

PRE-K FOR ALL CALENDAR/ HOURS

Pre-K for All offers free, full-day, high-quality pre-K, the equivalent of 6 hours and 20 minutes of daily instruction each week. Programs have flexibility when developing their annual calendar and daily hours within the operational parameters set forth by the DECE.

What You Need to Know

PRE-K FOR ALL DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Your program's calendar and hours of operation must meet the Pre-K for All operational requirements listed below, unless otherwise approved in writing by your DECE Field Office.

Days Per Year

- You must provide **at least 180 days** of Pre-K for All services, including **at least 176 days** of instruction and **4 days** of professional development for teachers.
 - You may choose to offer Pre-K for All instruction on professional development days with substitute teachers.
- The DECE strongly advises tentatively scheduling make-up days in case you must close due to inclement weather. See FAQ #3 for more information and procedural guidance on the decision to close your program during inclement weather.

Days Per Week

- You must operate **5 days** (Monday to Friday) in a typical week.
 - You may choose to schedule program hours on a Saturday or Sunday to account for days when your Pre-K for All program is closed due to a holiday.
- You may request approval from your DECE Field Office to operate for 6 days per week in a typical week (Monday through Friday and either Saturday or Sunday). See *"Flexible Schedule"* below for additional details.

Hours Per Day

- You must provide **a minimum of 6 hours and 20 minutes** and **a maximum of 7 hours** of Pre-K for All services each day.
- You may request approval from your DECE Field Office to operate for less than 6 hours and 20 minutes per day. See *"Flexible Schedule"* below for additional details.

Prior to the start of the school year, you must get approval of your Pre-K for All program's proposed calendar and hours of operation by submitting your proposal to your DECE Field Office via Pre-KIDS. All pre-K sites serving students funded through EarlyLearn NYC must also receive approval of their proposed calendar and hours of operation as instructed by ACS.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

To ensure Pre-K for All reaches all communities and reflects the incredible diversity of our city, you are provided with more flexibility in scheduling program hours beginning in the 2015-2016 school -year.

In the coming school year, you can:

- Schedule a short break in the middle of the day for non-Pre-K for All activities.
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- Time spent on non- Pre-K for All activities during a short break cannot count toward the minimum hours of required Pre-K for All instruction.
- For additional information on implementing a short break, please see the Short Break Section Below.
- Provide less than 6 hours and 20 minutes per day of Pre-K for All Instruction on a given day (Monday to Friday).
 - However, you must continue to satisfy the minimum weekly hour requirement of 31 hours and 40 minutes of Pre-K for All instruction.
- Schedule Pre-K for All programming for 6 days per week (Monday to Friday and either Saturday or Sunday).
 - If you operate for 6 days in a typical week, you must operate for a minimum of 216 days per year.
- Schedule Pre-K for All programming on legal holidays.

Approval from DECE Field Office

If you plan to implement a flexible schedule, you must:

- Request approval from your DECE Field Office to implement a Flexible Schedule. You should complete and submit an online Scheduling Policy Request Form by **the DECE specified date**. You will receive an e-mail with the link to the online Request Form.
- Provide families with a copy of your proposed calendar and hours of operation at pre-registration.

**Note – If your site includes classrooms funded directly by the NYCDOE and classrooms funded through EarlyLearn NYC, you must also request permission from your ACS Operations Manager if you plan to implement a flexible schedule in the classroom(s) funded through EarlyLearn NYC.*

SHORT BREAK (ONLY APPLICABLE TO PROVIDERS IMPLEMENTING A SHORT BREAK)

Beginning in the 2015-2016 school- year, you can request approval from your designated DECE Field Office to schedule a short break in the middle of the day for non-Pre-K for All activities.

- The short break will not count toward the minimum operating hour requirement and will not be supported with government funds.
- To ensure that all students, including students participating in the short break, receive the required 31 hours and 40 minutes of weekly instruction, you must:
 - Extend the length of the school day beyond 6 hours and 20 minutes (up to 7 hours), or
 - Provide program hours on a Saturday or Sunday to ensure that you have met the weekly minimum of 31 hours and 40 minutes in a typical week.

Approval from DECE Field Office

If you plan to implement a short break in the middle of the day for non-Pre-K for All activities, you must:

- Submit an online Scheduling Policy Request Form by **the DECE specified date**. On the request form, you will be asked to provide the following information:
 - Your proposed daily and weekly schedule.
 - The position titles of the staff who will be supervising the short break.
 - The proposed location of the short break.

- A description of the short break activity that will be provided.

**Note – If your site includes classrooms funded directly by the NYCDOE and classrooms funded through EarlyLearn NYC, you must also request permission from your ACS Operations Manager if you plan to implement a short break in the classroom(s) funded through EarlyLearn NYC.*

Parent/Legal Guardian Consent

- No student can participate in the short break **unless** their parent or legal guardian provides written consent.
- You must request written consent from parents or legal guardians at Pre-Registration (or upon enrollment if the student enrolls mid-year).
 - Consent must be provided on the Parent/Guardian Consent Form issued by the DECE.
 - The consent form is also posted on the Resources section of the Vendor Portal in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Urdu.
 - You must maintain documentation on file of written consent from every parent or legal guardian.

* You must neither encourage nor discourage participation in the short break.

Length of Short Break

- The short break must last for **no more than 20 minutes**.
 - This includes transition time into and out of the break.
 - If you would like to implement a break of more than 20 minutes, you must indicate this request on your Scheduling Policy Request Form.

Supervision of Short Break

- If one or more students enrolled in your Pre-K for All program opt not to participate in the short break, you must:
 - Designate staff other than the provider's Pre-K for All lead teacher and teaching assistants to oversee the short break. The Pre-K for All lead teacher and teaching assistants must continue to provide instructional activities to students who participate exclusively in city funded Pre-K for All.
- If **ALL** students enrolled in your Pre-K for All program participate in the short break, you are strongly encouraged to:
 - Designate staff other than the Pre-K for All lead teacher and teaching assistants to oversee the short break.

Location of Short Break

- If one or more students enrolled in the Pre-K for All program opt not to participate in the short break, you must:
 - Use a space separate from the classroom for the short break. The Pre-K for All classroom must be utilized only by those students who participate exclusively in city funded Pre-K for All.
- If all students enrolled in the Pre-K for All program participate in the short break, you are strongly encouraged to:
 - Use a space separate from the classroom for the short break.

TRANSITIONING STUDENTS TO AND FROM PRE-K FOR ALL ACTIVITIES AND THE SHORT BREAK

- You must ensure that your staff handles transitions between Pre-K for All activities and short break activities in a developmentally appropriate way. Suggestions include:
 - Reviewing norms and routines prior to each transition.
 - Using instructional supports such as visual schedules, songs, or other strategies to actively involve children.
 - Planning transition activities into and out of the break that also support children in adapting to change in all settings.
 - Scheduling transitions so that only a few children transition at a time.
 - Ensuring wait times during the transition are less than 1-2 minutes.

Please contact your Field Office for further guidance on transitions.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Which Pre-K for All days are considered a legal holiday?

The following holidays are designated by the federal government as a legal holiday:

1. Labor Day
2. Columbus Day
3. Veterans Day
4. Thanksgiving Day
5. Christmas Day
6. New Year's Day
7. Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
8. Washington's Birthday
9. Memorial Day

2. Can I close my Pre-K for All program on religious holidays or other dates when the NYC District Schools remain open?

You may choose to close your Pre-K for All program for religious holidays or other events. In determining whether to close, you should take into consideration the cultural and religious backgrounds of the families you serve.

Prior to the start of the school year, you must provide families with an annual calendar that clearly indicates what days you will be open and closed. If you chose to close your program on a day on which the NYC District Schools remain open, you should remind families at least one week in advance about the closure.

3. Can I close due to inclement weather or other events beyond my control? What should I consider if making the decision to close, and what is the process?

Yes, you may close due to inclement weather or other events beyond your control, and the safety of your students, families, and staff should be your highest concern in determining whether to close.

It is strongly recommended that on days when the NYC district schools close, you also close your Pre-K for All program.

You must have a policy in place for informing families and staff when your Pre-K for All program is unexpectedly forced to close. You should ensure that the method of communication is effective for all enrolled families and the time of the communication provides adequate notice for staff and families.

If the unexpected closure brings the total number of scheduled days to less than 180 (based on a 5 day week) or 216 days (based on a 6 day week), you are expected to schedule a make-up day and revise your calendar in Pre-KIDS to reflect the change. It is recommended that you tentatively schedule make-up days in case of inclement weather closures during the academic year.

All pre-K sites serving students funded through EarlyLearn NYC must also notify ACS of unplanned and weather emergencies. During times of inclement weather and City emergencies, ACS EarlyLearn center-based programs should close in accordance with the Mayor's Office declaring a "City Emergency" or the closure of all public schools. In the case of a Citywide Emergency, no follow-up documentation or reporting of the closure to ACS is required.