






Point Requirements for 3-, 4-, and 5-Star Ratings for Head Start Programs

Star Ratings are determined by your center/school-wide average score on the ERS assessments conducted by Grow NJ Kids (GNJK) Rating, evidence of implementing a selected research-based curriculum **and** the number of points you earn from meeting standards across all five categories. **A program can reach required points for applied star rating by submitting documentation that meets the requirements from *any level and any category.***

Requirements for Star Ratings			
Star Rating	ERS (ECERS-3/ITERS-3)	Implementation of Curriculum (GNJK Standard: 2.4.1)	Range of Points for required documentation
	Classroom observations are not required for Head Start programs seeking Star 3	Staff have attended minimum of 5 hours of training on selected research-based curriculum.	30-59
	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Preschool classroom observations are not required for Head Start programs seeking Star 4 with CLASS observation average scores that meet the following thresholds:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Support: 5.50 • Classroom Organization: 5.50 • Instructional Support: 2.65 <p style="text-align: center;">Head Start preschool classrooms that do not meet the thresholds above, and all Infant/Toddler classrooms require an ERS observation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Average of 4.5 No subscale below a 4.0</p>	Staff have attended minimum of 10 hours of training on selected research-based curriculum.	60-85
	Average of 5.0 No subscale below a 4.25	Staff have attended minimum of 20 hours of training on selected research-based curriculum	86-100

Your center/school will be awarded points by meeting standards from each of the five categories. The following pages list the GNJK standards from Levels 3, 4, and 5 for each category and the amount of points each standard is worth. Your center/school can acquire points by meeting standards during the review of the program’s Head Start documentation, as well as a virtual review of documentation by GNJK Rating and/or by electronically submitting documentation on NJCCIS. **Head Start Performance Standards** and **Head Start Acts** aligned to **GNJK Standards** have also been indicated below. Additional information can be found on the Star Rating Readiness Checklist for Head Start Programs.

The box below describes the information in each box and how it is coded:

GNJK Criteria #	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Max. Pts.	My Pts.
Criteria #	Standard Description <i>Required Documentation/Evidence</i> <u>Special Notes</u> <i>Head Start Standard</i>			Max. # of points available	

Additionally, some items are qualitative and measured across more than one level. These items are listed horizontally and, depending on documentation requirements, point values may be added together to acquire the maximum amount of points available. Your center/school can achieve *up to* the amount of points listed on those items by meeting the requirements for each leveled standard. The example below demonstrates this:

GNJK Criteria #	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Max. Pts.	My Pts.
4.3.8; 4.4.2; 4.5.3	20% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses 1 <i>1302.91(e)(1)(2)(i-ii)</i> <i>645A(h)</i> <i>648A(a)(3)(B)</i>	35% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses 1 <i>1302.91(e)(1)(2)(i-ii)</i> <i>648A(a)(3)(B)</i>	50% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses 1 <i>1302.91(e)(1)(2)(i-ii)</i> <i>648A(a)(3)(B)</i>	3	

Maximum Points for Each Category

Category 1: Safe, Healthy Learning Environment	10 Points
Category 2: Curriculum and Learning Environment	15 Points
Category 3: Family and Community Engagement	18 Points
Category 4: Workforce/Professional Development	14 Points
Professional Development and Training Staff Credentials	18 Points
Category 5: Administration and Management	25 Points
Grand Total	100 Points

A program can reach required points for requested star rating by submitting documentation from *any level and any category*.

Head Start programs must submit:

- Most recent OHS Monitoring Reviews** (Head Start Focus Area One and Focus Area Two Reports; any follow-up reports with corrections to areas of non-compliance or deficiencies; and any additional reviews by OHS)
- Most recent CLASS observation report with scores that meet the thresholds outlined on page 1** (Head Start programs with preschool classrooms that are seeking a Star 4 only)

This documentation can be uploaded to the NJCCIS File Cabinet using the GNJK Rating Readiness Checklist document type

Documentation Review Waiver for Head Start Programs

As a result of an alignment of Head Start Performance Standards to GNJK Standards, a number of GNJK Standards may be waived for Head Start programs. Points are awarded towards the total points for the requested Star Rating for **Head Start Standards successfully met through OHS Monitoring Reviews that are aligned to GNJK Standards**. GNJK Standards aligned to Head Start items identified on OHS Monitoring Review reports as *non-compliant* or *deficiencies* are **not waived**, and to receive points for these GNJK Standards, the program must submit documentation evidence for verification. Head Start items not listed as non-compliant or deficiencies on OHS Monitoring Reviews are presumed to have been completed by the program and the aligned GNJK Standard(s) is waived.

Waived standards apply to Head Start/Early Head Start classrooms only; blended programs (programs with classrooms onsite that are not funded by Head Start) must submit documentation for those classrooms to demonstrate evidence of meeting GNJK Standards.

Note: Head Start reports and NAEYC-accreditation certificates/reports must be submitted for **Head Start programs that are also NAEYC-accredited**.

Category 1: Safe, Healthy Learning Environment

GNJK Criteria #	Level 3			Max. Pts.	My Pts.
1.3.1	<p>Program has health and safety checks for outdoor areas and has a system to identify/address health and safety concerns. 1</p> <p><i>Outdoor Play Area Inspection Logs</i></p> <p>1302.47(b)(2)(v)</p>			1	
1.3.2	<p>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. 1</p> <p><i>Breastfeeding Policy & Documentation of Staff Orientation to the Breastfeeding Policy (I/T Programs Only)</i></p> <p>1302.44(a)(2)(viii)</p>			1	
1.3.3	<p>Nutritious meals and snacks are encouraged and/or provided and are respectful of religious and dietary restrictions. 1</p> <p><i>Sample menus</i></p> <p>1302.44 Child Nutrition 1302.44(a)(1)(2)</p>			1	

Category 1: Safe, Healthy Learning Environment

GNJK Criteria #	Level 3			Max. Pts.	My Pts.
1.3.4	<p>Families are provided health and safety workshops annually in topics that include: preventative health care, mental/behavioral issues, nutrition and obesity, medication administration policies and procedures, oral health practices, communicable disease prevention.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p><i>Flyers/Sign-In sheets from health and safety workshops; signed receipts for the Parent Handbook</i></p> <p>Note: Signed receipts for the parent handbook reviewed as a random sample per classroom</p> <p>1302.46(a)(b)(1)(i-v)</p>			2	
1.3.6	<p>A research-based developmental screening tool is used to identify children who may need additional evaluation and/or intervention strategies.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1</p> <p><i>Copy of developmental screening tool, completed screenings, and protocol/policy</i></p> <p>Note: Completed screenings reviewed as a random sample per classroom</p> <p>1302.33(a)(2)</p>			1	

Category 1: Safe, Healthy Learning Environment

GNJK Criteria #		Level 4		Max. Pts.	My Pts.
1.4.2		<p>The program has a system for daily age-appropriate oral health care for all children.</p> <p><i>Policy of age-appropriate oral health care for all children including documentation of parent consent</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">1</p> <p>Note: Documentation of parent consent reviewed as a random sample for each classroom</p> <p>1302.43</p>		1	
1.4.4		<p>Play areas are inspected annually to assure that play equipment is safe and accommodates abilities, needs and interest of each age group served.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1</p> <p><i>Outdoor Play Area Inspection Logs</i></p> <p>1302.47(b)(1-2) 1302.47(b)(2)(v)</p>		1	

Category 1: Safe, Healthy Learning Environment

GNJK Criteria #			Level 5	Max. Pts.	My Pts.
1.5.1			<p>With parental consent, vision, hearing, and dental screenings are completed and results are shared with families.</p> <p><i>Evidence that vision, hearing and dental screenings are offered and results are shared with families</i></p> <p>2</p> <p>Note: Reviewed as a random sample for each classroom</p> <p>1302.42(b)(1)(2) 1302.41(a) 1303.23 Parental Rights</p>	2	
				10	

Category 2: Curriculum and Learning Environment

GNJK Criteria #	Level 3			Max. Pts.	My Pts.
2.3.1	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Signed receipt showing teachers and teacher assistants received a copy of the NJ Birth- Three Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards</i></p> <p>Note: Reviewed as a random sample</p>	1		1	
2.3.2; 2.4.2	<p>Structured Classroom observation tools are used to focus on curricular areas such as literacy, math, science and diversity.</p> <p><i>Copy of policies for completed structured classroom observation/assessment tool(s) (e.g., ECERS-3; SELA; PCMI; PRISM; QBCC; ITERS-3; CLASS; TPOT; TPITOS)</i></p> <p>1302.31(a)(b)(c) 1302.32(a)(2) 1302.102(c)(2)(ii-iii)</p>	<p>Level 4</p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>Copy of policies for additional completed structured classroom observation/assessment tool(s) (e.g. ECERS-3; SELA; PCMI; PRISM; QBCC; ITERS-3; CLASS; TPOT; TPITOS)</i></p> <p>1302.31(b)(1)(ii-iii), (c),(d) 1302.102(c)(2)(iv)</p>	1	2	

Category 2: Curriculum and Learning Environment

GNJK Criteria #	Level 3			Max. Pts.	My Pts.
2.3.3	<p>A performance-based assessment aligned to the research-based curriculum is used to address all developmental domains.</p> <p><i>Evidence of performance-based assessment: sample portfolios, observation forms, completed rubrics</i></p> <p>1</p> <p>Note: Reviewed as a random sample</p>			1	
2.3.4	<p>Appropriate teaching and learning modifications and/or accommodations are made based on findings from performance-based assessments, and information gathered from observations is used to address children’s specific needs and strengths. Performance-based assessment must be aligned with the research-based curriculum chosen by the program.</p> <p><i>Evidence of how results from performance-based assessment are used to modify/accommodate children’s specific needs and abilities (one week of lesson plans from 50% of classrooms with descriptions of how PBA results are used in the submitted lesson plans)</i></p> <p>2</p> <p>1302.30 1302.33(b)(1-2) 1302.31(b)(1)(iii-iv) 1302.92(b)(5)</p>			2	

Category 5: Administration and Management

GNJK Criteria #	Level 3		Level 5	Max. Pts.	My Pts.
5.3.9; 5.5.4	<p>Based on the career lattice, there is a system to support staff career development.</p> <p><i>Documentation of individual professional development plans</i> 1</p> <p>Note: Individual Professional Development Plans reviewed as a random sample</p> <p>1302.92(b) 648A(a)(5) and (f)</p>		<p>Programs have Professional Learning Communities and incentive processes that reward educators that achieve the next steps on the career lattice.</p> <p><i>Minutes from Professional Learning Community within six months and documentation of incentive programs</i> 2</p>	3	
5.4.6		<p style="text-align: center;">Level 4</p> <p>The program has quarterly review conducted of the accounting records by an independent third party who has accounting or bookkeeping expertise.</p> <p><i>Quarterly accounting review report</i> 2</p> <p>45 CFR part 75 subpart f 45 CFR 303(c) 647</p>		2	
5.4.7		<p>An inside and outside audit is conducted annually by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).</p> <p><i>Signed contract with CPA and most recent audit</i> 1</p> <p>647(c)(1)(2) 45 CFR 303(c)</p>		1	

Category 5: Administration and Management

GNJK Criteria #			Level 5	Max. Pts.	My Pts.
5.5.3			Systematic opportunities are offered within the program for teachers to engage in reflective teaching practice through the use of peer groups, coaches, and/or mentors. <i>Documentation of ongoing reflective practice opportunities/Head Start Programs: Practice-Based Coaching document</i> 1302.92(c)(1-3)	2	
				25	