DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF
EDUCATION

Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion High-Quality Designation
Pre-Application Meeting
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
June 30, 2017

Overview:

On June 30, 2017, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) Division of Early Learning (DEL) held the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion High-Quality Designation pre-application meeting for community-based organizations (CBOs) expressing interest in applying for high-quality designation funding in accordance with the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Amendment Act of 2008 (Pre-K Act). (D.C. Code § 38-271.01 et seq as regulated by Chapter 5-A35 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations).

This FAQ document was developed in response to the questions raised by CBOs during the meeting.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Mahlet Getachew, Education Research Analyst, at Mahlet.Getachew@dc.gov.

General Application:

1. **If my pre-K program is required to participate in the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP), how do I get access to the application and other information online?**

   OSSE's Division of Health and Wellness is developing an automated online application for CACFP. To learn more about how to access the CACFP application, please contact Suzanne Henley, Program Manager at Suzanne.Henley@dc.gov. You can also find additional information on CACFP on OSSE's website at https://osse.dc.gov/service/child-and-adult-care-food-program-cacfp.

2. **What pay scale is used to determine the wages for pre-K teachers under the high-quality designation requirements on teacher credentials?**

   According to the pre-K regulation, teachers and assistant teachers who have earned the required credentials shall be paid wages equivalent to District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) pre-K teachers or assistant teachers, respectively, based on years of experience. Wages for pre-K teachers and assistant teachers are determined using the DCPS pay scale.

   The pay scale for DCPS teachers can be found on DCPS's website at https://dcps.dc.gov/node/989382.

   The pay scale for assistant teachers can be found on DCPS's website at https://dcps.dc.gov/node/1056492.

3. **What are the minimum education requirements for pre-K teachers?**

   The minimum education requirements for lead teachers and assistant teachers as specified by 5A DCMR Chapter 35 are as follows:

   Lead teachers:

   a) Hold at least a bachelor's degree in child development, early childhood education, early childhood special education, or child and family studies; except that a person may have an associate's degree in child development, early childhood education, or child and family studies provided that the person is enrolled, at the time of employment by the CBO, in a bachelor's degree program and on track to receive it by December 2017; or

   b) Hold a bachelor's degree in a field other than child development, early childhood education, early childhood special education, or child and family studies and have earned 18 credits in early childhood education; or

   c) Hold a bachelor's degree in a field other than a child development, early childhood education, early childhood special education, or child and family studies and successful completion of applicable Early Childhood Praxis Exams.

   Assistant teachers:

   a) Hold at a minimum a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and be enrolled, at the time of employment by the CBO, in an early childhood associate's degree program and on track to receive the degree by December 2017; or

   b) Hold an associate's degree in a field other than child development, early childhood education, early childhood special education, or child and family studies and have earned nine credits in early childhood education.

4. **After high-quality designation programs receive approval by OSSE, can providers start promoting these services to the community?**

   Yes, once you receive approval from OSSE, you may begin promoting services.

5. **Is there a limit on the number of children that can be enrolled in the program?**

   No, programs may apply with enrollment projections that are realistic and based on data that an applicant has available. Applications are approved based on funding availability.

6. **What are examples of technical assistance?**

   Examples of technical assistance are coaching, modeling, and consultation services related to maintaining high-quality standards.

Funding and Budget:

7. **Can funding be used towards operating costs such as materials, salary, and rent?**

   Yes, according to Section 201 of the Pre-K Enhancement and Expansion Amendment Act (D.C. Official Code § 38-272.01) and as dictated in the pre-K regulation, high-quality designated pre-K programs receiving pre-K enhancement and expansion funding may use funding for operating costs.

8. **How is funding accounted for with children enrolled in the subsidy program?**

   The actual amount of funding allocated to each high-quality pre-K program will be based on the number of pre-K age children served by the high-quality pre-K program, as verified by OSSE's annual enrollment audit, and minus any other local or federal funding sources available for education services for pre-K age children in the District of Columbia, including but not limited to, subsidized child care and the Head Start Program, as applicable.

9. **Will a program be penalized for not matching their projected enrollment with actual enrollment?**

   There is no penalty for projections and actual enrollment numbers not matching.