

Universal Prekindergarten Nap/Rest Policy

The NYC DOE Office of Early Childhood Education (OECE) recommends that all programs serving pre-k age students provide a regularly scheduled nap or rest time for students who will attend the program for more than four hours per day. During this time, students are encouraged to rest, relax, and nap. Quiet activities should be provided for students who do not nap.¹

OECE funds both half day (2 hours, 30 minutes) and full day (6 hours, 20 minutes) Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) programs in both public schools and community based organizations. Students enrolled in half-day UPK should not nap during UPK hours. Students enrolled in full-day UPK can nap during UPK hours.

OECE has developed guidelines for programs who will be offering a nap time during full day UPK program hours. Note: This policy only applies to public schools and DOE-contracted community based organizations. It does **not** apply to *EarlyLearnNYC* programs; these programs should follow the guidance provided by the NYC Administration for Children's Services. For additional resources on rest time, programs are encouraged to consult All About the ECERS-R by Cryer, Harms, and Riley.

Length

The length of naptime may vary depending on the changing needs of students over the course of the school year and the amount of time they spend in the program each day. If most students do not nap and are not tired during the program day, a shorter rest period may be appropriate. However, if most students are not ready to wake up at the end of naptime, this period may need to be extended.

Equipment and Furnishings

UPK students spend most of their time in the program engaged in cooperative play, discussion, and other highly stimulating activities. During the rest period, it's important that children are offered the resources they need in order to relax comfortably. To this end, OECE is adopting guidelines about equipment that shall be used in programs that offer naps. This guideline aligns to Article 47 of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene health code, as well as the recommendations found in All About the ECERS-R.

- A separate firm sanitary cot or mat shall be provided for each student who spends more than four hours a day in the program.
- Each student shall be provided with a clean sheet and blanket for his or her exclusive use.
- Each student's sheets and blankets shall be stored separately to minimize spread of illness.
- Sheets and blankets are washed (either at home or at school) at least weekly.

Ratios

UPK student-staff ratios must be adhered to at all times. During nap time only, family engagement staff members may count toward fulfilling required ratios. For a class of 18 students or less, two instructional or family engagement staff members must supervise students during naptime; for a class of 19 or 20 students, three instructional or family engagement staff members must supervise students during naptime. Instructional or family engagement staff members present during naptime are expected to actively supervise students at all times.

Staff Qualifications

At least one staff member with a teaching license from the New York State Education Department for the early childhood grades shall be on-site and on-duty throughout the entire nap time. The UPK teacher and paraprofessional are not required to be in the classroom during naptime as long as the staff:student ratios are maintained and a licensed staff member is on-site and on-duty.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Office of Early Childhood Education at earlychildhood@schools.nyc.gov or 212-374-0351.

¹ Cryer, Debby, Thelma Harms, and Cathy Riley. All About the ECERS-R. Chapel Hill: Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, 2003.