

**TO:** Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Program (PKEEP) community-based organizations (CBOs)

**FROM:** Hannah Matthews  
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**RE:** Implementation of PKEEP pay parity high quality standard

**DATE:** Sept. 24, 2025

## Background

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is issuing this guidance to clarify and support the implementation of the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Program (PKEEP) high quality standard that requires teachers and assistant teachers in high quality pre-K programs to be paid wages equivalent to District of Columbia Public School (DCPS) pre-K teachers or assistant teachers, respectively based on years of experience (5A DCMR § 3501.1(f)).

## Salary Guidance

To comply with the PKEEP pay parity high quality standard, community-based organizations (CBOs) must pay PKEEP teachers and assistant teachers wages or salaries that meet or exceed the following:

- PKEEP lead teachers with a bachelor's degree must be paid at or above \$66,580 ([Step 1 of the Fiscal Year 2026 ET 15 Salary Schedule - 10 Month salary schedule.](#))
- PKEEP assistant teachers with an associate degree must be paid at or above \$18.32/hour ([Step 1 of the Fiscal Year 2024 Educational Aides and Clerical salary schedule.](#))

Additionally, CBOs must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The minimum salary requirement applies to wages paid to PKEEP teachers and assistant teachers and does not include the cost of any benefits.
- Minimum salary requirements for PKEEP teachers are intended to cover the hours/days of PKEEP operation. PKEEP teachers who work additional hours, outside of PKEEP, such as providing before or after care or working during the summer months, should receive additional compensation beyond their base PKEEP annual salary.
  - Pursuant to 5A DCMR § 3500.3(g), PKEEP classrooms operate Monday through Friday for a minimum of 6.5 hours, at least 39 weeks a year, for a total of at least 180 days; and follow the holiday and closing calendar schedule of DCPS.

## Monitoring

OSSE will monitor the following documentation for compliance with PKEEP pay parity requirements for all PKEEP teachers and assistant teachers for the 2025-26 school year. Offer letters or contracts (as applicable) for each PKEEP teacher and assistant teacher.

- Offer letters or contracts should be uploaded in the applicable staff record(s) in the Division of Early Learning Licensing Tool (DELLT).

- In DELLT, scroll down to the Attachments section and click “Browse” next to “Staff Qualification Checklist with Supporting Documents.”
- Upload the offer letter or contract as a PDF. File names should be clear and indicate their content (e.g., “John\_Doe\_Offer\_Letter.pdf”).
- Ensure the offer letters or contracts include clear and understandable annual salaries or hourly wages and are signed and dated by both the employee and CBO representative.
- Payroll documentation submitted as part of CBOs’ monthly reimbursement requests in the Enterprise Grant Management System (EGMS).
  - Payroll documentation should include clear and understandable annual salaries or hourly wages for each eligible staff member for the monitored quarter.
  - CBOs may provide an explanation of payroll documentation by submitting a Word document or PDF with information that provides additional background or context.

### **Communications and Finding of Non-Compliance**

Prior to application approval in EGMS, CBOs must upload the signed and dated offer letters or contracts in the designated area. CBOs who have not met the pay parity requirements as set forth in 5A DCMR § 3501.1(d) will be notified of non-compliance and provided further guidance or required corrective action.