

NYC Department of Education

# Pre-K Program Assessments

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and  
Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale –  
Revised (ECERS-R) Release

## The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale– Revised (ECERS-R) are nationally recognized tools for measuring quality connected with student outcomes and are related to the Pre-K Program Quality Standards

- Both CLASS and ECERS-R are observation-based instruments that are valid and reliable at levels that are above what is considered acceptable for assessment tools.
- Both CLASS and ECERS-R are used nationally and internationally in quality assessment and improvement efforts, to monitor programs, evaluate programs to reward those with higher quality, evaluate the quality of programs to inform families, and to guide practitioners towards creating higher quality programs for the children they serve.
- Both tools measure what children directly experience in their programs that has an impact on their learning and development.

## Classroom Assessment Scoring System

- The DOE has been administering CLASS since 2012-13 in NYCEECs.
- CLASS assessments are conducted by Pre-K Program Evaluators, who undergo a standardized training, and must pass an extensive yearly certification test that is required by the purveyor of the tool, Teachstone, in order to conduct observations.
- Evaluators conduct observations in every classroom in cycles of 20 minutes. During this time, assessors note the observed interactions between children and teachers across three Domains:

CLASS Domains		
Emotional Support	Classroom Organization	Instructional Support
Are teacher interactions with children emotionally supportive and promote a positive classroom climate? This includes assessing teacher sensitivity and responsiveness to children and teacher regard for student perspectives.	Is children’s behavior effectively managed in a consistent way? This includes the stability of schedules and routines and the quality of guidance.	Do teachers promote children’s cognitive and language development by supporting children’s analytical and conversational skills and providing feedback?
Examples of what the observer looks for:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smiling, laughter, enthusiasm</li> <li>• Verbal and physical affection</li> <li>• Social conversation</li> <li>• Support for autonomy and leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear behavior expectations</li> <li>• Monitoring room</li> <li>• Efficient redirection or misbehavior</li> <li>• Little to no aggression and defiance in students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent conversation</li> <li>• Teacher involvements and effective questioning</li> <li>• Hands-on opportunities</li> <li>• Open-ended questions and back-and-forth exchanges</li> </ul>

## NYC results are comparable to that of other high performing pre-K programs

- Research shows that CLASS scores above a 5.0 in Emotional Support and Classroom Organization and above a 3.3 in Instructional Support are correlated with improved student outcomes.\*
- Many model pre-K programs across the country use CLASS to assess sites, like the National Head Start Program and Boston's pre-K program. The DOE's results are comparable to the National Head Start average and Boston's results at a similar point in implementation:

CLASS Domains	DOE Average Score	National Head Start Average for 2014	Boston Average in 2009-10
Emotional Support	6.0	6.1	5.6
Classroom Organization	5.8	5.8	5.1
Instructional Support	3.6	2.9	4.3

## Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale - Revised

- The DOE has been administering ECERS-R since 2010-11 in NYCEEC's and DOE District schools
- ECERS-R assessments are conducted by Pre-K Program Evaluators, who undergo a standardized training, and must pass a rigorous certification test by the tools' authors each year in order to use each of the tools.
- These ECERS-R reliable assessors conduct observations in one classroom chosen randomly at the start of the assessment. The observation lasts for 3.5 hours while the assessor observes across the following six quality indicators:

Space & Furnishings	Personal Care Routines	Language-Reasoning	Activities	Interaction	Program Structure
<i>Factors related to the physical indoor and outdoor spaces</i>	<i>Practices and provisions to meet health and safety, nap, and toileting needs</i>	<i>Materials and practices that support language development</i>	<i>Kinds of materials and amount of time that children have to access them (play)</i>	<i>Practices regarding formal and informal interactions and supervision</i>	<i>Factors related to the daily schedule, and provisions for students with disabilities</i>

### Examples of what the observer looks for:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Space is clean and well maintained</li> <li>•Sufficient and child-sized furniture</li> <li>•The room is arranged for play and good visual supervision</li> <li>•Displayed work is done by children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Meals/snacks are well-balanced</li> <li>•Appropriate nap provisions and time</li> <li>•Hand-washing procedures</li> <li>•No safety hazards</li> <li>•Children taught to manage health practices independently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Wide selection of books are available and read informally</li> <li>•Children encouraged to explain their reasoning when solving problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Many and varied materials are available (e.g., art, music, blocks, sand/water, dramatic play)</li> <li>•Use of computers is limited</li> <li>•Time children can play with materials is 1/3 of program time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Children are appropriately supervised throughout the day</li> <li>•Non-punitive disciplinary strategies</li> <li>•Many opportunities for children to talk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Outdoor play occurs daily</li> <li>•Waiting between daily events is brief</li> <li>•Whole-group gatherings are limited</li> <li>•Parents and classroom staff are involved in setting IEP goals</li> </ul>
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## NYC scores on ECERS-R are similar to the baseline scores of other large successful expansions of universal pre-K

- Research shows that ECERS-R scores above a 3.4 are correlated with improved student outcomes. 77% of programs assessed between 2012-13 and 2014-15 scored at or above 3.4.\*
- While there is no public national score for ECERS-R, the DOE's scores are similar to that of New Jersey's Abbott School District pre-K at a similar stage of implementation.

ECERS-R Score*	DOE Average Score	Abbott Average in 2002-03	Abbott Average in 2007-08	Abbott Average in 2014-15
Overall ECERS-R Score	3.9	4.0	5.2	5.4
Space and Furnishings	3.8	3.8	5.0	5.2
Personal Care Routines	2.6	3.7	4.3	4.4
Language - Reasoning	4.6	4.3	5.5	5.1
Activities	4.3	3.4	4.9	5.1
Interaction	4.7	4.9	6.4	6.3
Program Structure	3.5	4.0	5.4	6.1

## The DOE uses CLASS and ECERS-R as one of many data points to consider when differentiating support and holding programs accountable

- Analysis of the City's CLASS and ECERS-R results, along with other data, help DECE prioritize the supports that are currently provided to pre-K programs and determine what additional supports will be needed in the future.
- Differentiated supports and resources for sites are aligned to the Pre-k for All Program Quality Standards and include:
  - In-person professional learning sessions for leaders (3 days) and teachers (4 days) across four instructional tracks and lanes
  - On-site support visits provided by 100 Instructional Coordinators and 125 Social Workers
  - Interdisciplinary Instructional Units grounded in the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core available online
  - Family Engagement supports, including resources on social-emotional development, extending learning into the home, and successful transitions into and out of pre-K