



Star Rating Readiness Checklist for Head Start Programs

Center-based, In-district DOE Programs, NAEYC-Accredited, and Family Child Care Programs should refer to the Readiness Checklist applicable to their program

Instructions: When your program is ready to begin the rating process, **complete "File for Rating" in the Grow NJ Kids dashboard of NJCCIS and email a copy of this completed checklist to GNJKRating@montclair.edu.** Please also upload this document to the NJCCIS File Cabinet using the GNJK Readiness Checklist document type. Standards and training documentation should also be added to the NJCCIS File Cabinet using the applicable GNJK category for the document type. Programs should also be aware the items marked as *reviewed as a random sample* may be reviewed virtually for consideration towards the final rating decision.

About the Star Rating Readiness Checklist: This checklist is designed to help centers/schools after they have completed all Grow NJ Kids requirements for 1- and 2-star ratings with their Quality Improvement Specialist (QIS), Technical Assistant Specialist (TAS) or Master Teacher (MT) and have decided to seek a 3-, 4- or 5-star rating. The information on this page and on the Classroom Information List must be fully completed and submitted with any additional applicable documents requested for their program. This checklist will serve as notification to Grow NJ Kids Rating of your readiness to begin the rating process.

Date: _____ Center/School Name: _____

Center/School Address: _____

Primary Contact Name: _____

Primary Contact #: _____ Primary Contact Email: _____

School Closing Phone # and/or Website: _____

TAS or MT Name: _____ ☐ Information may be shared with my TAS during the rating process, including the Rating Summary Report

TAS/MT Primary Contact #: _____ TAS/MT Email: _____

Please indicate which of the following apply: ☐ Head Start ☐ Receives Subsidy Curriculum used: _____

Applying for Star Rating of: ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Applying for 3-Year Renewal: ☐ Yes ☐ No Date last Star Rating received: _____

Initial Star Rating Received: ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ Extension

Parking available? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, please check the days of alternate side parking (if applicable): ☐ M ☐ T ☐ W ☐ Th ☐ F

Location of parking: _____

Instructional day start time: _____ Arrival time for children: _____ Building hours: _____

Number of children enrolled in program: _____ Age range of students: _____

Number of classrooms per age group: Preschool Programs: 3yr old: _____ 4yr old: _____ Mixed 3/4yr old: _____

Infant/Toddler Programs: Infant (under 11 months): _____ Toddler/Twos (12 months-35 months): _____

Licensing Certification Number: _____ NJCCIS Facility ID: _____

Two-Month Window: Grow NJ Kids Rating will conduct onsite observations of randomly-selected classrooms as part of the rating process for Head Start programs. Please provide a window of two months during which the observation(s) can occur. Please list any dates of exclusion within this time (e.g., holidays, inservice days, meetings, days of special events). Up to 10 dates of exclusion within your selected two-month window are permitted. Grow NJ Kids Rating will contact you with the date(s) on which the observation(s) will occur.

Note: Rating observations are not required for Head Start programs requesting a Star 3, or for Head Start programs requesting a Star 4 with preschool CLASS observation scores that meet threshold requirements. Rating observations are required for programs requesting a Star 4 that have Early Head Start classrooms and/or preschool classrooms that have not met CLASS threshold requirements.

Requested Two-Month Window: _____

10 Days of Exclusion: _____

Additional Items Required from Programs

Note: Head Start programs seeking Star Rating 3, or programs seeking Star Rating 4 with only preschool classrooms that have met CLASS thresholds, only need to submit Staff Hire Dates from the list below as no classroom observations are required.

Please upload the following items on NJCCIS, as applicable, with this checklist:

- ☐ Staff list including all administrators, head/group/lead teachers, and paraprofessionals/teacher assistants with each staff member's hire date, NJCCIS ID, and whether the staff member is full time or part time (14 hours or less)
- ☐ A list with the dates of birth of all children enrolled, using the format MM/DD/YY, for each Infant/Toddler classroom
- ☐ Classroom schedules for all classrooms

Head Start programs must submit:

- ☐ **Most recent Office of Head Start (OHS) Monitoring Reviews** (Head Start Focus Area One and Focus Area Two Reports; any follow-up reports with corrections to Areas of Noncompliance or Deficiencies; and any additional reviews by OHS)
- ☐ **Most recent CLASS observation report with scores that meet the thresholds outlined on page 29** (Head Start programs with preschool classrooms that are seeking a Star 4 only)

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. GNJK Standards aligned to Head Start Performance Standards and Acts are identified throughout this checklist. 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 *Areas of Noncompliance* 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**.

Submitting Documentation

A program may submit documentation from **any level or category** to ensure they have reached enough points for the requested star rating. Items marked as *reviewed as a random sample* on the checklist may be reviewed virtually for consideration towards the final rating decision. If additional documentation is required to ensure point requirements have been met, Grow NJ Kids Rating will notify you.

Classroom Information List

Please fill out the following information for each classroom in your program. **Indicate Head/Group/Lead Teacher with a (T).**




Classroom Name/Number	Names of instructional staff members	Age range of children	Primary language of instruction	Inclusion/ Self-contained	Number of children enrolled in class	Days of operation (If not open M-F) <small>Indicate here if Half-Day Session AM/PM</small>




[illegible][illegible]




Summary Sheet for 3-, 4-, & 5-Star Ratings




The summary sheet lists documentation by GNJK Criteria #. According to the Star Rating sought, please upload documents on the NJCCIS File Cabinet using the applicable GNJK category for the document type, check off the box, and include the file name inside each box. Items **which may be waived** for Head Start programs are noted accordingly.




Note: GNJK Standards which are aligned to any Head Start items identified on **OHS Monitoring Review reports** as *Areas of Noncompliance* or *Deficiencies* are **not waived**.




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
1.3.1	Outdoor Play Area Inspection Logs	1302.47(b)(2)(v) 1302.47 Safety practices. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed outdoor play area inspection logs for <i>each playground</i> from prior three months <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
1.3.2	Breastfeeding Policy and Documentation of Staff Orientation to the Breastfeeding Policy (I/T Programs Only)	1302.44(a)(2)(viii) 1302.44 Child nutrition. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the breastfeeding policy (<i>or as noted in Parent Handbook</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of documentation of staff orientation to the breastfeeding policy <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
1.3.3	Sample menus	1302.44 Child Nutrition 1302.44(a)(1)(2) 1302.44 Child nutrition. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample menus for three months for each infant/toddler and preschool classroom as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
1.3.4	Flyers/Sign-In sheets from health and safety workshops and signed receipts for parent handbook	1302.46(a)(b)(1)(i-v) 1302.46 Family support services for health, nutrition, and mental health. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Copies of flyers or sign-in sheets from health and safety workshops from within past year (about two to three different workshops) <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence parents received a Parent Handbook (reviewed as a random sample per classroom) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
1.3.6	Copy of developmental screening tool and protocol/policy	1302.33(a)(2) 1302.33 Child screenings and assessments. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of developmental screening tools and protocol/policy. <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of completed screening tools (reviewed as a random sample for each classroom) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
1.4.2	Oral health care policy and documentation of parent consent	1302.43 1302.43 Oral health practices. ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> Policy of age-appropriate oral health care for all children including signature documentation of parent consent (reviewed as a random sample for each classroom) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
1.4.3	50% of all teaching staff have a Pediatric First Aid & CPR Certificate	1302.47(b)(4)(i)(J) 1302.47 Safety practices. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.101(a)(1) 1302.101 Management system. ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications that 50% of Teaching staff in each classroom have current CPR & First Aid Training <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
1.4.4	Outdoor Play Area Inspection Logs	1302.47(b)(1-2) 1302.47(b)(2)(v) 1302.47 Safety practices. ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> Completed outdoor play inspection logs for each playground from prior six months <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
1.5.1	Parental consent, vision, hearing, and dental screenings are completed and results are shared with families	1302.42(b)(1)(2) 1302.42 Child health status and care. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.41(a) 1302.41 Collaboration and communication with parents. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1303.23 Parental Rights 1303.23 Parental rights. ECLKC (hhs.gov)			<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that vision, hearing and dental screenings are offered and results are shared with families (reviewed as a random sample for each classroom) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:
1.5.2	All adults identified as staff have a Pediatric First Aid & CPR Certificate.	1302.47(b)(4)(i)(J) 1302.47 Safety practices. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1303.72 Vehicle Operation 1303.72(d)(2)(I) 1303.72 Vehicle operation. ECLKC (hhs.gov)			<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications that 100% of Teaching staff in each classroom have current CPR & First Aid Training <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:
2.3.1	Teachers and teacher assistants have received a copy of the NJ Birth-Three Standards and NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards		<input type="checkbox"/> 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 (reviewed as a random sample) File Name:		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
2.3.2	Copy of policy for completed structured classroom observation/assessment tool(s) (e.g. ECERS; SELA; PCMI; PRISM; QBCC; ITERS-R; CLASS; TPOT; TPITOS)	1302.31(a)(b)(c) 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.32(a)(2) 1302.32 Curricula. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.102(c)(2)(ii-iii) 1302.102 Achieving program goals. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of policy for one structured classroom observation/assessment tool used <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
2.3.3	Evidence of performance-based assessment		<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of performance-based assessment: sample portfolios, observation forms, completed rubrics (reviewed as a random sample per classroom) File Name:		



GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
2.3.4	Evidence of how results from performance-based assessment are used to modify/accommodate children's specific needs and abilities	<p>1302.30 1302.30 Purpose. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.33(b)(1-2) 1302.33 Child screenings and assessments. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.31(b)(1)(iii-iv) 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.92(b)(5) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence and descriptions of how results from performance- based assessment are being used to modify or accommodate children's specific needs and abilities</p> <p>Submit one weeks' worth of lesson plans with descriptions from 50% of all classrooms.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived</p> <p>File Name:</p>		
2.3.5	Documentation that results from performance-based assessments are shared with families	<p>1302.34(b)(2)(6) 1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of results from performance-based assessment shared with families two times in a 10-month program (reviewed as a random sample per classroom)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived</p> <p>File Name:</p>		
2.4.2	Copy of policies for completed structured classroom observation/assessment tool(s) (e.g. ECERS; SELA; PCMI; PRISM; QBCC; ITES-R; CLASS; TPOT; TPITOS)	<p>1302.31(b)(1)(ii-iii), (c),(d) 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.102(c)(2)(iv) 1302.102 Achieving program goals. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Copies of each <i>additional</i> policy for structured classroom observation/assessment tool used (in addition to any provided for 2.3.2)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived</p> <p>File Name:</p>	




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
2.4.3	Evidence of data summaries from performance-based assessment with descriptions of how it is used to inform program practices/individual student growth	<p>1302.33(b)(1-2) 1302.33 Child screenings and assessments. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.31(b)(1)(iii) 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.102(c)(2)(iv) 1302.102 Achieving program goals. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Data summaries from performance- based assessment and a description of how it is being used in the program to inform program practices/ individual student growth (e.g., trainings planned, experiences/activities, materials ordered to support content learning in areas of need) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
2.4.4	Documentation of developmental screening and referral policy and completed referrals	<p>1302.33(i)(2)(i-ii) 1302.33 Child screenings and assessments. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.61(a) 1302.61 Additional services for children. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.53(a)(1), (2)(ii) 1302.53 Community partnerships and coordination with other early childhood and education programs. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of screening and referral policy <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of completed referrals, if applicable (reviewed as a random sample per classroom) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
2.4.5	Documentation of transition policy and transition folders	<p>1302.70(a) 1302.70 Transitions from Early Head Start. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.71(a)(f) 1302.71 Transitions from Head Start to kindergarten. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.61(2)(i-ii) 1302.61 Additional services for children. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of policy outlining the transition process, including who gets transition folders, with whom the folders are shared and a list of the documents in each folder</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Children's transition folders (reviewed as a random sample per classroom)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:</p>	
2.5.2	Aggregated classroom data summaries of comparative progress over 5-10 months from 50% of classrooms	<p>1302.33(b)(2) 1302.33 Child screenings and assessments. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.102(c)(2)(i-ii) 1302.102 Achieving program goals. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>			<p><input type="checkbox"/> Aggregated classroom data summaries of comparative results showing progress over 5- 10 months from performance- based assessment for 50% of classrooms</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:</p>
3.3.1	Strengthening Families Protective Factors surveys	<p>1302.52(a)(b)(c)(3) 1302.52 Family partnership services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>642(b)(7) Sec. 642 Powers and Functions of Head Start Agencies ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Collated summary sheet with number of families enrolled and number of surveys returned from families. Copy of any/each survey(s) completed in prior 12 months should be submitted. Completed surveys from at least 50% of enrolled students must be returned</p> <p><i>Head Start Programs use PFCE Framework in your Program: Markers of Progress</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:</p>		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
3.3.2	Parent/Family Group Meeting agendas and/or minutes	<p>1301.4(a)(b) 1301.4 Parent committees. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.50(b)(1) 1302.50 Family engagement. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Agenda and/or Sign-In Sheets from two meetings within one year (current school year; unless date of rating notification is early school year; agenda from last school year is acceptable)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:</p>		
3.3.3	Family Education workshop agendas; and sign-in sheets/minutes	<p>642(b)(6)(A-F) Sec. 642 Powers and Functions of Head Start Agencies ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.34(a)(b) 1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.52(a) 1302.52 Family partnership services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Family Education workshop agendas and Sign-In Sheets or minutes from two workshops within one year (current school year; unless date of rating notification is early school year; agenda from last school year is acceptable). Topics should include: early/adult literacy, positive parent interactions, cultural awareness, developmental issues, or any other topics identified as needs or interests of the families</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:</p>		




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3.3.4	Documentation that home visits are offered to all families once a year	1302.34(b)(2)(7) 1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Documentation that home visits are offered to all families (e.g., newsletter, letter home) once a year <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence home visits were completed (reviewed as a random sample) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
3.3.5	List of community organizations with parent representatives		<input type="checkbox"/> List of community organizations where parent representatives are involved/participate or evidence the program encourages families to participate in community organizations File Name:		
3.3.6	Documentation of Absenteeism Policy	1302.16(a)(1) 1302.16 Attendance. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of policy as noted in Parent Handbook <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
3.4.1	Documentation of Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework annually updated Quality Improvement Plan and self- assessment	1302.50(b)(3) 1302.50 Family engagement. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.52(c) 1302.52 Family partnership services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that SF Quality Improvement Plan is based on self- assessment and annually updated (in addition to completing 3.3.1) <i>Head Start Programs use PFCE Framework in your Program: Markers of Progress</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
3.4.2	Parent/Family Group Meeting agendas and/or minutes	<p>1301.4(a)(b)(1) 1301.4 Parent committees. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1301.3(a)(c)(2) 1301.3 Policy council and policy committee. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>Sec. 642 Powers and Functions of Head Start Agencies ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Agenda and/or Sign-In Sheets and/or Minutes from three meetings within one year (current school year; unless date of rating notification is early school year; agenda from last school year is acceptable)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived</p> <p>File Name:</p>	
3.4.3	Examples of communication strategies with families	<p>1302.34(b)(2) 1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.50(b)(1) 1302.50 Family engagement. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Samples of communication strategies (e.g. newsletters, letters, workshops, flyers from past six months) (three to four examples, which can be electronic, paper and/or in multiple languages)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived</p> <p>File Name:</p>	
3.4.4	Documentation that home visits are offered to all families twice a year	<p>1302.34(b)(2)(7) 1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.42(b)(2) 1302.42 Child health status and care. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation that home visits are offered to all families (e.g., newsletter, letter home) twice a year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence home visits were completed (reviewed as a random sample)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived</p> <p>File Name:</p>	




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
3.4.5	List of community organizations and parent involvement			<input type="checkbox"/> List of community organizations in which parents are involved and identify which organizations have at least one parent representative. Also submit meeting minutes or agendas from at least two meetings File Name:	
3.5.1	Evidence of program fully integrating Strengthening Families Protective Factors	1302.50(a)(b)(1-6) 1302.50 Family engagement. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.52(a) 1302.52 (a) Family partnership services. ECLKC (hhs.gov)			<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that SFPP principles and strategies are fully implemented into the program (in addition to completing 3.3.1 and 3.4.1) <i>Head Start Programs use PFCE Framework in your Program: Markers of Progress</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:
3.5.2	List of ethnic demographics of student population; Annual current calendar of culturally relevant dates and activities reflecting student demographics	1302.53(a)(1)(2)(i-viii) 1302.53 Community partnerships and coordination with other early childhood and education programs. ECLKC (hhs.gov)			<input type="checkbox"/> Calendar of current school year with activities noted and list of school demographics with represented ethnicities <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
4.3.1	Formal Training in Curriculum		<input type="checkbox"/> Program staff must have completed at least 10 hours of training <i>before</i> the program will receive credit for 4.3.1. Any curriculum training hours over 10, beyond those required for the star rating sought, can be considered for this standard. Teacher: 5h; Teacher Assistant: 3h; Director/Supervisor: 5h; Part-time staff: 1h File Name:		
4.3.2/ 4.3.7	Lead teachers have received professional development in selected performance-based assessment	648A(a)(5) Sec. 648A Staff Qualifications and Development ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.92(b)(4),(5) 1302.92(c)(5) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.91(5) 1302.91 Staff qualifications and competency requirements. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - Lead teachers have received professional development in the selected performance-based assessment (reviewed as a random sample) Teacher: 5h <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
4.3.3	Directors/supervisors have received training in evaluating and observing teachers both formally and informally (with walkthrough instruments)		<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - Directors/supervisors have received training in evaluating and observing teachers both formally and informally Director/Supervisor: 3h File Name:		
4.3.4	Description of the annual staff performance evaluation process including copy of evaluation, self-assessment, family surveys and Individual Professional Development Plans, as applicable	648A(5) of the Act Sec. 648A Staff Qualifications and Development ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Description of annual performance evaluation process including copy of evaluation, self-assessment, family surveys <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Professional Development Plans (reviewed as a random sample) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
4.3.5	Staff is trained to work with children with special diets, allergies and specialized feeding issues	1302.47(b)(4)(D) 1302.47(b)(7)(vi) 1302.47 Safety practices. ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - Staff is trained to work with children with special diets, allergies and specialized feeding issues (reviewed as a random sample) Teacher: 2h; Teacher Assistant: 1h; Part-time staff: 0.5h <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
4.3.6	All teachers have received training in the administration of the adopted developmental screening tool		<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - Lead teachers have received training in the administration of the adopted developmental screening (reviewed as a random sample) Teacher: 3h File Name:		
4.3.8	20% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses	1302.91(e)(1)(2)(i-ii) 1302.91 Staff qualifications and competency requirements. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 645A(h) Sec. 645A Early Head Start Programs ECLKC (hhs.gov) 648A(a)(3)(B) Sec. 648A Staff Qualifications and Development ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - 20% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
4.3.9	Supervisor of teaching staff has, at minimum, a CDA or equivalent nine credits in ECE in the age group that the program serves		<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - Supervisor of teaching staff has, at minimum, a CDA or equivalent nine credits in ECE in the age group that the program serves File Name:		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
4.4.1	All teaching staff have 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	1302.92(b) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 645A(a)(5) Sec. 645A Early Head Start Programs ECLKC (hhs.gov) Sec. 648A Staff Qualifications and Development ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications – Teaching staff have 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 (reviewed as a random sample) Teacher: 5h; Teacher Assistant: 3h; Part-time staff: 1h <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
4.4.2	35% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses	1302.91(e)(1)(2)(i-ii) 1302.91 Staff qualifications and competency requirements. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 648A(a)(3)(B) Sec. 648A Staff Qualifications and Development ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - 35% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
4.4.3	All teaching staff have professional development on Pyramid Model, Social and Emotional Development and Infant Early Childhood Mental Health			<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - Staff have professional development that includes the following topics: Pyramid Model, Social and Emotional Development, and Infant Early Childhood Mental Health (reviewed as a random sample) Teacher: 5h; Teacher Assistant: 3h; Part-time staff: 1h File Name:	
4.4.4	Professional development is offered to program staff that includes: special needs, supporting teacher-child interactions, supporting English language Learners (ELL), cultural competence, transitions, the Strengthening Families Protective Factors, social-emotional, and infant/toddler or early childhood mental health			<input type="checkbox"/> NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - Staff have professional development on special needs, supporting teacher-child interactions, supporting English language Learners (ELL), cultural competence, transitions, the Strengthening Families Protective Factors, social-emotional, and infant/toddler or early childhood mental health (reviewed as a random sample) Teacher: 60h over 3 years; Teacher Assistant: 30h over 3 years; Part-time staff: 3h over 3 years File Name:	




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
4.4.5	Copy of completed curriculum implementation/Fidelity instrument	1302.92(a)(b)(5) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.32(a)(2) 1302.32 Curricula. ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of completed curriculum implementation/fidelity checklist/instrument used from 50% of <i>Preschool and Infant/Toddler</i> classrooms (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
4.4.6	Copy of staff meeting schedule and at least three agendas			<input type="checkbox"/> Schedule/Staff Meeting Agendas (at least three) File Name:	
4.4.7	Evidence of aggregated classroom/program/child level data reports and program improvement plan	1302.92(b)(5) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.102(c)(2)(iv) 1302.102 Achieving program goals. ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence demonstrating aggregated data used two times in a 10- month program from 50% of classrooms <input type="checkbox"/> Program Improvement Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
4.4.8	Non-instructional staff receive information on: Developmentally appropriate practices, diversity, an overview of age-appropriate standards and appropriate adult child interactions			<input type="checkbox"/> Signed receipts showing non-instructional staff have received documentation of school practices (reviewed as a random sample) File Name:	



GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
4.5.1	Agency Training Plans	1302.92(b)(5) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 1302.31(a) and (b)(1) and (e) 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment. ECLKC (hhs.gov)			<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of agency training plans (can include plans for workshops, conferences and trainings) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:
4.5.2	Pyramid Model Implementation Site: new enrollment paperwork (centers enrolled within the last year prior to rating submission) or checklist (centers enrolled over a year prior to rating submission)				<input type="checkbox"/> Pyramid Model Implementation Site new enrollment paperwork, or checklist indicating program is moving towards full implementation File Name:
4.5.3	50% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses	1302.91(e)(1)(2)(i-ii) 1302.91 Staff qualifications and competency requirements. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 648A(a)(3)(B) Sec. 648A Staff Qualifications and Development ECLKC (hhs.gov)			NJCCIS Professional Development & Certifications - 50% of teaching staff have a minimum of a CDA or equivalent, or higher degrees, credentials or licenses <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
5.3.1	Self-Assessed PAS score sheet	<p>1303.10 1303.10 Purpose. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>45 CFR 75.303(a),(b),(e) eCFR: 45 CFR 75.303 – Internal controls</p> <p>642(c)(1)(E)(ii) Sec. 642 Powers and Functions of Head Start Agencies ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Score sheet: Required minimum score of 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
5.3.2	Written definition of roles and responsibilities of the governing body (if non-profit/public)	<p>1301.2 1301.2 Governing body. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>642(c)(1)(E)(ii) Sec. 642 Powers and Functions of Head Start Agencies ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the written definition of roles and responsibilities of the governing body <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
5.3.3	Written policy/manual that includes financial operating procedures	<p>45 CFR 75.303(a),(b),(e) eCFR: 45 CFR 75.303 -- Internal controls</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of written description of financial operations/procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
5.3.4	Marketing Plan addressing increasing enrollment	<p>1302.12(c-e) and (k-m) Determining, verifying, and documenting eligibility 1302.12 Determining, verifying, and documenting eligibility. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.13 1302.13 Recruitment of children. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.14 1302.14 Selection process. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.15(a) Enrollment 1302.15 Enrollment. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Marketing Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
5.3.5	Current operating budget including statement of income and expenditures	<p>1302.101(a)(3),(4) 1302.101 Management system. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>642(c)(1)(E)(iv)(VII)(aa) Sec. 642 Powers and Functions of Head Start Agencies ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of current year's operating budget including statement of income and expenditures <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
5.3.6	Evidence of parent/staff feedback used to evaluate program	<p>1302.102(b)(2)(i-iii) 1302.102 Achieving program goals. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of parent/staff feedback used to evaluate program (e.g., surveys or other written communications) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		




GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
5.3.7	Evidence of internal communication strategies with staff		<input type="checkbox"/> Samples from at least three types of strategies currently utilized within past three years of notification of rating (e.g., regularly scheduled staff meetings, written procedures of policies, handbook, staff bulletin board, in-house newsletters, memos, verbal communication, e-mail) File Name:		
5.3.8	Benefit policy describing at least one benefit employees receive (Employee Handbook)	653(a) Sec. 653 Comparability of Wages ECLKC (hhs.gov)	<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of at least one benefit offered <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
5.3.9	Based on the career lattice, there is a system to support staff career development	1302.92(b) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov) 648A(a)(5) and (f) Head Start Act - Sec. 648A Staff Qualifications and Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Professional Development Plans showing a system for career development (reviewed as a random sample) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:		
5.4.1	Self-Assessed PAS score sheet	1303.10 1303.10 Purpose. ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> Score sheet: Required minimum score of 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
5.4.2	Advisory council meeting minutes/sign-in sheets	<p>1301.2(c)(1) 1301.2 Governing body. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>642(c)(1)(B) 642(c)(1)(D)(i) Sec. 642 Powers and Functions of Head Start Agencies ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.40(b) 1302.40 Purpose. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Minutes or Sign-In Sheets from meeting from current school year (if early in school year, acceptable to submit from last school year) <i>As reflected on Head Start Monitoring Protocol: Program Management and Quality Improvement - Program Governance (PM3)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
5.4.3	Business/Strategic Plan	<p>1302.11(b) and (2) 1302.11 Determining community strengths, needs, and resources. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>1302.101(a)(3) 1302.101 Management system. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Written description of Business/Strategic Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
5.4.4	Written description of system for tracking teacher turnover with evidence	<p>1302.101(a) 1302.101 Management system. ECLKC (hhs.gov)</p> <p>45 CFR part 75.430(i) eCFR: 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E -- Cost Principles</p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Written description of system with evidence (e.g., an Excel graph indicating percentage of teacher turnover each year and their reason for separation) – at least three years of turnover tracked <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
5.4.5	Annual report for previous year with financial system information	644(a)(2) Sec. 644 Administrative Requirements and Standards ECLKC (hhs.gov) 45 CFR 75.303(a),(b) eCFR :: 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D -- Post Federal Award Requirements		<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of annual report for previous year <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
5.4.6	Quarterly accounting review report from independent third party	45 CFR part 75 subpart f eCFR :: 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart F - Audits 45 CFR 303(c) eCFR :: 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D -- Post Federal Award Requirements 647 Sec. 647 Records And Audits ECLKC (hhs.gov)		<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of quarterly accounting review report from independent third party <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
5.4.7	Signed contract with CPA and most recent audit	647(c)(1)(2) Sec. 647 Records And Audits ECLKC (hhs.gov) 45 CFR 303(c) eCFR :: 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D -- Post Federal Award Requirements		<input type="checkbox"/> Signed contract with a CPA and most recent audit <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:	
5.5.1	Self-Assessed PAS score sheet	1303.10 1303.10 Purpose. ECLKC (hhs.gov)			<input type="checkbox"/> Score sheet: Required minimum score of 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:

GNJK Criteria #	Evidence/ Documentation Required	Head Start Program Performance Standard & Head Start Act Alignment			
5.5.2	Benefit policy describing at least two benefits employees receive (Employee Handbook)				<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of at least two benefits offered <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:
5.5.3	Documentation of ongoing reflective practice opportunities within the program	1302.92(c)(1-3) 1302.92 Training and professional development. ECLKC (hhs.gov)			<input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of ongoing reflective practice opportunities or evidence of coaching/ mentoring using the reflective cycle from minimum of four staff files or 25% of staff files (whichever is greater) <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start Waived File Name:
5.5.4	Evidence of Professional Learning Community and incentive programs				<input type="checkbox"/> Minutes from Professional Learning Community within six months <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of incentive program. If staff is formally recognized at a staff meeting, meeting minutes could be used as documentation File Name:

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><u>Preschool classroom observations</u> are not required for Head Start programs seeking Star 4 with <i>CLASS</i> observation average scores that meet the following thresholds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional Support: 5.50 Classroom Organization: 5.50 Instructional Support: 2.65 <p>Head Start preschool classrooms that do not meet the thresholds above, and all Infant/Toddler classrooms require ERS observations</p> <p>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
	<p>Average of 5.0 No subscale below a 4.25</p>	Staff have attended minimum of 20 hours of training on selected research-based curriculum	86-100



Observation Agreement

Independent Raters will arrive a few minutes before the scheduled observation to ask questions pertaining to non-observable items on the Environment Rating Scale such as the total number of children enrolled, if there are any children with identified disabilities, etc.

The Independent Raters entering the classroom(s) are there solely to observe, and will do their best to stay out of the way and not be disruptive to your program. Because the Raters are there to observe as much as possible during the three-hour observation, please keep interactions with Raters during this window to a minimum.

All adults in the state of NJ are mandated reporters. Whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect by a provider/center staff member or any other person, our Raters must verbally notify the NJ Department of Children and Families State Central Registry. If there is any imminent danger(s) or hazard(s) that threaten the health and safety of children in a provider's home or childcare center, the Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing will be notified.

Signature of Center/School Primary Contact

Date

Star Rating Readiness Certification

I certify that my program has completed all Level 1 and Level 2 GNJK Standards and that my program's child care license is in good standing. I have also worked with my Technical Assistance Specialist to successfully prepare my center/school for the rating process as required for the star rating I am seeking. On this Star Rating Readiness Checklist, I have noted all documentation that has been submitted electronically to be reviewed and considered towards the final rating decision. I also understand that items marked as *reviewed as a random sample* may be reviewed virtually for consideration towards the final rating decision.

Signature of Center/School Primary Contact

Date

Signature of Technical Assistance Specialist

Date