities.

### **Measurement**

Policy on Food Service, including program adherence to religious and dietary restrictions as defined by US Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines & Child Adult Care Food Program

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.23(b)(1)

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #4 – Healthy Practices and Routines

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Health

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Sample menus for each infant/toddler and preschool classroom as appropriate (Submit electronically)

### 1.3.4 Standard

Families are provided 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.

#### **Intent of Standard**

All aspects of the child's life can be more meaningfully supported with systematic coordination between home and early care and education. Many families encounter challenges that place children at risk. Basic issues involving clothing, shelter, and medical care add to family stress and interfere with a child's ability to learn. Program staff should support and partner with parents by making every attempt to understand their perspectives, enhance their understanding of child development, assist them in reaching their goals, and involve them in the program.

#### **Measurement**

Parent Handbook that includes all topics listed

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.40(b)(1)(ii)

Program Governance Key Indicator #2 Roles, Responsibilities, and Training

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #2 Parent – Child Relationships

#### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Health Protection & Promotion

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Flyers/Sign-In sheets from health and safety workshops from past 6 months (Submit electronically); signed receipts for the parent handbook (Reviewed on site in Children's Folders)

### 1.3.5 Standard

Demonstrates healthy, safe and clean indoor and outdoor environments through a formal assessment.

#### **Intent of Standard**

The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) are used to assess the classroom environment, program environment, and teacher interactions.

## **Measurement**

Demonstrates healthy, safe and clean indoor and outdoor environments through a formal assessment.

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.53(a)

1304.53(b)

Child Health & Safety

Key Indicator #3

Safe Physical Environments

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA Self-Assessment Tool

NAEYC Self-Assessment Tool

## **Rating Documentation**

Appropriate ERS Score for age group (Protocol)

Observations completed by Grow NJ Kids Rating Reliable Raters

### **1.3.6 Standard**

A research-based developmental screening tool is used to identify children who may need additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Typically, a developmental screening tool (such as the Ages & Stages, Brigance, or ESI-R) is conducted at the beginning of a school year for all children birth to 5 years of age. Developmental screening tools are a standardized method of identifying each child's strengths and difficulties. A developmental screening tool is a standardized tool. Instructions from the developer should be followed to fidelity when administering the tool. It also identifies children whose screening score recommends a referral for further evaluation by early intervention or professional diagnosticians.

#### **Measurement**

Screening Results

*Note: State-funded Preschool programs use Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R). Other preschool and infant/toddler programs may use Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), Ages and Stages Social Emotional Questionnaire (ASQ-SE) and/or Brigance Screening*

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1308.6(a)(1,2,3)

13086(e)(1)

1304.20(f)(2)(ii)

Child Health & Safety

Key Indicator #2

Screening & Referrals

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Assessment of Child Progress

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: A sampling of completed developmental screening tools will be reviewed during the rating visit when the child folders are reviewed. The policy should incorporate the following: When the screening is done (i.e., 1st day, 30 days, 60 days), by who is completing the screen and what happens with the results. It should also include what the procedure is for a child that starts the program mid-year. (Completed screening tools will be reviewed on site in children's folders; copy of policy can be submitted electronically)

## **Level 4 Safe, Healthy Learning Environment**

### **1.4.1 Standard**

Demonstrates healthy, safe and clean indoor and outdoor environments through a formal assessment.

#### **Intent of Standard**

#### **Measurement**

ERS reliable rater score average of 5 with no subscale below 4

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.53(a)

1304.53(b)

Child Health & Safety

Key Indicator #3

Safe Physical Environments

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA Self-Assessment Tool

NAEYC Self-Assessment Tool



## **Rating Documentation**

Appropriate ERS Score for age group.

Observations completed by Grow NJ Kids Rating Reliable Raters

### **1.4.2 Standard**

The program has a system for daily age-appropriate oral health care for all children.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Routine oral health activities as referred to in Caring for Our Children Basic, such as regular tooth brushing and reducing exposure to sweetened foods and drinks, can help prevent tooth decay and caries. Poor oral health in children has been associated with dental pain, missed school, and poor school performance. Good oral hygiene is as important for a six-month-old with one tooth as it is for a six-year-old with many teeth. It is also important to encourage the family to select a dental home for regular dental care.

#### **Measurement**

Policy and or Documentation of the oral health care system

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.23(b)(3)

1304.20©(3)(i) & (ii)

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #1 – Access to Health and Dental Care

#### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC 9.B.07

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Policy of age-appropriate oral health care for all children including documentation of parent consent (Policy can be submitted electronically; evidence of parent consent may be reviewed in children’s folders on site)

### **1.4.3 Standard**

One teacher or teacher assistant in each room has a pediatric First Aid & CPR Certificate.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Emergencies happen quickly. At least one individual trained and certified in pediatric CPR & First Aid needs to be in the room to respond within the first few minutes until professional help arrives.

#### **Measurement**

Training as indicated in NJCCIS or First Aid & CPR Certificate

**Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.53(a)(10)(x)

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #3—Safe Physical Environments

**Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Health Protection & Promotion

**Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review evidence of trainings on: NJCCIS **or** in staff folders on site

**1.4.4 Standard**

Play areas are inspected annually to assure that play equipment is safe and accommodates abilities, needs and interest of each age group served.

**Intent of Standard**

The intent behind this is to prevent unnecessary injury to children on the playground.

**Measurement**

Outdoor Play Inspection Report

**Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.23(b)(3)

1304.20©(3)(i) & (ii)

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #1- Access to Health and Dental Care

**Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Completed Outdoor Play Inspection Forms for each playground from prior 12 months

**Level 5 Safe, Healthy Learning Environment**

**1.5.1 Standard**

With parental consent, vision, hearing, and dental screenings are completed and results are shared with families

**Intent of Standard**

The purpose is to identify vision and hearing concerns early and make the appropriate referrals. Vision or hearing loss can be caused by many factors such as genetics, illness, or physical trauma. If there is a visual impairment or hearing loss the damage can be greatly reduced or corrected if identified early and the appropriate referrals are made.

Early detection of concerns is important to determine if further evaluation is needed so learning is not interrupted.

The QIS or TAS can provide a list of local resources or agencies that offer screening. Programs should develop their own procedure for gaining parent consent. This documentation or log should be maintained on site.

### **Measurement**

Evidence of Health Screenings provided to parents/program

**And**

Copy of Consent Form

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.20(b)(1)

Health & Safety Key Indicator #1—Access to Health and Dental Care

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Health

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Evidence that vision, hearing and dental screenings are offered and results are shared with families (This will be reviewed on site in children's folders)

## **1.5.2 Standard**

All staff, identified as part of the adult: child ratio, have a certificate of completion in Pediatric First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

### **Intent of Standard**

Emergencies happen quickly. It is best to have all staff trained and certified in pediatric CPR & First Aid able to respond within the first few minutes until professional help arrives.

### **Measurement**

Training as indicated in NJCCIS or First Aid & CPR Certificate

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.22(d)(1)

1304.22(d)(2)

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Health Protection & Promotion

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review evidence of trainings on: NJCCIS **or** in staff folders on site

### **1.5.3 Standard**

Demonstrates healthy, safe and clean indoor and outdoor environments through a formal assessment.

#### **Measurement**

ERS reliable rater score average of 6 with no subscale below 5

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.20(b)(1)

Health & Safety Key Indicator #1—Access to Health and Dental Care

### **Rating Documentation**

Appropriate ERS Score for age group (Protocol)

Observations completed by Grow NJ Kids Rating Reliable Raters

## **Category 2: Curriculum and Learning Environment**

### **Level 2 Curriculum and Learning Environment**

#### **2.2.1 Standard**

A structured observation instrument is used to assess the general classroom learning environment.

#### **Intent of Standard**

When programs use the ERS scales to assess their own classrooms or have an outside assessor conduct assessments, they learn valuable information about strengths and areas of growth needed in each classroom and age group. Using this information helps the programs make decisions about what areas of quality can be addressed in the early learning program. ERS assessments also help Grow NJ Kids programs celebrate growth as they achieve the scores needed for a Level 3, 4 and 5 rating and make decisions about continuous quality improvement.

#### **Measurement**

ERS self-assessed score average of 4 with no subscale below 3

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1307.3(b)(2)(i)

1307.3(b)(2)(ii)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

### **Rating Documentation**

Self-Assessed ECERS-3/ITERS-R for each classroom - Verified by QIS or TA

### **2.2.2 Standard**

Program is preparing to adopt a research-based, validated curriculum that is aligned to the NJ Birth to Three Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

#### **Intent of Standard**

High quality early learning experiences can be supported by a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that builds a firm foundation for learning and development. Programs may use the Grow NJ Kids Curriculum Standards Alignment Document to determine whether or not the chosen curriculum aligns with the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

#### **Measurement**

Identify research-based curriculum of choice

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

642(f)(3)(C)(E)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #2

School Readiness

### **Rating Documentation**

Documentation demonstrating teacher/parent involvement in the research and selection of an appropriate research-based curriculum; Standards Alignment Documentation. - Verified by QIS or TA

### **2.2.3 Standard**

Children whose first language is not English are encouraged to use home language, gestures, communication devices, sign language, and pictures to communicate when needed.

### **Intent of Standard**

Given the steady increase in the number of families and children whose home language is other than English, as well as in the number of languages spoken, programs must be responsive to serving culturally and linguistically diverse populations to ensure a high quality program for all children and families. A policy stating how home language supports will be addressed, (e.g., labeling classroom environments in home language, providing access to classroom materials in the home language) is sufficient to meet this standard.

### **Measurement**

Home Language Policy

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.21(a)(1)(i)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1 & 3

School Readiness

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 111-40

& 111-54

### **Rating Documentation**

Evidence of communication in children’s home language: Labeling, materials, books in home language (*to be examined on site*). - Verified by QIS or TA

## **2.2.4 Standard**

System in place to communicate and document child observations to families (daily for infants and toddlers and weekly for preschool).

### **Intent of Standard**

One of the primary purposes of child observation/assessment is to share information with families about how their children are progressing in the program. Programs should establish communication mechanisms that allow staff to share information that is meaningful and relevant about individual children; provide an opportunity for families to have input about their children’s needs, and to ensure that staff and families can take action when information is shared. Best practice advises that communication between families and staff occurs daily for infants and toddlers and weekly for preschool-aged children.

### **Measurement**

Communication Policy

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.20(f)(1)

1304.40(e)(5)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #3-Parents as their Child’s Educators

### **Rating Documentation**

Documentation of communication with parents sharing child observations (daily for infants and toddlers, weekly for preschool) - Verified by QIS or TA

## **Level 3 Curriculum and Learning Environment**

### **2.3.1 Standard**

Children’s individual differences are supported when developing individual activities and/or lesson plans and are reflective of the NJ Birth to Three Standards and or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

#### **Intent of Standard**

In early childhood programs, instructional methods should be individualized, recognizing that each child is a unique individual with his/her own temperament, learning styles, culture, language, interests and abilities. Therefore, teachers use intentional teaching methods that incorporate the process of individualizing activity and lesson plans for each child based on (1) getting to know each child’s needs, interests and abilities, (2) creating opportunities for learning that build on children’s interests, (3) scaffolding children’s learning through supportive interactions, and (4) monitoring children’s progress toward achieving important goals. Further, lesson and activity plans should align with state standards and guidelines reflecting the latest research to support meaningful growth and development.

High quality early learning experiences can be supported by a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that builds a firm foundation for learning and development. The chosen curriculum should align with the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards.

#### **Measurement**

Lesson/Activity Plans

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.21(a)(1)(i)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #3 Individualizing

## Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Signed receipt teachers and teacher assistants have received a copy of the NJ Birth-Three Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards. (Reviewed on site in Staff Folders)

### 2.3.2 Standard

Structured Classroom observation tools are used to focus on curricular areas such as literacy, math, science and diversity.

#### Intent of Standard

Recognizing the increasing emphasis in the United States on early literacy, math and science as well as environmental learning in young children, it is important for programs to consider a more complete picture of what a high quality program can look like. Structured observation instruments that focus on these curricular areas and the inclusion of all children in the early learning classroom can offer additional insight into how to enhance teacher-child interactions, plan for learning and development in particular academic domains, and maintain a more responsive environment as part of continuous quality improvement. Such instruments may include: Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-3, Supports for Early Literacy Assessment, Preschool Classroom Mathematics Inventory, Preschool Rating Instrument for Science and Math, and Quality Benchmark for Cultural Competence tool.

ITERS-R will suffice in meeting requirements for an Infant/Toddler program in addition to CLASS for infants; CLASS for toddlers; The Pyramid Infant Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS); the state of Illinois DHS has an infant toddler classroom observation tool/checklist; also Arnett's Caregiver Interaction Scale is appropriate.

#### Measurement

Completion of a scored structured tool to focus on curricular areas

#### And

Professional Development Plan based on rating scale results

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1307.3(b)(2)(i)

1307.3(b)(2)(ii)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

## Rating Documentation



Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Copy of policies for completed structured classroom observation/assessment tool(s) (e.g., ECERS, SELA, PCMI, PRISM, QBCC) (Submit electronically)

### 2.3.3 Standard

A Performance-based assessment aligned to curriculum is used to address all developmental domains.

#### Intent of Standard

Formative assessment is a process that teachers employ to collect and use assessment information to tailor instruction to the individual needs of children. Collecting information from multiple sources and analyzing it in light of children's individual learning needs can support teaching whereby all children continue to learn and thrive. Ideally, early childhood educators embed formative assessment in instruction by working directly with children to gather information about what children know and can do, how they process information and solve problems, and how they interact with other children and adults.

#### Measurement

Performance-Based Assessment

(e.g., *The Ounce Scale, Working Sampling Systems, High Scope's Child Observation Record Advantage, Teaching Strategies GOLD*)

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1307.3(b)(1)(i)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

#### Accreditation Standards NAEYC

NECPA 11-80

#### Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Evidence of performance-based assessment used: sample portfolios, observation forms, completed rubrics; evidence of data summaries informing program practices/student growth; aggregated classroom data of comparative progress across the school year. (Reviewed on site in children's classroom folders/online on Performance-Based Assessment System Database)

### 2.3.4 Standard

Appropriate teaching and learning modifications and/or accommodations are made

based on findings from performance-based assessments, and information gathered from observations to address children’s specific needs and strengths.

### **Intent of Standard**

As one of the primary purposes of assessment, staff will use what has been learned about individual and groups of children to make adjustments in instructional strategies that will foster each child’s competence and success. Lesson and activity plans should reflect how modifications and accommodations have been made for children including those who are advanced learners, exhibit challenging behaviors, possess developmental delays or disabilities, or are dual language learners, etc.

### **Measurement**

Lesson/Activity Plans

#### **And**

Materials for different abilities and interests

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1 School Readiness #3

Individualizing

ACF-PI-HS-11-04

School Readiness

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-96

NAEYC: assessment of child progress

### **Rating Documentation**

Evidence of how results from performance-based assessment is used to modify/accommodate children’s specific needs and abilities. (Submit electronically/Review onsite). Weekly lesson plans should provide evidence that the PBA results are being used in the teachers’ plans.

## **2.3.5 Standard**

Performance-based assessment results are shared with parents/families.

### **Intent of Standard**

Families should be partners in the accurate and sensitive assessment of young children. The purpose and results of performance-based assessment should be shared with families using the following guidelines:

- Keep in mind the parent’s perspective and allow time for them to share and give input;
- Be positive and specific with examples of behaviors and characteristics; · Be descriptive about concerns with a child’s behavior or learning;
- Focus on the parent-child relationship and how parents can help support children’s learning;
- Support parental competence by acknowledging and recognizing parents as the expert on their child;
- Be prepared for parent emotions especially if they express anger, concern, or confusion.

**Measurement**

Screening and Assessment Policy, Lesson/Activity Plans

**And**

Parent reports

**Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.20(e)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

**Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-95 (Curriculum)

**Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of results from performance-based assessment shared with parents (2x in 10 month program). (Reviewed on site in children’s folders)

**Level 4 Curriculum and Learning Environment**

**2.4.1 Standard**

A comprehensive, research-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum is fully implemented and teaching strategies are used to ensure positive classroom environment, engage children in learning and promote critical thinking skills.

**Intent of Standard**

Research shows that child outcomes improve when classrooms demonstrate strong fidelity, meaning that the curriculum and assessment are being implemented as

intended. Fidelity tools are designed to assess the degree to which curriculum are being implemented. Data from structured observation instruments like the ITERS-R, ECERS-3 and CLASS can also provide evidence of overall implementation and, used in conjunction with fidelity tools/assessments, can help programs to focus on specific areas for ongoing professional development.

At this level, programs will undergo classroom observations by an external reliable rater and must meet the requirements set forth in the Grow NJ Kids tool which are aligned to higher levels of quality.

Based on the curriculum selected, sufficient additional hours (beyond the 10) to ensure curriculum is fully implemented. Fully implemented means the curriculum's child assessment system, weekly planning process, schedule of the day, literacy program and/or math program have all been implemented and the curriculum's fidelity checklist completed or that the curriculum developer has vetted the program's implementation of the curriculum. Obviously, fully implemented also meant that they are using the most current version of the curriculum and not the one that they were trained in 5-10 years ago and haven't been updated on.

### **Measurement**

ERS reliable rater average score of 5 or higher with no single subscale below a 4

#### **And**

CLASS reliable rater score of 5 in Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains and score of 3 in the Instructional Support Domain (Infant/Toddler only)

#### **And**

Curriculum Implementation Check-list/Fidelity Assessment

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Head Start Act Section: 642(f)(3)(C)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #2-Curriculum Selection and Implementation

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Assessment of Child Progress

NECPA: Curriculum (assessment only)

### **Rating Documentation**

Observations completed by Grow NJ Kids Rating Reliable Raters

## 2.4.2 Standard

Additional structured observation/assessment instruments are used to focus on specific instructional supports and interactions to further inform quality improvement and inform instruction and determine overall trends in children’s development and learning.

### **Intent of Standard**

Research shows that child outcomes improve when classrooms demonstrate strong fidelity, meaning that the curriculum and assessment are being implemented as intended. Fidelity tools are designed to assess the degree to which curriculum are being implemented. Data from structured observation instruments like the ITERS-R, ECERS-3 and CLASS can also provide evidence of overall implementation and, used in conjunction with fidelity tools/assessments, can help programs to focus on specific areas for ongoing professional development.

At this level, programs will undergo classroom observations by an external reliable rater and must meet the requirements set forth in the Grow NJ Kids tool which are aligned to higher levels of quality.

### **Measurement**

Results from structured observations

**And**

Data summary reports of children’s development and learning

**And**

Lesson/Activity Plans

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1307.3(b)(2)(i)

1307.3(b)(2)(ii)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #2 Curriculum Selection and Implementation

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Assessment of Child Progress

NECPA: Curriculum (No research-based tool) & Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Copy of policies for completed structured classroom observation/assessment tool(s) (e.g., ECERS, SELA, PCMI, PRISM, QBCC). ITERS, CLASS for infants; CLASS for toddlers, The Pyramid Infant Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS), the State of Illinois DHS has an infant toddler classroom observation tool/checklist, also Arnett’s Caregiver Interaction Scale is also appropriate. (Submit electronically)

### 2.4.3 Standard

Data from Performance-based assessments are used to inform program practices and individualized child supports.

#### **Intent of Standard**

In addition to results from a structured observation instrument like the CLASS which focuses on teacher-child interactions, programs should regularly review and analyze children’s progress to better understand how instructional strategies are supporting learning. Programs should review lesson plans to ensure that staff are identifying developmentally-appropriate goals for each child to meet curriculum and state standards for early learning.

#### **Measurement**

Description of program’s process of using data to inform program practices, student progress and Professional Development Plans

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

ACF-PI-HS-1104

1304.21(c)(2)

Head Start Act Section:642(f)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

#### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-63

NAEYC: Community Relationship

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Evidence of data summaries from PBA and a description of how it is being used in the program to inform program practices/student growth (Submit electronically)

### 2.4.4 Standard

A system is in place to link families to services needed to address the developmental and behavioral concerns of children identified through developmental screening and performance-based assessments.

#### **Intent of Standard**

When programs conduct developmental and behavioral screens and/or performance-based assessments, there should be a mechanism to share results with families and provide the appropriate referrals for them to follow up on concerns and identify

resources to support their children’s needs. Programs should establish relationships with agencies and service providers in order to link families smoothly and efficiently.

### **Measurement**

Screening and Referral Policy

#### **And**

Formal agreements

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1308.4(g)

Head Start Act Section: 642A

1304.41(c)

Family & Community Engagement

Key Indicator #4

Parents in Transition

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-98

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of screening and referral policy (Submit electronically); copies of referrals (Reviewed on site in Children’s Folders)

## **2.4.5 Standard**

Transition planning for all children going to preschool or kindergarten including successful interventions strategies for children who exhibit challenging behaviors is documented and shared with the child’s parent/family as well as next placement.

### **Intent of Standard**

Transitioning to preschool or kindergarten is an important life event. Effective transition practices should promote continuity from one setting to the next and incorporate family involvement and support. Some examples of best practice include:

- Offering parent meetings focused on child and family expectations and services in the next setting;
- Coordinating with the next setting to send out invitations to the early care and education program that children are moving to;
- Having an open house for parents;
- Holding an orientation for the newly enrolled families;
- Setting up home visits for teachers to meet families;
- Distribute home-learning activities; and
- Sharing portfolios documenting children’s cumulative work

## **Measurement**

Documentation plans (e.g., Behavioral support plans)

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1308.4(g)

Head Start Act Section: 642A

1304.41(c)

Family & Community Engagement

Key Indicator #4

Parents in Transition

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-98

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Child's Transition Folders with the following evidence: results from developmental screenings, assessments, documentation from conferences, behavioral support plans (Reviewed on site/Children's Classroom Folders)

## **Level 5 Curriculum and Learning Environment**

### **2.5.1 Standard**

Teaching strategies are used to engage children in learning and meaningful conversations.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Research shows that interactions between adults and children are the key mechanism through which instructional support is provided to children in the early years of schooling. As a result, this item centers on the ways in which teachers implement the curriculum or learning activities, regardless of the model and that it is being used effectively to support cognitive and language development. In the CLASS, this specifically correlates to the Instructional Support domain but also links to emotional support and classroom organization.

At this level, programs will undergo classroom observations by an external reliable rater and must meet the requirements set forth in the Grow NJ Kids tool which are aligned to higher levels of quality.

#### **Measurement**

ERS reliable rater score average of 6 with no subscale below 5

**And**



CLASS reliable rater score of 5 .5 in Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains and score of 3.3 in the Instructional Support Domain (Infant/Toddler Only)

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework

Head Start Act Section:

648A(d)(2)

1304.21 (a)(b)(c)

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: teaching standard

NECPA: Developmental Program

### **Rating Documentation**

Observations completed by Grow NJ Kids Rating Reliable Raters

## **2.5.2 Standard**

Program shows evidence of improving child outcomes.

### **Intent of Standard**

At this level, child outcomes serve as the measurement of quality. Programs should use their data across child assessments to demonstrate that children in their programs are meeting or exceeding state standards and other measures set forth (e.g., Widely Held Expectations, Head Start Performance Standards) and/or are able to show growth and progress over the course of multiple checkpoints and data collection periods.

### **Measurement**

Demonstration of progress over time using results of performance assessments or other measures

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

642(f)(3)(E)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #2-Curriculum Selection

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Aggregated classroom data of comparative results showing progress across 5-10 months from performance-based assessment for 50% of classrooms (Submit electronically)

## Category 3: Family and Community Engagement

### Level 2 Family and Community Engagement

#### 3.2.1 Standard

The Strengthening Families Protective Factor Framework is used to assess engagement of and interactions with parents and families.

##### **Intent of Standard**

Research suggests that engaging families/parents is a strong prevention strategy to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. This is done by utilizing the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework to help early care and education programs identify family stressors, potential causes, provided community resources and build upon protective factors.

##### **Measurement**

Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Tool

##### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.40(a)(1)

1304.40(a)(4)&(5)

*Note: HS programs use Parent/Family Engagement Framework*

##### **Rating Documentation**

Strengthening Families Self-Assessment Tool (including SF Quality Improvement Plan) – Verified by TA/QIS

#### 3.2.2 Standard

A community resource handbook or materials is available to all parents/families yearly that include: community and school-based resources and/or direct services to promote child/family safety, health, and stability.

##### **Intent of Standard**

Early care and education programs can strengthen and support families in crisis by having a binder available containing brochures or listings of community resources, agencies, and services that can help families through various struggles or crisis. As such, this standard's intent is for programs to identify and gather contact information regarding services in their community that can be of assistance to parents.

Resources or materials can be electronic (on website) or hard copy (at program site). Programs do not need to develop their own resources but may use existing reliable resources to meet this standard.

## **Measurement**

Community Resource Handbook/materials

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.40(b)(1)

1304.41(a)(2)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #5

## **Rating Documentation**

Parent Signatures of receipt documenting they have received a copy of the Community Resource Handbook/materials – Verified by TA / QIS

(Evidence should be provided of what was shared and when. If shared electronically, the email or whatever documentation they have to show what was shared.)

## **Level 3 Family and Community Engagement**

### **3.3.1 Standard**

All newly enrolled families are offered the Strengthening Families (SF) Protective Factor Survey to complete.

## **Intent of Standard**

The survey is used to identify whether families entering the program have any needs or challenges in the areas of parental resilience, social connections, and/or concrete support. Programs can utilize the aggregated data to better serve families who have children enrolled in their program using the SF Protective Factors Framework to build on families' strengths and promote optimal child development.

## **Measurement**

SF Protective Factors Survey

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.40(a)(1)

1304.40(a)(5)

1304.40(b)(1)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #1 Partnerships with Families

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Completed Strengthening Families Protective Factor Survey or a collated summary sheet with number of families enrolled and number of surveys returned from families (Submit electronically)

### 3.3.2 Standard

A parent/family group is established to engage enrolled families and support their participation in the education of their children and includes activities to promote multicultural learning.

#### Intent of Standard

The intent behind this standard is to allow parents and families to form relationships with each other through formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational to enhance the social well-being, the community life of parents and their children's academic. According to the American Educational Research Association the three major factors of parent involvement are:

- Parent's beliefs about what is important, necessary and permissible for them to do with and on behalf of their children;
- The extent to which parents believe that they can have a positive influence on their children's education; and
- Parents' perceptions that their children and school want them to be involved.

#### Measurement

Group meets at least two times per year

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1304.50(b)(1)-(b)(7)

1304.50(e)(1),(2) & (3)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #3 Parents as their Child's Educators

#### Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Parent/Family Group Meeting agendas; sign-in sheets; minutes from 2 meetings within 1 year. (Submit electronically)

### 3.3.3 Standard

Education workshops are held at least two (2) times per year on topics such as: early literacy, adult/family literacy, positive parent-child interactions, cultural awareness, developmental issues, and/or other topics that address the identified needs and interests of enrolled parent/ families.

*Note: Translation/Interpreters are provided for ESL parents/families.*

#### Intent of Standard

The purpose of this standard is to offer workshops to parents on topics tailored to their particular needs. This provides the opportunity to increase their positive parenting skills to further support their child's educational success. The topics covered in this standard are different from the training topics covered in standard 1.3.4.

## **Measurement**

Communications of the workshops

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.40(d)(1)

1304.40(e)(3)

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Family Education workshop agendas; sign-in sheet from 2 workshops within 1 year: Topics should include early literacy, adult literacy, positive parent interactions, cultural awareness, developmental issues, or any other that identify needs/interests of parents/families (Submit electronically)

### **3.3.4 Standard**

Home visits are offered to all enrolled families using standard guidelines.

## **Intent of Standard**

Home visits are important in order to observe the child(ren) in a setting other than the classroom and for effectively developing a strong parent-teacher relationship.

Programs should develop standard guidelines to be used within their agency. In establishing home visiting policies, programs should refer to Head Start guidelines or other existing guidelines regarding home visiting.

## **Measurement**

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.40(e)(5)

1306.32(b)(8)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #3 Parents as Their Child's Educator

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of offered home visits for 10% of participating families. (Submit evidence of offered home visits electronically; documentation from completed home visits will be reviewed on site in Children's Folders)

### 3.3.5 Standard

Participation of parents on a local or regional community advisory council is encouraged (i.e., this could be the County Council for Young Children).

#### **Intent of Standard**

Parent participation in advisory councils is valuable for shaping programs so that they meet the needs of families. It also encourages parents to strive for leadership opportunities in which they can be actively involved in organizing activities that improve their child's education and learning experiences.

#### **Measurement**

Evidence of parent participation on the advisory committee/council

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.50 (a)(1)

1304.40(g)(1)&(2)

Program Governance Key Indicator #1-Structure and Participation

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: A list of possibly opportunities for parents to be involved and that it is shared (i.e., not just a list, but gives families who to contact, or times of meetings or something to show they encourage.

### 3.3.6 Standard

The program tracks and monitors absences of individual children and contacts families when children are absent more than three (3) consecutive days.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Programs that monitor the absences of children can support families in a timely fashion. Excessive absences adversely impact the child's learning. State subsidized child care and district contracted programs have attendance requirements for full payment and documentation requirements to verify excused absences. High quality early care and education programs follow up with families regarding absences.

#### **Measurement**

Absenteeism policy

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1305.8(a)

1305.8(b)

ERSEA Key Indicator #4-Attendance and Participation

## Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of Child Absenteeism Policy (Submit electronically **or** can be reviewed in a Parent Handbook)

## Level 4 Family and Community Engagement

### 3.4.1 Standard

The Strengthening Families Protective Factor Framework is used to assess engagement of and interactions with parents and families.

#### Intent of Standard

Research suggests that engaging families/parents is a strong prevention strategy to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect. This is done by utilizing the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework to help early care and education programs identify family stressors, potential causes, provided community resources and build upon protective factors.

#### Measurement

Annual update of the Strengthening Families Self-Assessment

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1304.40 (a)(1) 1304.40(a)(5)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #1

#### Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Annually updated Quality Improvement Plan; evidence of program fully integrating *SFPF / Head Start programs use PFCE Framework in your Program: Markers of Progress*. (Submit electronically)

### 3.4.2 Standard

A parent/family group is established to engage enrolled families and support their participation in the education of their children, provide input and advice on the program's policies, procedures and practices.

#### Intent of Standard

This allows parents and families to form relationships with each other through formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational to enhance the social well-being, the community life of parents and their children's academic. According to the American Educational Research Association the three major factors of parent involvement are:

- Parent's beliefs about what is important, necessary and permissible for them to do

- with and on behalf of their children;
- The extent to which parents believe that they can have a positive influence on their children’s education; and
- Parents’ perceptions that their children and school want them to be involved.

### **Measurement**

Group meets at least three times per year

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.50(a)(1)(2)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #2 Parent-Child Relationships

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Parent/Family Group Meeting agendas; sign-in sheets; minutes from 3 meetings within 1 year (Submit electronically)

## **3.4.3 Standard**

A variety of methods are used to communicate with parents/families about curriculum objectives, early care educational goals, other issues and effective strategies to support learning at home.

### **Intent of Standard**

To make an impact on engaging families as equal partners in their child(ren’s) learning and development, staff and families must work together to build strong relationships that support information sharing between the program and the family about child(ren’s) learning and development. Programs should ensure that families have access to information in a variety of ways (i.e., electronic, paper, multiple languages) about their child(ren) and that the information is understandable and meaningful.

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Head Start National Parent, Family & Community Engagement Framework 1304.21(a)(2)

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Examples of communication strategies; e.g., newsletters, letters, workshops, flyers from past 3 months (Submit electronically)



### 3.4.4 Standard

Home Visits are offered to all enrolled families at least two (2) times per year using standard guidelines.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Home visits are important in order to observe the child(ren) in a setting other than the classroom and for effectively developing a strong parent-teacher relationship.

#### **Measurement**

Home Visit policy and procedure

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.40(e)(5)

1306.32(b)(8)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #3-Parents as Their Child's Educators

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of offered home visits. (Submit evidence of offered home visits electronically; documentation from completed home visits will be reviewed on site in Children's Folders) Evidence must reflect that home visits were offered to all enrolled children 2x a year

### 3.4.5 Standard

Representation and participation of at least one (1) parent on a local or regional community advisory council (i.e., this could be the County Council for Young Children).

#### **Intent of Standard**

Parent participation in advisory councils is valuable for shaping programs so that they meet the needs of families. It also encourages parents to strive for leadership opportunities in which they can be actively involved in organizing activities that improve their child's education and learning experiences.

#### **Measurement**

Evidence of parent participation on the advisory committee/council

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.50 (a)(1)

1308.21(a)(6)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #3-Parents as Their Child's Educators

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: List of community organizations with parent representatives; meeting minutes/agendas. Also submit meeting minutes/agendas from at least 2 meetings (Submit electronically)

## **Level 5 Family and Community Engagement**

### **3.5.1 Standard**

Strengthening Families principles and seven core strategies are fully integrated into the work of the center/program.

#### **Intent of Standard**

The principles are practiced daily by the staff and program. The program staff is knowledgeable and competent about the seven core strategies.

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.(c)(1)(i),(ii)&(iii)

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #1 Partnerships with Families

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Evidence of program fully integrating SFPF / *Head Start programs use PFCE Framework in your Program: Markers of Progress.* (Submit electronically)

### **3.5.2 Standard**

Program fully collaborates with community partners to create a supportive system that responds appropriately to the needs of parents/families and is inclusive and respectful of cultural and linguistic differences for all enrolled parents/families.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Programs, staff and families collaborate with community, health, mental health, social service, and school partners to build networks that will link families and children to needed services, and support successful transitions for children and families.

#### **Measurement**

Partnership agreements and/or consultant agreements

**And**

Transition Folder

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #1 Partnerships with

Families 1304.41(a)(1)

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: 11-98

Staff-Parent-Community Partnerships

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: List of ethnic demographics of student population; Annual current calendar of culturally relevant dates and activities reflecting student demographics. (Submit electronically)

## Category 4: Workforce/Professional Development

### Level 2 Workforce/Professional Development

#### 4.2.1 Standard

All classroom staff is enrolled in the NJCCIS.

##### **Intent of Standard**

Enrollment in the NJ Registry through NJCCIS) is referenced for verification of credentials and professional development in roughly 20 Grow NJ Kids standards.

The classroom teacher and classroom teacher's assistance must be enrolled in NJCCIS. Grow NJ Kids does not require temporary staff to enroll in NJCCIS. Temporary staff would include volunteers, summer staff, CWEP workers, grandparent volunteers, and substitutes. There is no formal training required through Grow NJ Kids for temporary staff. It is recommended that the programs train temporary staff and provide in house training on policies and procedures. If a full time floater is employed in the program or if the temporary staff will attend Grow NJ Kids training, then they must be in NJCCIS to attending training.

##### **Measurement**

Evidence of Registry Membership

##### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1307.3(b)(2)(i)

##### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

##### **Rating Documentation**

NJCCIS – Verified by QIS/TA

#### 4.2.2 Standard

All teaching staff and supervisors have received an overview to the NJ Birth to Three Standards and or NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and topics specific to child development, appropriate teacher-child interaction and Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP).

##### **Intent of Standard**

The purpose is to ensure that early childhood professionals are familiar with New Jersey's early learning standards. The NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards & Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards are based on research regarding high quality child care and early childhood education.

Grow NJ Kids recommends that the supervisor, teacher, and assistant teacher in the classroom receive training on the topics listed in the standard. Temporary staff do not need to meet the same requirements as full-time teaching staff. These topics can be covered through Grow NJ Kids sponsored training, CCR& R, First Steps, CDA coursework, Administrator’s Credential coursework, and college coursework. These trainings can be turnkey training provided by the Director /Trained Professional. For school districts, training offered by NJ DOE or other approved State vendors meet the requirements for this standard. New staff should have an overview within three months of hire date. Training must be based on current research and practices and be in the latest edition on the standards.

### **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

#### **And/or**

Program Professional Development Plan

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1307.(b)(1)(i)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

### **Rating Documentation**

NJCCIS – Verified by QIS/TA

## **4.2.3 Standard**

All teaching staff members have received training on the benefits of home visits and how to plan for a home visit.

### **Intent of Standard**

The intent is to establish a foundation for home visits.

Any staff conducting the home visits should receive the training. Training should be provided by the program director/supervisor based on the agency’s policy, procedure, and standards for home visits. Training can be provided by Grow NJ Kids sponsored trainings or through other entities that have expertise in home visiting.

### **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

#### **And/or**

Program Professional Development Plan

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Family & Community Engagement Key Indicator #1-Partnership with Families 1304.40

### **Rating Documentation**

NJCCIS – Verified by TA/QIS

## **Level 3 Workforce/Professional Development**

### **4.3.1 Standard**

All teaching staff and administrators/directors have received formal training in the selected curriculum.

#### **Intent of Standard**

In order to accurately implement the curriculum as designed formal training in the selected curriculum is needed.

Teaching staff is defined as the teacher and teacher’s assistant working in the classroom. All teaching staff should be trained in the curriculum. For teaching staff that need curriculum training, completion of this training should be documented in their Professional Development Plan to be received within one year from date of submission of the Quality Improvement Plan.

Curriculum training should be in the most recent version of the curriculum. Online training offered by the developer will meet the training requirements for this standard.

#### **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

#### **And/or**

Program Professional Development Plan

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #2 Curriculum Selection & Implementation

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS **or** Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

### **4.3.2 Standard**

Teaching staff have received professional development in the selected performance-based assessment.

### **Intent of Standard**

Training in performance-based assessment is necessary in order for teaching staff to appropriately collect and use the assessment data to tailor instruction to the individual needs of children in their classroom.

Teaching staff is defined as the teacher and teacher's assistant working in the classroom. All teaching staff should be formally trained in the selected performance-based assessment. For teaching staff that need performance-based assessment training, completion of this training should be documented in their Professional Development Plan to be received one year from date of submission of the Quality Improvement Plan. Training requirements are based on the recommended training by the developer.

### **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

#### **And/or**

Program Professional Development Plan

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

642(f)(3)(C)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4-Quality Teaching and Learning

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS or Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

## **4.3.3 Standard**

Directors/Supervisors have received training in evaluating and observing teachers both formally and informally (with walkthrough instruments), (e.g., using structured observation instruments).

### **Intent of Standard**

Training may include informal and formal evaluation, reflective supervision, and observation techniques. Using a set of criteria and a rubric for scoring will allow for Directors/Supervisors to evaluate their teachers. These observations inform individual and program-wide professional development.

### **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

#### **And/or**

Program Professional Development Plan

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

648A(f)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4-Quality Teaching and Learning

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS or Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

#### **4.3.4 Standard**

All teaching staff receives an annual written performance evaluation, conducted by their supervisor.

### **Intent of Standard**

Annual performance evaluations identify strengths and areas that need improvement. This assists with ongoing skills development, identifying training needs for professional development planning and providing teacher recognition as professionals.

### **Measurement**

Self-evaluations completed by program administrator and teachers

**And/or**

Feedback from families

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

648A(f)

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #4 Quality Teaching & Learning

1304.52(i)

*Note: All staff members must have performance appraisals*

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #4 Quality Teaching & Learning

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Description of the annual performance evaluation process and copy of evaluation (Submit electronically) self-assessment, family surveys and Individual Professional Development Plans for each teaching staff folder reviewed (Reviewed on site)

#### **4.3.5 Standard**

Staff is trained to work with children with special diets, allergies and specialized feeding issues.



### **Intent of Standard**

Food allergies affect 1 in 13 children in the United States. As such, training is needed to follow policies, procedures, and precautionary measures in place in order to accommodate children with food allergies, special dietary restrictions based on religion and/or specialized feeding issues in early childhood programs.

Staff refers to all staff working with children that may include teachers, teacher’s assistants, directors/supervisors, social service support staff, and meal preparation staff. Training on the topics should be offered by a trained health professional.

### **Measurement**

Training as indicated in NJCCIS

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.23(a)(2)

1304.2(c)(6)

Child Health & Safety Key Indicator #4—Healthy Practices and Routines

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS **or** Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

## **4.3.6 Standard**

All teachers have received training in the administration of the adopted developmental screening.

### **Intent of Standard**

Training on the adopted developmental screening tool is necessary in order to for teachers to accurately utilize the screening tool to assess each child’s developmental status across multiple domains. Typically, a developmental screening tool (such as the Ages & Stages, Brigance, or ESI-R) is conducted at the beginning of a school year for all children birth to 5 years of age. Developmental screening tools are a standardized method of identifying each child’s strengths and difficulties. It also identifies children whose screening score recommends a referral for further evaluation by early intervention or professional diagnosticians.

A designee from the program (director/teacher) should receive training on the adopted developmental screening. The training should be provided by the developer or an approved trainer who was trained by the developer. The designee who received the training can turnkey training to other teachers who will be administering the developmental screen.

## **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

### **And/or**

Program Professional Development Plan

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Child Health & Safety

Key Indicator #2

Screening and Referrals

45 CFR 1304.52(j)

648A(a)(5)

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS **or** Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

### **4.3.7 Standard**

All teachers have received training in the administration of the adopted performance-based assessment.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Training in the adopted performance-based assessment (such as Teaching Strategies GOLD, High Scope's Child Observation Record (COR), Work Sampling Systems, etc.) is necessary in order for teaching staff to appropriately collect and use the data regarding each child's individual learning needs to tailor instruction to the children in their classroom.

Teaching staff is defined as the teacher and teacher's assistant working in the classroom. All teaching staff should be formally trained in the selected performance-based assessment. For teaching staff that need performance-based assessment training, completion of this training should be documented in their Professional Development Plan to be received one year from date of submission of the Quality Improvement Plan. Training requirements are based on the recommended training by the developer.

## **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

### **And/or**

Program Professional Development Plan

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School readiness

*Note: Mentions use but not training on the tool*

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS or Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

#### **4.3.8 Standard**

Child care teaching staff has a CDA or equivalent nine (9) credits in field related to child growth or development or are in the process of attaining a CDA.

### **Intent of Standard**

At this level the Grow NJ Kids standards require 20% of the non-degreed teaching staff to have a Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate or be in the process of attaining their CDA. If a teaching staff member has a degree unrelated to early childhood education or child development then 9 credits related to child development are necessary to create the foundation for early childhood education and child development knowledge. Early childhood related fields are defined by the NJCCIS career lattice.

### **Measurement**

20% of teaching staff have a CDA

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

648A(a)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4-Quality Teaching and Learning

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS or Staff Folders

#### **4.3.9 Standard**

Supervisor(s) of teaching staff must have, at a minimum, a CDA or equivalent nine (9) credits in Early Childhood in the age group that the program serves.

### **Intent of Standard**

The purpose of this standard is to ensure that the supervisor(s) have a similar foundation of knowledge in early childhood education and child development to understand optimal teaching practices.

### **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

648A(B)(i)

648A(f)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4-Quality Teaching and Learning

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-14

*Note: No mention of Individual Professional Development Plan*

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS or Staff Folders

# **Level 4 Workforce/Professional Development**

## **4.4.1 Standard**

All teaching staff has professional development or college level course work that prepares them to work with young children who have special needs. These should include strategies for supporting inclusion.

### **Intent of Standard**

The classroom is a community and in any community, there are individuals with disabilities. In accordance, with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) children with disabilities should be included with their peers. In order to be prepared to accommodate children who have special needs teaching staff needs training that includes strategies for supporting inclusion in the classroom.

### **Measurement**

Formal professional development as indicated by Registry **AND** Program Professional Development Plan

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS or Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

## **4.4.2 Standard**

Child care teaching staff has a CDA, in the age group of the children in their room/classroom or are in the process of attaining a CDA.

### **Intent of Standard**

This standard builds off of Grow NJ Kids Standard 4.3.8 but at Level 4 this standard 4.4.2 requires 35% of the non-degreed teaching staff to have a Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate or are in the process of attaining a CDA. The specialization of the CDA (infant/toddler CDA or a preschool CDA) should coincide with the age group of the children in their classroom.

If teaching staff do not have their CDA, the Professional Development Plan should include the timeline for obtaining their CDA.

### **Measurement**

35% of teaching staff have a CDA

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

648A

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4-Quality Teaching and Learning

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-14

*Note: No mention of Individual Professional Development Plan*

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS **or** Staff Folders

## **4.4.3 Standard**

Professional development is offered to program staff that includes the following topics: Pyramid Model, Social and Emotional Development, and Infant Early Childhood Mental Health.

### **Intent of Standard**

Training on the CSEFEL Pyramid Model, Social-Emotional Development, and Infant Early Childhood Mental Health provides teaching staff with strategies that promote social-emotional competence and effectively address challenging behaviors. Staff training needs should be identified by the Director/Supervisor and outlined in the Professional Development Plan.

### **Measurement**

Professional Development Plan specific to the areas listed

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.21(a)(1)(i)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4 Quality Teaching and Learning

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS **or** Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

#### **4.4.4 Standard**

Professional development is offered to program staff that includes:

Special needs, supporting teacher-child interactions, supporting English Language Learners (ELL), cultural competence, transition, and the Strengthening Families' Protective Factors.

### **Intent of Standard**

Professional development is needed on a combination of these topics to meet several Grow NJ Kids Standards and increase the overall level of quality. For example, the Strengthening Families' Protective Factors framework is referenced within 5 Grow NJ Kids Standards. Trainings regarding supporting English Language Learners (ELL), teacher-child interactions, cultural competence, working with children with special needs, transitions, and Strengthening Families builds positive classroom environments and engages children in learning while respecting cultural and individual differences. Staff training needs should be identified by the Director/Supervisor and outlined in the Professional Development Plan and may include topics mentioned in this standard.

### **Measurement**

60 hours of professional development in the topics listed obtained in 3 years

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.21(a)(1)(i)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4 Quality Teaching and Learning

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS **or** Staff Folders, PDP, training calendar with upcoming trainings listed (On site)

#### **4.4.5 Standard**

The Professional Development Plan includes the use of a curriculum implementation or fidelity checklist/instrument to ensure implementation of the curriculum.

### **Intent of Standard**

At this level, a curriculum fidelity instrument is needed in order to assess the level of fidelity to which the teachers are implementing the curriculum. The curriculum fidelity instrument is used to develop a professional development plan and strategies to guide teachers toward optimal implementation of the curriculum.

### **Measurement**

Curriculum Implementation check-list/fidelity assessment

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1307.3(b)(2)(i)

1307.3(b)(2)(ii)

1304.21(a)(4)(i)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #1 School Readiness

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Copy of completed curriculum implementation/Fidelity instrument from 50% of classrooms (Submit electronically)

## **4.4.6 Standard**

Teachers have planned opportunities to share collected child anecdotes and work samples with each other to improve and maintain their reliable use to the performance-based assessment.

### **Intent of Standard**

Opportunities for teachers to share and discuss performance-based assessment data is necessary in order to develop strategies for continual improvement and tailor instruction to each child's individual learning needs. Lesson plans should reflect how modifications and accommodations have been made for children including those who are advanced learners, exhibit challenging behaviors, possess developmental delays or disabilities, or are dual language learners, etc., to foster each child's competence and success.

To meet this standard, the program must maintain a copy of staff meeting schedule and/or agenda to document opportunities. The program director/administrator should determine how often teachers need to meet based on their program needs.

### **Measurement**

Number of times the opportunities occurred

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1307.3(b)(2)(i)

1307.3(b)(2)(ii)

1304.21(a)(4)(i)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #1 School Readiness

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Copy of staff meeting schedule and/or agendas  
(Submit electronically)

#### **4.4.7 Standard**

Directors/supervisors provide aggregated classroom and child data to teachers to collaboratively develop a plan to improve program quality in specific areas.

### **Intent of Standard**

The aggregated data shared with each teacher provides information about the educational environment (ITERS/ECERS scores), the teacher-child interactions (CLASS scores), curriculum implementation (Curriculum Fidelity scores), and the individual needs of children in his/her classroom (performance-based assessment data such as Teaching Strategies GOLD, High Scope's Child Observation Record (COR), Work Sampling Systems). The aggregated classroom and child data is used to make decisions as to how the level of quality in the classroom can be improved.

### **Measurement**

Evidence of aggregated room/classroom level data

#### **And**

Evidence of program planning using room/classroom data

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Child Development & Education

Key Indicator #1

School Readiness

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Evidence of aggregated classroom/program/child level data reports used 2x in a 10 month program and Program Improvement Plan. (Submit electronically)

#### **4.4.8 Standard**

Non-instructional staff receives information on: developmentally appropriate practices, diversity, an overview of age-appropriate standards, and appropriate adult child interactions.

*Note: Non-instructional staff include: lunch assistants, bus drivers, maintenance staff*



*and volunteers.*

### **Intent of Standard**

In an early childhood education program, it is important that non-instructional staff also receive information regarding developmentally appropriate practices, diversity, age appropriate standards, and appropriate adult-child interactions. They too have interactions with the children and have a role in supporting their education. Programs should maintain records on how they provide information to non-instructional staff.

### **Measurement**

Signed receipt of information

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.23(b)(4)

Head Start Transportation Regulations

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Signed receipts from non-instructional staff receiving documentation of school practices. (Reviewed on site in Staff Folders)

## **Level 5 Workforce/Professional Development**

### **4.5.1 Standard**

Ongoing formal professional development and supervision are received by staff to support positive and responsive relationships and interactions that are warm and nurturing.

### **Intent of Standard**

Workshops, conferences, and trainings are examples of formal professional development. The purpose of this standard is to enhance staff members' individual growth as professionals and increase knowledge of the recommended practices to achieve high quality. Training should be current and meet the annual requirements as outlined by NJCCIS.

### **Measurement**

CLASS reliable rater score of 5 .5 in Emotional Support and Classroom Organization domains and score of 3.3 in the Instructional Support Domain (Infant/Toddler only)

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.21(a)(3)(i)(A)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4 Quality Teaching and Learning

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Individual Professional Development/Agency Training Plans (Reviewed On Site in Teaching Staff Folders)

#### **4.5.2 Standard**

Program has fully implemented a research-based system that provides teaching staff, in particular, with strategies that promote social-emotional competence and effectively address challenging behaviors.

### **Intent of Standard**

Full implementation of evidence-based practices such as the CSEFEL Pyramid Model Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) and The Pyramid Infant Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) provide strategies that effectively address challenging behaviors and develop social and emotional competence for school readiness. The program Director/Administrator should obtain training on the TPOT and TPITOS to assess the implementation of the CSEFEL Pyramid Model.

### **Measurement**

Completed Pyramid Model TPOT and/or TPITOS assessment for each classroom

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.20(f)(1)

1304.20(f)(2)(i)

Child Development & Education Key Indicator#3-Individualizing

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Score sheets from completed assessments from each classroom: Pyramid Model TPOT and/or TPITOS. (Submit electronically)

#### **4.5.3 Standard**

Child care teaching staff has a CDA, in the age group of the children in their room/classroom or are in the process of attaining a CDA.

### **Intent of Standard**

This standard builds off of Grow NJ Kids Standard 4.4.2 but at Level 5 this standard 4.5.3 requires 50% of the non-degreed teaching staff to have a Child Development Associate (CDA) Certificate or be in the process of attaining their CDA. The specialization of the CDA (infant/toddler CDA or a preschool CDA) should coincide with the age group of the

children in their classroom.

If teaching staff do not have their CDA, the Professional Development Plan should include the timeline for obtaining their CDA.

**Measurement**

50% of teaching staff have a CDA

**And/or**

Professional Development Plan

**Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

648A

Child Development & Education Key Indicator #4 Quality Teaching and Learning

**Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA 11-14

*Note: No mention of Individual Professional Development Plan*

**Rating Documentation**

NJCCIS

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: NJCCIS **or** Staff Folders (On site)

## Category 5: Administration and Management

### Level 2 Administration and Management

#### 5.2.1 Standard

Appropriate business and administrative practices are demonstrated.

##### **Intent of Standard**

The Program Administration Scale (P.A.S.) is used to measure early childhood leadership and management. The program must earn a self-assessed PAS score of a 2 average.

The NAEYC Leadership and Management Standard meets the requirement for this standard as mentioned in Grow NJ Kids Standard 5.3.1.

Public School Programs do not complete the PAS, so they will not acquire points for this standard. However, if the board did an evaluation of their practices, then they would receive points if evidence is provided.

##### **Measurement**

Program Administration Scale (minimum self-assessed score of 2)

##### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Leadership & management

NECPA: Program Administration & Staff

##### **Rating Documentation**

Self-Assessed PAS score sheets – Verified by TA/QIS

### Level 3 Administration and Management

#### 5.3.1 Standard

Appropriate business and administrative practices are demonstrated.

##### **Intent of Standard**

The Program Administration Scale (P.A.S.) is used to measure early childhood leadership and management. This standard builds off of Grow NJ Kids Standard 5.2.1 but to meet Level 3 standard 5.3.1 the program must earn an average PAS score of a 3.

Public School Programs do not complete the PAS, so they will not acquire points for this standard. However, if the board did an evaluation of their practices, then they would receive points if evidence is provided.

### **Measurement**

Program Administration Scale (minimum self-assessed score of 3)

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Leadership & management

NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Self-Assessed PAS score sheets or evidence of Board evaluation results (Submit electronically)

## **5.3.2 Standard**

Programs led or governed by a Board of Directors, Board of Education, advisory council other similar group, have written policies defining their roles and responsibilities

### **Intent of Standard**

The intent is to ensure that there are by-laws and policies regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body overseeing the early childhood education program.

Board of Education would have written policies so district programs could achieve points.

### **Measurement**

Documentation of bylaws and or policies

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.50(a)(1)

Program Governance Key Indicator #1 Structure and Participation

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Leadership & Management

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Written definition of roles and responsibilities of the governing body (if non-profit/public). (Submit electronically)

## **5.3.3 Standard**

Financial policies and procedures are established based on professional accounting standards.

### **Intent of Standard**

In order for any organization to financially sustain itself professional accounting standards must be in place. These accounting standards must be evident within policies and procedures relating to financial operations.

### **Measurement**

Description of financial operations procedures

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

74.21(b)(3)

1301.32(a)(1)

Fiscal Integrity Key Indicator #1 Financial Management Systems

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Leadership & Management

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Written policy/manual of financial operating procedures. (Submit electronically)

## **5.3.4 Standard**

The program has a marketing/recruitment plan to maximize full enrollment.

### **Intent of Standard**

Any successful organization requires a strong marketing and recruitment plan. Early childhood education programs are businesses whether it be for-profit or non-profit. In order to maximize full enrollment, programs develop recruitment strategies, conduct outreach efforts and advertise in order to inform the community of the services provided and unique strengths of their particular early childhood education program.

### **Measurement**

Marketing Plan

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1305.5

ERSEA Key Indicator #1-Recruitment and Selection

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Leadership & Management (Program Improvement)

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Marketing Plan addressing increasing enrollment.  
(Submit electronically)

### 5.3.5 Standard

A projected one-year operating budget, including a statement of income and expenditures is developed.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Early childhood education programs are businesses whether they are a for-profit or a non-profit program; both have operations costs and the constraints of a budget. A projected one-year operating budget provides a financial road map to help estimate expenditures and income for the next 12 months. This allows for careful decision making regarding financial resources, salaries, expenditures, and profits.

#### **Measurement**

1 Year operating budget

#### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Head Start Act Section 647A Records & Audits  
Fiscal Integrity Key Indicator #2 Reporting

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Current operating budget including statement of income and expenditures. (Submit electronically)

### 5.3.6 Standard

Annually, input is solicited from staff and families to evaluate the program. Results are used to develop/inform a comprehensive written program improvement plan.

#### **Intent of Standard**

The intent is to improve the quality of the early childhood program from all aspects. It is important to obtain recommendations for improvement from the staff perspective. Feedback from the parents and families regarding programmatic improvement is valuable since they are the clients and their overall satisfaction is key. This information should be included in developing the Grow NJ Kids Quality Improvement Plan.

Parent and staff feedback can be elicited through a survey or other written communication format.

#### **Measurement**

Annual feedback and results tallied

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.51(a)

642©(2)(B)(i)

Program Governance Key Indicator#2 Roles, Responsibilities and Training

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Leadership & Management

NECPA: Program Evaluation

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Comprehensive written program improvement plan.  
(Submit electronically)

### **5.3.7 Standard**

At least three (3) types of internal communication to inform staff of program activities, policies, etc. is used.

#### **Intent of Standard**

Multiple modes of communication have proven to be more successful for keeping staff informed of program activities, policies, procedures, best practices, etc. Examples of internal communication include:

- regularly scheduled staff meetings
- written procedures to guide staff implementation of policies
- staff handbook
- a staff bulletin board
- in-house newsletters
- internal memos
- verbal communication
- e-mail

#### **Measurement**

Evidence of internal communication strategies

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.51(b)

Management Systems Key Indicator #4-Communication

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations

NAEYC: Leadership & Management



## Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Evidence of internal communication strategies.  
(Submit electronically)

### 5.3.8 Standard

At least one benefit (paid vacation time, sick time, health insurance, tuition/PD reimbursement or retirement plan option) is provided to staff.

#### Intent of Standard

Minimizing staff turnover and maximizing staff retention is influenced in part by the benefits offered. The Program Administration Scale (P.A.S.) has a section regarding the benefits offered. Examples include the number of paid sick/personal days, discount on child care, life insurance, the number of paid vacation days, if employees have the option of contributing to a retirement plan, if the employer reimburses any portion of professional development expenses, and if the employer offers health benefits for full time employees.

Enrollment in Grow NJ Kids does not meet the criteria for this standard.

#### Measurement

Employee Handbook

Or

Employee benefit policy

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1301.31 Personnel Policies

Management Systems Key Indicator #3: Human Resources

#### Accreditation Standards NAEYC

NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations

NAEYC: Leadership & Management

#### Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review Benefit policy describing the benefit(s) employees receive

- Employee Handbook listing

### 5.3.9 Standard

Based on the career lattice, there is a system to support staff career development.

### **Intent of Standard**

All teaching staff submit their credentials to NJCCIS) for NJ Registry membership. The NJ Registry has a career lattice for members of the early childhood workforce. The early childhood programs should support their teaching staff in advancing up the career lattice as to raise the level of quality.

### **Measurement**

Individual Professional Development Plans

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.52(i)

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of individual professional development plans (Reviewed on site); incentive programs (Submit electronically)

## **Level 4 Administration and Management**

### **5.4.1 Standard**

Appropriate business and administrative practices are demonstrated.

#### **Intent of Standard**

The Program Administration Scale (P.A.S.) is used to measure early childhood leadership and management. This standard builds off of Grow NJ Kids Standard 5.3.1 but to meet Level 4 standard 5.4.1 the program must earn an average P.A.S. score of a 4.

The NAEYC Leadership and Management Standard meets the requirement for this standard as mentioned in Grow NJ Kids Standard 5.3.1.

#### **Measurement**

Program Administration Scale (PAS) score self-assessed of 4

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Self-Assessed PAS score sheets. (Submit electronically)

### **5.4.2 Standard**

An advisory council is established which includes diverse community representatives who meet regularly to assist with the program improvement.

#### **Intent of Standard**

The purpose of an advisory council is to provide meaningful guidance, advice, and support. It should be comprised of a diverse group of individuals from the community that have skills appropriate to the needs of the program. Their experience and objectivity can guide and assist with programmatic improvement.

Events such as back to school nights and parent workshops do not meet the criteria for this standard.

### **Measurement**

Roster of members with affiliations

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.50(b)(1)-(b)(7)

Program Governance Key Indicator-Structure and Participation

### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NAEYC: Leadership & Management (no timeframe)

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Advisory council meeting minutes/sign-in sheets from past 6 months. (Submit electronically)

## **5.4.3 Standard**

The program has a strategic business plan that is reviewed and updated, at a minimum, every three (3) years.

### **Intent of Standard**

All programs should have a strategic business plan which consists of written document that starts with data gathered from a variety of sources. Developing a strategic business plan then involves setting goals, determining actions to achieve the goals, measuring progress on these goals and making decisions that follow this strategic business plan. The end result is the organization's strategy to be competitive and a set of action plans to accomplish over a set period of time in order to achieve high quality.

### **Measurement**

Strategic Plan

**Or**

Business Plan

### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.51(a)Program Governance Key Indicator #2-Roles, Responsibilities and Training

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Program Administration

NAEYC: Leadership & Management

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Business/Strategic Plan\* (Submit electronically)

\*For in district programs, the preschool plan would include how they recruit families, and a plan for administering the program. It could also be a part of the SAVS if business operation/fiscal management is a part of the year the rating occurs.

#### **5.4.4 Standard**

Teacher turnover is documented and tracked.

##### **Intent of Standard**

Tracking teacher turnover helps programs to identify trends, analyze which teachers are leaving, why they are leaving and how to increase teacher retention. By tracking turnover and the costs associated with hiring and replacing teachers, programs will be able to estimate turnover costs to be better prepared financially and strategize improvement for teacher retention.

##### **Measurement**

Description of system for tracking teacher turnover and plan for addressing teacher turnover

##### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1305.51(a)(1)(iii)

Management Systems Key Indicator #1 Program Planning

##### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Written description of system for tracking teacher turnover. (Submit electronically)

#### **5.4.5 Standard**

The program's financial system includes an annual budget and/or annual report.

##### **Intent of Standard**

An annual budget is important in order to anticipate expenses, income and trends. Knowledge of the actual income and expenses as it ebbs and flows throughout the year allows for careful decision making regarding financial resources, salaries, expenditures, profits, and projections for budget-planning purposes.

## **Measurement**

Annual Budget

**And/or**

Annual Report

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1304.51(h)(1)

Head Start Act Section 644

Program Governance Key Indicator #3-Reporting

## **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations

NAEYC: Leadership & Management

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Annual report with financial system information.

(Submit electronically)

### **5.4.6 Standard**

The program has quarterly review conducted of the accounting records by an independent party who has accounting or bookkeeping expertise.

## **Intent of Standard**

In order for any business to financially sustain itself professional accounting standards must in place. These accounting standards must be evident within the financial operations. Quarterly reviews by an independent party who has accounting or bookkeeping expertise is necessary to identify potential areas of concern, prevent costly surprises, increase accuracy and ensure that the appropriate checks and balances are in place.

## **Measurement**

Quarterly review report to ensure fiscal integrity and inform the business plan

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Head Start Section Act 647

Program Governance Key Indicator #3 Reporting to the Governing Body and Policy Council

## **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Quarterly accounting review report. (Submit electronically)

#### 5.4.7 Standard

An inside and outside audit is conducted annually by a certified public accountant.

##### **Intent of Standard**

Annually, an audit should be conducted by a certified public accountant (CPA) to ensure that the program's financial procedures are in order. The CPA should be viewed as a resource to look at the accuracy of the numbers and the processes and inform the program of any internal controls that should be taken to strengthen the program's financial system.

##### **Measurement**

Signed contract with a CPA

##### **And**

Most recent audit

##### **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

Head Start Section Act 647

Program Governance Key Indicator #3 Reporting to the Governing Body and Policy Council

##### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Signed contract with CPA and most recent audit. (Submit electronically)

### Level 5 Administration and Management

#### 5.5.1 Standard

Appropriate business and administrative practices are demonstrated.

##### **Intent of Standard**

The Program Administration Scale (P.A.S.) is used to measure early childhood leadership and management. This standard builds off of Grow NJ Kids Standard 5.4.1 but to meet Level 5 standard 5.5.1 the program must earn an average P.A.S. score of a 5.

##### **Measurement**

Program Administration Scale (PAS) score self-assessed of 5

##### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Self-Assessed PAS score sheets. (Submit electronically)

### 5.5.2 Standard

The program offers two benefits that include vacation, sick time, and health insurance.

#### Intent of Standard

Minimizing staff turnover and maximizing staff retention is influenced in part by the benefits offered. Additionally, the Program Administration Scale (P.A.S.) has a section regarding the benefits offered, the number of paid sick/personal days, the number of paid vacation days, if employees have the option of contributing to a retirement plan, if the employer reimburses any portion of professional development expenses, and if the employer offers health benefits for full-time employees.

To meet this standard two of the three benefits (vacation, sick time, health insurance) must be offered.

#### Measurement

Employee Handbook

Or

Employee benefit policy

#### Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act

1301.31 Personnel Policies

Management Systems Key Indicator #3: Human Resources

#### Rating Documentation

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Benefit policy describing the benefit(s) employees receive

- Employee Handbook listing:

### 5.5.3 Standard

Systematic opportunities are offered for teachers to engage in reflective teaching practices through the use of peer groups, coaches, and/or mentors.

#### Intent of Standard

Quality programs allow for ongoing planned and scheduled opportunities for teachers to reflect on their observations, knowledge, and experience so they can thoughtfully plan the next steps in each child's learning. It is highly beneficial for these reflective practices to occur within peer groups or with a coach/mentor.

Training opportunities will be available for reflective teaching practices and coaching.

#### Measurement

Documentation of ongoing reflective practice opportunities

## **Head Start Program Performance Standards & Act**

1307.3(b)(1)(i)

Child Development & Education Key #1 School Readiness

### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of ongoing reflective practice opportunities or evidence coaching/mentoring using the reflective cycle from minimum of 25% of staff files or 4 files (whichever is greater) / *Head Start Programs: Practice-Based Coaching document*. (Submit electronically)

### **5.5.4 Standard**

Programs have incentive processes that reward educators that achieve the next steps on the NJ Registry Career Lattice.

#### **Intent of Standard**

The NJ Registry has a career lattice for members of the early childhood workforce. All teaching staff members submit their credentials and professional development to NJCCIS) for NJ Registry. At this level the early childhood programs should have incentives in place to reward teaching staff members that advance to the next level of the NJ Registry Career Lattice. This improves teacher retention and increases quality.

If staff is formally recognized at a staff meeting, meeting minutes could be used as documentation.

#### **Measurement**

Minutes from Professional Learning Community

#### **And**

Documentation of Incentive program

#### **Accreditation Standards NAEYC**

NECPA: Program Administration & Staff Relations

#### **Rating Documentation**

Grow NJ Kids Rating will review: Documentation of incentive programs: minutes from Professional Learning Community within 6 months and evidence of incentive program



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