

CROSSWALK OF ALABAMA EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of this crosswalk is to illustrate the similarities and variations of the requirements in Alabama’s center-based early learning programs: voluntary First Class Alabama, Preschool Development Grant classrooms, Alabama Quality Stars (the state’s voluntary continuous quality improvement system), child care licensing, and Head Start. This crosswalk offers a look across the standards in key areas of quality and indicates those components and domains that may have a stronger focus in one program than another. For example, child care licensing specifies more detailed requirements for health and safety; Head Start details more in-depth regulations for family engagement; and First Class Alabama provides in-depth direction for classroom instruction and environment.

The state of Alabama has traditionally offered early childhood programming from two departments: the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Department of Early Childhood Education (DECE), formerly the Department of Children’s Affairs. DHR administers child care licensing and child care subsidy as well as the pilot of Alabama Quality Stars, and professional development under Alabama Pathways to Quality Care and Education. DECE houses the state’s Office of School Readiness and the Office of Early Learning and Family Support. These offices oversee Alabama’s state and federally-funded pre-kindergarten as well as home visiting, statewide professional development for voluntary pre-k, the Head Start Collaboration Office that represents the state’s Early Head Start and Head Start agencies, and the Alabama Early Childhood Advisory Council.

The two Departments (DHR and DECE) have a history of collaboration to offer Alabama’s families varied programming options for their young children and to provide current, research-based professional development for the state’s early childhood workforce. Recent federal grants for pre-kindergarten that emphasize cross-sector partnerships have expanded the interest in the development of creative partnerships across the agencies and program types to further align delivery systems to maximize quality. This crosswalk document can be used as a framework for Alabama’s program leadership to identify and come to consensus on quality indicators across program types that will improve outcomes for all of its young children.

The crosswalk is formatted into five broad sections based on First Class Alabama Guidelines: 1) Program Administration, 2) Classroom, 3) Children and Families, 4) Teacher Services, and 5) Instructional Supports with narrower quality requirements specified under each section. The standards or requirements for First Class Alabama, the programs funded through the Preschool Development Grant, child care licensing, Alabama Quality Stars, and Head Start are reviewed for each of these sections. It is important to note that, in particular, the standards for the Preschool Development Grant are primarily limited to the program’s definition for quality components of pre-kindergarten and do not go into the full detail of program implementation that the other standards include. In Alabama, the Preschool Development Grant programs also use First Class Alabama standards. Quality Alabama, the state’s quality improvement rating system, is in pilot phase and builds on the child care licensing standards to expand intentional quality service delivery in key areas. Included as [Appendix A](#), [B](#), and [C](#) are summary documents for the Environment Rating Scale, the Program Administration Scale, and the Classroom Assessment Scoring Scale, all of which are used as foundational resources for one or more of the reviewed early childhood programs. The Appendix documents are overviews; for more detailed review, the actual guidelines documents for each program offer more detailed descriptions of each standard.

SECTION I: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

	FIRST CLASS	PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT (PDG)*	QUALITY STARS**	LICENSING	HEAD START
<p>*Alabama programs with Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funding follow First Class requirements in addition to those expressly specified for PDG.</p> <p>**The Alabama Quality Stars standards identified in this document are Star 5 unless otherwise indicated. Quality Star programs also meet licensure requirements as described. Quality Stars classroom environments are assessed using the Environment Rating Scale that encompasses many quality elements. A brief outline of these quality elements is included in Appendix A. The Quality Stars program also uses the Program Administration Scale to assess programs' management capacity; an outline is included in Appendix B.</p> <p>***When a box is empty, there is no specific requirement for the program-type. Where multi-ages are described in the regulations documents, preschool-age descriptions have been used for this crosswalk.</p>					
Program Eligibility	2.1, 4.7: Annual competitive grant process funded through annual state appropriation, dependent on regional need. Must hold a current license from Department of Human Resources. School Systems that are not DHR licensed must adhere to DHR safety requirements for both classroom and the playground.	States identified through competitive application process. Within states, subgrantees identified through identification of geographic areas of high need.	5.00: Programs must be licensed by DHR; those programs that are not licensed must be individually evaluated for eligibility; must be a center in good standing; no adverse licensing action; free of community complaints for 12 months; voluntary program	B1: Agencies may apply to the Department of Human Resources for licensure. They must demonstrate capacity to meet the regulations and requirements outlined in the Standards document. Child care is defined as a program with 12 or more children.	Federal funding goes directly to awarded grantees. Each grantee has identified geographic region from which children may be enrolled. Head Start serves children who are 3 or 4 with two years prior to kindergarten as maximum time in the program.
Program Renewal	2.2: Funded programs are reviewed every third year for renewal	4-year grant. Years 2, 3, 4 funding are dependent on federal funding appropriation and state's demonstrated success of progress in achieving goals.	9.00: Re-verification every three years; application for higher star rating may occur 6 months after initial Star award	B5: Initial licensure is for 6 months. Subsequent licensure is valid for two years for programs in good standing.	Competitive five year contracts are contingent on successful monitoring outcomes.
Program Self-Assessment	2.2: Programs must demonstrate their capacity for planning, organizing and providing comprehensive child development services to families and children at the community level as part of the annual application and renewal process.	Alabama programs applying for enhancement grants must do an informal self-assessment as part of the application process.	7.02: Completed prior to Stars verification to indicate readiness. Score specifies Star level. Strategic Planning is assessed as part of the Program Administration Scale (PAS). Star 5 requires 4.5 score	B6: Programs must apply for renewal of license prior to 30 days of the expiration date of their current license. Renewal includes completion of form that requires review of current program operations.	Annual self-assessment required. Programs choose tools and process.
Budget Match	2.7: 25% match of cash or in-kind required	Required match, can be cash or in-kind; detailed requirements within grant guidance			Grantees have a required 20% match in cash or in-kind.
Program Reporting	3: Varied documents and records must be kept on-site for three years; reports related to teachers, demographics, budgets, surveys, enrollment, child assessment are completed on-line.	Annual reports, as defined by the Department of Education with a description of the State's progress to date on its goals, on meeting its timelines, and on its adherence to budgets, as well as a description of actual performance compared to the annual targets the State established in its application with respect to each performance measure.	9.00: Programs re-submit application paperwork 33 months after the date of their last Star rating.	H2: Enrollment reports, indicating the number and ages of children enrolled in the center, shall be submitted to the Department upon written request from the Department. Reports are required for major changes in operating or management (moves, director changes, etc.) and for circumstances such as child injury requiring professional attention or any incident in which the health, welfare, or safety of a child is at risk.	Grantees submit an annual Program Information Report (PIR) that provides child and family enrollment information, staffing and program services and implementation data.

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Program Evaluation	DA: Results of on-site monitoring visits, required report submissions and timely compliance to program and classroom guidelines are used for program evaluation	Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement	5.B: Program evaluation for continuous quality improvement required. Assessed as part of the Program Administration Scale (PAS). Star 5 requires 4.5 score.	B7, B8: The Department reserves the right to inspect facilities that are seeking new or renewal licenses or those operating with a 6-month permit. They may be announced or unannounced and include the entire facility and grounds. Pre-licensing visits may be made by appointment.	Head Start uses an Aligned Monitoring System, using either a Differentiated Monitoring Review Process or a Comprehensive Review Process for grantees, based on grantee performance history.
Instructional Days/Time	4.1: 180 instructional days for children	Programs must offer the equivalent of a full school week and a full school year at the public elementary schools in the State.		Definitions: Day time hours begin no earlier than 5:00 am.	Pending new regulations: Current: minimum of 32 weeks; 5 days/week programs require 160 days/year; 4 days/week programs require 128 days/year
Instructional Hours	4.3, 4.4: 6.5 hours of instruction- 5 days/week; wraparound services may be provided after 6.5 hours at families' expense	Preschool programs must be full-day: they must operate for the same number of hours as public elementary schools in the State, and must serve children for at least five hours.		Definitions: Child care centers are defined as operating for more than 4 hours per day with or without educational purposes.	Current regulations: Full day – 6 hours Part day – 3.5 hours (pending new regulations will require full day programs for all Head Start)
Health Information, Screenings and Referrals	4.6: Families grant permission for vision, hearing, dental, and physical screenings to be completed. They are offered, through partnerships with health care professionals, on-site at programs. Referrals are made as necessary. <i>See Classroom Section for information about Developmental Screening; Child and Families Section for additional health information.</i>	Child health screenings, including vision, hearing, dental and physical are included as services offered within the definition of “comprehensive services.”			Within 90 days of children's enrollment, programs must determine if they have accessible health care and if they have received routine health, dental and mental health care including screenings. Referrals and arrangements for needed screenings are provided as needed.
Community Collaboration	PA 4.6: Community collaboration is recognized as an important component of quality pre-k. Programs are encouraged to partner with their Education Committees of their local Children's Policy Council.	Program delivery across early childhood program types is encouraged. The delivery of comprehensive services is to be addressed in partnership (or collaboration) with community agencies. Collaboration is required to maximize service delivery while avoiding duplication of services.	5B: The Program Administration Scale measures the level of involvement of the staff in local community organizations and the extent to which the center maintains positive relationships with its immediate neighbors.		Regulations require programs to establish ongoing collaborative relationships with community organizations, including educational and cultural institutions. The Head Start Act promotes an effective relationship between Head Start programs and publicly funded preschools and K-12 programs
Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting	PR 4.10: Staff are mandated to report suspected child abuse and neglect following the regulations specified in Alabama's Mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect reporting law.			H2d: Programs are required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Resources or the local police immediately by phone, followed up by a written report.	Head Start staff are mandated reporters and are legally obligated to report suspected child abuse and neglect to their state protective services agency.

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Child Enrollment	5.1, 5.4: Random selection drawing with efforts being made to ensure a socio-economically diverse classroom. Classrooms must maintain enrollment of 18 until April 1. Children who leave after that day do not need to be replaced.	Children will be selected from identified at-risk communities based on grantee community assessments and determined risk factors.		B8: Enrollment must adhere to number of children and the ages that are in the license.	Service areas identified in federal contract. 100% enrollment required; 30 days to fill vacant slots. Vacancies do not need to be filled when 60 calendar days or less remain in the program's enrollment year. Children remain income eligible through that enrollment year and the immediately succeeding enrollment year.
Child Eligibility	5.1: All children are eligible; no exclusion due to gender, race, socio-economic status, academic ability.	Eligible children are defined as four-year-old children from families whose income is at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line.		Definitions: Child is defined as anyone under 19. Lawful school age is defined as children who are 5 on or before September 1.	The program is designed for children and families at 100% or below poverty. 35% may be at 135% with documented special circumstances; must have a minimum of 10% of children with disabilities. A child must be at least three years old or turn three years old by the date used to determine eligibility for public school in the community in which the Head Start program is located and not be older than compulsory school age.
Waiting List	5.3: Waiting lists are required to maintain enrollment; must be maintained on site.				Programs must keep an active and ranked waiting list at all times.

SECTION II: CLASSROOM

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Space	CR 2.1: Indoor classroom minimum space = 35 square feet per child; 60 square feet on the playground.			C4b, C5b: 32 square feet per child, excluding bathrooms, kitchens, isolation room, office, halls used as passageways, and storage areas for indoor activity space; 60 square feet per child for outdoor activity (with some variation for center size)	Centers must have at least 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child available for the care and use of children (i.e., exclusive of bathrooms, halls, kitchen, staff rooms, and storage places) and at least 75 square feet of usable outdoor play space per child.
Teacher-Student Ratio	CR 2.2: Teacher-child ratio is 9 to 1.	Teacher-child ratio is 1 to 10, with a highly-qualified teacher.	5.C.II: The teacher-child ratio follows licensing until Star 5 where it ratio is reduced 2 to 32.	D1a: The teacher-child ratio is 2 to 36 (for year olds up to school age (5 by Sept 1)	Teacher-child ratio is 1 to 10.
Class Make-up (Group Size)	CR 2.2: Classrooms maintain a group size of 18. Head Start may operate with 20 (as per federal guidelines with waiver request from OSR) with one lead and one auxiliary teacher	Classrooms may have a maximum of 20 with at least 1 HQ teacher and a second adult	5.C.II: Classroom size follows licensing until Star 5 where it reduces to 16 (one adult).	D1a: Group size is 18 (one adult).	Federally: Head Start allows group size to hold a maximum of 20 four and five olds.
Curriculum	CR 3.1: No endorsement of a specific curriculum; must be aligned to Alabama Early Learning Standards and Teaching Strategies GOLD Programs implement the Alabama First Class Framework, which consists of the Alabama Developmental Standards for Preschool Children, First Class Program Guidelines, First Class Classroom Guidelines, the ASQ-3 Developmental Screener and the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment.	Programs must use a research-based, age appropriate instruction, curriculum that is aligned to the state's Early Learning and Development Standards	3.C.1: Programs must use a developmentally appropriate curriculum (at Star 3)	D3: No curriculum is required. Teachers must provide a variety of indoor and outdoor experiences daily.	Head Start Outcomes Framework (2015 edition) guides programs' use of curriculum and instruction. Programs must use a research-based curriculum that is linked to ongoing assessment, with measurable developmental and learning goals.
Developmental Screening	PA 4.6: Classrooms are required to have a parent-completed Ages and Stages (ASQ-3) Questionnaire completed and scored for each child within 30 days of the start of school.	High quality program standards include the use of a comprehensive assessment system to improve instruction and enhance program quality. Developmental screening is one component of a comprehensive assessment system as defined within the grant guidance.	5B: Screening and Identification of special needs is one of the areas that is reviewed as part of the Program Administration Scale (PAS).		Programs must complete, in collaboration with parents, a linguistically and age appropriate developmental screening for each child within 45 days of program entry. Follow up, including referrals, are made as appropriate.

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Child Assessment	CR 3.1: Programs use Teaching Strategies GOLD as part of the First Class Framework implementing children's outcomes at key intervals during the year. <i>(Further detailed in Classroom Guidelines, Section IV-H).</i>	High quality program standards include the use of a comprehensive assessment system to improve instruction and enhance program quality. Formative assessment is one component of a comprehensive assessment system as defined within the grant guidance.	5.C.I Star 5 requires that programs complete a developmentally appropriate child assessment 3x/year; and aggregate the data into a report that shows outcomes to share with families		Programs measure children's progress across the five essential child development and early learning domains at two levels: 1) individual child; and 2) program wide. The purpose for tracking child level progress is to inform individualized curricular plans and conversations between program staff and parents in an ongoing manner. The purpose of tracking children's progress at the program-wide level is to inform the program's self-assessment and continuous improvement plans to ensure quality. Chosen assessments must align with the Head Start Outcomes Framework.
Classroom Environment	Classroom design, materials and equipment and scheduling are specified in specific document, Classroom Guidelines (summary included in Appendix A). Programs are reviewed with the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R). <i>Use of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) has begun in 2015.</i>	Learning environments that are developmentally, and appropriate, and aligned with the State Early Learning Standards are included in the definition of high quality early education. Environmental assessment is one component of the comprehensive assessment approach that is defined in the grant guidelines.	5.C.III: Star 5 programs are required to achieve a 4.5 on the Environment Rating Scale in 50% of classrooms. (summary included in Appendix A)	C, D3: Specifications provided for bathroom and diapering facilities, storage, areas for sick children, heating, lighting and ventilation, hazard protection, and outdoor areas. L4: Required equipment list provided for materials in the areas of art, educational and creative, home living and dramatic play, literature and music and nature study and science.	Performance Standards require a physical environment and facilities conducive to learning and reflective of the different stages of development of each child. The use of an environmental assessment is individual-program determined. Federal monitoring uses classroom checklists along with the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to review classrooms' quality.
Field Trips	CR 3.3: At least one off-site field trip annually is required.				Field trips are not required. However, Head Start guidance states that field trips can often be valuable activities when they are linked to the curriculum. When field trips are provided, they should be designed and implemented to address educational and socialization objectives for Head Start children.
Meals	CR 3.3: Breakfast, lunch and snacks are required components.	Comprehensive services for children, one of the grant's required quality components, include nutritional supports such as meals.		M1: Meals and snacks that are provided must comply with the Food and Nutrition Service of the US Department of Agriculture.	Each child in a part-day center-based setting must receive meals and snacks that provide at least 1/3 of the child's daily nutritional needs. Each child in a center-based full-day program must receive meals and snacks that provide 1/2 to 2/3 of the child's daily nutritional needs, depending upon the length of the program day.

SECTION III: CHILD AND FAMILY

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Health and Safety	<p>PA 4.6, CF 1.3: Evidence of age-appropriate, up-to-date immunizations (blue card) or signed religious beliefs affidavits against such immunizations are maintained on-site for each child.</p>	<p>Use of health and safety standards is a required component of the quality standards for PDG programs.</p> <p>Health supports and services is one element of comprehensive services, a required component of the quality standards for PDG programs.</p>	<p>5.C.III: Health and safety practices are included in the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) assessment. Risk Management is also included in the Program Administration Scale (PAS) assessment. (See Appendix A, B)</p>	<p>D.3: Standards are included pertaining to the illness and injury, hygienic practices, emergency procedures.</p>	<p>Performance standards that address children's illness, emergencies, and records storage are provided.</p> <p>Within 90 days, programs must ascertain whether children have access to medical care and whether their routine health care is up to date. Head start works with families to obtain and keep children current with health care services.</p> <p>Parent education about child illness and other health-related topics is specified in Head Start standards.</p>
Children with Special Needs	<p>PA. 5.5: No funds may be used to create special education classrooms.</p> <p>CF 1.4: Children with disabilities are required to be included in pre-K classrooms side by side with their typically developing peers. Classrooms with children who have been identified with significant developmental delays or behavior challenges may apply for a waiver to reduce the overall number of children in the class.</p>	<p>Within a High-Quality Preschool Program, the inclusion of eligible children with disabilities should be not less than either the percentage of four-year-old children served statewide through part B, section 619 of IDEA, or the current national average, whichever is greater, and should not include self-contained classrooms of children with disabilities. Collaboration with 619 programs should occur to coordinate funding and delivery of services.</p>	<p>5.C.III: Practices related to children with special needs are included in the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) assessment. (See Appendix A)</p>	<p>Definition: Special education services are available for those children in the child care facility who have IEPs.</p>	<p>At least 10 percent of a Head Start program's enrollment must include children with disabilities. Agencies must develop disability plans that specify how they will support children with disabilities within their program and classrooms.</p> <p>Standards address the need for including children with disabilities in Head Start classrooms and for making adaptations as needed for full inclusivity.</p>

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Family Involvement	2: Programs develop a comprehensive plan for family involvement that includes strategies for developing partnerships.	Subgrantees must show how they plan to coordinate and increase parental and family engagement, including by helping parents to support children's learning at home, involving parents in decisions about education and development, and encouraging strategies that strengthen families	4.D.II: Star 4 programs have a parent resource area that addresses the needs and interests of the parents served 5.D.II: Star 5 programs need to have a written parent engagement plan.	D.5: Staff must be open to visits from parents or family members at any time during the center's operating hours and family members should be notified of this opportunity.	Families and Head Start engage in a partnership-based family goal setting process to determine family strengths, goals and needed services and supports.
Parent Programming	CF 2.1: Families are encouraged to be engaged in their children's program experience through activities such as home visits, conference, classroom visits, parent education, decision making about their child's program or activities beyond the school day		5.D.I: Star 5 programs use the results of parent surveys to improve programmatic outcomes 5.B. , 5.C.III: The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) includes a subscale on provisions for parents and the Program Administration Scale (PAS) includes a section on Family Communications.		Agencies must offer parent involvement and education activities that are responsive to the ongoing and expressed needs of the parents, both as individuals and as members of a group.
Parent Orientations	CF 2.2: A family orientation is required within the first 20 working days of the school year. A list of topics is provided. Parent attendance is mandatory and should be documented.		3.D.II: Star 3 programs must hold a parent orientation to include program philosophy, goals, objectives and expectations.		
Parent-Teacher Conferences	CF 2.3: At least two individual conferences between lead teacher and parent or guardian are required. The first should be held after the October TS GOLD checkpoint; the second after the May checkpoint.		3.D.I: Star 3 programs are required to hold a minimum of two parent-teacher conferences annually. 5.B: The Program Administration Scale (PAS) includes a section on Family Communications.	D.5: Staff must be available for conferences at times that are convenient for parents.	Home visits and conferences are a required component of the family engagement standards.
Attendance Policy	CF 3.1, 3.2, 3.3: Written procedures are required to be shared with families. Daily records must be maintained on-site and track children's absences, late arrivals and early dismissals. Processes are in place for working with families according to the numbers of absences and tardies. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 4 days/month without medical or other reasonable explanation. Consecutive absenteeism is defined as not attending class for 10 consecutive days without a medical or other reasonable explanation. Both can result in dismissal if approved, in writing, by the Regional Manager.				If average monthly attendance falls below 85%, programs must analyze reasons. Family support procedures must be initiated for children who miss 4 or more consecutive unexcused days. The proposed standards include a provision for individualized child tracking of attendance to more easily identify chronic absences and additional home visits for those families in which children demonstrate frequent absentee behavior.

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Discipline Policy	CF 4.1, 4.2: No form of corporal punishment or time-out is allowed.		5.C.III: Strategies for discipline are reviewed as part of the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) assessment.	D.5: Parents and staff must, together, discuss any disciplinary concerns and determine appropriate action.	Head Start Performance standards state: "They will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation. In addition, they will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs."
Suspension and/or Dismissal	CF 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6: Modified attendance may be put in place for children with challenges with prior approval from the Regional Manager and Special Needs Coordinator. Emergency suspensions for up to 2 days allowable child is causing harm to self or others. Extended suspensions require prior approval and supporting documentation. Dismissal is a last resort. Three incidents of aggression may be considered in the determination of dismissal. Extended suspensions and dismissals require written approvals from Regional Managers.				Mental health services are an essential component of the Head Start program that include child observations, development of behavior plans in partnership with family members and the utilization of community services when appropriate. The newly-proposed Head Start standards include the following: "programs must either prohibit or severely limit the use of suspension and include requirements for programs to engage a mental health consultant, collaborate with parents, and utilize appropriate community resources should a temporary suspension be deemed necessary because a child's behavior represents a serious safety threat for themselves or other children."

SECTION IV: TEACHER SERVICE

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Lead Teacher Education Requirements	<p>TS 1.3: Lead teacher must be at least 21 years of age and possess a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or child development. Teachers in public schools must be teacher certified.</p>	<p>Lead teachers must have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or bachelor's in any field with a State-approved alternate pathway for acquiring knowledge and competency in early childhood education, which may include course work, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood, as well as teaching assistantships that meet State or local requirements.</p>	<p>5.A: At least 50% of the classroom teachers have reached a Level Three (Child Development Short-term) Certificate on the Alabama Pathways Professional Development Career Lattice (less than 29 credit hours in early childhood education, depending on the delivering agency)</p>	<p>F1b: Teachers with primary responsibility for a group must have a high school diploma or GED and receive 12 clock hours of training in child care and development within 30 days of employment. (List of specified topics identified in regulations)</p>	<p>A least 50% of Head Start teachers nationwide must have a BA in early childhood education; or a BA and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education, with experience teaching preschool-age children.</p> <p>Proposed regulation changes: The lead teacher must have a minimum of an AA in Early Childhood Education or an AA in a related field with equivalent coursework and experience in early childhood development.</p>
Lead Teacher Salary	<p>TS 1.4: Salary guidance is provided. Teachers are given raises through a step compensation plan using OSE supplementary grants.</p>	<p>Grant requirements specify instructional salaries that are the equivalent to those of K-12 teachers.</p>	<p>5.B: A review for related policies is completed as part of the Program Administration Scale (PAS) but no set parameters are given.</p>		<p>The Head Start encourages "Head Start agencies to provide compensation according to salary scales that are based on training and experience." Head Start provides resources for agencies to complete wage comparability studies.</p>
Auxiliary Teacher Education Requirements	<p>TS 2.2: Must be 19 years of age, possess a high school diploma or GED; possess a CDA or credit hours of college coursework in ECE or child development; possess at least 12 months of experience working in early childhood or OSR approved settings</p>	<p>The second staff person in the classroom is required to, at a minimum, meet the qualifications for an instructional assistant or classroom aide as set out in State or local requirements.</p>		<p>F1c: Aides/assistant teachers shall be at least 16 years of age and have at least an 8th grade education and work under the direct supervision of a person qualified as a child care worker/teacher and shall not be counted in the required staff-child ratio.</p>	<p>Teaching assistants must possess either a child development associate credential; be enrolled in a program leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree; or be enrolled in a child development associate credential program to be completed within 2 years</p>
Auxiliary Teacher Salary	<p>TS 2.3: A minimum salary scale is provided; does not include benefits</p>	<p>Grant requirements specify instructional salaries that are the equivalent to those of K-12 teachers.</p>	<p>5.B: A review for related policies is completed as part of the Program Administration Scale (PAS) but no set parameters are given</p>		<p>The Head Start encourages "Head Start agencies to provide compensation according to salary scales that are based on training and experience." Head Start provides resources for agencies to complete wage comparability studies.</p>

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Substitutes	TS 3.3: Long term substitutes (longer than 3 weeks) must meet the credentials of the teacher they are replacing. Criminal checks are required for all substitute teachers.			F1f: A substitute staff person shall meet all qualifications of staff for whom he/she is substituting.	The class size requirements for center-based programs must be maintained through the provision of substitutes when regular classroom staff are absent.
Professional Development Hours	TS 4.2: Lead teachers must attend 15 hours of OSR-sponsored training and 15 additional hours. Auxiliary teachers must attend a minimum of 10 OSR sponsored training plus 10 additional hours. All lead and auxiliary teachers must attend the 1.5 day pre-k conference.	Plans for delivery of high quality evidence-based professional development are included in requirements.	3.A.II: Attends 4 hours above the minimum required by licensing.	F4c: Child care workers/ teachers must have a minimum of 12 clock hours per year.	Each Head Start teacher shall attend not less than 15 clock hours of professional development per year. Such professional development shall be high-quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom, and regularly evaluated by the program for effectiveness.
Additional Professional Development Requirements	TS 4.3: Substitutes and associated costs for staff training including teacher travel, salaries and expenses are paid for all required trainings.	Preschool Development Grant funds could be allocated to increase and/or improve preschool teacher education and licensure requirements, or early education teacher and administration professional development programs	5B: The Program Administration Scale (PAS) assesses the program's professional development policies and process for individualization and provision of responsive training for staff. The Program Administration Scale (PAS) recommends a staff orientation process that includes implementation follow-up.	F4a: All staff shall be involved in ongoing training related to his/her specific responsibilities. Training in child care shall include each of these areas: (1) child development; (2) health, safety and universal precautions; (3) quality child care and licensing; (4) the child care professional and the family; (5) language development (6) positive discipline and guidance	New regulations propose targeted professional development on competencies to improve child outcomes such as curricula implementation, content knowledge of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (Birth-5), providing effective teaching and nurturing teacher-child interactions, supporting dual language learners, addressing challenging behaviors, using child assessment data to individualize child progress, and preparing children for new programs.

SECTION V: INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

	FIRST CLASS	PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT (PDG)*	QUALITY STARS**	LICENSING	HEAD START
<p>*Alabama programs with Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funding follow First Class requirements in addition to those expressly specified for PDG.</p> <p>**The Alabama Quality Stars standards identified in this document are Star 5 unless otherwise indicated. Quality Star programs also meet licensure requirements as described. Quality Stars classroom environments are assessed using the Environment Rating Scale that encompasses many quality elements. A brief outline of these quality elements is included in Appendix A. The Quality Stars program also uses the Program Administration Scale to assess programs' management capacity; an outline is included in Appendix B.</p> <p>***When a box is empty, there is no specific requirement for the program-type. Where multi-ages are described in the regulations documents, preschool-age descriptions have been used for this crosswalk.</p>					
Technical Assistance	IT1: A complement of regional managers, special needs coordinators, coaches and monitors are available to work with program staff so support program and grant compliance.	States were required to set aside a specified amount of funding from the grant for technical assistance and are required to participate in TA activities, either individually or with other states, to share effective program practices and solutions and collaboratively solve problems	4.0: Technical Assistance is available to help programs achieve Star level(s).	B7: Applicants for child care licensing may request consultation from the Department for assistance in meeting and maintaining minimum requirements.	Head Start's TA mission is to Technical Assistance is "Every Head Start and Early Head Start program deserves access to the same level of high quality T/TA to produce the best possible outcomes for children and families." Grantees may access training and technical assistance through funding that goes directly to them for individualized and programmatic options, state to state delivered technical assistance, and through the National Centers (six new National Centers to promote excellence through high quality, practical resources and approaches that build early childhood program capacity and promote consistent practices across communities, states, tribes, and territories.)
Program Monitors	IT 2.1: Each classroom is assigned a monitor that monitors and evaluates program progress during monthly planned and random on-site visits, aimed towards insuring program quality	Grantees must include a system for monitoring subgrantees' delivery of high quality early childhood programming and for their implementation of continuous quality improvement strategies within their delivery plan.	5.05: Star reviews and environmental assessments may be unannounced.	B7: Visits are made for the purpose of determining compliance with minimum standards or investigating a complaint shall be made without prior notice.	Grantees determine their own strategies for monitoring program components but are charged with ensuring they can provide evidence of an organizational system that can support the accomplishment of program objectives.
Coaches	IT 2.2: Each classroom is assigned a coach who is supports classroom teachers to adhere to classroom guidelines and connect teachers and administrators among First Class programs through regular site visits and through the identification and progress tracking of goals.	PDG's description of ambitious plans for supports to improve high quality programming includes provision of evidence-based professional development, including coaching.			Head Start identifies the use of mentor coaching as one of its professional development strategies to support teachers' efforts to meet their full potential. Practice-based Coaching is one advocated approach.

REFERENCES

Alabama Guideline Documents

- Office of School Readiness First Class Pre-K 2015-2016 Classroom Guidelines: http://children.alabama.gov/uploadedFiles/File/20152016_Classroom_Guidelines.pdf
- Office of School Readiness Program Guidelines 2015-2016: http://children.alabama.gov/uploadedFiles/File/20152016_Program_Guidelines_with_revision_july_17_2015.pdf
- Alabama Quality Stars Quality Rating and Improvement System Guidelines Minimum Standards for Day Care Centers and Night Time Centers, Regulations and Procedures, 2009 reprint, Alabama Department of Human Resources: http://dhr.alabama.gov/documents/MinimumStandards_DayCare.pdf

Head Start Performance Standards: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/hspps>

Head Start Act of 2007: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/law>

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-R

- Overview of tool: <http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/early-childhood-environment-rating-scale-ecers-r>
- Summary of assessment scales: <http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/c-overview-subscsles-and-items-ecers-r>

Program Administration Scale

- Overview of tool: <http://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/program-evaluation/program-administration-scale-pas/>
- Summary report: <http://mccormickcenter.nl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/PAS-Profile-Report-Sample.pdf>

Classroom Assessment Scoring Scale

- Overview of tool: <http://curry.virginia.edu/research/centers/castl/class>
- Summary of scales: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/sr/class/use-of-class.pdf>

APPENDIX A: Overview of Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R) Subscales and Items

ECERS written descriptions are provided at 1,3,5,7: Alabama Quality Star 5 requirement is 4:5.

Space and Furnishings	Indoor Space	Personal Care	Greeting/Departing
	Furniture for routine care, play, and learning		Meals/Snacks
	Furnishings for relaxation and comfort		Nap/rest
	Room arrangement for play		Toileting/diapering
	Space for privacy		Health Practices
	Child-related display		Safety Practices
	Space for gross motor play		
	Gross motor equipment		

Language and Reasoning	Books and pictures	Program Structure	Schedule
	Encouraging children to communicate		Free Play
	Using language to develop reasoning skills		Group Play
	Informal use of language		Provisions for children with disabilities

Interaction	Supervision of gross motor activities	Parents and Staff	Provisions for parents
	General supervision of children (other than gross motor)		Provisions for personal needs of staff
	Discipline		Provisions for professional needs of staff
	Staff-child interactions		Staff interaction and cooperation
	Interactions among children		Supervision and evaluation of staff
			Opportunities for professional growth

Activities	Fine Motor
	Art
	Music/Movement
	Blocks
	Sand/Water
	Dramatic Play
	Nature/science
	Math/number
	Use of TV, video, and/or computers
	Promoting acceptance of diversity

APPENDIX B



Program Administration Scale Report

PAS ID _____ Report date _____

Program Administrator's name _____

Program name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Assessment date _____ Assessor's name _____

DR. TERI TALAN
Director of Research and Public Policy
800.443.5522, ext. 5060
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PART A | Description of Items

The *Program Administration Scale* (PAS) measures quality on a 7-point scale in 25 items grouped in 10 subscales. The following description of the 25 items provides an explanation of how to interpret the scores for each area of administrative practice.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Staff Orientation assesses whether a program has a formal or informal orientation for new staff, whether there are written orientation procedures, and whether staff orientation is consistently implemented. A high score indicates that a system exists to ensure that orientation is consistently implemented and that written orientation procedures are periodically reviewed.

Supervision and Performance Appraisal considers how teaching staff are supervised and how their performance is evaluated at the center. This item looks at who participates in the process, what criteria are used to evaluate performance, and whether or not teachers are given feedback based on formal observation. A high score indicates that a system exists to ensure ongoing feedback and support based on classroom observations and that effective procedures are in place for performance appraisal.

Staff Development assesses whether professional development opportunities are provided for all teaching, support, and administrative staff; whether the center has a policy requiring a minimum number of staff development hours each year; and whether staff are advised about publicly funded professional development opportunities. A high score indicates an organizational commitment to systematic and ongoing professional development.

PERSONNEL COST AND ALLOCATION

Compensation addresses whether there is a written salary scale guiding decision making about employee compensation and to whom it is available. This item also assesses criteria the salary scale is based on and whether staff receives regular salary increases. A high score indicates that a salary scale is available to all staff and is differentiated by role, education, specialized training, years of experience, and professional credentials. A high score also indicates that the center provides salary increases on a regular basis.

Benefits considers the type and availability of different fringe benefits for personnel employed by the center. The benefits assessed by this item include health insurance, sick and personal days, vacation leave, retirement plan, and reimbursement for professional development expenses. A high score indicates a greater investment by the center in the provision of a variety of benefits.

Staffing Patterns and Scheduling assesses whether children are regrouped during the day, the availability of paid teacher planning time, whether staff are ever alone with children, and whether the Administrator spends time in the classroom to maintain required ratios. A high score indicates that the center has a staffing plan in place that supports teachers' professional preparation time and ensures consistent and adequate classroom coverage at all times with minimum reliance on the Administrator to maintain required ratios.

CENTER OPERATIONS

Facilities Management refers to standard operating procedures for routine maintenance of the health and safety of the facility, whether the space meets the needs of adults working at the center, and whether the space supports effective program administration. A high score indicates evidence of compliance with routine maintenance and well-equipped space that meet the needs of teaching, support, and administrative staff.

Risk Management assesses the components of the center’s risk management plan, how information about children’s medical conditions is documented, how emergency drills are implemented, and whether the staff is trained in CPR and First Aid. A high score means that the center has systematic procedures in place to anticipate and respond to different types of emergencies.

Internal Communications addresses the methods used to communicate information to employees, the type and frequency of staff meetings, teachers’ involvement in planning and facilitating meetings, whether records are maintained documenting staff meeting proceedings, and whether the center has a written policy and procedures in place for resolving staff disputes. A high score indicates administrative practices that promote distributed leadership and frequent, inclusive, and productive staff meetings.

CHILD ASSESSMENT

Screening and Identification of Special Needs assesses whether children are screened for the purpose of identifying special needs, whether the screening includes appropriate safeguards to protect against misidentification, and if parents and specialists are appropriately involved. A high score means that the center has effective procedures in place to ensure screening for all children, birth-to-five years of age, referrals for those needing further evaluation, and a system to support collaboration with specialists working with children with special needs.

Assessment in Support of Learning considers how the teachers assess children’s learning and development, whether curriculum planning is aligned with standards for best practices, and how the results of child assessments are used. A high score indicates that comprehensive procedures exist to support the integration of curriculum and assessment.

FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Budget Planning focuses on the center’s budget planning process, the components of the operating budget, and whether procedures are in place to ensure adequate cash flow. A high score means that needs assessment and goal setting are an integral part of the annual budget planning process and that administrative practices ensure effective monitoring of revenue and expenditures.

Accounting Practices looks at how income and expense statements are generated, whether there is a check-and-balance system in place, and whether an independent review of accounting records is regularly conducted. A high score indicates that the center adheres to accepted bookkeeping practices that ensure fiscal accountability and safeguards.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Program Evaluation addresses the degree to which staff and parents are involved in evaluating the program and how center-wide decisions are influenced by these evaluations. A high score indicates that systematic procedures are in place for evaluating the program and that the data generated from these evaluations are used to develop a written plan for program improvement.

Strategic Planning looks at whether the center has a written mission or vision statement as well as a written business or strategic plan. A high score means that the center engages in systematic strategic planning and that the staff and governing board/advisory board are involved in developing these documents.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Family Communications assesses how families are oriented to the center, the variety of methods used to communicate with families, and the frequency of formal conferences. A high score means that the center has a system in place for open, frequent, and respectful communication with families that promote mutual understanding about values, beliefs, and expectations.

Family Support and Involvement looks at the various ways that staff support families enrolled in the program. A high score indicates that families are encouraged to visit in the classroom and that families participate in parent meetings, special events, field trips, and routine classroom activities.

MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

External Communications assesses the variety and quality of marketing and public relations tools utilized by the center. A high score indicates that the center uses a number of different strategies to promote the center’s programs and to ensure prompt response to prospective parents.

Community Outreach measures the level of involvement of the Administrator and/or staff in local community organizations as well as early childhood professional organizations. It also measures the extent to which the center maintains positive relationships with its immediate neighbors. A high score indicates that the Administrator and/or staff play an active role in community and early childhood professional organizations and seek out opportunities to build good relations within the immediate neighborhood.

TECHNOLOGY

Technological Resources assesses the center’s technological resources, including Internet access, and whether teaching and administrative staff have access to the Internet. A high score means that the center has multiple computers with Internet access that are available for teaching and administrative staff.

Use of Technology assesses how administrative and teaching staff use technology in their work and whether they receive job specific technology training. It also addresses whether or not the program has a technology policy. A high score indicates that the administrative and teaching staff receive job specific technology training and the program has a comprehensive technology policy.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Administrator qualifications assesses the level of general education, specialized early childhood training, specialized management training, administrative experience, and professional contributions of the individual designated as the Administrator.

Lead Teacher qualifications assesses the level of general education, specialized early childhood training, and teaching experience of the individual with the highest professional qualifications who is responsible for the care and education of an assigned group of children.

Teacher qualifications assesses the level of general education, specialized early childhood training, and teaching experience of each member of the teaching team who shares responsibility with the Lead Teacher for the care and education of an assigned group of children.

Assistant Teacher/Aide qualifications assesses the level of general education, specialized early childhood training, and teaching experience of each member of the teaching team who is assigned to a group of children and works under the direct supervision of the Lead Teacher and/or Teacher(s).

PART B | Staffing Pattern and Summary of Teaching Staff Qualifications

The information summarized in the program’s Staffing Pattern details the name of each classroom in the center along with the number of assigned teaching staff (Lead Teacher, Teachers, Assistant Teachers/Aides). The Summary of Teaching Staff Qualifications reports the sum of the scores for each teaching role within each classroom as well as the Average Item Score for each teaching role for the center as a whole. The classroom is used as a focus of analysis because classroom teachers are at the core of the child’s daily experience. Presenting summary data on teaching staff qualifications for each classroom allows for a comparison of the level of teaching expertise children experience in different classrooms.

STAFFING PATTERN

Classroom	Number of Lead Teachers	Number of Teachers	Number of Assistants/Aides
A.			
B.			
C.			
D.			
E.			
F.			
G.			
H.			
I.			
J.			
Total	Total	Total	Total

SUMMARY OF TEACHING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Classroom	Lead Teacher Scores	Sum of Teacher Scores	Sum of Assistant/Aide Scores
A.			
B.			
C.			
D.			
E.			
F.			
G.			
H.			
I.			
J.			

Total of Scores	<input type="text"/>	Total of Scores	<input type="text"/>	Total of Scores	<input type="text"/>
	÷		÷		÷
Number of Lead Teachers	<input type="text"/>	Number of Teachers	<input type="text"/>	Number of Assistants/Aides	<input type="text"/>
	=		=		=
Average Lead Teacher Score	<input type="text"/>	Average Teacher Score	<input type="text"/>	Average Assistant/Aide Score	<input type="text"/>

PART C | Item Summary

The data summarized in this section details the individual item scores. The item scores for Lead Teacher, Teacher, and Assistant Teacher/Aide have been rounded to the closest whole number. The Average PAS Item Score noted in this section is derived by dividing the sum of the item scores by the total number of items assessed (a minimum of 23 for all programs; 24 or 25 for programs that have a staffing pattern that includes Teachers and/or Assistant Teachers/Aides).

Subscales	Items	Scores
Human Resources Development	1. Staff Orientation	6
	2. Supervision and Performance Appraisal	7
	3. Staff Development	1
Personnel Cost and Allocation	4. Compensation	1
	5. Benefits	1
	6. Staffing Patterns and Scheduling	4
Center Operations	7. Facilities Management	6
	8. Risk Management	4
	9. Internal Communications	1
Child Assessment	10. Screening & Identification of Special Needs	1
	11. Assessment in Support of Learning	1
Fiscal Management	12. Budget Planning	1
	13. Accounting Practices	1
Program Planning and Evaluation	14. Program Evaluation	1
	15. Strategic Planning	1
Family Partnerships	16. Family Communications	1
	17. Family Support and Involvement	6
Marketing and Public Relations	18. External Communications	6
	19. Community Outreach	4
Technology	20. Technological Resources	7
	21. Use of Technology	6
Staff Qualifications	22. Administrator	4
	23. Lead Teacher	2
	24. Teacher	1
	25. Assistant Teacher/Aide	2

Sum of Item Scores

76

÷

Number of Items

25

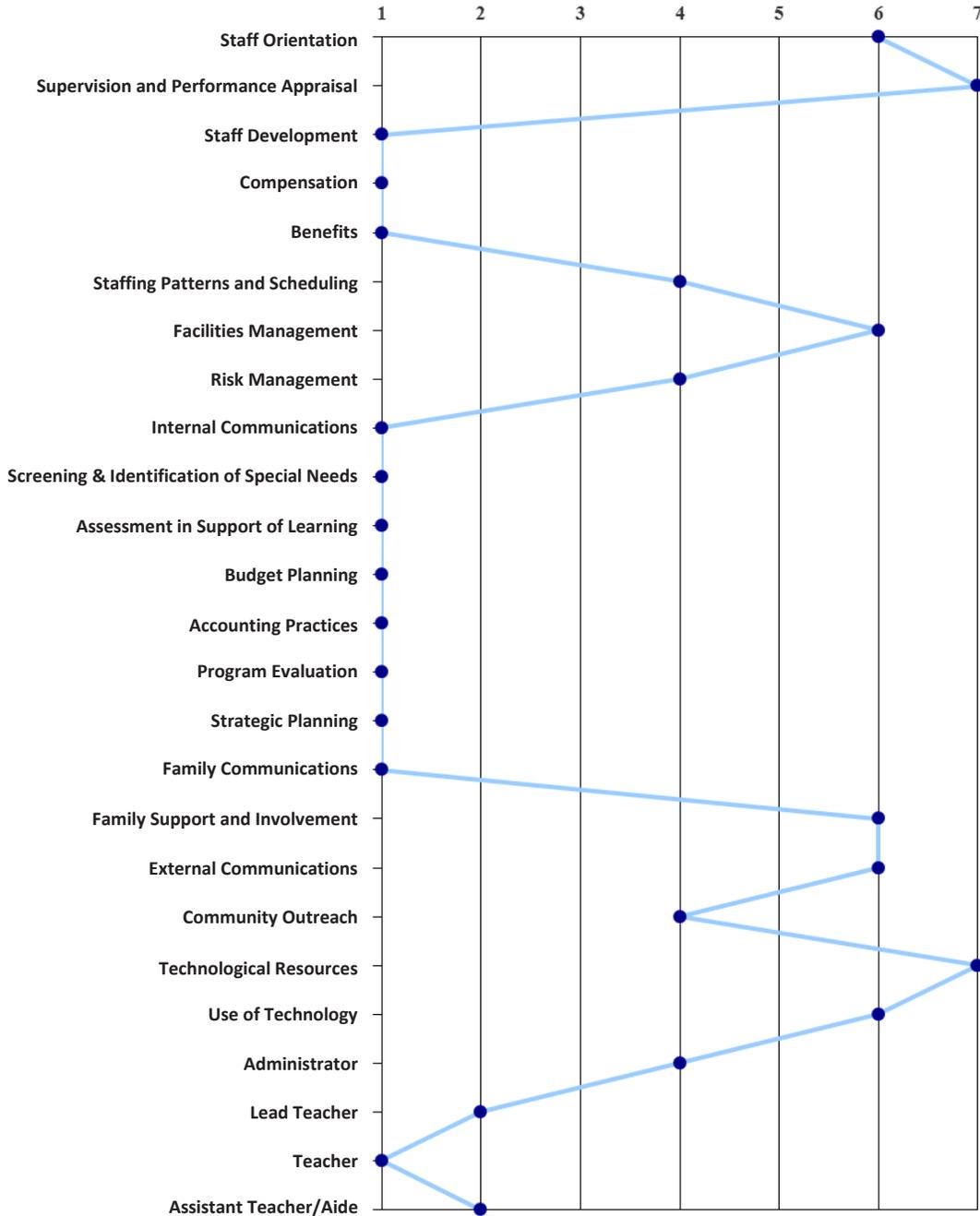
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Average PAS Item Score

3.04

PART D | PAS Profile

This section of the report provides a graphic representation of the Item Summary data presented in Part C. Because this profile provides a snapshot of the quality of program administration practices at a given moment in time, it can be used to benchmark quality improvements over time in subsequent administrations of the PAS.



APPENDIX C: Summary of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)*

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) is an observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based preschool classrooms. Teachers are rated on a 7-point scale, with scores of 6-7 indicating that teachers have been observed to show consistent and effective interactions with children.

The tool assesses teachers in three domains:

- **Emotional Support:** assesses the degree to which teachers establish and promote a positive climate in their classroom through their everyday interactions. Classrooms that score well in this domain have teachers that are responsive to children, acknowledge children's feelings or emotions, help children resolve problems, redirect challenging behavior, and support positive peer relationships. Observations provide evidence that teachers and children support and respect one another. Teachers are aware of and respond to children's academic and emotional needs and consistently provide comfort, reassurance, and encouragement. There is an emphasis on children's interests, motivations, and points of view.
- **Classroom Organization:** assesses classroom routines and procedures related to the organization and management of children's behavior, time, and attention in the classroom. High-scoring classrooms feature consistent schedules, well-designed learning centers, established routines, and sensitive and appropriate guidance strategies. Staff work together as a team. Classrooms with these characteristics give children a sense of stability and predictability that supports exploring, thinking about, and learning new things.
- **Instructional Support:** assesses the ways in which teachers implement the curriculum to effectively promote cognitive and language development. This domain measures how teachers support and extend children's thinking, problem solving, and conversational skills and vocabulary. Effective teachers support children's engagement by making concepts and skills relevant to their everyday lives, asking questions that encourage children to analyze and reason, providing the right amount of help and offering feedback that acknowledges children's attempts.

*Information taken from [Use of Classroom Assessment Scoring System \(CLASS®\) in Head Start](#).